



# Greenenergy

A Green Concern!





Architect  
**Pramod Chaugule**  
Editor, Greenergy

## 'PADAYATRI SMARAK' -

## A MEMORIAL FOR SOCIAL REFORMER SHRI RAJARAM BAPU PATIL

**B**est Architecture is a synthesis of several elements like space, structure, services and materials. The character of a space can be enhanced through the relationship of the spaces. The feel of authenticity of a space is maintained through the perfect blend of mass, color and lighting. A structure build in the memory of great social reformer from Western Maharashtra, India, Mr. Rajaram Bapu Patil follows the principles of aesthetic and functional design.

The project is a tribute to an active and capable social reformer Shri Rajaram Bapu Patil. He was born in 'Varkari' clan and he followed the principles of simplicity and honesty. He was a multidimensional personality. A memorial should be worthy of a personality whose character is being portrayed through a structure. For this, an understanding of the character of that person is significant. The transformation of a person from a simple background to a national leader is depicted in the structure through various themes incorporated in the plan through sculptural, pictorial and structural depiction.



Architect has divided the phases of R.B.Patil's life into four parts starting from his field work for the poor, to his various achievements. The sculpture also portrays his transformation into a great personality and the momentum he gained through his social reforms. It was intended to become an ideal centre of information about rural development, boost cooperation and function, as a study centre. He rose on the political scenario, through his several reforms and 'Padayatras' throughout the country, to reach up to the poorest of the poor. The characteristics of a true 'Varkari', inculcated in him, helped him to bond with the people as well as to become their leader.

The project is set up on a land about four and half acre.

## Plan

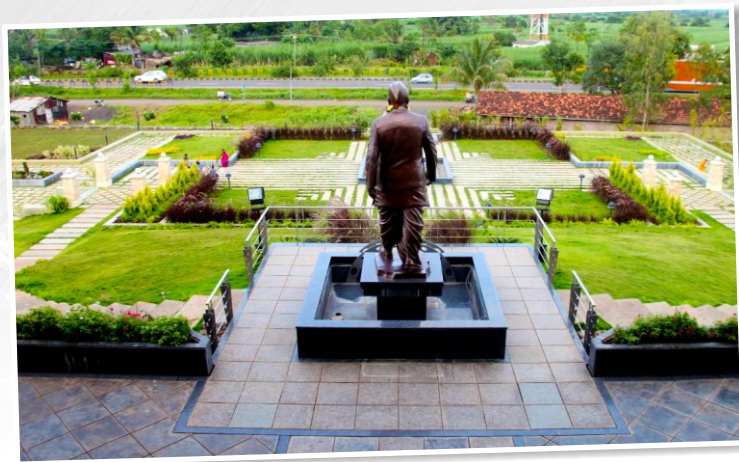
The plan is a simple, rectangular form with the divisions as lower ground floor, upper ground floor and first floor. Lower ground floor consists of an auditorium along with green rooms for performances, lectures and slideshows for sharing information and entertainment. It also has an office for 'Patasanstha' (a co-operative bank) and dining room for VIPs attending the function and visiting the bank.

Two spacious staircases take us to the upper ground which is provided with two museums for displaying the various phases in Bapu's life. First floor consists of a conference hall for a board meeting, a library, Chairman's room and a skywalk.

A magnificent bronze statue of Rajaram Bapu Patil, made up of hollow bronze and 10 feet 6" tall, stands against the back drop of a modern and imposing structure, amidst lush greenery. Various levels are created to reach up to the statue. These levels are extensively landscaped. The elevation of the landscape is the reflection of the levels Bapu reached through his reformation in green revolution, around the local area and in the vicinity of farmers.

A magnificent bronze statue of Rajaram Bapu Patil, made up of hollow bronze and 10 feet 6" tall, stands against the back drop of a modern and imposing structure, amidst lush greenery. Various levels are created to reach up to the statue. These levels are extensively landscaped. The elevation of the landscape is the reflection of the levels Bapu reached through his reformation in green revolution, around the local area and in the vicinity of farmers.

Flooring is composed of rough, locally available flag stones which have a sprinkle of green grass between the joints. Steps are provided to reach up to the statue with a simple but boldly painted yellow railing. The flooring laid is in interesting square or diamond pattern. A beautiful fountain is provided in front of the statue which is lighted at the night. Gradual levels are provided to reach up to the statue and the building. The mound surrounding the statue is planted with 'hariyali' and a wonderful rock garden is created with exotic plants in front of the statue. The simple, straight and grand structure clearly pays homage to the persona of Rajaram Bapu Patil. The gradual ascend of the mounds clearly depicts the journey of the man from lowest level to the topmost one.



Various walls of black basalt stone are seen in the elevation against which stands a beautiful monument and a magnificent building. An area has been located around the well where a routine village scene is proposed to be set up. The memorial portrays the transformation of this inspired person through different architectural styles; creation of the four ways water cascade provided at the feet of statue's feet represents water Revolution, depiction and lift Irrigation, started by Bapu. Landscape is simple and rugged with a creation of village scenery along with a statue with a building of international standards at its backdrop.



The structure is a composition of simple forms as semicircles and rectangles with bold coloring and external treatment of facades.

An imposing white arch stands as a back drop to the statue which is white in colour and clad with 'Alubond'. Multicolored fins stand on either side of the arch representing the 'Panchamahabhoot' coloured in magnificent blue, green and brown, the colors relating to the Mother Nature. Green flower beds can be seen connecting the fins at intermediary levels.

At the entrance façade stand two rectangles cutting the arch, protruding from it. The faces of these rectangles are treated with an attractive black cladding. The black severity is broken by small white rectangular patterns. A steel railing is seen on the first level, provided for a skywalk to give the feel of structure and the surrounding landscape. The arch represents his protecting arms and his support for the downtrodden. The walkways in the landscape are dedicated to the speed, maintained in his life. People can walk around on the walkways and get the glimpse of the structure from different angles. A ramp is provided with a railing for the handicapped, following the trail to the main walkway to get a good view of memorial.

The transformation of Bapu's life from a humble villager to an active and capable leader is seen through the large photographs which are hung in the entrance foyer below the skywalk. The designed structure is perfectly energy efficient and in accordance with all ecological factors as climate, rainfall and landforms. Architect has given consideration to the climatic factors as sun, wind and radiation, while designing the structure. The extensive use of energy is avoided through provision of perfect light, ventilation and use of materials. The elevation of the building from sides, reflects the simplicity of forms and colours designed in unison. Huge windows are provided at the sides of building for a proper light, ventilation, giving an airy feeling inside the building. The landscaping done in surrounding provides a temperature moderation and freshness to the surroundings.

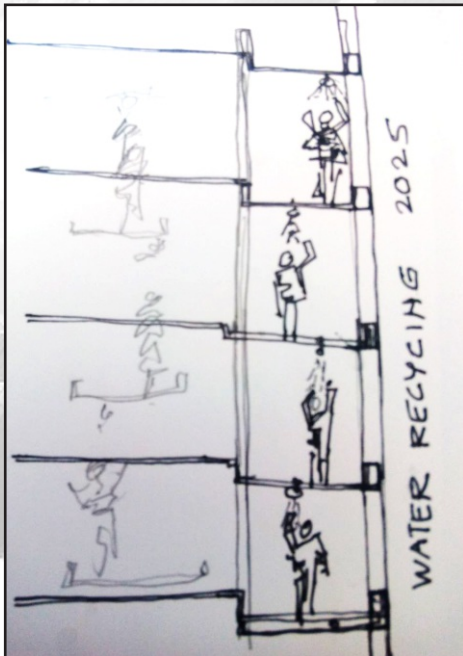
The site is designed in consideration with several parameters of design such as site, landscape, built form, materials and other control measures. This makes the structure functionally perfect and aesthetically magnificent. The main aim of meeting the occupants' needs for thermal and visual comfort, is achieved here.

Architect's aim of making the memorial an eco-friendly tribute to Bapu, is clearly achieved through Design and Landscape.



Architect Pramod Chaugule

## Green Toon



Architect  
**Pramod Chaugule**  
Editor, Greenery

Imagine If Trees Gave Off  
Wifi Signals, We Would  
Be Planting So Many Trees  
And We'd Probably Save  
The Planet Too.



Too Bad They  
Only Produce The  
Oxygen We  
Breathe.

**Dr. Jaya Kurhekar**  
Executive Editor, Greenery

## EAT GREEN, STAY GREEN!

Green is the color of fertility,  
Green is the hue of prosperity and freshness,  
Green is the fragrance of Life,  
Green is the epitome of all senses!

Green is an indication of pigments and birth,  
Green is the core of synthesis and growth!  
Green pigments are responsible for photosynthesis,  
A miraculous boon, leading to glycogenesis!

Oh, how many varieties surround us, of green!  
Light and dark, mixed and shades, umpteen!  
Green is the environment all around,  
Green is the color of health, safe and sound!

Let's develop green valleys, green mountains, green hills,  
Lush green pastures, green mounds and green creeper trills!

Vegetables, if green, carry growth factors,  
Fruits when green, pack a lot, that matters!  
Green contains anti-oxidants of all types in it,  
Green eating keeps one, fine and fit!  
Green tea and tender green sprouts,  
Keep one safe, without any doubts!  
Eat fruits and vegetables in ample, when clean!  
Eat green, sow green and stay green!!!



**Dr. Jaya Kurhekar**  
Executive Editor, Greenery

# MAN and BOUNTIFUL NATURE

Man keeps “getting and forgetting” and Nature Divine keeps “giving and forgiving”! We have taken more from the society than what we have given back. To redeem ourselves from our karmic indebtedness, we should work in order to leave behind a peaceful posterity.

Sincere introspection about our journey from the womb of our natural mother to the tomb provided by the Mother Nature, clearly suggests that we have taken more from the society than what we have given back!

Nature comprises of five basic elements; Water, Fire, Air, Earth and Space. Therefore, availability of the five elements of Nature and their constituents has tempted man to exploit these elements commercially, to enhance his prosperity.

In fact, these five elements provide the base for building the physical and material mundane world, in and around our existence. Man has exploited all the five elements of nature to the hilt and generated the surplus.

Earth's gift of Iron ores, Coal and Limestone has led to the establishment of Steel Industry, Cotton, Synthetic Fabrics, Silk Industry and creation of Textile Industries. Trees and plant fibers stand behind the establishment of paper industry; sand and Limestone behind the glass industry.

Apart from the above mentioned boons bestowed by the earth; elements of air, water, fire and space, happen to be the common inputs to all the major industries and auxiliary industries for a comfortable living and tolerant Mother Nature continues to watch these pranks patiently. Man keeps “getting and forgetting” and Nature keeps “giving and forgiving”!

The cruel excesses of the Industrial Evolution and Revolution seems to be taking its toll and patient Nature has to become impatient, unleashing her fury in the form of tsunamis, earthquakes, cyclones, floods and diseases which jolt up mankind out of its peace and service. The day spiritual values of these five elements are recognized and the presence of the supreme sixth element – 'The Supreme Almighty' is felt, it will herald the beginning of Heaven descending on Earth! To redeem ourselves from our karmic indebtedness to the cosmos, we should work sincerely for this miracle to happen and leave behind a peaceful world for the posterity.

I pray God to give a good sense to all of us and help Nature in its full form and give peace to all!

**Lt. Dr. S. A. Mantagani**



# “Sustainable life style ... Is it really possible?”

“A dwelling, where everything you need is available, where rivers are flowing like local trains of Mumbai, sunshine blesses throughout the day, crops are blooming like population of India and people are constantly smiling, animals are enjoying and the place is just perfect like an AmirKhans movie!

“Arpita, Wake up! It's 7 o'clock already!” I woke up my roommate on one Monday morning. She had a sweet smile on her face when she woke up. It was a happy shock to me that Arpita had woken up in just one call. Arpita was the same girl, who would not wake up even if a Dolby system played around. She said, “I saw heaven in my dream, it was really beautiful, let's go visit that place, let's go!” Saying this, she actually pulled me to the entrance. She explained her dream and narrated the entire event, which took me to that place and it was actually so beautiful!

Later that evening, after my college hours, I sat in the University garden, thinking of the dream. I was almost on another planet, unaware of the surroundings and the time. Is it really possible to find such a beautiful place on this earth? Or was it just a dream?

Can we really create such a place? With these heavy thoughts I went back to the University library and started the most difficult search of my life. I searched all possible shelves in the library to find that place of Arpita's imagination. I finally found one book, the picture on its cover page showing people dancing, animals grazing and lord Krishna playing flute. Yes, it was “Vrindavan”! I kept on observing the picture for more 20 minutes, imagining it to be a reality. Yes, I thought it was really possible to have such a clean and happy place and it was possible to create the same again. “Vrindavan” was a perfect example of a sustainable village. It had everything for survival of all living beings.

Natural resources as well as manmade produce were abundant. Wherever one glanced, it was either a lush green pasture or a neat and clean construction. All living beings were happy and satisfied. Potters, milkmen, barbers, blacksmiths, farmers, businessmen were satisfied with their work and income. The waste generated was reused and recycled so well that there wasn't even a drop of dirt visible. Ladies used pots and metallic vessels.

Kids played with organictoyoys. The entire town was a living example of an ecofriendly township. I went back to the hostel and chose a silent corner and started to revise all events since morning. I even linked this to my studies. We had a topic in Advanced Biotechnology, Sustainable Agriculture and Waste Management. The study included composting, manure production from waste, use of cow dung, bio fertilizers, organic food and recycling. These life sustaining techniques would definitely help us make our lifestyle sustainable, with limited resources.

One fine day, I wish to see such a beautiful place, where, our lives would be environment friendly. Our day would start with bird's chirping sounds, cleaner air and healthy food. We would be reusing and recycling all the used things and waste generation would be lesser. We would be surrounded by nature's blessings and we humans, plants and animals would be healthy and satisfied. The food would be plenty and everyone in the food chain would be getting their primary requirements.

For this to really happen, every single individual has to contribute and has to be walking towards an ecofriendly life. We have to make a habit of reusing, reducing waste and recycling things. If we wish to see our future generations surviving on earth, we have to start valuing the natural resources and preserving them. By avoiding over usage of energy consuming appliances we can preserve resources for the future!

In today's competitive world, we are running behind fame and money, but in reality we are going far from the nature and its feelings. Modernization has taken away the taste of satisfaction from our life.

To sustain in this global competition, we are actually losing basic happiness and the true motto behind our life. Let's pledge to save our mother earth and the future generations; "I would return everything that I used in my entire life to the mother land and would try to preserve my mother earth".

*Mayuri Shah*



**think  
green.**

42°+ temperature....

Dear Sun,  
Please go to settings>display>brightness  
and lower your brightness! Please its too  
hot to handle!

Sun replied...

I have not changed any settings.  
Please go to your settings and...

1. Increase number of trees...
2. Reduce carbon emissions levels...
3. Reduce concrete jungles...
4. Increase number of lakes...

Basically, switch to human mode from auto  
mode...!!!

# INTO THE THIN AIR

In April 2014, I went on a trek, which was my dream, for the last two years. “Everest base camp trek” is one of the most wonderful and tough treks in Nepal. Everest base camp is at a height of 17,500 feet and we left for it on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. I started from Kathmandu, with a group of fourteen, most of the members from Mumbai.

Our trek started from Lukla which is a remote place and a gate way to Everest and Everest base camp. To reach Lukla, we had to take a flight from Kathmandu to Lukla. Lukla is a small village, situated at the edge of mountains, which does not have a road connectivity till date. Most of villagers from Lukla, have to catch a flight for Katmandu.

Normal temperature at Lukla in the month of April is 10°C to 0°C and some times dips to a still lower level. It is a very beautiful village of population approximately 3000 to 4000. Localites earn a living on loading, trekking, shops and selling trekking material. Mostly youngsters guide the trekkers and travelers. The daily income is based on above itineraries. It is very difficult for people residing in mountains to survive, as compared to normal village or city life. They have to struggle for survival on a day to day basis. Most of houses in mountain ranges are made from easily available local material. We moved from Lukla to Manjo.

## Sustainable Living

During the whole trek, I observed is that people do not have much opportunities of business for earning daily bread. They mostly earn on farming or Tourism.

There are less schools for children with neither the facility of higher education in the mountains, nor the advanced technology. The basic necessities of living are met with the help of the surroundings, as it is very difficult to transport the material from the cities to mountains.

## Shelter

Most of the houses are constructed using local materials like wood, pine wood, silver oak and timber. Most of the columns or beam logs are taken from farms, in correct sizes depending on loads. They are properly processed for construction.

## Walls

Most of the walls are erected from local stones which are properly processed and aligned, so that they require very loss mortar.

## Roofs

Local tiles, stone slabs, G.I. sheets are used for roofs which sustain all the seasons. We observed ply wood sheets being transported on the shoulders of porters at higher altitudes, which is a very strenuous job. To complete the construction of a house in mountains as in Himalayan ranges, it takes almost three years as it is covered with snow most of the times and it is impossible to work for all twelve months. Economy is a major issue according to which the period varies. Most of material required daily, is transported on yaks which are ecofriendly and pollution free and not in three wheelers. Land available is in plenty in the mountain ranges. Most of houses have enough space around, for children to play. Birds can have their own space and natural ventilation is not a problem. In villages, women are seen cleaning rice, wheat or other cereals in the open courtyards. Birds eat the thrown unwanted particles which help in building up a habitat where birds get their food and they chirp around the houses. Nature, thus, takes part in our lives. Temporary sheds are erected in the front or back yards of the houses, mostly the partitions being made from the coconut or other trees. Partitions are made by weaving easily available leaves and wood together, to make “canopies”.

They often plant trees like Tulsi, Neem and take care of them, as they are useful for getting medicines and food, as per the situations. Houses are frequently nestled in the mountains at various locations and heights.

## Water

It is rightly said water is life and life is water! Obtaining water by just opening a jaguar tap for cooking, washing or drinking is a very lazy and easy job for any individual. But drawing the water from wells or lakes or tanks, on a daily basis is not so easy! In the mountains, mineral rich water with higher mineral value is available, than in normal stored water in a municipal water tank. Generally in the mountain ranges, people take water for use from the natural springs or water falls, which is then taken to the houses by pipes and stored in small tanks.



## Energy

Sitting in an air conditioned office or home and doing work is much easier than getting three to four hours of electricity in the villages or homes in the mountains. All work is planned according to the timings of day light. Solar energy is a good option in the mountains but the question of economy looms large! Very few lights are powered by solar energy. Small solar lamps of four to five watts play a crucial role in lighting up the houses and roads. House wives have to adjust all the work in the day light time, which is limited to a small period, which is not a question in the cities.

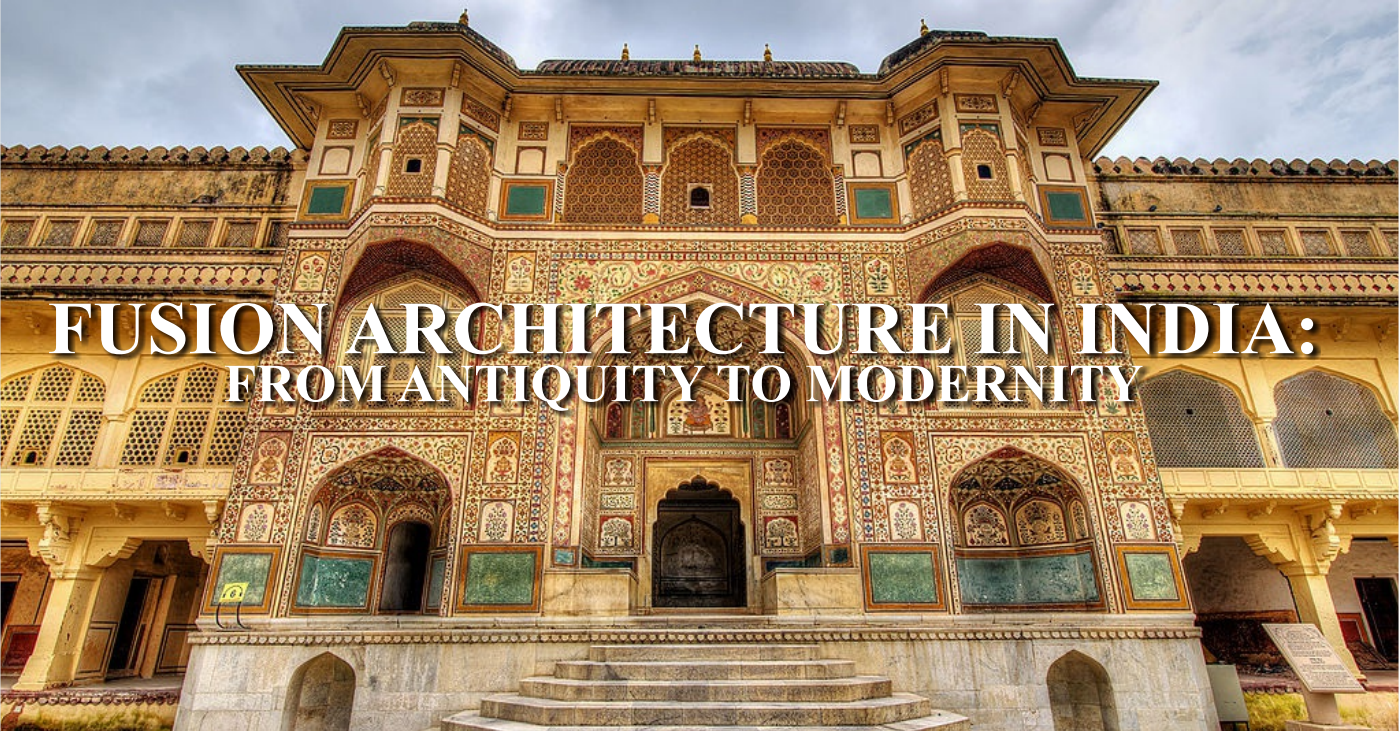
We went to higher altitudes and observed that the challenges for a sustainable living increase. The variety in flora, fauna, mankind in villages changes as per the nature, its surroundings and environment.

## Food

Opening a lid of a chilled coco – cola can is very easy but to get the same in mountains is a tricky job. Biogas or coal or woods are used for cooking the food. There are some regions where LPG gas has reached but overall it's not an affordable affair. The fallen wood sticks or wood from the old plant stock is generally used for routine needs.

Housewives, men, family heads go into the forests for wood collection on a daily or a weekly basis. We click big deals or perform other work within seconds, when they are toiling for wood and other basic necessities. Natural and organic vegetables are grown in mountains as nature is the only pesticide or fertilizer. Getting organic fruits and vegetables, is an advantage in the mountains. The point is that as we are living happily, they are also living a happy life there. The thought process for a good living in both the situations is correct, according to the situation. We can live a great green living by bringing about small modifications in our daily life. It's not necessary to shift to the mountains, but we can always accept small things, utilize sparingly and contribute to sustainable living. Let's contribute towards sustainable living!

Kaushal Suresh Patil, Sangli



# FUSION ARCHITECTURE IN INDIA: FROM ANTIQUITY TO MODERNITY

From ancient to modern, India nourishes on its immense architectural heritage. From antiquity to modernity, having transformed with changing tones of history, architecture has also, in turn influenced history. Evoking socio-cultural and political ethos of the place, the emerging architecture has always remained a fruitful fusion of the old and the new concerns. Maintain the deep rooted values of traditions, the element of “New” has always been introduced to make effective use of the prevalent resources as well as to keep up with the demands of changing times.

## Indo Islamic Architecture

Islamic architecture in India dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Brought to India by the first Muslim conquerors, Islamic architecture soon lost its original purity and borrowed such elements from Indian architecture as courtyards surrounded by colonnades and balconies; supported by brackets and above all decoration. Islamic architecture on the other hand introduced to India the dome, the true arch, geometric motifs, mosaics and minarets. Despite the fundamental conceptual differences, Indian and Islamic architecture achieved a harmonious fusion, especially in certain regional styles. Subterranean architecture for water such as the step wells is unique to Indians, in terms of our attitude to water and stylistic manifestations. Design, detailing and decorations of both Hindu and Islamic fused to become Indo-Sarcenic style.



Step well, Gujarat - Indo-Islamic style

The dome, the arch, the minaret are constant features of the style, a famous monument in this style is the mausoleum - GolGumbaz (17<sup>th</sup> century) in Bijapur, Mysore state.

### **Fusion of Hindu-Jain Architecture:**

Jain temples metamorphosed in marble, the intricate wooden carvings of the traditional havelis, giving a new dimension to the construction material as well as the temple form.

### **Fusion of Indian, Islamic and European architecture (colonial):**

European planning and colonial standards were customized for the given climate and conditions. Hence, an emergence of a bungalow occurred with formal planning and informal spaces like verandahs. Indian architecture is known for indigenous detailing and exteriors with western furnishing and interiors offering western aesthetics but Indian ambiance. A classical example can be given of late classical motifs of Europe, stained glass windows and peculiar woodwork combined soothingly with the vocabulary of prevalent arches, domes, jais, chhajjas and zarokhas.

**Houses of Bohras** are crisp examples of a pleasing amalgamation of Hindu-Islamic and colonial fusion style reflecting respectively their Gujarati habits, Muslim religion and European ties.



**BOHRA HOUSE — Hindu – Islamic, European fusion**

### **Rashtrapati Bhavan:**

apart from Indian style, Mughal and European colonial architectural elements are seen in the building. The entire building has been built around huge courtyards with a numbers of squares and open areas, within. The main dome involves a fusion of Indian and British architectural styles. Charming Mughal Gardens surround the Rashtrapati bhavan.



**BOHRA HOUSE --- Hindu – Islamic, European fusion**



## Victoria Memorial Hall:

set in a vast, well manicured park, the white Makrana marble is reminiscent of the mighty Taj-mahal, built in Indo-Saracenic Revival architecture.



### Victoria Memorial Hall -- Hindu, Islamic, colonial fusion

#### Fusion of Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist, Rajput and Christian styles:

**Belur Math, Kolkata**, encompassing four temples, it represents Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist, Rajput and Christian styles. The building serves as the Ramkrishna Mission Headquarters and sits within well-tended gardens of palms and lush lawns. Set on the banks of the river, Belur Math promotes religious harmony.



### Belur Math – Indo, Islamic, Rajput, Christian fusion

#### Fusion of Portuguese, Hindu and Islamic architecture – Temples of Goa:

Goa had been ruled by various Hindu dynasties before it was brought under the rule of Deccani Sultanates, followed by the Portuguese. The temples built in Goa from 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards also show combined aspects of Islamic and Portuguese architecture.

The domed roofs are a Muslim trait, while the white washed octagonal towers and balustrade facades have been borrowed from Portuguese church architecture. One of the unique features of Goan temples is the Deepstambhas, two to four storeyed high and the lamp towers, an influence from the Maratha temple traditions. The deepstambhas of Mangeshi and Shantadurga temples, with their white washed pillars and baroque decoration show unique synthesis of Hindu and Portuguese styles.

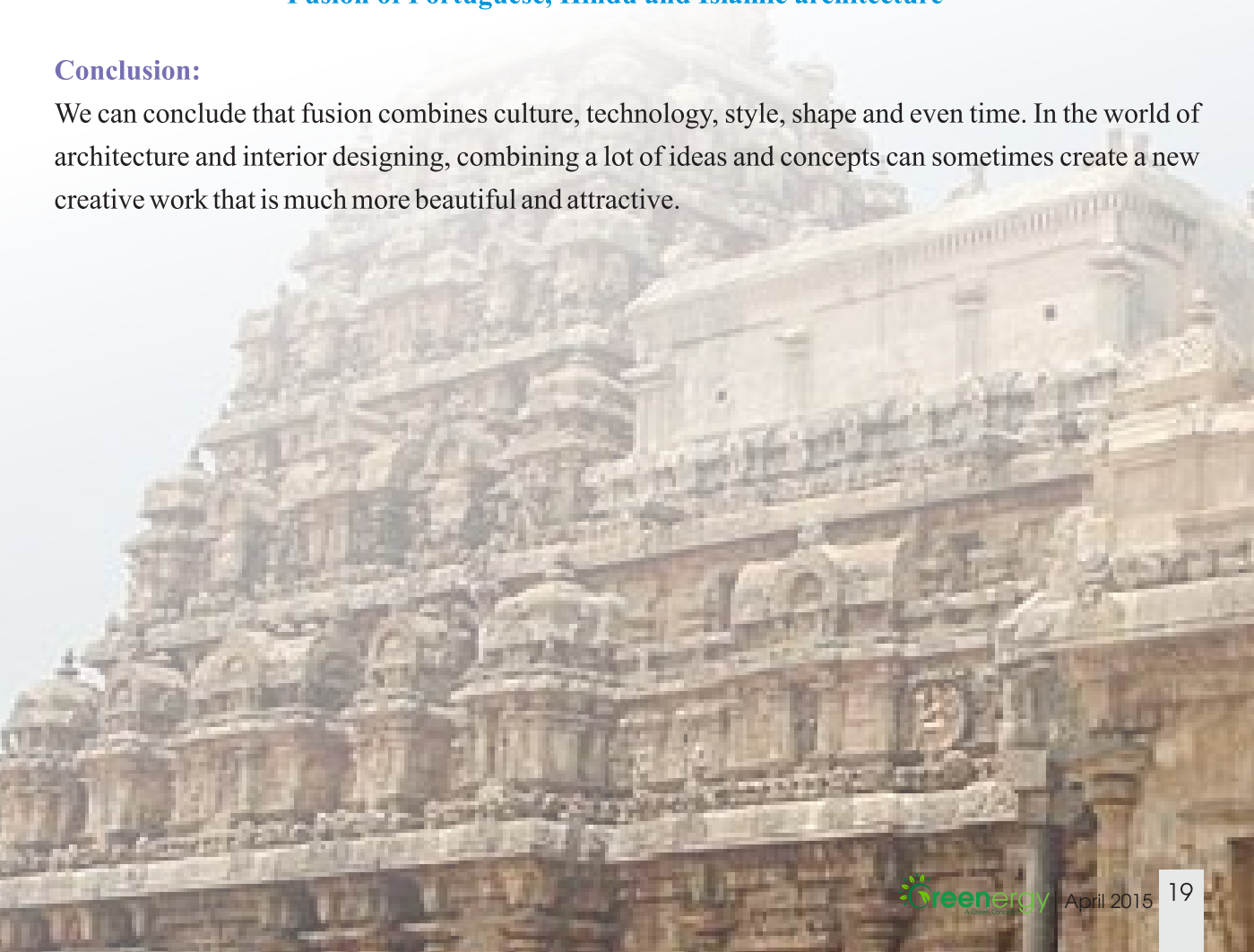
Another distinctive part of the Goan temples where the Portuguese influence is found is in the curvilinear roofs of the mandapas. The arched entrances, niches and pilasters that feature in the most of temples of this period, display a distinct European influence. Inside the temple, the mandapa often has a curved ceiling with columns sometimes the mandapas or garbhagriha would be decorated with cusped arches, flying angles and bunches of grapes as in Christian churches. The temples have been often embellished with baroque style balustrades.



**Mangeshi temple Deepstambhas – Shantadurga temple  
Fusion of Portuguese, Hindu and Islamic architecture**

### **Conclusion:**

We can conclude that fusion combines culture, technology, style, shape and even time. In the world of architecture and interior designing, combining a lot of ideas and concepts can sometimes create a new creative work that is much more beautiful and attractive.



# मानसरोवर

सुवर्णा लेले, मुंबई

## मानस सरोवर

[ कॉलीन थुन्नोन हयांनी केलेले प्रवास वर्णन ]

सगळी जवळची नाती आईच्या मृत्यूने संपली आणि उद्विग्न, मनाने कैलास पर्वताकडे मानसिक शांतीसाठी प्रवास सुरू केला त्याचे हे वर्णन देत आहे. जसे आम्ही कैलासाच्या दिशेने वर वर जाऊ लागलो तसे आभाळ विरळ होत गेले आणि रंग सुद्धा, फिक्कट होत गेला. 'गुरु मंत्रा' मधून झरे खालच्या कर्णामध्ये नाहीसे झाले. जाता जाता आम्ही काही जमीनदोस्त, होत चाललेल्या राहुट्या आणि किल्ले बघत चाललो होतो. ३००० हजार फुटांची उंची आम्ही एका तासात कशी पार केली हे आम्हाला कळलेच नाही.

बौद्धाची एखादी दुसरी मॉनेस्ट्री आणि गुरांच्या कळपाशिवाय रस्त्यामध्ये माणसांची खूणही दिसत नव्हती. १६००० फुटाच्या उंचीवर अचानक रंगीबेरंगी झेंड्याच्या खुणा दिसू लागल्या. एखाद्या भूताने पछाडलेल्या वैराण जागेसारखे ते दिसत होते. थालॉग पासच्या जसे वर आलो तसे आश्चर्याने अक्षरशः स्तब्ध झालो. ह्या पृथ्वीवरच्या एका अदभूत प्रदेशात आपण प्रवेश केला आहे, ह्याची जाणीव झाली.

ह्या स्तब्ध शांततेमध्ये एक अर्ध वर्तुळाकार तळे एखाद्याकोरीव शिल्पासारखे बसले होते. सगळ्या उजाड वैराण, परिसरातले त्याचे वैभव आणि दिमाख नजरेला स्पष्ट दिसत होते. ह्या शांततेत एक झुडूप किंवा पक्षी सुद्धा दिसत नव्हता, फक्त कैलासाचे चमकते शिखर मात्र दिसायला लागले होते. तो एक साक्षात्कारी क्षण होता आणि बरोबरचे सगळे प्रवासी मंत्रमुग्ध होऊन ईश्वराचा जयजयकार करू लागले. नेहमी ट्रेकिंग ला जाणारे लोक लँडक्रूजर मधून उतरून हे विलक्षण दृश्य पाहायला लागले !



इथे सर्व रंग, मनसोक्त रंगपंचमी सारखी उधळण केलेले होते. जमीनीचा मातकट रंग, हिमशिखरांचा पांढरा आणि राखाडी रंग आकाशात फिक्कट निळा आणि ह्या निळ्या रंगाचे प्रतिबिंब पडलेले ते सरोवर, असे ते अविस्मरणीय दृश्य होते. ही पवित्र भूमी माणसांपासून दूर अशा ठिकाणी किती वर्षांपासून अस्तित्वात आहे हे ईश्वरच जाणे !

तरीही हे तळे, म्हणजे 'मानससरोवर' नसून 'राक्षसतळे' आहे हे समजल्यावर धक्काच बसला. हे तळे इथले आसपासचे रहिवासी पवित्र समजत नाहीत. हिंदू कथेनुसार हे तळे राक्षसांचे असून त्याच्या किनाऱ्यावर कुठल्याही मनुष्याचा अथवा बांधकामाचा पुरावा दिसत नाही. फक्त एक जीर्ण - शीर्ण अशी एकलकोंडी मॉनेस्ट्री मात्र उभी असलेली दिसते आहेत. त्याचा अर्ध चंद्राकार उगीचच माणसांनी अशुभ ठरवून टाळला. मानस सरोवर जसे देवाचे आणि अतिशय पवित्र सरोवर समजले जाते, तसेच राक्षसतळे हे वाऱ्याने, हिम वर्षावांने झपाटलेले अशुभ तळे समजले जाते. मानससरोवराच्या गोलाकारा बरोबरच राक्षस तळ्याचा चंद्राकार निर्माण झाला. जे देव दानवांचे प्रतिक आहे असे इथले रहिवासी समजतात.

पायरीवरून आम्ही हळूहळू खाली उतरलो आणि काही क्षणांसाठी हे अदभूत दृश्य नाहीसे झाले. पण पुढच्या काही क्षणांमध्ये आणखीनच स्तब्ध करणारे दृश्य समोर आले आणि ईश्वराची साक्ष तिथेच पटली. हे पहिल्या तळ्यापेक्षा ही निळे असलेले आणि गोलाकार असलेले तळे दिसू लागले.

जगाच्या सर्व तळ्यांपेक्षा पवित्र समजल्या जाणाऱ्या तळ्याच्या काठाशी आम्ही उभे आहोत, ह्यावर विश्वास बसला नाही. जगातल्या एक पंचमांश लोकांचे हे पवित्र तीर्थस्थान आहे पण तरीसुद्धा ह्याच्या तीरावर लोकांनी घाण करायला सुरवात केली नाही हे बघून आनंद झाला. इथल्या सौंदर्याचे वर्णन करायला जावे तर शब्दही अपूरे पडतील. मोराच्या पिसाऱ्या प्रमाणे अनेक निळसर रंगांच्या छटांनी हे सरोवर नटले आहे. कुठे हिरवटसर, कुठे गडद निळा, कुठे हिरवट निळा आणि त्यातच प्रतिबिंबित झालेल्या हिमालयाच्या रांगा ! कोणीही प्रतिभावान लेखक ही आपल्या शब्दात हे पकडू शकणार नाही. एकुण १५००० फुटाच्या उंचीवरचे जगातले हे एवढे मोठे एकमेव तळे, ते ह्या जागी केव्हा कधी आणि का आले हे कुठलाही मनुष्यप्राणी सांगू शकणार नाही. अदभूताची साक्ष तिथेच हळू हळू पटायला लागते.

त्या दोन पर्वतांमधील निळाई तर अक्षरशा अदभूत दिसत होती. तिबेटी लोक त्याला 'ल्सी माफम' असे म्हणतात, म्हणजे ज्याची कशाशीही तुलना होवू शकणार नाही. असे 'अतुलनीय' त्याची शांतता

सरोवराच्या निळाईत मिसळून गेलेली दिसली. अशा आश्चर्यामधून विश्वाचा जन्म झाला असे बौद्ध व हिंदू पुराणांमध्ये लिहलेले आहे. ते खरंच आहे, असे वाटायला लागते. या संध पाण्यावर जणू विष्णू, कमळामध्ये तरंगत आहेत आणि ह्या एकात्मतेतून अनेक विषयांचे प्रगटीकरण झाले असे वाटते आणि एक अध्यात्मिक ग्लानी यायला लागते. ह्या तळ्याची भौगोलिक रचना ह्या अमानवी गोष्टींची साक्ष देत उभी आहे.

हिंदू साठी ह्या मानससरोवरचे कैलासाशी जणू लग्न झाले आहे. मानस सरोवर म्हणजे ब्रम्हदेवाच्या मनातून निर्माण झालेले सरोवर आणि चेतनेचा तो पहिला साक्षात्कार आहे असे हिंदू लोक समजतात. ह्या तळ्याच्या रचनेनंतर देवांचा इथे वास असे आणि खुद्द महादेव इथे राजहंसाच्या रूपाने विहार करत, असे इथले रहिवासी समजतात. गौतम बौद्धाच्या आईने त्याच्या जन्मा पूर्वी ह्या सरोवरात स्नान केले होते, अशीही एक अख्यायका आहे. बौद्ध आणि हिंदू कथांचा इथे सुंदर मिलाफ झालेला दिसून आलेला आहे.

इथल्या जडीबुटींचा उपयोग अनेक रहिवासी लोक आपला रोग बरा करण्यासाठी करतात, असे त्यांनी आम्हाला सांगितले. इथल्या पाण्याच्या सेवनाने सर्व पापातून मुक्तता होते आणि माणूस स्वर्गाला जातो असे सर्व हिंदू समजतात. मरण्याच्या माणसाच्या मुखात हे पाणी घातल्यास, तो जन्म मरणाच्या बंधनातून मुक्त होतो, अशीही कथा आहे. मी एखाद्या भक्ताप्रमाणे तळ्याला प्रदक्षिणा घालायला सुरवात केली. सूर्य त्याच्या पूर्ण तेजाने लख्ख आकाशात तळपायला लागला. १५००० फुटांवर हवा हळूहळू विरळ व्हायला लागली आणि माझे हृदय धडधडायला लागले आणि बधीर पायांनी मी वाळूवर चालायला लागलो. एकदम स्वच्छ हवेमध्ये दूरच्या गोष्टी ही स्पष्टपणे पण आकाराने लहान दिसत होत्या. ह्या शांत स्तब्धतेत एखादा पक्षी चिवचिवाट करत जात होता. चालता चालता माझ्या लक्षात आले की प्राणी, पक्षांच्या थव्यांमधून चालत आहेत. ह्या पक्षांमध्ये काळ्या डोक्यांचे गल्स (दपाड), सड पायपर्स, रेडशांक्स, बदके हे पक्षी प्रामुख्याने दिसले.

माझ्या उद्देशीत जागेकडे चालत जातांना वारे एकदम जोरात वहायला लागले. थोड्याच पुढे एक पांढऱ्या दगडांचा ढीग, कोणीतरी मानवी शक्तीने उभारावा तसा उभा केला होता. तो अनैसर्गिकपणे चमकत होता. त्या प्रकाशामध्ये मला अचानक एक पार्थिव असल्यासारखे भासायला लागले, वीस मैलांवर गुरु मंथाताचे रुपेरी प्रतिबिंब पाण्यात पडले होते. माझ्या पायाशी अनेक काळ्या दगडांच्या लादल्या पडल्या होत्या ज्यांच्यावर प्रार्थना आणि मंत्र, येणाऱ्या जाणाऱ्या भक्त गणांनी कोरले होते. कुठल्या साधूंनी आणि लोकांनी हे केले होते हे ईश्वरच जाणे ! त्या प्रार्थनांमध्ये एक प्रार्थना पुन्हा पुन्हा दिसत होती ती म्हणजे "ओम् मनी पद्मेहम्" ही श्वासोश्वासाप्रमाणे एका लयीत सगळ्या दगडांवर कोरली होती.

चालता चालता मधेच अनेक मोडकळीस आलेल्या भिंती दिसल्या. नंतर लक्षात आले कि, त्या उध्वस्त मॉनेस्ट्री च्या भिंती आहेत, ज्याचे नाव 'गोल्डन बर्ड मॉनेस्ट्री' असे आहे. गौतम बौद्धाने आणि त्याच्या अनुयायांनी इथून कैलासाला प्रस्थान केले असे म्हणतात. इथे अशा सहा मॉनेस्ट्री होत्या ज्या काळाच्या ओघात नष्ट झाल्या आणि नंतर बांधल्या सुद्धा गेल्या इथे एखादा monk सोडून कुणाचाही वावर नसतो. त्याने वाजवलेल्या घंटेचा नाद इथली शांतता भंग करत जाते !



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