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Thought for Today

➤ **From the MD's Desk:**

Dear Friends,

Independence Day greeting to all suvidhites !

Preparations are ongoing for the AGM; it is slated to be on 26th September 2015. You will get a formal communication about this a month in advance.

This is the time for you to participate actively in the AGM and steer the company by evaluating the performance so far and specifying the path to be taken in the coming year. This empowerment has meaning only when the following conditions are met:



- the evaluation is a serious one with an objective analysis of the state of the company 2 years previously and comparing it with the previous year - the year for which the data are placed before you.
- keeping politics and personalities out of the analysis.
- getting over the inertia and being vocal about this objective analysis.
- ensuring participation by actually attending the AGM or nomination of proxies.

My experience of the last 2 years at Suvidha has shown me that the participation is patchy. Many SH complain that a minority of vocal share holders 'call the shots'. It is incorrect for us to complain about these voices; it is their right to air their views; rather, all the SH must work towards airing their views. The management can then frame policies based on the majority view. I would stress that the process of airing one's views must be civil; it must be issue based only; and if the majority view goes against one's view, one should accept the majority view with equanimity.

The process of 'listening' to the residents and share holders has been very active. Emails, open houses, objective documentation of complaints etc. have resulted in a few path breaking suggestions that the board has placed before you. You will get these in the AGM notice. I request you to go through these and formulate your opinions on these issues and air them in the AGM.

As you know, the board took Dr Shekar K S as an additional Director and made him the Chairman earlier this year. He has now decided to step down. On behalf of the board and all the SH, I take this opportunity to thank him for his services to Suvidha. It is his vision that started Suvidha. He made the dream come true. We wish him a long and contented life.

I have always been requesting interested people to 'work' for Suvidha on a honorary basis. I renew this request and hope that some of you will come forward and serve Suvidha actively.

Warm regards
Dr K Lakshman

➤ **Event Highlights:** Last month witnessed the following events.



23-07-2015: Formation of Study Circle

With a view to provide a common platform for interested residents and local SH to share knowledge of Sanskrit Literature, the Suvidha Ladies Club has taken yet another innovative initiative to form a Study Circle on 23rd July 2015. Both men and women are invited to join this group activity which is scheduled on every Thursday between 5pm and 6pm. To facilitate meaningful and systematic deliberations, a lead team of three resident ladies has been formed to make a beginning. Details of the Lead Team are presented below.



Prof. TS Rukmani, Cottage#73, has agreed to be the moderator and resource person. Presently, she is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. Her specialization is in Sanskrit Literature, Vedas and Upanishads.

Ms. Vasanthi Nayak, Cottage#167, has agreed to be a resource person in the lead team. She is a qualified Sanskrit teacher with indepth knowledge of Bhagavad Gita and various sanskrit literary works. She has mobilised a sizable group of residents



to learn sanskrit. She has been conducting sanskrit classes since 20th May 2015.

Ms. Indra Rajaram, Cottage#63, is a new addition to Suvidha family. However, she readily volunteered to be a resource person in the lead team. In the past she had conducted similar knowledge sharing activities in respect of Bhagawad Gita and Bhajagovindam.

Let us wish all the best to the Study Circle and its members in this laudable community activity.



28-07-2015: Condolence Meeting

The news of sad demise of "People's President" APJ Abdul Kalam who passed Away at Shillong on Monday the 27th July 2015, shocked the residents of Suvidha. A condolence meeting was held on Tuesday 28th July 2015. Chairman Dr. K S Shekar addressed the gathering and paid tributes to the departed soul. Mr. E.S. Ramamurthy, shared his thoughts of long term association with the past president. Brig(Retd.) Pardhasaradhi and Mr. SVS Sastry recalled several incidences about



the "Missile Man" who, till the last breath, touched the hearts of millions of children. All Suvindhites paid tributes to one of the greatest teachers of modern India.



29-07-2015 : Inauguration of Recreation Hall

Recreation Hall at Suvidha Club House was inaugurated on 29 July 2015 by Mrs Lalitha Raju. Presently the Recreation Hall is equipped with Cards Table and Chairs sponsored by Smt Vijaya Rajashekar & Sri Rajashekar of Cottage # 100. Two wall mounted fans are donated by Smt Geeta Jaisim & Prof Jaisim, Architect, Cottage # 126. We Sincerely thank both the families for their generosity. Here is the link to photos:



<https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6177118589110995153?authkey=COWQ2OvBw864kwE>



02-08-2015 : Some thoughts on Human Ageing"

Dr. Narayanan Raghavan of # 107 gave a lucid lecture on physiology of ageing and how to tackle the ageing process. The subject was covered in two parts, the first consisting of the physiological changes in old age and how to deal with them and the second part dealt with the current research on prolonging human longevity.

➤ Suvidha On The Move :

During the month, the following developments have taken place.

- **Annual Maintenance:** On 13th August, our maintenance department has completed the two-day scheduled annual cleaning of the main water tanks. A team of workers worked round the clock to complete the odious tasks without any interruption to the water supply to the residents. Incidentally, an external agency when contacted indicated huge amount to undertake the same task.
- **New Sign Boards:** New sign boards directing the visitors to the SUVIDHA office floor and to different chambers have been put up. Our civil engineers have provided a nice ramp to access a slightly elevated office floor by a wheel chair.
- **Flooding at Handwash Area:** The hand wash area next to the banquet hall used to get flooded with the rain water as well as with a slimy black dirt from the roof. Relief from this slippery wet flooring has been achieved following diversion of rain water from the roof towards the kitchen garden and also repairing the dent in the drainage pipe at the top.
- **Suvidha Landscaping Committee (SLC) Updates:**
 - a) Long pending landscaping of front area of cottages from 162 to 175 was completed in spite of many setbacks like piling of construction debris by the contractors and haphazard laying of sanitary and electrical pipes and the lines. The process of landscaping was further delayed due to innumerable stones and the gravel in the area.
 - b) **Front garden maintenance schedule:** The new revised maintenance schedule covered all the cottages including the unoccupied cottages. During the SLC inspection rounds it was observed that during the previous years the front garden has been laid without removing the stones and the gravel which is preventing proper rooting of the flowering plants. This month it was decided to undertake arduous task of removing all the stones from the garden area. It is rewarding to add that though it was a difficult task the garden workers did a good job in making the front garden free of stones. In fact it has changed the over all look for the better. At the same time care was taken to maintain the schedule dates unchanged.

- c) **Landscaping of the Pump House garden area:** The pump house garden area was levelled and bench has been placed. The whole area was beautified after removal of the construction material and other debris. A small garden has been laid to uplift the area.
- d) **Kitchen Garden:** The entire area looks green with variety of vegetables, fruits and creepers.
- e) **Rock garden in front of the new first floor office:** It is heartening to see that all the newly laid plants in between the vertical rock garden have taken root with little mortality. The microprocessor controlled drip irrigation system is functioning satisfactorily.
- f) **Nursery:** Suvridha Nursery has been renovated by cleaning and rearranging the area for better utility. After procuring the small plastic bags the propagation work is progressing well to make it self sufficient. Week-ends have been identified as nursery maintenance day.
- g) **Pest control:** Before the onset of heavy rains, the annual pest control programme was conducted and the chemicals have been sprayed all along the greenery.
- h) **Dressing up of front area of the club house:** As a preparation to celebrate the Independence Day on 15th. August 2015, the entire car park area in front of the club house is being spruced up to give a fresh look. Wing Commander (Retd.) S. Rajamani has kindly agreed to unfurl the national flag.

➤ Suvridha Family News :

- **Additions to Suvridha Office:** Mrs Shewtha Singh has joined Suvridha as Company Secretary on August 1st, 2015. She is a qualified company secretary with about 6years of hands on experience in various statutory duties of a company secretary. We extend a warm welcome to her and wish her a happy career with Suvridha.



➤ Picture Gallery:

A picture says a thousand words. So goes the common saying. Hereunder, we have presented the major events in pictures to transport you to that very event with just one click. So relax and enjoy!!!

Archives:

- Heritage Tourism - 28-06-2015 - <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6165675296988262817?authkey=CKf5iZbEgOOY8wE>
- Talk by Dr. T. S. Rukmani – Session 4 - 07-06-2015 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzTGY9kvPaEb2RDLXlpa08wekk/view?usp=sharing>
- The Glory of the Upanishads- Dr. T Hegde - 31-05-2015 https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6156908851599629313?authkey=CKIcwc_hk7vIQQ
- Talk by Dr. T. S. Rukmani – Session 3 - 10-05-2015 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzTGY9kvPaEbWdNYU9Sd3RBZ1E/view?usp=sharing>
- Talk by Dr. T. S. Rukmani – Session 2 - 26-04-2015 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzTGY9kvPaEMFhBV1JFWDhjdjA/view?usp=sharing>
- Talk on Patanjali's Yogasutras – Session 1 - 12-04-2015 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzTGY9kvPaEZkNNNTRUMkdszczq/view?usp=sharing>
- Open House : 5-04-215 <https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/54985496/Suvridha%20Open%20House-150405.pptx>
- Light Music Programme - 5-03-2015 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6122968366850694321?authkey=CO3ujLHsqvPtCA>
- Spring Carnival - 15-02-2015 : <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6116679344584298001?authkey=CLXw0LrBxdCcvwE>
- Ladies Picnic - 27-01-2015: <https://picasaweb.google.com/110142373058695926282/LadiesClubSrirangapatna150127?authkey=Gv1sRqCL3-8mRpcGZwAE>
- Waste Management - 26-01-2015 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6109271834004216833?authkey=CLPi0MIW4lbrqgE>
- Republicday Celebrations - 26-01-2015 https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6109272081926882609?authkey=CKz0v4Sw9Y-3_gE
- Light Music Programme - 17-01-2015 https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6105636160068792241?authkey=CPrijvP_0YP31gE
- Discourse on Upanishad : 11-01-2015 https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6104225980469096433?authkey=CM7NieOc5Pmr_QE
- New Year Celebrations – 31-12-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6099384845647941521>
- 50th Wedding Anniversary of Dr Shekar 17-11-2014 https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6082717539941833649?authkey=CNXLoJ_HnPvHMq
- Kannada Rajyotsava – 1-11-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6078045167637707377>

- Staff Sports – 25-10-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6076179498871069585>
- Divali Celebrations - 23-10-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6076363233510266001>
- Ayudha pooja celebrations – 3-10-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6065922506997420081>
- Gandhi Jayanthi – 2-10-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6065621288180490177>
- International Day of Older Persons – 1-10-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6065621728240223265>
- Beauty parlour, Library and Banquet Hall inauguration – 27-09-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6064320275129696065>
- Ground Breaking Ceremony – 26-09-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6063396405392137953>
- Rotarians from Rotary Cantonment - 25-09-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/108282941260356382969/albums/6063271329055857393>
- Ganesh Puja – Library – Beauty Palor - 31-08-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6053920250576543425>
- Bandstand Inauguration - 17-08-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6048464450147649377>
- 68th Independence Day 2014 – 15-08-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6047691657626994961>
- Suvidha Vanamahotsava 2014 – 10-08-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6045854550653105985>
- Musical program "Baar Baar Dekho" – 2-08-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6046887354098837889>
- Marketing initiative for Suvidha's Phase-1A – 2-08-2014 <https://plus.google.com/photos/117291397490350207875/albums/6046889931783647761>

➤ **Talent Corner:** Under this banner, we plan to introduce to our readers, the contributions of our Suvidha family members who have developed substantial special skill sets as hobbies. Hope you will all enjoy such presentation. We welcome all such talented members to participate in this endeavor.

- **Paintings:** Dr. Narayanan R, a popular gynecologist and a resident of Cottage No. 107 at SUVIDHA, will be introducing us to the fantasies of flora / fauna around the Village through his intricate miniature paintings.



CASSIA FISTULA



Cassia fistula, known as the **golden shower tree** and by other [names](#), is a [flowering plant](#) in the family [Fabaceae](#). The species is native to the [Indian subcontinent](#) and adjacent regions of [Southeast Asia](#). It ranges from southern [Pakistan](#) eastward throughout [India](#) to [Myanmar](#) and

[Thailand](#) and south to [Sri Lanka](#). In literature, it is closely associated with the Mullai (forest) region of [Sangam landscape](#). It is the national tree of [Thailand](#), and its flower is Thailand's national flower. It is also the state flower of [Kerala](#) in India and of immense importance amongst the [Malayali](#) population. It is a popular [ornamental plant](#) and is also used in [herbal medicine](#).

Common Names include golden shower tree, Aragwadha, Purging cassia, golden shower cassia, Amaltas, Indian laburnum, caña fistula, Chaturungal, Swarnapatrika, Tinnevely senna, Karnaikar, Rajvriksha etc. In Tamil, it is called as Konrai. Other names include Konai, Sharakkonnai, Irjviruttam.

It has been used since ancient times. It has been referred to as “Aragvadha” or “disease killer”.

WORLDWIDE ETHNOMEDICAL USES	
Brazil	as a laxative, analgesic, anti-inflammatory
Dominican Republic	as a laxative, vermifuge
India	for burns, cancer, convulsion, delirium, diarrhea, dysuria, epilepsy, gravel, hematuria, pimples, syphilis
Java	for carbuncles, dermatosis, herpes, wounds; as a purgative, laxative
Mexico	as a laxative
Panama	for diabetes
Peru	as an astringent, laxative, purgative
Venezuela	as an astringent, laxative, purgative
Elsewhere	for constipation, flu, fumitory, tumors; as an aperient, laxative, purgative

- **Birds of SUVIDHA:** This is a series of beautiful and at times stunning pictures of birds that are either resident of or visitors to our Village. Mr. Ashok Dey, a permanent resident of SUVIDHA since November 2010, has been able to photograph as many as 82 different species of birds in the Village.



Puff-throated Babbler



The plant nursery is where I have always found species of birds that I had not seen either earlier or any where else in the Village. This is because the dense foliage of the large trees surrounding the area offers excellent cover for most species that are extremely shy. That is why I always visit the nursery at least once and sometimes twice during my morning walk.

One particularly lucky break recently was the sighting of the rather shy and difficult to observe **Puff-throated Babbler** aka **Spotted Babbler (*Pellorneum ruficeps*)**. A small (15 cm from beak to tail) olive-brown bird with a reddish brown cap, whitish underparts and breast spotted and streaked in brown, it is a resident of Himalayan foothills and the hills of India and Bangladesh, generally up to an elevation of 1500 m.

As you will see from the picture the bird had just collected material to build its nest, which the species builds typically on the banks of nullahs. So, I am hoping that this particular specimen has built its nest in the banks of the nullah running into our Village under our northwestern boundary wall from the Vajramuneeshwara Temple.

Then we will be able to see more of the species in SUVIDHA very soon.

➤ Readers Corner :

A LEOPARD IN THE STATION.....!

Courtesy: Mr. PK Nayak , Cottage # 167

(Based on a real life incident narrated by Mr. Rajagopal who was the guard of the goods train.

The names used here, except that of Mr. Rajagopal, are fictitious and bear no resemblance to any person.

Resemblance, if any, is purely coincidental and not intentional.)

John Fenn, familiarly called Big John, driver of the weekly Vijaynagaram/Raipur goods express looked over the ridges and espied the signal tower of Kantabanchi station, and as usual yanked the whistle cord for three small toots followed by a long toot- the normal signal to the station to give the green signal. When the train arrived at the outer signal of the station it was still red. He once again gave long whistle. After waiting for another five minutes he gave another long whistle. He got worried because he had to stable his train on the loop line at Kantabanchi to let the Vijayanagaram/Raipur fast passenger to cross. He could not see the station because of many hillocks and was not prepared to send one of his crew members even though the station was hardly two kilometres away because the area was infested with leopards and at sundown they normally come and rest in the small tunnels through which the track passes. He then asked the Khalasi, Mandanna, to climb the nearest telegraph pole and ask the station why red still glares? Mandanna, a twenty year veteran, waiting to be promoted as a shunting driver, climbed the pole and raised the station. He had grave news when he returned. A leopard is in the station. Appa Rao the station master has been mauled to death, the station crew have locked themselves in the rooms, and the big cat is at large.



Big John consulted his guard, Rajagopal, and then drove the train slowly to the station. As they neared the station he could see the big cat marching on the platform like soldier doing his goose step. Seeing the train approaching the leopard came to the edge of the platform. BJ brought the train close to the leopard and suddenly discharged a lot of steam which made a big noise. Alarmed by the noise the leopard ran away and entered the open archives room. Mandanna and his assistant ran after the cat and locked the room.

Big John Climbed down from the engine looked at the darkening sky and laughed. This was his last journey before he retires and what a mess he has landed himself into. John, an Anglo Indian, who had seen action in the First World War in the Middle East theatre and who earned two mentions in the despatches, after demob from the forces joined the Bengal Nagpur Railway. With his war record he was able to get employed as a driver. Within a span of ten years he was driving expresses and mails – a task entrusted only to senior capable drivers. He received the summons to report to the training headquarters in Shillong when the Second World War started. He joined as a Sub Lieutenant and saw action in Burma. During the disastrous Burmese campaign his company was badly affected by gastro enteritis killing a lot of soldiers. Due to the Japanese onslaught the supply lines had weakened and the general officer commanding the forces Field Marshall Slim had ordered the forces to regroup. Major Bretagne the company commander pleaded with HQ to let him stay and fight to the last man and the last bullet. His defence was, nothing could worsen the situation for his company and they would fight to the last man. Field Marshal Slim wrote his famous quip on the letter, “Poor man he has not yet experienced the Iravadi Rains”. The company was ordered back. Big John slung the emaciated Captain on his back, while his Sergeant Naidu picked up all the gear. Few living soldiers and officers trudged back to the base camp at Imphal. John had by then been awarded a field rank of Captain. The army was pleased to grant him a permanent rank of Lieutenant when he voluntarily retired after the cessation of the hostilities.

The Railways restored his job. About two years before retirement he sought a desk job. As no desk job was available at Vijayangaram he opted to drive the weakly fast goods train to Raipur. This would give him a weakly lay off two days.

The war council decided to summon Major Row to shoot the leopard. Major Row was none other than the Sergeant Naidu who worked under Big John in the Army. Subbaih Rangaih Naidu was the son of a prosperous farmer. The father had always nursed a dream of his son joining the Indian Civil Service. With lot of coaching and cajoling Subbaih reached Intermediate. He was sure he can never pass the Intermediate exam and did not know how to face his father. And then, like three angels, three army recruitment officers came to the college. Subbaih without giving it a second thought enlisted as the Army team had vouched that those who enlisted will be automatically declared as having passed the University Exam. Soon after the Exam he reported to the recruiting office who sent him to the training command. He was promoted as a Corporal by the time his company was ordered to go to Burma. His officer was acting Lieutenant John Fenn. In the Burma Campaign Subbaih earned his promotion and also a medal for bravery. After fifteen years of service he sought voluntary retirement. He was entitled to a proportionate monthly pension of Rs. Twenty five. He learnt from the Quartermaster’s office that he can commute his life pension into lump sum amount. Accordingly he received a sum of Rs. 3500. He went to the Clive Row in Calcutta and bought two sets of Major’s uniform, cap, epaulets, few medals and a baton. Thus a fully transformed Major Subba Row detrained from a first class compartment at Rayagada. He had a big brass plate fixed on his gate with his name etched as Sgt MAJOR SUBBA ROW. The letters Sgt were so small that, only a close look will reveal them. Subba Row had become a well-respected country squire known to one and all as either Majorgaru or Raogaru and would turn up in his smart uniform bedecked with a few medals and bars to hoist the Tricolour on the Independence and the Republic days. He was also the only man with a licenced gun.

Big John returned with Majorgaru. The Major was on his third sun-downer when the SOS reached him. He picked up his gun and a few cartridges and boarded the engine brought by Big John. Though slightly tipsy Majorgaru’s speech was not slurred. He stood at the window of the archives room and took stock of the situation. The room was full of steel trunks containing the despatches and records of many nearby stations neatly stacked on planks erected on steel angles. As he took aim the cat stood up. Raogaru adjusted his aim and squeezed the trigger. The bullet hit the angle and cannoned off to a wall and then grazed the major’s nose and imbedded in the window panel. Before the startled leopard could get away a whole stack of steel trunk fell

and a few of them pinned it down. The second time the major did not err. This time the bullet landed plumb in the middle of two eyes and leopard died.

The engine steamed into Rayagada with the big cat strung across the engine and a beaming Subba Row standing with his gun on the engine step. Subba Row got down, and as others untied the Leopard, clicked his heels and saluted Big John, who returned the salute. BJ brought the engine back to Kantabanchi manoeuvred the goods train to the loop line and gave thumbs up to the signal man. A few minutes later the long whistle of the fast passenger was heard and it thundered through the station on the main line. The driver, an old acquaintance of John, gave three toots and doffed his cap to Big John.

When all clear was sounded Mandanna said 'Right' and climbed the engine. Big John mechanically yanked the rod and the train started moving as Rajgopal and the signalman on the platform waved the green light. The whole crew of the station had stood in line and waved good-bye to Big John for the last time as the train steamed into the night.

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HITOPADESHA

Courtesy: Dr. T. S. Rukmani, PhD, Dlit.

Resident of Suvidha Village, Cottage # 73-74

(Presently, the author is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada.)

Let me start with a common misconception amongst many people today regarding Sanskrit. Sanskrit they think is only concerned with religion, priesthood and all things spiritual. It is a pity that our education system since independence has not paid much attention to the multifaceted contents embedded in the Sanskrit language with the result that at least three to four generations of our youth are deficient in their appreciation of what is contained in the vast treasure house of the Sanskrit language.



One cannot stress enough the richness of the many sided disciplines covered by Sanskrit literature. Besides the religious and spiritual material, there are any number of secular subjects covered by Sanskrit literature. Those of you who have watched the interview with the mathematical wizard Manju Bhargava on television would know the vast mathematical material that still exists in the Sanskrit manuscripts. Just as the King James Bible is written in English but equally contains material on other subjects such as physics, chemistry, literature etc., so also Sanskrit being the language of the educated (śiṣṭas) in the classical period of India's intellectual history, has dealt with many secular subjects as well.

Apart from subjects such as mathematics, metallurgy, medicine etc., there is a rich literature written in prose, poetry and drama. Ancient Indian theatre as depicted in Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra (C.4th century BCE) deals with the depiction of drama in a manner which unfolds the plot through music (both instrumental and vocal), dance, movement and speech.

And will it surprise you to know that the use of animals to teach children some moral and ethical behavior is the *genre* used by Narayaṇa to instruct a king's three sons who were extremely lazy and refused to be disciplined in spite of many instructors trying to do so. In the tales given in the Pañcatantra and the Hitopadeśa (which have many tales in common) Viṣṇu Śharman similarly uses animals to tell tales and carry moral lessons for the benefit of children and thus shape the character of people in general. Today we see animated pictures which are very popular such as Shrek etc., but that is exactly what the authors of the Pañcatantra and Hitopadeśa did. The Hitopadeśa claims in its introduction that its study will make a person capable of using

elegant and refined speech, able to converse on many subjects and have a good grounding in moral principles (pāṭavam saṃkr̥ṭoktiṣu, vācām sarvatra vaicitryam, nītividyām dadāti ca). So let us see whether its contents measures up to these claims. In this short article I shall give you some verses from the Hitopadeśa which have become very much part of our cultural heritage and allow you to judge for yourself.

1. Knowledge is declared to be the most excellent wealth as it cannot be stolen, it is priceless and it cannot be destroyed. Further, it says that even one who is born in under-privileged conditions has access to the great such as a king (if he/she is learned), like a river which even though flowing through low regions eventually reaches the ocean.

(It is well known that education has always been a cherished goal in Indian families and it is attested to when the diaspora Indians moved to far away lands like S. Africa, Mauritius, Fiji and so on. They carried this love for learning with them and educated their children against great odds in those lands. Today the Indians in these places are some of the most learned in the world.)

2. Knowledge not regularly replenished with constant study is like poison; to eat when one has indigestion is poison; to an old man a youthful wife is poison.

(How true these sayings are).

3. Food, sleep, fear and carnal pleasures are common amongst beasts and humans; the only distinguishing feature (of humans) is following dharma; those devoid of dharma are the same as animals.

(One need not dispute this wise saying)

4. Even an idiot will make his presence felt in an assembly (of learned persons) if he is clothed in rich robes; but he will do so only as long as he does not open his mouth and speak!

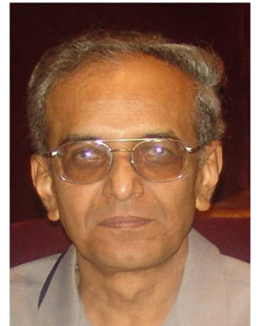
(How true !)

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LET GO !

Courtesy: Dr. P.M. Chandrasekhara, Cottage # 75
{Acknowledgement: Dada J P Vaswani / Sant Rajinder Singh/ Pulkit Sharma}

When we reach our sunset years, we realise that our life was full of incidents -- pleasant and unpleasant. When an unpleasant thing happens, we are apt to lose our balance and peace; this creates a negative emotion which expresses itself in a feeling of sadness, or depression. An effective way of dealing with such a situation is to go to the root of the matter and 'let it go' of what is causing the negative emotion. Let it go! Let everything go! ... when ourselves are going sooner or later..



Has my sister failed to understand me? Let it go!
Has my brother spoken ill of me? Let it go!
Has my best friend turned against me? Let it go!
Have I suffered loss in business? Let it go!
Have my plans been upset? Let it go!
Have I been treated with disrespect? Let it go!

Has a dear one cheated me? Let it go!
 Has the health of someone dear to me suffered a setback? Let it go!

There was a gardener who loved each tree, each plant, each little shrub in his hand grown garden so dearly that he would not cast away even the dead leaves and the withered branches. He stored them all in his garden. Gradually all the space in his small garden was taken up by the dead leaves and dry branches, and the beautiful garden wore the appearance of a garbage heap!

Aren't so many of us like this gardener? We go on storing memories and anxieties, failures and frustrations, fears and disappointments, which are better cast away and forgotten. And thus prevent the beautiful garden of our life turning into a wasteland!

If we wish to be happy, we must unclutter our "house" – the house of our heart. We must throw out all the joy-killers, the negative thoughts of greed, ill will, jealousy, malice and envy. But throwing these out is not enough – we must fill our minds with happy thoughts – thoughts of purity, prayer, sympathy, service and sacrifice, love and kindness, prosperity and peace, success and victory.

Troubled conscience will never allow us to live in peace and quiet – our conscience will continue to remain troubled unless we rid ourselves of the hatred and resentment that make us unforgiving, the joy killers that disturb our inner peace.

The past is over and done with the wind! Therefore, release it once and for all! Let it go! This is the best way to handle all your failures, disappointments, hurdles, and grievances – release them, let them go! We can do this simply by erasing the slate of our mind.

There is a beautiful little incident in the life of Aesop the great story-teller. Aesop was playing with little children, shouting and laughing with them. An Athenian passed by; he expressed surprise that such a grown-up person should waste his time thus.

In answer; Aesop picked up a bow, untied the string and laid it on the ground. To the Athenian, he said "O wise one tell me the meaning of this unstrung bow!. The man was perplexed, he found no suitable answer. "I cannot solve your riddle". He said. "tell me, what it means". Aesop told him, "if you keep a bow always bent, it will lose its elasticity. But if you let it go slack, it will be fitter for use when you want it".

Are we not, many of us, like that bent bow, always highly strung? We need to unstring ourselves, to relax, from time to time, that we may be "fitter for use" when we are called to act. To relax, we need to learn to "let go". The secret of relaxation is in three words "Let it go"!

If we wish to achieve inner peace, there is only one way – release ourselves from anger and resentment learn to let it go. Remind yourself that anger hurts you more than the person who upset you, and visualise it melting away as an act of kindness to yourself.

In this transitory world – a world in which things come and go, nothing abides – is there anything worth worrying over? Let it go! You cannot start the next chapter of your life if you keep re-reading the last one. The more we let go, the more do we conserve our energies for the constructive and creative tasks of life that is burning out.

There are numerous ways we can engage ourselves in the constructive and creative activities by doing service to the others. Life is filled with many opportunities. We can help our fellow beings by doing physical, intellectual and spiritual service of the soul. To truly perform selfless service, one must act without any desire for a reward or recognition, motivated by an innate desire to help another. When we help someone our heart expands, our soul opens up. As our love for others flows out. God's love for us can pour in.

At the same time *Don't Fear Death, Begin to Live*. We constantly seek immortality. We fantasize about having endless time, boundless opportunities and control over our lives. However, the fact is that, we have limited time and no control over anything beyond our self. Among those who seek psychological help, fear of death is a common complaint. Whether conscious or subtle, this fear of death haunts every one. Due to fear of death, some people suffer from intense anxiety phobias, panic and paranoia and their energies are consumed in battling it without knowing how to let it go. Deep psychological introspection reveals that people are scared of death because they have not been able to find meaning in their lives. As a result they harbour feelings of regret, guilt and anger. In order to overcome the fear of death, we need to constantly find meaning in our existence. By finding meaning in our existence, we are able to move beyond our narrow ego. If we create meaning and transcend our ego and let it go; prospect of death may not be scary at all!

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