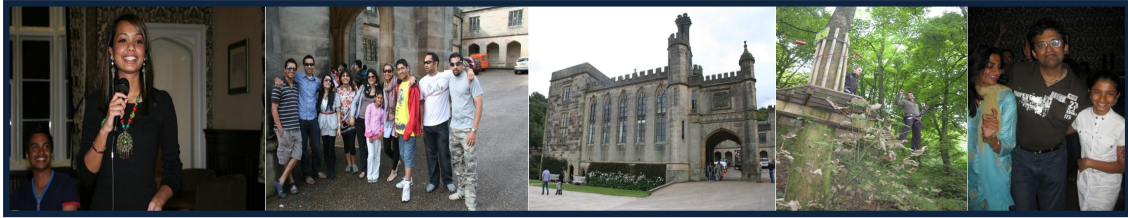




Saraswath Vani

**DIWALI EDITION
October 2009**



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(Registered with the Charity Commission of the United Kingdom Reg No. 299275)

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The objective of the Vani is to promote, inform, communicate, help, advise and develop links with its members in the U.K. and similar institutions in India and abroad.

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EDITORIAL



Dear Sabha members,

As you read this commemorative Diwali edition of the Saraswath Vani, may I take the opportunity to wish you and your family a very HAPPY DIWALI and Best Wishes for the year ahead.

A big Thank goes out to the previous Editor, Mansi Kamath and to you our Sabha members and friends for contributing and keeping the Vani alive.

We are grateful to Punjab National Bank for their kind sponsorship of an advertisement in this Vani.

It's coming up to a year, since the terrorist atrocities in Mumbai and we have a moving, heartfelt note from one of the many people directly affected by that tragedy.

The layout of this Vani, although different, should be familiar to you, with our usual emphasis on Bhakti, Members News and a range of helpful and interesting articles, sent in. We are fortunate that our base of friends and supporters is not just limited to the UK. Over time, we have been contacted by many fellow Konkans from across the world and some of the contributions from fellow Konkans are included here. As always we are immensely grateful for your contributions and in case due recognition has inadvertently been missed out, please forgive me and let me know.

We've introduced a new section in this VANI – Connecting with High Achievers and this would showcase some of the people in our community, who have reached great heights in their personal and professional endeavours. We start this off with a note by Dr. Prakash Nayak on Page 6.

This is YOUR newsletter, please let us know what you would like to see included and continue to keep sending in your contributions to the usual address: vani.editor@konkanie.com



Best Regards,

Jayant Sheno
Vani Editor

MEMBERS's NEWS

New Annual Members

- Mr. V. Sthalekar

WELCOME

Weddings

Wedding Congratulations to Pritam (son of Mr. Manohar and Mrs. Vasantha Kamat) and Ms Diluka (daughter of Mr. and Mrs S.G and Vajjira Perera). The marriage took place on 19th September 2009 at Tropical Hut of Mt Lavinia Hotel, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

New Arrivals



- Vikram and Namita Kamath were blessed with a baby boy, Nikhil, born on 30th May 2009.
- Vinay and Sandhya Pai were blessed with a baby boy, Ayush, born on 3rd September 2009.
- Anant and Preeta Nayak were blessed with a boy, Aniket, born on 15th September 2009.

Achievements

Rajesh Mallya has gained 4 'A's in the following subjects.



1. Mathematics
2. Further Maths
3. Economics
4. Chemistry.

He joins his Sister Reshma at Warwick University to read Economics and Mathematics. Reshma is also a brilliant mathematician, doing an integrated Masters in pure Mathematics at Warwick University.

Condolences

We regret to inform you about the sudden, sad and untimely demise of :-

- Mr. Sandeep Shanbhag on 22nd July 2009.
- Mrs. Vijaya Pandit on 16th October 2009.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Gauri and the children, Mr. Krishna Pandit, Anjali and Pavitra.

CONNECTING WITH HIGH ACHIEVERS

By Dr. Prakash Nayak

Dear Vani reader

Gowda Saraswath community is now a global family. In today's highly populated world we are a relatively small but a dynamic and vibrant community. In the last few decades we have become truly a global community. Our people have moved to and have established themselves in every continent. We the U K group has our own identity and challenges to survive and to preserve our traditions. We the Gowda Saraswath Sabha U K have a close and warm working relationship with our sister group, the Saraswath Samaj UK.

Connecting with and networking among people is beneficial to the wider community. Many in the wider Gowda Saraswath community have achieved great professional and socioeconomic heights. We can call them High Achievers. I believe that connecting with high achievers worldwide is not just beneficial but is essential for our survival and progress. I hope to inform you on this subject through Vani on an ongoing basis.



Dr P Dayanand Pai of Bangalore, a dynamic entrepreneur and property developer, is widely known for his business empire, charity and generosity.

Dr Pai's family originates from Panemangalore in South Kanara District, Karnataka State in India. After completing schooling in Canara High School, Mangalore and B.Sc Degree from Government College, Mangalore, he proceeded to Mysore for his Engineering Studies and did his B.E. in Mechanical Engineering from Jayachamarajendra College, Mysore and did his B.L. degree in Law from Sharada Vilas Law

College, Mysore. Recently Mangalore University has conferred Honorary Doctorate (D. Litt) on Dr. Pai for his philanthropic and social service activities.

Dr.Pai is mainly engaged in large scale Real Estate Business in the State of Karnataka and holding a large Land Bank. Dr.Pai is a Director in several Private and Public Limited Companies engaged in Real Estate, Construction, Hotels, Schools, Hospitals, Insurance, Leasing & Finance and Tech Parks.

After studies he and his younger brother Mr. Satish Pai set up their real estate business the Century Group. As the Managing Director he heads the Century Group Bangalore. The company has the largest land bank in Bangalore with an estimated value of over Rs 15,000 Crores. He has also invested in health care for Cancer patients and is a Director of one of the best private sector Cancer Institute in the Southern India.

Recently I met Dr Pai in Bangalore to invite him to the U K to meet our Sabha members. It is an understatement to say that Dr Dayanand is a busy man. He promised to visit us in the U K at a mutually convenient time in the near future.

Dr Dayanand Pai has many achievements to his credit, the latest being a Doctorate conferred by Mangalore University. He has cupboards full of trophies, accolades and medals won from his school and college days for his achievements in sports to social service to excellence in business.

I had heard a lot about Dr Pai. I first met him with my wife Kumuda in his office on Palace Road, Bangalore on the day his 800 strong affordable apartment project was launched. No wonder, he was a bit late to the appointment. It did not take long for me to realise that the wait was well worth. After a brief chat when I briefed Dr Dayanand Pai about my background I was rewarded with an invitation along with my family to his famous farm house dwelling for breakfast the next

day. Although I had to change my travel plans I seized on the opportunity.

Dr Pai's farm house has deservedly earned the reputation as being 'Pride of Bangalore'. The garden has thousands of species of plants and trees that include Mango trees, coconut palms, pepper climbers, beds of some 300 varieties of Roses to Butter fruit (avocado), Bread fruit (jeevi kadgi), Cashew, Jack fruit (panas), Coffee plants, tall Oak trees, Teak, Frangipani (champak) and name it, it is there.

Dr Pai readily agreed that he is a nature lover. In the modern days when 90 percent of our families live in apartments devoid of a garden, I feel that every GSB child should get an opportunity to have a 2 hour to half a day's tour of Dr Pai's garden. Yes I forgot to mention the 'water falls' and many other things I enjoyed looking around. Dr Pai employs more than 50 people to look after the farm house. Dr Pai's son and daughter in law live in a specially built Japanese style cottage a stone throw away from Dr Pai's house. Also within the grounds of the farm house there are quarters for his employees.

Dr Pai has a tidy collection for prestige cars including Rolls Royce, Bentley, Porsche, Mercedes Benz and many other makes on display in an open garage.

The breakfast itself was lavish with traditional and newer snacks from Dosa to rice noodles (Shevayi) to several varieties of snacks and sweets. Something very special about the

breakfast was it was personally served by the great woman behind the great man, Mrs Mohini Pai.

Forgive me for getting the sequence wrong, we were served the breakfast first and then escorted round the garden personally by Dr Dayanand Pai. He employs some 50 people to look after the farm house.

This brief account does no justice to Dr Pai or his greatness but is a sincere attempt to familiarise him to all our Sabha members.

I look forward to an opportunity of having Dr Dayanand Pai in the U K and to share his thoughts and experience with the Sabha members.

Sabha members may contact Dr Pai by email on: dayananda.pai@centuryrealestate.in

Dr. Prakash Nayak

Thoughts for the Day

Even with a small bank account, the one who is contented finds himself with great wealth!

Freedom starts in the mind, not by cutting ropes.

To give happiness to others is a great act of charity.

Cheerfulness keeps up the spirit of the one who possesses it and brings a smile on the lips of others.

A smile can make short work of any difficulty.

To taste the sweetness of life, we must have the power to forget bitterness of the past.

Contributed by Mr. Sheshagiri Mallya

Now, what would you ask for from a GENIE in the lamp! I wonder

Editor

Genie.

A man was walking along a California beach found an old lamp. He picked it up and rubbed it and out popped a genie.

The genie said "OK, so you released me from the lamp blah blah blah, but this is the fourth time this week and I'm getting a little sick of these wishes, so you can forget about three. You only get one wish."

The man sat and thought about it for a while and said, "I've always wanted to go to Hawaii but I'm too scared to fly and I get very seasick. So could you build me a bridge to Hawaii so I can drive over there?"

The gene laughed and replied, "That's impossible. Think of the logistics; how would the supports ever reach the bottom of the Pacific? Think of how much concrete....how much steel!! No, no - think of another wish."

The man agreed and tried to think of a really good wish. He said, "I've been married and divorced four times. My wives have always said I don't care and that I'm insensitive. I wish that I could understand women. To know what they are thinking when they give me the silent treatment; to know why they are crying; to know what they want when they say "nothing"...."

The genie replies, "You want that bridge two lanes or four?"

Contributed by Mr.Sheshagiri Mallya.

As we slowly but surely head into Winter, our darling Serena Nayak has sent across a timely little Winter poem

Editor

Winter Poem

In winter I see the animals going to bed

I can see the robin fluttering around the air

I can hear the owl doing hooting sounds

I can feel the snow around my ears

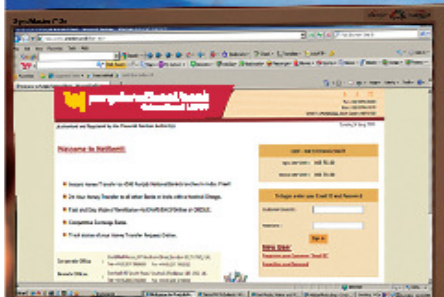
I can see snow dripping from the roof

In winter you have to wear warm clothes

In winter you can throw snowballs at each other



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Sri Puradara Dasa

Sri Puradara Dasa is known as the Karnataka Sangeetha Pra-pithamaha (founder of Carnatic classical music). Purandara Dasa is believed to have been born in 1494 in Pandarapura in Karnataka. This was the golden age of Kannada literature too, under the most famous Vijayanagar emperor Sri Krishnadeva Raya. The influence of Sri Purandara on Carnatic music and Kannada literature is immense. He virtually started the branch of literature which is now known as Dasa Sahithya. It was a blend of sublime poetry and music emphasising the virtues of good life over material wealth and religious ceremonies. Kanaka Dasa is another composer who was his contemporary and an important contributor to Dasa Sahithya.

There is a legend as to how he gave up a life of wealth to become an ascetic. He worked as a money lender and was infamous as a miser. Once, a Brahmin man wanted to perform the sacred thread ceremony (upanayana) for his son and came to Purandara Dasa's wife for money. She gave him her nose-ring to sell for money, and the man went to Purandara Dasa himself to get the money. The miser lent the man his money, but his wife was worried about what to say to her husband, so she prayed to her favorite deity who gave her a nose-ring just like the one she had. When Purandara Dasa hurried home, anxious to know if the nose-ring was hers, he was bewildered seeing her wear the same one! She narrated the story, and he was converted, believing in the virtue of his wife and the virtue of a charitable life.

He renounced his riches and became disciple of Vyasa Raya who titled him "Purandara Vittala," which became his signature. Then he is said to have composed 475,000 songs in both Kannada and Sanskrit.

He sang many rare ragas with the most beautiful lyrics. Tyagaraja's praise in "Prahallada Bhakti Vijayam" is for him.

Purandara Dasa is believed to have systematized the early music lessons - Sarale Varase, Janti Varase, Geete, etc. and also chose Mayamalavagowla as the Raga to be used for these. He composed many devotional songs in Kannada known as Devaranama.

Purandara Dasa set the highest value on good conduct. The strength and greatness of Sri Hari's name have been beautifully enshrined and sung in this world. People who do not know Sanskrit find it hard to understand the Vedas and Upanishads. But Purandara Dasa has explained the whole essence of these scriptures in simple Kannada and show the way that one should live.

He practiced in his life what he preached. It is important to note this aspect of his life. He gifted away all his wealth and lived the life of renunciation which he preached to others. Although he took to the life of renunciation and asceticism he did not desert his wife and children. He lived with them.



He made it clear to others by his conduct how it was possible to achieve purity of thought, word and deed regardless of caste, religion or creed. He did not believe that man could understand God by mere external purity unless it was accompanied by purity of mind.

Whatever Purandara Dasa says, the way he introduces it and explains it is very pleasant. His similes are very simple and telling. He compares wicked men to the knotted tree of thorns. He warns the non believers that life is being wasted at every stroke of the bell. When he saw a post man he sang 'Kaagada bandide, namma Padumanabhanadu...' (a letter has arrived from Padmanabha.) He preached several moral precepts making use of familiar incidents like the postman delivering letters.

It was God's gift that Purandara Dasa was able to preach, in simple Kannada, what is difficult even for philosophers to put across in a way which the ordinary people can understand. He left Ihaloka in 1564 at the age of 70.

Ever felt like doing some DIY / decorating at home and getting stuck! Well Mr. Sheshagiri Mallya has some good tips

Editor

Painting Tips

How to keep your paint roller clean while painting?

Before you load your paint roller tray with paint, wrap a plastic bag all around and over it, so that when you're finished painting or even changing colour, all you have to do is throw away the bag (safely) and your tray is spotless!

Don't try and pick the flies out of the wet paint. Leave the paint to dry overnight and the flies can be wiped away with a damp cloth next day without leaving a trace.

Dealing with left over paint?

At the end of a job, and especially at the end of the exterior painting season, there's always leftover paint to be concerned with. Ideally we would always buy exactly what we need for each job, but some excess products are almost unavoidable.

Rather than stack half-empty cans in a corner where they take up space, become useless, and may present a hazard, take care of them properly.

One idea is to pour emulsions into a cardboard box or bag, and add absorbent material such as sawdust, shredded newspaper or cat-box filler to speed drying. Recycle the empty can, and then throw away the dried paint with your normal rubbish.

Removing dents in Wood quickly?

To remove dents in wood, especially from a hammer, cover with a wet cloth and hold a warm iron on the dent. It is remarkable how the dent disappears when the steam swells the fibres.

How to remove Mildew and or Mould?

Remove mildew with a 50:50 mix of bleach and warm water. Mildew needs moisture to survive, so identify and fix the moisture problem before redecorating.

A common cause of mildew is insufficient ventilation, bad insulation and or lack of heating. To prevent the mildew or mould coming back, just add a fungicidal paint additive like VC175 Mould Stop to subsequent paint coats to help prevent a return of the problem. Also very good on outdoor walls near trees, bushes etc.

Greasy walls and ceilings

Painting kitchen areas can often be tricky due to all the greasy deposits all over the place. Paint as we all know will not stick to that, and one good solution is to wash thoroughly with sugar soap & warm water and allow to dry prior to any painting.

Mr. Sheshagiri Mallya has compiled this informative snapshot into the Puranas, which forms part of our BHAKTI section of this Vani

Editor

18 PURANAS

There are eighteen mahapuranas, and also several other upa-puranas, the word 'upa' signifying minor. These Puranas were completed between 400 to 1500 CE.

The 18 Puranas have still a valuable place in the life of religious Hindus as they serve to connect us with the past, which we have forgotten and which needs revival is the light of new age. Puranas afford useful matter.

The stories described therein are from the ancient past and can connect us to our glory if we decipher them scientifically and base them on reason and facts without any exaggeration or distortion.

Among these Puranas, Bhagvata Purana and Vayu Purana are said to be of great value. Vishnu as Krishna is the central deity of the text in Bhagavata Purana. Vishnu Purana is total Vaishnava in theory.

The Nature of Puranas

Puranas can be divided into two categories

- Mahapuranas and
- Upa Puranas.

Both the categories have 18 Puranas each.

Mahapuranas can further be divided into three types.

1. Brahma
2. Vishnu and
3. Shiva

In the first category, the Rajas guna prevails and in the second Sattvik guna where as in the third Tamas guna prevails.

The Purana with Rajas quality are

1. Brahma Purana
2. Brahmanda Purana
3. Brahma Vaivarta Purana
4. Markandeya Purana
5. Bhavishya Purana
6. Vamana Purana

Sattvik Guna dominated Puranas are

1. Vishnu Purana
2. Srimad Bhagavat Purana
3. Narada Purana
4. Garuda Purana

5. Padma Purana
6. Varaha Purana

Tamas guna prevailing Puranas are

1. Shiva Purana
2. Linga Purana
3. Skanda Purana
4. Agni Purana
5. Matsya Purana
6. Kurma Purana

For the benefit of those, not too familiar with Hindi/Sanskrit, "guna" refers to attributes and the three states Rajasic, Sattvik and Tamasic literally are sort of different levels of mental purity. One would endeavour to reach the higher levels of a well balanced Sattvik life [i.e. not being lazy (Tamasic) or over – aggressive (Rajasic)]

Editor

Thoughts for the Day

- Never Argue With An Idiot. They Will Drag You Down To Their Level, Then Beat You with Experience
- Don't let Life Challenge You. You Challenge Life.
- I don't pretend to have all the answers. I don't pretend to even know what the questions are. Hey, where am I?
Jack Handey
- First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you. Then you win. M.K.Gandhi
- DETERMINATION: Never, Never, Never, Quit. Winston Churchill
- GROWTH: What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing. Aristotle
- ATTITUDE: Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Stephen R Covey
- MOTIVATION: When inspiration does not come to me, I go halfway to meet it. Sigmund Freud

Compiled by Ms Reshma Mallya

Mr. Ramesh Pai, in his note below has enclosed a web-link to an interesting project – please do not forget to check it out Let us keep our heritage alive.

Editor

GRANDMA STORIES

Dear friend,

Ever did you feel that you miss your grandma ? And what about those childhood days when you enjoyed the grandma stories?

Sure, each of us would be treasuring those kids' stories told by our grandmas in some corner of our minds. We would feel happy and proud of our grandma when such stories are retold to our children. Even we would have thanked her in our hearts at that point and wondered how grand a store she was !!!

But, does it, or should it, end there? In the present age when we see hi-tech lives, whether you call it luxurious or mechanical, each one is struggling to take out enough time for many activities, not to talk of the inability to spend adequate time with children and grandmas. What about days when we ourselves turn into grandmas and grandpas? Do we have enough to hand down to our tiny tots? I mean something of our own stories.

Yes, Konkani folk stories. We too have a beautiful collection of folktale worth talking of. Each one of us is duty bound to preserve what has been passed on till now. Often the argument is put forth that we are not conversant with our script to write down such materials.

This can be overcome if we attempt to make **audio recording** of such old stories. Either direct from grandmas or from children themselves. In either manner, we add value -Grandma's voice is preserved, which can be played and re-played year after year, which would later turn to be a very valuable archival piece!! If it is children narrating the stories, imagine how much proud they would feel of their childhood days when they grow up and listen these recordings!?

Sure, I have made a small attempt in this direction. (I am aware of the website/web folder of Ashamayi and Dr.Ramesh Kamath, both from Bangalore, who have published a good number of audio files forming such collections) You are welcome to visit my following folder to listen some Konkani stuff in MP3, compiled from yesteryears :

<http://www.esnips.com/web/konkanifolk audios>

So... let us make an attempt. To strengthen and preserve our heritage. In whatever status it is available now. Give a hand...so that we clap together. Should you like to have any support or guidance for this cause, please feel free to contact me.

Jai Konkani, Jaai Konkani !
Jai Samaaj, Jaai Samajh !!

Best regards,
Payyanur Ramesh Pai

And now we have the moving piece I mentioned earlier – a poignant reminder of the threats we face and a positive approach to addressing the problems

Editor

Reflections and responses to the events of Nov 26th 2008

Dear Friends,

Firstly I would like to thank you all for the love, support, prayers and good wishes extended to me over the last few days. I would like to reply to all you messages one by one but it will be impossible to do in such a short time frame. It was these messages that kept me going for the last few days giving me hope and comfort.

As many of you might know from email and newspaper articles my father was trapped in the oberoi hotel for 36 hours. He was eating dinner with his two close friends Anand Bhatt and Pankaj Shah, both of whom have been father figures to me over the last several years. The three of them were trapped along with another fifteen people in the Kandhar restaurant when the terrorist arrived. They were all marched up fifteen or so flights of stairs up to a landing in the fire escape where two terrorists lined them up and opened fire with AK 47s. A bullet grazed my father's neck and he collapsed on the floor with all the bodies piling up on top of him. Some how he and 3 others managed to survive hiding among the dead bodies for the next two days. We lost both Anandbhai and Pankaj Uncle in the shooting.

My father is now safe at home with minor wounds, which will heal, but the damage of losing such dear friends and good people continue to haunt us. Somehow with the help of God and all our friends we hope that one day we can reclaim the innocence of life which is now so lost to us.

There are several stories I can tell you.... tales of near escape, luck and sheer heroism. I am inspired and touched by the many brave men and women who gave their lives to perform their duty and know that somewhere they are with God. To their families I give my deepest condolences and pray to God that somehow one day we can understand why they fell to such madness.

Today I attended the march outside the gateway of India... the press were calling it the gateway of anger and in many ways they are right. I saw the impassioned youth of India frustrated with the ineptness and impotence of our leaders. I saw a spark in their eyes that fills me with a hope that we can change this city and this country.. The youth are educated and strong and believe in a better country for us all. Their strength will carry us forward into the next phase of our country.

I only wish to ask a few things of everyone that reads these... things that have become clear to me over the last few days. I shall list them down point by point.

The following is my action plan for the rest of my life... what I will take away from this experience.

- 1) Do not preach violence and war without first understanding its true nature. I spent 2 nights hearing the guns and grenades going off from outside the hotel and imagined my father in there. What I felt at that moment I would not wish on any family in the world. We must not let our passions take control of us and become the very same demons that held our city hostage.. Our response must be measured educated and precise. Please do not ask for anything more from you leaders.
- 2) Corruption is the cancer of our society and has now shown how it can cripple us. Politicians are too busy making money to carry out their work. This again starts with you and me. From today I promise never to bribe another government servant. I will go to every businessman I know and ask him to do the same. Please let us collectively rid our nation of this poison.
- 3) Train yourself mentally and physically to protect yourself and your family. Learn a martial art or basic

self-defense. If everyone in these hotels knew how to react to violence maybe we may have overcome this situation sooner. If you do not wish to learn to fight learn basic first aid and lifesaving techniques. We are heading to a situation of war soon and these skills will serve us well in the future.

4) Be involved with an NGO/govt org/ prayer group. Connect with your society and help to uplift it with money and time. We now have to be concerned with what goes on outside the doors of our apartments and bungalows. Educate a poor child and he will be an asset in the future not an easy recruit for terrorists and criminals. Reach across communal borders and get to know other religions. It is only after we start this dialogue on the basic level will we be able to be undivided when the terrorists try to divide us.

5) Love and cherish your family and friends... even the ones who you think are weird and different. The sheer number of people who supported our family through this crisis has been amazing... people who I haven't spoken to for years have reached out with love support and prayers. It's only after incidents like these that you realize how petty your day-to-day problems are. The terrorists didn't check whether the people they shot were Hindu, Muslim, rich, poor, ugly, well dressed etc etc..... They just shot.... we should not differentiate between people when we share our love and support. If you can make a sad person smile for me you are a hero.

6) Fear nothing except fear itself.... your destiny is written.... if the bullet had been one centimeter off my father would have been dead.... never be scared.... be bold and be brave and when the time comes you will meet your maker with dignity.

7) Stand up for what's right.... support those who do ...

8) Smile, dance, sing enjoy the beautiful world that god has given us. Plant a tree and give back to nature. Life is fleeting and if you don't enjoy it what's the point.

9) Confront your guilt and stand up to your fears. Apologize to those you have wronged and forgive yourself for the wrongs you have committed.

A few messages I wish to convey -

To the terrorists and people who committed this cowardly act I want to thank you for exposing our weakness so now we may become strong, for hurting our pride so that we may be humble, for scaring us to that we can be brave, for angering us so that we can unite.. You have served as an alarm clock for a sleeping giant and I hope that one day I can meet you face to face and show you how wicked and weak you hearts are.

To the people of Pakistan... I know that you have been victims of terror too and I pray to God that you have the strength and clarity to face the demons that exist in your country. Money and power means nothing without the love of your friends and family and it is now time to stand up and fight for what's decent and right. It's time to stop letting the jihadis and self-serving govt officials fool you. Take control of your country - never forget that we were once one proud nation and the same breed of men split us apart. We are with you in body heart and spirit.

To fellow Indians.... never forget where you came from ... we have inspired the world before and the time has come again... never again is a casualty or death acceptable... be it a poor man in a train or a rich man in a five star hotel... We must protect our children and our motherland with blood, sweat and tears.

To my friends and family ... you are the most important part of my life and without you there is no meaning. I hope you are safe and happy wherever you may be and hopefully we will be together soon.

With all my love always,

Romil Parikh

Some of you may have seen versions of this earlier, but Mr. Mohan Prabhu has made the effort to collate into a nice concise note, an illuminating account of our many Konkani surnames

Editor

What's in a name?

A telephone directory of any English speaking town will reveal that there are more Jones and Smiths than any other names in their commune, and directory of Gowda Saraswaths will list more Pais, and then Shenoy's than other names. Why?????

In fact we are all Shenoy's, and in the matter of time, new titles came into being and thus other surnames. Mythologically, we are descendents of clan brought by Lord Parsurama, who created Goa by throwing his axe into the sea, and reclaimed the land mass and arranged to settle ninety-six families from ten Gothras he had led to the new land.

Historically, when the religion was reaching its nadir, the king who had learnt that a highly educated and spiritual commune could be found in the Trihut region (present day Mithila in Bihar). He then sent his emissary with a request to the King of Mithila to send him such persons for uplift of his subjects. The king of Trihut sent ninety-six (is it a coincidence?) families from ten Gothras to the new land to propagate religion and philosophy. These families were settled in two different parts of the region. Thirty families were grouped in one commune, and sixty-six in other. The first commune was known as Tiswadys, and the other Shashatis among themselves, and the locals used to call them as a member of Shanavis.

Saha means six and Navi means ninety, and our ancestors were known as a family of ninety-six. The word sahanavi later became Shenvi, and then to modern Shenoy. There exist regions known as Tisuary and Salcette (Portuguese pronunciation of Shashasti) in Goa.

The families from Trihut mingled with the locals, taught them and imparted the knowledge for which they were brought to the area, and in return started amassing wealth, buying lands, learnt feudalism and slowly became owners of village and ruled over the locals. They built temples, started trading and became one of the locals, but with a difference. The difference was the Name.

The strongest survives or rules over, and our ancestors were no different. Pai in our language means foot or leg. The common person who had not amassed wealth or power was known as Pai. Their job was menial in maintaining ledgers, doing clerical and odd jobs. The promotions were also there and your surname will change according to the promotion.

Migration was a rule rather than exception to survive and prosper. The neighbouring towns, etc employed GSBs who were very good in maintaining accounts. The local title for accountant was Shanbhag. This name stuck with many and is one of the popular surnames in North Kanara of Karnataka.

A person maintaining statistics was called Karni. Nad / Nadu means earth / land and the person maintaining statistics of land- sale, procurement, agriculture, construction, etc was known as Nadu-Karni, modernised to Nadkarni.

“Kula” means commune or a society which faces many activities, such as birth, upanayan, kanyadaan/marriages, death, etc. The person maintaining the social activity was called Kula-karni / Kulkarni.

The main source of income was from agriculture, and the person experienced in soil mechanics, agro-science was called Kamathi. Mathi means soil and Kama is work = that is working in soil (Kama + Mathi).

In Konkani even today we call kamathi not kamath or kamat. Cultivation of herbs for medicinal purpose was rule of the day. The concoction was prepared and dispensed by Vaidya – the doctor, and the herbs were cultivated by Kinvis, presently called Kini or Keni.

The animals required for tilling, transportation and other works were under Haya-Gade (actually Horse tenderer), modernized to Hegde.

The daily requirements of every family for survival, presentations, etc were the responsibility of the Ballo. There is another theory that reveals that the foot soldier with a spear was called Ballo. The soldier Ballo (Baliga) was under the command of Nayak.

The Brahmins from Trihutpura became feudal lord, and fancied himself as "The Lord" and was called Prabhu. He lived in a palatial home called mahal and the caretaker was known as Mahalyar, presently modernized to Mallya.

The religion was the centre of attraction, and every hamlet, village; town had one or more temples. Poojas were performed in every home almost daily. There used to be a congregation in the temple everyday to listen to recitation of puranas or other subjects.

The daily rituals in Temples were performed by “Bhat”, whereas the rituals in homes were performed by “Purohit”. “Paro” means ”Others” or “Pur” is a suffix to denote a village/commune. “Hith” mean “benefit / for use”. Thus Purohit was for the “benefit of others”. Evenings found the whole commune in temples gossiping. To propagate religious dogmas, the epics were read in the temples and explained. Since most of the epics were “Puranas”, the person well versed in these epics was known as Puranik.

The temples were administered by Mahajans and its stores by Bhandari. The village godown was also under the Bhandari or Bhandarkar.

Educating youngsters were the duty of “Acharyas”. “Achar” means etiquette /culture, and we had different “Acharyas” to impart knowledge on different topics, including cooking, hunting, warfare, etc.

Kudva did the fabrication of tools and tackles (the village blacksmith). Every hamlet had the same profession and hence the limited family names. To differentiate between two prabhus or pais, the person started calling himself from the particular hamlet or village, such as Gokul Shenvi Kakodkar, or Prakash Pai Angle. The word ‘Kar’ means ‘From’ or citizen of. Thus Kakodkar means person from village Kakod. This enabled one to identify the profession and the domicile.

The Portuguese invasion made people migrate to Ratnagiri in North and entire coast in the South, and slowly the local influence crept into the culture. In Karnataka, the village of refuge was used as a prefix to call oneself Padbidri Mohandas Prabhu, or Kinnigoli Ramanath Kamath, et all. The Kerala civilization induced the name of the house or the exact area rather than the village, and in some places, the present profession was also added to the name. So we have today, Thayyil Muralidhar Kamath (Thayyil means tailoring house) or Kannaparambil Gopalakrishna Pai (Parambil means estate belonging to Kannan).

Homo sapiens have unique ability to identify others with sarcasm, environs or habits. Near Kaup (pronounced Kapu-sic) there was a compound full of Shenoy's. One of the houses had three steps. Hence the Shenoy's living there were known as “Mooru-Katte- Shenoy!!! Meaning Shenoy's having “Three (Mooru) Steps (Katte). Slowly Shenoy vanished and Moorukatte became their surname. Today this family writes their surname as “Mudakatte”.

One family member has a longish face resembling that of a cow!!! They were called “Gayeeche Thond” – Cow's face. The name got stuck and today you have Ghaitonde!! A family selling “nuts” were called “Kadale” (means nuts in Kannada), and one selling Oil-cakes in Kerala were called “Pendikars” (Pendi mans oil-cake in Konkani). There are many more such names in vogue.

Today the name has no links with the profession. Mallya owns Palaces, and Kini is a soldier; Prabhu works for Kamath, Pai owns the land and Vaidya is an accountant whereas Shenoy is a Doctor???

The names got stuck; even though the profession didn't. But then what's in a name. A rose is a rose is a rose, even if called by any other name.

What's in a name? After all it is the person which and who matters

There was a query on this from one of our respected elders:

Your article was quite descriptive and informative. However, can you please quote the source of the information on surnames?

In fact the information is spread over various resources on the net as well as on different books, but many of them do not seem to be founded on solid research or reliable source. At least a few write-ups appear glaringly imaginative/ hearsay/ rumours/ guess-work.

Response from the author of the Article:

The mystery of our traditions is not explained in a clear manner, but clarifications to all the doubts are there in any one of the Puranas, Vedas, Upanishads and other scriptures. A person should have the patience and may have to peruse umpteen times to understand the implications.

I am not doing any PhD's, but my hobby is to investigate these scriptures and other books and find out as many information as possible.

The article I presented long time back in www.gsbworld.com is a result of readings/research I did for more than two years. My research is still going on the names because I haven't found clarifications to Avadhani, Dalvi, Lad, etc.

There is no hearsay or rumours, but a lot of permutations with some logical guess-work has assisted me in the derivation of these names.

Every name has an inner meaning.

Do you know "George" means farmer (Kamathi).

Indian names have beauty and resonance also.

Please study the traditional names and you will find few clarifications yourself.
