

AGOMONI

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AGOMONI

Edition 18

Published by:

**BICHITRA,
The Bengali Association of Manitoba
Inc., Winnipeg, Manitoba.
for the occasion of Durga Puja 1997**

Editor & Scribe for Bengali Section

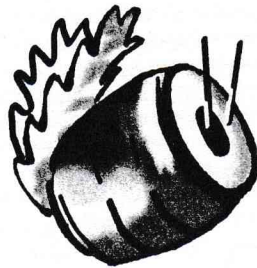
Sikha Maiti

Advertisement Collection

Pradip K. Maiti

Special thanks from the editor to:

- ❖ Soubhik Maiti for helping with the organization of the magazine
- ❖ The members who contributed literary works
- ❖ The organizations who provided advertisements
- ❖ Members of BICHITRA for their support





শরৎ কালের নীল আকাশে
 হাওয়ায় পূজোর গন্ধ ভাসে।
 কাশ ফুলের ঐ বনেতে
 খুশির তুফান মনেতে।
 বাজলো ঢাকের বাদ্যি
 বই পত্তর বাদদি।
 সপ্তমীতে নতুন শাড়ি,
 ডাক পড়েছে পূজোর বাড়ি।
 মহাষ্টমীর অঞ্জলী
 আনন্দে মন চঞ্চলই।
 নবমীতে মন কাঁদে
 যাওনা মাগো কদিন বাদে।
 যাবেই যদি শিবের ঘরে
 আসবে তো মা বছর পরে?



Program

Tuesday, October 7, 1997

Maha Shashti

9:00pm – 12:00am

Bodhan

Amantran

Puja

Pushpanjali

Prasad Bitaran

Wednesday, October 8, 1997

Maha Saptami

9:00am-2:00pm

Puja

Arati

Pushpanjali

Prasad Bitaran

7:00pm-9:00pm

Sandhya Arati

Pushpanjali

Cultural Program

Dinner

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Maha Asthami

9:00am-2:00pm

Puja

Arati

Pushpanjali

7:00pm-9:00pm

Sanhya Arati

Pushpanjali

Cultural Programme

Dinner

11:30pm-12:30am

Sandhi Puja

Friday, October 10, 1997

Maha Nabami

9:00am – 2:00pm

Puja

Arati

Pushpanjali

Prasad Bitaran

Yagna

7:00pm-9:00pm

Sandhya Arati

Pushpanjali

Cultural Program

Dinner

Saturday, October 11, 1997

Vijoya Dashami

7:00am-12:00pm

Puja

Pushpanjali

Bisorjan

Prasad Bitaran

Sindur Utsav

Wednesday, October 15, 1997

Kojagari Laxmi Puja

7:00pm-11:00pm

Puja

Sandhya Arati

Prasad Bitaran

Dinner

-Please confirm all timings at the temple bulletin board or phone 774-9197

Pooja Committee

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Priest | Bimal Bhattacharjee |
| Transportation of Protima | Pranab Roy |
| Decoration | Ratna Bose |
| Pooja Groceries & Supplies | Gaurisankar Roy |
| Pooja Arrangement | Jaya Roy |
| Food Preparation | Baljit Malaker |
| Cultural Programme | Krishna Bal |
| AGOMONI Publication | Sikha Maiti |
| Fund Raising Advertisement Donation | Pradip Maiti Asoke Sarkar |
| Treasurer | Ratna Bose |
| Chairperson | Asim Roy |



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সম্মাদকীয়

বাঙ্গালীর জীবন কখনও গৌরবে উল্লসিত হয়েছে, কখনও বিপর্যয় নেমে এসে তাকে নিরানন্দ করে তুলেছে, কখনও অনিশ্চয়তা কিংবা ঝড়-তুফান-বন্যা, কিন্তু ভিতরে ভিতরে বাঙ্গালীর জীবনে প্রবাহিত হয়ে এসেছে এক নিস্তরঙ্গ আনন্দ আনন্দময়ীর আগমনকে ঘিরে। নীল আকাশের ফাঁকে মেঘের লুকোচুরী খেলা আর সোনা রঙ্গের রোদদুয়ের ঝলক সেই আগমনী গেয়ে ওঠে প্রতি বছর। পুলকিত হয়ে ওঠে বাঙ্গালীর মন।

প্রার্থনা করি সব যশ্রাণা, বিভেদ, বিপর্যয় ঘুচে গিয়ে আনন্দমুখর হয়ে উঠুক শারদোৎসবের দিনগুলি।

- শিখা মাইতি

Editorial

Bengal prides itself on its culture. Bengali culture embraces traditions, arts, literature, music and just about everything else one can think of. Durga Puja is but one upholder of this culture.

An interesting part of Puja here in Canada, is that it's not just for Bengalis, but an enjoyable event and a pious get-together for all Indians.

Puja in Winnipeg is not exactly what it is in Bengal. There are no loudspeakers blaring the latest Bengali or Hindi music. Nor is there a fashion parade of the seasons' purchases. But its still puja and a successful attempt on the part of the expatriate Bengalis to keep alive the culture they have left behind. May it continue.

I wish you all a very happy Durga Puja

Sikha Maiti

সভাপতির বার্তা

আবার সেই দিন সমাগত, যখন আমরা সবাই একসাথে বাৎসরিক দুর্গা পূজা অনুষ্ঠান উদযাপন করব। এই সময় সবাই আমাদের বিভিন্ন মতামত, বিভিন্ন ভাবধারা সব ত্যাগ করে একসাথে মা দুর্গার আরাধনা করি এবং সমস্ত ভেদাভেদের উর্ধ্বে গিয়ে, নিজেদের অন্তরের মালিন্য সরিয়ে দিয়ে মায়ের আশীর্বাদ প্রার্থনা করে সুখী হওয়ার পুচেষ্টা করি।

আশা করি পুতি বছরের মত এবারও পূজার কয়েকটি দিন আমরা ধার্মিক এবং সামাজিক নানা অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে আমাদের মনলোকের আনন্দ উৎসের সন্ধান পাব। এই কয়েকটি দিনে মানসিক পুনর্নবীকরণ করে আগামী একবছরের জন্য আত্মিক ও মানসিক পাথেয় সংগৃহ করতে সক্ষম হব আমরা।

আসুন, মায়ের আরাধনার জন্য এই কয়েকটি দিন আমরা সবাই শুভ পূজা অনুষ্ঠানে অংশ গ্রহণ করি এবং সকলের মংগল কামনার সাথে নিজেদের কল্যাণের জন্যও প্রার্থনা করি।

বিনীত-- অসীম রায়

Pooja Committee Chairperson's Message

On behalf of Bichitra's Durga Pooja Committee, I extend our sincere greetings and best wishes to all the members and friends of Bichitra and to all the guests participating in this year's festivities. This is the eighteenth year of our celebration of Durga Pooja. It is at this time of the year when we collectively worship Mother Durga and pray to Her to grant us hope and strength to enrich ourselves spiritually and ask for Her blessings to remove the darkness and pettiness from within ourselves.

We express our reverence to Devi Durga through the prayers and pooja during these special days when all Her devotees are united by a feeling of spiritual enrichment and joy. This is an occasion when everybody leaves aside their differences and get together in pooja-related activities--both religious and social.

On this occasion, I sincerely thank all the members of Bichitra and of the Durga Pooja Committee for their hard work and help in making the 1997 Durga Pooja celebrations a reality, and thank the most dedicated editor, all the contributors and advertisers for making the publication of AGOMONI a success. I also sincerely thank the members, the Executive Committee and the Trustees of the Hindu Society of Manitoba for their participation and assistance.

Wishing you all a **Happy Durga Pooja!**

Sincerely,

Asim Roy

**• ALL TYPES
OF PUJA
SAMAGREES
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| ② ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਟਿੰਡੇ | Punjabi Tinda | ⑪ ਲਸਣ | Garlic |
| ③ ਭਿੰਡੀ | Okra | ⑫ ਗੰਡੇ | Onion |
| ④ ਕੌੜੀ ਹਰੀ ਮਿਰਚ | Hot Green Chillies | ⑬ ਟਮਾਟਰ | Tomato |
| ⑤ ਚੱਪਣ ਕੱਦੂ | Summer Squash | ⑭ ਕਰੇਲੇ ਦੇਸੀ | Desi Karela |
| ⑥ ਅੱਲਾਂ | Squash | ⑮ ਸੇਬ | Apple |
| ⑦ ਲੰਬੇ ਬੈਂਗਣ | Long Egg Plant | ⑯ ਕੇਲੇ | Banana |
| ⑧ ਗੋਲ ਬੈਂਗਣ | Round Egg Plant | ⑰ ਮਤੀਰੇ | Watermelon |
| ⑨ ਸ਼ਿਮਲਾ ਮਿਰਚ | Green Pepper | ⑱ ਖਰਬੂਜੇ | Melon |
| | | ⑲ ਨਾਸ਼ਪਾਤੀ | Pears |

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ଆମର ଦେଶ

उत्तराखण्ड (अ) विभाग उत्तराखण्ड शासिका ।

ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਲਾਗੀ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ॥

ତୁମ୍ଭି- ସର୍ବସାଧନ ସୁବିଧା, ସର୍ବାଙ୍ଗ- ସମ୍ପନ୍ନ, ଏକମାତ୍ର ମନ୍ତ୍ର(ପାତ୍ର),
 ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତମୟୀ- ଓ ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ, ଯେ ନିରାପତ୍ତି- ଭାବରେ ଆଶା, ଆଶିଷ
 ଭାବରେ ମନୋମତ, ତୁମ୍ଭି- ସକଳେ- ଯଥା- ସକଳେ- ଓ ଓ ତୁମ୍ଭି- ଶକ୍ତି,
 ଏହି- ଆଶା- ଆଶିଷ,

[illegible]

ଏ ପଥ ମାତ୍ର ଅପଦାତ ଗୁରୁତ୍ବର ଉଦ୍ଧାରଣ ।
 ମୟ କର୍ମାନୁବର୍ତ୍ତେ ମନୁଷ୍ୟଃ ନାଥ ସର୍ବତଃ ॥

ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ମାନୁଷ୍ୟ ଯେ ଡାକେ - ଏହା ଯେ ଜ୍ଞାନର କିବାଳୁ - ସୁଖ - ବା ଉପାମନା
 ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ନା ତେନ ତାହା - ସର୍ବତଃ - ଆମାର କାହା - ଆମେ, ଏହି - ସ୍ମାରକସିତର - ଆହୁ
 ସର୍ବତ୍ରାପ୍ତ - ସମସ୍ତାପ୍ତ ବସ୍ୟ, ଅପରମୁଖ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରୀ ବାସକଚକ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜୀବନ ତାହା
 ଅମାନ କରେ - ଦେଖାଯାଉନ, ତିନି ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ, ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ, କୋଷ, ଜିନ, ବିଷୟ
 ଓ ମିଥ୍ୟ ବର୍ମ ଅନ୍ତର କାରେ ଏହା - ମେ - ମେ କିଛି ଆହାର - ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଆମନ
 କାରେ ଦେଖାଯାଉନ ଯେ - ମରଣ ଯତ୍ନ - ମେ - ମରଣ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ (କୌଣସି - ମର, ତିନି
 ଶୋକାଭାବ ଜାମେ ଉଦାହରଣ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ - ଦେଖାଯାଉନ ଯେ ଏକତ୍ର - ଜାମେ - ବିଦିତ ନାମ
 ବିଦିତ ଆଚାର, ବିଦିତ - ମେ - ମନ ବା ଉପାଦେ - ମର - ଜନ, ତାହା - ଏହି - ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି
 ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ମର ବ୍ରହ୍ମରୁ - ଉପାମନା ।

ଶ୍ରୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନାମାମ୍ବି ସ୍ତୁତିର ଆର - ଏକତ୍ର - ସ୍ମାରକ - ଆହୁ :
 ସ୍ତୁତିସ୍ତୁତି ବିନାଶନାତ୍ ସନ୍ନିହତ - ସନ୍ନତନୀ,
 ଉପାମନା ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରାୟ ନାମାମ୍ବି ନାମାହୁତ ॥

ଏହି - ଆହୁ - ଦେବୀ ଅସ୍ତି, ସ୍ଥିତି ଓ ମହାବୀର ଅବିନାଶିନୀ, ଅସ୍ତି, ବହୁ, ତାହା
 ଏହି - ତିନି - ଓ - ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଚେନିସିତ, ଆହାର ତିନି ଏହି - ତିନି ଚାନ୍ଦ ଅତି,
 ହେ ନାମାମ୍ବି ଦେବୀ ତୋମାର ନମସ୍କାର ।

ସୁନ୍ଦର ଓ ଅକୃତି ନିଧେ ଏହି - ବିଷୟ, ମର ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ଆର ଓଡ଼ିଆ
 ମନୁଷ୍ୟ - ଅକୃତି, ଏହି - ଅକୃତି ବା - ମାୟା ବା ଆହାର ମନୁଷ୍ୟ କିମିନୀ
 ମା ବିନିତ - ମନୁଷ୍ୟ କାରେ ଓ ମରଣ, ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ୨୦ ମ - ଅକୃତି ୩୦
 ସ୍ମାରକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ବାମେନ :

ଅକୃତିର ୫ କର୍ମାନି ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତାନାମ ସର୍ବତଃ,
 ଯଃ ନାମାମ୍ବି ତମାତ୍ମାନମକର୍ତ୍ତାରୁ ସା ନାମାମ୍ବି ॥

ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ଅକୃତିର - ଅକୃତି ଅକାରେ ଅକୃତି ବର୍ମ କାରେନ, ଆହୁ ଅକର୍ତ୍ତା, ତିନି
 ଜ୍ଞାନସ୍ତୁତ୍ର ଦ୍ବାରା ଏହି କିବା - ଦୋଧନ, ତିନି - ଅକୃତି ମନୁଷ୍ୟ, ଅକୃତିର କୃତ୍ତି
 ଏହା ମୁକ୍ତାପ୍ତ - ଅକୃତିର ବିଷୟମାନ ଉପାଦେ - ଶ୍ରୀ ବାସକଚକ୍ର ଏକତ୍ର - ମୁକ୍ତ
 ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ବାମେନ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଉପାଦେ, ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ଜ୍ଞାନ : " ଓଡ଼ିଆ - ଯେ - ଯେ ଦେଖିନ,
 ଯେ ବଡ଼ିତ ? କର୍ତ୍ତା ମୁକ୍ତ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ - ନିଜେ ବାମେ ବାମେ ଆମେନାମ୍ବି ତାହା
 ଶେନାହୁ । ମନୁଷ୍ୟ କିନ୍ତୁ କାହା - ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ବାମେ ଏକତ୍ର - ଏହାମେ, ଏକତ୍ର ଓହାମେ
 ବାମେନୁ କୃତ୍ତିକୃତି - କାରେ - ଏ - କାହା - ଏନ ତିନା, ଓ କାହା - ଏନ ତିନା ମର
 ଦେହେନ, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରାୟ, କାହା - ଯେ - ବାମେନ ଆମେ, ତାହା ଆମେ - ଅକୃତି

* * * *
 ଜନକଲ୍ୟାଣପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ପ୍ରୀତିକିତା, ଦୂର-ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ
 ଅସ୍ମଦ୍ଭାଗିନୀ ଶତ ଚଳାହୁନ ମୋହେ ସୁରନାଦୀ
 ଏହିଏ ସଂକଳ୍ପେ ଉପେକ୍ଷିତ ହେବେ ଲାଭେ, ଗୃହୀତନ
 ଓଲଟାବଟା - ଶୁଦ୍ଧ - ଅଭିମାନ;

ଦୃଢ଼ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଅନ୍ତରାତ୍ମଜନୀ, ଚଳାହୁନ ଆନନ୍ଦକର୍ମସ୍ତେ
 ଶତ ଚାହୁଁ ମିଳନ୍ତି, ଅହାସର ଯତ୍ନେ, ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ଶତ ସାର ଚୈନ
 "ଆଜ୍ଞାତ ଓଲଟାବଟା ନା ଭୁଲିବ ? କେନ ପାତ୍ର ଭୁଲିବ ?
 କେନ ? କେନ ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନ ? ଏହିଏ ଯେ ଚୋରା ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ ।"
 ଶୁଦ୍ଧତା, ଅସ୍ମଦ୍ଭାଗିନୀ ଶତ, ହୋଇବ, ସତେ ଜୟମଧ୍ୟ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ତର
 "ଶାନ୍ତି ନା, କାନ୍ତି ନା, ଜ୍ଞାନ ଶାନ୍ତି ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ,
 ତାର ଓଲଟାବଟା, ଆକାର ଅମିଶର ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ, ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ତାର ତର,
 ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ଯେତେ ଶାନ୍ତି ମୋତେ ଉପାସର ଧ୍ୟାନ
 ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ଶାନ୍ତି ଆଦର୍ଶ ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ !"
 ନୀତି ଆର୍ତ୍ତନାଦ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ନାଦ ଏହି ଶୁଦ୍ଧିଦାନ
 ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଶାନ୍ତି ଅଭିମାନ କଥା, କେନ ନାହିଁ ଧ୍ୟାନ ?
 ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଶାନ୍ତି କେନ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ସୁଧ ?
 ନରବିଶାସେ ଶୁଦ୍ଧିତା ନାହିଁ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଓଲଟ
 - କୋହା ଭୁଲି ଆସିବ ? ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ ? ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ ?

* * * *
 କ୍ଷତିକାରୀ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଶାନ୍ତି ଶାନ୍ତି ଶୁଦ୍ଧିନ,
 ଧ୍ୟାନେ ଶତ ଅନ୍ତ ଧ୍ୟାନ - ଧ୍ୟାନେ ଶୁଦ୍ଧିନ ।
 ଶୁଦ୍ଧିକାରୀ, ଶୁଦ୍ଧିକାରୀ, ଶୁଦ୍ଧ
 ବାହ୍ୟ - ଓଲଟାବଟା ଶୁଦ୍ଧିତା ଏହି ଅଭାବିତା
 ଶାନ୍ତି ଶାନ୍ତି, କାହିଁ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଶୁଦ୍ଧିନ ତାର,
 "କେନା ନିତି ଆସାବ ?"

କ୍ଷତିକାରୀ ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ଆସେ ଶତ ଶୁଦ୍ଧିତା ଏହି ମିଶ୍ରଧ୍ୟାନ,
 "ଶୁଦ୍ଧି ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ ! ଶୁଦ୍ଧି ପୁନିଷ୍ଟନୀ !"
 ଅସ୍ମଦ୍ଭାଗିନୀ ଶାନ୍ତି, କ୍ଷତିକାରୀ କାହିଁ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଧ୍ୟାନ
 ନରବିଶାସେ ଶାନ୍ତି ଧ୍ୟାନ -
 "କୋହା ଓଲଟାବଟା ଶାନ୍ତି, ଆକାର ଏହି, ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ତାର ତର ।
 ବାହ୍ୟାଭାବେ ଶାନ୍ତି, ଧ୍ୟାନୀ ଶାନ୍ତି, ଧ୍ୟାନ

ସିନ୍ଧୁ ସିନ୍ଧୁ ପାଣିଦିନ ଅତିଦିନେ, ସୁଦୂର ଆସନ ।

ତୁ- ଯେ ଲାଙ୍ଗୁଳୀ ଆସାର, ଘୋର ପୁଷିକାଣୀ-

ଦୁଇ ନାହିଁ- ତୋର ।"

" ଚିତ୍ର- ଆସିବ- ଏକ ମନସ୍କର ମହାଦେ ;

ସୁ- ଧାର- ଚିତ୍ର, କାନ୍ଦି ମାତ୍ର, ଅନିତ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚିତ

ବିରାଟ- ଆମିର୍ତ୍ତ ନିର୍ମାଣ୍ୟମାନ

ଆସ- ତୋର ସିନ୍ଧୁ ଯେତେ ଗଡ଼େ ।"

ଏକାକି- କୁଳକନ, ପୂର୍ବଧନ ନିନ୍ଦା ମହାତ ବାଧ୍ୟତା- ଯେ ଶିଳ୍ପିମୟ ଜଗନ,

ଆସନାର- କାନ୍ଦେ- କ୍ରୋଧାର କଳ୍ପଧନ ଯେତେ ,

ଏକାକି କ୍ରୋଧ ନିନ୍ଦା ସିନ୍ଧୁ ନିନ୍ଦା ତାହାର

- " ବିରାଟ- ଆମିର୍ତ୍ତ ଅନିତ ଯେ, ଘୋର ଡେହାର ଗଡ଼େ ଗଡ଼େ ।

ସୁଆ, ଓଡ଼େ- ଘୋର,

ସୁଆସୁତା, (ପୁଷିକାଣୀ ଆସାର

ଜୁନ- ଜୁନ- ଅବଗିନୀ, କଳ୍ପାଣୀ, ଶିଳ୍ପି- କଳ୍ପି ;

ବିରାଟ- (ଅତି ପୁଷିକା କଳ୍ପାଣୀ, ନାହିଁ,

ଜାହାଜର ମାତା ଚିତ୍ରଧାରୀ କ୍ରୋଧଧୀ

ପୂର୍ବଧନ- ଯେ, (କ୍ରୋଧାର) ପୁଷ- ପୁଷ ମାତା

ସୁ- ସୁନୟିତା ଦୁଇ- କ୍ରୋଧାଣୀ ୨୩ ;

ସୁଆ- ଘୋର, ଡେହାର କଳ୍ପି- ବିରାଟ

ପୂର୍ବଧନ- ସୁନ- ଆତ୍ମ- ବିରାଟ- ଆନ-

କଳ୍ପି- ବିରାଟ- ଘୋର- ଅଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମ

ବିରାଟ- ବିରାଟ- କ୍ରୋଧ- ବାନ୍ଧନ ।

ଏ କଳ୍ପଧନ, ଏ କ୍ରୋଧ- କଳ୍ପଧନ, -

ତୁ- ଯେ (କ୍ରୋଧ) ଆତ୍ମ- ମହା- ନାହିଁ- ଡେହାର-

କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ- ବିରାଟ- କଳ୍ପଧନ-

ଯେ- ଯେ- ବିରାଟ- କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ ।

ଦୁଇ- ଯେ- କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ, ଓଡ଼େ,

ଘୋର- କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ, ବିରାଟ- କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ,

କ୍ରୋଧ- କ୍ରୋଧ- କଳ୍ପଧନ, ବିରାଟ- ତୋର

ବିରାଟ- ଆମିର୍ତ୍ତ- କଳ୍ପଧନ, ବିରାଟ- କଳ୍ପଧନ- କଳ୍ପଧନ

ଘୋର- ଘୋର- ଡେହାର- ବିରାଟ- ତୋର, ଓଡ଼େ ପୁଷିକାଣୀ !"

ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ - ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ
କାମାକ୍ଷୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ (ଦେବ ମାତା ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ)
ନବବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ୟ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ (ପୌରାଣିକ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ)
ଅନନ୍ତାକ୍ଷରୀ, ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ନିଜ ନିଜ
ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ, ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ
— 'ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ', 'ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ' "



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ସିଦ୍ଧାନ୍ତ ଶେଷ

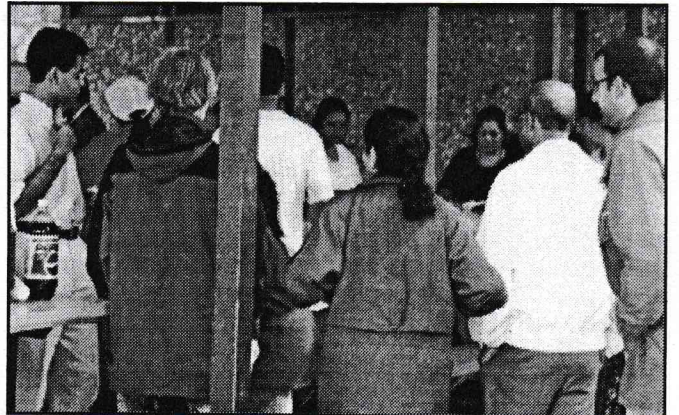
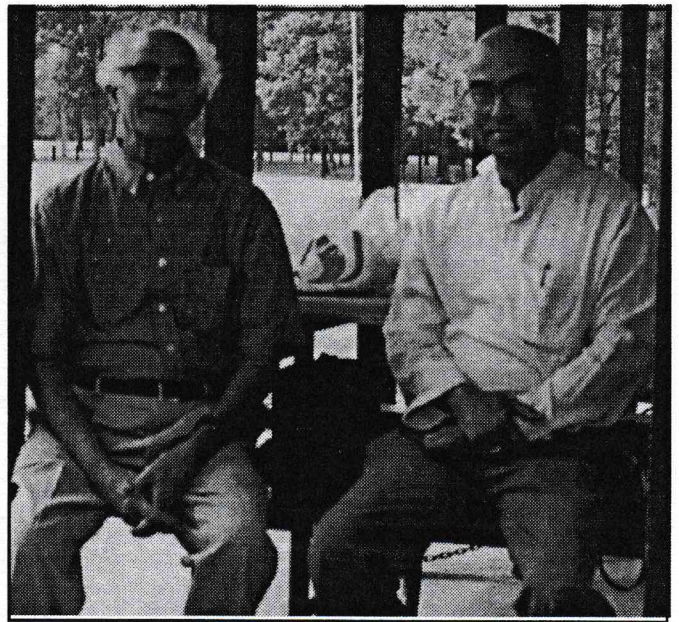
(୧) ପଞ୍ଚମ ମିତ୍ରାତ ନୟ
 ଆତ୍ମ ନାମ ବହୁ
 (୨) ଅନୁସନ୍ଧାନ କର
 କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ନୟ ଗଢାଣ ।
 ତାହାତେ ବିନି ଆମର କଥା
 ନୟାରେ ବିରାମେ ଶେ
 (୩) ଅନୁସନ୍ଧାନ କର
 କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବହୁ କର ।
 କାଳେର ଶୂନ୍ୟାୟ (୧) ପଞ୍ଚମ
 ଆତ୍ମେ ଆତ୍ମେ ପାଞ୍ଚ
 କାଳେର ନିଶାପେ (୨) ଶୂନ୍ୟାୟ
 କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଶୂନ୍ୟାୟ ଆତ୍ମେ ।
 ଅନୁସନ୍ଧାନ, ମିତ୍ର, ଶେଷ, ଶେଷ
 ପଞ୍ଚ ଆତ୍ମକାଳୀ -
 କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କର ଆତ୍ମେ ତର
 ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଆତ୍ମକାଳୀ ।
 କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କର ନାୟେ ପଞ୍ଚ
 ଆତ୍ମେ କାଳେର ଶେଷ
 ନୂତନ କାଳେର ଆତ୍ମ ନୂତନ
 କାଳେର ଆତ୍ମେ ଶେଷ !
 ଆତ୍ମେ କାଳେର ଆତ୍ମେ
 କାଳେର ଆତ୍ମେ ଶେଷ
 ତାହାତେ କାଳେର ଶେଷ ନାୟେ
 ପଞ୍ଚ କାଳେର ଶେଷ
 କାଳେର କାଳେର ଆତ୍ମେ
 କାଳେର ଶେଷ ଶେଷ
 "ସତ୍ୟସୋମ୍ୟ" ଶୂନ୍ୟାୟ ଶେଷ
 ପଞ୍ଚ ଆତ୍ମେ ଶେଷ ।

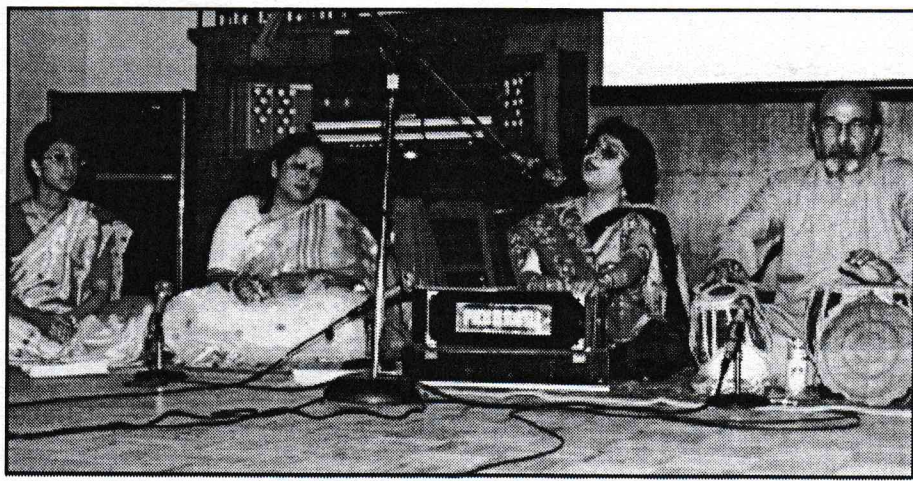
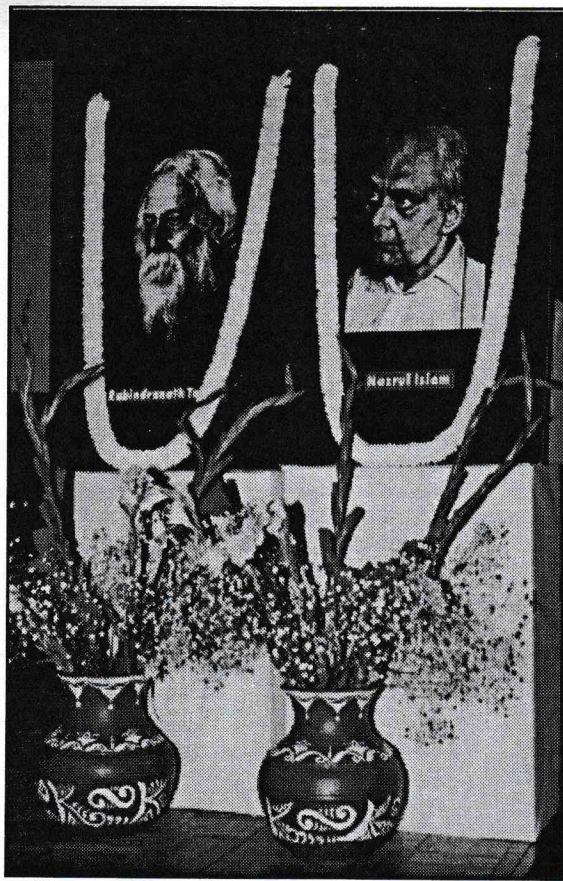


*Durga Puja
Celebration
1996*



*Canada Day
Picnic 1997*





*Rabindra
Nazrul
Jayanti
Function
1997*



Wonderland

By Urmila Samanta

I have traveled to so many places,
Places of beauty and wonder,
There's one place I like to see, always,
A land of colour and wonder.
A land of dead and cold in winter
That transformed into splendor and joy.
Alive in spring and all summer morn,
With blooms and flowers,
With roses and mums,
Alive with the singing birds
And dancing butterflies,
What a sight to see!
I like to walk and touch the flowers
And smell the fragrance of roses
A heavenly place of songs and say
A wonderland? You may say,
This is my backyard garden
Of roses and mums.
My special wonderland!



A Place in the Song

Prasun Tagore

At the crack of dawn-the music floats in,
My place in the song amounts not much
And my efforts – cannot claim a seat
In the symphony as such!

Nonetheless, I do know that I do listen
To the music that floats
in the hope
one day- I'll learn the notes!

“You may listen with all your might”
The sun goes down and the night cries mean-
Never with your effort so slight-
You'll ever sing the song that floats in!”

Nonetheless, I do know that I do listen
And I tried to sing all along
That for sure-
Is my place in the song!

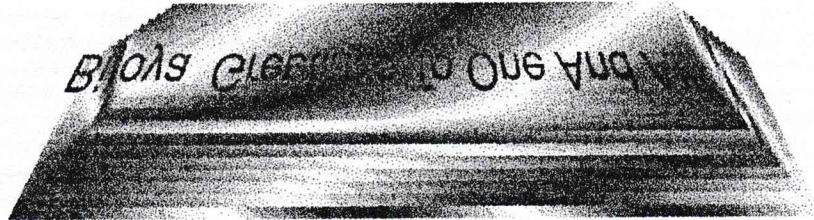
Mother

Shibdas Biswas

Make me an instrument of love,
where there is hatred, Let me implant love,
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is a doubt, faith;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.
O! Devine Mother, grant me the wisdom not
so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to love.
For it is in giving than we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is death to born to eternal spirit.

[WP]
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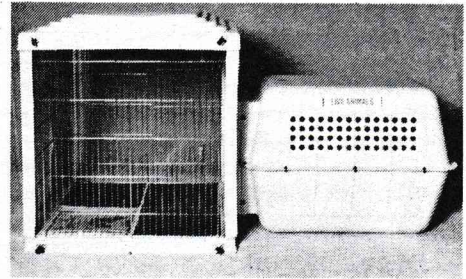
Bijoya Greetings To One And All



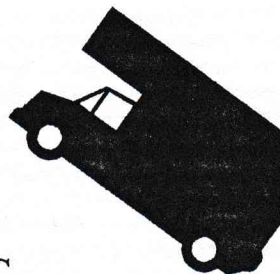
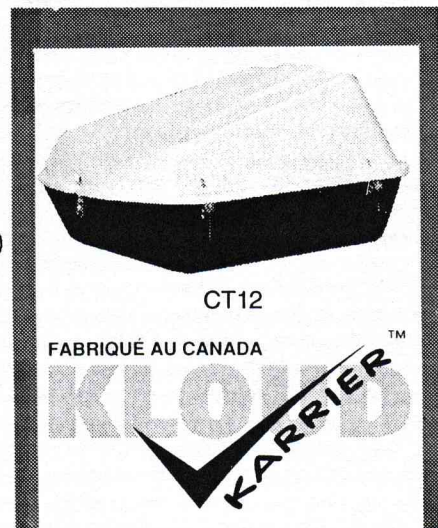
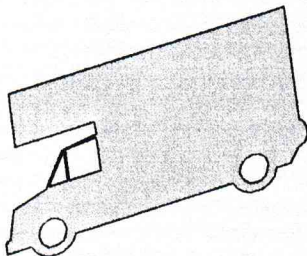
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Durga Puja: The Autumn Festival

Pradip K. Maiti

Durga Puja is considered to be the greatest festival of Bengal, the eastern province in India. Durga Puja is in part a religious festival, but it has transcended the religious limitations and has derived a new form – the major social festival of Bengal. For that reason the Durga Puja festival is celebrated throughout the world by the people of Bengal. The religious aspect of Durga Puja is also celebrated in other provinces of India, under these different names: Navaratri, Dushera, etc.



In Hindu Mythology the goddess Durga represents the image of power and vigor for eliminate Evils and Demons. Many years ago, Mahishashura (the Buffalo Demon) king of the Demons, being indulged by Lord Shiva (the Supreme Hindu God), started his tyranny over Heaven. Scared and hopeless gods earnestly requested Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva to kill Mahishashura. Then from these three gods, a divine vigor came emerged and took the shape of a woman - the Goddess Durga. This vigorous goddess got married to Lord Shiva and prepared herself for the battle with Mahishashura. All the gods rendered their support by arming her with different weapons. She holds these weapons in her ten hands. After a great battle, Durga killed Mahishashura, and brought back heavenly peace.

The goddess Durga is worshipped as mother rather than the goddess of supreme power. Mother Durga, accompanied by her children (Laxmi, Saraswati, Ganesha and Karitka) come to earth for four days: Maha Shasthi, Saptami, Ashtami, Nabami & Dashami. Bodhan (Mahashasthi) is celebrated as a welcome to mother Durga and the puja concludes after the four days with Dashami, the farewell to mother Durga. The significance of Dashami in social terms is that it is a time to forgive and forget. It is a time to renew and re-establish the friendship eternal to all.

In Bengal this is the time when most of the married women come with their children to their parents' home to spend a few days. During this time people of all ages socialize in a great way. The gorgeous decorations of the idol of Durga, the lighting of pandals(stage), and streets, shopping spree for buying gifts for relatives and friends, the rhythm of the drums; the combination of all of these factors brings forth the festive mode in Bengal. This kind of festive atmosphere can only be compared to the Christmas celebrations held in the western world.

The Durga Puja festival is also known as the Autumn festival in Bengal. Mother nature decorates herself in magnificent ways to welcome the goddess Durga; with clear blue sky, wispy white clouds, snow white crowns of Kash(a type of grass flower), gems of dew on the blades of grass and the pleasant fragrances of Sheuli(a beautiful tropical flower which only blooms in autumn).

It is this religious sentiment mixed with social get together that has made Durga Puja the most popular festival among Bengali people throughout the world.



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: reverence for a hero

Sharmila Biswas

There are many who believe that India's independence was won by the efforts of one man, alone. The greatness of Mahatma Gandhi, in his efforts to free India from the bondage of the British Raj, is not being argued. However, one must realize that Gandhi did not secure this victory by himself. The monumental work of Gandhi often overshadows the forgotten faces of hundreds of men and women that participated in the emancipation of India. Among the faces, Subhas Chandra Bose stands out as one of the martyrs of the Indian independence movement. He must not be remembered as the rebellious opponent of Gandhi but as the determined revolutionary of an enslaved nation. To this day, he is remembered as Netaji, the revered leader. He has achieved his immortality as a man who dedicated his life for the liberty of his fellow countrymen. Great mystery surrounds the legendary figure of Subhas Chandra Bose. This paper seeks to discover the man behind the legend. To properly understand the life of Subhas Chandra Bose, one must understand his relationship with Gandhi. Bose's political career was short and intense, yet the mark he left upon India and her people was everlasting.

Subhas Chandra Bose was born in 1897 in the state of Orissa. He was one of nine children growing up in urban Calcutta. His attachment to his native Calcutta remained a lifelong commitment. He also shared a great closeness with his family. His family was the pillar upon which he found strength and courage¹. Bose's older brother Sarat remained his close ally throughout his political career. Bose spent some time in England preparing for the civil service exam in which he did exceptionally well. However, he abandoned the civil service to join the non-cooperation movement that was taking place throughout India. Bose's political zeal was molded by his mentor, C.R. Das. Das was an influential Bengali leader. He was member of an extremist wing of the Congress. Das and Bose became the spokesmen for Bengal's politics and culture. From 1925-1927, Bose was imprisoned by the Indian government for his anti-British activities in Burma. His popularity among the youth of Bengal and the rest of India grew during this time. Bose was firm in his ideas about India's independence. He would not accept any compromises. Congress was ready to settle for dominion status. Bose declared that India should demand complete independence from the British oppressor, nothing less, nothing more. In the 1930s, he traveled extensively throughout Europe. Upon his return to India in 1931, he

¹ Gordon, L. *Brothers Against the Raj* (New York: 1990) pp. 21.

was elected as president of the Indian national Congress with Gandhi's blessing. However in 1939, Bose chose to run against the wishes of the Mahatma and was reelected. Due to the conflict of opinion between himself and Gandhi, Bose resigned shortly after as Congress president. It was from that point on that the relationship between these two great men deteriorated. After his resignation in 1939, Bose formed his own political party, the Forward Block. He used his forum to "implement his own agenda and to eliminate gandhian mysticism from politics"². Bose, along with his brother Sarat, became a harsh critic of the congress.

In 1941, after escaping from house arrest, Bose traveled to Europe. This secret journey was only known to but a few close relatives. He went to Rome, Berlin and Japan to seek assistance from the Axis powers. Bose was fascinated with the fascist governments of Italy and Germany. He sought their assistance after his resignation as congress president. He found the period of the Second World War the most opportune time to get rid of the British in India. He believed that the "enemy's enemy was India's best friend"³. He demanded that the Congress should take action while the British were still vulnerable. Gandhi and the congress chose to sympathize with the war effort. Bose chose to take matters into his own hand. It was in Japan, where Bose received the greatest assistance. General Tojo of Japan helped him organize the Indian National Army. The Japanese general granted the utilization of Indian prisoner of war to mobilize this military force. Bose set up a provisional government, Azad Hind in 1943, making himself president. Bose declared war on the United States and Britain. Along with the Indian national Army, Bose began his historic march to Delhi. However, his efforts remained futile. In 1945, he was reported dead after his plane crashed in Taiwan.

Subhas Chandra Bose's political agenda was based on India's independence at any cost and by any means. This attitude reflected the fundamental difference between him and Gandhi, Gandhi believed that the only way for India to free herself from the colonial powers was through non-violent means. Bose considered the path of non-violence to be a possibility. He did, however believe other possibilities should be utilized, if necessary. Bose saw Gandhi as an old reformer backed by wealthy capitalists. Gandhi was trying to oppress the radical and military inclined nationalists.⁴ Bose called the people of India to take up arms for the fight for freedom, so be it. Bose's radical ideas did

² Ibid....pp.391

³ Ibid....pp.465

⁴ Bhattacharyya, SN. Subhas Chandra Bose in Self-Exile: his finest hour. (Delhi:1975)pp.32

not sit well with Gandhi's conservative stance. He believed that Gandhi belonged to the old generation of revolutionaries who were slow, passive and conservative. Bose was deemed as a rebel by members of the Congress. Gandhi found him to be like a child, impatient and impulsive.⁵ The Tripuri congress of 1939, became a conflict between one generation and another⁶. These events culminated in the congress and the question was put forth: which path to independence would India follow, Gandhi or Bose? At the end, it was Gandhi that the Congress chose to follow.

News of Subhas Bose's death sent shock waves throughout the Indian sub-continent. It was also after his death that the myths started to grow. People refused to believe that Bose died on that plane. Some people believed that he was living in China or Russia. Thus the sighting began. The government of India had to commission two inquiries to prove to the people of India that Bose was no longer alive. The first was commissioned in 1956. However this inquiry remained inconclusive because the investigator believed that he was really alive⁷. Almost thirty years after his death, another inquiry was launched. The questions were finally put to rest. Yet people continued to believe that a conspiracy took place. They also believed that India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was behind the conspiracy.⁸

The biggest tragedy of Subhas Chandra Bose's life was that he was unable to see his India free from the shackles of colonialism. India's independence was achieved only two years after his death. Boses's life was full of contradictions. He was a socialist who sought assistance from fascist government. He espoused military actions while devoting himself to the pacifist philosopher, Swami Vivekanada. One thing is certain, his love for his country is undeniable. He remained true to his word; independence at any cost. This is why I believe that his legacy lives on to this day. His passion for his country should command respect and reverence from all people. He is indeed a martyr for his country.

⁵ Gordon, L. *Brothers Against the Raj* (New York: 1990) pp. 385

⁶ Bhattacharyya, SN. *Subhas Chandra Bose in Self-Exile: his finest hour.* (Delhi:1975)pp.32

⁷ Gordon, L. *Brothers Against the Raj* (New York: 1990) pp. 605

⁸ *Ibid....*pp.607

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

Ranen Sinha

At any time, we may be experiencing a good time, bad time or just stagnating as we move along in life. Really, we have no choice but to live, grow, work and decay during this wonderful period on earth between birth and death. Living is all about being aware and coping with change. Although we like to freeze the periods of good times, nothing stands still, even for a moment. A Polish poet, Wislawa Szymborska, who won the Nobel prize in 1996, says that we say "hello" and "goodby" at just about the same time because things move so fast. Another Nobel prize winner poet, T. S. Elliot, felt as if everytime we met someone we met a stranger because we both had changed within ourselves and in relation to the other. The passage of time, moments or years, always changes both the people and the events. There are ways that we can make the most out of this inevitable change. Each of us try to do this in his or her own unique fashion. These are some of the ideas about how I try to do it. One or two pointers from these ideas may be of help to others.

First, I like to be fully aware of my inside with the tools and the processes that are available. There are six parts of my inside -- sensing, thinking, feeling, desiring, acting and the part dealing with the spiritual component. With the senses of seeing, hearing, tasting and touching, I connect with the world outside and often inside. They are my news reporters who help me observe, visualize and remember.

Through thinking I try to make some meaning out of the large volume of sensory data that I take in, weigh, analyze and interpret. My thoughts are affected by my beliefs and experiences from the past and present. Our perceptions, while strongly affected by our beliefs, can limit or expand our vision of the world bringing us misery or joy, healthy or poor self esteem being an example.

Feelings are spontaneous inner responses to the comparison between what I desire or want and what I actually experience. Lately, I have learned that this part of my inside is the only one that never tells me lies about myself. It's like the thermometer and barometer of my inside conditions. It tells me when I am sad or happy, vengeful or loving. Unfulfilled desires and expectations are the main causes of my pain and anguish. The greater my expectations the stronger are my feelings - when the gap is large on the negative side I feel pain, on the positive side I feel euphoria. I feel happy when there is no gap. I am learning to accept a feeling as it comes - that is not fighting to alter the feeling of loss or sorrow. It is a new experience for me to let myself go ahead and feel a strong emotion without cluttering it up with my reason. Activity also helps change my feelings for the better.

With desires my core values show up. With these I express my wishes for myself and the quality of relationships I want with others. They can cripple me or provide me with a sense of well being. Two ideas that have helped me enormously are: What do I want for me? and, What do I want for others (not from and with no strings attached)? Answering these questions honestly without playing games with myself, declaring them to others whenever relevant, and acting on them have made an enormous difference in my life - towards the

better. But the hardest thing has been to avoid using my logical thinking habit at every occasion. It is difficult because this mode has dominated most of my life. Especially in matters of human relationships, feelings are by far the most valuable guide for knowing the truth before taking appropriate action.

Through acting, I deal with what I did, what I do now and what I will do in the future. Before acting I try to take into account all of my inner parts as much as I am able to. My behavior, promises I make and ability to solve problems and other related factors that give a sense of well-being, depend largely on acting this way. An anonymous poet wrote:

Never grow tired of growing

When your mind is tired, exercise your body

When your body is tired, exercise your mind.

This theme is included as one of my day to day action plans.

With the sixth part dealing with the spiritual component of a person, I only have vague awareness. I am involved with this component when I pray, meditate or worship God. We are told that all the four mental states of a human person - unconscious, subconscious, conscious and superconscious - are possible only because of the constant presence of the spirit inside.

The unconscious state occurs when I fall into deep sleep and remain unaware of the outside world and my identity. The subconscious state, like an uncontrolled tape recorder, constantly keeps bringing volumes of information from past memory. This state also gives me dreams. Most of the time I have no control over it. The conscious state is when I am awake and totally involved with the first five parts of my inside. The superconscious is illusive. I know it is there but I cannot access it. My inner spirit, presumably links with the Supreme Self or God. We are told that communion with the Supreme Self which can be achieved in the superconscious state, takes one beyond sorrow and death bringing true bliss. I try to access the inner spirit through praying, meditating and practicing the Patanjali Yoga System. I know that spirit can also be accessed through ritualistic worship within the scope of a religion. But there is always a problem of reconciling between the excitement of worldly activities and serious engagement of the spiritual quest. A solution to this dilemma is offered by the Isa Upanishad. The life in this world and the life in the spirit are not incompatible. One can live an active life in the manifested world (the so-called "Avidya" ignorance) in which one practices activities such as intellectual thinking, procreating and doing other mundane chores while having a spirit of non-attachment, in which the mind remains centered in the Unmanifest (the so-called "Vidya" wisdom). The Manifest is the visible, ever-changing entity that we see and in which we live and the Unmanifest is the invisible, unchanging entity that makes it all happen. They are two sides of the same coin.

“Move Over- Mighty Mughals!”

Pasun Tagore

Taj Mahal! Mighty Mughals, the King of Kings and the Emperors of Hindusthan!

Close your eyes and move to another time, another age- King of Kings a Bengali from the kingdom of “Banga” and “Gaur” who reached the pinnacle of power as the emperor of the land of Bharat and whose kingdom extended from the Himalayas to the south of the Vindhyas, over the whole of the subcontinent. The first *Samrat* from Bengal would also be the last *Samrat* from Bengal to sit on the throne and have his kingdom from the Himalayas to the seas.

The Bengalis owe it to the Huns!!

From the steppes of Asia when Atilla decided to march towards Europe, another unknown leader gathered the rest and marched towards India. What he did not know was that the mighty *Guptas* were the rulers of India. Even though the glory days of Samudragupta and Chandragupta were gone, Skandagupta who was on the throne, gathered his army and went to war with the most skilful and ruthless warriors on the face of the earth!

And he won! He stopped the Huns at the foothills of the Himalayas!! The Huns were stopped but the Gupta Empire had to pay the price!!!

The Huns initiated a crack at the very foundation of the kingdom and it started to grow! Soon enough small kingdoms started to spring up and declare independence. By the beginning of the sixth century two such kingdoms came into existence by declaring independence and were known as the kingdom of Banga and the kingdom of Gaur.

In the time the people of Banga and Gaur developed their own distinct culture, their own language apart from Sanskrit and thus was born the “Bengali” people as it is known today.

The first powerful king of Bengal to leave a mark on the pages of history was the King Sasanka, who had his capital set at Karnasuvarna in Gour. In his young days he was

trained in the art of warfare by the tail end of the Gupta war machine. Later on as the king of Gaur he shattered the dream of Harsha, the emperor of India.

Harsha's empire extended from the Himalayas to the seas except for the kingdom of Banga and Gour. Try as he did, he could not conquer Sasanka's kingdom!

After Sasanka's death the kingdom of the Bengali speaking people plunged into darkness and for almost a century dark age followed! In the middle of the eighth century, a young person emerged as leader defeating the other chieftains. His name was Gopal and he declared himself the King of Bengal.

His son Dharmapal inherited his father's skills and extended his kingdom to Bhoj (Berar), Matsya (Alwar & Jaipur), Madra, Jadu, Kuru, Gandhar, Keer (all parts of modern Punjab) and Kanauj. Dharmapala was lucky too! He suffered defeat at the hands of the Rastrakut king from the south; however, Rastrakut king did not like Bengal and left in a hurry without undermining Dharmapal's kingdom.

After Dharmapal's death, came the glory days of Bengal! His son Devpal took over the throne. Following the footsteps of Chandragupta, Maurya, who appointed the legendary Chanakya as the strategist, Devpal appointed the Brahmin Darvapani and his grandson as the strategist and the aim was to be the *Samrat* or the Emperor of India.

With his skills in the battleground, together with the brilliant strategic planning of Darvapani, Devpal conquered the Rastrakuts, the Huns, the Gurjaras and established his kingdom from the Himalayas to the seas. He declared himself as the *Samrat* or the emperor of India! Few centuries after Harsha, India again had an Emperor- but this time the Emperor was from the land of the Bengali speaking people!

The Pal dynasty ruled India for almost 400 years. However, it was only Devpal, who could truly claim the title of *Samrat* or emperor of India.

And the rest? Well- its another story !!!

MEMORIES OF ADOLESCENCE

Ranen Sinha

In the 1996 issue of Agomoni, I wrote about my childhood memories. The article in this issue is a sequel to that. Here, I have tried to remember what happened to me after I left my ancestral village in Purbadhala in 1942 and moved to a small subdivisional town, Netrakona, in the district of Mymensing in undivided Bengal.

My father chose to practice law in this small town not far from our landed properties, Zamindari, in Purbadhala so that he could both pursue his professional career and supervise our ancestral estates. My vague memories for this period, between 1942-1946, are like putting together a pictorial puzzle with many pieces missing. A series of tumultuous events that would change the lives of most people in India and the world began to occur just when I was enrolled in Netrokona Dutt High School, in 1942. The main events occurring in the world during this period included the waging of World War II and its ending; and for India the last major showdown of the Indian people achieving their independence from British rule. I had little understanding of the complexities of these events. Nevertheless, they shaped my life and my future in a way that I could not even conceive at the time.

In 1943, Bengal experienced a tragic famine, in which numerous people died from starvation. And yet this period is also unique for its ushering in of a new era.

Soon after these disturbing events, the world entered a new era marked by a prolonged period of postwar prosperity, freedom, better health, literacy and longevity for the people of all developed and many developing countries including India. An American historian Eric Hobsbawm, aptly calls this period the "Golden Age of 1947-73". Without knowing about it I was getting myself prepared for my personal odessey that involved my migrating to the new world and sharing in the remarkable growth and prosperity enjoyed by the United States and Canada.

Life in Netrokona

The town had a mixed population of Muslims and Hindus whose social and religious lives differed. But in education, employment and culture they were blended together well. Love of the Bengali language, its music (played with harmonium, drums and stringed instruments), folk songs and cultural events were enthusiastically shared by both groups. The food supply was plentiful and included fish, goat meat and many vegetables and milk that were available in open air markets. Daikon, eggplant, gourd, fiddlehead, potato, cauliflower, and patal were among the common vegetables. The town had one police station, one post office, two law courts, two rail stations, two bazaars, several mosques and temples. In short, life was simple and good.

Here is a brief description of my life as a boy in a small town in Bengal. Our town had only one automobile belonging to the British subdivisional officer(SDO). Other people walked on unpaved roads using bullock carts, horse and buggy carts. Drivers of these carts had long

fishing-rod like whips with which to keep the horses in line. Rikshas and bicycles were in common use.

Teaching at school was based on the British model. We had to study the history of England and India. Indian history was divided into Aryan, Hindu, Buddhist, and Mughal and British periods. We studied everything in Bengali medium of instruction. In addition we studied English, Sanskrit or Arabic. The English curriculum contained such books as Dicken's "David Copperfield", and writings of Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth and other British poets. The Bengali curriculum was also rich with the writings of Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and other writers. Boys and girls went to separate schools. The road to school from our house was scenic, winding along the shore of the Magra river.

We lived in a complex of five tin-roofed houses with earthen floors. Our living quarters consisted of father's office, a kitchen, servant's quarters and storage, and a guest house. My father's office was located in one building near the main road. It was a well furnished building in which my father and his two male legal clerks sat on wooden cots covered with white sheets. When they sat and worked they had small cylindrical pillows tucked behind their backs. Each clerk also had a small wooden box in front of him containing legal papers. The tops of the boxes were used as writing desks. The elderly clerks worked seriously with their glasses halfway over their nose and a pen or pencil tucked in their ear. They spoke to clients, wrote documents, and seemed to know about everything. Father sat separately on a revolving chair behind a Western-style office desk. Except for special reasons we children were not allowed in the office. We spent our time in an adjoining room which housed our well-stocked family library. Everybody in our family loved to read books especially my younger sister, Sulekha, who seemed to always be sitting in a corner and poring over a book. Books by many well-known authors of Bengal and the West such as Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra Chatterji, D. L. Roy, George Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell, Rommain Rolland, Leo Tolstoy, Aldous Huxley, Knut Hamsun, Emil Zola and D. H. Lawrence were represented in our library.

A typical day in my life started by getting up at 7 a.m., brushing my teeth before breakfast with a cut-up branch of the Neem tree and having a breakfast of toast, jam, a half-boiled egg, milk and fruit. After breakfast I read school books and did homework for a couple of hours. Then came the most enjoyable part of my day. I rubbed mustard oil all over my body and went for a bath and swim in the river. In monsoon time the river had a fast current. Other boys and I climbed a branch of a tree leaning over the river and dived into the water. We then swam and drifted downstream for a while and walked back to the tree and dove again. The fun lasted for up to an hour when I had to come home hurriedly, dress up and finish lunch (usually fish curry, dal, and vegetables) and walk to the school. I did not particularly care for school and the highly disciplined way of teaching. But I enjoyed learning new things by listening to elders. My curiosity was usually satisfied by reading literature and books on science at home. I would return from school at about 4 p.m. and eat a small snack of anything from samosas to luchi to condensed milk, along with parched rice or fried (muri or chira). I loved jackfruit, oranges, mangoes, and bananas. I would then

go to play soccer or other games with my friends in open grass covered fields or on rainy days I would read a book. After the games, I had to study and do homework with the light of a kerosene lantern. I remember often being very sleepy at this time. Then at about 9 p.m. we had the family dinner. In the kitchen we sat on wooden seats (Piri) placed in a semicircular pattern on the floor and ate food with our right hands from brass dishes. Mother sat near the centre of the circle and served food to everybody. After the meal we washed our hands and mouths and went straight to bed. Before dozing off to sleep we heard the yelling of jackals and songs of the frogs in the rainy season. Life would have been perfect, in those days if we only did not have to go to school!

In 1943 I experienced my first real trauma. It was the time of the dreaded Bengal famine. Day after day emaciated men, women and children came to our door for scraps of food. We were told later that this calamity was brought upon us by the colonial rulers who withheld food from the population as a punishment for our seeking independence. In the beginning we gave all the food we could spare. But one day my mother told us that if we give away any more food, we would have to go begging for food ourselves. So, we stopped giving alms. From then on we could only help cremate the dead bodies lying in the street before the corpses decayed and caused a disease epidemic.

The second traumatic event in my life took place in 1945-46 when the British rulers started jailing people for joining processions and shouting for the freedom of India. In 1945 I was elected, to my surprise, as the student leader in my school. I led processions of young students as a protest against the British rule. The only reason, perhaps, that I did not end up in jail was because my mother made my promise that I would not shout the slogan "Vande Materam" (Salutation to Mother, Motherland India in this case). Anyone who uttered this slogan was arrested. Police with night sticks and officers with side arms were everywhere. Strangely enough I was not scared. We sincerely felt that we had to do this for our leaders, Gandhi, Nehru and Bose were in jail and we had to carry on the fight.

Three Episodes. When you become adult and live daily through life's many trials and tribulations you need a set of your own personal guidelines to make decisions. In old days these guidelines mostly came from the religious traditions in which one was born and raised. Nowadays, the values of many of these traditions and the religious rituals which carry them are seriously questioned. For example: majority of people in Canada do not attend church; most Bengalis do not go to the Hindu temple regularly. Yet, most of them believe in a Supreme Spirit or God.

My Hindu family was not a very ritualistic one. I often wondered how I fared in having a set of values for myself - some sort of a personal radar with which to steer my life. I realized that my growth in the adolescent years provided me with these essential values. I remember three episodes that exemplified my family's value system and the way these were passed on to me.

I was a frail, sickly, but strong-willed child - the only boy with three sisters. I used to get

angry quickly when I could not get my own way. If everything failed I resorted to biting. That afternoon, I bit my younger sister over some quarrel in which I lost ground. She ran crying to our mother. It was a monsoon day with pouring rain. Mother sought me out and made me stand on the porch without saying a word. I thought I shall get away easy because I was a sickly child! But she took my left hand, pulled the little finger into her mouth biting it hard until blood came. The only thing she said was "Now you know how it hurts people when you bite them. You must never hurt people". Then she calmly put some iodine tincture and bandaged the wound and left. From then on if I hurt somebody, usually unwittingly, my subconscious seems to remind me of the value of kindness versus cruelty.

One afternoon my father came home from his work somewhat agitated. My mother asked him what was the matter. He said "How dare this man come to my office for legal advice and tell me that I should lie to the court for him. I told him to get out at once" That was my lesson in the value of telling truth versus lying that I never could forget.

One evening I invited some of my classmates from high school for dinner. After the dinner and a nice visit my friends left. A little while later mother, looking tense, came to our bedroom with a stack of unwashed dishes and a bucket of water. Quietly closing all the windows and doors she began washing the dishes. We were most curious about why she was doing the job of our servant who was still in the house. She told us that my classmates were from a Hindu caste lower than that of the servant, therefore, he refused to do their dishes. We had three servants doing three different tasks that are allowed by their caste restrictions. This was a common practice among the high caste Brahmin families in those days. My mother told us that all people were equal and deserved equal treatment regardless of which caste they were born in. So she was doing the dishes herself without any fear of losing her caste. Because the neighbors in a small town would gossip, she was doing it behind closed doors. I got my third lesson - in the value of equality versus inequality.

India: as I see it today

Anindya Maiti

India has been the cynosure of all eyes for the past few months as it is commemorating its 50th year of Independence. There has been a plethora of activities throughout the length and breadth of India and the world over in celebration of this solemn occasion. So when I thought of contributing something to this issue of "Agomoni", I could not fathom of anything more significant than writing about the present state of the country where I spent my last 25 years.

As I see it today, India is passing through a difficult time. On one hand it is facing formidable challenges in the areas of economic, technological and social development. In the other it is struggling to cleanse its social and political system from the evils of corruption, bureaucracy, casteism, illiteracy, over-population or poverty. However beyond this specter of gloom or the cloud of unaccomplishments, I see a different India which often gets unnoticed. It is that India which is a microcosm build on the values of a diverse culture, a rich heritage, secularism and a booming economy that makes it stand apart in this emerging world of pluralism.

Today it is a nation of 970 million people of which only a little over a million live in the US and Canada. India has the world's largest democracy - vibrant and healthy. It boasts of being the cradle of one of the most ancient civilizations and at present it is the tenth largest industrial economy of the world. In this era of technological change and global economic challenge India is being reckoned as a great industrial power in Asia and a global economic player for the 21st century. With the opening up of the economy, sweeping liberalization and radical reforms, it has achieved a sustained economic growth of 7 % GNP. And with this growth rate India's income is going to double in every 10 years. The country produces 200 million-ton grain harvest every year with a surplus to export.

With a vast industrial and scientific base, India is now capable of indigenous production of missiles, space satellites and "nuclear technology". The indigenously developed PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) by ISRO, has recently launched the fourth IRS-1D remote sensing satellite into orbit. India's Integrated Guided Missile Development

Program with a Rs 5.04 billion budget (Ninth Plan, 1997-2002) is developing missile systems like Prithvi, Akash, Trisul, Nag and Agni (with 2500 km range and capable of carrying 1 ton nuclear warhead). Furthermore to quote from my personal experience I had been working for a company that developed a CFD software to analyze the “unsteady aerodynamics” of LCA (Light Combat Aircraft), India’s first indigenously developed fighter aircraft built at ADA (Aeronautical Developmental Agency) and NAL (National Aeronautical Laboratories), Bangalore. To top it an Indian company manufactured an equipment for the recent Mars Pathfinder mission! India has also proved its credibility as a hi-tech solution provider for the pivotal technologies like Information Technology and Telecommunications that is reshaping the industrial landscape of the modern world. It is now the home to the third largest pool of engineering talent of the world (next to the US and Russia). Computer professionals of India are recognized throughout the world as technically superior and today they swarm all over the world, where they are an integral part of most product development teams, be they teams developing new semi-conductor chips, software packages or computers. Besides its thriving Software industry, India’s export of gems and jewelry, textiles and garments are other examples of the internationally competitive entrepreneurship that is emerging.

Globalization of Indian economy, de-licensing and the free market policies of the government have attracted institutional investors and multi-national companies like General Electric, General Motors, Texas Instruments, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Sony, Ford, Opel, Microsoft and many others to make large up-front investments. American direct investment in India is now twice as that in China and the US is India’s largest trading partner (Indian exports increasing by 20%). The entry of global players is bringing us hard currency, providing employment to our people and creating an atmosphere of technological and economic competitiveness. Thus to thrive in these challenging times our 7000 publicly quoted companies (aggregating \$140 billion) are forced to improve their standards of product-quality, be technology-driven and are in the process of establishing a very strong global presence. The entry and participation of multi-nationals alone bears testimony to the trend and shape of things to come. Today the Mercedes marches, Ford cruises and BMWs zoom on Indian roads. The ready availability of the latest Sony TVs, Whirlpool washing machines, IBM PCs or the fast foods of McDonalds, KFC or Pizza Hut are transforming the lives of the Indian people. Computerized Banking, ATMs, automated rail and airline reservation facilities are as ubiquitous as having Visa cards or Master cards are. Isn’t this any indication of the changed standard of

living? India's 40 million middle-class today has a purchasing power (PP) income of \$600,000 each and its 150 million affluent rural class has a PP income of \$20,000 each.

A remarkable improvement is observed in the quality of life and life expectancy of its people. The average Indian today lives to the age of 63 compared to 32 in 1947, 52% people are literate compared to 17% in 1947. Today with the reforms in the right direction we are poised for a rapid economic growth and reduction of poverty, unemployment and a near zero foreign exchange trade deficit. Our education system is among the best and every year hundreds who flock to the US and Canada compete on equal terms with the best International talent. Even in the world of "Beauty and fashion", Susmita Sen and Ayeshwaria Rai by winning of late, the "Miss Universe" and "Miss World" titles respectively, have shown the world where we stand.

It is this nation that I envy of and feel proud to be associated with. I have faith in the future of this country and a conviction that in the 21st century, India by being firm in its resolve and confident of its potential will emerge as a first world nation and live up to Rabindranath Tagore's dream of India, "Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high...."



Subhas Chandra Bose*

Asim Roy

This year, 1997, people in India and the Indians all over the world celebrated a great event, the 50th anniversary of India's freedom from the colonial rules of the British Raj, which Gandhiji once denounced as a "poison that corrupts all it touches." People from all walks of life have expressed their sincere jubilation, while commemorating their liberation 50 years ago.

The year 1997 is also very important to Indians, as it marks the birth centenary of one of India's greatest freedom fighters--Subhas Chandra Bose, who had the same objective as Gandhiji of making India free by permanently driving out--albeit through different means--the colonial rulers from the Indian soil. It may be an appropriate way to observe his centenary by learning about the life of this great person, who was one of the most fearless and dedicated leaders India has ever had, and about his valiant fight to shatter the shackles of foreign domination in India. Lest we forget about his contribution to making us free and equal with other free people of the world, and about this important chapter in the history of India's political evolution, let us pay our homage by reviewing here his fascinating life story.

Subhas Chandra Bose was born on January 23, 1897 at Cuttack in Orissa--a state of northeastern India. His mother was Prabhavati; his father was Janaki Nath Bose, a prominent lawyer of Cuttack. As one of eight children, Subhas was raised with all the love, affection, and care typical of a Bengali middle class family of that time.

At the age of five, Subhas was admitted to the Baptist Missionary School at Cuttack. His elder brothers also went to the same school, where instructions were given in English. When Subhas was 12 years old, Bengali became a compulsory language for all Bengalis at the matriculation level. He was then transferred to Ravenshaw Collegiate School, where the medium of instruction was entirely in Bengali. Here, for the first time, he learned Bengali, and instead of wearing a European school uniform, he started going to school dressed like other Bengali boys in his class.

The headmaster of this school, Beni Madhab Das, was a true nationalist, and he tried to instill among his students a love for their country. While a student of Ravenshaw Collegiate, Subhas always organized many types of activities in support of other patriots and his less fortunate countrymen.

At the age of 15, Subhas was inspired by reading the works of Swami Vivekananda--a great religious leader of India at the time, who taught salvation through service, service to humanity and particularly to Mother India. He read all he could of Vivekananda and Vivekananda's master, the saintly ascetic Ramakrishna Paramhansa, that eventually led to his adoption of selfless service as his ideal. Subhas felt that he needed a spiritual guide and guru, and visited many centres of pilgrimage in search of one. However, he could find no one of his liking--no one he could truly consider his spiritual guru.

He then started his college life in 1913 and began to study philosophy at the Presidency College in Calcutta, but got in trouble with the English professors, who made anti-Indian comments. As a result of this he was expelled from his college, but with the help of Sri Ashutosh Mukherjee, was admitted to another, the Scottish Church College in Calcutta.

*Revised version of author's 1985 article with the same title, published in Bichitra Samachar

At that time he joined the University Training Corps, and his experiences there proved very useful in his later life. He was promoted to the position of a non-commissioned officer in the Training Corps.

Subhas graduated from the University of Calcutta at the age of 22 and went to England to appear at the Indian Civil Service Examination. He did very well and came out fourth amongst all candidates, but he resigned from the service. He decided to come back to India to work for the liberation of his country from the British rule.

After landing at Bombay he met Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest leaders of India. At Gandhiji's suggestion, Subhas came to Calcutta to work with Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, the uncrowned king of Bengal. Soon Subhas became the right hand man of Deshabandhu, and for a living, he took on the principalship of the National College at Calcutta.

In 1921, Subhas was arrested for the first time, for anti-government activities, in his struggle for the freedom of India. When Deshabandhu formed his "Swaraj Party" to work with the Congress Party, Subhas joined this new party. In 1924, this party gained almost all the seats in the Calcutta Corporation elections, and Deshabandhu was elected the Mayor and Subhas was appointed the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation.

Under the guidance of Deshabandhu, Subhas formed a volunteer corps to do social and political work. This volunteer corps was declared illegal, and following the murder of a European, Subhas was arrested on the false pretext of masterminding the murder. In spite of his denial of involvement in the murder, Subhas was punished without a trial and sent to the Mandalay jail in Burma.

Under the unhealthy and inhuman conditions found in the jail, Subhas soon fell ill and contracted tuberculosis. When people learnt about this, there was a mass demonstration demanding his immediate release. Finally, the government was compelled to release him and Subhas was returned to India, where he then spent some time at Dalhousie, in the Himalayas, to regain his health.

In 1928, during a session of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta, Subhas organized another volunteer corps and became its General Officer Commanding. The government became suspicious of Subhas and his volunteers, and jailed him again. In 1931, while in jail, he was elected the Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation and was thus released to take up his duties as the Mayor of Calcutta.

During this time, he planned public meetings in support of India's Independence Day, January 26. Since all the meetings and processions were banned, Subhas was jailed again, he fell ill and once again under public pressure, the government released him from jail.

Subhas then proceeded to Vienna for treatment. After his health improved, he toured many countries in Europe, promoting the cause of Indian freedom. He then returned briefly to Calcutta to meet his dying father, but his father died before Subhas could see him. He returned to Europe, but after being elected the President of the Indian National Congress in 1938, he was allowed to come back to India.

World War II was now imminent in Europe and Subhas wanted to strike at the British to make India free. But other leaders, including Gandhiji, did not agree. In 1939, Subhas was reelected President of the Indian National Congress, but to avoid any split in the party, he formed a "Forward Bloc" within the Congress Party. Then, when he started to campaign for the immediate freedom of India again, he was sent to jail once more.

During his stay in jail, he became convinced that only an armed struggle could free India. To achieve his objectives, he planned to leave India to seek foreign help. In accordance with his plan, he started growing a beard and one day, escaped from his house arrest, travelled some distance out of Calcutta by car, then got onto a train and identified himself as Moulavi Jiauddin, an insurance agent. Upon arrival at Peshawar, he played the part of a deaf and dumb Pathan, and travelled to Kabul in a loaded truck. Finally, he reached Berlin via Moscow and engaged himself in a hectic series of activities to liberate India.

During his stay there, he met Hitler and sought his help. But since Germany was too far off to wage a war against the British in India, he decided to seek help from Japan. He travelled via a German submarine, transferred to a Japanese submarine, and finally reached Tokyo. From there, he went to Singapore, where he was received by Rash Behari Bose, another Indian revolutionary then settled in Japan.

In Singapore, after taking over the leadership of the Indian National Army (INA) and taking the title of "Netaji", Subhas raised an army of Indian prisoners of war captured by the Japanese; he also formed the Rani of Jhansi regiment with Indian girls. He announced the formation of the Azad Hind Government on October 21, 1943 and appealed to his soldiers by saying: "You were fighting for an alien power. Now, you shall fight for your own country." He mentioned that India was a country of many religions with different ways of salutation, but with the Azad Hind Government, the salutation would be "Jai Hind."

Subhas led an inspired army towards India and on the way, received generous donations from the Indian residents as a token of their fantastic support for the cause of the motherland's freedom. The Indian Diaspora gave him complete support in his fight for freedom. In March of 1944, Imphal in northeastern India was completely surrounded by the INA and the Japanese. The INA entered Kohima on March 18, 1944 and raised the Indian national flag there.

However, the British resistance in Imphal was strong and the Japanese could not maintain the supply of arms and food any longer. Eventually, the Japanese surrendered to the British-American forces and the INA also surrendered on August 16, 1945. Netaji's life was now in danger as the British forces were searching for him. His soldiers asked him to leave and seek refuge in a safer place. Netaji, however, did not give up so easily. At first he refused to leave, but Subhas finally made his way to Thailand. After a few days, accompanied by Col. Habibur Rahman of the INA, at Da Nang, Vietnam he boarded a plane which reportedly crashed near Taipei. His escort Col. Rahman survived, but there was no trace of Netaji any more. What happened to him on that fateful trip is still a mystery to this day; he disappeared completely. Is he dead or is he still alive? Nobody knows the answer.

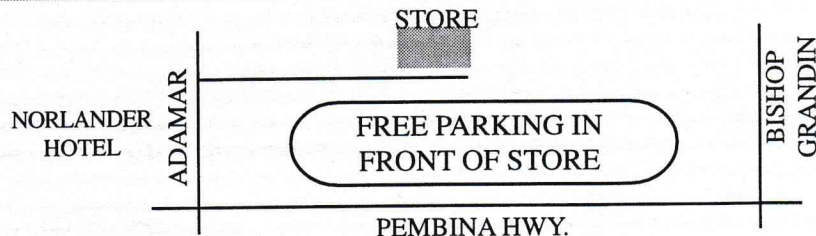
Even today, his fellow countrymen remember him at least once a year--on January 23, his birthday. He is remembered as one of the most fearless freedom fighters of the Indian subcontinent. He will long be loved and respected for the leadership which led his people beyond the confines of language, religion, caste and all other limitations, and inspired them to fight for the freedom of the motherland. Netaji's unique contribution to the creation of an independent India would always be respectfully and gratefully remembered by all Indians, including the Indian Diaspora all over southeast Asia and in the rest of the world.



Jai Hind

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