



అమెరికా భారతి



Magazine of American Telugu Association
January – March 2007 issue

Adopt
A
Village

Prepare
Our
Youth

One
Telugu
Community

Service
And
Generosity

Guidance
From
Past

Innovative
Communication
Channels

Widen
The
Horizons

Expand
The
Organization

Always
Support
Members

Be
American
Telugus



A new vision for ATA



**This issue of America Bharathi is sponsored by
Dr. Pailla Malla Reddy**



Dr. Pailla Malla Reddy, an ardent lover of social service, is always there for ATA and never says 'no' to a request for sponsorship or support - and it is true for this issue also. As a token of our appreciation, we would like to dedicate this issue of *America Bharathi* to Dr. Malla Reddy, Mrs. Sadhana Reddy and their children Shilpa and Saketh.



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Dear ATA Friends,

2007 has arrived, and I wish everyone peace, happiness and prosperity in this New Year. For ATA, the 2007-08 year represents a multitude of exciting possibilities, and it is my belief that this will be a successful and well-accomplished year. We have many ambitious goals, lofty expectations and difficult tasks, but with hard work, dedication and some luck, there is no doubt that all of our short-term and long-term strategic objectives will be met.

I hope to further the vision of ATA and be steward of all the great work that has been accomplished thus far. In the last term, under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Mohan Mallam, ATA fostered many works of charity, expanded the reach of the organization in America and India, and convened the 9th ATA conference in Los Angeles. However, we cannot rest on the laurels of our past accomplishments- as a new term begins, it is incumbent that we aim higher, reach farther, rectify past mistakes and ensure that ATA will become a strong and lasting organization.

The primary mission for the 2007-2008 term is to bring ATA to the next generation. Judgment of our tenures as ATA leaders will not occur this year or next year. Rather, our success can be fully realized if, and only if, ATA continues to be a viable resource for many generations to come - long after our tenure is completed. It should be our goal that someday, our children and their children will be the caretakers of this organization that we have created and piloted, such that through them our culture and heritage be sustained.

It is therefore imperative for ATA to be a vehicle to carry out this dream. The next term will not be easy- there is much work to be done, a number of objectives to be met, and countless hours of effort and sweat yet to be realized. However, in the end, we will reap the benefits of what we have sown. The 2007-08 ATA leadership team is fully aware of what challenges lie ahead, and no group of men and women are better suited to see this mission completed. Every member of our team has proven themselves to be smart, resourceful and dedicated human beings who have achieved a plethora of successes in their own personal lives and in the professional world. It is certain that, together and united, we will see our goals and dreams realized. The ATA of tomorrow begins today, and today, we will begin the planning for tomorrow. May God bless us all as we continue on this journey together.

Sincerely,

Chandrareddy

Chandra G Reddy
President

అమెరికా భారతీ

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Cover: The front cover portrays the 10-point strategy by the new president, Dr. Chandra Reddy Gavva. These 10 points are illustrated by 10 circles – starting from ‘youth emphasis’ on top and going clockwise, and completing a circle of these circles indicating commitment and closure. In the center is the swearing in of the new team with the backdrop of the map of Andhra Pradesh, flags of India and US and images of Andhra Pradesh and US. Please see the detailed article about the 10-point strategy in this issue. Front cover idea conception and design by Dr. Siva Prasad Kumpatla.



America Bharathi

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Editorial



Dear America Bharathi readers:

Happy Ugadi!! I am sure you all had fun in inviting our Telugu New Year with festive zeal and traditional paraphernalia mingled with childhood memories from our Telugu Land. I am very pleased and honored to be your new focal point for America Bharathi and I extend my heartfelt invitation to you all to join and work with me and my team in an exciting new journey to make this magazine useful to our Telugu households in US – and may be beyond. When I was asked to take up the editorial helms of America Bharathi and was updated on the new vision for ATA by our president, Dr. Chandra Reddy, one image immediately flashed in my mind – that of Roman god “Janus” – the god who has two heads, one looking to the past and the other to the future. Reason – my role as the helmsman for America Bharathi is somewhat similar to what Janus stands for, that is, catering to the needs, ideals and interests of Telugu people who came to USA in the past and Telugu children belonging to next generation or our future. On one hand, my team has to uphold the content to satisfy those who grew up in India and have been living here for a while and on the other hand, we have to take steps to come up with content towards educating our youth about our heritage. By the way, did you know that the month ‘January’ in Gregorian calendar is named after “Janus”? It was named so, since it was considered a transition month – one head of Janus looking to the year gone by and the other to the year that is yet to unfold.

We have a good plan to bring forward new and exciting items for your reading pleasure and for your children’s awareness. To name a few - in addition to ATA news, which will be featured under “ATA mATA”, we have a regular feature called “Ask the Guru” where questions of interest to Telugu diaspora will be answered. In addition, we will publish articles by our youngsters in the feature “From the desktop of ATA youth”...well, if it is last century, I would have named it “from the desk of..”, but we are in computer age and I thought ‘desktop’ is more appropriate. We will also have a feature to educate Telugu children on “Our heritage”, through a column with the same name. Therefore, please make sure your children read America Bharathi regularly. For your children’s benefit, we will have English Editorial regularly. In addition, we are also contemplating features like “Telugu Tejam” and “Spotlight” to highlight the achievements of Telugu adults and children, respectively. To be able to do justice to all these features – we need your help and articles to fill these pages. Please see the invitation “Publish in America Bharathi” in this issue for more features and details.

Albert Einstein said, “imagination is more important than knowledge”. I totally admire this quote but would like to add to that by saying “to have a fruitful imagination, you need more knowledge - the more you know, the more you can imagine and more you can create”. Therefore, gather information or think about appropriate topics for this magazine, write about them and send to us. As Franz Kafka beautifully stated, “Writing is a sweet, wonderful reward...” Please share yours with your fellow Telugu people through these pages.

Looking forward to travel with you on this exciting journey!

With best wishes,

- Siva Prasad Kumpatla

సంపాదకుని మాట

“ఇదేమిటి...ఇప్పుడే కదా ఏకవిగిన, ఎడాపెడా ఆంగ్లంలో ఎడిటోరియల్ చదివి పారేశాను, మళ్ళీ ఈ సంపాదకుని మాట - లాలి పాట ఏమిటి చెప్పా?” - అని నౌసలు చిట్టిస్తున్నారా? ఉన్నాయండి...దానికి రెండు కారణాలున్నాయి. మొదటి కారణం, అమెరికా భారతిలో ఎప్పటిలాగానే తెలుగులో కథలా - కమామీమ, కవితలా, వ్యాసాలు, నివేదికలు మొదలగునవి మరియు కొత్త కొత్త విషయాలు మీ ముందుకు తీసుకొస్తామని మీకు చెప్పటానికి తెలుగులో అయితే సబబుగా ఉంటుందని. రెండవ కారణం, మన కొత్త ‘ఆటా’ అధికార, కార్యవర్గాల ప్రణాళిక మేరకు, ఈ తరం పిల్లలకు మన సంస్కృతి, సంప్రదాయాల గురించి తెలియచేసి, వారిని భవిష్యత్తులో తెలుగు నాడికి ప్రతీకలుగా, నాయకులుగా తీర్చిదిద్దే బాధ్యత మనందరి మీద ఉంది. వీళ్ళే గడచిన తరానికి, రాబోయే కాలానికి వారధులు. అందువలనే, ఈ గమ్యం దృష్ట్యా, మేము ఆంగ్లంలో ఎన్నో విషయాలను అమెరికా భారతిలో ప్రచురించబోతున్నాము. మీ పిల్లలు కూడా చదవాలనే ఉద్దేశ్యముతో తెలుగుతోపాటు ఆంగ్లంలోకూడా ఎడిటోరియల్ ఉంటుంది. అందువలన రాబోయే ప్రతి అమెరికా భారతి సంచికలో ఆంగ్లంలో ఎడిటోరియల్ తో సహా వాళ్ళకు ఉపయోగపడే శీర్షికలన్నీ మీ పిల్లల చేత మీరు తప్పనిసరిగా చదివిస్తారని ఆశిస్తున్నాము. మరి మీరు కొద్దిగా ఓపిక తెచ్చుకొని తెలుగులో ఉన్న విషయాలను గురించి కూడా వాళ్ళకు చెప్పగలిగితే ఇంకా చాలా బాగా ఉంటుంది.

మీరు, మేము, మనమందరం కలిసి చేయాల్సిన పని మరొకటుందండోయ్ - ఈ తరం పిల్లలకు తెలుగు గురించి చెప్పటం, మాట్లాడటాన్ని ప్రోత్సహించడం, ఆంగ్లం ఎలాగూ వారు నేర్చుకుంటారు. మరి తెలుగు గురించి చెప్పటం మన వంతు. మన తెలుగు భాష ఎంత గొప్పదండి - ప్రతీపదం వొవెల్ (అచ్చు లేదా స్వరము)తో అంతమవుతుంది. దీని కారణంగా తెలుగు మాట్లాడుతుంటే ఒక సున్నితమైన ప్రవాహంలాగ వుంటుంది. తెలుగు కాకుండా ఇలాగవుండేది ఒక్క ఇటాలియన్ లోనేనట - అందువలనే అనుకుంటా నాలుగువందల సంవత్సరాల క్రితం మనదేశం వచ్చిన ఇటాలియన్ యాత్రికుడు, నికోలో డ కాంటి, తెలుగును “ఇటాలియన్ ఆఫ్ ది ఈస్ట్” అని తెగ మెచ్చేసుకుని జెజేలు పలికేడట. మరి మన రాయలవారు ... అదేనండి, తుళువ రాజు మన శ్రీ కృష్ణదేవరాయలు వారు “దేశ భాషలందు తెలుగు లెస్స” అన్నారు. కాని, తెలుగు మాట్లాడేవాళ్ళు నానాటికి కరువైపోతున్నారని విన్నప్పుడల్లా, వార్తల్లో చదివినపుడల్లా నాకనిపిస్తుంది “దేశ భాషలందు తెలుగు Lessa?” అని. మళ్ళీ ఇదేమిటి? తెలుగు గురించి రెచ్చిపోయి వ్రాస్తూ, మధ్యలో ఈ ‘Less’ అనే ఆంగ్ల పదం ఏమిటి అనుకుంటున్నారా? చూశారా - ఒక్క పదం ఆంగ్లం వస్తేనే మీకలా అనిపిస్తుంటే, మరి తెలుగును జీవితాంతం మాట్లాడే మన పెద్దలకు, తెలుగు భాషను సజీవంగా వుంచాలని తాపత్రయపడే, శ్రమించే భాషాభిమానులకు, తెలుగు వారు తెలుగు మాట్లాడకపోతే ఎంత బాధగా ఉంటుందో? ఈ విషయాన్ని నోక్కి వక్కాణించాలనే ఉద్దేశ్యంతోనే ఈ ఆంగ్ల పదం వాడాను. ఏమీ అనుకోరు కదూ?

ఇంతకీ మమ్మల్నేమి చెయ్యమంటావయ్యా అని మీరంటే -ముందుగా మిమ్మల్ని అభినందించాలి అని అంటాను ఎందుకంటే మీరు ఇది చదువుతున్నారు. అంటే మీకు తెలుగు భాష రావటమే కాకుండా తెలుగు భాషపై అభిమానం ఉందని తెలుస్తుంది. దానికి నా జోహార్లు. ఇప్పుడు మన మందరం తెలుగు గురించి కలిసి చేయాల్సిన పని గురించి చెప్తాను. అంతేకండండి లోకం తీరు పనిచేసేవాళ్ళకే ఇంకా పని చెబుతారు. కాని ఈ పని మన మాతృభాష కోసమంది. మనకు వీలైన విధంగా తెలుగును సజీవంగా ఉంచటానికి కృషి చేద్దాం. ఉదాహరణకి, తెలుగు వాళ్ళము కలిసినప్పుడు తెలుగులోనే మాట్లాడుకుందాం. పిల్లలకు తెలుగులో తర్సీడు ఇద్దాము. తెలుగు మాట్లాడడాన్ని ప్రోత్సహిద్దాం. తెలుగులో రచనలని ప్రోత్సహిద్దాం. మరి మన మందరం తెలుగును ఆనందించడానికి మరియు తెలుగు వారికి సంబంధించిన సమస్యలను, విషయాలను మీకు తెలియచేయటం కోసం, మేము అమెరికా భారతిలో పద్యం-గద్యం, కట్టుకథలు, కళ్ళకి కట్టినట్లు చూపించే కథలు, వ్యాసాలు, నివేదికలు మొదలగునవి తీసుకురాబోతున్నాము. ఈ పత్రికను మరి ప్రపంచవ్యాపిత గూడులోకూడా పెడతాము. అంటే ఇంటర్నెట్ లోనండి. మన ‘ఆటా’ వెబ్ సైట్ లో అన్నమాట. మరి మీరు ఈ లింకును ఇండియాలో ఉన్న మీ స్నేహితులకు పంపించి, చూడవోయ్ మేము తెలుగు మర్చిపోకుండా దానిగురించి ఎంత కృషి చేస్తున్నామో అని చెప్పండి

ఈ సంచికలో సంక్రాంతిపై ఛందోబద్ధమైన పద్యాలతో పాటు, ఉగాదితో అవినాభావసంబంధం ఉన్న కవినమ్మేళనాలను గుర్తుచేస్తూ, ఉగాది గురించి మరియు కవుల గురించి కవితలు చోటు చేసుకున్నాయి. వీటితోపాటు ఎన్.ఆర్.ఐ. తల్లిదండ్రుల సంఘం, విశాఖపట్నంలో చేస్తున్న సేవల గురించి తెలియజేసే ‘మేమున్నాము’ అనే నివేదికకూడా మీ ముందుంచుతున్నాము. అవి మీ అభిమానాన్ని అందుకుంటాయని ఆశిస్తున్నాను. ముఖ్యంగా మీ అందర్నీ కోరేది ఒకటుంది. - మీ రచనలు అమెరికా భారతికి పంపి తెలుగు భాషకి మీ వంతు సేవ చెయ్యండి. ఈ పత్రికను - కాదు కాదు - మీ పత్రికను ప్రోత్సహించండి. దిగ్విజయం చేయండి. అందుకే అంటున్నాను - “నడుం కట్టి, కలం ఎత్తి వ్రాయండి తెలుగులో ...పంపండి మాకు మెయిల్ లో.. మరి చూడండి వాటిని అమెరికా భారతి వెలుగులో!”

రచయిత(తు)లకు అమెరికా భారతి తరపున ఇదే మా ఆహ్వానం!

ఉగాది శుభాకాంక్షలతో,

మీ “శివప్రసాద్ కుంపట్ల”

10-Point Strategy to further the vision of ATA

Dr. Chandra Reddy Gavva
President, ATA

It gives me a great pleasure to step into the role of the president of American Telugu Association (ATA). During the last term, ATA has expanded its area of influence in USA and India under the leadership of Dr. Mohan Mallam by facilitating and sponsoring many activities. It is my hope and sincere wish to further the vision of ATA by further accelerating this momentum and by being the steward of continuing ATA initiatives.

The primary mission for the 2007-2008 term is to bring ATA to the next generation. I strongly believe that for ATA to be a great organization we have to develop it into a viable platform and resource for youth and many generations to come. Only through this mindset and action we can be sure that this organization will be effectively transitioned to our children and theirs. To this end, I would like to propose the following 10-point strategy during my term as president of ATA and I am counting on the help of each and every one of you in its implementation:



1. Take ATA to the next generation

We have to work with the goal that someday, our children and their children are going to be the caretakers of this organization, the very organization that we have created and piloted. Only through them – our children- can our culture and heritage be sustained for many generations to come. So, let's begin this "*changing of the guard*" in our term. I would like to expand the role of the youth beyond the Youth Conference itself. Let us teach the next generation the framework, fundamentals, and principles of the organization so that they are properly equipped with the tools, knowledge, work ethics, and positive attitude that is necessary to run ATA long after our tenure is completed. I understand that this is a delicate process and will take some time to eventually transfer full responsibility to our next generation, but we must start somewhere – and I believe that our term should be that

'Beginning'. Let us guide our Youth and let them follow in our footsteps so that one day – they can leave some of their own on this great organization.

2. United We Stand As Telugus

Let us foster a strong cooperation and relationship between ATA and other Telugu Associations across the nation. We should work together with our fellow sisters and brothers and be unified in our efforts to grow as one community – a Telugu community. I believe that we should embrace each other's thoughts, ideas, and opinions – for strength lies in the diversity of perspectives and that is what allows any organization to grow and flourish. Remember –

Individually, we are one drop but together, we are an ocean. Of course, we must also be united as an ATA team in our efforts to have a successful and memorable term. As Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is a progress. Working together is success". Let us keep this in mind as we embark on this journey together.

3. Guidance from the Past builds a brighter Future

The past is behind us, but we must learn from it. The Future lies ahead of us, so we must prepare for it. The Present is here, so let us act in it. To put it in the words of Dr. Siva Prasad Kumpatla, Chief Editor of America Bharati, "By remembering the **past**, act wisely in the **present** for the success in the **future**!" We have had nine wonderful years of this organization, and each year offered us another opportunity to improve and expand. I believe that advice and guidance from past ATA executives and members can help us rectify past mistakes and build a stronger foundation for the new ideas ahead. I propose creating an "Advisory Think Tank" – a group of past ATA leaders that are willing to acknowledge inaccuracies in their terms and suggest solutions to resolve these issues for the upcoming term. In this way, each subsequent team will possess the hindsight of the past and will be equipped with better



foresight for their future term.

4. More opportunities to connect creates a bigger bridge

To the less involved member, ATA is merely a convention that occurs every two years. An opportunity to reconnect with old friends, meet new people and ideas, eat some wonderful food and realize the greatness of our community – Oh, and of course – an opportunity to shop for fine Indian items and make marriage settlements. Let us show the average member the vast horizons to which this organization can reach. By providing and promoting more events and opportunities, we will prove to our members that ATA is an organization – not just a convention. I propose building a bigger and stronger bridge – one that reaches from US coast to coast and stretches all the way to India. In addition to the grand ATA conference every two years, and during the off-conference year ATA Roju in the USA and ATA Vedukalu in India, let us meet more often in various regional events. I propose holding a separate Youth mini-conference, ATA regional gatherings, and perhaps even a Foreign Exchange week in the off year. By allowing our members to connect more often, we are building more interest and stronger ties between them.

5. Support our ATA members through every stage of life

Our ancients have divided human life into four stages: Brahmacharya (student life), Grihastha (family life), Vanaprastha (retired life) and Sanyasa (spiritual quest). Each of these stages has its own challenges and we, being social entities, need the help of fellow humans to get through or excel during these changes. In addition, we have yet another set of issues to face since we live in a land far from our Motherland. By identifying stage-specific issues and concerns, we should help our fellow Telugus in whatever way we can under the umbrella of ATA. It is our obligation to support members as they experience every stage of life and cater to their needs and desires at these various periods.

6. Be Americans, being Telugus

As the United States of America had afforded so many of us with such remarkable opportunities, we must be true to the country that allowed our lives to flourish. As India has offered us with such rich culture, heritage, and values, we must be true to the country that gave us our first breath of life. Both of these nations have helped shaping who we have become today – American

Telugus. I believe that we must act as citizens of both nations – upholding our duty to both cultures. While ATA is well known for its commitment to our Telugu roots, we must also encourage social responsibility to the United States of America. Whether that includes allowing our children to express Western ideas of individualism, integrating philanthropy into our lives or exercising our own right to vote – we must promote the positive aspects of American culture and values. On the other hand, we must not stray from the positive aspects of our own Indian culture and values. Our strong commitment to education, heritage, and faith are just among a few ideals that have allowed our community to rise as one of the most successful ethnic groups in America. Let us merge the best parts of both cultures and afford our community continued positive personal growth.

7. Expand the organization further

The strength of any organization is its people. The more ATA members we have, the more we can contribute to and give back to our community in US and in India. We can collectively achieve this by working as devoted ambassadors of ATA. By increasing the responsibility among the elected members and by promoting the membership campaign we can attract new members. In addition, we should actively engage all members in this drive – “Member brings a member in a year!” should be our goal to go after.

8. Innovative Information and Communication

Communication is extremely important for reaching out to our members and to the world. It not only gives visibility and transparency to our activities but also serves as a vehicle between ATA leadership and membership. Our goal, to this end, is to develop and launch a state-of-the art and user-friendly website and an enhanced America Bharathi magazine that focuses on the mission of my team and term. In addition, importance will also be given to the prompt communication of ATA activities and community news from time to time.

9. Spread the idea of Service and Generosity

“We cannot do great things on this Earth, only small things with great love” – Mother Theresa once said. Let us spread this idea of fulfilling our responsibility to humanity by the means of Service. The ATA Foundation has helped many people over the years and

we hope to continue this act of generosity. I believe that we must go beyond monetary donations for charities, but rather, instill a sense of charity and generosity among our community. By teaching and sharing this idea of service, our efforts will be more far reaching than if only a small percentage of our community participated in such services. The feeling of satisfaction after helping another human being is enormously rewarding – and contagious. So let's spread this sense of social responsibility and philanthropy ... and infect as many ATA members as possible!

10. Adopt-a-Village, Support Your Motherland

In addition to existing and other planned initiatives, let us support our beloved Motherland by adopting a village and developing it under the sponsorship of ATA. This program has 6 wings i.e., improving the adopted village in six different areas: 1) Communications; 2) Cottage industry and farming; 3) Health; 4) Roads and sewage & Safe water; 5) School Development and 6) Spirituality.



Sponsor • A Project

In USA • Or In AP

ATA Trust Committee • Project Sponsorship Form

The ATA Trust Committee is formed to encourage individuals to take up a project to help non-profit organization in USA or in AP, India. Individuals should fill the following project profile and get approval from the ATA Trust Committee prior to raising the funds. All funds raised under ATA Trust are tax-exempt.

Name of Sponsor: _____
 Address : _____

Telephone No: _____

Non-Profit Beneficiary Organization
 Organization Name: _____
 Address: _____

Attach project correspondence from the organization (if any).

Project Details:
 Type of Organization: (Check one)
 Educational
 Cultural
 Social Work
 Other (specify) _____

Project Expense : \$ _____
 Sponsor's Contribution : \$ _____
 Beneficiary Contribution : \$ _____
 Completion Date : \$ _____

Important Note (Please Read): When submitting application for sponsorship approvals please make sure the following items are complete in all respects. (1). Beneficiary's registration certificates under the appropriate acts of the Government of Andhra Pradesh/Government of India as a qualified nonprofit organization(No sponsorship will be looked at without this) (2). FCRA,1976 (Foreign Contributions Regulation Act 1976) REgistration Certificate issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, GOI.(No sponsorship will be looked at without this) (3). Full project report submitted by the beneficiary showing total project cost, Beneficiary's contribution(intial and continuing), start date, expected completion date or if a continuing project, start date of initial operations (project initiation to start date of operations) (4). Sponsor's relationship to project leaders. (5). Sponsor's intial and continuing contributions, if any, along with expected dates of contributions (6). Sponsor's detailed note on monitoring the progress of the project and utilization of sponsor's contributions(if sponsors number more than one, names of all sponsors and their initial and continuing contributions) (7) Any other information the sponsor may consider important. (8) Please note ATA will charge 2% of each remittance with a minimum of \$250 as service charge. (9) Please use extra sheets if more space is needed.

**Mail Sponsorship Form to: Sreeram Reddy, Chairman, ATA Foundation
 Committee, 1403 Bonnema Ave Naperville, IL 60565
 Phone: (630) 527-1054; Email: ram_reddy@cargill.com**

Reflections and Random Thoughts. . . From ATA youth

Abhilash Reddy

It gives me immense pleasure in introducing this article written by Mr. Abhilash Reddy – invited youth representative on 2007-2008 America Bharathi committee. Abhilash is a recent graduate from Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, and has a passion and natural talent for writing. He regularly contributes his works in creative writing to Indianapolis Star newspaper and received many accolades for his exceptional talent. When I reviewed the article that appears on these pages, I felt as if I was reading the old poetry of Oliver Goldsmith, sonnets of P.B. Shelly, books of John Milton and the dramas of William Shakespeare – all at once! It reminded me once more of my school and college days in India when I used to devoutly read and appreciate the mellifluous and flowery charm of Old English literature. Who else is better qualified to call upon fellow youngsters to contribute articles to America Bharathi than a youngster himself? My kudos to Abhilash for a job well done on this article and in inviting all Telugu youngsters out there to consider contributing to America Bharathi. - Editor

I don't have concrete memories of India. My mind has no definitive images, no pictures that are clear and precise, no places, faces and scenes that have not been immune to the dulling of time, like a photograph exposed to the elements losing its gloss and detail. The memories I do possess come to me in snippets, hazy images that are brief, some augmented by imagination, others, I would imagine, purely fictitious, perhaps amalgamations of information gleaned from books or elsewhere.

The sights have changed, I have been told. The country has changed, the physical realities that my imaginations are based on have passed, and, the land and country that was is not as I last knew it. I remember, though, more distinctly, other sensual details with more preciseness, the smell, the tastes, the feel and the sound. These memories, it would seem, take longer to fade: the brain a fortress with retreating rings, each level more impenetrable than the other. The smell is the strongest, and, I can place that smell to a farm outside of Hyderabad, a place where old traditions find themselves working with modern technology, laborers still adherent to the rigid protocols of caste operating tractors alongside bullock pulled carts. The air is purer here, there is no smog, no pollution, no tainting of the pristine, no chemicals afloat and the air sings with an unencumbered freedom. The pitch of that air, I remember also, undulating like waves, with crests and valleys, crescendos and decrescendos, changing notes as it passes through the trees and through the field crops and fleeing towards the open horizon, a dancing

ghost: light of step, playful, ethereal skirt hems twirling hypnotic.

The landscape comes in many shades of green, from deep dark emerald greens to faded pastels, greens mixed with blue, red, yellow and brown. Fields drawn with water lines adorned with floating plants, trees laden with fruit standing against the bright blue sky and other flora and fauna scattered about, some arrived by choice and plan, others arrived by chance and luck. The farmhouse, more fortress than house, stands obtrusively in the center of all this. A large gate stands at the end of the dirt path, and, as a young child, I had never felt smaller than that moment in front of the gate. The courtyard is open and moving with activity. There is braying, mooing, huffing and clucking. Cows, Chickens, Goats and Water Buffaloes. I had never seen a Water Buffalo until visiting India, never gotten close to a Water Buffalo until I entered the courtyard of the farm. Large beasts, as tall as I was, purple and muscular, with wide horns and genteel eyes that followed my movements as I neared towards them and touch the shoulder hump of this creature, hoping that it would not turn and gore me with those massive horns. I can smell the burning wood that emanated from the opposite corner of the stables, the strong pungent smell of fire consuming fuel, and, the spice and sharpness of the food that cooked in kettles and pots overtop the flame. Old women, squat down, knees up near their chins, wearing bright saris, their hair black, white and henna red, stirring the food and poking the fire to keep it crackling. One night, when I was no more than 10 or



11, it rained heavy. The night sky flashed lighting and tympanic percussions boomed, shaking the house and ground. In the courtyard, there was yelling and as I entered it, I saw a couple of men running towards the stable. A cow had gone into labor, yet, unforeseen complications arose and the cow was distressed and in danger. I remember watching, from a certain distance, as a man grabbed hold of the calf while others braced the mother, and, pulled the baby out by bare hand. I remember the shouts of joy that the men shouted out. Or so I think I remember the shouts of joy. It may have been a different shout perhaps, but, I'd like to think it was joy over the birth of a new calf. Its not only smell that leads me to remember India, but, I can feel it too. I can feel iodine being applied to open wounds gained from an unfortunate scooter accident in the feeding pastures near a small lake. I can feel the rain on my skin as we walked back through a torrential rainfall, having ditched the tractor after it had gotten stuck in the mud, slogging through the red dirt sludge barefooted, clothes made heavy by the dowsing, a mighty long trek it was, an adventure from a different time and place. I feel the texture of raw, unprocessed turmeric between my fingertips as I grabbed a piece from mound piled to the ceiling of a room on the bottom floor of that farm fortress. I can feel the bounce of an old horse that was brought in for me and my brother to ride on. This was no magnificent steed, no battle horse, not some might rider with a deep barreled chest, flowing mane and strength lines corded throughout, but, an old, meandering, skinny thing with straggly hair and tale that was oddly bare. With the help of a man wearing a lungi and halfway buttoned dress shirt rolled upsleeve, I was saddled on its back and being lead around, like a conquering prince just arrived from a far off land, victorious and proud. It is incredible what imagination can come to a young child while sitting on the saddle of a horse. Now, many years later, I still find myself on that horse saddle, imagining adventures that may someday be. I have not been back to that farm in over 12 years, yet, at times, I find myself back there, a break from the rapid paced exposure of American pop culture and flash.

It is sometimes unimaginable to think that the people who exist in my fragmented memories are the same people who have now crossed oceans, continents and hemispheres and now find themselves contributing to an entirely different nation. Harold Bloom, the Yale Scholar, once said that the Asian-Americans are the future of this country, the next in a long line of immigrants to shape the future of American history.

The late 19th century saw an influx of Catholics, and, in a century later, they now hold seats in Congress, Governorships and the majority of seats on the Supreme Court. The same sort of unbridled contribution came from the European Jews who fled the hellish nightmare of the Holocaust and the destruction wrought by World War II for a better a life. They, much like the Catholics before them, took a firm grasp of the quill and helped write the chapter of history that followed. Indians and Indian Americans now stand on that same historical precipice, looking out at this new Promised Land, ambition abound, prepared to add our voice to the collective choir of people's past. Already, in the short time we have been in America, we have seen massive accomplishments, and, arguably, no group has accomplished more in fewer years. Indian Americans have become CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, Hollywood players, famous novelists, and a congressman from Louisiana. There have been countless books, movies and more than a few reality television show participants. And all of this is only the tip of the iceberg, the beginning of what is to be a generations worth of recognition and glory. The memories, whether they be the fragmented ones I possess or the concrete ones of others, are, at the end of the day, the driving force for all of what is to be. All of us, regardless of situation or station, come from the fields, the land and landscape of India.

One last thing. American Bharathi magazine is in the midst of great change and reorganization. This magazine ought to be more than just a series of advertisements. We need writers. If you wish to contribute, please do so. Any form of writing is appreciated, whether its non-fiction or fiction, poetry or prose. There are no limits to what will be considered as long as it is appropriate for this magazine, and, we hope to put a wide range of things into this magazine. This magazine, much like the entire ATA organization, ultimately belongs to us; it will be our legacy, a living connection to our history and culture. We sincerely hope that all of you will consider adding to the content of this magazine and use this magazine as a watchword for our own unique backgrounds: The children of two countries, separated by oceans and continents, different in customs, yet, belonging equally to both nations. So, pick up your pens or sit in front of your keyboards and start writing. This magazine and its blank pages are now yours.

Abhilash Reddy
Purdue University

A window to ATA World !

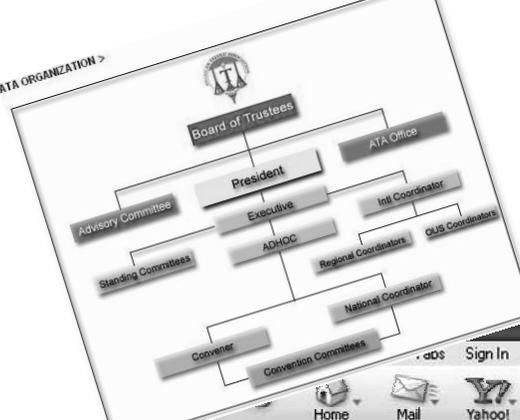
www.ataworld.org

Dear Readers: Check out the new and improved website of American Telugu Association (ATA) at www.ataworld.org. In addition to information about ATA organization, we will continuously update the website about current and upcoming ATA events, projects and activities by various ATA forums. We will also make America Bharathi available at this website. Please check it out from time to time.

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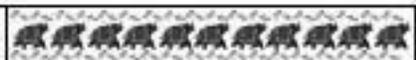
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Telugu Community's Q & A with Dr. DHR Sarma



(America Bharathi is proud to introduce and present this regular feature which will discuss items of special interest to Telugu Diaspora from a unique perspective. We hope this column will stimulate thought about issues faced by Telugu families in US and provide insights into our heritage – our culture, traditions, language and things that are unique to our Telugu way of life. It is also the goal of the present ATA leadership team to educate our youth on our heritage and prepare them for the future. So, please make sure your children also read this feature. We are very pleased to have Dr. D.H.R. Sarma, a well known Telugu poet, scholar and an entertaining speaker of Indiana Telugu community, to serve as the “Guru” to host this feature. I request you all to submit questions of interest and generic value to Dr. Sarma. This is intended for both adults and children. Therefore, in addition to your questions, you can also submit questions posed by your kids by working with them in framing the questions. We will also print the name and location of the person submitting the question. Questions can be submitted directly to Dr. Sarma at dhrsarma@aol.com - Editor)

The scope of this column will evolve but the emphasis will be on issues facing us, our children, our work and family lives to the extent they are peculiar to us, being from a different heritage than the mainstream USA. In time, this distinction (i.e. mainstream or not) will surely pass for some and begin for some others. The timescale for the smooth transition into the mainstream is not clear. The pendulum swings from the side of assimilation and integration into the mainstream to the side of retaining and proudly showcasing our distinctive culture and our heritage. Of course, a balance has been struck by several of us. Regardless of where one is in the balancing process, there are topics and issues that are dinner-party talk. This column will adopt a Question and Answer style. The questions are submitted or simply created to facilitate the discussion or exposition on a topic.

Question: My children are 18 and 20 and do not know how to speak Telugu. Yet, there seem to be many families whose children are claimed to speak Telugu fluently. Where did I go wrong?

Loosely speaking, since the children are of age 18 or older, you are “excused!” This is because, 18 or so years ago, there were less opportunities to learn, less tools, and less glamour associated with it. I would say that the peer pressure was not to learn Telugu. Today, the excuses for not learning Telugu are very few, at least for those who live in major towns. There are many volunteer groups providing an opportunity. Many regional or sub-regional Telugu associations and Temples now exist that devoutly organize events celebrating our festivals on a routine basis. And then, we have many social functions throughout the year celebrating birthdays, landmark anniversaries, engagements, weddings etc., As you see our children have many opportunities to socialize and interact with fellow Telugu kids. Being able to speak and/or understand Telugu is now considered a positive trait and the peer pressure has shifted. Families with similar age children are coming together and creating a mini school. The children learn while the parents socialize and develop friendships. Many organizations are currently

encouraging and supporting learning of Telugu. Every movie star who gives speeches in the ATA and TANA conferences lectures us that we should teach Telugu to our children. Language is learnt through use, so schooling can only do so much. So we should place priority on it in everyday living. Years ago, many did not care or did not have the ease and opportunities we have today. If you went wrong, it is only in the sense that you failed to foresee that such knowledge will be considered a plus among today’s Telugu folks in US. The enhanced recognition India is enjoying in today’s “flat” world is another reason that learning Telugu is the “in thing” now.

Question: My dad plays those awful Telugu songs while we are driving on long trips. Worse still, he sings along many times. How can I rescue myself?

... You are not alone. Ha! Ha! I have inflicted and continue to inflict the same pain on my children. The key here is the difference in the planes (or wave lengths) on which your dad and you are operating during this “long” driving trip, made longer by this unbearable cacophony of sorts. While there is no magic solution to this problem, the following may help. Most of the time, the disenchantment stems not so much

from the tune, but from the lack of understanding of what the words mean and why the song is so poignantly appealing to your dad or mom. Ask the dad or mom for an explanation of what the words mean. Perhaps the beauty of the words, and the thoughts expressed therein will be captivating to you or give you a novel perspective. In turn, you can clue them into the wonderful world of your music. They will likely argue that your music is not as sublime, splendid and literary as theirs, but we all learn by sharing. (A personal note: I immensely enjoy Eagles, Beatles, Peter Frampton, etc.. just like I do the melodies of Ghantasala and Susheela) .

Question: Can you tell me a little bit about Telugu New Year or Ugadi. How does one celebrate this? Why does it not fall on the same date on the calendar every year?

The Telugu New Year is based on the lunar calendar and is related to the motion of the Moon around the Earth, while the “solar calendar” we commonly use, January - December, is based on the motion of the Earth around the Sun. Hence the Telugu New Year, defined in terms of the motion of the moon around the Earth does not coincide with a particular date on the solar calendar. Another example is Easter Sunday which is defined in lunar terms and hence does not occur on the same date on our January - December calendar every year. This leads to those of us who observe the lunar calendar for many things (such as festivals, horoscopes etc.) having two different birthdays based on the two different calendars. If you know your exact date of birth in one but not the other you need both the calendars in the year you were born for comparison and establishing the relationship. Your local priests or other experts can help you with this.

Ugadi, then, is the beginning of the New Year in the lunar calendar. The years in this calendar have names and there are sixty such names – one per each year - in a cycle. These names have meanings too! At the conclusion of this sixty year cycle, another one commences and the sixty names will repeat. The first of the sixty is named *Prabhava* and the sixtieth, *Akshaya*. On March 20, 2007 we begin the 21st year in this cycle and the year is named *Sarvajittu*. The name *Sarvajittu* can loosely be said to mean “victory all around”, perhaps indicating that things should go well for us for the most part this year! Typically Ugadi is celebrated generally with good food, new clothes, and gatherings with family and friends. A special event on this day is *panchaangasravanam*, listening to a synopsis of what the year forebodes to us (more about this in a later

issue). Also, a multi-taste chutney known as “Ugadi pachchadi”, made from ingredients having the six different tastes...using mango, neem leaves, brown sugar etc. is served to indicate the varieties of feelings and experiences you might come across in the New Year.

Question: I hear that the Telugu alphabet is very complex, has a lot of letters and is difficult to master. How many letters are there? Why so many? Is it not very difficult?

The Telugu alphabet is commonly presented as 16 vowels, 37 consonants, and 3 vowel-consonant combinations, giving 56 as the grand total. However, unlike English, the Telugu language script is not limited to the 56 letters of the alphabet. It extends to various combinations among these. For example, each of the 37 consonants can be combined with the 16 vowels giving rise to $37 \times 16 = 592$ letters. Further, each of these 592 can be combined with any of the 37 consonants giving, theoretically to another set of $592 \times 37 = 21,904$ letters. In this last set, perhaps 50% do not figure at all (this approximation is mine and is subject to revision). So let us say we have 10,000 in this last set. There are a few 3 letter combinations, which can be ignored for the present approximation. Thus, we have, as a crude approximation, a whopping 11,000 or so letters that are “legally” formable. This is nearly same, if not exactly the same, as Hindi script, in terms of the same letters and sounds, even though the actual letters are penned differently in Hindi. . At first sight, this may look very complex, but there are some simple rules that make generation of these possible methodically from the 56-character set and some additional symbols. Thus learning the Telugu script takes a bit longer than learning the English script. The major advantage of such scripts is that we never ever worry about pronunciation since each word is phonetic enough and requires no pronunciation rules. While just 26 letters of the English alphabet are used almost magically to create the richness of English language, the Telugu script lends itself to different varieties of expressions and poetic tools. In addition, in Telugu script, spelling is never an issue and never addressed since every word is written exactly as it is pronounced. There are no “spelling bees” in Telugu!

(Dr. D.H.R. Sarma resides in Kokomo, Indiana. By profession he is an engineering manager and received high honors for his technical achievements)



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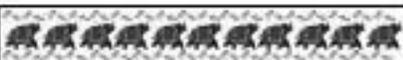
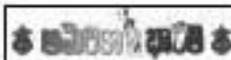


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Make a Difference: Adopt a Village

Dr. Jagan Ailinani, MD

All of us, I am sure, would gladly do our part to bring progress to India. Being so far away, we cannot do much more than make the occasional trip to render free professional services or fund worthwhile projects. Even a small contribution can go a long way towards alleviating poverty and suffering.

Yet, many NRIs express misgivings about giving money for charitable causes in India. Concerns often heard from would-be philanthropists include: their money would end up in the pocket of some dishonest individual, NGOs in India have skewed priorities or poor administrative abilities, their money would be used for proselytizing or other religious activities, and government red tape would confound every effort to make a difference.

There are valid reasons for the cynicism. Most of us have heard stories about, or had personal experience with, corruption, inefficiency and indifference among NGOs in India. And many of us feel that a drastic change in culture is needed before we can invest in the system.

I would still argue that the developmental problems of India are so large that the potential benefits of philanthropy far outweigh the risks of some money being misappropriated or misspent. If even some aid reaches those who are in need, it could literally make the difference between life and death, or help ease untold suffering. Moreover, there is much cause for optimism in the fact that more and more Indian NGOs are becoming professionally managed, with transparency and accountability.

A Personal Viewpoint

My personal experiences may serve to illustrate why I am so upbeat about philanthropy in India. Like many other AAPI members, I come from rural India. I was born and raised in a small village called Motha, in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh. Karimnagar district has a population of about 3.5 million, about 80% of which is rural. Motha, in Jagtial Mandal, has a

population of 3,000. The administrative headquarters, Karimnagar, is less than 200 km from Hyderabad. Literacy in the district is only 56%, and poverty and unemployment are rife - so much so that the district has gained notoriety for mass suicides by out-of-work weavers. In addition to droughts and pestilence, Karimnagar suffers from various problems such as contaminated ground water, growing prevalence of AIDS, high alcoholism among the unemployed, and epidemics such as Japanese encephalitis. In short, my district epitomizes the developmental malaise of rural India.

Although I came to America and built a career and life for myself, my heart has always belonged to my small village of Motha. Many years ago, I decided to adopt my village and do my best to help in its development. I, too, was wary about getting involved at a distance – especially because, after decades of living in America, I had become accustomed to having a good deal of control over any of my endeavors. In trusting someone else to do philanthropy on my behalf, I would be relinquishing control and subjecting myself, second-hand, to the uncertainties and arbitrariness of conditions in India. It took a good deal of introspection for me to make that commitment. I have never had cause to regret it.

Given the range of developmental problems facing Motha, I decided at the outset to take a comprehensive and sustained approach to tackling them. My efforts so far have been aimed at improving school education, providing safe drinking water, promoting public sanitation and hygiene, improving maternal and child health, reducing maternal neonatal mortality, preventing AIDS, and improving access to and affordability of healthcare. I am aware of similar efforts that have been undertaken by some other AAPI members.

In order to build sustainable programs, it is necessary to have reliable partners with whom to forge long-term relationships. It is also important to establish programs



that eventually become financially independent and use local resources and manpower. Sometimes, a good deal of money may be required to initiate change, as is the case when establishing a health clinic or school, or when sponsoring a new road. At other times, all that may be required is seeding a new idea or practice and providing minimal resources to nurture it. In either case, the ultimate beneficiaries need to buy into the change and become partners in the effort.

From my experience, I know that villagers become enthusiastic participants when they experience the positive effects of change. They even bring to the table valuable perspectives and insights that we, as outsiders, would not have.

In the following section, I will describe the changes we brought to Motha village and the technologies, costs and partnerships it took to accomplish them.

Providing safe drinking water

India has nearly 15 percent of the world's population, but only four percent of the world's potable water. Moreover, by some estimates nearly 90 percent of India's water is polluted. About 1.5 million Indian children under five die every year from water-borne diseases. In our home state of Andhra Pradesh, an estimated 150 children die each day from diarrhea caused by polluted water – deaths that are entirely preventable.

This problem has an entirely feasible solution: an affordable, community-owned water purification system that can provide potable water for up to 15,000 people. It is made available to Indian communities through a joint effort of the NAANDI Foundation in Hyderabad (www.naandi.org) and the U.S. based Water Health International (WHI). It uses a low-tech, low-maintenance ultraviolet (UV) system to remove 99.9 percent of pathogens. In pilot projects the system has proven to be robust and dependable in harsh conditions. The cost, after installation, is about \$50,000 (Rs. 22 lakhs) to provide water for up to 15,000 people. A village or a sponsor puts 20 percent (\$10,000) toward the cost of the system and NAANDI helps organize domestic, commercial loans to pay the balance. Water is sold for pennies (about one rupee for 15 liters) at a time to pay off the loans. This way the system becomes the property of and a source of pride for the community. The initial 20 percent could come from an ATA member or other NRI sponsor who has adopted the village. You can send money through ATA foundation or other U.S.

based charitable organizations. I have done this for my village Motha. Even people from surrounding villages are coming to get safe drinking water. About 30 other units are in operation in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. Safe drinking water program is also available through another foundation, Byrrajufoundation (www.byrrajufoundation.org).

Promoting hygiene and sanitation

Lack of resources for community waste disposal and nearly nonexistent personal hygiene education causes millions of unnecessary deaths in India, particularly due to open defecation.

Sulabh International (www.sulabhinternational.org), a voluntary organization of retired government administrators, scientists, engineers and architects, has already brought successful sanitation services to over 5 million people in India. It has done this with a remarkable, simple latrine design that uses two pits to pass water back and forth from one to the other to flush the toilet. It uses only 2 liters of water per flush. The result is a maintenance-free latrine that can last 100 years. As proof of its effectiveness, Sulabh International has located its office in Patna's Gandhi Maidan next to a complex of 42 of its latrines. The office is “stink-free.” Since 1974, Sulabh has built sanitary public latrines and brought hygiene education to over 500 towns and villages.

Another organization that is doing sterling work in this area is the Byrraju Foundation (www.byrraju.foundation.org). I am currently discussing with both organizations the possibility of building latrines in my village.

We are also conducting efforts to improve trash disposal and sanitation and have started planting trees along both sides of the 2 km road from Motha to nearby Jagtial town. We are also giving free trees to plant throughout the village under a ‘Clean and Green’ program. More than 300 trees have already been planted.

Improving education

You can bring education and child health services to village schools. The current health care system in India is very large and well-conceived. But, in action, it is often unwieldy and inadequate. The late prime minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi once observed that only 10 percent of the funds for social health actually reach the people

who need them. But there are many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) based in the U.S. and India that can deliver primary health services and education to children in poor rural areas. For example, Pratham (www.pratham.org), based in Mumbai, is dedicated to bringing universal primary education to all of India, the NAANDI Foundation has many school-based health initiatives. Working with the Andhra Pradesh government and NAANDI and other organizations, we are working to improve education infrastructure, build schools, provide education in languages, math and science, and improve child health. With your help and the help of these organizations, school children can get a good education, learn healthy habits, and get good nutrition through the NAANDI Midday Meal Program.

Better health through preventive care

Promoting preventive care is a major strategy for improving overall health in rural areas. Along with providing safe drinking water, I have focused on immunization of children, especially adolescent girls so as to prevent deafness, blindness, heart disease and mental retardation (rubella syndrome) in their future offspring. The cost of each MMR vaccine is about a dollar, or Rs. 50 (projectdeafindia.org).

We are also providing Hepatitis-B immunization, the cost being about \$3 per child. Other care includes free medical exams (eye, ear, dental) by a pediatrician or family physician and vision and hearing checkups.

Reducing maternal neonatal and infant mortality

India has one of the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in the world, and 50-60 percent of children under three are undernourished. You can support and strengthen existing government rural health care programs such as the Reproductive Child Health (RCH) and Janani (Mother) programs run by the government. I am working with them and NGOs such as the NAANDI Safe Motherhood Program to bring services to my village to reduce infant mortality and improve maternal and infant health.

Preventing AIDS

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations have said that India, especially in rural areas, is at high risk for an explosive increase in HIV/AIDS which could destroy India's newfound economic growth. Andhra Pradesh has one of the highest incidences of AIDS. And within the state, Karimnagar has one of the highest rates of AIDS.

Education and awareness are considered the two best weapons in the fight against AIDS. There are many organizations that can provide materials and resources. SHARE "Mediciti" (www.mediciti.com) is promoting an intensive HIV/AIDS awareness campaign in villages. I have been working with Dr. Vijay Yeldandi, Chair of the AAPI AIDS Committee, who was instrumental in starting the Andhra Pradesh AIDS Consortium (APAIDSCON), the largest network of private health care institutions dedicated to HIV/AIDS care. It allows you to adopt an AIDS victim and fund care for a child or parent for a year for just one dollar a day. You can choose a preferred region of AP where your donation will be spent. You can visit its Web site at www.apaidson.org or contact APAIDSCON (ichhaindia.org) at info@ichhaindia.org. AAPI Preventive Health Clinic of Jagtial is part of the AIDS Consortium.

Sponsoring Health Camps

Under the auspices of the AAPI Preventive Health Clinic of Jagtial, we have conducted health camps in Jagtial and surrounding villages.

Eye Camps: We have conducted eye camps through Rotary International to provide early detection and treatment of glaucoma and cataract surgeries to prevent blindness in the elderly. We have also worked through the Vitreo-Retinal Institute of Secunderabad to conduct screening for diabetic retinopathy for early detection and treatment to prevent blindness in diabetic patients.

ENT Camps: In cooperation with the Yashoda Hospital of Hyderabad, we conduct evaluations and outpatient ear surgeries. We are working with Sweekar Institute of Secunderabad to screen for hearing problems in newborns and children.

Cancer Screenings and Awareness: Tobacco use, especially smokeless tobacco, is a health crisis in India. There is also a high prevalence of cervical and breast cancers. Over 70 percent of cancers in India are found in the late stages, when it is too late for treatment.

In our village, we conducted cancer screenings for throat, lung and breast with the Indo-American Cancer Institute of Hyderabad. We also did PAP smears for cervical cancers. We are promoting education on the dangers of tobacco use by distributing the "Evils of Tobacco" literature developed by the Indian Tobacco Prevention Initiative headed by past AAPI president,

Dr. Kalpalatha Guntupalli.

We are now planning on working with American Cancer Society International on the Indian Cancer Initiative. ACS-International can provide seed grants for cancer education and early detection programs in India. You can apply for a grant or make a pledge that the Cancer Society will put toward your specific needs. For more information, visit www.cancer.org/international.

Diabetes Camps: We have provided free diabetes and cholesterol screenings and counseling on the connection between diabetes, diet and nutrition. Research has shown that education programs about diabetes and diet does lower the incidence of diabetes. You can sponsor a diabetes awareness program in your village.

Heart Disease: Heart disease comes at an earlier age for Indians than for other ethnic groups. We have given heart disease screenings at health camps and provided education about the risk factors for heart disease. To learn more about how you can help prevent heart disease in your adopted village, visit www.heartsmart.info.

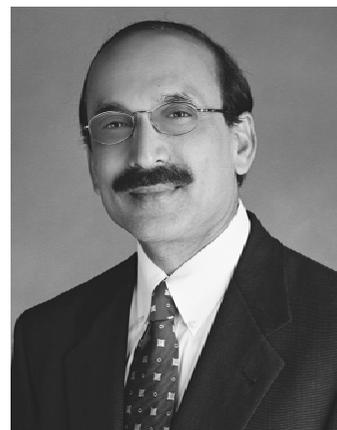
One Village at a Time

It is important that we recognize the changes that have been taking place for the better in India. First, there is a real will and desire on the part of governments, both at the state and center, to work with NGOs and NRIs to bring development to rural India. Second, there are more NGOs today that are professionally run, transparent, and accountable, which reach all parts of India and deliver a variety of services. Third, there are long-term development programs being run by NGOs that are yielding discernible results. Funding for these programs often comes from local sources, including commercial loans that are being paid off. The implication is that even charitable works can pay enough to become self-sustaining. And, lastly, the number of people taking on philanthropic projects in India has been growing. And they have made a visible impact in the fight against poverty and disease in India.

There is no instant solution for India's myriad problems. But by adopting one village or town at a time and working through the AAPI Charitable Foundation, government agencies and NGOs, you can make a difference. More than anything, you can save lives by promoting preventive health. Over time, an improved village could lead to an improved region, state and country.



Dr. Jagan Ailinani graduated from Osmania medical college, Hyderabad in 1973. He has completed residency in Diagnostic radiology at St. Louis University, MO, where he served as the chief resident. Dr. Ailinani is board certified in diagnostic radiology with certificate of added qualifications in neuroradiology. He is a fellow of American college of radiology. He is involved with Group practice in Carbondale, IL, since 1980 where he is also serving as the clinical professor of radiology at Southern Illinois University school of medicine. Dr. Ailinani served as the president for various organizations, including American association of physicians of Indian origin (AAPI), Osmania university medical alumni association of America and Jackson county medical society. He is also actively involved in local community and various civic organizations and was instrumental in establishing free medical clinic for working poor in Carbondale, IL. He is married to Uma and has two children. Vasavi works as the market research specialist for Accenture company in Chicago and Hary is a senior medical student.





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Altruism and Academics: A Look at North South Foundation

Aparna Ramakrishnan

Swami Vivekananda, the great Hindu pioneer and diplomat to the United States who helped drive the modernization of India, once said, “Arise, Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached.” North South Foundation (NSF) under Dr. Ratnam Chitturi’s direction has continued Swami Vivekananda’s mission in uniting Indians of many different religions and ethnic backgrounds under a single guiding principle: the importance of education. Although Indian parents often encourage their own children to excel in the academic arena, Dr. Chitturi’s work, with the help of hundreds of dedicated volunteers, has highlighted the need for motivating all children to educate themselves and become tomorrow’s leaders.

The North South Foundation, founded in 1989 as a non-profit organization, has achieved astounding success in providing scholarships to promising but underprivileged students in India. NSF has awarded over 2,000 scholarships to students in fields as diverse as engineering, medicine, and the general sciences. There are 17 chapters who distribute these scholarships, which are located in: Bangalore, Bhavnagar, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jamshedpur, Jodhpur, Kanpur, Katihar, Kochi, Kolkata, Madurai, Mau, North Eastern States, Pune, and Trivandrum. NSF is unique in its efforts because it is arguably the single most expansive organization dedicated to promoting education both among its ethnic demographic in the United States as well as in the mother country. Therefore the Foundation is undeniably a source of pride and a success story for all Indians to share.

The counterpart of the charitable aspect of the Foundations’ work is the competitions NSF holds for children of Indian descent in the United States. These contests are held in centers across the country and include spelling, vocabulary, math, geography, essay writing and public speaking. The popularity of the competitions that the Foundation conducts are illustrated in the statistics: there are currently sixty-five chapters that facilitated 6,700 contestants in 2006 – a big jump from less than 1,000 contestants in 2001. Although

scholarships of \$1000, \$500, and \$250 are awarded, the purpose of these contests is not just to drive competitive ambition but to motivate children to engage in learning towards broadening their horizons. For example, they make children open an atlas and learn about the mountains and rivers of Tanzania or write about the prospects for diplomatic relations between the United Nations and the United States – what a great way to supplement and enrich classroom lessons!



It is no mere coincidence, therefore, that Indian children have increasingly shined in the academic spotlight. Five of the past seven Scripps National Spelling Bee champions have been Indians, as were the top three finishers at the National Geographic Bee. Writing and math are no different, with Indians consistently scoring high on standardized college entrance exams such as the SAT and the ACT.

As a member of the generation of youth that has taken a part in shaping the organization’s future, I have come to appreciate how NSF has motivated children to channel their ambition into honing skills that may not have been otherwise regarded as important. Although public speaking skills are vital in the workforce today, the encouragement of communication skills has often taken a back seat to the development of science and math abilities. As a result, NSF’s work in championing



such skills has allowed many young adults in the Indian community to better this essential ability.

Another young adult who has also greatly benefited from North South Foundation's contests is Bhakti Nagala. Nagala was the 2003 recipient of the first prize at NSF's Brain Bee contest. She went on to represent the Foundation in the 2004 International Brain Bee, conducted by Dr. Norbert Myslinski of the University of Maryland, Baltimore. Here she won the championship, along with a monetary award and a research internship. Nagala has since given back to North South Foundation by donating a part of the scholarship that she received at the international level of competition. In addition, she volunteers her time through serving as a judge for the Foundation's yearly Brain Bee contest. Many other young adults who competed at a younger age in NSF contests have returned as judges and contest coordinators, demonstrating that this organization has also been influential in shaping a culture of volunteerism.

In fact, this sense of civic duty is one of the many positive repercussions of North South Foundation's work. The Dollar-a-Square program conducted by the organization had children canvass their neighborhoods and approach friends for one hundred dollars to fill a sheet of as many squares. Many children who are also regular participants in the educational contests became very involved with the idea to such an extent that some even started substituting donations for birthday presents. As a result of these initiatives, six thousand and seven hundred dollars were raised, providing thirty-three scholarships for economically disadvantaged youth in India. The success of this venture illustrates that North South Foundation has not only been able to academically motivate the youth but it has also been able to instill a sense of philanthropy, a concept that has been more widespread in the Western world than it has in India.

North South Foundation has not gone unrecognized for its efforts. The Foundation has been featured in most prominent NRI-run publications as well as many newspapers based in India. In addition, its successes have been reported in the Chicago Tribune as well as other American publications.

The hope of NSF is to eventually also form a similar organization in India so that Indians can better support their neighbors and countrymen. With all of its



successes both in America and India, North South Foundation serves as a model for many other charitable groups seeking to further the education of the current generation.

Swami Vivekananda spoke of Karma Yoga, or the idea that a person has the duty to help mankind in whatever way that they can. North South Foundation has taken this goal and transformed into reality, as an example for all.



Aparna Ramakrishnan, a 12th grader from Naperville, Illinois, has participated many times in North South Foundation contests. In 1999, she won 2nd place at the National Spelling Bee, and in 2006, she won 1st place at the National Public Speaking Bee. She is active in many academic teams at the high school level and is a very dedicated singer of South Indian Classical Music.



The Editor would like to thank Dr. Ratnam Chitturi of NSF for the pictures and Dr. Srinivasa Rao Kasalapudi of Catalyst magazine for helpful discussions.



Election Committee Report

Election Results of Life Members Category



I would like to thank ATA for giving me the opportunity to serve as an election committee chair. My sincere thanks to my committee members for their participation.

Here are the highlights of the elections:

On 11/18/06, ballots were mailed to all life members along with the candidate's bio-data, AVN Reddy's nominating committee letter, and a stamped return envelope.

Today, December 3, 2006 we had ATA election ballot counting in our Naperville ATA office. Thanks to my committee members Vijaypal Reddy, Sreeram Reddy, Kishan Pulluru, Ramani Reddy Rodda for their active participation during this process. They have done an excellent job of sending ballots, counting ballots, picking up ballots, and counting every ballot in front of election committee members, ATA trustees, and ATA members. There were no glitches; every thing went smoothly. I will give my complete report at the next board meeting.

Dear Candidates:

Thank you very much for your participation in the election process in deciding board members for this great organization. Congratulation to the eight candidates who have won the election, and Dr. Mohan Mallam welcomes you to the ATA board. The following eight candidates, listed on the left, are the winners from Life Member Category.

WINNERS:

Rajeshwar Reddy, NJ
Balaraju "Raju" Chinthala, IN
Damoder Veera Reddy, VA
Ravindhar K. Reddy, CA
Chitten Raju Vanguri, TX
Sanjeeva Reddy, LA
Rohini Bokka, IL
Jhansi Reddy Hanumandala, CA

Number of votes for each candidate:

Rajeshwar Reddy - 859
Balaraju "Raju" Chinthala - 854
Damoder Veera Reddy - 858
Ravindhar K. Reddy - 854
Chitten Raju Vanguri - 872
Sanjeeva Reddy - 871
Rohini Bokka - 860
Jhansi Reddy Hanumandala - 864
Kambam Ramesh Kumar - 122

Elections for President-Elect: Mr. Jithender Reddy and Mr. Rajender Jinna were the candidates. Jithender Reddy won the elections.

Regards,
Chandrasekhar P. Reddy,
Chair, Election Committee.
847-217-5006

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2007-2008

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