



NSJ Round Table: Former Lok Ayukta Justice Santosh Hegde will speak at the NSJ Round Table to be held at the National School of Journalism (NSJ) auditorium. The event will be on January 20, Wednesday at 11 am.

FOURTH ISSUE

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VOLUME 02 | ISSUE 04



The labour of love P2  
Read through the inspiring story of Aruna Sunderlal and how she founded Bangalore School of Music. In a chat with NSJ Post, Mrs Sunderlal shares the challenges she faced in making her pet project come true as a gift to the city.



Not the world's best love story P2  
NSJ student, Khushboo, an avid reader reviews Durjoy Dutta's latest release, "The world's best Boyfriend." The book, a romantic fiction set in a college campus weaves around the lives of Aranya and Dhruv. Find out more on growing popularity of Indian romantic fiction.



Bengaluru now and then P3  
Our city underwent dramatic changes in the recent past. The changes are so big that many find the old city totally missing. In a brilliant attempt at preserving Bengaluru's glorious past the Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH) held a rare exhibition of photos of a fast changing city



Obscured by Modernity P4  
The Kempegowda International Airport is 35km from the heart of Bengaluru city and the journey is always arduous and often boring, so much so we fail to notice a 500-year-old historical monument right on our way. Like many historic spots this too is facing official apathy.

# "EVERYBODY IS PLAYING POLITICS"

By NSJ Bureau

Mr. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, well-known journalist, broadcaster, and film-maker, believes that the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has suffered significantly during the 20-month rule of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the centre

Mr. Thakurta, who was in Bengaluru recently for the release of the book, "The Modi Myth", published by himself in association with Author's Upfront, feels that while the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Aam Admi Party (AAP) in Delhi, the bigger debacle was in Bihar. He says that the BJP's strategic disaster in Bihar was the party's failure to promote social harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims, which led to the big victory of the Grand Alliance, particularly of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Mr. Thakurta, noted documentary film-maker and the author of the controversial book, "Gas Wars: Crony Capitalism and Ambanis" and "A Time of Coalitions: Divided We Stand", spoke to student journalists of the National School of Journalism.

## Excerpts from the exclusive interview:

Tell us something about the new book "The Modi Myth" and its author Mr. Surendra Nihal Singh. "The Modi Myth" is the first book that has been published under my imprint, in association with Author's Upfront. The book is an analysis of the first year and a half of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure. It takes a critical look at the sharp shift in the working of India's polity after the 2014 general elections and also how Mr. Modi lost a

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There is a corrupt media and there is a proactive and very sensitive media. One shouldn't sort of club everybody together in the media.

lot of his popularity so rapidly after becoming the Prime Minister of India, which cost the BJP Delhi and then very recently the Bihar Legislative assembly elections.

The author of the book, Mr. Surendra Nihal Singh, is 86 years old and represents a generation of journalists. He has been practicing journalism for more than half a century and has been the editor of leading newspapers such as The Statesman, The Indian Express and Khaleej Times.

Speaking of the Bihar elections and the BJP, we saw the Prime Minister and the Home Minister campaigned rigorously throughout the state and yet the BJP lost. Why do you think the party lost with such huge margin?

The Bihar assembly election was not about The Grand Alliance (JD, RJD and INC) v/s Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP); it was Nitish Kumar v/s Narendra Modi. Everybody says that identity politics matters. In case of Bihar, the elections were painted

as Bihar v/s Bahari. The People of Bihar perceived Nitish Kumar to be a more credible Chief Ministerial candidate.

It's interesting how voters choose parties and candidates. I do believe that the type of campaign that was carried on by the Bhartiya Janata Party in Bihar, did not exactly promote social harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims. Instead, it was telling them what they could and what they could not do. All of these in my opinion didn't really help the Bhartiya Janata Party.

India is facing the issue of intolerance and some writers and scientists have returned their awards. Do you think this is the right way to protest?

There is no right or wrong way to protest. When the BJP says that these people were politically motivated, of course they were. Everybody is playing politics. But, at the end of the day the fact is that the voices of rationalists and writers are not just being throttled, they are physically harmed. They are being killed. This doesn't speak highly of the tolerance of the world's largest democracy.

Mr. Modi can go to London and talk about how India is a tolerant and free nation. I believe, it would help himself if he said more of that while he is at home.

Is media being fair to the country with regard to sensitive issues like these?

A journalist is supposed to be a watch dog of society. There is one section of the media which is doing its work very diligently, very well and others who are not. There is a corrupt media and there is a proactive, and very sensitive media. One shouldn't sort of club everybody together in the media. ●



# Her Labour of Love

By Khushboo Aneja

**T**here are people who narrate a story and then there are people who are a story themselves.

Most people think of retiring at 60 and enjoying the rest of the days, but for Mrs. Aruna Sunderlal, managing trustee of The Bangalore School of Music, her work is everything. In 1974, she came to Bangalore with her husband and fell in love with the city. They decided to retire here. But fate had willed something else. An early death of her husband brought her to Bangalore in 1987, earlier than she had imagined.

"Luckily we had a place here. Our mothers were looking after the house. We had planted trees and shrubs along the drive way. I was involved in community service; raising funds for charity, Red-Cross Society, counselling youth with drug abuse and so on. After coming to Bangalore I decided to focus on music as I was myself interested in it. Bangalore had immense talent, good teachers, but no central place to learn music. "And thus came into being The Bangalore School of Music.

## Problems

Her colonial house provided the school with a cottage. Teachers who were formally introduced to the idea were supportive. But some established teachers did not want to associate with a new music school. It took some time and later they agreed to send their senior students to teach. "I bought a grand



Mrs. Aruna Sunderlal, Founder of Bangalore School of Music.

piano from Delhi and collected a few string instruments. That took care of the infrastructure. But for the school I needed students. I was new to the city and could not ask teachers to bring students too," she added. The first three students of the school were her daughter, niece and nephew. She begged them to help her and they did. "My daughter was

interested in piano and my niece, and nephew took up classical guitar. It started with three students and in the first year itself we had 100 students for classical guitar which was not even popular. At the end of the year, the school had 200 students". With the growing demand for admissions, the infrastructure was not sufficient. The school was shifted

to R.T Nagar . The problem of infrastructure continues even now. The rooms are not sound proof, and the noise of traffic disturbs the classes.

From the beginning the school used to teach singing to a few underprivileged children. "We could not teach all of them as the school had to pay teachers what they deserved. So we focused on a few talented

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Bangalore had immense talent, good teachers, but no central place to learn music.

children". Teachers from the school go to government schools to teach students and also teachers. "Singing together brings harmony. Music is an area where you can meet new people. "Music breaks barriers.

"When we started we had a 70-year-old student who sang as he had asthma. Singing helps asthma patients. "We had a programme for visually challenged children also. They sing in more than 15 languages."

The Bangalore School of Music has exchange programmes with college of music in Stockholm, Sweden, universities in Germany, Spain and Switzerland. The latest is with the Zurich University of Arts which is going to set up a distance learning programme at the school. ●

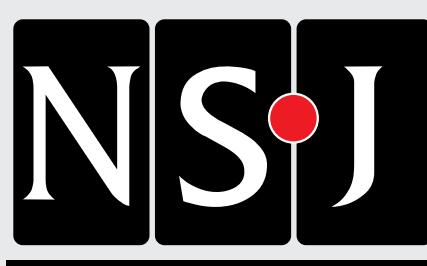
# Not The World's Best Love Story

By: Khushboo Aneja

Hate is a four letter word. So is love. And, sometimes, people can't tell the difference.... Durjoy Datta's new release "World's Best Boyfriend" explores the same genre as his earlier books--romance fiction. The story starts with Dhruv, a little boy, getting to know about his mother's affair with the principal of the school he goes to. (Coincidentally, his mother is a teacher in the same school). His parents get divorced. There are a few pages on how divorce affects children emotionally. But you don't really feel the pain or loneliness Dhruv is going through.

In school, he meets Aranya, a scholarship student who also suffers from Vitiligo, a skin disease. You expect Durjoy to tell his readers a little bit more about the disease and its effect on a young mind, but that doesn't happen. Worse, Aranya is discriminated against at home because of her gender, and her skin problem. Naturally enough, these two lonely children are naturally drawn to each other. Later on, Dhruv gets suspended from the school for reasons that are not made clear—basically, you the reader, can make up your own mind on what happened.

Aranya grows up to be intelligent, smart, extremely talented, and overweight. The difficulties she faces in life are again, left to your imagination. The author has, however, taken the trouble to explain only the bit about "her not having a boyfriend". Meanwhile, Dhruv grows up to become a handsome, gym loving person who hates women and lies, the kind of guy you expected him to become.



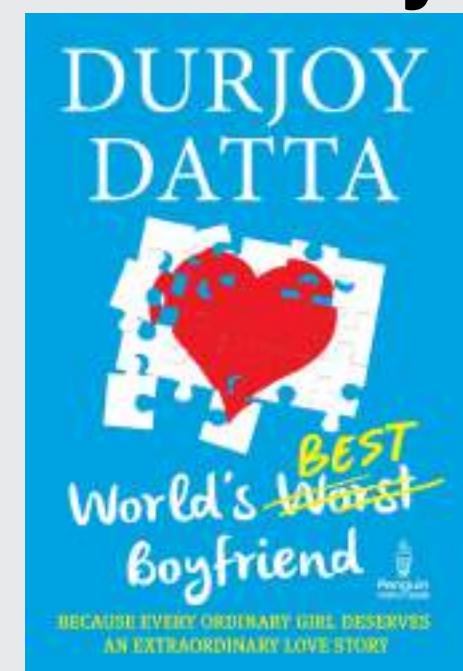
Durjoy has created a lovable character in Sanchit, Dhruv's best friend—he is someone every reader will fall in love with.

Both of them end up in same college and same class. What a coincidence! From day one, Dhruv and Aranya try to hurt each other deeply but end up feeling guilty and remorseful about their behaviour (with each other). They try to stay away but are drawn to each other. It's pretty obvious that they love each other but events of the past keep them apart. In fact, a lot of the developing story

is concerned with how the two protagonists try to destroy each other over old misunderstandings. A good heart-to-heart could have resolved things quickly, but that would have meant the end of the story. This is Durjoy Datta's thickest book (in terms of pages!) and the reason for the extra length is clear, even though everyone knows how the story is going to end.

Both the characters are pretty childish, they spend a lot of time fighting over nothing. Aranya's character is better written than Dhruv's for the author does bring out the struggles of a girl who is trying hard to fit in. Dhruv, however, is just another guy who loves going to the gym, thinks about sex all the time and has no real goal or aim in life. On the other hand, Durjoy has created a lovable character in Sanchit, Dhruv's best friend—he is someone every reader will fall in love with. He is funny, witty and you feel like you are reading about your best friend. Then there is Raghuvir, who unfortunately, doesn't even come across as a real person. Aranya's parents are despicable characters who hate her mostly because she is a girl and that too, overweight and (in their heads), ugly because of her skin condition. Sadly, the author does not attempt to change the parents' thinking in the book.

Durjoy Datta's writing is extremely easy to read and understand. Words such as "fuck" are used very freely and unnecessarily most of the time. So, it is not a book to pick up if you mean to improve your English. In fact, there are grammatical mistakes throughout and the lack of a good Editor is obvious.



Dhruv and Aranya's love story is played out in a very childish manner. Personally, I don't recommend the book. The author had the opportunity to explore relationships in depth, and talk about how gender bias, lack of self esteem and body confidence, can impact young minds/lives. Instead, he has chosen to craft a very immature love story. ●

# BENGALURU

## Then & Now



34, Cunningham Road



9, Edwards Road, Off Cunningham road



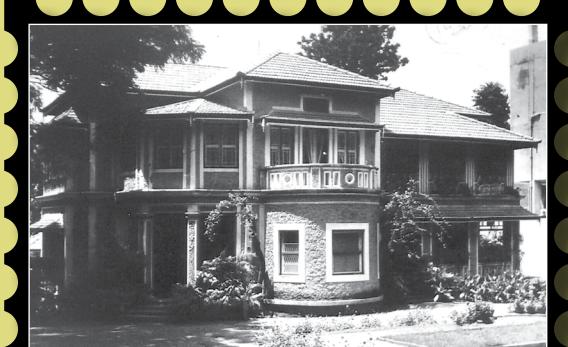
14/11, St Mark's Road



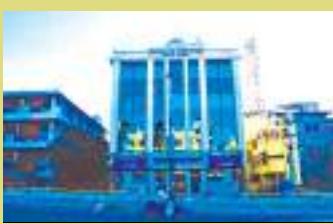
77, Diagonal Road, V V Puram



54, Vani Vilas Road, Basavangudi



15, St Mark's Road



14/11, St Mark's Road

The display contrasts photographs taken of heritage sites in 1985 during Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)'s first inventory of heritage buildings in Bengaluru with recent photographs of the same buildings taken over the last six months. Among the 823 buildings that INTACH's KN Iengar documented in 1985, only 43% stand today. Currently, these buildings appear to be protected because they are mostly under the government, army, church or few individuals. However, there is little legislation to safeguard domestic properties. Here are few pictures taken by NSoJ Student Journalist Abdul Azeez Zain from an exhibition organised by INTACH. Picture Courtesy: INTACH, PeeVee and Ajay Bhaskar.

# Obscured by modernity

By Paul Abhishek Joseph

Devanahalli Fort? Well not many know about it. Leave them aside many of us who zoom to the airport and back give it a miss. Well the impressive fort is very visible from the highway leading us to the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA).

The fort with a long history is not colossal but looks beautiful. Unfortunately many years of neglect and indifference from the authorities concerned has left the massive structure in a bad shape.

The Devanahalli fort was built by a local chieftain, Mallabairegowda in 1501. The fort continued to be in the possession of his descendants until mid-eighteenth Century and in 1749, the then Dalwai (chief minister) of Mysore, Nanjarajaiah, brought it under him.

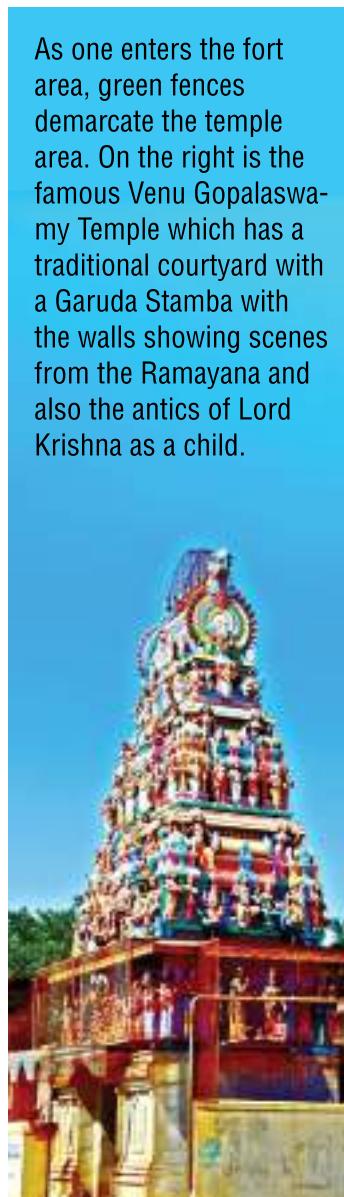
In the years that followed, the fortification was vanquished frequently by the Marathas, the Mysore kingdom and the British under Lord Cornwallis.

Later, the fort went under the control of Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, who re-fabricated the stronghold with stones in the structure that stands even now. After almost two centuries later, the rise of Hyder Ali who was the commander in chief of Krishna Raja Wodeyar II saw many historic events. Hyder Ali gave stiff resistance to the British who were on a grand mission to expand their territory. His administrative acumen and military skills saw many campaigns in the region. Soon the Devanahalli Fort also came under his control.

The area near the Fort is also said to be the birth place of Tipu Sultan who was born in 1750. A small pillared enclosure with a stone tablet declares the place to be the birth place of Tipu Sultan. The area around the enclosure is known as Khas Bagh and has a dried up stone pond.

Unfortunately there are no information boards to tell visitors about Tipu Sultan, popularly known as the Tiger of Mysore. Tipu Sultan gave the British a tough time and became famous for his sharp military skills. In alliance with the French in their struggle with the British, and in Mysore's struggles with other surrounding powers, both Tipu and his father used their French trained army against the Marathas, rulers of Malabar, Kodagu, Bednore, Carnatic, and Travancore. During Tipu's childhood, his father rose up to take power in Mysore, and upon his father's death in 1782, Tipu succeeded to a large kingdom bordered by the Krishna River in the north, the Eastern Ghats in the east, and the Arabian in the west. He won important victories against the British in the Second Anglo-Mysore War.

If the Karnataka tourism department or the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) were to develop infrastructure around the area of Tipu's birthplace, it would boost tourism here. This will enable our future generations to appreciate our rich heritage.



## HOW TO REACH

- Devanahalli Fort is located around 40 km from Majestic bus stand on the Bengaluru-Hyderabad highway, just before the Kempegowda International Airport, you will find the fort on the right. It is visible from the highway if you are watchful enough.
- **Eateries:** There are many nearby
- **Directions:** Travel on Bellary Road(NH-7) to reach Mekhri Circle. 9 kms from here is Yelahanka. Proceed straight ahead for 29 kms till you reach outskirts of Devanahalli town. Turn left at a junction with a circle and half-a-km from here is Tipu's birthplace and the fort.



Pictures by Paul Abhishek Joseph



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