



SAKURA

No. 83

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おご ^{ひさ} 奢るもの久しからず Pride comes before fall

Their Majesties
Emperor Akihito & Empress Michiko



Their Majesties, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko are the first Emperors of Japan to visit India. Well they did, 53 years ago as Crown Prince and Princess but the aura that surrounds them now is unmistakable. The bond between the two nations seems to have strengthened with time.

What is this euphoria about? Is it the belief that the Emperor is a celestial being on Earth - having descended from *Amaterasu Omikami*, the Sun Goddess - the source of all power? Or is it the comforting presence that draws his subjects? The unassuming royal couple has duties from the basics of life (symbolic rice planting and harvesting, sericulture), aesthetic and humanitarian to Diplomatic functions as head of the State. Aptly described by the Constitution as "the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people", the pride of all Japanese people!

Mariko

新年おめでとうございます



AUDIENCE WITH ROYALTY

1st December 2013, 18:00 hrs - this will remain as the most memorable time of my life. I was invited by the Embassy of Japan, New Delhi to a ceremony of audience with the Emperor and Empress of Japan. My husband and I reached the Embassy at the scheduled time and waited in the reception room we were shown into. There were about 100 people from all over India, all waiting for the moment around 5 tables. The heavy door opened exactly at 18:00 and their Majesties, being escorted by the Ambassador of Japan, Mr Yagi, and his wife, advanced towards the golden screen on the opposite side amidst a huge applause. After a brief introduction of the people gathered, we had the opportunity of talking directly to Their Majesties in turns.

I said "I am teaching Japanese language for 40 years in Kolkata" to which Empress Michiko answered "You are doing an excellent work, isn't it?"

Soon after the designated 30 minutes of audience was over and Their Majesties took leave with a smile and left the hall amidst applause.

Being encouraged by Empress Michiko, I would like to continue teaching Japanese language.

Kazuko Nigam

MONTHLY PROGRAMME

- ◆ **Annual Picnic:** 26th Jan 2014
At Nature Park
- ◆ **Ikebana Exhibition:** 6th - 9th Feb 2014
By **Nigam Sensei** at Horticulture Garden
Opening Ceremony 6th Feb at 3pm
- ◆ **29th In Nichi Bunkasai:** 8th Mar 2014
Dr. Triguna Sen Auditorium, Jadavpur University
5:30pm

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. SATYANARAYAN BHATTACHARYA



I met Dr. Satyanarayan Bhattacharya for the first time during the Japanese Language Proficiency Test two years ago in Kolkata. We were both proctors for the examination. We developed a friendship and I thus came to know about his various activities. He is M.A. (English), M.Com. (Management), M.Ed. (Education), Ph.D (Education), LLB, Diploma in Japanese Language and *Kovid* in Hindi Language. Dr. Bhattacharya has been working as Assistant Registrar (Academic and research) in Viswa Bharati (a Central University) in Shantiniketan. He has been teaching Japanese language in two high schools - Patha Bhavana and Siksha Satra (under Viswa Bharati University on a part time basis. He is also a poet, composes poems for various magazines. With his benign personality, he exudes an unassuming, bland and yet strong personality.

Extracts of his interview:

Q: Why did you learn Japanese?

A: When I started learning Japanese in 1991, I did not think it would become a profession one day. I had heard about Japan and its culture from my childhood and desired to learn this language one day. I completed two years of Certificate Course and one year of Diploma Course from Viswa Bharati University in 1994.

Q: Then you continued...

A: Yes, I gradually became interested and tried to continue studying even after Diploma Course. I have completed Level 4 in 1996 while I was in Japan.

Q: You went to Japan?

A: Yes, towards the end of 1994 I suddenly came in contact with Professor Kazuo Azuma, the famous Indologist, Tagore scholar, and former Professor of Japanese language and Culture, Viswa Bharati. Dr. Padmaruchi Mukherjee introduced me to him. Then Professor Azuma offered me a proposal to go to Japan for a year on an Exchange Program, and I agreed. On 18th May, 1996, I reached Japan and stayed there till 17th May, 1997.

Q: Please tell us about your experiences there.

A: During that time I was able to go to many villages there (remote ones) of Japan and experienced the culture of the 'Land of the Rising Sun'. I had a bicycle there with the help of which I used to visit new

places on every weekend holidays. I stayed mainly at Kandetsu, a small town of Ibaraki prefecture near Tsuchiure National University (where I did Ph.D. on Comparative study). I went to Japan for the second time under the JENESYS Programme in 2010. This time I spent 10 days mainly in Nagoya.

Q: Your teaching experience...

A: I have been teaching Japanese language in the Higher Secondary level of the two schools of Viswa Bharati University since 2002. I have taught about 800 students, some of who are well placed now at Bangalore, Pune, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Kolkata, etc.

Q: Any memorable experience in Japan.

A: I was given a very warm welcome at Mito Higher Secondary School especially as I had gone from the Tagore International University, India, and Rabindranath Tagore had visited this school in 1916. After a formal reception and a short discussion, they led me to the music class where the students were practising a song... *Hotaru no otosan kanemochi da; Ha ha ha ha; Ho ho ho ho...* the melody is still vivid in my mind. The Principal informed me that till date some songs of Tagore are sung in that school for which I felt proud. They honoured me with a ceremonial tea ceremony, which is generally organized in the honour of a special guest. It was because of Tagore that I, being a very ordinary citizen of India, had been extended a VIP treatment which I did not deserve at all. I cannot forget that incident.

Q: Your advice to students of Japanese Language?

A: Japanese is a very interesting language and has similarities with the Bengali language in some places. Students should learn this language from their hearts not just for the sake of learning the language but also for the procurements of jobs because at the moment there is a good job market for Japanese knowing people.

*Aloke Basu
(An Executive Member of NKKS, and co-editor of "Sakura" Aloke san has also translated several Japanese "Haiku" poems recently published in the little magazine in Bengali called "Kathasatya")*



**CONGRATULATIONS
to the NEWLYWEDS!
Doyel Banerjee san
&
Sangeeta Chanda san**

ROOTS OF CULTURE

MOTOYOSHI NORO SAN'S VISIT to NKKS



DANCING TO THE TUNE OF NATURE

On 27th November, Kolkata got a feel of the ancient culture of the Ainu people at EZCC, Salt Lake. In an effort by the NPO Society to promote Indo-Japan Cultural Relations, Niigata, Japan, Ministry of Culture, Government of India and banglanatak.com, the city got a glimpse of the rich heritage of this naturalistic culture of the Ainu people, who hail from Hokkaido. Currently striving to restore the prestige deserving of this culture to the people, the 18-member dance group made their maiden voyage out Japan to promote awareness for their unique culture, which is essentially steeped in the worship and appreciation of the natural resources around them.

This was evident in the animalistic sounds and movements incorporated in their dance pieces – from their lullabies to the dances pertaining to their religious practices. The culture proved to be seemingly inclusive as in their final rendition of a dance piece, in which they invited the audience members to also join in.

Along with this, in a collaborative effort we also saw Chhau performers make an appearance. Perhaps it was in the spirit of integration as the Chhau culture is immensely naturalistic and the use of mythology and animal folk tales in the performances is similar to those of the Ainu. The energetic performance by the Chhau dancers along with the fascinating costumes brought an entertaining evening to a proper culmination, but left the spectators wanting more.

Sharmila Guha



GLIMPSE OF INDIAN MYTHOLOGY

Global Citizenship at Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata.

In his lecture which enthralled the audience, Mr Noro elaborated upon the deep bonds of friendship between India and Japan,

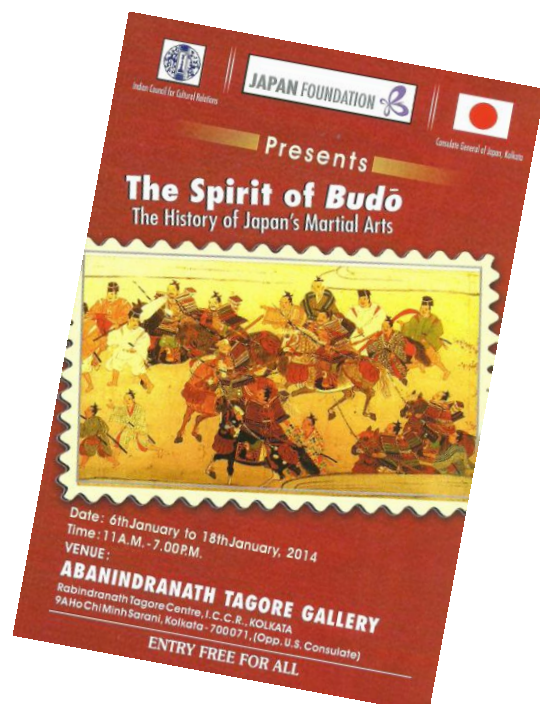


MR. M. NORO

which traces its' roots to the advent of Buddhism to Japan from India. He also talked about eminent personalities from India and Japan who visited the two countries. Tagore was deeply influenced by the Japanese sense of harmony with nature and he invited many Japanese scholars like Okakura Tenshin and Sano Jinnosuke to Santiniketan. In conclusion, Mr Noro reiterated that the relationship between India and Japan would further strengthen in the future, an indication of which was the visit of the Emperor and Empress of Japan to India recently.

As a token of appreciation, Mr. Noro was presented with a beautiful silver memento after his talk.

Poonam Nand Dey



JAPANESE CROSSWORD
(January - February)

1.	2.	3.	4.		5.		6.
7.					8.	9.	
10.			11.	12.			
	13.	14.					15.
16.						17.	
18.	19.		20.		21.		
22.			23.				
24.					25.		

ACROSS

- 1) Living alone
- 7) Bachelor
- 8) Mat
- 9) Will
- 11) Pleasure
- 13) Embezzle
- 17) Moss
- 18) Constitution (health)
- 21) Conversation
- 22) Lyrics
- 23) Extra-curricular
- 25) Calf

DOWN

- 1) Terrible
- 2) Characteristics
- 3) Interest (bank)
- 4) Army
- 5) Like
- 6) Wealth
- 9) People
- 12) Remain
- 14) Mustard
- 15) Delivery
- 16) Shawl
- 17) Carp
- 19) Dignity
- 20) To use
- 21) Dismissal

Mahashveta Basu Mukherjee

Answers to
JAPANESE CROSSWORD
(November - December)

1.	か	い	2.	ぎ	3.	し	4.	つ		5.	は	6.	し
	ん		7.	し	た	ま	8.	ち				か	
9.	こ	10.	じ	き		11.	む	く	12.	い		る	
13.	う	む		14.	か		15.	さ	き				
	16.	い	17.	ち	ぶ	18.	ぶ	ん			19.	つ	
20.	し	ん	り			ん			21.	あ	め		
ん			22.	と	ぼ	し	24.	い				た	
25.	し	ん	り	ん			26.	み	ら	い			

WORD JUMBLE - 29

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



1. ざいばん (Hurrah)

○	○		
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2. くんだり (Army)

○			
---	--	--	--

3. ぞいのち (one's second wife)

○	○		
---	---	--	--

4. じゅんうひよ (Standard)

	○	○			
--	---	---	--	--	--

5. じよし (Sons and daughters)

	○	○
--	---	---

6. すじあう (Mild tstring)

○			
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Sontu Debnath

ANSWERS TO WORD JUMBLE - 28

- 1. はらいもどし
- 2. ふくざつ
- 3. おせちりょうり
- 4. きんむじかん

ら	く	せ	き
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EDITORS: Tanusree Chatterjee & Alok Basu

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NIHONGO KAIWA KYOOKAI SOCIETY
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