

Nov '18
Diwali



Saraswathi

Wani





Shubh
Deepavali!

EDITORIAL



Namaskara!

Team Vani welcomes you to your copy of Saraswath Vani - Diwali 2018 edition.

Our life is ever radiant. Each Diwali, we welcome light and embrace the depth of knowledge that dawns from within. We are all carriers of joy and knowledge, and the sooner we accept that, the more happiness we spread.

This edition continues to be a radiant celebration of stories. It gives me immense joy to showcase your work and narrate them on a platform as prestigious as the **Saraswath Vani**. Through this edition, we explored your stories at depth and reproduced them in a manner we hope you will find interesting. I am particularly happy with contributions from our **Generation 'Z'**, who have expressed their views on a range of topics. We also have some travel tales from both the mountains and the seas!

A BIG "Thank You" to our **EC 2018-2019, Dr. Shalini Gadiyar and Mrs. Shambhavi Prabhu** for being the pillars of strength behind every successful Vani edition. A special thank you to **Mrs. Sujatha Bhat**, who very graciously handed me copies of Vani through the years. *To see a little surprise, turn to Page 20 for a*

trip down memory lane! **Co-Editor Shambhavi Prabhu** has penned down a beautiful conversation in and about Konkani. **Mr. Navin Nayak** turned Quizmaster this time with an exciting quiz for our readers.

GSS UK welcomed me with open arms and in return, I hope to continue doing my bit to help nurture and strengthen this community. There is strength and beauty in simplicity. There is also strength in unity. Let's pledge to keep the positive spirit up!

Always remember, **Vani is because of YOU**. It remains my sincere request that you all continue to contribute for the cause that is Vani. I hope you enjoy reading this edition as much as we loved creating it. In this season of festivity, through your imagination and love, I present to you - **your Work of Art**.

Shubh Deepavali to all!

May everyone who comes to you experience the light of joy

Dedicated to Samik & Veera, my spring of happiness!



Shalini Rao - Nayak
Editor, Saraswath Vani
Gowda Saraswath Sabha UK

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SECRETARY SPEAKS



Ladies and Gentlemen,

Another year has gone by with a quick blink of the eye. It's already time to quickly write my Secretary's Note for **Vani**, which has so beautifully been put together by the editorial team. I congratulate **Shalini and team** for creating such a well thought out edition despite personal and professional commitments. Hope you are as eager as I to go through the contributions sent by our Sabha members.

Here are some thoughts I would like to share with you:

Generation Z

When I had joined the committee along with my wife **Shambhavi**, we had set up a very important objective - to get the younger generation in our Sabha to lead. It is with great pleasure that I see during our various events; bank holiday weekend, Diwali preparations and other events; that they have stepped up. Their enthusiasm level is amazing. Few of our young blood have gone ahead and done some amazing charity work in their individual capacity. Hats off to them! They have also been involved in our management and we now have two new youth coordinators on board.

I am very proud of our youth and I am positive that, together, they will take GS Sabha's sparkling light to another level.

Challenges

Every family faces challenges; so has our Sabha. But with our "**Keep calm and carry on building**" attitude, we are overcoming all sorts of surprises and challenges, working together as a team and in the process becoming stronger.

Problem shared is problem halved

There are a lot of mental health awareness initiatives around these days. Our Sabha is not just about food, fun and celebration. It is also about being there for each other as much as possible. So reach out. If you need help, advice or simply need to chat, just pick up the phone and talk.

Upcoming Programs & Initiatives

Thanks to input from our members, we also have plans to do Digital Initiative programs for senior citizens, youth placement programs, dance/language workshops, etc. More on that in your Inbox soon.

Our Community

We are **Konkanis** but we also have other communities who have integrated so well, which is fantastic. It is not all about who we are or where we come from, it's about building the Sabha towards an even brighter future!

Grateful

Many thanks to everyone for your unconditional support. A big hug and thanks to our amazing gold star **Executive Committee and Trustees**. You might see or hear only a few names, but a lot goes on behind the scenes - every minute of which is voluntarily invested by our EC members towards the Sabha's smooth functioning. *Last but not least, a big thank you to my wife Shambhavi who is my rock!*

I always say - Express yourself, Respect others, Help each other and do not to forget to Enjoy Life!

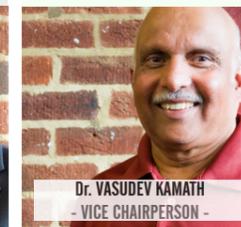


Vinayak Prabhu
Secretary, Gowda Saraswath Sabha UK

Have a Travel photograph that you'd like to share with us? Send it to our Editor at Vanieditor@gssuk.org for the next feature!



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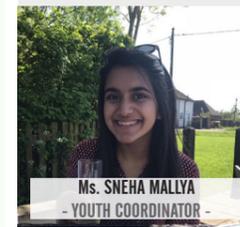
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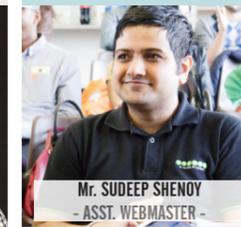
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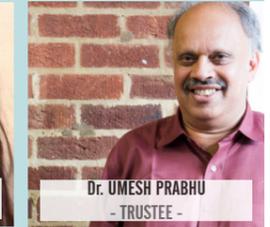
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Photographs Courtesy: Featured Members; © Shalini Nayak

the YEAR that was

Our members go on to achieve some incredible successes every year. This year, we celebrate the joy of many such beginnings yet again. TEAM VANI extends their gratitude to those who shared their stories with us.

Aarya Shenoy, daughter of Vinaya and Suraj Shenoy, has been offered a place for year 8 at Elmhurst Ballet School, a full-time Ballet residential training school in Birmingham. We wish Aarya good luck on her journey to becoming a breathtaking ballerina!



Sonali Naik, daughter of Suman and Appaya Naik, has been appointed Queen's Counsel (QC) at Garden Court Chambers. Naik specialises in immigration, asylum and public law, and is among only 32 women of 119 QCs appointed this year. Congratulations, Sonali! The Sabha is proud of your achievement.



2018

CO-EDITORIAL

Co-Editor Mrs. Shambhavi Prabhu essays a heart-warming message about her love for *amchigelé* and its setting in the modern day. Thank you Shambhavi for your wonderful play of words and inspiring many to keep the tradition of speaking Konkani alive!

Talk in Konkani, shall we?, said he.

*What? No no!, she said,
shock in her eyes, disdain in her tone.
English - my language to think, to vocalize my
thoughts innermost
Abandon it I simply shall not.*

*True it stands for me as well, he said
but then how else shall we,
in an island miles away,
relish our wilting vernacular from the coast?*

*The sense of belonging in "mharaya"
can't be conveyed through "mate".
The gastronomic satisfaction of "daalito",
will not be tempered with "tadka dal".
And aah! the sheer thrill of "phardi panchadik",
simply cannot be vocalised in "baseless banter".*

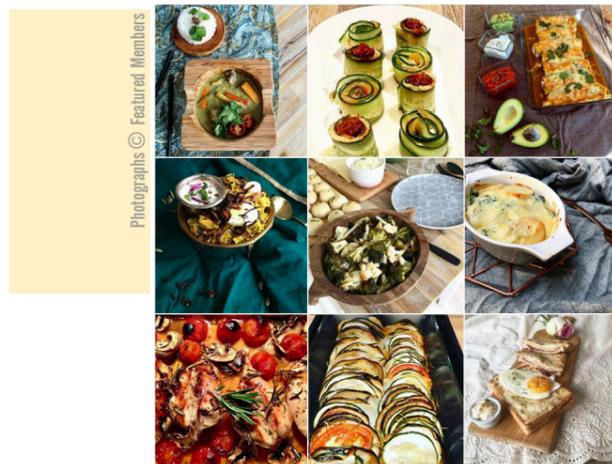
She ingested these words,
and thought of the tender roots she left behind.

*Tu saangche sama re,
Migele bhaasha uloché ka
makka kasa lajji
Migele bhaasha uloché ka
makka kasa maryada.*

A naughty smirk appeared on her mouth,
at the thought of speaking amchigelé with
abandon,
in queues, the tube and pubs,
With no worry of whispering
to keep away eavesdroppers.

Smile in her eyes, pride in her tone,
Talk in Konkani, shall we?, said she.

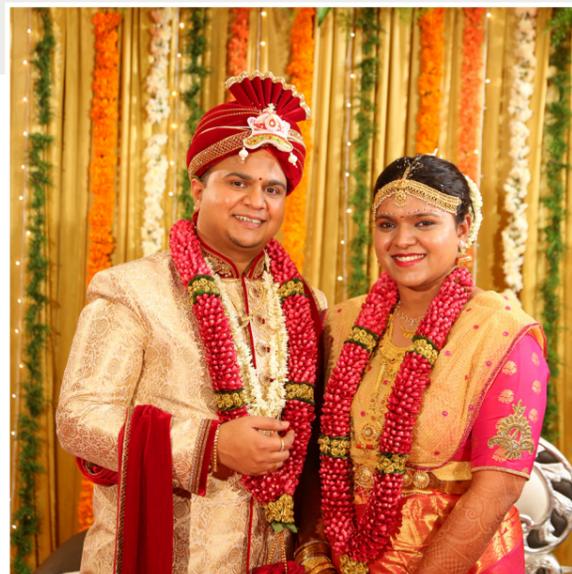
Shambhavi Prabhu
Co - Editor, Saraswath Vani
Gowda Saraswath Sabha UK



Sangeeta Anand Shenoy is excited to share her **food photo blog** on Instagram under the profile, **sang.eater**. Sangeeta considers this blog an outlet to experiment with two of her creative passions - food and design. Because food is such an innate part of everyday life, creating content for the blog happens alongside routine. Do follow **sang.eater** on Instagram to be a part of Sangeeta's everyday tryst with food.

There had been unusually heavy rains since June 2018 in the state Kerala of India. In August, there were terrible floods, causing several landslides and over 483 people died. Because of these severe floods, many diseases are occurring amongst Kerala: like leptospirosis and dengue fever. Many people around the world are trying to help them by donating money. I had been raising money for charity by making handmade origami bookmarks. I donated £50 to the flood relief funds.

In Hinduism, our holy book (The Bhagavad Gita) explains that a gift is pure when it is given from the heart to the right person at the right time and at the right place, and when we expect nothing in return, and this has inspired me.



Congratulations on your wedding on 19 September 2018 in Udupi, Tilak Kamath and Sanjana Shenoy! We wish you abundance of love, laughter and happiness. Welcome to your GSS UK family, Sanjana!



Vaishnavi Rajput, 11, has raised money by making bookmarks, which she then donated towards helping out with the **recent floods in Kerala**. We couldn't be more proud, Vaishnavi!



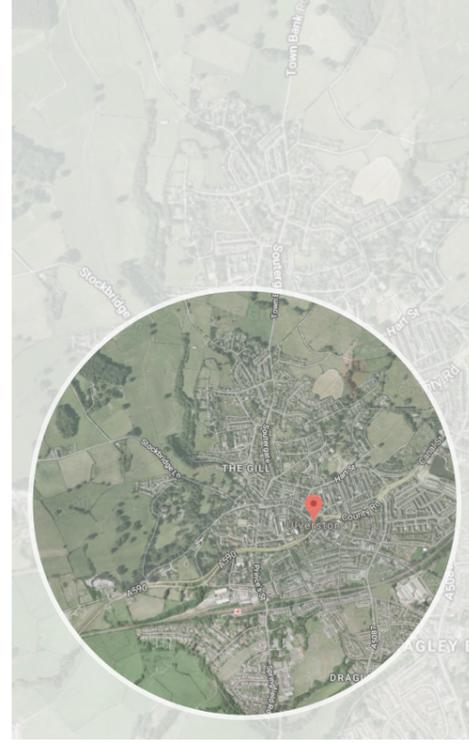
For the past few years, **Aadi Kamath** has been graciously sharing his experience at BHWE with us. The Sabha's flagship event has seen 32 summers now and the tradition continues on. Aadi tells a tale of delicious breakfasts, fun games and making new friends.

About Bank Holiday Weekend

Every August Bank holiday, GSS holds an event when we go some place in the UK and have a bit of fun. This year, the bank holiday weekend was held in a small and beautiful town called Ulverston south of the Lake District, which is a colossal national park in Northern England. It was very different in many ways for me - different accents, different weather, it was an environment-preserving area and there were many more differences to where I live. There were roughly 74 people who attended, and the hotel was almost fully booked with people from our community.

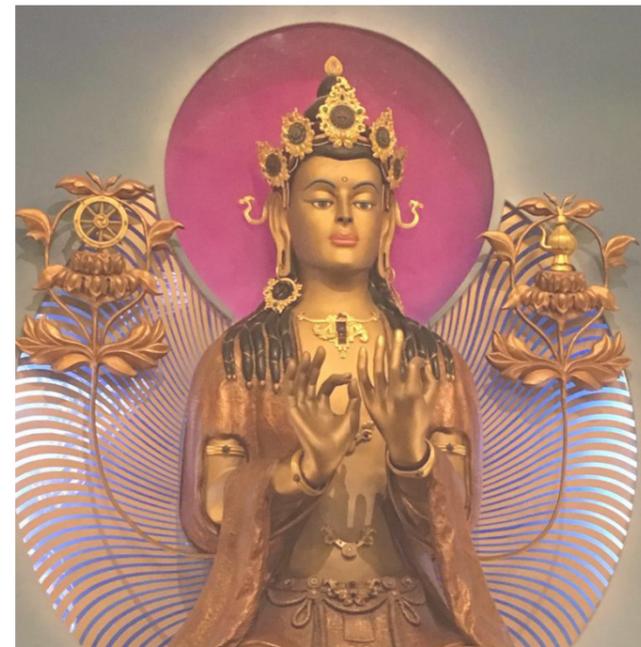
DAY ONE

At home, I woke up to a morning that had a beautiful view of the sunrise and realised I needed to get ready for the Bank Holiday Weekend. My parents, my grandma and I loaded the car and drove off to the Lake District. After a long 4.5 hour drive, we finally reached the hotel in Ulverston. It was a brilliant view outside; there was the lake and a beautiful hill view. Some people thought that the holiday was over as they believed they had seen the beauties of the area already. However, there were a lot more and fascinating things to see. The hotel seemed luxurious. It had a lobby where people could interact with each-other; it had great food and great views all around. The comfort of the room was spectacular.



At 5 PM, everyone gathered in the hall where the entertainment program was to take place. When the entertainment started, the first task as always, was to introduce ourselves. Once everyone introduced themselves, the next edition of Konkani Olympics started. Everyone was divided into 5 teams and the team names had to be chosen. The theme was provided by the 2 entertainment leaders (Vinayak Prabhu and Shambhavi Prabhu). Ulverston is the birthplace of comedian Stan Laurel (from the Laurel and Hardy duo), so the theme for the team names was funny names. The 5 team names chosen were: Doni Ghadi Haasun Kadi, Dhingdi Kalyani, Bod Sukla Ve Tukka, Vaan Gallele Jana and Pharkhata Pindile Chaddi. My team name was Pharkhata Pindile Chadi. There were a variety of games played and at the end of the day, my team stood 2nd.

After the games, there was a disco and everyone joined on the dance floor. After all the laughter and entertainment in the hall, the people who attended drove back to the hotel where most people interacted with each other until around 2 AM. I, on the other hand, went straight to my room and slept by 11 PM. While most people were downstairs having fun, I was fast asleep.



DAY TWO

The next day I woke up to a dull morning. There were lots of clouds ruining the view and it made me feel bored. It was 6 AM and I was the first person to wake up, which meant I had an hour until breakfast. I didn't realise breakfast would be served between 8AM to 11AM, so for 2 hours I kept walking to and from my parent's room (which annoyed them). Finally after 2 hours, it was a brilliant breakfast. I had scrambled eggs, bacon, sausages, yoghurt, fruit and toast. It was one of the best breakfasts I had in a long time.

I went back to my room and prepared for the day ahead, which seemed to be quite boring for me. Most of us drove to the Buddhist temple to see it and attend a meditation session by a Buddhist monk. I interacted with a lot of people and made some new friends at the Buddhist temple. The meditation lesson lasted about 15 minutes and it helped me relax. Some of my friends chose to snooze for that duration - meditating in their own way I guess :D

After the temple visit, some people went to visit the Laurel and Hardy museum. My friends and I thought it would be boring and chose not to go. We stayed at a pub the whole afternoon, had lunch and talked about our schools and exams. After my parents came back from the museum, we drove back to the hotel to get ready for that evening's entertainment. Everyone stuck to their own teams and we continued playing Konkani Olympics. After about 2 hours of competing in different games, the winners were finally announced. It was my team - Pharkhata Pindile Chaddi! This is the third time in a row my team has won at BHWE.

Afterwards, there was a bit of music, dancing and playing, which was fun. We then rushed back to the hotel for some more fun. My friends and I played all sorts of games such as UNO, Chinese whispers, etc. Everyone played games till around 1:15 AM. I slept at 1:30 am.

DAY THREE

The final day. I woke up at 7:30 AM and got ready for breakfast. My grandma and I went downstairs for breakfast, which was delightful again. We then went upstairs and packed our bags to get ready to go home. Once we packed our bags, we said goodbye to friends and took nice group photos. After all of that, we departed to go home on a long 4.5-hour drive. It was a wonderful Bank Holiday Weekend of 2018.

Compared to other bank holidays this was different as I met a lot of people from my age group. Despite the bad weather, the spirits were high. I am eagerly awaiting next year's bank holiday weekend. ■

GO GREEN

Tanuja Kamath shows us how responsibility towards the environment starts young. A reminder of doing our bit to **Reduce, Reuse, Refuse and Recycle**.

I woke up with a tingle of excitement on the 27th of February. My keen interest in our environment and protecting it finally gave me this opportunity. It was the day I would be representing my school at the Spelthorne Eco-Conference. Four students from my primary school were chosen to represent the school, and I was the youngest of them! I felt really proud to represent my school amongst 11 other schools at Borough of Spelthorne.

The conference was held at the district's Council offices. Popular radio presenter Phil Williams spoke at the Eco-Conference. He told us fascinating and interesting facts about his trip to the Amazon rainforest. We learnt that 2189 animals and 1752 flowers and plants are on the endangered species list. We also learnt about the 4 R's – **Recycle, Reduce, Refuse and Reuse**.

Phil's very interesting presentation was followed by a debate in the morning. In the afternoon, we were all assigned a task. My task was to make a presentation on "Food waste and Compost". It got even better when I realised we had to present this to the **Mayor of Spelthorne, Councillor Jean Pinkerton OBE**.

I quickly wrote down as much as I could about the topic and stood in front of the microphone with confidence. At the end of my presentation, I received a big round of applause. I was overjoyed when the Mayor gave me her signature and business card and congratulated me on a good presentation. We all had a great day at the Eco-Conference, learnt a lot and also got some goodie bags!



**RECYCLE
REDUCE
REUSE
GO GREEN NOW!**

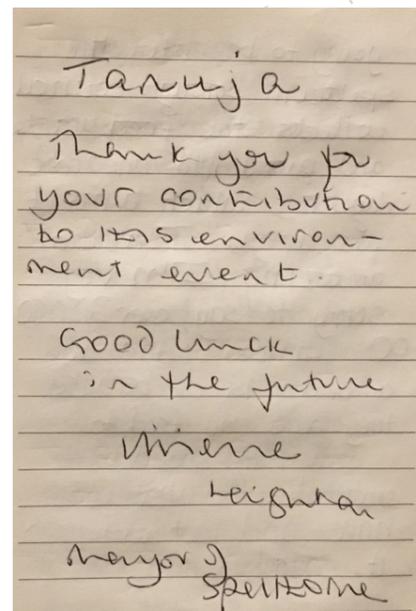


Image © Seema Prabhu Kamath



"BLACK MAY BE THE CLOUDS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FUTURE MAY SEEM GRIM, BUT DON'T LET THE NERVE DESERT YOU. KEEP YOURSELF IN FIGHTING TRIM"
- Excerpt from "See it Through" by Edgar A. Guest

Sanjit Mallya chalks out a three-pronged approach to brace ourselves for the many testing moments life brings our way

How you handle your nerves determines the outcome of a demanding situation. Ultimately, if one can keep hold of their nerves, they will perform at the highest level that they possibly can.

Take for example Lionel Messi; regarded as one of the legends of football. The stage was set for him to be the hero for his nation, Argentina, at the World Cup against dark horses Iceland. When they were drawn 1-1 and Argentina was awarded a penalty, Messi stepped up but showed the world that he too is just human. Nerves definitely would have affected Messi missing the penalty but from this he was able to learn to cope with nerves and continue with his prolific career.

There are many mental preparations one can carry out to make sure that they are in the best mindset possible and best setup for whichever situation they face.

Imagery is one of these mental preparations. This is the creation of pictures in our minds, and can massively improve one's concentration. For instance, a surgeon who is facing their first major surgery. Using imagery they would be able to envisage the surgery going as planned, which could end up making for a more successful surgery. Imagery can also help with relaxation. A participant in a physical activity who feels anxious, could go to 'another place' in their minds to try and calm down before their activity, hence keeping themselves relaxed and ready.

Mental Rehearsal is another way to cope with nerves. The relaxation side of imagery is one of the forms of mental rehearsal. It enables us to concentrate and focus a lot more, furthermore encouraging us and giving us a much more positive outlook. To be effective in mental rehearsal we must:

Relax in a comfortable setting and attempt to practise mental rehearsal. Practise it in a real-life situation that has some relevance. Make sure that the mental rehearsal or imagery is carried out at short but frequent stints.

- * Set goals for each session, e.g. concentrate on imaging scoring the winning penalty in one of your short sessions.
- * Evaluate the mental rehearsal at regular intervals and see how far it is taking you.
- * The last way to cope with nerves is to simply Think Positively. This is the easiest of the three parts of the coping with nerves and stress. The participant or athlete should just make sure they believe in themselves and have the belief and mindset that they will succeed in whatever they want to do. All negative thoughts should exit our mind, and for the split second or many hours that we are completing an activity, our mind should be filled only with positive thoughts.

In conclusion, nerves will bother us but there are ways to overcome them. If we can learn to control our nerves, no task is impossible. Believe that you can do whatever it takes and always make sure that you are giving yourself the best chance to succeed!

LIGHT

Ayush Pai draws a beautiful narrative of perspective beyond the confines of a closed mind. Team Vani would like to congratulate 9 year old Ayush for painting us this poetic image and for receiving his school Head-Teacher's award for this piece.



Illustration © Rupri Kaur

Draw back the curtains
Maybe outside there's,
A forest of lush green grass
A batch of Tulips
Or a row of Roses

Draw back the curtains,
Maybe a swan is flying elegantly through the sky
Maybe you'll see an eagle
Fly through the sky to catch a fish
Or a Rabbit hopping up and down
Or the picture
Of a Peacock waving it's feathers

Draw back the curtains,
If there's a storm
It will blow away!

Draw back the curtains,
Even if there's only a spark

At least there'll be some light

From the soft warm earth below
Shoots up a green toddler, born not long ago;
Curious yet cautious, it searches for the light;
Not long after, it turns to night

Amazed by night and awestruck by day
In the cushioned soil its roots it lay;
As it's intrigued by the world around
It commences to push up from the ground

As it grows and begins its flight,
It learns about the Earth with all its might;
It twists, it turns and also curls
To find its rightful place in the world

As it notices the plants and flowers,
It bows down to them and cowers;
Hoping to grow into one someday,
It sits down and waits away

As the shoot blossoms and blooms,
It admires its golden costume;
Wondering what is approaching next,
It remained in a vigour zest

It soon fashioned a royal suit,
And is no longer a simple shoot;
The sunflower now wears its golden crown,
To which others all bow down

SHOOTS

15 year old Siddhant Nayak writes a tale of love and affection for his little sister Saiesha, while brilliantly articulating words and drawing a beautiful picture of pure adoration for our readers. Well done Siddhant!



Illustration © Google Images

ILLUSTRATE

By Riya Kamath

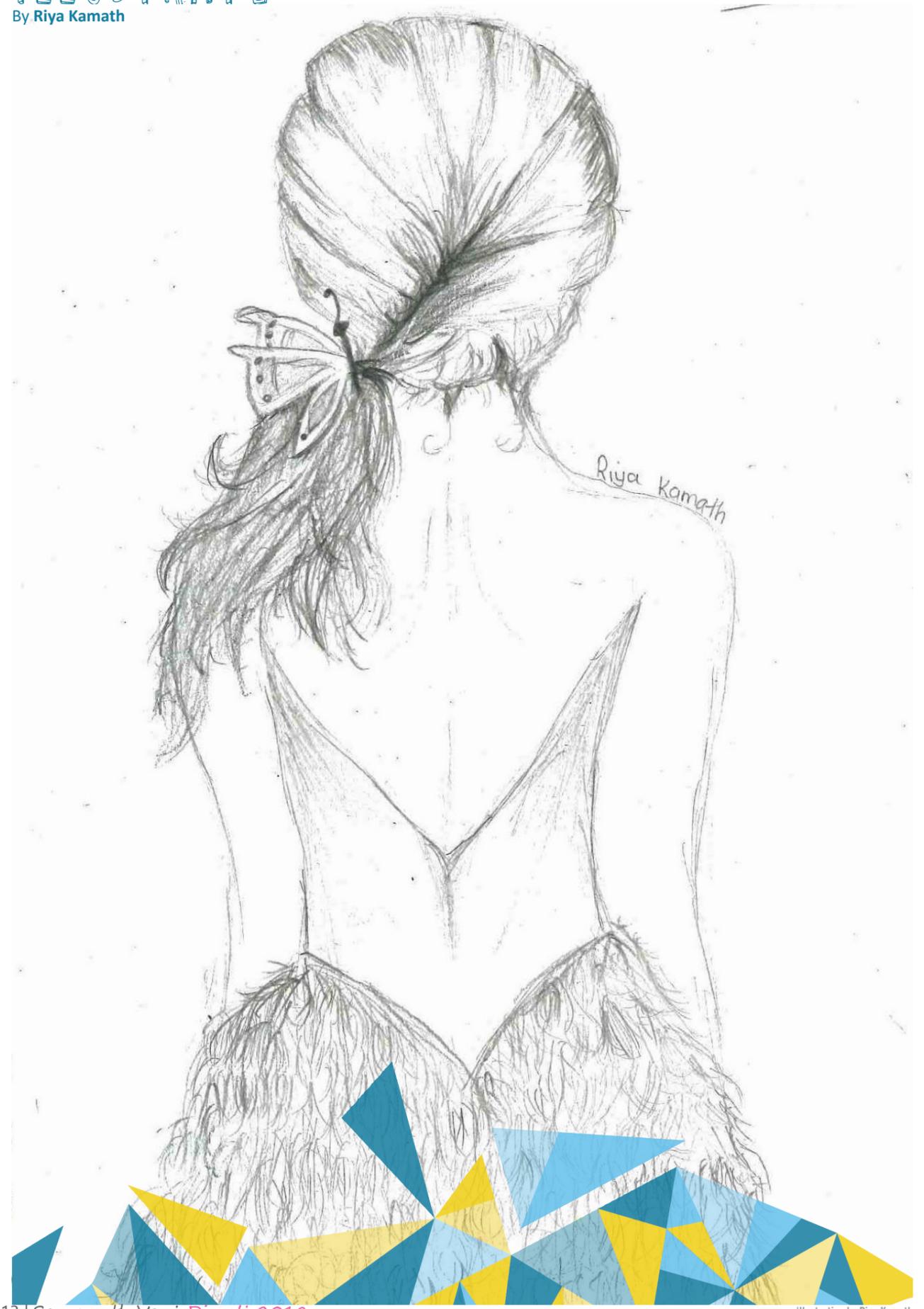
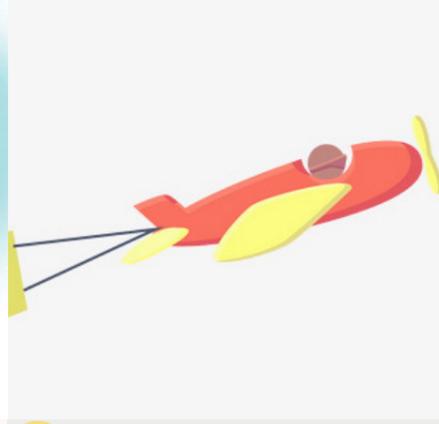
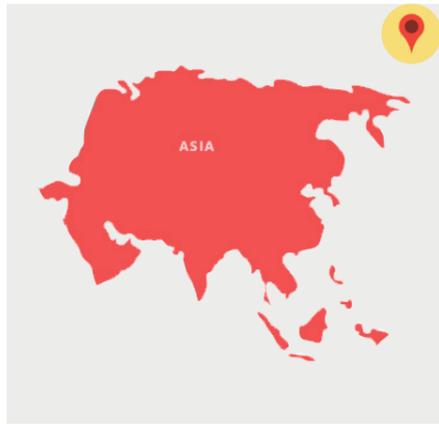
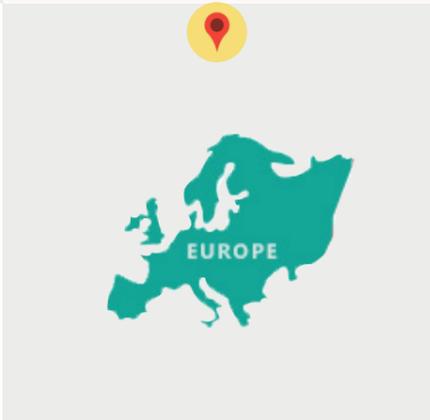


Illustration by Riya Kamath



Congratulations to Globe Trotters Vasudev and Shambhavi Kamath, who have now set foot on every Continent on planet Earth!
 Here are some quips from Across the East and Down Under of almost-missed shuttles and saarupkari in New Zealand. **Shambhavi Kamath** pens naughty chronicles from her travels with husband Vasudev Kamath.



Our friends Ramdas and Lata Padiyar from USA and Manjunath and Sheela Pai from the UK joined us on this epic journey traipsing across the eastern countries and going “down under” to Aussie land.

The tour started in Singapore; we went on to Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Bali, Perth, Alice Springs, Uluru (Ayers Rock), Cairns, Melbourne, Sydney, Fiji, South and North islands of New Zealand and Brunei.

We met some lovely people and also enjoyed playing pranks on our menfolk! (*More on that later!*)

In Jakarta, the food was not very impressive. We decided to try an Indian restaurant called *Zanas*. When we arrived, we realised we were short of some money to pay the driver. The owner of the restaurant not only loaned us the money, he also sent us to our hotel in his own chauffeur-driven car at the end of the evening! What a lovely gesture in offering assistance of this kind to complete strangers!

Our accommodation was called **Desert Gardens at Ayers Rock**. True to its name, the place was unbearably hot. The resort was self contained and spread over several blocks with a shopping and dining area within a 2-minutes walk. We decided to walk to the shopping area for dinner.

Ramdas, Vasu and Manja are "*chaddi-buddies*", having been at school and medical college together – once they get together, they revert to their school-boy days and forget our existence altogether! In true *yaari dosti* style, they walked ahead of us and were so engrossed in their conversation, they completely missed the shopping area and didn't even turn around to see if their wives were following them. My devilish brain kicked into action. We gave them the slip and waited for them in the shopping area, knowing that sooner or later they would turn up. They carried on chatting till the end of the township, when suddenly realisation dawned on them that something was amiss. They turned around and discovered they were by themselves! Luckily, there was a shuttle bus going by and the driver kindly made an unscheduled stop and “delivered” them to the shopping area where they came in with very sheepish expressions on their faces!

We had some **great GSB experiences down under**. It was a real pleasure catching up with our members **Leela and Jinesh** in Melbourne. We spent a lovely evening together and had lots of laughs.

After weeks of restaurant food, the real treat to our taste buds was in **Lake Tekapo** where our accommodation comprised a fully equipped kitchen. We wasted no time in making a dash to the local supermarket to purchase groceries and cooked a meal of beans (canned) saarupkari, rice, tomato and onion salad, broccoli upkari and fried fish. Our tummies felt well loved that evening. In **Auckland**, we were treated to authentic **Konkani staples of rice, dalithoy and pathrado!** Manja's nephew *Dr Vasu Pai* and his wife warmly welcomed us to their home. We had an amazing evening with them.

OPERA HOUSE, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



BOROBUDUR YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA



ULURU, AUSTRALIA



BRUNEI



In **Queenstown**, we had the opportunity to participate in a **Kiwi Haka** – it was quite amusing to see these boys sticking out their tongues and uttering the war cries like the native *Maoris!* All us ladies got to do was swing the *poi* balls, although none of us could catch them mid swing like the Maori women.

The **best of the pranks happened in Christchurch**. We checked out of our rooms at 11 AM; our transport to the airport was booked for 12 noon. We collected our luggage and sat in the lounge area of the hotel. The boys as usual decided to wander off for a walk. No sooner had they left, our transport arrived. The driver told me that he was very early and asked if it was okay for us to leave for the airport. The only problem was that we could not contact the boys to ask them to return and that is when the plot was hatched, with the driver and the hotel reception completely involved in the prank. We loaded the van with our luggage, sat in it and drove to a secluded area of the car park and waited patiently for the boys to surface. I would have given anything to be a fly on the wall in the reception area just to see the look on their faces when they discovered that their wives and luggage had gone missing! The reception staff too played their part beautifully and offered to order a taxi for them to go to the airport. Our van slowly crept up to the entrance to pick up the dazed boys who were only too glad to see us and our luggage!

The **icing on the cake of the whole trip was Brunei**. We stayed with *Damma and Sneha* (*Dr Sushanth Kamath's* parents). Each day, every meal was a feast fit for us *Konkanis* – all the *Mangalorean* delicacies that we dream of were prepared on a daily basis. It was sheer heaven to spend time in the kitchen assisting *Sneha* and going to the market to purchase fresh vegetables and fish – we lived in a dream bubble for 5 days.

All good things come to an end and our journey did too. We will treasure the memories of this long holiday together with all the laughter therapy.

Slowness

Vani Editor **Shalini Rao - Nayak** recounts her tale of a Walk in The Himalayas with friend and husband Navin Nayak in June '18.

This. This is my something back from where I have been. It continues to live in me despite distance, merged with thought and felt in act. This is an extension of a heritage I call my own. Here, I explore beauty and vulnerability; age and anatomy; submission and honesty. Here, sunshine feels like Home...

WHAT : ROOPKUND LAKE TREK
WHERE : UTTARAKHAND, THE HIMALAYAS
WHEN : JUNE 2018



Inset: Roopkund Lake; Google Images
Background: Mt. Trishul, 7120m; © Author

Day 01 | Kathgodam — Lohajung | 23.06.18 | 213.0km drive to 2350m

Most beginnings are dalliance-like. You hesitate but engage eventually. You meet new faces, condition your senses to accept change and greet transition heartily. Deep down, you know this will touch a chord. Gradually, you start to believe in the long-standing heights of the hills holding valleys of prosper in between. Our drive and stay up at **Lohajung** helped us understand this narrative.

Day 02 | Lohajung - Didna Village | 24.06.18 | 13km trek to 2450m

After breakfast, we started our 13km trek through lush plantations of **Kuling** down across rivers before scrambling uphill to see the clouds at **Didna**. We plunged into canvases of Blues and Greens with pauses enough to catch and hold our breath. At 2450m, **Didna** is an exclusive Himalayan hamlet, far away from our idea of comfort. Little by little, we faced challenges (unsettling water, food and lack of basic infrastructure) and the Homestay instantly became a reluctant refuge for the night. I wanted to return but couldn't convince myself to.

Day 03 | Didna Village - Bedni Bugyal | 25.06.18 | 13km trek to 3500m

Come daybreak and it felt easier to **embrace simplicity**. Slowly but surely, I started to believe in the symphony of Blues, in the engagement of Greens, in the limitless and everlasting nothingness. I breathed. I saw comfort in our reverent dwelling. I then rephrased curiosity with awareness and welcomed observation. I wondered how the humble hamlet accommodated us lot, and noticed why their windows felt rugged yet charming. I acknowledged the niche, appreciated pattern and admired light in all its measure. Suspended at dawn, the mountains gave us another day to keep walking. Upon reaching our **Base Camp at Bedni** that evening, we found ourselves facing the sublime **Mt. Trishul**. At once, we were lost and afloat; dust and celebration; nothing yet complete. **Beauty here was a display of both wisdom and worldliness, it felt absolute.**

Day 04 | Bedni Bugyal to Pathar Nachauni | 26.06.18 | 6km trek to 3850m

When walking, every so often, we felt various levels of discomfort when our body and mind just wasn't prepared. We reached our camp-site at **Pathar Nachauni** to a pounding headache and hoped to find refuge in whatever warmth we could find. We went for a walk instead. Instantly, it felt like we were moving without time. Carpets of Green greeted an epiphany of Blues, and we magically believed there was no greater reality than the magnificence of nature. We thanked the people and stories that made them. We persevered and hoped to stay strong. **Because beyond the body and the mind lies a chasm of discovery, waiting for all.**

Day 05 | Pathar Nachauni to Bhagwabasa | 27.06.18 | 6km trek to 4300m

We walked on tectonic terrains with poor visibility. Trekking up to our **last base camp, Bhagwabasa**, through a thick cloud of mist on rocky landscapes was quite a feat. Here, we saw nature become devotion become culture. Space manifested into act despite the fog, and people gathered in gratitude. Slowly, we savoured, remembered and prolonged the moment for reasons we found esoteric. By now, I'd found a familiar face in the monolithic **Ganesha**. It was fascinating to see how it made people forget pain and rejoice the moment, for reasons they found comforting. It made me acknowledge a truth — **Divinity and Nature are One**. It dwells in the void as well as in act. And in us there is both.

The slowness of it had left a longing and a satisfaction.

It was liberating to worship simple truths. That moment, in a place far, far away, I said a silent prayer — a prayer of gratitude for all that void and clarity around me. **Bhagwabasa**, in all its vulnerability, looked spectacular. It made me, and others alike, want nothing more.



DAY 01 LOHAJUNG GUEST HOUSE



DAY 02 EN ROUTE TO BEDNI BUGYAL



DAY 03 PATHAR NACHAUNI



DAY 04 KALU VINAYAK MANDIR



DAY 05 BHAGWABASA BASE CAMP



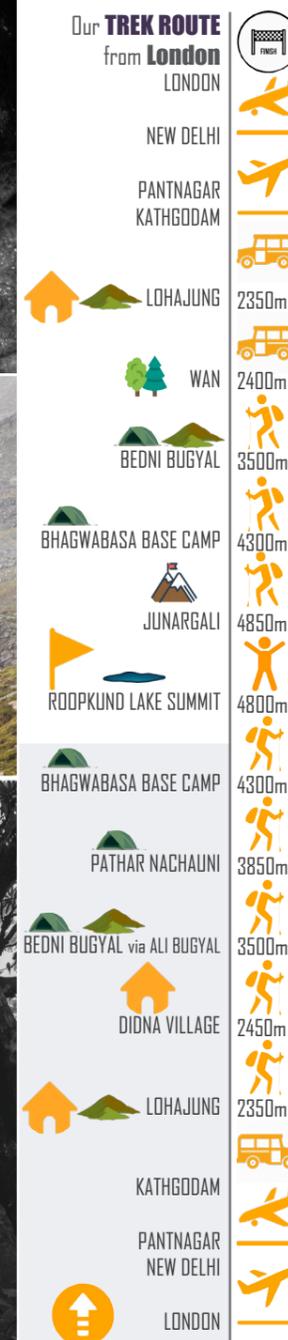
MEDITATION BEFORE
DAY 07 TRISHUL



DAY 07 SCALING NEW HEIGHTS



WALKING THROUGH
DAY 07 WAN FOREST





SUNRISE AT BEDNI
DAY 07 BUGYAL CAMPSITE

Day 06 | Bhagwabasa to Bedni Bugyal | 28.06.18 | 12km descent to 3500m

It was decided. We were poised to move upward today. Starting at 02:00hrs, we were supposed to climb up the last 4km to meet the mysterious **Roopkund Lake at 4800m**, and climb further on to **Junargali** at 4850m to catch the sunrise and complete the Summit. Our bags were packed and all our essentials in place, waiting. Sadly, the rains descended and the clouds engulfed, and with them our decision to descend strengthened. As the storm caved us in, I gazed out of our tent hoping for sunshine, but settled back in until further instruction. I saw how, even in their most vulnerable state, the mountains were alive. Even in the darkest, most testing of times, there was light — the kind you could perceive but not possess. Trepidation, aspiration and fulfilment all diffused into the blinding air and we were asked to descend to **Bedni Bugyal**, where we would spend another night before our final walk back to civilization.

Day 07 | Bedni Bugyal to Wan | 29.06.18 | 16km descent to 2400m

It's easier to love the mountains. Draped unconditionally in heavenly light, among the wisest of nature's shrines, I imagine there is more to this than we may ever know. There were many a world before us, and many to come. This earth is like a vessel that molds itself like poetry. And often, as a spectator to a visual, **I find that there is nothing more beautiful than to wonder, to love, to be.** Today is a present. And with each passing day, my respect for our environment and people alike deepens. The mountains bring out the best and the worst in you. They allow you to meet with yourself and feel the excitement of new love, the apprehension of meeting a stranger, the despair at loss and the grace of a greater good. Despite the Himalayan cold, you stand disrobed in discovery. Every step is that of hope, some distressed, but eventually of surrender.

Our final 16km descent took us from lush green hills of **Bedni Bugyal** to the **village of Wan** through a remarkable trail of receding mountain

peaks and unending Oak and Rhododendron forests. Here, we walked the last stretch on earth laden with patterns peculiar. Trees, like wisdom, reached out to voice. The heavy mist drifted ever so slightly, as though shifting in sleep. The roots looked enormous with sinewy legs buried deep into the earth. Leaves, whimsical and wise, decorated every step. The sky, demure as a child, appeared behind branches. Behind us, we were leaving a colossal of experience and yet, feeling inconsequential before the impervious landscape. **We were awake and alive, lost and found, air and breath yet again.**

TODAY

You run and hope the Goodbyes disappear.

But with goodbyes come stories. **Celebrating 4 years** of being married on a 'hill' has been an incredible experience for both **Navin** and me. We decided to do this as a promise to return to the mountains. It's not easy doing a high altitude trek, having to deal with an alien idea of comfort or learning to pace your steps with your breath. But the landscapes enlighten you; they make you want to do good. They empower you to reflect and live from a place of awareness. **They teach, nurture and celebrate.**

We'll go back soon enough.. they keep calling!



Featured Photographs © Shalini Rao - Nayak

1. Contemporary Konkani is written in the following scripts. Identify them!

कोंकणी
کنکانی
കൊങ്കണി
ಕೊಂಕಣಿ

2. Who was fondly known as Uncle Pai and for what?

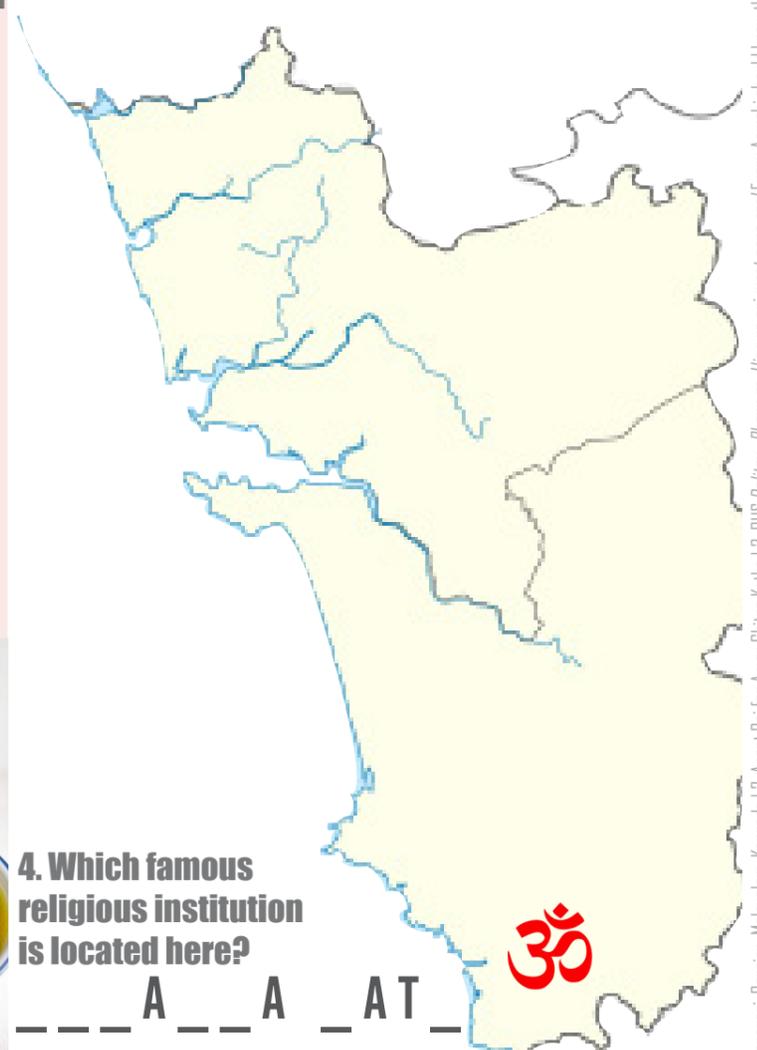


3. SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



Navin Nayak tests you on how well you can
Keep Calm and be Aamchi!
Put on your thinking hats and give this one a go!
PSSST: No cheating!

ANSWERS
1. Gokarna Math



4. Which famous religious institution is located here?

___ A ___ A ___ AT ___

1. Devanagari, Persian, Malayalam, Kannada | 2. Anant Pai for Amar Chitra Katha | 3. RHS Daltroy : Phann na. Hing na ani meet one ass! Every Aamchi should know this!

SARASWATH VANI, since its inception, has been an integral element in unifying the GSS Community in the UK and abroad. TEAM VANI present to you a Walk Down Memory Lane from 30 YEARS AGO with an Editorial Message from Mr Jayanarayan Bhat (Editor, Saraswath Vani 1988), with the message of 'Strength in Unity' still standing strong. We hope you enjoy this little treasure as much as we enjoyed curating it!

“ EDITORIAL

With the summer behind us, kids back at school, life is getting back to a normal run.

The newly elected Editorial committee of your 'Saraswath Vani' conveys its heartfelt appreciation on the good work done by the previous editorial committee. Our pledge to them is - we will continue their good work on the Vani- our plea to you, however, would remain the same- please keep up your contribution to this publication coming in.

Strength of any organisation directly depends on the increasing number of its members. As rightly suggested by our Chairman there is quite a number of our community individuals and families, who could possibly be the members of the Sabha but for some reasons are not. Every member of the Sabha should take on him to introduce one member at least per quarter, so that we have the maximum majority within our fold in a years time.

New ideas and plans are on the way to make Saraswath Vani interesting reading for our members. Your suggestions are most valuable to us and we sincerely hope you would come forward with your suggestions. Starting this issue, we have introduced a new feature 'Gowda Saraswath Calendar' which would give important cultural and religious dates for the next six months. Hope you would like this.

Interaction among the members is vital for continued refinement of an organisation like ours. As the membership is scattered through the length and breadth of the country and overseas we firmly believe that 'Saraswath Vani' has an important role to play in this interaction. It is with your support we would like to achieve this objective which is now our target.

K. J. BHAT
Editor, Saraswath Vani 1988
GSS UK



**the
many
voices
of VANI**
1988 - Present

The above has been reproduced verbatim from the 1988 Saraswath Vani hard copy





Hope you enjoyed this edition of Vani.
We look forward to your

Comments
ontributions
ompliments and
riticisms

Contact us @
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