



11 Lord Sinha Road, Kolkata, West Bengal - 700 071
Tel : 91 (33) 2282 6033, +91 (33) 2282 7296 / Fax : +91 (33) 2282 3025
e-mail : shikshayatan@shrishikshayatancollege.org / http://shrishikshayatancollege.org
brewingminds.asc@gmail.com

A collage of historical and scientific images with text overlays. It features a circular logo at the top left, a newspaper clipping about a Bengal Group & Indra Vidyasaga, a portrait of a man in a white shirt, a portrait of Leonardo da Vinci, and a portrait of a man in a red shirt. The background is a red and orange gradient.

BREWING MINDS
2020

Bengal Group & Indra Vidyasaga

Leonardo Da Vinci

Kari Shandhan

Shri Shikshayatan College

A NAAC Accredited Women's College
(Awarded A Grade, CGPA 3.24 in November, 2016 by NAAC)
Affiliated to University of Calcutta

BREWING MINDS 2020

Volume VI



SHRI SHIKSHAYATAN COLLEGE

A NAAC Accredited Women's College
(Awarded A Grade, CGPA 3.24 in November, 2016 by NAAC)
Affiliated to University of Calcutta

BREWING MINDS

VOLUME VI, February, 2020

Board of Editors :

Ishita Kumar, B.Ed
Raunak Nasim, MA, English
Ahana Basu, 3rd Year, JMC
Dripta Banerji, 3rd Year, BBA
Srijeeta Banerjee, 3rd Year, Bengali
Eliza Bose, 3rd Sem, JMC
Ankita Saha, 3rd Sem, English
Karihma Singh, 3rd Sem, Hindi

Advisors to the Editorial Board :

Shri Mayukh Lahiri, Faculty, Dept. of JMC
Smt. Debolina Guha Thakurta,
Faculty, Dept. of English

Front and Back Cover :

Ahana Basu, Dept. of JMC

Published by :

Shri Shikshayatan College
11, Lord Sinha Road
Kolkata- 700 071
Phone: 033-2282 6033

Printed by :

PRATIRUP
35, Nandana Park
Kolkata - 700 034
Phone : 2403-7402

NURTURING THE BUDS

"Rough winds do shake the darling buds...", but it doesn't have the power to stop it from blossoming.

In this age when the world is overwhelmingly boasting upon "Machine Hearts" which thrive on straight lines, the Brewing Minds are providing us with the essential beats of human heart - uneven, yet lively contours of existence - weaving the dream of their creativity, shaping their thoughts, putting some unnamed and untamed ingredients to prepare an unprecedented flavor.

On behalf of 'Team Brewing Minds', we take this opportunity to thank our Principal Dr. Aditi Dey who, since 2014, has always remained the backbone of this venture. We wish to convey our thanks to Dr. Shaheen Perveen and Smt. Baidehi Mukherjee for their sincere help to publish this issue of Brewing Minds.

We hope, this edition of Brewing Minds will offer the readers something more than usual.

Mayukh Lahiri
Debolina Guha Thakurta
Advisors to the Editorial Board

EDITORIAL

"Today a reader, tomorrow a leader." – Margaret Fuller

Shri Shikshayatan College proudly presents their 6th volume of "Brewing Minds", a humble initiative to set the budding minds free and let their creative urges to blossom naturally. This magazine acts as a platform for the students to express their perceptions, opinions and interests, thus brewing a beautiful world with their thought.

This year Brewing Minds, through its cover page, pays homage to the Renaissance artist and scientist Leonardo da Vinci on his 500th death anniversary, Florence Nightingale- "The lady with the lamp" and the great philanthropist and revolutionary Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar on his bicentenary year.

This journey of Brewing Minds started with the co-operation of our respected Principal Dr. Adil Dey and immense and continuous support of our professors- Shri Mayukh Lahiri and Smt. Debolina Guha Thakurta. The collective effort of all of us has helped this young magazine to sail all the way to the shore of publication.

* * * * *

"মন চল নিজ নিকেতনে..." আমাদের শত্রীরের ভেতরে একটা মন-বাড়ি আছে, যেখানে থাকে রবেরচন্দর অনুভূতিস্বরূপ এক বিশাল সংসার... তারা কেউ বা বাহিরে এসে নিজেকে এই জগৎ পৃথিবীর একজন করে তোলে, কেউ বা সমাজ সংসারের ভয়ে গৃহবন্দীই হয়ে থাকে...

তবুও, সবার জন্যই আমাদের স্কর "Brewing Minds" তার নিজের ঘরটা খুলে দিয়েছে... এখানে সবাই পারে নিজের মত বঁচতে, নিজের মত অস্তিত্বকে জিইয়ে রাখতে... আর সেখানেই আমাদের সময়ের সফলতা...

আমাদের স্কর যেন আরো বড়ো হয়, সেই চ্যালেঞ্জকেই তোমরা সবাই পূরণ করো... তোমাদের "মন-নিকেতন"-এর "ঘরনি" অনুভূতিগুলোকে, মিশিয়ে দিয়ো আমাদের সাথে..

* * * * *

"توکر سے سونخوگے بہت کچھ...
 لاکھ تومنہ پھاری کی ہوں...
 جوت تونہرے کدمن چوموں...
 جس دن تون ہوں نے تون سے لڈائی کی ہوں..."

ہر برہ "Brewing Minds" پتریکا اء اٹسارہ كے سااھ اء نء ءوش كو لاتی ہ اءر پاٹكوں كا منورنجن كرتی ہ۔ یہ "Brewing Minds" كا اٹواں سنسकरण ہ، جسكے ذوارا شری شلكاوتن كالفن كو پرتیباشالی اءاڑے اءنوں رءناत्मकता اءر كलात्मकता كو نء आयام دینی ہ۔ वरुधारुथوں ذوارا اءنوں वरुधारुथوں كو उडान دینے اءर योग्यता كو प्रस्तुत करने में यह पत्रिका विशेष योगदान देती है। यह पत्रिका विभिन्न विचारों एवं कलाकृतियों का भंडार है।

اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔

* * * * *

پتریکا "Brewing Minds" كے ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔ اءارنوں پتریکا اءاڑوں ذوارا پرتیپادیت یہ پتریکا اءنوں كوشل كا رنمنء ہ۔

* * * * *

CONTENTS

CREATIVE WRITING ENGLISH ON VIDYASAGAR DIWAS

- ISHWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR 1
Svetlana Sen Mukherjee (Department of English)
- VIDYASAGAR AS A SOCIAL REFORMER 4
Sinjory Bose and Dhritideepa Das (Department of History)
- VIDYASAGAR AS A SOCIAL REFORMER 7
Ahana Basu (Department of Journalism and Mass Communication)
- LIFE UNDER THE BRIDGE 9
Souraseni Bhattacharyya (M.A. English)
- EPIPHANIES 12
Samridha Ghosh (Department of English)
- COFFEE AND CONTEMPLATIONS 13
Debarati Banerjee (Department Of Geography)
- THE CALL 14
Debarati Banerjee (Department Of Geography)
- HEAD IN THE CLOUDS 15
Saloni Sharma (Department Of Sociology)
- TEXTING A BLESSING? 16
Chandreyi Chatterjee (Department Of Sociology)
- FORBIDDEN FROM FOREVER 17
Mritika Banerjee (Department of Economics)
- DIARY OF AN INTROVERT 20
Payal Roy (Journalism and Mass Communication)
- TWENTY 21
Olivia Roy (Political Science Honours)
- A CITY OF DEADS – Revisiting the pages in History 22
Ishita Kumar (Department of B ed.)

■ RENDEZVOUS WITH MAGNIFICENT CREATION OF INDIAN ART AND HISTORY Aritree Dutta (Department of B.Ed.)	23	■ HEALING MINDS Tulika Chatterjee (M.A. English)	47
■ NOCTURNAL WHISPERS Samiddha Ghosh (Department of English)	25	■ CANDLES Asmita Basak (M.A. English)	48
■ UNTITLED Ruchra Pachisia (Department Of English)	26	■ THE GIRL ON THE BOAT Asmita Basak (M.A. English)	49
■ PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE STUDENTS	27-34	■ BOX WORLD Faaizah Anwar (Department Of Sociology)	51
■ OBLIVION Mrittika Chatterjee (Department of English)	35	■ মেতাজীকে অনিশা ভট্টাচার্য (ইংরাজি বিভাগ)	51
■ THE ART OF LYING Tanisha Bhattacharya (Department of English)	37	■ ট্রেন কুমুদিকা দাস (সাংবাদিকতা ও গণজ্ঞাপন বিভাগ)	52
■ CHRONICLES Samiddha Ghosh (Department of English)	37	■ বাদল চৈতালী গায়ন (ইংরাজি বিভাগ)	52
■ EUTOPIA Ankita Saha (Department of English)	37	■ সনাতনী তিমোত্তমা পায়েল রায় (সাংবাদিকতা ও গণজ্ঞাপন বিভাগ)	53
■ TAKE ME TO THE GREAT FALL ... Ankita Saha (Department of English)	38	■ বৃষ্টিভেজা তিমোত্তমা পায়েল রায় (সাংবাদিকতা ও গণজ্ঞাপন বিভাগ)	54
■ IRREPLACABLE Ankita Saha (Department Of English)	39	প্রথম পুরস্কার, বাংলা সৃজনশীল রচনা, বিদ্যাসাগর দিবস ■ সমাজ সংস্কারক ঃ বিশ্বর চন্দ্র বিদ্যাসাগর সৃজিতা ব্যানার্জী (বাংলা সাম্পাদিক)	65
■ ABOUT TIME Debarati Banerjee (Department Of Geography)	41	■ "... কেউ হো টানে না" সৃজিতা ব্যানার্জী (বাংলা সাম্পাদিক)	57
■ IN THE NIGHT WILL IT END Sumedha Thakur (Department Of Chemistry)	42	■ অবলম্বন কুমুদিকা দাস (সাংবাদিকতা ও গণজ্ঞাপন বিভাগ)	58
■ ESCAPE Subhra Parna Deb (Journalism and Mass Communication)	43	■ হসোহ নিহা বিন্দা (হিন্দী সম্মান)	60
■ STAND BY ME Shifa Khan (Department of Political Science)	44	■ রোহনী কা জ্বাৰ তনীমা মল্লচাৰ্য (অংগ্ৰেজী বিভাগ)	60
■ SMASHED IDENTITY Snehlata Singhal (Department Of Commerce)	44	■ ঝাৰিস রীক নসীম (এম.এ. অংগ্ৰেজী বিভাগ)	61
■ CALL FOR HELP Hazaqat Zubana (Department of BBA)	45		
■ EASY ESCAPE Tulika Chatterjee (M.A. English)	46		

■	पॉ	61
	रौनक नसीम (एम.ए. अंग्रेजी विभाग)	
■	जादूगर का खेल	62
	हज़ारकत जुवाना (बी.बी.ए.)	
■	औरत	62
	अंजनी शर्मा (एम.ए. अंग्रेजी विभाग)	
■	ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर - एक महान समाज सुधारक	63
	सृष्टि खन्ना (हिन्दी सम्मान)	
■	مرزا اسد اللہ خان غالب حیات و خدمات	65
	VIDYASAGAR AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION	
	Alvi Fatma, (Urdu General)	

1st Prize, Creative Writing, English on Vidyasagar Diwas

ISHWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR

Swetlana Sen Mukherjee
(Department of English)

Reminiscence of Bengal's celebrated polymath, the very ignition of the unquenchable fire in the doused hearts of Bengal, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was the embodiment of the word 'Bird of Bengal', safety graces only the moniker of Tagore. This inimitable defuge of humanism, education, philanthropy and verse that was Vidyasagar, took the gargantuan bull that was Bengal, by the horns.

Born into the epoch of Bengal Renaissance, he was thrown into the perleu of intellectual awakening which slowly but steadily let to his active participation into what could be called a cultural, social, intellectual and artistic movement aiming towards collective change in ways previously unimaginable. Hailing from a Bengal kulin Brahmin family from the Ghatal subdivision of west Midnapore district of present day Bengal, this young mind found the flower bed from which to nurture it's seed, in his father's acquaintance Bhagabat Charan's abode which provided him with a suitable atmosphere and warmth, along with Bhagabat's younger daughter Raimoni's affectionate nurture, all of which left a deep impact in the youth's budding conscience resulting in his empathetic sagacity towards women.

His fervid quest for erudition pushed him through thick and thin, bringing him excellence in quick succession, and a welcome relief in the face of dire poverty. He studied in the Sanskrit College, Calcutta from 1829 - 1839, drowning himself into the world of Academics, maintaining his hard achieved discipline and diligence in the face of adversity - something which later went on to fruitify his perseverance in the eradication of social injustice against women. The Sanskrit College being bedrock of intellectual hubhub acquainted him with notable intellectuals and scholars who provided the intellectual purlieu, from which he could attain a holistic approach towards society.

Being a student of Sanskrit college enabled him to experience religious, cultural and ideological clash between reformists like Rammohan Roy; radicalists like Derozio who denounced the degradation of Hindu deities and the conservatives who preferred to uphold the primary role of Hinduism. Indifferent to the extremities of this ideological conflict, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar applied an achromatic approach to the concepts of religion and society unlike the ideas of progenitors which emphasized on the formation of a completely new society which had been drained of all its corruption, Ishwar Chandra aimed at reforming the social structure from within. Though his faith in the European ideal of humanity was unparalleled, he believed in the deeper meaning of the ancient Hindu philosophy and its rich heritage, which he believed had much to offer. This led him to amalgamate European Dynamism with the abysmal Indian philosophy.

After twelve years of relentless pursuit in the disciplines of Sanskrit, Grammar, Literature, Vedanta, Alankara, Shastra, Smriti and Astronomy. He passed out with flying colours.

Again at the age of nineteen, in 1839, he cracked the examination on Law, conducted by the Hindu Law Committee. His well rounded education allowed him to amass considerable mastery in a number of Shastras, thus earning him the Moniker of "VIDYASAGAR" OR 'Ocean of Knowledge'.

On 29th December the fruits of his consistent educational excellence earned him the position of principal of lecturer of Fort William College. His scholastic excellence impressed G.T. Marshall, the secretary of the college, who endowed him with the position of the Sanskrit Department in 1841.

Subsequent to five years of service in FWC Vidyasagar joined his Alma Mater Sanskrit College as Assistant Secretary in 1846. This proved to be the commencement of his reformation of social norms when he submitted his survey regarding a number of changes in the system of education, one of his daring stances being the admission of students from lower castes. This generated equal amounts of praise and criticism eventually forcing him to resign, only to be invited back as professor with permission of redesigning the system. In 1851, he became the principal of the college.

His idealization of the concept of holistic learning explains his castigations against corruption seeping into the education system, and his preference of multilingual education which he believed would enhance their understanding in numerous subjects which should be explored and broadened. His unwavering faith in both Western and Indian systems of Education could not blind him to the flaws of either, which in turn proved to be conducive in his expedition for truth. All of this culminated into the publication of "Upakramonika" and "Byakaran Kourmudi" – both of which eased the methods of understanding Sanskrit grammar for the masses. The establishment of Normal Training school that followed boosted the opportunities for employment of ordinary Bengali Pedagogues.

Eventually Vidyasagar could freely expand his vision regarding education of females. From 1853 – 1864 he opened a number of girl's colleges, schools, and educational institutions.

Slowly he started entering the broader spectrum, when he actively contributed to the Bengal Renaissance. Dr. Sharmila Bose writes,

"What is fascinating about Vidyasagar is the way in which a traditional Sanskrit scholar in a patriarchal society used his command of the ancient scriptures to argue against opponents in his own society....."

The year 1845 marks the commencement of Vidyasagar's fight against social injustice when he began his campaign, rallying for the rights of widows to marry. As it can be understood 19th century Bengal as no fairytale for women, especially pre-pubescent girls whose lives were forced into stigmatized and alienated existence. Traces can be found in his quote from ancient "Parashora Dharma Samhita" which states,

"Gate mrte pravajite pleevacha patite patau
Panchas vapatsu nanum patiranyo bidhlyate"

Which if translated means?

"Women are at liberty to marry again, if their husband be not heard of, die, return from the world, and prove to be an impotent or be an outcast."

His petition regarding widow remarriage was challenged by 30,000 signatures from the powerful conservative groups within the Bengali society, which however turned out to be unsuccessful given the promotion of the Widow Remarriage Act of 26th July, 1856.

His relentless struggles against social evils like child marriage, unfair treatment of widow was acknowledged both from insiders of orthodox Bengali society and also from certain British Statesman like Dalhousie and Bentick. His staunch liberalism allowed him to overlook the pressures and castigations of his society and take a leap of faith, giving birth to the bedrock of modern Bengali language or "Barna Parichey" which now graces the state and verse of every Bengali child, as primal as mother's milk.

Unfortunately success did not ensue all his struggles. His protests against child marriage were met with indifference since it was followed the First War of Independence of 1857 which eventually developed the British promise of non-intervention on Indian Personal Law. Same fare ensued for the ban on polygamy in the 1870s where the unbridgeable rift between the Indians and their colonial masters and enthusiasm of nationalists to preserve Indian culture freezed all avenues of reform.

Vidyasagar met a tragic end with his idealist visions and eventually receded to the Santhal regions of Jharkhand, a disillusioned man.

"No guts, no story." — Chris Brady

VIDYASAGAR AS A SOCIAL REFORMER

Sinjory Bose and Dhritideepa Das

(Department of History)

In Indian history, 19th century is considered as a creative period. One of its causes is the emergence of some extraordinary persons who contributed significantly to the causes of development. Among them the name of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar should be mentioned specially. According to Amallesh Tripathi he was the ablest of educational administrators, the creator of Bengali prose, the most successful textbook publisher of his day, the most active organiser of primary and secondary education for both male and female and the most dedicated social reformer. His role as a social reformer included his efforts to develop a new education system and to improve the condition of women in Bengal.

In order to remove the inertness of the society, Vidyasagar has given great importance to the education. In 1846 Vidyasagar was appointed to the post of Assistant secretary at Sanskrit College. Ashok Sen says that the changes which he proposed aimed at acquiring both Sanskrit and English learning. After resigning from the Sanskrit College Vidyasagar set up a printing press with the partnership of Madanmohan Tarkalankar. Vidyasagar returned back to Sanskrit College in December 1850 (rst) as a professor of literature and then he was appointed as principle of Sanskrit College. Vidyasagar was able to achieve far reaching improvements in the standards of the institutions.

Vidyasagar dedicated his entire life to the cause of social reform. Born in 1820 in a poor family he struggled through hardships to educate himself. Though he was a great Sanskrit scholar, his mind was open to the best in Western thought and he came to represent a happy blend of Indian and Western culture. His greatness lay above all in his sterling character and shining intellect. Possessed with immense courage and fearless mind he practised what he believed. There was no lag between his beliefs and his practice. He was simple in dress and habit and direct in his manner. He was a great humanist who possessed immense sympathy for the poor, the unfortunate and the oppressed.

Vidyasagar strongly believed in female education. He was a close associate of Drinkwater Bethune and worked for many years as honorary secretary of Bethune. While emphasizing the necessity of female education he wanted to remove the prejudices of his countrymen by proving that female education had the sanction of shastras. Vidyasagar had established 35 girl schools in rural areas.

Above all Vidyasagar is remembered gracefully by his countrymen for his contribution to the uplift of India's downtrodden womanhood. Here he proved a worthy successor to Rammohan Roy. He waged a long struggle in favour of widow remarriage. His humanism was aroused to the full by the sufferings of the Hindu widows. To improve their lot he gave his all and virtually ruined himself. In 1855, he

raised his powerful voice, backed by the weight of immense traditional learning, in favour of widow remarriage. Soon a powerful movement in favour of widow remarriage started which continues till this day. Later in 1855, a large number of petitions from Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Nagpur and other cities of India were presented to the government asking it to pass an act legalising the remarriage of widows. This agitation was successful and such a law was enacted. The first lawful Hindu widow remarriage among the upper castes in our country was celebrated in Calcutta on 7 December 1856 under the inspiration and supervision of Vidyasagar. Widows of many other cities in different parts of the country already enjoyed this right under customary law.

In 1850, Vidyasagar protested against child marriage. All of his life he campaigned against polygamy. He was also deeply interested in the education of women. As a government Inspector of Schools, he organised thirty-five girl's schools, many of which he ran at his own expense. As secretary to the Bethune School, he was one of the pioneers of higher education for women.

Vidyasagar was so moved by the cruel poverty people were living under that as a student he would use his scholarship proceeds to feed the poor and buy medicines for the sick. Apart from his kindness Vidyasagar was an extremely humble individual, a characteristic through which he constantly inspired people. Vidyasagar also authored many books which gently helped the Bengali education system. In him India saw an individual whose own interests took a backseat as he constantly worked for the betterment of the society.

Vidyasagar wanted the abolition of polygamy among the Hindus. He took a massive survey the actual number of kulin Brahmins in just one district (Hooghly) due to the widespread practice of kulin polygamy. He gave a list of men, by name, age, village and the number of their wives. The top of the list was 55 years old with 80 wives. This was not polygamy but 'hypergamy'. G. Forbes tells us arguing against the humanity of kulinism in 1855, that Vidyasagar presented the government with a petition but no action was taken, gradually the tradition faded away by the end of the 19th century.

Vidyasagar knew that in order to instill social change in India, it was necessary to bring about an improvement in the modes of thought of the Indian population. And yet, only a change in the social environment in which these thoughts grew and found sustenance would bring about a change in people's mindsets. He adopted a unique solution to solve women's issues. He challenged religious dogmas and social norms by drawing proofs and evidences to support their arguments against social and religious evils from historical and scriptural sources so as not to offend practitioners of their religion and secondly by translating religious texts in various languages to highlight the erroneous ideas that people held and to introduce them to true spirit of their religion.

The enactment of the Sati Abolition Act XVII 1829 and the Widow Re-marriage Act XV 1856, through a successful collaboration among the Indian reformers, the British government and the society, motivated uprooting of sati and widowhood systems.

Sumit Sarkar claimed that Vidyasagar was a failed reformer. This maybe a hard verdict, after all Vidyasagar was instrumental in bringing a new law into effect. Ashok Sen also thinks that Vidyasagar's struggle for social reforms ended on a note of reversal. But at the same time he tells us that in spite of all his constraints of historical situation Vidyasagar endeavoured to attain some concrete goals which occupied his sense of social priority. He did so not only in words, but in repeated social action. Ashok Sen also put forward some causes of Vidyasagar's failure, first whether remarried or not widows could undergo no change in their usual status, as unpaid family labour. Secondly, the law clearly stated that on remarriage widow would forfeit all claims to her deceased husband's property. Thirdly, widow remarriage as it was sanctioned by the Act of 1856 made no assault on the habitual canons of middle class property nor did he encouraged any move towards economic independence of widowed females.

The widow remarriage had introduced the process of future social construction. According to K.M Pannikar the intellectual climate of renaissance was characterised by all these tendencies. Pannikar further states that the discussion on widow remarriage addressed the fundamental question of women's emancipation and the methods to be adopted for it in the conditions prevalent in colonial India.

Vidyasagar's contribution to the making of modern India was many sided. He evolved a new methodology of teaching Sanskrit. He wrote a Bengali primer which is still used today. His writings helped in the evolution of modern prose style in Bengal. He opened the gates of the Sanskrit College to the non-brahmin students. He was determined to break the priestly monopoly of scriptural knowledge and also introduced the study of western thought in the Sanskrit College. Though there are different views among historians regarding Vidyasagar and his social reforms, we cannot ignore the fact that he worked hard for the upliftment of the women in India and most importantly posed a challenge to the dominating men of the patriarchal society. Whether it was caste, women, marriage or education he attacked every social evils of the society. Vidyasagar had to face the bitter enmity of the orthodox Hindus and sometimes even his life was threatened but he did not leave his battle incomplete and fought till the end. Hence Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar can be rightfully called a social reformer.

"Boldness is my friend." — William Shakespeare

[6]

3rd Prize, Creative Writing, English on Vidyasagar Diwas

VIDYASAGAR AS A SOCIAL REFORMER

Ahana Basu

(Department of Journalism and Mass Communication)

Revolution is an extreme form of change. Since it is not gradual, it is different from evolution. Revolution is also different from concepts such as revolt, rebellion, mutiny, uprising and insurrection. It means modernization and not restoration. It aims at emancipation of men as well as women from social, political and cultural bondage. Bengal was thus not alienated from this concept during the 19th century which saw a unique blend of social reformers, scholars and literary giants. While Raja Rammohan Roy was one of the pioneers of this time, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was at the helm of revolutionizing Bengal with his strong influence and by dedicatedly working towards the upliftment of women's status in India. A philosopher, academic educator, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Vidyasagar's passive contribution to Bengali literature was Michael Madhusudan Dutta, later the Meghnad Bodh Kavya Grantha, the first piece of literature, instigated people to revolt against the established order, just the very essence of what Vidyasagar did.

If we trace back to the 19th century colonial Bengal, various patriarchal ideologies governing the lives of women were gradually challenged, despite stern social disapprobation, by Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and the Radical Young Bengal. Thanks to these pioneers, the 19th century is generally regarded as the time when a number of reform movements geared towards the emancipation of women were undertaken. While talking about Vidyasagar's contribution, mentioning Rammohan's role becomes inevitable. Both of them opted for changing the society from within through activist politics, strengthened by their tracts on prohibition of widow immolation and sanctioning of widow marriage. Instead of being radical and dismissive of the contemporary society, they tried to engage their compatriots with a view to changing long-held beliefs about the condition of women in Bengal. They were often labeled as half liberals by the young Bengal due to their "slow go policy". But their efforts gradually paid off as the year 1829 saw widow immolation being banned by the British colonial India. The following year witnessed the passing of the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act XV and intercourse with wives below the age of twelve was also criminalized.

Rammohan Roy's relentless struggle may have saved the widows from the burning pyre, by banning sati in 1829, but their harmonious coexistence in the society became a complete myth. After becoming widows, they were sent to Kashi, only to get sexually exploited by the Purohits, which led to the rise of religious prostitution. But the only way to stop these young girls from becoming widows was to stop child marriage altogether. For this Vidyasagar campaigned against Kulin Brahmin polygamy, child marriage and prostitution. But the process had never been smooth for him, since he never got the full support from neither the society, nor the contemporary media. In fact instead of appreciating his efforts as a social reformer, various literary plays were made ridiculing his steps.

[7]

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar along with many other active reformers had opened schools for girls. This was because for him, educational reform was much more important than any other reform. He believed that the status of women and all kinds of injustice and inequalities that they face could be changed only through education. Vidyasagar worked endlessly to provide equal education to all men and women irrespective of their caste, religion and gender. He did this since he believed that without education, there was no point of having legitimized laws if the women do not know about it, let alone access it. He also allowed people from lower castes in the Sanskrit college that was meant only for upper caste men.

Apart from his kindness, Vidyasagar was an extremely humble individual, a characteristic through which he constantly inspired people. He was so moved by the cruel poverty people were living under, that as a student he would use his scholarship proceeds to feed and buy medicines for the sick. In him India saw an individual whose own interests took a backseat as he constantly worked for the betterment of society.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar had truly been a 'messiah' for the Indian women, without whom they would not have seen the lights of education nor had they got equal status in the society like men. If we are to analyze the effect of these reforms in the contemporary society, we see that every day the newspapers are filled with new cases of atrocities committed against Indian women. But today, 200 years after Vidyasagar's time, the Indian Penal Code has brought in front of the public eye, reforms that Vidyasagar had envisioned for the Indian women long back. It had introduced stricter laws against sexual harassment, increased justice for acid attack survivors, harsher penalties for child marriage, tougher laws against domestic violence, promising higher representation for women in parliament, greater protection for children and of course the Triple Talaq Bill.

A whole lot of women have suffered brutally under a host of crimes and continue to suffer even today. While these laws are certainly a welcome move to boost the deteriorating position of women in India, there's a lot more that needs to be achieved. It is due to Vidyasagar that today, 200 years later, Indian women not only have legitimized rights, but also representation in the parliament. Thus after his death Rabindranath Tagore had rightly said, "One wonders how god, in the process of producing forty million Bengalis, produced a man".

"Fight till the last gasp." — William Shakespeare

LIFE UNDER THE BRIDGE

Souraseni Bhattacharyya

(M.A. English)

Kolkata is a city, Calcutta – an emotion. As Geoffrey Moorhouse, in his book published in 1971, rightly points out, the city to be his 'strangely beloved', Calcutta surely is an everlasting enigma. The city's wealth is not, in its ancient monuments, medieval courtrooms or modern skyscrapers... it is in its stones. Perhaps no city in India, has inspired the responses of love and disgust so sharply, as Calcutta. Kolkata the city, that likes to keep a feet back in past till date, is a little slow paced; compared to its status of a Metro, a little disorganized and sometimes a bit dreamy too. The city is one where the old and the new, the beautiful and the squalid exist side by side. Once a city, second only to London, Kolkata is referred often, as a "Dying City". But despite, perhaps because of all its problems, "Calcuttans" love the city, with an illogical passion of true love. The feeling of this true love is immortalised in these following lines of Sunil Gangopadhyay in his poem "Calcutta and I".

"Calcutta, where can you escape my clutches?

You cannot hide in Canning Street—

and if you run down the broken lanes of Chinatown,

I shall chase you like a leopard,

leaping across the traffic lights, past miserable Burrabazar,

down Chowringhee—the convalescent's diet—

I shall pursue you My painful love like a strange phantom

shall track you down with vengeance."

Luckily enough, I have breathed my first in the soil of the city. In its most secret alleys, I have touched, first, the feeling of a burning passion inside, called 'love'... the age-old Ghats, of the city have sympathized with the bitter most tears, my eyes have welled up with, because of my failed, too many "firsts". The city knows me, and so do I. I have made a secret affair, with its unnamed lanes and by lanes, I have travelled through its every nook and corner, which are painfully ignored by her visitors and the hoi-polloi even. These places albeit lack, the flashy foil of commercialised advertisements, yet the most intricate flavours of the city are given a sauté inside these unknown, uncared, unkempt places of Titlotoma (meaning, Extremely beautiful; the term Kolkata commonly is referred to in Bengali). These places, forgotten, silently boasts the city's extraordinary idiosyncratic beauty.

All these facts about Calcutta make me a proud "Calcuttan", ever since. Mostly alone, I have explored the city quite well. I know those places, where the city keeps all its secrets hidden. Strawn

across her length and breadth, one needs to have an eagle eye and a passionate heart, illogical to a small extent, to discover the secret chests of the city. I have found one such, underneath the Fly-over, running straight through Golpark to Gariahat. The platform, below the bridge portrays a melange of lives, that attracts all my senses with an unique pleasure of joyful discovery. The stretched pavement, under the bridge, from Golpark to Gariahat, is seasoned with flavours unique to the taste of Calcutta. The place lacks a GPRS entry of its own. In a world where Google eyes play compulsive voyeurs, mapping and appropriating spaces, revealing the minutiae of veins, it is strange that Calcutta still keeps secrets. The marks on the map grow fainter, as an intricate geometry of roads lead to labyrinthine lanes and by-lanes, till there are places where the city simply tumbles out of the cartographer's vision. In these places the only GPRS that works is speculation. Life under Gariahat Fly Over is one such

The area under Gariahat Bridge is vibrant due to the varied and brisk business run by too many vendors. They sell various items. The cluster of cubicles, has selling stalls, tea kiosks, Dosa stalls. The space accommodates some very famous Fuchkawalas (Bengalis really have a soft corner for fuchka) and the list goes on. But, perhaps in my eyes the cynosure of the show is the 13 tabled chess club over there. The club shares its terrace, partially with both: the fly over's iron sheets and the partly visible city sky. It's existence is almost camouflaged inside the busy business that runs over the area, Gariahat, one of the city's primary business citadels.

The club laid its cornerstone in the year 1985, and since then it has experienced no decline in its collective zeal. The humble pavement ending or beginning whatever one calls it, has attained the look of a legitimate club with 13 tables, bearing laminated boards, arched lamp posts and 26 stools laid out for anyone who likes an endgame.

Regulars at Gariahat Chess Club range from Government officials, to hawkers, all with a shared love of the game and a capacity to concentrate amidst the continuous hustle around one of Kolkata's busier intersection. Added to it is, Babulal's 'chai'. An elderly man of mid 60's, who has to manage over loaded work pressure, of catering a heavy queue of requests, to provide his special 'Cha', an integral part of any Bengali Adda. Mainly from seven in the evening men huddle over chess board under busy Gariahat flyover, oblivious to the traffic & noise around them. This is the Gariahat chess club, where for a fee of INR 10 one can become a legit member and can play there some pretty intense round of chess. Playing games like Carrom, Ludo and Chess is very Calcutta. Erstwhile just an informal gathering of chess lovers, the club took the shape of a valid CLUB, in 2008, when the flyover was built and now comes under the titular identity of Gariahat Chess Club. It has a count of members over 170 now, with 100 regular visitors. The number reflects the trait of people coming together to play here. They are street dwellers, Mphil/Phd students, college/University students, small traders, retired professionals, school kids, middle class Babus, infact many of the members are sons who man the popular street stalls in the area.

Interesting enough, it was in my higher secondary school years, that I met Harry over the same place. Harry is from Russia, pursuing his academic interests in International Relations from the University of Jadavpur. I was quite surprised to meet him there, as it was unexpected. I came to know from him that Chess is the national Russian hobby. In our conversation, he also admitted that, in Russia, he has not seen people who are so passionate about chess/hobby, that they would find scorching heat, honking horns, or intense pollution not an issue while pursuing habits. In Harry's eye, the place is cosmopolitan as well as egalitarian per excellence of the two terms. Harry told me he is going to remember the place his entire lifetime. Babu da's cha, poured from the improbable height to the pink clay pot over the crushed spices, sugar and milk, is for Harry "something that settles everything to the right place". Harry said, and so he does, to pay a visit to this chess club everytime he visits India.

The club doesn't run without a future plan. It has chalked out plans to arrange coachings for youngsters by some accomplished regulars and putting up a giant screen on pillars to invite top players to take special challenges over the board. Recently the spot is enjoying a facelift of glowing tiles and better seats. A sum of Rs. 20 lakhs was afforded for the self fashioning of the club.

I have been an old soul in this unique spot, at the heart of the city. The flavours of the spot is varied and different than all the metro cities of the world. Life gathers there from all the walks of life in their most honest self manifestation. Everything comes under Gariahat's roof, everything takes place there: from old pals catching hold of each other after work, to lazily sipping a cup of hot tea, or may be humming a song to strumming a guitar, from watching beggars and homeless contemplating life, street kids playing, to the latest model of Ferrari being parked, Gariahat is the most tolerant to its new and varied experiences. The chess club has silently but strongly defeated the globalized unidimensional identity of self. It with its humanitarian motto "come and welcome" has shaken hand with everyone: homeless, rich, vegetarian, beef eater, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Muslim. One has only a single identity in that place: a 'member'. It's a moment of pride for Calcuttians like us, who believe in equality, uniqueness and tolerance to accept all kinds. An unique identity of Kolkata, the club is protecting humanism, silently in its low key activity, simply in a round of chess.

"Life is a lively process of becoming." — Douglas MacArthur

EPIPHANIES

Samiddha Ghosh
(Department of English)

Epiphanies are sudden realizations about you, life or your life. I have had around four massive epiphanies in the two decades I've survived... I'm hoping every reader has had one or is about to by the due course of finishing this. Some are hit by it at twelve or nine and the other unfortunate ones take the time up to a mid life crisis.

The first time I had it I was fourteen, perpetually tired and alone at home. While I dragged my thick thighs to the ivory basin to wash my face to begin the evening. Unwillingness creeping through my temples aiming to slide through my ear drums and infect my otherwise calm brain. I splashed my face with some water and looked up towards the mirror when I saw it... my face! I stood petrified letting the galactic moment sink in, looking into my deep seated perplexed eyes. This round pound of flesh, wavy strands of ink brown hair, corpses of died out pimples on the apples of my fat cheeks, the double chin, bushy eyebrows... I had been living with this for fourteen years straight. This fleshy clothing I'm trapped inside. In that microsecond I realised that it is going to continue to be this body... this face for as many years as I manage to survive. It hit my head hard enough to feel a flickering visual solarisation or ghosting effect vibrating from my cerebellum to toe nails. My entire body fell off a cliff into this unending spiral pit of vacuum. This face looking back from the mirror at me... was ME! There I stood, a fourteen year old, not drugged, not stoned, not high; realizing: you only live once while you are aware of it because even if you reincarnate you must probably won't look, feel or be the same. If they happens we'll have to be in a parallel universe. Moreover: you'll only get one body a life! Sad, is it not? This was somewhat an Onism; the frustration of being stuck in a single body which is only capable of inhabiting at one place in one point of time. You most likely feel it in crowds... rail stations, bazaars, witnessing the airport departure screen, like an ambedo; a melancholic or effective trance of realization that you'll witness very little of the world before you are dead.

The second epiphany I had was in the changing room of a shopping mall, golden lights on me, mirrors all around. I realised how important my 'flaws' are. My flaws distinguish me! My flaws were perfect!

In the minor epiphanies I realised that life is that awkward moment between birth and death, through a meme! I realised through the BBC Sherlock series that

- a) *All lives end, all hearts are broken... caring is not an advantage.*
- b) *Your own death is something that happens to everybody else.*

And the fact that being kind and good to one another should be the eventual aim of human beings. These epiphanies freeze our body, making the brain run for it's life with cactus trees as shoes and drops elixir on our tongue tips. What's sad is many of us go through such events and do not normalize it hence getting negatively affected.

Well I just did. Tell me or a friend about it or go get one quick!

"It's no wonder that truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense." — Mark Twain

COFFEE AND CONTEMPLATIONS

Debarati Banerjee
(Department Of Geography)

Maybe, it's already too late to find love.
I see people, who are in love.
A pretty coffee shop.

A mild jasmine fragrance, which is stirred with the cold air. The smell of freshly baked confectionary. Soft music slips into my ears, almost as tenderly, as the boy entwines his fingers with hers and the ring on her finger glistens. So does the curve on her lips. She looks coyly, blushing a beautiful baby pink, so does the sky. I can gather from the boy's face, that it wasn't an easy road for him either. Love is never easy.

As I look away, my vision travels far, to that part of the sky which looks like a canvas where the artist has filled in a bluish grey as if he has emptied his heart on the canvas, which too longs for love.

Next, I see a man resting on a couch placed along the glass window of the cafe. Maybe, his mug is filled with a strong black coffee. His right arm, covers his eyes and forehead. Occasionally, he rests his head and looks through the glass. A layer of vapour has formed over it. It is raining now. I feel the urge to go up to him, but I hold myself back.

The red headlights of the cars, reflect on the raindrops collected on the window. Scatters the red, like blood. The hubbub outside however, fails to pierce in.

Two girls are sitting at the table just next to mine, and one of them is sobbing. Is it a heartbreak or just bad grades? I fail to fathom.

Strange, how we meet different people without even knowing, what they are going through, but yes what I know is that everyone has a story to tell. Which is their very own. Of their share of sufferings. Pains.

The atmosphere is intoxicating here. I inhale the cold air.
Maybe it's already too late to find love.
Suddenly, the music has my attention, I fall back to reality
'I just called, to say, I Love You...'
I feel a something. Is it a heartbreak?

"Solitary trees, if they grow at all, grow strong." — Winston Churchill

THE CALL

Debarati Banerjee
(Department Of Geography)

It was an usual morning.

Just that I woke up a little late today. I saw my mom was preparing some nice breakfast. A little mechanically today, she kept the plate on the table. I was talking to her, asking her if dad had left already for work she wasn't answering. All this while I was not looking at her, but as I did, the blood in my veins turned cold. It was not my mom's usual smile. Her green eyes seemed darker. I later realised, her pupils were dilating, slowly, into oblivion. The toasts on my plate were burnt, the poach was half done.

She kept staring. Her smile, eerie. I tried calling her. Shook her, at a point almost pushed her but all in vain. It was then, that my phone rang and broke the quiet. My heart skipped a beat, when I saw the screen. My eyes were fixed to the phone, which read "Mom calling.."

None of it made sense. I took the call and heard a lot of hustle. Confused, I kept repeating, "Hello? Is anyone there on the call?"

A man, in a worried and quick voice spoke, "Mrs James has met with an accident near the grocery store. Reach here soon, I think she is no more. Yours was the last number she called, so we reached out."

The phone slipped from my hand, fell on the ground.
Mrs James, is still staring at me.

"The last woman I was in was the Statue of Liberty." — Woody Allen

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

Saloni Sharma
(Department Of Sociology)

The sky has always been fascinating to me. The vibrant colours seem to be the pallet of Gods while the nimbids that are the clouds float aimlessly all around. I could stare at those clouds all day in peace. In fact every time I feel restless or panicked I look up at the sky and try to concentrate on the shapes of the clouds, and suddenly I find myself breathing easy. As a child I always wished to be a bird, to fly above and beyond the clouds. But as I grew up, my point of view started altering subtly, and soon I wanted to be a cloud instead of a bird.

My younger self wanted to be a bird just for fun, for she wanted to live the dream. But now that I've grown up, my experiences define my mindset and therefore my wistful thinking. Now I relate to an aimless cloud more than a free bird. A bird is free to fly in the limitless sky, but they still seem to have a purpose in life. Each bird is responsible to make a nest, feed their little one and teach them to fly and so on. They are almost like humans in this sense. At this point in my life I'm yet to find my purpose and thus a frivolous cloud appeals to my conscience more than the birds.

When clouds clash, I can visualize an image of two people fighting. The thunder and lightning, the rain and storm are almost as if us, the humans, venting out some of the most important emotions, anger, sadness and relief. They seem to change colours from time to time, some blend in the background while some stand out, it often makes me think of people trying to blend in the crowd while some try to remain under the spotlight. Sudden changes in the weather due to dark clouds remind me of humans experiencing mood swings. If you observe closely the clouds are not exact replica of each other just like human beings, even twins have attributes and qualities that create a difference between them, this is what makes us unique. Even our own idea of others surrounding us can be a parallel for when we use our imagination, which is a product of our upbringing and prejudice, to see shapes in the clouds. These shapes are subjective just like our opinions on different things and beings. Lastly, if you ever notice, you'll see some clouds just merge to form a larger cloud while some separate from the group due to wind or some other aspect that generate these changes, this never fails to remind me how our innate desire is to be a part of a group or community for humans cannot survive in isolation. While some remain a part of a certain group for a long period of time, others might just find themselves leaving it due to certain circumstances and trying to merge into another group or community, and that's just how life is - a constant need to be part of something bigger than us, clashing with each other, separating, and moving on.

Someday, when I finally find a goal in life, an aim to work towards, I might just go back, wanting to be a free bird but may be with certain responsibilities. Even then these clouds will never stop mesmerizing me.

"Do crabs think we walk sideways?" — Bill Murray ■

TEXTING, A BLESSING?

Chandreyi Chatterjee
(Department Of Sociology)

Should I ask her which colour of eyefiner she prefers? As I'm about to press on the name button and make the call, I retreat towards the familiar whatsapp or text message folder. This feeling is common amongst people who have been a victim of anxiety. It's always a much safer and calmer decision to message the person instead of actually hearing their voice. This statement might seem atypical to others but to someone who is in constant alliance with the unnumerable anxious thoughts which creep into the cravices of their minds when the said call goes unanswered or worse put off subtly for later, they totally mentally high-five me at this point.

Annoying or loathsome would be major understatement for decoding the plaguing effects of anxiety. One might be in the highest of spirits, yet at the slightest mention of having to speak to a stranger in person or over the phone about seemingly insignificant issues might trigger off irrational ideas in ones head. Head. Head. Head. The crux of all dystopian ideologies and the erection ground of all vague assumptions. Anxiety delivers one as a pessimistic individual through and through.

What could be so agonizing about hearing the voice of your loved ones? Shooting a quick question regarding their day or just maybe initiating contact with a potential future love interest or even as much as your best friend. It's all in the head I tell you. Is what we get to hear time and again and that is true to an extent. Typing it out or messaging that same person is what we choose over the former. The latter saves us from spending futile hours deciphering the reason behind the specific tone of voice used or the way the person on the other end speaks to us. It ain't easy we say. Try waking up with your inner demons for a week. Now imagine doing the same for as long as you live. Do you really blame us for choosing to thank technology for blessing us with the euphoric joy of texting instead of calling?

"Believe you can and you're halfway there." — Theodore Roosevelt

FORBIDDEN FROM FOREVER

Mritika Banerjee
(Department of Economics)

"The truth is stranger than fiction."

Spring of 2008.

Sanvi had just graduated high school with an impressive score of 98%. Her talents enabled her to secure a place in one of the top colleges in the country. Her family was proud of her.

Summer of 2006.

Sanvi left for Delhi where her new home was her hostel. And here, little did she know that she would meet her first love.

"Not all love stories start rosy, you know", said Meghna, folding her bed sheets one fine morning, before they would go out for a morning walk. Sanvi was getting to know boys for the first time coming from a girls' school. So, things weren't easy for her here.

On the first day of college, she made a new enemy, instead of making new friends.

"Why should girls even play football and cricket? Neither do they have stamina nor strength! They should just go back to playing hide and seek in the garden!", said this boy, rather a young man, technically, who was neither attractive, nor openly affectionate, named Susheel.

Sanvi immediately rushed to the scene with all of her wits and feminist ideology around her. But sadly, the conversation turned into a heated argument the moment she yelled "HOW DARE YOU!" Ah well, on the first day of college, all the Chemistry Honours students noticed before classes began, a heated quarrel.

The cold war between them continued. Both degraded each other in each other's absence. Occasionally, in each other's presence as well.

October 20th, 2006.

Yes, it happened. Everybody was scared, that something sinister is going to happen now. Sanvi and Susheel were made Chemistry laboratory partners. When classes were over, both came out laughing about how the Professor had messed up the Dry Test for testing the presence of Hydrochloric Acid!

"He is neither pretty nor smart, nor is he an intellectual. So why does the sound of his laughter keep on ringing in my ears!", said Sanvi, with frustration spilling out from her tone. "Well, we don't choose the ones we fall in love with.. we just do.", said Meghna.

Yes she was in love. Her first love. And, first love is really special, isn't it?

Winter of 2006.

"You know, I've missed quarrelling with you over the holidays", said Sanvi, the first day they met after the Puja holidays.

Yes, everyone saw it. Susheel blushed. Perfect love stories don't exist in the real world, but this did seem like one!

Summer of 2007.

It has been a year since they first met. Sarvi was dying to confess her love to Susheel. But the uneasy fear of rejection kept holding her back from confessing to him. "Does he like someone else? I think he likes Vineeta, she's both a topper and dancer in our batch. I don't even stand a chance. The very thought of rejection drains out my energy", said Sarvi, with a deep breath. "Just go and confess! Else you will regret for not confessing!"

Well, she didn't have to do much.

November 10th, 2007.

Amidst advance Diwali celebrations in college, a voice came floating in the air "I love you". Yes, he said it. And he stared at her the whole time that she stood in a corner, looking at the ground and smiling. He knew she was shy, but he knew she loved him too.

Fast forward one year. Summer of 2008. Countless memories had been made. From travelling in crowded trains, to holding hands in the busy streets of Old Delhi, to the counselling sessions, they found friendship and love in the same person. It was a dream. It was. She loved the sound of his laughter, and how he would laugh at his own jokes when nobody would, how he would listen to her constant rants patiently about the people she hated, but most surprisingly, she would be enthralled every time he talked flawlessly in Urdu.

Things were rosy so far. I am telling you again, it felt like a dream. A perfect love story.

December, 2008.

Everybody was worried. Post 26/11, Susheel had been missing. Sarvi was crestfallen.

"Miss, don't tell us you don't know anything. You happen to be the closest friend of this person, Bashir Ejaz Hakim, or, Susheel. He is an undercover terrorist, operating for Al Qaeda. These encoded messages in Urdu, these weapons, cannot belong to any normal citizen of India", and they threw everything on the table that they had recovered from his room, which had been set on fire the night he had gone missing.

"No sir, there has been a terrible mistake. How could he possibly..."

"His name is Bashir Ejaz Hakim, age 20, height 5'11", hailing from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, speaks English, Hindi, Urdu and Pashto. We are almost certain that he is linked with the 26/11 terrorist attacks."

And they showed her a picture of a man. The man looked like him. Yes, very much. With Kufi, and a beard that Sarvi had never seen before.

When Sarvi left the police station, she stood dumbstruck. She returned home as soon as possible, entered her bedroom and fell asleep.

She woke up in the evening, drank water. And fell asleep again.

Their first quarrel, their first day as Chemistry lab partners, all those times when she caught him staring at her, all the times they listened to music together, how Susheel had consoled her when she was heartbroken that she was not selected in the Orchestra team of her college, he said. "Tough times never last, but tough people do." She lived through all those memories, in her dreams. Probably that was why she could sleep so long.

Two days, no food. Never uttered a word. "His name is Bashir Ejaz Hakim...26/11...Al Qaeda". was all that she could hear. "Honey, if you don't eat you will fall sick!", probably these words never reached her ear.

She overheard the conversation coming in from the next room.

"Scoundrel! He betrayed all of us. People like him deserve to burn in hell!"

"Now come on, shut up. The guy has been hit with six bullets already."

"I would have loved to see him getting hit with half a dozen more!"

He was dead. There was a picture of his mangled body in the newspaper which her friends made sure she never saw.

They thought she was asleep. No. She had been hearing the whole conversation. A loud 'Thud', and she crashed first on the table, then on the floor with a blade in her hand, and probably the loudest cry they had ever heard. What was that cry for? Was it because she would never ever meet Susheel again? Was it because she felt betrayed? Or was it out of the physical torture that she had just inflicted upon herself?

Ten years since then. I meet Sarvi didi for the first time (well in her words, she hates to see me call her "didi", since she feels she's just as young and immature as I am!) Okay, so let me just refer to her as Sarvi now. She has just graduated with her Masters degree in Music from London School of Music and Drama.

"Mother, she is 32 years old. She talks way too much! She is way too childish for her age! And yes, that is annoying."

But this woman did have a different story to tell altogether.

Before leaving our house that afternoon, I saw a different side of her. Like that of a matured adult, she told me. "Tough times never last, but tough people do." And then she sat in the Uber, clinging to her mother and her violin. Next week, she would be going to Sydney to perform.

So now, my dear reader, do you finally believe in what my English teacher told me, "The Truth is stranger than fiction"?

"Focus on the journey, not the destination." — Greg Anderson

DIARY OF AN INTROVERT

Payal Roy

(Journalism and Mass Communication)

There are times when the crowd suffocates me. It chokes my throat, seals my lips and I get unnerved. Some repelling force of the head and heart pulls me back and I keep running away from the crowd. No, I don't have a psychological disorder. People call me an 'introvert'.

I am a girl who finds solace sitting in a corner of the class, alone, while the others find pleasure in their regular titbits. While they make memories among themselves, I create memories with empty classrooms, the benches, the grills of the corridor or with the books in the library. The crowd of the canteen and the noise makes me repulsive. But I never get tired of the fluttering of the turning pages of a book, when the wind ruffles them.

I am somebody who behaves like a stranger whenever I come across any known face in the crowd. Some groundless fear overpowers my mind and I refrain myself from talking to people thinking that if I utter something, a chain of conversations would follow. I'm not comfortable in making long conversations with people, so I prefer to avoid them. Hence, people find me arrogant, boring or simply an 'introvert'.

My earphones act as a shield, protecting me from embarrassing situations and the clumsy crowd. On a busy rainy day, I would prefer a window seat of a bus with earphones plugged in, staring at the aimless race of the rain drops on the window pane. Even the shrill cry of the conductor can't distract me.

Yes, the crowd suffocates me but I find my oxygen among the crowd of books in College Street. The smell of new books fascinates me. I can tirelessly gaze at the dreamy sunset. I can spend hours staring at the play of the pigeons in a Masjid courtyard. I can readily get lost in the crowd of my memories on a starry night. These crowds are among whom I rediscover myself every time. I don't mind if people call me an 'introvert'.

I'm not an escapist. I don't escape from people, I choose to stay away from them. Smiling forcefully being a part of any disagreeable conversation is not my cup of tea. Spending time with colour changing chameleons, in the name of friendship is also not my thing. So I prefer to stay away from these 'known strangers' who call me, an 'introvert'.

"Don't be humble, you're not that great." — Indira Gandhi

[20]

TWENTY

Olivia Roy

(Political Science Honours)

Twenty is an even number. But twenty is an odd age. Twenty is a woman slumbering inside my skinny, underweight body often mistaken as a school-goer. Twenty reminds me of the time when I turned eighteen and felt glad. But this time it's different- twenty makes me feel empathetic.

My teenage was a piece of square camphor trapped in a square box of predicaments, yet evanescent – like seasons that come, touch us and disappear at the back of our minds. On the threshold of twenty, I had stood against grey skies, a dead sunflower in my pocket. I had walked through the streets of my city, breathed in polemical histories and listened to colonial laughter with one ear. An uncanny melancholy yielding from my tentativeness from what I perceive of the world around me seeped through the crevices of my heart; the dead sunflower in my pocket – a fossil.

Twenty wakes the woman up from my within, with a lover's touch. She's a semblance of my mother, she plasters the crevices of the grief-stricken pulp of flesh, with an acute piece of hope – a buoyant push of freshness takes me forward. I take a sip from a life of self-reliance.

Twenty makes me stop and think – by lilac sunsets on late September evenings, or breathe in damp soils before *Puja* – I am taught to smile at spaces between seconds and moments between errands. *Twenty teaches me to converse with myself.*

I look around and wonder if we have really grown up when we cannot seem to hear what the voice inside our heads. Does growing up mean to have a drive outside the city on weekends? Or is it a license to have kids? I believe, growing up is much more than that. To be able to listen to yourself is the most important step to conquer.

I might seem like someone who wins everybody at the lunch table with every ounce of amicability, but who actually knows if I really say what I want to be heard, for every time a word escapes my mouth, it is after a painstaking process of translation between my mind and my tongue, and that way, the mouth utters what the ears mostly want to hear. But twenty? It's a beautiful age – it teaches me to make peace with myself. Twenty is such a myriad plethora of experiences multiplied with numbers, an amalgamation of lessons learnt from half-baked promises and false hopes.

At nights I don't feel lonely anymore in the white silhouette of the street lamp – willing myself to sleep by caressing my arm is an art now. Having been brisking away amongst the unapparent excitement of everyday life, delving into moments that do not leave a scratch on the slate of the mind, I return to my region now – the one inside my head, where white is white, and black is black.

Twenty has taught me to hold my own hand, before I hold yours, to feel my presence before I feel yours, to own my scars before you trace your fingers on my stretch marks, and still be able to stand before the mirror and smile at the radiance reflecting off my bindi.

Twenty acknowledges the woman inside my skinny underweight body by her name.

"The only truth is musk." — Jack Kerouac ■

[21]

A CITY OF DEADS – *Revisiting the pages in History*

Ishita Kumar
(Department of B.ed.)

Every time I visit South Park Street Cemetery, I have been moved by the gravity of the place. The weathered mossy stones, now interrupted by trees, that have had stretch their limbs for centuries make the cemetery an 'artefact of the past'. The memorials are almost architecturally imposing, replete with classical details and sculptures.

The silence those dawns upon us after entering the premises endows us with a peace of mind. The only element at play is the breeze whispering in the grand canopy of the huge trees. The sound while treading along the Derozio Path, strewn with dry leaves is very soothing. Although situated in the heart of the busy city, it carries with it a sense of tranquillity – the silence of ancient trees and dilapidated graves is most enchanting.

Having settled in surrealism, the interestingly constructed graves seem to narrate their own story. The cemetery in the midst of glamorous buildings lay uncomplaining like a 'living mockery'. It seems to whisper to the hurrying passengers that no matter how Man aspires to touch the ultimate from dust he has come and one day to that dust he shall return.

Rudyard Kipling aptly says –

"the tombs are small houses...a town shrivelled by fire and scarred by frost and siege."

"Love the life you live. Lead the life you love." – Bob Marle

RENDEZVOUS WITH MAGNIFICENT CREATION OF INDIAN ART AND HISTORY

Aritrea Dutta
(Department of B.Ed.)

**"TRAVELLING IS NOT SOMETHING YOU'RE GOOD AT,
IT'S SOMETHING YOU DO – LIKE BREATHING"**

— Gayle Foreman

Travelling generally means movement of people between geographical locations. But for me travelling does not mean only movements rather it is a way to learn, to experience and to realise. We do various things to break our monotonous routine but travelling not only provides us relaxation but at the same time enrich us in all aspects.

Travelling gives us idea about different geographical features and locations, knowledge about various cultures, people, life style etc. and at the same time it also make us realise how much we dwell on petty matters, ego and selfishness. It reveals, how small we are in comparison to everything, how less we know and how much we need to learn.

Travelling helps us to expand ourselves, helps to release all the toxic energy from our body and mind and fill our soul with positive motivation and develop positive attitude towards life.

Being a student of geography, travelling has always attracted me. I have visited many places in India, out of which, I am sharing my experience of visit to exquisite Ajanta and Ellora caves. These caves are located in Maharashtra in the district of Aurangabad.

To reach Ajanta one has to get down at Bhusaval or Jalgaon railway station. Then they have to proceed towards Fardapur near Ajanta. From there one has to avail battery operated bus for reaching the caves.

The caves are rock-cut Buddhist caves which date from 2nd century BCE to about 480 CE. The caves are located on a rocky cliff of a U-shaped gorge on the small river Waghur in the Deccan plateau. There are 30 caves (approx) in total but only few are accessible. All the caves contains Buddhist architecture and magnificent paintings. The paintings depicts the past lives and rebirth of Buddha, pictorial tales of Jatakamala. There is also a rock-cut sculpture of Buddhist deities. Caves no 1, 2, 16 and 17 are worth mentioning as it contain the surviving ancient Indian wall paintings. The surrounding environment is beautiful and serene.

However the paintings are well preserved way by the Archaeological Survey of India but still are getting destroyed day by day. The paintings of the caves show the skill of artists of those days and also reflect exquisiteness and excellence of art attained during those times.

Another spectacular creation in our country as well as in the world is the Ellora caves. There are exquisite fine and spellbound carvings and sculptures. It is one of the largest rock-cut monastery temple complex. Cave temples of Ellora are the combination of three great religious faiths - Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. They contain elaborate carvings of gods and goddesses and our epics The Ramayana and The Mahabharata. The carvings on three religious faiths illustrate a spirit of faith and tolerance which was a characteristics of ancient India. Caves 14, 15 and 16 are worth mentioning. Cave 16 is known as Kailas. Carved out of a mountain, this temple of Lord Shiva is by far the best of all Ellora excavations. It is regarded as the greatest monolithic structure in the world.

All the caves consist works of superb genius with magnificent construction and planning which cannot be described in words. These caves exhibit excellence of the artists and outstanding work of art. These grandeur of architects and sculptures out of living rock is a reflection of the golden period of Indian history.

Millions of precious stones will be formed on earth but the excellence of these creations can never be reached. Time will come and go but these creations will enrich our culture and heritage forever.

"Life is about making an impact, not making an income." — Kevin Kruse



NOCTURNAL WHISPERS

Samridha Ghosh

(Department of English)

'I don't wanna talk about it how you broke my heart', the mellifluous lines of Rod Stewart soak into the intricate corners of my old soul having passed through my rotund and suffered ears, my cracked and burnt flesh and my placid and fragile bones.

The night just got pitch inky and we are supposed to call it the morning for the time is sharp three (of the 'morning') as I listen to the song for the twenty third time. There is no hesitation anymore to befriend the fact that the more I hear 'I don't wanna talk about it how you broke my heart' my charged nucleus desires to bang the universe I see operating with my naked insomniac eye from my room's south faced window and talk loud about it.. how you broke my heart!

But revelation leads to the revelation of misery.. misery and a bucket more of misery. And that is why let us keep it hidden. Identities, apparent obscenities...

LET US ALL LOOK AT THIS SCREEN AND DEVOUR WHAT WE READ. THE IRRESISTIBILITY OF ROMANTICISM WITH PAIN.

Any reader that reads this might as well halt for a moment to pay homage to every suffering they have had the good fortune to witness. for misery is the lovechild of Love itself!

'Blue for the tears, black for the night's fears' he says... Rod Stewart in his song. Haven't we all shed blue tears? Ink blue or teal.. whatever that may be. For the crimson fluid called LOVE that runs in us by the pen name of BLOOD boils and boils and boils waiting to be tamed and flamed by the correct fire. When ages pass and the fire ceases or denies existing, this BLOOD stops boiling within us.. out goes the resilience the blossoming and flushing and the turbulent flow of thick inertia. This is when crimson turns to maroon which turns to violet and to plum then to indigo follows by berry and cobalt!

The same way the sky; the vault of heaven evolves in the due course of the day.. from the lilac dawn to the citric day, the chrome noon and the peach dusk to the purple twilight followed by the Oxford blue night which then cycles over. Auroras do not occur very often.

Let us all cycle over.. anyone who reads this.. Let us cure our hearts to be broken again.. (Still denying being a sadist). For a heart that is not breaking is a heart that is not breathing!

It is 3.55 am on the 16th of November here in my city and every star gazing at me is a star I am gazing at.. Let me hold this pristine saine of the universe tonight to remind us all that it is fine for them to break our hearts.

Hearts are like stars... the stronger and more glaring the flame the brighter the glow.
 Stars are actually the lovers of our last life! They died loving us and are burning even now, even today so that we can have an ethereal night every time we do not or cannot sleep!
 Thus in this life the one's that broke our heart are the ones we will most probably become stars for by their next life if we continue beating for them back now! I am,
 Are you ready? ... To expire from your broken heart and expire from this body and expire by loving them and expire to become shining stars in the night sky of their next life? - *An ardent lover.*

"Seek the seeker." — Ramana Maharshi

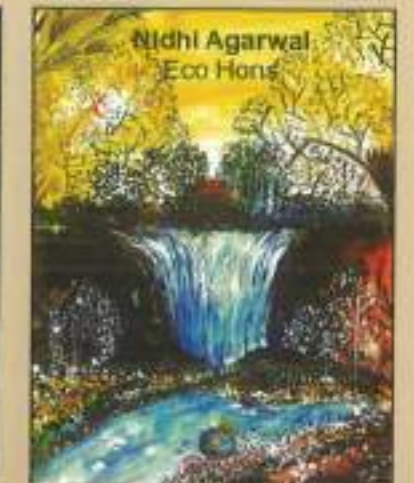
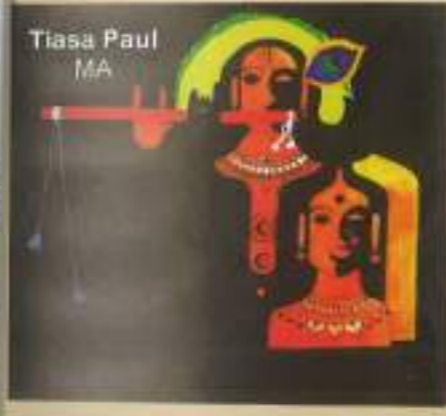
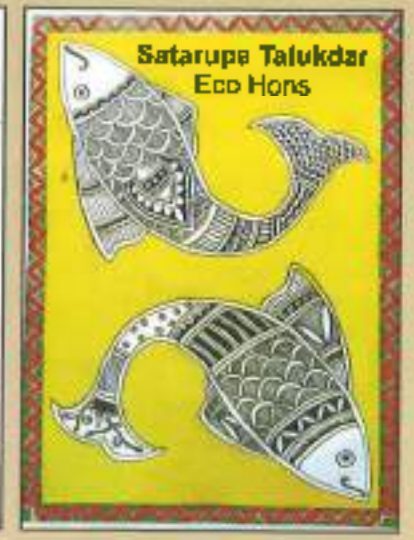


UNTITLED

Ruchira Pachisla
 (Department Of English)

It's a great world, or should I say that it's a great 'virtual' world. Bling has taken over your 'rectangular device' The reason why a lot of us have 'FOMO'. It's a four letter abbreviation of a big thing for teenagers nowadays.
 "Fear of missing out" has made a lot of kids, teenagers and even some adults feel an urge to attend everything everytime because they fear that they are missing out on so much while swiping through other's stories and posts. They start thinking that if they do not keep themselves posted about everything, they won't qualify as "socially acceptable". They need to be present in every party, know every gossip, attend every event. But does going there or doing that really make you happy? The urge will just keep growing. The need of attention and validation will always prevail, making your heart dreary, and mind, less peaceful.
 Always remember, you'll be where you need to be and want to be, fostering this behaviour will not only drag down your personality but also your peace of mind. By that, you automatically reduce your chances of getting judged. Rather, people look up to you and respect you.
 "FOMO" is a real thing, just don't feed it's needs unless you want to seem needless in front of everyone else.

"Life is too important to be taken seriously." — Oscar Wilde ■

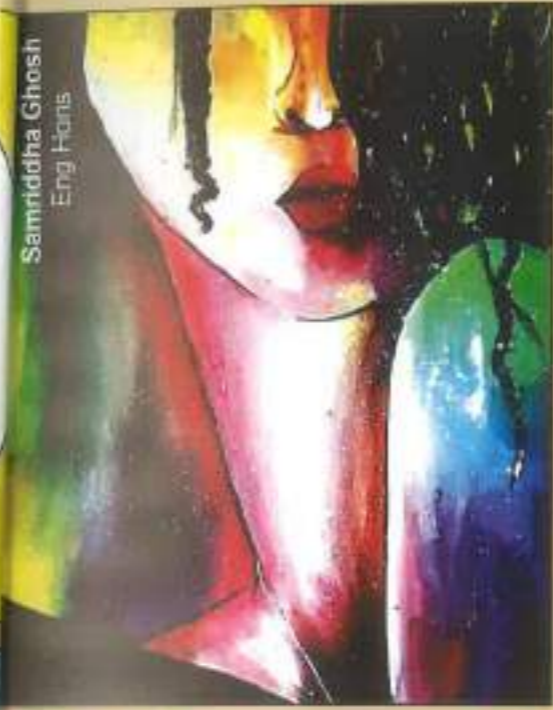




Aditi Malhotra
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Samridha Ghosh
Eng Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Aditi Malhotra
JMC Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Samridha Ghosh
Eng Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Aditi Malhota
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Anneyesha Chatterjee
PG Eng



Anneyesha Chatterjee
PG Eng



Shreya Hazra
Eco Hons



Shreya Hazra
Eco Hons



Samridha Ghosh
Envy Hon



Soumata Sanya
Chem Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Samridha Ghosh
Eng Hon



Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Joyita Sarkar
JMC Hons



Fatema Nigar
Geog Hons



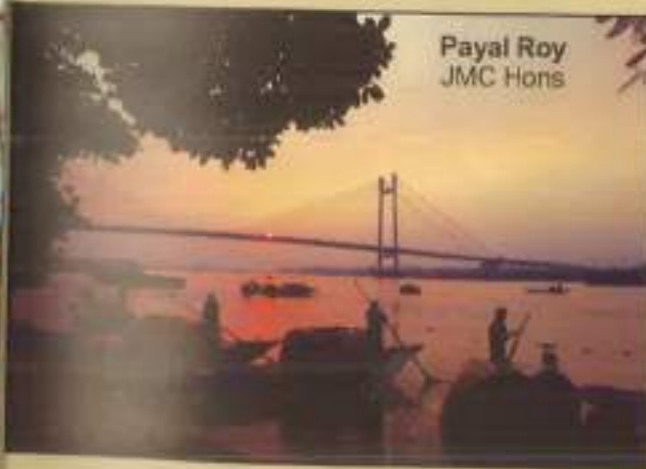
Joyita Sarkar
JMC Hons



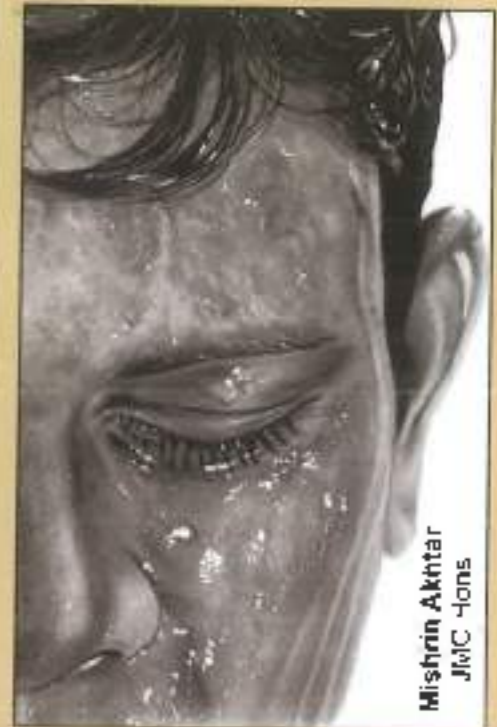
Ahana Basu
JMC Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Payal Roy
JMC Hons



Mishrin Akhtar
JMC Hons



Samriddha Ghosh
Eng Hon



Samriddha Ghosh
Eng Hon



Koyena Das
B.Sc Hons



Joyita Sankar
M.C Hons



Samriddha Ghosh
Eng Hon



Samriddha Ghosh
Eng Hon

OBLIVION

Mritika Chatterjee
(Department of English)

And here goes another thought of mine,
into the heap of the thoughts of the past.
It took me a very long time to realise,
that everyday, bit by bit,
my thoughts were busy building something.
No, they weren't building a better me,
they were building a cage,
and I am feeling more suffocated, helpless.

I spread my hand towards the world,
shouting, crying, breaking down into pieces
and again rising with the hope of getting heard by someone.
But I see none except darkness,
slowly walking towards me
trying it's best to take over me,

A terrible cage,
which is getting stronger with every passing second,
and here I am, standing and thinking I don't know what

I feel like running,
but the cage is stopping me
My heartbeats are increasing with every passing second,
my hopes of a better tomorrow are crumbling down like a house of cards,
I feel like giving up,
but 'no', says a voice from within.
Suddenly that one percent hope I had
made me feel strong,
stronger than ever,
so strong that I broke whatever was stopping me,
and ran,
ran away from darkness,
ran away from the obstacles,
hoping to see the light,
but alas darkness still didn't give up,
it's still following me
I try to run faster,
I collapse I feel tired.

yet something made me stand up and run,
I ran for hours.
I am wounded but not a mark of blood is visible,
I am thirsty but not a drop of water is available.
I am struggling,
not only with the environment
which plans to cease all the colours from my life
but also with myself, a poor, meandering soul
who doesn't know that it's useless to wander around
until and unless you lose your way
just to find a new version of yourself
by fighting all the demons
this blackness brings with it.

And after struggling more,
my soul finds the light
It has been looking for,
since a long time
and that made me realise
that on the days
when we are surrounded by darkness
and hope for light
we tend to forget that,
'light lies within us.'
It lies within the power
of patience
and
of the 'I won't give up' attitude.

So whenever a sheet of blackness surrounds you,
knocks you down,
leaves you in a pool of tears,
don't forget to remind yourself
that you are there for it
and you, are enough.
And then watch how
you, yourself create light
and guide yourself out of the darkness.
Also, don't forget to shout out
and say yourself,
"I did it. I am unstoppable. I am light."

"The knowledge of happiness brings the knowledge of unhappiness." — Swami Vivekananda

THE ART OF LYING

Tanisha Bhattacharya
(Department of English)

When do you start lying?
Is it when you are not sure,
What, the outcome of your truth is?

Or is it when you are afraid?
When you feel the truth,
Will cause havoc in your life?

Or is it when you love someone?
When you know, the truth,
Will hurt the people you love?

Or is it just for the sake of it?
The sweaty palms, the nervous face,
The thrill, the adventure, the uncertainty of it all?

Or is it to gain strength?
To save yourself from the pitiful eyes,
And the sympathy that pierce your spirits?

Or is it because of all the above?
Because life sometimes become so uncertain,
That your lies become the only truth in it

"As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so a life well spent brings happy death."

— Leonardo da Vinci

CHRONICLES

Samiddha Ghosh
(Department of English)

To every mind that has wondered;
Every soul that strives.
To all who seek,
And anyone that thrives...
I am a passer-by;
Too rare to be quiet;
Too wild to sigh!
Words I have, words I hawk.
Life comes tip toed in this crosswalk.
Hear me out lovers passing through the sky.
Hear me before we all die!

EUTOPIA

Ankita Saha
(Department of English)

Let theatres be your anarchy,
Books your grave,
Coffee your slumber,
Music your crave,
Tagore your drug,
Kolkata your wave

TAKE ME TO THE GREAT FALL ..

Ankita Saha
(Department of English)

Take me where the light resides,
Walk me to the mountains;
Take me where the home dwells,
Fly me to the fountains.

Take me where the dawn hides,
Swim me to the oceans,
Take me where they tell tales,
Drive me to emotions.

Take me where the dusk lives,
Beyond the sky and the waves,
Where the farform souls thrive,
Sheer tranquility they crave.

Towards the horizon we move,
The night and the grave,
In quest of the cove,
The conquered and the brave.

The man and the dove,
And the trail of the doomed;
Seeking Bliss and Ardent Love,
From the Nothing to the Tomb.

"It takes a long time to become young." — Pablo Picasso

[38]

IRREPLACABLE

Ankita Saha
(Department Of English)

Do not force me to change
My course, my nature, my range
For I am born with it
It is natural
My weirdness is innate
Do not speak to me of the future
Do not tell tales of fate
Let me explore the world within me
Let me live amidst a soulful glee
Let me be rough and thorough
Let me be screwed and late
Let me be broken
Beyond all repair
Let me breath in ..
You and the air

I am tired of trying
Let me go, let me rest
Do not keep me from flying
Let it go, for my best

I am no extraordinary
A human of blood and flesh
Not born unique
Still want to start a fresh

I am on it
Working and toiling
To make myself work
Running and spoiling
And my Ivories lurk

Why look for perfection ?
When one can be imperfect yet beautiful,
To embrace myself ...

I tell my soul
Enough wasted .. Enough gained ..
I tell my heart
Enough lost .. Enough
sprained .. I tell my mind
Enough asked .. Enough lamed ..
I tell myself
Enough tried .. Enough framed
I realize
Enough borrowed .. Enough caged

I'll just be ME now
For one cannot change
Keeping in mind the perspective
Following which the world wants to see ME

Change the way you see me
For I am the best in me
For I have accepted the way I see
You and your flaws
I am what I am,
And I want to flaunt

My scars and my tears
My insecurity My tears
My darkness and the monster within
I am ready now, let that sink in

I am irreplaceable
In your unconscious you know that
For a fact
You are just too conscious to accept it
Your subconscious retorts
that you are ...

[39]

Too forlorn to let me go
Too sadistic to make me happy
Too dark to shine me bright
Too much of the otherwise
Like a moron, a parasite

Just understand
That I am way beyond
Your understanding

But then, . You defer

I do not care
If you judge me
For I sin differently

I used to be easily
replacable
At least that is
exactly
what had dawned upon my mind
Last dawn

But then
Now I know
Its not me its you ...
Yes its you ...
Your blindness
Your inability

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

— William Shakespeare

You could not see the me in you ...
You did let go of me
I did see the you in me
Am clinging on to it

Lingering around me
Is the metaphysical world
I am irreplaceable ...
And you know it ...
So do I

You're too coward to keep me
Am too brave to let you go
For I know that no human is irreplaceable

We cling on to one another's soul
Like little leaves of attachment
hanging on to
The decayed branches of humanism

No matter how hard you want to deny it
Know it

Nobody is easily replacable
We are all one of a kind

You are irreplaceable
And So am I.

ABOUT TIME

Debarati Banerjee

(Department Of Geography)

Today, at daybreak I heard the clock ticking,
Faint as it was, I tried to listen closer, harder.
Each time, I missed it, the sound was slipping,
Couldn't put it out of my mind,
as though my brain froze the sound.
Something, took me by the throat
Someone's mocking, could be heard,
A nightmare? I couldn't discern.
Time was fleeting, and I had to leave.
And then, the room was painted a dull grey
Had I become the devil's prey?
The ticking continued it's rhythm.
I tried to hold on, but all in vain.
Envisaged them,
Who no longer wake up to the rising sun,
I was lost in a whirlpool of memories,
Just then, the ticking hastened.
I knew it was about time,
A tick or two, and then,
A halt. Forever.

"Guests, like fish, begin to smell after three days." — Benjamin Franklin

IN THE NIGHT WILL IT END

Sumedha Thakur
(Department Of Chemistry)

Not a complaint in my mind I bore,
When I passed by the murmuring shore.
Listening to the desperate stillness of Night,
I was rendered a tempestuous flight I
The mighty waves roared on and on,
But I stopped not and carried on.
I gently walked along the shingle beach
And awaited the Night to preach.
She preached me nothingness,
And pushed me into a dark emptiness.
Pushed me and pulled me in and out
Then it startled me by laughing out loud!
I felt my feet upon the wet sands
And let the waves play gently upon my hands.
The gruesome Night laughed on and won,
Still I kept walking and carried on.
I heard closely her thundering laughter,
My spine trembled with a chilly shiver.
She consoled me or stopped me not.

She left me dismal and let me rot.
Then I surmised amidst the sea.
Again she provoked me to flee.
I felt no pain, I shed no tear
For I felt too numb, without any fear.
She pushed me again, down and down.
Once again a chain of memories glimpsed
around.

Heard a tune sweeter than my life,
Oh, a tune ever sweeter than my life!
I looked at her finally and smiled.
Such profound beauty has had me beguiled.
The moon set with a tinge of sorrow,
For my dawn won't rise tomorrow.

"Start every day off with a smile and get it over with." — W. C. Fields

[42]

ESCAPE

Subhra Parua Deb
(Journalism and Mass Communication)

Busy, mundane, hectic life,
Struggling every second to strive.
Amongst the insensitive crowd,
Am I standing alone?

Impalpable smiles and tears
Subdued for years,
Heaped under a monotonous schedule.
What is this unsaid rule?
Forlorn people in search of something—
Where lies the escape?

Few find it for a brief moment
In the picturesque, silent sunset.
While others in the blooming
Of the evening primrose
Receive their respite,
A much needed dose.

The escape is in the soothing breeze
That gently touch the skin's peace.
When glaring outside the train's window,
Halt! Give deaf ears to the chatters indoor.

Reach out to the seas that beckon you,
The mountains that calm you,
And let the soul find its solace
Amidst the unvarying days

Life is all about the morning cup of coffee,
Or that much treasured winning trophy,
From the album of your forgotten hobby,
The dog-eared page of your last read book,
Or perhaps, the last carefree picture you took.

Let the soul take a leap
Before you drown too deep.
In your life's videotape,
Do not forget to record your escape.

"Time is the soul of this world." — Pythagoras

[43]

STAND BY ME

Shifa Khan
(Department of Political Science)

Stand by me, while I'm on the seashore,
And the waves are smudging up my somber.
While I see the shooting stars that ignite
 credence against-

While I feel the rain falling upon me
Washing away my Secludedness,
Stand by me

When I feel you in every breath I take,
When I see you above in the clouds,

Stand by me
When the world is against me.

*"The truth isn't always beauty, but the
hunger for it is." — Nadine Gordimer*

SMASHED IDENTITY

Snehiata Smgahal
(Department Of Commerce)

Tired, with sweat drops on the face,
Continuously working as a horse in a race,
Neither breaks nor holidays,
Just working 365 days.
No salary no pension
Not allowed to complain,
Silently working, hiding her pain,
Without expectation of gain.
She is dead inside but smiles outside,
As no one cares for her,
Teunts and mocks are gifted in return,
And then questioned, "What do you do for
us?"
With broken dreams
She has lost her identity.

*"You are not a drop in the ocean. You are
the entire ocean in a drop." — Rumi*

CALL FOR HELP

Hazaqat Zubana
(Department of BBA)

Bruises on my legs,
Cuts on my hand,
A numb soul,
Is all I have.
The scars have been there
For so long,
They feel as though a part of me now.
Broken pieces of 'me',
Bind me together,
Making me whole.
Darkness is my only friend,
These walls which caved me earlier,
They're the only home I know.
I am incapable of love,
Yet my demons have embraced me
My insecurities
They do not scare me,
Numb is all I feel,
Grief is all that is left,
Medicines and Help
Cannot save me.
I am my greatest enemy,
They keep telling me it gets better,
But does it ever?
I keep fighting, yet feel nothing,

Waiting for the colours to return
Waiting for the light at the end of the tunnel
But this tunnel,
It goes on and on,
Wearing me out,
Breaking me,
I fight, for a modicum of hope,
To see the good in me, again
Even if it's just one time,
They say that in darkness, there is some light,
And I am searching for that light within my
weary soul.

"The man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd." — James Cook

EASY ESCAPE

Tulika Chatterjee
(M.A. English)

I am a sinner
For I have loved thee more than I loved God
But what could I have done?
I saw my preaching in her, I saw my rosary in her and I saw my ecstasy in her
I worshipped her eyes filled with love
Filled with care I couldn't unlove
I preached her virtue like I preached my hymns
I could see my universe in her
I couldn't see her all at once
I couldn't feel her all at once
It was so much more to her every ounce
My misery is I couldn't have thee forever
For God loved her more than ever
My god was snatched by her God
Her perfection made her unearthly and odd
She was a part of the almighty joined with the umbilical cord
For I wish in the next life she comes to me in a human form
For I could have her long
Much longer than his holy spirits
Much more than I can explain in my lyrics
You can call me selfish, but next time I want her. Till I am finished.
This time I let her be in her happy place
Covered with flowers on her charming face
This time I let her an easy escape
But next time it will be you, me and an unending life cave.

"A man can't ride your back unless it's bent." — Martin Luther King Jr

[46]

HEALING MINDS

Tulika Chatterjee
(M.A. English)

My tear ducts were empty
As empty as the canvas lying in the hall
My spirit was caged abruptly
As caged as a bird in a mall
I couldn't figure out which of the shadows
Crawled and plunged it's paws
Into my awakening soul of delight
It took away all the colours from the canvas in sight.
It was dark twisty and burdensome
A weight so surreal
Only cured by pills for real
My shattering eyes like the tombs of Egypt
Lying down not even having to shift
I saw my canvas again lying in the hall
But this time it had colours all dark
The pages white that had no spark
My body and soul was so similar to the canvas
Dull, empty, and caged.
Waking up was so difficult
But dying an unturned artist was an insult
I woke up to paint my canvas all spring
It had yet a lot of energy to bring
The poppies, burgundy and red
Swallowed the dark in me which once fed
My shoulders were no more heavier
I was my saviour,
My plight was not forever.
I am forever, my metapresence is forever.
I'll live through my paintings,
I'll live through my works
If I've lived through my darkness
I shall live through it all.

"Concentration is the ability to think about absolutely nothing when it is absolutely necessary."

— Ray Knight

[47]

CANDLES

Asmita Basak
(M.A. English)

Like a candle I was, lighting my dark world all alone
Happily flickered when like a wind you came into my world
Little did I realize you would steal my happiness
You blew my light, my hope away, I was stranded all alone in the dark world
I couldn't scream, because no one was around
They came into my life, like brightly glowing candles and surrounded me
They lent me their light, I am no more alone
They helped me light up the world brighter than before
I do wish you come back
And see the beauty of a few yet dazzling candles in my world.
Darling can you see the happiness in my life?
It is all thanks to you
Sarcasm? No, I'm being honest with you
If you hadn't left me alone,
I wouldn't have found that there are people who love me
And they would do anything for me.
Tell me now, aren't candles a magnificent thing?
They can easily be put off,
But others would light them up, as candles are pretty
Together they are wonderful.
Like a candle I am, shining with
Other candles in world full of light
I don't care if you come or not,
Stand afar, and see how I gleam in my new world
Don't come near, you'll burn yourself
Hope to see you being envious of the world you created for me.

"Live the life you've dreamed." — Henry David Thoreau

[48]

THE GIRL ON THE BOAT

Asmita Basak
(M.A. English)

'Twas a radiant night, the light dancing off the waves and making a music even sirens would admire.

Amongst it stood a small boat, only a dewy-eyed damsel onboard,
She lamented about her misfortunes as the moon lit up her face.
Plodding across the boat she counted the holes in the boat,
'Almost as many as mine' she smiled, "No wonder everyone left
First the crew of the ship, busy blaming each other while they overlooked
The other damages the sea and they caused. Everything is okay they said,
Oh, why is it then the boat and I sink, amidst nothing?
Come back, weren't you supposed to take care of the boat?'

A breeze blew, a beautiful autumn wind that reminds one of childhood and the innocent dreams one had.

The boat wobbled, she fell onto the water logged floor,
Her wet dress didn't matter to her any longer, all she craved was company.
She hummed a song that she used to sing as a kid, on her canopy bed,
'Then it was the company I had on the ship, drinking and talking,
Of their many accomplishments, at first I could converse too, but then...
They spoke of things I knew not, leaving me out was easy.
All of them had other places to go; they packed at night and left me alone
Tell me was I not important enough to save?'

The water was getting freezing, the moon and wind worried about her, they silently heard her,

The boat sank more and more into the sea, no life boat to save her,
Still, her smile warm enough to evoke brightness all around.
Standing up, she steadied herself and drew out a note she wrote:
'Au revoir' saying she threw it out, "Delusional I was to believe
I could at least get true companionship. A ship that like this one sank,
Didn't even board the boat when I asked, surely chose Italy over Greece,
That's better at least you are safe, with your lies and beliefs.
You are just like every other person you despise."

[49]

As the time almost came, for the boat to submerge into water, she travelled back to her past,
 The moon and stars couldn't shine bright enough,
 To rid her off the darkness that had consumed her entirely,
 As dark as the night and her hair, that floated on the waist deep water,
 Her head filled with voices of society, they accused her of a hundred things,
 She couldn't help but believe she was all that: an uncomely maiden,
 Devold of humour and brain, worthy of nothing but indifference and laughter...
 Laughter, her head full of laughter and mockery she faced,
 The deceits of people she trusted,
 The boat sank, she struggled as waters rushed towards her, trying to bring her down entirely,
 A moment where everything seemed to end, the Sun's first ray fell,
 Like a blessing from her people in heaven, cutting the night and her darkness,
 She could feel their presence, not there to take her but to help,
 Reminding her, that she is not alone, her childhood heroes looking over her
 And in that moment that was everything she needed, "Swim, My Queen"
 Said an old voice she remembered all too well, she held her breathe
 She swam with all her might, only to realize she had reached the land,
 She looked up, "Worry not, someday I will be at place, where they all come back."
 "Life is a long lesson in humility." — James M. Barrie

BOX WORLD

Faizah Arwar
 (Department Of Sociology)

It's about realising
 That the wind still whispers,
 Long after every other sound,
 Has died away.
 It's about being able,
 To stand a little way off,
 And watch from a distance
 As the world goes by.
 It's about feeling,
 The silence of the night,
 About letting go,
 As the darkness closes in,
 Life begins and ends here
 In my box-world,
 In the place that time forgot,
 It's about being alone.

"In heaven, all the interesting people are
 missing." — Friedrich Nietzsche

নেতাজীকে তানিশা উল্লাহ চাও (ইংরেজি বিজ্ঞান)

বিনি ইংরেজের নিগ্রাহরণ ও
 ভারতের স্বাধীনতার মূল কারণ,
 তাঁকে আমার সেলাম।
 বিনি আজাদ হিন্দ বাহিনী ও
 কাসি বাহিনীর ঘণ্টা,
 তাঁকে আমার সেলাম।
 বিনি স্বদেশের বিনিময়ে
 স্বাধীনতার অঙ্গীকার করেছিলেন,
 তাঁকে আমার সেলাম।
 নেতাজীকে আমার সেলাম।

"যে দেশে দেশের সমাদর নেই সে দেশে ওশী জন্মতে
 পারে না।" — ডঃ মুহাম্মদ শহীদুল্লাহ

ট্রেন

কুমিকা দাস

(সাংবাদিকতা ও গণস্বাক্ষর বিভাগ)

দুটো ব্যাগ আর একটা টুলি, এই আমার লাগেজ
তিন ট্রেনে রাখতে এদের করতে হবে ম্যানেজ।
জনলার পাশের সিটে বসে চোখ গেল বেই দুরে;
অমনি মনের ক্রান্তি যেন সবই গেল সরে।
ছুটছে মাঠ, ছুটছে নদী, ছুটছে ঘরবাড়ি
আমার সাথে ওরাও আজ যাবে তপস্বত্যাগি।
ইচ্ছে করে বহু আমার হতে নিরাক্ষয়,
দেখতে ঘুরে বিচিত্র সব নানান নতুন দেশ।
কত হকার হরেক জিনিস নিয়ে ভ্রমের সাথে
মন ভোলানো কত কথা বলতে নাকো বাধে।
ছোটো ছোটো ডোরেরমন, নবিতা আর ভীম,
বার্টনের সবই আছে; আছে সেক ডিম।
নতুন কোন স্টেশন এলেই ছড়মুড়িয়ে নামা,
একটু অসতর্ক হলেই ছিঁড়তে পারে জামা।
ট্রেনের অলস দুনুনিতে চোখ যেই আসে বুজে,
বুদ্ধি বলে ঠিক সময়ে মামতে হবে বুঝে।
কি প্রশ্ন কেমন করে লেগেছিল চোখ,
ইঠাৎ কিসের স্টেলায় আমার ডাঙল ঘূমের ঘোর।
তাকিয়ে দেখি ট্রেনতো ফাঁকা - রয়েছে আমার লাগেজ;
কুলি বলে, সিন্ডা কিসের; এটাই জে লাস্ট স্টপেজ।

"ভালো খাবা বহু পেট করে, কিন্তু ভাল বই মানুষের আত্মাকে পরিতৃপ্ত করে"। — স্পিনোসা

বাদল

চৈতালী গায়ের
(ইংরেজি বিভাগ)

বৃষ্টিভেজা মাটির হালকা গন্ধে,

মন নেচে শুটে কোন আনন্দে
সমকা হাওয়া স্নেহ করে আসে ঢুকে।।

ঘন মেঘ ছোয়ে পাড় আকাশে,
আসো অন্ধকারের খেলা চরপাশে
ধিগদ বৃষ্টি রায়ে যাবে চিরস্মৃতি।

একপল অফিতে চুমুক দিয়ে,
তেলেভোনে বাটি হাতে নিয়ে
ধীরে ধীরে এসে বসে বারান্দায়।

ভাল জনলা দিয়ে মুখ বাড়িয়ে।
কোন এক অজানা চিন্তার মাঝে সে যেন হারিয়ে
অবিশ্রান্ত বৃষ্টির ধারা বাসিয়ে দিয়ে যায় তার ঘর।

দুটি ভিন্ন প্রকৃতির জীবন,
বৃষ্টিকে তারভাবেই করে বরণ
স্বভাব বৈচিত্র্য দাগ কেটে যায় মনের মাঝে।।

সনাতনী তিলোসুমা

পায়েল রায়

(সাংবাদিকতা ও গণস্বাক্ষর বিভাগ)

সেকালে ছিল গ্রাম
একাল Modern মানি
তবু প্রাণহীন আমার শহর,
মানি না এ বাণী।
এখনো মাটির ভাঁড়ে চুমুক দিয়ে,
পাড়রে মোড়ে বসে
ইন্সটবেক্স মোহনবাগান নিরে
তুমুল বিতর্ক চলে।
এখনো KFC আর McDonald
এর খেতে,
ফুডকোর্টের সামনেই
বেলি লাইন লাগে।
Ola-Uber মাঝে মাঝেই সাজে,
ভিড় বাসেই শহরবাসী নিত্য চড়ে বসে।
হারিয়ে আঙণ
ভুলহরি মামার ডাব চিংড়িকে,
মায়ের হাতের কথা মাংসই
খিঙে ফল আনে।
ভিন্টারিমায় প্রেম,
প্রিলেপে নৌকাবিহার,
কলেজ স্ট্রিটের বই পড়াই
অজ্ঞেও প্রিয় সবার।
সেমরাম কোয়েস্ট হোক বা
থাকুক স্ট্রিপকর্ট-আমাজন,

পুষ্পের শপিং মানেই
নিউমার্কেটে সবার চল।
বর্ডার মেয়েও অষ্টমীর অঙ্কনিত
শাড়িটাই বাছে,
WhatsApp এর বিজয়া আঙণ পিছিয়ে
মিষ্টি ভাঁড়ের কাছ।
কদনের আঁতলায় আঙণ
মাশিটেলেককে হার মানায়,
নাইট ক্লাবের চেয়ে আঙণ
গঙ্গার ধারই মন জোলায়।
জাধুনিকতার হাতছানিতে ওই
আঁকড়ে পুরাতনের কথা,
নিখুম হাতের গার বলে আঙণ
আমারই 'কোলকাতা':

"বুদ্ধিমান লোক অস্বস্তি তার জীবন বার করে।" — প্লেটো।

বৃষ্টিভেজা তিলোত্তমা

পায়োল রায়

(সাহিত্যিকতা ও গণজ্ঞাপন বিভাগ)

ওহ মনে মেঘ ক্রমে
ভিজায় আজ শহরতলি,
ফুটপাথ থেকে রাকপথ
জলে জনা অলিগলি।
বৃষ্টি-স্তম্ভ মটির গন্ধে
মনটা আজ ব্যাকুল ওধু,
কর্শি বেয়ে পড়িয়ে পড়া বৃষ্টির দল
ফেলেছে আমার অবশরুকু।
মন চাইছে ছুটি গিয়ে
এক পশলা মেঘ ধরতে,
মন চাইছে প্রাণতলে আজ
বৃষ্টিকে গানে মাখাতে।
উলসীনতা ভিজতে আজ
বৃষ্টির এই শীতল হেঁয়াল,
নুঃখগুলো লুকিয়েছে সব
নাম-না-জানা কেনে ঠিকানায়।
'হলুদ ট্যাক্সি' সাজেছে অঞ্চ
ধূস্র বিনু গায়ে মেখে,
রাঙিন সব ছাত্তর দল
শৈশবকে ধুঁজে ধরে।

বৃষ্টি ভেজা কাকশালো সব
আশ্রয় নিয়েছে প্যাম্পা,পোস্টে,
স্কুল ফেরত ছেলের দল
এখা জলে খেলা করেছে।
বার্ষিক প্রেমিকের কবিতায়
নুঁকোহে আজ ছন্দ,
নুরের ওই প্রেমিক যুগল
লিখনে মনতুল গল্প।
শহরট' মেডেছে আজ
বৃষ্টি-বৃষ্টি খেলায়,
'বৃষ্টিভেজা তিলোত্তমা' বে
'অপূর্বকৈও হার মানার

"যদি মনে কর তুমি পারবে, কিংবা মনে কর তুমি পারবেনা, দুই ক্ষেত্রেই তোমার বিশ্বাস সঠিক।" — হেনরি ফোর্ড।

প্রথম পুরস্কার, বাংলা সৃজনশীল রচনা, বিদ্যাসাগর দিবস

সমাজ সংস্কারক : ঈশ্বর চন্দ্র বিদ্যাসাগর

সৃষ্টিতা ব্যানার্জী

(বাংলা সাহিত্যিক)

আমাদের মনুষ্য সমাজে, 'মানুষ' দেবতার চেয়েও বেশী দুর্বল। স্বাধিক পুরুষ ভঙ্গস্বর করেন জীবনে দেবতার দর্শন পাওয়ার মন, কিন্তু একজন মানুষের মত মানুষ চাওয়া এমাদের সাধনাতীত, মানুষের পক্ষে এ সমাজে দেবতার রূপান্তরিত হওয়া যত পহুজ, মানুষ হওয়া তত সহজ নয়। আজও এই বিজ্ঞানের প্রাকালে তথাকথিত আধুনিক যুগে, অতি মানুষ ও 'মানবদেবতা', মধ্যে দেবত্বের বিকাশ যত সন্ন্যাসে হয়, সামাজিক মানুষের মধ্যে মনুষ্যত্বের বিকাশ আরো সোভাবে হয় না। অত্যা থেকে শার্বিক বহুং আগে আমাদের এই তীর বোড়াধর্মী সমাজে ক্রিয়ানাগরের মতো এক প্রাণপুরুষ পর্বতের মতো মাথা তুলে ঠাডান, কোন অতি মানবিক কনৌকিক শক্তির জোরে নয়, সম্পূর্ণ নিজের মানবিক শক্তির জোরে, তখন বিশ্বয়ে অভিতুত হতে হত।

বিদ্যাসাগরের আবির্ভাব উর্দিশ শতকের এমন এক পর্বতে, যে সময়ে সমাজে মানুষের চেতনার আকাশ অতিপ্রাকৃতলোভে কুরাশায় আচ্ছন্ন ছিল। সমাজমণ্ডলী ভুগছিল গৌড়া কুসংস্কার এর মারণ জ্বরে। রাজা রামমোহন রায় এই রোগ নিরাময়ে অগ্রসর হয়েছিলেন বটে তবে সম্পূর্ণভাবে এই অসুখ থেকে রক্ষা পায়নি সমাজ। ১৮২০-র ২৬শে সেপ্টেম্বর জন্মান পশ্চিম মেদিনীপুর এর বীরসিংহ গ্রামের বীর এই 'বিদ্যাসাগর' উপাধিতে ভূষিত সিংহটি যার নাম ছিল ঈশ্বর চন্দ্র বাম্পোপাখ্যায়। সমাজকে জ্বর মুক্ত করে সুস্থতা প্রদান ছিল তাঁর কর্মজীবনের বিশেষ উপজীব্য। আর তার মত ব্যক্তিত্বের সাধনেই সমাজে ধর্মীয় গৌড়মীর জ্বর সেরে আসে 'রেনেসাঁস' বা 'নবজাগরণের' মতো সামাজিক সুস্থতার লক্ষণ। এই সময়ের জিত হতে ঠাডালো না-ধাক্ষত্রীক চিন্তাভাবনা; স্বত্ব স্বত্ব, অতিপ্রাকৃতিক বিশ্বাস, কুসংস্কারের জর ভেদ করে বেড়িয়ে এলো ভোক্তার আলোর মতো এক স্বচ্ছ সমাজ। বলা বাহুল্য, মনব গ্রীবানের এই আদর্শকেই ইতিহাসে 'হিউম্যানিজম' বলা হয়। অপার্বিক থেকে প্রতি মানুষের চিন্তাধারাকে পরিচালিত ও কেন্দ্রীভূত করাই 'হিউম্যানিস্ট'-এর আদর্শ। এই আদর্শই বিদ্যাসাগরকে সারা জীবনে তাঁর দুঃসাহসিক সমাজকল্যাণরতে উদ্বুদ্ধ করেছে। নবযুগের বাংলার আদর্শ হিউম্যানিস্ট বিদ্যাসাগর। চূড়ান্ত রকম প্রাট্টনপন্থী গৌড়মির পরিবেশে মানুষ হওয়া সত্ত্বেও কোনোপ্রকার আনুষ্ঠানিক ধর্মচরণে বিদ্যাসাগরের কিছুমাত্র উৎসাহ দেখা গেল না। আসলে এটা বিশ্বাসের এই কারণেই যে তিনি এমন একযুগের পথিক যখন ধর্ম জিনিসটাই মহা গুরুতর বিবেচনার বিষয় হিসাবে গণ্য হতো এবং বিভিন্ন ধর্মীয় আন্দোলনের আগুনে সমাজ বালসে বাজিল। এই সময়ে সবচেয়ে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত ছিল নারীজাতি; নারী জাতির প্রধান লক্ষ্যই ছিল 'পূর্বেরে ক্রিয়তে ভার্ম'। বিদ্যাসাগর এই বৃত্ত থেকে নারীদের প্রতি এই পরধীনতার অবমাননাকে দ্বিঃ করে নারীদের নিজের পায়ে ঠাডালোর জমিটি খনন করেন। তিনি অনুভব করেন নারীশিক্ষার প্রয়োজনীয়তা।

বস্তুত, নারীরা তখন সর্বদিক থেকেই প্রতিক ছিল। তাই নারীদের মাথা অধিকারের জন্যে দুঃস্থে তিনি তিনদিক থেকে আক্রমণ চালাবেন বলে মনস্থির করলেন। যে সব কারণে মেয়েদের উপর নানা প্রকারের বিধিনিষেধ আরোপিত তার মধ্যে সর্বপ্রধান ছিল তত্তা যে অকথ্য বয়েছে তার থেকে উদ্ধৃত দুর্বলতা। তাই অন্যান্যটির বিরুদ্ধে লড়বার সবচেয়ে ভাল পন্থা হল, সেটের মূলে আঘাত স্থান; মেয়েদের এমনভাবে শিক্ষা দিতে হবে যাতে তারা নিজেগাই নিজেদের মাথা অধিকারগুলি সবসঙ্গে সচেতন হয়ে সমানে সমানে পুরুষদের সঙ্গে লড়তে পারে। তাই তাঁর কর্মসূচীর মধ্যে স্ত্রীশিক্ষা স্থান হল সকলের গুরোভাগে

তারপর এল পুরুষদের সঙ্গে সমান অধিকার পাওয়ার পথে বাধা স্বরূপ যে সমস্ত অক্ষমতা তাদের উপর চাপিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে সেগুলি দূরীকরণের উপায় করা। তাই পরের দফা কাজ হল হিন্দু বিধবাদের পুনর্বিবাহের অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠা। একই পর্যায়ের কাজ হলো গোড়া সংস্কারাজ্ঞয় হিন্দু পুরুষের যে নিকট রীতিতে বহু বিবাহ প্রথার প্রচলন ছিল সেই কলঙ্কিত রূপ থেকে সমাজকে বিমুক্ত করা। সামাজিক ন্যায়পরায়ণতা চাইছে পুরুষের বহু বিবাহ প্রথা বিলুপ্ত হোক, যাতে স্ত্রী-পুরুষ উভয়েই পতি-পত্নী সম্বন্ধ সম্পর্কিত ব্যাপারে সম-অবস্থার সুযোগ সুবিধা পেতে পারে। নারী শিক্ষার জন্য তার কর্মপ্রচেষ্টা কম ছিল না। উনিশ শতকের ইউরোপের রেনেসাঁ-এর ফলে বাংলায় বিদ্যাসাগর পাশ্চাত্য শিক্ষার প্রয়োজন অনুভব করেন। বিভিন্ন পণ্ডিতদের সহায়তায় মাতৃভাষায় অনুবাদ করে পাশ্চাত্য গ্রন্থগুলিকে পড়বার উপযুক্ত করে তোলেন। তিনি বৈতনিক অবৈতনিক মিলিয়ে নারী শিক্ষার জন্য পরিশ্রমটি স্থূল স্থাপন করেন। এছাড়াও নারী-পুরুষ নবায়নের জন্যই তিনি সংস্কৃত কলেজ প্রতিষ্ঠা করেন (১৮২৬), এমনকি কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্রতিষ্ঠার পেছনেও তার অবদান অমহীকর।

১৮৫০ সালে মদনমোহন মল্লিকের সাহায্যে তিনি একটি পত্রিকা প্রকাশ করেন যার নাম ছিল 'সর্বপ্রভকারী পত্রিকা', এবং সেটার প্রথম সংখ্যায় 'বাল্য বিবাহের পোষ' নামে একটি প্রবন্ধ প্রকাশিত করা হয়। শুধু নারীদের জন্যই এই মহামানবের চিন্তনা সীমিত ছিল না; তিনিই ছিলেন বাংলা সাহিত্যের গানের প্রথম পথিকৃত। তাই শিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে যুগ-যুগের রক্ষা তিনি শিশুদের শিক্ষাচর্চার প্রয়োজন বোঝেন এবং সেই দিকে লক্ষ্য রেখেই সেন্সন 'বর্ণপরিচয়' (১৮৫৫), 'জীবনচরিত' (১৮৪৯), 'বোধোদয়' (১৮৫১), 'কথামালা' (১৮৫৬), 'ব্যাকরণ কৌমুদী' (১৮৫৩-৬২) ইত্যাদি। এই বইগুলির বিষয় নির্বাচন থেকে শুরু করে ভাষা ব্যবহার, সর্বোপরি রীতি প্রকরণ গ্রহণের মধ্যে দিয়ে বিদ্যাসাগর-এব শিক্ষা ভাবনার পরিচয় মেলে।

এবার বলা যাক নারীদের ছোট, পান্ডার ভেতরকার জগৎ থেকে বড়ো পৃথিবীতে নিয়ে আসার নিয়মসংগে যে ৩ম অঙ্গনের কথা। তিনি নারীমুক্তি আন্দোলনের তীব্র সমর্থক ছিলেন। হিন্দু বিধবা নারীদের অসহনীয় দুঃখ, তাদের প্রতি পরিবারের অনাচার, ঘৃণিতার স্বভাবভাবে আহত করে তাকে। এই বিধবাদের মুক্তির জন্য তিনি অস্বীকৃত সর্বত্র পণ করে সংগ্রাম করেছেন। হিন্দুশাস্ত্র উদ্ধৃত করে প্রমাণ করেছেন, সে লোকাচার ঘর্ষের নামে সমাজে প্রচলিত, আসলে তা ধর্মবিরুদ্ধ প্রবর্তন আচর্যমাত্র। তাঁর আন্দোলন সফল হয়েছিল। ১৮৫৬ সালে সরকার বিধবা বিবাহ আইনসিদ্ধ পোষণ করেন। তার শুধু অর্ধ প্রকাশই ফল খ্যাতনৈকি বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশয়। তাঁর উদ্দেশ্যে একাধিক বিধবা বিবাহের অনুষ্ঠান আয়োজিত হয়। এমনকী তাঁর পুত্রও এক হংগারী বিধবাকেই বিবাহ করেন। এজন্য স্বভাববশতই তাকে গোড়া রক্ষণশীল হিন্দু সমাজের ও সভাপতিত্বের তীব্র নিষেধ মুখে পড়তে হয়। শুধু বিধবা বিবাহই নয়, বহু বিবাহের মতো যুগপ্রথার বিরুদ্ধেও যে তিনি সরব হন তা আমরা আগেই জেনেছি। প্রচার করেন তার সাপেই বাল্য বিবাহের বিরুদ্ধে কঠোর যুক্তি। সবচেয়ে দুঃখের বিষয়, তাঁর এই সংগ্রামগুলি তৎকালীন সময়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ নির্দোষ হয় বিভিন্ন গণমাধ্যম বক্তৃতার দ্বারা। এমনকী ইন্ডিয়ান ওপিনিয়ন অফ ইন্ডিয়া বাক্যব্যয়ে তাঁর নারী মুক্তির আক্রমণকে বিদ্ধ করেন।

পরিবেশের কথা যাঁর যে বিদ্যাসাগরের উদ্দেশ্যে 'হিউম্যানিটি' বা মানবমুখী আন্দোলনের মতো সাক্ষরিত চরিত্রে প্রধান পোষক হন সেমি উর্বর সাহিত্য কর্মী শিক্ষা সংস্কার এবং সমাজসংস্কারের গণতান্ত্রিক কর্মসম্পন্ন সমানভাবে প্রকাশ পায়। তার মনে সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক ক্ষেত্রে জামাত বহুদূর অগ্রসর হয়েছে। আর সেখানেই এই সংস্কার শাসক পুরুষটির সার্থকতা। রবীন্দ্রনাথের অস্বস্তি, মধ্য নারী, বিদ্যা নারী, ইন্ডিয়ান ওপিনিয়ন চরিত্রের প্রধান শৌর্য ছিল তাহার অজের পৌষা। তাহার আশ্রয় মনুষ্য।

তথ্যসংগ্রহকারী বইগুলি :- সূর্যনার সেন : বাংলা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস, শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৌধুরী : বাংলা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস, অশোক রায় : উনিশ শতকে নবজাগরণ, হিরন্ময় বন্দোপাধ্যায় : ইন্ডিয়ান ওপিনিয়ন বিদ্যাসাগর ও বাঙালী সমাজ, অক্ষয়কুমার বন্দোপাধ্যায় : বাংলা সাহিত্যের ইতিবৃত্ত। ■

“... কেউ তো টানে না”

সুজিতা ব্যানার্জী
(বাংলা সাম্প্রতিক)

এ রকম স্পেসিফিক 'Phrase' জীবনে খুব কম ফ্রেইডেই বাউকে বলে নিজের ভর্তি থাকার অনুভবটা জাহির করা যায়, আমার ক্ষেত্রে সংখ্যাটা নেহাত সামান্য হলেও, এই সামান্য সংখ্যাতেই তাদের অসামান্যতার জন্য তারা আমার কাছে "বিশেষ"... তাদের "একজন" এর কথাই বলবো এখন... হয়তো সেই "জন" কোন মানুষ না, কিন্তু তাতে গ্রাণ এর অভাব নেই... সে হলো, আমার কলেজ। জীবন বাড়ির দ্বিতীয় ঘর... আমার "শ্রীশিক্ষারতন"...

আরো বিশেষভাবে বললে বলতে পারি, আমার এই সময় পৃথিবী সুলভ কলেজকে মাপকাঠিটা হলো, আমার নিজের "ঘর" আমার বাংলা বিভাগ... যার জন্য কলেজটা আমার কাছে "অলসারতন"এ রসেই "উত্তরের জানলা..."

বলাবাহুল্য, কোন থান বা শব্দ ছিল না এই কলেজের প্রতি আমার! শুধু এই কলেজ সম্পর্কে জানাটুকুর মধ্যে ছিল, এই কলেজ আমার স্কুলের পাশে... যে স্কুলে আমার জীবনের এক যুগ কেটেছে... উচ্চমাধ্যমিক পাশ করতে শুরু হলো কলেজ খোঁজের খোড়দৌড়... এই কলেজে এই পাচ্ছি... ওই কলেজে সেই পাচ্ছি এই পাচ্ছি... এই পাওয়ার না পাওয়ার দ্বন্দ্ব তখন চা-এ ডুবে যাওয়ার মেরি বিস্কুটের মত অবস্থা... সবজেন্স্ট চয়েজ ছিল জুলজি কিম্বা ইংলিশ... কেন জানি না এই টালমাটাল অবস্থার বাবা এই কলেজের ফর্ম-এ আমার 'বাংলা' Choose করে দিলো... এও সত্যি, অনেকের মত "সারোপ" কিম্বা "ইংলিশ" এর প্রায়মারকে যেতে নির্বাসনে পাঠিয়ে "বাংলা" পড়তে ফওয়ার আমিও হালকা অ-সুখী হয়েছিলাম... কিন্তু এইটাই ছিল আমার জীবনের "টার্নিং পয়েন্ট..."

এখন কথা হচ্ছে অনেক ভেবেচিন্তে লিখতে বসেছি আমার এই "জানি" নিয়ে, কিন্তু এ যে "মহাভারত"। কোথায় শুরু, কোথায় শেষ, ভালগোল থাকিয়ে যায়। কলেজের প্রথম দিনই ম্যামনের পেয়ে বুকে গেছিলাম, এই ডিপার্টমেন্ট আমার "সব পেয়েছির দেশ"... এখানে আমি বাঁচতে পেরেছি, এমন কি নিজের যে খোঁজ কোনোদিন আমি পাইনি, এই চার দেওয়ালের ছোট্ট রঙিন ডিপার্টমেন্ট সেই আমিকেই খুঁজে দিয়েছে... প্রতিটা আনাচ-কানাচ জানে কিভাবে আমি "তৈরি" হয়েছি... ছোটবেলায় স্কুলে একটার পর একটা বছর কাটতো কেবল তারিখ এর হিসেবে, আর সেখানাম পরের বার কিরকম সিলেবাসটা নতুন হয়ে গেছে। পরিবর্তন বলতে হয়তো হয়তো নতুন পেপিল বঙ্গ, একটু বড় চুল, কিম্বা নতুন ইউনিফর্ম... এভাবেই বছর বদলটা ধরা পড়তো আমাদের অধীনে... কলেজ, তথা "সাহিত্য"কে আঁকড়ে এই তিনটে বছরে বুকেছি, একটা বছর কি, একদিনেও আমার এমন পরিবর্তন ঘটবে, তখন সময়ের আসল নামটা সত্যি উপলব্ধি করতে পেরেছি। স্কুলে যা হইনি, কলেজে তা হইনি!

আর ঠিক একমাত্র ব্যক্তি এই সময় শেষের... হয়তো অনেক কিছু বলতে চেরেছি, পারিনি। এই না বলার মধ্যেই রয়ে গেছে বলতে চাওয়াটুকু... এই ছোট্টো জীবন-পাশে আমার এই ঘরের অনেক শৌখিন-অশৌখিন মুহূর্তগুলো উই করে বাৎসর্যম, খার কিছুদিন পরে এই সময়গুলোই ব্যস্ততা এর যান্ত্রিকতার সায়ভুইচ-এ ঠেসে চুকে গিয়ে হয়ে যাবে "Bliss of Solitude"... তাই "শেষ হয়েও হইলো না শেষ" হলেও একটা শেষ তো করতেই হবে... আর সেটাই করবো আমার এই "বাড়ি"র সম্পর্কে সাহিত্যের "সান্ত্যাক্রম" এর একটা লাইন দিয়ে... "তোমার মতো এমন টানে, কেউ তো টানে না..."

"ভালো বই পড়া মানে গভ শতাব্দীর সেরা মানুষের সাথে কথা বলা।" — সেক্সপেট ■

অবলম্বন
কুমিকা দাস
(সংবাদিকতা ও গণজ্ঞাপন বিভাগ)

অল্পকাল অধিকাংশ ছেলেমেয়েই পড়াশোনা বা চাকরির জন্য বাইরে চলে যাচ্ছে।

কখনো রাজা বা কখনো দেশের। বাবা মায়ের মনে এটাকে ঘিরে তৈরী হচ্ছে এক অজুত। বানিকটা অপূর্ণীয় শূন্যতা। অথচ ছোট থেকে তারই সবচেয়ে বেশি করে চেয়েছে তফের ছেলে বা মেয়ে, যে দারুন কিছু একটা করুক, যা একেবারে চোখ খাঁড়িয়ে দেয়। কিন্তু এখন যখন বাবাই তার ভিগ্নি ভালোভাবেই স্টেটস-এ প্রতিষ্ঠিত তখন সূচনার প্রণয়ই মনে হয় এত কিছু কি খুবই দরকার ছিল? অন্তত মেয়েটাও যদি এখন থেকে কিছু একটা করতো। নাহ! এ সব আর আজ ভেবে লাভ নেই। অগ্নি অগ্নিসে বেগিয়ে গেলে এক অজুত শূন্যতা গ্রাস করে বাড়িটাকে। স্বপ্ন দেখার অনেক আগেই নিজেকে মানসিকতারে প্রস্তুত করার দরকার ছিল হয়তো। ছেলেমেয়ে তখনকে সময় দিচ্ছে না; তারি অভিমানে করে না-বলে খাবা কিংবা ওরা গ্রামার শরীফ এর বোজ রাখবে না বা ডাক্তারের কাছে নিয়ে যাবে না; তাই রাগ করে একান্ত দরকার সবুজ ডাক্তার না-দেখানো।

— এসব আঙ্কুর প্রজন্মের কাছে ফ্যাটাসি বা ন্যাকামো আমবে জীবনটা আনারই — এই কথাটা আঙ্কুর করতে হবে।

সূচনা ভাবে স্মার্টফোন, হোয়াটসঅপ, স্টাইপ, নিয়মিত শরীর চর্চা, জগিং, প্রায়শঃম, লার্কিং ক্লাব, মেডিটেশন, শপিংমল, আইনস, নন্দন, সপ্তাহান্তে NGO - এগুলো কি পারে কোন কাছের মানুষের জ্ঞান অনুভূতির বিকল্প হতে? পারে মনের যাবতীয় কষ্ট এক নিমেষে মুছে মুছে পকে করে দিতে? চোখের কোনটা চিক চিক করে ওঠে। এই সব এসেগামতো ভাবনার তখন যে সূচনা বালকনিত্য এসে দাঁড়িয়েছে ও নিজেই জানে না। ভাবনাম ছেদ পরে মোবাইলের একটানা বিরক্তিকর শব্দে। পারে পারে এগিয়ে যায় ও —

— “কিরে, কোথায় ছিলি?”

— “এই তো বাড়িতেই।”

— “তো আগেরটা ধরলি না কেন?”

— “ঠিক শুনতে পাইনি।”

— “নিশ্চয়ই lonely হীন করছিলি? তোকে বলছি না নিজেকে ভালো রাখাটা নিজের দায়িত্ব বলে মনেতে শেখ। হানিকুশি থাক, দূর থেকে ছেলেমেয়েগুলো skype এডার ঐ মুখটা দেখলেই জালা পাকবে। এভাবে খুঁজতে হয়ে গেলেও ওদের ওপর অপরাধ বোধের বোঝা চাপিয়ে দিস না।”

— “হ্যাঁ, না আর কিছু বলবি?”

— “নাহ’ তোকে খুঁজিয়ে লাভ নেই। হ্যাঁ যা বলতে তোকে ফোন করা। শোন, আজ বিকেলে তোরা একবার আমাদের ফ্যাটে আসনা। জানিসই তো তোরা রশিতা এতো ভালো একটা সুযোগ পেলে তাই না গিয়ে কোনো উপায় নেই। প্যাকজটা খুব ভালো, সব মিলিয়ে যাওয়াটা কনকর্ন হয়েই গেছে, আর তো কটা দিন। তাই বলছিলাম আসবি?”

— “ঠিক আছে যাব।”

এলিনার ফ্যাটেটা একইরকম আছে। কিন্তু বদলায় নি। অনেক দিন আগে আসা হয়েছিল।

— “তোবা সীড়িয়ে কেন? বস। অরিনা বসুন”, বলতে বলতেই ঢুকলো এলি।

— “কবে যাবিস তোরা?”

— “ওরা অক্টোবর জয়েনিং।”

— “স্বাহ। পূজোর আগে চলে যাবি?”

— “হুমম... মনটা তাই ভালো নেই। আঙ্কুর, কবি খাবিতো? সুধাদি, ও সুধাদি। কবিটা বসায় না।”

— “ওকে।”

— “ওঃ তুই একে দেখিসনি না... ও সুধাদি, আমার বাড়ির সব কাজ সামলায়। কিন্তু এখন একে নিয়েই খুব সমস্যা পড়েছে জানিস?”

সূচনা শব্দ করে সুধার চোখে এক অসহায় করণ চাইনি।

— “কি সমস্যা?”

— “অমরা তো UK চলে যাচ্ছি, কিন্তু সুধাদি তো আমাদের সাথে যাচ্ছে না। অর ও ওর ছেলে বৌনা বাকনি এদের না দেখে থাকতে পারে না। যদিও এরা একে ডাড়ায়ে দিয়েছে। ঘরে থাকতে দেয় না, খেতেও দেয় না। তবুও ভাণ্ডা ভালো থাকলে ন’ মাসে ছ’ মাসে চেষ্টা করে দেখাটুকু দেখতে দে’ যায়। বীচার জন্য ওর ওটাই যাবে। কিন্তু এখন আমি চলে গেলে ও যাবে কেখায়? এতো ডাড়াডাড়ির মধ্যে নতুন একটা কাজ পাওয়া মুশকিল।”

— “কিন্তু অমরা জন্য অন্যমনস্ক হয়ে যান সূচনা। তাবপর পরিবার গলায় গলে,

— “ও যদি আমাদের বাড়িতেই থাকে তবে কোন আপত্তি নেই তো?”

— “আপত্তি। এর চেয়ে ভালো তো কিছুই হতে পারে না, তুই আমাকে বাচালি সু।”

— “তোকে না, আমি নিজেই হয়তো একটু বেশি করে বাঁচার রসদ পেলাম। পূজোর আগে ‘না’ এটাকে একটা নতুন সঙ্গী পাঠিয়ে দিলেন।”

“অনেক দিন আগেই আমি বুঝেছি যে ওটারের সঙ্গে ঘনুগ্ন করতে নেই। শরীর নোরা হয়ে যাবে এবং ওয়ারটি এইটাই পছন্দ করবে।” — সাইরাস চিং



उत्साह

निहा बिन्दा (हिन्दी सम्मान)

जो वक्त की बिसातपे
तू हीसले विछाएगा
फलक नही है दूर फिर
सितारे तोड़ लाएगा
औंधियों के वेग में
अडिग खड़ा रहा अगर
रुख हवाओं का तू फिर
खुद ही मोड़ पाएगा

कदम को कर कठोर तू
खुद को जो जलाएगा
सदमें हर सफर के फिर
हँस के झेल जाएगा

निराश हो के रुक नही
हताश ही के थक नही
आशा की पतंग को
स्वयं ही तू उड़ाएगा

पर्वतों को तोड़ के
जो रास्ते बनाएगा
एक दिन ज़माना भी
पीछे पीछे आएगा

निगाह तेरी लक्ष्य पे
तू मुश्किलों से डर नही
कठिन डगर पे चल के ही
तू मंजिलों को पाएगा.....।

"Life got to be about more than just solving problems." — Elon Musk

रोशनी का ख्वाब

तनीषा भट्टाचार्य (अंग्रेजी विभाग)

दिल की काल कोठरी में,
मजबूरियों की जंजीरो ने जकड़ा,
जिंदगी की राह पर,
मुश्किलों ने रास्ता रोका।
काबिलीयत की तराजू पर,
बिन पूछे ही समान ने तोला,
गलती गिनाकर, हर जताकर,
जाने किस मोड़ पर धकेल दिया,
पर अंधेरे के इस मोड़ पर जहां हम बेखबर खड़े हैं,
इस तन्हाई में आपने पहुँचा दिया।
अपनी को पराया होते और परायों को मुंह
फेरते देखा है।

रोशनी से कब नाता टूटा ख्याल न रहा,
अब इस तन्हा दिल को उससे जुड़ने का
ख्वाब भी न रहा।

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."

— Albert Einstein

बारिश

रौनक नसीम (एम.ए. अंग्रेजी विभाग)

बारिश की पहली बूंद, जब धरती को छूती है,
उन दिनों की याद दिलाती है,
जब कागज की कशती बनाकर
हम बारिश में झूम उठते थे।
न जिंदगी की कोई फिक्र थी,
और न ही घर जाने की कोई जल्दी।
आज भी उसी एहसास के साथ जीते हैं।
घर भी वही है,
नाव भी वही है,
और मल्हार भी वही है,
बदल गए हैं तो सिर्फ हम।
और धुंदला गई है चह यादें।
पर नाराज नहीं हूँ तुझसे ऐ जिंदगी
क्योंकि फिर से आई है वह बारिश
साथ में खुशियों को खींचात लेकर।

"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life : it goes on."

— Robert Frost

माँ

रौनक नसीम (एम.ए. अंग्रेजी विभाग)

खुदा की रहमत हो तुम,
धर की बरकत हो तुम।
ऊंगली पकड़कर चलना सिखाया है तुमने,
जिंदगी के हर मसले को हल करना
सिखाया है तुमने।

तुम हो तो मेरे चेहरे पर नूर है,
तुम हो तो हर गम दूर है।
तुम हो तो सांसे हैं मेरी,
तुम्हारे पैरों में जन्म है मेरी।
माँ तुम जिंदगी हो मेरी।

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

— William Shakespeare

जादूगर का खेल

हलाकत जुमाना (बी.बी.ए.)

सब कुछ नीला है।
इतना नरम और सुखदायक,
नोरवता और कोमलता टपकता हुआ,
अब आगमान में एक मृदु गुलाब की सौंदर्य छाई
हुई है।

ऐसा प्रतीत होता है, कि जैसे वह एक
बच्चे का भोला चेहरा है।
वह गुलाबी अब एक नारंगी में संक्रमण हो रहा है,
सहज ही शांत और सुंदर।
सूरज की किरणें अब चारों दिशाओं में
फैल चुकी हैं,
ऐसा लग रहा है मानो वह अपने जीत के झंडे गाढ़
रही है।

वह एक जादू का खेल ही है,
जो दुनिया का सबसे विशाल
जादूगर खेल रहा है।
वरना किस में है इतनी क्षमता,
जो हर क्षण, हर लम्हे में,
इस आसमान में, अपनी कला का
प्रदर्शन कर रहा है।
मैं अपना आधार प्रकट करती हूँ, उस अल्लाह से,
जिन्होंने मुझे अपनी कला को देखने के लिए
दो आँखें दिए,
और सूर्योदय के जादू का वर्णन करने के लिए मुझे
शब्द दिए

क्योंकि उस एक क्षण में, मेरे सारे कष्ट दूर हो जाते हैं,
मैं उसक्षण में पूरी हो जाती हूँ।
उस वक़्त मैं खुश हूँ।
मैं अपार हूँ।
मैं अनंत हूँ।

"Always borrow money from a pessimist. He
won't expect it back." — Oscar Wilde

औरत

अंजनी शर्मा (एम.ए. अंग्रेजी विभाग)

दहलोज क्या रोके उसे
चौट पर जो जाना था
रुकावटों को ताकत बना कर
आसमान को ठिफाना बनाना था

चूल्हे की आग से उसे
खुद को इतना तपाना था
फिर चाहे कोई भी आस
सबको धूल चटाना था,

तानों को मिश्री बनाकर
स्वाद उन्हें चखाना था
धीर्य को भीतर सपाकर
औरत उसे कहलाना था।

"I've never been poor, only broke. Being
poor is a frame of mind. Being broke is only
a temporary situation." — Mike Todd

ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर - एक महान समाज सुधारक

सृष्टि छान्ना (हिन्दी सम्मान)

महान लोग समाज पर अपना प्रभाव छोड़ने के लिए पैदा होते हैं - ऐसा ही एक व्यक्तित्व, ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर थे जो बहुत विनम्र थे, जिन्होंने निश्चित उद्देश्यों को पूरा करने के लिए दृढ़ संकल्प और उद्देश्य के साथ अपना पुरा जीवन बिता दिया वह महान समाज सुधारक, लेखक शिक्षक एवं उद्यमी थे और समाज को बदलने के लिए निरंतर काम करते रहे थे भारत में शिक्षा के प्रति उनका योगदान और महिलाओं की स्थिति को बदलना उल्लेखनीय था।

ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर ने भारत में बहुपत्नी, बाल-विवाह का जोरदार विरोध और विधवा पुनर्विवाह और महिला शिक्षा अनुग्रह किया। इस तरह के मुद्दों के प्रति उनके योगदान के कारण विधवा पुनर्विवाह अधिनियम 1856 में पारित किया गया था जिसके तहत विधवाओं का पुनर्विवाह कानूनी तौर पर मान्य हो गया। विद्यासागर जी ने महिलाओं को शिक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए, अनेक प्रयास किये। उन्होंने स्वयं के खर्च पर कई स्कूल खोले जिसमें लड़कियों ने एडमिशन लिया। उनकी धर्मार्थ प्रकृति और उदारता के कारण उन्हें "दया-आरसागर" या "करुणा सागर" कहा जाता है।

ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर का जन्म 26 सितंबर 1820 ई. की एक रुढ़िवादी परिवार में हुआ था। बचपन से वह अधिक से अधिक ज्ञान प्राप्त करने के लिए उत्सुक रहते थे। उनके परिवार की आर्थिक स्थिति अच्छी नहीं थी, इसलिए वह रात में स्टूडेंट लाइट में अध्ययन करते थे। उनके गाँव के लोगो ने विभिन्न विषयों पर उनके विशाल ज्ञान के कारण, "विद्यासागर" नाम से सम्मोहित किया। विद्यासागर का अर्थ है शिक्षा का एक महासागर। वह संस्कृत के पंडित बन गए और इस विषय में बेहद निपुणता हासिल कर ली। अपनी सेवानिवृत्ति से पहले, उन्होंने कलकत्ता के संस्कृत कॉलेज में संस्कृत के प्रोफेसर के रूप में सेवा की वह जब कॉलेज के प्रिंसिपल थे, तो कॉलेज सुधार का स्थान बन गया। इतना ही नहीं विद्यासागर एक महान लेखक भी थे और उनको आधुनिक बंगाली भाषा के पिता के रूप में जाना जाता है। उन्होंने संस्कृत के व्याकरण के नियमों पर एक पुस्तक भी लिखी जो आज तक प्रयोग की जाती है।

ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर एक बेहद नम्र व्यक्तित्व थे। कई बार उनके स्वभाव ने दूसरों को प्रेरित किया उनके जीवन की कई कहानियाँ उसकी सादमी को साबित करती हैं जो मनुष्यों के लिए बहुत ही प्रेरक हैं। समाज के प्रति उनके योगदान के अलावा उनकी विनम्रता ने उन्हें पुरे भारत में एक प्रसिद्ध और सम्मानित व्यक्तित्व बना दिया। विद्यासागर ने वास्तव में बंगाल की शिक्षा प्रणाली में सर्वव्यापी अंधेरे को हटाकर उनमें सुधार किये।

अन्य कोई सक्रिय सुधारकों के साथ इन्होंने लड़कियों के लिए स्कूल खोले। ऐसा इसलिए था क्योंकि उनके लिए शैक्षिक सुधार किसी भी अन्य सुधार से बहुत महत्वपूर्ण था उनका मानना था कि महिलाओं की स्थिति और सभी प्रकार के अन्याय और असमानताएँ जिनका वे सामना कर रही थीं, केवल शिक्षा के माध्यम से बदल सकती हैं।

विद्यासागर ने सभी जातियों धर्म और लिंग के बावजूद सभी पुरुषों और महिलाओं की समाज शिक्षा प्रदान करने

के लिए उल्लेखनीय कार्य किये। उन्होंने अपने संस्कृत महाविद्यालय में उच्च जाती के लोगों की बजाय निम्न जातियों के लोगों को अनुमति प्रदान की थी।

विद्यासागर ने विशेष रूप से अपने मूल बंगाल में भारत में महिलाओं की स्थिति का उत्थान किया। वे एक समझ सुधारक थे और वे हिंदुत्वदी हिन्दू समाज को भीतर से बदलना चाहते थे। ईश्वर चंद्र ने विधवा पुनर्विवाह पर अमल शुरू किया और बहुपत्नी प्रथा के खिलाफ कार्य किया। इन्होंने अनेक किताबें लिखी हैं और इस तरह बंगाली शिक्षा प्रणाली को काफी हद तक समृद्ध किया है। उनके द्वारा लिखी गयी किताबें आज भी पढ़ी जाती हैं।

ईश्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर वास्तव में एक महान व्यक्तित्व और सुधारक थे। आज भारत को इस तरह के समर्पित, विनम्र और दृढ़ व्यक्तित्वों की जरूरत है जो समाज को भलाई के लिए पूरी तरह से अपने आप को समर्पित करके आवश्यक सुधार ला सकें।



نا اسد اللہ خاں غالب حیات و خدمات

VIDYASAGAR AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر۔۔۔ الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر کی پیدائش ۱۸۲۲ء میں ہونے لگی تھی اور انھوں نے اپنی ابتدائی تعلیم "مدرستہ کالج کلکتہ" سے پوری کی۔
 کلام تھا کہ اس بے پروا اور بے باک اور نا اچھا کوئی اور بھائی نہیں تھا۔ انھوں نے اپنی ابتدا اور گن سے محبتوں کو ہا
 دینی صدی سے ساری میں بھڑکانی حیات نے اس کو ایک نام کیا ہے۔ الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر کا نام اور اس کا ل (عالم) ہے۔ وہ ویا ساگر
 اختیار کیا اور ان کی عظمت اور فوٹوٹالی کے لئے ہر جوش ہو کر کام کیا ہے۔ الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر کا نام اور اس کا ل (عالم) ہے۔ وہ ویا ساگر
 ایک کثیر الاطراف شخصیت کے نام ہے۔ ایک اچھا عالم اور اس کا ل کے علاوہ ایک سماجی اصلاح (Social reformer) کو بھی
 لیز کرتے تھے انہوں نے "سماجی حیثیت اور عورتوں کو عزت دہ" کی ہر نظاری کی اس کے علاوہ ان کے زمانے میں عورتوں کے ساتھ جونا
 انسانی ہوتی تھی اس کا بھی تجربہ کیا آخر میں وہ اس تجربہ میں اپنے کے عورتوں کو بھی عزت و احترام اور آزادی دینی دینے اور ان کو بھی ہرج
 میں بے پروا اور بے باک کے لئے ہر ضروری ہے کہ پہلے اور میں معاشرتی برائی کے مشکلات، بد معاشرتی برائی سے باہر آئے اور
 اپنے اور خود کو بچا کریں۔

الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر نے عورتوں کی تعلیم کے لئے اپنی زندگی بھر باہر انھوں نے پاس چھوڑ کر تعلیم کی تھی جس کی وجہ سے وہ اپنی بے پروا
 کا کار جس میں ہر وقت عوامی حق اور آزادی کی مقصد سے عزم تھی۔ الٹھور چھرو کی نگاہ میں تعلیم ایک ایسا شخص ہے جس کی کوئی قیمت نہیں ان
 سب باتوں کو ان میں رکھ کر انہوں نے بحال میں ایک سماجی تحریک شروع کی یہ سماجی تحریک خود بھی کو تعلیم دینے، بے پروا لائق حاصل کر
 نے ترقی یافتہ دور میں مردوں کے شانہ و شان ملنے اور ان سماجی برائیوں سے نکلنے کے لئے تھا۔ الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر کا
 قدم بہت بہتر ہے اور عورتوں کی ترقی، بھلائی، خود کشاری، بھاری ایک سنگ میل بن گیا۔ اس طرح سے الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر
 ایک "کھف" کا ذریعہ بھی بن گیا ہے اور ان کے لئے ہیں اور ان کے لئے۔

اس وقت عورتوں کی سماجی حالت، خاص کر بھاریوں کے اور قابل رحم تھا۔ ان کا دور ویا ساگر نے عورتوں کا وہ بار بھاری کرنے کا
 رواج شروع کیا یہ تھا۔ اس وقت میں تھا پھر بھی انہوں کا سماجی لی لی اس کے علاوہ انہوں نے سنی کے رسم کے خلاف بھی بھاری کی۔ یہ وہ کی
 شہری اور وہاں کے لوگ نے کا مقصد یہ تھا کہ انہوں نے سب سے پہلے اپنے بیٹے نارائن چھرو ویا ساگر نے کی بھاری ایک ہیہ
 سے کر لیں۔

الٹھور چھرو ویا ساگر نے عورتوں کی اصل تعلیم کے لئے بہت جدوجہد کی ہیں وہ بے شک ایک تاریخی شخص ہیں انہوں نے

بنگال میں بہت سے تعلیمی ادارے بھی قائم کئے۔ سڑکیوں کی تعمیر اسکول کی بنیاد کی اور یہاں اسکول کے بنیاد میں ڈال دی گئی۔
تعلیم حاصل کرنے کے لیے انھیں ہرگز ہرجا نہیں دیا بلکہ ہر مذہب کی لڑکیاں یہاں آکر تعلیم حاصل کرتی تھیں۔ اس اسکول کا مقصد عورتوں
کو تعلیم دینا اور خود اعتماد بنانا تھا۔

انٹرنیشنل ایک قول پیش کرتی ہیں

"It does not matter how great one has become, he must remember
(the glory of) his post."

انٹرنیشنل نے تقریباً ۱۹۳۵ء میں اسکول بنیاد میں لڑکیوں کے لئے کھلے ہیں۔ اس کے علاوہ انھوں نے بیورڈ میں لڑکیوں کی تعلیم اور ان کی تعلیم
ڈال دی۔ انھیں کی کشف کے نتیجے میں انھوں نے اسکول (Bethune school) جو بیورڈ میں لڑکیوں کا پہلا اسکول ہے لڑکیوں کے لئے ۱۸۳۹ء
کو کلکتہ میں وجود میں آیا۔ اس کی بنیاد John Elliot Drinkwater Bethune نے ڈالی جو ۱۸۷۹ء میں ایسا کاسب
سے پہلا کارکن تھا جو لڑکیوں کے لئے وجود میں آیا۔

آج بھی بہت سی جگہوں میں عورتوں کو عزت اور خود اعتمادی حاصل نہیں۔ عورتیں ابھی بھی تعلیم سے محروم ہیں زیادہ تر گاؤں کے
علاقوں کے طرف عورتوں کی تعلیم پر کم توجہ دی جاتی ہے۔ یہ بہت ہی شرمندگی والی بات ہے کہ اگرچہ ۱۹۴۷ء میں سے زیادہ لڑکیاں جن کی عورتوں
سال سے بھی کم ہوتی ہیں ان کی شادی کر دی جاتی ہے۔ انھیں سب چیزوں کو ہٹانے اور دور دورہ کرنے کے لئے ہمیں بھی انٹرنیشنل کے
طریقوں کو اپنانا چاہیے اور ان کی طرح آواز بلند کرنا چاہیے۔ ہمیں ہر لمحہ یاد رکھنا چاہیے کہ عورتوں کی خود اعتمادی اور آزادی کے بغیر ہمارا
مروج بھی ترقی نہیں کر سکتا۔

Alvi Fatima
(Urdu General)