

# রাহান

Ramadhan



BENGALI ASSOCIATION  
OF SOUTH AFRICA

## সম্পাদকীয়



**অর্ণব চট্টোপাধ্যায়**  
সম্পাদকীয় পরিকল্পক

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**প্রিয় পাঠকবৃন্দ,**

জোহানেসবার্গের বুক গড়ে ওঠা আমাদের এই ছোট্ট বাঙ্গালী পরিবার, আমাদের বাসা। দেশ-কালের ব্যবধান ছাপিয়ে, বাঙ্গালীর মনন, বাঙ্গালীর চিন্তা, বাঙ্গালীর ভালো-লাগা, চাওয়া-পাওয়া, সুখ-দুঃখ --- সব কিছু কেমন যেন একই সূত্রে বাঁধা। সেই সূত্র ধরেই, প্রবাসের মাটি আঁকড়ে আমরা নিজেদের বাঙ্গালীমানার জায়গাকে ঠিক পাকাপোক্ত করে নিয়েছি।

১৪২৭ অক্ষয়-তৃতীয়া উপলক্ষে, পরস্পর-পরস্পরকে উপহার স্বরূপ --- রামধনুর বৈশাখী সংখ্যা সকল পাঠকের হাতে তুলে দিলাম। আশা রাখব, রামধনুর রূপ ও রঙ ছুঁয়ে যাবে সকল পাঠক মনকে, সজীব করে তুলবে আমাদের বর্তমান শুষ্ক বাতাবরণকে।

"সৃষ্টি সুখের উল্লাস" --- বাঙ্গালীর কাছে অতি প্রিয়, কারণ বাঙ্গালী চিন্তাশীল ও সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতি উল্লাসি। মনের নিরাকার রূপকে আকার দেওয়ার জন্যই আমাদের এই ছোট্ট প্রয়াস রামধনু, যেখানে আমাদের মনের ভাবনা ডানা মেলে জায়গা করে নেয় রামধনুর পাতায়। এই সংখ্যায় BASA র অনেক সদস্যদের সৃজনশীল প্রয়াসকে আমরা সাধুবাদ জানাই। আশা রাখব আগামী সংখ্যাগুলোয় আপনাদের সহযোগিতা পাব। আমাদের কিশোর-কিশোরীরা আরো উদ্বুদ্ধ হবে এবং ওরাও উৎসাহের সঙ্গে এগিয়ে আসবে।

রামধনু পরিবেশনে আমার সহযোগী সম্পাদকদের আন্তরিক কৃতজ্ঞতা জানাই। তাদের সাহায্য এবং নানাবিধ প্রয়োজনীয় পরামর্শ ছাড়া এ কাজ সম্পূর্ণ করা সম্ভবপর হতো না।

আমরা আশা রাখি কোনো একদিন Corona-মুক্ত সকাল দেখতে পাব। নতুন বছর নিয়ে আসুক নতুন আশার আলো, এটাই আমাদের সকলের কামনা। রোগ-তাপ-জরা কাটিয়ে পৃথিবীতে ফিরে আসুক শান্তি ও স্বস্থি, নববর্ষ হয়ে উঠুক শুভ।

- অন্নপূর্ণা

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*How to choose the right school for your child as an expatriate?*

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# Schools in and around Johannesburg

*This article is based on interviews with some of the school students and parents of BASA where they share their exclusive opinions and experiences about their schools. Such first-hand information may guide you in your school selection for your children and help understand the schooling system of South Africa.*

Before you move to Johannesburg as an expatriate, one of the biggest concerns is your child's education amongst many others. Investing in your child's schooling is probably the most important investment you'll make as a family. So choosing the right school for your children isn't so simple. Many factors will play a role in your decision: school fees, choosing a curriculum, academic standards, the choice of elective subjects, performance of past-students in board examinations and their placements thereafter, distance from home, facilities and exposures the school provides, discipline, extra-curricular activities and many more. The demands and requirements vary from one child to the other. This article is intended for parents to take informed decisions and understand the education establishments in and around Johannesburg.

There are three main types of schools in Johannesburg: International, Private and Government. There is a handful of international schools in Johannesburg that offer a variety of globally recognized curricula, such as that of the UK, the US or the International Baccalaureate. The fees of these schools are exorbitant. Apart from that, South African education system consists of independent private schools and government schools. Government schools are controlled by provincial education departments and standards vary widely. Former model C schools (named during Apartheid era) are government schools that are administrated and largely funded by a governing body of parents and alumni. Some of the country's best schools, in terms of academic standards and facilities, fall into this category of model-C schools and fees are somewhere between private and regular government school.

NSC stands for National Senior Certificate. This is the official name of the South African matriculation examination. The

NSC is determined by what has been gazetted by the Department of Basic Education in terms of what is today called the CAPS curriculum (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement). The NSC is accredited and overseen by UMALUSI (The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Authority). This is essentially what a South African matric is. It can be achieved, however, through two paths: one, through the Department of Basic Education, and the other, through the IEB.

IEB stands for Independent Education Board. It is a private examination setting and support agency to independent private schools. The IEB offers support in terms of the CAPS curriculum examinations and sets tests and exams according to the CAPS guidelines, as well as memorandums and assessments, moderations and marking groups. A matriculant in South Africa writes an NSC examination, either set by the Department of Basic Education (usually the government schools) or the Independent Examination Board (usually the private schools) and receives a Matric Certificate from UMALUSI. UMALUSI moderates both examination paths to ensure that they comply with the content and question standards set by CAPS. Supporters of the IEB model attest to the curriculum's progressive and superior outcomes. The IEB seeks to nurture problem-solving abilities, beyond that of the NSC, and tests various additional methodologies. It is reported that the IEB exams are more complex and require heightened skill-sets. The IEB is an internationally recognized qualification with IEB students studying all over the world. Regarding the school sessions, the South African school and the Cambridge school year begins in mid-January and ends in early December. For the American schools, their annual session is from August to May.

Here are the list of schools that we have surveyed and their details will follow later.

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

### **BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AND COLLEGE**

*Gender: Co-educational*

*Curriculum: Cambridge Board: IGCSE (grade10),  
A-Level(grade12)*

*Grades: 1 to 12*

*Campus: Bryanston and Pretoria*

*Website: [www.britishinternationalcollege.co.za](http://www.britishinternationalcollege.co.za)*

*[www.aisj-jhb.com/about-us/facilities/pretoria](http://www.aisj-jhb.com/about-us/facilities/pretoria)*

### **AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF JOHANNESBURG**

*Gender: Co-educational*

*Curriculum: American and International Baccalaureate*

*Grades: Pre-K to 12*

*Campus: Pretoria and Midrand*

*Website: [www.aisj-jhb.com](http://www.aisj-jhb.com)*

### **LONEHILL INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY**

*Gender: Co-educational*

*Curriculum: Cambridge Board: IGCSE (grade10),  
A-Level(grade12)*

*Grades: 1 to 12*

*Campus: Lonehill*

*Website: [www.lonehillacademy.co.za](http://www.lonehillacademy.co.za)*



## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**CRAWFORD PRE-PRIMARY, PREPARATORY AND COLLEGE**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: Independent Education Board of South Africa (IEB)  
Grades: 0 – 12  
Campus: Sandton, Lonehill, Pretoria, Fourways  
Website: [www.crawfordschools.co.za](http://www.crawfordschools.co.za)

**DE LA SALLE HOLY CROSS COLLEGE**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: Independent Education Board of South Africa (IEB)  
Grades: 0 -12  
Campus: Victory Park/Linden  
Website: <https://www.delasalleholycrosscollege.co.za/>

**HOLY ROSARY SCHOOL**

Gender: Girls  
Curriculum: CAPS, IEB  
Grades: R-12  
Campus: Edenvale  
Website: <http://www.holyrosaryschool.website/>

**KINGS COLLEGE AND PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: CAPS, IEB  
Grades: 1 to 12  
Campus: Bryanston  
Website: <http://www.thekingscollege.co.za/>

**REDDAM HOUSE**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: CAPS, IEB  
Grades: 1 to 12  
Campus: Waterfall Estate, Bedfordview, Helderfontein  
Website: [reddamhouse.com](http://reddamhouse.com)

**ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

Gender: Girls  
Curriculum: CAPS, IEB  
Grades: 1 to 12  
Campus: Senderwood  
Website: <https://www.standrews.co.za/>

**ST. CATHERINE'S CONVENT**

Gender: Girls  
Curriculum: CAPS, IEB  
Grades: 1 to 12  
Campus: Florida Park, Roodepoort,  
Website: <http://www.stcatherines.co.za/>

## GOVERNMENT MODEL C SCHOOLS

**CRAIGHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: CAPS Curriculum, SA  
Grades: 1 to 7  
Campus: Caighall Park  
Website: <http://www.craighallprimary.co.za>

**HORIZON INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**

Gender: Boys  
Curriculum: NSC, South Africa  
Grades: Grades 8-12  
Campus: Turffontein  
Website: <http://horizonhigh.co.za/>

**PARKVIEW SENIOR**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: CAPS Curriculum, SA  
Grades: Grade 4-7  
Campus: Parkview  
Website: <https://parkviewsenior.co.za/>

**ST. BARNABAS SCHOOL OF SPECIALIZATION**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: NSC, South Africa  
Grades: grade 8 to grade 12 .  
Campus: Bosmont  
Website: <http://www.stbarnabas.co.za>

**UJ METROPOLITAN ACADEMY**

Gender: Co-educational  
Curriculum: NSC, South Africa  
Grades: Grade 8-12  
Campus: Foyle Ave & Hekpoort St, Crosby  
Website: <http://ujulink.com/uj-metropolitan-academy-ujma/>

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

**AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

**Arundhati Bannerjee** goes to the American International School from the time they moved to South Africa. Here her mother, **Sudeshna Banerjee** shares her experience from the past 6 years.

“There are a lot of things that I like about this school as opposed to what I don’t like. From Middle school (Grade 6 onwards), the students are encouraged to do self-study. Based on topics, many formative assessments lead to a summative assessment later, where students have to take the onus of learning. This method of teaching and learning develops a sense of responsibility amongst students where the teachers act as facilitators, guiding and correcting them. For subjects like Mathematics and Science, concepts are taught and practiced. Learning to extract relevant data from the study material and self-study helps them to streamline the content and submit assignments within a deadline. I found it interesting that they were learning about “Israel Palestinian Conflict”( in Grade 8)- something that has been an issue for ages and is still going to be relevant when they grow up. Most subjects are application based. The idea is that data can be found at the touch of a mouse but how exactly do you apply it in your work. The school follows the quote by Albert Einstein, ‘Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think’, as their principle.”

International Baccalaureate, (IB) is a very demanding course that they follow in grades 11 & 12. “IB is very beneficial if students are aiming for Universities in the US or Europe. Apart from the intensity of the subjects that students need to handle, they have to fulfil a CAS criteria (creativity, sports activity and service) and do an extended essay of 4000 words. The chosen topic should be supported with lots of evidence and statistics which leads to undertaking of a research work. Only then one gets an IB diploma, which is recognised worldwide. This rigorous grinding though very stressful for students does prepare them for what lies ahead.”

Once a year, the ‘International Day’ is observed, as a celebration of unity in diversity. The school students from international communities come together and showcase their country of origin, wearing traditional dresses and putting up food stalls apart from cultural programmes. The school does live up to the international standards as far as infrastructure is concerned. There are lot of extra-curricular activities like Basketball, Football, Tennis, Swimming, Volleyball, Rugby, Track and Field. “My children enjoyed the extra-murals like Ballet, Rhythmic (choir), Band and Debate Club. The school takes part in South African Mathematics Olympiad, inter school sports competitions (ISSEA, International Schools of Southern and Eastern Africa) along with Band and Choir competitions”.

In the Elementary school (Pre K to Grade 5) the academic

curriculum is very relaxed, compared to India as the school believes in letting children enjoy childhood as long as they possibly can, but the students do manage middle school from where expectations start.

**Abhigyan Chakraborty** joined the Pretoria campus Middle school of American International in Grade 6 after coming from New Delhi, India. His father who is in diplomatic services had been in India and abroad before moving to South Africa. So their natural choice was an international school as Abhigyan was exposed to a variety of teaching and learning methods before. Even though the education system seems different from India with lighter work load, Abhigyan enjoys the friendly atmosphere of the school and has no complains of bullying. He takes part in the school extra-curricular activities like Dance, Martial Arts, Advanced Swimming. Second languages offered are French and Spanish. ‘Classroom Without Walls’, a camping trip for team building helped him to socialize and make friends in his new school. He is super excited about having a personal Mac book, given from school, which he can use outside the school hours for educational purpose like doing online homework assignments. He plays using apps like Minecraft as an educational tool and enjoys art and animation. “Using apps, I have programmed a science project on water cycle. In Robotics, I enjoy constructing Robots and programming. I love creating video games myself”, says Abhigyan who is bit upset, as currently the Pretoria campus is have staffing problems and he feels that his progress in Robotics is getting hampered.

**BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AND COLLEGE (BIC)**

**Rivoo Bagchi**, who is preparing for his A-level examinations this year finds his school unique, both for good and bad. This is a small high school offering Grades 8 up to 12. However, classes tend to be very small with a very high staff-to-student ratio at the school. Thus students can expect a lot of individual attention from teachers at this school as is the norm in all International schools. IGCSEs are also offered as a grade ten equivalent qualification, and is globally recognized. The A-Level curriculum offered here used to be unique among British schools, though Crawford and other schools have started offering such options too. However, BICs implementation of such a curriculum can be considered to be the most holistic of its peers. Rivoo aspires to apply to foreign universities and he says, “Doing A-Levels have simplified the process greatly compared to local qualifications.”

This school has very limited sporting facilities compared to most. The choice includes table tennis, basketball, badminton, volleyball and pool. The swimming pool is seldom used. A personal development programme is compulsory, where students choose an activity to pursue for an entire term. These activities may include photography, film study, pottery, beading, knitting, creative writing and debating. Students in higher grades also have the option to start their

own programme.

Languages such as Zulu, Afrikaans, Mandarin, Spanish, French, German are offered in house and it is compulsory to do an IGCSE in one of these languages. The school also offers distance learning programmes in multiple other languages, such as Italian, Greek and Japanese for students who are home schooled.

Rivoo finds the atmosphere at school to be really enjoyable and relaxing. Despite the immense cultural diversity in the school, exploring foreign viewpoints and ideas is a way of life in the school. “I believe the Commerce and Science departments in this school are extremely competent. This college has a strong focus on independence. Homework is light compared to other schools and the onus is on the student to prepare as much as they need for their exams. There’s a lot of free time during a school day, and students may socialize or study at their discretion. The company of ambitious friends at this school can provide some positive peer pressure.”

This academically focused school often ranks top in South Africa or top in the world. When asked about the shortfalls of BIC, Rivoo comments, “The extracurricular and sporting facilities are sorely lacking and dealing with the administrative department might prove to be a bit of a headache too. The fees are also steep, and it’s better to view them as an investment. If you want a globally recognized qualification at a compact and diverse learning environment, your only competition is the American International School which is considerably pricier.”

**Gaurika Chatterjee**, a Grade 9 pupil of BIC likes the school

environment that teaches students to respect other people’s religion and beliefs. She likes to take part in the Mathematics and Science Olympiads. “I finds some teachers very approachable. They help me understand better than other teachers. The submission deadlines are very strict that keeps me on my toes always.”

At British International Preparatory school, **Anwasha Das** enjoys her Grade 3 where she participates in Music, Art, Drama, Computer studies and reading. For the young minds, there are various Club activities that helps in developing critical thinking, creativity and motor skill developments. They are encouraged to participate in international competitions in sports, Mathematics and Expressive Arts. “I learnt about road safety today and had lot of fun activities there. I love my school, my friends and teachers”, says Anwasha, after coming back from the school day-trip to Rocky Ridge Estate in Pretoria.

### LONEHILL INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

Another Cambridge board school is Lonehill International Academy (LIA) where **Siddhant Modak** attends, a pupil of Grade 9. He loves Football and Chess as extra-curricular activities. The second languages offered in the school are Afrikaans, Zulu, French, German and Portuguese. Siddhant says, “The school has a friendly atmosphere and teachers are approachable at all times. There is no competitiveness amongst students. The school follows a strict decorum even though the uniform is relaxed and comfortable, which I enjoy”. The school believes that because each learner is different, their learning program should be flexible to meet each of their needs.

## PRIVATE IEB SCHOOLS

### CRAWFORD SCHOOLS

Crawford schools have a vibrant, stimulating and enjoyable environment that teaches independent thinking and inculcates habits of work and study that equip students with the ability to succeed. They have many campuses in Johannesburg. In addition to the NSC offered by the Independent Examinations Board (IEB), another examination is written in Grade 12, equivalent to VCAA (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority) which is an internationally benchmarked examination based on which students can apply to universities abroad. The school includes sports like Soccer, Basketball, Netball, Swimming, Tennis, Touch-rugby. Extra-curricular activities include music, public-speaking, debating. Second Languages offered are Afrikaans and IsiZulu. Students can opt for French or Hebrew as a third language or a language of their choice, which is recognized by the IEB, outside of the school. The school takes part in many academic competitions like Math Olympiad, English Olympiad, Afrikaans and IsiZulu Olympiad, Science Olympiad, Programming Olympiad.

**Tuhinangshu Moitro**, a Grade 12 pupil of Crawford, Sandton likes the multicultural environment in the school and the warm-hearted teachers who accepts the students the way they are. The school has always achieved top academic results in the country. **Jayati Basu**, mother of another Grade 12 pupil **Debangshu Basu** dislikes the poor disciplinary system for students who shows misconduct. “The department of Mathematics, English and Afrikaans is excellent in the school with strict marking-system. The Leadership programme, Community services offered along with adoption of disadvantaged schools are commendable”, says Jayati Basu.

### DE LA SALLE HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

This school (DLSHCC) is a Catholic IEB school that offers a holistic education that encourages the pursuit of excellence in sporting, cultural, leadership and spiritual interests and performance. The learners are actively involved in community service through outreach projects to underprivileged communities. The leadership structures and the counsellors

system ensure that the leadership potential is developed within each child. The junior school is from grade R to 6 and the high school is from Grade 7 to 12. The curriculum is balanced and comprehensive which aims to extend learners to achieve their potential.

The school encourages excursions, Mathematics Olympiads and subject enrichment programs. A variety of activities is on offer to enhance and develop learners' abilities and talents. Students compete at inter-house and inter-school or social and pre-season level in Adventure clubs, Art, Sound and Lighting, Choir, Church Band, Debating, Public speaking, Drama, First-Aid, Johannesburg Junior Council, Lassalian Youth Group, Liturgy group, Pipe Band and Marimbas. The school offers Tennis, Hockey, Rugby, Netball, Athletics, Cricket, Swimming, Cross country and Cheerleading in sports. Second languages offered are Afrikaans and IsiZulu. **Ambika Ghosh** of Grade 8 says, "The best aspect of my school are the teachers who are ready to help and give instant feedback whenever I ask questions through emails or WhatsApp messages or Google classroom. Some teachers support the students who want to progress ahead of the class by providing extra material and assistance. A more challenging workload would have been better."

### HOLY ROSARY SCHOOL

The vision and the ethos of the schools is: "We dedicate ourselves to the honour and glory of God and the vision of the Holy Rosary Sisters which urges us to value the uniqueness and potential of each individual and to strive for excellence in education within the context of a changing South African and global society."

This IEB girls school has pre-primary, primary and high school sections. The academic standards are high and prepare students very effectively to cope with the demands of tertiary education. The sports facilities include swimming, Tennis, Hockey, Netball, Athletics, Cross country, Rowing and Equestrian. Extra-curricular activities involve choir, djembe, marimba, public speaking, jazz vocal ensemble. IsiZulu and Afrikaans are the second languages. The school takes part in Mathematics and Geography Olympiad. **Drishti Khemka**, who joined the high school in Grade 8 this year enjoys the new activities in schools. "Going to Mass in the school church is a new experience for me apart from doing community services. The orientation day was filled with fun activities. Waking up at 6 o'clock for Tennis lessons has become a routine now. Due to small class sizes, teachers pay more personal attention."

### KING'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

King's Preparatory School and College is an independent Christian school. To monitor high academic standards, the school participates in the ACER (Australian Council for Education Research) international testing, as well as the IEB's Core Skills Testing and various International Benchmarking Tests – IBT's. The school has smaller classes and personal

approach allow each learner to challenge themselves and grow in their self-esteem and confidence. There are lot of extra-curricular activities like Swimming, Cross-country, Football, Athletics, Hockey, Cricket, Rugby and Soft ball. Students progress to the highest levels of musical theatre, drama, dance and music composition. The school takes part in the annual Shakespeare Festival. Art and culture activities offered include Drama & Play Writing, School Choirs, Stepping Up & YBF Bands, Arts & Crafts and Public Speaking. **Gaurika Chatterjee** who attended the preparatory school before says, "The teachers took individual care and almost spoon fed us when we were in the prep-school. The submission deadlines were very relaxed even though it was a very disciplined school."

### REDDAM HOUSE WATERFALL ESTATE

Reddam House Waterfall Estate is an IEB private school starting from preschool, Junior preparatory (grades 1 to 3), Senior preparatory (Grades 4 to 6) up to College (Grades 7-12). The school competes in a wide variety of sports which includes Cricket, Soccer, Equestrian, Chess, Water Polo and many more. The students are encouraged to choose a sport and carry it throughout their school career. The extra-curricular activities range from dance, public speaking, debating and music. The school offers second languages including Afrikaans, IsiZulu and French. The school takes part in Mathematics Olympiad and in 'Tour de Maths'. **Ankit Das**, a Grade 9 pupil of Reddam House prefers to have more choices of second languages in his school. He says, "My school is a well-rounded school, which is balanced in terms of academics, cultural and social activities. Overall it is a safe and happy place to learn and grow".

### ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

St. Andrew's School for Girls -Skilled for Life, was founded by two young Scottish women named Jessie Johnston and Jean Fletcher. St. Andrews was founded in 1902 and has been a success ever since. The school is now 118 years old. There are 4 schools situated on school campus including the Pre-school. The Pre-school is coeducational starting from 3 months to 5 years, the Junior school, Senior school and Saturday school (uBambiswano). The school offers many sports facilities like Hockey, Netball, Swimming, Tennis, Diving, Squash, Athletics (cross-country included), Rowing and Golf. Extra-curricular activities involve private music lessons in many instruments, choir, a Capella (from Grade 9 onwards), band, marimba etc. The Second languages offered are Zulu and Afrikaans. From Grade 8 onwards French is included and a third-additional language that can later be dropped in Grade 10. The school takes part in inter-house competitions, music and sport festivals, Olympiads and Science Expo. **Mayurakshi Shome**, a student of Grade 9 from this school says, "Apart from being a very good school, I love the amazing facilities and opportunities the school offers and the lovely festivals that our school supports and takes part in."



### ST. CATHERINE'S SCHOOL

This is an Independent Catholic Co-Ed School located in Johannesburg's East Rand. The school is divided into four sections: Kindergarten, Primary and High School. The academic standards are fairly good. The school has a qualified Educational Psychologist, Speech Therapist and Occupational Therapist to assist pupils in need. The school takes part in Mathematics Olympiads, IBT tests and Science Expos. There

are many sporting facilities like Chess, Netball, Hockey, Tennis, Swimming and Cross country and the school takes part in many competitions. The cultural side includes drama, ballet, violin, hip-hop, tap and modern dance. The school also take part in dance festival and music shows. The second language offered here is Afrikaans. **Spishow Roy Chowdhury** is a Grade 6 pupil who loves her school but dislikes the examination pressure.

### GOVERNMENT MODEL-C SCHOOLS

#### CRAIGHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Craighall Primary School is one of the oldest and is the best government schools in Gauteng. This school has kept its reputation for excellence and has been at the forefront of educational opportunities since 1918. The grades are from 1 to 7. The school prepares the students well enough for entry to other good High Schools. Knowledge Network® is a project based, goal oriented and outcomes based integrated Information Technology Learning System that the school follows. The activities in this school include the outdoor activities such as cricket, football, rugby, hockey, swimming, water-polo, tennis and netball. As extra-curricular activities there are chess, art, drama, music, dance, project research, public speaking, choir and photography club. The second languages offered in the school are IsiZulu and Afrikaans.

**Rajorshi Das** joined the school 4 years back when he moved from Richards Bay to Johannesburg. He is now a Grade 7 pupil. Rajorshi does not much like the old facilities of this school, loves basketball in their sports though. "I was nervous when I joined school initially but soon I made good friends. The motto of our school is 'Craighall Cares' and it is indeed so as the teachers are so loving," remarks Rajorshi.

#### HORIZON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (STAR COLLEGE JOHANNESBURG)

The school, founded in 1998, has played a significant and extensive role in fostering a good relationship between South Africa and Turkey in the educational, cultural and social fields. The school was renamed as Star College, Johannesburg. Besides school lessons, Star College Johannesburg pays great attention to national and international Mathematics, Science and Computer-IT Olympiad and Project competitions and since 2000 they have been won many medals. Although Star College aims at being an academically intensive school, it places a fair deal of importance on sport and recreational activities. Cricket, Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Table tennis, Rugby, Athletics are the sporting facilities. Extra curriculum activities involve Programming, Chess, Debate, Media, Advanced Maths and Robotics. Afrikaans and IsiZulu are offered as first additional Language while Turkish is the second additional language. **Ayush Bhadra**, a Grade 11 pupil

who stays in their boarding facilities likes the dormitory discipline. "My School promotes excellence in academics especially in Maths and Science. There are lot of opportunities to go overseas if one enters the competitions. It is a Turkish school therefore all the learners get to learn more about the Turkish culture", says Ayush, who is very happy with the helpful teachers in his school.

#### PARKVIEW SENIOR SCHOOL

This is a Model C Senior Primary School (Grade 4 to 7). The school's motto is "Excellence in Education". The school also has junior section from grade R to grade 3. Parkview Senior School has a proven track record of turning out well-balanced learners who move up to high school with very little need for adjustment. The team of dedicated staff is highly motivated with a common goal of personal development in each child. Individual motivation creativity, extension, self-discipline, striving for excellence and fun are the key factors to their success. The teachers in the school make sure that each and every student understands the concepts that have been taught. The sports and cultural activities in the school are not many. Netball, Soccer, Hockey, Cricket, Chess and Swimming are on offer. The cultural activities that take place are art club, ballet, piano, choir and drama. The second languages offered are Afrikaans and IsiZulu. The school takes part in Mathematics Olympiad, Lit Quiz, Debates and students win prizes in inter school competitions. **Ambika Ghosh** who studied from Grade 5 to 7 after moving to Johannesburg says, "The school environment was very friendly, and anybody could fit in easily. There was no bullying." After coming from Glenwood Prep School in Durban, PVS taught her to be more independent and responsible. "I have to admit that I never enjoyed the school while I was enrolled there, but looking back at it all seems to be good memories. The academic standards were quite high that made me well prepared and advanced for my present high school".

#### ST. BARNABAS SCHOOL OF SPECIALIZATION

The High school is from Grade 8 to 12. Programmes in the lower grades are designed to make up for any learning deficits so that students quickly develop basic ability in English and Mathematics. The school offers learning

opportunities to prepare students for ultimate success not only at tertiary level, but also in the professional fields, public service and business. The school has been successful in improving students who are challenged, in great leaps and bounds. The school caters for both day and boarding students. The school offers sports such as Athletics, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball, Netball, Hockey and Chess. There are extra-curricular activities like Debating, Public Speaking, Drama and First Aid. Afrikaans, IsiZulu and seSotho are the second language offered by the school. It takes part in academic competitions like Mathematics, Science, Afrikaans, English and Computer Application Technology Olympiads and the Science Expo. It also takes part in other competitions like Soccer, Chess, Volleyball, Netball and Hockey games that are played against other schools in the district. **Suran Saha**, a Grade 9 pupil says, "The school always puts challenges along the way that helps us to learn better. The school is focused on subjects like Mathematics, Science, IT and Robotics in order to prepare us for the future career opportunities."

### UJ METROPOLITAN ACADEMY

UJ Metropolitan Academy is the high school (Grade 8 to 12) of the University of Johannesburg with Metropolitan as co-sponsor. In 2019 the Minister of Education launched the school as a school of specialisation in Mathematics, Science and ICT with a focus on high tech innovation. The school takes part in Mathematics, Science, Provero (Accounting and Economics) and EMS Olympiad competitions. Sports include Cricket, Soccer and Netball. The extra-curricular activities include Programming, Chess, Art and Drama.

**Punnita Bhadra**, joined Grade 8 this year in UJ Metropolitan Academy. "The helpful teachers give extra lessons after school. The school has a good academic reputation. Unfortunately it's not a very big school and does not offer a variety of sports. I like my school as the students respect each other and are always willing to learn something new".



#### References:

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<https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/matric-results-2019-ieb-versus-nsc/>
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This article was compiled by the interviewer, **Annapurna Hazra** and would not have been possible without the feedback of the parents and the students. Sincere thanks to



Abhigyan Chakraborty



Ambika Ghosh



Ankit Das



Anwasha Das



Arundhuti Bannerjee



Ayush Bhadra



Debangshu Basu



Drishti Khemka



Gaurika Chatterjee



Mayurakshi Shome



Punnita Bhadra



Rajorshi Das



Rivoo Bagchi



Siddhant Modak



Spishow Roy Chowdhury



Suran Saha



Tuhinangshu Moitro



Sudeshna Banerjee



Dr. Jayati Kusari Basu



Annapurna Hazra Ghosh

# Toucan

Oil Pastel



Aarav Chatterjee

# Dawn and Dusk

Oil Pastel



Antareep Das

বছর তিনেক পর অন্বেষণ, অন্বেষা আর তাদের বারো বছরের রূপসাকে নিয়ে বাড়ি ফিরলো। বছর তিনেক আগে রূপসা যখন দেশে এসেছিল সবকিছুর মধ্যে কাদা ব্যাপারটা ভালো লাগেনি, প্রবাসে ফেরার পথে বাবা তাকে বড় হয়ে কি হতে চায় তার একটা রচনা লিখতে বলেন। অনেক ভেবে মেয়েটি লিখল, বড় হয়ে আমি রাষ্ট্রপতি হতে চাই। বহু বানান ভুল, ভুল শব্দ চয়ন থাকলেও, মাতৃভূমির প্রতি ভালোবাসা কালির প্রত্যেকটা আঁকড়ে প্রস্ফুটিত হয়েছিল।

জীবনের দর্শন, মতাদর্শ সম্পূর্ণ ভিন্ন হলেও জন্মভূমির প্রতি টান এত বছরের প্রবাস বাসের পরেও অটুট রয়েছে। এই সমস্ত আবেগগুলো দুজনকে একটা অদৃশ্য জালে আটকে রেখেছে।

যাইহোক ন বছরের এই ছোট্ট শিশুটির মনে ও মাথায় মাতৃভূমির সংস্কারের চিন্তা এসেছে তাই ভেবে অন্বেষণের চোখটা কেমন জ্বালা করে উঠলো আর ওদিকে অন্বেষা পড়তে পড়তে ভাবলো, রূপসা কে ঠিক পথেই রাখতে পেরেছে, যেমনটা সে স্বপ্ন দেখেছিল হয়তো সে পথেই চলছে রূপসা। একটা বড় দীর্ঘশ্বাস ফেলে দুজন দুজনের দিকে ছল ছল চোখে তাকিয়ে রইলো তারপর নিঃশব্দে কেটে গেল বাকিটা সফর।

দৈনন্দিন জীবনে যেমন হয় আরকি - প্রবাসে পৌঁছে কাগজের তলায় চলে গেল ছোট্ট রূপসার লেখা সেই রচনাটা। আজ যখন প্রায় তিন বছর পর দেশে ফিরল বাড়িতে ঢুকতে ঢুকতেই হঠাৎ রাষ্ট্রপতি হওয়ার কথা মাথায় ভেসে উঠলো দুজনের একসাথে। কিন্তু ওই যে কবি লিখেছেন - সময় বহিয়া যায় নদীর স্রোতের প্রায়।

মাঝখানে অনেকগুলো বছর কেটে গেছে কিন্তু স্মৃতির ভাৱে অনেক কিছু চাপা পড়ে গেলেও রূপসার মনে এখনো নিজের বাড়ির সামনে টা পরিষ্কার করার বা সংস্কার করার কথা মনে ছিল। বাড়িতে ঢুকেই সে পাড়ার রূপ কুকুরগুলোকে বিস্কুট খাওয়াতে গেল, এদিকে তখন পৃথিবী জুড়ে ভাইরাসের তালুব চলছে।

পাড়ার কিছু লোক না বুঝতে পেরে তেড়ে এল তার দিকে, দরজার সামনে থেকে বেশ কয়েকজন বলে গেলেন “বাইরে থেকে এসেছেন বাড়ির ভেতরে থাকুন, তা না হলে আপনারাই অসুবিধায় পড়বেন”।

বাড়ির ভেতর কিভাবে কেটে ছিল তা শুধু তিনটে মানুষই জানে... কুকুরগুলোকে ছোট রূপসা দুটো বিস্কুট খাওয়ার জন্য ডাকলেও লোকেরা কেমন অদ্ভুত সন্দেহে ভুরু কঁচকে তাকাচ্ছিল তার দিকে। সাধারণত বাড়ি ফিরে পাড়ার যেসব বন্ধুদের বাড়ি ও খেলতে যায় তাদের ফোন করলেও তারা ফোন ধরছিল না প্রথম দিকটা সে বুঝতে পারেনি যখন তারা বুঝল তখন দূরত্ব বজায় রাখতে শুরু করলো।

বাড়ির বাইরে লোকজন কেমন টিটকিরি মেরে ঘুরতে থাকলো, কেউ বলে গেল “বাড়ি আসা কেন বাবু, ছিলে তো বিদেশে- টাকা রোজগার করে সেখানেই থাকতে পারতে?”

এরকম বন্দী জীবন কখনো দেখেনি তারা। এরপর ফোনের

গুণল দেখতে থাকে, মৃত মানুষের তালিকা একের পর এক বেড়েই চলেছে, যেন মৃত্যু মিছিল.. বিরক্ত হয়ে অন্বেষা বলতে লাগল পুজোর সময় ফোন করে আমাদের বলে “দাদা বাড়ি থেকে বাইরে আছেন, এত দূরে আছেন পাড়ার পুজোয় একটু না হয় বেশি দিলেন” এখন বারান্দায় মুখ দেখতে পেলেও একেবারে পুলিশকে ফোন করছে, চেনা মানুষদের এমন বদলাতে দেখে ধাক্কা লেগেছে, তবে বারবার রূপসা কে বোঝানোর চেষ্টা করেছে অন্বেষণ, ওদের কোন দোষ নেই, প্রাণের ভয়ে মানুষ যদি একটু ভুলভাল করে, সহ্য করে নিতে হবে। এমন ভাবে বেশ কিছুদিন কেটে গেল, কেটে গেল তাদের গৃহবন্দী দশাও। ধীরে ধীরে সেই দানবের মৃত্যু তালুব খেমে আসল। হঠাৎ চৈতালি বিকেলে মাঠের কোনো থেকে ছুটে এলো মেঘ, বারান্দায় দাঁড়িয়ে ওরা গান গেয়ে উঠলো ....প্রানো ভরিয়ে তৃষা হরিয়ে মোরে আরো আরো আরো দাও প্রাণ। সামনের আম গাছটায় মুকুল এসেছে, অগ্রিম কালবৈশাখী তাণ্ডব ঝরালো প্রচুর মুকুল...নামল তুমুল বৃষ্টি।

প্রায় একমাস দরজার পেছনে থাকা কচি মুখগুলো বাধন মানল না, ছোট্ট হাতে দুই হাতে দরজা ঠেলে তারা বেরিয়ে পরলো আমের মুকুল কুড়োতে, তাদের নিষ্পাপ চোখ আকাশের দিকে ঝকঝকে ভাবে তাকিয়ে বলে উঠলো ভাইরাস মানিনা তোমার চোখ রাঙানি, উড়িয়ে ধ্বজা অভ্রভেদী রথে ওই যে তিনি ওই যে বাহির পথে। ছল ছল চোখে রূপসা সবটা দেখছিল দরজার দিকে হাত গেলেও হাতটা চেপে ধরে অন্বেষা। অভিমানী... দুঃখে কষ্টে ঘরের বালিশের উপর মুখ গুঁজে কাঁদতে থাকে। উল্টো দিকের বাড়ির বারান্দা থেকে দেখতে পায় জেঠু, এসে দরজার সামনে ডেকে উঠলেন, রূপ কুমারী বেরিয়ে আয়, দেখ তোর বন্ধুরা কত আনন্দ করে আম কুড়চ্ছে। আসতে অস্বীকার করে রূপসা।

দিন কয়েক এর মধ্যে অসুখের কামড় কমলো বেশ কিছুটা, মাতব্বরেরা ঠিক করলেন বৈশাখের সকালে সব রকম সচেতনতা বজায় রেখে আশেপাশের গরিব মানুষদের খাওয়ানো হবে। ক্লাব থেকে প্রতি বাড়িতে এসে ভলেন্টিয়ার করার আরজি করা হলো। রূপসা এক ছুটে বেরিয়ে গিয়ে হাজির হয় ক্লাবের সামনে, ভাইরাসের বীভৎসতা কমলেও সতর্কতা মেনে চলতেই হবে একথা ভুলে গিয়েছিলেন বেশকিছু মাতব্বর, রূপসা ভেতরে ভেতরে বেশ বিরক্তই হলো, মাইকে গানের আওয়াজটা কম করে, এই পরিস্থিতিতে কি করা উচিত, কম শব্দে সবাইকে বুঝিয়ে দেয়।

তারপর এক দশম সময় নষ্ট না করে ঝটপট করে কাজ শুরু করে দেয়, পেছনের দিকের ভিড়ে চাপা গলায় কেউ বলে ওঠেন আমাদের পাড়ার প্রতিভা পাটিল। শুনতে পেয়েও না শোনার ভান করে মাইকটা বাড়িয়ে দেয় রূপসা আর আবহে বাজতে থাকে “নব আনন্দে জাগো আজি নব রবি কিরণে...।”



হেমন্তিকা চ্যাটার্জী

## একটি মেয়ের গল্প

কলকাতার বৃষ্টি নয়, একটু দূরে ছোট্ট মফঃস্বলে আমাদের ছেলেবেলা কেটেছে, আর পাঁচটা সাধারণ পরিবারের মতোই। বিশেষত্ব বলতে আমাদের ছোট্ট জায়গাটোতে একটা নদী ছিল, যেটা আমার মনে হত আমাদের সাথে স্কুলে যায়, ফেরবার সময়ে ফেরে; ওর সাথে আমরা অনেক কথা বলতাম। আমরা বলতে, আমি আমার বন্ধু কুমুমিতা। আমাদের সাম্প্রতিক মনের মিল ছিল। দিনে একবার দেখা না হলে ভীষণ খারাপ লাগত। স্কুল থেকে কলেজ পর্যন্ত একেবারে অটুট বন্ধুত্ব ছিল। মাঝে মাঝে আমরা নদীর ধারে বসতাম, অনেক গল্প হত, সাক্ষী থাকত নদীটা, যেন ও আমাদের আরেকটি প্রাণের বন্ধু।

দিন যায়, আমরাও বড় হতে লাগলাম, এক সময় আমাদের যাকারীতি বিয়েও হল, আমার আগে হলো, আর কুমুমিতার দুমাস পরে। চলে আসার সময়ে আমি খুব কান্নাকাটি করেছিলাম, মা বাবার জন্য, কুমুমিতার জন্য তো বটেই, আর নদীটার জন্য ভীষণ কষ্ট হচ্ছিল। অনেকদিন পর্যন্ত নদীটাকে স্বপ্ন দেখতাম। প্রথম প্রথম ঘন ঘন মায়ের কাছে যাওয়া হত, বন্ধুর সাথে নদীর পাড়ে বসে গল্পও হত।

কিছু বছর পরে আমার ছেলে হলো, মায়ের কাছে যাওয়া কমতে লাগল, সংসারে ব্যস্ততা বাড়ল, তারপর আমার স্বামী বিদেশ চলে এলো। প্রথম প্রথম ঘন ঘন চিঠি, ফোন, ধীরে ধীরে তার সংখ্যাও কমতে লাগল।

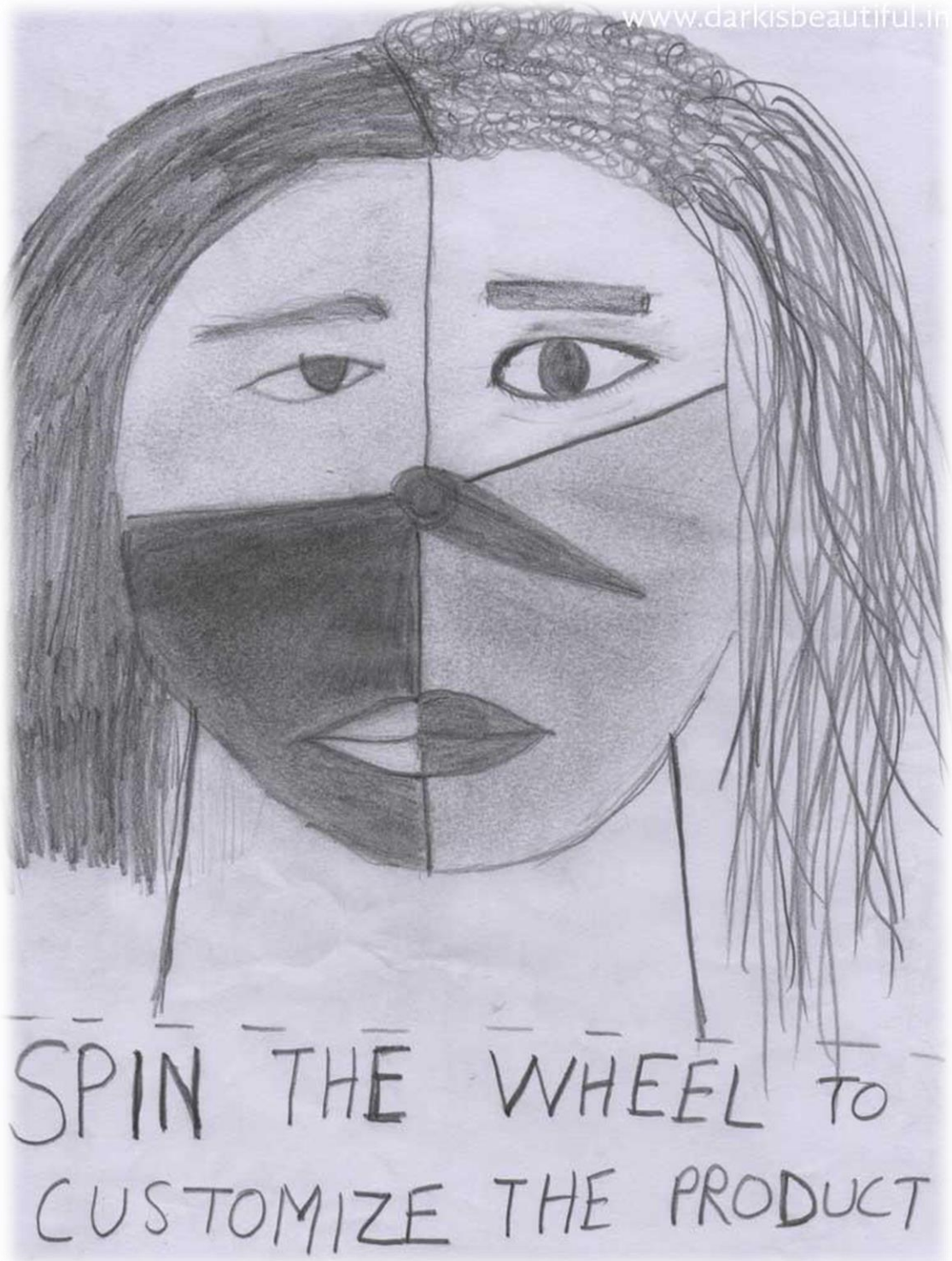
হঠাৎ একদিন মায়ের অসুস্থতার খবর পেয়ে দেশে ফিরলাম। এসেছি আগেও অনেকবার, কিন্তু তাড়াহড়োতে এদিক-ওদিক করে সবার সঙ্গে দেখা করতে করতে কোথা থেকে যে একটা মাস কেটে যেত টেরও পেতাম না। এবারে কিছুদিন ছিলাম মায়ের কাছে, নিজস্ব সময় নিয়ে। দেখা হলো কুমুমিতার সাথে, গেলাম আমরা নদীর ধারে। কিন্তু কেন জানিনা আমার মনে হলো আমরা কেউই আর আগের মতো নেই। নদীটাও যেন শুকিয়ে দূরে সরে গেছে, কুমুমিতার ডিভোর্স হয়ে গেছে, ওর মেয়েকে নিয়ে ও আলাদা থাকে। কুমুমিতা চাকরি করে, কলেজের লেকচারার। আমিও কি আগের মতো ওকে সব কথা উজাড় করে বলতে পারলাম? আগে যেন কথার শেষ হত না, এখন বেশীরভাগ সময়টাই নীরবতা।

কেন এমন হল? বড়ো হওয়ার সাথে সাথে মানুষকে কি অনেক কিছু লুকিয়ে ফেলতে হয়? আমরা শুধু খুশীটা দেখাই, দুঃখটা লুকাই কেন? আসলে সত্যিটা কাউকে বলতেই চাইনা, ছোটবেলার বন্ধুকেও নয়, ভাবি শুনলে ওদের খারাপ লাগবে। তাই যে কয়েকদিন বেঁচে থাকি, হেসেখেলে হইচই করে কাটিয়ে দিই যাতে সবার মনে আমার জন্য আনন্দই থাকে। আর এটাই বোধহয় ভাল, সবার জন্য, আমার জন্যও। সকলে ভাল থাকুক, কিছু কষ্ট আমার নিজস্ব হয়েই থাকুক।



অপর্ণা চ্যাটার্জী

# Dark is Beautiful Pencil Sketch



Doodle Contest winner in [www.darkisbeautiful.in](http://www.darkisbeautiful.in)



Adrija Pattanayak





## ফিরে দেখা

বিকেলের এই শেষ সময়টা রানুর একমাত্র নিজের। এই সময় বারান্দায় বসে চা এর সাথে নিজের কথোপকথন আর বিকেলের পড়ন্ত আলোয় গা ভেজানোটা যেন সারাদিনের রুটিন কাজকর্ম থেকে তাকে একটু সময়ের জন্য মুক্তি দেয়।

আজও বারান্দায় বসে চা এ চুমুক দিতে দিতে সামনের মাঠে বাচ্চাদের খেলতে দেখছিল একমনে। দেখতে দেখতে কখন জানি বেথেয়ালে চলে গেছিলো তার নিজের বাড়িতে, নিজের দেশে। সীমান্ত পেড়িয়ে সে তখন মুক্তাগাছার বাড়িতে। ভাগ্যিস মন বর্ডার বোঝেনা।

বাংলাদেশের ময়মনসিংহ জেলার মুক্তাগাছায় থাকতো তারা। বাবা মা বড়দি মেজদি আর সোবাবার ছিল ওষুধের দোকান। খুব স্বচ্ছলতার ছাপ ছিলনা ওদের ঘরে, তবে আনন্দ ছিল ভরপুর। সারাদিন মাঠে পুকুরে জঙ্গলে ঘুরে বেড়ানোই ছিল তার একমাত্র কাজ। মায়ের কাছে সেইজন্য বকাও জুটত খুব। যদিও বাবা কোনদিনও তাকে বকত না। বাড়ির ছোট ছিল বলে আদরের ভাগটা একটু বেশিই ছিল তার। ছোট হলেও তার খেলার দল ছিল অনেক বড়। গাছে ওঠা, পুকুরে কলা গাছ দিয়ে সাঁতার কাটা আরও কতো কিছু করতো সারাদিন ধরে। জঙ্গলে খুব ঘুরত সে, প্রায়ই কাঁটারোপে পা ক্ষতবিক্ষত হত, যদিও তাতে তার ঘোরা কমতোনা। সেই সময় জুতো পড়ার রীতি বিশেষ ছিলনা বললেই চলে। শুধু পুরুষরা খড়ম ব্যবহার করতো। মহিলারা, শিশুরা খালি পায়েই যাতায়াত করতে অভ্যস্ত ছিল। রানুর খুব জুতো পড়তে ইচ্ছে করতো। মাঝে মাঝে ও ওর বাবার খড়ম দুটো পায়ে দিয়ে হাঁটার চেষ্টা করতো। কিন্তু ছোট্ট পায়ে বড় খড়ম বাগে আসতো না। ফলস্বরূপ বারবার পড়ে যেত। মাঝে মাঝে কাপড়ের পাড় দিয়ে খড়ম কে পায়ের সাথে বেঁধে সে হাঁটত, কিন্তু ঠিক মনমতো হতোনা ব্যপারটা।

সেইবার গরমের ছুটিতে তাদের প্রতিবেশী মাখন দাদাদের বাড়িতে মাখন দাদার মামা মামিমা আর বোনেরা এসেছিল কলকাতা থেকে। কলকাতা দেশ টার নাম শুনলেও সেটা ঠিক কোথায় রানু তখন জানতোনা। বাবার কাছে রাতের বেলা সে অনেক দেশের গল্প শুনত। সে মনে মনে ভাবতো বড় হলে সে অনেক দেশ যাবে। কদিনের মধ্যে মাখন দার বোনের সাথে ওর বেশ ভাব হয়ে গেল। রানু বেশ অবাক হয়ে দেখত ওদের জামা, ওদের হাবভাব। সবচেয়ে অবাক হয়েছিল ওদের সুন্দর জুতো দেখে। কি সুন্দর লাল রঙ্গের জুতো। ওর খুব ইচ্ছে করছিল ঐ জুতো পায়ে দিতে। কিন্তু অন্যের জিনিস না বলে পরাটা ঠিক নয় সেটা সে জানতো। মাখন দাদার মামারা যতদিন ছিল রানু যে কতবার তাদের বাড়ি যেত তার ঠিক

ছিলনা। জুতো দেখার নেশটাই বেশি ছিল। একদিন বাড়ি ফিরে রানু বাবাকে বলল-‘বাবা আমরা একটা লাল রঙের জুতা দিবা?’ বাবা হেসে বলল-‘জুতা দিয়া কি হইব মা? তুমার তো অহন ছোট্ট পা, বড় হও তহন পরবা।’ রানু- ‘না বাবা দাও না-’ সে তার বাবার কাছে বায়না ধরল জুতা তাকে দিতেই হবে। প্রায় প্রতিদিন সকাল বিকেল বাবার কাছে আবদার চলতে লাগলো জুতার জন্য। শেষে একদিন ওর বাবা ওকে ভোলানোর জন্য বলল- ‘বেশ আমি ফটিক মুচি কে কইয়া দিয়াম হে তুমার লাইগ্যা জুতা বানাইয়া দিবো। ব্যস রানু কে আর পায় কে??? সকাল বিকাল জুতার খোঁজ লাগায় সে মুচির দোকানে গিয়ে-‘ফটিক দা আমার জুতাডা কই?’

ফটিক ও উত্তর দিতো-‘ এই তো মা তুমারডাই বানাইতাসি’।

এইভাবে চলল কয়েক মাস। জুতা আর হয়না। কদিন পর ফটিক দাদা ও কোথায় জানি চলে গেল। রানু সারাদিন গোমড়া মুখে ঘুরে বেড়ায়। কতো স্বপ্ন দেখেছিল জুতোটা নিয়ে। সেইসময়টা শুধু রানু গোমড়া ছিলনা। সারা দেশ ছিল গোমড়া। একটা গুমোট পরিবেশ গ্রাস করছিল শান্ত সবুজ দেশটাকে। আস্তে আস্তে পাড়া প্রায় খালি হতে লাগলো। রানু বুঝতই না কেন সবাই নিজের বাড়ি ছেড়ে চলে যাচ্ছে? তাদের ও যেতে হবে- এরকম কথা মাঝে মাঝে কানে আসতো তার। খুব কান্না পেত তার। খেলার সঙ্গীরা একে একে চলে যেতে লাগলো। চারিদিকে একটা শ্মশানের নিঃস্বকতা। দিন যেতে লাগলো। ও লক্ষ্য করে বাড়ির সবাই কেমন চুপ হয়ে গেছে। মা মাঝে মাঝে খুব কান্নাকাটি করে। ও বুঝতে পারেনা কিছুই। বড়দি কে জিজ্ঞেস করলে বলে ওরা নাকি চলে যাবে এখান থেকে। সে চিৎকার করে বলে উঠত- কক্ষনো না। এখান থেকে সে কোথাও যাবেনা। ভাবতো দিদি ওকে মিথ্যে বলছে। একদিন সে দেখল বাবা সবার জন্য চটি নিয়ে এসেছে। তার জুতোটা লাল রঙ্গেরই ছিল। জুতা পেয়ে রানুর সেকি আনন্দ। কতবার যে তা পায়ে দিয়ে দেখেছে তার ঠিক নেই। সেই দিনটা যে তার জীবনের সবচেয়ে রক্তাক্ত দিন হিসেবে চিহ্নিত হয়ে থাকবে তা সেদিন তার ছোট্ট মন আঁচও করতে পারেনি।

সেদিন খুব তাড়াতাড়ি মা তাদের খাইয়ে শুয়ে দিয়েছিল। খুব ভোর রাতে ওরা বেড়িয়ে এসেছিল বাড়ি থেকে। সব যেমনকার তেমন ছিল, শুধু ওরা ছিলনা। মূল উপড়ে নিয়ে ওরা বেড়িয়ে এসেছিল সেদিন। পিছনে পরে ছিল নিজের দেশ, নিজের বাড়ি, নিজের স্বপ্নের সবটুকু। তাদের সাথে ছিল আরও বেশ কয়েকটি পরিবার। বর্ডার যখন এলো তখন দলের অনেকেই কেঁদে উঠলো।

ঠিক ঐ মুহূর্ত রানুকে অনেকটা বড় করে দিলো। সে নাড়ি ছেঁড়া টান অনুভব করলো নিজের মাটির প্রতি। বুঝতে পারল আর কোনদিনো ফিরে যেতে পারবেনা ঐ বাড়িটাতে। ঐ গাছগুলো, ঐ পুকুর, তার বন্ধুরা- রমা, বিন্মি, বাচ্চু, রহিম। তার আরশাদ ভাই, কাজলি দিদি, মাখন দাদা, চকতি জ্যাঠা...সব এখন অতীত। কঁকিয়ে কেঁদে উঠলো রানু। এতো দিন যে জুতোর জন্য সে পাগল হয়ে উঠেছিল আজ তা পেয়েও সব হারিয়েছে সে। বহু কাঙ্ক্ষিত জিনিস পাওয়ার আনন্দ টা যেন রক্তাক্ত হল বর্ডারের তারকাটাতে। দেশভাগ তার মতো কতো শিশুর শৈশব কেড়ে নিয়েছে। শিকড় থেকে গাছ কে উপড়ে নিলে

গাছ বাঁচেনা, বেঁচে গেলেও তারা স্বাভাবিক ভাবে বিকশিত হয়না। ছিন্নমূল হওয়ার বেদনা যে কি তীব্র তা ঐ ছোট বয়সেই উপলব্ধি করেছিল সে। আর সেই ক্ষত বহন করে চলেছে সে আজও।

‘মাসিমা আজ রাতে কি রান্না হবে?’- মানদার ডাকে বর্ডার পার করে ফিরে এল রানু কলকাতার এই ফ্লাটে। আবছা চোখে তাকিয়েছিল মানদার দিকে। কিছু কথা বলতে পারছিলনা। সেদিনের সব ছেড়ে আসার দাগ টা যেন আজ আবার টাটকা হয়ে উঠলো।



জয়িতা ভট্টাচার্য

# Waiting In The Rain Ink Sketch Paint



Rai Sinha

# The Tomorrow

Actors assuming the persona of Macbeth speaks about it in a voice groomed to project a frustrated weariness emanating from the stage. At the same time, some film aficionados may recall a spy caper. For motivational speakers, it's associated with procrastination. Tomorrow for them is a tool for making today more relevant.

Tomorrow pairs better with today rather than yesterday. The known concept of time goes from today to tomorrow. Today becomes yesterday in realms of 'science' fiction. The analogue watch strapped to the wrist turns a full circle making today, a tomorrow. Tomorrow can be welcomed after a bad today. A good today can raise expectations of a better tomorrow.

The onset of a long night conveys a cessation of efforts for today and commencement of preparations for tomorrow. A biological sense of transition from today to tomorrow is a manifest in the act of lying supine for eight hours.

The waking hours are not much that a man can save on the sands of life, in the straits of time but activities during this time ward off the inexorability of tomorrows becoming today. Recalling and cataloguing our yesterdays through digital and oral record serves to ward off the nostalgic craving for lucid immortality. Another unattainability is the desire to relive moments, which an imaginative mind can create for itself by turning the hour hand of the watch a full circle backwards.

A realisation of temporality seeps in, which seeks to see today as life and tomorrow as the afterlife. Sleep is when the crossover happens, and one can tell the other, each night, when I go to sleep, I die. And the next morning, when I wake up, I am reborn. An eccentric oration for the mind, manifest in its practical validation might just bring a calm acceptance of the final transition. This is perhaps a comforting thought process for an agnostic atheist with a need for labelling happenings for own peace of mind.

But the horror and dread settle in with the realisation that the today's and tomorrows are interspersed by brief spells of sleep taking place in the same space and time and are experienced in the same mortal habit.

Explanations, untainted by pre-existing philosophical beliefs, embellished by creative thoughts, sophistries and sincere constructs offering more, beyond a today ending in abrupt black oblivion with no conscious realisation of a tomorrow ever, is welcome and to be shared at

[abhijit.chakraborty79@gmail.com](mailto:abhijit.chakraborty79@gmail.com)



**Abhijit Chakraborty**

## Vasudhev Kutumbakam

'The world is a family.' Is my school's motto, and as a child, I wondered what it meant? Thirty years later, the answer revealed.

After settling down, I joined a gym and met a few ladies there, one with whom I had an interesting conversation with:

*Lady: Where is your home?*

*Me: Bedfordview*

*Lady: (slightly confused) Are you South African?*

*Me: No, I am from India. I came here because of my husband's job.*

*Lady: So, your home is in India.*

*Me: (gave her a confused smile) this is my home for now (I guess).*

Isn't the phrase, 'Home is where the heart is', pertinent? My heart is where my husband and child are. I was born and raised in Delhi—yet, I never felt like a complete *Dilliwallah* due to the Bengali environment I was brought up in, which sometimes clashed with the Delhi culture. So, what defines our *home*?

Expat life, I guess, is all about breaking the notion of permanence and creating your 'home' wherever you land. This idea of starting from scratch is arduous but highly fulfilling.

*Why may you ask?*

It is a unique opportunity-- to learn, unlearn and relearn that makes us more flexible, accepting other's opinions and cultures and in the process learning something new about ourselves. Maybe as a first-timer, it seems all exciting to me, but I am grateful for this experience, especially for our son, who, hopefully, will grow up to having many *homes*.

On Saturday, the adrenaline of the country as high as South Africa reached the finals of the Rugby World Cup, my husband was all upbeat, which confused me as Rugby isn't a popular sport in India. Then realisation dawned, this is his *home* now, and when SA won, Ihaan and he collectively shouted, "South Africa came first!" Oh, what joy!



***Celebrating South Africa's epic win at the Nelson Mandela Square***

I guess, *home*, is not only one thing. It is a potpourri of the values, culture, and familiarity you have been brought up with while adding onto what you learn from your experiences.

The world is indeed a family if we accept each other's thoughts, views and cultures even if we don't necessarily agree with it.

Ultimately, HOME is where you are your natural, authentic self. A place where you can be YOU without the fear of being judged, misunderstood and feel limitless love and warmth.

For now, my home is Johannesburg 😊



**Tushita Mukherjee**

**This content has been retracted  
after consulting with the  
contributor**

## মহামারী

চারি দিকে ছেয়ে গেছে মহামারী ঘোষণা  
ভয়াবহ ভাইরাস, নাম তার করোণা।  
চীনেরা বাদুড় খেলো  
তাতেই কি রোগ এলো?  
বিজ্ঞেরা পড়ে বলে: এই সব রটনা!

এই তালে ফাঁক পেলো শ্বাস নিতে পৃথিবী  
আকাশটা নীল হলো, গাছ হলো সজিবী,  
রাস্তায় লোক নেই  
বাড়ীতে বসে সবাই,  
TV দেখে, আর বলে "Remote টা দিবি?"

খেটে খাওয়া মানুষের সব থেকে কষ্ট  
এক দিন বসে গেলে তাতেই অনিষ্ট;  
ছেলেটার পেটে ক্ষুধা  
ভিক্ষা চাইতে দ্বিধা  
মাথা ঠোকে, কেঁদে বলে, কোথা তুমি ইস্ট?

ভাঙা ঘরে TV নেই, useless রামায়ন!  
শিক্ষা পায়নি সে যে, বোঝোনাকো রসায়ন,  
এই মহামারীকার গ্রাসে  
জানে সব সন্ত্রাসে,  
আগুন - পেটের জ্বালা, পরিবারের অনশন।



সোমদেব ব্যানার্জী

## সাপ লুডো

আর একটা বছর হারিয়ে যাচ্ছে  
নিচে নামতে নামতে,  
জীবনের সাপ লুডো খেলায়  
তলিয়ে যাবার সাপ আছে  
উপরে যাবার সিঁড়ি নেই।

রাস্তার মোড়ের ভিখারী টা রোজ  
আশীর্বাদ করে বড় হবার  
পুরীর সমুদ্রের মধুচন্দ্রিমা তটে, দোকান দার টাও  
বলেছিল সেই কথা।

আমার ঠাকুয়ার ভট্টাচার্য মশাই  
কোনো এক চিন্তি তে  
পাঁজি পড়তে এসে ব্রহ্ম বাক্য দিয়েছিল  
দিগন্ত ছোঁয়ার, তাঁর কবজ ছাড়াই,  
শুধু বলে ছিল দস্ত ছাড়তে।

এই কি বড় হওয়া?  
পায়ে পায়ে, সাপের পেটের সিঁড়ি দিয়ে  
নীচে নামা

এই কি দিগন্ত ছোঁয়া?  
ভালোবাসা হারিয়ে যাওয়ার ভয়ে  
ঘুমের মধ্যে গুমরে ওঠা।  
বিষিয়ে জাওয়া বন্ধুতায়  
আনন্দ মিছিল বের করা।

তোমরা তো  
আশীর্বাদ দিতে পারতে  
আকাশ নয়, মাটি ছোঁয়ার,  
বড় নয়, ছোট হওয়ার।

ছোট বুকে ভরা থাকতো শুধু মধু  
থাকতো না ওঠা নামার ভয়  
থাকতো অফুরন্ত সময়,  
নিজের দস্ত বিলিয়ে দেওয়ার।

পুরোনো হারিয়ে যায় যাক  
হে নুতন, তোমার বুক ছোট দস্তি  
কেটে জায়গা দিও আমায়।  
গগনচুম্বী স্বপ্ন থেকে বেরিয়ে  
যেন মাটিতে আছড়ে পড়ি  
সিঁড়ি ভেঙে ফেলে,  
যেন সমতলে হাঁটতে পারি ॥



ফাক্রুদীন পন্ডায়ক

# ধর্ম

বাবা ধর্ম কি,  
আমি বললুম  
যা ধরে থাকো, তাই ধর্ম।  
আচ্ছা, আমি লাফুদু বাছুরের  
লেজ ধরে থাকি, লেজটা আমার ধর্ম,  
মায়ের আঁচল টাও আমার ধর্ম,  
বাবা তোমার ধর্ম কি?

তুর পাগলি, ওগুলো ধর্ম নয়,  
আমারা যা নিয়ে থাকি তাই ধর্ম।

আমি যেমন রামুকে নিয়ে থাকি,  
সামীনা দিদি আলীকে নিয়ে থাকে।  
আমাদের পুতুল গুলো আমাদের ধর্ম,  
তাই না বাবা?

আমি শিউরে ওঠি  
মেয়ের প্রশ্নে।  
এত সাবলীল উদাহরণের কাছে,  
হার মেনে যায় আমার ধর্ম আর তার বড়াই।

একটু ধাতস্থ হয়ে বললুম  
আমরা যে পূজো করি,  
ওটা আমাদের ধর্ম।

তুমিতো করোনা,  
পূজোতে বামুন কাকা করে।  
বাবা, তোমার দক্ষীগা  
বামুন কাকা ভগবানকে কবে পাঠায়?  
দাদুর ছাদে, বামুন কাকা খাট, ছাতা  
সব নিয়ে গেল, এখনো ওদের বাড়িতে আছে।  
ভগবান কে পাঠায়নি কেন?

বোঝাতে পারি না ধর্মের এজেন্সি প্রথা,  
নিজেও বুঝি না দক্ষীগার মর্ম,  
ভগবান পুরোনো, মুদ্রার রূপ পাল্টায় যুগে যুগে  
পাল্টায় না রীতি আর রেওয়াজ।

বাবা, আগের বার এসে দিদি বলেছিল  
ওদের দেশে নাকি বড় বড় ইস্কুল আছে,  
ওরা বড় সরস্বতীর পূজো করে?

আমাদেরও আছে, কম সংখ্যায়,  
বড় ইস্কুল করতে অনেক টাকা লাগে।

কেন আমরা তো লক্ষ্মী পূজো করি।

আবার থমকে যাই, আমরা যখন  
প্রার্থনার রীতি নিয়ে ব্যস্ত  
চুরি গেছে আমাদের বিজ্ঞান,  
বিজ্ঞানের বইপত্র গুলো ধর্ম গ্রন্থ বলে,  
সরে গেল জনসাধারণের কাছ থেকে।  
পাশ্চাত্যের লোভে, বিক্রি হল  
প্রাচ্যের প্রাচুর্য আর সংস্কৃতি।  
সব জেনে ও আমরা  
পূজোর রীতিতে ব্যস্ত রীতিমতো।  
শুধু বললুম, আমাদের আরো বড় ছিল,  
আবার বড় হবে, বড় হয়ে তুমি করবে।

আচ্ছা বাবা, ভগবান কবে বাঙলা শিখবে?  
কেন কি হয়েছে? আমি বললুম।  
সব পূজোতে বামুন কাকা কি যে মন্তর পড়ে,  
কিছুই বুঝি না, মা বলে হাত জোড় করে বসতে,  
সামীনা দিদিও ছাই কিছু বোঝেনা  
আবদুল চাচা আবার উল্টোদিক দিয়ে বইপড়ে  
পূজো করার সময়।

বলতে ভয়ঙ্কর ভয় করে  
যা দেখিস সবই খোলস,  
ওগুলো ছাড়াই বাঁচা যায়,  
এই পূজো, লৌকিকতা,  
নিজের অস্তিত্ব জাহির করার জন্য নানান রোশনাই,  
যুগযুগ ধরে চাপিয়ে দেওয়া খোলস,  
যা নিজের গায়ের চামড়া বলে মনে হয়,  
তাই ধর্ম।

শেষে বললুম  
মানুষকে ভালোবাসা ধর্ম,  
বড়দের শ্রদ্ধা করা ধর্ম,  
অন্যের বিপদে পাশে দাঁড়ানো ধর্ম,  
অন্যায়ের প্রতিবাদ করা ধর্ম।

আমারা যে পূজো করি,  
আবদুল চাচা যে নামাজ পড়ে,  
সবাই শক্তির কাছে প্রার্থনা করি,  
সেই ধর্মের জন্যে  
বাকি সব খোলস।

বুঝেছি বাবা  
নারকেল ছোবড়ার মতো ॥



ফাল্গুনী পট্টনায়ক



## নব বর্ষ

## বৃষ্টি

বৈশাখেতে প্রতি বছর  
নীলাকাশে রঙিন ছটা,  
পলাশ শিমুল পাল্লা দিয়ে  
লাগায় রং এর ঘনঘটা।

যারা কিনা দু তিন বার  
ধুয়েছে এতদিন হাত,  
তারা এখন ধুচ্ছে দিনে  
অন্তত বার ছয় সাত।

এবার ও ত রং ধরেছে  
থোকায় থোকায় ডালে ডালে,  
এ সব দেখেও মন আমার  
বাজেছে না ঠিক সুর তালে।

শ্রমিক, দিনমজুরেরা  
রোজ পায়না খেতে যারা,  
একমুঠো ভাত পেলেও  
আজ হাত ধুচ্ছে বেচারারা।

অন্য বছর এমন সময়  
থাকেনা কোনো অবকাশ,  
এবারে এক বিষন্ন অবসর  
মনে শুধু আতঙ্ক ত্রাস।

বৈশাখ আজ এসেছে দ্বারে  
তবু আনন্দ নেই প্রাণে,  
বন্দিদশার মুক্তি কবে  
জানিনা কে জানে?!

হচ্ছে নভ স্বচ্ছ নীলাভ  
পাখিরা আসছে ফিরে,  
ডলফিনের মিলছে দেখা  
দাঁড়ালে নদীর তীরে।

শুধু জানি কাটবে আঁধার  
আসবে নতুন ভোর,  
ধৈর্যটাকে বাঁচিয়ে রাখো,  
বাড়াও মনের জোর।

মানুষ বিহীন স্তব্ধ পথ  
নেই অটো বাস বা গাড়ি,  
দূষণ মুক্ত পথে তাই ..  
আজ বন হরিণের সারি।

সময়ের নেই lockdown  
সে শুধু ই বয়ে চলে,  
শুভেচ্ছা তাই সবার তরে  
ভালো থেকো সঙ্কলে।

তবু...

ভেবেছো কি একটা কথা  
প্রকৃতির makeover এর পরে,  
কোপ পড়তে পারে কিন্তু  
মাটির নিচের জলের স্তরে।

“শুভ ১৪২৭”



কাবেরী মুখার্জী  
শ্রীলা গুপ্তা ব্যানার্জীর বান্ধবী

বৃষ্টি- ১

.....  
তানসেন!  
দহন থামাও  
মেঘ মল্লারে...

বৃষ্টি-২

.....  
বৃষ্টি!  
এস আদর ডাকে  
দীর্ঘশ্বাস কাঁপে...

বৃষ্টি-৩

.....  
বৃষ্টি!  
তুমি সৃষ্টি জাগাও  
উল্লাসে...

বৃষ্টি-৪

.....  
উল্লাস  
তুমি উষ্ণ চুমু  
বৃষ্টি রাতে...

বৃষ্টি-৫

.....  
আদর!  
তোমায় একলা চাই  
বৃষ্টি নামাও ...



জয়িতা ভট্টাচার্য

This Bengali poem “Bristi” is inspired by Haiku, a short form of Japanese poetry in three phrases

# The Living

Pencil Sketch & Water colour



Punnita Bhadra

# Neuschwanstein Castle

## Water colour



Ayushi Banerjee



# Aspects of CORONA VIRUS

Corona virus (COVID 19) is our new enemy. We do not know much about it & scientists around the world are working around the clock in an aim to know this deadly enemy.

We have learnt a bit about the nature of the disease, death statistics & preventive measures of this new virus. Here is a highlight about its structure, pathology, mutation & logic of social distancing in a simple way. Corona Virus is a hot topic for any exam & this information might help the students.

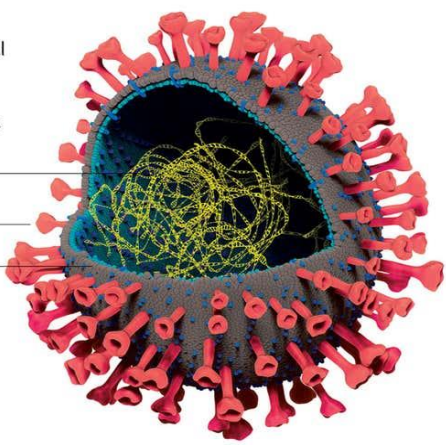
The Corona virus derived its name from the Latin word "Crown" as it looks like a crown under electron microscope. It is thought to be originated from bats.

It is a RNA virus which has a lipid membrane encapsulating the long RNA strand. Outside the lipid membrane, embedded are the structures called "spike protein". Below is a picture of Corona virus.

### Anatomy of a virus

The covid-19 virus has several features we may be able to target with drugs to break it down and stop it entering cells

- RNA enclosed in protein
- Spike protein
- Lipid membranes



Viruses always mutate, especially RNA viruses. So far, two types of Corona virus have been observed, L-type & S-type. L-type is more prevalent worldwide and more aggressive in transmission. Difference between two strains although is very small.

The virus likes to infect the human cells which has a protein named ACE 2 (Angiotensin converting enzyme 2) on the cell membranes of cells in the lungs, heart, kidneys, intestines and arteries. The infection begins when the spike proteins of the virus particle attaches on to the cell's ACE2 protein. Thereafter, the spike transforms and reconfiguration occurs. The transformed spike hooks into the cell and crashes the virus particle and cell together. This forms a channel where the string of viral RNA can get its way into the healthy cell.

Most of the symptoms of Corona virus infection is caused by the immune system carrying out a mega defense to stop the virus from spreading. Millions of cells from the immune system invade the infected lung tissue and cause massive amounts of damage in the process of cleaning out the virus and any infected cells.

The ACE2 protein that the virus uses as a door to enter the cells is also important for regulating blood pressure in human, and it fails to do its job when infected by the virus. This is one reason why the Corona virus is more severe in people with high blood pressure. Corona virus is a tricky virus. It has ways to stop cells from calling out to the immune system for help. For example, one way that cells try to respond to infection is by making interferon, the alarm signaling protein.

Once a person is infected with the coronavirus, they are unlikely to have repeat infection— unless the virus mutates to allow it to overcome the defense mechanism of the immune system. Virus is less aggressive in children than in adults or elderly. Children’s immune systems react in a less vigorous way & they don’t get that sick. The immune system of adults overreacts to the virus which makes them sick. Currently, the only treatment is prevention by personal protection, hand hygiene and social distancing of 1 metre or 3 feet. Soap & alcohol inactivates lipid cell membrane of the virus.

Transmission primarily occurs between people through respiratory droplets and surface contact route during coughing and sneezing. When the droplet particles are >5-10 µm in diameter they are called respiratory droplets. Each droplet may contain many virus particles. Corona virus droplets are normally larger than 20 micrometres (µm) in diameter and it can transmit to a person in close contact (within 1 metre distance). People are therefore at risk of having mucosae (mouth and nose) or conjunctiva (eyes) exposed to potentially infective respiratory droplets.

In addition, droplets are heavy enough to succumb to gravity and fall on the surface, hence touching the surface can also transmit the infection to the nose from the hand. Virus is not airborne as it remains in the air for only 10 minutes due to its heavy particle size.

### How reduction of social contact (gathering) can reduce the spread:

	In 5 days	In 30 days
Normal contact 1 person infects ≥	2.5 people	406 people
50% less contact 1 person infect	1.25 people	15 people
75% less contact 1 person infect	0.625 people	2.5 people

Scientists are working on a vaccine. Until any definitive cure is found, we must all practice preventive measures to stop the spread of this deadly virus.



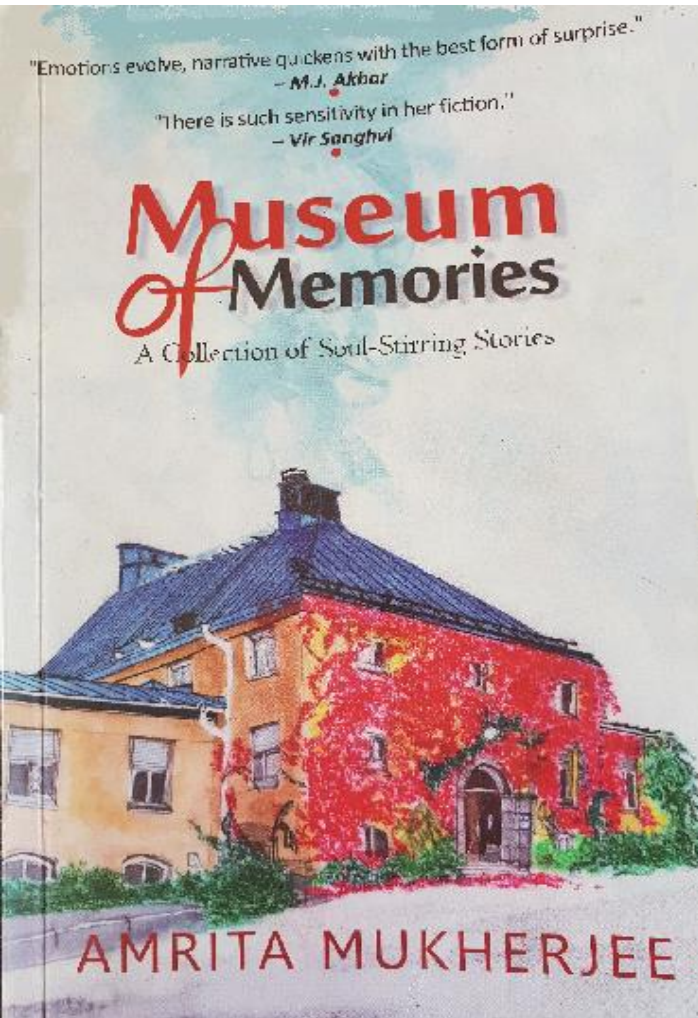
Dr. Jayati Kusari Basu

# Cartoon Pencil Sketch



Spishow Roy Chowdhury

## Book Review



**Book: Museum of Memories**

**A Collection of Short Stories**

**Publisher: Readomania Publishing House**

My favorite fiction genre being 'short stories' and a cover that held an alluring promise of 'a collection of soul-stirring stories', accompanied by an unusual and rather intriguing title 'Museum of Memories, all unmistakably striking a chord inside, I picked up the relatively thin paperback collection from Readomania Publishing House. With endorsements from eminent journalists like M.J Akbar and Vir Sanghvi, and the claim that the stories are based on real life incidents penned down by a senior journalist Amrita Mukherjee, I expected a sojourn into the simple, ordinary day-to-day lives of

identifiable characters, sans ostentation. Well, I wasn't disappointed in the least – I breezed effortlessly through 189 pages in just 2 sittings. Reading through the life-like, soul stirring stories was an experience I relished to the core and would not mind even revisiting after a certain gap.

'Sometimes, some regrets refuse to go. Mine was just sitting there, somewhere; may be even sleeping in a tiny hole in my mind. The regret didn't gnaw, didn't claw, didn't even stir but I knew it was there and would be, always.'

Thus begins the first paragraph of the first story in the collection titled 'Museum of Memories' on a slightly pensive note. All the tales however, evoke a variety of emotions and belong to different genres. One common thread that binds all the stories is the sensitivity with which the author delves into the psyche of each character in diverse social milieu. The narrative style is fast-paced, simple, lucid making the book a light and enjoyable read, yet leaving a profoundly rich after-taste and offering ample food for thought. A dash of suspense and intrigue added here and there along with an unexpected ending add to the attractiveness of some stories. For example in the first story, the protagonist expresses her anguish over her sister's death from suicide and there is a sudden shift of emotion or an unexpected turn when a devastating truth is revealed at the end.

Each story in the collection is relatable and is clothed in realism – a lady judging the life of her friend through her Facebook posts, a house husband narrating his side of the story, a sex worker's poignant yearning to be back home to her son, a young surrogate mother voicing out her angst, a young innocent girl on a journey from the confines of her parents' home to her brush with the cruel outside world post marriage, a quirky love story depicting a boy's fascination for a much older woman and this feeling continuing for 42 years and so many others.....

At certain places the stories leave a sense of incompleteness and a yearning for more and might seem a tad rushed. However, that could be inherent in the genre of the fiction – 'short stories' the author has attempted to handle. I would recommend the book to anyone looking to savor fiction which is gripping, based on realistic situations in life and go through the intense yet relatable emotional journey inside the inside the minds of each character.



**Gargi Bagchi**

## Movie Review



**Movie: ONWARD**

**Type: Animation**

**Genre: Fantasy Film**

**Age: 7+**

Another of Disney's masterworks, Onwards is set in an urban fantasy world inhabited by magical creatures like elves, pixies and centaurs that has forsaken magic for the convenience of modern technology. The story centres around two elven brothers, Ian, who is shy and makes an effort to reinsert himself in the social circle on his sixteenth birthday, emboldening himself by wearing his father's t-shirt and his elder brother, Barley who is outgoing in contrast and likes his hard metal music and quest-themed adventure games. The story picks pace when Ian's mother surprises Ian who idolises his dead father whom he had never interacted with and about whose life he is always eager to learn about, with a coming-of-age gift left for him by his father. Barley, with faith in all things magic, and Ian, a gifted doubter must now follow the rituals of magical obligation to achieve a miracle, the brief resurrection of the dead, their father.

The gift was a staff and a scroll which had a resurrection spell inscribed upon it for bringing father back to life for 24 hours.

Attempts to cast the spell drives home the difference between Barley, his lack of magical ability, and Ian's natural inclination to be a wizard. However, the spell casting suffers an accident half way through, bringing to life the lower half of their father's body. In spite of being a squib, Barley comes across as an enthusiast and a firm believer in magic who encourages Ian to embark on a quest to find the gem required for recasting the spell in order to bring father fully back to life, by following the rules of a table top role playing game. They drive first to the Manticore's tavern where the map to the gem is kept. On arrival they discover that the Manticore has converted the tavern, which was once a meeting ground for fearless adventurers and warriors, into a family friendly joint. The Manticore refuses to give them the map saying that the quest is too dangerous and she is worried about getting sued if the brothers are injured. But Ian goads her into realising how boring her life has become and in a fit of new found rage the Manticore accidentally burns her restaurant and the map in the process, leaving the brothers with only the supposed location of the gem, Raven's point. After giving the slip to the police and a biker gang of Pixies the brothers reach a crossroad. Ian wants to take the more practical non-magical highway while Barley insists on taking an alternative route as for him quests are never easy. Ian realises he needs to give Barley a chance to try out his own ideas and agrees to take the alternative route. Barley's reasoning and his encouragement of Ian's magical skills lead them to their school building, right back to where they started conveying via symbolism that magic is all around us just waiting to be found. After a brief argument between them Barley uncovers the final clue revealing both the gem and dragon that guards it. After casting the resurrection spell properly, Ian fights the dragon, allowing Barley to spend some rare moments with their father.

The movie references many other film characters in the plot like Dungeons and Dragons and LOTR. The highlight of the film for me was the climax where, despite being more invested in meeting his father Ian fought the dragon, letting Barley meet with him. He makes this gesture when he realises that he does not need to actually meet his father as for all of his growing life he was taken care of by his elder brother who was like a father figure to him. Barley, being the older son, grew up without a father figure. That realisation played out emotionally at the end, although the effect was ruined a little as half the meeting between the resurrected father and Barley consisted of them seemingly standing around doing nothing before embracing each other for the last time. All in all Onwards is an excellent film and ranks among the best animated films we have watched in recent times.



Abhigyan Chakraborty



Abhijit Chakraborty



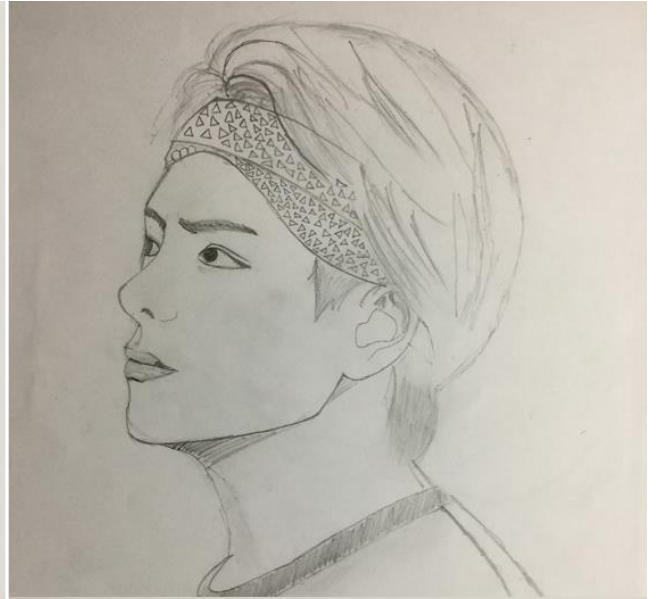
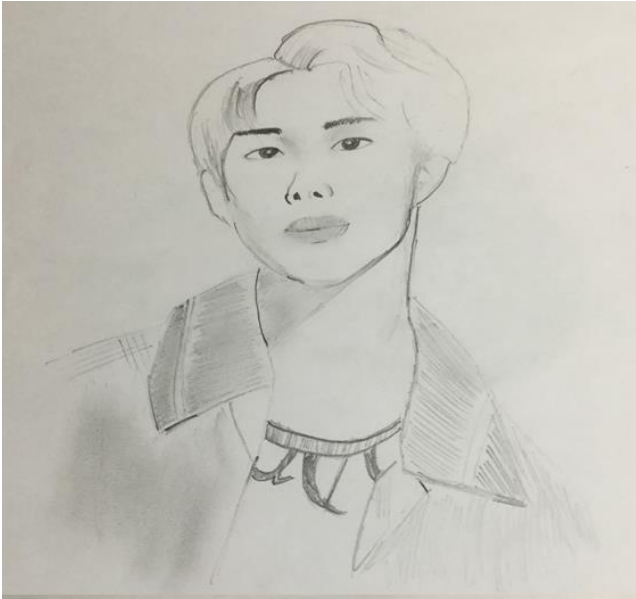
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# Teenage Fantasy Pencil Sketch



Ambika Ghosh

# CR 7

I love playing soccer and I am a very big fan of Cristiano Ronaldo. I have been following him since his Man U days. I have been lucky to have also visited Manchester United Stadium.

Here is a close look into the journey of this football star who is regarded as one of the greatest players of all times on the planet – and he is my soccer hero.

Cristiano Ronaldo, known by his nickname 'CR7', was born on 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 1985 and lived on an island of Madeira, Portugal. Ronaldo played for an amateur team, Andorinha, before being signed by Sporting CP after a three-day trial. Ronaldo stopped attending school at the age of 14 so as to focus on his football career. His football dreams were Threatened by a racing heart condition, but after undergoing surgery he resumed playing.



He currently plays forward for Juventus (Italian club) and the Portugal National Team. Among the greatest of all time to have graced the football pitch, entertaining us with a unique style of play, outstanding dribbles, sensational goals and electrifying speed, Cristiano Ronaldo stands out. The ace skipper has a liking for scoring incredible goals while inspiring his team to victory.

### SPORTING CP (2002–2003)

Ronaldo started playing in the youth team of Sporting CP at the age of 16. He played for all the levels - under-16, under-17, under-18, B-team, and the first team before finally graduating into the senior team in the year 2002. He scored two goals in his league debut and announced his arrival on the big scene. He moved to Manchester United.

### MANCHESTER UNITED (2003–2009)

Ronaldo became one of the best players in Europe. He became the first player to break the 20-goal barrier & helped Man U claim their first League title in four years.

He received Professional Footballer's Association's Player, Young Player of the Year and the Football Writers' Association Footballer of



the Year, making him the first player to receive four major PFA and FWA award for two consecutive seasons. He also

won the Premier League Golden Boot for his 31 goals and European Golden Shoe, the first winger to achieve the feat.

In the Champions League, Ronaldo got the UEFA club footballer of the Year Award. Ronaldo ended his time with United with the Ballon d'Or award, becoming the first Premier League Player to be named the FIFA World Player of the Year. Ronaldo claimed a total of nine trophies while at Manchester United.

### REAL MADRID (2009–2018)

Ronaldo secured a move to Real Madrid before the start of the 2009–2010 season, in a world-record transfer of 94 million Euros. The attendance of 80,000 fans at his presentation at the Santiago Bernabeu broke the 25-year record of 75,000 attendances at Diego Maradona's Napoli presentation.

Ronaldo particularly achieved more in his final days with Madrid becoming Madrid's first Player to score a total of 5,900 goals. He also became the first player to score 100 goals in a UEFA club competition.

The highest point of his last days with Madrid was his bicycle kick goal in a 3-0 away win over Juventus which was lauded by the opposition fans. The goal was labelled as a "Playstation Goal" by Juventus defender Andrea Barzagli.



### JUVENTUS (2018–PRESENT)

Ronaldo secured a 100 million Euros transfer to Juventus which also included an additional 12 Million euros in fee and contributions to Ronaldo's youth club. His transfer was the highest for a player above 30 years old.

He debuted for Juventus in a Serie A goal against Chievo on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2018.



His team players are:

Douglas Costa, Paulo Dybala, Giorgio Chiellini, Matuidi, Federico Bernardeschi, Andrea Bargali, Sami Khedirea, Moises Kean, Alex Sandro, Miro Mandzukic, Emre Can, Wojciech Szczeseny, Joao Cancelo



It has been my wish to visit the Juventus (Allianz) Stadium in Italy. I would in fact have been there (this Easter) as I write this – but our trip had to be cancelled.

I am very hopeful and praying that very soon I will be able to visit my

HERO



Compiled by  
Raunak Paul

## Introducing Meri Zindagi Female Rock Band with a Mission

Music on the beats is what the all-women band, **Meri Zindagi Female Mission Rock Band** is known for. Meri Zindagi is Uttar Pradesh's first & only rock band that sings about female education, gender justice, equality, domestic violence and female feticide.



The band members among others: **Jaya Tiwari, Purvi Malvia, Niharika Dubey and Saubhagya Dixit**

This is India's first Female Rock Band whose motto is 'Music with Mission', the mission of saving and educating girl children. Our **Basudha Modak** had an interesting conversation with **Dr. Jaya Tiwari**, the composer and lyricist of the band, who works in media. She has been the Radio Jockey for AIR RedFM before launching the band. This exclusive interview will introduce us to their mission.

*Welcome Jaya. So tell me about the journey of your Band and how it all started?*

I was a blessed child at home, and I got all the freedom as a girl as I was born after many *mannats*. We also started with the same determination of giving a girl the right to be born, the right to live, the right to education,...all these which I took for granted. I promised myself to bring a musical

revolution, first time in India when I started the band in 2010. Many international bands, have brought about revolutions and we are trying our own way.

With this dream I am still living today..., it is as much my parent's as my own. They let me learn music, drama and pushed me to keep on bettering myself. From all the freedom I got, it made me more conscious to bring the two worlds of a girl- the home front and for the society, together. The society discriminates a girl in every way. Even in competitions for music I met highly ambitious and very talented girls who were forced to do what society expected them to- get married and live a life defined only by others. When I worked in orphanages, girls were never adopted. I wished for everyone a good life with freedom. I have lived that freedom, so the band was created to bring the two worlds together.

### Who or what have influenced your band the most?

Society..... all the things we see around and the conclusions we come to. Growing up with two older brothers, I was always free in gender-equality since childhood. Growing up in a purely academic atmosphere also gave a positive growth that influenced me. We chose music for this mission as we thought we can reach out to more people with our lyrics, music, emotions, gestures will touch people's heart.

### How did you meet others and form the band?

I am just a face...., there is a higher power that is controlling everything. There were lot of struggles that we went through while forming the band. I do not know how all the thoughts and motivations keep coming. I think coming from a media background and being musical-minded, helps a lot. All the girls in our band are not professional players, but they come and join the mission. We connect and grow. Many come with gifted voices. We look for motivated people irrespective of gender who have the passion to bring about and be the 'change'.

Our songs are not black or grey, they are colorful, vibrant and very positive songs. They give meaning to all the people who join and we see their dedication and the thoughts and ideas. We do not have a manager or PR, we manage everything on our own.

### Tell me about your process of song-writing for the band.

If you hear our band, you will know we are not rough and tough. We are the 'Indian Nari in Saree'. We chose the pink colour to include femininity. We represent our Indian culture.



Catch this band on YouTube channel and social media pages by the name **Meri Zindagi**

We write songs to connect to the grassroots and there is no definite way we do it. The words of the songs linger in our started a campaign on 8th March "JustBolo". If we don't like something we speak out. Before it becomes a #MeToo Campaign, we wish for women to take charge of themselves and enjoy the freedom of being Women.

Some of our favourite songs are 'Mairi mera byah na rachana' that asks mothers to give the girls a chance to live their dreams rather than getting them married young; 'Dreaming ke pressure cooker ki seeti ko bajne do, mere hauslon ke shank nath ko badhne do,' encouraging girls to believe in themselves and not stay in the kitchen. Another song on female feticide 'Teri galiyon mein na aayenge kabhi is raat ke baad, maa, meri maa' is well accepted.

### It is interesting to know about your accompanying instruments, tell us more about them.

We don't have many instruments other than a guitar and a synthesizer, neither do we have the money to buy them. So we picked up anything we could find — metal spoons, bowls, glasses, plates, bottles with whole spices and even tongs. We had early morning jamming sessions as practice and then the band members, who were college students attended their classes.

### How have your thoughts changed since you started?

There has been many changes from all that the feedback we got while moving around in the society. When we perform going to villages, mohallas, even corporate and Government/NGO or political platforms, we meet people who are facing the challenges daily. In these ten year's journey, even the lyrics of our songs have changed. Initially we used to send sweet decorative messages, but now our songs are direct with no 'if's and 'but's and there is nothing that anyone listening to our songs cannot understand. The thoughts give confidence to our band members in our daily jobs and people get influenced and impressed by them. Even if you go through our social media profile, we never put disheartening thoughts or about tough times that we have faced, instead we showcase the recent issues and the lessons to be learnt from that. It is not an entertainment band, but a band with a cause. We do not sing any Bollywood numbers at all. From the funding we get from the NGOs or others, we support the needy girl children and support their school education. The band has given us the chance to be a part of something we believe in. It is our life.



**Basudha Modak**

# The Joys of Being a Foster Mother for Spaniel Welfare, South Africa

Nothing they say happens by chance. Well in that case I am truly grateful to the forces of nature for giving me this wonderful opportunity of being a Foster Mother for Spaniel Welfare.



Sky and Fiela

There are so many glimpses of this life I want to share with you, but will share the significant ones. Some funny. And some sad.

A picture comes to my mind. Sky is being surrendered by a very kind and emotional lady. She is in tears while hugging & kissing him goodbye. Sky knows. He is being abandoned to strangers. Again. His purple leash is on the dinning table. The lady leaves. Sky is staring at the main door. I've never seen this kind of sadness in any dogs eyes before. Or since. Suddenly he leaps on a chair and then on to the table. Picks up the leash in his mouth and sits still on the table – eyes fixated on the main door. For long. I sit close by. Tearing up.

Some funny. Ruby & Feila. Surrendered as sisters. Naughty and active little girls. Very preety too. But mischievous as hell. Within the first 20 minutes of their arrival they find a tiny gap in the back garden wall and dance to the front of the house. I find them happily chasing butterflies in the front yard. Much scolding and downcast eyes, drama follows. Not that it makes an iota of difference. They continue their merry ways regardless.

Lily came at night. Dark night. The front yard is dark. Lily is tiny. Shaking. Scared. Scarred. She bolts under the car and will not come out. The humans may beat her again. And again. It takes us about an hour to cajole her indoors. She jumps on her bed in my room. And there she stays put. Neither eating. Nor drinking water. Nor moving an inch. She does not sleep a wink. Neither do any of us. She tries to bite us if we go near. Elmarie & Annelda come in the evening the next day. Elmarie works her magic. Annelda softly coaxes her

out. Lily goes to the garden to do her business. Eats a full meal. Drinks copious amounts of water. Settles in. Within a few days she is ruling the house. With a rod of iron. My wellbeing and comfort are her business. Solely hers. Growls and hackle raising happen frequently if the other dogs step out of line. She has a new toy. A pink plastic hedgehog. That is the kohinoor of her little world. She guards it as passionately as she does me. At night she sleeps on my pillow. On top of my head. In case anyone dares to come near – she can launch an attack head first.



Cindy Lesley-Ann Simone  
Elmari Cindy Anita  
Annelda  
The Gauteng Spaniel Welfare Admin Team

Some new life. With huge heartbreak. A mommy Spaniel rescued with her pups from a shelter. The pups are six. They look cute. As all puppies do. And fall in line very quickly. Eating heartily. Gambolling in the garden. Playing hide & seek amongst the plants. Digging up the flower beds. Eating every strange thing in their path. Suckling beautifully. And growing in leaps & bounds. Suddenly the pups start looking listless. Drooping around. Not eating. Quick rush to the vet. 2 have the dreaded Parvo virus. There is panic about the rest of the pups. Our home has suddenly become a place of stress.



Massive stress. The pups are under observation. Other house dogs are swiftly segregated. We take turns to stay awake at night. By morning the others have the same symptoms. Spaniel Welfare is adamant that no cost is too high to save all the pups. They are admitted to a high care speciality hospital. Given the best possible treatment. But we loose 4 puppies. I've seldom felt such sense of failure, grief and pure helplessness. I look at their Mommie's eyes. It's full of questions I have no answer to. Her loss is immense. The 2 pups survive. And have been homed to wonderful families.



*The Parvo pups*



*Mommie of the Parvo Pups*

It's a wonderful mix of joys and sorrows. Of highs and lows. Of emotional roller coaster rides. But I am not getting off this

ride until I am told to do so. Besides loving my fosters endlessly, I also have another very important reason. The people who make up Spaniel Welfare. I've never ever met



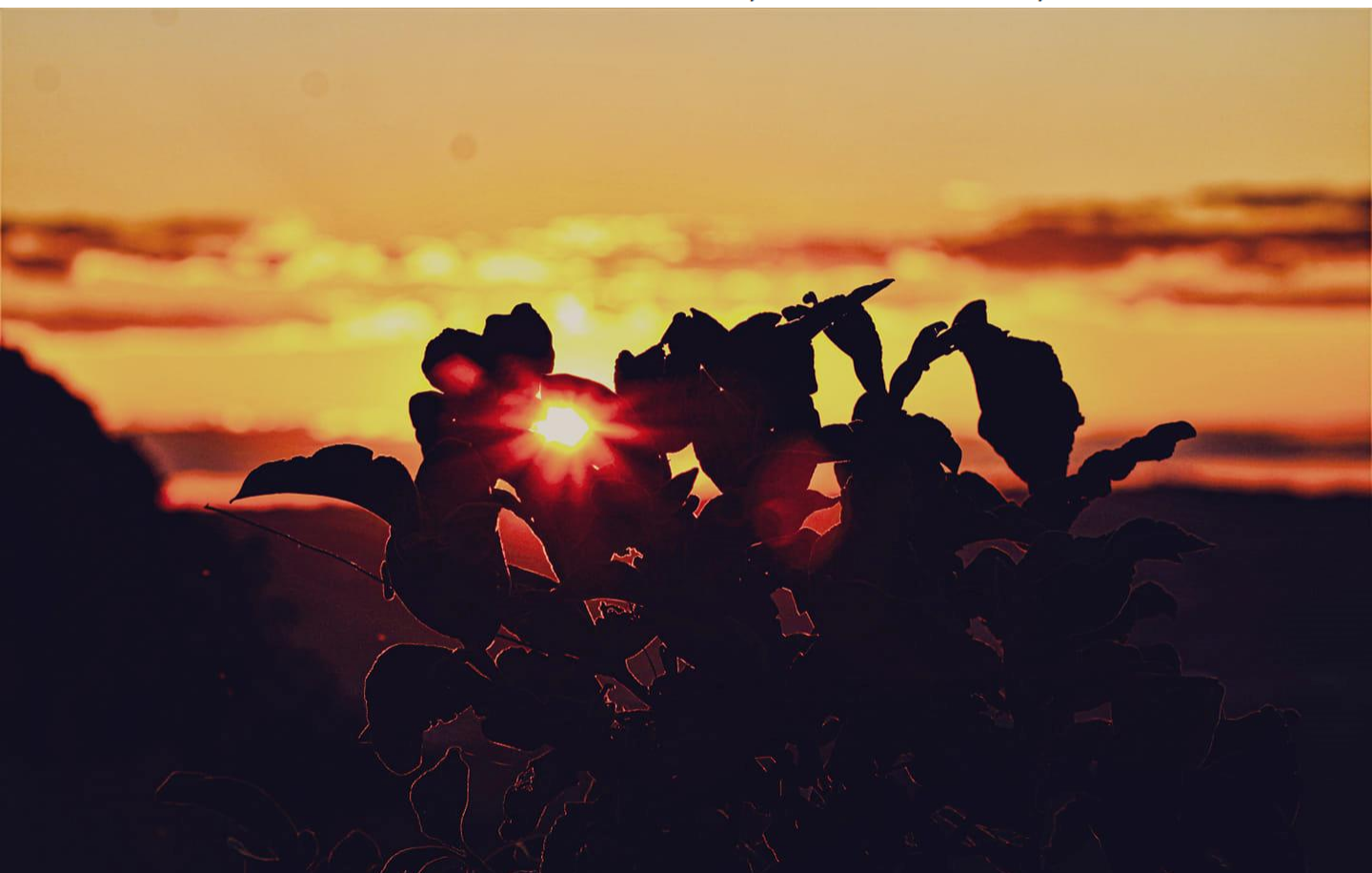
*Ruby and Lily*

such a wonderful group of dedicated Ladies. Never. Ever. They come with the rescues. And a bakkie load of support stuff. Food, beds, blankets, toys and treats. Nothing is left to chance. Every request is addressed. And every worry resolved. There are nights where I fret about my newest adoptee. Very few I can relay with an unbiased view. I lean on Lesley Ann sometimes. She works full time at a job. Then works at SW's needs. Yet she has time for me. I am truly grateful. I never realised when the ladies of SW – Elmarie, Annelda, Lesley Ann, Anita Landman, Sue Choppins, Beverley Kinsala became friends. Close friends. I lean on these ladies so much. Mostly personally. And they hold me secure in the circle of their sincere love & warmth. To quote Elmarie who I called desperately in the middle of the night when my GSD Leo was bleeding to death – "I'll be there in a blink. Remember we always have your back. Always"!!



**Shreela Bannerjee**

# South Africa, Unity in Diversity







Pratyush Halder



# Riddles

1. I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with the wind. What am I?
2. You measure my life in hours and I serve you by expiring. I'm quick when I'm thin and slow when I'm fat. The wind is my enemy. What am I?
3. I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees. I have water, but no fish. What am I?
4. You see a boat filled with people. It has not sunk, but when you look again you don't see a single person on the boat. Why?
5. A woman shoots her husband, then holds him underwater for five minutes. Next, she hangs him. Right after, they enjoy a lovely dinner. Explain.
6. I come from a mine and get surrounded by wood always. Everyone uses me. What am I?
7. What disappears as soon as you say its name?
8. I have keys, but no locks. I have space, but no rooms. You can enter, but you can't go outside. What am I?
9. What gets wet while drying?
10. What belongs to you, but everyone uses it?
11. You can see me in water, but I never get wet. What am I?
12. The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
13. What word starts with E and ends with E but only has one letter in it?
14. The more there it is, the less you see. What am I?
15. What type of dress can never be worn?



- (1) An echo (2) A candle (3) A map (4) All of them are married  
 (5) She took a picture of him and developed it in her dark room (6) Pencil lead  
 (7) Silence (8) Keyboard (9) Towel (10) Your name (11) A reflection  
 (12) Footsteps (13) Envelope (14) Darkness (15) Address



Compiled by  
Ambika Ghosh



# ଶ୍ରୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ପୂଜା

ଜୋହାନେସବାଗ ୧୫୨୬



# শ্রী শ্রী কালী পূজা

জোহানেসবার্গ ১৪২৬



# শ্রী শ্রী সরস্বতী পূজা

জোহানেসবার্গ ১৪২৬





# Farewell to Bangladesh High Commissioner, His Excellency Mr. Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury by Bengali Association of South Africa



# Jiyo Bangla Sharod Shamman 2019 Award



# লকডাউনে লন্ডভন্ড







# BASA ExCo 2020-21



**TUSHAR DAS**  
PRESIDENT

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I am a simple and grounded individual driven by my emotions and powered by my passion. I am a person who dares to dream and turns them to reality. I love leading from the front, extremely hands on and a ruthless perfectionist. My love for food, music, movies & everything else takes a back seat when I follow my fitness goals or chase my life targets.



**SOMNATH MODAK**  
VICE PRESIDENT

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Simple living & even simpler thinking with a pinch of humour. Emotionally inclined to *Phoods, Phriends & Phamily*. Love watching *Philims* and sports. An "Andha Bhakt and Sevak" of BASA.



**AYAN CHATTERJEE**  
TREASURER

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I am family oriented, foodie, love music, reading and philately. Love to travel, passionate about my work and family. New in BASA and trying to help as much possible and be positively constructive. Last but not the least, I love to be a Bengali.



**HEMANTIKA CHATTERJEE**  
CULTURAL SECRETARY

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I am a homemaker with keen interest in creativity. I love challenges. I am dedicated and hardworking. I enjoy exploring different cultures and their musical forms, experimenting with Tagore and working with underprivileged children.



**GAURAV CHATTERJEE**  
EXCO MEMBER

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I try to spread joy and positivity. Sports is my passion, music brings me to my equilibrium. While being a social fun loving party animal, I am a family person to the core. I am a proud Bengali, Kolkata is my first love.



**SUVRO SHANKAR PAUL**  
EXCO MEMBER

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My life revolves around my family, friends and work which I am very passionate about. I am a strong believer of "we live to eat" and not otherwise. Besides work my other interests are food, soccer, music and movies. Happy to be a part of BASA and being an Exco member would like to contribute constructively and harmoniously with the BASA family.



**Annapurna Ghosh**  
EXCO MEMBER

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I follow my heart and look for positivity in all things. Enjoy taking ownership and working collaboratively. People matter to me as I respect relationships. Fond of creativity and passionate about art and music. I believe in doing small things with love. BASA makes me feel at home and I am grateful for that.





আমার কথাটি ফুরালো  
নটে গাছটি মুডালো।  
কেন রে নটে মুডালি  
গরু কেন খায়  
কেন রে গরু খাস  
রাখাল কেন চরায় না  
কেন রে রাখাল চরাস না  
বউ কেন ভাত দেয়না  
কেন রে বউ ভাত দিস না  
ছেলে কেন কাঁদে  
কেন রে ছেলে কাঁদিস  
পিঁপড়ে কেন কামড়ায়  
কেন রে পিঁপড়ে কামড়াস  
কুটুস কুটুস কামড়াবো  
গতের ভিতর ঢুকবো  
কুটুস কুটুস কামড়াবো  
গতের ভিতর ঢুকবো।।