



Fall Newsletter



Happy Fall and Happy Halloween 2023

October 2023

-BY DR. NAVEEN ULI (PRESIDENT, KASTURI KANNADA SANGHA, 2013-2014)



I moved to Solon OH with my wife Pushpalatha, son Nishanth and daughter Amala in July 2002, after spending a decade in New York City. Even prior to our move here, we had enquired about the local Kannada sangha and got information on Kasturi from the then President Prof. Ram Nagaraj. The Kannada sangha in New York City was too large and we were unable to make great connections during our time in NYC. However, Kasturi was just of the right size for our needs and all of us (including myself, my wife and both kids) have made lasting friendships in the Kannada community here, relationships we continue to cherish to this day.

Just a couple of years after we moved here, we went from being mere spectators at events to participating in a wide variety of activities and events. I had a natural inclination towards musical events, our children took part in dances and skits, Pushpalatha was active on multiple fronts, including skits and organizational activities. In 2010, I was inspired by Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara winning the 8th Jnanapith award for Kannada and composed a 3-act skit that combined characters and scenes from the works of Shivarama Karanth (ಮೂಕಜ್ಜಿಯ ಕನಸುಗಳು) and Masti Venkatesh Iyengar (ಚಿಕ್ಕವೀರ ರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ) that was performed during the presidency of Mrs. Hema Vartak in 2011.

I then found myself with the presidency for the years 2013 and 2014 in an unexpected manner. There were no structural changes to the programs of the Sangha during my presidency, and we continued the tradition of 3 indoor events (ಯುಗಾದಿ ಹಬ್ಬ, ಗಣೇಶ ಪೂಜೆ, ದೀಪಾವಳಿ ಹಬ್ಬ) and 1 outdoor event (summer picnic) every year. I was however successful in incorporating specific regional cuisines into the food service at each event for a year (ಕರಾವಳಿ, ಮಲೆನಾಡು, ಬಯಲುಸೀಮೆ). The most memorable cultural programs I remember from my presidency are bhathanatyam performances by students of local teachers and a ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ performance by a troupe from Toronto.

In 2017, during the presidency Mrs. Meena Mahesh, I spearheaded a new program called "ದಾಸ ವೈಭವ". This is a musical program held in conjunction with our ಗಣೇಶ ಪೂಜೆ festivities and celebrates the rich ಹರಿದಾಸ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ tradition of Karnataka. We showcase the numerous Kannada composers by performances by students of various Carnatic music teachers from the greater Cleveland area. It is extremely gratifying to note that this program has steadily grown every year since its inception with more teachers and students participating. Of course, this would not have been possible without the unwavering support of all the Kasturi presidents and committee members; active participation by the Kannada families and the greater music community; and the constant encouragement of my wife. I hope we will be able to expand the scope of this program in the coming years.

Ever since I have been in the Cleveland area, I have experienced and benefited from the volunteering spirit of many of my Kannada friends, who continue to play important roles in propagating and celebrating the Kannada heritage in northeast Ohio. Let us work together to cherish this rich tradition, keeping it alive and growing it among the coming generations.

Naveen K. Uli, MD

Solon, OH

MRS. RAMYA RAJASHEKAR



It has been my honor to have served in the organizing committee along with a team of close friends in Kasturi Kannada Sangha in Cleveland, Ohio. Being President of the sangha was just a title I bore, but the true work effort, great ideas and execution was a team effort from the entire committee. We spearheaded initiatives to promote Kannada language and culture, fostering a sense of community among members aimed at preserving the rich heritage of Karnataka. Through collaborative efforts, we strengthened the bonds within the Kannada-speaking community, contributing to a vibrant cultural exchange in Cleveland. What was most memorable was the committee members having a growth mindset, willingness to learn from feedback, try out new things especially the one event with live music performance by the popular artist Rajesh Krishna. The funds generated from the captivating performance contributed to the financial health of the organization, giving us satisfaction that we were exiting our tenure by leaving the organization financially stronger for the incoming committee to leverage! I look back fondly at those times doing it all with my infant boys in town! and now they're both colleges bound, it's amazing how time has flown! It was a wonderful experience and I'm grateful for all the people both on the committee and all volunteers who came together to make the events as successful as they were!"

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NUCHINA UNDE



For soaking one cup toor dal

1/4 cup moong dal

1/4 cup channa dal

Grated coconut 1/2 cup

Grated ginger or ginger paste - 1 tbsp

Finely chopped green chilli - 4

Chopped cilantro - 1/2 bunch.

Chopped dill leaved - 1/2 bunch (optional)

Chopped onion - medium (optional)

Pepper powder - 1/2 tsp

Jeera - 1/2 tsp

Hing

Salt

Method:

Mix all the dals together and soak them in water for at least 4 hours. Drain all the water after soaking Coarsely grind the soaked dal (to the consistency of broken wheat). You can easily grind it in a vegetable chopper or food processor. Do not add water during grinding. Add all the other ingredients and mix well with your hand. Adjust salt. If you need more heat, add some red chili power. Grease the idly plates (or steamer plate) Make oblong balls by binding the mixture together in your hand and place them on idli plates or steamer. If the ball is not holding shape, you can add a small quantity (one or two spoon of rice flour) to the mixture. Steam the balls for 15 minutes. Let it rest for 5 minutes. Serve hot with or without chutney This is a very flexible recipe. You can vary the ingredients added to dal according to your taste for example, you can add grated carrot.



KARIGADUBU- ಕರಿಗೆಡುಬು BY MRS. MAHIMA RAO

INGREDIENTS FOR OUTER COVER OR KANAKA

1. MAIDA -1 CUP
2. COLD UNSALTED BUTTER- 1/4 CUP (PREFERABLY SMALL CUBES OF BUTTER TO WORK EASILY)
3. SUGAR -1/4 TEASPOON
4. SALT-1/8 TEASPOON
5. BAKING SODA- 1/4 TEASPOON
6. ICE COLD WATER 1/2 TO 1 CUP

Method:

In a bowl mix all the ingredients, (1 through 5) except ice cold water.

Make sure butter is blended well in Maida. When you squeeze the dry flour mixture it should hold it together. Add ice cold water slowly enough to form a dough. If using a food processor mix using gentle cycle to form a dough with little water. It should be of a chapati consistency. Place an ice-cold cloth on the dough and rest at least 30 minutes in a cold place. Using cold butter and ice-cold water is essential to make flaky buttery outer crust. Do not compromise on this. If you mix room temperature butter & water, it will not incorporate well in the dough and will not form air pockets when frying resulting in softer crust.

For inner filling Traditional Hoorana

1. Grated fresh/frozen Coconut- 1 cup (thawed)
2. Jaggery-3/4 cup grated or powered
3. Poppy Seeds - 1/8 cup
4. Chopped mix Dry fruits of choice -1 cup
5. Cardamom powder-1 teaspoon
6. Cinnamon powder 1/8 teaspoon
7. Nutmeg powder- 1/8 teaspoon
8. Ghee -1 teaspoon
9. Kesar /saffron - few strands broken

Method:

In a thick bottom dry fry poppy seed till golden brown. In the same pan add ghee and roast chopped dry fruit mix and take it out. Add jaggery to the hot pan and allow it to melt. When it melts add room temperature grated coconut and blend till the mixture comes together. Add cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg powder along with saffron. Add roasted poppy seeds and dry fruits. Allow the mixture to cool.

Inner filling- Modern twist or easy hoorana

1. Coconut - Desiccated or fresh -1 cup
2. Icing sugar- 3/4 cup
3. Chopped dry fruits - 1/2 cup
4. Apple pie spice- 1 teaspoon
5. Cardamom powder- 1 teaspoons
6. Saffron or Kesar strands- few
7. Milk -3 teaspoons

Optional ingredients

1. Dry Roasted Poppy seeds - 3 teaspoons
2. Almond powder- 1/4 cup

Method:

In a food processor mix all the ingredients to form a mixture. Make sure the mixture is not sticky or runny, it should be easy to form a nonstick ball to fill into the casing. Procedure to make Kadubu Take out golf ball size cold dough and roll it as thin as possible. It should be easy to roll without extra flour. Once rolled use a circular cookie cutter and cut out a circular piece. Add a portion of hoorana/filling to one side and close it to form a semicircle shape. Use a form to pinch the ends. Make sure the closure is secure and the filling doesn't come out. In a thick bottom pan add enough oil and heat till the oil smokes and sim the oil. Make sure you have enough oil to keep the submerge the kadubus without any problems. Fry the kadubus till golden brown and enjoy the pastry.



AAIWO – AMERICAN ASIAN INDIAN WOMEN OF OHIO – CHILDREN'S DAY PROGRAM

Association of Asian Indian Women in Ohio (AAIWO) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization for Asian Indian women promoting professional development and education through scholarships and cultural outreach programs. Their aim is to foster and support women for personal and professional advancement while providing volunteer opportunities. AAIWO promotes culture and education while establishing productive social networks for women. AAIWO sponsors multi-cultural activities to promote cultural understanding in their community.

On September 17, 2023, they hosted Children's Day in the India Cultural Garden in Cleveland and there were numerous performances from Kasturi Kannada Sangha Kids

Here are some pictures.



Kids performed Jayathi Jayathi Bharata Mata – Thought by Guru Mrs. Chandrika Gopal



India – Diversity and Culture Talk by Kshitij G Ravikumara, Anika Rao and Shreshta Shastry



Medha Lalith Iyer Song



Ms. Ameyaa Gargsha and Amogh Gargsha – Vande Mataram song



Miss. Maitri Radhesh – Bollywood Fusion Dance



A group of students act out the **Kannada** folklore story Govina Haadu, also called, **Punyakotiya Kathe**.

Punyakoti, also known as Govina Haadu is a Kannada Folk song about a cow called Punyakoti that always speaks the truth and reveals great moral values including truth, trustworthiness, and love. This famous Kannada song, the story of truth, the story of honesty which has been heard from generations and needs to be heard in the coming generations. This story of Punyakoti narrates a situation where the calm and humble cow Punyakoti deals with a dangerous situation with a tiger and overcomes the danger with her honesty. The central theme of the story revolves around establishing the importance of honesty and truthful nature. Kasturi Kannada Sangha kids performed this skit. Kshitij G Ravikumara played Cowboy / Golla role, Anika Rao was Punyakoti cow and Saanvi Niranjana was baby of Punyakoti cow. Shrestha Shastry played tiger role and Ananya Akshay, Bhumika G Ravi kumara and Samarth Shastry were cows. Enjoyed this beautiful Kannada folktale!! (Mrs. Rashmi Shastry).



Bharat Kumar, Pushpalatha Venkataraman, Mahima Rao, Deepa Rao, and Ron Falconi



Iha Manyam singing Sloka.



Mrs. Savitri Rao, Mahima Rao and Bharat Kumar





Mrs. Mahima Rao was the MC for the event.

Photo Credits: Dan Hanson

Reference: <https://www.clevelandpeople.com/groups/asian-indians/2023/aaiwo-kids-day.htm>

NAVRATRI GOMBE IN VARIOUS HOUSES IN CLEVELAND OHIO



Mrs. Namrata Rao



Mrs. Indra



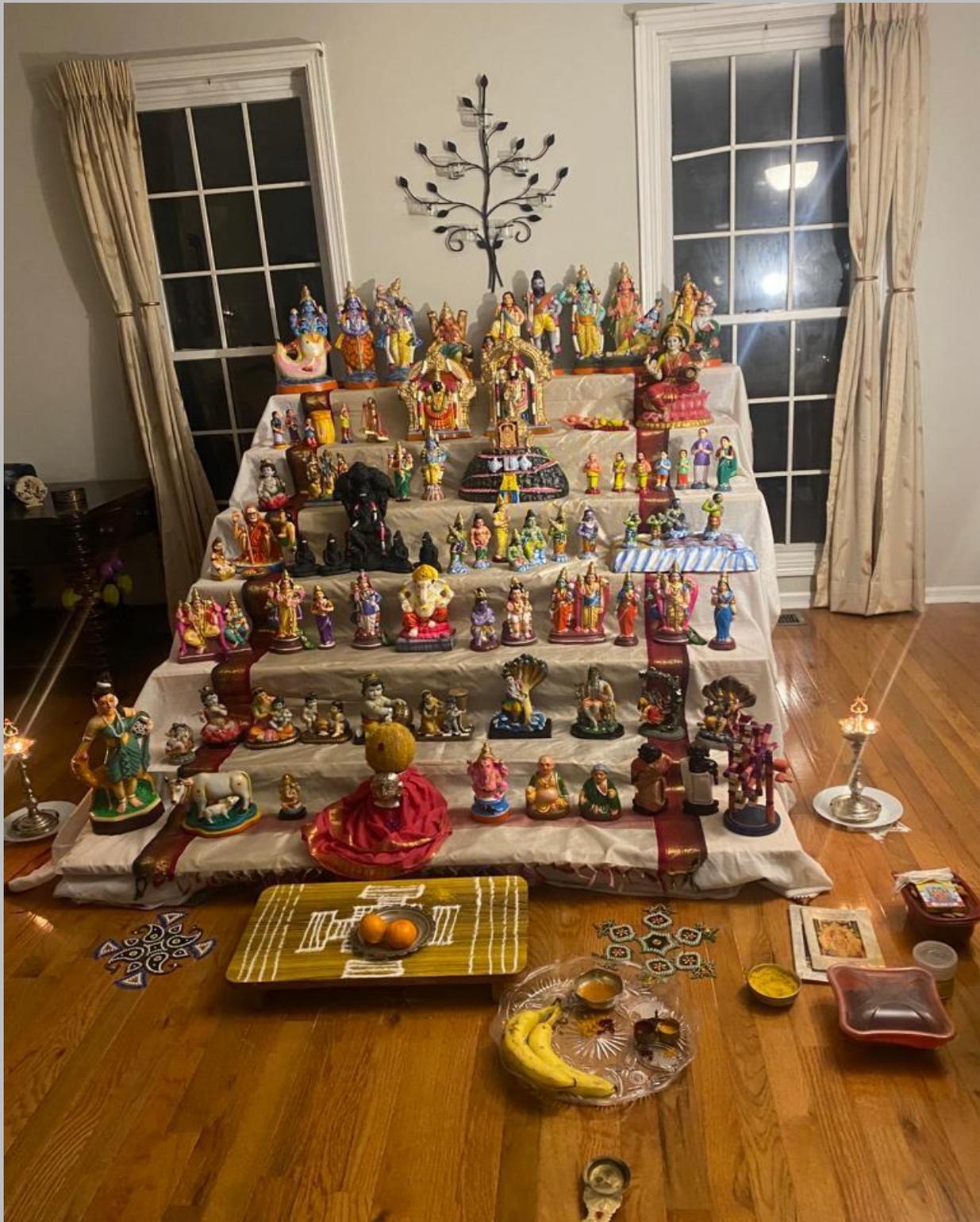
Mrs. Ashwini Nagaraj



Mrs. Mahima Rao



Mrs. Chandrika Gopal



Mrs. Jyotsna



Mrs. Jayashree

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND STORIES OF DOLLS DURING NAVARATRI

Known as GOMBE HABBA in Karnataka, the arrangement of dolls is an integral part of Navaratri celebration in South India. The word GOMBE in Kannada mean dolls.

There is no scriptural evidence for the tradition of temporary arrangement of dolls during the Navaratri festival. It is a tradition that transformed from a royal convention into a domestic custom over the last 300 years or so. However, there are a few narratives that try to explain the relevance of dolls in Navaratri.

Some believe that all the creatures of the world stood as still as dolls when the Devi fought the ASURAS. Contradicting this, some believe that the dolls come to life during the nine nights of the festival, and they need to be put back to sleep on the night of VIJAYADASHAM OR DUSSEHRA. Others say that the dolls arranged during the festival represent the army of the Devi. Yet another explanation is that the dolls are the source of energy for Devi in her fight against evil. However, the most popular belief behind the arrangement of KOLU is in inviting the Divine Goddess home through the puja of KALASHA (sacred pot) over the nine nights and welcoming SUMANGALIS (married women) and KUMARIS (prepubescent girls) home who are like all women are the embodiments of the Divine Feminine herself.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE Golu OR Gombe – microcosmic representation of the macrocosm

Nine-tiered steps are created to arrange the dolls in a certain hierarchy. The number nine represents the nine forms that Devi Durga is believed to have taken during the nine nights of the war. If one cannot arrange nine steps, an odd number of steps like seven, five or three are arranged (conforming to Indian tradition). The higher steps are preserved for the celestial Gods and Goddesses. The steps in the middle generally have the dolls of the many saints and sages who are revered for the inspiring lives that they led on earth. The lower steps represent the worldly life on Earth which include various stages and activities of human life. The lowest step has a bed of sprouting seeds which are a manifestation of mother nature herself. This hierarchic arrangement of the celestial and terrestrial life is a microcosmic representation of the macrocosm or world order as defined by the popular Hindu belief system.

It is important to remember that hierarchy is not compulsory. Many arrange dolls based on themes like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Krishna Leela, and many more from Indian mythology. Some people just arrange dolls as per their convenience.

Pattada Gombe – The Royal Couple of Karnataka

GOMBE HABBA IN Karnataka is characterized by PATTADA GOMBE – a pair of dolls made from wood and dressed as the King and the Queen. This custom of keeping royal dolls is reminiscent of the stately celebration of Navaratri during the times of the Vijayanagar empire. This tradition has been continued by the Mysore Wodeyar's. To prevent a break in this tradition, a pair of PATTADA GOMBE is gifted to a newly married daughter by her parents. It is also believed that the PATTADA GOMBE are a married couple who have come to the girl's maternal home during the Navaratri.

GOLU OR GOMBE CELEBRATIONS

The celebrations commence on ASHWAYUJA SHUDDHA PRATHAMA WHICH IS the first day of Navaratri. At an auspicious time, the leading lady of the house takes a silver pot filled with water and puts five betel leaves and nuts, five turmeric pieces, rice, tur or arhar dal, gold and silver coins in it. She closes its mouth with a coconut collared with mango leaves or betel leaves. The silver pot which is the manifestation of the Devi herself is wrapped with a silk cloth, bejeweled, adorned with a BINDI and a garland of flowers. The festival of Navaratri begins with invoking the Goddess by placing this pot, called KALASHA, in the center of the KOLU. In Karnataka, PATTADA GOMBE is placed on one of the lower steps at the same time. For the next nine days, the dolls are not rearranged or touched for they are believed to have come to life now.

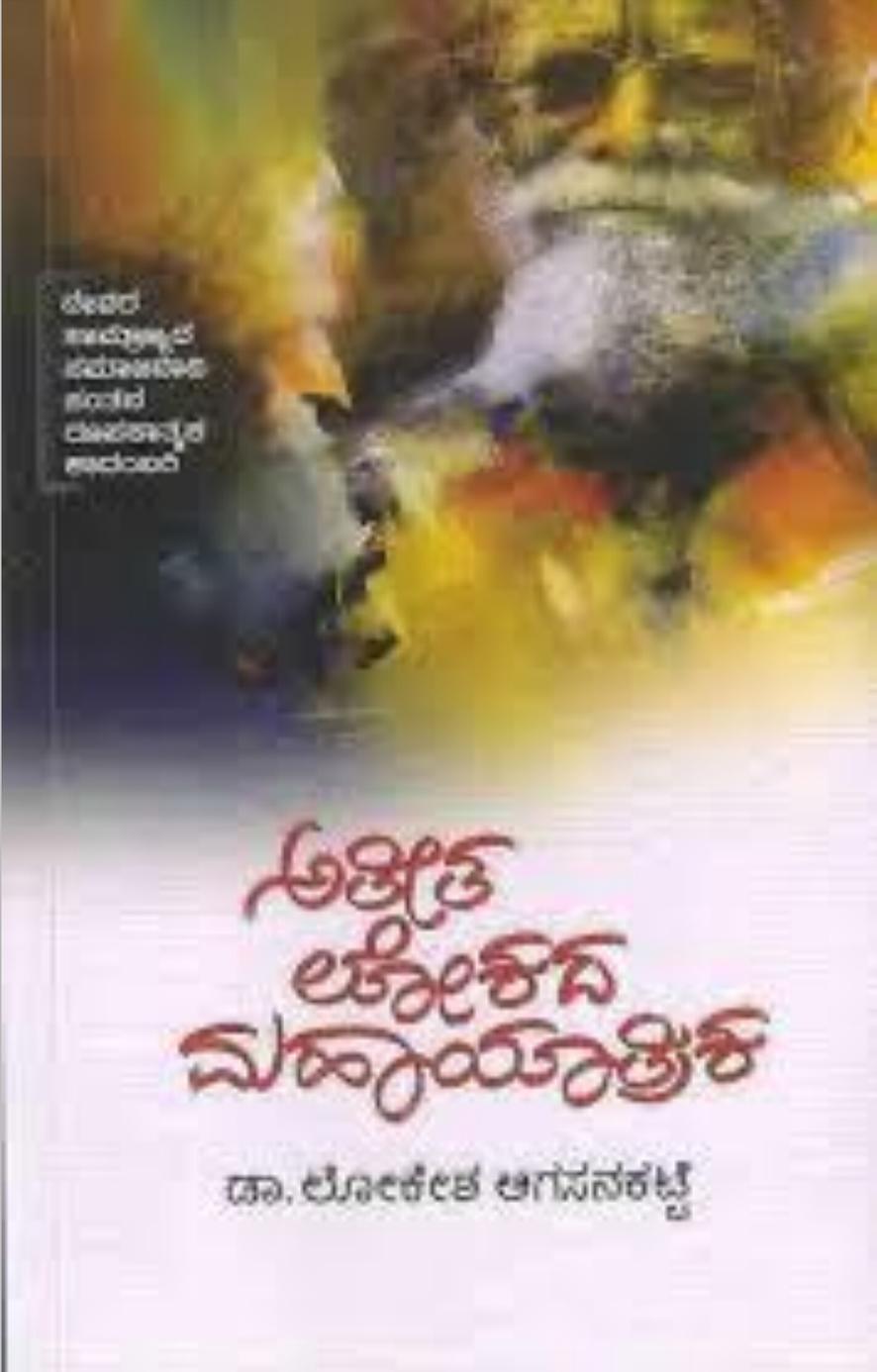
For the ten days of the festival, every morning the dolls along with KALASHA are worshipped with flowers, prayers and PRASADA OR NAIVEDYA (food prepared for the God). In the evening, ladies and kids are invited home to view the dolls. The invited guests take active part in the GOMBE HABBA by singing songs in praise of God and performing for the Devi. Many households invite women to recite LALITA SAHASRANAMA SOUNDARYA LAHARI and such works invoking the Goddess in her infinite forms. The host gives gifts to the invited guests. SUNDAL (cooked pulses) are offered to the Goddess and then distributed to the guests. Every evening, the puja ends with the AARATI of the Devi.

On the day of Vijayadashami, the morning after Navaratri, a final puja is offered to the KOLU. The GOMBE HABBA ends with moving the KALASHA to the north and it symbolizes that one is bidding goodbye to the Devi. In Karnataka, the PATTADA GOMBE are laid flat symbolizing the return of the married daughter to her in-law's house.

The dolls are put to sleep only to be awakened during the next Navaratri. It is important to remember that many of these dolls are passed on from one generation to another and have their own tales to tell.

Reference: <https://culturalsamvaad.com/kolu-or-golu-or-gombe-habba-the-navaratri-dolls/>

BOOK REVIEW – MRS. SUMATHI MUDDENAHALLI



ಕೆಲವು ಪುಸ್ತಕಗಳನ್ನು ಓದಿ ಮುಗಿಸಿದ ಮೇಲೂ, ಅವು ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿದಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯ ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತವಷ್ಟೆ, ಅಂತಹುದೇ ಪ್ರಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ "ಆತೀತ ಲೋಕದ ಮಹಾಯಾತ್ರಿಕರು" ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ನಾನು ಈ ಬೆಲಗೂರು ಎಂಬ ಊರಿಗೆ ಅತೀ ಹತ್ತಿರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳೆದಿದ್ದರೂ, ನನಗೆ ಬಿಂದು ಮಾಧವರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಏನೇನೂ ಗೊತ್ತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅನ್ನುವುದು ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ನಾಚಿಕೆಗೇಡಿನ ಸಂಗತಿಯೇ ಹೌದು. ನಾನು ಪರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ನೆಲೆಸಿದ್ದೇನೆ ಎಂದು ಸಮಾಧಾನ ಹೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲೇ? ಏನೋ ತೋಚದು. ಇನ್ನು ಈ ಪುಸ್ತಕದ ವಿಚಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಬರೋಣ. ಡಾ. ಲೋಕೇಶ ಅಗಸನಕಟ್ಟೆಯವರನ್ನು ಇದೇ ಮೊದಲ ಬಾರಿಗೆ ಓದುತ್ತಿರುವುದು. ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಅಕಾಡೆಮಿಯಿಂದ ಪುರಸ್ಕೃತ ಕೃತಿಯಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಆಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ಕೈಗೆತ್ತಿಕೊಂಡೆ. ಆರ್ಥಿಕವಾಗಿ ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶವೊಂದರ ಕುಟುಂಬದ ಬಡತನದ ಬಾಳ್ವೆಯ ಚಿತ್ರಣ. ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಧಶ್ರದ್ಧೆಯಂತೆ ಕಾಣುವ ದೈವಾರಾಧನೆಯ ಪುಟಗಟ್ಟಲೆ ಚಿತ್ರಣ. ತಲತಲಾಂತರದಿಂದಲೂ ಕೃಷಿಯೇ ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗಿರುವ ಈ ಕುಟುಂಬ ಹನುಮಪ್ಪನ ಗುಡಿಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ, ದರ್ಶನಕ್ಕೆ ಬರುವ ಭಕ್ತಾದಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಸಾದ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಶೇಷ ದಿನಗಳ ಭೋಜನದ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಹಣಗುವ ವರ್ಣನೆ ಓದುತ್ತಾ, ಈ ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಬೋರ್ ಹೊಡೆಸಿತು ಅನ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದು ಸುಳ್ಳಲ್ಲ. ನಂತರದಲ್ಲಿ, ಪುಸ್ತಕದ ನಾಯಕ ಬಿಂದು ಮಾಧವನ ಕುರಿತಾಗಿ ಲೇಖಕರು ಮಾತನಾಡತೊಡಗಿದಾಗ, ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಏನು ಹೇಳಿ ಹೊರಟಿರಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಜಾಡು ಸಿಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಪಾರ ದೈಹಿಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಹೊಂದಿದ ಬಿಂದುವಿನ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛ, ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಪೂರಿತ ಮನಸ್ಸು, ಸಾಧಿಸ ಬಯಸುವುದೆಲ್ಲಾ ನಿಜವಾಗುವುದು ನೋಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಆತನ ಇಚ್ಛೆಯನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಲು ಸ್ವತಃ ಹನುಮನೇ ಕಟಿಬದ್ಧನಾಗಿ ನಿಂತಿರುವಂತೆ ಭಾಸವಾಗುವ ಹಲವಾರು ಘಟನೆಗಳು! ಈತನ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪ ಬಲದಿಂದ ಈ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರವು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು, ಹಲವಾರು ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಸ್ಥರು, ಭಕ್ತರು ಈ ಕೆಲಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೈ ಜೋಡಿಸುವ ಚಿತ್ರಣ ಕಾಣ ಸಿಗುವುದು. ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ, ಲೇಖಕರು, ಬಿಂದು ಕೇವಲ ಜಾತಿ-ಮತ-ಧರ್ಮದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಸದೇ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಸಿದ ಸಮಾಜವಾದಿ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಲ್ಲಿ ನೆನಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವರು. ನಮ್ಮ ಭಾರತದ ಯೋಗಿ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ, ಚಿತ್ತದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಸುವ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳೇ ಬಾಹ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಳ್ಳುವವು ಮತ್ತು ಇಂತಹ ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳು ಪರಿಶುದ್ಧವಾಗಿದ್ದಷ್ಟೂ ತೀಕ್ಷ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಮ್ಯಾನಿಫೆಸ್ಟ್ ಆಗಬಲ್ಲವು ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರಲ್ಲವೆ. ಸಾಧಾರಣವಾದ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯೊಬ್ಬ ಅಸಾಧಾರಣ ಕೆಲಸವನ್ನು ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದು ಬಹುಶಃ ಇದೇ ಯದ್ಯಾವನ ಶಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದಲೇ ಇರಬಹುದು. ಪುಸ್ತಕದ ಕೊನೆಯ ಪುಟಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಂದಾಗ, ಬಿಂದು ಮಾಧವರ ಕೆಲವು ವಿಡಿಯೋಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಲು ಸಿಕ್ಕು, ನಾವು ಬದುಕುವ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದಲ್ಲೇ ಇಂತಹ ಅವಧೂತರೊಬ್ಬರು ಬದುಕಿದ್ದು, ಕೆಲವು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆಯಷ್ಟೇ ಇಲ್ಲವಾದರು ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ನಂಬಲು ಕಷ್ಟವಾಯ್ತು. ಈ ಪುಸ್ತಕವನ್ನು ಹುಡುಕಿ, ಖರೀದಿಸಿ, ಕೊರಿಯರ್ ಮಾಡಿ ಕಳಿಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟು ಗೆಳತಿಗೆ ಹೃದಯಪೂರ್ವಕ ಧನ್ಯವಾದಗಳು!

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