



# SAKURA

No. 136

March – April 2021



しごと どうぐ  
仕事は道具にあり Work depends on tools

## The 1<sup>st</sup> Japanese Language Singing Contest - ONLINE

On the 30th of January 2021 at 3 pm, the first Japanese Language Singing Competition was held Online by the NKKS with the support of the Consulate of Japan in Kolkata.

It garnered tremendous response from the Japanese learners in Kolkata and Shantiniketan. But due to time limitations, only the first twenty applicants were selected to take part in the event. The applicants had to send in the recording of their song and the best three entries were selected the first, second and third prize winners. The esteemed judges were from the Consulate of Japan in Kolkata. The Vice Consul, Ms Risa Tamura announced the three winners who were Mr. Deepro Banerjee (First), Ms. Subhasree Chattopadhyay (Second) and Ms. Ritwika Biswas (Third).



DEEPRO BANERJEE

All the twenty participants' song recordings were played out during the event, and it was a pleasure to hear their melodious renditions. It was indeed a unique event,

organized and compered impeccably by Ms. Khushboo Agarwal, Executive member of NKKS.

We hope we can organize more such events, but hopefully the next one will be an event where we can meet in person and enjoy.

Poonam Nand De

## FROM THE TEACHER'S DESK

Destiny had made me a teacher when I was only 17 years old, not for any financial constraints - it was my own passion. Incidentally, all members of my family, my parents, uncle, aunt were in this profession, and I consider myself fortunate to associate myself with an obsession which helped me to enjoy my life in a blissful environment.

I find a sharp contrast between the educational system of the '70's and now. The teacher sometimes punished an unmindful student by

caning him. Later on, the same student met the teacher and touching his feet confessed with folded hands: Sir, it is your stick that helped me to become the successful man I am today. Scenario of today: A teacher of a huge multistoried school rebuked a student for non-compliance of discipline. This teacher, subsequently, had to apologize under pressure from the Parents' Union.

I have never been a teacher in any recognized school so I have been able to avoid humiliating acts like the above. Rather, I have enjoyed friendly association with my students all the time. Believe me, it has been a heavenly journey for me. Even today when I meet my old students, I receive the same respect and gratitude that gives me immense satisfaction.

I sincerely believe that in everyone's heart there is a hidden teacher. My request is to play that role whenever he gets a chance – in any sphere of life. I am sure it will be a very valuable experience which will stand in good stead to maintain a very peaceful life throughout.

*"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all" Aristotle*

Partha Sarathi Mitra

## THE STUDENT SPEAKS

For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to explore beyond the boundaries of what I know. Learning Japanese was also one such endeavour. My curiosity regarding Japan and its distinct culture began taking shape when I was 15 years old. Japanese anime had always been a popular topic of discussion amongst my peers. I recall a friend of mine recommending the famous "Death Note", adding that it was a wonderful creation. That was possibly the very first time I felt genuinely interested in something new. I began watching a lot of anime, simultaneously trying to comprehend the Japanese language, as it did intrigue me a lot. Initially, I watched anime dubbed in English, but gradually I started watching it in Japanese with English subtitles. It felt like I had created a bond with the Japanese language and my curiosity to understand its intricacies increased. As the days passed, I felt a deep attraction to the diversity of Japanese cultures and practices.

*Contd. on page 2...*

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## AN INTERVIEW WITH SANKAR MANDAL



Sankar Mandal resides in Bongaon (North 24 Parganas). Now he teaches Japanese language in Fujiyama Japanese Language Academy. He stayed in Japan for long 12 years.

Excerpts from the conversation with Sankar Mandal:

Q: Now you have been teaching Japanese language in Fujiyama Japanese Language Academy.

A: Yes after returning from Japan in 2017 I started to teach Japanese Language in this institution.

Q: You passed BSC in 1999.

A: Yes. But in 2005 I went to Japan as a student. There I studied Japanese for 2 years.

Q: Then you started to learn Information Technology ...

A: Yes in 2007 I started to learn Information Technology for 2 years. Then I entered in another branch of Information Technology.

Q: After completion of the course I started a business in Japan and continued for 3 years. But then I joined a Korean Company. But in 2017 I returned India due to some family matters.

Q: Why have you started to learn Japanese?

A: Actually from the very childhood I started to like Japan I got chances to read many things about Japan! As a kid I liked so many things about Japan. From then I dreamt about Japan. I dreamt about going to Japan someday. I wanted to learn Japanese language so that I can go to Japan and communicate with my dream country!

Q: Basically you are a businessman but you teach Japanese Language.

A: Though basically I am in my family business of running restaurant and I am also involved in export business but I enjoy most teaching Japanese! Specially I love to teach children. The joy I get in teaching children Japanese that I cannot find in any other job!

Q: You stayed in Japan for long 12 years! You were also engaged in business in Japan. So you must have vast experiences about Japanese people and culture.

A: Yes. I went there so many places. I liked Japanese people and culture very much! They

value time very much in their life! They are kind-hearted and helpful and don't cheat! They are very diligent! I went so many famous places of Japan.

Q: Can you remember any memorable incident in Japan?

A: There are so many incidents which I still cherish in my memory! But right now I still can remember one incident! Once in Japan I lost my wallet! In it there were some ATM cards and credit cards for 120,000 yen! I was at a loss! I really did not know what to do! But the very next day a Japanese returned the wallet to me! He picked up that on his way! They can't imagine that they usurp other people 'money or things'!

Q: Do you think learning Japanese can be an effective way to a good career?

A: Yes. If you know Japanese you can find job in various Japanese and Indian Company. There are many good companies and many jobs for job aspirants of Japanese Language knowing people.

Q: Your hobby .....

A: Watching specially Indian movies.

Q: Your advice to Japanese Language students ....

A: Actually you have to study hard. Without hard labour you can't achieve anything! So fix your focus and aim at destination.

*Aloke Basu*

### The Student Speaks

*Contd. from page 1...*

I started reading articles about Japan and its customs, people, arts and music, its cuisine, and of course, pop-culture. It felt so refreshing to try and understand a culture so vastly different from mine. After reading numerous articles and watching uncountable YouTube videos about Japan, I eventually decided to study the Japanese language formally. In 2019, I joined The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture. In the beginning, the thought of learning Japanese was quite intimidating to me. Thankfully, my sensei, an exceptional teacher through whose guidance I began admiring this language and the various opportunities it has to offer. She aided in clearing my doubts and encouraged me to participate in multiple events. My ambitions have changed drastically. It is my wish to pursue Japanese and English together and work as a translator or a teacher. Japan is one of the world's most literate and technically advanced nations and the world's third-largest economy, thus making it a land of opportunities. It is my dream to work in Japan and witness its profound culture first hand.

*Ankana Basu.*



## UNLOCK Diaries-1



### DOLON SINHA SAYS

After being caged at home for three whole months, We were free again, like an independent bird, who just left her cage. I was very happy when I could do outside again, but had to be very careful about the surroundings. After unlock, the first thing which I did was to do a morning walk as I used to do regularly before lockdown. But, wearing mask is important. I have always felt morning time to be so peaceful, and especially you go to any park for jogging or exercise. The green trees, the refreshing oxygen, I was feeling like a free bird after a long time. Though I didn't visit anyone after lockdown, as the pandemic situation were still there. I visited Ganges river which is always my favourite place. As the unlocking process has started from June and ended on November, still I avoided crowd and didn't enjoy Durga Puja. I spent those days at my home. Now, everything is becoming normal and I hope soon we will be able to meet each other. Being happy again!

### EXPECTATIONS AND EXCITEMENT - THE 24<sup>TH</sup> INDIA JAPAN STUDENTS CONFERENCE

There have been several beautiful things that have been done over the years in order to make the relationship between Japan and India bloom. Japan and India have done some of the most interesting things for the consumption of the public in order to celebrate their friendship over the years as well. On the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the India Japan relationship, Japanese director Yugo Sako collaborated with Indian musician Vanraj Bhatia and came up with the movie Ramayana: The Legend of Prince Rama. The movie became an international blockbuster and received appreciation worldwide due to its depiction of Indian mythology and the Japanese animation style to it. The movie also showed the strength of the diplomatic ties between the two countries, and the celebration through the movie meant a different essence to the upliftment of the relationship the countries shared.

Over the years, just like the normal relationship between India and Japan, efforts have been taken by the youth of the two countries to keep ideas taken up by the young minds on a platform. This platform has been provided by the India Japan Student's Conference organized by Nihongo Kaiwa Kyookai Society, and it will take place in its 24<sup>th</sup> edition very soon in February. The India-Japan Student's Conference started from 1997 and has taken place every single year, with students from India going to Japan and then from Japan to India in consecutive years. This led to exchanges where



students engaged deeply into learning about each other cultures from a very personal point of view and were able to relate with the lives of each other as well as they were young.

However, in 2020 as we know, the world was struck with a tragedy that no one saw coming towards them at a speed of light. Both Japan and India suffered immensely in the coronavirus pandemic, which led to the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus worldwide and led to a complete depletion in the economic and diplomatic relationship and workings of both the nations. As both the nations were trying to cope up with their own mechanisms to save their citizens from the fearful grasp of the coronavirus, Japan was dealing with its' own issue of deciding whether they should conduct the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Unfortunately, due to the dangerous yet tragic side of the virus, the Olympics had to be cancelled for 2020, and India alongside many other nations understood the difficulty in this. The students understood the difficulty in a more personal manner as every youth would understand the excitement one would have if the Olympics were being conducted in their own nation. The India Japan Students' Conference remains as the platform through which the youth of the two nations can address their grievances again.

**JAPANESE CROSSWORD  
(March - April)**

1	2	3		4	5
6				7	
8			9		
10		11			
		12		13	
14				15	

**ACROSS**

- 1) Disappointment
- 6) To understand
- 7) Board
- 8) Hoop
- 9) Crack/gap
- 10) Thick voice
- 12) Faraway
- 14) Relaxation
- 15) Mist

**DOWN**

- 1) Hurried/quickly
- 2) Hand mirror
- 3) Spring (season)
- 4) Chill/cool
- 5) Horse/Sword beans
- 9) To fix/install
- 11) Cooked rice
- 13) Oyster

*Mahashveta Basu Mukherjee*

**ANSWERS TO  
JAPANESE CROSSWORD  
(January- February)**

1 か	2 が	3 や	4 か	し	5 い
6 じ	ん	か	く		ち
7 き	じ	ん		8 さ	じ
9 ま	つ		10 は	し	る
ぐ		11 か	ら	が	し
12 ろ	う	ど	う	さ	い

**WORD JUMBLE – 70**

Unscramble the following words, and join the circled letters to find out the answer:



1. じょうみ (Surname)

○ □ □ □ □

**What's the proverb?**

2. えないをざる (Cannot help)

○ ○ □ □ □ □ □

3. かいき (Machine)

○ ○ □ □

4. ざいけい (Economy)

□ □ ○ □ □

5. がるいしある (Careless)

□ □ ○ □ □ □ □ ○

6. をみくがわざ (To improve one's skill)

○ ○ □ □ □ □ □

7. ばんるすでんわ (Answering machine)

○ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

*Sontu Debnath*

**ANSWERS TO  
WORD JUMBLE – 69**

1. ねずみ
2. あこがれる
3. をもとして
4. かぶしき
5. るすばんでんわ

ね □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

**MONTHLY PROGRAMME**

◆ **ONLINE 35<sup>TH</sup> MINI IN NICHI BUNKASAI:**

13<sup>th</sup> Mar 2021 6pm to 7 pm

(Link available on NKKS Facebook and website after 10<sup>th</sup> Mar)

◆ **ONLINE LISTENING PRACTICE by Poonam Nand De Sensei: 10<sup>th</sup> Apr 2021 5pm to 6pm**

(Request link from your Sensei)

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