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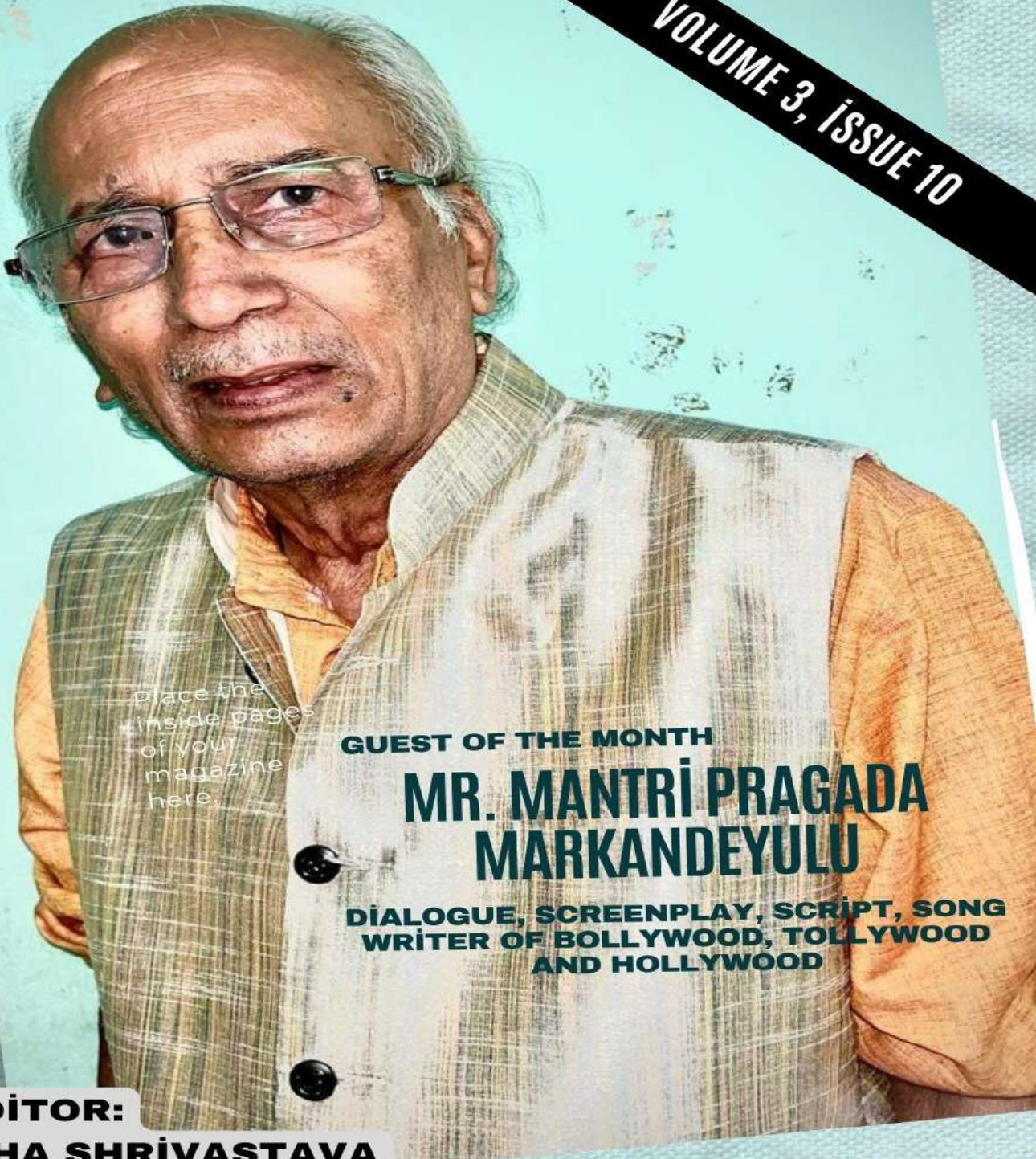
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E-MAGAZINE IN ENGLISH FOR AN
INTERNATIONAL CIRCULATION

PANACHE

A PRODUCT OF
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 10



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GUEST OF THE MONTH

**MR. MANTRI PRAGADA
MARKANDEYULU**

**DIALOGUE, SCREENPLAY, SCRIPT, SONG
WRITER OF BOLLYWOOD, TOLLYWOOD
AND HOLLYWOOD**

**CHIEF EDITOR:
AKANKSHA SHRIVASTAVA
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE**

LITERATURE | INTERVIEW

Preface

"Panache" is not just a name. It is a basic value of our "Aadhya Publishing House" as we believe talent should never die. Rather it should always stand out like the feathered plume on a helmet to attract the world and that is what Panache means. We, as the Publisher, believe in encouraging new talent in the field of literature. We want each and every poet to get the opportunity to express themselves and get the proper acknowledge that they deserve. They should be known by the world for their views and we hope very soon we shall be able to achieve this.

Panache is a monthly international magazine in the English Language, that is released on digital platforms for literature lovers.

However, our work does not end here. I, Akanksha Shrivastava, Publisher and Chief Editor of Aadhya Publishing house, am trying to put a smile on the faces of poor children by providing them with food on behalf of our publishing house. By taking this small initiative, it is our wish to fulfill this basic need of food so that we help the children to survive in a better way.



AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

PRESENTS

PANACHE International Magazine

October 2024

**Publisher &
Chief Editor**

Akanksha Shrivastava
9424002558

Designed by:

Lalit Kishore Gaur
LKG Telefilms
lkgaur76@gmail.com

Panache is a monthly magazine which is published by **AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE**. In this magazine we encourage new poets and writers by publishing their writings. Every month we offer a competition in which poets and writers can take part by registering themselves. The registered participants send their writings along with their name , photograph and phone number. The magazine will be launched on our facebook page on 1st day of every month. After the launch of magazine every registered writer will get the pdf of the magazine. Out of all the registered participants we ask every writer for their top 5 choices. And then we promote our writers on our social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter . This “**Panache**” will definitely be the attraction of literature and also the rise of every poet...



Akanksha Shrivastava
Publisher & Chief Editor

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**CELEBRATING THE EXCELLENCE AND HARDWORK
WITH HONORABLE MR. MANTRI PRAGADA MARKANDEYULU
(MEMBER OF EDITORIAL PANEL,
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE)**

About Author Mantri Pragada Markandeyulu, Litt.D., (Introduction):

Mantri Pragada Markandeyulu is a retired PSU Executive Secretary (Govt. of India - Deptt. of AE) for 24 years. Also worked for 6 years in the Engineering colleges as Training & Placement Manager. Also, I have worked for 5 years at various NGOs. Presently turned as an Author, Poet, Novelist, Song and Story, Script and Dialogue Writer.

1) What's your favourite short story?

WHAT I CAN DO IN MY LIFE. It's a Scientific Short Story, for making a movie.

2) Where do you write?

I write in all social media, international websites, KDP Amazon, Smashwords, Flipkart, Story Mirror, various Journals and Magazines etc.

Even I have published more than Eighty (80+) books as on today, all in English Language version and also in Telugu Language.

3) Where do you get your ideas?

I get generated all the ideas from my mind, I catch up from TV, News Papers, YouTube and other multi-media channels and from National News.

4) Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Not much energization, but I get peace of mind and have self-satisfaction. I keep my mind in ship-shape condition. I try to put my mind-wavelength in perfect condition. Exhausting? Of course, I do get exhausted because of age factor. But I don't feel like exhausting my energy. Rather I feel happy to write something useful and put it in social media for reader's view. Most of the readers endorse my writing as Good or Excellent.

5) How long on average does it take you to write a book?

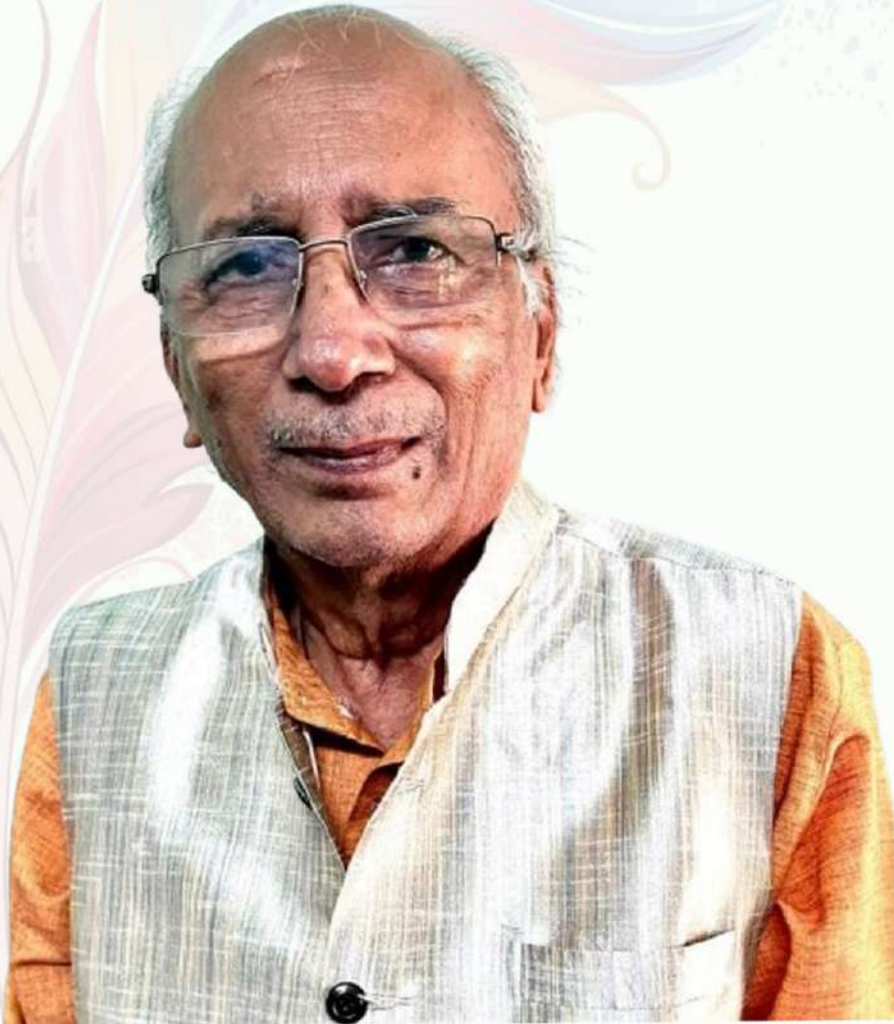
60 days average for writing a book. But, the time taken for setting, proof reading, reorganizing, proof-reading and corrections, deletions, additions all these take more time. This is called Gigs Management.

6) If you had to do something differently as a child or teenager to become a better writer as an adult, what would you do?

Learning process is infinite. Actually, teens and youth have more new technologies and ideas. Adults have to learn few new things from youngsters. It's true. There is no doubt in it. Adults have to learn many things from youth. Adults are not perfect all times in Literary or writing or in any other field. Everybody can't become William Shakespeare. But most writers and authors and poets or poetesses just follow the writing techniques and language standard established by famous poets and Novelists.

7) The Best piece of writing advice?

Whatever thoughts you generate in mind, please note it down. Make draft. Add some additional related content like sayings, quotations, malmasala etc., and make a final draft of your story. First of all, all the youth and youngsters and middle-aged people in particular and old age people in general, to make a habit of reading and writing. Go on writing and writing. The Literature is everybody's property. Unless one practices writing of thoughts generated in one's own mind, a writer cannot become an Author or a Poet. Academic studies are different. Literary writings are different. Writing habit is the best habit. More so, there will be selfsatisfaction and peace of mind.



Mantri Pragada Markandeyulu
2024




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Note :- We always demand the original write-ups from our writers. If any article, short story or poem is found to be a copy of any other article, short story or poem respectively, then the writer would only be responsible for it.

1. Life is a big theatre



Ms. Aarti Dhurve
Student
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh

We are halfway into our workshop! We embarked on a journey where theater became our mirror, reflecting the diverse faces of our community. People from different walks of life gathered shoulder to shoulder, breathing in the same air yet carrying unique stories and questions within.

Through playful games, we tapped into our deepest emotions—fear, joy, the need for safety, and the delicate balance between trust and control. Each game became a canvas where we painted our feelings, and in the end, we shared these stories through powerful monologues.

The air was filled with vulnerability and strength as we tried to understand not just ourselves, but each other a little better. In those few hours, the room wasn't just a space; it became a bridge, connecting hearts and minds across the invisible divides that often keep us apart.

This is the magic of theater—it doesn't just tell stories; it creates them together.

2. Father is my dear

Father is the name of struggle,
He is my inspiration.
He helps me achieve success,
He shares a bond of love with me,
Father is my dear.

Father is the name of struggle,
He does everything for me and my family.
He is my teacher,
He teaches me about subjects and creatures.
We share a bond of love so dear,
Father is my dear.

He always supports me,
He is full of kindness.
He gives me happiness,
He takes care of me,
Father is my dear.

In the end,
I give thanks to my father,
From the core of my heart.
And I promise you that,
We will always maintain our bond of love,
Father is my dear.



**Mr. Anmol
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

3. Traveller

I am a traveler of time,
From the past to the present of mine.
Past memories or future hopes,
Living in both with present scopes.

It costs me more than I think;
Good memories give me that wink.
It took a little bit of time
Till you feel rejuvenated in line.

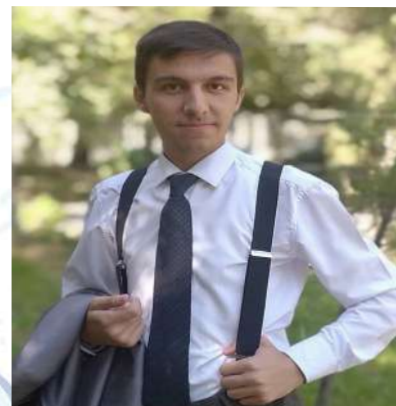
Traveling is such a heaven;
It can't be explained without exploration.
To filter the past and head to the new,
That's what it helped me to know.

New people and new stories,
A new journey with new memories.
To recall or imagine, I'll filter it out;
Traveling is what I've figured out.



**Ms. Ayushi
Khawade
Student
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh**

4. Global initiatives of Tajikistan on the planet



**Mr. Behruz
Saifulloev
Journalist
Tajikistan**

Human society has accepted many notable actions of the President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, and they are working together to eliminate global threats.

The main goal of these initiatives, first of all, is that the President of Tajikistan expressed his views not only on solving the problems of his country, but also on solving the problems of the planet. Currently, when climate change and the rapid melting of large glaciers continue, the President of Tajikistan predicted and analyzed that this phenomenon can lead to a great loss of animals and plants and limit access to drinking water. From the beginning of 2000 until now, on the initiative of the President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, the General Assembly of the United Nations has adopted the necessary agreements and resolutions related to water.

For the first time, on October 1, 1999, at the 54th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Emomali Rahmon was invited to the honorary podium of this Organization and spoke in front of the leaders of more than 180 countries of the world. In this meeting, the leader of the nation raised the issue of water and proposed to the international community to declare 2003 as the International Year of Clean Water. The proposal of Honorable Emomali Rahmon was accepted by the international community and on September 20, 2000, at the 55th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 2003 was announced as the International Year of Clean Water. This was the first global initiative of Emomali Rahmon, which was accepted by the international community. As part of the declaration of 2003 as the International Year of Clean Water, conferences, round tables, forums and high-level events were held on a global scale. In particular, from August 29 to September 1, 2003, the International Forum on Clean Water was held in Dushanbe. The holding of this Forum played a great role in providing the world's population with drinking water and taking important and necessary measures in the way of providing the population with this invaluable natural resource. In recognition of the personality and image of the head of the new

state of Tajiks, respected Emomali Rahmon, many worthy and realistic opinions were published on international and domestic websites and newspapers.

The second humanitarian proposal of Emomali Rahmon was the announcement of the International Decade of Action "Water for Life" (2005-2015). On December 23, 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations, based on the Dushanbe Declaration, adopted a relevant resolution, designating the years 2005-2015 as the Decade. International operation "Water for Life" was announced. The support and implementation of the humanitarian measures of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Honorable Emomali Rahmon, by this organization is a testament to the prestige of the Tajik people in the international arena. Tajikistan, as a full-fledged member of the international community, makes a significant contribution to solving global issues, effectively uses its water resources both in the field of energy and agriculture through the construction of hydroelectric power plants.

The United Nations at its 65th session, with the decision of its General Assembly dated December 20, 2010 under No. 65/154, declared 2013 the International Year of Cooperation in the Water Sector and fully recognized the third international initiative of Emomali Rahmon. In 2013, the international community, based on the United Nations Resolution, marked the International Year of Cooperation in the Water Sector by holding high-level forums, conferences and summits. The opening ceremony of the International Year of Cooperation in the field of water was held at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris, France on February 11, 2013, where the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan participated and gave a speech.

In 2013, Tajikistan expanded cooperation with the international community in the field of water and climate. In addition, this year, again at the initiative of Tajikistan, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution entitled "Implementation of the International Year of Cooperation in the Water Sector" within the framework of item 20 of the "Sustainable Development" agenda at its 67th session. In total, 48 developed countries of the world joined the list of members of our resolution.

As part of the adoption of this Resolution, an international conference was held in Dushanbe on August 20-21, 2013. The purpose of the Dushanbe Conference is, first of all, to promote the improvement of cooperation in the field of water,

including transboundary cooperation, through the promotion of best practices, the participation of all interested parties and the encouragement of cooperation in the field of water at all levels to help achieve the goals coordinated at the international level in the field of water. This conference provided an opportunity to discuss and discuss the process of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals regarding water resources and recommendations and suggestions on the design of the Millennium Development Goals for the development period after 2015. This conference consisted of four round tables.

Also, on the sidelines of this Conference, side meetings on various topics related to water and the exhibition "Water unites us" were also held.

Delegations of all UN member states, UN leadership and its agencies, international and regional organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, regional organizations, civil society, private sector, scientists and specialists, representatives of mass media, etc. participated in the Conference.

The United Nations has declared March 22 as the International Day of Water Resources, and on this day the International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028" officially began.

Also, the proposal of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Honorable Emomali Rahmon, to provide Central Asian countries with fresh water through the establishment of an international consortium on the use of water from Lake Sarez and the initiative of the International Foundation for the Protection of Glaciers was supported by the international community.

It should be said that our country is one of the founders of the International Fund to Save the Aral Sea, and along with other Central Asian countries, it is focusing its efforts on solving this regional and global problem. During the negotiations of the heads of states of Central Asia, the rational use of water resources is being discussed as a serious problem of the region. It is a matter of pride and honor that all proposals of the leader of the Tajiks of the world, Emomali Rahmon, are supported by the international community. That is how the fifth proposal of the founder of water policy in the world, Honorable

Emomali Rahmon, regarding the declaration of 2025 as the International Year of Glacier Protection on December 14, 2022, was unanimously supported by the international community. On December 15, 2022, the leader of the nation, Emomali Rahmon, with his congratulatory message, announced this important historical event to all the proud and enterprising Tajik people, and congratulated the adoption of the United Nations Special Resolution on declaring 2025 as the International Year of Glacier Protection for every Tajik individual. congratulated.

In fact, nowadays, climate change has caused rapid melting of glaciers. Scientists and researchers of the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan are looking for safe ways to protect the glaciers of Tajikistan and the world. In this direction, the work of scientists is considered very significant, because they invented a special curtain that reduces the impact of sunlight on glaciers. In this way, we can give a new life to the glaciers and contribute to their preservation.

Every initiative of the leader of the nation, Honorable Emomali Rahmon, is to save people from the problems of lack of water, poverty and other issues related to the improvement of the standard of living of the world society. At the same time, it is necessary for all of us to follow the noble actions of the leader of the nation and contribute to the sustainable economic development and decent life of the people.

Global initiatives of Tajikistan within the framework of the United Nations

1. Proposal of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan at the 54th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (October 1, 1999) - to declare 2003 as the Year of Clean Water. Based on this initiative, on September 20, 2000, at the 55th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 2003 was announced as the International Year of Clean Water. On August 29 - September 1, 2003, the International Forum on Clean Water was held in Dushanbe.

2. Proposal of the President of Tajikistan to declare 2005-2015 as the International Decade of Action "Water for Life". On December 23, 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the relevant Resolution based on the Dushanbe Declaration and declared 2005-2015 as the International Decade of Action "Water for Life".

3. The initiative to declare 2013 as the international year of cooperation in the

field of water.

In 2013, the international community, according to the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations under the number 67/204, authored by Tajikistan, marked the International Year of Cooperation in the Water Sector. The opening ceremony of the International Year of Cooperation in the field of water was held at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris on February 11, 2013, in which the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan participated and gave a speech.

4. Proposal of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan to declare 2018-2028 as the International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development". On December 21, 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted the relevant Resolution and declared 2018-2028 as the International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development". It is worth mentioning that this initiative was first presented by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on April 12, 2015 during the World Water Forum in Daegu, Republic of Korea.

The International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development" began on March 22, 2018 and will end on March 22, 2028.

In this regard, it should be mentioned that in June 2018, after the official start of this Decade in New York on the World Water Day (March 22), in Dushanbe with the participation of high-ranking representatives of states and governments of UN member states, international and regional organizations and other stakeholders, a high-level international conference on the implementation of the "International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028" was held, during which a wide range of issues related to water resources were discussed.

It is worth noting that the results of this Conference can give a fresh impetus to the implementation process of the aforementioned Decade. Moreover, the Dushanbe Conference, which was held before the UN High-level Forum on Sustainable Development (July 9-18, 2018) (where the Sixth Sustainable Development Goal was also raised), was designed to develop specific recommendations to strengthen measures for helped to achieve goals and objectives in the field of water resources. At the end of the conference, the final document of the

Conference - Declaration of Dushanbe was adopted.

And the most recent initiative to declare 2025 as the "International Year of Glacier Protection" was accepted by the international community.

By Behruz Saifulloev



5. Mare's Nest



Dr. Bobby Narayan
Writer
New Delhi

Some 30 – 40 years ago, an old man was walking in 7th Mile, Shillong, a hill station trudged through the biting cold. It was most likely end of December or start of January. The air was thick with snowflakes, and occasional raindrops pelted his ragged clothes. It was the cusp of winter, when the world seemed to hold its breath.

It was really irritating to live in this situation. The old man's gnarled hands clutched at the edges of his tattered coat, and his breath formed misty clouds in the frosty air. Irritation gnawed at him—why did life have to be so harsh? Why did the elements conspire against him?

Suddenly the old man stopped, feeling a little bit hungry he noticed a humble woman sitting by the roadside, tending to a makeshift fire. He came near the woman who was baking corn upon burning coal on the roadside. Her hands weathered and her face etched with lines of hardship.

As he stopped near her, she smiled. She had no teeth, and her cheeks went inside but her smile was very lovely. Her smile, however, was a beacon of warmth—a fragile light in the wintry landscape. Approaching her, the old man felt a pang of hunger which doubled. The woman didn't respond with words; instead, she stood up, her toothless grin widening, and beckoned him to follow.

He gestured toward the corn and asked, 'What is the price?'. She didn't answer but smiled.

He again asked her, but she stood up and caught his hand and took him to her shop which was just two minutes' walk. They walked together—a mere two-minute journey—to her humble shop, a rustic hut that seemed to defy the biting cold. Inside, the air smelled of wood smoke and resilience. The woman served him a simple meal: rice, dal, and fried vegetables. Her eyes crinkled as she patted his head and back, as if bestowing a silent blessing.

While eating, midway through the meal, suddenly, the old man noticed something curious, saw her two cobs burnt and he pointed towards it. Two cobs of corn lay discarded near the fire, their kernels charred and blackened. He pointed to them and questioning their fate.

Whenever there were no customers inside the shop, she used to come out and bake the corn. She didn't show any signs of regret or loss. The woman's eyes met his, and she didn't flinch. Instead, she smiled—an unwavering smile that held no regret. Those burnt cobs were a testament to her resilience. When customers were scarce, she stepped outside and baked corn, undeterred by the elements. She didn't lament the loss; instead, she embraced the rhythm of life.

After eating the old man went away and every now and then this old man in rags used to come and sit beside her used to say something but she used to smile only. And so, their silent ritual continued. Sitting beside her, he shared stories that only the wind heard. She listened, her eyes crinkling with understanding, her smile a balm for his weary soul.

What did they talk about? Perhaps it was the weather, the changing seasons, or the constellations that adorned the night sky. Maybe they spoke of dreams—hers of warm hearths and his of forgotten summers. Words mattered less than the connection they shared—the quiet companionship that transcended language.

As the days passed, the old man's visits became a pilgrimage. He'd sit by her side, and she'd smile, her toothless mouth revealing a universe of wisdom. She taught him that life's sweetness lay not in abundance but in the simplest gestures—the warmth of a fire, the taste of corn, and the touch of a kind hand.

And so, in that hill station where snowflakes danced and raindrops fell, the old man found solace. The woman's smile became his compass, guiding him through life's storms. She was his mare's nest—a hidden treasure that defied logic, a lesson in resilience and grace.

-2-

The old man was not a regular customer, and never did he pay any sum of money for the food he consumed but she used to hear his gossip without answering.

After having dinner, he was not in habit of coming back for which she was concerned very much.

The nearby shopkeepers, the neighbourhood, especially women, used to ask her "Who is he?". "Is he your husband who left you 21 years ago?" Stupid people used to comment, "Your long-lost husband?" They speculated, but she only smiled. Her hut, wooden structure, became a haven—a place where hunger met warmth, where stories flowed like a secret river.

And she used to smile, seeing her happiness they used to dance like merrymaking surrounding her at nights every now and then. Outside, the rain fell in torrents.

The neighbourhood shopkeepers gathered; their faces etched with concern. At night, the neighbourhood shopkeepers used to gather and make gossip near fire, help her in other works, shutting down her shop, cleaning utensils and so on.

And then, one day, he didn't return. The woman worried. Had he fallen ill? Or worse? The nearby shopkeepers, especially the women, prodded her. "Is he your past?" they asked. "A ghost from twenty-one years ago?"

She smiled, revealing the universe hidden behind her toothless grin. Her happiness radiated, and they danced—a merrymaking circle around her. At night, the neighbourhood shopkeepers after closing the shop, make a gathering and cut jokes; their laughter echoing through the quiet streets.

"Who was he?" they'd ask. She'd glance at the stars, her eyes holding memories. "A friend," others would say. "A companion in the cold."

And so, the old man became a legend—a mare's nest of kindness and resilience. His visits, like whispered secrets, lingered in the frosty air. The woman baked corn, her fire a beacon for lost souls. She taught them that life's sweetness lay not in abundance but in shared meals, in smiles that defied hardship.

When the old man departed, he carried her smile—a fragile treasure—beyond the snow-capped peaks. And the woman? She continued baking corn, her hut a sanctuary where stories wove themselves into the fabric of time.

In the quiet corners of lives, they found perhaps unexpected treasures—the kind that defy explanation and leave an indelible mark on their hearts.

-3-

Suddenly, one day she fell ill. The woman's hut stood silent, its thatched roof sagging under the weight of memories. For years, she had baked corn there—her fire a beacon for lost souls, her smile a fragile treasure. But now, illness had claimed her.

Stumbling through the rain-soaked streets, the old man drunk, came inside and shouted, 'Where are you Manie?' and finding no reply, his breath came in ragged gasps, fuelled by fear and determination. He went inside and angrily asked but she was motionless. "Why are sleeping, Manie?" he shouted, but the silence mocked him.

He found her lying on a straw mat, her frail body covered by a threadbare blanket. He touched her forehead; it was as hot as burning coal. The coal outside was extinguished and the one inside; her forehead was burning instead.

Her forehead burned like the embers of her extinguished fire. The old man's anger dissolved into worry. He touched her skin, her chest —it seared his fingertips, a fever hotter than any coal. But now she didn't smile—a secret smile that held a lifetime of stories. Her hut had witnessed love and loss, resilience and quiet companionship, lay silent like mountains.

He ran to the door and shouted; people gathered but didn't have the courage to come inside. The old man's heart raced. He again came inside and lifted her, cradling her fragile form in his arms, walked in the rain to a nearby hospital.. The rain soaked through his tattered clothes, but he didn't care. He carried her through the winding streets, each step a prayer for her survival. The neighbourhood watched, their eyes filled with awe and fear.

At the hospital, the nurses rushed to her side. They placed her on a sterile bed, their gloved hands gentle as they checked her vitals. The old man stood by his eyes never leaving her face. The doctor arrived—a weary soul who had seen too much suffering. He examined her, his brow furrowing.

"She's gravely ill," the doctor said, his voice a whisper against the rain's drumming. "Pneumonia, perhaps. We'll do our best."

The old man nodded; his heart heavy. He sat by her bedside, watching her chest rise and fall. The rain tapped against the window, a lullaby for the sick. Memories flooded his mind—the warmth of her hut, the taste of her corn, the toothless smile that had brightened his darkest days.

Days turned into nights. The old man refused to leave her side. He whispered stories—theirs, others', and those of the raindrops that danced on the hospital roof. The nurses listened, their eyes softening. They brought warm broth and kind words, their compassion a balm for his weary soul.

And then, one morning, the woman stirred. Her eyes fluttered open, and the old man leaned closer. Her smile—the same smile that had warmed his heart—returned. She whispered, her voice fragile as spun glass, "Thank you."

The old man held her hand, tears blurring his vision. "You're not alone, Manie" he said. "We'll weather this storm together."

And so, they did. The rain continued its relentless dance outside, but within those hospital walls, a different kind of magic unfolded. The old man and the corn baker shared stories of hope, resilience, and the simple joy of being alive.

When she finally recovered, they sat by the window, watching rainbows arch across the sky. The old man knew—he had found his mare's nest, a treasure

beyond measure. It wasn't gold or jewels; it was her smile, her indomitable spirit, and the warmth of their shared journey.

And as the rain subsided, leaving behind glistening streets, the old man realized that sometimes, the greatest miracles happen in the quietest moments—the ones that defy logic and burn brighter than any coal.

-4-

After a fortnight she was discharged. The hospital doors swung open, releasing the old woman into the world once more. Her frail body bore the weight of recovery, and her eyes held a quiet gratitude. The old man, her silent companion, stood by her side—a sentinel against life's storms. In the rain-soaked tapestry of life, their bond remained—a testament to resilience, kindness, and the healing power of companionship.

The old woman was thinking how the old man managed the food and cost of hospitalization. As they stepped out into the rain-drenched streets, the old woman wondered: How had he managed? The food, the hospital bills—each rupee a precious gem. She glanced at him, her eyes searching for answers. But he only smiled—a smile that held secrets and promises.

She returned to the shop, the old man also began to stay there. Back at her shop, the woman resumed her routine. The fire crackled, and the scent of baking corn filled the air. The old man, too, settled into a corner, his presence a familiar warmth. They shared meals—the same rice, dal, and fried vegetables—but now, there was an unspoken pact. He would stay, and she would let him.

Someone from the hill, rang her daughter Itumushu. The neighbourhood watched—the shopkeepers, the passersby. They whispered; their curiosity piqued. “Who is he?” they asked. “Your long-lost husband?” But the woman's smile defied their questions. She had found solace in his company, and that was enough. And then, one day, the phone rang. Itumushu, her daughter, calling from the hill, ‘I am coming’.

The old woman's heart skipped a beat. Twenty-one years—the chasm between them—had suddenly narrowed. She imagined his face—the lines etched by time, the eyes that had witnessed both joy and sorrow.

The old man stood by the window, watching the rain. His memories, like raindrops, tapped against the glass. He had carried her to the hospital, held her hand through fevered nights. Now, he wondered—would she remember him? Would she smile that toothless smile?

The rain continued, as if celebrating their union. The old man and the corn baker—their journey had spanned decades, traversing loss and longing. Now, they sat together, their smiles like embers, warming the room.

The neighbourhood, the shopkeepers, the passersby marvelled at love's resilience—the way it could bridge gaps, heal wounds, and ignite hope. The old woman's daughter would smile; her heart would be full of happiness.

And as the rain subsided, leaving behind glistening streets, the old man knew—he had found his mare's nest. It wasn't gold or jewels; it was her smile, her indomitable spirit, and the warmth of their shared journey.

Together, they would bake corn, tend the fire, and weather life's storms. For love, like rain, had a way of nourishing even the most fragile of hearts.

-5-

Itumushu arrived the next day. During the journey, Itumushu was wondering, she would find her parents sitting side by side.

And so, Itumushu dreamt they would sit—a trio of souls bound by time and love. The old woman's hut, once a refuge, now would be held a reunion beyond words. Itumushu would listen—their stories, their laughter, their shared silence. Itumushu arrived, her footsteps echoing in the quiet streets. She pushed open the door to the corn baker's hut, her heart racing. The old woman's eyes widened, and she reached for her hand. "You came back, my love" she whispered.

"Where is he?" Itumushu demanded, her voice sharp. She turned to Manie, the woman who had raised her. "Why isn't he here?"

But the old man was not there. Manie's smile held secrets—the kind that only time could unravel. She patted Itumushu's hand, her touch gentle. "He'll come," she said. "He always does."

Itumushu's frustration simmered. "You're too kind," she snapped. She asked her mother with a hope, but she received a smile which angered Itumushu, and she uttered, 'that's why father has left you. You never respond. You are a cruel mother. Perhaps you have never treated my father properly'. The rain had ceased, leaving behind a glistening world.

But Manie's eyes held no bitterness. She knew complexities of love —the way it could burn and soothe, like the fire that once baked their corn. The old woman smiled and patted her.

--6--

Christmas arrived—a day of miracles and memories. Itumushu left for her friend's house, her mind restless. And in that quiet interval, the old man appeared. He carried champagne and gifts, his eyes searching for Itumushu.

The old woman baked a cake for him, and the old man ate a piece and got angry at her, but in return she just flashed a smile, her wrinkles deepening and brought some rice, pork- their shared feast a communion of souls. The hut smelled of warmth and nostalgia. The cake Manie baked was a simple offering of love. He went inside fell asleep.

After an hour, two men came in a car and took Manie to the place where her daughter was partying and there they were discussing about her parenthood — the tangled threads of love and loss.

Another old woman leaned in; her voice hushed. “This is not your mother,” she said. “But that drunkard! - he's your father. He comes seeking news of you. When he doesn't find you, he grows angry.”

The woman nodded. “Long ago, your mother was burnt in this very shop. You were handed over to Manie, the woman you call mother, now. She raised you, loved you but she is deaf. But we don't know who she truly is. After your mother's death this old man, your father, became mad, say, mentally disturbed. But he comes in search of you”.

Itumushu's world tilted. “My mother?” she whispered.

Itumushu was astonished. Itumushu's resolve hardened. She was now determined not to return without meeting her father.

Itumushu left the party, raindrops clinging to her hair. The old man's hut awaited—a sanctuary of memories and came running to the shop.

The old man was no more. Beside him lay, a new dress, a skirt, pink in colour, size that of a baby. She picked up the skirt, feeling its softness against her fingertips, kneeled down and cried.

By Bobby Narayan

6. Raja Dahir Sen of Sapt Sindhu



**Dr. Chitranjan
Dayal Singh
Kaushal
Director of Sanskrit
Cell,
Haryana Sahitya
Evam Sanskriti
Akademi,
Panchkula,
Haryana**

Sapt Sindhu, also known as Sindh, was a prosperous region in ancient India with a rich history and Vedic culture. The Chachnama, a historical text, provides insights into the life and reign of Raja Dahir Sen. The Chachnama gives an account of an ancient history of Sindh, giving the Hindu period down to the Arab conquest. It is originally written in Persian and translated by Mirza Kalichbeg Fredunbeg, then Deputy Collector of Naushahro in the district of Hyderabad, Karachi.

There were business relationships between the Bharat and the Salyusid dynasty in the 1st Century. Business was open by road and sea both ways. In the North, roads were made from Takshila to Arab via Selyusiya, Kapisa, Bacteaia and Hiketomopailas. In the South, roadways were made via Sistan and Karmenia. In 570 A.D. at the time of Mohammad Sahib, signs of Vedic culture were very clear and important to follow. There was no rigidity of any kind and everybody was free to worship the Almighty according to his or her sweet will. Hariharkshetra-mahatmya book provides the testimony of the performance of different festivals.

Ekam padam gayayatam makkayaum dvitiyakam.
Tritiyam sthapitam divyam muktyai shuklasya sannidhau..

Raja Dahir Sen is best known for his valiant fight against the Arab invader Mohammad bin Qasim in the early 8th century. Despite being outnumbered and facing a powerful enemy, Raja Dahir Sen displayed immense courage and determination in defending his kingdom.

The battle between Raja Dahir Sen and Mohammad bin Qasim was fierce and intense, but ultimately, Raja Dahir Sen made the ultimate sacrifice for his people. He chose to die fighting on the battlefield rather than surrendering to the invaders.

Raja Dahir Sen's bravery and sacrifice have been immortalized in history as a symbol of resistance against foreign aggression. His legacy continues to inspire generations to stand up for their beliefs and fight for what is right.

Let us remember and honor the memory of Raja Dahir Sen of Sapt Sindhu, a true hero who stood tall in the face of adversity and defended his land with unwavering courage. His reign was put to the test when Arab invaders attacked his kingdom. Despite putting up a fierce resistance, Raja Dahir Sen eventually lost his breath fighting for the sake of his motherland.

Hajaj, one of the ministers of Khalifa and Abdullah invaded Deval port. Subedar of Deval immediately informed Raja Dahir Sen about this invasion by the Arabs. Prince Jai Shah, the son of Raja Dahir Sen and Manu Gurjar also played a pivotal role in fighting against the Arabs .

But it was not just the king who suffered during this tumultuous time. His wife, Rani Ladi, and their two daughters, Surya and Parmal, also showed immense courage and sacrifice. When the Arab invaders demanded that Raja Dahir Sen convert to Islam, he refused, choosing to stay true to his beliefs even if it meant facing death.

In a heartbreaking turn of events, Rani Ladi offered herself as a sacrifice to save her motherland. She also encouraged all to fight against invaders and enthused enthusiasm in the hearts of soldiers and public at large. He took revenge in the true sense of husband's sacrifice. She bravely stood up to the invaders and chose to die alongside her husband rather than live without him.

And if that wasn't enough, their two daughters also made the ultimate sacrifice. When they were sent to please Khalifa, they made a plan and materialised it successfully. They told Khalifa that we were made impure and not fit for him to have a relationship. After knowing the bad conduct of Kasim, Khalifa was very much annoyed and sent people to capture Kasim in a sealed bag. When he was brought in front of Khalifa, he was all dead. In this way, both brave daughters of Bharat took their revenge and killed themselves telling the truth to Khalifa. They

preferred to die rather than be taken captive by the Khalifa.

According to Chachnama:

"When the king of stars made his appearance from behind the curtain of night, a camel man bearing a letter from the capital of the Khalifa arrived. Muhammad son of Ali and Abdul Hasan Humadani relate that at the time of Raja Dahir's death, two of his virgin daughters had been captured in his seraglio. Muhammad Kasim sent them in charge of some Abyssinian servants to the holy city of Bagdad. When Khalifa seated the elder near himself, she unveiled her face and Khalifa of the time looked at it and became charmed with her perfect beauty. Her blood-sucking blandishments took away patience from his heart and he began to take liberties with her and catching hold of Surya, pulled her to himself. Surya sprang up and said, "May the king live long. I, a humble slave, am not fit for your Majesty's bedroom, because the just amir Muhammad Kasim kept us both with him for three days and then sent us to the Khalifa." He lost patience and his excess of jealousy did not permit him to make any inquiries. He, therefore, immediately sent for pen, ink and paper and with his own hands wrote an order directing that Muhammad Kasim should, wherever he may be, put himself in raw leather and come back to the chief seat of the Khalifa. When Muhammad Kasim received this order on his arrival at Udhapur, he at once asked his men to put into a fresh hide. This was done and the living parcel was placed in a box and carried away. Muhammad Kasim thus in a short time breathed his last."

The story of Raja Dahir Sen and his family is a powerful reminder of the strength and resilience of the human spirit. Their sacrifices will forever be remembered as acts of bravery and love that inspire us all.

Always think about courage and sacrifice, remember the story of Raja Dahir Sen of Sapt Sindhu and his family. Their legacy lives on as a testament to the power of love and loyalty in the face of adversity.

By Chitranjan Dayal Singh Kaushal

7. SILENT REVERIE



Ms. Esha Fatima
(MindScribe)
Student, Writer
Sargodha
Pakistan

For all the writers, creators, and dreamers who find themselves lost in the chaos of their own minds,

Sometimes, the words won't come. The mind is exhausted, the heart is heavy, and the world outside feels suffocating. It's okay to admit defeat, to acknowledge the burnout and the overwhelm. It's okay to take a step back, to pause, and to breathe.

In these moments, the urge to create, to write, to express feels like a distant memory. The thoughts swirl—a jumbled mess of emotions and doubts—making it hard to focus, to think, to be.

But even in the darkness, there is beauty. The stillness, the quiet, the solitude—it's a chance to recharge, to refocus, and to rediscover. It's a reminder that creativity ebbs and flows, like the tides, and that rest is essential to the process.

“So let the words wait!” Let the world spin without you for a little while. “Take the time to heal, to mend, and to find yourself again.” For when you return to the page, the words will flow like a river, and the world will be a brighter, more vibrant place.

This is your gentle reminder that rest is not the enemy, but the key to unlocking your true potential.

8. Mama

Mother is the doctor for any sickness.
Mama is the country that everyone loves,
without conquering.
Mama is joy and sorrow,
Mama the power,
Mama the forgiveness.
One word was created by God
to forgive people.
Say it every day,
call her if they put chains on you,
to sweeten the wound,
to bring peace.
My mom, you're unique.
You never told them you were upset.
With gold, I will cherish you,
chosen person.
I crown you,
my mother,
my sun,
my compass.



**Ms. Eva
Petropoulou Lianou
Greece**

9. PEACE

No expectations, peace.
Forgive and forget, peace.
Non-violence, adjustments, accommodation—peace.
Before poking fingers at others,
Try to discover your own faults—peace.
Gratitude, humility, surrender—peace.
Give me a sea of peace
In a world of loud pandemonium.



Ms. Gargi Saha
Teacher
Varanasi
Uttar Pradesh

10. Flamboyant

Flamboyant means elaborate and ostentatious.
Flamboyant has a noticeable quality, attracting a lot of attention.
Flamboyant is very confident and energetic in behavior.
Flamboyant individuals are stylish and giggly, changing the atmosphere.
Flamboyant leaves behind boldness and brilliance.
Flamboyant is expressive and filled with qualities par excellence.
Flamboyant seeks attention due to a dashing and spirited temperament.
Flamboyant is a symbol of smartness and colorful confidence.



**Mr. Girish Chandra
Upadhyay
Advocate Allahabad
High Court,
Allhabad
Prayag Raj
Uttar Pradesh**

11. My Mother



**Mr. Harvendra
Singh
Lecturer (Jaunpur)
Lakhimpur Kheri
Uttar Pradesh**

She is the shade of a tree cold and profound,
She is every herb to my aching wound.
She dabs my forehead , putting in her lap
And her lap's warmth gives me a cozy nap.

The seventh heaven, in her feet divine,
A miraculous cure, from her stroking fine,
Her soothing fingers, passing through my hair
Energize my nerves and spirit fair.

She is the solid ground under my feeble feet
Over my head, like the sky broad and neat,
An exorcist to a bad omen or an evil eye,
She is like a goddess from the mountains high.

My heartbeat's rhythm and a unique nurse,
My mother is my comfort and my universe.

12. Loss of Life

Those memorable sitting areas,
Talking for hours and hours,
Loud laughter, sharing sorrows,
Priorities, resolved conflicts,
Those time-traveling habits,
Goals and promises.
I lost the labor of years,
I lost you—my fault; I lost you.
Perhaps it was the demand of time
Or human nature.
You were the holder of my whole heart,
Now you hold nothing.
Strangers pass by
As if they don't know each other.
Hearts grew cold, words are forgotten,
Cares turned into, "I don't know."
Never-ending confusion—
Who knows?
The mystery or the universal cycle of change.
I lost you, my peace, I lost you.



**Ms. Humaira
Noreen
Writer, Graphic
designer, Analyst
Sargodha
Pakistan**

13. Toothbrush



**Dr. Jailaxmi R
Vinayak**
**Research guide for
Ph.D students**
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh

The toothbrush is my dear friend.
Early in the morning,
When I say hello and good morning to the mirror
With a smile from ear to ear,
Displaying my pearly teeth,
While brushing,
Ruminating and jotting down
With anxiety and fear
My chaotic, mundane routine behavior.

So many questions
Crowd at the gates of
My mind:
What should I make today for breakfast?
Toast and omelet
Or poha and pancakes?

In the meantime,
The milkman shouts,
Piercing the bubble of my reverie.
I dribble
And think,
Can't run with a toothbrush in
My hand, sure!

So I say goodbye to my perennial friend
With the promise to see it again at night
To brush my teeth and say goodnight.

The toothbrush is not only my necessity;
It lends me privacy,
To think aloud,
Ventilates me,
Cleanses, and refreshes me.

14. Across the allies of time



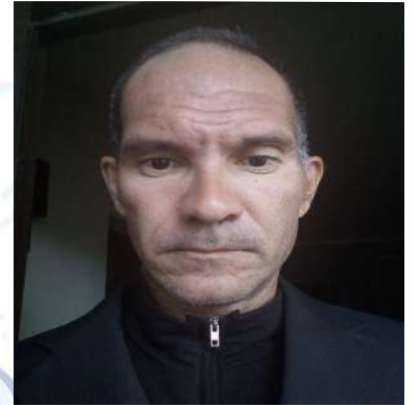
**Dr. Jaya Anitha
Abraham
Teacher
Abu Dhabi
United Arab
Emirates**

She hugs me, my adult child.
Her ancient first cry
Echoes in my ears
Across the alleys of time.
She curves her lips
Into the first syllable,
Fragrant in her innocence.

Her arms curve around me
A little tighter, a little longer now.
My tree-like body stands,
Counting its rings of existence.
Time, the bouquet of glass roses
In full bloom between us,
Glowing in fluorescent pain.

Her arms grow around me.
We breathe the same memories,
Fiery as the trumpet vine flowers.
“Who can stop love blooming?
Surrender, surrender.
You will die
But live in her,”
My heart murmurs.

15. Bitter Joy



**Ambassador Dr.
Jose Luis Lopez
Puerto Rico**

I must want a fictitious life
because I have not known how to give love.
While time marches on,
I find myself in darkness and silence,
the inert spirit without a yawn.
The air runs out, covering the light;
it is the prison of the entrails
that eats me like cancer,
unstoppably consuming my body.

I sometimes wish to leave vaporless,
not to respawn until completed,
because this suffering is incessant.
Even with a smile, I die,
and my limited breath fades away!
And now there is only one sentence left:
try to refocus what is broken.

Even so, I remain weak in total agony,
waiting for the inhuman treachery.
Let it strike me down anyway
so that I may succumb slowly, and in peace.
It's not because I distrust destiny;
rather, I try to reach such a step.
Nor do I intend to cheer the joy;
lies lie in the disastrous mystery... it lives within!

I am a total slave to your insults,
looking to find the miraculous key
to escape toward that divine tunnel.
Otherwise, I will be your eternal giñapo,
at the mercy of whippings, screams, and wounds.

I even convince myself that all my life
I have been an indelible... bitter joy!
Just seeing the bad guy cry... the madness laughs!

By Jose Luis Lopez



16. O MOTHER !



**Ms. Juhi Prakash
Singh
Professor, Director
and CEO- Anant
Naad Foundation
and a passionate
writer
New Delhi**

A new life had begun inside her,
A life that for nine months she loved and nurtured.

Came the ninth month, and her fruit of labor she bore,
A new life into this world she brought here.

A bundle of joy, a mix of her parents yet unique,
The child's very existence, a living proof of the Lord
Almighty's magic.

To nourish, nurture, guide, and take care of her girl
lovingly,
The Lord filled her motherly being with a never-ending
love, the purest and heavenly.

The little one heard stories, tales, and lullabies nestled cozily in her mother's lap,
Tales and stories that told her about the ways of this world before she fell into
another dreamy nap.

The mother became the daughter's first teacher and her forever true love,
In her mother, the little girl found a true friend, a Godsend for her from the heavens
above.

And then came a day when the mother bid her true love, her girl, a final goodbye.

The now silent motherly face shone with the refulgence of a summer sky shining
bright,
For she knew that her girl had grown up to be a woman strong and upright.

She could now rest eternally in peace, for she was assured that her child would be
under her beloved Lord Almighty's watchful gaze that shall never cease,
Cared for and held safe by Him like a baby held in her mother's embrace, lovingly
and at ease.

17. Perceptions



**Ms. Lucy Victoria
David
Writer, Motivational
Speaker
Durban
South Africa**

I knew a young man once,
Packing groceries in a store.
I perceived he wanted to be independent and earn his
own pocket money,
Until we began to chat.
I discovered he was saving his earnings to attend a
prestigious medical school.
How wrong was my perception!

I knew a young lady once; she was quite ordinary-
looking.
I perceived her to be a mom, a dedicated housewife,
Until we began to chat.
I discovered she was the owner of a rather large
company
And made a few million a year.
How wrong was my perception!

I met a middle-aged woman once,
Who came across as quiet, antisocial, with hardly a smile.
I perceived her to be disgruntled, bitter, and lonely,
Until we began to chat.
I discovered she was a well-established attorney
With a grand track record, from England no less.
How wrong was my perception!

One should, therefore, never ever judge a book by its cover.
For it's only when the pages are turned and the chapters unraveled
That one discovers mysteries and marvels, treasures and gems.
An open door to the wonders of stories yet to be told.
This time around, let's get our perceptions aligned with the reality of what
really is!

18. LOOK REY LOOK



**Mr. Mantri Pragada
Markandeyulu,
Litt.D.,
Author and Poet
Hyderabad**

Look Rey Look, don't be greedy
Yah, don't chase money
Hey, money can ditch you
You know, money comes and goes

Look O Look, you avoid doll-drums
Yeah, you have good mouth piece
Try get Peace of Mind, try and Try
Hey, lest, you're smashed

Thy, Life to run on life tracks
Look Rey Look, you're engine driver
O See, all bogies your kith and kin
Hey, don't drive engine like goods

A lovely image indicates the lovely mind
A lovely mind indicates the lovely feeling
A lovely feeling is for a lovely talk
A lovely talk is the result of a lovely friend

A nice moment is the result of a good mind wave-length
A lovely thought is the result of a good study
A hard work study indicates the nice behaviour
Behavioural attitudes are the combination of personality-cult

Look Rey Look, Birth and Death common
Hey, Try become legend, Try and Try
Your deeds show the path
Legends always simple and simple

Thy, Life to run on life tracks
Look Rey Look, Birth and Death common

19. The Chasing Crowd



**Mr. Nhamo
Muchagumisa
Teacher
Mutare
Zimbabwe**

Mrs Pfurwa knew for certain that she had not dreamt about it. She had surely escaped an attempted rape. She bemoaned how savage men's behaviour could be and silently vowed that no man would ever touch her body again unless he was a doctor or medical officer, upon her illness of course.

Lying beside the road that led to Nyakamete Industrial Site, she could hear a crowd approaching, like the whole of Sakubva was marching up the road. Forgetting the pain in her head and the entire network of her body muscles, she stood up to watch. Yes, a mob was indeed marching up the road, everybody talking excitedly and listening to nobody else. The night turned suddenly alive with their animated talk.

"Imagine how a woman would hop out of her matrimonial bed and bolt out of her bedroom shouting 'Rape!'. This is the work of demons," one voice said.

"Her husband is befuddled. A wedding night turned into a nightmare," another voice said.

"There she is, in her thin night gown," yet another voice said.

Mrs Pfurwa wanted to start running again, but an unexplainable frailty permeated the whole anatomy of her body, and she collapsed. Before she knew what was happening, she felt herself being lifted from the ground where she was lying, and being swiftly carried away most probably back to her potential rapist's bedroom. She did not have enough breath in her to utter a scream and concluded that if she had escaped the first rape attempt, a second attempt was inescapable.

Mrs Pfurwa drifted back to consciousness amid cursing shouts that were hardly discernible. When she was in full self possession, she remembered her wedding day at Queens Hall, the vows she had made to Tawana and the vows Tawana had

made to her, the pastor's sermon, the presents, & c.

The drive to her matrimonial house replayed in her mind, and the relief of being finally alone with her husband, within the matrimonial four walls. Hell had poured upon her when her man gathered her into his arms and started cuddling her. She had extricated herself from his arms and shot out of the bedroom with the speed of a meteorite, shouting hysterically.

Rape was all she saw coming when Tawana started touching her body. Her mind had switched off soon after breaking free from his odious arms and fleeing from the house. Next she found herself lying on the damp earth beside the Nyakamete Road, three kilometres from her matrimonial house. Her consciousness had switched off again with the arrival of the crowd.

What was she going to say to Tawana, the man who had turned her heart into a bowl of molten magma? The man the sound of whose name meant the same as love? Had she not counted herself the most blessed woman in her age group when Tawana had gently expressed his intention to marry her without mentioning the word love? Only to say it without making a serious effort with his tongue because of the sincerity with which he expressed his partiality towards her?

The effect of the sedatives she had been given overwhelmed her senses again and she was with Tawana in a dream that should have turned into reality, with Tawana holding her in his arms, getting ready to ritualise their relationship. Her body was literally on fire, the flames spreading from the region of her spine, her loins tortured by his delayed entry.

The dream mutated into a rowdy scene without preamble, with her racing down Chitungo Road and a throng of yelling people hard at her heels. The wind rushed at her as if threatening to blast her body into powder, but she was unstoppable. Then once again she was awake, trying to make out what force had forced her to suddenly see a rapist in a man she had loved with every sensitive spot of her heart.

At a blink of the eye, Tawana was standing there before her. "Nelie, I hope

everything will be all right, I can't really explain what happened last night."

"Neither can I, but I need to go back to my family, spend a short while with them. Maybe there is something they know that would explain my behaviour," Mrs Pfurwa said, knowing that she was definitely losing the only other man she had truly loved. The two lines that had begun to cascade down his face also told her that he also knew so well that he had lost her.

Back with her family, she was taken to a faith healer who told them that her late father had used charms to preserve her virginity, which he had not yet undone by the time of his death. Mrs Pfurwa could not dispute that as she had behaved in the same bizarre manner when her first boyfriend had come to her place for a sleepover. She had screamed in the same manner she had done in Tawana's case and her boyfriend had been mobbed by almost the entire Zimunya Township community and taken to Zimunya Police Post where he was charged with attempted rape.

She had withdrawn the rape charges on the following day. What was she going to do now?

"I'm shown another man. That is the one you must marry," the faith healer said looking straight in her eyes, before turning his eyes away from her to scan the faces that filled his tiny cubicle.

"How will that be possible Uncle?" Nelie asked, her whole body soaked in sweat.

"Are you not the one who had left this city for a year? He is still working where he was working when you last met him, staying at the same address. Make an effort to meet him."

The family left the faith healer's place, Nelie's mother weeping, her brothers and sisters numb in their grave speechlessness.

The youngest of Nelie's three younger sisters finally broke the impermeable silence. " You have to find him Nelie or else the curse befalls us all."

"Ruvimbo speaks sense Nelie, " said another female sibling. " When I get into a relationship I don't want it to die of a problem whose solution is clear."

Nelie, against her will had to find her ex-boyfriend. If she had her own way, she would stay single forever, but she had sisters who would never consider her one of their own if she allowed her curse to live on and be passed on to the others.

After finding Sani at his work place, she was stunned by his agreeable reception of her. Within a week they were interacting like nothing had gone wrong between them before until within the quietness of a hotel room he found her naked embrace, deflowering her the same night.

"You are Mrs Pfurwa. If you go back to your husband, there won't be any more drama," said Sani as he drew off from her arms.

"How is that possible? We will have the wedding annulled. If you don't want me for life, I will learn to forget this moment and live a celibate life," Nelie said.

A voice deep within her told her that he had found her, and would never let her go. What more apology did she have to utter when throughout their reunion he always looked cheerfully grateful?

By Nhamo Muchagumisa

20. A Letter to My Future Wife



**Mr. Oladipupo
Olayemi
Anuluwapo
Ikeja
Nigeria**

My dearest, yet unknown,

In dreams, I see your lovely face,
A vision of beauty, a warm embrace.
Though time and fate have yet to align,
My heart beats fast with love's sweet design.

Dear future wife, my forever friend,
Together we'll create a love that never ends.
I promise to cherish, support, and adore,
To laugh with you through life's joys and more.

In your eyes, I'll find my peaceful nest,
A haven where love will forever rest.
Your smile will brighten every single day,
And with you, my heart will find its way.

I envision us, hand in hand,
Exploring life's wonders in a world so grand.
Through trials and triumphs, we'll face the test,
Together, our love will forever be the best.

My love, you are the missing piece,
The one who makes my heart's deepest release.
I long to meet you, to hold you tight,
To whisper "I love you" through the quiet night.

Until that day, know you're adored,
A treasure waited for, a love in store.
I'll prepare my heart, my life, my all,
For the moment when our love will stand tall.

Yours always,
Your future husband.

21. The Moments

I'm Living In My Head



Mr. Own Abbas
Writer
Jhang
Pakistan

Do you have those moments in your life that you live forever?

Moments that always make you smile,

Maybe with your friends or someone you love?

I know that you are long gone, and I am doing the most

Mundane thing of my day, but

I am still there with you, cherishing those times in my head.

Maybe if someone just looked at me, they'd consider me mad,

Smiling or laughing on my own.

But they are unaware of where I am, what moments I'm living in my head...

Only He (Allah) knows.

I don't know where they all are at the moment,

But their jokes, and the way they used to tease me, still make me laugh.

Oh! You are not here, but I still sense your presence,

Whenever I go to any restaurant for random tea,

Or lunch, or any party without any reason.

Oh! Maybe you'd be doing the same mundane stuff

Somewhere with my other friends.

But I am still paying attention to your details, and imagining...

Like you are explaining to me right now, right here...

22. Lagos Couple!

Lagos,
Where couples are oddly
Not rosy with roses,
Perfumes lack scented petals,
I mean, where love lurks
Behind walls... veiled faces,
Of a man and woman beset,
Not long ago... signed lines,
Besotted... bespoke... loudly
All and sundry present.

Oh Lagos!
Expensive thou art, heart,
Of seeking... seeing love.
The marriage bells ringing
Aren't for popcorn or drinks,
Wheat, coke, or oatmeal,
Coupling Lagos couples
Like a colorful fabric theme,
Adds beauty explicitly.
Hark, beastly exterminate!

Why,
Lagos couple,
Fight for trivial motives,
Like randy cash calls,
Of Lagos women's clout,
To make Lagos men tithe,
Like God... like family!
It is the voice of men,
Nay, not of the gods' mindset.
Episcopal trite realism:
Men are the head,



**Mr. Phillips Tayo
Damilola
Writer/Content
Enthusiast
Lagos
Nigeria**

Like the Almighty's crucifixion,
Of the Father,
Of the Son,
Of the Holy Spirit.

Men
Aren't the carnage's brow
Of superficial donors,
Who give... give... give!
Like Heaven's genial mirth
Of fresh air and radiant days,
Of the whiteness of the sky,
Where men see fields
To sow... and reap the harvest later.
Why are households now callous,
Asking for unending payments?

It isn't like the early lovebirds
Who met... melted hideous gardens
With pelted kisses... soft bites,
Their eyes sparkling,
Caught by the bug of love,
To give and take
Through rain and dry seasons,
Again and again,
Till death do us part!

When have
Storms relieved havens,
When cooking chinaware warms,
Delicacies... sumptuous meals...
Melodious rhymes
Of how our fathers' husbands
Took care of their flocks
Like a good shepherd?

If not,
Women sip whining teas,
As they hawk at market squares
To dramatize a meaningless talk:
“Our husbands have gone mad again!”
At free-ticket audience streams.
One by one for all,
Publish each and every
Done task... tattered debt,
Of their sincere motherhood.
Aghast, oh, we fatherhood!
Against the fruits of the wombs,
Whom we’ve tagged future pillars.
Yet, they ask not for daily bread,
But for fish pie!

As if Heaven’s manna
Is an earthly bakery.
Men as the villains,
Women as the heroines
Of this lifetime marital saga.
We, Lagos couples!

By Phillips Tayo Damilola

23. Life cycle



**Mr. Pushendra
Pratap Singh
Teacher
Kannauj
Uttar Pradesh**

A water-filled pitcher floats in a pond;
When it shatters, it breaks its bond.
The separate existence of water fades,
As the inside joins the outside's shades.
Rainwater crawls upon the land,
And finally merges with the water's band.

The same is childhood—
Depending on others for every act,
With no control over our senses, in fact.
Ignorant, helpless, innocent, and true,
Old age repeats the events anew.
So is the body,
Born from dust, rising from toil,
Flowing its course on this earthly soil,
And finally returns to the same soil.

The cycle of life keeps turning around;
One is bound to be grounded.
Don't take it too seriously; the body is a toy.
Spread love around, consume ample joy.
Nothing is stable, nothing to mention—
Life is a bubble; live free of tension.

24. If, I Found A Time Machine



Mr. S L Omacsh
Student
Jamnagar
Gujarat

One night, while going to sleep, I saw something falling from the sky on the mountain near my house. I was wondering, “What could it be?” So I decided to explore that thing.

In school, I explained to my friends and asked them to join me. I thought they would not come with me, but I was surprised that they agreed to join me, and we decided to go to that mountain after school.

After school, we all went to the mountain, and there we were surprised to see a weird machine. I had seen it before somewhere. I thought about it a lot, then realized that it was the time machine! We all stepped inside and saw many colorful buttons, levers, and a big screen on the control panel. One of my friends accidentally slipped and pushed a button, which turned on the time machine. We were all scared! Then the time machine asked us to enter the year we wished to go to. We all decided to go to the future in 2050 and entered the year on the screen.

Stepping out of the time machine, we were greeted by a world that was a fascinating blend of advanced technology and renewed nature. The year was 2050, and the first thing that struck us was how seamlessly urban environments and nature coexisted. Skyscrapers were draped in greenery, with vertical gardens climbing up their sides, and autonomous electric vehicles glided silently through streets lined with solar panels and lush urban parks.

In a bustling tech hub, we met Mr. Ramesh, a young entrepreneur who revolutionized the way humans interact with artificial intelligence. His company had developed a sophisticated AI companion system that could seamlessly integrate with daily life, providing personalized assistance and even emotional support. These AIs were not only incredibly intelligent but also exhibited a surprising degree of empathy and understanding. We were all amazed to see the fantastic technologies of 2050!

25. Web Of Mercy



**Mr. Saleem Raza
Jakhar (Amar
Shaw)
Teacher, Writer
Sindh
Pakistan**

In the spider's lair, a life hung,
Entwined in silken threads so fine,
A fly ensnared by cunning's clang,
A desperate cry, her final dread.

"Oh, save me! Save me!" she implored,
Her fragile form a pawn in fate's design.
As the spider crept with calculated pace,
A life suspended on the brink of decline.

I chanced upon this heart-wrenching scene,
The spider's primordial urge, a force both wild and
free,
And grappled with fate's dark, endless night,
Yet in the fly's plea, a glimmer shone on me.

To intervene or not, my heart ached,
The spider's dominion, a realm of instinct's hold.
As I weighed the value of her life,
Yet in the fly's cry, a spark of life remained.

But then I thought of existence brief—
For the spider, another day, another conquest to claim—
And how one act can alter life's relief.
But for the fly, no second chance, no reprieve from pain.

So I reached out with gentle, merciful hand,
And spared her life from the spider's deadly band.
I freed the fly from the jaws of certain demise,
And restored her to life's realm, where love expands.

26. NOT GENDER BUT TALENT WILL COUNT



Suave, farouche, and naïve defined her existence,
Until an unforeseen incident turned her world upside
down.

It made us realize the rigmarole of a woman's life,
Caught between reverie and reality, adrift in the storm.

What was her fault?
Perhaps challenging the mores of society,
Regressive and redundant norms.
Yet, the way her dreams shattered in a moment
Shook the country and made the world frown.

Why was she at the receiving end,
When even the perpetrators knew
The implications of the heinous wound?
Yes, we—the women—want to know:
When will the world be a safer place for us,
Where not gender but talent will count?

Mr. Shadabi Naz
Writer
Patna
Bihar

27. I'm turning 24 soon



**Ms. Tasmin Pearl
Bharath
Student / Teacher
Hluhluwe
South Africa**

I'm turning 24 soon,
And somehow I feel a lot smaller, but I tend to think of
things that are much bigger.

Who would have thought that at this age,
I'd be living with my mom and dad
And occasionally forget what I just had for dinner?
I scroll online and see my friends graduate, with
dream jobs, families, and best friends.

Of course, I'm happy for them,
But when will I be on par?

Ah! Silly me.
How could I forget?
God, Abba, the best friend I've met,
He comes in to remind me:

"Don't be so harsh.
Everyone's on a different journey,
A different path.

You're not behind or gone too far.
You are needed right where you are.
I am your shepherd, and you have all that you need.
What kind of person do you want to be?
Lovable, teachable, living peacefully?
Set your minds on things above,
Not earthly things you see.

Don't make room for lies;
Make room for me.
This world is not your home;

Someday you'll be with me.
So run this race with faith,
Enduring even in uncertainty,
For there comes a time when you and I will dwell together in eternity.

This truth I will think on,
The truth that sets me free:
That I'm not behind
Or forgotten;
I'm right where I need to be.

Someday I may or may not have that degree,
That job, that friend,
And that's okay with me.
All that really matters is that one day I want to hear
That even just at 24,
My beloved, you still chose me.
So well done, my good and faithful servant.
Let's dance in eternity.

By Tasmin Pearl Bharath

28. Numb



Mr. Tha Ono
Teacher
Gasparillo
Trinidad & Tobago

Welcome to the realm where wisdom reigns, beneath
the sunlit skies...

Where the sacred Ganges flows into the Nile and
ancient knowledge lies...

Stood the sages of the ages, with hearts both wise and
bold...

Yet in the shadow of their teachings, their worth lay
untold...

Oh, Teachers! You are the warriors of the mind's
unyielding fight...

With patience as your armor, you guide us towards the light...

Lo! As time wanders, the youth's eyes turn away...

To screens that flicker brightly, where venomous shadows often play...

Hallowed halls of learning echo, with whispers of disdain...

Every noble lesson, a heart that bears the pain...

Once revered as deities, now mere echoes of the past...

In the rush of fleeting moments, influence unsurpassed...

Students, bright with promise, like stars in the night...

Blinded by ambition, they forsake the guiding light...

Every harsh dismissal, every scornful word...

Tarnishes the sacred bond, leaving teachers disturbed...

Oh, Numbness that surrounds us, like a fog upon the land...

Gratitude lies silent, and respect rarely planned...

The battles fought in silence, the tears that stain the ground...

In the struggle for our futures, their voices must resound...

Remember the gentle whispers, the lessons carved in stone...

Carving a place, somewhere to belong...

Values, truth, and kindness, the seeds of love sown...

Every step faltered, for every doubt you face...
Recall the guiding presence, the wisdom of their grace...

Yet in the darkest corners, a flicker begins to glow...
A shift in hearts and minds, a chance for love to grow...
In depths of sorrow, a phoenix arises...
Gratitude rekindled, and appreciation's eyes...

Let not the tale be written where love is cast aside...
Instead, let us honor those who have walked this noble stride...
Teachers and educators are the guardians of dreams yet to unfold...
In their embrace, we find our strength; in their stories, we are bold...

So, rise, oh mighty students, let your hearts no longer roam...
Embrace sacred teachings and bring the lost ones home...
In our grand journey, where knowledge meets the soul...
Allow love to transcend numbness and make the broken whole...

In the end, let us remember, as the ages pass us by...
Teachers, educators, you are the stars that light the vast, immortal sky...
Every lesson cherished, with every moment shared...
We weave a tapestry of love, a legacy declared...

Stand resolute and united, in honor and in grace...
Lift our teachers and educators higher, in love, their rightful place...
In this heroic journey, where battles rage and churn...
It is the love we give to teachers and educators that the world will one day
learn...
They learn...

By Tha Ono

29. When the Blooms are in a Symphony



Mrs. Usha Krishnan
Educationist, Life
Coach & NLP Coach
New Delhi

A myriad of flowers enraptures my eyes
In a galore of colors all around.
An innumerable number of tiny blossoms in vibrant
yellow,
Scarlet red, stunning blue, dazzling violet,
Sober white, and many unknown shades and hues
Adorn the pathways, hilltops,
Riversides, and the valleys that are far away.
The whole air around me is fresh and fragrant,
With festivity and joyfulness everywhere,
With the mirthful presence of children,
And the exuberant seniors forgetting
All about the season's burdens for the time being.

It's the culmination of a ten-day solicitous wait
For the arrival of a beloved King of bygone years.
It is the preparation for the benevolent King's annual visit
To his subjects, eager to confirm
Their well-being even in his absence.
It's the time for us to express our gratitude
For his care and immense love.
It's the time when we spread flower carpets
At our thresholds, extending a warm welcome to His Highness.
It's the time for being together,
Spreading the message of oneness and belonging.
It's the season of being in a symphony,
Singing one song in harmony.
It is Onam, the festival of God's own country,
A treasure house of nostalgic feelings and
Sweet reminiscences for all of us.
It is the time we see that all of nature
Adorns itself with freshly bloomed flowers
And merges with the multitudes on this Earth
To celebrate a grand festival of togetherness.
It is the time when the blooms are in a symphony.

30. Moonlit Dreams



**Ms. Vaishnavi
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

Softly glows the moon above,
A silver crescent, gentle love.
The night's dark veil unfolds,
A canvas for dreams, young and old.

Stars twinkle like diamonds bright,
A celestial show, beyond sight.
The world is hushed, in quiet sleep,
As moonbeams whisper secrets deep.

In this ethereal, lunar glow,
My heart finds peace, and troubles slow.
The world's loud din fades away,
As I bask in the moon's gentle sway.

Dreams unfold, like petals wide,
As the night's mystery, I step inside.
The moon's soft light guides me through,
To places unknown, and dreams anew.

So let the moon's sweet radiance shine,
And fill my soul with peaceful design.
For in its light, I find my way,
Through life's dark paths, to a brighter day.

31. Unity in Diversity

Indian culture and its traditional rituals go way back, probably thousands of years. We have accepted every religion and mixed its traditions into the melting pot that is now known as the new Bharat. From Hindus decorating the Christmas tree to Syrian Christians showing their love for India through their wedding rituals, or the Parsi people mixing and reinventing their food with Indian influence, India is united in every way when you look at the grassroots level.



Ms. Vizzmaya Jalal
Student
Mumbai

Although all traditions and rituals have something positive to add to the united beauty and diversity of our country, there is one thing in particular that is common in almost all religions, and it kind of falls into the negative category. I am talking about black magic and the rituals done to cause or undo it. Not just the religions, but every caste in these religions seems to have its way of dealing with the evil eye, ghosts, and negative energies. It is especially important to mention here that a Hindu will not just go to a Tantrik or Pandit for a solution but also to a church and a dargah. People from all religions, castes, and economic statuses forget the social barriers when it comes to this topic, and unknowingly, these so-called superstitious rituals or fears of certain dangerous entities actually bring people closer in our country.

I have not only seen this in movies but also in real life, how some of these procedures are carried out. As a 13-year-old, I am too young to comment on belief systems and ancient rituals, but I have to say that before you spend thousands or lakhs of rupees on Babas, Tantriks, or exorcism procedures, please consult a psychiatrist or psychotherapist first to make sure that the patient or victim is not suffering from some disorder or ailment. Most of these so-called God-men are fake, and the money would be more beneficial to feed the hungry population of Bharat to create a strong and intelligent future generation of Indians, or shall I say 'Bharatiya Nagriks.'

Bharat is a sea that accepts all the rivers
of every caste, status, and religion.
Our soldiers protect us, our farmers feed us,
and our children safeguard the treasure of every tradition.
We have always believed that our ancestors
found ways to make science and spirituality meet to survive.
Bharat is exploring the future through space and genetics
but stays rooted in its ancient culture as we grow and thrive.
Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!

By Vizzmaya Jalal

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PUBLISHER-CHIEF EDITOR

Name : Akanksha Shrivastava

Dob: 29-August

Place: Bhopal

Education: B.E(computer science)
M.A(English Literature)

Achievements: Director “De telephone”
(Short Movie)

**Editor (Premakriti, Vihangam,
Sunhari yaadein, Akshraang, Viraaj,
Navoday ki yaadein, Bits Of My Heart
Kalam ka rahi, corona kaal ka
sangharsh, Safar Farsh se Arsh tak,
Yaad-E-Maazi, The Journey to Success)**

Email.id: aadhyapublishinghouse@gmail.com

Phone No.: 9424002558



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House**



Designer

Name : **Lalit Kishore Gaur**

Dob: **21-July**

Place: **Bhopal**

Education: **LLB(Bachelor of Law)
MCA(Master of Computer
Applications)**

Achievements: **Producer “De telephone”
(Short Movie) <http://surl.li/bwosk>**


**Educationist, Photographer,
Founder of LKg Telefilms,
Film Maker, Writer, Poet,
Social Worker, Environmentalist**

Email.id: **lkgaur76@gmail.com**

Phone No.: **8109246305**



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Aadhya Publishing House
Vardhman City

Raisen Road Bhopal

Mobile: 9424002558

aadhyapublishinghouse@gmail.com

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