

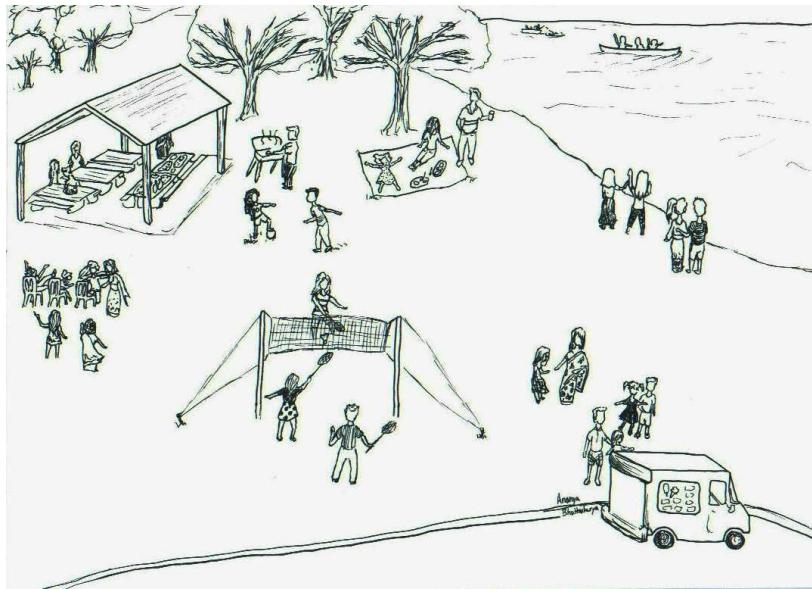


Bengali Association of Greater Chicago - Community Newsletter

সমাজ সংবাদ

Volume 39 Issue 3

July 2014



Art work by Ananya Bhattacharya

Editorial

School children are done with their classes, homework and final examinations. Young adults are probably busy with their summer travels, jobs, and internships. Are you ready for the BAGC summer rituals? We, BAGC Executive Committee members, are busy planning the annual picnic at Busse Woods, Elk Grove, to be held on July 26. The Children's Day event is also coming up in August.

At the picnic, those of us with grown-up offspring are looking forward to sitting around in the shade engaged in our favorite activity – that is “adda”. As younger parents try to manage their children running around in the open field, we will smile. We will coo over new babies and congratulate expecting mothers. We will welcome visiting parents and relatives from India. It is a wonderful opportunity to get personalized news about India. Personally, I have attended almost all BAGC picnics for the past 26 years and loved every one of them including some under pouring rain. As you all know, some members of the food committee will gain few more gray hair thinking

UPCOMING BAGC EVENTS

ANNUAL BAGC PICNIC

Date: Saturday, July 26, 2014

Time: 11:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Venue: Busse Woods, Grove 18 Shelter
T, Elk Grove, IL 60007

BAGC CHILDREN'S DAY

Date: Saturday, August 9, 2014

Time: 2 PM to 6:00 PM

Venue: Banga Bhaban

SRIKRISHNA JANMASHTAMI

Date: Sunday, August 17, 2014

Time: 2 PM to 6:00 PM

Venue: Banga Bhaban

about every single detail related to serving the best food.

We sincerely hope that every BAGC member will join us at the picnic and make it a great success.

The next item on the BAGC Calendar is the Children's Day. Many young talents will take to the stage for the first time at this event. It is wonderful to see them mature every year. Please do attend this event, even if you do not have a performer on the stage. We, BAGC newsletter editors, truly believe that encouraging the younger generation in expressing talents and opinions is our primary objective.

Lastly, please remember to send your contributions to the annual Sharodiya Samaj Sangbad Patrika as soon as possible. We are accepting poetry, fiction and non-fiction as well as art work. The deadline is July 15, 2014.

We are signing off on the longest day of the year wishing you all wonderful summer days that you will remember for a long time. Keep well and hope to see you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Bakul Banerjee and Kakali Dasgupta

“Investing is Simple, but not Easy” - Warren Buffet

Are you investing successfully for the long term?

Despite making enough money, most people struggle to achieve their long term financial goals. They employ trial and error investment strategies, trying to pick the next hot stock or mutual fund. Lacking a clear investment plan and execution strategy, they often assume more risk than necessary and thereby diminish their chances of achieving their goals.

What does it take to invest successfully?

Successful investors have a well thought out investment plan and strategy, which they execute consistently over the long haul. Just as successful athletes have a plan and strategy in place and achieve success with the help of a coach, successful investors need a good investment plan and strategy that they can execute with the help of a good investment adviser.

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All investment strategies have the potential for profit or loss. Changes in investment strategies, contributions or withdrawals may materially alter the performance and results of your portfolio. We only transact business in states where we are properly registered, or are excluded or exempted from registration requirements.

News from the BAGC Board of Trustees (BOT)

— Second Quarterly meeting

Dear BAGC Members:

Greetings from 2014 Board of Trustees. Hope you are having a good summer. BOT had its second quarterly meeting on May 3. Following is a synopsis of subjects that BOT is currently working on:

- A) A Task Force created by BOT and lead by Dr. Narayan Das, to report on Safety of Food Distribution in BAGC events has submitted a preliminary report. A final report is expected in the near future. The report will be reviewed by BOT and forwarded to EC with its recommendations.
- B) BOT had initiated a project to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to serve as a guide book for BAGC operations. SOP has been developed and will stay with BOT as caretaker and updated as needed.
- C) BOT had delegated Ranjit Roy and Dipak Ghosh to investigate the status of Banga Bhavan (BB) security system. I am happy to report that through their coordination and with help of many volunteers like Atanu Mazumder, Milan Banerji, Monisha Datta, Malabika Palit, BB security system is fully operational.
- D) BOT has also initiated a special project, spearheaded by Dipak Ghosh, to develop procedures for safety and security of BAGC members and assets. As a part of that endeavor EC volunteer went over the emergency exit procedures before the start Banga Sanskriti Dibas program.
- E) Another BOT initiated special project is Reevaluation of various BAGC Committees. A committee has been formed with Achintya Ray as the BOT representative in the committee. The committee plans to move expeditiously so that their recommendations can be finalized before the next GBM.
- F) Last but not the least, is the huge financial deficit run up by 2013 EC and the lateness of its realization. BOT is developing procedures to preclude similar happenings in future and implement necessary checks and balances. The report will be finalized following the receipt and review of the final financial report from the 2013 EC.

We will keep you advised of BOT activities through Newsletter and e-mails. Thank you.

Subhas Bose, BOT Chairman

Consular Expo for Passport/Visa/OCI/PIO

On June 8, 2014, Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), Chicago, hosted the first ever Consular Expo for Passport/Visa/OCI/PIO Information at the Indo-American Center (IAC) at 6328 N California Ave, Chicago, IL. In spite of few logistics issues, it was a success. Recently, Indian embassy has contracted Cox & Kings Global Services (<http://www.in.ckgs.us/application-centres/>)



([chicago.shtml](#)) for processing above documents. The main objective of the informational camp was to assist individuals and to answer questions regarding the transition. The Consul General, Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, himself answered questions from more than 170 attendees. Representatives from Cox and Kings Global Services were also present at the event. For more information regarding the transition process, please visit consulate website and BLS (the previous contractor) site <http://www.visa.blisia.com/>.

The event was also attended by the 50th ward Alderman Debra Silverstein and Illinois State Senator Ira Silverstein. Ms. Nettie Lasko from Illinois Attorney General's Office presented important information regarding the assistance including financial ones available to the victims of crime and identity theft.

This event was well represented by the Bengali community with Dr. Basanti Banerji, President of IAC. On behalf of FIA, Mr. Ranjit Ganguly was a key organizer.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



June 18, 2014

Dear Members,

It is six months since the 2014 EC assumed charge. Time has flown by quite fast. Thank you for your generous support to us in discharging our duties and serving your needs. We hope that thus far you have been satisfied with our services.

In the next few months we have planned quite a few events. Our annual picnic is scheduled at Busse Woods on July 26, 2014. As in every year, we look forward to a fun-filled day of outdoor activities, tasty food, and pleasant socialization. We hope that the weather will be cheerful and that there will be a good turnout. Our annual Children's Day program, which provides BAGC youth and children an opportunity to showcase their talent in the performing arts, will be held on Aug 9, 2014 at Banga Bhavan, followed by Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations on Aug 17, 2014. In addition, we shall be organizing three summer concerts at Banga Bhavan during the months of July and August. Admission is free for the first two concerts, while the last will be a ticketed event. Please extend your encouragement by attending these events.

As regards strengthening our financial infrastructure we are making steady progress. After the end of June, we shall be working on completing the financial statements for the second quarter to present to the BOT. We are also making some headway in setting up a packaged accounting software for BAGC. We hope to get it up and running by the end of the third quarter.

Let me add a few words now about a key strategic goal of the 2014 EC – paying off BAGC's outstanding mortgage loan by the end of 2014. Earlier this month, I reached out to you via the BAGC Google Group, to appeal to you for donations in this regard. As I mentioned in the letter, BAGC incurs a hefty \$14,000 per year in interest charges on our mortgage loan. This is a huge financial drain on the association. While this financing charge was unavoidable four years ago, the situation has changed now that Banga Bhavan has become operational. The property's market value is up; this is the time to make it secure. As long as we carry the debt, an unexpected financial blow could snatch away what so many have toiled so hard to make ours. If we pay off the debt, BAGC's annual costs will be reduced by \$20,000 and Banga Bhavan operations will become self-sustaining, minimizing our reliance on donations. Most importantly, our resources may be used for other important causes.

We have targeted raising \$130,000 in donations for this purpose. The remainder of the outstanding loan balance can be met with a portion of our cash balance. We wish to appeal to as many members as possible so that everyone feels a sense of participation and belonging in this effort. Since we have nearly 200 member families, the average donation will be within a reasonable amount the more the number of members who pitch in. In the initial round of fund-raising for purchasing Banga Bhavan, BAGC members demonstrated much collective enthusiasm. I appeal to all of you to come forward again with your generous support.

The 2014 EC Fund-Raising Team, led by Shubham Sanyal and Sonali Biswas, will be reaching out to you in a short while. Meanwhile, I request you to fill in the pledge form on the next page and mail it out at your earliest convenience. Pledges in any amount will be welcome.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel welcome to reach out to me.

Warm regards,

Debasish

Debasish Gooptu
BAGC President 2014

**BAGC MORTGAGE LOAN PAYOFF FUND DRIVE
PLEDGE FORM**

Please detach along perforated line



Date:

To

Sonali Biswas and Shubham Sanyal

BAGC EC 2014 - Fund Raising Team

Bengali Association of Greater Chicago

1148 N. Main Street

Glendale Heights, IL 60139

Here is my pledge as donation towards the fund-raising initiative for paying off BAGC's outstanding mortgage loan by the end of 2014.

(Please check the appropriate box)

\$1,000 or above *(Please enter amount)* \$_____

\$500 to \$999 *(Please enter amount)* \$_____

Less than \$500 *(Please enter amount)* \$_____

Expected Date of payment _____

Number of Instalments _____

I understand that this donation will not be used for any other purpose than paying off the mortgage loan. Also, it will qualify as a deductible charitable deduction.

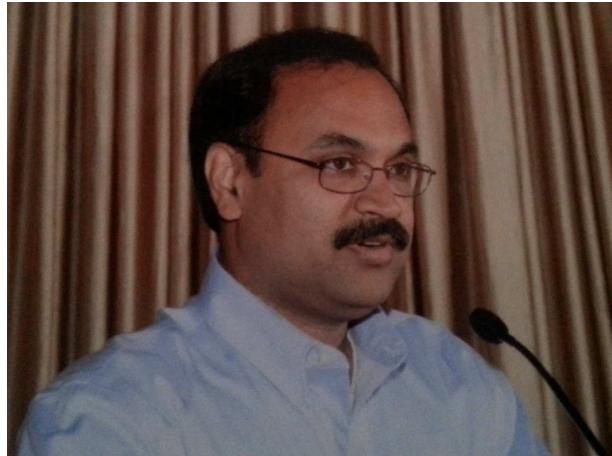
Name _____

Address _____

(If you wish to include your payment now with your pledge, please make out your check to "BAGC", with the memo, "Mortgage Loan Pay-down Fund".)

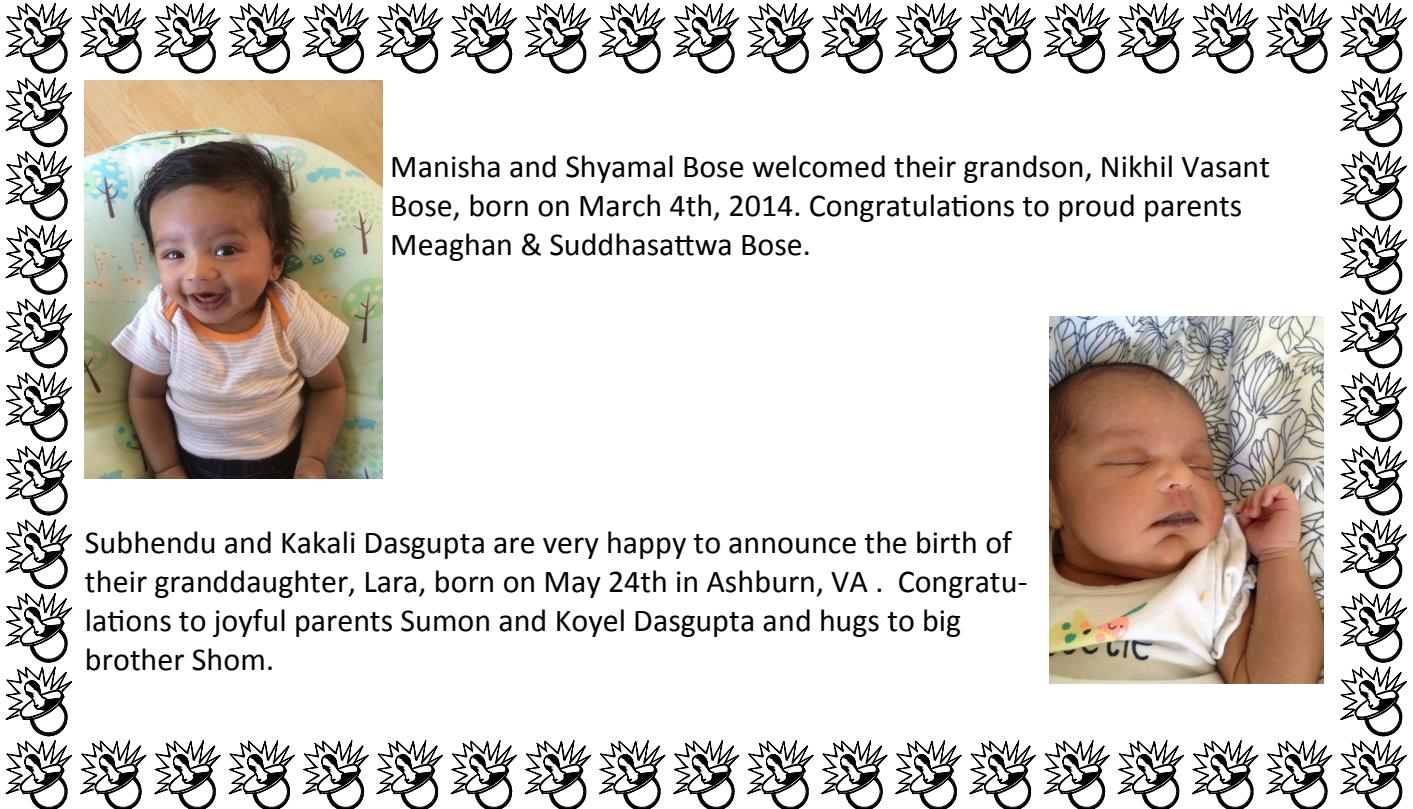
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You light up our lives!



Manisha and Shyamal Bose welcomed their grandson, Nikhil Vasant Bose, born on March 4th, 2014. Congratulations to proud parents Meaghan & Suddhasattwa Bose.



Subhendu and Kakali Dasgupta are very happy to announce the birth of their granddaughter, Lara, born on May 24th in Ashburn, VA . Congratulations to joyful parents Sumon and Koyel Dasgupta and hugs to big brother Shom.

2014 Executive Committee Members

President Debasish Gooptu/847-722-9216

Vice President Amitava Deb/815-469-4010

Secretary Ashok Ghose Dastidar/630-310-7666

Treasurer Bikramjit Dewanjee/630-802-7060

Deputy Treasurer Uditt Mukherjee/630-235-7774

Banga Bhavan Chair Monisha Datta/630-776-0676

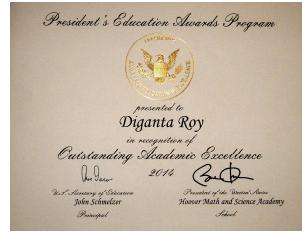
For information on other EC members, please visit:

<http://www.bagc.net/bagc/node/6>

You make us proud!



Diganta Roy, son of Mallika and Sumit Roy, has received 2014 U.S. Presidential Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence. He will have the honor of participating in the Magnet Program at Margaret Mead Junior High School.



Dwaipayan Basu, son of Deba Prasad and Sarmila Basu, graduated from Plainfield South High School. He was named as a Presidential Gold Scholar, Illinois State Scholar, and AP Scholar. He was a member of the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Scholastic Bowl Team, and the Leadership Corp. This upcoming fall he will be attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and plans to major in Economics.



Aniket Biswas, son of Arup and Sonali Biswas has graduated from Buffalo Grove High School with the distinction of Highest Honors and has been recognized as Illinois State Scholar. He has captained the Speech and Debate Team and represented his school to Regional and National Tournaments. He will be attending University of Wisconsin at Madison and majoring in Bio-chemistry. In his free time, Ani likes to spend time with friends, watch movies and listen to music.



Soumik, son of Partha and Sampa Biswas, graduated from William Fremd High School and was recognized at graduation for being an academic scholar. He will attend University of California, Berkeley, and plans to major in electrical engineering and computer science.



Priyanka Chaudhuri, daughter of Rupa and Sandeep Chaudhuri, graduated from William Fremd High School. She will be attending the University of Illinois as a James Scholar, and majoring in elementary education.

You make us proud!



Avisek Datta , son of Sanatan and Sanchayita Datta, graduated from Purdue University majoring in Bio Medical Engineering. He will be pursuing M.S in Bio Statistics from Washington University, ST Louis, School of Medicine.



Tanmoy Datta, son of Sanatan and Sanchayita Datta, graduated from Glenbard North high School. Tanmoy is a Illinois State Scholar, AP Scholar with Distinction, recipient of President's award. He is also a member of National Honor Society. Tanmoy will be studying "Management" in Indiana University, Bloomington, School of Business.



Ahona Mazumder, daughter of Atanu and Ajanta Mazumder, graduated with honors from Downers Grove South High School in Downers Grove. She was a member of the National Honor Society and her school's Madrigals Singers and also participated on the speech team. In the fall, she will be attending Indiana University-Bloomington to pursue a degree in marketing and international business from the Kelley School of Business.

Special Recognition



On April 10, 2014, Dr. Krishna Chakrabarty received the College of Medicine - Urban Health Program Director's award from the University of Illinois, Chicago. It is given to teachers and faculty members who demonstrate outstanding commitment to Excellence in Teaching, Leadership and Service and Commitment to Student Success.

BAGC NEWS

Satyajiter Panchali — A Review by Kakali Dasgupta



One of the joys of belonging to a vibrant and active community such as BAGC is that almost every event produces an outstanding cultural offering by the local talent. This year's Banga Sanskriti Dibas was no exception. 'Satyajiter Panchali', written and directed by Alak Bhattacharyya, was an attempt to encapsulate in a brief presentation, the genius that is Satyajit Ray. An impossible task, some might say. But through some insightful vignettes, the highlights of Ray's memorable career, his struggles to bring his creative vision to life on the movie screen, the recognition and fame that first the international community and then his own nation showered on him, were deftly presented. Along the way there were those who stood by him steadfastly, like his mother - played by Devipriya Roy, his wife Bijoya Roy - played by Soma Sanyal, and his loyal friend and production designer on most of his movies, Bansi Chandragupta played adroitly by Shubham Sanyal. Ray's fortuistic meeting in Kolkata with French director Jean Renoir was played with aplomb by Debanshu Bhattacharya. Purabi Majumdar's portrayal of the aged Indir Thakuran in 'Pather Panchali' was simply exceptional. Dhiman Chakraborty, as the central character Ray himself, did an admirable job of portraying Ray's journey through the ups and downs of life. Subrota Mukherjee's versatility in playing multiple roles and Achintya Ray as Bidhan Chandra Roy, deserve mention. Most of all, the young actors who portrayed Apu, Durga, young Soumitra Chatterjee and Ray's son Sandip, are to be commended for their hard work.

The audiovisual projection of actual newscasts and moments such as presentation and acceptance of the honorary Oscar, added another dimension to the play. Minor glitches, such as

the pesky hidden microphones which seemed to have a tendency to tumble into plain view, were good naturedly overlooked by the audience. All in all, it was an excellent production and we would like to thank Alak, the actors and the indefatigable backstage crew for making it possible. Because of the shortage of time on that day, the cast and crew did not have an opportunity to come out and take a bow. We would like to recognize them once again.

Writer and Director: Alak Bhattacharyya

Cast: Dhiman Chakraborty (Satyajit Ray), Devipriya Roy (Suprova Ray), Soma Sanyal (Bijoya Ray), Shubham Sanyal (Bansi Chandragupta), Debanshu Bhattacharya (Jean Renoir, Berlin Award Announcer), Subrota Mukherjee (Mr. Sarkar, Mr. Das, Mr. Bhattacharya), Deepa Bhattacharya (Roma Bardopadhyay), Jayanta Mukherjee (Anil Chaudhury, Minister 3), Debasis Chatterjee (Nirad Choudhury, Subrota Mitra, Minister 1), Achintya Roy (Bidhan Chandra Roy), Purabi Majumdar (Chunibala, Indir Thakuran), Ashok Ghose Dastidar (Ranababu, Minister 2), Supriti Chatterjee (Ira Thakur), Amarto Bhattacharyya (Soumitra Chatterjee), Shourik Dutta (Sandip Ray), Shuvani Sanyal (Sharmila Thakur), Malabi Mukherjee (Durga), Anand Ghose Dastidar (Apu), Sunayana Yang (Narrator), Alpana Gangopadhyaya and Joyita Mukherjee (Prompters)

Production Co-ordination: Anjali Bhattacharyya

Audio Team: Subhasis Mukherjee, Mallika Sarkar, Anjali Bhattacharyya, Sunanda Bose, Ishita Kodali

Video Team: Neela Dasgupta, Subhashish Ghosh, Indrani Sen, Sumit Roy, Chandrima Roy

Stage Manager: Dibyen Majumdar

Back-Stage Manager: Shankar Sarkar

Audiovisuals: Nirmalya Ghosh, Aian Mazumder

Sets: Malabika Palit, Lyra Mukherjee

Lights: Prasenjit Das

Dance Choreography: Aindrila Dutta

Makeup: Subrota Mukherjee, Deepa Bhattacharya and Debanshu Bhattacharya

Back Stage Help: Sanjib Basu, Sudeshna Chakraborty

Unveiling of Banga Bhaban Plaque



On Sunday, June 1, 2014 at 2:00 pm, the new plaque for Banga Bhaban was unveiled. A simple unveiling ceremony marked the event. It was followed by a cake cutting ceremony and an informal "adda". Sweets, snacks, tea, and coffee were served. We wish to express its heartfelt thanks to all those who participated.

Book Review by Basanti Banerji

Bugging Cancer; by Ananda Chakrabarty et. al.,

The book 'Bugging Cancer' is narrating the idea of one person, Dr. Ananda Chakrabarty. The chapters and vignettes are created by different individual authors. It is a fiction of romance, but of a different nature.

The story starts where the principal character, a young U. S. based physician research scientist Dr. Sambuddha Roy (Sam) meets Erin at a gathering in the library. They share their passion for philosophy of India and poetry. They develop a romantic bond.

We get to know of the dreams, aspirations and commitment of this young man. His personal background depicts his journey through all challenges to find answers to prevent and thus treat cancer through gene therapy using a specific protein by use of a bacterium. The girl, Erin on the other hand is a victim due

to history of cancer in the family.

While reading, we meet different characters with cancer and their personal lives. In addition, there are many research scientists who are committed to the same cause and how they arrived at this point of decision.

It is a complex endeavor. So are many parts of the book where intricate details of the mechanisms are described. We are introduced to the idea of the pathophysiology where readers may get overwhelmed. My impression was that the narration could indeed progress more slowly to allow the reader going thru this difficult technical subject matter, while I do not doubt the complexity of the main theme.

We also get introduced to the subject of 'patent' on the matter of the treatment that our Sam envisions and the issue of 'copy-right'. Hence there are enlightening discussions about ethics of patent and genetics among the professionals offering their expertise in such individual fields.

The colloquies in the chapters are interwoven well in the book for the most part.

There is a romantic theme as I said before, however the romances are not just between two people, but also between this young man and his dream to cure cancer.

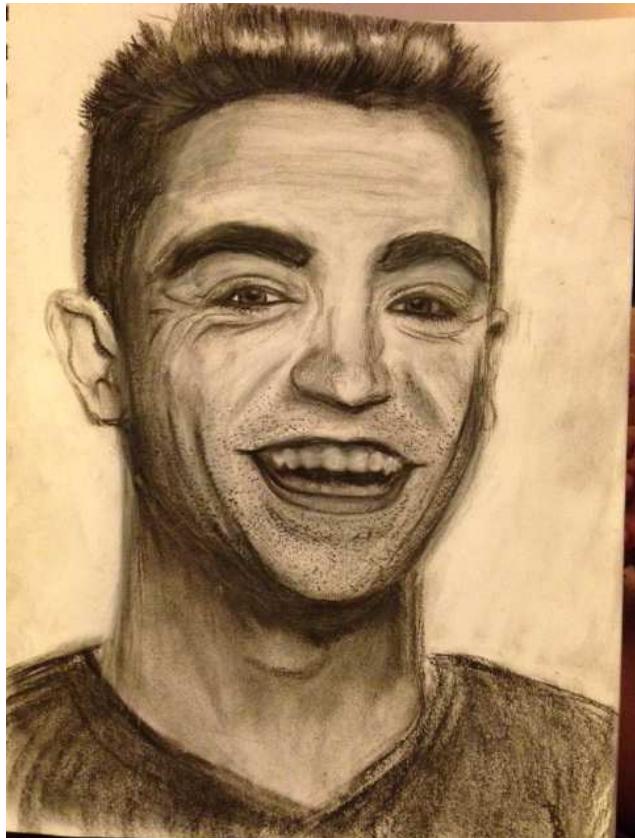
Something unusual and noteworthy about the novel is that a group of Bengali authors and scientists have contributed to the compilation and creation of the story and material in this book .

The different chapters are authored and coordinated by Ranajoy Ganguli, Indrani Mondal, Bakul Banerjee, Debkumar Chatterjee, Ranjita Chattopadhyay, Debabrata Chakravarti, Krishna Chakrabarty and Ananda Chakrabarty. The scientific research references were provided by Drs. Tapas Dasgupta and Dibyen Majumdar.

The book is available for purchase from amazon.com.

Commencement 2014

Binita Gupta Honors Xavi and 2014 FIFA World Cup



Indrani Mondal

She stood against the light
unadorned in her fierce simplicity
resplendent in the radiance of youth
and the priceless knowledge, without wordy
epithet or flowery title,
of growing up and growing into
What accolades could celebrate her natural grace
in gathering around her, her ornamental robe
rich and heavy, embellished with
Inherited expectations
and pairing it with the winsome lines of red,
blue and white
of true homegrown shape,
into an unique presence
of earthy modern day wit and age spun wisdom
shorn of pretension, guile and superfluous
clutter,
ever ready to create, mold or follow the
beaten path
meet a challenge or weigh a demand
with equal zest, candor and cheer
throbbing with such genuine life and the joy of it;

I can only close my eyes and hardly wait to see
her fiery innocence
set the world aglow
as she commences into it.

Xavier "Xavi" Hernandez is a world-renowned central midfielder for FC Barcelona and the international Spain team. He has won more trophies than any other Spanish player in the history of the sport. He was also the 2010 World Soccer Player of the Year. Despite his undeniable brilliance in the sport, the defending champions have been eliminated from this year's World Cup. It was a devastating shock to Spain fans everywhere, but we hope Spain will return strong in the next Euro Cup as well as the 2018 World Cup.

— Artwork and writing by Binita Gupta

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SHUBHAM SANYAL
somasany@hotmail.com, 847-372-2535

আমেরিকার গল্পসংগ্রহ - ২য়

যাকিমা, ওয়ালাওয়ালা ও পোর্টল্যাণ্ড

দেবাংশু ভট্টাচার্য

আমি ও আমার তিনবন্ধু, এই চারমূর্তির, চেরি তোলার
অভিযানের গল্প বলেছি আগের সংখ্যায়। তিনিদিন পর আমরা
বেরিয়ে পড়লাম। আবার রাত্তায় - পথের পথিক। পরের দিন
পৌঁছে গেলাম ওয়াশিংটন স্টেটেরই একটা ছোট শহর - নাম
যাকিমা। এই যাকিমা আপেলের জন্যে বিখ্যাত। ওয়াশিংটনের
আপেল সারা আমেরিকায় যত বিক্রী হয় - তার বেশীর ভাগই
আসে এই অঞ্চল থেকে।

ওখানে আমাদের এক বন্ধু থাকতো - নাম মারভিন - আমরা
ডাকতাম মার্ভ বলে। তার বাড়ীতে গিয়ে উঠলাম - খুব একটা
বড় বাড়ী নয়, তবু আমাদের আদর করে থাকতে বলল।
আমাদের সবার সঙ্গেই স্লিপিং ব্যাগ ছিল কাজেই মার্ভের ঘরে,
বসবার ঘরে সবাই শুয়ে পরার কোনও অসুবিধে নেই। ওই মার্ভ
ও ওর স্ত্রী অ্যান ইউরোপ থেকে ভারতবর্ষ অবধি হিচ-হাইকিং
করে গিয়েছিল। সে এক রোমহর্ষক গল্প - অন্য কোনও সময়ে
বলব।

মার্ভের বাবার বেশ কয়েকটা আপেল অর্চার্ড আছে। সেখানে
একটা খুব সুন্দর জিনিস দেখেছিলাম। রাতে যদি একটু ঠাণ্ডা
পড়ে তাহলে আপেলগুলো ফ্রিজ করে গেলে সেগুলো নষ্ট হয়ে
যায়। এত আপেল গাছ গরম রাখবে কি করে? তাই চারটে,
চারটে আপেল গাছের মাঝে মাঝে ওরা জ্বালায় যাকে বলে
“স্মার্জ পট”। মানে একটা খোলা চুল্লির মত, যার মধ্যে কয়লা
বা কাঠ জ্বালায় সারা রাত্তি। তাতেই আপেলগুলো গরম থাকে।
রাতে ওপরের বাড়ী থেকে নীচে ভ্যালিতে যখন এই সব স্মার্জ
পট গুলো জ্বলে - দারুণ দেখতে লাগে।

পরের দিন গেলাম ওদের আপেল অর্চার্ডে ব্যাপার সাপার
দেখতে। হয়তো কোনও কিছু করাও যেতে পারে। হয়তো
আপেল তোলাও যেতে পারে। অর্চার্ডের ম্যানেজার বলল, না
এখনও আপেল পাকেনি। তবে তোমরা আপেল “থিনিং” করতে
পারো। সেটা আবার কি? আপেলকে রোগা করতে হবে?

মানেজার বাবু বুঝিয়ে দিলেন ও তখন মনে হল খুব ইন্টারেস্টিং,
আগে জানতাম না। আপেল থিনিং হচ্ছে এই। যখন আপেল
প্রথম হয় - একসঙ্গে তিনিটে চারটে কাছাকাছি হয়। যখন
এগুলো বড় হতে থাকে - সেগুলো একটা আর একটাকে ছুঁয়ে
যায় ও আর বাড়ে না। এখন একটা বড় আপেলের দাম দুটো
তিনিটে ছোট আপেলের থেকে বেশী, এমন কি লোকেরা খুব
ছোট আপেল কিনতেই চায় না। তাই যখন তিন চারটে আপেল
হয় কাছাকাছি, একটা রেখে বাকিগুলো ছিঁড়ে ফেলে দিতে হয়।
একেই বলে আপেল থিনিং।

আমরা বললাম ঠিক আছে আমরা করতে চাই এই কাজ। পরের
দিন লেগে গেলাম। কাজটা চেরি পিকিং-এর থেকে সহজ, কিন্তু
অনেক বেশী উঁচুতে মইয়ে উঠতে হয়, পড়ে যাবার ভয় আছে।
এখানেও দেখলাম অনেক মাইগ্রান্ট ওয়ার্কার। এখানে রোজগার
চেরি তোলার মত পাউন্ডে নয় - কটা গাছ করতে পারব তার
ওপর। আমরা তো দুটো তিনিটে গাছ করতেই দিন কাবার আর
ওরা বাড়ের বেগে এক গাছ শেষ করে আর এক গাছ করছে।
আর একটা অসুবিধে - এই আপেলগুলো খাওয়া যায় না, যেমন
চেরি খাওয়া যেত। যাই হোক দু'দিন ওই কাজ করার পর ঠিক
করলাম আবার time to move on, নতুন একটা এক্সপ্রিয়াক্
তো হল।

এরপরে আমরা পৌঁছলাম ওয়াশিংটন স্টেটের আর একটা ছোট
শহর - নাম ওয়ালাওয়ালা। নামটা শুনে খুব মজা লেগেছিল।
ছোটবেলায় আমি যখন বোঝেতে - এখন মুশাই - সেখানে
অনেক পার্সিদের সঙ্গে আলাপ ছিল। তাদের অনেকেরই নাম
ওয়ালা দিয়ে শেষ হত আর বেশীর ভাগই যা ব্যবসা তার, সেই
ওয়ালা। যেমন কার্পেটওয়ালা - কার্পেটের বিজনেস,
বাটাটাওয়ালা - আলুর ব্যবসায়ী। সবচেয়ে মজার নাম শুনেছিলাম
- পোচ্খানেওয়ালা। তার মানে উনি কি খুব ডিমের পোচ
খেতেন?

ওয়ালাওয়ালা খুবই ছোট শহর। সেখানের প্রধান ব্যবসা -

পেঁয়াজ। সারা আমেরিকায় এখনকার পেঁয়াজ বিক্রী হয়। ওখানে আর একটা এক্সপ্রিয়াঙ্গ হয়। আমরা লাঞ্চ খাচ্ছি একটা জায়গায়, দেখা হল আমাদের ইউনিভার্সিটির আর এক ছাত্রের সঙ্গে – খুব একটা বন্ধু নয় তবে মুখচেনা। কথায় কথায় জিজ্ঞেস করলে কোথায় থাকছ? বললাম কিছু ঠিক করিন। বলল, সে কি? আমার বাড়ী চলে এসো। আমাদের বাড়ী খুব ছেট কিন্তু আমরা সবাই বার্নে খড়ের ওপর শুতে পারি। আমরা তো রাজি। সেখানে রাতে বার্নে খড়ের ওপর স্লিপিং ব্যাগে শুয়েছিলাম। আমরা পেঁয়াজ তোলার কাজ অবশ্য করিন। ওটা শক্ত কাজ – নিচু হয়ে অথবা উবু হয়ে বসে ঘণ্টার পর ঘণ্টা করতে হবে তাও দেখলাম অনেক মেঞ্জিকান্ ওয়ার্কার তাই করছে।

এবার আমরা ঠিক করলাম একটা একটু বড় শহরে যাওয়া যাক। অরিগনের পোর্টল্যান্ড শহর। সুন্দর শহর – মধ্যে দিয়ে একটা নদী পরিষ্কার পরিচ্ছন্ন। একটা মোটেলও পেয়ে গেলাম সহজে। বড় শহর, অত কোনো মাইগ্রেট ওয়ার্কারের ব্যাপার নেই। এবার কি করা যায়? খবরের কাগজে দেখলাম এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া বিক্রীর লোক চাই। আমরা গিয়ে হাজির – দেখা যাক কি ব্যাপার? আমাদের গ্রন্তি ম্যানেজার বলল যে একদিন ট্রেনিং দেওয়া হবে তারপর দিন থেকে চাকরি। এক একটা এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া সেট বিক্রী করলে একশো ডলার। পুরো সেটটার দাম আটশো ডলার। মনে হল এতো ভারি মজার চাকরি, অনেক টাকাও পাওয়া যাবে – তখনকার দিনে একশো ডলার অনেক টাকা, অন্তত আমাদের কাছে।

শুরু হল ট্রেনিং পরের দিন। যেমন প্রথমেই বলল কখনও বলবে না আটশ ডলার দাম – বলবে সাতশো নিরানবই ডলার। আরো ভাল যদি বলো দিনে মাত্র দুই ডলারের থেকে একটু বেশী। আর প্রথমেই বলবে না যে এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া বিক্রী করতে এসেছি। একটা ফর্ম দিল – যার ওপরে লেখা এডুকেশন্যাল রিসার্চ ইনসিটিউট। বলবে আমরা ছাত্র – সার্ভে বা রিসার্চ করছি। বেশ কয়েকটা প্রশ্ন আছে ফর্মটায় – যেমন তোমাদের ছেলেমেয়ে আছে? কত বয়স বা স্কুলে কোন ক্লাসে পড়ে? তোমরা কি বিশ্বাস করো যে ছেলেমেয়েদের পড়াশুনা করা খুব দরকার? বাড়ীতে কি এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া আছে? যদি দেখো যে স্কুলের ছেলেমেয়ে নেই বা বাড়ীতে এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া আছে, তাহলে সময় নষ্ট করবে না

– চলে যাও পরের বাড়ীতে।

তারপরের দিন বিকেলের দিকে যখন সবাই বাড়ীতে – সেই সময় এক বিরাট সাব্ডিভিসনের এক দিকে নামিয়ে দিল, বলল সব বাড়ী গিয়ে সাব্ডিভিসনের অন্য দিকে থেকো – তুলে নেবো।

প্রথমেই লক্ষ্য করলাম যে খুব একটা বড়লোকের জায়গা নয়। বলা যায় ব্লু-কলার ওয়ার্কারদের বাড়ী সব। শুরু করলাম বাড়ী থেকে বাড়ী যাওয়া। বেশ কয়েকটা বাড়ী যাবার পর বিক্রী হয়ে গেল একটা এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া সেট। একশো ডলার রোজকার হয়ে গেল। আর ঘুরতে ইচ্ছে করলো না – সাব্ডিভিসনের অন্য দিকে একটা কফি শপে গিয়ে সময়টা কাটিয়ে দিলাম যতক্ষণ না ম্যানেজার এল তুলে নিতে। ও আমি একটা সেট বিক্রী করেছি শুনে তো খুব খুশী।

তিনিদিন এই কাজ করেছিলাম। রোজ একটা করে বিক্রী করতাম আর বাকি সময় এমনি কাটিয়ে দিতাম। আর আমার ম্যানেজার খুবই খুশী। বলে তুমি আরও বিক্রী করতে পারবে, পুরো গরমের ছুটিতে কামাবে অনেক টাকা। কিন্তু আমার ক্রমশই মনে হচ্ছিল যে এই চাকরিটা এক ধরণের ‘কন জব’। এই এন্সাইক্লোপিডিয়া সেট বিক্রী করা হয় তাদের যারা নিজেরা খুব একটা পড়াশুনা করে নি, চায় তাদের ছেলেমেয়েরা ওদের থেকে বেশী উন্নতি করে জীবনে আর ভাবে যে এই সেটাই কিনলে সেটা হয়ে যাবে। সবচেয়ে বড় কথা ওদের এতটা খরচ করার সত্যি সামর্থ্য নেই। আমরা ওদের ভুলিয়ে ভালিয়ে, কথার মারপ্যাঁচে এটা কেনাই। আমার এতই খারাপ লাগল যে আমি তিনিদিন পরে গিয়ে বললাম যে আমি এই চাকরি আর করব না। শুনে ম্যানেজার তো বিশ্বাসই করতে পারে না। ভীষণ মুষড়ে পড়ল। অনেক বোঝালো – তোমার ফিউচার খুব বাইট, অনেক রোজগার করতে পারবে এক গরমের ছুটিতেই। আমি কিছুতেই রাজি হলাম না।

আমার বন্ধুরা অত বিক্রী করতে পারছিল না। আমরা ঠিক করলাম আর না, বেরিয়ে পড়া যাক রাস্তায়। এবার ক্যালিফোর্নিয়া – তার গল্প পরে।



বেঙ্গলী এসোসিয়েশন্ অফ গ্ৰেটাৰ শিকাগো

Bengali Association of Greater Chicago

1148 N. Main Street, Glendale Heights, IL 60139

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BAGC PICNIC, Saturday, July 26, 2014

Event: BAGC PICNIC, 2014

Date: Saturday, July 26, 2014

Time: 11:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Venue: Busse Woods,

Grove 18 Shelter T

Elk Grove, IL 60007

