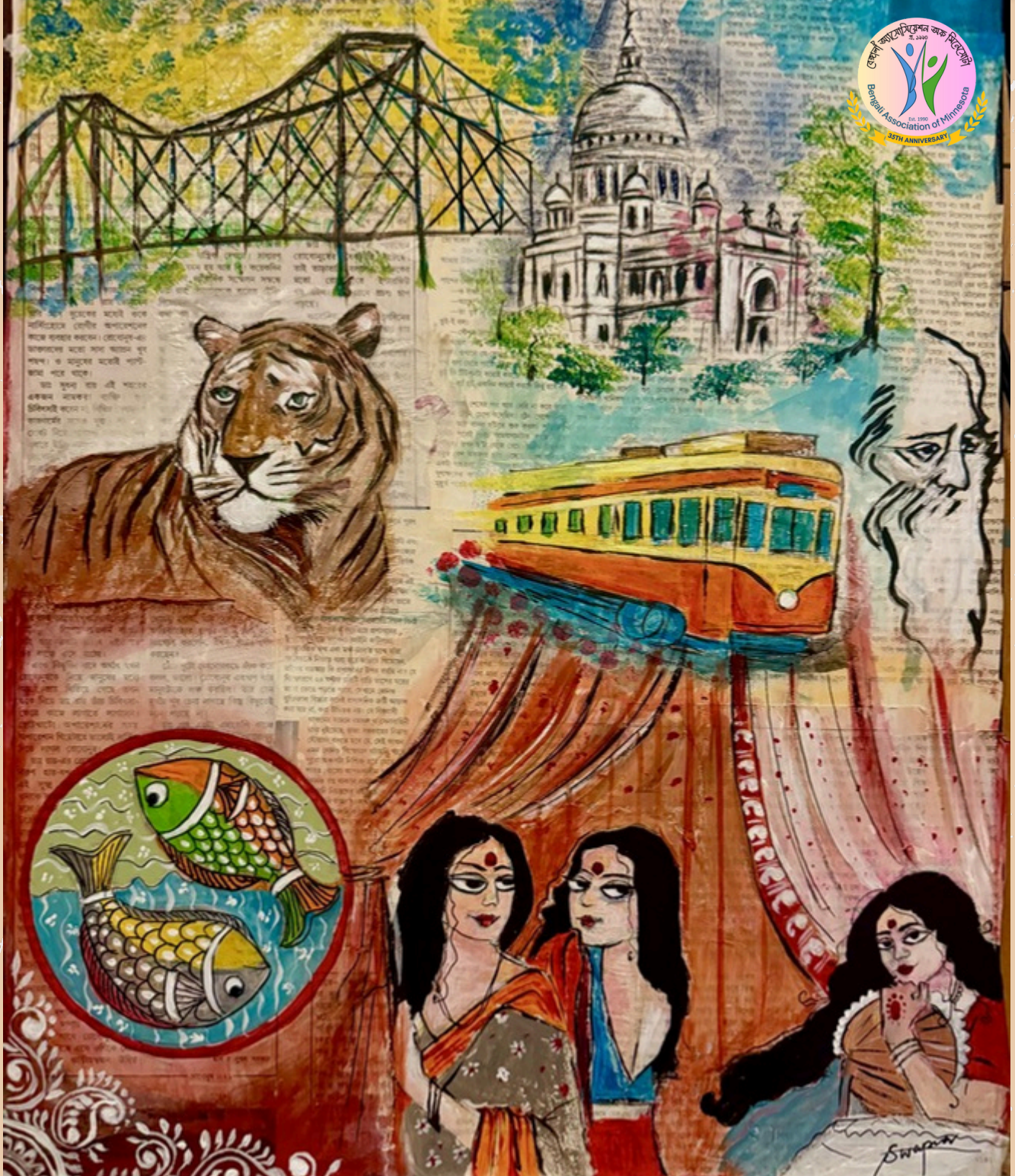


Sannikar

II DECEMBER 2025 | VOL31 | ANNUAL ISSUE II

সন্নিকট

৩১তম সংকলন



**A PUBLICATION OF THE BENGALI ASSOCIATION
OF MINNESOTA (BAM)**

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নিবেদিত পত্রিকা

A PUBLICATION OF THE BENGALI
ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA (BAM)



EDITORIAL TEAM

ANURADHA BHUNIA • DITI BHADRA •
DEBASMITA MUKHERJEE •
SONALI DAS • SASWATI MUNSHI •
PRASHANT ROY • VIJAYESH ROY

COVER ART

SWAPNA SENGUPTA HALDAR (FRONT)
BIDESH ROY (INSIDE BACK)

www.mnbangali.org



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Sannikat

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Editorial Desk



Dear BAM Members and Friends,

We are excited to present the 2025 Annual Issue of Sannikat™ along with the Winter 2025 issue of Sannikat – The Little Magazine™. Both magazines are created and edited by BAM volunteers and continues a 30-year tradition of highlighting the creativity, achievements and spirit of our Bengali community in Minnesota.

By releasing the annual issue in December, we've been able to include coverage of Durga Puja, Lokkhi Puja and other year-end events, something not possible in previous years. This combined edition brings together the voices of our members, from children to adults, showcasing stories, poems, art, photographs and memorable moments that reflect our shared heritage and community pride.

Our heartfelt thanks to every contributor and reader who continues to believe in this journey. Your enthusiasm keeps our creative flame alive and reminds us why storytelling still matters.

Let's continue to grow together-through words, ideas and togetherness.

**Thanks and Regards,
Sannikat Editorial Team, 2025
Bengali Association of Minnesota**





**BENGALI ASSOCIATION
OF MINNESOTA
TEAM SANNIKAT
2025**

Message from The President

Dear BAM Members and Well-Wishers,

It is my pleasure to present the 2025 Annual Issue of Sannikat™ along with the Winter 2025 Issue of Sannikat – The Little Magazine™. For over 30 years, Sannikat™ has served as the Minnesota Bengali community's platform to showcase literary and artistic talent, celebrate our heritage, and highlight the achievements and contributions of our members. This year's Annual Issue includes articles, poems, and artwork from our talented BAM members, along with key highlights and community updates. The Winter 2025 Issue of The Little Magazine™ features a delightful collection of children's art, stories, and creative expressions.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Editors and Editorial Board Members of both magazines. Producing two quality publications on a tight schedule requires dedication and teamwork, and our volunteers have once again delivered outstanding work. I hope reading these magazines will inspire more members to contribute in the future. I would also like to recognize and thank the Governing Body, BAM Committees, and our adult and youth volunteers. Your tireless service, energy, and enthusiasm make every BAM initiative possible and help sustain the strength of our community. The names of Board Members, Committee Members and Volunteers and the areas or teams that they contributed to are listed in this issue of Sannikat™. Please take a minute to find them and convey your appreciation to them. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our BAM members for your loyalty and contributions to the organization.

Since its founding in 1990 by a small group of Bengali families, BAM has grown into an organization serving several hundred families across Minnesota. As our community has expanded and diversified, so has our annual calendar of events, which includes Saraswati Puja, Naba Barsha, the Summer Picnic, Durga Puja, Lokkhi Puja, and the Annual Member Appreciation Lunch. Attendance at our events this year has reached new heights, with Durga Puja welcoming over 800 attendees—our highest ever.

Our Food, Logistics, Puja, Guest Services, Cultural, and Finance teams responded impressively to the increased demand.

We also strengthened partnerships with organizations such as IAM, HSMN, SEWA-AIFW, Feed My Starving Children, and ICOCMN. BAM's booth at IndiaFest 2025 winning the Best Regional Booth Award was a proud moment for us.

Before closing, I would like to take a moment to give a huge shout out to the following members of the 2025 Board of Directors for their unflinching support of BAM's mission and their leadership: BAM Vice President Hironmoy Das, BAM Secretary Sudhanshu Jena, BAM Treasurer Sujay Purkayastha, and BAM Directors Ambuja Goswami, Chandradeep Banerjee, Golak Gunjan Garai, Ipshita Choudhury, and Prashant Roy. Each of them had to shoulder multiple functional responsibilities, motivate and lead volunteers, meet challenging goals and deadlines, and support and coordinate with each other over the course of the year. They did this enthusiastically, always striving to provide the best outcomes for our BAM community and members. Thank you!

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to members of the 2025 Advisory and Compliance Committee (ACC), ACC Chair Sayan Mukherji, and ACC Members Sanjib Basak and Rikhia Basu, for their continued support, encouragement and advice. Sayan will complete his current term as ACC Chair in 2025. We will miss him at our Governing Body Meetings. I hope that he will remain involved in BAM and continue to share his experience and advice with us.



Congratulations to all our BAM Board Members, Committee Members, volunteers and members for an exceptional year. Together we continue to build a vibrant, strong, and welcoming BAM community.

With Warm Regards,

Respectfully,

Vijayesh Roy

President, Bengali Association of Minnesota



Message from ACC

Sayan Mukherjee

ACC Chair, Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM)

“পুজো মানেই ডিজাইনার ধুতি, পাঞ্জাবি, শাড়ি, গয়না আর চার দিনের বাঙালিয়ানা।
পুজো মানেই মা দুর্গাকে ব্যাকগ্রাউন্ডে রেখে ফটো সেশন আর ইনস্টাতে সেলফি।।
পুজো মানেই, অষ্টমীতে খিচুড়ি খাবার লাইনে বেগুনি নিয়ে টানাটানি।
পুজো মানেই, তিন-চার দিন অতিরিক্ত খাওয়া-দাওয়ার পর অবধারিত অশ্বল।।”

দেখতে দেখতে আমাদের বেঙ্গলি অ্যাসোসিয়েশন অফ মিনেসোটা (ওরফে BAM) এবার পঁয়ত্রিশ বছরে (35 years) পদাপর্ণ করলো। আমার এখনও মনে পড়ে, প্রথম প্রথম মিনেসোটাতে এসেছি—তখন পোলক স্ট্রিট, মিনিয়াপোলিসের একটি চার্চে (Hindu Mandir-এর মূল অবস্থান) দুর্গা পুজো হতো, আর সেখানে বেসমেন্টে গুঁতোগুঁতি করে লাইন দিয়ে খিচুড়ি নেওয়া হতো, এবং কোনোমতে বসে খাওয়া হতো। তখন জায়গা কম থাকলেও মনের আনন্দে কোনো কমতি ছিল না। আজ সেখানে জায়গা জোগাড় করতে অনেক দিন আগে থেকে প্ল্যানিং শুরু করতে হয়; পাঁচশো থেকে ছ'শো লোক ঠিকমতো বসতে পারবে কিনা, অডিটোরিয়ামে এতজনের জায়গা হবে কিনা ইত্যাদি ইত্যাদি।

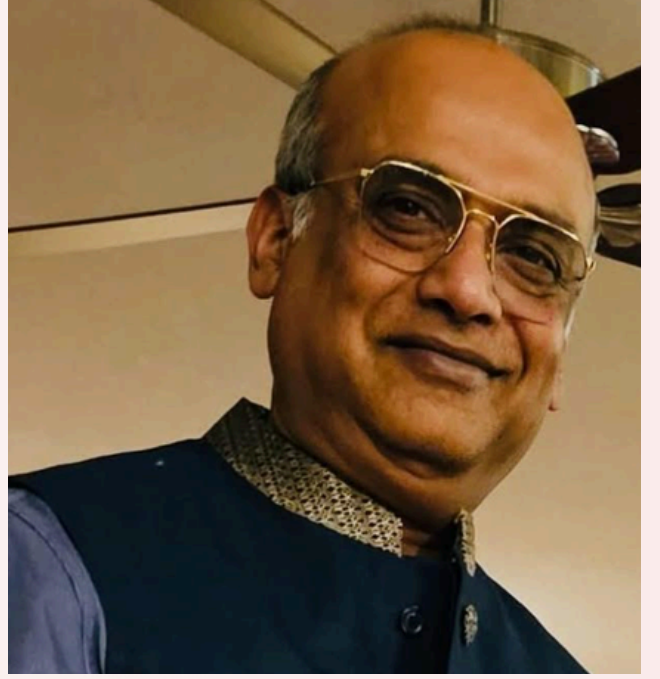
এ বছর ২০২৫ (বাংলা ১৪৩২)-এর শারদীয় দুর্গোৎসবে প্রায় ৮০০-এর বেশি লোক হয়েছিল। তাছাড়া ইন্ডিয়ান অ্যাসোসিয়েশন অফ মিনেসোটা (IAM) এবং হিন্দু সোসাইটি অফ মিনেসোটা (HSM) থেকে তাঁদের প্রতিনিধিরা আমাদের সঙ্গে এই অনুষ্ঠানে যোগ দিয়েছিলেন। আশা করি আপনাদের এ বছরের দুর্গা পুজো, কালচারাল প্রোগ্রাম, এক্সটার্নাল আর্টিস্ট আর সমস্ত অনুষ্ঠান সকলের ভালো লেগেছে। এ বছর সমস্ত অনুষ্ঠানে অনেক নতুন ভলেন্টিয়ার যোগ দিয়েছে। তাছাড়া অনেক যুব ভলেন্টিয়ার আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগ দিয়েছে, যেটা আমাদের কাছে খুবই খুশির খবর। এই বছর সব মিলিয়ে প্রায় ৭০ থেকে ৮০ জন ভলেন্টিয়ার ছিল, তার মধ্যে প্রায় ৩০ জন যুব ভলেন্টিয়ার। তাঁদের সকলকে BAM-এর তরফ থেকে আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ জানাই। এত বড় অনুষ্ঠান ভলেন্টিয়ারদের সাহায্য ছাড়া সফল হওয়া সম্ভব নয়। আমরা আপনাদের কাছ থেকে এরকম সহযোগিতা প্রতি বছর ই আশা করব।

একটি কথা খুবই গর্বের সঙ্গে বলতে চাই, যে এ বছর IAM আয়োজিত IndiaFest-এ BAM সেরা বুথের পুরস্কার পেয়েছে। এটি খুবই আনন্দের যে, এক বছর বাদ দিয়ে এটা আমাদের কাছে আবার ফিরে এলো। যাঁরা BAM-এর বুথ তৈরি করতে সাহায্য করেছেন এবং অংশ নিয়েছেন, তাঁদের সকলকে জানাই আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ ও অভিনন্দন।



BAM গভর্নিং বডির প্রেসিডেন্ট (বিজয়েশ দা),
ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট (হিরণ্ময় দা), সেক্রেটারি
(সুধাংশু), ট্রেজারার (সুজয়), ডিরেক্টরস
(অম্বুজা, প্রশান্ত, ইন্সিতা, গোলক আর চন্দ্রদীপ)
এবং ACC (অ্যাডভাইসরি অ্যান্ড কম্প্ল্যামেন্ট
কমিটি)-র সদস্য সঞ্জীব আর রিখিয়া-কে সমস্ত
ব্যাপারে সাহায্য আর সহযোগিতা করার জন্য
আমার তরফ থেকে জানাই আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ ও
কৃতজ্ঞতা। এই সফলতার পেছনে সকলেরই
প্রচুর পরিশ্রম রয়েছে।

আমাদের BAM-এর ৩৫ বছর পূর্তির জন্য
একটি বিশেষ অনুষ্ঠানের আয়োজন করা হবে,
তার খবর আপনারা খুব শীঘ্রই পাবেন।



সব শেষে এইটুকু না বললেই নয়, সারা বছর এতগুলি অনুষ্ঠান করতে গিয়ে আমাদের তরফ
থেকে যদি কিছু ভুল ভ্রান্তি হয়ে থাকে, সেটি সম্পূর্ণভাবে অনিচ্ছাকৃত। তবুও আপনাদের কিছু
অভিযোগ বা পরামর্শ দেওয়ার থাকে, তাহলে আপনারা bamec@mnbangali.org-এর সঙ্গে
যোগাযোগ করতে পারেন।

আমার দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস, নতুন প্রজন্মের সদস্যরা এই সংস্থাটিকে আরও সমৃদ্ধ ও সুপ্রতিষ্ঠিত করে
তুলবে।

“অসতো মা সদগময়, তমসো মা জ্যোতির্গময়।”

(Lead me from the unreal (falsehood) to the real (truth), from darkness to light)

Governing Body

Bengali Association on Minnesota (BAM)



Sayan Mukherjee
ACC Chair



Vijayesh Roy
President



Hironmoy Das
Vice President



Sudhanshu Jena
Secretary



Sujay Purkayastha
Treasurer



Golak Gunjan Gorai
Director



Ipshita Choudhury
Director



Prashant Roy
Director



Ambuja Goswami
Director



Sanjib Basak
ACC Member



Chandradeep Banerjee
Director



Rikhia Basu
ACC Member

Community • Culture • Service • Art • Heritage





This digital art is created from real photographs of our own community members, bringing to life the heart of who we are and how BAM's core values shine across generations.

At the center is a little girl holding the Indian flag, a reminder that India lives in our hearts even as we grow up in America. Our children may graduate from American universities, yet their journey begins with "Haath e Kori," the Bengali ritual marking their very first step into learning. They learn and perform Indian art forms on Minnesota stages, celebrate our festivals with pride, speak Bangla at home, and learn to serve communities here and around the world. This blend of roots and wings is what makes BAM special, a place where we stay connected to our culture, to one another, and to the heritage we lovingly carry forward.

- Prashant Roy



2025 Committee Members

Communications and Media Management

Manages internal and external communication, including social media, BAM publications (Sannikat annual and Little Magazine, newsletters, pamphlets), community emails, and website content. Handles timely release of official announcements from the President, Officers, ACC Chair, and Committee Chairs. Assists with surveys for member feedback and drafts external communications to promote BAM's public image.

Chair: Vijayesh Roy;

Co-Chairs: Prashant Roy, Sudhanshu Jena and Ambuja Goswami

Email and Social Media Communications Team: Prashant Roy, Sudhanshu Jena, Ambuja Goswami.

Website & Web Content Support Team: Prashant Roy, Sudhanshu Jena, Sujay Purkayastha.

2025 BAM Publications Team:

Sannikat - Annual magazine

Editorial Board: Diti Bhadra, Anuradha Bhunia, Sonali Das, Saswati Munshi, Debasmita Mukherjee, Haimanti Moulik, Trishita Banerjee, Abhrajeet Roy, Sanjib Basak, Prashant Roy, Vijayesh Roy.

Sannikat - The Little magazine

Junior Editors: Subhangee Das, Arnav Chakraborty

Senior Editors/Mentors: Debasmita Mukherjee, Saswati Munshi, Diti Bhadra and Abhrajeet Roy

Junior Editorial Planning Team: Ayush Brahma, Shiladitya Pal, Shayaan Purkayastha, Subhangee Das, Arnav Chakraborty, Aditya Brahma, Mishti Choudhury, Shivali Choudhury.

Membership Committee

Handles membership drives, maintains the roster, processes new applications, resolves member issues, and ensures timely renewals. Updates records and prepares voting member lists for elections and GBMs. Manages the registration desk at events and GBMs, and coordinates volunteer and member recognition initiatives.

Chair: Vijayesh Roy; **Co-Chairs:** Sudhanshu Jena, Sujay Purkayastha, Prashant Roy, Ambuja Goswami

Members: Ipshita Choudhury, Hironmoy Das, Sayan Mukherjee

Member Experience and Engagement, Event Registration,

Member Issues Resolution: Prashant Roy, Sujay Purkayastha, Sudhanshu Jena, Ambuja Goswami, Hironmoy Das, Sayan Mukherjee, Vijayesh Roy

Member Database Development; Interim Membership Solutions: Sudhanshu Jena, Prashant Roy, Ipshita Choudhury, Sujay Purkayastha

Member Accounting and Billing/Analytics: Sujay Purkayastha, Sudhanshu Jena

Youth Volunteer Recruitment and Development: Ambuja Goswami

Volunteer and Member Recognition: Vijayesh Roy, Ambuja Goswami

Fundraising Committee

Oversees fundraising initiatives, builds and maintains relationships with current and potential donors, and explores other fundraising opportunities.

Co-Chairs: Sudhanshu Jena, Golok Gunjan Garai, Ashoke Mandal

Members: Rikhia Basu, Subhadip Kumar, Priyabrata Samanta, Indrajeet Mukherjee, Snehasish Ghosh, Subarno Pal

Finance Committee

Sujay Purkayastha, Vijayesh Roy, Subarno Pal.

Cultural Committee

Plans and delivers BAM's cultural programs, promoting our community's heritage through music, dance, theatre, and creative performances by members and youth. Also organize shows featuring international professional artists to engage and inspire the community.

Chair: Hironmoy Das;

Co-Chair: Ipshita Choudhury

Members: Sayanti Ghosh, Debasmita Mukherjee, Madhumita Sengupta, Amlan Ghosh; Vijayesh Roy, Shuchismita Dutta.

Fine Arts Appreciation & Talent Development:

BAM Durga Puja Art Exhibition: Debasree Das, Anjana Parua, Bidesh Roy.

Puja Decorations and Artwork/Sculpture:

Swapna Sengupta Halder (Miniature Durga Pratima), Moushumi Maiti (Alpana decoration), Anjana Parua (Mural), Subhra Saha (Mural).

Food Operations:

Manages event-specific food committees, budgeting, vendor negotiations, and menu selection and approval, catering and beverages and snacks management for BAM events, inhouse cooking and food prep for BAM events, food service volunteer management, food service setup and cleanup.

Co-Chairs: Golok Gunjan Garai, Sujay Purkayastha

Food Operations Team Members: Rudra Brahma, Arunava Das, Anish Choudhury, Abhishek Mondal, Ajoy Datta, Avijit Das, Hemanta Ghosh, Mintu Talukdar, Partish Mishra, Priyabrata Samanta, Satyajit Paul, Saurav Chintapatra, Shobhan Goswami, Snehasish Ghosh, Subarno Pal, Suchismita Basu, Biswajit Bhattacharjee, Rahul Biswas.

Puja Ceremonies and Rituals

Plans and coordinates all religious aspects of BAM events—Durga Puja, Lokkhi Puja, and Saraswati Puja—including Pandal and Pratima setup, decorations, puja supplies, Prasad/Bhog preparation, and priest arrangements. Collaborates closely with Logistics, Cultural, and Food Operations teams.

Chair: Ipshta Choudhury; **Co-Chairs:** Abhijeet Benerjee, Sonali Das, Aparna Mandal, Ranja Tarafder

Team members: Debapriya Purkayastha, Antara Garai, Rikhia Basu, Suchismita Bas, Rupa Pal, Sujata Datta, Pritha Mazumdar, Binita Sinha

Consultants: Barin Pal, Snehasish Ghosh

Pandal Concept and Construction: Arunava Das (Lead), Partish Mishra, Avijit Das, Satyajit Pal, Samit Roy, Bidesh Roy.

Purohits: Abhijeet Benerjee, Ashok Chattopadhyay (Consultant), Partish Mishra, Debasmita Mukherjee, Sayan Mukherjee, Sandip Nath

Advisors: Hironmoy Das, Vijayesh Roy.

Logistics

Responsible for coordinating logistics and support for major BAM events and General Body Meetings, including facility rental, transportation, storage, and set up and tear down of props; Works closely with Cultural, Food Operations and Puja Team.

Co-Chairs: Chandradeep Banerjee; Sudhanshu Jena, Snehasish Ghosh

Members: Arunava Das, Subarno Pal, Bibhash Banerjee, Avijit Das, Prathish Mishra, Saikat Si, Satyajit Paul, Samit Roy, Sujay Purkayastha, Soumitra Tarafder

Outreach and Community Relations

Partners with Twin Cities Indian/Asian organizations, builds relationships with local communities, government, nonprofits, and service groups, and represents BAM at public forums and meetings.

Chair: Vijayesh Roy; **Co-Chairs:** Sudhanshu Jena, Ambuja Goswami, Ashoke Mandal

Members: Prashant Roy, Binita Sinha, Hironmoy Das, Sujay Purkayastha

Building Relations and Partnerships

MN State and Local Government

Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, Local Legislators and Officials

India Association of Minnesota

IndiaConnect (Governing Body Members),

IndiaFest (Ambuja Goswami (Lead), Debbie Mukherjee, Shubra Saha, Mousumi Maiti, Anjana Parua and other Volunteers.

IAM Cricket Tournament (BAM Members participated)

IAM Consular and VFS Services Camp (Vijayesh Roy, Diti Bhadra, Priyamvada Banerjee)

“Together for Every Table” campaign

Hindu Society of Minnesota (Vijayesh Roy, Ashok Mandal, Binita Sinha, Sudhanshu Jena, Chandradeep Banerjee, Bibhash Banerjee, Golok Gunjan Garai, Sujay Purkayastha, Prashant Roy)

Hindu Temple Pratima Storage, Facility Rental for BAM events, Satsang Lunch, Represented BAM at Diwali Mela.

Networking with other MN based Indian and Asian Regional Orgs

India Chamber of Commerce (Vijayesh Roy and Sudhanshu Jena)

· Invite Partner Organization Leadership to BAM events

Provide Volunteering Opportunities to BAM members and youth in community events for worthy causes (Ambuja Goswami)

Feed My Starving Children

SEWA-AIFW Health Camp

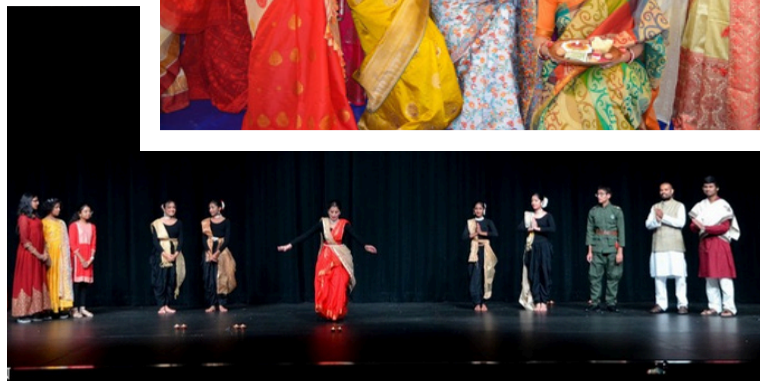
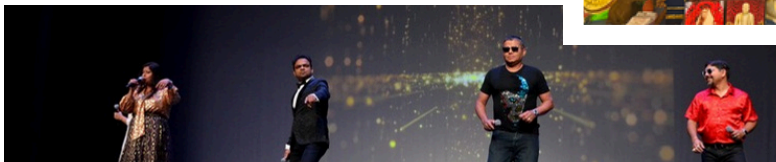
SARASWATI PUJA



INDIA FEST & VOLUNTEERING EVENTS



DURGA PUJA



SUMMER PICNIC & LOKKHI PUJA



Pohela Boishak and Other Events



Pohela Boishak 2025



Cultural at Pohela Boishak



Sunita and Suresh Pillai from IAM



Dr. S.K. Dash



Sia Her Executive Director CAPM



L to R - Dashrath Yata (Executive Co-Director of SEWA-AIFW), Suresh Thekkot (HSMN Vice President), Sajive Jegenathan (HSMN President), Vijayesh Roy (BAM President), Ganesh Ram (HSMN Chairman), Anurag Saurabh (IAM Board Member)



Diti Bhadra and Vijayesh Roy with IAM Board Members at IAM Consular and VFS Services Camp 2025



BAM Board members with IAM Board members and Somnath Ghosh (The current Consul General of India in Chicago)



Front Desk & Guest Services Team

Durga Pujo 2025

Prashant Roy
Director, Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM)

Every year, Durga Puja brings our community together in celebration, devotion, and joy. And every year, there is one team whose quiet, dependable presence helps everything begin smoothly: our Front Desk & Guest Services Team.

They are the first friendly faces our members and guests meet.

They greet people with warmth, answer questions with patience, and help guide families who may be visiting for the first time. Their calm support sets the tone for the entire experience, not loudly, but gently and consistently, year after year.

Behind the scenes, our Welcome Envelope Preparation Team works with the same dedication.

Long before Puja begins, they count wristbands, prepare tickets, check envelopes, and make sure every detail is in order. It's detailed work, and they do it with care, knowing how much smoother the entry process becomes because of their effort.

These volunteers are often the first to arrive and the last to leave. They stand for long hours, handle questions big and small, and step in whenever someone needs a hand. Their service isn't glamorous, but it is essential and it reflects the heart of the community: showing up for one another without expecting anything in return.



For many of our guests, the Front Desk team is their very first experience of BAM, And thanks to these volunteers, that experience is warm, welcoming, and reassuring every single year.



*Note : Some Team Members are not there in the picture,
but they are always there in spirit.*





The BAM Food Team

Golok Garai & Sujay Purkayastha

Director and Treasurer, Bengali Association of Minnesota(BAM)

The BAM Food Team is the heartbeat of our community festivities – a living symbol of dedication, teamwork, and love in action. Long before the dhak begins to echo or the fragrance of incense fills the air, this remarkable team is already hard at work: planning menus, balancing budgets, sampling dishes, and ensuring that every bite reflects the soul of authentic Bengali cuisine.

This year, they went above and beyond. When our respected seniors expressed a wish to prepare Khichuri for the Ashtami lunch in-house, the Food Team didn't just support the idea—they embraced it wholeheartedly.

After a full Friday of Pujo, they returned on Saturday with renewed energy, dividing into three dedicated teams. One began prep work at 7 a.m. and launched into cooking; the second completed the cooking and oversaw the delivery of steaming hot meals to the venue; and the third served the food with their signature warmth, smiles, and care. And because no Bengali feast is complete without a Misti Pan after a hearty meal, the team introduced a live Borof Misti Pan stall for Saturday dinner—an instant favorite across the community. They also carried forward last year's excitement with the much-loved Phuchka during Saturday snacks, which once again became a crowd-pleaser. The joy was so infectious that people were singing and dancing as they waited in the long line!



Across the three days, the team served more than 3,600 meals, spreading happiness with every plate.

Just when we thought their work might be done, they showed up again –this time preparing Chholar Daal, Alur Dom, and Payesh for the Lokkhi Puja dinner, offering the same love, warmth, and authenticity to yet another cherished celebration.

What truly sets this team apart is not only their skill but their spirit. These are volunteers—people who bought tickets, came with their families, yet chose to spend their time feeding others rather than simply enjoying the festivities. They embody the essence of community: giving, sharing, and finding joy in the joy of others.

To every member of the BAM Food Team—A BIG “Thank You.”

Your dedication not only enriches our exquisite culinary experience but also adds significantly to our sense of belonging. You have shown us that the highest form of devotion is service.





THE BAM FOOD TEAM





The BAM Cultural Committee

Hironmoy Das

Vice-President, Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM)

The BAM Cultural Committee is dedicated to celebrating and preserving the rich heritage, language, and traditions of Bengal. Through vibrant cultural programs and community engagement, the committee fosters a sense of unity and pride among Bengalis and those interested in Bengali culture. We organize events such as Durga Puja, Pohela Boishakh and other festivals that showcase the region's music, dance, literature, drama and love for authentic cuisine. Our mission is to create an inclusive platform where cultural expression thrives and future generations remain connected to their roots.



Vijayesh Roy, Hironmoy Das, Ipshita Choudhury, Amlan Ghosh, Madhumita Sengupta,
Sayanti Ghosh, Suchismita Dutta & Debasmita Mukherjee





In 2025, the Bengali Association of Minnesota hosted a truly unforgettable evening during Lokkhi Puja by inviting the multi-talented performer and singer Saumya Chakrabarty along with his musical band. The audience was mesmerized as Saumya's versatile voice carried them on a journey through genres—ranging from classical to lok sangeet, Rabindra Sangeet to Bengali rock, and timeless old melodies to vibrant new-age rhythms. Each performance was a seamless blend of tradition and innovation, leaving the crowd spellbound. It was a magical musical night, one that will be cherished and remembered forever.



Picture Courtesy :-Subhra Pratim Photography





United in Purpose: Another Chapter in BAM Fundraising

Sudhanshu Jena
Secretary, Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM)

This year marked a special milestone for the Bengali Association of Minnesota's fundraising efforts. With the introduction of the Platinum, Gold, and Silver Sponsorship tiers, we took a significant step toward recognizing those partners who share our vision—of celebrating Bengali culture and fostering community right here in Minnesota.

The idea behind this initiative was simple yet powerful: to create a framework where sponsors could connect with BAM not just as contributors, but as true partners in our cultural journey. Our Platinum, Gold, and Silver sponsors represent organizations and individuals who believe deeply in the values we uphold—celebrating our culture and heritage, and giving back to the community that has given us so much.

Our fundraising team has developed meaningful, lasting connections with our patrons—many of whom have stood by BAM for years. These relationships go beyond transactions; they are built on mutual trust, respect, and a shared sense of purpose.

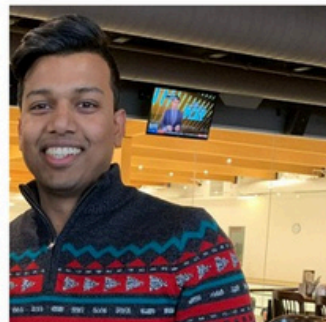
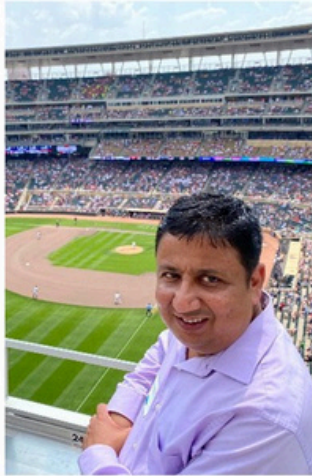


Being part of BAM means being part of a close-knit community that rallies behind its partners. Businesses and individuals who support BAM don't just gain visibility—they gain the goodwill and appreciation of many families who cherish and uphold our cultural traditions together. It's this spirit of togetherness that transforms sponsorship into genuine partnership.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to every member of the fundraising team for their tireless dedication, creativity, and teamwork. From outreach and planning to follow-ups and relationship-building, each person played a vital role in making this year's fundraising journey a true success. Your passion and commitment continue to inspire, ensuring that BAM's cultural heartbeat stays strong for years to come.

Together, we've not only raised funds—we've strengthened the bonds that define **who we are as a community**.





BENGALI ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA FUNDRAISING TEAM





The Architects of Pujo 2025

Ipshita Choudhury

Director, Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM)

My deepest gratitude goes out to our community for making this year's Durga Puja an overwhelming success, especially as we celebrated our 35th anniversary.

Our organizing strategy was built on advance planning & proactive communication. We utilized detailed schedules and announcements to ensure everyone was well-informed, enhancing the sense of inclusion from the thakur set up to the final visarjan.

It was the unwavering passion and tireless dedication of our core committee and over 50 volunteers that truly shone. Their commitment turned obstacles into footnotes, ensuring the reverence of the morning anjali, the joy of the prasad distribution, and the energy of the aarti & Dhunuchi Naach remained untouched.

This success is a direct testament to our community spirit and the hard work of every volunteer. Thank you for setting a new standard for amader Pujo.





**BENGALI ASSOCIATION OF
MINNESOTA**
DURGA PUJO 2025
PUJO TEAM





Our Sponsors, Our Strength



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India Fest – A Rewarding Experience

Ambuja Goswami

Director, Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM)

India's Independence Day, August 15, is celebrated by Indians across the globe with immense pride. It's a day that honors our unity, sovereignty, and democracy. It also brings back warm memories of school and community celebrations with friends and family. India Fest, organized by the India Association of Minnesota, offers a wonderful opportunity to experience India's diverse culture in a single day. Each year, we come together to celebrate the rich heritage of our motherland and proudly sing our national anthem in our home away from home.

The Bengali Association of Minnesota hosts a booth every year and takes great pride in sharing Bengal's vibrant cultural legacy with visitors. Guests experience "a little bit of Bengal" through our activities, interactions, artifacts, and paintings created by community artists. This meaningful experience is made possible by the dedicated volunteers who support the BAM India Fest team each year.

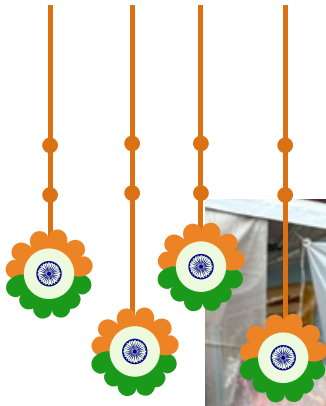
The BAM booth showcases a fresh look every year, thanks to the creativity and hard work of our artists and volunteers. This year, we created a mural depicting Bengal's cultural heritage. Community artists Subhra Saha and Anjana Parua worked on it from concept to completion, producing an exceptional piece of art. The booth also featured beautiful paintings crafted by our talented community members.



Mousumi Maiti has been a devoted India Fest volunteer for many years, and her contributions remain invaluable. From guiding visitors in creating Alpona Art to sharing her treasured artifacts, she plays a key role in making the booth both engaging and beautiful.

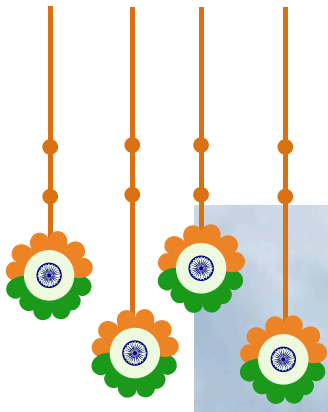
Devasree Mukherjee—our beloved Debbie Di—is a guiding light at every step. Her infectious energy makes every visitor interaction memorable.





We are deeply thankful to the volunteers who arrived early to help set up the booth and to everyone who supported throughout the day by welcoming and engaging with visitors. We are also grateful to the members who shared their paintings and artifacts!

This year, BAM is proud to be the winner of the Best Regional Booth Award at India Fest. We are grateful to everyone whose efforts made our booth deserving of this honor.



BAM booth at India Fest 2025



Sannikat Little Magazine

DECEMBER 2025 VOL 1 NO. 2





Subhangee Das



Arnab Chakraborty

TEAM SANNIKAT LITTLE MAGAZINE 2025

COVER ARTWORK

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Pickle Found a Friend

Aaditri Saha(10 yrs)

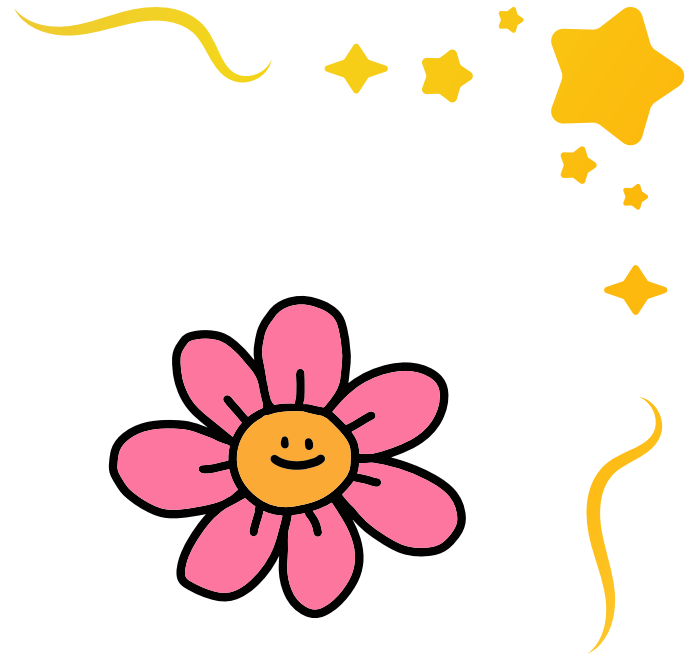
Once upon a time, there was a pickle that wanted a friend, but with that friend, it still wanted to taste amazing. So it set out to search as it walked along the path. It found a stick of butter, and as they chatted, they discussed the meals. Though the pickle thought butter was a great friend, it almost gagged at the thought of eating a butter-covered pickle. So then the pickle told butter that he had to leave. So he left and started walking on the path. Hours passed, but he found nothing.



Then he saw a post office, so he wondered if he could ship himself somewhere with more food for him to be friends with. So then he went into the office and hid. A couple of minutes later, he saw an open box marked Western Africa and hopped inside the box. What felt like years passed; he finally found the box being closed and carried out to a truck. Then he fell asleep.

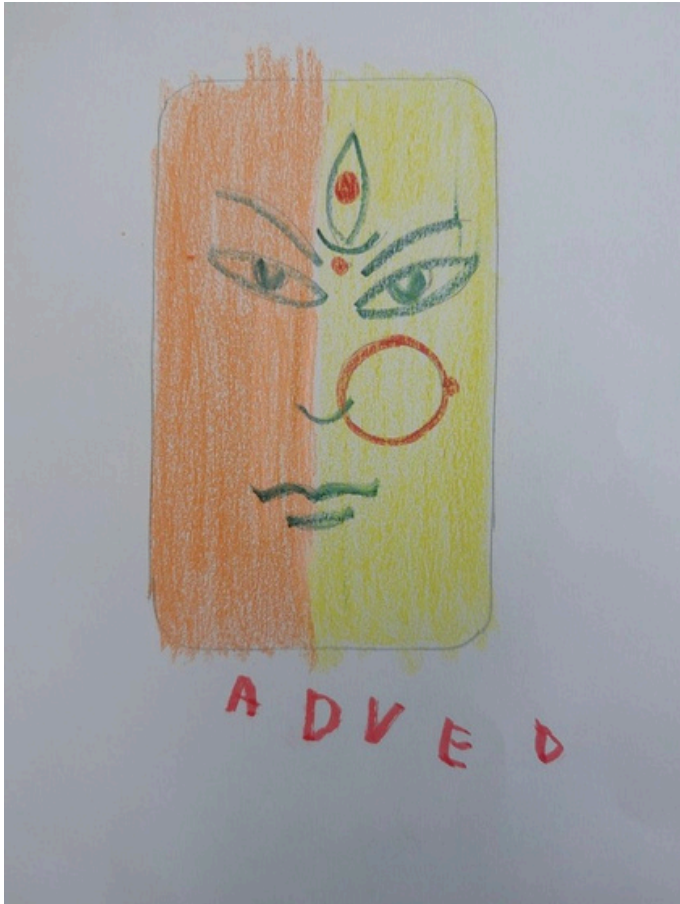


Ahaan Kumar(9yrs)



Anandi Dutta(13 yrs)





Adved Biswas(4yrs)



Anuran Kumar(6yrs)



Moving

Samara Jena (9 yrs)

About the author:

Samara Jena lives in Lakeville, Minnesota with her family. She is in 3rd grade in Mr. Yetzer's class at North Trail elementary school/ NTES. She loves drawing and reading. In her free time, she always reads or plays with her 'Our Generation' dolls. She also likes to eat Ice cream!





CHAPTER 1

Have you ever had to move?

I know it's hard, so let me tell you, my story.

One day, my mom told me that we were moving to a new house. I was so excited! I ran straight to my room to start packing. But a few days later, my mom told me something more - that I would be going to go to a different school next year because my old school was too far away from my new house.



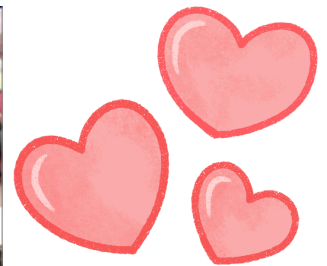
I felt really sad!!

I was so sad because I didn't know anyone at my new school, but I knew everyone at my old one.

The next day I told my friends what my parents had told me. They were just as sad and devastated as I had been.

I couldn't imagine what I would do without them!!

They were my best friends ever!!!!





CHAPTER 2

The next day we went to check on the new house to see how it was looking so far.

Honestly... I thought it looked very ugly!

But my dad said, "Trust the process". Sometimes things don't look great at first, but they get better over time. He promised the house would look much nicer once it was finished.

So, I believed him. And he was right... And now I love my new house!



CHAPTER 3

Yay! Today is a big day – it's my housewarming ceremony!

My friends are coming over to see my new house for the first time ever. I'm so excited to show them my new room! I hope they love it as much as I do. I think my room is very cute, and I hope they think so too!!

Also, I get to give everyone a "new house tour"!



THE END

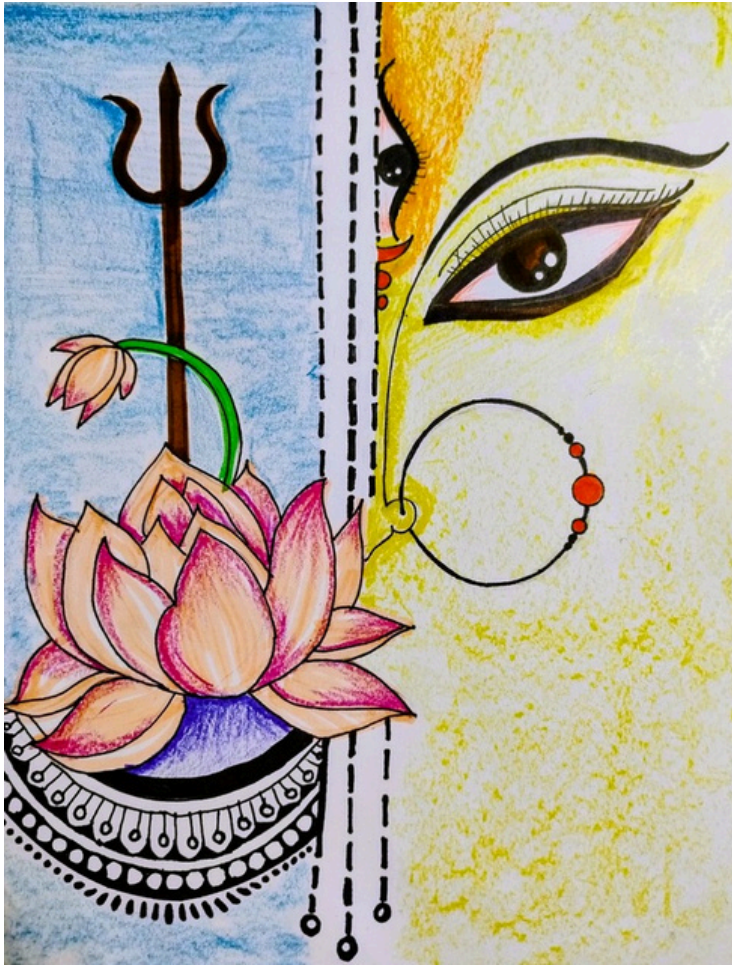


Mihika Sen



Prisita Samanta(11yrs)





Samujjwala Pathak(10yrs)



Satvika Das(9yrs)





Kolkatay Nach

Shaivi Mishra (12 yrs)

Non fictional Personal Essay

I moved to Minnesota when I was two years old. I started performing in BAM at an early age and enjoyed watching others perform. Dance performances in BAM have always been a highlight of my year as I really enjoy the feeling of dancing with my friends and being part of the celebration.

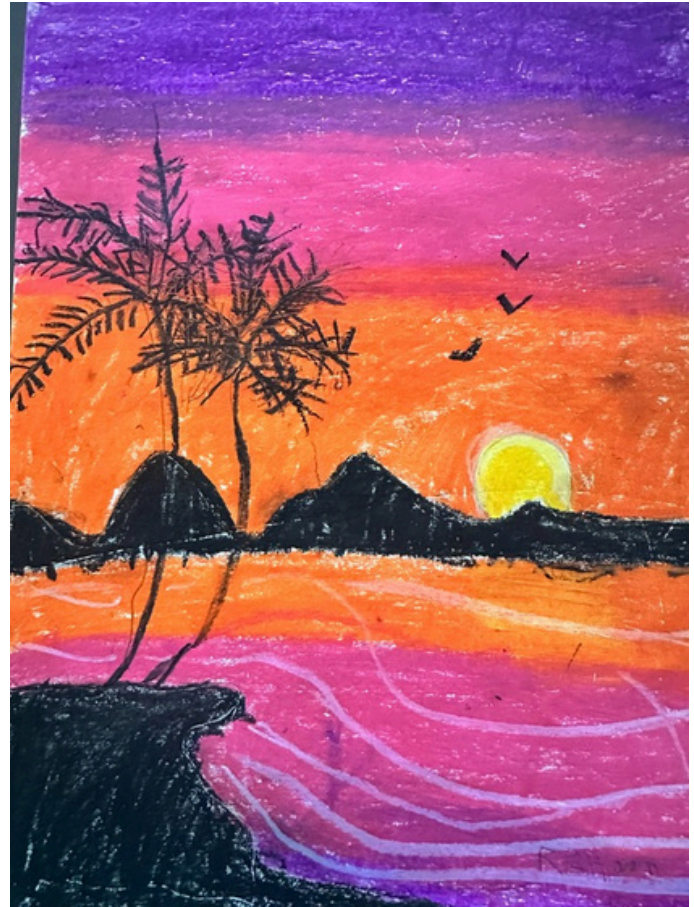
For the last two years I have been performing in Kolkata in Rabindra Sadan under the training of my Odissi teacher Sri Subikash Mukherjee. My Sir is very strict and I like learning from him a lot. Performing in Kolkata is very different from here. Since that is a professional school people are very sincere and extremely respectful towards the guru and dance. During the rehearsals in the hot weather, I felt very tired. I felt out of place sometimes, but my mom kept saying that it would have a positive impact on me. I have started enjoying the hard work. Another important thing is that my grandma and my family members get to see my performance.

Professional makeup artists do our makeup and hair. Volunteers help with our dressing, and they make all of us look so elegant. Even though I get scared when I go on stage and I miss my friends here, the feeling of being on that beautiful stage with grand lights makes me feel very good and I hope I can continue it. I also get to meet many well-known dancers there.



There, the kids around me ask if I know Bengali food, Bengali festivals etc. And I say that even though I do not know how to read or write Bengali, I know a lot about our Bengali culture thanks to my parents, my friends and BAM events. I hope I can continue doing BAM dance-shows and having a wonderful time



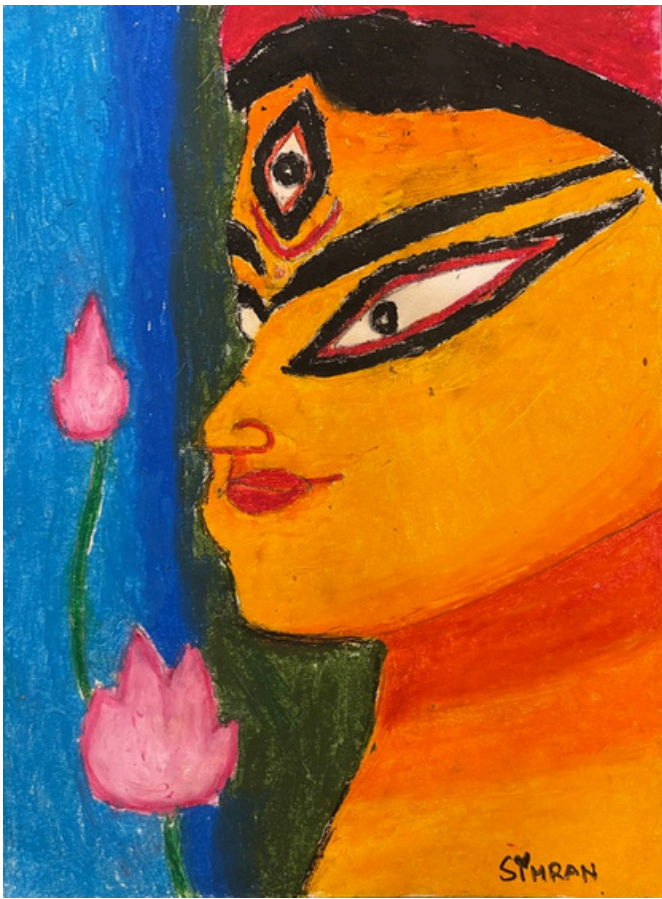


Rishaan Banerjee(6yrs)



Madhuksha Barman(12 yrs)





Simran Nag(7yrs)



Hiya Ghosh





Utsa Banerjee(8 years)

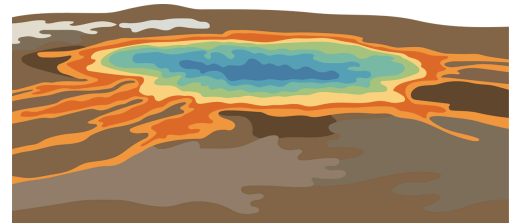
Dear Diary – Yellowstone

Dear Diary,

Today I'm going to tell you about our trip to Yellowstone.

First, we went to Norris Geyser Basin. I had so much fun, but I did have a few issues. At the start, I kept tripping on the boardwalk, but that was really the only problem. The trail kept switching between boardwalk and dirt. But don't let it trick you – the boardwalk is way bumpier than the dirt!

There were so many geysers, and you probably guessed that. My favorite one was Pork Chop Geyser. It used to be a huge geyser, but then it shrank.



Next, we visited the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone. It was a long hike, but this time we didn't have any issues, which was wonderful. The path was all dirt again, but it was steep and very twisty. At the end of the trail, there was a beautiful waterfall, and it was totally worth it.



Our Trip to Glacier National Park

The next day, we went to Glacier National Park. We first visited Lake McDonald, and the water was crystal clear. We even collected a few pebbles to take home. I even found a heart-shaped pebble – it was so pretty!

Next, we went to Logan Pass. It was a hiking trail that was about eight miles long. It started with a boardwalk, but later we began walking on the mountain path, which turned into gravel. Along the way, we saw some mountain goats. One of them was standing right on our path, so we had to turn back.

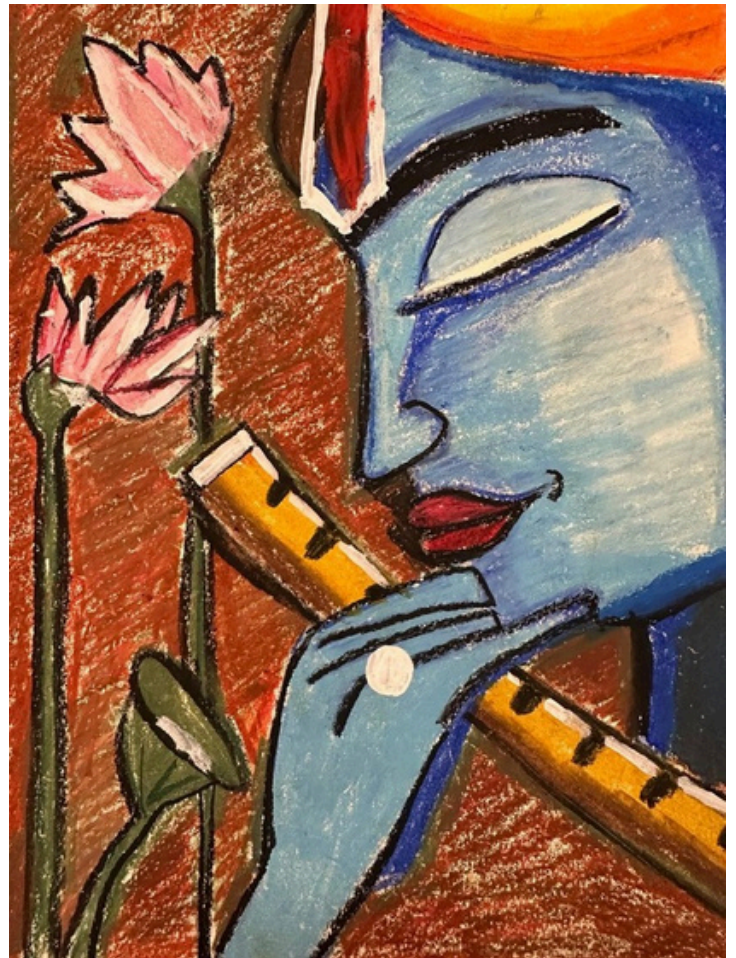
Even though we couldn't finish the trail, overall we had a lot of fun!



**THE
END**



**Madhuksha Barman
(12yrs)**



 **Udantica Roy(12yrs)**



Mahika Das(5yrs)



Utsa Banerjee(8yrs)





The Big Ben
Sana Roy(11yrs)



Hiya Ghosh





Krishav Dutta(8yrs)



**Ice Cream
Meru Roy(8yrs)**





**Bless Your Heart
Meru Roy(8yrs)**



**The Rainbow Cat
Kaya Roy(5yrs)**

Mural



CREATED BY
ANJANA PARUA & SUBHRA SAHA



Unspoiled Wilderness

Sonali Das

Upon the northern shores I tread,
Where silence wraps the world in thread.
The air is crisp, the pine trees tall,
No voice but wind - no sound at all.

The lake lies still, a glassy sheet,
Reflecting stars beneath my feet.
No ripple breaks its mirrored face,
A perfect, wild, and sacred place.

No roads, no lights, no man-made sound,
Just moss and stone and ancient ground.
The loon's faint cry, a haunting song,
Where earth and sky both belong.

Here children run through moss and sand,
With berry- stained lips and stick in hand.
No screens, no clocks, no hurried pace----
Just scraped- up knees and nature's grace.

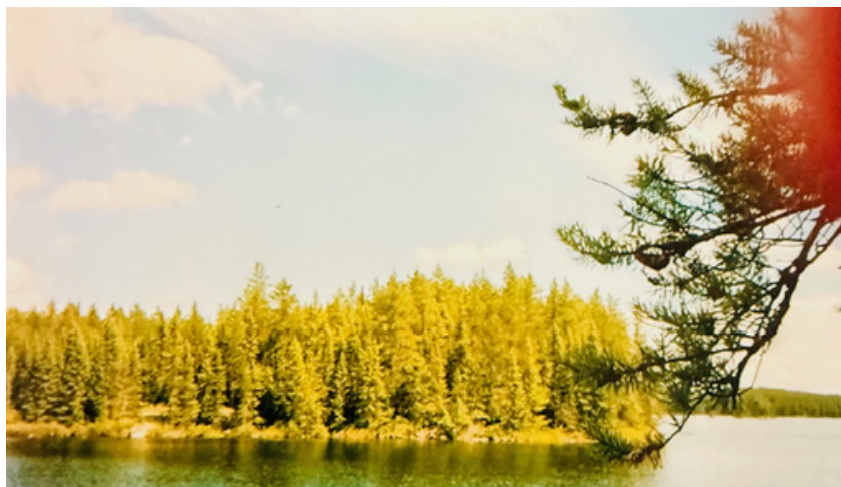
The stars spill out like ancient lore,
A planetarium evermore.
Each night sky tells a different story,
Of wonder, not of conquest but glory.





Here time is still. The wild is free.
And I become a part of Thee.
The untouched shore, the quite deep----
Where sky and water fall asleep.

So, guard these shores, this hallowed earth,
More precious than the things of worth.
The North calls out, serene and true----
May we protect her. Me. And You.



This poem has been written based on the experiences of my daughter Natasha, who led a group of teenagers on a couple of trips to the Boundary Waters. During their week-long stay in the wilderness, they lived in tents, survived on bare minimum, without any technological devices, not even a watch. Nature was their only guide. Every time she told me about her unique experiences, I was bewildered....as she described I painted the image in my mind and thus was born my poem: Unspoiled Wilderness





এক বিখ্যাত বাঙালি : শহীদ মাতঙ্গিনী হাজরা

দিতি ভদ্র / Diti Bhadra

সাংঘাতিক জোরে, কানের পর্দা ফাটিয়ে গুলির আওয়াজে চারিদিক ভরে গেলো! সাল ১৯৪২, স্থান তমলুক, আজকের পশ্চিম বঙ্গে। মাতঙ্গিনী হাজরা, এক গরিব ঘরের মেয়ে, বয়েস তখন ৭৩, ভারতের পতাকা হাতে, "বন্দে মাতরম" চিৎকার করতে করতে সেই গুলির ঘন আঁধারের মধ্যে ঢুকতে থাকলেন। ভারত ছাড়ো আন্দোলনের (Quit India Movement) এক দীপ্ত জননেতা, মাতঙ্গিনী হাজরা আমাদের দেখিয়েছিলেন দেশভক্তি কাকে বলে। ইংরেজের সেই গুলির বাঁধে তার শেষ নিঃশ্বাস ঘটে, কিন্তু জীবনের শেষ মুহূর্ত পর্যন্ত ভারতের পতাকা উনি মাটিতে লাগতে দেননি। শহীদ মাতঙ্গিনী হাজরা চিরদিন হয়ে থাকবেন বাংলার গর্ব, আমাদের স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনের সমৃদ্ধ ইতিহাসে নারীদের অবদানের এক উজ্জ্বল উদাহরণ।

মাতঙ্গিনীর জন্ম ১৮৬৯ সালে, হোগলা গ্রাম, পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর। বাবা কৃষক ছিলেন, মেয়েকে পড়াশোনার উপহার দিতে পারেননি। মাত্র ১২ বছর বয়সে ৬০-বছরের বৃদ্ধ ত্রিলোচন হাজরার সাথে বিবাহ হয়ে যায় মাতঙ্গিনীর, আর ১৮ বছর বয়েসের মধ্যে বিধবা হয়ে যান। মহাত্মা গান্ধীর (Mahatma Gandhi) ভারত ছাড়ো আন্দোলনে “Do or Die” ডাকে অনুপ্রাণিত হয়ে মাতঙ্গিনী স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনে যোগ দেন।



Mahatma Gandhi during the Quit India Movement



মহাত্মার অহিংসা ও স্বদেশী প্রত্যয়ে মাতঙ্গিনী নিজে উদ্বুদ্ধ হন এবং হাজার হাজার আরও মানুষকে এই আন্দোলনে যোগ দিতে অনুপ্রাণিত করেন। খাদি কাপড় বোনা থেকে শুরু করে স্মলপক্স মহামারীতে সমাজের সেবায় নেমে পড়া, "চৌকিদারী ট্যাক্স" রদ করার চেষ্টা করা, Civil Disobedience Movement এ অংশগ্রহণ করা, নারীদের নিয়ে "বিদ্যুৎ বাহিনী" তৈরী করে ব্রিটিশ শাসনের বিরুদ্ধে আওয়াজ ওঠানো -- এই সব কাজের মধ্যে দিয়ে মাতঙ্গিনী হাজারা আমাদের শিখিয়ে গেছেন মানুষের আসল পরিচয় পাওয়া যায় তার কর্মে, তার সামাজিক অবদানে, তার নির্ভয় নেতৃত্বে। পুলিশের গ্রেফতার ও অত্যাচার অনেকবার সহ্য করেছেন মাতঙ্গিনী, কিন্তু সেই অত্যাচার ওনাকে থামাতে পারেনি।



Matangini Hazra



Matangini's statue. Kolkata

মাতঙ্গিনী হাজারার মূর্তি ১৯৭৭ সালে কলকাতায় স্থাপন করা হয় -- প্রথম মহিলার মূর্তি এই শহরে। বয়স, শিক্ষা, ধনসম্পদ নির্বিশেষে মানুষ কিভাবে দেশের মুক্তি যুদ্ধে নেমে পরে, নিজের জীবনের পরোয়া না করে, বিপ্লবের ডাকে সারা দিয়েছিলো মাতঙ্গিনী তার জ্বলন্ত দৃষ্টান্ত। প্রত্যেক বাঙালিকে এবং ভারতীয়কে এই শহীদের কাজ ও জীবন চিরদিন অনুপ্রেরণা যোগাবে।

(Images sourced from: Wikimedia Commons)





What it means to Belong

Prashant Roy

Somewhere between the snow-covered streets of Minnesota and the hot afternoons of Bengal, there's a space where your story lives. A space where you wake up to your mom singing Nazrul in the kitchen, while the smell of shorshe ilish fills the air. Where you go from rehearsing a school play to dancing dhunuchi naach at Durga Puja.

That space is not confusion, its home.

You are part of a beautiful legacy. You may not have walked through muddy fields or seen hawkers selling steel utensils in exchange for old clothes, like your parents did. But you carry their stories in your smile, and their language in your voice.

Some days are hard,

You don't speak perfect Bangla or feel shy around your grandparents.

Your friends don't understand why you take a day off for Saraswati Puja.

You feel "too American" at home and "too Bangali" outside.

Here is the truth, you are not stuck between cultures you are the bridge, the best of both worlds.

Culture is love in Disguise, Love doesn't always shout. Sometimes it sings while flipping luchi. It's your mom dancing kathak in the living room, not for an audience but for her soul. It's the Bangla song she hums while folding laundry.





Its in the adhuri Bangla you speak on video calls. Your Grand parents understand every word, not because the grammer is perfect, but because you are.

Culture is in Dida's achar, that one glass jar at the back of the pantry is more than pickle. It's dida's love, poured over mango slices and sealed under the Minnesota sun. That achar carries the drying spices and wrinkled hands shooing away crows.

Even if you eat it with Mac and cheese its still your story.

You are Bengali because of the stories you carry, you are American because the dreams you chase.

You can forget the words to a prayer, but still feel peace when you hear it.

you can listen to Rabindra sangeet and Olivia Rodrigo on the same playlist.

You can say "Ma" and "Mom" with equal love.

Belonging is something you carry,

You may not live in Bengal but Bengal lives in you, in your food, your music, your family and your soul.



So, next time when some one asks "Where are you from?"

Lift your chin, smile, and say,
"I am from Minnesota.. and also from Bengal"



And right there, in that moment, you will feel it.
Because you belong everywhere your heart has ever called home.





তোকে না বলা কিছু কথা !

গঙ্গোত্রী দে

তোর জন্য আকাশ মেঘলা,
তোকে ভেবেই গান,
তোর সাথে আমার যত
অনুরাগ আর অভিমান।

তোর সাথেই হৃদকম্পন,
তোকেই ভেজায় চোখের জল।
তোর সাথে অচেনাকে,
আপন করে নেওয়ার ছল।

তোর সাথে হোঁচট খেয়ে,
মুখ খুবড়ে পড়া।
তোর হাতেই হাত,
একটু এগিয়ে চলা।

তোর আঁচড়ে গভীর ক্ষত,
রক্ত যত্রতত্র,
তোর সাথেই খুঁজতে যাওয়া
বনৌষধির পত্র!





ফোকটের ঘড়ি

Anjan Chakraborty

*অনেক বছর আগের ঘটনা। আমরা তখন Egan-এ থাকি। দুই মেয়ে রিমা ও রিয়ার বয়স ছিল ১৪ আর ৬। শুভ্রা সপ্তাহান্তে ওখানকার এক Dairy Queen-এর রেজিস্টারে কাজ করত। সে কাজে গেলে আমি মেয়েদের নিয়ে Library, Zoo, Garage Sale, Flea Market ইত্যাদিতে যেতাম।

এক শনিবারে শুভ্রা কাজ থেকে ফোন করে বলল, "আজ সকাল ১০টায় Jyarred নামে বিখ্যাত অলঙ্কারের দোকান উদ্বোধন হবে। প্রথম ১০ জনকে ওরা বিনাপয়সায় Omega ও Tissot ঘড়ি দেবে। ওখানে গিয়ে লাইনে দাঁড়াও।" প্রথমে পাত্তা দিইনি, কিন্তু কিছু পরেই আবার ফোন এলো আর শান্তি রক্ষায় রওনা দিলাম।

দোকানে পৌঁছে দেখি কয়েকজন ৭০-৮০ বছরের বৃদ্ধ আর দুজন বাচ্চা নিয়ে দাঁড়িয়ে আছে। ভাবলাম দাদুরা নাতিনাতিদের এনেছে antique ঘড়ির কদর বোঝাতে। জানতে পারলাম ৪ থেকে ১০০ বছরের যে কেউ লাইনে দাঁড়াতে পারে। মেয়েদের ডেকে দাঁড় করালাম। কেউ যেন শুনতে না পায় তেমনভাবে ওদের বাংলায় বললাম, "শোনো মায়েরা, এরা লাইনের প্রথম ১০ জনকে বিনাপয়সায় ঘড়ি দেবে। তোমাদের যেগুলো তুলতে বলবো সেগুলো নেবো।" ওরা ভ্যাবাচেকা খেয়ে একে ওপরের দিকে তাকিয়ে বললো, "ঠিক আছে, বাবা"।

বউয়ের উপরে রাগ করেছিলাম এখানে আসতে বলার জন্য কিন্তু তা পাল্টে অগাধ ভালোবাসায় পরিণত হলো। পরিস্থিতির পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে "ফোকটের তত্ত্ব" মধুর লাগলো এবং লোভ আমার মাথায় চেপে বসলো।

আমার সামনে যে দাদুটা দাঁড়িয়েছিল সে কেমন যেন তির্যকভাবে তাকাচ্ছিলো। সম্ভবত ভাবছিলো আমিও বুঝি তার মতো ফোকটের মাল নিতে এসেছি। পকেট থেকে ফোনটা বার করে বউয়ের কাছে একটা ভুয়ো ফোন করে বেশ জোরেই ইংরেজিতে বললাম, "তোমায় কিচ্ছু ভাবতে হবে না। কুড়ি হাজার ডলার দিয়ে তোমার পছন্দমতো ওই হীরের নেকলেসটাই নিয়ে যাবো।" এরপর দাদু আর ফিরেও তাকায় নি।



ঠিক করলাম একটা নিজের জন্য রেখে বাকি দুটো ঘড়ি দান করে দেব। এটা ভেবে নিজেকে দানবীর মনে হলো কিন্তু কোনো না কোনো কারনে প্রত্যেকের ক্ষেত্রেই পাহাড়প্রমাণ বাধা আমার সদৃষ্টাকে বানচাল করে দিলো। কাউকে উপহার না দিতে পেরে মনটা বেদনায় ভরে উঠলো। তার চাইতেও ব্যাখিত হলাম বুঝে জগতে দাতার অভাব নেই কিন্তু প্রকৃত গ্রহীতা পাওয়া কঠিন। অপারগ হয়ে দানের আশায় ইতি টেনে নিজেকেই দাতা ও গ্রহীতার ভূমিকায় বেছে নিলাম।

দিবাস্বপ্নে আমার মুখের ভাব পাল্টাতে থাকায় মেয়েরা উৎকর্ষিত হয়ে জিজ্ঞাসা করলো, "বাবা, ঠিক আছে তো?" আমি বললাম, "চিন্তা কোরোনা, দরজা খুললেই সব ঠিক হয়ে যাবে।"

সময় মতোই দরজাটা খুললো এবং সবাই ধীরে সুস্থে প্রবেশ করা শুরু করলো। আমি ওসব ঠুনকো ভদ্রতাকে কাপুরুষতা বলে মনে করতাম এবং তরও সহিচ্ছিলো না। মেয়েদের প্রায় টানতে টানতে ভিতরে নিয়ে গেলাম। দেখি দুই কর্মী টেবিলে বসে টিকিট দিচ্ছে। বৃদ্ধরা সেখানে লাইন দিল। আমি ঘড়ির জায়গা খুঁজতে লাগলাম! আমাদের ঘোরাফেরা করতে দেখে এক ভদ্রমহিলা জিজ্ঞাসা করলো, "আমি কি সাহায্য করতে পারি?" জানতে চাইলাম, "তোমরা যে বিনাপয়সায় Omega এবং Tissot ঘড়ি দিচ্ছে সেসব কোথায়?"



এই শুনে ভদ্রমহিলার চোখ কপালে উঠে গেলো এবং সদ্য জল থেকে তোলা রুইকাতলার মতো খাবি খেয়ে করুন সুরে বললো, "স্যার, সেরকম কিছুই এখানে হচ্ছে না। Customer Appreciation হিসাবে Dairy Queen 'এর আইসক্রিমের কুপন দেওয়া হচ্ছে।" আমি আমার কানকে বিশ্বাস করতে পারছিলাম না কিন্তু চেতনা ফিরলো মেয়েদের উল্লাস দেখে। দুজনেই বলা শুরু করলো, "বাবা, চলো কুপন নিয়ে Dairy Queen এ যাই। ওদের আইসক্রিম খুব সুস্বাদু।"



ওরা নাচতে নাচতে কুপন নিতে গেলো আর আমি দরজার কাছে দাঁড়িয়ে ভাবতে লাগলাম এতক্ষন ধরে যা ঘটলো তা দৈবিক না ভৌতিক! গাড়িতে পৌঁছে শুভ্রাকে ফোনে বললাম, "এখানে তো ঘড়ি দিচ্ছে না। তুমি কি ঠিক শুনেছিলে?" আমার হতাশা আর বেদনায় জর্জরিত মনের প্রতি কোনো গুরুত্ব না দিয়ে আমার আজীবনের সাথী হাহা হুহ করে হেসে বললো, "আরে বুদ্ধ, আজ হচ্ছে পয়লা এপ্রিল। April Fool!"

কিছুক্ষন আগে শুভ্রার উপরে যে ভালোবাসা উপচে উঠেছিল তা নিমেষেই উবে গেলো আর মনে মনে ওকে খুব খিস্তিখেউড় করলাম। জীবনে অনেক অপদস্থ হয়েছি, কিন্তু সেটা ছিল বেশ কঠিন। কেননা ওইদিন আমি আমার আপাত নিরোভ সত্তাকে বিসর্জন দিয়ে ঘোরতর লোভিতে পরিণত হয়েছিলাম। অথচ তার বিনিময়ে কিছুই পাইনি।

সেদিনের পর থেকে "April Fool" শব্দ দুটো শুনলে আমার গা পিণ্ডি জ্বলতে থাকে!



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Behind the Curtain

Shuchismita Dutta

I've lived in Minnesota for over a decade, and every year, Durga Pujo with the Bengali Association of Minnesota has been a highlight. I've often performed in dance programs, which always reminded me of the joyful chaos before Pujo back home. While I loved participating, I sometimes had questions—about my slot, timing, or group size. Things always worked out in the end and we enjoyed all our performances in BAM.

This year, I decided to volunteer and joined the Cultural Committee. As a newcomer, I was warmly welcomed by Vijayesh-da, Hironmoy-da and all other members. Slowly, I began to understand the immense effort behind the scenes—coordinating with teams, tracking communications, and making fair, inclusive decisions. My earlier questions found their answers naturally.

The most challenging parts were trying to accommodate everyone's requests, arranging slots that worked for all teams, and keeping track of audio, visual, and stage requirements. Backstage management was especially intense—when complications arose, we had to make quick decisions to keep the program running smoothly and on time.





Overall, the experience was very positive. I felt included, saw true team spirit, and appreciated how everyone's voice was heard. It was also fun! This year was the first time in the committee for both of us "Mitas"—Shuchismita and Madhumita—and we had a wonderful time. Thank you to the existing members for making me feel welcomed.

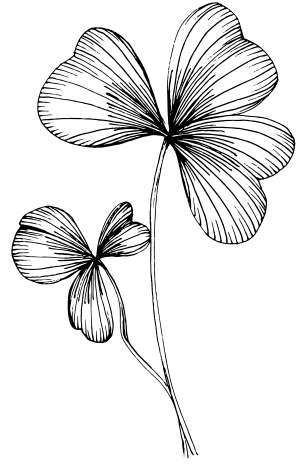
Being part of the organizing team gave me a new perspective. It's easy to overlook the effort from the outside, but stepping in showed me the dedication and effort it takes to make any such event successful.





You don't let me go!

Gangotree Dey



World lost the color, turning gray,
every day is a little darker!
If you look at the dead child on the pile,
and the pieces around there,
I'm spellbound, don't you think
it's not a place for us to live anymore?

The lady got raped last night,
They taught her how to rest in peace.
Now survival is so easy,
she doesn't even need a bed anymore!

We planted those seeds, blame others,
what a metamorphosis around us,
We swallow everything in silence,
We don't remember Kafka anymore!

Senses, my strengths turned numb,
I thought now it's time to go,
But my greed stopped me,
Because I wanna see you once more!!!





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The enigma called Bob Dylan

Sarmistha Safui

I read that he was always a maverick. During Friday's Bob Dylan concert at Mankato, I saw that he still is. No introduction, no small talk with audience, no anecdotes about the origin or context of any song, no emotional outburst for performing in the place where he was born. He just started with a song, sang nonstop for 2 hours and then ended the concert with a song. Bob Dylan's only dialogue in between with his audience was introducing his fellow musicians on stage.



At 83, he played the mouth organ and the piano with the same panache as he did in his earlier records that we are so enamored with. His husky nasal voice has surprisingly remained the same. I was enchanted, enraptured and captivated by his sheer energy and capability to deliver with such impeccable finesse at this age. This enigmatic musical genius chose not to perform in any of the big cities as part of his Never Ending Tour; he rather chose to perform in remote small cities like Mankato, Wichita, Peoria, Davenport.



As the concert came to end, I was wondering why he did not belt out his more popular numbers like “Knocking on Heaven’s door”, “Like a rolling stone”, “All Along the Watchtower,” or “Highway 61 Revisited”..the answer I guess my friends is still “Blowing in the Wind”. The free spirit, the nonconformist, who chose not to receive in person his Nobel prize for literature, has his own unique ways to win the audience’s heart including mine. What I devoured on Friday, the thrall of his “Bobness”, simply took my breath away.



Bob Dylan and Joan Baez in 1963,
Photo credit: this photo by pingnews.com
is marked with public domain mark 1.0



Sarmistha Safui at Bob
Dylan Concert, on April 4,
2025 at Mankato, MN



Bob Dylan at New Orleans Jazz and
Heritage Festival, April 28, 2006
Photo Credit: Photo from Bob Dylan's April
28, 2006 concert appearance at the New
Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival (aka
"Jazzfest")

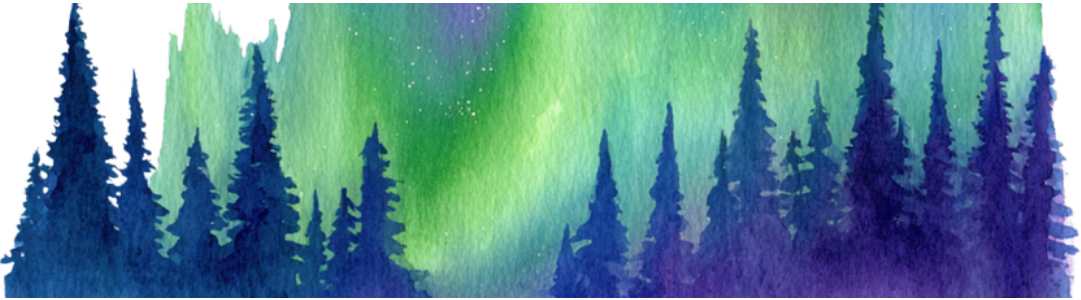


অরোরার সন্ধানে

Anuradha Bhunia

একটা বিশেষ অভিজ্ঞতার কথা লিখতে ইচ্ছে করছে। শনিবার সকাল থেকে অনেক কাজ, লাফালাফি করে কাজ সারছিলাম। ফুলকপির তরকারি আর সঙ্গে রুটি বানাতে বানাতে গল্প হচ্ছিল দেশে। লাঞ্চ করে অনেক কাজের প্ল্যান। ইন্ডিয়ান দোকানে সেল দিয়েছে। কিনতে হবে জিনিসপত্র। তড়িঘড়ি বাজার সেরে বাড়ি ফিরছি গিয়ে আবার পাতা পরিষ্কার। বাড়ি পৌঁছে ফোন খুলে দেখি আত্রেয়ী টেক্সট করেছে। আমাদের এদিক থেকে নাকি অরোরা বোরিয়ালিস দেখতে পাওয়া যাবে। ওমনি শুরু হলো আমাদের প্ল্যানিং। রিসার্চ করে দেখা গেল একটু পর থেকেই মেঘে ঢাকা পড়বে চারিদিক। দেখতে হলে যেতে হবে ওয়েস্টে, কারন ওদিক থেকেই মেঘ বাবাজীবন আমাদের দিকে আসবেন। ঠিক হল লাইট পলিউশন পেরিয়ে যেতে হবে আমাদের। ৪৫ মিনিট এগিয়ে গেলে একটা লেকের ধারে দাঁড়িয়ে আমরা দেখবো আলো। ঠিক ১১-টায় বেরিয়ে পড়লাম।

ওমা, লেকের ধারে গিয়ে দেখা গেল পাবলিক একসেস নেই। বড় বড় বাড়ির ব্যাক-ইয়ার্ড। অন্ধকারে ঘুরে ঘুরে একটা জায়গা জোগাড় হল দাঁড়াবার। রাস্তার উল্টো দিকে এক ওয়াইল্ডলাইফ রেফিউজ, আর তার উল্টো দিকে একটা ক্যাম্প গ্রাউন্ড।



আমরা গাড়ি পার্ক করে বসলাম ওই ক্যাম্প গ্রাউন্ডের মুখে। আকাশে তখনও বেশ মেঘ। মনটা একটু একটু খারাপ হয়ে যাচ্ছে। হঠাৎ এক ম্যাজিক হলো। মনে হলো একটা পর্দা কেউ সরিয়ে দিলো। মিটমিটে তারায় ভরে গেল আকাশখানা। ঘড়ির কাঁটা তখন রাত ১২-টা পেরিয়েছে।



হঠাৎ করে ওই অঞ্চলে একটু গাড়ির আনাগোনা বেড়ে গেল। একটু ভয় ভয় করছিল। আমরা নিঃশ্বাস চেপে বসে আছি উত্তরের আকাশের দিকে চেয়ে। সময় কেটেই চলেছে। একটা সাদা পিক আপ ট্রাক দাঁড়িয়ে পড়ল আমাদের গাড়ির থেকে কিছুটা দূরে। ভয়টা আরো একটু বেড়ে গিয়েছে। ঘড়ির কাঁটা ১-টা পেরিয়ে গিয়েছে। কোথাও অরোরার লক্ষণ নেই। ১:১৫ অবধি অপেক্ষা করে সিদ্ধান্ত নিলাম এবার ফিরে যাই বাড়ির দিকে। মন খারাপ হয়ে আছে। খালি এটাই ভাবছি একবার না একবার দেখা তো হবেই।



৩ বছর কেটেছে ইতিমধ্যে। ২০২৪ -র মে মাস। সকাল বেলায় আমার কাছের বন্ধু শর্মিষ্ঠা জানাল, জানো তো আজ অরোরা দেখা যাওয়ার প্রেডিকশান। আমি জানতাম না। তড়িঘড়ি প্ল্যান করে, রাতের খাওয়া সেরে গাড়ি ছোটালাম। আমাদের সঙ্গে ভ্রাতৃসম বন্ধু বিক্রম। আমরা চলেছি মিনেসোটার উত্তরের দিকের আকাশ দেখতে দেখতে। রাত ১০, বাড়ি থেকে এক ঘন্টা মতন যাওয়ার পর পাইন সিটিতে নেমে আকাশে দেখা মিলল হালকা এক সবুজ আভার। আবার ও এগিয়ে চললাম আরো উত্তরে হিংক্লির দিকে। রেডিওতে আগেই শুনেছিলাম রাত ১টায় হবে পিক। ১টা বেজে গেছে, আকাশে সবুজ আভা, মাঝে মাঝে যেন হালকা লালনীল রঙ, কিন্তু ভালো করে দেখার আগেই উধাও হয়ে যাচ্ছে। হঠাৎ গাড়ির মধ্যে থেকে বিক্রম চিৎকার করে উঠল, "দেখো, দেখো"।



অপূর্ব সুন্দর রঙের খেলা চলেছে আকাশ জুড়ে। বর্ণনা অসম্ভব। বলতে ইচ্ছে করছে, কি দেখিলাম জন্ম জন্মান্তরে ভুলিবনা। আগেরবারের না দেখার দুঃখ ভুলে, মন ভরে উঠল খুশিতে।



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মিনেসোটার পূজামণ্ডপ – এক অভিন্ন বাংলা

Sanjib Basak

আজ মিনেসোটার বাঙালি অ্যাসোসিয়েশনের দুর্গাপূজার দ্বিতীয় দিন | Central Middle School-এর ক্যাফেটেরিয়ায় দুপুরের খাওয়া চলছে। বাইরে হালকা বরফ পড়ছে নিঃশব্দে, কিন্তু ভেতরে ধূপের গন্ধ, পায়েসের ঘ্রাণ, আর ঢাকের তালে মন ভরে আছে।

একটা টেবিলে সবাই গোল হয়ে বসেছে | খিচুড়ি খেতে খেতে গল্প শুরু হলো ছোটবেলার পূজা কেমন ছিল!”

অর্ণব পশ্চিমবঙ্গের মানুষ — হাওড়ার দিকের। মিনিয়াপোলিসে এসেছেন প্রায় পনেরো বছর হলো।

“ঠাকুর আসত কুমোরটুলি থেকে — বাঁশে বাঁধা, কাপড়ে ঢাকা | আমরা, পাড়ার ছেলেরা, মাথায় করে আনতাম | ভোরবেলায় পিসি ঘুম থেকে তুলে দিত | কে যেন গলা ফাটিয়ে হাঁক দিত, ‘ওই, ফুল-বেলপাতা আনবি না? বাজারে যা রে তাড়াতাড়ি!’ খিচুড়ির গন্ধে গোটা পাড়া মেতে উঠত, ধুনিচির ধোঁয়ায় ছেয়ে যেত বাতাস। দুপুরে পায়েস, বিকেলে জিলাপি, রাতে নাটকের মহড়া! টিনের ছাউনি, বাঁশের মাচা, আলো ঝলমলে চাঁদ পায়ের প্যাণ্ডেল | তবু মন ভরে যেত। বহুদিন পর সেই সব কথা মনে পড়ে যাচ্ছে..।”



মীরা ঢাকার মেয়ে, মধ্য বাংলাদেশের মানুষ। এখানে এসেছেন, প্রায় দশ বছর হলো |

“আহারে, তোমাগো কথা শুনে মন হইল কেমন জানি!

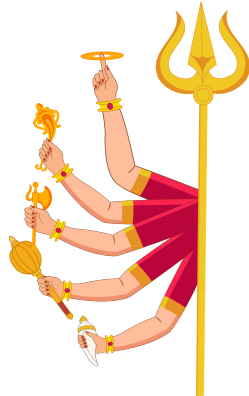
আমাগো দিক দিয়া পূজা মানে আছিল কাশফুলে ভরা মাঠ, আর ঢাকের আওয়াজে হাওয়া কাঁপে।

দ্বাদশীর সন্ধ্যায় যখন ঢাক বাজতো, সবাই বলতো—“ওরে মা আসতেছে রে!”

ওই ধুনিচা নাচ—আমাগো পাড়ায় তো প্রতিযোগিতা হইতো!

সকালে দই-চিঁড়া, দুপুরে ভুনা খিচুড়ি, রাতে রসগোল্লা খাইতাম।

এখন এই ঠান্ডা মিনেসোটায় বসে ও মনে হয়, মা যেন লালবাগের রাস্তায় হাঁটতেছে।”





বাস্পি সিলেটের ছেলে—উত্তর-পূর্ব বাংলাদেশের সবুজে ভরা পাহাড় আর নদীর দেশেই বড় হয়েছে। এখানে এসেছে প্রায় বারো বছর হলো।

“হেই সময়ত আমার বাড়িঘরে পূজার আগের দিন ফুল তোলার ধুম আছিল। আমার আন্মা কইতো, “মায়ে ফুল দিলে পাপ ধুইয়া যায়।”

আমরার গান গাইয়া পূজা হতো, হারমোনিয়ামে বাজতো “জগজননী মা”।

সন্ধ্যার পর নদীর পাড়ে আলোর পাতা ভাসাইতাম পানিত।

এখন এই লেকের পানিত তাকাইলেই মনে হয়, ওই নদীর ঢেউত মা হাসতেছে।”



রিয়া, চট্টগ্রামের মেয়ে—পাহাড়, সাগর আর বৃষ্টির শহরে তার বেড়ে ওঠা।

এখানে, মিনিয়াপোলিস, প্রায় কুড়ি বছর হলো তিনি আছেন।

আমাগো দিক্কে পূজা মানে পাহাড়ত ঢোল বাজে, দোতরার সুরে গান গায় মানুষ। আগে মন্দিরে যাইতাম, পরে সোজা সাগরপাড়ে যাইতাম ‘সন্ধ্যা আরতি’ দেখতে। আন্মা কইরতো, “মা পাহাড়ে না, ঢেউতেও থাকে।”

পূজার আগে সবাই মিলে বানাইতাম চাটগাইয়া তেলপিঠা, নারিকেল আর গুড় দিয়া।



এইখানে বরফ পড়ে, তবু আজ মনে হইছে কোতোয়ালি রোডে ফেরত গেছি।

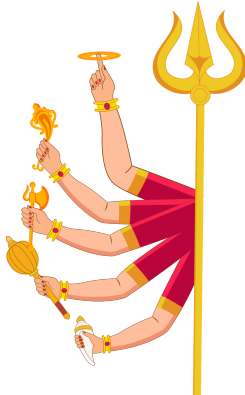
প্রিয়া, বরেন্দ্র অঞ্চলের মানুষ—রাজশাহী আর দিনাজপুরের দিকের মাটির গন্ধে তার বড় হওয়া।

এখানে, মিনিয়াপোলিস এসেছে প্রায় আট বছর আগে।

“আমাগো দিক্কে পূজা মানে নদীর ধার দিক্কে গাছতলায় মঞ্চ, প্যান্ডেল তেমন ছিল না। রাতে বাঁশের মঞ্চে নাটক — “বীরাজনা মন্দোদরী”, সবাই গামছা পেতে বসে দেখত।

মা কইতো, “পূজা মানে আলো, জল আর সঙ্গ।”

আমরা মাটির প্রদীপে নাম লিখে জ্বলাইতাম, যেন মা জানেন কারা প্রার্থনা করতেছে। এখনো লেকের ধারে প্রদীপ রাখি, ওই নদীর আলো চোখে ভাসে।”





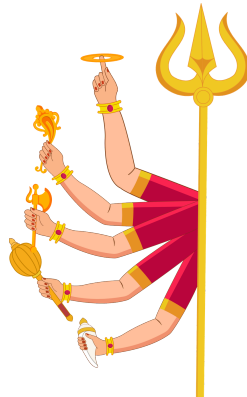
সৌম্য, মানভূমের মানুষ—পুরুলিয়ার মাটির গন্ধ, ঢোলের তাল আর ছৌ নাচের রঙে তার শৈশব কেটেছে।

এখানে, মিনিয়াপোলিস এসেছে প্রায় দশ বছর আগে।

— “আমগার মানভূমে পূজা মানে ছিল চৌদ্দ নাচ আর ঢোলের বাদ্য।

গাঁয়ত মাঠে সারারাত নাচ, ঢোল, মহিষাসুরের মুখোশ — পুরা উৎসবটা মাতময়!

আমি ছোটবেলায় ঠাকুর বানাইতাম কাদা দিয়া; মা কইতো, “তু ছোট শিল্পী।”

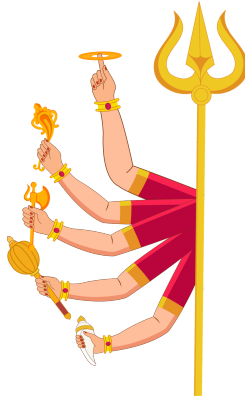




এখন যখন ঢাক বাজে, মনে পড়ে পুরুলিয়ার মাটির গন্ধ।
সেই মাটিতেই মা গড়া হয়, সেই গন্ধে আজও মা'য় মুখ দেখি।”
ঘরের এক কোণে তখন ছোট তুষারের ছেলে রুদ্র, হাতে খুদে ঢাক বাজাচ্ছে।
সবাই হেসে উঠলো। সৌম্য হেসে বলল—
“নতুন প্রজন্মের বাঙালি! ” অর্ণব মৃদু হেসে বললো, “এরা কি আমাদের ঐতিহ্য ধরে রাখবে?”
বাইরে তুষার ঝরছে, ভিতরে ধুনুচির ধোঁয়া আর ঢাকের আওয়াজে কাঁপছে মন।
মীরা হেসে বলল:



— দ্যাখো না, ভাষা আলাদা, টান আলাদা—তবু মায়ের ডাকে সবাই একসাথে আসি।
অর্ণব:
— মা দুর্গা তো নিজেই বহুরূপিণী, তাই আমাদের ভাষার ও হাজার রূপ!
সবাই একসাথে সাড়া দিলো—
“জয় মা দুর্গা!”
আর সেই মুহূর্তে, মিনেসোটার পূজামণ্ডপ ও হয়ে উঠলো এক অবিভক্ত বাংলা। —
যেখানে বরফের নিচে লুকিয়ে আছে পূজার উষ্ণতা, আর মায়ের নামেই মিলেছে সবাই।





The Drop that forgot it was the Ocean

Prashant Roy

What if reality is not what it seems?

Have you ever wondered, like Neo in The Matrix, whether the world you see is only one layer of a much larger truth? Ancient philosophers and modern physicists are strangely aligned on this question.

The King Who Questioned Reality

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, King Janaka wakes from a dream where he is a starving beggar. Moments later, he opens his eyes in his palace, surrounded by all comforts. Confused, he turns to the sage Ashtavakra:

“Which one is real, the dream or this waking world?”

Before you read further, ask yourself, **what would you say?**

Ashtavakra explains, that while you are inside a dream, the dream is completely real to you. If someone entered your dream and said, “You’re actually asleep on a bed,” you would search for that bed and never find it. You might even call them mad. But the moment you wake up, you say effortlessly, **“Oh, that was just a dream”**.

Ashtavakra then asks,
What if, after death, you ‘wake up’ in another dimension and say the same thing,

“That entire life was just a dream”?





His point is not that life is false, but that it is dream like, real only while we are “**observing**” it, dissolving when we awaken to something larger. We are all participants in a shared illusion called Maya.

The Illusion of Reality

Many years after Janaka’s question, Rene Descartes declared, “I think, therefore I am.”

But modern science complicates this confidence.

Atoms, the building blocks of everything, are mostly empty space. When you touch a wall, your atoms never meet the wall’s atoms; you only feel electromagnetic resistance.

So ask yourself,

If nothing truly touches anything, how solid is this world you trust?

Does the Universe Change When You Look at It?

In the Double Slit Experiment, electrons behave like waves until “**observed**”, then they suddenly start to behave like particles.

It’s as if the universe waits for your observation before choosing a form.

Just like the Matrix bends for Neo when he begins to see differently. And quantum entanglement, proven by

Nobel winning experiments in 2022, shows that two particles separated by light years behave as one.

So... **were they ever truly separate?**





The essence of Advaita Vedanta

Physics calls it entanglement.

Advaita Vedanta calls it Brahman, The indivisible whole.

Advaita says the goal is not to “become” one with the Devine,

Its is simply to realize that **“You already are”**.

Just like the drop thinking it is separate from the ocean, until it drops in the ocean and realizes **“I am the ocean”**

“Tat Tvam Asi” - The Divine you are searching for is your own deepest Self. Not your personality, not your ego, not your body, but the pure consciousness behind it.





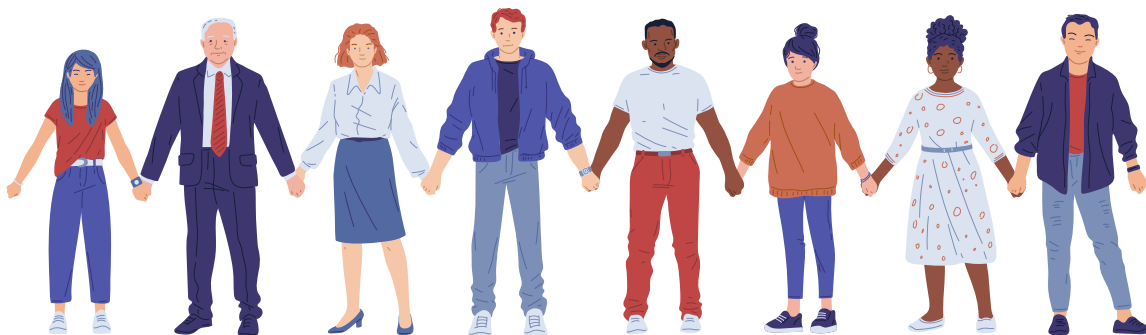
A decade of gratitude

How the Bengali community helped us thrive

Nila Chakraborty

As we celebrate our tenth anniversary April 2026, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to the Bengali Association of Minnesota (BAM) and to the entire Bengali community for your continued encouragement, friendship, and support throughout this incredible journey.

Your support over the years has been a reflection of the trust and warmth within this incredible community. Many of you stood by me from the very beginning—with encouragement, kind words, and belief in my efforts. Through community events, gatherings, and simple acts of support, you helped me grow in ways I will always be grateful for.





Support has always been at the heart of our success. It's more than patronage...it's about connection. When neighbors and friends stand behind local businesses, they create more than commerce; they build pride, strength, and lasting bonds. Each time you shopped, referred a friend, or simply shared kind words, you became part of our story. Together, we've created a space that celebrates identity, creativity, and belonging.

To every member of the Bengali Association of Minnesota and to everyone who has supported us over the last decade, thank you. Your trust and warmth have been our greatest inspiration. As we look ahead to the future, we remain deeply committed to serving this beautiful community that has made everything possible.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Nila Chakraborty.





Graduates of 2025!

Amartya Bhattacharya,

Son of Ashis Bhattacharya and Reema Bhattacharya graduated from Wayzata High school . He is headed to Northeastern University, Boston to pursue his undergraduate degree in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Music.



Tara Chinta,

Daughter of Rinki Das and Sivaram Chinta graduated from Wayzata High school . She is headed to University of Minnesota-Twin Cities to pursue her undergraduate degree with a major in Economics.





Graduates of 2025!

Sayan Majumder,

Son of Sandip Majumder and Susmita Majumder graduated from Chaska High school . He is headed to University of Minnesota-Twin Cities to pursue his undergraduate degree with a major in Biochemistry.



Archisha Basak,

Daughter of Sanjib Basak and Nandita Basak graduated from Wayzata High school . She is headed to University of Michigan , Ann Arbor to pursue her undergraduate degree with a major in Bio Medical Engineering.





Graduates of 2025!

Ahana Das,

Daughter of Anwasha Das and Anindya Das graduated from Eden Prairie High School . She is headed to University of Minnesota to pursue her undergraduate degree with a major in Biology.



Asmi Sinha,

Daughter of Paromita Sinha and Anustup Sinha graduated from Wayzata High school . She is headed to Northwestern University, Evanston, IL to pursue her undergraduate degree with double major in Economics and Statistics.





Graduates of 2025!

Aishanee Dey,

Daughter of Pinaki Dey and Gangotri Dey graduated from Wayzata High school . She is headed to Arizona State University to pursue her undergraduate degree with Business major in Artificial Intelligence.



Himani Mondal,

Daughter of Asim Mondal and Lipika Mondal graduated from East View High School. She is headed to Iowa State to pursue her undergraduate degree in Family and Customer Education and Studies.





Graduates of 2025!

Shivali Choudhury ,

Daughter of Anish Choudhury and Ipshita Choudhury graduated from Carlson School of Management. She is joining US Bank as a Full Time Employee and intends to pursue a Master's Degree in the future.



Rani Mukherjee,

Daughter of Devasree Mukherjee and Amit Mukherjee graduated from Cornell University. She is starting her career at Hilton in McLean, Virginia.





Graduates of 2025!

Devna Panda,

Daughter of Chhanda Panda and Purnendu Panda graduated from University of Minnesota in Biomedical Engineering with Summa Cum Laude Honors and Distinction. She is currently working as a Medical Assistant and interested to pursue Medical School.



Deeplina Banerjee,

Completed Phd in gender, sexuality and women's studies with a minor in transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction from the University of Western Ontario. She will continue her research on gender, labor, and the future of work, shaping discourse through data-driven insights.





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Youth achievement -ExCEL Award Recipient Ankit Mukhopadhyay

Proud Parents Anirban and Debarati Mukhopadhyay

As Ankit's parents, we are incredibly proud to share that our son, Ankit Mukhopadhyay, a senior at Eagan High School (District 196), has been honored with the 2025 MSHSL ExCEL Award for Excellence in Community, Education, and Leadership. Watching Ankit grow into a thoughtful, motivated, and compassionate young man has been one of our greatest joys—from his dedication to Youth in Government, Model U.N., Student Council, Math Team, debate, tennis, and the school's top bands, to his genuine commitment to service through the District 196



Legislative Advisory Council, Rotary Interact Club, and his roles with the Eagan Community Foundation and The Drawer. This recognition means so much to us because it reflects the values of kindness, humility, perseverance, and service that he lives every day—not for accolades, but because they define who he is. We are deeply grateful to the teachers, mentors and friends who have supported him along the way, and we feel truly blessed to watch Ankit continue growing into a young adult determined to make the world a little better than he found it.





ExCEL award recipient - Siddharth Chowdhury

**Proud Parents
Olivia and Sanjoy Chowdhury**

As Siddharth's parents, we are deeply proud to share that our son, Siddharth Chowdhury, a senior at Eden Prairie High School, has been honored with the 2025 MSHSL ExCEL Award for Excellence in Community, Education & Leadership. This prestigious award is presented annually to only 36 high school juniors across Minnesota who exemplify outstanding academic achievement, community involvement, and leadership in school activities. The ExCEL Award recognizes students who not only meet high standards but also strive to make a meaningful difference in their schools and communities.

Siddharth has also distinguished himself on the global stage, earning a Top 3 international placement out of 240+ teams in Financial Services Team Decision Making at DECA's 2025 International Career Development Conference. Competing among more than 10,000 students worldwide who advanced through local, state, and national rounds, Siddharth and his teammate delivered a sophisticated financial strategy. The event tested their ability to analyze complex client scenarios, apply investment and budgeting principles, and communicate effectively under pressure.





Relocating from Dubai to Minnesota at the age of nine, Siddharth embraced new opportunities in academics, sports, and community life with resilience and enthusiasm. His journey reflects the qualities we admire most in him—compassion, discipline, teamwork, and drive. We are profoundly grateful to his teachers, mentors, and friends for their guidance and support along the way. We hope Siddharth continues to pursue excellence, build a bright future, and uplift others through his leadership and dedication.



We extend our sincere gratitude to our Sponsors

We are especially proud to recognize our Platinum, Gold, and Silver Sponsors, whose partnership reflects a deeper commitment to preserving our heritage and supporting future generations.

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Dr. Sita Kantha Dash

GOLD SPONSOR

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India Spice House, Eden Prarie

India Association of Minnesota



Donations from Community Members

We are truly grateful to all our generous community members who made cash or in-kind donations,

Abhijit Banerjee	Chhanda Panda
Abhijit Sarkar	Debapriya Purkayastha
Adrita Ganguly	Deeplina Banerjee
Ajoy Datta	Devasree Mukherjee
Ambuja Goswami	Haimanti Moulik
Anita Mallik	Ipshita Choudhury
Antara Garai Pratihar	Ishita Bhandari
Anuradha Bhuniya	Jaite Mukherjee
Anuradha Chakraborty	Meghna Ghosh
Anwesha Bhattacharjee	Mintu Talukdar
Aparna Mandal	Moumita Roy
Ashis Bhattacharya	Mousumi Maiti
Ashoke Mandal	Nabanita Debnath
Avijit Das	Nandita Basak
Baishaki Karmakar	Oindrilla Chakraborty
Binita Bose Sinha	Papiya Das
Binita Sinha	Parama Bardhan
Chandrani Basak Dutta	Piyali Dam

Donations from Community Members

We are truly grateful to all our generous community members who made cash or in-kind donations,

Pranab K Chatterjee	Indrajeet Mukherjee
Pritha Majumdar	Sayanti Ghosh
Ramyani Mukjopadhyay	Sayonnha Mandal-Roy
Ranja Tarafder	Shatanik Saha
Ranjan K Chankravarty	Shilpi Chatterjee
Renuka Bhoyar	Snehasish Ghosh
Rikhia Basu	Snigdha Das
Rita Mustaphi	Sonali Das
Rupa Pal	Subhra Saha
Sagarika Das	Suchismita Basu
Sahana Chakraborty	Sudhanshu Jena
Sangeeta Pal	Sujata Dutta
Sarmistha Safui	Susmita Majumdar
Sarmistha Sinha	Swati Mukherjee
Saswati Munshi	Tanwi Prigge
Saurav Chintapatra	Tarit Dey
Sayan Mukherji	Trishita Banerjee
Dr. Sita Kantha Dash	Vijayesh Roy

Our Heart Our Amazing Volunteers



Youth Volunteers

Adwait Talukdar, Ahaan Kumar, Anaisha Ghosh, Anandi Datta, Anusha Chakraborty, Anvita Ghosh, Archisman Sarkar, Arnav Chakraborty, Arnesh Maiti, Ayona Banerjee, Ayush Brahma, Ayushmita Mondal, Ishaan Konar, Mainak Mukherjee, Mihika Datta, Mihira Mitra, Mishti Choudhury, Naisha Biswas, Pranav Datta, Prishita Samanta, Pritha Das, Priyamvada Banerjee, Riddhima Paul, Rishika Raman, Saanvi Ghosh, Samara Jena, Sana Roy, Shaivi Mishra, Shayaan Purkayastha, Shiladitya Pal, Shoumili Tarafder, Subhangee Das, Srija Dey, Srinita Debnath, Sruti Si, Utsa Banerjee.

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Food Volunteers

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Photographers

Debabrata Biswas, Indradip Adhikary, Subrapratim Bhattacharjee, Samanjit Datta

Dhak at India Fest

Satyajit Pal, Soumendu Das

Puja Volunteers

Abhijit Banerjee (Purohit), Anish Choudhury, Antara Garai Pratihar, Anuradha Chakraborty, Anwesha Bhattacharjee, Aparna Mandal, Arunava Das (Pandal concept and construction), Avijeet Das, Barin Pal, Bidesh Roy, Binita Sinha, Chandradeep Banerjee, Chandrani Basak Dutta, Debapriya Purkayastha, Debasmita Mukherjee (Purohit), Gangotree Dey, Hironmoy Das, Indra Sunasir, Indrajeet Mukherjee, Ipshita Choudhury, Kannan Sheshadri, Moushumi Maiti, Nabanita Debnath, Partish Misra (Purohit), Piyali Daam, Pritha Majumdar, Rahul Biswas, Rana Das, Ranja Tarafdar, Reena Chatterjee, Rikhia Basu, Rohit Roy, Rupa Pal, Sahana Mukherji, Sambaran Ray, Sanchita Paul, Sandip Nath (Purohit), Sangeeta Pal, Saswati Munshi, Sayan Mukherji (Purohit), Shipra Sunasir, Shivali Choudhury, Shobhan Goswami, Snehashish Ghosh, Snigdha Das, Sonali Das, Subhra Saha, Suchismita Basu, Sudanshu Jena, Sujata Datta, Sujay Purkayastha, Surya Pidaparti, Swapna Sengupta Halder (Miniature Durga Pratima), Swati Mukherjee, Trisha Mukherjee, Vijayesh Roy.



Volunteers at other Bam events who were not covered above
Abhrajee Roy, Biswajit Bhattacharjee, Joehin Bhattacharya, Manjim Bhattacharya, Manojit Bhattacharya

Despite our best efforts to include every name, we may have unintentionally missed some of our amazing volunteers. If your name is not listed, please forgive the oversight. Your contributions are genuinely valued, and BAM's success would not have been possible without your support.



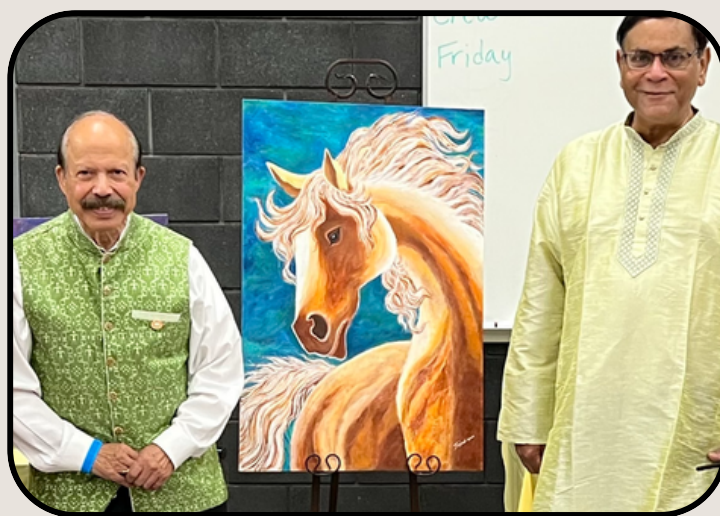


“Unconditional Love”
Art work: Subhra Saha



Art work: Bidesh Roy

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Thank you, Dr. Sita Kantha Dash, for being a consistent pillar of support for BAM. Year after year, you stand with us, believe in what BAM represents, and help us keep our cultural traditions alive. We are truly grateful.