



MANN KI BAAT

VOL.2



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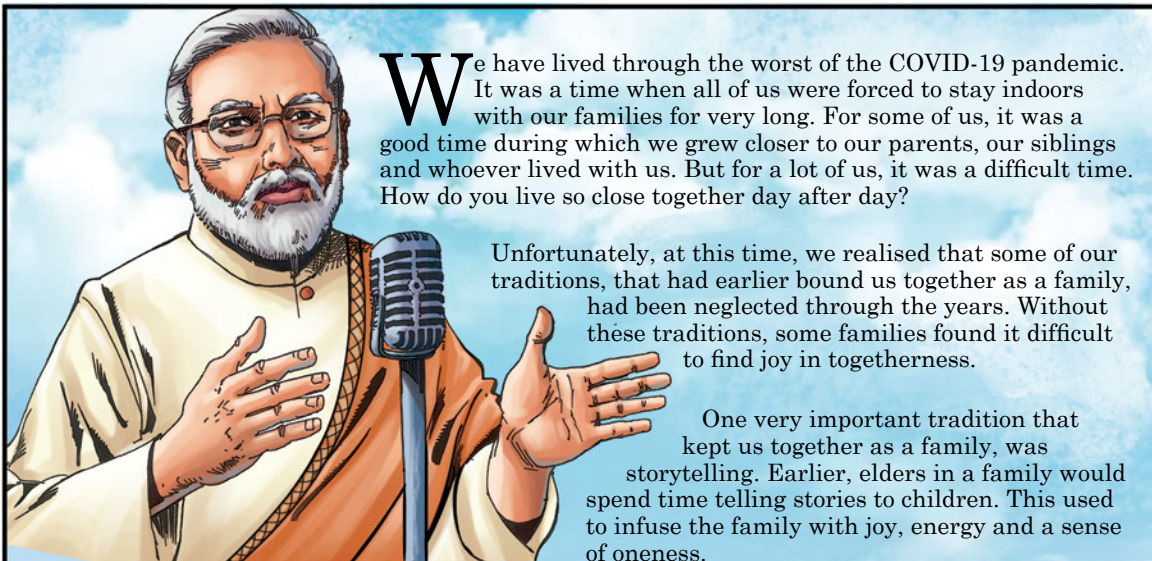
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We have lived through the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a time when all of us were forced to stay indoors with our families for very long. For some of us, it was a good time during which we grew closer to our parents, our siblings and whoever lived with us. But for a lot of us, it was a difficult time. How do you live so close together day after day?

Unfortunately, at this time, we realised that some of our traditions, that had earlier bound us together as a family, had been neglected through the years. Without these traditions, some families found it difficult to find joy in togetherness.

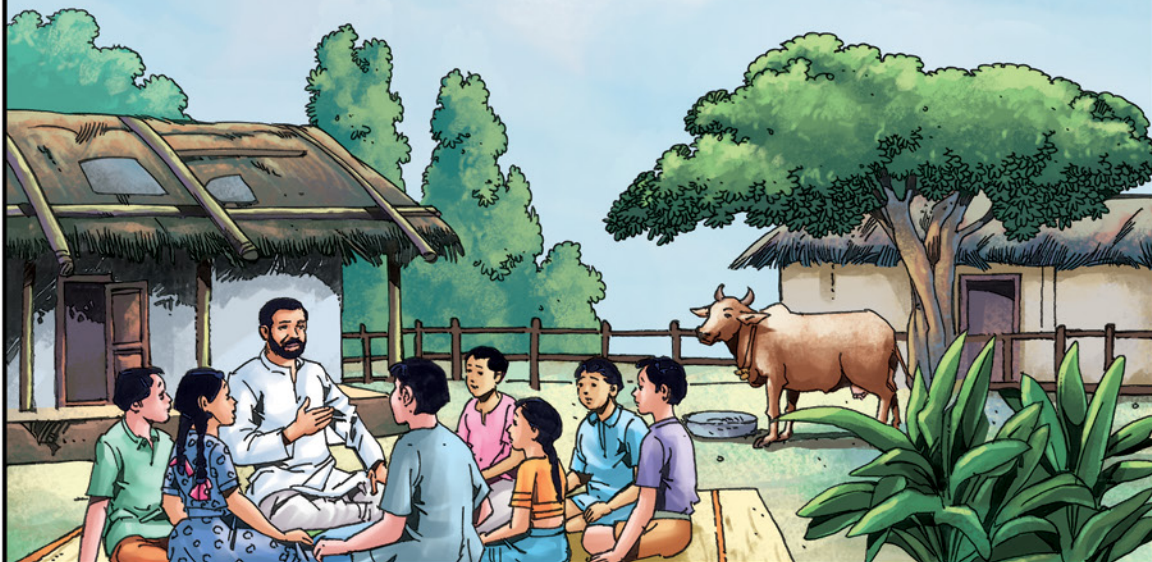
One very important tradition that kept us together as a family, was storytelling. Earlier, elders in a family would spend time telling stories to children. This used to infuse the family with joy, energy and a sense of oneness.

Stories bring out creativity and sensitivity. Where there is a soul, there is a story. When I was much younger, I travelled through India, visiting village after village. I always made it a point to interact with village children. I would often ask them to tell me a story.

They would reply, “No Uncle, we will tell you a joke and then you tell us a joke.” I was taken aback that these children were not even aware of the joy of listening to stories! The tradition of storytelling in India goes back to ancient times. Be it stories from the Panchatantra, the Hitopadesha or Kissa Goi*. There were stories with animals and birds that imparted wisdom, and religious stories that taught values.

Today, there many people who have started their own storytelling platforms. Amar Vyas and his friends started Gaathastory.in. Vaishali Vyavhare Deshpande popularises stories that tell about village folk and farmers. Vikram Sridhar of Bengaluru is a storyteller who has a special passion for telling stories of Babu^ . Srividya Veeraraghavan of Chennai and Geeta Ramanujam of Kathalaya.org, are all excellent storytellers you must find out more about.

Let us join Nair Sir in his school, as he tells us more stories about storytellers and many other inspiring people, from my programme, Mann ki Baat.



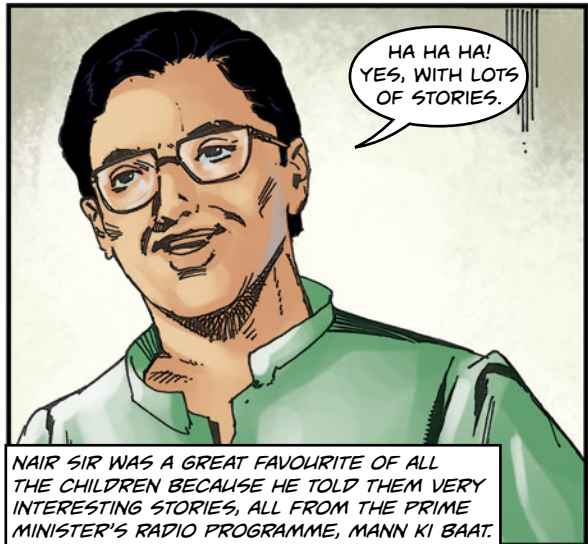
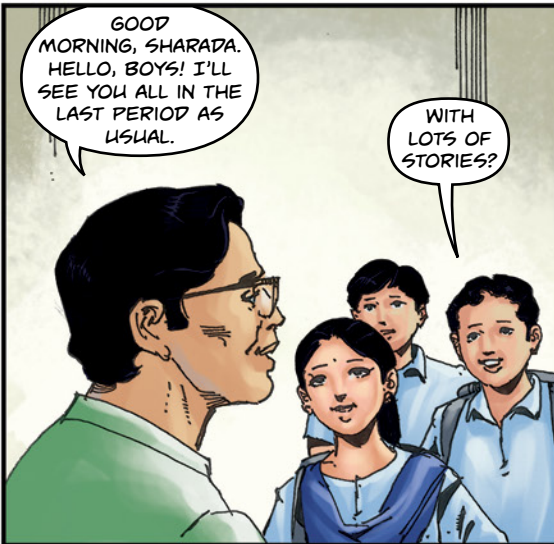
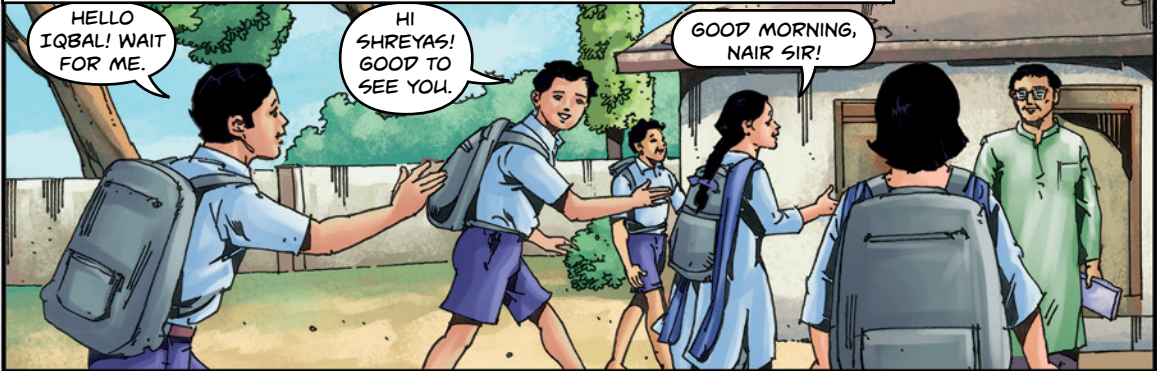


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ALL ABOUT STORIES

THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS WERE OVER AND ALL THE CHILDREN WERE BACK AT SCHOOL.

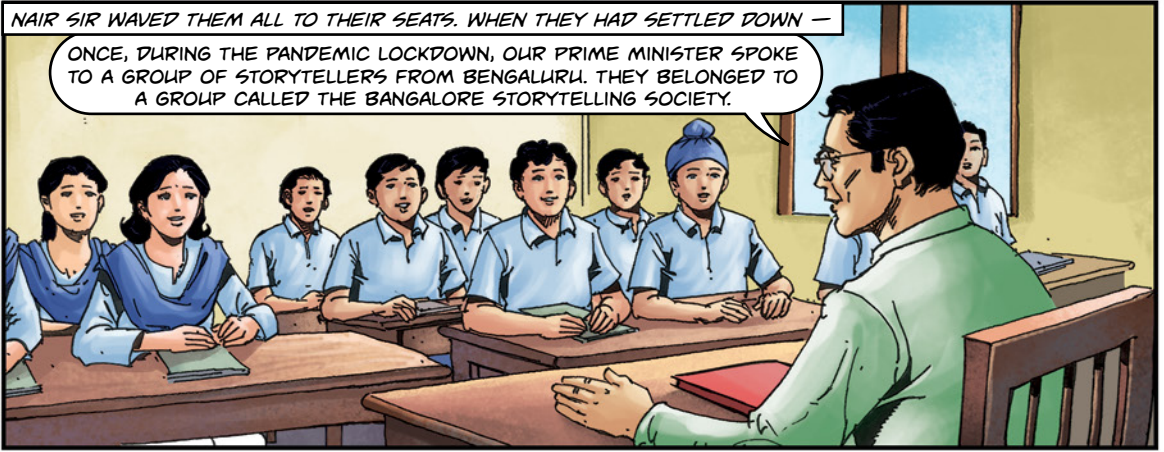


SURE ENOUGH, AT THE END OF THE DAY, HE CAME STRIDING IN WITH A BIG SMILE, AS USUAL.



NAIR SIR WAVED THEM ALL TO THEIR SEATS. WHEN THEY HAD SETTLED DOWN –

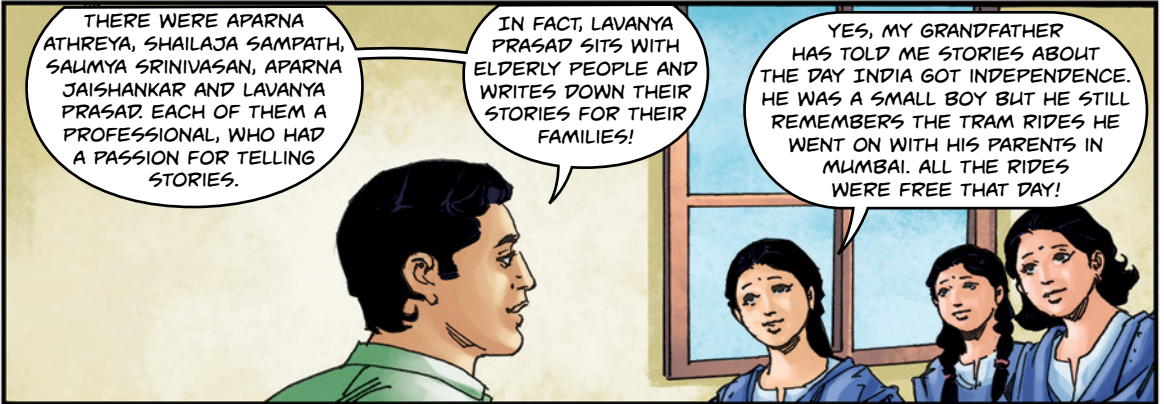
ONCE, DURING THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN, OUR PRIME MINISTER SPOKE TO A GROUP OF STORYTELLERS FROM BENGALURU. THEY BELONGED TO A GROUP CALLED THE BANGALORE STORYTELLING SOCIETY.



THERE WERE APARNA ATHREYA, SHAILAJA SAMPATH, SALMYA SRINIVASAN, APARNA JAISHANKAR AND LAVANYA PRASAD. EACH OF THEM A PROFESSIONAL, WHO HAD A PASSION FOR TELLING STORIES.

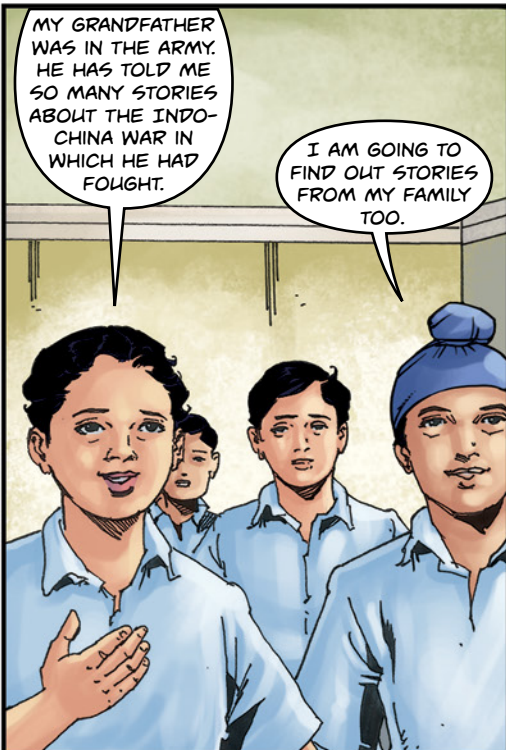
IN FACT, LAVANYA PRASAD SITS WITH ELDERLY PEOPLE AND WRITES DOWN THEIR STORIES FOR THEIR FAMILIES!

YES, MY GRANDFATHER HAS TOLD ME STORIES ABOUT THE DAY INDIA GOT INDEPENDENCE. HE WAS A SMALL BOY BUT HE STILL REMEMBERS THE TRAM RIDES HE WENT ON WITH HIS PARENTS IN MUMBAI. ALL THE RIDES WERE FREE THAT DAY!



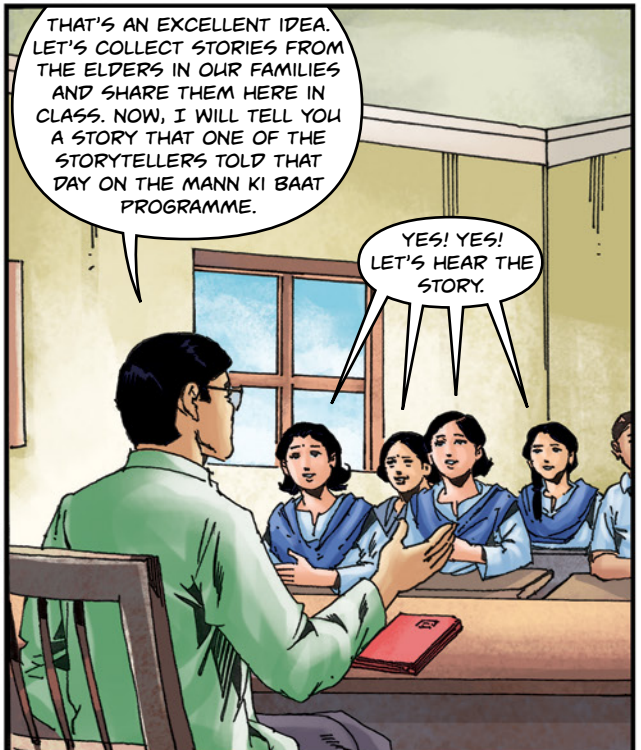
MY GRANDFATHER WAS IN THE ARMY. HE HAS TOLD ME SO MANY STORIES ABOUT THE INDO-CHINA WAR IN WHICH HE HAD FOUGHT.

I AM GOING TO FIND OUT STORIES FROM MY FAMILY TOO.



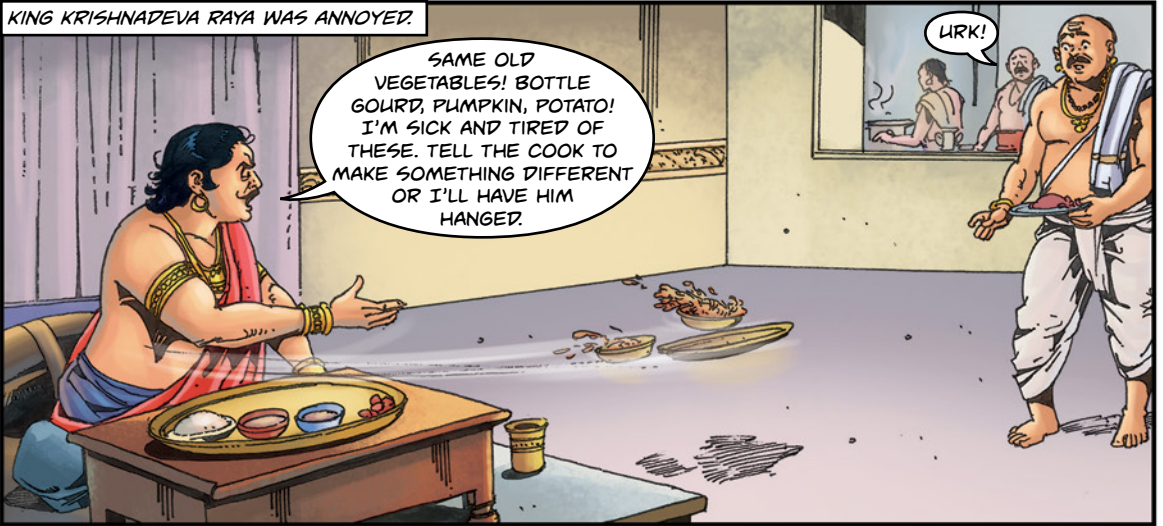
THAT'S AN EXCELLENT IDEA. LET'S COLLECT STORIES FROM THE ELDERLY IN OUR FAMILIES AND SHARE THEM HERE IN CLASS. NOW, I WILL TELL YOU A STORY THAT ONE OF THE STORYTELLERS TOLD THAT DAY ON THE MANN KI BAAT PROGRAMME.

YES! YES! LET'S HEAR THE STORY.





KING KRISHNADEVA RAYA WAS ANNOYED.



SAME OLD VEGETABLES! BOTTLE GOURD, PLUMPKIN, POTATO! I'M SICK AND TIRED OF THESE. TELL THE COOK TO MAKE SOMETHING DIFFERENT OR I'LL HAVE HIM HANGED.

LIRK!

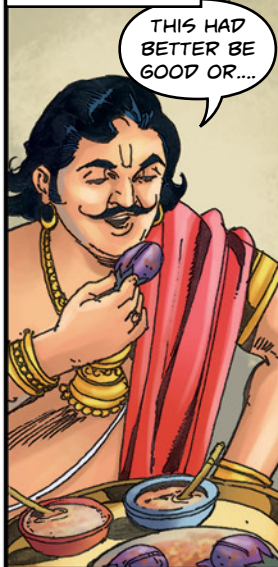
THE POOR COOK WENT RUNNING TO THE KING'S ADVISER, TENALI RAMAN AND TOLD HIM HIS WOES.



HIS MAJESTY IS NOT HAPPY WITH ANYTHING I MAKE. HE SAYS HE WILL HAVE ME HANGED.

SHUSH! STOP WAILING AND LISTEN TO ME. I HAVE A PLAN.

THE NEXT DAY AT LUNCHTIME —



THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD OR....

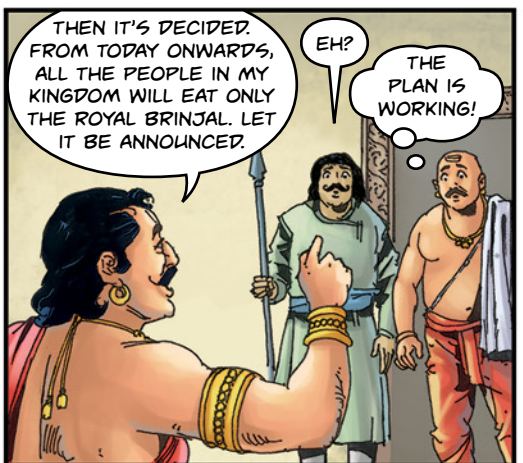


AHA! DELICIOUS!



WHAT IS THIS WONDERFUL VEGETABLE?

SIRE, IT IS A BRINJAL. IT WEARS A ROYAL CROWN AND PURPLE ROBES LIKE YOU!

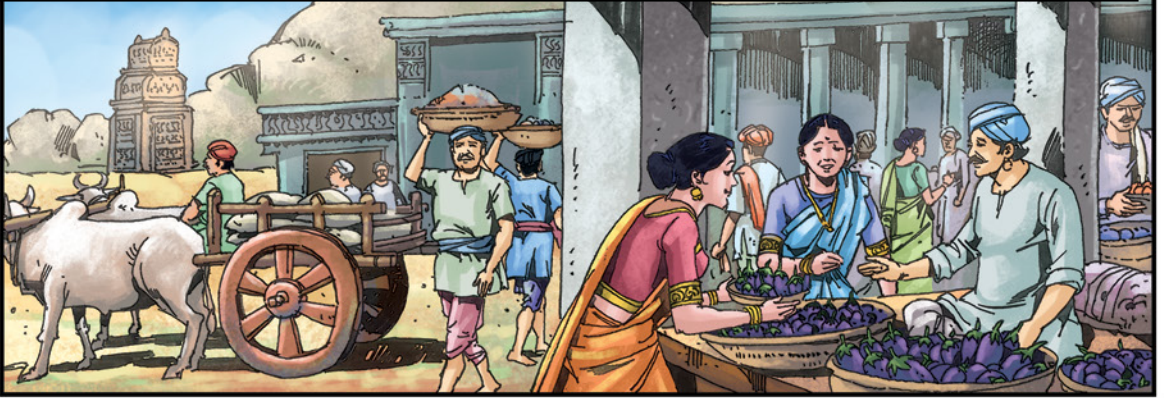


THEN IT'S DECIDED. FROM TODAY ONWARDS, ALL THE PEOPLE IN MY KINGDOM WILL EAT ONLY THE ROYAL BRINJAL. LET IT BE ANNOUNCED.

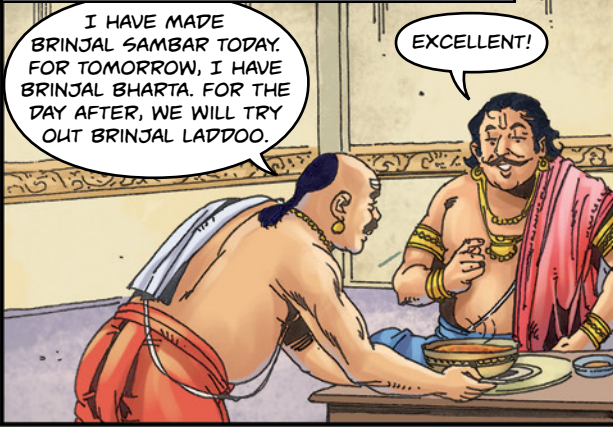
EH?

THE PLAN IS WORKING!

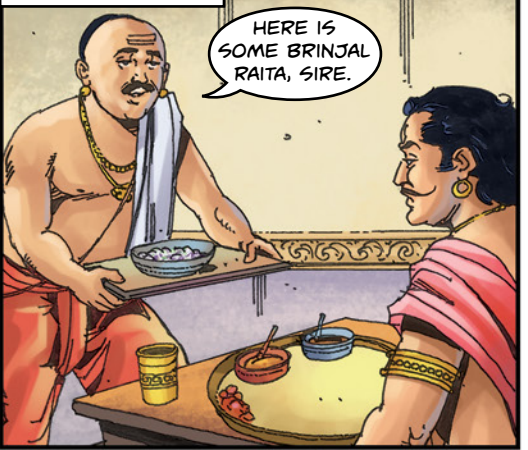
CARTLOADS OF BRINJAL WERE BROUGHT INTO THE KINGDOM AND ALL THE OTHER VEGETABLES DISAPPEARED.



IN THE PALACE AND IN EVERY HOUSE, BRINJALS WERE BEING COOKED IN VARIOUS WAYS.



BUT, VERY SOON —



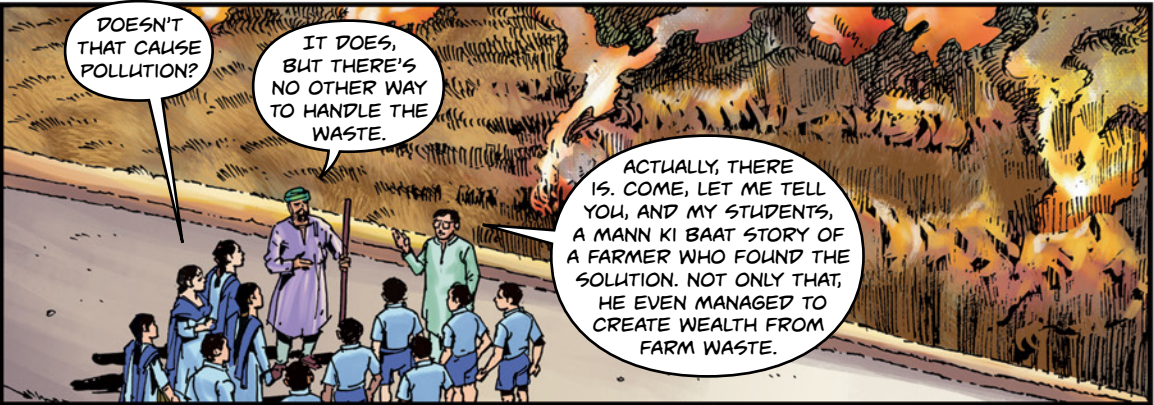
VEERENDRA YADAV

NAIR SIR AND HIS STUDENTS WERE VISITING A FARM IN DELHI.



WHY IS THERE SO MUCH SMOKE HERE?

THEY ARE BURNING STUBBLE* THAT IS LEFT IN THE FIELDS AFTER HARVEST.



DOESN'T THAT CAUSE POLLUTION?

IT DOES, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER WAY TO HANDLE THE WASTE.

ACTUALLY, THERE IS. COME, LET ME TELL YOU, AND MY STUDENTS, A MANN KI BAAT STORY OF A FARMER WHO FOUND THE SOLUTION. NOT ONLY THAT, HE EVEN MANAGED TO CREATE WEALTH FROM FARM WASTE.

AFTER SPENDING OVER SIX YEARS IN AUSTRALIA, VEERENDRA YADAV RETURNED TO HIS NATIVE VILLAGE, FARSH MAJRA, IN KAITHAL DISTRICT OF HARYANA.



I CAME BACK BECAUSE OF MA'S LUNG PROBLEMS BUT HER CONDITION IS NOT GETTING BETTER.

I KNOW, AND IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS. YOU MUST NOW THINK OF DOING SOME WORK OR STARTING A BUSINESS.



LOOK PITAJI[†], THEY ARE BURNING THE STUBBLE AGAIN. IT CAUSES SO MUCH POLLUTION. I THINK THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS FOR MA'S RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS. EVEN MY WIFE AND CHILDREN ARE FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO BREATHE.

INDEED. THIS PRACTICE HAS POISONED OUR AIR.



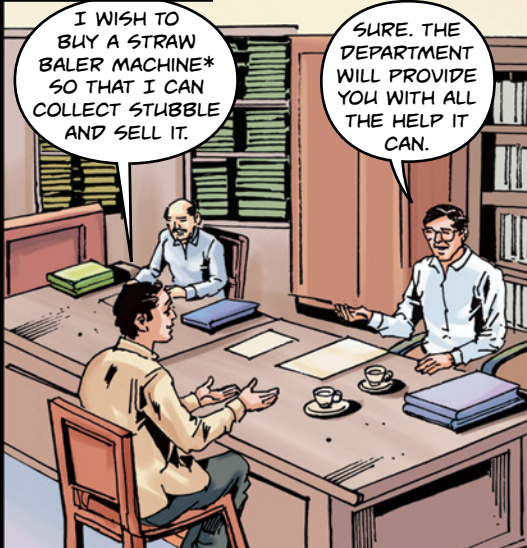
I WONDER IF THE STUBBLE COULD BE PUT TO BETTER USE.

HUH? STUBBLE IS AS USELESS AS TEA LEAVES AFTER THE TEA IS MADE.

*THE STALKS AND OTHER REMAINS OF PLANTS THAT ARE LEFT IN THE GROUND AFTER THE GRAINS HAVE BEEN HARVESTED

[†]FATHER

VEERENDRA DECIDED TO VISIT THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT OF KAITHAL AND GET INFORMATION ON VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT. AFTER MUCH THOUGHT —

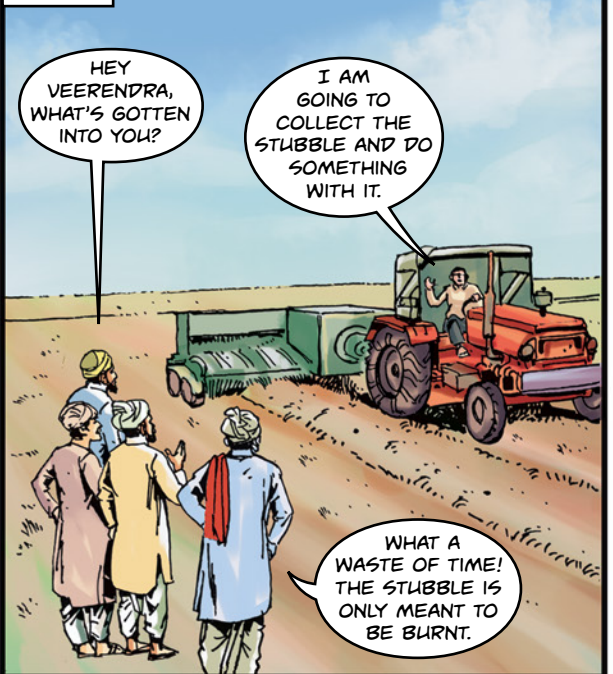


I WISH TO BUY A STRAW BALER MACHINE* SO THAT I CAN COLLECT STUBBLE AND SELL IT.

SURE. THE DEPARTMENT WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH ALL THE HELP IT CAN.

VEERENDRA GOT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT.

SOON —

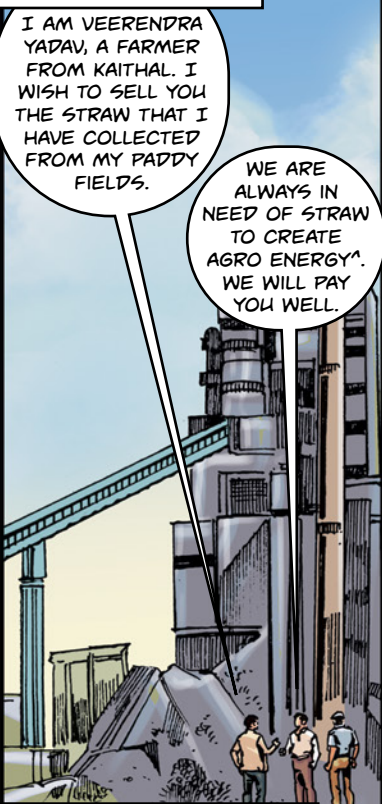


HEY VEERENDRA, WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?

I AM GOING TO COLLECT THE STUBBLE AND DO SOMETHING WITH IT.

WHAT A WASTE OF TIME! THE STUBBLE IS ONLY MEANT TO BE BURNT.

A FEW WEEKS LATER —



I AM VEERENDRA YADAV, A FARMER FROM KAITHAL. I WISH TO SELL YOU THE STRAW THAT I HAVE COLLECTED FROM MY PADDY FIELDS.

WE ARE ALWAYS IN NEED OF STRAW TO CREATE AGRO ENERGY**. WE WILL PAY YOU WELL.

VEERENDRA SOLD HIS BALES OF STRAW TO AGRO ENERGY PLANTS** AND PAPER MILLS.

TWO YEARS LATER —



BABA, WE HAVE SOLD STUBBLE WORTH 2.5 CRORES.

THAT MEANS THAT EVEN AFTER SPENDING ON EQUIPMENT AND LABOUR, WE HAVE MADE A PROFIT OF 50 LAKH RUPEES!

SOON —



VEERENDRA, WE WERE WRONG ABOUT YOU. WE ALSO WANT TO SELL OUR STUBBLE. PLEASE HELP US.

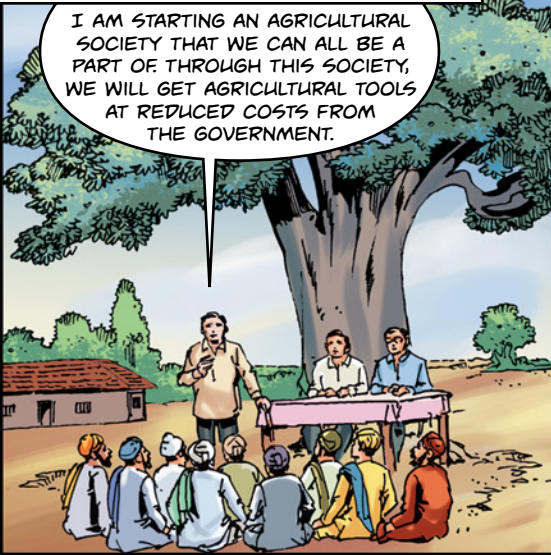
OF COURSE, MY FRIENDS.

*A MACHINE THAT COMPRESSES STRAW INTO COMPACT BALES
**ENERGY OBTAINED BY BURNING PLANT OR ANIMAL WASTE

**FACTORIES THAT GENERATE ELECTRIC POWER THROUGH AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES



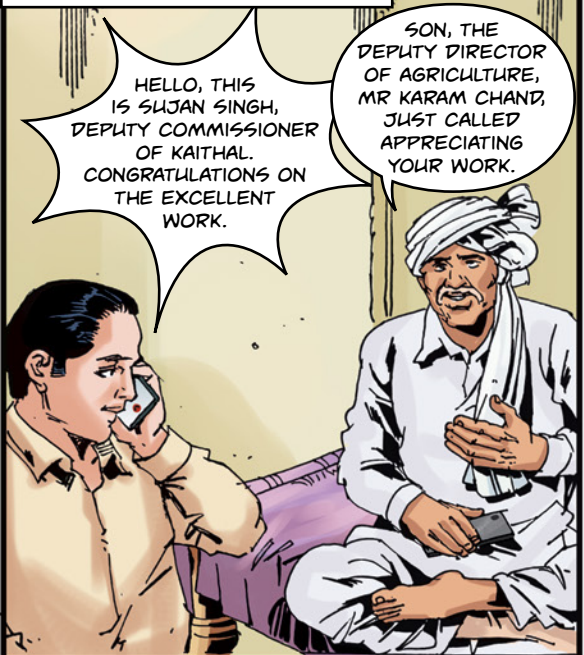
OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, MORE FARMERS JOINED VEERENDRA IN HIS INITIATIVE.



I AM STARTING AN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY THAT WE CAN ALL BE A PART OF THROUGH THIS SOCIETY, WE WILL GET AGRICULTURAL TOOLS AT REDUCED COSTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

HE SOON STARTED A SECOND SOCIETY AND GOT 80 PERCENT SUBSIDY ON EQUIPMENT FROM THE AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE DEPARTMENT. LESS COSTS MEANT MORE PROFITS.

NEWS OF THE INITIATIVE'S SUCCESS SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE STATE.



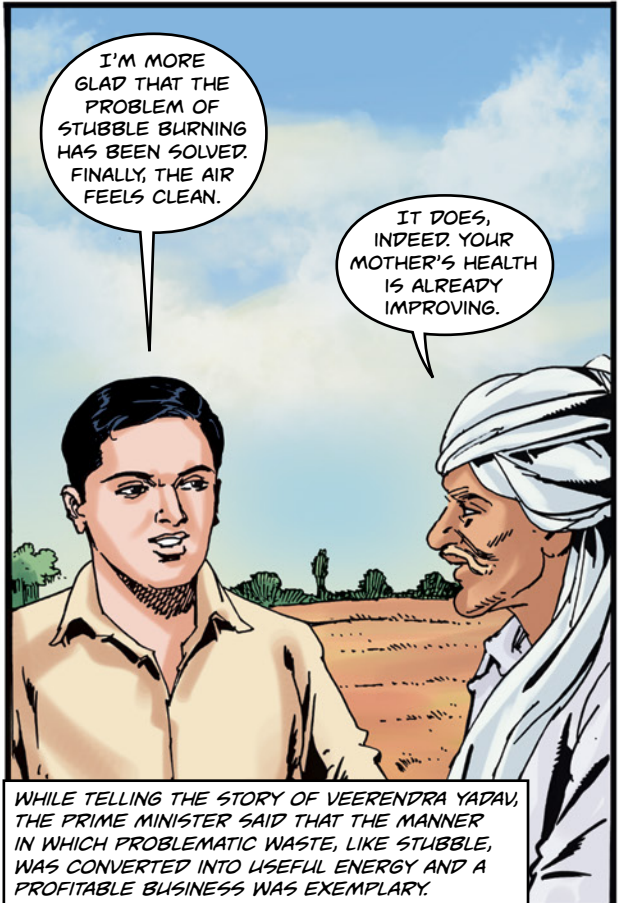
HELLO, THIS IS SUJAN SINGH, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF KATHAL. CONGRATULATIONS ON THE EXCELLENT WORK.

SON, THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE, MR KARAM CHAND, JUST CALLED APPRECIATING YOUR WORK.

DURING SUMMER, WHEN THE STUBBLE IS READY TO BE HARVESTED, VEERENDRA YADAV EMPLOYS MORE THAN 200 PEOPLE TO HELP HIM.



I AM SO PROUD OF YOU, SON. YOU HAVE TURNED WASTE INTO WEALTH.



I'M MORE GLAD THAT THE PROBLEM OF STUBBLE BURNING HAS BEEN SOLVED. FINALLY, THE AIR FEELS CLEAN.

IT DOES, INDEED. YOUR MOTHER'S HEALTH IS ALREADY IMPROVING.

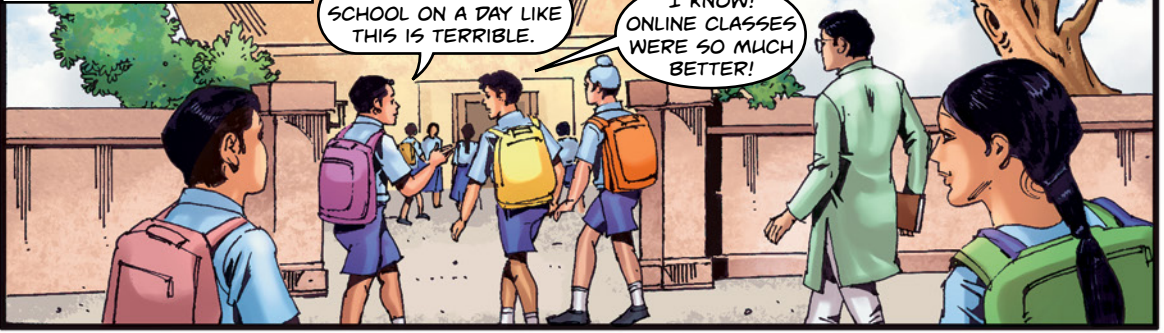
WHILE TELLING THE STORY OF VEERENDRA YADAV, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE MANNER IN WHICH PROBLEMATIC WASTE, LIKE STUBBLE, WAS CONVERTED INTO USEFUL ENERGY AND A PROFITABLE BUSINESS WAS EXEMPLARY.

USHA DUBEY

IT WAS A HOT DAY IN DELHI.

UGH...COMING TO SCHOOL ON A DAY LIKE THIS IS TERRIBLE.

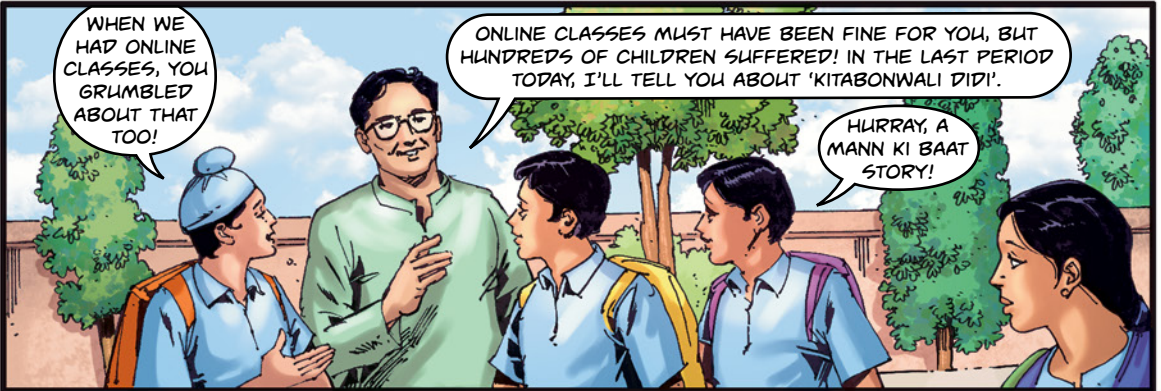
I KNOW! ONLINE CLASSES WERE SO MUCH BETTER!



WHEN WE HAD ONLINE CLASSES, YOU GRUMBLED ABOUT THAT TOO!

ONLINE CLASSES MUST HAVE BEEN FINE FOR YOU, BUT HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN SUFFERED! IN THE LAST PERIOD TODAY, I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT 'KITABONWALI DIDI'.

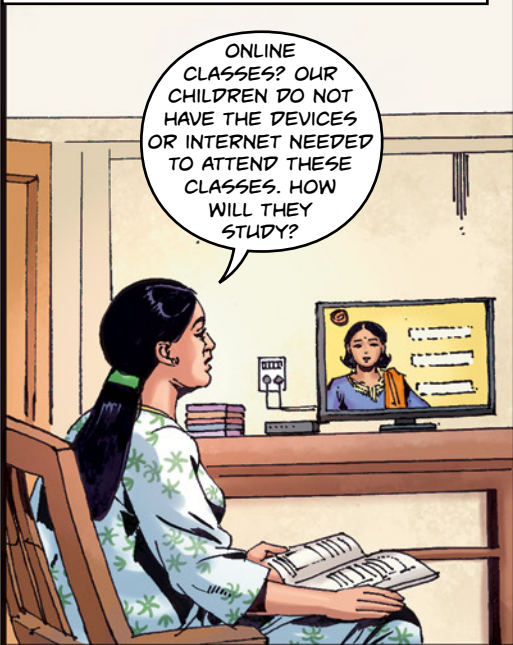
HURRAY, A MANN KI BAAT STORY!



WHEN A LOCKDOWN WAS ANNOUNCED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, USHA DUBEY, A SCHOOL TEACHER FROM SINGRAULI, MADHYA PRADESH, WAS WORRIED.

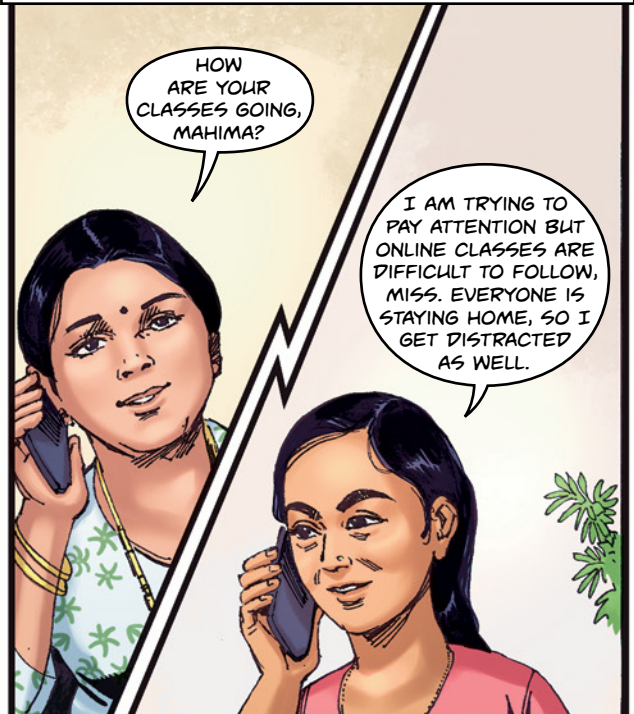
HER CONCERNS WERE ECHOED BY HER STUDENTS AS WELL.

ONLINE CLASSES? OUR CHILDREN DO NOT HAVE THE DEVICES OR INTERNET NEEDED TO ATTEND THESE CLASSES. HOW WILL THEY STUDY?

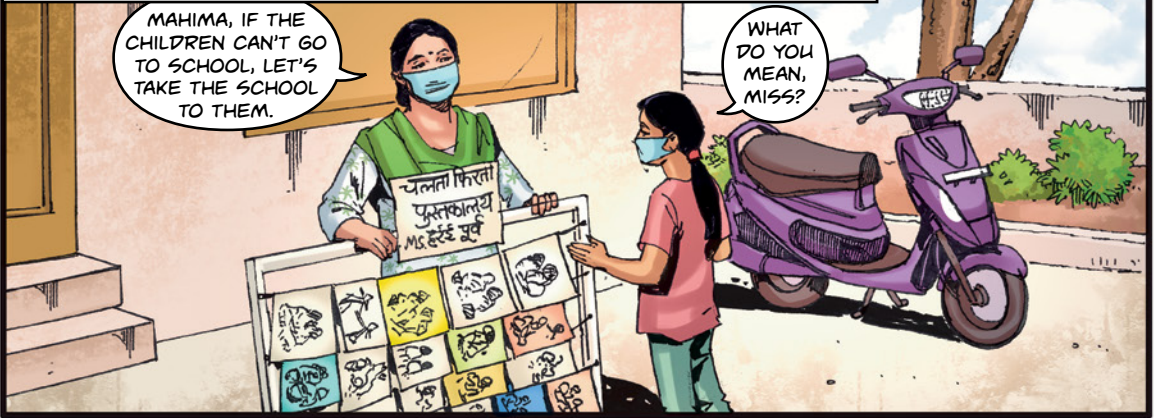


HOW ARE YOUR CLASSES GOING, MAHIMA?

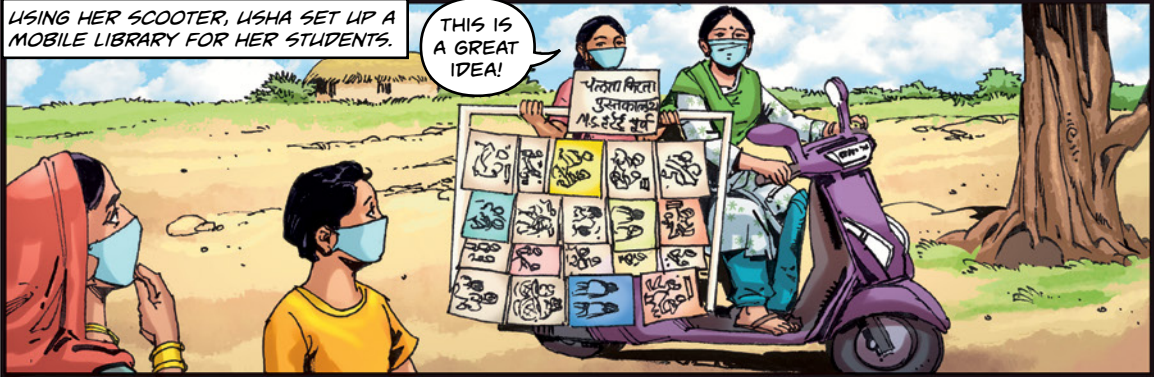
I AM TRYING TO PAY ATTENTION BUT ONLINE CLASSES ARE DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW, MISS. EVERYONE IS STAYING HOME, SO I GET DISTRACTED AS WELL.



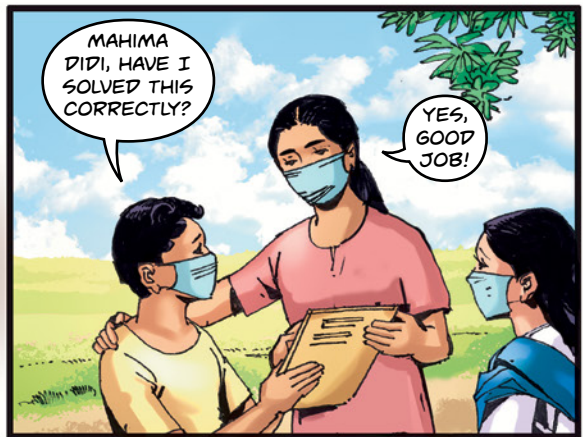
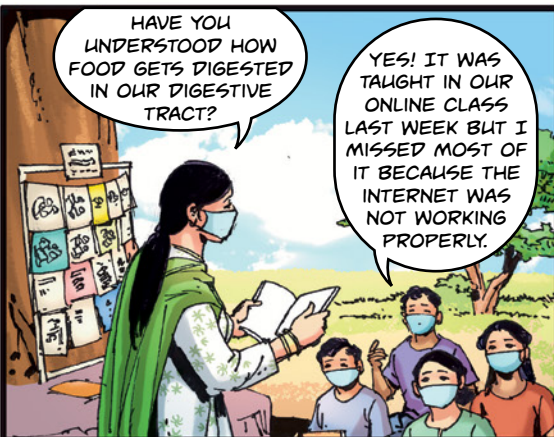
USHA'S DISCUSSIONS WITH HER STUDENT, MAHIMA SINGH, LED TO A BRILLIANT IDEA.



USING HER SCOOTER, USHA SET UP A MOBILE LIBRARY FOR HER STUDENTS.



USHA AND MAHIMA TRAVELLED FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE, SETTING UP THE LIBRARY AND TEACHING STUDENTS.

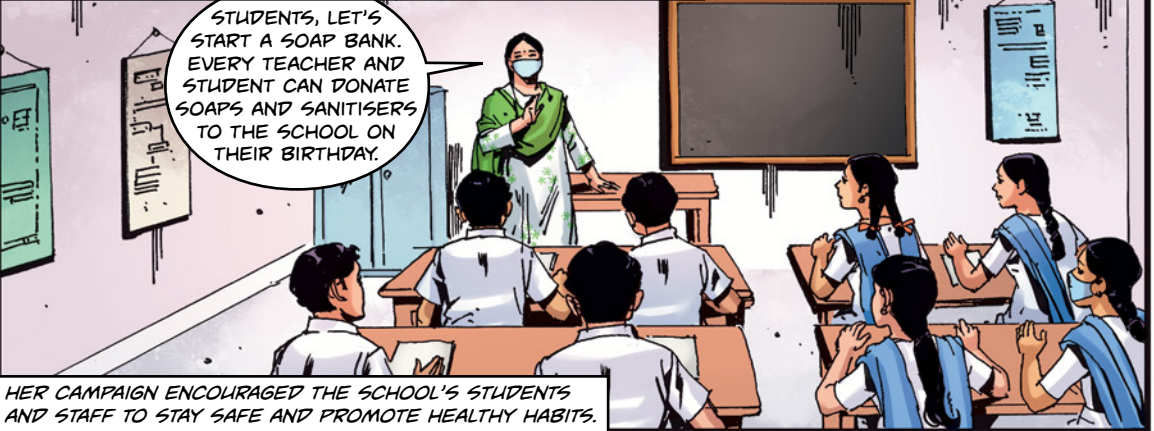


LISHA'S EFFORTS EARNED HER THE NAME 'KITABONWALI DIDI'* AMONG THE PEOPLE.



LOOK, KITABONWALI DIDI IS COMING. GO, GET YOUR BOOKS AND MEET HER.

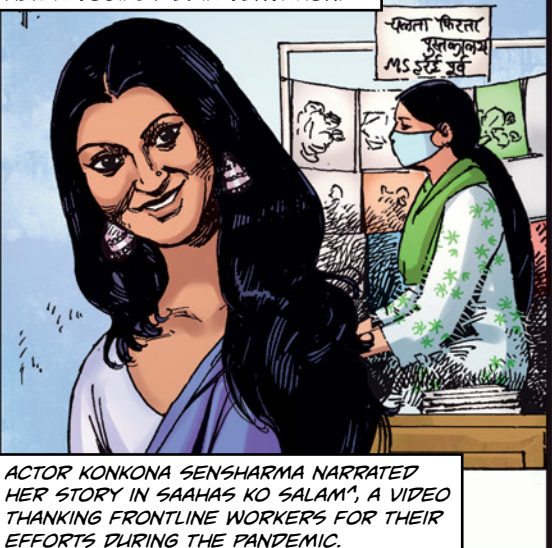
ONCE THE LOCKDOWN WAS LIFTED AND SCHOOLS REOPENED, LISHA INTRODUCED A HYGIENE AND SAFETY CAMPAIGN AT HER SCHOOL.



STUDENTS, LET'S START A SOAP BANK. EVERY TEACHER AND STUDENT CAN DONATE SOAPS AND SANITISERS TO THE SCHOOL ON THEIR BIRTHDAY.

HER CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGED THE SCHOOL'S STUDENTS AND STAFF TO STAY SAFE AND PROMOTE HEALTHY HABITS.

LISHA'S STORY HAS INSPIRED MANY ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND MADE HER A SOCIAL MEDIA SENSATION.



ACTOR KONKONA SENSHARMA NARRATED HER STORY IN 'SAAHAS KO SALAM', A VIDEO THANKING FRONTLINE WORKERS FOR THEIR EFFORTS DURING THE PANDEMIC.

WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER PRAISED LISHA FOR HER SELFLESS EFFORTS ON HIS RADIO SHOW —



I AM GRATEFUL TO THE PRIME MINISTER FOR MENTIONING MY WORK. I WAS JUST DOING MY DUTY AS A TEACHER AND A CITIZEN.

*THE SISTER WITH BOOKS' IN HINDI

'A SALUTE TO COURAGE

SOON, SRINIVASACHARYA STARTED HIS OWN PRINTING PRESS CALLED 'RAGHAVA SIMHAM', TO PUBLISH HIS BOOKS. BUT —

APPA*, WE ARE RECEIVING BULK ORDERS FOR YOUR SANSKRIT BOOKS FROM ALL AROUND THE WORLD! BUT WE NEED TO UPGRADE OUR PRINTING MACHINES FOR BETTER QUALITY.

I HAVE BEEN READING ABOUT THESE NEW COMPUTER-CONTROLLED PRINTING MACHINES THAT ARE EXCELLENT FOR PRINTING. WE MUST TRY ONE OUT.

IN 2000, RAGHAVA SIMHAM PRESS REVAMPED ITS PRINTING PROCESS TO ADAPT TO THE DIGITAL ERA.

BUT SRINIVASACHARYA CONTINUED TO WRITE HIS BOOKS BY HAND. ONE DAY —

THATHA^, WHY DON'T YOU USE A COMPUTER TO WRITE BOOKS?

I WISH I COULD. BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO USE ONE.

WE CAN TEACH YOU!

AT THE AGE OF 80, SRINIVASACHARYA BECAME THE PROUD OWNER OF A COMPUTER.

HERE'S THE LANGUAGE OPTION. ONCE YOU CHANGE THIS, YOU CAN WRITE BOOKS IN ANY LANGUAGE YOU WANT, INCLUDING TAMIL AND SANSKRIT.

THAT'S GREAT. WITH A LITTLE PRACTICE, I THINK I CAN WRITE MY BOOKS WITH EASE.

SOME YEARS LATER —

THATHA, YOU ARE 92 YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG. YOU ARE A MASTER OF ANCIENT SCRIPT AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY.

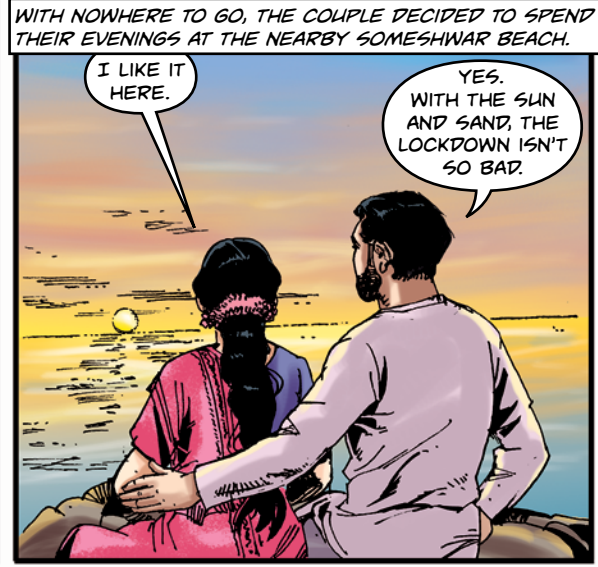
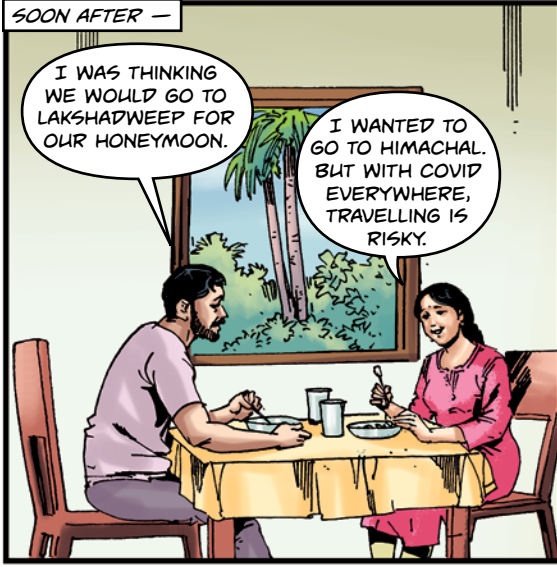
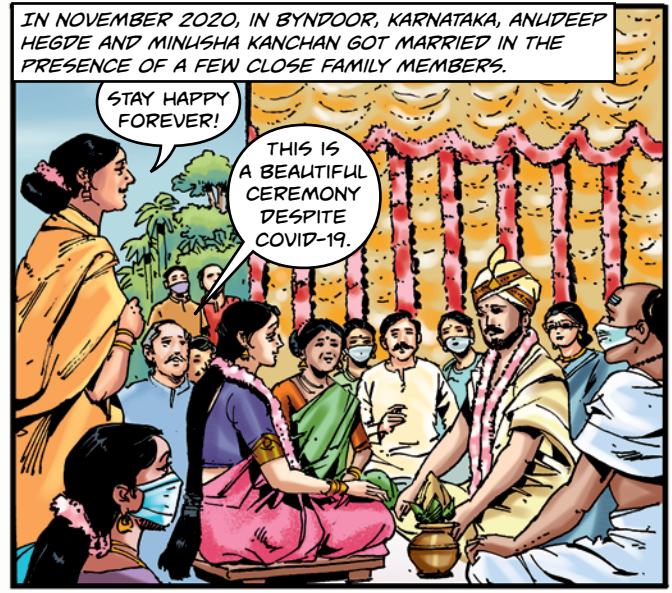
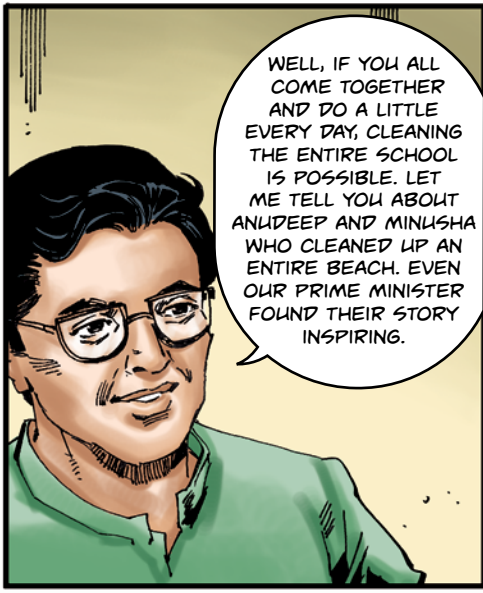
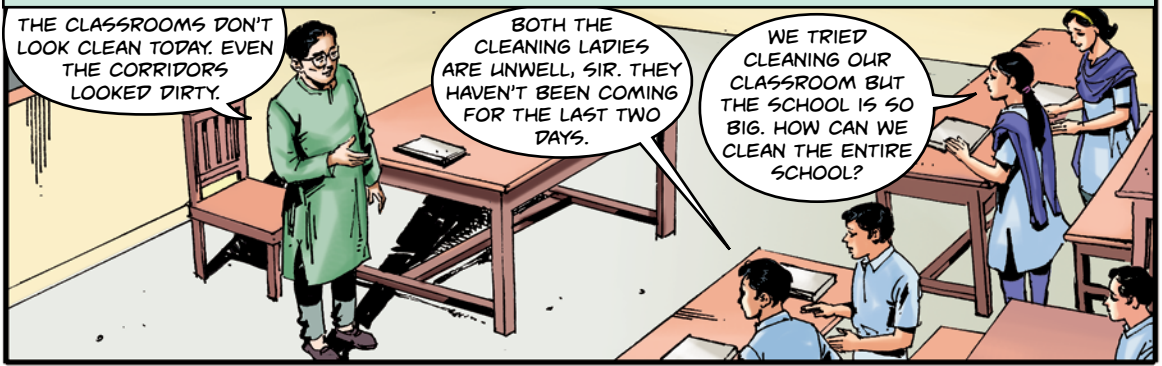
THANKS TO YOU, MY CHILDREN, FOR TEACHING ME TO USE A COMPUTER. I'M GLAD I COULD LEARN.

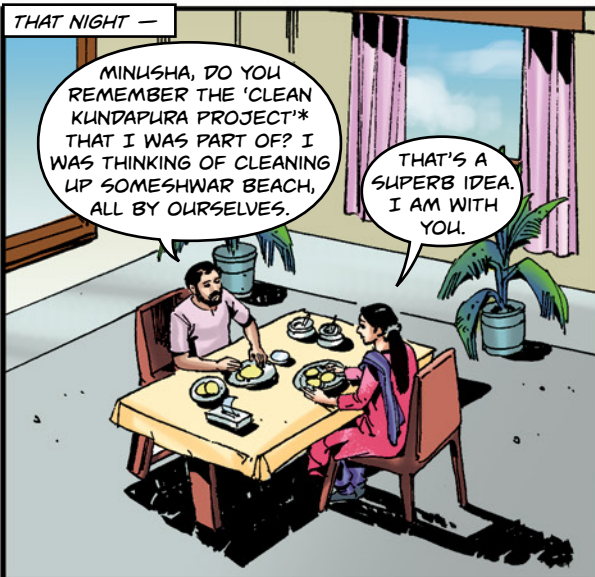
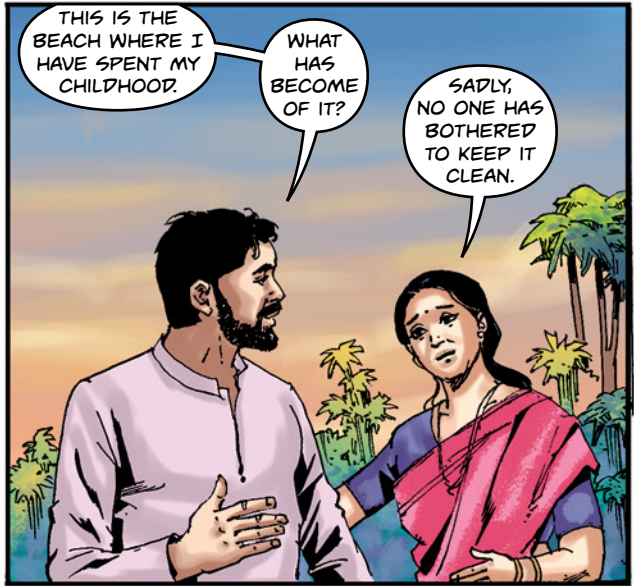
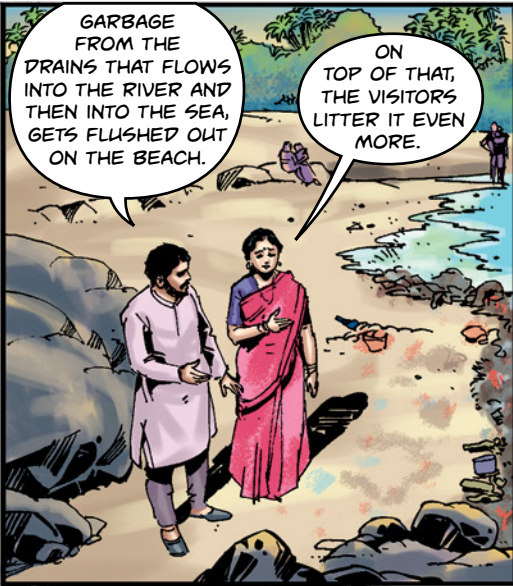
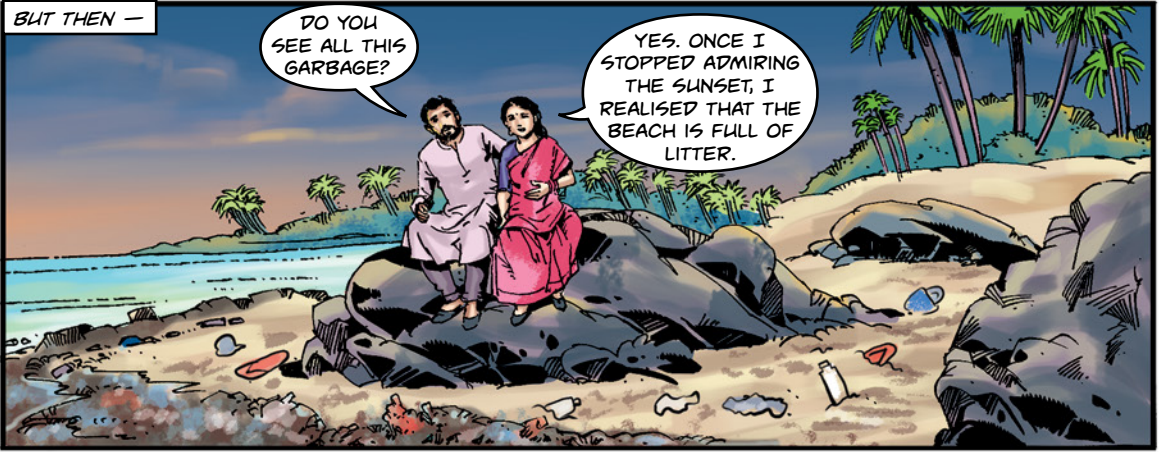
AS THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IN 'MANN KI BAAT', AGE AND CIRCUMSTANCES DO NOT MATTER. IF YOU ARE CURIOUS, THE CHAIN OF LEARNING CONTINUES.

*FATHER IN TAMIL

^GRANDFATHER IN TAMIL

ANUDEEP AND MINUSHA





*A CITIZEN-LED CLEAN-UP DRIVE STARTED BY A GROUP OF FRIENDS IN KUNDAPURA, KARNATAKA. NOW, MANY VOLUNTEERS DEDICATE THEIR SUNDAYS TO THIS PROJECT.



A FEW DAYS LATER —



NOT BAD. LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE CLEANED UP A LARGE PORTION OF THE BEACH.

WE HAVE INDEED. BUT I WISH MORE PEOPLE WOULD JOIN US.



I KNOW A WAY!

ANUDEEP POSTED ABOUT THEIR INITIATIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

SOON —



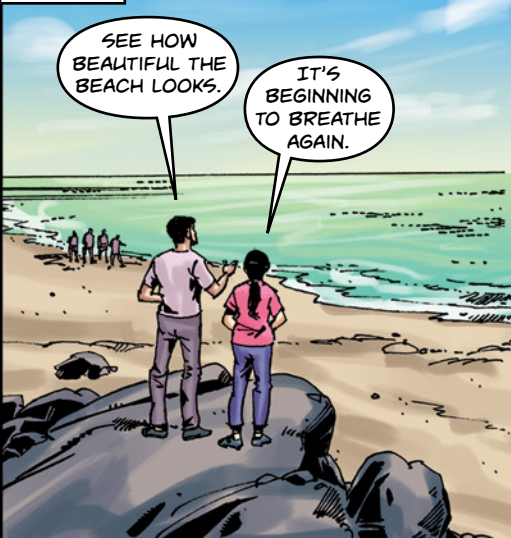
I AM MANJUNATH.

I AM HASSAN. WE ARE HERE TO JOIN YOU ON THIS CLEAN-UP DRIVE.

THAT'S WONDERFUL!

SOON, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED TO JOIN THEM.

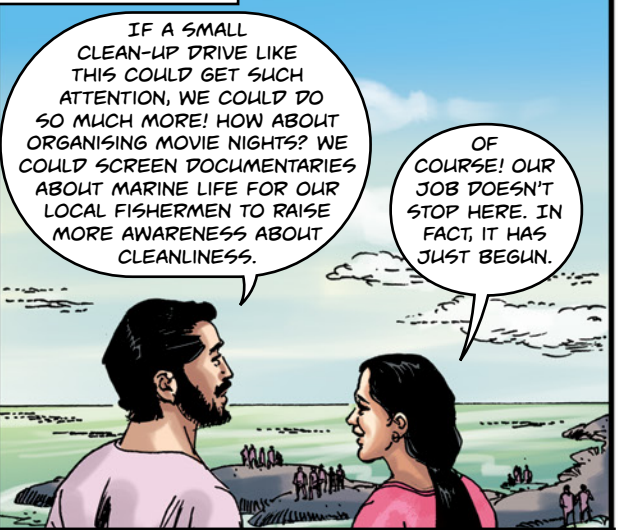
TOGETHER, THEY CLEANED UP 80 PERCENT OF THE BEACH AND COLLECTED AROUND 800 KGS OF TRASH.



SEE HOW BEAUTIFUL THE BEACH LOOKS.

IT'S BEGINNING TO BREATHE AGAIN.

A FEW DAYS LATER —



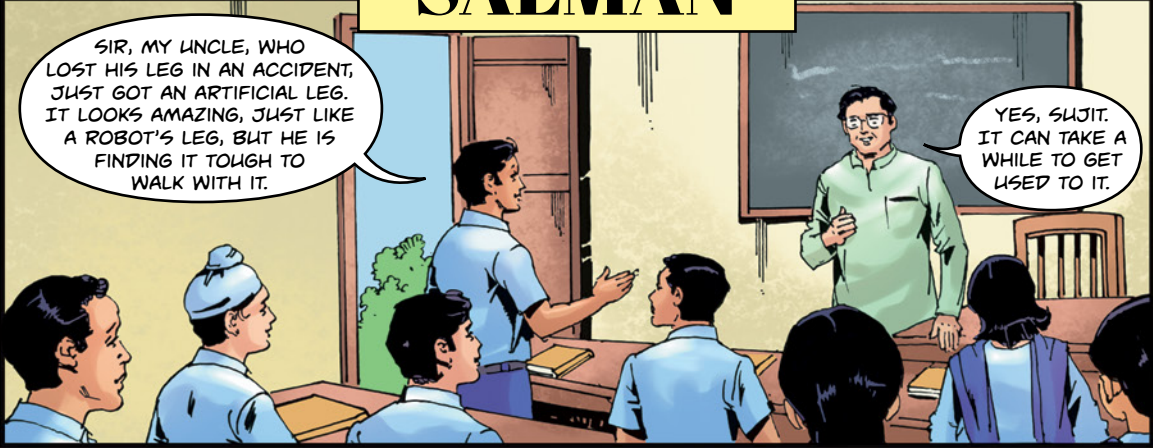
IF A SMALL CLEAN-UP DRIVE LIKE THIS COULD GET SUCH ATTENTION, WE COULD DO SO MUCH MORE! HOW ABOUT ORGANISING MOVIE NIGHTS? WE COULD SCREEN DOCUMENTARIES ABOUT MARINE LIFE FOR OUR LOCAL FISHERMEN TO RAISE MORE AWARENESS ABOUT CLEANLINESS.

OF COURSE! OUR JOB DOESN'T STOP HERE. IN FACT, IT HAS JUST BEGUN.

ANUDEEP AND MISUSHA CONTINUE THEIR GOOD WORK. THEIR MOTTO IS, 'TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE'.

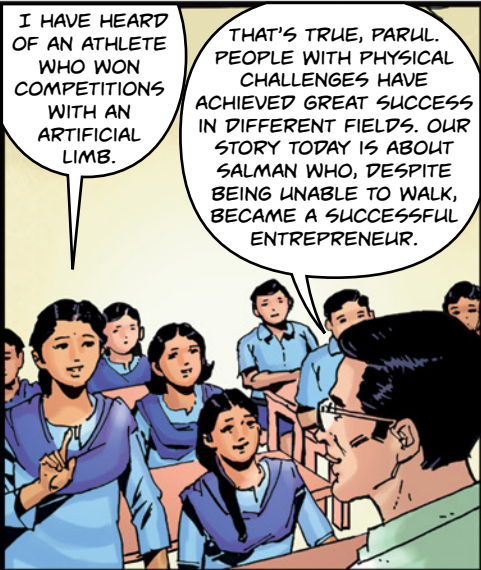


SALMAN



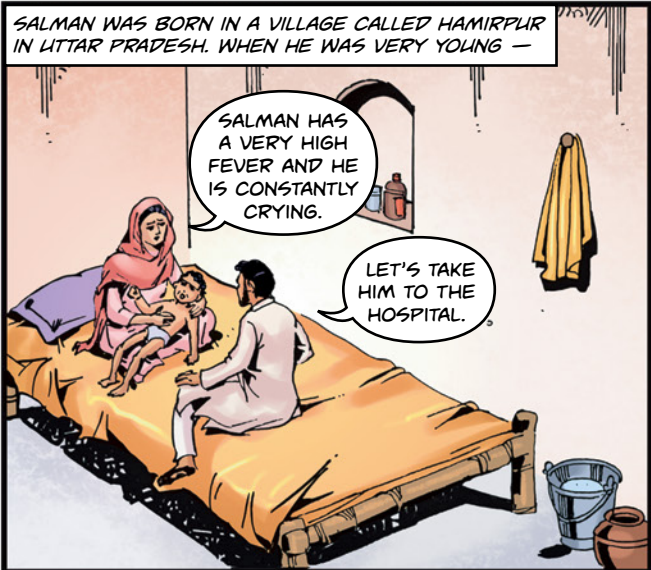
SIR, MY UNCLE, WHO LOST HIS LEG IN AN ACCIDENT, JUST GOT AN ARTIFICIAL LEG. IT LOOKS AMAZING, JUST LIKE A ROBOT'S LEG, BUT HE IS FINDING IT TOUGH TO WALK WITH IT.

YES, SUJIT. IT CAN TAKE A WHILE TO GET USED TO IT.



I HAVE HEARD OF AN ATHLETE WHO WON COMPETITIONS WITH AN ARTIFICIAL LIMB.

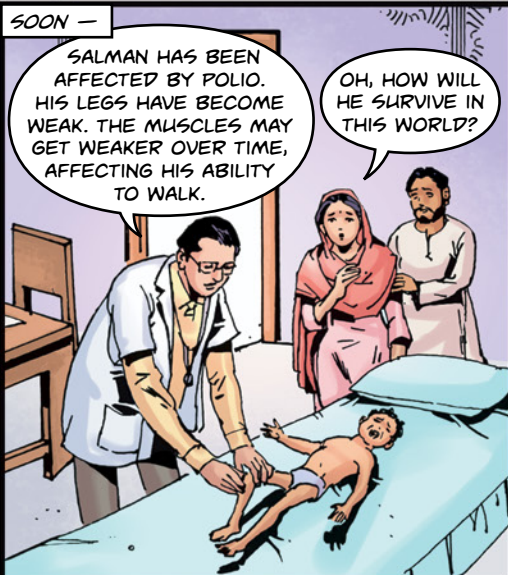
THAT'S TRUE, PARUL. PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL CHALLENGES HAVE ACHIEVED GREAT SUCCESS IN DIFFERENT FIELDS. OUR STORY TODAY IS ABOUT SALMAN WHO, DESPITE BEING UNABLE TO WALK, BECAME A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR.



SALMAN WAS BORN IN A VILLAGE CALLED HAMIRPUR IN UTTAR PRADESH. WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG —

SALMAN HAS A VERY HIGH FEVER AND HE IS CONSTANTLY CRYING.

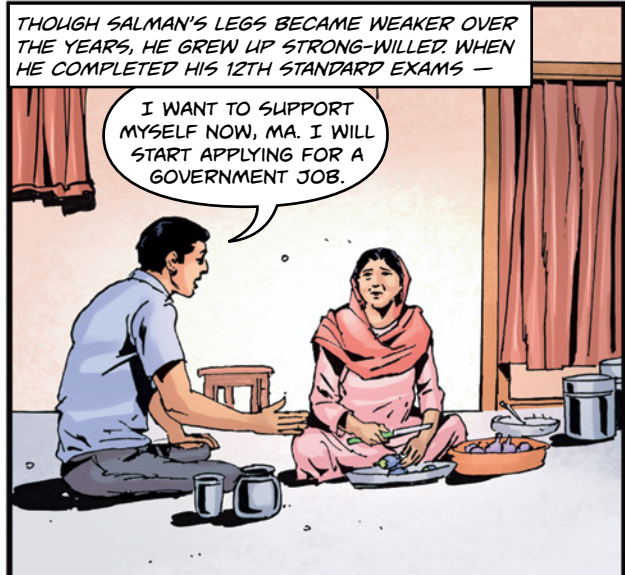
LET'S TAKE HIM TO THE HOSPITAL.



SOON —

SALMAN HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY POLIO. HIS LEGS HAVE BECOME WEAK. THE MUSCLES MAY GET WEAKER OVER TIME, AFFECTING HIS ABILITY TO WALK.

OH, HOW WILL HE SURVIVE IN THIS WORLD?

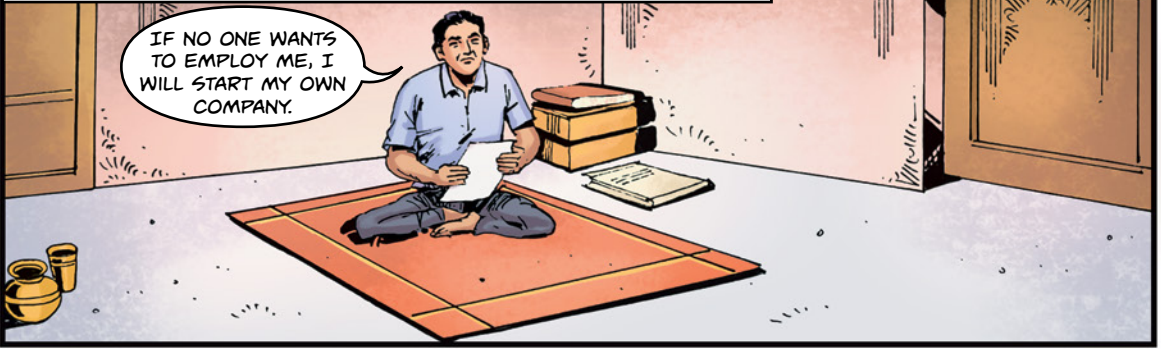


THOUGH SALMAN'S LEGS BECAME WEAKER OVER THE YEARS, HE GREW UP STRONG-WILLED. WHEN HE COMPLETED HIS 12TH STANDARD EXAMS —

I WANT TO SUPPORT MYSELF NOW, MA. I WILL START APPLYING FOR A GOVERNMENT JOB.



NO MATTER HOW HARD HE TRIED, HE COULD NOT GET WORK. ONE DAY —



IF NO ONE WANTS TO EMPLOY ME, I WILL START MY OWN COMPANY.

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, SALMAN LEARNT TO MANUFACTURE SLIPPERS AND DETERGENTS. WITH THE HELP OF A LOAN, HE STARTED A COMPANY CALLED TARGET.



COME, I WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO MAKE SLIPPERS.

THE COMPANY BECAME WELL KNOWN. ONE DAY —



I AM NOT GETTING A JOB ANYWHERE BECAUSE I LOST ONE ARM IN AN ACCIDENT. CAN YOU EMPLOY ME?

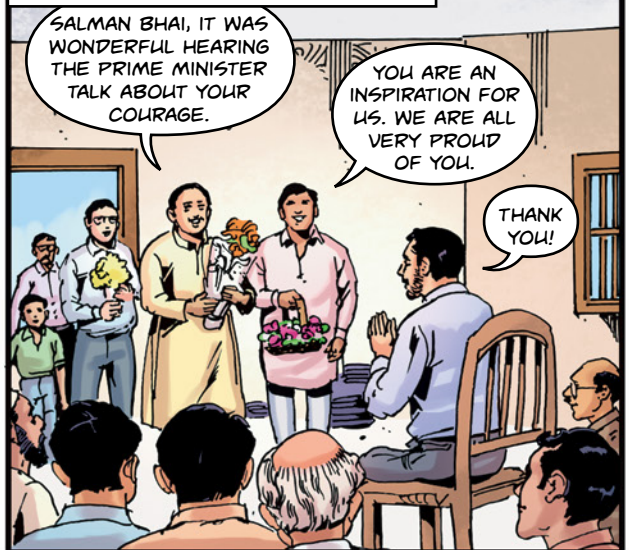
LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO HERE. PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME DESERVE TO GET EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO FIND WORK AND DO WELL.

OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS, SALMAN EMPLOYED MANY OTHERS WITH PHYSICAL CHALLENGES.



WE NOW HAVE 30 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WORKING WITH US. I HOPE TO GIVE WORK TO MANY MORE SUCH PEOPLE SOME DAY.

SALMAN'S STORY WAS RELATED BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON MANN KI BAAT.



SALMAN Bhai, IT WAS WONDERFUL HEARING THE PRIME MINISTER TALK ABOUT YOUR COURAGE.

YOU ARE AN INSPIRATION FOR US. WE ARE ALL VERY PROUD OF YOU.

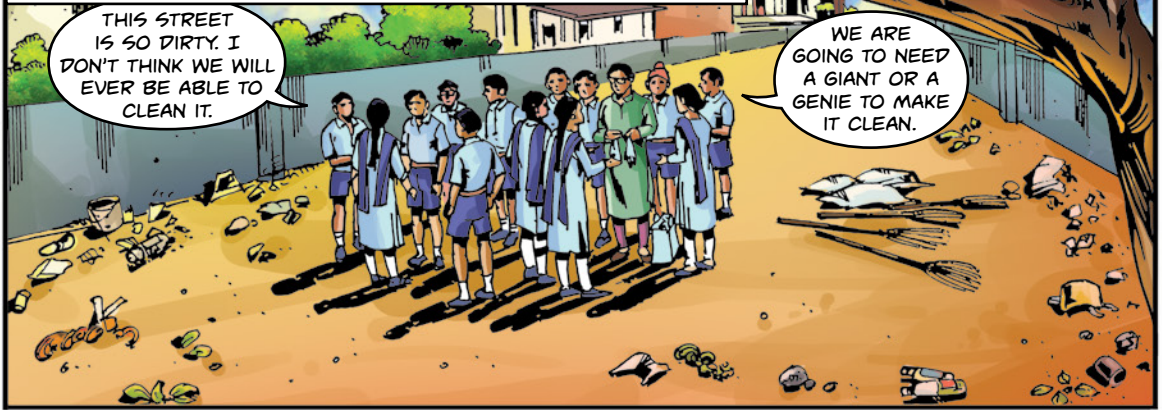
THANK YOU!

N. S. RAJAPPAN

NAIR SIR AND HIS STUDENTS WERE TAKING PART IN A CLEAN-UP DRIVE.

THIS STREET IS SO DIRTY. I DON'T THINK WE WILL EVER BE ABLE TO CLEAN IT.

WE ARE GOING TO NEED A GIANT OR A GENIE TO MAKE IT CLEAN.



WITH SO MANY OF US, CLEANING ANYTHING SHOULD BE POSSIBLE. BEFORE WE BEGIN, LET ME TELL YOU THE STORY OF A MAN WHO CLEANED UP AN ENTIRE LAKE BY HIMSELF, DESPITE BEING PARALYSED IN BOTH LEGS.

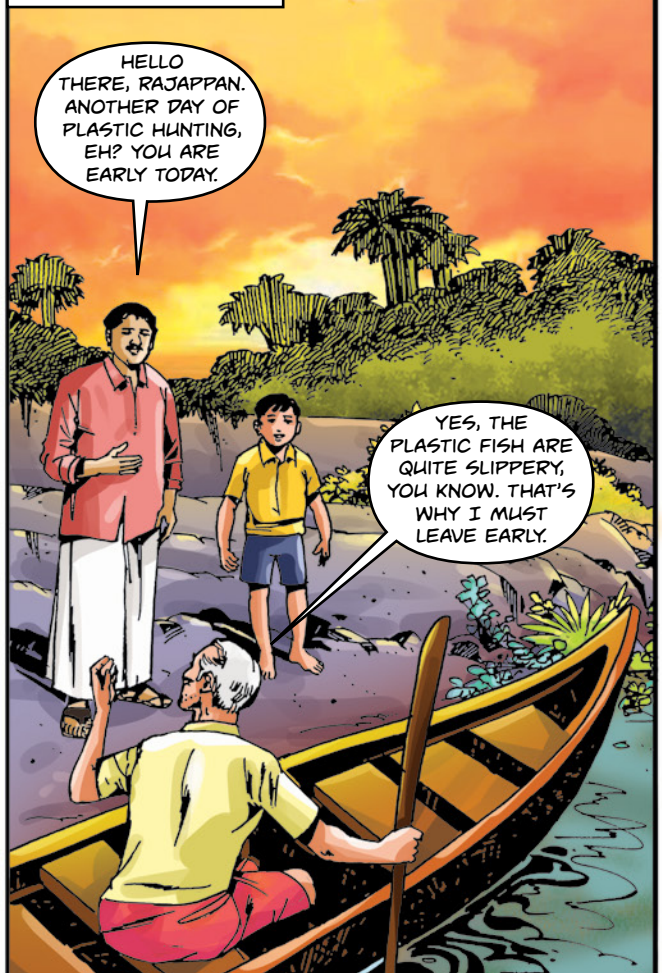
THAT SOUNDS IMPOSSIBLE. TELL US MORE, SIR.



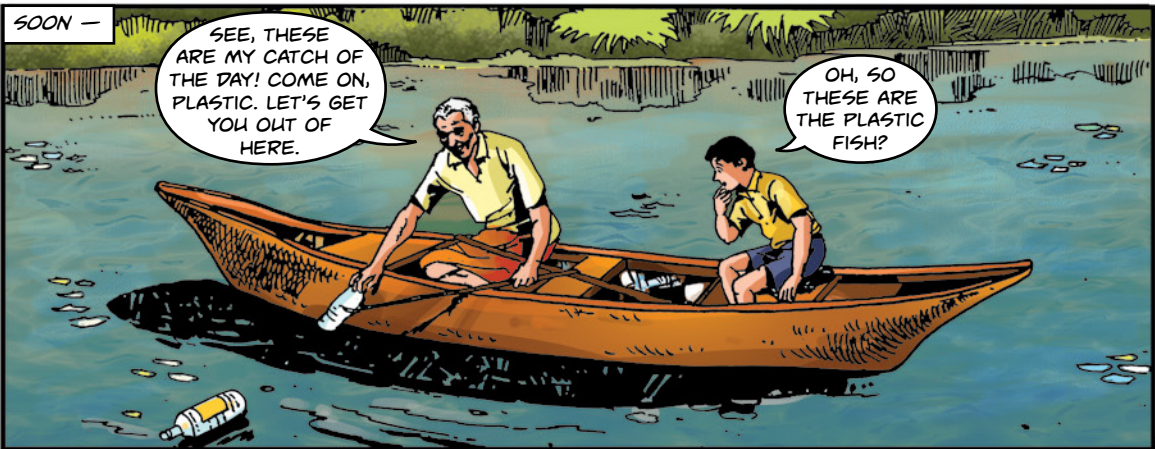
69-YEAR-OLD RAJAPPAN HAD BEEN STRUCK BY POLIO WHEN HE WAS FIVE YEARS OLD. EVERY MORNING, HE WOULD MAKE HIS WAY TO VEMBANAD LAKE*, WHERE HE WOULD RENT A BOAT.

HELLO THERE, RAJAPPAN. ANOTHER DAY OF PLASTIC HUNTING, EH? YOU ARE EARLY TODAY.

YES, THE PLASTIC FISH ARE QUITE SLIPPERY, YOU KNOW. THAT'S WHY I MUST LEAVE EARLY.



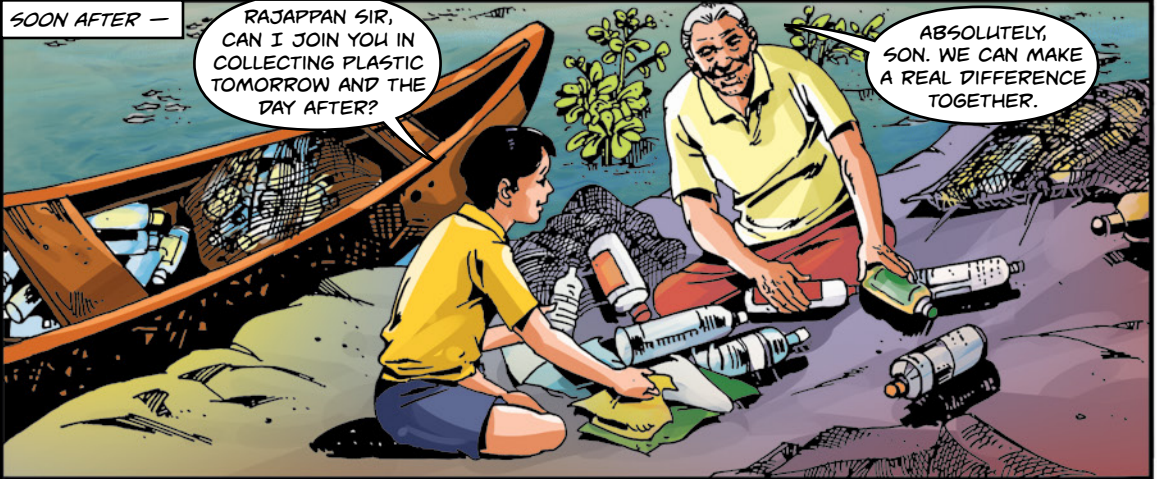
*A FAMOUS LAKE IN KERALA, AND A POPULAR DESTINATION FOR TOURISTS



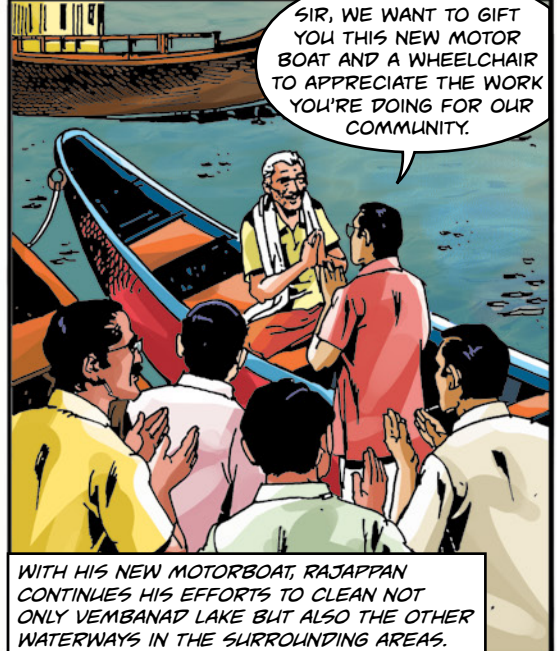
AFTER MANY HOURS OF CLEANING, RAJAPPAN MOORED HIS BOAT BY THE SHORE.



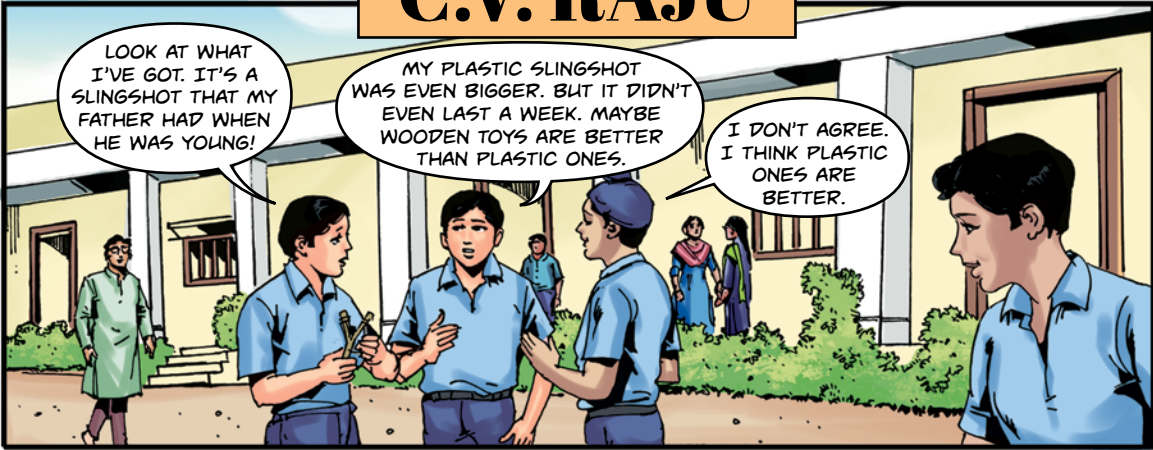
SOON AFTER —



PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI MENTIONED RAJAPPAN IN MANN KI BAAT AND PRAISED HIS TIRELESS EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE WATERS FROM PLASTIC POLLUTION. SOON AFTER —



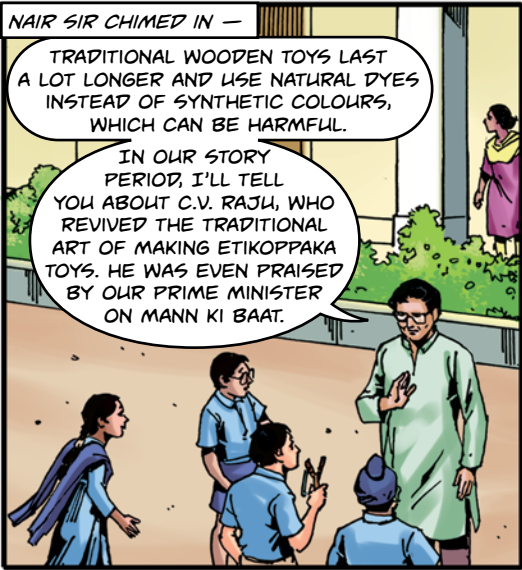
C.V. RAJU



LOOK AT WHAT I'VE GOT. IT'S A SLINGSHOT THAT MY FATHER HAD WHEN HE WAS YOUNG!

MY PLASTIC SLINGSHOT WAS EVEN BIGGER. BUT IT DIDN'T EVEN LAST A WEEK. MAYBE WOODEN TOYS ARE BETTER THAN PLASTIC ONES.

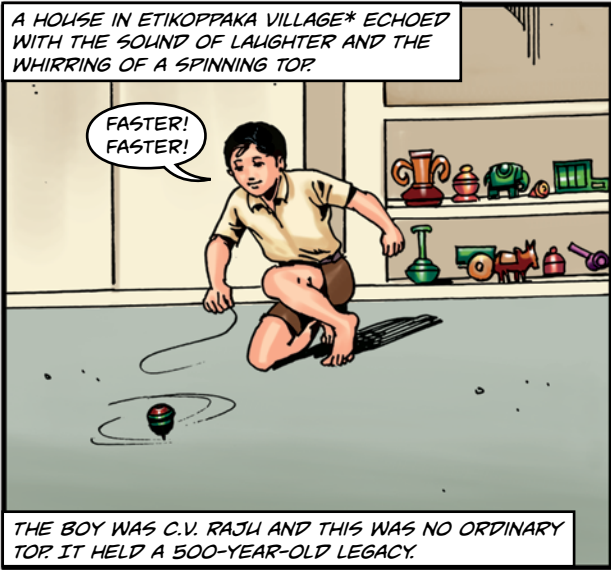
I DON'T AGREE. I THINK PLASTIC ONES ARE BETTER.



NAIR SIR CHIMED IN —

TRADITIONAL WOODEN TOYS LAST A LOT LONGER AND USE NATURAL DYES INSTEAD OF SYNTHETIC COLOURS, WHICH CAN BE HARMFUL.

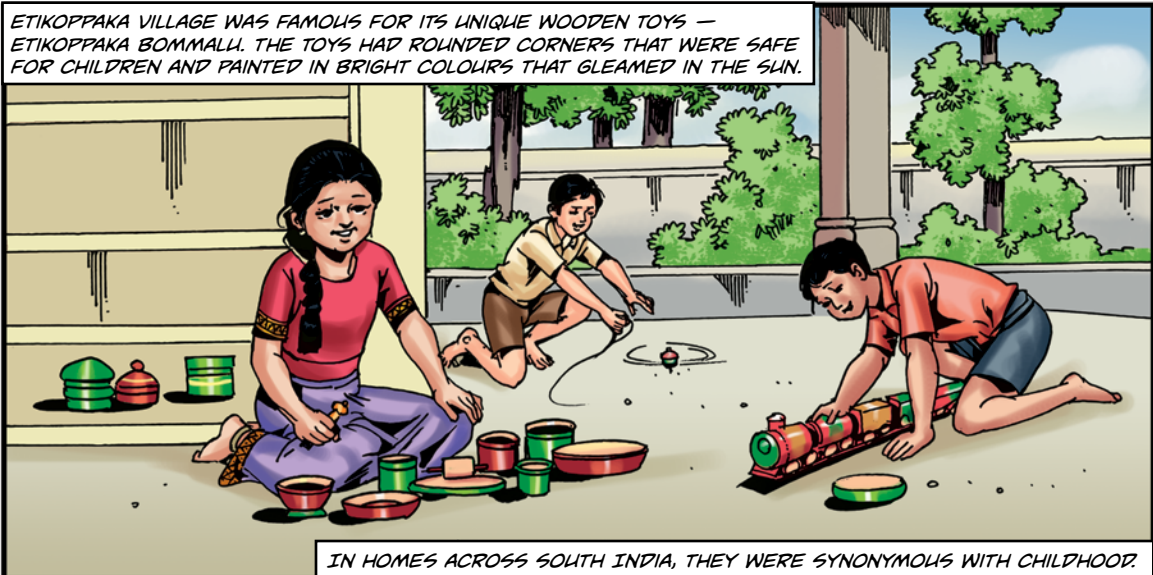
IN OUR STORY PERIOD, I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT C.V. RAJU, WHO REVIVED THE TRADITIONAL ART OF MAKING ETIKOPPAKA TOYS. HE WAS EVEN PRAISED BY OUR PRIME MINISTER ON MANN KI BAAT.



A HOUSE IN ETIKOPPAKA VILLAGE* ECHOED WITH THE SOUND OF LAUGHTER AND THE WHIRRING OF A SPINNING TOP.

FASTER! FASTER!

THE BOY WAS C.V. RAJU AND THIS WAS NO ORDINARY TOP. IT HELD A 500-YEAR-OLD LEGACY.

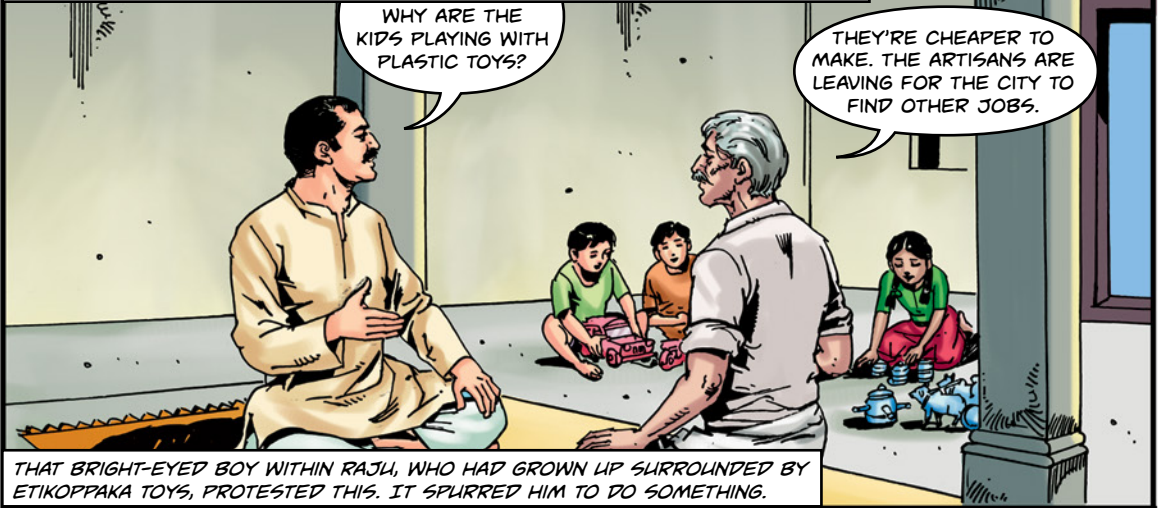


ETIKOPPAKA VILLAGE WAS FAMOUS FOR ITS UNIQUE WOODEN TOYS — ETIKOPPAKA BOMMALLU. THE TOYS HAD ROUNDED CORNERS THAT WERE SAFE FOR CHILDREN AND PAINTED IN BRIGHT COLOURS THAT GLEAMED IN THE SUN.

IN HOMES ACROSS SOUTH INDIA, THEY WERE SYNONYMOUS WITH CHILDHOOD.

*LOCATED IN THE VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

BUT WHEN RAJU WENT OFF TO COLLEGE AND RETURNED, THINGS HAD CHANGED —

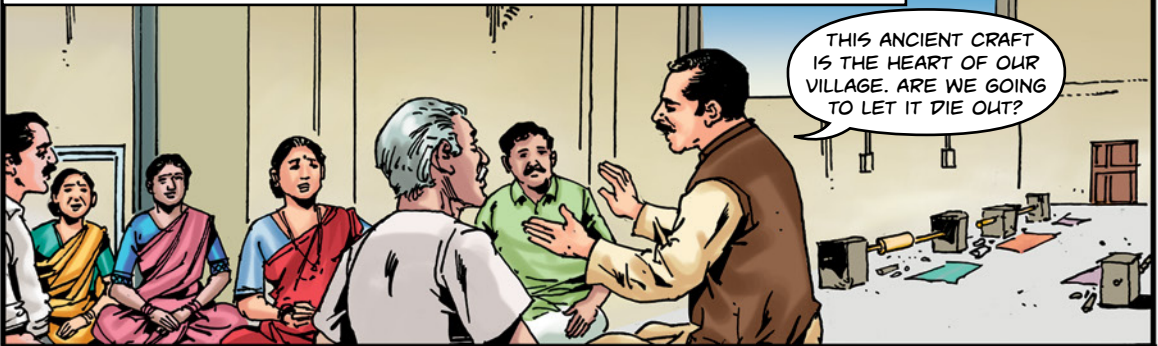


WHY ARE THE KIDS PLAYING WITH PLASTIC TOYS?

THEY'RE CHEAPER TO MAKE. THE ARTISANS ARE LEAVING FOR THE CITY TO FIND OTHER JOBS.

THAT BRIGHT-EYED BOY WITHIN RAJU, WHO HAD GROWN UP SURROUNDED BY ETIKOPPAKA TOYS, PROTESTED THIS. IT SPURRED HIM TO DO SOMETHING.

HE SET UP A COOPERATIVE SOCIETY FOR ARTISANS CALLED 'PADMAVATI ASSOCIATES'.

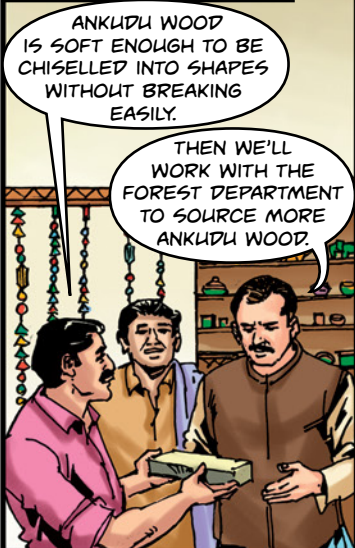


THIS ANCIENT CRAFT IS THE HEART OF OUR VILLAGE. ARE WE GOING TO LET IT DIE OUT?

THEY HAD TO COMPETE WITH MASS-PRODUCED FLIMSY COPIES BUT RAJU AND HIS ARTISANS ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE.

AS PRODUCTION SWELLED, RAJU TOOK THE TOYS TO TRADE FAIRS AND EXPOS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

BUT CELEBRATIONS WERE SHORT-LIVED. THE SHIPMENT WAS SOON SENT BACK.



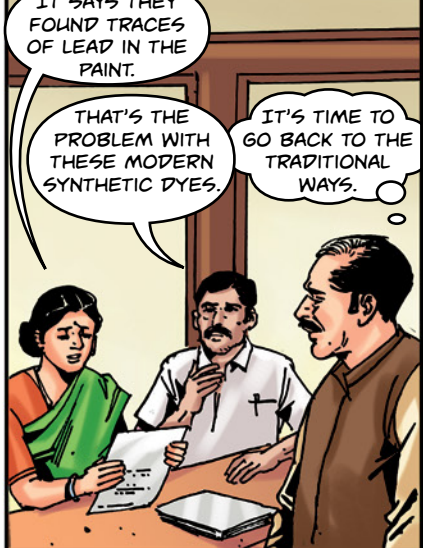
ANKUDU WOOD IS SOFT ENOUGH TO BE CHISELLED INTO SHAPES WITHOUT BREAKING EASILY.

THEN WE'LL WORK WITH THE FOREST DEPARTMENT TO SOURCE MORE ANKUDU WOOD.



I EXPORT UNIQUE GOODS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET. I'D LIKE TO PLACE A LARGE ORDER.

OUR BIG BREAK IS HERE!



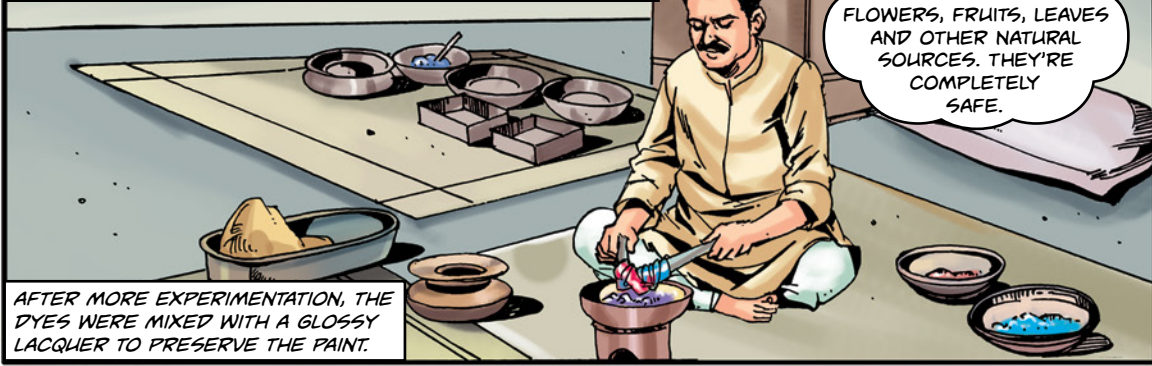
IT SAYS THEY FOUND TRACES OF LEAD IN THE PAINT.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THESE MODERN SYNTHETIC DYES.

IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO THE TRADITIONAL WAYS.



IN 1988, RAJU APPROACHED THE CRAFTS COUNCIL OF INDIA. TOGETHER, THEY WORKED ON CREATING ORGANIC DYES.



THESE ARE MADE FROM FLOWERS, FRUITS, LEAVES AND OTHER NATURAL SOURCES. THEY'RE COMPLETELY SAFE.

AFTER MORE EXPERIMENTATION, THE DYES WERE MIXED WITH A GLOSSY LACQUER TO PRESERVE THE PAINT.

THIS TIME, WHEN THE TOYS WERE SENT ABROAD, THEY PASSED ALL QUALITY CHECKS AND RECEIVED PRAISE.

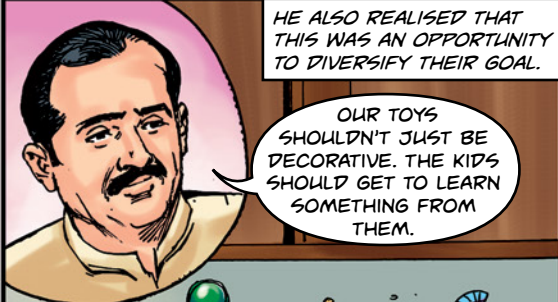


THE WORLD CAN FINALLY SEE THE BEAUTY OF ETIKOPPAKA BOMMALLU.

WE DID IT!

HOORAY!

RAJU'S RESURRECTION OF THIS CRAFT WAS ALSO A RESURRECTION OF LIVELIHOOD FOR ITS TALENTED ARTISANS.



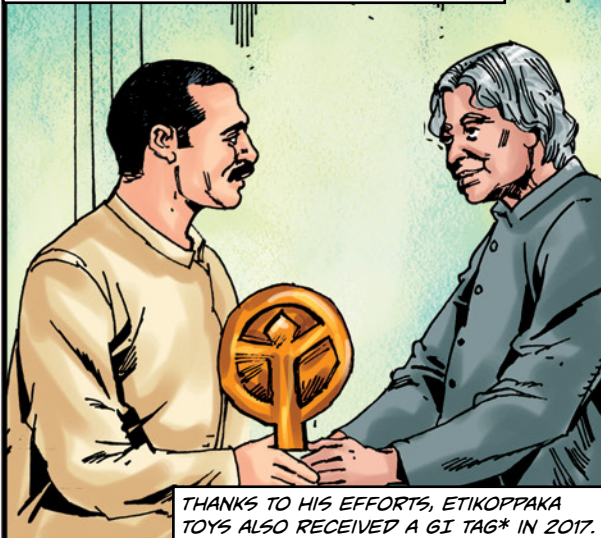
HE ALSO REALISED THAT THIS WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DIVERSIFY THEIR GOAL.

OUR TOYS SHOULDN'T JUST BE DECORATIVE. THE KIDS SHOULD GET TO LEARN SOMETHING FROM THEM.



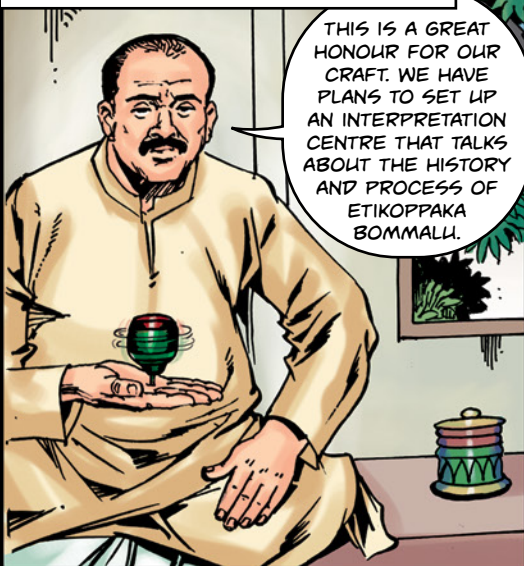
NOW, THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ETIKOPPAKA TOYS THAT TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT NUMBERS, COLOURS, THE NATURAL WORLD AND MUCH MORE.

IN 2002, RAJU WAS PRESENTED WITH A NATIONAL GRASSROOTS INNOVATION AWARD BY THE THEN PRESIDENT, DR A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM.



THANKS TO HIS EFFORTS, ETIKOPPAKA TOYS ALSO RECEIVED A GI TAG* IN 2017.

WHEN RAJU WAS SELECTED FOR A PADMA SHRI* IN 2023, HE WAS HUMBLE —



THIS IS A GREAT HONOUR FOR OUR CRAFT. WE HAVE PLANS TO SET UP AN INTERPRETATION CENTRE THAT TALKS ABOUT THE HISTORY AND PROCESS OF ETIKOPPAKA BOMMALLU.

*A GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) TAG DENOTES PRODUCTS THAT POSSESS QUALITIES OR A REPUTATION THAT COME FROM THEIR PLACE OF MAKING.

*THE FOURTH HIGHEST CIVILIAN AWARD IN INDIA

BHAGEERATHI AMMA

I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS. I WILL SOON BE COMPLETING MY EXAMS IN PLANT BIOLOGY. SO, WHEN WE GO ON OUR NATURE WALKS, I WILL BE ABLE TO TEACH YOU ABOUT THE PLANTS AND TREES.

ARE YOU STILL STUDYING, SIR? HOW'S THAT POSSIBLE?

I DIDN'T KNOW GROWN-UP TEACHERS COULD STUDY TOO!

OF COURSE, GROWN-UPS CAN STUDY. RECENTLY, ON MANN KI BAAT, I HEARD ABOUT A 105-YEAR-OLD WHO STUDIED AND WROTE EXAMS.

THAT'S RIGHT, SHARADA. HER NAME IS BHAGEERATHI AMMA. SETTLE DOWN AND I'LL TELL YOU HER STORY.

BHAGEERATHI WAS A LITTLE GIRL IN THE PRAKKULAM VILLAGE OF KERALA, WHO LOVED TO READ AND WRITE. BUT WHEN SHE TURNED EIGHT —

AREN'T YOU COMING TO SCHOOL, BHAGEERATHI?

NO. NOW THAT HER MOTHER HAS PASSED AWAY, SHE WILL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSE AND HER SIBLINGS.

I DO WANT TO STUDY.

BHAGEERATHI COULD NEVER RESUME SCHOOL. LATER, SHE WAS MARRIED AND HAD SIX CHILDREN OF HER OWN. AND THEN, HER HUSBAND PASSED AWAY.

I WON'T LET ANYTHING AFFECT YOUR EDUCATION. I WANT YOU ALL TO STUDY WELL.

AMMA, WE WILL STUDY HARD AND MAKE YOU PROUD!

AS HER CHILDREN GREW UP —

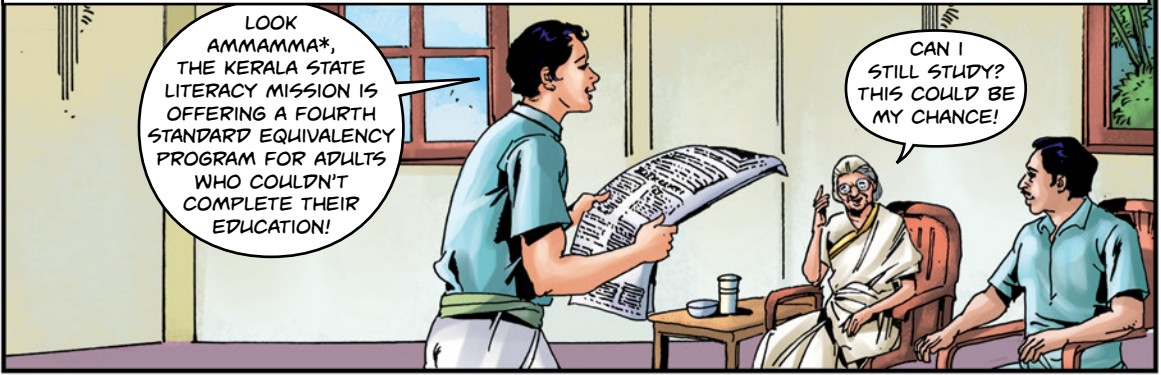
CAN I READ THIS BOOK? WILL YOU HELP ME IF I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT?

OF COURSE, AMMA.

AMMA, READ THIS BOOK FIRST. IT IS VERY INTERESTING.



BHAGEERATHI AMMA'S DESIRE TO STUDY REMAINED UNFULFILLED. IN 2019, WHEN SHE WAS 105 YEARS OLD —



LOOK AMMAMMA*, THE KERALA STATE LITERACY MISSION IS OFFERING A FOURTH STANDARD EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM FOR ADULTS WHO COULDN'T COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION!

CAN I STILL STUDY? THIS COULD BE MY CHANCE!

DESPITE HER AGE, BHAGEERATHI AMMA DECIDED TO DO THE COURSE.



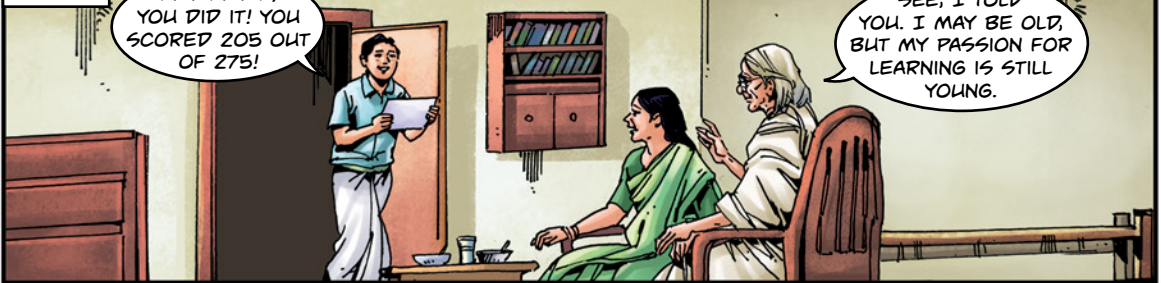
I HAVE A LOT TO STUDY. I HAVE TO DO WELL.

I'M SURE YOU WILL, AMMAMMA. BESIDES, WE ARE ALL HERE FOR YOU.

AFTER MONTHS OF HARD WORK, BHAGEERATHI AMMA GAVE THE EXAMS IN MATHEMATICS, MALAYALAM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE.



SOON —



AMMAMMA, YOU DID IT! YOU SCORED 205 OUT OF 275!

SEE, I TOLD YOU. I MAY BE OLD, BUT MY PASSION FOR LEARNING IS STILL YOUNG.

IN 2019, FOR HER REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT, BHAGEERATHI AMMA WAS AWARDED THE NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR, THE HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOUR FOR WOMEN IN INDIA.



IF WE WISH TO PROGRESS IN LIFE, WE SHOULD DEVELOP OURSELVES. IF WE WISH TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING IN LIFE, THE FIRST PRE-CONDITION IS THAT THE STUDENT WITHIN US MUST NEVER DIE.



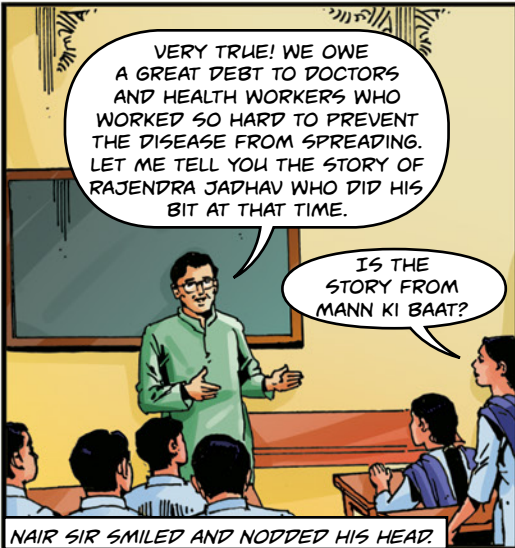
*'GRANDMOTHER' IN MALAYALAM

RAJENDRA JADHAV



AREN'T YOU GLAD THERE IS NO BIG THREAT FROM COVID ANYMORE?

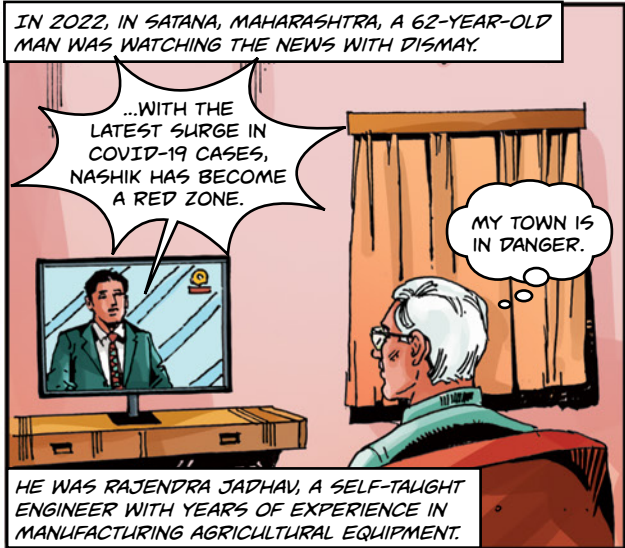
OH YES, SIR! THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WORKED TO KEEP US SAFE.



VERY TRUE! WE OWE A GREAT DEBT TO DOCTORS AND HEALTH WORKERS WHO WORKED SO HARD TO PREVENT THE DISEASE FROM SPREADING. LET ME TELL YOU THE STORY OF RAJENDRA JADHAV WHO DID HIS BIT AT THAT TIME.

IS THE STORY FROM MANN KI BAAT?

NAIR SIR SMILED AND NODDED HIS HEAD.

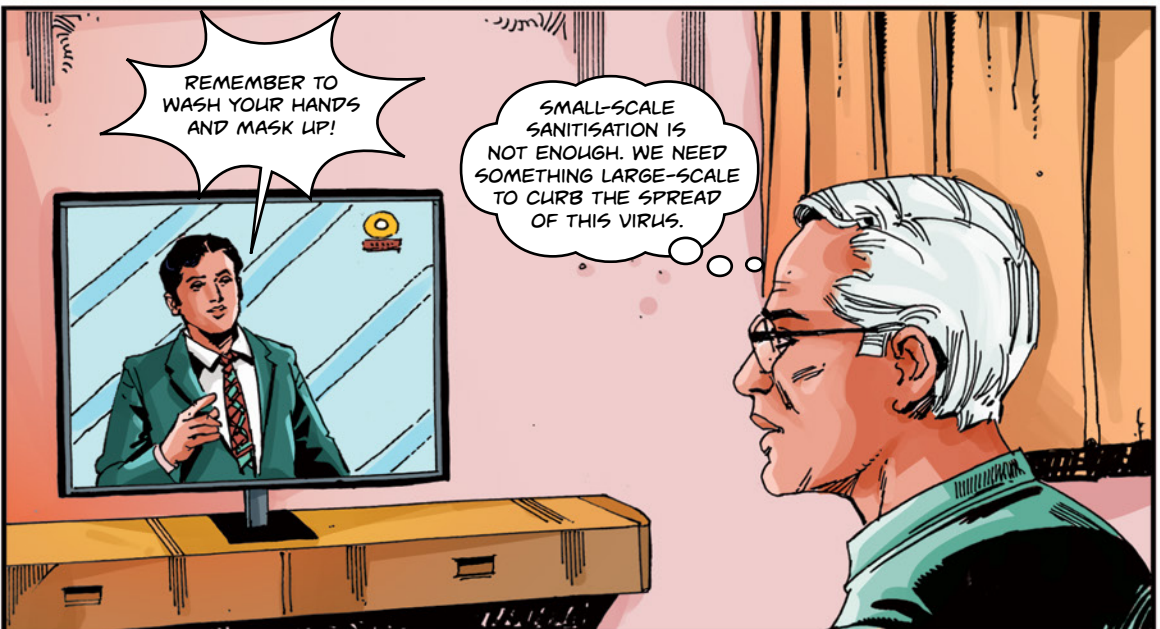


IN 2022, IN SATANA, MAHARASHTRA, A 62-YEAR-OLD MAN WAS WATCHING THE NEWS WITH DISMAY.

...WITH THE LATEST SURGE IN COVID-19 CASES, NASHIK HAS BECOME A RED ZONE.

MY TOWN IS IN DANGER.

HE WAS RAJENDRA JADHAV, A SELF-TAUGHT ENGINEER WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN MANUFACTURING AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT.

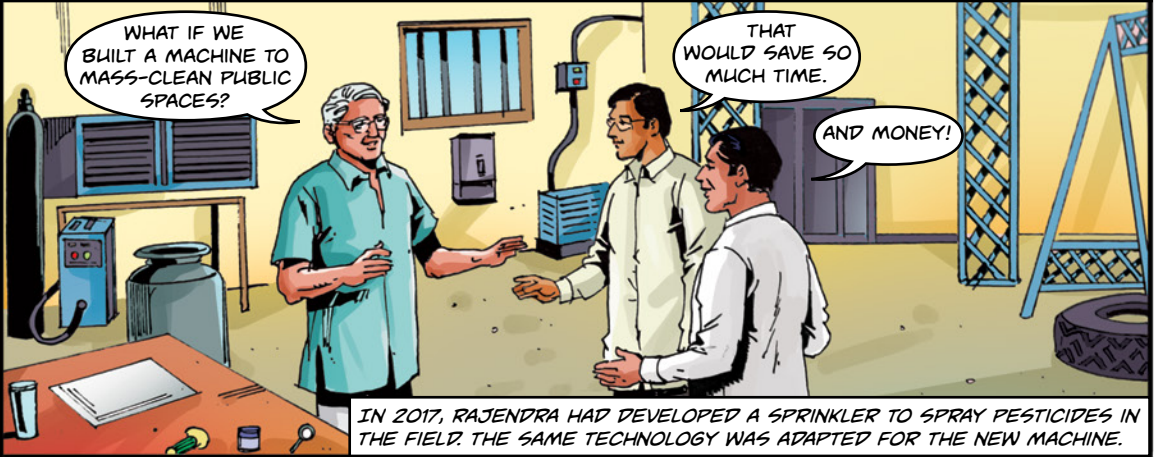


REMEMBER TO WASH YOUR HANDS AND MASK UP!

SMALL-SCALE SANITISATION IS NOT ENOUGH. WE NEED SOMETHING LARGE-SCALE TO CURB THE SPREAD OF THIS VIRUS.



RAJENDRA TOOK THE PROBLEM TO HIS WORKSHOP, WHERE HE SPOKE TO HIS SONS, MANGESH AND DHANANJAY.



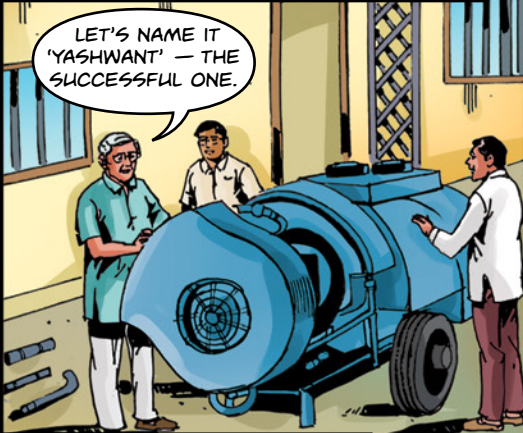
WHAT IF WE BUILT A MACHINE TO MASS-CLEAN PUBLIC SPACES?

THAT WOULD SAVE SO MUCH TIME.

AND MONEY!

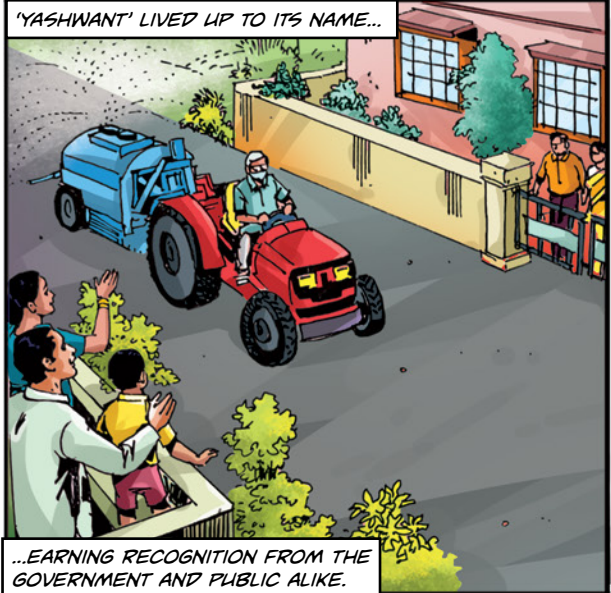
IN 2017, RAJENDRA HAD DEVELOPED A SPRINKLER TO SPRAY PESTICIDES IN THE FIELD. THE SAME TECHNOLOGY WAS ADAPTED FOR THE NEW MACHINE.

AFTER 25 DAYS, THEIR LABOUR OF LOVE WAS A SANITISER THAT STORED UP TO 600 LITRES OF WATER MIXED WITH DISINFECTANT.



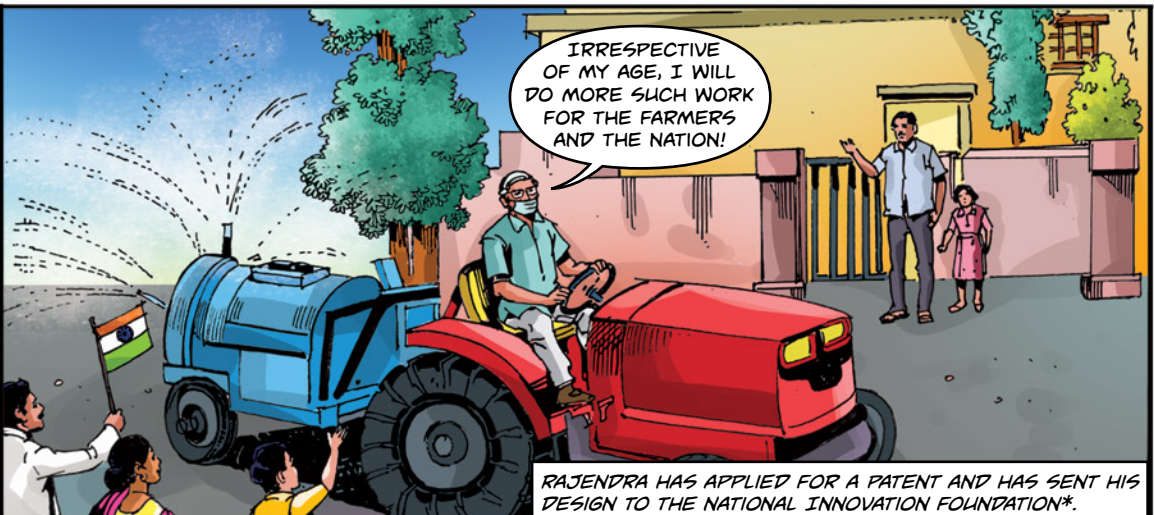
LET'S NAME IT 'YASHWANT' — THE SUCCESSFUL ONE.

WHEN MOUNTED ON A TRACTOR, IT COULD SANITISE HUGE AREAS LIKE ROADS AND COMPOUNDS EASILY.



'YASHWANT' LIVED UP TO ITS NAME...

...EARNING RECOGNITION FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ALIKE.

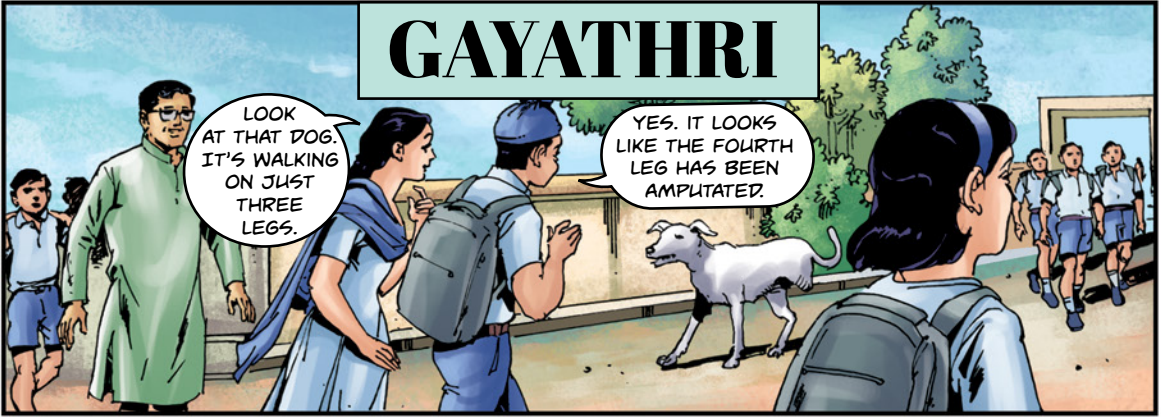


IRRESPECTIVE OF MY AGE, I WILL DO MORE SUCH WORK FOR THE FARMERS AND THE NATION!

RAJENDRA HAS APPLIED FOR A PATENT AND HAS SENT HIS DESIGN TO THE NATIONAL INNOVATION FOUNDATION*.

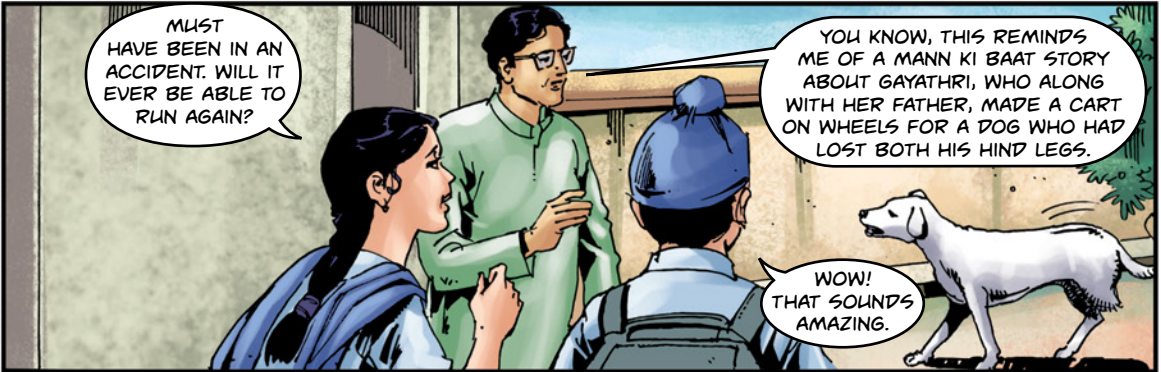
*NIF IS AN ORGANISATION THAT SCOUTS AND SUPPORTS GRASSROOTS INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY.

GAYATHRI



LOOK AT THAT DOG. IT'S WALKING ON JUST THREE LEGS.

YES. IT LOOKS LIKE THE FOURTH LEG HAS BEEN AMPUTATED.



MUST HAVE BEEN IN AN ACCIDENT. WILL IT EVER BE ABLE TO RUN AGAIN?

YOU KNOW, THIS REMINDS ME OF A MANN KI BAAT STORY ABOUT GAYATHRI, WHO ALONG WITH HER FATHER, MADE A CART ON WHEELS FOR A DOG WHO HAD LOST BOTH HIS HIND LEGS.

WOW! THAT SOUNDS AMAZING.

GAYATHRI WAS AN IT* PROFESSIONAL LIVING IN COIMBATORE, TAMIL NADU.



APPA, I WAS THINKING, NOW THAT I'M WORKING FROM HOME DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, I'LL HAVE TIME TO LOOK AFTER A DOG. CAN WE GET ONE?

I KNOW YOU HAVE ALWAYS WANTED ONE. THIS MAY BE THE RIGHT TIME.



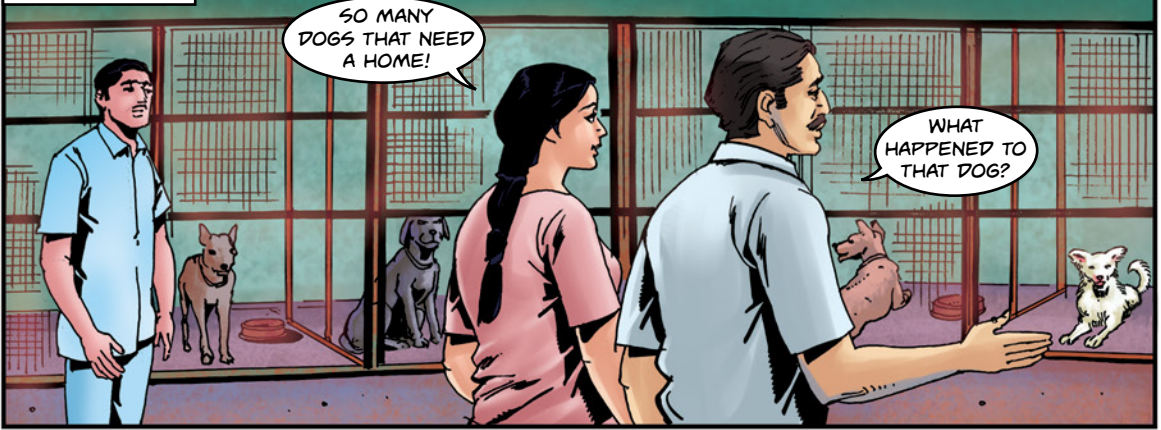
GREAT! LET'S GO TO THE NEARBY DOG SHELTER TOMORROW AND ADOPT ONE.

I THINK IT WILL BE A HAPPY ADDITION TO OUR HOME.

*INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

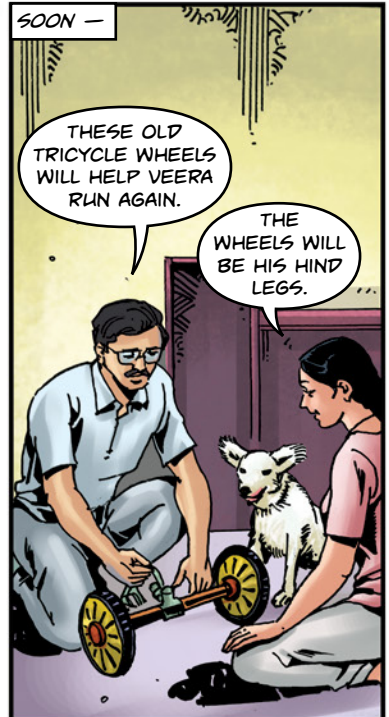
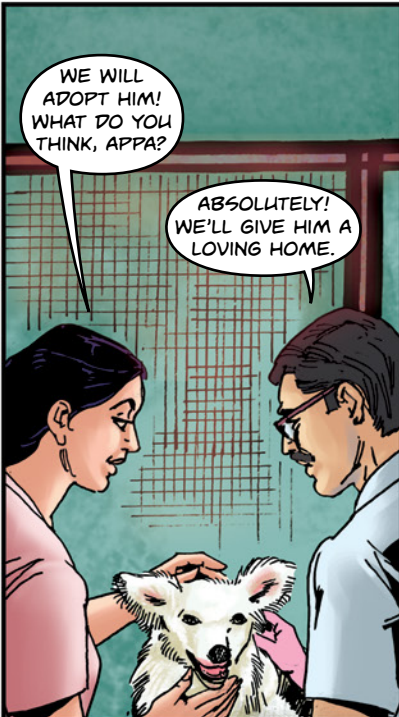


THE NEXT DAY —

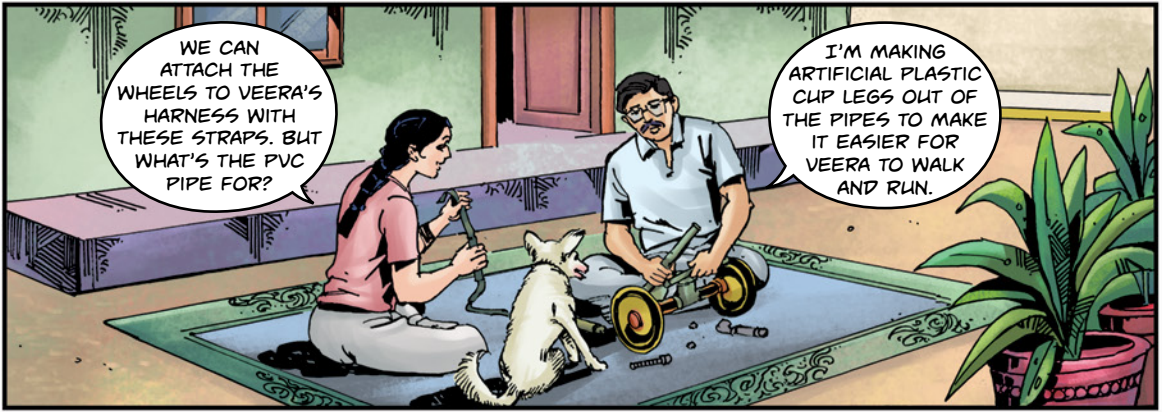


THAT'S VEERA. HIS LEGS HAD TO BE AMPUTATED AS THEY WERE BADLY BROKEN. WE THINK IT WAS A CASE OF ANIMAL ABUSE.

NO ONE WANTS TO ADOPT HIM BECAUSE OF HIS DISABILITY.

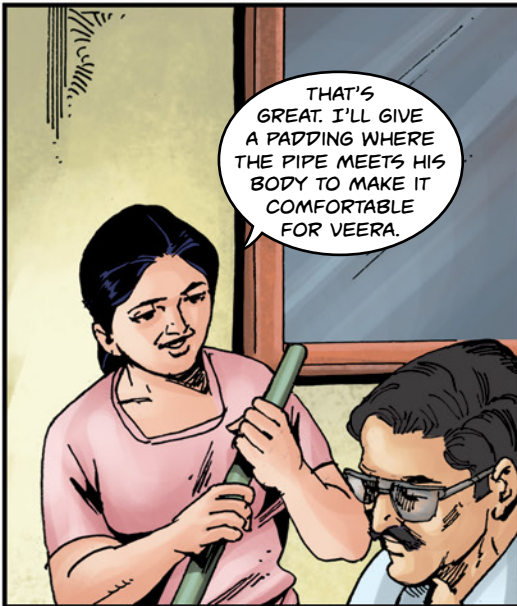


*GAYATHRI'S FATHER, KASILINGAM, WAS A MECHANICAL ENGINEER.

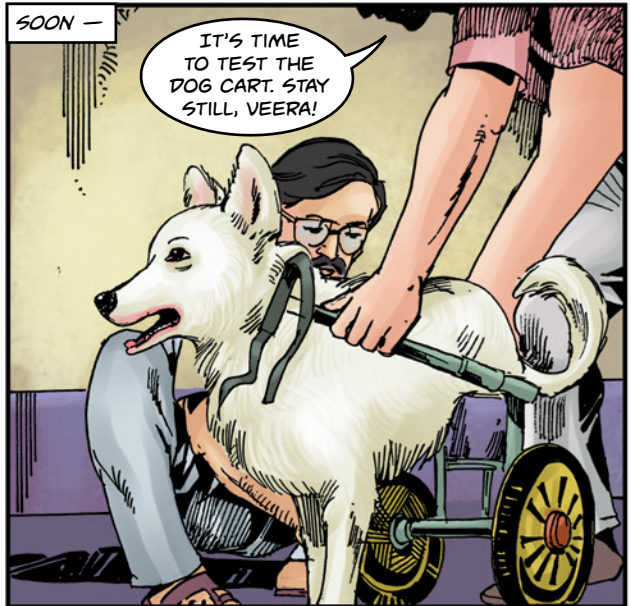


WE CAN ATTACH THE WHEELS TO VEERA'S HARNESS WITH THESE STRAPS. BUT WHAT'S THE PVC PIPE FOR?

I'M MAKING ARTIFICIAL PLASTIC CUP LEGS OUT OF THE PIPES TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR VEERA TO WALK AND RUN.

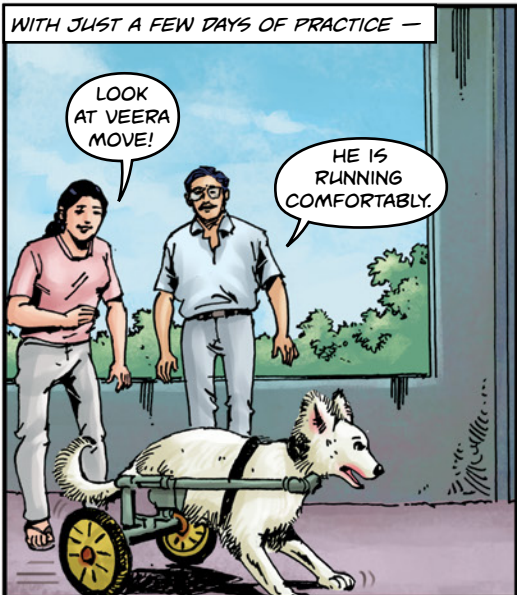


THAT'S GREAT. I'LL GIVE A PADDING WHERE THE PIPE MEETS HIS BODY TO MAKE IT COMFORTABLE FOR VEERA.



SOON —

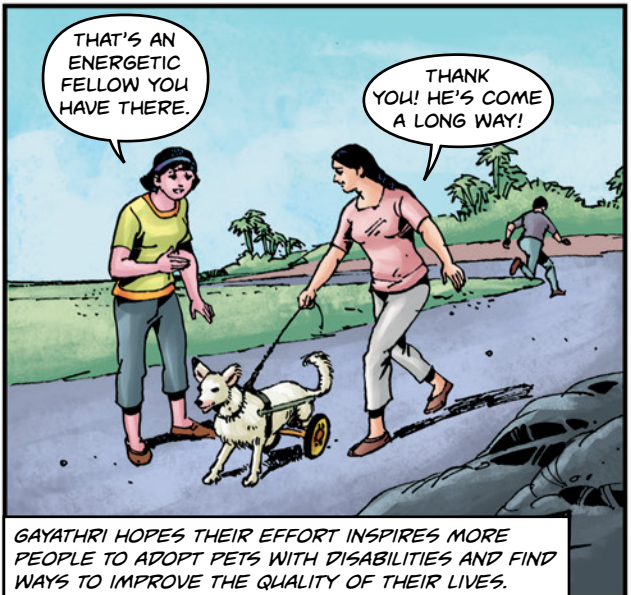
IT'S TIME TO TEST THE DOG CART. STAY STILL, VEERA!



WITH JUST A FEW DAYS OF PRACTICE —

LOOK AT VEERA MOVE!

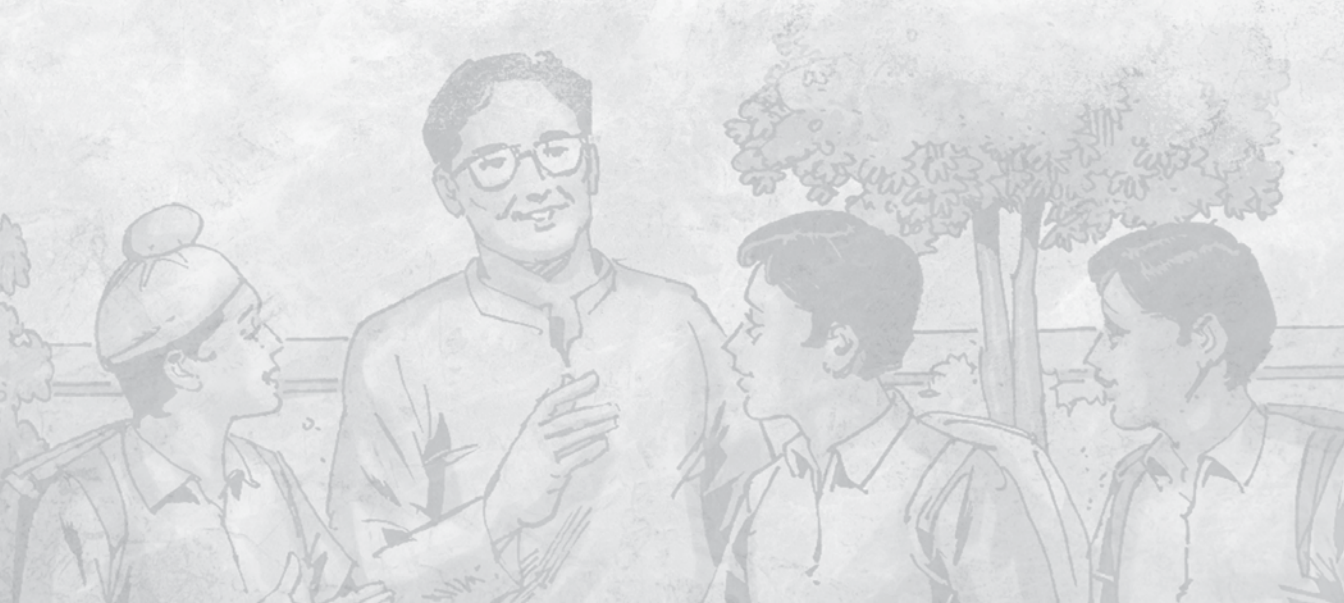
HE IS RUNNING COMFORTABLY.



THAT'S AN ENERGETIC FELLOW YOU HAVE THERE.

THANK YOU! HE'S COME A LONG WAY!

GAYATHRI HOPES THEIR EFFORT INSPIRES MORE PEOPLE TO ADOPT PETS WITH DISABILITIES AND FIND WAYS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES.





MANN KI BAAT

VOL.2

The second volume of Mann ki Baat continues to celebrate the power of one.

In his radio programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has highlighted the contribution of a number of men and women who have worked miracles with their lives.

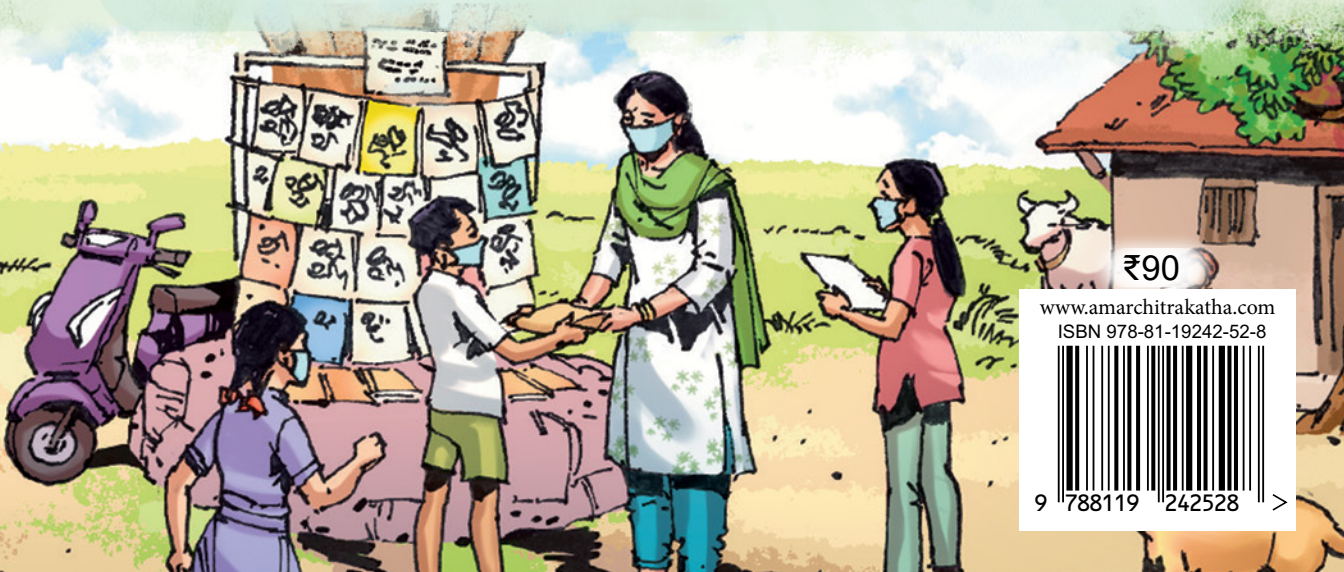
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Bhageerathi Amma, who was pulled out of school as a child to look after her siblings, studied when she was a great-grandmother and passed her fourth standard exam when she was 105 years old.

N.S. Rajappan, though struck by polio at the age of five, took it upon himself, at the age of 63, to clean the Vembanad lake of plastic bottles and packets littered by careless tourists.

Usha Dubey, during the Covid lockdown, realised that online classes were not possible for children from poorer homes. So, she took the classroom to them on her scooter.

It does not take great money or position to make a difference. And these heroes prove it.



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