



# ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ

ଆମେରିକୀୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର ମୁଖପତ୍ର

ଶରତ ୨୦୨୫ ସଂସ୍କରଣ

## UTKARSHA

THE JOURNAL OF THE ODISHA SOCIETY OF THE AMERICAS  
FALL 2025 EDITION



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A NEWSLETTER OF  
ODISHA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS

FALL 2025 EDITION

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President



**Utkal Nayak**

Vice-President



**Snigdha Hota**

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**Sanjeeb Rout**

Treasurer



Editorial Section

**Nil Bisoi**



**Sarita Nayak**



**Debu Panda**



**Devika Tripathy**

&

**Simoni Mishra**



Design – Photography – Typeset  
PRABHU

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ପ୍ରଶାସକଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

MESSAGES  
FROM  
OSA EXECUTIVES





## || MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ||

Dear OSA Friends and Family,

My team and I accepted the responsibility to lead OSA for the 2025-2027 term with humility, optimism and some dreams. Dreams similar to those that our founders envisioned 56 years ago when they came together to form this great organization that we call The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA).

OSA was formed with a vision to preserve and propagate Odia culture in the Americas by bringing together people interested in Odisha. Our founders had the following purposes in mind for OSA to deliver on (summarized & paraphrased from the By-laws Article 2):

1. Create a Mutually supportive environment for NA Odias
2. Share the gift of Odia Heritage Culture and Tradition with the world
3. Provide voluntary, Charitable & Humanitarian service to members
4. Contribute to the community we live in, through model citizenship
5. Stay connected with Odisha and contribute to development

So, as a community, how do we deliver on this promise? We are a fast-growing organization with 5000+ member families and a wide demographic representation. We are also a volunteer driven organization and have multiple priorities in our lives. So how do we all come together and deliver on our founders' vision?



The only way is for all of us to come together with a small slice of our time and make a combined impact that helps move the organization forward. With inputs from members, past leaders and volunteers, we framed the vision depicted in the graphic below:



## 2025 – 2027 TEAM FOCUS

### BE MORE FOR OUR MEMBERS

- Meaningful Senior Services
- Culture & Language Learning for Youth
- Engage Youth members in OSA Core
- Enhance professional networking
- Health & Wellness

### INTEGRATE OSA PROCESS & PLATFORM

- Increase Member engagement
- Facilitate Leadership Development
- Formalize & Simplify Processes
- Create a IT foundation

### ENRICH LIVES WITH ODISHA CULTURE

- Promote Odisha Arts, Cuisine, Tourism, Architecture and Spirituality in NA
- Model Citizenship in NA and Odisha

#### Our Values

STAY  
MEMBER  
FOCUSED

PROMOTE  
OSA  
PURPOSE

PLAN LONG TERM  
EXECUTE  
SHORT TERM

OWNERSHIP  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
TRANSPARENCY

WE ALL  
GROW WITH  
EACH OTHER

Elevate member experience and create a sense of belonging

As I mentioned, we can deliver on these promises if we can pool our available resources to move the initiatives forward - I will share some detail below:

### The Senior Samparka Initiative

OSA was formed 56 years ago. A large number of our founding members and members from the initial years are in their 70s and 80s. In many cases they experience *Loneliness, Social Isolation, Health Challenges, Mobility Challenges, Cooking, Grocery Shopping etc.*





The Senior Samparka initiative aims to address these challenges by bringing together a group of volunteers who can stay connected with the seniors and assist based on the need. The program will be rolled out in a few pilot cities and gradually expanded.

### **How you can help:**

We need a lot of volunteers to help connect with seniors in many cities – If you are interested, please reach-out to your chapter EC team.

### **The Professional Network Initiative**

The employment market is rapidly changing – Regulatory, technology and new breakthroughs will challenge us as we move forward. The Professional Network is designed to help in professional networking, career progression and information related to skill development.

In addition, this initiative will allow our Young Adults to explore Internships and new Jobs as they move through college.

Also, the OSA Higher Education Team will establish a structured mentorship and scholarship support system for OSA youth in North America.

**How you can help:** Are you interested in shaping and running this initiative? Please register with the Google form at the bottom of this message.



### The Chhampu Chanda Odissi Initiative (CCO)

Preserving and Propagating CCO, remains a core prerogative of OSA. The CCO team aims to create an OSA CCO Asset Library of Music Tracks, Lyrics in Odia and their Phonetic English translation and songs from prominent singers. We hope this library is a great gift to students in North America and in India. Many OSA chapters do not have access to a CCO teacher in their location – The CCO team will work on making teacher/s available from Odisha (on Zoom) to address this.

**How you can help:** If you love promoting CCO vocals, do get in touch with your chapter EC and help them form a CCO support team.

### The Nilachakra Youth Adventure

For our youth from grade 1 to 11, the Nilachakra Youth Adventure provides a path to learn and experience many aspects of Odia Culture, Language, Arts, Heritage, Community Service and Leadership. The program is designed to be engaging and recognizes the participant for each accomplishment. Upon completion, the participant is awarded the Nilachakra Award of Community Service. The core value used by the design team is that ***Every child in the community has an equal opportunity to finish this program and receive the award.***

**How you can help:** We need coordinators and counselors in every chapter. If you like working with children, do let your EC team know that you want to help.





## New OSA Publications

We are planning two special projects:

Tracing the History of Odissi Dance in North America – The Editorial team will work on publishing a coffee table photobook that traces the growth of Odissi dance and OSAs contribution to the Art.

The publications team also plans to publish Odia Cuisine Recipe books including recipes from our members.

**How you can help:** There is a lot of chapter level coordination that is needed in putting the two publications. Please look out for communications in the near future.

## Higher Education: Helping Odisha implement Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture, Education and Healthcare

In addition to the past charter, the Higher Education team is hosting the Odisha AI Summit 2025 in Bhubaneswar, with OSA playing a convening role for academics, industry leaders, and students.

## Model Citizenship in North America

Many OSA chapters contribute and give back to the communities they live in, by volunteering at and donating to the local community food bank.

We will continue encouraging our chapters to work in this area as we move forward.

**How you can help:** Connect with your EC to understand if there is a local Food Bank that can benefit with our help.



## **The Odisha Public Library Initiative (OPLI)**

The OPLI team will fine tune and continue their work to create a positive impact in the grassroots in Odisha by advocating for opening new libraries and preserving historic libraries.

All of our initiatives are rooted in the founding principles and purpose as articulated in the OSA Bylaws.

In this past quarter, we have worked within the BOG to propose and approve several policies to bring greater clarity and process to our work. You can read the policies in detail in the OSA Policy Update section of this edition of Utkarsa.

**How you can help:** Write to [opli@odishasociety.org](mailto:opli@odishasociety.org) and explore your interest - They have work in all districts of Odisha, and you can find something of interest.

**Nagesh Rajanala**  
**President, OSA**





## || MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT ||

### Charting OSA's Transformational Journey



Namaskar! Dear Fellow OSA Members,

As I write to you today, I am filled with profound optimism about the remarkable journey we are embarking upon together. When I look across our vibrant community, I see a tapestry of dreams, achievements, and untapped potential that speaks to the very essence of who we are as Odias in North America.

#### The Story of Our Evolution

Our community's story is one of extraordinary transformation. The Odia professionals who once predominantly filled engineering and medical fields now span every corner of the American and Canadian landscape, from entrepreneurs to engineers, from renowned academics to creative artists. Our age demographics have shifted dramatically, creating a beautiful mosaic of generations, each bringing unique perspectives and energy to our shared mission.

This evolution isn't just statistics; it's the heartbeat of our future. It demands that we, as leaders of OSA, ensure our initiatives remain not only relevant but inspiring to every member of our diverse community while staying true to the foundational values that have made us who we are.



## **Honoring Our Foundation While Building Tomorrow**

I am deeply moved when I think of our senior members, the architects of this magnificent organization. They poured their hearts, time, and resources into building the strong foundation upon which we stand today. Their unwavering commitment created the value system that continues to guide us. Yet, as these pillars of our community face new challenges of social isolation and mobility limitations, we have both an opportunity and an obligation to provide them with tangible support and bring them closer to the community they helped build.

Simultaneously, we witness an inspiring surge of energy from our youth. Young Odias who don't just want to participate but are eager to lead OSA into its next chapter. They envision an organization ready for future generations, and their passion is infectious. Our commitment extends beyond mere engagement; we must create initiatives that are genuinely relevant to their needs while remaining firmly aligned with OSA's mission, vision, and purpose.

## **Recognizing Our Rising Stars**

One area where we must demonstrate immediate leadership is in celebrating our youth's cultural and artistic accomplishments. When a young Odia excels in classical dance, music, or any art form connected to our rich heritage, they deserve recognition that matches their dedication. We are developing frameworks to honor these achievements, ensuring that our next generation feels valued and connected to their cultural roots.

## **Expanding Our Impact Beyond Tradition**

While our chapters have excelled in hosting world-class cultural programs, we celebrate this achievement. Our vision extends much further. Imagine OSA





chapters that are not just cultural centers but community pillars, contributing to food banks, supporting underprivileged communities, and standing as exemplary citizens in every city we call home.

This broader engagement serves a dual purpose: it creates meaningful connections with our local communities and builds healthier chapter finances through diverse revenue streams. To those chapters already pioneering this approach, you inspire us all.

### **Supporting Chapter Financially**

Here's where smart strategy meets generous hearts: employee matching programs. Picture this: your \$1,000 donation to your chapter becoming \$2,000 or even \$3,000 through your employer's matching program. These aren't complex processes; they're readily available tools that can multiply our community's impact exponentially. Our Treasurer, Sanjeeb Rout, stands ready to guide you through this transformative opportunity.

### **Building Sustainable Support Systems**

The visionary generosity of members like Mr. Kirtan Behera, who established an endowment fund for families in distress, demonstrates how strategic giving creates lasting impact. These investment-backed donation funds don't just provide immediate relief; they ensure sustainability for causes close to our hearts while offering valuable tax benefits to donors.

### **Preparing for Exponential Growth**

Here's a reality that both challenges and excites us: only 10% of North American Odias are currently OSA members. Imagine the potential when we



when we unlock the remaining 90%! This growth requires us to build robust, scalable platforms, standardized policies, diversified funding mechanisms, enhanced member connection platforms, and precise fund disbursement systems.

Some of these changes may feel unfamiliar, requiring adaptation from all of us. But transformation is never comfortable; it's necessary. We're not just maintaining an organization; we're preparing OSA for generations to come.

### **Revolutionizing Recognition**

Our awards process is undergoing a fundamental transformation. Instead of a "winner takes all" approach, we're moving toward celebrating every nominee. Being recognized for outstanding contributions to our community is an honor in itself, regardless of the final outcome. Under the dedicated leadership of Ms. Ipsita Mahapatra, Dr. Arun Mohanty, and Mr. Dillip Behera, our awards committee is crafting guidelines that truly reflect this philosophy.

### **Our Annual Pilgrimage - OSA Convention**

The OSA Convention remains our crown jewel, our annual pilgrimage where friendships are renewed, families reconnect, and our children discover the magnificent scale of our community. Those who experienced Dallas this year understand the magic of those three days. As we prepare for Minneapolis 2026, I encourage you to register early, not just for the savings, but to give our convention team the confidence they need to create another unforgettable experience.





But registration is just the beginning. Volunteer your time, donate generously, and help transform this dream into reality. The convention team's personal commitment deserves our unwavering support. Under the leadership of the convenor Mr. Anjan Pradhan, the Minneapolis team is committed to deliver one of the conventions that will be remembered for years to come.

Please visit the convention website : [osa2026.osaconventions.org](https://osa2026.osaconventions.org)

### Final Thoughts

As we advance these transformational initiatives, I invite you to be more than observers. Be architects of OSA's future. Follow our social media channels, engage with our content, and most importantly, bring your ideas, energy, and passion to this collective endeavor.

The next two years of our term represent more than administrative duties; they embody our commitment to elevating OSA to unprecedented heights while honoring every thread in the rich tapestry of our heritage.

Together, we're not just preserving culture, we're propelling it forward, ensuring that the Odia spirit continues to flourish across North America for generations to come.

With unwavering commitment and boundless enthusiasm.

Vande Utkal Janani.

**Utkal Nayak**

**Vice President, OSA**

**One Family | One OSA**



STAY CONNECTED WITH OSA'S JOURNEY:

Facebook:

[facebook.com/OdishaSocietyOfTheAmericas](https://facebook.com/OdishaSocietyOfTheAmericas)

Instagram:

@odisha\_society\_of\_americas

Community Forum:

[facebook.com/groups/1902803256640735](https://facebook.com/groups/1902803256640735)

Minneapolis 2026 Convention:

[osa2026.osaconventions.org](https://osa2026.osaconventions.org)



## ॥ A Note from the Treasurer ॥

### Message to the OSA Community

Dear OSA Community,

Namaskar! As I write my first letter after being given the opportunity to serve our community as the Treasurer of the Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA), I want to express my gratitude for the trust you have placed in me. I am committed to strengthening OSA's financial processes, improving transparency, and ensuring long-term financial stability for our organization.

As my first step, we brought all chapter treasurers together into one forum. The goal was to openly discuss challenges faced in managing chapter finances and identify areas where additional support from the National Treasurer is needed. During these discussions, we collected valuable suggestions on how to improve chapter-level financial management and streamline day-to-day operations.

To further strengthen our financial system, we created official email IDs for treasurers who did not have them earlier. These emails will now be used for all chapter financial transactions and communication. This will ensure continuity, data security, and prevent information loss during leadership transitions.





We have also initiated periodic discussions to maintain transparency, reinforce compliance across all chapters, and continue improving our financial processes. These steps are helping us move toward a unified, efficient, and accountable OSA financial ecosystem.

### **Supporting Our Community: Ways to Give to OSA**

We can support OSA in many meaningful ways. One option is making one-time or recurring donations to OSA's professionally managed investment fund, which follows prudent growth strategies to ensure long-term community impact. You may also contribute through stock or securities gifts that offer valuable tax advantages while increasing the reach of your donation. For those wishing to leave a lasting legacy, named endowments starting at \$100,000 create permanent support for education, relief, and cultural initiatives, while legacy giving through estate planning ensures your values continue to uplift future generations. Members can also choose to upgrade to Patron or Benefactor status by paying only the difference in dues (\$600 for Patron and \$1,000 for Benefactor). Many employers offer matching gift programs that double or even triple your donation—simply donate to OSA and submit your company's matching form. Additionally, volunteer grants allow companies to turn your volunteer hours into direct financial contributions; you only need to track your hours for conventions, chapter events, or community programs and submit them through your employer's volunteer grant program.



## How Your Contribution Helps Build the Community

Your generosity directly strengthens programs that uplift and empower the Odia community across North America. Your support helps fund chapter initiatives and OSA conventions, provides critical assistance to families through the Emergency Relief Fund and ensures care and dignity for our senior and vulnerable members. It opens doors to higher education through scholarships and supports women as they restart their careers through return-to-work programs. Your contributions also help preserve our cultural heritage by sustaining Champu, Chhanda, Odissi music, and classical and folk-dance traditions. Through the Nilachakra Youth Pathway, your gift nurtures cultural pride in our children and youth, while professional networking programs create valuable career opportunities for students and working professionals. Additionally, your donations help strengthen OSA's financial platform, building long-term resources that support future growth and stability for our entire community.

## A Final Word

During our tenure, we are committed to making OSA financially strong, policy-wise simple, and supportive of every chapter. With the initiatives already taken, we aim to build a stable foundation for years to come.

We also ask for your support—through immediate giving or planned endowments. Your actions today create ripples of positive change throughout our community. Together, we honor our past while securing a vibrant future for Odia families across North America.



To learn more or discuss your philanthropic goals,  
please contact:

OSA Treasurer: [treasurer@odishasociety.org](mailto:treasurer@odishasociety.org)

Every gift, no matter the size, strengthens the  
foundation on which our community thrives.

OSA Official Address:

The Odisha Society of the Americas

100 Powell Place #1722,

Nashville, TN 37204

EIN: 62-1105102

Warm Regards,

Sanjeeb Rout

Treasurer, OSA





ସମ୍ପାଦକୀୟ

EDITORIAL



## ॥ ସମ୍ପାଦକୀୟ ॥



“ଶୁଭର ସରିତା ତଟେ ପାର୍ବଣ ଡିଣ୍ଡିମ,  
 ଝରେ ଶୁଷ୍କ ଦ୍ଵିତପତ୍ର ଗହନ ବିପିନେ,  
 ବାଜେଣି ନୂପୁର ପୁରେପୁରେ ଝମଝମ  
 ଭଲ୍ଲସିତ ମହାତନୁ ଶେଫାଳୀ ବସନେ”

ଏକ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ପ୍ରକାରର ସ୍ଥିରତା ଥାଏ ଶରତ ଋତୁରେ, ସତେ ଯେମିତି ସମୟ ନିର୍ବିକାର ହୋଇ ଭିନ୍ନୁଛି ଏକ ନାତିଶୀତୋଷ୍ଣ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟର ସ୍ଵର୍ଣ୍ଣମ ଆଲୋକରେ । ଆଖପାଖରେ ମୁଖରା ପତ୍ରଝଡ଼ାର ନୀରସ ପ୍ରହର ଗୋଧୂଳି ଭାରରେ ନଇଁ ଆସିବା ବେଳେ ମାଟି ଦୀପାଳିର ଦିକିଦିକି ଶିଖାରେ ଝଲସି ଉଠେ ପାର୍ବଣର ଅନେକ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ । ବୋଧ ହୁଏ, ବାହ୍ୟ ଜଗତରେ ସେହି ଅବରୋହୀ ଦ୍ଵିତର ବେଦନା ଓ ଅନ୍ତର୍ମନରେ ଦୀପ୍ତିମିତ ଆରୋହୀ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ନିହିତ ଏକ ଧ୍ଵନିତ ମୂର୍ଚ୍ଛନା, ମୁକ୍ତି ଓ ସମର୍ପଣର । ଲହଲହ, ବିସ୍ତୃତ ଶ୍ଵେତ-ହରିତ କାଶତଣ୍ଡୀର ଗାଲିତାରେ ରକ୍ତଜବା-ଅଳତା ଜର୍ଜର ପଦକମଳ ଆଦି ଅବତରିତ ମାତା ଜଗଦମ୍ବିକାଙ୍କର ନୂପୁର ଝଙ୍କାରରେ ଗୁଞ୍ଜରିତ ସତେ ମେଦିନୀ ହୃଦୟ ।

ଶିଶିରଭିଜା ରଜନୀରେ ସରିତାର ପଣତରେ ବିଛୁଡ଼ି ପଡ଼ିଛି ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନାଧୌତ ଆକାଶର ତୁନା ତୁନା ତାରାଫୁଲ୍ଲ । ଏକ ସୁଖଦ ପ୍ରହର ତଟରେ ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାରତ କାହା ଅନ୍ତର ସୁମରି ହେଉଛି ଅତୀତର ଅନେକ ଅବିସ୍ମୃତ କ୍ଷଣ, ସାଇତା ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ଓ ବିଗତ ସରାଗ । ବୋଧହୁଏ ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ଏକ ନୀରବତାରେ ସମାଧୀସ୍ଥ ଏହି ଋତୁର ରାଗିଣୀ । ପୁଣି କାହିଁ କେତେ ଦୂରରୁ ଭାସି ଆସେ ନାଉରୀ, ନଦୀ ଓ ଆହୁଲାର ସମ୍ପାଦ; ଦୁର୍ବୋଧ୍ୟ ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆପଣାର ।

ଉତ୍କର୍ଷର ଏହି ଶାରଦୀୟ ସଂସ୍କରଣ ସୃଜନଶୀଳତାର ପୁଷ୍ପଗୁଚ୍ଛ ସଦୃଶ । ଏକାନ୍ତ, ଆତ୍ମବୋଧ, ଅନୁରକ୍ତି, ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ଓ ବିଭୁକ୍ତିପାର ନାନାବିଧ ରଙ୍ଗରେ ଏହା ସୁଖପାଠ୍ୟ । ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ମୃତ୍ତିକା,ଜଳ,ବାୟୁ ଓ ଅନଳର ତତ୍ତ୍ଵକୁ ଭକ୍ତିରେ ରଞ୍ଜିତ କରି ଗଢ଼ାହୁଏ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଓ ବିଶ୍ଵାସର ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ, ଝଲସି ଉଠେ ଦଶଭୁଜା ମାତାଙ୍କର ହିରଣ୍ଠୟ ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣବିଭା । ସେହିପରି ବାସ୍ତବିକ ଜୀବନରେ ପ୍ରମୋଦ-ବିଷାଦ ଓ ଉଦ୍ଘାନ-ପତନର ଅଜସ୍ର ପରସ୍ପର ଉଦ୍ଘାତରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷର ଅବସ୍ଥିତି ବହୁମୁଖୀ । ସାମୟିକ ଅପକର୍ଷ ମାନଙ୍କର ଜୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପ୍ରସ୍ତର ପ୍ରାନ୍ତରେ



ସିଂହପର୍ବ୍ଣ୍ଣୀ ଫୁଲଟିଏର ଉପସ୍ଥିତି ମଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇପାରେ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷର ଅନନ୍ୟ ଉଦାହରଣଟିଏ । ଉନ୍ନତ ଗିରିଶୃଙ୍ଗରେ ଉପନୀତ ଅଣନିଃଶ୍ୱାସୀ ପର୍ବତାରୋହୀର ସଫଳ ସ୍ଥିତହସରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ନିହିତ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷର ଧବଳ ଗରିମା ।

ଏହି ଶରତରେ ସାଦରେ ଆମନ୍ତ୍ରିତ ସମସ୍ତ ହୃଦୟ, ସହଭାଗୀ ଓ ସହପାଠୀ ହେବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷର ସାରସ୍ୱତ ଯାତ୍ରାରେ । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ନୀବନରେ ଭରିଉଠୁ ପାର୍ବଣର ଶୁଭ ଶଙ୍ଖଧ୍ୱନି, ରଙ୍ଗମୟ ହେଉ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ପ୍ରାଙ୍ଗଣ- ଶାନ୍ତି ତଥା ସମୃଦ୍ଧିର ମୂରୁଜରେ, ଓ ସୁଫଳା ଧରଣୀର ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ଉଦ୍ଭାସିତ ହେଉଥାଉ, ଋତୁ ପରେ ଋତୁ, ନିରନ୍ତର ସବୁରି ଅନ୍ତରେ ।

ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଶୁଭକାମନା ।

ଦେବୀକା ତ୍ରିପାଠୀ

ସମ୍ପାଦିକା

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ





ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବିଭାଗ

ODIA SECTION





କବିତା

POETRY



## ॥ ଅତୀତର ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ॥

ପ୍ରତିଦିନ...

ସକାଳର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳା ପରି

ଝରକା ଦେଇ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ମାରେ ଚପଳ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ।

ଆବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଆଉ ବିବର୍ତ୍ତନର ପୋଷାକ ପିନ୍ଧି

ନଗ୍ନ ଅବୟବକୁ

ସଜାଇ ନିଏ ଅତି ସନ୍ତୁର୍ପଣରେ ।

ଅତୀତକୁ ...

କାଲିର ମୁଠାଏ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନରେ

ଦୁଇ ଠୋପା ଲୁହ, ଆଉ ଆଞ୍ଜୁଳାଏ ହସ ମିଶାଇ

ମଡୁଆଲା କରି , ଫୁସୁଲେଇ

ଅଫେରନ୍ତା ସମୟ ସାଥେ

ପଠାଇ ଦିଏ ଅଜଣା ଅନ୍ଧାରି ମୁଲକକୁ

ନିଜର ବାସ୍ତବତାକୁ ସ୍ୱରୂପ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ।

ଶରଦ ଆକାଶରେ ଆହୁଳା ମାରି

ଭାସି ଯାଉଥିବା ବଉଦ ଖଣ୍ଡକୁ ଚାହିଁ

ଜୀବନର ଏପାରିର ନଈକୂଳରେ

କାଶତଣ୍ଡୁ ଫୁଲ ପରି ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚିତ ମେଲାଇ

ସମୟର କୋମଳ ମଳୟ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗରେ

ତଳତଳ ହୋଇ ନାଉଥିବା 'ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ'

ଲୁଚାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରେ

ଅତୀତର ପଣତକୁ

ତାର ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛ ଶୁଭ୍ର ଚାଦରର ଆତୁଆଳରେ ।

ପୁଣି ସେହି ମଳୟ ରଞ୍ଜିତ ସମୟର

ଶକ୍ତ ପ୍ରହାରରେ

ଜୀବନର ବିସ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ମଲାଟ ଉପରେ

ଭୂମିଷ୍ଠ କାଶତଣ୍ଡୁର

ଲୁଣିତ ଜୀର୍ଣ୍ଣତାକୁ ଦେଖି

ମନେ ମନେ ଖୋଜିବୁଲେ

ଅତୀତର ଇତିହାସକୁ

କାଳେ ପୃଷ୍ଠା ଲେଉଟାଇ ପାଇଯିବ

ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତାର ପ୍ରତିଛବି...

ଆଉ ସଜାତିନେବ ନିଜର ବିନ୍ୟସ୍ତ ବେଶଭୂଷାକୁ

ସମ୍ଭାବନାର ପ୍ରଚ୍ଛଦପଟରେ ।

ଅନ୍ତଃସତ୍ତ୍ୱା ଅତୀତକୁ

ଉପେକ୍ଷା କରିବାର ପ୍ରୟାସରେ

ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ପାଦ ବଢ଼େଇ ଆଗଭର ହୁଏ

ପାହାଚ ପରେ ପାହାଚ ଡେଇଁ

ସମାହିତ ହୋଇ, ସମାହିତ କରିବାକୁ

ନିଜର ଅସ୍ତିତ୍ୱକୁ

ସଫଳତାର ମୂଲ୍ୟାଙ୍କନରେ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ବିଫଳତାର କଣ୍ଠୁଆ ଚାହାଣୀରେ

ବିକ୍ଷିପ୍ତ ହୋଇ

ଅତୀତର ଅସ୍ତିତ୍ୱକୁ ଧିକାର କରେ

ନିଜ ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନର ପରାଜୟ ଭୟରେ ।

ଧୂଳି ଧୂସରିତ ଗୋଧୂଳିର ଆଗମନରେ

ସଳଖି ବସେ ...

ଅସ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ବି ଲିଭିଯିବ କିଛି ସମୟ ପରେ

ନିରନ୍ତ୍ର ଅନ୍ଧକାରରେ

ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ହୋଇଯିବେ ପୃଥିବୀ , ଆକାଶ

ହଜିଯିବ ସବୁକିଛି

କାଳିମାର ଛିଟାରେ ଏକାକାର ହୋଇ ।

ହେଲେ କାହାର ଏ ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବ ?

ଅନ୍ଧାରର ଘନତ୍ୱରେ ଆହୁରି ପ୍ରଜ୍ୱଳିତ !!!

ପାଖେଇ ଆସି ଦେଖେ

ଏଇତ ସେଇ ଚିହ୍ନା ମୁହଁ ... ଅତୀତ ।

ଫେରିଆସିଛି କୋଳେଇ ନେବାକୁ

ତା'ର ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନକୁ ...

ଅତୀତର ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନକୁ ।

**ସୁବ୍ରତ ମହାନ୍ତି**

ଲସ ଏଞ୍ଜେଲେସ,

କାଲିଫୋର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆ







## ॥ ଭିଜା ନିଶି ॥

ଶ୍ରାବଣ ଫୁଆର  
ଝରେ ଝର ଝର  
ଅମାନିଆ ମନ ଆଜି ମାନେନା  
ହସି ମୋତେ କଥା ପଦେ କୁହନା । ।  
ଶ୍ରାବଣ ଫୁଆର...

ଉଠି ଗୋ ନ ଯାଅ ପାଶେ ବସିଥାଅ ମୋର  
ଆଲୋକ ବୁଝେନା କେବେ ଜଳିବା ଦୀପର  
ମନକଥା ଓଠେ ମୋର ଆସେନା  
ଆଖି ଭାଷା ତୁମେ କିଗୋ ବୁଝନା । ।  
ଶ୍ରାବଣ ଫୁଆର...

ଭିଜା ଭିଜା ନିଶି ଭରେ ମହକ ମଧୁର  
ବୁଝନା ଇସାରା କାହିଁ ଭଲ ପାଇବାର  
ଦୂରେ ଦୂରେ ଆଜି ଆଉ ରୁହନା  
ମତୁଆଲା ମନ ମୋର ଭରେନା । ।  
ଶ୍ରାବଣ ଫୁଆର...

**ପ୍ରବୀର ଦାଶ**  
ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲ, ଟେନେସି





## ॥ ନୀରବ ଭାବନା ॥

ଜୀବନ ସାରା ଖାଲି ମରୀଚିକା ଦେଖି ଦେଖି  
ଖିଆଲରେ ଭୁଲିବାକୁ ମନ ଆଉ ଚାହେଁନା  
ଝିଲ୍ଲୀର ଡାକ ଶୁଣି ପରିଚିତ ଡାକ ମଣି  
ନୀରବରେ ଖୋଜିଲେ ବି, ସେ ତ ଧରା ଦିଏନା । ୧ ।

ପ୍ରଥମ ଗୀତର ସ୍ଵର ମନରୁ ଲିଭି ଗଲାଣି  
ପ୍ରଥମ କବିତା ଲେଖା କାଗଜୁ ଚିରି ଗଲାଣି  
ଉଭେଇ ଗଲାଣି ସବୁ ସକାଳ ଶିଶିର ପରି  
ସ୍ମୃତିରୁ ଖିଅଟେ ସୁତା ବାନ୍ଧିଛି ମନକୁ ଟାଣି । ୨ ।

ମନଭରି ହସିବାକୁ ଏ ଜୀବନେ ହେଲା ନାହିଁ  
ହସୁଛି ଜୀବନେ ଯାହା ସେ ସବୁ ତ ଛଳନା  
ଦରଦୀ ଜୀବନ ଗାଥା ମନରେ ରହିଲା ଖାଲି  
ଆଖିର ନିଗିଡ଼ା ଲୁହ ପଣତ ବି ବୁଝେନା । ୩ ।

ଯାହା ବି ଦେଇଛ ତୁମେ ଅଯାଚିତ ଏ ଜୀବନେ  
ଲତିକା ଗହନେ ଫୁଟି ଝରିଯାଏ ମାଟିପରେ  
ନ ଜାଣନ୍ତୁ କେହି ଅବା, ନ ଦେଖନ୍ତୁ ଥରେ କେହି  
ଉଦାସୀ ପଥିକ ଏକା ନୀରବେ ପଡ଼ିଛି ଶୋଇ । ୪ ।

**ଶ୍ରୀମତି ସ୍ନେହ ମହାନ୍ତି**

ହସ୍ତିନଗର ବିର,  
କାଲିଫୋର୍ଣ୍ଣିଆ





ଗେଲିକ

STORY





## ॥ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ॥

ତାହାଣ ପାଦରେ ବହୁତ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ହେଉଥାଏ । ତାହାଣ ପାଦ ଉଠେଇବା କି ସେ ଗୋଡ଼ରେ ଠିଆ ହୋଇ କିଛି କରିବା ଅସମ୍ଭବ ଲାଗୁଥାଏ । ମୁଁ କିଛିଦିନ ଧରି ମନ୍ଦିରର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଯୋଗଦେଇପାରିଲି ନାହିଁ । ଏମିତି ଅନେକ ସାମାଜିକ ମିଳନୀରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅନୁପସ୍ଥିତ ରହିଲି । ଜାନୁୟାରୀ ମାସରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଯାଇ ଯେତେ ଖୁସି ଥିଲି ଓ ଯେତେ କିଛି ଆନନ୍ଦର ଅନୁଭବ କରିଥିଲି, ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ଫେରିବା ପରେ ଯେମିତି ସବୁକିଛି ମୋ ପାଇଁ ବଦଳିଗଲା । ନିଜେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଅକର୍ମଣ୍ୟ ହୋଇଯିବ, ସେତେବେଳେ ଆଉ କି ସୁଖ ? କଷ୍ଟେମକ୍ଷ୍ଟେ ରୋଷେଇ କରୁଥିଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ରୋଷେଇ ସହିତ ଯେଉଁସବୁ କାମ ଲାଗିଯାଉଥିଲା, ରୋଷେଇ ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗାତ କରିବା ଓ ସଫାସଫି କରିବା, ସେସବୁ କରିପାରୁନଥିଲି । ମୋ ସ୍ବାମୀ କିଛି ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରୁଥିଲେ, କିନ୍ତୁ, ସିଏ ସେମିତି ସୁସ୍ଥରୂପେ କିଛି ଦେଖୁନଥିଲେ ।

ମୋର ସାମାଜିକ ମିଳନୀରେ ଅନୁପସ୍ଥିତିକୁ ଦେଖି ଜଣେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ରୂପା ଫୋନ କଲା । “ପଚାରିଲା, ତମେ ତ ବହୁତ ମଜାକରି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ଫେରିଲ, ହେଲେ ଆମକୁ କଣ ଭୁଲିଗଲ ? ମୁଁ ତ ତମକୁ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ଦେଖିଲିନି କି ଆନିର ଘରେ ଦେଖିଲିନି । ଭାଇନା ବି ଆସିନଥିଲେ । ସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ଅଛି ତ ?”

ମୁଁ କହିଲି, “ହଁ, ସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ଅଛି, ପୁଣି ନାହିଁ । ତାହାଣ ପାଦଟା ଏମିତି ଫୁଲି କରି ଅଛି ଓ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ହେଉଛି ଯେ, କୁଆଡ଼େ ଯିବାଆସିବା ପାଇଁ ଆଗ୍ରହ ରହୁନି । ଆଉ, ତମ ଖବର କଣ ?”

ରୂପା କହିଲା, “ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଅପା, ତମେ ଯୋଗ କର । ମୋର ବି ସେମିତି ଗୋଡ଼ ବିଛାବିଛି କରୁଥିଲା, ମୁଁ ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୋରର ଜଣେ ଯୋଗ ଶିକ୍ଷୟିତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଠିକଣା ପାଇ ତାଙ୍କ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ଏବେ ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ଯୋଗକରୁଛି । ଟିକେ ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଛି । ମୁଁ ଏକଥା ଲୋପାଅପାଙ୍କୁ ବି କହିଥିଲି । ସିଏ ବି ଏବେ ଆମ ସହିତ ଯୋଗ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ ଗୋଡ଼ର ଯେଉଁ ସମସ୍ୟା ଥିଲା, ଭଲ ଲାଗୁଛି ବୋଲି କହୁଥିଲେ ।”

ମୁଁ ରୂପାଠାରୁ ସେ ଯୋଗ ଶିକ୍ଷୟିତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଠିକଣା ଆଣିଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସିଏ ଶିଖାଉଥିବା ସମୟକୁ ନେଇ ମୋର ସନ୍ଦେହ ଥିଲା । ସେତେବେଳେ ତ ମୋର ବ୍ୟବସାୟିକ କାମ ଥିବ । ମୁଁ କଣ ସେ ସମୟରେ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ରହିପାରିବି ?

ତାପରେ ରୂପାର ମୋର ବୟସଜନିତ ସମସ୍ୟା ସବୁ ବିଷୟରେ କଥାହେଲୁ । ଦେଖୁଦେଖୁ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ



ଭଳି ଭଲ ମଣିଷଟା ହଠାତ୍ କେମିତି ରୋଗୀ ହୋଇଗଲେ ଓ ସଂସାରରୁ ବିଦାୟନେଲେ, ସେ ବିଷୟ ଅବତାରଣା କରିବା ସମୟରେ, ରୂପା କହିଲା, “ଜାଣିଛ ତ ଅପା, ତାଙ୍କ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କର ବି ପରଲୋକ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି ।”

“ତାଙ୍କ ଭଉଣୀ ମାନେ, ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ? କଣ ହେଲା, ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କର ହଠାତ୍ ଏମିତି କେମିତି ହେଲା ?”

“ହଁ, ଫେବୃୟାରୀ ଦୁଇ ତାରିଖରେ ତାଙ୍କର ପରଲୋକ ହେଲା ।”

“ହେଲେ କେମିତି ? ଆମେ ତ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସେପଟେମ୍ବର ମାସରେ ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ଶେଷକ୍ରିୟା ସମୟରେ ଦେଖିଥିଲୁ । ସିଏ ଯଦିଓ ରୁଗ୍‌ଣ ଦିଶୁଥିଲେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ହଠାତ୍ ଏମିତି କେମିତି ହେଲା ? ତମେ କେମିତି ଜାଣିଲ ?”

“ମୁଁ ଭାଇନାଙ୍କ ସହିତ କଥା ହୋଇ ଜାଣିଲି । ତାଙ୍କର ସେମିତି କିଛି ହୋଇନଥିଲା । ସିଏ ସେମିତି ଭଲରେ ଭଲରେ ଶେଷନିଃଶ୍ୱାସ ତ୍ୟାଗକଲେ ।”

ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କର ଦେହାନ୍ତ ଖବର ପାଇ ମନ ଦୁଃଖ ହେଲା । ମୋର ଅନ୍ୟ ଦୁଇ ଜଣ ସାଙ୍ଗ ମୀରା ଓ ବନ୍ଦିତାଙ୍କୁ ତାକି ମୁଁ ସେକଥା ଠିକ୍ ବୋଲି ଜାଣିଲି । ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ଦେହାନ୍ତର ଖବର ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ଇମେଲ ନେଟୱାର୍କ କି କୌଣସି ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଛପା ହୋଇନଥିଲା । କେବଳ ଗୁଗୁଲରେ ଖୋଜି ମୁଁ ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ସନ୍ଧାନ ପାଇଲି ।

ମନଟା ଦୁଃଖ ରହିଲା । ତାଙ୍କ ମୁହଁ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଗଲା । କେବଳ ତାଙ୍କରି ଭରସାରେ ଭାଉଜ ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡ ଛାତି ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡା ଚାଲିଗଲେ । ସେ ନୂଆ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ହିଁ ତାଙ୍କର ପରମ ବାନ୍ଧବୀ ଥିଲେ । ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ସହିତ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା କରି ମୁଁ ସେସବୁ ଜାଣିଥିଲି । ମୁଁ ପଚାରିଥିଲି, “ଏଠି ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଦିନ କେମିତି କଟୁଛି ।” ସିଏ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଇଥିଲେ, “ସକାଳ ନଟା ବେଳକୁ ଗିନି ଅପା ଆସିଯାଏ । ସେତେବେଳକୁ ମୋର ଡାୟାଲିସିସ୍ ସରିଯାଇଥାଏ । ଆମେ ଘରେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଚାହା ପିଉ, ନହେଲେ ଗିନିଅପା ମତେ ବୁଲେଇ ନେଇଯାଏ । ବେଳେବେଳେ ଆମେ ରେଷୁରାଣ୍ଟରେ ଯାଇ ଖାଉ ।”

ଏମିତ କେତେକଥା । ସବୁକଥାରେ “ଗିନି ଅପା” ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ମୁଁ ଖୁସି ହୋଇଥିଲି ଯେ, ସେଠି ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଭାଇନାଙ୍କ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଆଉ ଜଣେ କିଏ ଅଛି । ପ୍ରକୃତରେ “ଗିନି ଅପା” ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା



ଅପା, ଭାରତର ବଡ଼ବାପାଙ୍କର ଝିଅ । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଜାଣିଲି ୨୦୦୩ ମସିହାରେ । ସେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ଓସାର ଟ୍ରେନାସିକ ପତ୍ରିକାର ସଂପାଦିକା ଥିଲି । ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଡକାହକା କରି ଲେଖା ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରୁଥିଲି । ସେତିକିବେଳେ ନୟାଗୋପାଳ ଭାଇନା ନିଶେଇଥିଲେ, “ଭାରତର ନିଶେ ଭଉଣୀ ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡାରେ ରୁହନ୍ତି ଓ ଭଲ ଲେଖାଲେଖି କରନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କଠାରୁ କିଛି ଲେଖା ମଗେଇବି କି?”

“ନିଶ୍ଚୟ । ଏବେତ ଗୁଣାମୂଳ ଲେଖା ମୁଁ ଏତେଟା ଦେଖୁନି । ଆପଣ ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖା ଆଣନ୍ତୁ ।”

ସତରେ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ଭଲ ଲେଖିଥିଲେ । ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ କଥା ତାଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ନିକଟତର କରାଇଲା ଯେ ସିଏ ବି ଗଣିତର ଛାତ୍ରୀ ଥିଲେ ଓ ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡାରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଯୁନିଭରସିଟିରେ ଗଣିତ ପଢ଼ାଉଥିଲେ । ସେଇ ଲେଖାଲେଖି ବାହାନାରେ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ମୋର ସଂପର୍କ ସ୍ଥାପିତ ହେଲା । ଭାରତ ଯେମିତି ସ୍ନେହୀ, ସିଏ ବି ସେମିତି ସ୍ନେହୀ ଥିଲେ । ବହୁତ ନିଜର ଲାଗୁଥିଲେ ଓ ଅନେକ କିଛି ଜୀବନର କଥା କହିଯାଉଥିଲେ ।

ପରେପରେ ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଭାରତର କେତେଟା ଘରୋଇ ମିଳନରେ ଦେଖିଲି । ତାଙ୍କ ପୁଅର ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ଗ୍ରାଡୁଏସନ ପାର୍ଟିକୁ ସିଏ ଆସିଥିଲେ । ସିଏ ନିଶେ ବଙ୍ଗାଳୀ ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ ବିବାହ କରିଥିଲେ । ନିଜର କିଛି ପିଲାପିଲି ନଥିଲେ ବୋଲି ସିଏ ନିଶେ ଝିଅ “ସୁଜାନ” କୁ ପୋଷ୍ୟାକନ୍ୟା ରୂପେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ସୁଜାନ ସେ ଗ୍ରାଡୁଏସନ ପାର୍ଟିରେ ନାଚିଥିଲା ।

ଏହାପରେ ଆମେ କେତେଥର ମିଶିଛୁ । ତେବେ ୨୦୧୫ ମସିହାରେ ମିଶିବାଟା ସ୍ମୃତିରେ ରହିଛି । ସେ ବର୍ଷ ଆମେ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଆଲୋଚନା ପାଇଁ ଦୁଇଦିନ ରଖିଥିଲୁ । ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ଆମକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରୁଥିଲେ । କବିତାପାଠ ମିଳନରେ ସିଏ କହିଲେ, “ମୁଁ କେବଳ ଗଳ୍ପ ଲେଖେ । କବିତା ନୁହେଁ । ତେଣୁ ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀର କବିତା ବହିରୁ ହିଁ ମୁଁ ଆବୃତ୍ତି କରିବି ।”

ମୁଁ ଏହାପରେ କେତେଥର ଓସା ବାର୍ଷିକ ମୁଖପତ୍ରର ଦାୟିତ୍ବରେ ରହିଛି । ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରିବି ଓ ତାଙ୍କର ଗଳ୍ପ ସବୁ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇଛି । ସିଏ ଭଲ ଲେଖନ୍ତି । ନିଜ ଜୀବନର ସାଇତା ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ଶବ୍ଦ ଦେଇ ଲେଖନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କର ୨୦୦୩ରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ଗଳ୍ପ “ଅଭୁଲା ଅତୀତ” ଗଳ୍ପଟି ଏବେ ବି ମୋର ମନେଅଛି । କାରଣ ସେ ବର୍ଷର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖା ସବୁର ସମ୍ପାଦନା ମୁଁ କରିଥିଲି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସମସ୍ତ ଲେଖାଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ନିଜେ ପଢ଼ିବା ଓ ସଂଶୋଧନ କରିବା ମଧ୍ୟ ମୋର କାମ ଥିଲା । ସିଏ ଉତ୍ତମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଓ ଇଂରାଜୀରେ ଲେଖନ୍ତି ।





ସୁଲୋଚନା ଭାଉଜ ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଯେମିତି ବଡ଼ ଭାଉଜ ଭଳି ସ୍ନେହକରନ୍ତି, ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ଯେମିତି ବଡ଼ ଭଉଣୀ ଭଳି ସ୍ନେହ କରନ୍ତି । ୨୦୦୪ ଓସା ବାର୍ଷିକ ମୁଖପତ୍ରରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଗଳ୍ପ “ଚଲା ବଉଦ” ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ସେଇ ବର୍ଷରୁ ସିଏ ମତେ ଏମିତି ଜାଣିଗଲେ ଯେ, ସିଏ ବି ସମ୍ପାଦକ ହୋଇଥାଉ ନା କାହିଁକି, ସିଏ ମତେ ହିଁ ପ୍ରଥମେ ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖା ପଠାନ୍ତି । ସେତେବେଳେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଓଡ଼ିଫୋନରେ ଟାଇପ କରିବା ଜାଣିନଥିଲେ । ସିଏ ମତେ କାଗଜରେ ଲେଖି କପି କରି ଇମେଲରେ ପଠେଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି । ମୁଁ ତାକୁ ସବୁ ଟାଇପ କରି ସମ୍ପାଦକ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ପଠାଏ । ବେଳେବେଳେ ସିଏ ମତେ ଲେଖାସବୁ ଆମ ଘର ଠିକଣାରେ ବି ପଠେଇଦିଅନ୍ତି । ଅନ୍ୟ ସମୟରେ ସିଏ ଲେଖା ସବୁ ଜୟଗୋପାଳ ଭାଇନାଙ୍କ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଟାଇପ କରେଇଦିଅନ୍ତି ।

୨୦୧୫ରେ ଶୁଣିଥିଲି ତାଙ୍କ ଦେହ ଭଲରହୁନି ।

ତାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଶେଷ ଦେଖା ହୋଇଥିଲା ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡାରେ, ୨୦୨୪ ମସିହା, ସେପ୍ଟେମ୍ବର ୧୧ ତାରିଖରେ । ସୁଲୋଚନା ଭାଉଜଙ୍କର ଶେଷକୃତ୍ୟ ଲୋହମାନ ଶବଦାହ ଗୃହରେ, ଡେଟ୍ରୋଇଟ, ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡାରେ ଆୟୋଜନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେଇଠି ମୁଁ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା, ତାଙ୍କ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଓ ତାଙ୍କ ଝିଅ ସୁଜାନକୁ ଭେଟିଥିଲି । ସୁଜାନ ଏବେ ନର୍ସି କରୁଛି ବୋଲି ସିଏ କହିଲେ । ସୁଜାନ ଯେ ଭାଉଜଙ୍କର ଶେଷ ସମୟରେ ଯତ୍ନ ନେଇଛି, ସେ ବିଷୟ ମଧ୍ୟ କହିଲେ । ସୁଜାନ ଏବେ ବହୁତ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦିଶୁଥିଲା । ସବୁଠାରୁ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଥିଲା, ତାର ହୃଦୟ । ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ଯେ କେତେବଡ଼ ଧର୍ମକାମ କରିଛନ୍ତି, ସେସବୁ ସୁଜାନକୁ ଦେଖି ଜଣାପଡ଼ିଯାଉଥିଲା । ଭାଉଜଙ୍କର ଶେଷଦାହ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଅନେକ କିଛି ଦାୟିତ୍ଵ ସୁଜାନ ହିଁ ସମ୍ପନ୍ନ କରିଥିଲା ।

ପୂଜା, ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ଓ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି ପରେ, ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ଶବକୁ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଶବଦାହ ଗୃହକୁ ଅଗ୍ନି ସଂସ୍କାର ପାଇଁ ଅଣାଗଲା, ସେତେବେଳେ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା କୋହ ସମ୍ଭାଳି ପାରିନଥିଲେ । “ଏବେ ତ ସାନୁ ଚାଲିଗଲା, ମୁଁ ଏକୁଟିଆ ହୋଇଗଲି । ଆମ ଦୁଇ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କର ସେ ସକାଳ ଗପସପ ଆଉ ହୋଇପାରିବ ନାହିଁ ।”

ସେତେବେଳେ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା ଠିକ୍ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଦିଶୁଥିଲେ ।

ମୀରା କହିଲା, “ଦେଖତ, ଭାଉଜଙ୍କ ଭଉଣୀ ଏବେ ଠିକ୍ ତାଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଦିଶୁଛନ୍ତି ।”

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଭାଉଜଙ୍କର ତାକନାମ “ସାନୁ” ଥିଲା । ସେଦିନ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସାଙ୍ଗ ହୋଇ ଆମେ ବି



ସମସ୍ତେ କାନ୍ଦିଲୁ । ମୁଁ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେଇ କହିଲି, “ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଭରସାରେ ହିଁ ଭାଉଜ ଏତେ ସବୁ ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀ  
ଓ ସଂପର୍କ ଛାଡ଼ି ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡା ଆସିଲେ । ଯେବେବି କଥାହେଲେ, ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବିଷୟ ବାଦ ଦେଇ ତାଙ୍କର ଗପ  
ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହେଉନଥିଲା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ ରଣୀ ।”

ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପା କିଛି କହିପାରିଲେନି । ତାଙ୍କ କଣ୍ଠରୁ ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ ଶବ୍ଦ ଶୁଣାଗଲା । ସିଏ କେବଳ ମୋ ହାତଟିକୁ ନିଜ ହାତରେ  
ଧରି ଅନେକ ସମୟ କାନ୍ଦିଲେ । ତାପରେ ନିଜକୁ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରି କହିଲେ, “ସାନୁ ସିନା ଫ୍ଲୋରିଡା ଚାଲିଆସିଲା,  
ହେଲେ ତା’ ମନ ମେରୀଲାଣ୍ଡ ରେ ହିଁ ଥିଲା । ସିଏ ତମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଝୁରୁଥିଲା ।”

ସେଇ ମୋର ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଶେଷଦେଖା ଥିଲା ।

ଜୀବନଟା ହିଁ ଏମିତି । ହଠାତ୍ ସବୁକିଛିର ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଘଟିଯାଏ । ଆଜି ଯିଏ ଅଛି, କଥା କହୁଛି, କାଲିକି ଯେ  
ସିଏ ଥିବ, ସେକଥା ଆଶା କରିବା ବୃଥା । ଭୂମିକା ଉଲ୍ଲି ଅକସ୍ମାତ୍ ଜୀବନରେ ଓଲଟପାଲଟ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ସବୁ  
ଭାଙ୍ଗିରୁନି ଯାଏ । ରହିଯାଏ କେବଳ ଧୂସରିଧୂସ୍ର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ।

ଏବେ ଆଉ ସୁଲକ୍ଷଣା ଅପାଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିହେବନି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତାଙ୍କର ସେ ବଡ଼ଭଉଣୀର ସ୍ନେହ ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ ସ୍ମୃତିରେ  
ସାଇତା ହୋଇ ରହିବ ।

**ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ**

ଡେପୁଟି  
ମେରିଲେଣ୍ଡ





## ॥ ଅଲିଭା ॥

ଝିଅକୁ ସେଦିନ ପାର୍କରେ ଖେଳାଉ ଖେଳାଉ ଗୋଟେ ସୁନ୍ଦର କଣ୍ଠ ସ୍ଵର ଶୁଣି ହଠାତ୍ ନଜର ପଡିଲା ଟିକେ ଦୂରରେ ପଡିଥିବା ଗୋଟେ ବେଞ୍ଚରେ । ଜଣେ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ବସିଥିଲେ । ମନ ବେଶ ଖୁସି ଥିଲା ପରି ଜଣା ପଡୁଥିଲା । ହାତରେ ଗୋଟେ ବହି ଥିଲା ଆଉ ଗୁଣୁଗୁଣୁ ହେଉଥିଲେ ଗୋଟେ ପୁରୁଣା ହିନ୍ଦୀ ଗୀତ “ତଲୋ ଇକ୍ ବାର ଫିର୍ ସେ ଅଜନବି ବନ୍ ଯାଏଁ ହମ୍ ଦୋନୋ.. “ ଗାଉ ଗାଉ ହଠାତ କାଣି ଉଠିଲେ । ନିଜର ପାଣି ବୋତଲଟା ଦେବି କି ବୋଲି ଭାରୁ ଭାରୁ ଅନତି ଦୂରରେ ଠିଆ ହେଇଥିବା ଜଣେ ଯୁବତୀ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଗୋଟେ ବୋତଲ ବଢେଇ ଦେଲେ । ଦେଖି ମନେ ପଡିଲା, ଯେବେଠୁ ମୁଁ ଏଇ ନୂଆ ଘରକୁ ଆସିଲିଣି ଅନେକ ଥର ଏଇ ଝିଅ ଜଣକୁ ଦେଖେ ଅଫିସ ବାହାରିଲା ବେଳେ । ଗର୍ଭବତୀ ହୁଏତ । ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ମୋ ଘର ପାଖାପାଖି ହିଁ କେଉଁଠି ଘର ତାଙ୍କର । ଟିକେ ହସର ଆଦାନ ପ୍ରଦାନ ହୁଏ ଆମ ଭିତରେ । କେବେ କେମିତି “ହେଲୋ, ହାଏ, ବା କେମିତି ଅଛନ୍ତି “ ତା’ ଠୁ ଅଧିକ କେବେ ଆମେ କଥା ହେଇନୁ । ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଜୀବନରେ ନୂଆ ଜାଗାରେ ନୂଆ ବନ୍ଧୁ ତିଆରି କରିବାକୁ ସମୟ ତ ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଲାଗେ ।

ସେ ହୁଏତ ଟିକେ ଅନ୍ୟମନସ୍କ ଥିଲା । ମୋତେ ଦେଖିଲା କି ନାହିଁ ଜଣା ନାହିଁ । ଠିକ୍ ଏଇ ସମୟରେ ବୁଢ଼ା ମଉସା ଜଣକ ପାଣି ପିଇ ଯାରି ଝିଅ ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ପଚାରିଲେ “ମା’ ରେ, ପ୍ରାୟ ସବୁଦିନ ମୁଁ ଏଠିକି ଆସେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ତୋତେ କେବେ ଦେଖିନି । ତୁ କଣ ଏଠି ନୂଆ ? ତୋ ନା’ କଣ ? ତୋର ଡେଲିଭରି ଡେର୍କ କେବେ ? ଖାଇବା ପିଇବା ଠିକରେ କରୁଛୁ ତ ? କାହା ସାଙ୍ଗେ ଆସିଛୁ ନା ଏକା ?”

ଝିଅଟି ଟିକେ ବିରକ୍ତ ହେଇକି ମଉସାଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖିଲା ଆଉ ତୁପ୍ ରହିଲା ।

ତା’ ଠୁ କୌଣସି ଉତ୍ତର ନପାଇ, ସେ ମଉସା ଜଣଙ୍କ ଆଦୁରି ଗପି ଚାଲିଲେ । “ବୁଝିଲୁରେ ମା’ , ଏମିତି ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ କେବେ ଏକା ଏକା ବାହାରେ ବୁଲିବୁନି । କେତେବେଳେ କୋଉ କଥା । ଆଜି କାଲିର ଦୁନିଆ ଯାହା ହେଲାଣି ନା .. ଯଦି ଦେହ ବହୁତ ଖରାପ ଲାଗିଲା କଣ କରିବୁ ? କାହାକୁ ଅବା ବିଶ୍ଵାସ ! ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ବି ହେଲାଣି । ହଉ ନେଲୁ, ବିସ୍ଫୁର୍ ଦି’ ଟା ଖାଇଦେ । ଶୁଣିଛି ଏଇ ସମୟରେ ଭୋକ ଅଧିକା ଲାଗେ ।”

ଜଣେ ଅତିଥ୍ଵା ଲୋକଠୁ ଏତେ କଥା ଶୁଣି ଝିଅଟି ଆଦୁରି ବିରକ୍ତ ହେଇଗଲା ବୋଧେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯଥା ସମ୍ଭବ ଭଦ୍ର ଭାବେ ଉତ୍ତର ଦେଲା “ମୁଁ ଠିକ୍ ଅଛି । ଭୋକ ନାହିଁ । “





“ନହେଲେ ପଇଡ଼ ପାଣି ଟିକେ ପିଇ ଦେଉନୁ । ଏଇ ପାଖରେ ଗୋଟେ ଲୋକ ବିକ୍ରି କରୁଛି । ଦେହକୁ ଭାରି ହିତ”  
.. ମଉସା ଜଣକ ଆଉ ଥରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତତା ଦେଖାଇ କହିଲେ ।

ଝିଅଟି ଧୀର ଅଧର ଦୃଢ଼ କଣ୍ଠରେ କହିଲା “ଟିକେ ସମୟ ତୁମ୍ଭ ରହିଲେ ଭଲ ହୁଅନ୍ତା ।”

ଏସବୁ ଦେଖିକି ମୁଁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି ଉଦ୍‌ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଜଣକ ବୋଧେ ଏଥର ତୁମ୍ଭ ହେଇଯିବେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ମତେ ଭୁଲ୍ ପ୍ରମାଣିତ କରି ସେ ଆହୁରି ଗପିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ “ମୋର ଗୋଟିଏ ଛୋଟ ଝିଅଟିଏ ଅଛି । ଭାରି ଗୁଲିଗୁଲିଆ । ପାଠଶାଳା, ନାଟ ,ଗୀତ ସବୁଥିରେ ଆଗୁଆ । ଦୁଷ୍ଟ ହେଲେ ମା’ ତାର ଆକଟ କରେ । ଆଉ କହେ ଗୋଟେ ଝିଅ ବୋଲି ମୁଁ କାଲେ ତାକୁ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ବସେଇଛି । ତୁ କହିଲୁ ଦେଖି .. ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ବସେଇବିନି ? ରାଜନେମା ସେ ମୋର । ତା’ ପାଇଁ ଭଲିକି ଭଲି ଖେଳଣା ,ଫ୍ରକ୍ ,ଚକୋଲେଟ୍ ଆଣିକି ମୁଁ ଥୋଇଦିଏ । ତାର ଟିକେ ଦେହ ଖରାପ ହେଲେ ମୁଁ ରାତି ସାରା ଅନିଦ୍ରା ହେଇକି ଚାହେଁ । ଏତେ ଯତ୍ନ କରିକି ବି ଦେଖୁନୁ ସେଦିନ କଣ ହେଲା ? ତାର ନୂଆ ନାଲି ସାଇକେଲଟା ଚଲାଉ ଚଲାଉ ଖସି ପଡ଼ିଲା ସେ ରାସ୍ତା କଡ଼ରେ । ଗୋଟେ ବଡ଼ପଥରରେ ପିଟି ହେଇ ଫାଟିଗଲା ମୁଣ୍ଡ । ଗୁଡାଏ ଷ୍ଟିର ପକେଇଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ଆଉ କହିଲେ ଅଳ୍ପ ଦିନରେ ଠିକ୍ ହେଇଯିବ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଦାଗଟା ହୁଏତ ରହି ଯାଇପାରେ ।” ହଠାତ୍ ଅଟକି ଯାଇ ମଉସା ଝିଅଟିକୁ ଟିକିଏ ନିରେଖି ଚାହିଁଲେ ଆଉ କହିଲେ “ତୋ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ବି ଗୋଟେ ଦାଗ । ତୁ ବି କେବେ ପିଲାବେଳେ ପଡ଼ି ଯାଇଥିଲୁ କି ?”

ମୁଁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି ଏଥର ମଉସା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଗାଳି ଶୁଣିବେ । ଅତୁଟ ମଣିଷ । ଗପ ସରୁନି ଯା ଈର । ବୁଲି ପଡ଼ି ସେ ଝିଅ କୁ ଚାହିଁଲି । ସେ ରାଗିବା ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତେ ଏଥର ଟିକିଏ ଭାବପ୍ରବଣ ହେଲା ପରି ଜଣା ପଡୁଥିଲା । ଛୋଟ ଉତ୍ତରଟିଏ ଦେଲା “ହଁ , ମୁଁ ବି ପଡ଼ିଯାଇଥିଲି “ — ମଉସା ନିଜ ପକେଟରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଚକୋଲେଟ୍ କାଢି ତାକୁ ବଢ଼େଇଲେ ଆଉ କହିଲେ “ଏଇଟା ମୋ ଝିଅ “ଅଲିଭା” ର ପ୍ରିୟ, ତୁ ଖାଇବୁ କି ? ମୁଁ ତା’ ପାଇଁ ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ କିଣିଦେବି । “

ଝିଅଟି ଆଖିରେ ଏଥର ଲୁହ ଥିଲା । ତୁମ୍ଭ ଚାତ୍ ଚକୋଲେଟ୍‌କୁ ନେଇ ସେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଭିତରେ ରଖିଦେଲା ।

ହୁଏତ ଝିଅଟିର ଘରୁ କିଏ ନେବା ପାଇଁ ଆସିଥିଲେ । କାର୍ ଭିତରୁ କାହାର ଡାକ ଶୁଣି ସେ ଯିବା ପାଇଁ ବାହାରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ମୁଁ ଆଉ ମୋର କୌତୁହଳ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରି ନପାରି ପଚାରିଲି “ଆପଣ ଯାଙ୍କୁ ଜାଣନ୍ତି ? “



ଶୁଖିଲା ହସଟେ ମୁହଁରେ ଖେଳାଇ କହିଲା ଝିଅଟି “ପୂରା ଦୁନିଆ ତାଙ୍କୁ ପାଗଳ ଭାବେ । ସ୍ମୃତି ଶକ୍ତି ହରାଇ ବସିଛନ୍ତି ସେ । ତାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସମୟ ଯେମିତି ୨୦-୨୨ ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଅଟକି ଯାଇଛି । ସମସ୍ତେ ଏବେ ଅତିହୀନ । ସବୁ ଲିଭି ଯାଇଛି ମନ ଭିତରୁ । କେବଳ ଅଲିଭା ହେଇ ରହି ଯାଇଛି, ତାଙ୍କ ଗେହ୍ଲା ଝିଅର ପିଲା ଦିନ । ମନର କେଉଁ ଗୋଟେ କୋଣରେ ହୁଏତ ସେଇ ବାପା ଏବେ ବି ଜାଗ୍ରତ, ପ୍ରତି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଯତ୍ନ ନେବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଛି ମାତୃତ୍ବର ପ୍ରଥମ ସୋପାନରେ ପାଦ ରଖୁଥିବା ନିଜ ଝିଅର ।“

ଅନ୍ଧାର ହେଇଆସୁଥିଲା । ମୋଠୁ ବିଦାୟ ନେଇ ଭଦ୍ରବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ହାତ ଧରି କାର୍ ଆଡକୁ ନେଇ ଯାଉ ଯାଉ ଝିଅଟି କହିଲା “ବାପା , ତୁମ ମେଡିସିନର ସମୟ ହେଇଗଲାଣି । “

ହତବାକ୍ ହୋଇ ଚାହିଁ ରହିଥିଲି ମୁଁ !!

**ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟସ୍ନାତା ରଥ**

ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲ, ଟେନେସି





## ॥ ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ବାଞ୍ଛାର ସନ୍ଦେଶ ॥

ଏ ହେଲା ୧୯୯୦ ମସିହାର କଥା ।

ସେତେବେଳେ ଆମେରିକାର ଟେନେସୀ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ, ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲ୍ ସହରରେ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ଭାରତୀୟମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରୟୋଜନରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ହିନ୍ଦୁ ମନ୍ଦିର ତିଆରି ହେବାର ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ଚାଲିଥାଏ। ସେ କାଳରେ ଏ ସହରରେ ଭାରତୀୟ ମାନଙ୍କ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ତୁଳନାରେ କେବଳ କିଛି ମୁଷ୍ଟିମେୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ହିଁ ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲ୍‌ରେ ବାସ କରୁଥିଲେ । ସେମାନଙ୍କର ନିଜ ମନ୍ଦିର ନିର୍ମାଣ କରିବାର ଶକ୍ତି ନଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ଆମେରିକା ଆଣିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ବହୁ ମାତ୍ରାରେ ସଜାଗ ରହିଥିଲା ।

ଏଠାରେ କହିବା ବାହୁଲ୍ୟ ଯେ ମନ୍ଦିର ନିର୍ମାଣ ପାଇଁ ଆମେରିକାରେ ବହୁଳ ପରିମାଣରେ ଅର୍ଥର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ସବୁବେଳେ ରହିଥାଏ । ସେ ପ୍ରକାର ଅର୍ଥ ସଂଗ୍ରହ ପାଇଁ ଆଞ୍ଚଳିକ ଅଧିବାସୀ ମାନଙ୍କଠାରୁ ବହୁ ପରିମାଣରେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ, ସହଯୋଗ ଓ ମୂଳତଃ ସାମାଜିକ ଉଦ୍‌ଯୋଗ ବିପୁଳ ଭାବରେ ଦରକାର ପଡ଼ିଥାଏ । ଏତଦ୍ ବ୍ୟତୀତ ମନ୍ଦିର ମାନଙ୍କର ନାମକରଣ ଓ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଦେବତାଙ୍କୁ ମନୋନୟନ କରିବାର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି, ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀ-ସଚଳତା ଓ ବିଶେଷତଃ ଆର୍ଥିକ ଦାନ ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରିଥାଏ।

ସେ ଅନୁସାରେ ତତ୍କାଳୀନ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀ, ମନ୍ଦିର କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କୁ ସେହି ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ସ୍ଥାପିତ କରିବାର ଆଶାରେ ପ୍ରତିଟି ଆଲୋଚନାରେ ଭାଗ ନେଇ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରତିକୂଳ ଅବସ୍ଥାର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହେଉଥିଲେ । । ଅନେକ କିଛି କଥୋପକଥନ ପରେ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ଭାରତୀୟଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱୀକୃତି କ୍ରମେ, ଏ ମନ୍ଦିରର ନାମ ଶ୍ରୀଗଣେଶଙ୍କ ନାମରେ ନାମିତ ହେବା ସ୍ଥିର ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଭାରତ ବାହାରର ପ୍ରାୟ ସବୁ ମନ୍ଦିର ମାନଙ୍କ ପରି ଏ ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀଗଣେଶ, ଶ୍ରୀମହାଦେବ ଓ ଶ୍ରୀବାଲାଜୀଙ୍କ ସମେତ ଆଉ କେତୋଟି ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ-ବିଗ୍ରହ ରୂପେ ପୂଜା ପାଇବା ଠିକ୍ ହେଲା । ତା’ ଭିତରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦେବାଦେବୀଙ୍କର ସିଂହାସନର ଜାଗା ମଧ୍ୟ ବଛା ସରିଗଲା । ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ ଏଠାରେ ପାର୍ଶ୍ୱଦେବତା ରୂପେ ସ୍ଥାପିତ ହେବା କଥାରେ ମନ୍ଦିର କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷ ଶେଷରେ ରାଜି ହୋଇଥିଲେ ।

ଆମ ଚତୁର୍ଦ୍ଧାମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ତାଙ୍କ ନିଜ ସିଂହାସନ ପାଇଁ ସ୍ୱୟଂ ଜାଗା ବାଛି ଥିଲେ ବୋଲି କହିଲେ ଅତ୍ୟୁକ୍ତି ହେବନାହିଁ । କାରଣ ସେତେବେଳେ ଆମେରିକାର ବହୁତ ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ସହରରେ ଅଧିକ ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବାସ କରୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଠାକୁରେ କୌଣସି ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ସେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସ୍ଥାପିତ ହୋଇପାରିନଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ତାହା ସେତେବେଳେ





କେବଳ ଇଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ପରି ମନେହେଲା ।

କାଳକ୍ରମେ ଏଠାରେ ସବୁ ଦେବାଦେବୀ ମାନଙ୍କର ପୂଜା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସମୟ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ କରାଗଲା । ସବୁ ଠାକୁର ମାନଙ୍କର ପୂଜାପଞ୍ଜତି ଅଲଗା ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ ତାକୁ ସୁତାରୁ ରୂପେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀ କରିବା ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ବହୁତ ଯିଜ୍ଞାନ୍ତ ନିଆଯାଇଥିଲା । ସେ ସବୁ ନିୟମରେ ଆଜି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ କୌଣସି ବିଶେଷ ବ୍ୟତିକ୍ରମ ଘଟିନାହିଁ ମଧ୍ୟ । ପୁରୋହିତ ମାନେ ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ରୀତିନିତିରେ ପୂଜା କରୁଥିବା ବେଳେ ପ୍ରାୟତଃ ସବୁ ରବିବାର ଦିନ ଆଂଚଳିକ ଭକ୍ତଙ୍କ ବ୍ୟତୀତ ଆହୁରି ଅନେକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସହରରୁ ଆସି ପୂଜାରେ ଯୋଗଦାନ କରୁଥିଲେ । ତେବେ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ଭାରତୀୟ ପୁରୋହିତ ମାନେ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ପୂଜା-ପଞ୍ଜତି ଏତେ ଭଲଭାବରେ ଜାଣିନଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାରମାନଙ୍କର ବହୁ ଉଦ୍ୟମରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଯଥୋଚିତ ପଞ୍ଜତି ଶିଖା ହେଲା ।

ଆମ ମହାପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ ପୂଜା ସକାଳ ନଅଟାରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ । ତାଙ୍କ ପୂଜା ସରିଲେ ଅନ୍ୟ ଦେବାଦେବୀଙ୍କର ପୂଜା ହୁଏ । ମନ୍ଦିର ପ୍ରସାଦ ପ୍ରାୟତଃ ଦିନ ଗୋଟାଏ ବେଳକୁ ବଣ୍ଟାଯାଏ । ମନ୍ଦିର ରୋଷେଇ ଘରେ ସଂଖୁଡ଼ି ପ୍ରସାଦ ରନ୍ଧା ହୁଏ ଏବଂ ଭକ୍ତ ମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଫୁଲ-ଫଳ ସହିତ ନିଜ ଘର ତିଆରି ପୂଜା ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ପଦାର୍ଥ ଭୋଗ ପାଇଁ ଆଣନ୍ତି । ଅତୀତରେ ପ୍ରତି ଥର ପ୍ରାୟ ଦୁଇଶହ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସାଦ ତିଆରି ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସେ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ବହୁତ ପରିମାଣରେ ବଢ଼ି ଯାଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏହି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଅଦ୍ୟାବଧି ଜାରି ରହିଛି । ମନ୍ଦିରର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଛଡ଼ା ପ୍ରଥମ ଦିନରୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ମହାପ୍ରସାଦ ବଣ୍ଟନ ପାଇଁ ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ସମୟ ରଖାଯାଇଥିଲା ।

୧୯୯୦ ମସିହାରେ ଦିଅଁ ମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା ସରିଲାପରେ ସବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପୂଜାକୁ ଯିବା ଗୋଟେ ଅଭ୍ୟାସରେ ପଡ଼ିଲା ପରି ମନେ ହେଲା । ଏଠାରେ ସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଭାବରେ ରହୁଥିବା ପରିବାର ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଦୂରରୁ ଆସୁଥିବା ପରିବାରମାନଙ୍କୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ବହୁତ ଆକର୍ଷିତ କରିଥିଲା । ତାହା ଥିଲା ପାଳି କରିବା-ମାନେ ଆମ ଦିଅଁ ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଆମେ ପ୍ରସାଦ ରାନ୍ଧିବାର ପ୍ରୟୋଜନା ! ତା’ ପୁଣି ଥିଲା କେବଳ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପରିବାର ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିରର ପରି ମହାପ୍ରସାଦ ରାନ୍ଧିବାର ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ।

ଏହା ଦ୍ଵାରା ପ୍ରାୟ ସତୁରୀ, ଅଶୀ କି ଶହେ ମାଇଲ ଦୂରରୁ ଆସୁଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭକ୍ତମାନେ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ଦିନ ମାନଙ୍କରେ ପାଳି କରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ପ୍ରକାଶ କଲେ ଓ ସେଇ ଦିନ ପୂଜାରେ ଭାଗ ନେଇ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପ୍ରସାଦ ସେବନ କରି ସଅଳ ଫେରି ଯାଇପାରିଲେ । ପ୍ରାୟତଃ ଏହି କାମ ସାରି ବିଶେଷ କରି ଦୂରରୁ ଆସିବା ଲୋକମାନେ ଗୋଟିଏ



ଦିନରେ ସକାଳୁ ଆସି ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ହେବା ଆଗରୁ ଫେରି ଯାଇ ପାରୁଥିଲେ । ଏ ସବୁ ଉଦ୍ୟମ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଇଶ୍ଵରଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ସମର୍ପିତ ମନୋବୃତ୍ତି ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଭାବେ ସବୁରି ମନକୁ ଛୁଇଁଲା । ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ପ୍ରସାଦ ରାକ୍ଷିବା ପାଇଁ ଯାହା ଦରକାର ନୁଆ ଷ୍ଟିଲ୍ ବାସନସେର୍, ଛୁରୀ ,ଚଟୁ, କରତୁଲି, କରେଇ, କଟିଂବୋର୍ଡ଼ ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଅଲଗା ବାସନ ମଜା ସାବୁନ, ସ୍ଫୁଞ୍ଜ,ତଉଲିଆ, ଚଦର ଇତ୍ୟାଦି କିଣି ରଖିଲୁ । ଏମିତି କି ଅଧିକାଂଶ ଘରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ନିରାମିଷ ଖାଦ୍ୟ(ବିଶେଷତଃ ଭୋଗ) ସରଞ୍ଚାମ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଫ୍ରିଜ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ନୁଆ କିଣା ହୋଇଗଲା । ତିନି ଦିଅଁଙ୍କର ଫୁଲମାଳ ପାଇଁ ଭକ୍ତମାନେ ନିଜ ବଗିଚାରେ ଅଧିକ ପରିମାଣରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟତଃ ମଲ୍ଲୀ ,ଗେଣ୍ଡୁ ,ତରାଟ ପରି ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଫୁଲଗଛ ଖରାଦିନେ ଲଗାଉଥିଲେ ଓ ତା’ସହିତ ବଡ଼ କୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଟାକୁଆ ପୋତି ଆମ୍ବଗଛ କରି,ସେ ଗଛକୁ ବର୍ଷବର୍ଷ ଧରି ବଂଚାଇ ରଖିବାର ବହୁ ଉଦ୍ୟମ କରୁଥିଲେ ।ସେତେବେଳେ ଫୁଲମାଳ ଓ ଆମ୍ବପତ୍ରର ମାଳ କରି ଆଣିବା ଗୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରଥାରେ ପାଲଟିଗଲା ।

ତା’ ଛଡ଼ା ଚାଲିଥିଲା ଭକ୍ତ ମାନଙ୍କର ପୁରୀ ମନ୍ଦିର ମହାପ୍ରସାଦ ତିଆରି ଉପରେ ଗବେଷଣା । ସେତେବେଳେ ସୋସିଆଲ ମିଡ଼ିଆ ନ ଥିବାରୁ କେତେ ଜଣ ପୁରୀର ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ରଖି ଅଭଡ଼ା କେମିତି ତିଆରି ହୁଏ ତାର ବିବରଣୀ ଆଣୁଥିଲେ । ଭାରତ ଭ୍ରମଣ ବେଳେ ଯିଏ ଯାହା ପାରିଲା ପୂଜାପୂଜିର ବିଧାନ ଠାରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଅଭଡ଼ା ରନ୍ଧା ସମ୍ପର୍କୀୟ ସବୁପ୍ରକାର ପୁସ୍ତକ ମଧ୍ୟ କିଣି ଆଣୁଥିଲେ । ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ପାଇଁ ଘନଘନ ମିଟି ଚାଲୁଥିଲା । ଠାକୁରମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଶାଢ଼ୀ, ମୁକୁଟ, ବେଶ ଆଦି କେମିତି ଆମେରିକା ଆସିବ, ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ଆଲୋଚନା ଚାଲୁଥିଲା ।

ମୋ ଘରେ ଠାକୁର ବାସନ, ଆମ ପରିବାର ରୋଷେଇ ବାସନ ଠାରୁ ଅଧିକା ରହିଛି, କହିଲେ ଭୁଲ୍ ହେବନାହିଁ । ସେ ପୁଣି ଆଟିକ୍ରେ ଅଧା ଜାଗା ନେଇ ରଖାଯାଇଛି। ସବୁ ପାଲିରେ ପ୍ରାୟ ପଚାଶ ଷାଠିଏ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଅନ୍ନ, ଡାଲମା, ବେସର, ଖଟା, ପାଚେଡ଼ୀ ଓ କ୍ଷୀରି କରାଯାଏ ଓ କେବଳ ସେତିକି ମନ୍ଦିରର ତଳ ବଖରାରେ ରଖାହୁଏ। କେବଳ କିଛି ଭୋଗ, ଯେମିତି କି କୌଣସି ପ୍ରକାରର ଫଳ, ପିଠା ବା ମିଠା ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ମନ୍ଦିରର ଉପର ମହଲାକୁ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ଭୋଗ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ବାଢିବାକୁ ନିଆଯାଏ। ଯେହେତୁ ଆମ ପୁରୀ ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିରରେ ଘର ତିଆରି ରନ୍ଧାର କୌଣସି ପଦାର୍ଥ ପଶେ ନାହିଁ ; ମତେ ସବୁବେଳେ ଘର ତିଆରି ଭୋଗ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ପାଖକୁ ନେବା କଥା ଦ୍ଵନ୍ଦ୍ଵରେ ପକାଇ ଦିଏ ।

ଆମେ ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲ୍ ଆସିବା ଆଗରୁ ଚାଟାନୁଗା ସହରରେ(ମନ୍ଦିର ଠାରୁ ଶହେ ପଡ଼ିଶ୍ ମାଇଲ) ଦୁରରେ ରହୁଥିଲୁ। ପାଲି ଆଗଦିନ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ସମୟରେ ସବୁ ସରଞ୍ଚାମ କିଣି ଆଣି ମୁଁ ଫ୍ରିଜ୍ରେ ନ ରଖି ପ୍ରାୟତଃ ବାହାରେ ହିଁ ରଖେ ।



ମୋର ପାଳି ପଡ଼ିଥିବା ଦିନ ମୁଁ ଗାଧୁଆ ଯାରି ରାତି ଦୁଇଟା ବେଳୁ ରୋଷେଇ ଆରମ୍ଭ କରୁଥିଲି । ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ସବୁ ପ୍ରସାଦ ରଖି ଆମେ ପ୍ରାୟ ଭୋରରୁ ବାହାରି ସାଢ଼େ ତିନି ଘଣ୍ଟା ଡ୍ରାଇଭ କରି ଆସି ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ପୂଜା ଆରମ୍ଭ ବେଳକୁ ପହଂଚୁଥିଲୁ । ଯିବାଆସିବା ବାଟରେ ମଣ୍ଡୁଇଗଲ୍ ପାହାଡ଼ର ତୁଳ ବିସ୍ତାର କରି ରହିଥିବାରୁ ବହୁ ଘାଟି ରାସ୍ତାକୁ ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରି ଯିବାକୁ ହୁଏ ।

-ରବିବାର ଏପ୍ରିଲ ୨୫ ତାରିଖ ୧୯୯୩-

ସେଦିନ ସେମିତି ଭୋର ରାତିରୁ ଉଠି ପ୍ରସାଦ ରାନ୍ଧିଲି, ଅନ୍ନ, ଡାଲମା, ଖଟା, ବେସର, ଭଜା ଓ ଭୋଗ ପାଇଁ ପୁରା ବଡ଼ ଟ୍ରେ ରେ ଭର୍ତ୍ତି ସୁଜିର ମୋହନଭୋଗ ମଧ୍ୟ । ସବୁ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଧରି ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ବସିବା ପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବିଷୟ ଭାବି ମୋର ମନ ବିଶ୍ୱଖଳିତ ହୋଇ ଉଠିଲା । ବାରମ୍ବାର ମନେ ପକାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲି, ମୋର ସକାଳର କୃତକର୍ମକୁ ମୋର ଧାରଣା ହେଲା ଯେ, ମୁଁ ସବୁ ଭୋଗ ଠାକୁର ବାସନରେ ରାନ୍ଧିଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁରୁଣା (ହୁଏତ ନିରାମିଷ ନୁହେଁ) ଲୁହା ଖଡ଼ିକାରେ ବେସରକୁ ଘାଣ୍ଟି ଦେଇଛି ବୋଧେ ! ଆଉ ଆମର ଘର ବାସନ ଧୁଆ ଯୁଞ୍ଜରେ ପୁଣି ସେଇ ଖଡ଼ିକାକୁ ଧୋଇ ଭୋଗ ବି କରିଛି । ଯେତେ ମନେ ପକାଇଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ନୂଆ ଖଡ଼ିକାକୁ ବା ନୂଆ ବାସନ ମାଜିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସଦ୍ୟ କିଣିଆଣିଥିବା ଯୁଞ୍ଜ, ଠାକୁର ବାସନବାଙ୍କୁରୁ କାଢ଼ିଲା ପରି ମନେ ହେଲାନ୍ତି । ତା’ପରେ ଚାଲିଲା ମନରେ ଅସଂଖ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନବାଚୀ । ମୁଁ ବହୁତ ବିଚଳିତ ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ରହିଲି । “ସେଇଟାରେ କେବେ ଆମିଷ ରାନ୍ଧିଦେଇନି ତ ? ଆଉ ପିଆଜ ରସୁଣ ... ଯଦି ହୋଇଥିବ ତେବେ ଏ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ସବୁ ମାରା ହୋଇଗଲା” ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଇତ୍ୟାଦି...

ତିନି ଘଣ୍ଟାର ରାସ୍ତା ଯାବା ଡ୍ରାଇଭ କରିବା ବେଳେ ମୋ’ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ମୋତେ ବୁଝାଇ ଚାଲିଥାନ୍ତି ଯେ ମୁଁ ଏମିତି କିଛି ପାପ କାମ କରିଦେଇନି ବୋଲି.. ମୁଁ ସବୁ ଶୁଣୁଥାଏ । ହେଲେ ନିଜକୁ କ୍ଷମା କରିପାରୁନଥାଏ । ଆମେ ଭଲରେ ଯାଇ ପହଂଚିଲୁ । ସେଦିନ ପୂଜା ସରିଲା ବେଳକୁ ଦିନ ୧୧ଟା ହୋଇଗଲା । ତା’ପରେ ବନ୍ଧୁ ମିଳନ ଏବଂ ଖିଆପିଆର କାମ ସାରି ପୁଣି ସବୁ ବାସନକୁସନକୁ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ଲଦି ଆମେ ଘରମୁହଁ ହେଲୁ । ସେଦିନ ଫେରିବା ବାଟରେ ମଣ୍ଡୁଇଗଲ୍ ପାହାଡ଼ ଉପରେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ହେବାର ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ମୋର ଆଜି ବି ମନେ ଅଛି । ଘରେ ପହଂଚିବା ପରେ ଯଥାକ୍ରମେ ଘରକାମ ସାରି ଓ ପରଦିନର କାମ ସମ୍ପନ୍ନିତ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥାରେ ରହି, ମନ୍ଦିର ଓ ଅରୁଆ ଲୁହାଖଡ଼ିକା କଥାକୁ ପାସୋରି ଯାଇଥିଲି ।

ତେବେ ଏ ଘଟଣାର ଅନେକ ଦିନ ପରେ ଆମେ ଭାରତ ବୁଲିବାକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲୁ ।





-ଡ଼ିସେମ୍ବର ୧୦ ତାରିଖ ୧୯୯୭ , ଶହୀଦନଗର-

ରାତିରେ ମୋର ନିମ୍ନୋକ୍ତ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖି ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଯାଇଥିଲା ।

“ମୁଁ ସେ ଦିନ ମୋର ପରିବାର ସହିତ ପୁରୀକୁ ଠାକୁର ଦର୍ଶନ କରିବାକୁ ଯାଇଥିଲି । ବହୁତ ଭିଡ଼ ଭିଡ଼ରେ ନଣେ ମନ୍ଦିର ପଶ୍ଚାତ୍ତ ସହାୟତାରେ ଦିଅଁ ମାନଙ୍କର ଭଲ ଦର୍ଶନ ହେଲା । ପରେ କିନ୍ତୁ ହଠାତ ମୁଁ ବାଟବଣା ହୋଇ ମନ୍ଦିରର ବାହାରେ କୌଣସି ଏକ ଜାଗାରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଯାଇଥିଲି । ସେ ଦିନର ଭିଡ଼ରେ ଓ ଟଣାଓଟଣାରେ ମୋ’ ସହିତ ଯାଇଥିବା ପରିବାରର ସଦସ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କୁ ଖୋଜି ପାରିଲିନି । ସେଇ ହଜିଯିବାର ଭୟରେ ହଠାତ୍ ଚାରିଆଡ଼କୁ ଚାହିଁ ଇତସ୍ତତଃ ହୋଇଉଠୁଥିଲି । ମୋର ମନ ସେତେବେଳେ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ କେମିତି କେତେ କ୍ଷଣ ଆଗରୁ ଭଲରେ ଦର୍ଶନ କରି, ତା’ ଭୁଲିଯାଇ କେମିତି ଘରକୁ ଫେରିବି; ସେଇ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ଥାଏ । ଆଗରୁ ଶୁଣିଥିବା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦୁର୍ଘଟଣାର ଖବରକୁ ମନେ ପକାଇ ଏଣେ ଅନେକ ଆଶଙ୍କା ମଧ୍ୟ ଘେରି ରହି ଥାଏ । କାଳେ କିଏ ଟାଣିନେବ ଭୟରେ, ମୁଁ ଭ୍ୟାନିଟିବ୍ୟାଗକୁ କାଖ ତଳେ ଚାପି ଧରି ବେକର ସୁନା ହାରଟିକୁ କାନିରେ ଘୋଡ଼ାଇ ଶାଢ଼ୀ କାନିକୁ ଜବରଦସ୍ତକରି ମାଡ଼ି ଧରିଥାଏ । ଫୋନ୍ ନ ଥିବାରୁ କେମିତି ମୋ’ ସ୍ୱାମୀଙ୍କୁ ଭେଟିବି ସେଇ ଚିନ୍ତାରେ ଥାଏ ।

ମୁଁ ଏକା ଠିଆହୋଇଥାଏ, ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲା ତାହା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ମନ୍ଦିର ବାହାରର କୌଣସି ଏକ ଜାଗା । ନୀଳଚକ୍ର ଠିକ୍ ମୋର ପଛପଟେ ଆଉ ମୋର ଡାହାଣ ପଟେ ଦୁଇଟା ବହୁ ଉଚ୍ଚ ନଡ଼ିଆଗଛ ସ୍ୱଷ୍ଟ ଦିଶୁଥାଏ । ହେଲେ ମୁଁ ନିଜେ କେଉଁଠି ଅଛି ଜାଣି ପାରୁନଥାଏ ।

ଆଖି ବୁଲାଇ ନିଜର ସ୍ଥିତି ଖୋଜିଲାବେଳେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ମୋତେ ଚମକାଇ ଦେଲା । ଦୁଇ ନଡ଼ିଆ ଗଛର ମଝିରେ ଫାଙ୍କା ଜାଗାରେ ଗଛର ଅଧା ଉଚ୍ଚ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବାସନ ସବୁ ଲଦା ହୋଇଥିବା ଦେଖିଲି । ଥାକ ମାରି ଥୁଆ ହୋଇଥିବା ଏତେ ବାସନ ମୁଁ କେବେ ଆଗରୁ ଦେଖିନଥିଲି । ବାହାଘରମାନଙ୍କରେ ଭୋଜିରେ ରନ୍ଧା ହେବା ପରି ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ରସ ଆଉ ପିତ୍ତଳର ବାସନ ସବୁଆଡ଼େ ରଖା ହୋଇଥାଏ ଓ ବାସନରେ ମହାପ୍ରସାଦର ଅବଶିଷ୍ଟାଂଶ ବୋଳି ହୋଇ ଲାଗିଥିବାର ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ପରିଷ୍କାର ହୋଇ ଦେଖାଯାଉଥାଏ । ସତେ କି ସଦ୍ୟ ରୋଷେଇ ସାରି ବାହାରେ ବାସନ ଗଦେଇ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ପୂଜାରୀ ।

ତାପରେ କିଛି ସ୍ୱଷ୍ଟ ନୁହେଁ । ଯଦିଓ କାହାକୁ ଦେଖିପାରିଲିନି ଅଥଚ ମୋର ସବୁ ଡର କୁଆଡ଼େ ଉଭେଇ ଗଲାପରି ମନେହେଲା । ଆଉ ମୁଁ ସ୍ୱତଃସ୍ପୃହ ହୋଇ ସେଇ ବାସନ ଗଦା ଦିଗକୁ ଟାଣି ହୋଇ ଚାଲିଲି ।



କିଛି ପାଦ ଚାଲି ନଡ଼ିଆ ଗଛ ପାଖରେ ପହଂଚିଲି । ବାସନ ଗଦାକୁ ଦେଖି ବାରମ୍ବାର ମୋ’ ଆଖି ନଡ଼ିଆ ଗଛର ଉପରୁ ତଳ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ନିରୀକ୍ଷଣ କରି ଚାଲିଲା । ହଠାତ୍ କେହିଜଣେ ମୋତେ କିଛି କହିବା ପରି ମନେହେଲା କିନ୍ତୁ କିଛି ସ୍ପଷ୍ଟ ନଥିଲା । କିଛି ଗୋଟାଏ ମୋ ଗୋଡ଼ରେ ବାଜିଲା କେଉଁ ଜିନିଷକୁ ମାଡ଼ି ପକେଇଲି ଭାବି ତଳକୁ ଚାହିଁଲି । ମୋର ପାଦ ଗୋଟିଏ ନରମ ଜିନିଷ ଛୁଇଁବା ପରି ମନେହେଲା ।

ମୋ’ ପାଦ ତଳେ, ଠିକ୍ ମୋ’ ଶାଢ଼ୀ ଘୋଡ଼େଇ ଦେଲା ପରି ଜାଗାରେ ଦୁଇଟା ବଡ଼ ନଡ଼ିଆକତା ଓ ପୁଲାଏ ପାଉଁଶ ଗୋଟିଏ କଦଳୀ ପତ୍ର ଉପରେ ଥିବା ହୋଇଥିଲା ।

ମୋତେ ଲାଗିଲା.. ସତେ କି କିଏ ମୋତେ କହୁଥିଲା, ଏତେକ ବାସନ ସଫା କରିବା କାମ ତୋର ହିଁ!

“ଆରେ ଏତେ ବାସନ କଣ ମୁଁ ମାଜିବି? ତା ପୁଣି ଏତିକି ପାଉଁଶରେ?” ବଡ଼ ପାଟିରେ କାହାକୁ ଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ପଚାରୁଥିଲି ମୁଁ ଜାଣିନି ହେଲେ ମୋର ଚାରିପାର୍ଶ୍ୱରେ କାହାକୁ ଦେଖିପାରୁନଥିଲି । ସେ ଜାଗା ପୁରା ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଥିଲା ।

ତେବେ ତା’ ପର ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ କ୍ଷଣିକ ପାଇଁ ତଳେ ବସିପଡ଼ି ଗୋଟିଏ ନଡ଼ିଆକତାକୁ ଛୁଇଁବାକୁ ଗଲାବେଳେ ମୋ’ ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଗଲା ।”

ସେତେବେଳକୁ ମୋର ଭାରାକ୍ରାନ୍ତ ମନ ହଠାତ୍ ଶାନ୍ତ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲାମୋତେ କିଛି ଗୋଟାଏ ହଜିଥିବା ଜିନିଷ ମିଳିଗଲା ପରି ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲା ଓ ମୋ ଅଜାଣତରେ ଖୋଜୁଥିବା ଗୋଟିଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ମିଳିଗଲା ପରି ମଧ୍ୟ ମନେହେଲା ମୋ’ ମନ ବୁଝିଗଲା ।

ଯଦିଓ ଯୁ ଭିତରେ ଅନେକ ଦିନ ଗଢ଼ିଯାଇଥିଲା, ଓ ଆମେରିକାରେ ସେ ଦିନର ପାଲିରେ ପ୍ରସାଦ ରାନ୍ଧିବା କଥା ମୋ’ ମନରୁ ପୁରା ପାସୋରି ଯାଇଥିଲା, ତଥାପି ମୋର ଭାବନାର ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବା ପରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେଇ ଦିଗକୁ ହିଁ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ମୋର ଅବଚେତନ ମନ ଆପେଆପେ ଇସାରା ଦେଇ ଗୋଟିଏ ସନ୍ଦେଶ ଦେଉଥିଲା । “ସେଦିନ ମୋର ପୁରୁଣା କରତୁଲୀରେ ବେସର ଘାଣ୍ଟିବା ଓ (ହୁଏତ)ଆମିଷ ସଫା ହୋଇଥିବା ବାସନମଜା ସ୍ୱଞ୍ଜର ବ୍ୟବହାର ସେହି ଦୋଷବୋଧ ଓ ଦ୍ୱନ୍ଦର ଉତ୍ତର ସତେକି କେହି ମୋତେ ଜଣାଇଦେଲା ।



ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଘଟଣା ପରେ ଏ ଭିତରେ ଅନେକ ବର୍ଷ ବିତିଗଲାଣି ।

୧୯୯୬ ମସିହାରେ ଆମେ ଚାଟାନୁଗା ସହରରୁ ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲକୁ ବଦଳି ହୋଇ ଆସିଲୁ ଓ ବିଗତ ଅଣତାଳିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲାଣି ଆମେ ଏଠାରେ ଅଛୁ । ଇତି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ମୋତେ ଅନେକ ଥର ପାଳି କରିବାର ସୌଭାଗ୍ୟ ମିଳିଛି ଓ ସେ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ସୁରୁଖୁରୁରେ ସମାପନ ହୋଇସାରିଛି । ପର୍ବ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଭୋଗ ତିଆରିକରି ଘରଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ପରଶିଛି- ହେଲେ ଥରେ ହେଲେ କେବେ ମନ୍ଦିର ଦିଅଁ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଘରତିଆରି ପ୍ରସାଦ ଭୋଗ ଲଗାଇବା କଥା ମନକୁ ଆଣିନି ।

ଏହି ଅନୁଭୂତିକୁ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଏଇ ମୂହୁର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଲିପିବଦ୍ଧ କଲାବେଳେ ଭାବୁଛି, ଥରେ ନୁହେଁ ବରଂ ବାରମ୍ବାର ବିଶ୍ୱକର୍ତ୍ତା ଅତୃଣ୍ୟ ବାର୍ତ୍ତାବାହକ ଭାବରେ ଆମ ଜୀବନର ଅନେକ ରହସ୍ୟର ଉନ୍ମୋଚନ କରନ୍ତି, ଯାହା ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ଦୁଃସ୍ୱପ୍ନ କ୍ଷତିତ୍ୱ ହୃଦୟଂଗମ କରିପାରେ । ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଘଟଣାଟି ବୋଧହୁଏ ଥିଲା ସେଇ ମୂହୁର୍ତ୍ତ...ମୋ' ପାଇଁ ଏକ ଅତୃଣ୍ୟ ସନ୍ଦେଶ ଓ ମୋର ଅନ୍ତର୍ଦ୍ଧୂଷ୍ଟର ସମୀକ୍ଷାର ସମୟ।

ଜୟ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥ !

**ପ୍ରଦେଶ ନନ୍ଦିନୀ ଦାଶ**

ନ୍ୟାଶଭିଲ, ଟେନେସି







ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧ

ESSAY





## ॥ ପ୍ରାବୃତ୍ତତ୍ୟୟ ॥

“କେମନ୍ତେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିବି ସେହି ଭାଷାତୀତ ଭାବ,  
ଜୀବାତ୍ମାରେ ପରମାତ୍ମା ଭୂମା ଆବିର୍ଭାବ ।”

ସୁନ୍ଦରତାର ଏଇ କଥାକୁ ଅତି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବେ ହୃଦୟର ସହ ଯୋଗଜନ୍ମା ମଧୁସୂଦନ , “କୁସୁମାଞ୍ଜଳି”ରେ ଦୁଇଧାଡ଼ି ଲେଖିଥିଲେ ।

ଆହା! ଅପୂର୍ବ ଏଇ କଥା ପଦିଏ ।

ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ଏଇ ଅମରାବତୀରେ ଆତ୍ମା-ପରମାତ୍ମା ଏକାକାର ହୁଅନ୍ତି । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ କଣ ଆଉ କୋଣରେ ଐଶ୍ବରୀୟ ଶକ୍ତି ପ୍ରକାଶ ହୁଏ । ମନ-ପ୍ରାଣ-ହୃଦୟରେ ଶିହରଣ ହୁଏ । ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଏଇ ସତ୍ତାରେ ସୃଷ୍ଟିକର୍ତ୍ତାର ସ୍ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅନୁଭବ ହୁଏ । ପୁଷ୍କର ଗନ୍ଧ, ଫଳର ସ୍ବାଦ, ସବୁଜିମାର ଦର୍ଶନ ଆଉ ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଶବ୍ଦ ନିକ୍ଷେପର ଶ୍ରବଣ ହିଁ ଆମକୁ ଏହା ବୋଧ କରାଏ ଯେ ଆମେ ଏଇ ବିଶ୍ବବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡର ସମସ୍ତ ସେଇ ଐଶ୍ବରୀୟ ଅଂଶ ।

ଅବ୍ୟାଜମଧୁର ଏଇ ପ୍ରକୃତି । ଅପାପୁତିମୟ ଏଇ ଜୀବ ଜଗତ । ଅଣୁ ପରମାଣୁରେ ଭରି ରହିଛି ପଞ୍ଚ ମହାଭୂତର ଗୁଣ । ଅଷ୍ଟବିଧାନୀଙ୍କ ଭଳି ଜୀବଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଏଇଠି ନିଶଢ଼ର ମଧ୍ୟ ଶବ୍ଦ ଅଛି । ଅନ୍ଧକାରର ମଧ୍ୟ ସତ୍ତା ଅଛି ଆଉ ଆଲୋକର ମଧ୍ୟ । ସ୍ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ, ଗନ୍ଧ, ସ୍ବାଦ, ଦର୍ଶନ ତଥା ଶ୍ରବଣରେ ଏଇ ବିଶ୍ବ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡ ବ୍ୟାପ୍ତ ।

ବିଶାଳ ଏ ସମଗ୍ର ସଂସାର, ସୁନ୍ଦର ଏ ସୃଷ୍ଟି; ଅହରହ ଜୀବଜଗତ ସମୟର ମହାସମୁଦ୍ର ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରି ହୁଏ ଭବିଷ୍ୟୋନ୍ମୁଖୀ । ପ୍ରକୃତି ପ୍ରତି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଅନେକ ବୈଚିତ୍ର୍ୟ ଆଣି ରଖିଦିଏ ଆମରି ଆଗରେ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଦିନ ନେଇ ଆସେ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା ଏକ ନୂତନ ପ୍ରଭାତର; ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ରାତି ଆମକୁ ଚେତେଇ ଦିଏ ଯେ ଏକ ନୂତନ ପ୍ରଭାତ ଅପେକ୍ଷାମାଣ ।

ପ୍ରକୃତି ସତ୍ୟ-ଶିବ-ସୁନ୍ଦର, ରହସ୍ୟମୟ ନୁହଁ; ପ୍ରକୃତି ଏକ ଖୋଲା ପୁସ୍ତକ, ଆଦର୍ଶ ଗୁରୁ, ମମତାମୟୀ ଜନନୀ, ଦିବ୍ୟ ଚେତନା ଆଉ ଶାଶ୍ବତ ପ୍ରେରଣା । ଏଇ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ରହସ୍ୟ କଥା ଭାବି ବିସ୍ମିତ ହେବା ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଯଦି ଆମେ ନିଜକୁ ଆହୁରି ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ଭାବେ ଜାଣି ତଥା ଆମର ଗୁଣାବଳୀକୁ ଆହୁରି ଉନ୍ନତ କରିପାରିବା ତେବେ ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଦିବ୍ୟରୂପ ଆମର ଦୃଷ୍ଟିଗୋଚର ହେବ । ସେଇ ପ୍ରକୃତିରାଣୀ ସହ ବାର୍ତ୍ତାଳାପ କରିଥିଲି ଏକ ନିତ୍ୟତୁରେ ।



ଶରତର ଶିଶିର ବୁନ୍ଦାକୁ ଛାତିରେ ଭିଜେଇ ସେ ମୋତେ ଦେଖି ହସୁଥିଲା ।

ତା ଛାତିରେ ହାତ ଦେଇ କହିଲି;

“ଏଇତ ଶୀତଳ ହେବାରେ ଲାଗିଛି ସବୁ । ଏଇ ସବୁଜ ତନୁ ତୋର ଶିରୀହୀନ ହୋଇଯିବ ଦେଖୁ ଦେଖୁ । ଆଉ ତା ପରେ ହାଡ଼ଧରା ଶୀତରେ ଏଇ ବନାନୀ ସବୁ କୁଆଡ଼େ ହଜିଯିବେ ଶୂନ୍ୟତାର ସାଥେ । କେମିତି ଖାଁ ଖାଁ ଲାଗିବ ବଣ ନଈ ପାହାଡ଼ ସବୁ । କେମିତି ଏଇ ସବୁ ସହି ପାରୁଛୁ ତୁ!”

ମୋ ହାତକୁ ଛୁଇଁ ସେ କହିଲା;

“ଏଇତ ଗ୍ରୀଷ୍ମ ଆସି ସବୁଜ ଦେଇ ଗଲା । ଶରତର କାକର ଆଉ ହେମନ୍ତର ଶିଶିର ଏଇ ପତ୍ର ସବୁକୁ ଝଡ଼ାଇ ନେବେ । ତାପରେ ହିମ କାକର । ମୋ ଛାତିର ଉଷ୍ମତାକୁ କିଛି ତ ଆରାମ ମିଳିବ । କଡ଼ ଲେଉଟେଇ ବି ଅଳ୍ପ । ଏଇ ଋତୁ ସବୁ ତା’ର ଭିଆଣ । ଏଇ ଋତୁରଙ୍ଗରେ ସେ ମୋତେ ଛୁଏଁ । ମୋ ତନୁରେ ରୋମାଞ୍ଚ ଭରିଦିଏ । ଷଡ଼ଋତୁର ରଙ୍ଗରସରେ ମୁଁ ମଜ୍ଜିଯାଏ ଆଉ ଏଇମିତି ମୋର ସମୟ ସବୁ କୁଆଡ଼େ କେମିତି ଚାଲିଯାଏ ଜାଣି ପାରେନି । ଏହାକୁ ହିଁ ତ ମୁଁ ଭୋଗ କରେ ଆଉ କରାଏ ସଭିଙ୍କୁ । ”

ମୋତେ କୋଳକୁ ଆଉ ଟିକେ ଆଉଦେଇ ନେଇ ସେ କହିଲା;

“ମୋ କୋଳରୁ ଏଡ଼ୁଟିଏରୁ ଏତେ ହେଲୁଣି; କେବେ ତତେ ଅତୁଆ ଲାଗିଛି କି! ଏଇ ତ କାଲି ପରି ଲାଗୁଛି; ପନ୍ଦର ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଏଇ ମାଟିରେ ପାଦ ଥାପି ଥିଲୁ । ସେତେବେଳେ କାଁ ଭାଁ କେତୋଟି ଗଛରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣାଳୀରେ ଭରା ଅଳ୍ପ କେତେ ପତ୍ର ହିଁ ଥିଲା । ହେଲେ ତୁ ମୋତେ ଶିରୀହୀନ ଭାବି ନ ଥିଲୁ । ସେଇ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣାଳୀରେ ହଜି ଯାଇଥିଲୁ । ତା’ପରେ ସେ ହାଡ଼ଧରା ଶୀତରେ ହିମପାତରେ ଖେଳିଥିଲୁ ପଞ୍ଚାବନ ବର୍ଷ ତଳର ସେଇ ପିଲାଟିଏ ପରି । ”

ତା’ର ସେଇ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ମୋ କାନକୁ ଭେଦି ମୋ ସ୍ନାୟୁକୁ ଉଦ୍‌ବେଳିତ କରୁଥିଲା ଆଉ ମୁଁ ତା’ର କଥାର କୁହୁକରେ ମୋର ପନ୍ଦର ବର୍ଷକୁ ଘଡ଼ିକରେ ଅନୁଭବି ଗଲି । ତା’ର ଛାତି ଉପରେ ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଲି । ଆଖି ମୁଦିଲି । ସବୁ ଶୁଣି ପାରୁଥିଲି ତା’ ବୁକୁର ସ୍ୱଦନ ଆଉ ମୋର ମଧ୍ୟ । ସବୁ ଯେମିତି ଏକାକାର ହୋଇ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ସେଇ ସ୍ୱଦନ ଭିତରେ ଷଡ଼ଋତୁ ଗୁଞ୍ଜନର ଝଙ୍କାର ମୋ ଭିତରେ ଶିହରଣ ଭରି ଦେଉଥିଲା ।

ମୋ ଛାତି ଉପରେ କାହାର ସ୍ପର୍ଶ ପାଇ ଦେଖିଲି; ରଙ୍ଗ ବିରଙ୍ଗ ପର୍ଣ୍ଣଟିଏ । ଝରି ପଡ଼ିଛି ତରୁ ତାଳରୁ । ହୁଏତ ସେ ଆମ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କ ସ୍ୱଦନ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ କୁତୂହଳୀ ହୋଇଥିବ । ତାକୁ ମୋ ଛାତି ସହ ହାତରେ ଚାପି ଧରିଲି ସେଇ ମତେ । ଏଣେ ଶରତ ବୃକ୍ଷବାଦି ସବୁଙ୍କୁ ଆଉଁଶି ଚାଲିଥିଲା । ମୃଦୁ ମନ୍ଦ ସମୀରଣରେ ଥିଲା ଶୀତଳତା । ହୁଏତ





ଏଇ ବର୍ଷାଳୀ ସବୁକୁ ଆଖି ମୁଦି ମୋ ହୃଦରେ ଆଜିବାରେ ଲାଗିଥିଲି ମୁଁ । ଆଉ ହେଉଥିଲି ଏଇ ଦୁଇ ପଦ...

ମେଲାଣି ମାଗୁଛି ଶରତ, ଦେଇ ପଲ୍ଲବେ ଝାଡ଼ି  
କୋଳେଇ ନିଅଇ ଧରଣୀ, ରାଣୀ ପ୍ରେମେ ଜାବୁଡ଼ି  
ଶୀତଳ ପରଶ ଦିଅଇ, ବର୍ଷା ବିବର୍ଷ ପଶେ  
ଥାମି ନିଏ ଶୀତ ଶିଶିର, ସରାଗରେ ଅପଶେ

ସୁଧୀଜନେ!

ପ୍ରାକୃତ ଦୋଷ କେବଳ ଜୀବଜଗତରେ ଦେଖା ଯାଏ ନାହିଁ ବରଂତ ଏଇ ଶରତ ଋତୁ ବୃକ୍ଷ ଜଗତକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଚଳଚଞ୍ଚଳ କରିଦିଏ । ଉତ୍ତର ଗୋଲାର୍ଦ୍ଧରେ ଏଇ ପ୍ରାଦୁର୍ଭାବରେ ବନ ତରୁ ଲତା ପୃଥିବୀକୁ କରିଦିଅନ୍ତି ବର୍ଷାଲିର ଏକ ବିସ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଗନ୍ତାଘର ।

କହିବି ତେବେ; ଶୁଣନ୍ତୁ କେମିତି ହୁଏ ଏଇ ରଙ୍ଗ ବିରଙ୍ଗର ସମାହାର ଆଉ ପ୍ରକୃତି ରାଣୀ ଶୀତଋତୁରେ ନିଜକୁ ଶୁଭ୍ରଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନା ଆଉ ହିମକାକରରେ ଆଚ୍ଛାଦିତ କରିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ନିଜକୁ ସଜାଇ ବସେ ଋତୁସାର କରି ଏଇ ପତ୍ରଝଡ଼ା ଶରତରେ ।

କେବଳ ନିଜ ପାଇଁ ନୁହଁ ବରଂତ ପ୍ରାଣୀଜଗତର ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଉଣ୍ଡାର ବୋଲାଉଥିବା ସବୁଜ ପତ୍ର ସବୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଆଳରେ ମାଟିରୁ ଫସଫରସ୍ ଆଉ ଯବକ୍ଷାରଜାନ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରିଥାନ୍ତି ଜଳକଣା ସହ । ବାୟୁମଣ୍ଡଳରୁ ଅଙ୍ଗାରକାମ୍ଳ, ମହାଶୂନ୍ୟରୁ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟରଶ୍ମୀ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅଣାଯାଏ । ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୁଏ ଅନ୍ନ ବ୍ୟଞ୍ଜନର ଜୈବିକ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା । ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହୁଏ ଭଲିକି ଭଲି ଖାଦ୍ୟସାର । ଏଇ ସବୁ ଅହରହ, ପ୍ରତିଦିନ ଲାଗି ରହିଥାଏ । ରାତିଦିନ ଏଇ ସବୁରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ରୁହନ୍ତି ପତ୍ର ସବୁ । ଆଲୋକ ଓ ଅନ୍ଧାରର ରହସ୍ୟମୟ ଲୀଳା ଇଏ ।

ଶରତକାଳର ଆଗମନ ବେଳେ ଦିନ ସାନ ହୋଇ ଆସେ ଆଉ ରାତି ଲମ୍ବା ହୁଏ । ସେଇ ଅନୁପାତରେ ଥଣ୍ଡା ବଢ଼େ ଏଇ ଉତ୍ତର ଗୋଲାର୍ଦ୍ଧରେ । ଗଛ ଲତା ସଭିଙ୍କୁ କଷ୍ଟ ହୁଏ । ସେମାନେ ସେଇ ଅଭିମାନରେ ଏଇ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ପଦାର୍ଥର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତିକରଣକୁ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ମୃଦୁ ପ୍ରତିବାଦ କରନ୍ତି । ଧରଣୀ ରାଣୀ ପୃଥିବୀର ଋତୁଚକ୍ର ଆଉ ନିଜ ଛାତିରେ ଧରିବସିଥିବା ଏଇ ବୃକ୍ଷଲତାଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଠିକ୍ ସେହିପରି ହୁଏ ଯେପରିକି ଦୁଇ ଦନ୍ତପଂକ୍ତି ମଧ୍ୟରେ ବିଚରା ଜିହ୍ଵାର ଅବସ୍ଥା ।



ଜିନ୍ଧ୍ ଧରି ବସନ୍ତି ଏଇ ପତ୍ରହରିତ ବୃକ୍ଷରାଜୀ । ବନ୍ଦ ହୁଏ ଆଲୋକ ସଂଶ୍ଳେଷଣ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା । ସବୁଜ କଣିକା ସବୁ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଦ୍ଧାନ ହୁଅନ୍ତି । ସେଇ ଜାଗାରେ ଦୃଶ୍ୟମାନ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ ସବୁ ରଙ୍ଗୀନ କଣିକା । କିଏ ହଳଦିଆ ତ କିଏ ନାରଙ୍ଗୀ କିଏ ଲାଲ ତ କିଏ ଗୋଲାପୀ । ସବୁଜ କଣିକାର ବହୁଳତାରେ ଏମାନେ ଘୋଡ଼େଇ ହୋଇ ରହିଥାନ୍ତି ହେଲେ ସବୁଜ କଣିକାର ଅନୁପସ୍ଥିତିରେ ଏମାନେ ରଙ୍ଗର ଢୁଆର ନେଇ ମାଡ଼ି ଆସନ୍ତି ପତ୍ର ଗହଳକୁ ଆଉ ସାରା ଦୁନିଆଁ ରଙ୍ଗବିରଙ୍ଗରେ ଭରି ଉଠେ ।

ଉତ୍ତର ଗୋଲାକାର ମେଘଲ୍ ଗଛରେ ଶର୍କରା କଣିକା ସବୁ ସକାଳର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ କିରଣ ଆଉ ରାତିର ଶୀତଳତାରେ ଗାଡ଼ିଲାଲ ହୋଇ ବସନ୍ତି । ଓକ୍ ଗଛ ମାଟିଆ ଦିଶେ ତାର ପତ୍ରସବୁକୁ ନେଇ । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଗଛ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ରଙ୍ଗର ପସରା ମେଲାଲ ବସନ୍ତି । ପତ୍ରର ଯେଉଁ ଅଂଶ କାଣ୍ଡ ସହ ଲାଗି ରହିଥାଏ ସେମାନେ ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ପ୍ରକାରର କୋଷାଧାର ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରନ୍ତି ଆଉ ପିରେପିରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ପତ୍ର ଝଡ଼ି ପଡ଼ନ୍ତି ଧରଣୀ ମାଆର ଶୀତଳ ଛାତି ଉପରେ ଆଉଜି ଶୋଇ ଯିବାକୁ ।

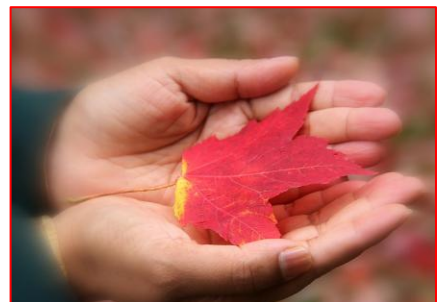
ପୃଥିବୀ ରାଣୀ ଶୀତ ଚାନ୍ଦର ଘୋଡ଼ି ହୋଇ ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟର କାନରେ କହିଦିଏ । ପତ୍ର ସବୁ ଋଷି ବସିଲେଣି । ତାଙ୍କ କଅଁଳ ଗାଲ ସବୁ ରକ୍ତିମ ହୋଇଲାଣି । ତାଙ୍କୁ ମନେଇବା ବାୟୁତ୍ୱ ତୋର । ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହସେ । ଶୀତୁଆ ପବନ ଆନମନା ହୋଇ ଉଠେ । ପତ୍ର ସବୁ ଝଡ଼ିବାରେ ଲାଗନ୍ତି । ସେମାନକୁ ଆହୁରି ନିଜ ଆଡ଼କୁ ଆଉଜେଇ ପୃଥିବୀ ଶୀତକୁ ଆଦରି ନିଏ ।

**ପତ୍ରଝଡ଼ା ଋତୁର କଥା ଲଏ । ଧରଣୀ ମାଆର କଥା; ଜୀବଜଗତର ଅପୂର୍ବ ଭିଆଣ ।**

ପୁଣିଥରେ କେବେ କହିବି ତା'କଥା । ଅନନ୍ୟ - ଅପୂର୍ବ - ଅକଳ୍ପନୀୟ ।

**ପ୍ରଭୁ**

ମିଶିସାଗା, କାନାଡ଼ା







ଈଂରାଜୀ ବିଭାଗ

ENGLISH  
SECTION





କବିତା

POETRY

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## || RED SHELLS ||

Red shells, scattered like embers on the sand,  
Each a fragment of a past mistake,  
a fiery memory singed onto a fragile form.  
Some are smooth, worn by the tide's constant apology,  
The sting of regret softened by the ocean's endless churn.

Others, jagged and sharp, hold the raw ache of fury,  
a crimson skeleton housing a storm that refuses to settle.  
They whisper of moments when pride flared too bright,  
until it lashes out like fire on the dry forest floor  
Scorching the landscape of connections, leaving only ash.

Then there are the shells, dull and heavy,  
burdened with the weight  
Of unspoken words  
They are the colors of grief, a muted maroon,  
for dreams unfulfilled, a dusty rose for love lost.

These shells, they press against my chest,  
a constant reminder of the battles fought, the scars earned.  
They whisper doubts, a chorus of "what ifs"  
that echo in the hollow chambers of my heart.



But the ocean, wise and relentless, continues its work.

It softens the shells, smooths the edges,  
bleaches the crimson to a soft pink.

And with each crashing wave, a tiny voice whispers inside me,  
a voice that sounds like seashells and salty spray.

It tells me the story of the oyster  
how a grain of sand becomes a pearl.

These red shells are not just fragments of failure,  
but testaments to resilience.

They are the raw materials from which strength is built.

And like the beach, forever changing, forever beautiful,  
I too can transform.

The red shells, once a burden, can become mosaics,  
a story etched in the colors of my past,  
a testament to my capacity to overcome.

the lessons learned ,  
the battles weathered.

**Arlene Nayak**

**Camarillo, California**





## || EQUINOCTIAL THOUGHTS ||

The Autumnal Equinox, marking  
the beginning of a new season,  
reminds me to meditate mindfully  
with a beginner's mind.

The imminent change of season  
will become prominent soon  
days becoming shorter, nights longer  
sun setting earlier, rising later  
average temperatures dropping  
leaves changing colors, falling.

I remember that change  
is the only certainty in life  
that is occurring all the time  
whether we notice it or not.

The Autumnal Equinox reminds me  
to appreciate beauty and joy  
with gratitude when present, but  
at its time of passing, to let it go:  
the moderate weather  
colors of the season  
sightings of migrating birds  
holidays with friends, family  
and community.



Equal lengths of day and night  
the balance of darkness and light  
remind me to balance my reactions  
to the opposites encountered  
in life such as pain and pleasure  
noticing them equally without  
clinging to or pushing away  
to balance my energy by noticing  
and equalizing activities  
that nourish and deplete energy  
for self-care and care of others.

Tales of resilience, written abundantly  
in Nature, are visible in the backyard!  
How trees slow down their growth  
to focus on what is most needed!  
How leaves die a colorful death  
for trees to survive the cold winter!  
How squirrels dig and scatter  
food that stays safe and sound  
in their pantry underground!  
How birds migrate to safety  
flying thousands of miles  
of unimaginable distance  
using their tiny wings!





I remember that we human  
beings are born of Nature  
with tales of resilience too!

**Mamata Misra**

**Austin, Texas**





৭৭৯

ESSAY



## || Shakti Cycles: The Chausathi Yogini Temple of Hirapur ||



**The Yoginis. PC: Suchitra G. Das**

Chausathi Yogini Temple at Hirapur is a poetry of feminine power, engraved on stone, once lost to the ravages of iconoclasm and time. It is, in short, the Poem of Shakti. The temple is dedicated to the sixty-four manifestations of Goddess Parvati, who symbolizes the creative energy of the



universe. Considered to be a Shakti Peetha, it was the center of Tantrism during the 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries in Ekamra Kshetra, now known as Bhubaneswar, Odisha's capital city. The genius of structural conception and beauty of the sculptures are as astonishing as the manner in which they were laid to waste, in terms of destruction of the temple and the Yogini statues. I will delve, in my experience of visiting the temple, into the aesthetics, architecture, and sculpture of the monument, as they confirm and reinforce the concept of the cyclical nature of existence as a constant source of energy.

What is the significance of the cycle? From a layman's point of view, geometrically speaking it is a circle that is endless, not to be confused with infinity. Infinity, too, goes on forever, but a circle has no intersection. No pause, or point of beginning or end. Each cycle enriches, enhances and feeds the next cycle. The circle is an incredible symbol of energy, of unceasing movement and activity. Logically speaking, more the activity, more the creation. I feel it's another dimension. Look around you. The moon, the earth, the sun, all the planets, all the orbits, time, everything follows the principle of a circular path or cyclical repetition. Repetition of cycles is what makes life exist and evolve. Closer to home: our calendar, routines, body clocks and menstruation follow the cyclical path. What appears to be linear, really, is not. So, bearing this definition in mind, we go back to the subject of the Chausathi Yogini Temple which is conveying the cyclical nature of existence.

I learned about the Chausathi Yogini Temple as a student of Ancient Indian History and Culture. Ever since it has held an undying fascination for me. Having studied the art, science and structure of Hindu temples, the pre-conceived notion of what a Hindu temple should look like





was already stamped in my consciousness. The Chausathi Yogini Temple was everything contrary to the soaring, massive and solid structures of the Kalingan style of temples. Strange stories abounded about the Chausathi Yogini temple, one being it was haunted by malignant forces since tantrism was practiced there. Another, if one enters the temple, they will not come out alive for the Yoginis are daahaanis, or witches, who suck human blood. Yet another, of getting possessed by the Yoginis. The ancient practice of animal sacrifice gave rise to the fear that the Yoginis thirst for flesh and blood. Such stories cultivated fear and neglect of the site. This fear drove the denial of any knowledge of the temple. On the contrary, I was intrigued that people, in this day and age, still believed the temple was a dangerous place to visit. Why would anyone be afraid of the Yoginis who are manifestations of the great Mother Goddess? Mother, by definition, is the nurturer and protector. And who is the Mother Goddess? Isn't she Shakti, the power and force within us all?

To find out its secret, to visit a sacred place and to satisfy a curiosity, my father, sister, and I visited the temple on January 5, 2020. Our obstacles to visit the place started right off. We were supposed to travel from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar and another 20 km to Hirapur. First, our driver refused to go there. He wouldn't tell us why, but the incredulous look on his face brought to mind the negative stories. Having no other recourse, we asked a few autorickshaw drivers, who refused as well. We pressed on, intrigued by this attitude. Finally, an autorickshaw stopped for us. The driver had no idea where the temple was, but agreed to take us. We asked him how he didn't know about the Chausathi Yogini temple. He said he was not from Odisha, but from Telangana. No wonder he agreed. After mapping it, we



reached the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, and even Google maps confused us, the roads being undocumented. We asked pedestrians and shopkeepers the direction to the temple, but most of them refused to tell, except one who lived nearest to the temple vicinity. As we continued, we stopped at a Devi temple to pay our obeisance. A few kilometers further, we turned into a narrow lane leading that was obscured by vegetation and trees. After a long winding path, we reached the village of Hirapur. It was 3pm in the afternoon.

Tucked within the village, surrounded by paddy fields and the Mahamaya Pushkarini, located on the eastern bank of the river Kuakhai, was the Chausathi Yogini Temple. As we alighted from the rickshaw, a cemented foreground and an elevated stage, shaded by a banyan tree, met our sight. We were told by a villager that dance performances were held during the months of October-November. On our right was a large pokhari. On our left, a few feet away, was the entrance to the temple. A notice board informed the temple was recognized as an important Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites by the Archaeological Survey of India. A petition to include the temple as a World Heritage Site had been submitted to UNESCO. Enclosed in the gated compound, some distance away was the appearance of a ruined temple. We stepped into the cobbled brick pathway towards it. On the left side of the pathway was a small white shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva facing an anthill. The anthill, about 4 feet high was draped with a piece of red cloth, and pierced with a trident. After paying our obeisance, we proceeded. The compound was a garden-like area with well-manicured lawns, lined with flower bushes and trees. As I got closer to the temple, silence descended on me.

This temple was tiny and compact compared to the massive



temples of Odisha. Circular and roofless, such a structure, known as a hypaethral temple, was indeed rare. Greece is known to have open roof temples such as the Temple of Jupiter, Olympus and the Temple of Apollo. Let it be noted that all the Yogini temples in India and the most famous ones, are circular hypaethral temples: Ranipur-Jharial, Bedghat, Mitaoli, and Morena, except the Khajuraho, which is rectangular. What was the purpose of an open-roofed structure? A common understanding was it provided a direct communion with the divine. In the case of the Yogini temples, open roofs were used for specific rituals that enabled the yoginis to confer and roam about in freedom. In the ancient times, cultures were agrarian, and associated with nature and animals. So, the reading of the sky, phases of the moon and constellations aided in predicting weather, seasons, and agricultural gains or losses. It wouldn't be wrong to assume that on solar and lunar eclipses, full and new moons, summer and winter solstices, when the energy levels were at its peak, venerations and sacrifices bore fruit. Imagine how the temple premises might look and feel under the glaring midday sun or the bright full moons.

Unfortunately, what we saw was the reconstructed structure as the temple was razed to the ground by an iconoclast. The Madala Panji or The Chronicles of the Jagannath Temple in Puri documents and history evidence that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an Afghani general, named Kalapahad, who served under Suleiman Durrani, the Sultan of Bengal, went on a wild rampage of destroying Hindu temples. The erstwhile king of Kalinga, Mukunda Dev, had a fallout with the Sultan over a political arrangement with Emperor Akbar and gave shelter to Ibrahim Khan Sur, a sworn enemy of the Sultan. Enraged at the perceived deception, Sulaiman sent Kalapahad to destroy all the temples





in Kalinga. The Jagannath Temple at Puri and Konark Sun Temple were the main targets and largely destroyed. Kalapahad's army not only looted the temples of its wealth and razed the structures to the ground, smashed and mutilated its statues, but also vandalized its deities. Kalapahad's trail of iconoclasm is well-documented in the collective consciousness and literature of the Odia people.

The Chausathi Yogini Temple was no exception. It, too, fell to the sword of Kalapahad and his marauding army. It lost its patronage after the destruction, and eventually faded away in the mists of time. Superstition, fear, and nature took over. It lay in obscure abandonment for centuries, buried under dirt, plants and weeds. In ruins and forgotten, it wasn't until the Odisha State Museum archeologist and historian, Sri Kedarnath Mohapatra, stumbled upon the ruins in 1953. Blocks of sandstone and broken female statues were scattered around the area near a visible foundation. Mohapatra arranged the blocks on the foundation. What emerged was a wall, less than 9ft in height and 30ft in diameter. No other materials were available to close the structure from the top. The final structure was connected by a vestibule that served as an entrance to a circular open-roofed temple surrounding a rectangular platform. Based on the research and study of Shakta and Tantric traditions, and other Yogini temples in India, the female statues were inserted in the niches of the sandstone blocks. The statue of Shiva was placed in the rectangular platform. The temple was believed to have been built in the 9th or 10th century CE by Queen Hira Debi of the Bhauma Dynasty. Imagine how grand it must have been in its original form. After the temple was reconstructed, worship of the Yoginis returned. Inhabitants of the nearby village brought the temple back to life through their devotion and ancient



beliefs. After all, it was one of the Shakti Peethas of the Tantric tradition. I will refrain from discussing Tantrism due to the expanse of its treatise, practice and symbolism. For further reading on this subject, *The Yogini Cult and Temples: A Tantric Tradition* by Vidya Dehejia is a must read for anyone who wants to know more. Ironically, it was this tantric association that kept people away.

Returning to the survey of the temple, I noticed the vestibule entrance was barely 5ft high. On its right, was a high platform, probably known as the jagamohan or natya mandap. The plinth level of the circular structure was much lower than the mandap. Most probably, the temple's plinth level was the same as, or higher than the mandap. The entrance was flanked by two guardian statues known as dvarapalas. In the vestibule, two faceless statues carved from sandstone flanked either side: on the right-Kaal Bhairav with a katari and skull-cup; left-Bikaal Bhairav drinking blood from a skull-cup. Though time had ravaged their faces, their stance, with caved-in stomachs, garland of skulls and raised weapons made them appear fearsome. The moment we passed through the vestibule and emerged into the courtyard circle, I, personally, experienced an indescribable emotion. An imaginary spider scampered up my back and goosebumps covered my arms. Nothing had prepared me for what I saw. I couldn't tell if it was the environment—not a bird call nor rustle of the leaves or any kind of sound—or it was I, who felt the hush from within. For some inexplicable reason, words failed to describe the emotion that passed through me at that moment. There was something awe-inspiring about the manner in which the Yoginis stood, side by side, fitted into niches that looked like individual shrines, sixty of them in a circle. As if in a trance, I first walked the entire circle from the first



yogini to the 60th. They spoke without speaking. They moved without moving. Something shifted within me. I felt like being in a womb, warmth and a wall protecting me. They inspired reverence. I visualized them as whole even though they were desecrated.

The remaining four Yoginis, three Kaal Bhairavas and the Ekapad Shiva were enshrined in a rectangular mandap at the center of the sanctum. The missing 61<sup>st</sup> Yogini, Sarva Mangala, made me wonder. What was she wearing, what was her face and hairdo like? What animal was she standing on? But most of all, where was she? Was she destroyed? Or stolen? Was she at any museum in the world, or was she a part of a private collection? The Shiva image was also stolen soon after its reconstruction. It is common knowledge that statues from ancient temples and structures have been looted and sold for millions and grace museums all over the world. An eye-opening essay titled: *The Plunder of Sacred Heritage: Stolen Hindu Idols and Sculptures in Foreign Museums* published by the Rare Book Society of India throws light on the second round of invasion: the ongoing plunder and desecration of the Hindu heritage.

As we explored the premises, entranced by the scene before us, a temple priest approached us. He shared the story of the temple. Goddess Durga assumed the form of 64 Yoginis to defeat a demon named Mahisasura. Day and night, the Yoginis fought the demon and his army, killing and feasting on their flesh and blood. Upon victory, the Yoginis or the manifestations of Durga, requested to be commemorated in a shrine dedicated to them. He pointed to each of the statues, starting from the left side and reeled off the names of each Yogini:





- |                   |                   |                  |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1)Chandika,       | 27)Biraja,        | 53)Aditi,        |
| 2)Tara,           | 28)Vikatanayana,  | 54)Chandrakanti, |
| 3)Narmada,        | 29)Mahalakshmi,   | 55)Vayuvega,     |
| 4)Yamuna,         | 30)Kaumari,       | 56)Chamunda,     |
| 5)Mahananda,      | 31)Mahamaya,      | 57)Maruti,       |
| 6)Varuni,         | 32)Rati,          | 58)Ganga,        |
| 7)Gauri,          | 33)Karkari,       | 59)Dhoomavati,   |
| 8)Indrani,        | 34)Sarpasha,      | 60)Gandhari,     |
| 9)Varahi,         | 35)Yosha,         | 61)SarvaMangala, |
| 10)Padmavati,     | 36)Aghora,        | (62)Ajita,       |
| 11)Ushtragriva    | 37)Rudrakali,     | 63)Surya Putri,  |
| 12)Vaishnavi,     | 38)Vinayaki,      | 64) Vayuveena.   |
| 13)Panchavarahi,  | 39)Bindhyabalini, |                  |
| 14)Vadyarupi,     | 40)Abhayaa,       |                  |
| 15)Charchika,     | 41)Maheswari,     |                  |
| 16)Betali,        | 42)Ambika,        |                  |
| 17)Chinnamastaka, | 43)Kamayani,      |                  |
| 18)Bindhyavasini, | 44)Ghatabhari,    |                  |
| 19)Jalakamini,    | 45)Stutee,        |                  |
| 20)Ghatavarahi,   | 46) Kali,         |                  |
| 21)Kakarali,      | 47)Uma,           |                  |
| 22)Saraswati,     | 48)Narayani,      |                  |
| 23)Birupa,        | 49)Samudri,       |                  |
| 24)Kuaveri,       | 50)Brahmani,      |                  |
| 25)Bhalluka,      | 51)Jwalamukhi,    |                  |
| 26)Narasimhi,     | 52)Agneyi,        |                  |



Why were people afraid of coming here? He answered that in the past the temple was simply a place for Devi worship, and where kings used to pray for victory in battles. They kept manasik to destroy their enemies. Some centuries later, it came under the fold of Tantrism. When people didn't know or have an understanding of the true meaning of Tantra and its purpose, they tended to be either fearful or abusive of the practice. Nowadays, it is a living temple and place of worship of the Goddess Mahamaya. For me, the temple was a masterpiece of human creativity, so I couldn't understand this fear. Perhaps, it was a psychological reaction to something unknown. Even though it had been resurrected from ruins and lost its original splendor, I marveled at the brilliancy of inception, the creativity of thought and flawlessness of execution. What I mean is, there are sixty-four Yoginis in a circular enclave, conferencing with the Lord of Consciousness, Shiva. We have heard of the Nava Rasa or the nine emotions—joy, sadness, anger, pity, disgust, fear, shock, love, hate, in Indian dance and musical arts, that epitomize human emotion. Here, the Yoginis represented the rasa of life in all its complexities, call it an extension of the mind from the benign to the malevolent, symbolizing shakti from the maternal to warrior to destroyer. The circular form represented the cycle of time, cosmic order and infinite flow of energy. Furthermore, the temple reminded me of equality where no one person was the authority. Instead, all the Yoginis had equal rights, the democracy of being heard. Imagine, in the 9th or 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, women had a right to be heard, participate in important decisions and give their viewpoints. What power the queen must have possessed to build a temple that declared women's right to freedom in every possible avenue, be it adornment, activities, protectiveness, or defense.



Standing amidst the circular structure, a sharpened sense of the self, infused by power emanating from each Yogini, engulfed me. Something like a center of energy. It reminded me of the creation of Durga. That energy was clearly present in a strange way. Of being surrounded by feminine and maternal protection, like all the yoginis were investing me with their shakti, empowering and liberating me. I confirm with Vidya Dehejia when she says, “Hirapur is the smallest of all Yogini temples and measures only thirty feet in diameter, with stone walls barely eight feet high. Yet the atmosphere that exists within this temple is quite awe-inspiring. This miniature circle conveys an impression of overwhelming power and seems to transmit the potency and dynamic strength of its sixty-four Yoginis.” (Dehejia, *Yogini Cult and Temples: A Tantric Tradition*, p.104)

Appearance-wise, each Yogini was about 18”-20” tall and fixed into a rectangular shrine in the inner wall of the temple. Delicately carved faces, soft torsos and rounded thighs distinctly echo the Kalingan style of sculpture comparable to the Muktesvara Temple nearby. Their faces, bodies and limbs appeared to be in suspended animation. Each stood on a mount which was either an animal, plant or human. Slender-waisted and heavy-bosomed, the yoginis indolently posed on their pedestals with lips and eyes—those who weren’t defaced—that gently smiled and made them alluring. Some of the yoginis had animal heads, but that didn’t detract from their beauty. Every one of them wore finely carved girdles above skirts that were defined only by lines etched on their thighs or around the ankles. They were adorned with ornaments like necklaces, bangles, armlets, rings, nose rings and earrings, anklets, and hair accessories. Most of them had elaborate hairdos and some had flowing hair, either wild, straight or wavy. They were





standing either straight, or in tribhanga positions, while others were sitting. Most of the Yoginis had two arms while sixteen of them had four, and one, had eight. Only one Yogini, Chamunda, shocked, in her emaciated form. With breasts suspended low and a visible ribcage, Chamunda held a lion's skin above her head and stood on a deer, representing the power of shakti that destroyed evil forces.

What made me sad was the destruction of such an exquisite form of art and architecture. The partial figurines convey an exquisiteness that couldn't be destroyed, but once lay in ruins. A text in the Persian language on the history of Bengal entitled *Riyaz-us-Salatin* states, "Of the miracles of Kalapahad, one was this, that whenever in that country, the sound of his drum reached, the hands and the feet, the ears and the noses of the idols, worshipped by the Hindus, fell off their stone-figures, so that even now stone-idols, with hands and feet broken, and noses and ears cut off, are lying at several places in that country." (Zaidpuri 1902, 18)." As a practice, during the invasions and occupation of Indian territories, Muslim rulers in India employed outsiders and mercenaries to vandalize and destroy Hindu temples. Chlorite is a hard stone, also known as muguni in Odia, yet almost all faces of the Yoginis were slashed and noses knocked off. Many Yogini's breasts were hacked off. Their hands were broken at the elbow. Legs missing. What must have passed through Kalapahad's mind when he was destroying them. Was their femininity too intimidating? Is their sensuousness too provocative? The Yoginis' stance. Their power. Or was it fear? Did mutilation of the faces, remind him of his own fears. If we could see their faces, especially the Yoginis in aggressive poses, wouldn't they have been challenging? Perhaps it was a psychological reaction to being nourished,



aroused and defied by the female gender. Women were to be subjugated, not put on pedestals or worshipped. Otherwise, how does one explain such rage? One can argue that idolatry goes against the tenets of a certain faith—which is one of the main reasons for the destruction of thousands of temples in India—but does art not evoke admiration and go beyond beliefs? I think iconoclasm has everything to do with power. Destruction, violence and vandalism were governing policies of control. By destroying cultural markers and social fabrics, ruling powers systematically brought large populations to heel and submit. But Shakti never dies as evidenced by the temple resuscitated from the ruins, symbolized by the Goddess Mahamaya in whose honor a lamp has been burning ever since. This simple act also reinforces the movement of the universe that is constantly regenerating through energy cycles. So, for the last 75 years, the temple priests never allowed the lamp to snuff out. After marveling at the Yoginis' loveliness, I exited the temple, and went around the outer wall, which had nine Katyayanis, in striking poses. Made of sandstone and much better preserved than the vestibule images, the Katyayanis were adorned with jewelry, flowers, posing on severed human heads and flanked by other female and animal figures. Dehejia states they could be the nine forms of Durga. Viewing the temple from the jagamohan or natya mandap, I realized it resembled a yoni with the linga-like rectangular mandap, symbolizing the union of Shiva and Parvati, of consciousness and shakti, which the universe emerged from.

As I gazed upon the Yoginis, I wondered about the craftsmen who infused stones with such animate spirit. The indulgent smiles on the yoginis' lips, their suspended movement, and their emotions that held me in thrall. Were the soft smiles evoking the joy of life? Were the weapon-wielding



Yoginis always ready to destroy evil and protect the vulnerable? What did they do under the night sky when the humans slept? Why did they congregate and what did they discuss about the world of the mortals? They stirred the depths of my mind and churned the pit of my stomach. What were the yoginis conveying to me? I, too, sent my questions out to the universe. The connection of the mortal body with the infinite mind, of the ordinary with the divine, of time with the absence of time, of the cyclical and temporal nature of the universe. The cycle of life. The circle of death and regeneration. Never ending, energizing, empowering.

The sun was starting its descent into the horizon. Dusk was sliding in. It was time for us to leave too. But I knew I would be back.

### About me...

*Suchitra G. Das is a writer from the Bay Area. She has an M.A.(English), M. Phil (Latin American Lit.) and MFA(Fellow) in Creative Writing from USFCA. She enjoys writing fiction, poetry, and about culture, society and literature. Currently, she is engaged in completing her first WIP novel. To read more on culture, her Substack, Maati: Indian Culture Vibes explores some of her interests. She also runs a podcast Krishna Said, an ongoing 12-part series of stories from the Sarala Mahabharata translated into English by her.*

**Suchitra G. Das**

**California**







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CONVENTION  
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## || OSA 2025 Convention – Another Year of Rich Memories ||

This year was our 25<sup>th</sup> year of attending OSA convention in person. We missed 3 years of attending OSA convention in person from 2000-2022. It was a lot of excitement, because such types of gatherings also remind us of the Covid-19 era and how all those moments have become luxury and so precious in life.

My sincere thanks to the hardworking and dedicated Convention Organizing Team, especially Convenor Tapan Padhi and the 2023-2025 OSA Executive Committee, for giving all participants such wonderful memories to take back home. I had the opportunity to attend and participate in many programs, including:

- Meeting and Greeting
- Walk of Art
- Book Exhibition
- Pitha Competition
- Kusumanjali – Morning Bhajan
- Inauguration Events
- Children Talent Show – Junior
- Womens' Forum
- The documentary on Jayant Mohapatra
- Pappu Pom Pom Show
- Cross Chapter Folk Dances
- Performance by Manas Pritam and Keka Ghosal
- Subrina Biswal Dance Competition
- Pramode Patnaik Drama Competition
- GBM
- Special Presentation on Dr Digambar Mishra
- Pala
- Poetry Reading
- Odia Vocabulary Competition
- Tribute to Uttam Mohanty

As one can see, the range of programs was vast. I sincerely appreciate the coordinators for managing such a diverse and packed schedule that catered to participants of all generations and age groups.



Unfortunately, I missed a few events such as *Champu-Chhanda-Odissi*, the Odissi Festival, Senior Talent Shows, and some chapter dramas, which I would have loved to attend. Nevertheless, I am grateful for the sessions I could participate in and returned home with many cherished memories.

I will share a little more about a few programs.

### **Meeting and Greeting:**

As soon as we reached the hotel around 12:30 PM on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, we were greeted by the volunteers. After we checked in with the hotel, we were offered to go for lunch, although we preferred to go to the hotel room and take rest for a while. We were offered water bottles which we accepted gracefully. That was such a nice gesture.

During the three days of the convention, I met many old friends, made new ones, and reconnected with extended family members, some for the first time and others after a long gap.

Mainly, I was impressed by the host chapter's public relation team members. Swati Sambhedana, whom I did not know before, became a known face just after we met. Despite their many responsibilities, the PR volunteers were always courteous and helpful.

### **Walk of Art:**

After resting for a while on July 3<sup>rd</sup> I went to the registration desk and the registration was smooth as there were not many people by then. There was artwork throughout the path that led from the residential side of the hotel towards the conference center. I took pictures as I walked. The artworks were beautifully designed with traditional Odia touch. The village house with *jhoti* and lanterns, Pipili umbrellas, Odisha sarees and the red-carpet area, all were so elegant that one would not like to leave the area without taking a picture for the memory.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, the artist's imagination was reflected on the main stage. Lord Jagannath was in the middle of the stage with beautiful decorations. That was such a blissful feeling. I appreciated the decoration team for their imagination and implementation.



### **Book Exhibition:**

The book exhibition was upstairs, in Dhauli room. Initially, I had some difficulty in finding the room, however, volunteers helped. When I visited the book exhibition for the first time on July 3<sup>rd</sup> afternoon, a few people were checking the titles of the books that were on display. There was art display in the same room.

I took some friends with me and visited the exhibition in the evening again. I also visited the exhibition on July 4<sup>th</sup>, and we had a discussion on moving the book exhibition to the main area near the main ballroom where people can find it easily. That was done on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to the hard work and perseverance of Satya Babu for arranging something extra special for the convention participants.

### **Pitha competition:**

When I was in the book exhibition room on July 3<sup>rd</sup> afternoon, one of the visitors talked about Pitha competition. I never attended any Pitha competition event before. Out of curiosity, I went to explore. Several Odia delicacy cakes, Kakara pitha, chitou pitha etc were on display and there were quizzes on various pithas with their origin and tradition. There was also the testing opportunity. It was fun. I tasted some of the pithas and was happy that I attended the event.

### **Documentary Film on Dr Jayant Mohapatra, Women's Forum and Children Talent Show:**

In the afternoon of July 3<sup>rd</sup>, attended the film on Dr Jayant Mohapatra which was upstairs. That was being done in parallel with women's forum in the adjacent room. Watched the film for some time. Jayant sir was my physics lecturer during my B.Sc. First, I knew him as physics lecturer and then as a writer. After watching film for a while went to attend the women's forum. The talent show was also going on in parallel. After the women's forum I came to attend the talent show. I attended a few performances. I was very much amazed by the cultural skills of the children.

### **Kusumanjali – Morning Bhajan**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup> night, I checked the room for the morning bhajan program next day. It was easy to find the room as there was a poster of bhajan participants outside the designated “Khandagiri” room.





On July 4<sup>th</sup>, I got up early in the morning to attend morning bhajan that was scheduled to start at 6:30 AM. By the time I arrived, all of the organizers were there and a few Bhajan singers. The program started a little late even though many were present. It was because of the technicians and some of the singers who had signed up to sing but were not seen. It was a nice feeling to meet some known friends and got to know some new singers. The best thing was that breakfast was served in the same room.

Bhajan program also continued on July 5<sup>th</sup> morning. I appreciate the effort of the organizers Surath Rath and Sukanta Mishra for getting up early and setting up the room.

### **Inauguration Events:**

The inauguration in the morning of July 4<sup>th</sup> included several events. Inauguration puja part, welcome song, dances and the meeting.

After bhajan, I went to attend the inauguration program. Seeing Lord Jagannath in the middle of the stage was a blissful feeling. However, inauguration was delayed. There was Puja of Lord Jagannath followed by blessings by two sadhus. After that inauguration song was presented by about 40 men and women. I was so much appreciative of the Odisha sarees of different colors and designs. The stage was looking gorgeous, and the side displays were also highlighting the performances on the stage.

After the inauguration song, Indian National Anthem followed by the national anthems of USA and Canada were presented.

The inauguration meeting was formally started with the release of OSA Annual Souvenir URMI followed by speeches, awards and acknowledgements. This was followed by the dance part which was mainly presented by SW chapter with a few dances where other chapters participated. By the time inauguration program ended it was too late for lunch. We stood in the line for about 45-50 minutes. Everybody was there in the dining hall. Although it was waiting, it was enjoyable to see everybody, watch others in their activities. There were varieties of food. The nice part of it was that there was live music when we were all eating.

The regular structure of the inauguration program was changed. So, I was not sure what would follow what. However, finally the meeting happened, and all the elements of the inauguration program were presented.



### **Odia Vocabulary Competition:**

Odia vocabulary competition was held on July 4<sup>th</sup> upstairs in Dhauli Room. It was supposed to be held in Khandagiri room, that was adjacent to the main cultural hall, Barabati. The room was changed at the last minute but was communicated to all the participants. As a judge I was amazed by the Odia language knowledge of the children. Many of the children did very well in the written and verbal questions. The children had done the homework carefully, going through all the words given by the organizers.

### **Special Presentation on Dr Digambar Mishra**

There was a special presentation on the main stage for Dr Digambar Mishra on July 5<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon. Dr Digambar Mishra was a past president of OSA and has a lot of contribution in member recruitment in nineteen nineties. His method of persuasion to convince newly arrived Odias to become OSA members was unique. Several past presidents of OSA that were attending the convention were gathered on the stage to share a few words on Dr Mishra. Dr Jyotsna Mishra was accompanied by her daughter Likun Mishra, a past OSA editor. They shared their personal experiences on Dr Digambar Mishra's devotion to OSA and Odias. It was a good gesture by the convention team and OSA executive team to organize such an event.

### **Poetry Reading:**

Odia Poetry Reading has become an integral part of OSA convention since 1999. It started in 1996 at the OSA DC convention. However, from 1999, it has become regular in conventions. This year it was being held upstairs in Dhauli room from 4:00 to 5:30 PM. I arrived a little late because of the special program. It was full of many enthusiastic audience members. Dhauli was a small room with no air to escape. Some people were standing outside. Many new poets recited their poems for the first time. I saw them for the first time in the Poetry reading sessions. I felt happy that there are many Odia writers now in OSA. The session was coordinated by Saswat Mohapatra, and the session was managed by Prachi Mohanty.

The poetry reading session was followed by the discussion on Bhanja Sahitya which was supposed to take place on July 4<sup>th</sup> but was postponed because of the delayed schedule.



### **GBM:**

The GBM took place in the Khandagiri room, instead of the main hall. The meeting flow was smooth following the order of the items on the agenda. Next year's convention in 2026 was awarded to Minnesota Chapter. New executives were welcomed and they presented their vision for the next 2 years. They shared the information about grievance team, finance team and editorial team. The meeting was supposed to start at 9 AM, but started around 9:30 PM. Accordingly, the meeting ended on time. However, several seminars and cultural programs were supposed to start at 11:00 AM and a few members left around 11:00 AM.

GBM should have been held in the main room. There was a big question on everybody's mind, "why not in the main ballroom". There was a reason for keeping the main room all set to start Pramod Pattnaik drama competition on time at 11 AM. The solution could have been some transition time. It is also understood that because of the large number of programs it was difficult to have the luxury of the transition time between programs/events. A balanced solution must be found for future conventions.

### **Pala:**

Pala was presented by OSA DC chapter members on July 4<sup>th</sup> afternoon. It was supposed to start at 3:15 Pm. Because of the program delay, it started late around 4:40 PM. Many members sitting near me were so excited about Pala, even though we do have Pala programs at least once or twice in our programs in DC area.

It was a good feeling that many appreciated Pala, the traditional playing of mrudangam with karatala and jhanja accompanied by singing. Dr Devraj Sahu was gayaka and he was accompanied by Dr Naresh Das (mrudanga), Krishna Debata (harmonium and singing), Dr Nrusingha Biswal (singing and questioning), Swagatika Mohanty and Smita Padhy (Singing and Jhanja), Srnibash Sahoo (Karatala).



### Other Shows:

I attended the Pappu Pom Pom show on July 3rd, but it was quite late, past 11 PM and since I had to get up early the next morning for the bhajan program, I watched for a while and then left. The same was true for the performances by Manas Pritam and Keka Ghosal on July 4th, which also went on late into the night. On July 5th, I did not attend any late-night programs, as we had to leave the hotel at 4 AM on July 6th.

I was happy to represent our Washington DC chapter as a participant in the Pramod Patnaik Drama Competition, the Cross-Chapter Folk Dance, and the Tribute to Uttam Mohanty program.

Overall, a big shout-out to the 2025 Convention Organizing Team and the 2023–2025 OSA Executive Committee. OSA has grown substantially, and we now have multiple generations and age groups with diverse interests and expectations. Yet, we continue to follow the same 2–3-day convention structure that we had 15–20 years ago. It may be time to consider adding at least one more day to allow for smoother transitions and better engagement. In another 10–15 years, we may even need a full five-day convention.

**Dr. Bigyani Das**  
**Dayton, MD**







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OSA CHAPTER  
&  
COMMITTEES



## || OSA Odia Learning Team Report ||

Team Members: Sujata Patnaik (Chicago), Ullasini Sahoo (Carolinas), Bigyani Das (Washington DC), Smita Panda (Georgia), Nilasundar Jena (NYNJ), Ranjita Mishra (NYNJ)

New OOL team for 2025-2027 OSA year was established in August 2025. The team included 3 past members and 3 new members. A meeting was held among the team members to discuss steps for starting Odia language teaching professionally from September 2025. The decision was taken to offer Level 1 classes and Level 2 classes. About 15 students had appeared Level 1 examination last year. Level 2 curriculum was selected for them.

We published two books in Amazon. One was completely Level 1 with identical information as in OSA KidsLipi App. Another book contained extra contents for Level 1 and contents for Level 2. PDF copies of those books were circulated among the students.

Around 100 students submitted registration form expressing their interest in Odia lessons. A public information meeting was held on September 5, 2025. Classes started on September 7, 2025. Currently, 4 different types of classrooms are considered taking into account the grade levels of the students as well as to keep the classroom size below 15. Classes are offered through zoom, and students are fully engaged in their classroom activities. The class levels are:

**For Level 1:**  
**KG-Grade 2**  
**Grade 3 – Grade 5**  
**Grade 6 - Grade 12**  
**Above Grade Level & Adults**

**For Level 2:**  
**Only one class is offered now**

Classes are offered both in the morning and afternoon considering different time zones.



For next year, Level 3 class will be offered for those that complete Level 2 this year.

We will soon announce Level 1 test dates for the students that had completed Level 1 curriculum last year but could not appear for the test.

We thank some volunteer teachers that are teaching classes as well as supporting in classroom activities.

For any questions about OOL program, please contact

[ool@odishasociety.org](mailto:ool@odishasociety.org)

**Bigyani Das**  
**On behalf of the OOL Team**

**4525 Rutherford Way**  
**Dayton, MD 21036**





## || MI-OSA (OSA, Michigan) - Forging a Connected Future ||

The MI-OSA Executive Team, after taking ownership for the 2025-2027 term, prioritized community revitalization, digital connectivity, and high-energy engagement. Recent events have already demonstrated a significant increase in family participation.

We've successfully built bridges across generations and interests, moving from planning to impactful execution in a remarkably short time. The following sections detail the key achievements that have redefined community participation and established a clear, vibrant direction for MI-OSA.



Pic: Transition of leadership from the previous Executive Committee (right) to the new Executive Committee (left).





The most significant early strategic achievement was the creation of a **multi-tiered WhatsApp Community Structure**. Recognizing that one communication channel does not fit all, we introduced dedicated, focused groups to cater to the diverse needs and mindsets within our community.

- **MI-OSA Announcements:** The primary broadcast channel for all official announcements.
- **MI-OSA General:** A channel to communicate with all the people living in Michigan
- **MI-OSA Members:** A private group for the core voting membership and administrative discussions.
- **MI-OSA Sports & Activity:** A high-engagement channel for coordinating recreational events and wellness initiatives.
- **MI-OSA Help & Support:** A dedicated space for families to seek and offer localized, non-emergency assistance, reinforcing the spirit of mutual aid.

This shift has created **deeper connections** by ensuring every message is relevant to its audience, successfully segmenting generations, interests, and mindsets into productive, collaborative units.

The **India Day Parade** on August 16th was a great success with over **30+ families** joined the march, showcasing Michigan OSA chapter presence within the regional Indian diaspora.







Ganesh Puja was celebrated on September 6th with the participation of 65 Odia families. For the first time, we introduced a children-led Puja conducted alongside the priest's traditional rituals. It was a pleasant surprise to see our young children not only understand the meaning of the Puja in English but also sit attentively in one place for nearly two hours while actively participating in the ceremony.



The team coordinated absolutely stunning decorations and prepared delicious Prasad, but most importantly, the overwhelming participation from the community made this event a truly memorable experience for everyone.

**Next Event:** We are eagerly looking forward to celebrating Kumar Purnima on October 25th, an occasion that always brings great excitement and joy to our Odia families.





## || OSA, Minnesota Chapter Report ||

The Odia Society of Minnesota, an integral chapter of OSA National, has worked tirelessly and unwaveringly to keep the Odia community of Minnesota deeply connected to its culture, traditions, and the enduring pride of being Odia. Over the years, through strong leadership and the relentless efforts of community members, the bonds within the community have grown substantially, reflected in increased participation and engagement in cultural activities and gatherings.

In 2025, the year began with a vibrant New Year celebration in January. Delicious food, melodious singing, and engaging games such as *Padyantara* and card games brought together nearly 40 families, creating a warm, homelike atmosphere amid the cold Minnesota winter.

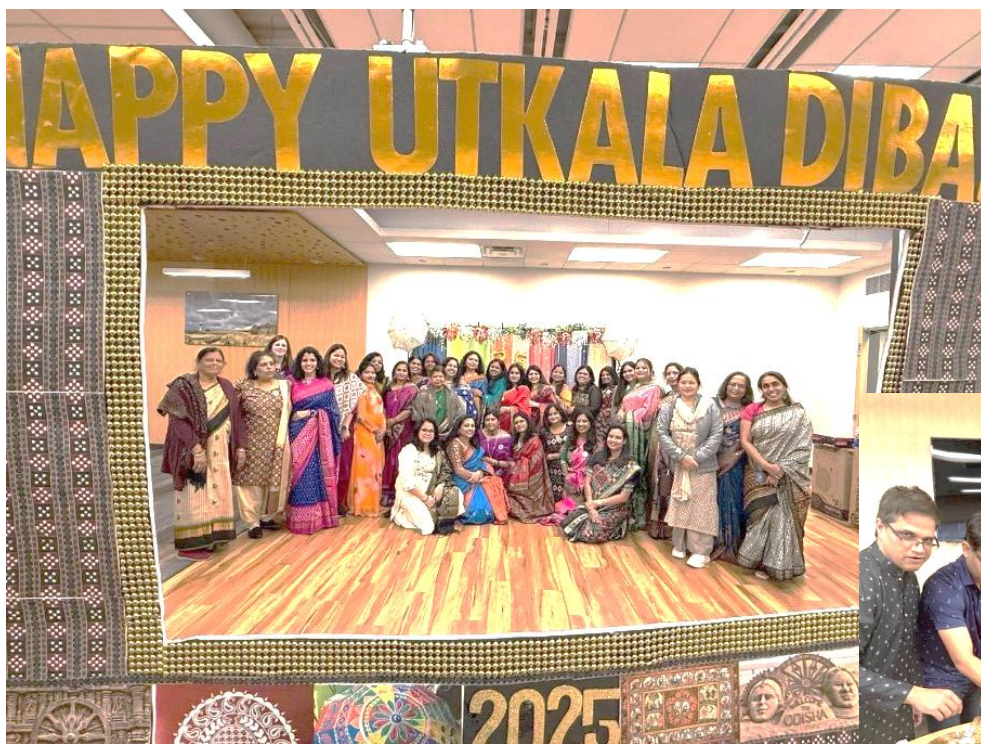


After welcoming 2025 in a joyful and festive manner, the community immediately began preparations for a day that reminds us of the struggles, strategies, and sacrifices of our ancestors in uniting the Odias and forming the independent state of Odisha—Utkal Dibasa. To make the celebration special and engaging, the community board members chose a truly creative approach to invite participation. They composed a *hasya kabita* (humorous poem) highlighting Utkal Dibasa and the planned attractions, recited it, and even filmed a video—an imaginative and delightful way to send out invitations.



The event featured an array of attractions, including delicious Odia cuisine and charming performances by children who impersonated renowned Odia personalities and celebrities. Community members enthusiastically prepared traditional dishes such as Odia-style mutton, *potala-alu rasaa*, *pariba besara*, *chenapoda*, and more—truly a mouth-watering feast! *Hatare bhangra pana* turned out to be a major attraction for everyone! And the food celebrations didn't stop there—board members also organized a delightful *pitha* competition. Many of our Odia *gruhinis* lovingly prepared and brought a wide variety of delicious *pithas* to the competition table. While some won prizes and others received consolation awards, everyone enjoyed tasting the wonderful homemade *Odia pitha*.

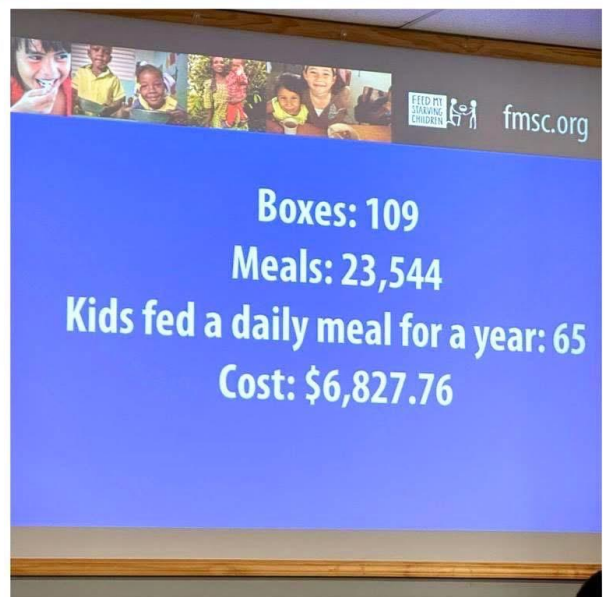
Our little impersonators were absolutely charming—accurate in Odia pronunciation and impressive in their portrayal of well-known personalities such as Nandini Satapathy, Uttam Mohanty, Biju Babu, Aparajita Das, and others. They were truly fantastic! To make the presentations even more informative and engaging, our Odia kids also created meticulous PowerPoint presentations on each character, adding great educational value to the performances.







In the month of May, our community volunteered for a greater cause by organizing a food-packing event at Feed My Starving Children. About 20 families, including children above the age of five (as per FMSC protocol), participated in this meaningful service. Together, they packed 109 boxes, providing meals for 23,544 children. As a token of appreciation, volunteers were treated to chips and ice cream, adding a cheerful end to a rewarding day of service.







The most awaited time of the year for our Odia community, Ratha Jatra, arrived with great joy and devotion. While Ratha Jatra is a Minnesota Hindu Temple event, the entire planning and execution, from rituals and finances to cooking and ratha construction, are lovingly managed and carried out by the Odia community. We take immense pride in organizing and supporting such a large-scale event for the temple.



The celebrations begin on Akshaya Tritiya with the commencement of ratha construction, followed by Debasnana Purnima and Netrotsava, when the Lords adorn Hatibesa.

All rituals are observed strictly on their respective tithis. Despite many of these auspicious days falling on weekdays, community members enthusiastically attended the events, cooked food, and offered seva. Truly, "bhajana and bhojana" strengthen the bonds within our community.





Men, women, and children alike poured their love and devotion for Jaga, Bhaina, and Bhauni, supporting the community through volunteering efforts and generous contributions to ensure a smooth and successful Rathajatra. The Lords were offered Chhapan Bhoga, lovingly prepared by community members. On Rathajatra day, a grand meal was cooked and served to nearly 800 devotees.

A beautiful cultural program followed, performed by Odia children and adults. Odissi and Kathak dances, Hindi film songs, Sambalpuri folk dance, and a fashion show showcasing traditional Odia attire and costumes were major highlights of the celebration.

Rathajatra was followed by Bahuda Jatra, observed with equal enthusiasm and again fully planned, sponsored, and executed by the Odia community. The Lords resided at the Gundicha Temple for seven days, from June 29 through July 6, and returned to the main temple on July 7. Throughout these seven days, evening rituals were performed by temple priests, followed by bhajana and bhojana at the Gundicha Temple. Community members cooked and brought food to offer to the Lords and then served it to devotees - truly an auspicious and selfless act of devotion.





The State of Minnesota has officially recognized India's Independence Day as India Day. Each year, the Indian Association of Minnesota (IAM) observes India Day on the Saturday closest to August 15, and this year it was celebrated on August 16.

Our community participated with great enthusiasm by setting up a booth that beautifully showcased the art and culture of Odisha. Community members presented a variety of traditional art forms, including Paika Nacha, Odissi, and Sambalpuri folk dance, all of which were warmly received and highly appreciated by the Minnesota audience. Here are a few glimpses from the celebration!





Did the two months of tireless effort for Ratha Jatra and the India Day celebrations make us slow down or take a break? Absolutely not! No sooner were these events concluded than we began planning a quintessential Odia favorite - “Pakhala Kansa”.

Toward the end of August, we gathered for a picnic at a reserved park, bringing together about 35–38 families. Community members lovingly prepared and shared traditional dishes such as *pakhala*, *baigana poda*, *tomato poda*, *alu bharta*, *chuin besara*, and more. The true highlights, however, were the freshly made *macha bhaja* (fish fry) and *pakudi chana*, prepared on the spot. Tea and *mudhi-mixture* were served continuously, adding to the authentic Odia flavor of the day.

The fun didn’t stop with food. Volunteers organized face painting that delighted children and even a few adults! Games like volleyball and bingo kept everyone engaged, while talented singers from within the community entertained the gathering with music. It was truly a joyful, fun-filled day that celebrated togetherness and the spirit of Odia camaraderie.



After a brief cooling-off period, we are once again enthusiastically preparing to welcome Maa Durga to our community, with the celebration planned for mid-October.

Several exciting activities are already in the pipeline, including Odia story time for children, arts and crafts programs for community members, badminton matches, and celebrations to bid farewell to 2025 and welcome 2026. We are truly blessed to be part of such a well-bonded, caring, and vibrant community.

Bande Utkala Janani! 🙏





## ॥ Odisha Society of New England (OSNE) ॥

The Odisha Society of New England (OSNE) celebrated Ganesh Puja on September 6, 2025, marking yet another highly successful event organized by the OSNE Executive Team. The celebration began with traditional Ganesh Puja rituals, including *Khadi Chuan*, *Puspanjali*, and *Prasad Seban*. Devotees enjoyed a delicious array of Prasad featuring *modak*, *mitha boondi*, *rasi laddu*, *chuda ghasa*, *kala chana*, *halwa*, and more.

The formal program opened with Ganesh Vandana, followed by updates and accomplishments shared by the outgoing Executive Team. Several recognitions and awards were presented, including the OSNE Lifetime Achievement Award, OSNE High School Senior Award, and the Avantika Memorial Odissi Dance Award, honoring outstanding contributions and achievements within the community.







The evening continued with a vibrant cultural program that provided a wonderful platform for both children and adults to showcase their talents. The program also featured the announcement of the new OSNE Executive Team for the 2025–2027 term.

The celebration concluded with a sumptuous homemade dinner lovingly prepared by community members, featuring traditional Odia dishes such as *kanika*, *dalma*, *bhaja*, *saga besara*, *paneer curry*, *amba khatta*, *chenna poda*, *kheeri*, and more. As always, the event was meticulously planned and flawlessly executed, thanks to the dedication of the Executive Team and the selfless efforts of our volunteers, who are an integral part of OSNE's continued success.

OSNE now looks forward to celebrating the 11th OSNE Kumar Purnima Utsava on October 12, 2025.

Thank you,

Priya Paul  
President, OSNE



## || OSA Rocky Mountain - Chapter Report ||

**Reporting Period:** May 2025 – September 2025

Jurisdiction states: CO, NE, WY, ND & SD

### OSARM Key Activities & Events

#### 1. Ratha Jatra

OSARM celebrated and sponsored Lunch Prasad on the first day of Ratha Jatra, distributing Prasad to approximately 1,300 devotees at the Hindu Temple & Cultural Center of the Rockies in the Denver area. The chapter also donated \$1,001 to the temple. In addition, chapter children performed an Odissi dance during the Ratha-pulling ceremony.



#### 2. Participation in 2025 OSA 56<sup>th</sup> Convention at Dallas TX

OSARM enthusiastically participated in Opening song, Fashion show & Drama “Ki Bhul Kali”! The convention offered an inspiring cultural experience featuring outstanding performances, delicious Odia cuisine, meaningful networking, and tremendous camaraderie with OSA families across North America.







### 3. Ganesh Puja

OSARM organized and celebrated Ganesh Puja at the Hindu Temple & Cultural Center of the Rockies, Denver, with homa, yagya, and pushpanjali. The chapter also prepared and distributed Lunch Prasad to approximately 500 devotees and made a donation to the temple.



### 4. Three Picnics during Summer

OSARM arranged and enjoyed three picnics this year (June 8, August 10, and September 14). The June picnic also included a joyful celebration of Raja Parba. These picnics are among our regular annual community events, where members come together to prepare traditional Odia food, play cricket and the Odia card game “29,” conduct kids’ activities, create fun reels, welcome new chapter members, and share community updates and OSA news — all while enjoying a vibrant and fun-filled gathering.







## ॥ OSA South-West - Chapter Report ॥

### ॥ ଆମ ବାର୍ଷିକ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଓ ସାମାଜିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ବିବରଣୀ - ଓସା ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଶାଖା ॥

#### କୁସୁମାଞ୍ଜଳି - ଓସା ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ପ୍ରଭାତ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା

୨୦୨୫ ଓସା ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ଡାଲାସ ସହରରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି । ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ସଫଳ ସମାପ୍ତିରେ ଚାରିଆଡୁ ଭୂୟସୀ ପ୍ରଶଂସା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହୋଇଛି । ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ଅନେକ କିଛି ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କ୍ରମ ଭିତରେ ଆମେ ପ୍ରଭାତ ଭଜନର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ କୁସୁମାଞ୍ଜଳିର ଆୟୋଜନ କରିଥିଲୁ । ପ୍ରଭାତ ଭଜନର ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟିର ସଫଳତା ପାଇଁ ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତ କଳାକାରମାନଙ୍କୁ ଓ ଆମର ସମସ୍ତ ଅତିଥିଙ୍କୁ ଅଶେଷ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଦୁଇ ଦିନର ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ସୁତାରୁ ରୂପେ ପରିଚାଳନା ପାଇଁ ସୁରଥ ରଥ, ସୁକାନ୍ତ ବଳିୟାରସିଂ, ସୁକାନ୍ତ ମିଶ୍ର, ପ୍ରଭାତ ଦାଶ, ଶାଶ୍ୱତ ମହାପାତ୍ର, ସଂଯୁକ୍ତା ମିଶ୍ର, ନୀଳମାଧବ (ନୀଲ), ସ୍ୱାତୀ ସାହୁ ଓ ଶିବରଞ୍ଜନ ମହାପାତ୍ରଙ୍କୁ ଅଶେଷ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଦୁଇଟି ସକାଳର ଭଜନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଅତି ହୃଦୟସ୍ପର୍ଶୀ ଥିଲା ।

କେତୋଟି କଥା ନିଶ୍ଚୟ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖନୀୟ । ବାଦ୍ୟ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରର ସହଯୋଗୀ କଳାକାର ଆମରି ସ୍ରୋତା ମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ କେତେଜଣ ଥିଲେ କିନ୍ତୁ ଆମକୁ ଜଣାନଥିଲା । ଡ଼ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ମିଶ୍ର (ତବଲା), ନରେଶ ଦାସ (ତବଲା) ଓ ଆଦିତ୍ୟ ଦେବତା (ତବଲା)ରେ ସହଯୋଗିତା କରିଥିଲେ । ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ମିଶ୍ର ଭଜନ ମଧ୍ୟ ପରିବେଷଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ଆଦିତ୍ୟ ୧୧ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସ୍କ ବାଳକ କଳାକାର, କୃଷ୍ଣ ଦେବତା ଙ୍କ ପୁତ୍ର । ତାର ତବଲା ବାଦନ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଆନନ୍ଦିତ କରିଥିଲା । ସମସ୍ତେ ତାର ତବଲା ବାଦନ କଳାରେ ଉତ୍ତୋରତର ଉନ୍ନତି କାମନା କରିଥିଲେ । ବନ୍ଧୁ ପ୍ରମୋଦ ବଂଶୀବାଦନରେ ସହଯୋଗିତା କରିଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ନିଜେ ବଂଶୀବାଦନରେ ଭଜନ ପରିବେଷଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ଦେବକୀ ବାବୁ, ସୁକାନ୍ତ (ମିଶ୍ର ଓ ବଳିୟାରସିଂ), ସଂଯୁକ୍ତା ହର୍ମୋନିୟମରେ ସଙ୍ଗ ଦେଇ ଭଜନ ମଧ୍ୟ ପରିବେଷଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ସୁକାନ୍ତ ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ପରିଚାଳନାରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ୭ ମିନିଟର ସାମୁହିକ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଗବତ ପାଠ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଅପା ଜଣେ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ କିନ୍ତୁ କୁସୁମାଞ୍ଜଳିରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇ ଭଜନ ପରିବେଷଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ଏହା ଆମର ଆନନ୍ଦର ବିଷୟ ଥିଲା । ଯେଉଁ କଳାକାର ମାନେ ଆଗରୁ ତାଲିକାଭୁକ୍ତ କରାଇଥିଲେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରତିଛବି ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଗୋଟିଏ ବୋର୍ଡରେ ରଖାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଏହି ବୋର୍ଡଟିର ଡିଜାଇନ୍ ବନ୍ଧୁ ସାଗର ହଜାରୀ ଅତି ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାର ସହିତ ତିଆରି କରି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଓ ତାକୁ ଆମେ କକ୍ଷ ସାମ୍ନାରେ ରଖିଥିଲୁ ।



କୁସୁମାଞ୍ଜଳି ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ମନପସନ୍ଦ ରହିଥିଲା ଓ ତାହାହିଁ ଆମର ଖୁସି । ଆମରି କଳାକାରମାନେ କଳା ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିଥିଲେ । ଡାଲାସର ବନ୍ଧୁ ସାଗର ହଜାରୀ ଅତି ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାର ସହିତ ଆମ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ପାଇଁ ପତ୍ରିକା ଓ କଳାକାରମାନଙ୍କ ଛବି ସହିତ ଗୋଟିଏ ପୋଷ୍ଟର ତିଆରି କରିଦେଇଥିଲେ । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ତରଫରୁ ଅଶେଷ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ।



## ଗାଏ ତୁମ୍ଭ ଗୀତ – ଭଞ୍ଜ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର ଗୋଟିଏ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ (ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ ର ଷଷ୍ଠ ଅଧିବେଶନ)

ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ କ୍ରମରେ ଆମେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ଆୟୋଜନ କରିଥାଉ । ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ମୂଳ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ହେଲା କଳା ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ପରମ୍ପରାର ପ୍ରସାର ଓ ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟତା ବଢାଇବା । ସଂଗୀତ, ନୃତ୍ୟ, ଚଳଚ୍ଚିତ୍ର, ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ଜଡିତ ପରମ୍ପରା ଗୁଡିକ ଉପରେ ଆଧାରିତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଆୟୋଜନ କରି ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ଦେବା ଓ ତା ସହିତ କିଛିଟା ଆର୍ଥିକ ସହାୟତା ଦେବା ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଗୁଡିକର ମୂଳ ଲକ୍ଷ । ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ୩୧ ତାରିଖ ସକାଳ ବେଳାରେ ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟିକୁ ଡୁମ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ର ସିନେମା ସ୍ଥଡ଼ିଓ ରୁ ପ୍ରସାରିତ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟି ଆମେ ଓସା ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଶାଖା ଓ ହୁଏଟ୍ସନ ସ୍ଥିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସଂସ୍କୃତିକ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ତରଫରୁ ଆୟୋଜନ କରିଥାଉ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସ୍ୱନାମଧନ୍ୟା କଳାକାର, ଗୁରୁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୋପାଳ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ପଣ୍ଡାଙ୍କର କନ୍ୟା ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ସଂଗୀତା ପଣ୍ଡାଙ୍କ ସହିତ ପରାମର୍ଶ ପରେ, ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ର ଏହି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟି । ଡକ୍ଟର ମୃତ୍ୟୁଞ୍ଜୟ ରଥ ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗର ଏହି ଷଷ୍ଠ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟଟିକୁ ଭଞ୍ଜ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗରେ ପରିଚାଳନା କରିଥିଲେ । ଡକ୍ଟର ରଥ ଅତି ଆନନ୍ଦର ସହିତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟିର ନାମ ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି ଓ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ବିଷୟବସ୍ତୁ ଉପରେ କିଛିଟା ଆଲୋଚନା କରି କହିଛନ୍ତି, "ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା-ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ପରିମଣ୍ଡଳରେ କବି ସମ୍ରାଟ ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜ ପ୍ରାତଃ ସ୍ମରଣୀୟ ବିଭୁତି । ଭଞ୍ଜ କବି ବିରଚିତ କାବ୍ୟ-ମହାକାବ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ଐଶ୍ୱର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଓ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟକୁ ସମ ଭାବରେ ଡୋଳି ଧରିଛି । ଭଞ୍ଜ ଭାରତୀରେ ନାୟିକା-ନାୟକଙ୍କ ପବିତ୍ର ପ୍ରେମ, ପରିଣୟ, ବିରହ, ମିଳନର ଆଦର୍ଶ ପ୍ରକାଶ ଯେତିକି ସ୍ପଷ୍ଟ, ବିଷୟ ବିନ୍ୟାସରେ ବିଭୁ ପ୍ରେମ ସେତିକି ପରିପୁଷ୍ଟ । ଉପମା, ଅର୍ଥ ଗୌରବ, ପଦ ଲାଳିତ୍ୟ ଓ ଅନୁପମ ଶବ୍ଦ ଚାତୁରୀରେ ଭଞ୍ଜ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଅନତିକ୍ରମ୍ୟ ।





ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତିର କୃତବିଦ୍ୟ ସାଧକ କରି ସମ୍ରାଟ ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜଙ୍କ ସାରସ୍ୱତ କୃତିର ପୁନଃ ଜାଗରଣ ଓ ବାଣୀପୁତ୍ରଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଗଭୀର ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ସୁମନ ଅର୍ପଣର ଆଗ୍ରହରେ ଭଞ୍ଜ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ଭଞ୍ଜ ସଙ୍ଗୀତର ଯୁଗଳବନ୍ଦୀରେ ସମର୍ପିତ ସତ୍ର - ଗାଏ ତୁମ୍ଭ ଗୀତ ।" ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗର ଷଷ୍ଠ ଅଧିବେଶନର ସମାପ୍ତି ପରେ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜର ଅନେକ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ନିଜର ମତାମତ ପଠାଇଥିଲେ ଓ ପରମ୍ପରାର ଏଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମଟିର ଉତ୍କଳ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ କାମନା କରିଥିଲେ । କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଶେଷରେ ଆମ ଶାଖାର ସଭାପତି ସ୍ମରଣିକା, ସଚିବ ବାବାଜୀ ବାବୁ ଓ ଓସିସି ସଭାପତି ଡଃ.ଗୋପାଳ ମହାପାତ୍ର କଳାକାର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ମାନପତ୍ର ପ୍ରଦାନ କରିଥିଲେ ।

ବାରଗୋଟି ମାନପତ୍ର ରୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ନିମ୍ନରେ ।





## ଓସା ଛପନତମ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ - ଆମର ଗର୍ବ

ଓସା ଛପନତମ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ର ସଫଳତା ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗୌରବ ର ବିଷୟ । ପ୍ରାୟ ଦୁଇ ହଜାର ଅତିଥିଙ୍କର ସମାବେଶ ରେ ତିନି ଦିନର ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କର ସ୍ମରଣୀୟ ହୋଇ ରହିବ । ସବୁ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଗୁଡିକ ଅତି ମନରଞ୍ଜକ ଥିଲା । "ଏକତା, ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଓ ସମୃଦ୍ଧି" ର ଚିହ୍ନ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ସବୁ ଜାଗାରେ ଅନୁଭବ କରିହେଉଥିଲା । ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ସବୁକିଛି ବିବରଣୀ ଅନେକ ଲେଖାହୋଇଛି ଓ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇଛି । ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ସଫଳତା ପାଇଁ ଆମ ଶାଖାର ସମସ୍ତ କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତା ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଅର୍ପଣ ସହିତ ମିନିଆପଲିସ ରେ ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଥିବା ଓସା ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ୨୦୨୬ ରେ ଯୋଗଦାନ କରିବାକୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ ।





The Odisha Society Of The Americas  
New York | New Jersey | Pennsylvania

## || OSA NY-NJ-PA - Chapter Report ||

### Reporting Period: May 2025 – September 2025

The chapter continues to focus on the “5S” pillars – Sankalpa (ସଂକଳ୍ପ), Samparka (ସମ୍ପର୍କ), Sanskruti (ସଂସ୍କୃତି), Samrudhhi (ସମୃଦ୍ଧି), and Suraksha (ସୁରକ୍ଷା).

#### OSA Activities During the period:

##### 1. UTKAL DIBAS

OSA NYNJPA celebrated Utkal Dibas (the Odisha State Formation Day) on April 13 at Ananda Mandir in Somerset, NJ. More than 350 community members gathered to honor the spirit of Odisha and Odia culture. The Consul General of India in New York, Honorable Binaya S. Pradhan, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The event featured vibrant cultural performances, thematic photo booths, and authentic Odia cuisine showcasing the rich heritage of Odisha. Executive members from BAJNA and the Bengali associations also joined us. The chapter honored distinguished community members and felicitated Guru Durga Charan Ranbir for his continued guidance and support to our Odissi gurus and performers.







## 2. SPRING COOKOUT FUNDRAISER

Our chapter has been celebrating an Odia food festival cookout event for the past 5 years to come together and cook Odia food by our own master chefs and distribute to our member families. The families of OSA NYNJPA dedicate Spring Cookout to charity in the USA and in Odisha. OSA members in the chapter may nominate organizations in the USA and in Odisha to receive charitable contributions.



## 3. GRADUATE DAY CELEBRATION

OSA NYNJPA celebrates High School and College Graduates every year. All High Schools graduates received a \$100 Gift Card and all College Graduates received a Life membership for OSA. Our own OSA stars were Keynote speakers and shared valuable thoughts candidly.







#### 4. PICNIC

The 2025 picnic was attended by 400+ people, and we had organized a delicious and long menu of Odia dishes. Apart from great food, we organized picnic games that were enjoyed by all. There was a pitha competition and many enjoyed the creative delicious pitha made by our participants. There was a creative pan stall that many visited.

The Consul General of India at NY honorable Binaya S Pradhan also joined the picnic.



#### 5. 4-H County Fair

The 4-H Organization in New Jersey hosts a three-day county fair every year that attracts thousands of residents from Somerset County.

The fair offers a wide range of engaging and educational activities for children, including opportunities to pet animals such as goats, sheep, chickens, horses, and pigs; watch dog shows; explore large excavation vehicles; climb aboard fire trucks; and experience interactive exhibits featuring robotics, toy trains, and more.



The OSA NY-NJ-PA Chapter sets up a food booth at the fair as a fundraiser. The net proceeds from this initiative are used for charitable causes as well as to promote Odia culture and heritage in the United States. The event also provides valuable volunteering and leadership opportunities for our NextGen youth, and this year's fair showcased many inspiring examples of their dedication and enthusiasm.



## 6. INDIA DAY PARADE, NYC

After a gap of nearly two decades, OSA proudly participated in the India Day Parade for the second consecutive year, in 2024 and 2025. This was more than just a parade—it was a vibrant celebration of our roots, culture, and enduring love for India. Members came together to thoughtfully design a float that proudly showcased Odisha's rich culture, heritage, and excellence to the broader Indian-American community.

Marking a historic first, OSA members also performed a graceful Odissi dance on the main cultural stage, centered on the theme “Sarbe Bhavantu Sukhinah (ସବେ ଭବନ୍ତୁ ସୁଖିନଃ)”, spreading a universal message of peace, harmony, and well-being. We were honored by the presence of the Binaya S. Pradhan, the Consul General of India in New York, who joined us on the OSA float, further elevating the significance of our participation.







## 7. Bahuda Jatra Celebration with Chef Vikas Khanna

The OSA NY–NJ–PA team celebrated Bahuda Jatra with celebrity chef Vikas Khanna at Bungalow in New York City. This event marked one of the many occasions on which our community has participated at Bungalow, proudly showcasing the rich culture, traditions, and traditional attire of Odisha.

Through such meaningful engagements, OSA continues to highlight Odia heritage and cultural pride on prominent platforms beyond the community.







## || OSA-Southern - Chapter Report ||

### 2025: A Year at a Glance

Celebrating culture, service, and togetherness across our community.



*Moments from Utkala Dibasa, Independence Day Parade, Food Donation Drive, and Kumara Purnima.*

**Thank you** to every volunteer, performer, donor, and family who made 2025 unforgettable.

## Highlights

### 2025 in Numbers

- 6 community highlights celebrated
- 5,185+ meals donated to Second Harvest of Middle TN
- First-time Independence Day float representing Odisha
- **Kumara Purnima:**  
21+ performances, 110+ attendees  
6 hours of celebration,  
57+ participants across segments,  
12+ food and drink items served

### 2025 Timeline

**Mar 29:** Utkala Dibasa – Nolensville UFM Church  
OSA Election – New Executive Committee  
**Aug 9:** Independence Day Parade – Odisha float + lemonade stall  
**Oct 8:** Food Donation Drive – 5th Annual  
**Oct 11:** Kumara Purnima – Nolensville Historical Museum  
**Nov 14:** Veterans Day Volunteering – Murfreesboro, VA





*A few favorite snapshots from across the year.*

## Saraswati Puja

February 2, 2025 | Residence of Dash family

The OSA–Southern Odia community celebrated Saraswati Puja on February 2 at the residence of Mrs. Pournamasi and Mr. Biswajit Dash. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Dash family for graciously hosting the celebration and warmly welcoming everyone to share this auspicious occasion together.







## Utkala Dibasa

March 29, 2025 | Nolensville UFM Church

The OSA–Southern Odia community celebrated Utkala Dibasa with great energy and a vibrant program that brought families together. The event featured:

- An inaugural rendition of *Vande Utkala Janani*.
- *Kabita Patha*, fancy dress, Odia speeches, dance performances, and singing
- A heartfelt note of gratitude to the volunteers who lovingly prepared delicious *Odia pakhala* with traditional side dishes, enjoyed by all.

Special thanks to all the volunteers and families whose efforts made the celebration warm, welcoming, and truly memorable.







## OSA-Southern Chapter Election 2025

March 29, 2025 | Community leadership transition

Our Election Committee successfully conducted the process to select the next Executive Committee, ensuring a smooth and transparent election.

The newly elected office bearers are:

- President: Goutam Giri
- Vice President: Jasmin Mishra
- Treasurer: Srinibas Das
- Cultural Secretary: Lopamudra Hati

We extend our sincere thanks to the Election Committee and all community members whose support and participation contributed to the successful and transparent completion of this process.





## Independence Day Parade 2025

August 9, 2025 | In collaboration with Jagannath Society of the Americas

For the first time, we celebrated Indian Independence Day with a newly designed float proudly showcasing Odia culture and iconic monuments.

- Heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated and volunteered, especially the families who joined us despite the hot weather.
- Our free lemonade stall was a big hit and warmly appreciated by many attendees.
- A truly proud moment representing Odisha and India together.

We are deeply grateful to every volunteer, parent, and child who helped bring the float and lemonade stall to life, making the celebration both meaningful and memorable.







## Food Donation Drive

October 8, 2025 | 5th Annual Food Donation Drive

Together, we donated 5,185+ meals to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee. Your generosity continues to set an inspiring example for our children and our community.

- A record-breaking year of impact.
- Helping fight hunger across our state through meaningful, local action.
- Teaching our children the importance of reducing food waste and giving back

Thank you for every contribution, big or small. This was truly a remarkable community achievement.







## Kumara Purnima

October 11, 2025 | Nolensville Historical Museum

Kumara Purnima was a joyful celebration of talent, tradition, and community spirit. Your support, time, and enthusiasm truly made all the difference.

- 21+ performances with 110+ attendees
- 57+ participants across diverse segments
- 12+ food and drink items served
- 6 hours of nonstop community celebration
- Special thanks to our elders, volunteers, emcees, coordinators, and families who traveled from nearby cities to be part of the event

To our performers: you lit up the stage. To our volunteers: your planning kept everything smooth. To our audience: your energy made the hall come alive.





## Veterans Day Volunteering

November 14, 2025 | Murfreesboro Veterans Affairs

We were honored to volunteer at the Murfreesboro VA, spending time supporting our veterans through service and community care.

- A meaningful day dedicated to volunteering and gratitude
- Heartfelt thanks to every volunteer who generously gave their time

We sincerely appreciate everyone who showed up to serve and share a small token of gratitude with our veterans.







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EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE  
REPORTS





## || NEW POLICIES APPROVED THIS QUARTER ||

**1. Policy Clarification for OSA Emergency Relief Fund Disbursement:** This policy provides greater guidance and clarity to the BOG while taking decisions related to the OSA Emergency relief process.

**2. The External Policy (OSA Logo and Brand Assets Use)** is a press release that conveys that OSA's official logo, brand name, and letterhead are protected intellectual property and may only be used with prior written authorization from the OSA Public Relations Office. In addition, this policy indicates that OSA maintains a strict policy against soliciting or accepting funds from foreign governments (central or state), non-U.S. / Canada. institutions, or individuals residing outside the United States or Canada without prior approval from OSA's executive officers.

**3. Policy for solicitation and Disbursement of Funds from Foreign Entities –** This is an internal member facing policy. The policy seeks to gain greater transparency for OSA officials or members soliciting or disbursing funds from/to foreign entities, as representatives of OSA.

**4. OSA Leadership Development Training Program:** This policy approves OSA to setup a formal Leadership development program to train members who are interested to take leadership roles, in OSA bylaws and processes.

**5. MOU - Kirttan & Mamata Behera with OSA for Establishing Distress Fund:** We are delighted to share that OSA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with our esteemed members, Kirttan and Mamata Behera of California, to establish a permanent \$100,000 Distress Fund Endowment. This fund will assist any Odia in financial distress in North America.

**6. Executive Travel Expense Reimbursement Policy:** The travel policy approves the members of the executive team to travel 4 times (2 for meetings with the convention teams and 2 for meeting chapter teams) in this year.

**7. OSA-Membership-Amendment-2025:** This policy creates targeted incentives for encouraging new members from specific groups including, Children of existing members who want to become independent members, people who are on H1 or other temporary visas, people in Canada who find it difficult to pay membership fees in USD etc.



## || Policy Clarification OSA Emergency Relief Fund Disbursement ||

### Purpose

This document outlines the scenarios under which disbursements from the Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) of the Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) may be made and establishes guidelines for recommended disbursement amounts. The goal is to support OSA member families or persons/families of Odia origin, facing financial hardship due to unforeseen and distressing circumstances, in a fair, compassionate, and consistent manner with compassion and dignity.

OSA bylaws have a provision for an Emergency Relief Fund to assist OSA member families or victims of natural disaster events in Odisha. The relevant section in the bylaw reads as follows:

### Section 5: Emergency Relief Fund

*OSA shall maintain an “Emergency Relief Fund”, hereafter referred to as ERF. The circumstances necessitating disbursement from ERF and fund-raising procedure will be as per “OSA fundraising and disbursement guideline” adopted by the Governing Board. Notwithstanding the provisions of Bylaw VI, Section 4, an amount of no more than \$7000 from the ERF may be disbursed for a single individual or family-based emergency situation. In case of natural disaster that affects Odisha, the Governing Board will decide the disbursement amount from the ERF by a simple majority. The expenditure of any portion of the ERF is subject to approval by the Governing Board upon a written request from the Executive Committee.*

### Eligibility

#### 1. Immediate Financial Assistance (For OSA Members)

- Upon request by immediate family members, a one-time financial aid for funeral expenses may be provided.
- Requests should be made directly to the local OSA Chapter President who will coordinate with the Executive Committee for initiating the approval and disbursement process.
- The amount and speed of support will depend on the urgency, fund availability with OSA and OSA chapter.



## 2. Support for Fundraising Initiatives

If the family or close friends of the deceased initiate a fundraising effort, OSA may allow the family to Promote the campaign via official channels (social media, emails, website).

## 3. Support for Non-Members of Odia Origin

While OSA's primary responsibility lies with its members, support to non-members of Odia origin may be considered in exceptional humanitarian cases.

Such requests should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the local chapter leadership, in consultation with the OSA Executive Committee as appropriate. Support may be extended based on:

- The nature and urgency of the situation,
- The individual's connection to the Odia community,
- The availability of chapter or organizational resources,
- Alignment with OSA's values of compassion and community service.

In all requests, the case for Financial Assistance must be made with appropriate documentation by the chapter president.

## Funding Sources

Per current guidelines,

- OSA will maintain an Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) of \$10,000. In case a disbursement is made and the fund balance comes below \$10,000; the Executive Committee will take appropriate actions to replenish with additional funds.
- Distress funds are also available through the Kirttan and Manata Behera Distress fund. OSA treasurer can determine availability at any given time.
- In addition, several OSA chapters maintain an Emergency Fund to support members in case of financial distress - OSA EC will work with chapters to create and maintain such reserves.





## Disbursement Scenarios & Recommended Amounts

### Death

Scenario	Description	Recommended Disbursement
Death 1	Death of Sole Earning Member where financial distress for surviving family is established.	\$6,000 – \$7,000
Death 2	Death of Earning Member. However, there are other known sources of income for the family (e.g., spouse, child) available.	\$3,000 – \$5,000
Death 3	Funeral Expenses (when insurance or other aid is unavailable)	Up to \$2,000 (if separate from above)
Death 4	Send flowers and card to the funeral event in every occurrence of death in OSA member family.	Up to \$250

### Natural Disasters Affecting Odisha

- In the event of a natural disaster in Odisha (e.g., cyclone, flood, earthquake), the Governing Board may approve a separate allocation from the ERF.
- The total amount and method of distribution will be determined by simple majority vote.



## Disbursement Process

- 1. Request Submission:** The chapter president must coordinate & evaluate the nature of emergency and distress and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for relief. The request must state the circumstances of the distress and the justification for relief.
- 2. Executive Committee Review:** The Executive Committee will review the request, ask for clarifications as required and make a separate written request to the Governing Board for approval.
- 4. BOG Review:** The Governing Board will evaluate the request based on the policy guidance explained above. Additional consideration must be given to fund availability both at National and Chapter level. If a chapter emergency fund is available, then the approved amount should be shared equally between the chapter and national, subject to fund availability.
- 5.** A simple majority vote from BOG via email is required to approve the disbursement. The chapter may follow a similar approval for chapter funds.
- 6. Disbursement:** Funds will be released to the beneficiary family member directly as per OSA financial procedures.
- 7. Flowers & Cards :** Only OSA EC Approval is enough, since the amount is kept capped at \$250. This request will be processed based on members or chapter presidents informing OSA EC with reference to published Obituary in a public domain.
- 8.** Non-monetary assistance to families can be approved by OSA EC in coordination with Chapter President.

## Transparency and Record-Keeping

- All ERF disbursements must be documented and reported during the Annual General Body Meeting and published in Utkarsa.
- The ERF balance and disbursement summary will be maintained by the OSA Treasurer and reviewed quarterly.
- In the event any request is not approved, proper documentation must be kept to substantiate why the request was not approved and at what stage it was closed out.

## Amendments

This policy may be revised by the Governing Board by a simple majority vote, in alignment with the OSA bylaws.



## || The External Policy (OSA Logo and Brand Assets Use) ||

**The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) Issues Clarification on Official Use of Logo, Brand Assets, and Fundraising Practices**

[United States of America] — July 25, 2025 — The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA), a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting Odia culture and community engagement across North America, today reaffirmed its official policies regarding the use of its brand assets and its financial practices.

### **Authorized Use of OSA Logo, Brand Name, and Letterhead**

OSA's official logo, brand name, and letterhead are protected intellectual property and may only be used with prior written authorization from the OSA Public Relations Office. These brand assets represent the organization's identity and credibility; therefore, any unauthorized use, whether for personal, commercial, or nonprofit purposes is strictly prohibited.

All OSA-affiliated events and communications must comply with the organization's official branding guidelines, as discussed in recent Board of Governors meetings. For reference, members are encouraged to visit [www.odishasociety.org](http://www.odishasociety.org).

### **Clarification on Financial Solicitations**

The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) maintains a strict policy against soliciting or accepting funds from foreign governments (central or state), non-U.S. institutions, or individuals residing outside the United States or Canada without prior approval from OSA's executive officers.

Any request for financial or in-kind donations claiming to represent OSA must be verified with the OSA Public Relations Office before any contribution is made.

In accordance with its nonprofit governance and sponsorship policy, OSA also accepts voluntary donations without conditions, as well as funding designated for event sponsorships. All contributions must align with OSA's event sponsorship guidelines, and interested individuals or organizations are encouraged to contact the OSA Public Relations Office for authorization and further details.





Upon approval from the Public Relations Office, all contributions must be wire-transferred directly to the official OSA National Bank Account, with full awareness of the OSA Treasurer.

The Treasurer will issue an official acknowledgment receipt for every donation or sponsorship received.

These measures reflect OSA's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and respect for the values of its community and its nonprofit governance framework.

**Media Contact:**

Public Relations Office

[osapro@odishasociety.org](mailto:osapro@odishasociety.org)

The Odisha Society of the Americas

[www.odishasociety.org](http://www.odishasociety.org)

**Team Members of the OSA Public Relations Office**

Debadutta (Bunu) Behera

Nil Bisoi

Sunil Sabat



## || Policy for solicitation and Disbursement of Funds from Foreign Entities ||

In alignment with its mission, vision, and obligations under U.S. nonprofit regulations, the Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) has instituted enhanced clarity in its financial solicitation and contribution policies, particularly concerning funds originating from outside the United States and Canada.

All OSA members, volunteers, and chapter representatives are expected to remain fully compliant with these financial governance policies. Specifically:

- No funds may be solicited from foreign governments, organizations, or individuals residing outside the United States or Canada without prior written approval from the OSA Executive Officers.
- All approved contributions/ donations to OSA must be wire-transferred to the official OSA National Bank account, with the OSA Treasurer duly informed. A formal donation or sponsorship acknowledgment will be issued thereafter.
- OSA treasurer will document Source & Purpose of funds and any commitments from OSA and will transfer the funds to the appropriate account for use.
- Any disbursement of OSA funds to foreign governments, organizations, or individuals residing outside the United States - whether at the national level, chapter level or at the convention level, must first receive explicit authorization from the OSA Public Relations Office (PRO).

These safeguards ensure transparency, legal compliance, and responsible stewardship of resources entrusted to us by the community.



## || OSA Leadership Development Program ||

### Executive Summary

The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) proposes the ***OSA Leadership Development Program***, a formal structured training program designed to enhance members' understanding of OSA's Vision, Mission, Purpose, Administrative functions, bylaws, and governance.

This initiative aims to empower members with the knowledge and skills necessary to strengthen leadership, advocacy, and decision-making within OSA's chapters and Board of Governors (BOG).

By fostering a deeper connection to OSA's vision & mission through education, OSA Leadership Development Program will create a new generation of leaders who may strengthen volunteering and OSAs Mission & Purpose.

### Background

As a socio-cultural organization, OSA plays a pivotal role in uniting the Odia diaspora and promoting Odisha's rich heritage. With growing membership and increasing demands for structured governance, there is a pressing need to provide formal training to members interested in contributing to OSA's administrative and leadership functions.

Key areas of focus include:

- OSA Bylaws and Constitution
- Constitutional Committee operations (Grievance, Awards, Editorial, Election, Finance, Executive, and Board of Governors)
- Leadership Skills

OSA will serve as a platform to deliver this training, ensuring members are well-equipped to uphold OSA's mission of preserving and propagating Odia culture while enhancing organizational efficiency.





## Goals and Expected Outcomes

- **Enhanced Awareness:** Increase members' understanding of OSA's bylaws, constitution, and committee operations.
- **Leadership Development:** Strengthen leadership and advocacy skills among members, enabling them to effectively represent OSA's mission and purpose.
- **Improved Governance:** Equip the chapter EC and Board of Governors with trained members with higher ability to contribute to policy development and decision-making.
- **Community Engagement:** Deepen members' connection and encourage volunteering to support OSAs mission & purpose.

## Program Structure and Implementation

### Curriculum Development

- A team of constitutional experts, appointed by the OSA BOG, will develop a comprehensive lesson plan and training materials covering:
- OSA Bylaws and Constitution
- Roles and responsibilities of Constitutional Committees (Grievance, Awards, Editorial, Election, Finance, Executive, and BOG)
- Best practices in leadership, advocacy, and governance
- Materials will incorporate classroom training, case studies, and interactive components to ensure relevance and engagement.

### Training Delivery

- The BOG will appoint qualified trainers to deliver the curriculum using the developed materials.
- Training sessions will be conducted virtually ensuring accessibility for members across chapters.
- Each course will accommodate 15 participants, with 2 courses offered annually (totaling 30 participants per year).



## Participant Selection

- OSA members may self-register
- OSA EC may invite members
- Chapter presidents may nominate members
- Priority will be given to members demonstrating a desire to contribute to OSA's purpose and vision.

## Budget Allocation

The OSA Leadership Development Program will be funded through the OSA Development Fund (Bylaw VI, Section 4). The proposed budget is as follows:

- **Program Costs:**
  - 15 students per course × 2 courses/year × \$75 per student = \$2,250/year Costs include course completion certificates, graduation plaques, an OSA branded gift and shipping.
- **Funding Duration:** Budget allocation is approved for 2 years, with annual reviews by the BOG to assess effectiveness and enable appropriate changes.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Success Metrics:**
  - Percentage of participants who complete the program and engage in OSA leadership roles.
  - Increased engagement and advocacy by participants in OSA
  - Feedback surveys rating the program's impact on understanding OSA bylaws.



## || **MOU - Kirttan & Mamata Behera with OSA for Establishing Distress Fund** ||

Memorandum of Understanding between “Donor”, their heirs or designees and The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA).

Establishing the “**Distress Fund for People of Odisha Origin in North America**”.

Date: August 14, 2025

### **I. Parties**

Donor: <Name>, their heirs or designees (“Donor”), Address:

Donee: The Odisha Society of the Americas (“OSA”), a 501(c)(3) public charity

Address: 100 Powell Place #1722, Nashville, TN 37204 | EIN: 62-1105102

### **II. Purpose and Intent**

The Donor wishes to establish a permanent charitable fund at OSA to provide timely, needs-based support to individuals and families of Odisha origin residing in North America who are experiencing acute distress, including:

- (i) death-related emergencies;
- (ii) health-related emergencies;
- (iii) educational hardship/transition; and
- (iv) basic welfare and financial crises.

All grants must further OSA’s charitable purposes within the meaning of IRC § 501(c)(3).

### **III. Fund Name**

“<Name> Distress Fund for People of Odisha Origin in North America.” OSA shall use this designation in internal records and acknowledgments unless the Donor elects anonymity (see § X).

### **IV. Legal Framework (Tennessee UPMIFA)**

OSA will hold, manage, invest, and make appropriations from the Fund in accordance with Tennessee’s Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA), Tenn. Code Ann. § 35-10-201 et seq. including, without limitation:





Prudent investment and management standard (§ 35-10-204);  
Appropriation for expenditure from endowment funds (§ 35-10-206);

Delegation to external agents (§ 35-10-205); and  
Modification to honor donor intent if purposes become unlawful, impracticable, or wasteful (§ 35-10-208).

## V. Definitions (for this MOU)

**Fund:** the institutional fund established hereunder and held by OSA for charitable purposes.

**Endowment Fund:** an institutional fund (as defined in § 35-10-202(3)) not wholly expendable on a current basis by explicit donor direction.

**Principal (Corpus):** the Donor's original contributed amount and any amounts the OSA Board formally designates as principal.

**Appropriation:** the OSA Board's prudent decision to make all or part of an endowment fund available for expenditure under § 35-10-206.

## VI. Contributions and Permanence

- A. Initial Contribution: The Donor shall contribute US \$100,000 to establish the Fund.
- B. Permanence: The Donor intends the Fund to be a permanent endowment. Restriction: OSA shall not appropriate principal (corpus) for expenditure unless (i) required by law or court order; or (ii) the Donor (or, if unavailable, the Donor's designee/heirs) consents in writing. This donor restriction supplements UPMIFA's default rules.
- C. Additional Gifts: OSA may accept additional gifts from the Donor or others to this Fund, which will be governed by this MOU unless a later written addendum states otherwise.

## VII. Investment, Custody, and Delegation

- A. Custody: The Fund will be held in OSA's name in a separately designated account or sub-account.
- B. Standard of Conduct: OSA will invest and manage the Fund prudently considering the factors in § 35-10-204, including duration/preservation of the Fund, expected total return, inflation/deflation, general economic conditions, and OSA's resources and mission.



C. Diversification & Costs. OSA will diversify unless special circumstances make non-diversification prudent and will incur only reasonable costs, consistent with § 35-10-204(e).

D. Delegation. OSA may delegate investment/management functions to external professionals under § 35-10-205, exercising due care in selection, scope, and monitoring.

## **VIII. Spending / Appropriation for Expenditure**

A. Spending Rule: Each year, OSA may appropriate up to 4.0% of the trailing 12-quarter average market value of the Fund (or the best available shorter look-back until 12 quarters of history exist), determined as of January 15. This percentage is intended to be presumptively prudent under UPMIFA given the Fund's purposes and long-term preservation goals.

B. Floor/Ceiling Safeguards: If market conditions are materially adverse, OSA may appropriate less than 4.0% or suspend distributions to preserve purchasing power. If inflation or extraordinary needs warrant, OSA may appropriate more than 4.0% based on the approval of the board.

C. Source of Spending: Appropriations shall come from income and appreciation; principal is not to be invaded absent the limited exceptions in § VI.B. D. Unspent Amounts. Amounts not spent in a given year remain in the Fund and continue to be invested.

## **IX. Grantmaking & Eligibility**

A. Eligible Beneficiaries. Individuals or families of Odisha origin who reside in North America and face acute, short-term hardship aligned with § II.

B. Process. OSA will use a documented intake and review process, including: a brief written request or referral describing the hardship and immediate need; basic verification (to the extent feasible and respectful of privacy); and a conflict-of-interest check (no grants to OSA insiders or their family members where a conflict exists, consistent with OSA's duty of loyalty).

C. Form of Aid. Grants will generally be paid to third parties (e.g., funeral homes, hospitals, landlords, universities) whenever practicable.

D. Nondiscrimination. Grants shall be made without discrimination and solely on charitable need and program fit.

E. No Earmarks/Private Benefit. No grants for members' dues, political activity, or private benefit unrelated to the Fund's charitable purpose.



## **X. Donor Recognition and Privacy**

The Donor may elect public recognition or anonymity. OSA will follow the Donor's written election (or any later change provided in writing).

## **XI. Reporting & Transparency**

- A. Annual Statement: OSA will deliver to the Donor an annual Fund report including beginning/ending market value, contributions, investment return (net of fees), amount appropriated and granted, and brief anonymized impact notes (when appropriate).
- B. Books & Records: OSA will maintain accurate, complete records for the Fund and retain them consistent with prudent nonprofit practice.

## **XII. Governance & Approvals**

- A. Authority: The OSA Board (or a Board-authorized committee) will approve the annual appropriation and all grant awards or establish written delegations and controls for timely emergency responses.
- B. Conflicts. Any director/committee member with a conflict of interest must recuse from decisions related to a particular grant.

## **XIII. Modification; Impossibility; Variance Power**

- A. UPMIFA Guidance: If the Fund's stated purpose becomes unlawful, impracticable, impossible to achieve, or wasteful, OSA may seek to modify application of the Fund under § 35-10-208 to preserve donor intent as nearly as possible (cy-près/equitable deviation), including any required notice to or involvement of the Tennessee Attorney General.
- B. Board Variance (Narrow): If circumstances materially change (e.g., beneficiary definition needs modernization to effectuate the same charitable objective), the OSA Board may adopt a narrow variance consistent with § 35-10-208 and this MOU, preserving the Fund's core purpose (urgent relief for Odia-origin individuals/families in North America).

## **XIV. Term and Termination**

- A. Term: The Fund is intended to be permanent.
- B. Termination for Cause: In the event of substantiated financial mismanagement or material breach that remains uncured for 60 days after written notice, either party may request mediation and, if needed, seek appropriate relief. Any court-ordered or legally required termination or merger must honor donor intent under UPMIFA.





- C. Disposition: Upon any lawful termination, remaining assets shall be used by OSA for a substantially similar charitable purpose consistent with the Donor's original intent and § 35-10-208.

#### **XV. Compliance; Governing Law**

OSA will administer the Fund in compliance with IRC § 501(c)(3), applicable charitable trust principles, and Tennessee UPMIFA (Tenn. Code Ann. § 35-10-201 et seq.). This MOU is governed by the laws of the State of Tennessee.

#### **XVI. Entire Understanding; Amendments**

This MOU and any amendments thereof, reflects the Parties' entire understanding regarding the Fund. It may be amended only in writing, signed by the Donor and an authorized OSA officer, and, where required, in a manner consistent with UPMIFA and any notice obligations to the Tennessee Attorney General.

#### **XVII. Signatures**

By signing, the Parties affirm their good-faith intent to uphold this MOU and the Donor's charitable purpose.



## || Executive Travel Expense Reimbursement Policy ||

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear framework for reimbursing travel expenses incurred by members of the Board of Governors (BOG), the Executive Committee (EC), the Advisory Group of the EC and any other OSA official designated when traveling on official OSA business. This policy ensures that travel expenditures are transparent, mission-aligned, and fiscally responsible, while supporting OSA's commitment to strengthening chapter engagement and advancing its mission across North America.

### 2. Scope

Executive Committee (EC), Board of Governors (BOG) and any other OSA official designated to travel on OSA business.

### 3. Governance and Annual Budget

- An annual budget of \$2,000 will be allocated under OSA National's operational expenses specifically for approved travel reimbursements.
- This budget is intended to cover approximately 4 trips per year, ensuring that all chapters can be visited within a two-year EC term.
- Reimbursements under this policy shall not exceed \$500 per person per trip towards the flight cost. The stay and food will be out of pocket expense of the individual traveling.
- The Treasurer shall track all travel reimbursements against the approved annual budget.

### 4. Pre-Approval Requirements

- Travel expenses must be pre-approved by the BOG.
  - Exception : Travel can be approved by the EC for trips under \$500 if deemed urgent, with reporting at the next BOG meeting
- A written request must be submitted prior to travel, stating:
  1. The purpose of the visit.
  2. How the travel will help OSA strengthen local community alignment with OSA's mission and vision.
  3. Any gaps, challenges, or conflicts that the travel aims to address between OSA National and chapters or convention teams.
- Approval will be based on alignment with OSA's mission and the anticipated organizational benefit.



## 5. Reimbursement and Documentation

- Reimbursement will be limited to actual, documented expenses for flight only, up to \$500 per approved trip.
- Following travel, the traveler must submit:
  - Flight ticket payment receipts.
  - A short activity report outlining key meetings, interactions, and outcomes achieved.
  - Any recommendations or follow-up actions for OSA leadership.
- This documentation will be reviewed by the BOG for:
  - Audit purposes.
  - Improving future travel planning.
  - Evaluating alignment with OSA's mission.

## 6. Guardrails, Oversight and Compliance

- This fund is only to cover the airfare of a single person at the most economical price. Stay and food expenses must be borne by the traveler personally.
- To ensure prudent use of the budget, no more than 2 persons should not be using this travel expense in one trip.
- The purpose of the visit must be strictly for chapter collaboration or convention coordination. Travel for conferences, external networking opportunities, or activities outside OSA's internal affairs is not eligible.
- Travel to destinations within a driving distance of less than 5 hours from the traveler's home base does not qualify for reimbursement. Such travel shall be covered personally by the executive.
- All reimbursements under this policy will be subject to OSA's existing financial controls, including Treasurer oversight, annual audits, and BOG approval of budgets.
- Travel undertaken without prior approval or without submission of post-travel documentation will not be reimbursed.
- The independence of the Treasurer's fiduciary responsibilities ensures separation of duties between expense authorization and financial compliance.

## 7. Review Cycle

This policy shall be reviewed by the BOG every two years, in line with the EC term cycle, and updated as needed to reflect organizational priorities, budget capacity, and feedback from prior travel outcomes.





## || OSA-Membership-Amendment-2025 ||

### Policy Amendment: Membership Expansion and Engagement Policy:

#### Purpose

To increase membership participation, simplify membership fee structures for international members, enhance pathways for life membership, and strengthen engagement of children and young adults in OSA activities. This policy also clarifies the allocation of membership fees toward OSA and Chapter development in line with OSA Bylaws.

#### Scope

This amendment applies to all OSA members, prospective members, their families, and OSA Chapters across the United States and Canada. It supplements Article IV (Membership) and Bylaw I (Membership) of the OSA Constitution.

#### Amendment Clauses

##### Clause 1 : Canada Membership Fees

- Canada-based members shall pay **CAD 200** for membership since no amount is sent from OSA National to Canada chapter for chapter development.
- The equivalent USD amount will be determined annually in January by the OSA Treasurer, based on prevailing exchange rates published by a recognized authority (e.g., Bank of Canada).
- This replaces the current fixed USD 200 fee for Canadian members.

##### Clause 2 : Upgrade to Life Membership

- Any active 1-year or 5-year member may upgrade to Life Membership by paying the difference between their current membership fee and the Life Membership fee.
- Members whose memberships expired within the last 90 days remain eligible for the upgrade option.



### **Clause 3 : Life Membership for Children of Current Members**

- Children of current OSA members seeking independent Life Membership shall pay **50% of the prevailing Life Membership fee.**
- Eligibility applies only to children who establish their own household and membership independent from their parents.

### **Clause 4 : Convention Membership & Registration for Children Above 25**

- Children of OSA members who are above 25 years of age must register independently as OSA members to participate in the OSA Annual Convention.
- Such individuals will receive a 50% discount on convention registration fees.
- The convention registration system shall include an age verification mechanism and automatically direct such individuals to complete OSA membership registration before proceeding to convention registration.

### **Clause 5 : Temporary Work Visa Members**

- Life Members on temporary work visas who return to India within two (2) years of joining shall be eligible for partial refunds:
  - If returning within one (1) year : OSA retains only the equivalent of an annual membership fee, refunding the remainder.
  - If returning within two (2) years : OSA refunds 50% of the Life Membership fee.

### **Clause 6 : Allocation of Life and 5-Year Membership Fees**

- Currently, 25% of Life and 5-Year Membership fees are allocated toward OSA development and another 25% toward Chapter development.
- Amendment: The BOG will pool these development funds and prepare a consolidated annual development budget. This budget shall fund both OSA-wide and Chapter-level development activities, to be reviewed annually and published in the Treasurer's report for transparency.



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ADMINISTRATION  
SECTION

PRASHU





## || OSA Executives & Staff 2025-2027 ||

### EXECUTIVE

### NAME

### EMAIL

President

Nageswar Rajanala

President@odishasociety.org

Vice President

Utkal Nayak

Vicepresident@odishasociety.org

Secretary

Snigdha Hota

Secretary@odishasociety.org

Treasurer

Sanjeeb Rout

Treasurer@odishasociety.org

Past President

Leena Mishra

ipp@odishasociety.org

### CONTACT US

President@odishasociety.org

Vicepresident@odishasociety.org

Secretary@odishasociety.org

Treasurer@odishasociety.org

### CALL

To be updated

### ADDRESS

100 Powell Place #1722

Nashville, TN 37204

### FOLLOW US





## || OSA Chapter Representatives ||

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER	HEAD	EMAIL
California	Dharitri Patnaik	osa-ca@odishasociety.org
Canada	Gopal Rao	osa-canada@odishasociety.org
Carolinas	Sourav Parida	osa-carolinas@odishasociety.org
Chicago	Manoranjan Sahu	osa-chicago@odishasociety.org
Florida	Nirakar Jena	osa-florida@odishasociety.org
Georgia	Chinmaya Panda	osa-ga@odishasociety.org
Michigan	Trailokyanath Padhi	osa-mi@odishasociety.org
Minnesota	Jayanti Mohapatra	osa-mn@odishasociety.org
MT. Hood	Jyoti Rout	osa-mthood@odishasociety.org
New England	Priya Paul	osa-ne@odishasociety.org
New York-New Jersey	Nilasundar Jen	president@nynj.odishasociety.org
Ohio	Supragnya Dash	osa-ohio@odishasociety.org
Ozark (central)	Sushil Behera	osa-ozark@odishasociety.org
Rocky Mountain	Rajat Pradhan	osa-rockymtn@odishasociety.org
Seattle	Amulya Das	osa-seattle@odishasociety.org
Southern	Goutam k. Giri	osa-southern@odishasociety.org
South-West	Smaranika Rout	osa-swpresident@odishasociety.org
Washington, DC	Bidyashree Parhi	osa-dc@odishasociety.org



## || OSA Committees 2025-2027 ||

COMMITTEES LEADS & ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

### COMMITTEE

### NAME

### EMAIL

#### OSA Advisory

Bigyani Das (DC)  
Annapurna Pandey, CA  
Gopal Mohapatra (TX)  
Kuku Das (CA)  
Lalatendu Mohanty (NJ)  
Sushant Satpathy, (IL)  
Dhirendra Kar, (NC)  
Devasish Ray, (GA )

#### OSA Awards Committee

Ipsita Mahapatra, IL (Lead)  
Dillip Behera, NH  
Arun Mohanty, MA [osaawards@odishasociety.org](mailto:osaawards@odishasociety.org)

#### OSA Chapter Guidelines

Dilip Behera, NE  
Sameer Senapati, NC  
Rashmita Baral, CA  
Santwana Dash, IL  
[chapter-guidelines-committee@odishasociety.org](mailto:chapter-guidelines-committee@odishasociety.org)

#### OSA Convention Guidelines Team

Kuku Das, CA (Advisor)  
Sourya Mohapatra, MA (Advisor)  
Prashant Padhi, IL  
Amar Senapati, NJ  
Manoj Mishra, MD

#### OSA Drama Festival

SriGopal Mohanty – Canada (advisory)  
Sandeep Dasverma – CA (advisory)  
Birendra Jena – Ohio (advisory)  
Basant Mohapatra – Ohio, Lead  
Dillip Praharaj – Western Region  
Ulasini Sahu – South East Region





## || OSA Committees 2025-2027 ||

COMMITTEES LEADS & ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

### COMMITTEE

### NAME

### EMAIL

Ulasini Sahu – South East Region  
Khitish Pradhan – South west  
Pravat Singh – South west  
Swaroop Guru – North East [osa\\_ndf@odishasociety.org](mailto:osa_ndf@odishasociety.org)

### OSA Odia Learning

Bigyani Das, MD (Lead)  
Sujata Patnaik, IL  
Ullasini Sahoo, NC  
Nilasundar Jena, NJ  
Ritu Mohapatra, NJ  
Smita Panda, GA [ool@odishasociety.org](mailto:ool@odishasociety.org)

### OSA Editors

Nil Bisoi, TN (Lead)  
Sarita Nayak, TN  
Debu Panda, CA  
Devika Tripathy, CA  
Simoni Mishra, MD (Next Gen)  
[editors@odishasociety.org](mailto:editors@odishasociety.org)

### OSA Finance and Audit

Akshay Ray, MI  
Sachi Pati, GA  
Chinmaya Samant, AZ

### OSA Graphics and Arts

Sukanta Paikray, NJ  
Soubhagya Rout, GA  
Buddhadeb Mohanty, TX  
Subranshu Shekhar, TX  
Lisa Panda, CA  
Meelan Mohanty, VA  
Monalisa Jena, NJ  
Prajnya Jena, NJ  
Satyabrata Pradhan, MI  
Aditi Mallik, NJ (Next Gen Youth)



## || OSA Committees 2025-2027 ||

COMMITTEES LEADS & ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

### COMMITTEE

### NAME

### EMAIL

#### OSA Grievance Hearing

Ashutosh Dutta – MD (Lead)

Eva Mohanty, NJ

Sunil Sabat, CA

[grievance@odishasociety.org](mailto:grievance@odishasociety.org)

#### OSA Health & Wellness Group

Sangeeta Pradhan – MI, Lead

Devashis Ray – GA

Nanakram Agarwal – NY/NJ/PA

Basant Mohapatra – OH

[osahw@odishasociety.org](mailto:osahw@odishasociety.org)

#### OSA Higher Education

Chitta Baral (Advisory) (AZ)

Durga Misra (Advisory) (NJ)

Prashant Mohapatra (Chair) (FL)

Asutosh Dutta, MD

Anil Patnaik, OH

[osa-he@odishasociety.org](mailto:osa-he@odishasociety.org)

#### OSA Information Technology

Debu Panda, CA

Amit Nayak, NJ

Shakti Tripathy, MN

#### OSA K-10 Nilachakra Adventure

Ritu Mahapatra, NJ

Mousumi Swain, TN

Deepak Sahoo, OH

Pradeep Mahapatra, NJ

Antarjami Panigrahi, NJ

Mona Panigrahi, NJ

Antarjami Panigrahi, NJ

#### OSA Leadership Development

Sushant Satpathy, IL

Bigyani Das, MD

Lalatendu Mohanty, NJ

Ashutosh Dutta, MD



## || OSA Committees 2025-2027 ||

COMMITTEES LEADS & ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

### COMMITTEE

### NAME

### EMAIL

#### OSA Legal Counsel

David Joseph Sullivan, MD  
Bhabesh Bhabisnu, MA (Next Gen)  
Yogesh Mahapatra, NJ (Next Gen)

#### OSA Literature Special Project

Prasanta Bhunya, Canada  
Nil Bisoi, TN  
Swapnalata Rath, MI  
Krishna Kodukula, NJ

spl\_proj\_literature@odishasociety.org

#### OSA Next Gen Youths

Anoushka Das (Lead)  
Ankita Mohapatra (Co-Lead)  
Anoushka Jena, IN  
Priyanshi Singh, TX  
Aditya Patnaik, OH  
Debasnata Dash, IL

ngl@odishasociety.org

#### OSA Odia Literature and Poetry Reading

Prasanta Bhunya, Canada  
Gagan Panigrahi, Canada  
Tapasi Mohapatra, CT

osa\_ltrp@odishasociety.org

#### OSA Odissi, Champu, Chhanda Vocal and Odissi Dance Committee

Sabita Panigrahi, Canada  
Rashmi Rajguru, NJ  
Debasmita Patra, MD  
Gayatri Senapati, NC  
Archana Mishra, NJ

osa-cco@odishasociety.org





## || OSA Committees 2025-2027 ||

COMMITTEES LEADS & ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

COMMITTEE	NAME	EMAIL
OSA Professional Networking	Sudeep Mishra, CA Anjan Panda, CA Amit Nayak, NJ Toshit Panigrahi, NH Samay Sahu, MA Swati Biswal, CA Manas Swain, NJ	
OSA Public Library Initiative (OPLI)	Ajay Mohanty-DC, Lead Nishikanta Sahoo, NE Sandeep Dasverma, CA Prasanta Bhunya, Canada Nalini Pattnaik, DC Birendra Jena – Debadatta Behera, NE	opli@odishasociety.org
OSA Public Relation Office	Debadutta (BUNU) Behera, MA (Lead) Nil Bisoi, TN Sunil Sabat, CA	osapro@odishasociety.org
OSA Sampark Dori	Annapurna Pandey, CA Brajendra Sahu, NJ Ipsita Mahapatra Satpathy, IL Ajit Das, MD Sukumar Nayak, MD Anne Mahapatra, TX Tushar Mahapatra, NJ Krishna Kodukula, NJ Mamta Rath, TX Deepti Pradhan, CA Joy Mohanty, FL	



## || OSA Committees 2025-2027 ||

COMMITTEES LEADS & ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

COMMITTEE	NAME	EMAIL
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OSA Social Media		
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Subhashree Dash, Canada
Lisa Panda, CA
Namrata Mohanty, NJ
Sushmita Pradhan, NJ

OSANet Moderator		
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Som Mohanty, NH
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## || **2025 OSA Nomination-Based Award Winners** ||

Distinguished Odia Award 2025:  
**DR. ASHUTOSH DUTTA (Laurel, Maryland)**

Arun Das Memorial Kalashree Award 2025:  
**DR. GOPAL MOHAPATRA (Houston, Texas)**

Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das Memorial Award 2025:  
**MRS MAMATA MISRA (Austin, Texas)**

Subrina Biswal Award for Academic Excellence 2025:  
**MR. ARNAV TRIPATHY (Dallas, Texas)**

Youth Volunteer Award 2025:  
**MS. MANASWEE MISHRA (Woodstock, Maryland)**

Youth Kala Vikas Award 2025:  
**N/A (one invalid nomination received)**

**Congratulations to all the 2025 OSA Award winners!**

The OSA Awards Committee thanks OSA VP and OSA EC for entrusting us with the responsibility of managing the OSA Awards 2024 and 2025 nomination & judging process. We are humbled by the talents and accomplishments of all the OSA members nominated over these two years and wish them continued success in their endeavors. We hope the abridgement of the winners' achievements and contributions inspires all readers and motivates Odias in North America and beyond to advance their own capabilities and interests.





We recognize and thank all the nominators for discerning the distinction of the nominees and sending in their nominations for the different award categories. It takes magnanimity to recognize the contributions of fellow OSA members and dedicate time to recommending them for an award. We appreciate your effort and hope you will not only continue to do so but also motivate others in our community to follow your example and put forward worthy OSA members and youth for subsequent OSA Award nominations.

OSA award winners in each category are selected by the combined evaluation of 3 - 5 OSA member judges from across the States. Our gratitude and appreciation to all the uncredited judges, who commit to this task and to remain anonymous throughout the process and thereafter. The uncredited judges sign up to scan through pages of nomination materials, resumes and recommendation letters to unbiasedly share their evaluations based on OSA Award guidelines. This is not a straightforward task considering the multiple varied accomplished candidate profiles.

**OSA Awards Committee 2024-2025**

**Prachee Behera (Lead)**

**Akshay Ray**

**Deepak Sahoo**



## || Distinguished Odia Award 2025 ||



### **DR. ASHUTOSH DUTTA**

Dr. Ashutosh Dutta from Cuttack, Odisha has been in the USA since 1987. He is an alumnus of NIT, Rourkela with a MS in Comp Science from NJIT, NJ and a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Columbia University, NY. Dr. Dutta is currently Chief 5G Strategist and Lawrence Hafstad fellow at John Hopkins University/Applied Physics Lab, Maryland. He also serves as the Director of Doctor of Engineering at Johns Hopkins University, where most recently, he served as the Chair for Electrical and Computer Engineering for Professional Program. During his 37 years of service, Dr. Dutta has held leadership positions in AT&T Labs, Bell Communications Research, startups, and Columbia University.

Dr. Dutta's professional leadership in 5G areas has resulted in the development and deployment of 5G mobile networks around the world. Dr. Dutta is a Fellow of Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), a Distinguished Member of Association of Computing Machinery (ACM), and has several other leadership positions in IEEE/ACM including Chairs of Future Networks, Connecting the Unconnected, IEEE Princeton / Central Jersey Section and ACM Baltimore Chapter. Dr. Dutta has been conferred with multiple awards and recognition for seminal contribution in technology and leadership:



- 2009 IEEE MGA Leadership award
- IEEE-USA's 2010 Professional Leadership Award
- 2022 IEEE-USA George F. McClure Citation of Honor
- 2022 IEEE North American Region Exceptional Service Award
- Distinguished and Star Alumnus award from NIT, Rourkela
- Authored more than 120 technical papers and has 31 issued patents
- Co-authored book, "Mobility Protocols and Handover Optimization: Design, Evaluation and Application" published by IEEE and John & Wiley

Dr. Dutta's first significant contribution to the Odia community during his PhD at Columbia was the formation of ORNET (First Odia Network in Cyberspace) that he co-conceived during 1990. He has delivered invited talks and keynotes in the emerging 5G and 6G areas at various higher educational institutions in Odisha. Dr. Dutta has also served as a visiting faculty and Industry Advisory board member at NIST University, Odisha. He has collaborated with the faculty to design various 5G related courses for NIST students. He has actively raised funds for cyclone relief in Odisha multiple times. Dr. Dutta has been serving in the Industry Advisory Board of Siksha "O" Anusandhan. As an IEEE leader he has helped set up IEEE student branches at NIT Rourkela.

Dr. Dutta served as President of the OSA NY Chapter during 1992-1994 and Co-Convener for the 1994 Silver Jubilee OSA Convention at Pomona, NJ. He made significant contributions in his role as Vice-President of OSA during 2007-2009. He has attended 17 OSA conventions, contributed to various OSA activities at the local and national level, including serving in the Higher Education Committee, Sponsorship Committee, Advisory committee, Speakers Committee, Awards committee and Grievance Committee. Dr. Ashutosh Dutta continues to serve as an advisor on various OSA committees at the chapter level.





## || Arun Das Memorial Kalashree Award 2025 ||



### **DR. GOPAL MOHAPATRA**

Dr. Gopal Mohapatra is a geophysicist by profession and currently a senior technical advisor in Hess Corporation. He is a graduate of IIT Kharagpur and has a Ph.D. from the University of Arizona. He lives with his family in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Mohapatra became a life member of the OSA in 1996 and is currently an OSA benefactor. He served as the President of the OSA Southwest Chapter and as an OSA Governing Board member from 2010 to 2014. He served on OSA's Constitution Amendment Committee (2009-2011), the Dispute Management Committee for the 2012 Seattle Convention, the OSA Grievance Committee (2019-2021) and led the committee from 2021 to 2023. Dr. Mohapatra co-convened the 2021 OSA Convention in Houston, which was revival of in-person convention during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also served as a member of the OSA Advisory Committee for the 2023-2025 term. Dr. Mohapatra received the Distinguished Young Odia Award at the 2001 Chicago OSA Convention. He also received the OSA Distinguished Service award at the 2021 OSA Convention for his efforts to successfully organize that Convention at the newly established Orissa Culture Center (OCC) in Houston, overcoming numerous challenges posed by the pandemic.

Dr. Mohapatra has been a key figure in the Houston Odia drama group, serving as writer, director, and actor for the OSA-Southwest Chapter. Under



his directorship, the Chapter won the prestigious Pramode Patnaik Drama Competition in 1998 and 2010. He played an instrumental role in establishing the OSA-SW Regional Drama Festival (RDF) and served as the RDF coordinator for Houston until 2019. He wrote, directed, and acted in numerous plays for the Houston team, leading them to win the Best Drama award at the inaugural RDF, followed by multiple other awards in subsequent years. He has organized and sponsored the RDF in Houston several times.

Since 1997, Dr Mohapatra has been sponsoring and organizing performances of many renowned Odissi Gurus such as Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra, and dancers, prominent Odia singers including young and emerging talents from Odisha such as singer Subhradeep Sahoo. Dr. Mohapatra has been graciously hosting visiting artists at their home. He is a founding member and current President of the unique Orissa Culture Center (OCC) in Houston. OCC serves as a home to the culture of Odisha in North America and provides a vital platform for many artists from Odisha. Dr Mohapatra has promoted and sponsored Odisha's art and artists, both in North America and in Odisha personally and through organizations. He served in the board of Indo-America Association (IAA), Houston for many years promoting cultural artforms from India. Some of his sponsored projects are Gotipua dance project by Late Guru Gangadhar Pradhan at Konarka Natya Mandap, SEEDS Pala preservation project (2008-2015), Gita Gobinda project (SEEDS), and annual Pala conferences in rural Odisha.

Dr Mohapatra has shown commendable leadership in inspiring young members of the community into Odia culture and social services through his mentorship.



## || Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das Memorial Award 2025 ||



### **MRS MAMATA MISRA**

Mrs. Mamata Misra has lived in Austin, Texas since 1974 with her family. She has a Masters in Computer Science from the University of Texas, Austin. She worked as a software architect at IBM and Intel. Now, she teaches Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and other mindfulness classes. She was trained to teach MBSR by the UMASS Center For Mindfulness, Mindfulness Center at Brown University, and East Coast Mindfulness.

Working against family violence for 12 years, she helped build an organization SAHELI, now Asian Family Support Services of Austin (AFSSA). Through SAHELI, she aided while maintaining confidentiality to South Asian survivors of domestic violence. She helped over 200 families, including some Odia survivors in different ways, including peer counseling, arranging emergency shelter, housing, job search, paperwork, teaching them to drive, language interpretation, accompanying them to legal proceedings, immigration offices for work permits or adjustment of status under the Violence Against Women Act and sometimes to criminal court hearings. She also helped survivors in North America long distance over the years, providing phone counseling and connecting them with their local resources. She helped two Austin American families who adopted girls from orphanages in Odisha, to understand Odia/Indian cultures and customs





and to communicate with the girls in spoken Odia. She led awareness campaigns on domestic violence and initiated programs that engaged college students. Her work in SAHELI has led to AFSSA being a 30+ year organization with state funding. Her work has earned her numerous recognitions:

- The Jordan Award, from the Austin Community Foundation
- Woman of the Year, from the YWCA
- Business in Ethics Finalist from the Samaritan Center and St. Edward's University
- Humanitarian Award from the Network of Asian American Organizations
- Volunteer of the Year from SafePlace
- Founding Sister Award from Saheli

Mrs. Misra serves on the Board of Pratham USA, Austin Chapter, enabling child literacy in India. She visited Pratham programs in Odisha in 2012 (Read India programs in 10-12 villages in Salepur and Jajpur area) and 2015 (Second Chance program for high school dropouts in Polasara in Ganjam district) and raised awareness about Pratham's work in the US, organizing fundraisers and managing online summer readathons. She has been active in local education-related initiatives, including serving in the Immigration Task Force of the City of Austin and the Travis County Adult Literacy Council.



Mrs. Mishra is one of the founding members and current President of the board of SEEDS (Sustainable Education and Economic Development Society), a non-profit dedicated to grassroots development in Odisha. As a long-standing patron of SEEDS, she has supported education, economic independence, and healthcare for girls and women in Odisha. Under her leadership SEEDS is currently providing nursing training to 150 girls in hospitals across Odisha. As President, she has also enhanced the organization's programs, online presence, and social media outreach.

Mrs. Mamata Mishra is big promoter of Odissi and other Indian cultural activities helping host many artist performances in Austin over three decades. She played a key role in organizing OSA Women's Forums at several OSA conventions, creating space for meaningful dialogue and empowerment. She had helped create a directory of helpful numbers for South Asians to call for assistance in different states in the US for the OSA website. She has been involved in OSA and OSA Southwest Chapter and Conventions in various roles. She continues to be an active volunteer in various OSA, local Odia, Indian communities.



## || **Subrina Biswal Award for Academic Excellence 2025** ||



### **MR. ARNAV TRIPATHY**

Mr. Arnav Tripathy describes himself as an inquisitive senior at Coppell High School with a strong academic background, excellent analytical skills, demonstrated commitment, and passion for a research-oriented career in computer science. He is on his way to the University of Texas at Austin where he plans to use computer science to advance real-world issues through international projects and research.

Arnav volunteered in Florida Odia Community and has been an active student volunteer in OSA SW Chapter events since past 3 years. Arnav volunteered for an organization (SANTI) helping impoverished mothers and children in Odisha. He raised awareness and helped raise \$2000+ for SANTI childcare. He is in the Next-Gen/Youth Planning Team for the upcoming 56th OSA Convention, in Dallas. He intends to continue volunteering at food banks or other community service projects throughout the Austin area.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/arnav-tripathy-b899a6268>

#### **Awards & Recognitions:**

- Finalist National Merit Scholarship Program (Qualified with NMSC Selection Index Score of 228/228, PSAT/NMSQT score of 1520/1520)
- State winner in Florida State level competition for FBLA (Orlando, March 2023); FBLA National participant in Atlanta and placed in top 30.





- State winner and National participant in Policy Debate; State winner in NCFL (National Catholic Forensics League) in 2021 and 2022; NCFL national participant in 2021 at Washington D.C.
- AP Scholar with Distinction in 2023 and 2024
- Principal Honor Roll and Gold Lunch Recipient
- Member of National Honor Society at Coppell High School
- Spelling Bee: South Asian Spelling Bee National Qualifier in 2020, NSF Regional Spelling Bee Champion in 2016, 2017
- President's Award in Middle School 2021

### Experience & Research Work:

- App Developer Intern with Technosphere
- Research Paper: Convergence of Nanotechnology and Machine Learning: The State of the Art, Challenges, and Perspectives. *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*. 18 November 2024
- Intern at University of Texas at Dallas – Data s and Algorithm
- Summer Intern at Morsani College of Medicine, USF, Florida
- Internship with NanoFlorida
- Assistant Project Manager with SANTI (Community Service)
- Volunteer at Feeding Tampa Bay & Teachers Help in Montessori School
- Captain and Founder of Science UIL Club at Coppell High School
- Officer in STEM Squared Club at Coppell High School
- Member of iLead (Coppell ISD Student Leadership Program)
- Captain of Policy Debate team in Strawberry Crest High School, FL
- Captain of FBLA team in Strawberry Crest High School, FL



## || Youth Volunteer Award 2025 ||



### **MS. MANASWEE MISHRA**

Ms. Manaswee Mishra is a Biomedical Engineering major student at Penn State University. She volunteers her talents, time and energy to multiple OSA activities since she was in elementary school. She performed in many OSA events and Conventions presenting Odissi and other folk and fusion dances, drama and participated in Odia Vocabulary and Speech, Champu, Chhanda and Odissi singing.

Manaswee has also taken on more technical responsibilities, including stage management, audiovisual coordination, and liaison work with venues and event management companies to raise the standard of cultural events within OSA. She played a pivotal role in mobilizing youth by helping establish a youth group within OSA which led to the smooth execution of the youth events and the increased participation of young members. As part of the core leadership team of this youth group, she was instrumental in developing a roadmap and implementing processes that empowered the youth team to self-manage effectively.

Manaswee also volunteers in JOGA, a local organization in Maryland, which fosters religious and educational activities. She has been actively involved in THON, Penn State's student-run philanthropy committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer. For THON



she contributed to various fundraising and awareness initiatives before taking on bigger responsibilities like participating in dancer support, planning THON Weekend logistics, and collaborating with other student organizations to coordinate joint events. Manaswee shows long-standing dedication to service and community, driven by the belief in making a tangible impact on the lives of Four Diamonds families.

### **Leadership Roles:**

- South Asian Student Association: Events Director (Fall 2024), Freshman Liaison (Fall 2021)
- The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) Youth - Cultural Coordinator June 2020 - Dec. 2023
- Penn State JaDhoom - Captain (2022-2023) Sept. 2021 - May 2023
- National Honor Society Executive Board (2020-2021), Class Council (2019-2021), Speech and Debate Captain (2021), Bollywood Dance Team Captain (2018-2021)

### **Honors and Awards:**

- The OSA Yuva Kala Vikas Award (Youth Cultural Excellence Award) Fall 2020
- Wilkes University's Colonel Emerging Leader Award Summer 2020
- Other Honors - National Honors Society, Tri-M Music Honors Society, Spanish Honors Society





### **DISCLAIMER**

**All articles and opinions published herein reflect the views of the respective authors alone. The Odisha Society of the Americas (OSA) and the Editorial Board do not assume responsibility for the opinions expressed, nor for any copyright, legal, or ethical matters arising from the content. Authors bear full responsibility for their submissions.**

### **ଅସ୍ୱୀକାର ବାଉଁ**

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**Namaste all,**

**This issue of **UTKARSHA** has been a collective journey for all of us. We sincerely apologize for the unintentional delay in its publication.**

**Kindly send us your write-ups for the forthcoming**

**WINTER EDITION**

**of Utkarsha at your earliest convenience, to help us prepare and release the next issue in a timely manner.**

**Please submit your raw documents only...**

- Without any editing or graphics.**
- With your photo, web links, Address, email ID & phone no.**

**We would also be grateful if you could inform us of any errata you may notice in the issue, so that necessary corrections can be made in the digital edition. Your thoughtful and constructive observations are always valued. In addition, we would appreciate a few words reflecting on the current issue.**

**Thank You All**

**The Editorial Team**

**Utkarsha**

**[editors@odishasociety.org](mailto:editors@odishasociety.org)**





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## UTKARSHA

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FALL 2025 EDITION