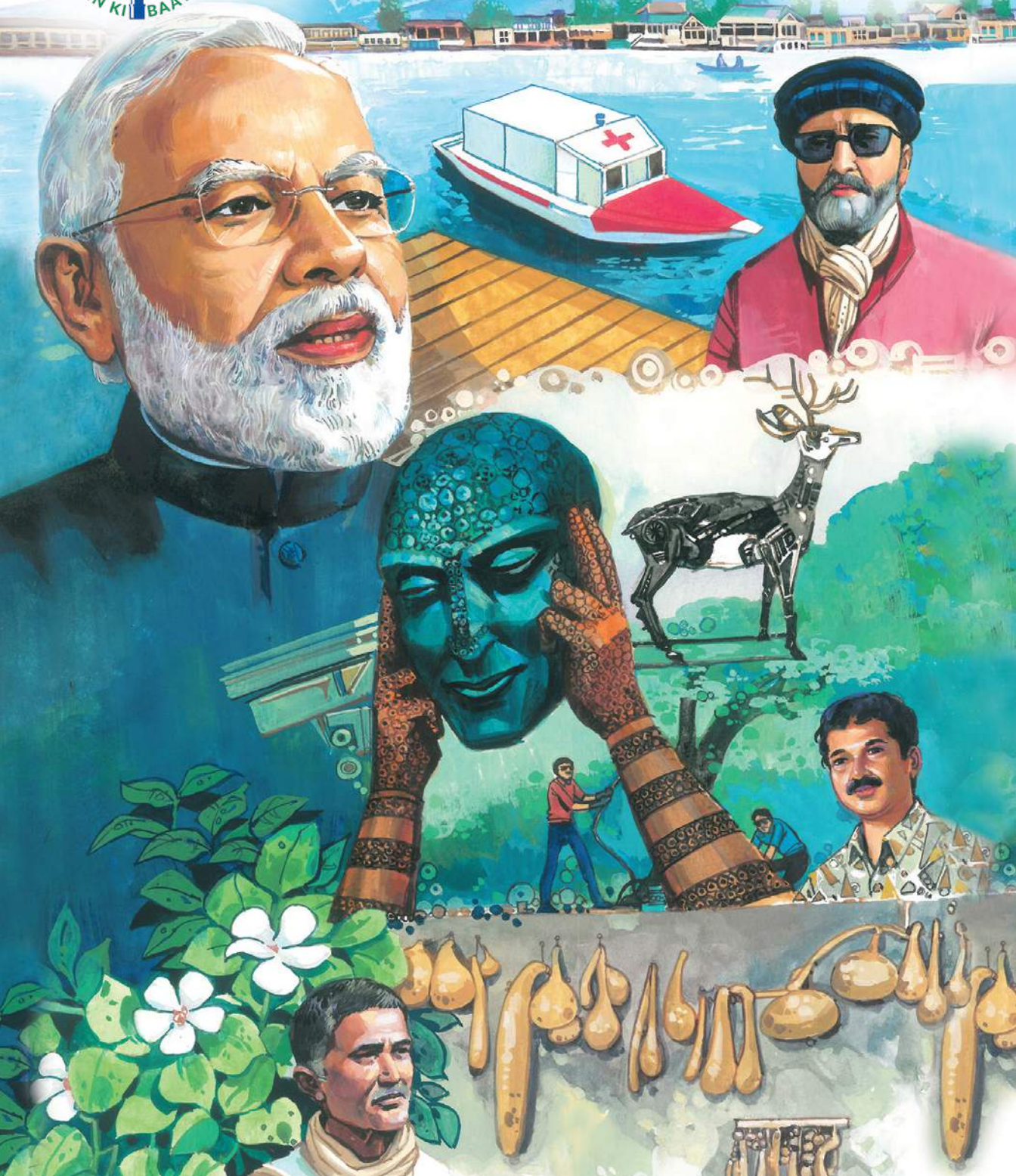




MANN KI BAAT

VOL.3



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Script Writers

Sarda Mohan and Shashi Mukherjee

Illustrations and Cover Art

Dilip Kadam

Assistant Artist

Ravindra Mokate

Production

Amar Chitra Katha

Layout Artist

Tarangini Mukherjee

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Dear Children,

Our country is full of ancient knowledge and wisdom, a lot of which has been forgotten in the rush towards modernisation. It is good to move ahead but it is equally important to look back and appreciate the various legacies that our ancestors have left us.

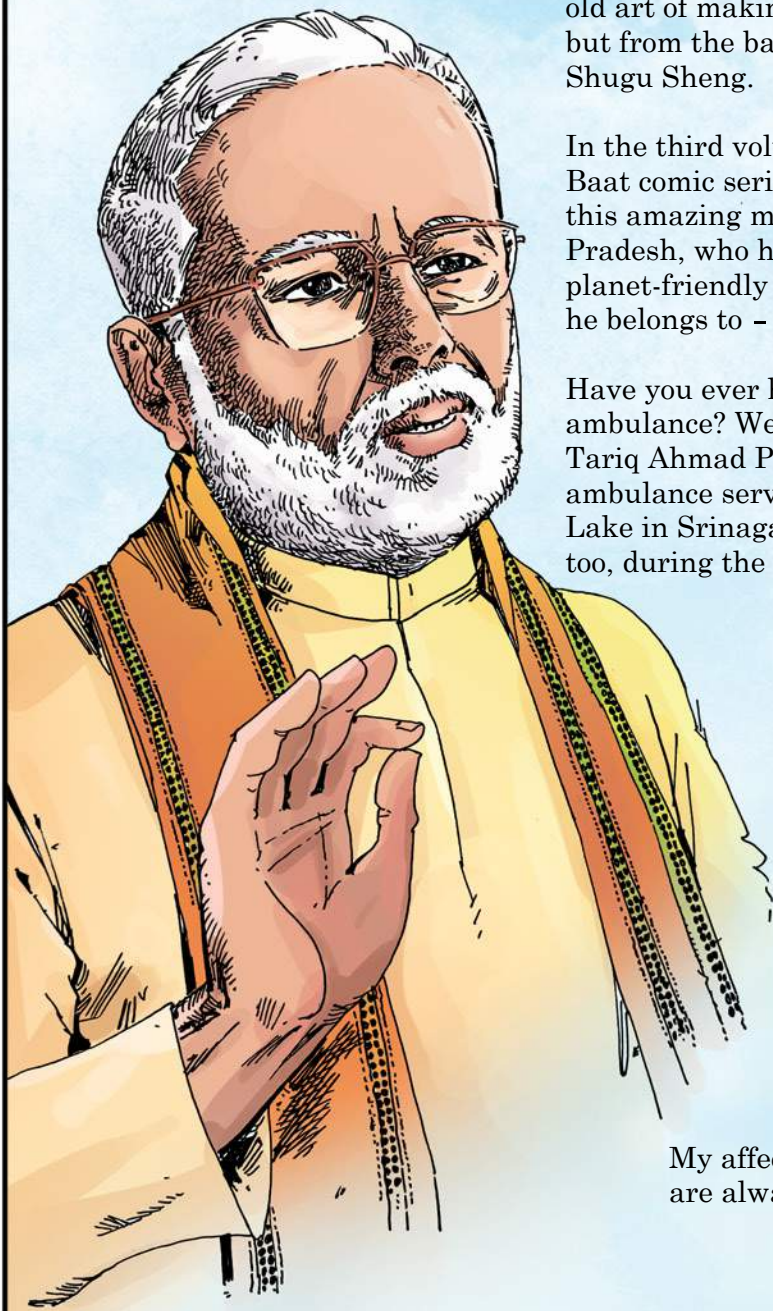
It was this very thought that inspired Maling Gombu to revive the 1,000-year-old art of making paper, not from trees, but from the bark of a shrub called Shugu Sheng.

In the third volume of our Mann Ki Baat comic series, you will learn about this amazing man from Arunachal Pradesh, who has given new life to the planet-friendly paper made by the tribe he belongs to - the Monpa tribe.

Have you ever heard of a water ambulance? Well, read the story of Tariq Ahmad Patloo who ran a water ambulance service on the beautiful Dal Lake in Srinagar, Kashmir. And that too, during the COVID-19 lockdown.

To step out and do something which is not in your comfort zone, is not easy. It takes courage, determination and the willingness to face difficulties. But once you do, you will find extreme satisfaction in thinking out of the box - in doing what your heart tells you to do.

My affection and my blessings are always with you.





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MALING GOMBU

IT WAS THE CRAFTS PERIOD IN SCHOOL AND THE CHILDREN WERE LEARNING TO MAKE PAPIER-MÂCHÉ TOYS.



LOOK AT MY PAPER MACHE PIG! ISN'T HE SWEET?

I'M SURE HE WILL HAVE A STORY TO TELL ABOUT PAPER AND PIGS.

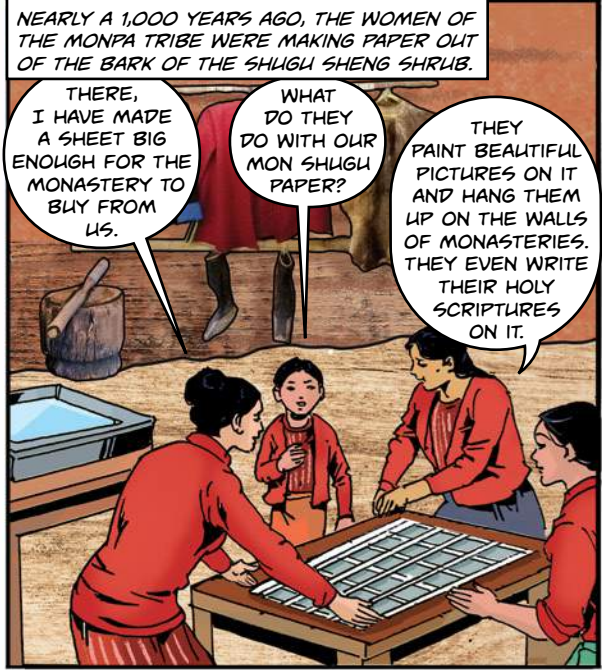
AW! HE IS REALLY CUTE! YOU MUST SHOW IT TO NAIR SIR DURING OUR STORY CLASS.

NAIR SIR DID NOT DISAPPOINT THEM.



WELL, I MAY NOT HAVE A STORY ABOUT PIGS BUT I SURE HAVE A STORY ABOUT A SPECIAL TYPE OF PAPER CALLED MON SHUGU.

SEE, DIDN'T I TELL YOU!? HA HA HA!



NEARLY A 1,000 YEARS AGO, THE WOMEN OF THE MONPA TRIBE WERE MAKING PAPER OUT OF THE BARK OF THE SHUGU SHENG SHRUB.

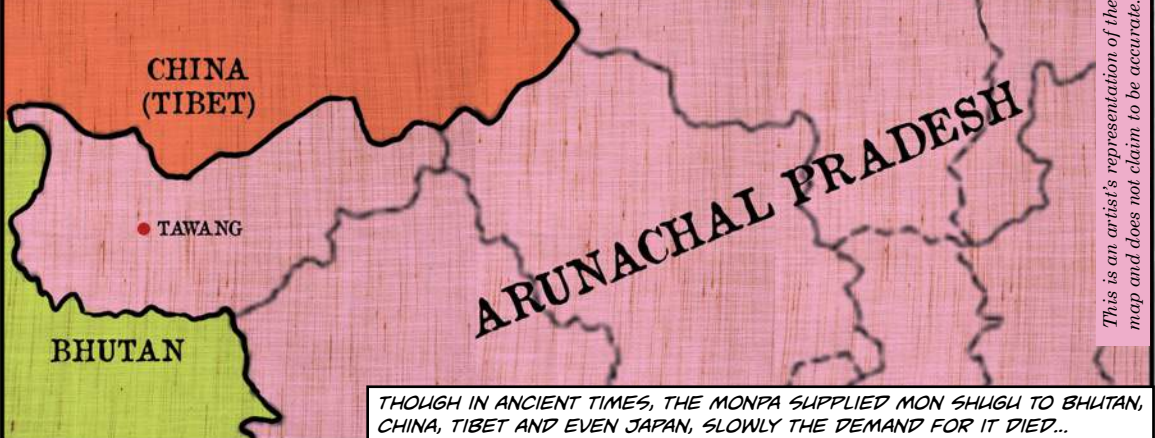
THERE, I HAVE MADE A SHEET BIG ENOUGH FOR THE MONASTERY TO BUY FROM US.

WHAT DO THEY DO WITH OUR MON SHUGU PAPER?

THEY PAINT BEAUTIFUL PICTURES ON IT AND HANG THEM UP ON THE WALLS OF MONASTERIES. THEY EVEN WRITE THEIR HOLY SCRIPTURES ON IT.

THEY ALL SETTLED DOWN EAGERLY. AFTER ALL, IT WAS STORYTIME FROM MANN KI BAAT.

THE MONPA LIVED CLOSE TO THE BORDER BETWEEN INDIA, TIBET, AND CHINA, IN WHAT IS NOW KNOWN AS ARUNACHAL PRADESH.

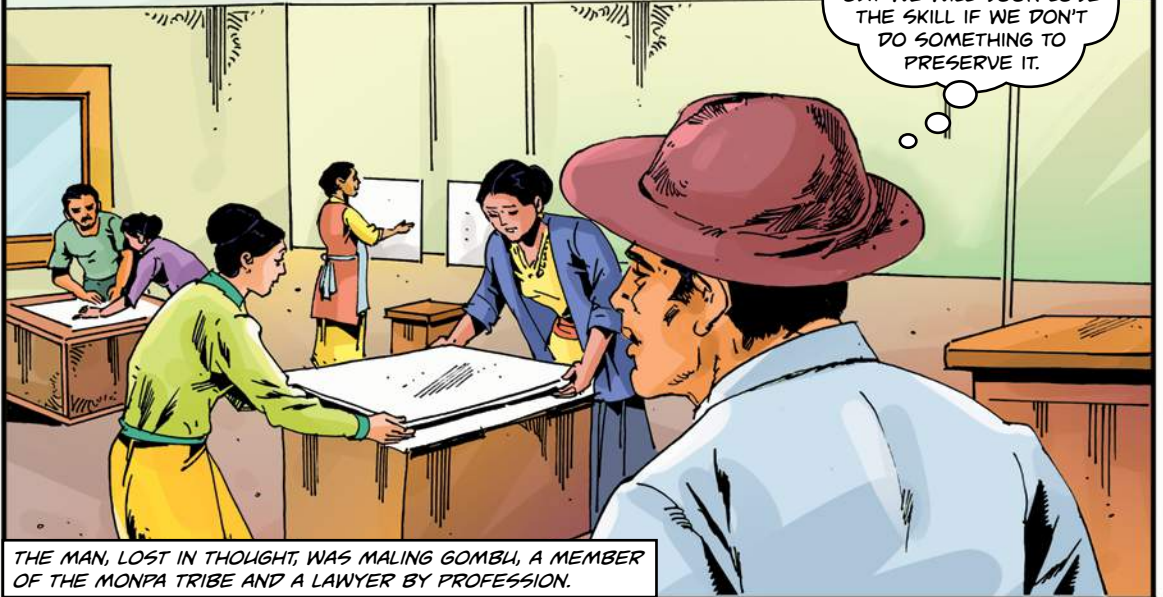


THOUGH IN ANCIENT TIMES, THE MONPA SUPPLIED MON SHUGU TO BHUTAN, CHINA, TIBET AND EVEN JAPAN, SLOWLY THE DEMAND FOR IT DIED...

This is an artist's representation of the map and does not claim to be accurate.

*COMMONLY KNOWN AS PAPER MACHE — A MIX OF PAPER PULP AND GLUE

...BUT THE CRAFT OF CREATING MON SHUGU DID NOT DIE. A FEW FAMILIES CONTINUED TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE CENTURIES. HOWEVER, RECENTLY —



MON SHUGU IS PART OF OUR HERITAGE BUT WE WILL SOON LOSE THE SKILL IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING TO PRESERVE IT.

THE MAN, LOST IN THOUGHT, WAS MALING GOMBU, A MEMBER OF THE MONPA TRIBE AND A LAWYER BY PROFESSION.

THE ART OF MAKING MON SHUGU FOLLOWS A LONG AND PAINSTAKING PROCESS.

1. THE BARK IS HARVESTED FROM THE SHRUBS BETWEEN APRIL AND DECEMBER, WHEN THE PLANT DOES NOT HAVE NEW LEAVES OR FLOWERS.



2. THE SOFT INSIDES ARE REMOVED AND THE BARK IS WASHED AND DRIED THOROUGHLY.



3. IT IS THEN DIPPED IN ASH WATER* BEFORE BEING CUT INTO SMALL PIECES AND BOILED.

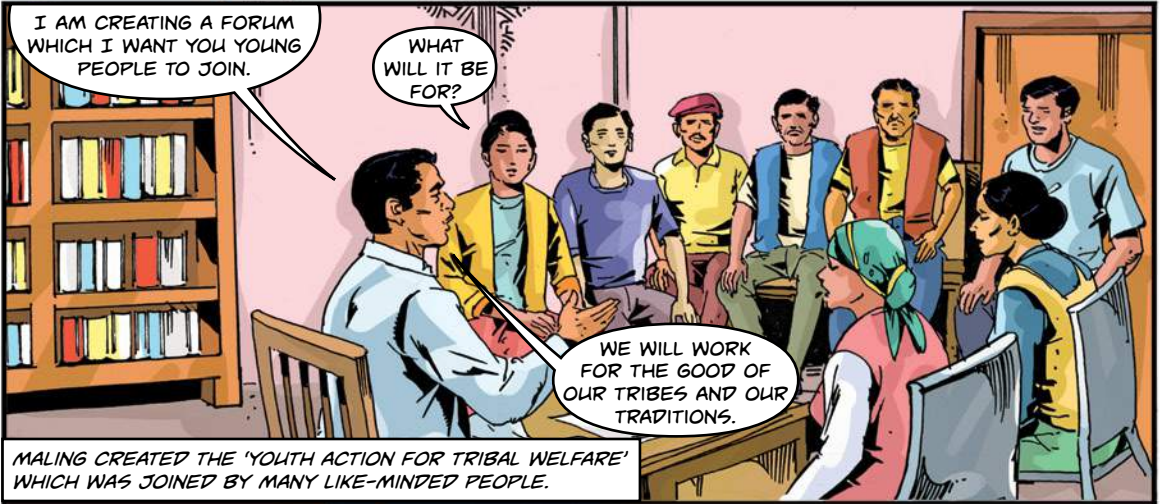


4. THE RESIDUE IS PULPED AND THEN LAID OUT AS PAPER.



IF THE WEATHER IS GOOD, ABOUT 100 SHEETS OF PAPER CAN BE MADE IN A DAY.

*WATER MIXED WITH WOOD ASH



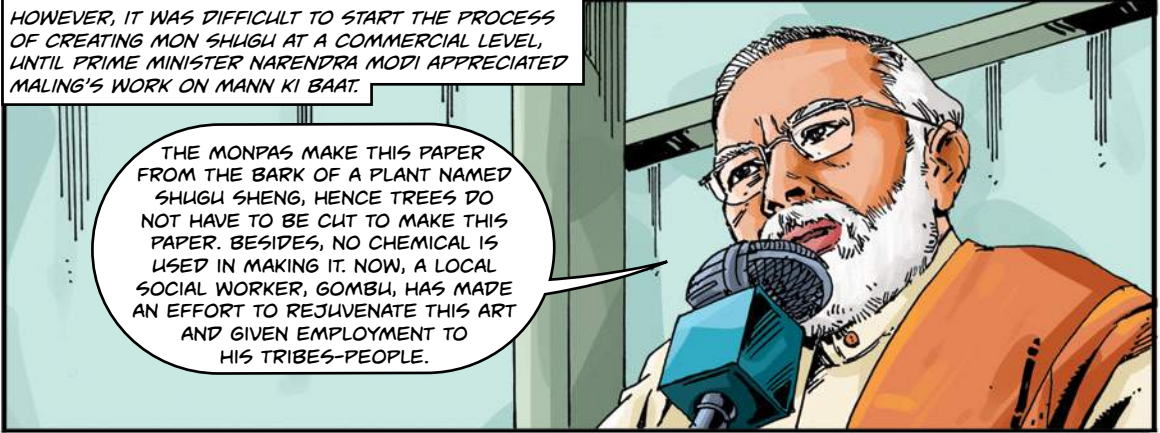
I AM CREATING A FORUM WHICH I WANT YOU YOUNG PEOPLE TO JOIN.

WHAT WILL IT BE FOR?

WE WILL WORK FOR THE GOOD OF OUR TRIBES AND OUR TRADITIONS.

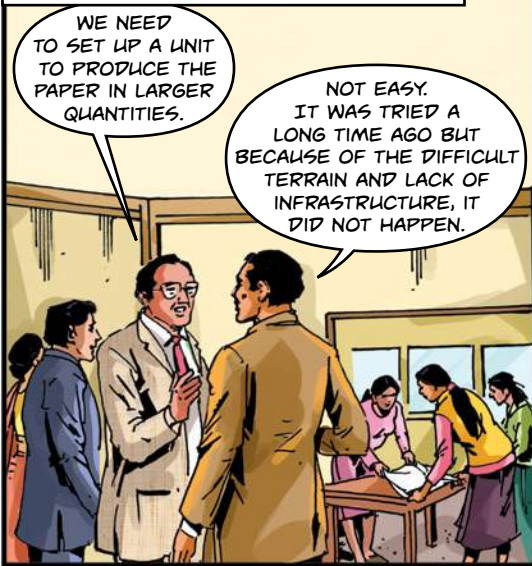
MALING CREATED THE 'YOUTH ACTION FOR TRIBAL WELFARE' WHICH WAS JOINED BY MANY LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE.

HOWEVER, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO START THE PROCESS OF CREATING MON SHUGH AT A COMMERCIAL LEVEL, UNTIL PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI APPRECIATED MALING'S WORK ON MANN KI BAAT.



THE MONPAS MAKE THIS PAPER FROM THE BARK OF A PLANT NAMED SHUGH SHENG, HENCE TREES DO NOT HAVE TO BE CUT TO MAKE THIS PAPER. BESIDES, NO CHEMICAL IS USED IN MAKING IT. NOW, A LOCAL SOCIAL WORKER, GOMBU, HAS MADE AN EFFORT TO REJUVENATE THIS ART AND GIVEN EMPLOYMENT TO HIS TRIBES-PEOPLE.

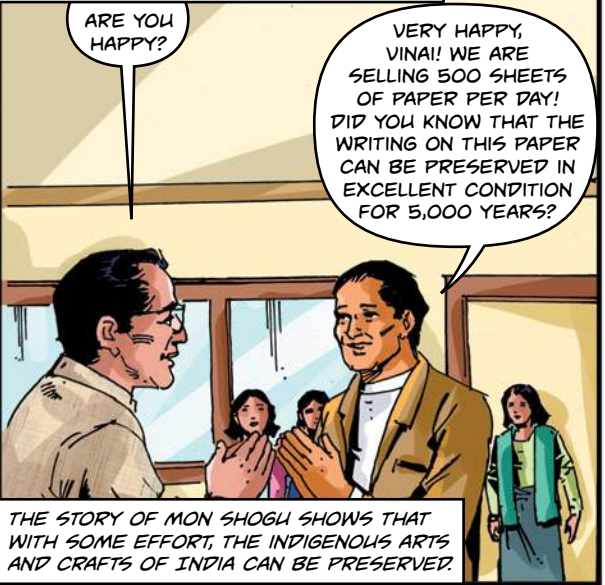
LUCKILY FOR MALING GOMBU, VINAI KUMAR SAXENA, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION, WAS EXCITED TO LEARN ABOUT MON SHUGH.



WE NEED TO SET UP A UNIT TO PRODUCE THE PAPER IN LARGER QUANTITIES.

NOT EASY. IT WAS TRIED A LONG TIME AGO BUT BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULT TERRAIN AND LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE, IT DID NOT HAPPEN.

BUT SAXENA WAS NOT ONE TO GIVE UP. DESPITE ALL PROBLEMS, HE HELPED SET UP A MANUFACTURING UNIT IN TAWANG.



ARE YOU HAPPY?

VERY HAPPY, VINAI! WE ARE SELLING 500 SHEETS OF PAPER PER DAY! DID YOU KNOW THAT THE WRITING ON THIS PAPER CAN BE PRESERVED IN EXCELLENT CONDITION FOR 5,000 YEARS?

THE STORY OF MON SHOGHU SHOWS THAT WITH SOME EFFORT, THE INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS OF INDIA CAN BE PRESERVED.



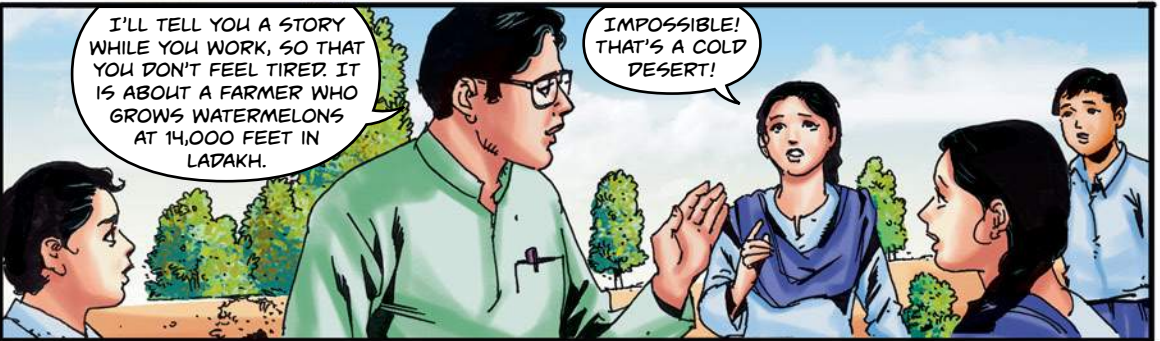
URGAIN PHUNTSOG

IT WAS GARDENING CLASS AT THE SARVODAYA VIDYALAYA AND NAIR SIR WAS TEACHING HIS STUDENTS HOW TO WEED BETWEEN THE PLANTS.



MY BACK IS BREAKING! THIS WORK IS TOO TOUGH.

THINK OF THE FARMERS IN THE FIELDS WHO DO THIS ALL DAY.



I'LL TELL YOU A STORY WHILE YOU WORK, SO THAT YOU DON'T FEEL TIRED. IT IS ABOUT A FARMER WHO GROWS WATERMELONS AT 14,000 FEET IN LADAKH.

IMPOSSIBLE! THAT'S A COLD DESERT!

URGAIN PHUNTSOG LOST HIS FATHER AT THE AGE OF 12. HE GREW UP WITH HIS MOTHER, ELDER SISTER, TSERING AND YOUNGER BROTHER, STANZIN, IN GYA VILLAGE, LADAKH.

AMA*, WHEN I GROW UP, I WILL JOIN THE ITBP^ OR THE INDIAN NAVY.

THAT COMES LATER, URGAIN! NOW FOCUS ON THE SOWING.

OH TSERING DEAR, HE WILL LEARN IT ALL GRADUALLY.



BEFORE LONG —

ACHE**, YOUR SON URGAIN IS BECOMING AN EXPERT IN PLOUGHING.

LOOK, AMA, I HAVE COMPLETED THE WHOLE FIELD.



URGAIN LEARNT THE SKILLS OF FARMING VERY QUICKLY.

THE YEARS PASSED BY.

AMA, I HAVE DECIDED NOT TO GET MARRIED. I WILL STAY AND LOOK AFTER THE LIVESTOCK. WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO HOLD ONTO THE LAND OUR ANCESTORS LEFT US.

I AGREE. AMA, YOUR HEALTH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN JOINING THE ARMY. I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU.



*MOTHER IN BHOTI, THE LANGUAGE OF LADAKH
^INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE

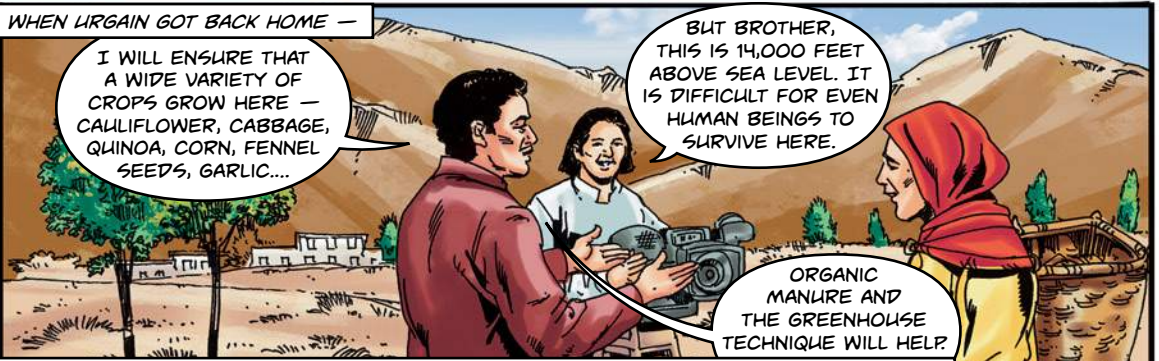
**ELDER SISTER IN BHOTI



MANY YEARS PASSED BY. IN 2010, URGAIN ATTENDED A 10-DAY EXPOSURE TOUR ORGANISED BY THE LOCAL AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT, IN SRINAGAR, KASHMIR.



THIS TOUR IS TEACHING ME SO MANY NOVEL METHODS OF FARMING. LOOK HOW THEY ARE CULTIVATING CROPS USING A GREENHOUSE*.



WHEN URGAIN GOT BACK HOME —

I WILL ENSURE THAT A WIDE VARIETY OF CROPS GROW HERE — CAULIFLOWER, CABBAGE, QUINOA, CORN, FENNEL SEEDS, GARLIC...

BUT BROTHER, THIS IS 14,000 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR EVEN HUMAN BEINGS TO SURVIVE HERE.

ORGANIC MANURE AND THE GREENHOUSE TECHNIQUE WILL HELP.

URGAIN'S YOUNGER BROTHER, STANZIN DORJAI, HAD BECOME A DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER. HE WAS SHOOTING A DOCUMENTARY ON TSERING AND HER LIFE AS A SHEPHERDESS.

URGAIN THEN VISITED THE KRISHI VIGYAN KENDRA (KVK), LEH.



I WISH TO BUY A FEW KILOS OF EARTHWORMS SO THAT I CAN RECYCLE ALL THE ANIMAL AND FARM WASTE TO PRODUCE VERMICOMPOST^.

WE ARE MORE THAN HAPPY TO PROVIDE THAT.

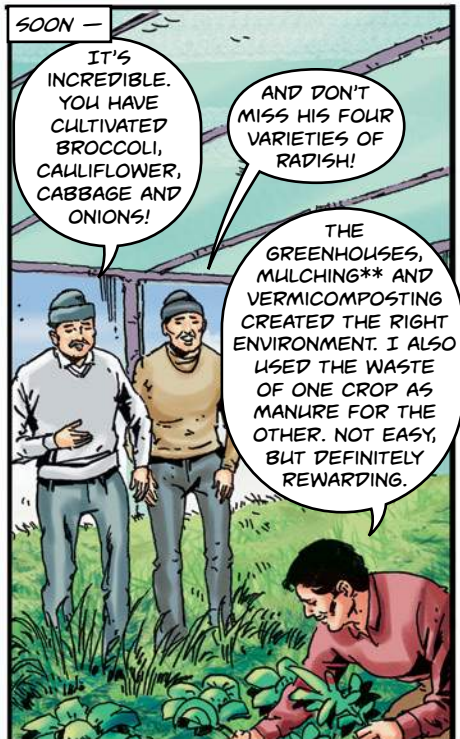
AND THEN, HE STARTED EXECUTING HIS IMPOSSIBLE VISION.



IT'S A COLD DAY FOR ONE OF YOUR EXPERIMENTS, ISN'T IT?

YES, THE TEMPERATURE HAS DIPPED TO -30 DEGREES TODAY.

WAIT AND WATCH, EVERYONE!



SOON —

IT'S INCREDIBLE. YOU HAVE CULTIVATED BROCCOLI, CAULIFLOWER, CABBAGE AND ONIONS!

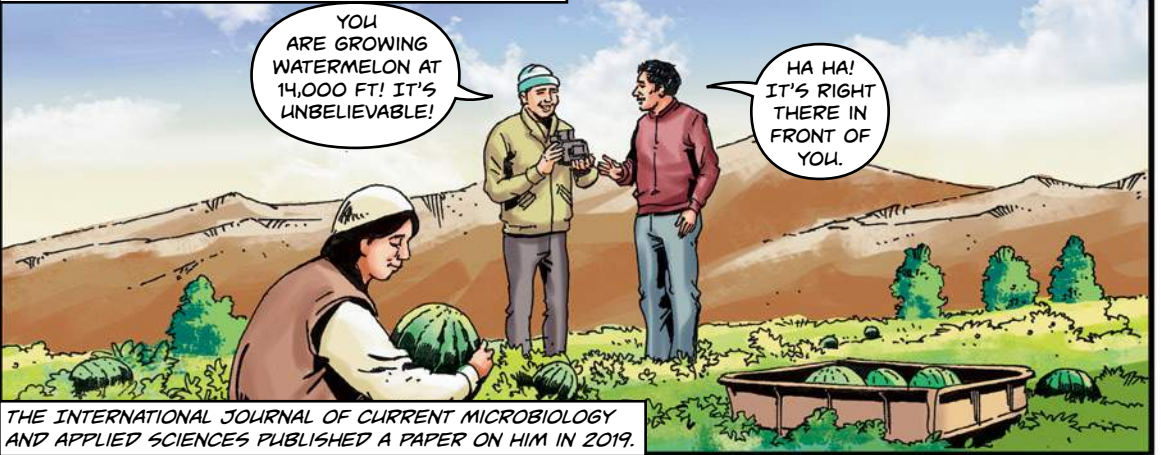
AND DON'T MISS HIS FOUR VARIETIES OF RADISH!

THE GREENHOUSES, MULCHING** AND VERMICOMPOSTING CREATED THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT. I ALSO USED THE WASTE OF ONE CROP AS MANURE FOR THE OTHER. NOT EASY, BUT DEFINITELY REWARDING.

*A STRUCTURE MADE OF GLASS OR PLASTIC WHICH ALLOWS CLIMATE-CONTROLLED CONDITIONS
^AN ORGANIC FERTILISER

**COVERING THE GROUND WITH STRAW AND OTHER PLANT MATERIAL TO PROTECT THE SOIL FROM HEAT, COLD OR DRYNESS

NEWS OF URGAIN'S SUCCESS SPREAD FAR AND WIDE.



YOU ARE GROWING WATERMELON AT 14,000 FT! IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!

HA HA! IT'S RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF YOU.

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT MICROBIOLOGY AND APPLIED SCIENCES PUBLISHED A PAPER ON HIM IN 2019.

THE GOVERNMENT APPRECIATED HIS HARD WORK AND HONoured HIM WITH THE STATE AWARD.



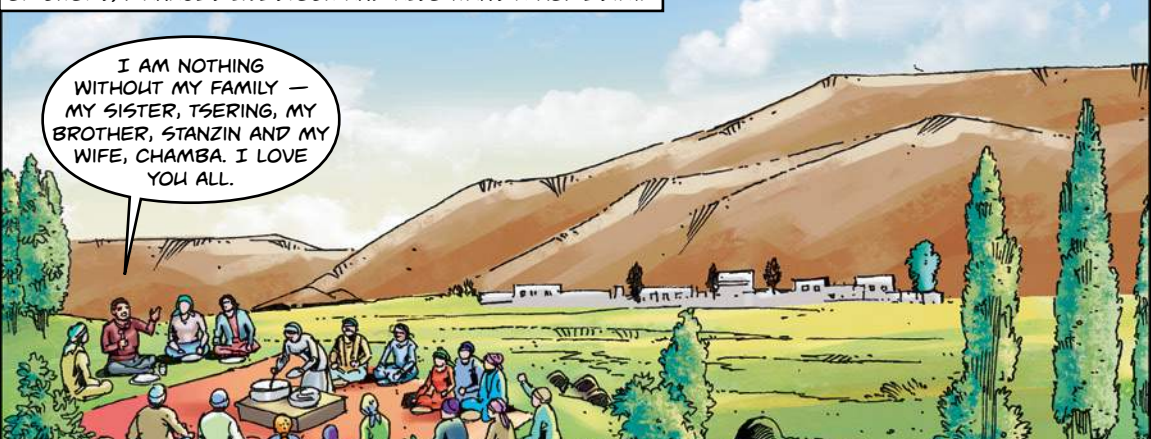
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS LIKE BBC AND NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC APPLAUDED HIS WORK.

IN 2016, HE WAS FEATURED IN HIS BROTHER STANZIN'S DOCUMENTARY, 'THE SHEPHERDESS OF THE GLACIERS'.



THIS FILM WON 17 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AWARDS.

WITH THE HELP OF HIS FAMILY, URGAIN CULTIVATES A VARIETY OF CROPS, MANAGES LIVESTOCK AND ALSO RUNS A HOMESTAY.



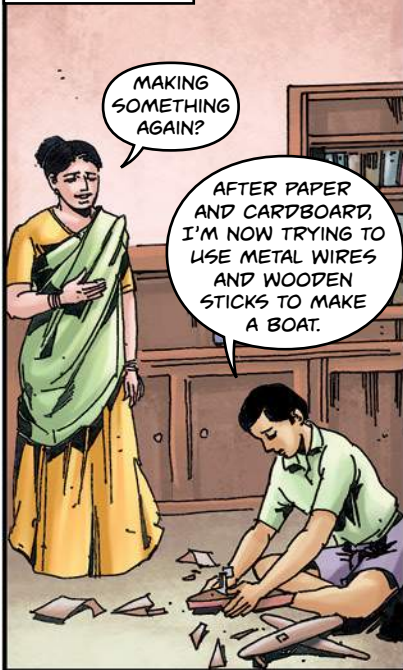
I AM NOTHING WITHOUT MY FAMILY — MY SISTER, TSERING, MY BROTHER, STANZIN AND MY WIFE, CHAMBA. I LOVE YOU ALL.

URGAIN HAS PROVED THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THOSE WHO ARE CONSTANTLY INNOVATING AND DREAMING BIG.

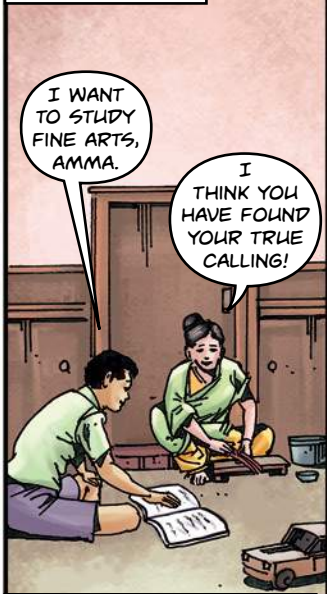
SRINIVAS PADAKANDLA



SRINIVAS GREW UP IN VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH. DURING HIS SCHOOL DAYS —



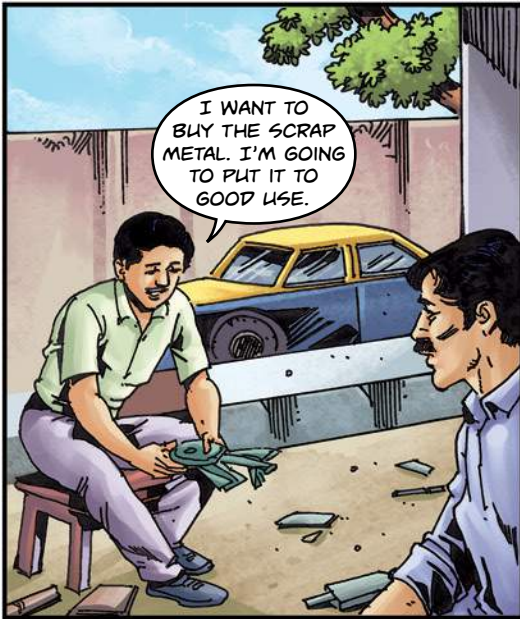
OVER THE YEARS, SRINIVAS' INTEREST IN CREATIVE ART GREW STRONGER.



SRINIVAS COMPLETED HIS BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE FROM ANDHRA UNIVERSITY.

THROUGH THE YEARS, SRINIVAS CONTINUED LOOKING FOR DISCARDED MATERIALS TO WORK WITH. ONE DAY AT A MECHANIC'S SHOP —





I WANT TO BUY THE SCRAP METAL. I'M GOING TO PUT IT TO GOOD USE.



SOON -

HOW DOES THIS LOOK?

IT'S BRILLIANT.

SRINIVAS BEGAN TO MAKE SCULPTURES USING SCRAP METAL, WOOD AND STONE.

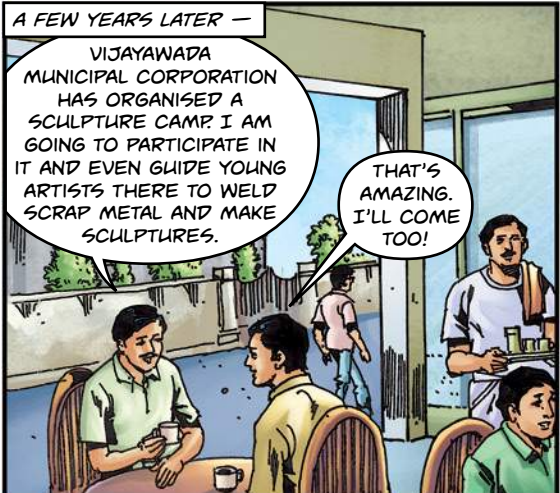
SRINIVAS WENT ON TO DO HIS POSTGRADUATION IN FINE ARTS FROM BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY. SOON -



HEY, THERE'S A CREATIVE SCULPTURE CAMP BEING ORGANISED BY ANDHRA UNIVERSITY, WILL YOU...

OF COURSE, IT WILL BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SHOWCASE MY SKILLS.

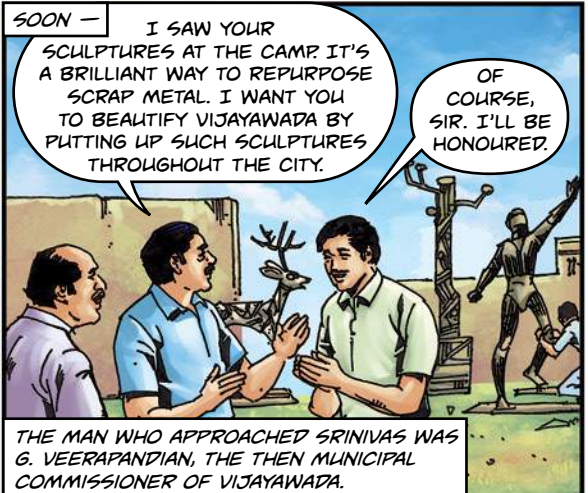
SRINIVAS BEGAN TO PARTICIPATE IN SCULPTURE CAMPS AND EXHIBITIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.



A FEW YEARS LATER -

VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION HAS ORGANISED A SCULPTURE CAMP. I AM GOING TO PARTICIPATE IN IT AND EVEN GUIDE YOUNG ARTISTS THERE TO WELD SCRAP METAL AND MAKE SCULPTURES.

THAT'S AMAZING. I'LL COME TOO!



SOON -

I SAW YOUR SCULPTURES AT THE CAMP. IT'S A BRILLIANT WAY TO REPURPOSE SCRAP METAL. I WANT YOU TO BEAUTIFY VIJAYAWADA BY PUTTING UP SUCH SCULPTURES THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

OF COURSE, SIR. I'LL BE HONOURED.

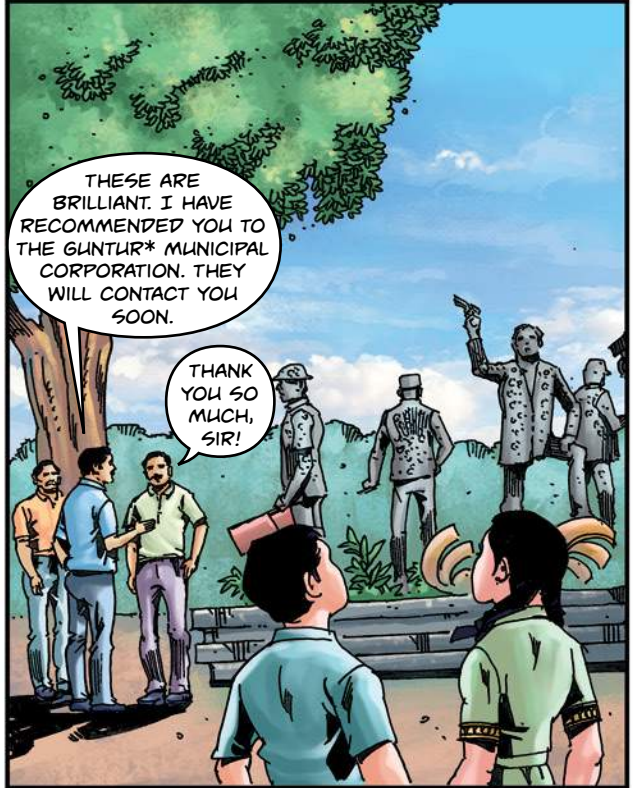
THE MAN WHO APPROACHED SRINIVAS WAS G. VEERAPANDIAN, THE THEN MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER OF VIJAYAWADA.



SRINIVAS FORMED A TEAM OF 15 MEMBERS AND BEGAN TO WORK.



OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, SRINIVAS AND HIS TEAM PUT UP SCULPTURES IN MANY PUBLIC PLACES IN VIJAYAWADA.



THESE ARE BRILLIANT. I HAVE RECOMMENDED YOU TO THE GUNTUR* MUNICIPAL CORPORATION. THEY WILL CONTACT YOU SOON.

THANK YOU SO MUCH, SIR!

OVER THE YEARS, SRINIVAS COLLABORATED WITH DIFFERENT MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS AND HIS WORKS WERE EXHIBITED IN PUBLIC PARKS IN GUNTUR, MADURAI, TIRUNELVELI, KURNOOL AND MANY OTHER CITIES.

HE NOW HEADS THE FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT IN THE COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING, ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY, GUNTUR, AND CONDUCTS SCULPTURE CAMPS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.



IT GIVES ME IMMENSE SATISFACTION WHEN STUDENTS AND OTHERS GET INSPIRED BY MY ECO-FRIENDLY MODELS, AS CLIMATE CHANGE IS A SERIOUS ISSUE THREATENING MANKIND TODAY.

HE HOPES THAT OTHERS, TOO, COME UP WITH INNOVATIVE WAYS TO REUSE AND RECYCLE WASTE.

*ANOTHER CITY IN ANDHRA PRADESH

BHAGYASHREE SAHU

IT WAS THE LAST PERIOD OF THE DAY, AND THE STUDENTS WERE WAITING FOR NAIR SIR.



IN THE WOMEN'S HOSTEL OF AN ENGINEERING COLLEGE IN DHENKANAL, ODISHA, BHAGYASHREE, AN MTECH* STUDENT, WAS BUSY STUDYING.



THIS BEGAN BHAGYASHREE'S SELF-TAUGHT ART JOURNEY.

*SCROLL PAINTING DONE ON CLOTH USING NATURAL COLOURS
**MASTER OF TECHNOLOGY

**A VILLAGE OF PATTACHITRA ARTISTS
IN PURI DISTRICT, ODISHA



A FEW MONTHS LATER —



YOU REALLY SHOULD THINK OF SELLING THEM! THEY ARE SO BEAUTIFUL.

CAN YOU MAKE ME ONE ON CANVAS? I WILL CARRY IT BACK HOME.

SURE, I WILL MAKE ONE FOR YOU, BUT CANVAS?

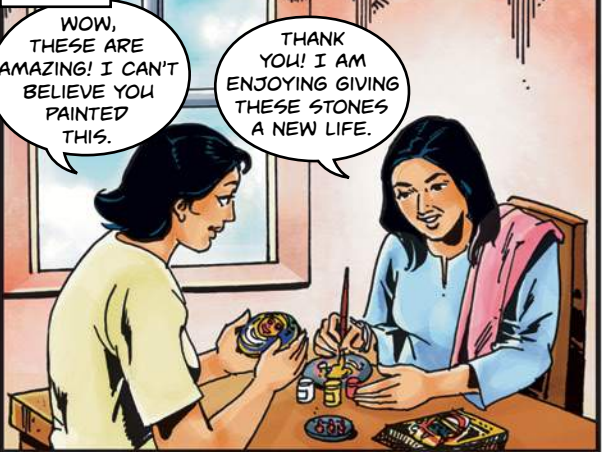
BHAGYASHREE HAD AN IDEA. SHE TOOK HER FRIENDS TO THE RIVER BRAHMANI THAT FLOWED THROUGH DHENKANAL.



I CAN PAINT ON THESE STONES. THEY ARE ROUNDED, SMOOTH AND JUST THE RIGHT SIZE.

GREAT IDEA! THIS COULD BE EVEN BETTER THAN CANVAS.

BHAGYASHREE'S PAINTED STONES SOON BECAME VERY POPULAR.



WOW, THESE ARE AMAZING! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU PAINTED THIS.

THANK YOU! I AM ENJOYING GIVING THESE STONES A NEW LIFE.

DURING THE PANDEMIC, WHILE STUCK AT HOME, BHAGYASHREE BEGAN COLLECTING EMPTY BOTTLES, TINS AND BULBS. SOME DAYS LATER —



MA, DO YOU RECOGNISE THESE BOTTLES AND BULBS?

WELL DONE! YOU'RE NOT JUST AN ARTIST, YOU'RE ALSO HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT.



LIKE BHAGYASHREE, MAYBE WE CAN ALL ADD COLOUR TO OUR LIVES AND THE WORLD AROUND US THROUGH ART.

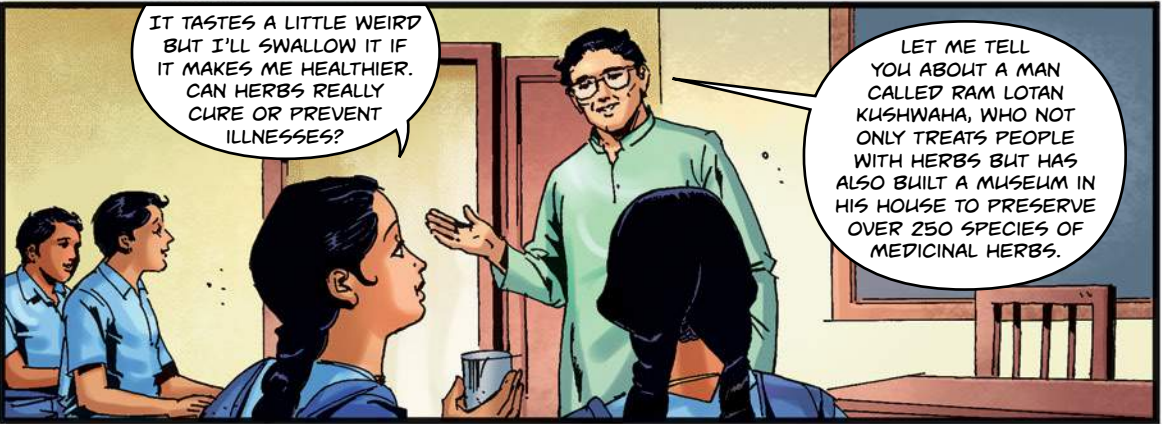


RAM LOTAN KUSHWAHA



THIS IS A HERBAL DRINK MADE WITH TULSI, GINGER, TURMERIC AND PEPPER. WE TEACHERS THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD WAY TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY.

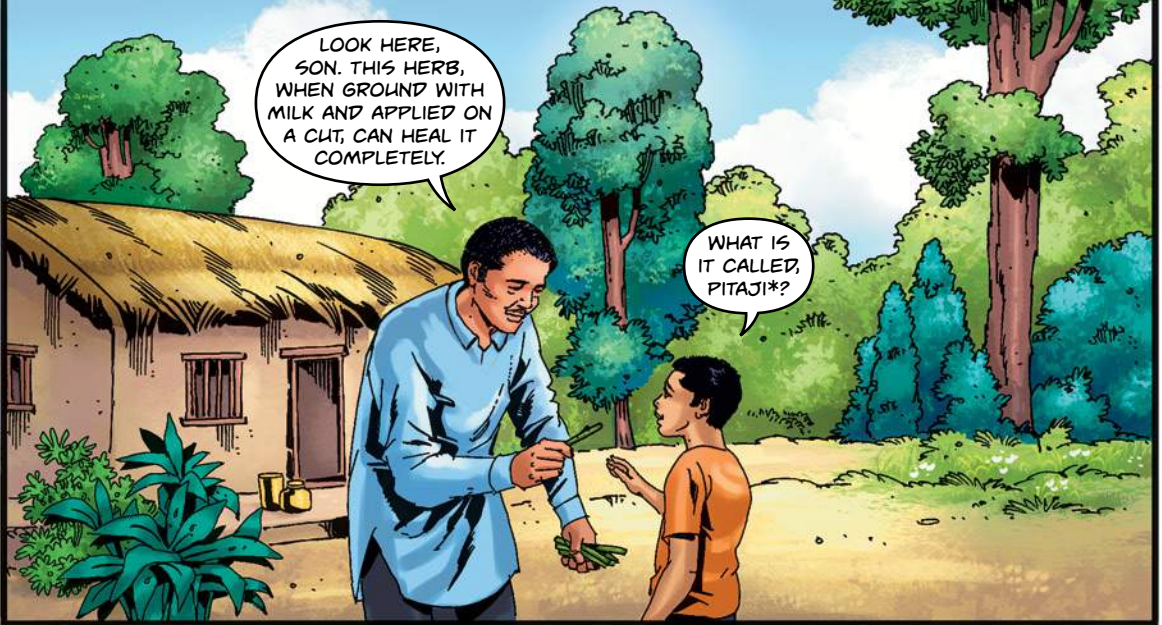
THANK YOU.



IT TASTES A LITTLE WEIRD BUT I'LL SWALLOW IT IF IT MAKES ME HEALTHIER. CAN HERBS REALLY CURE OR PREVENT ILLNESSES?

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT A MAN CALLED RAM LOTAN KUSHWAHA, WHO NOT ONLY TREATS PEOPLE WITH HERBS BUT HAS ALSO BUILT A MUSEUM IN HIS HOUSE TO PRESERVE OVER 250 SPECIES OF MEDICINAL HERBS.

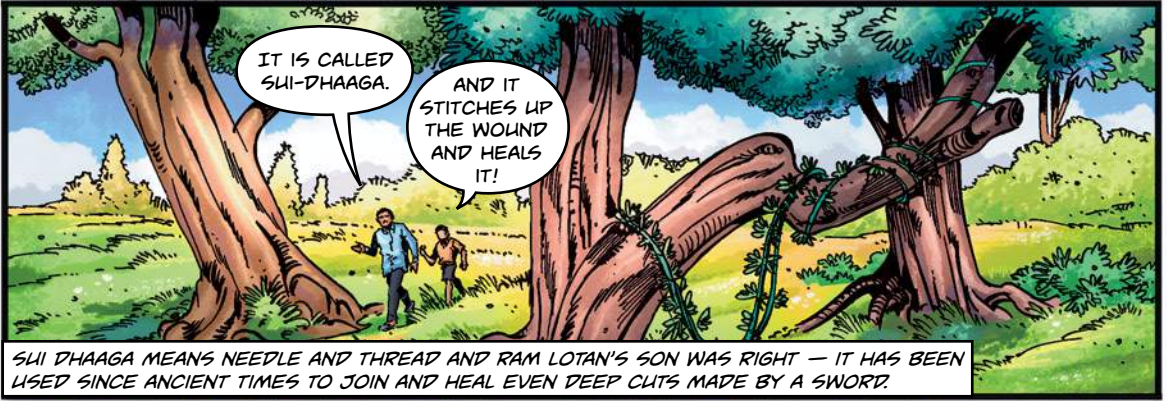
RAM LOTAN KUSHWAHA AND HIS FAMILY BELONG TO ANTARVEDIYA VILLAGE OF SATNA DISTRICT, MADHYA PRADESH.



LOOK HERE, SON. THIS HERB, WHEN GROUND WITH MILK AND APPLIED ON A CUT, CAN HEAL IT COMPLETELY.

WHAT IS IT CALLED, PITAJI*?

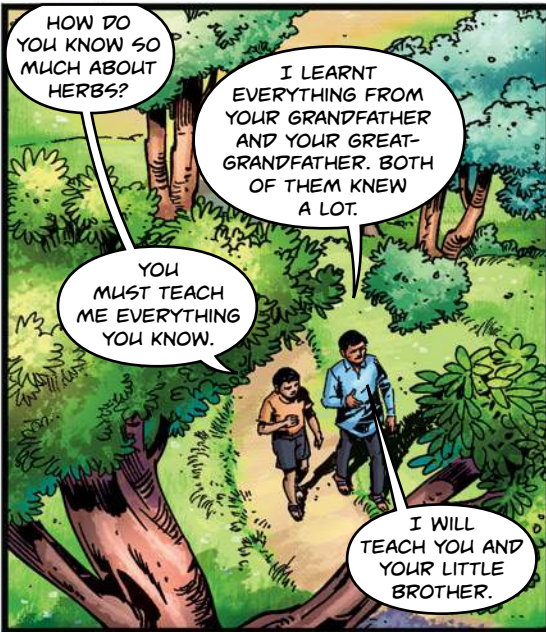
*FATHER



IT IS CALLED SUI-DHAAGA.

AND IT STITCHES UP THE WOUND AND HEALS IT!

SUI DHAAGA MEANS NEEDLE AND THREAD AND RAM LOTAN'S SON WAS RIGHT — IT HAS BEEN USED SINCE ANCIENT TIMES TO JOIN AND HEAL EVEN DEEP CUTS MADE BY A SWORD

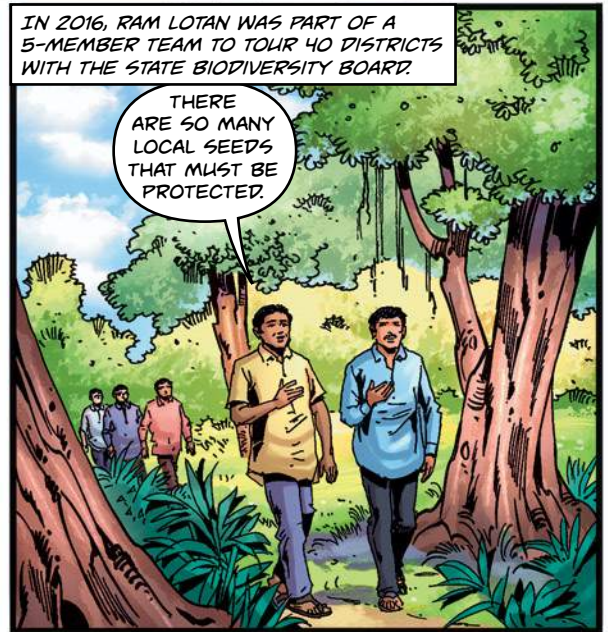


HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT HERBS?

I LEARNT EVERYTHING FROM YOUR GRANDFATHER AND YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER. BOTH OF THEM KNEW A LOT.

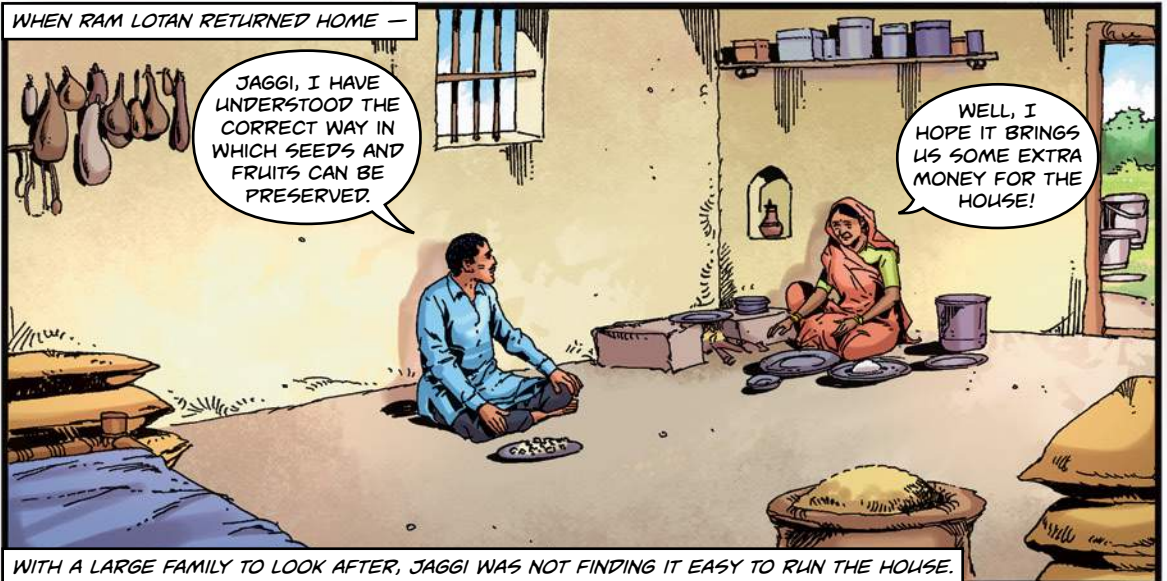
YOU MUST TEACH ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.

I WILL TEACH YOU AND YOUR LITTLE BROTHER.



IN 2016, RAM LOTAN WAS PART OF A 5-MEMBER TEAM TO TOUR 40 DISTRICTS WITH THE STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD

THERE ARE SO MANY LOCAL SEEDS THAT MUST BE PROTECTED.



WHEN RAM LOTAN RETURNED HOME —

JAGGI, I HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE CORRECT WAY IN WHICH SEEDS AND FRUITS CAN BE PRESERVED.

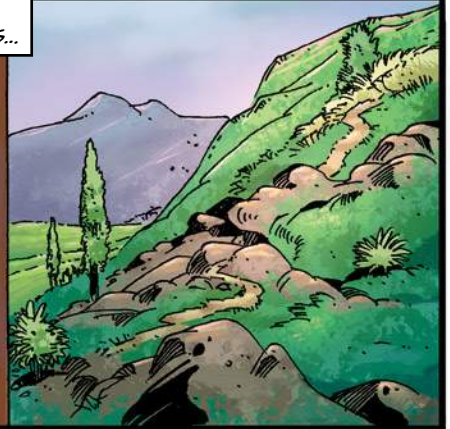
WELL, I HOPE IT BRINGS US SOME EXTRA MONEY FOR THE HOUSE!

WITH A LARGE FAMILY TO LOOK AFTER, JAGGI WAS NOT FINDING IT EASY TO RUN THE HOUSE.

IN HIS QUEST TO CONSERVE HERBS AND VEGETABLES, RAM LOTAN TRAVELLED FAR AND WIDE TO COLLECT SEEDS. FROM THE HIMALAYAS...



BHAI, WHERE CAN I FIND THE BRAHMI ROOT?



...TO THE SATPURA AND VINDHYA RANGES.

RAM LOTAN HAS GROWN 250 VARIETIES OF MEDICINAL PLANTS AND INDIGENOUS VEGETABLES ON HIS ONE-AND-A-HALF ACRE OF LAND. IT IS VISITED BY SCORES OF PEOPLE.



PEOPLE DISCOURAGED ME SAYING THAT THE PLANTS THAT GROW IN THE HIMALAYAS, CANNOT GROW HERE. BUT LOOK, THEY ARE GROWING BEAUTIFULLY.

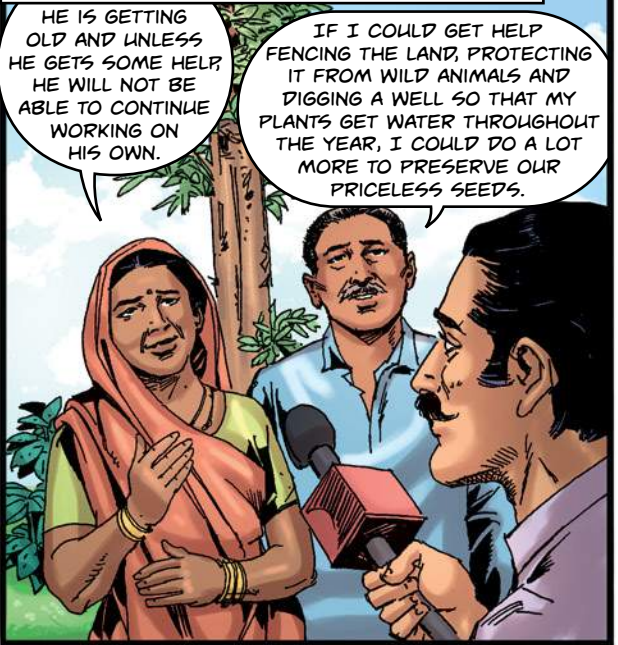
THERE'S MAGIC IN YOUR HANDS, RAM LOTAN JI!

IN HIS HOUSE, RAM LOTAN HAS A 'DESI' MUSEUM WHICH DISPLAYS NUMEROUS VARIETIES OF GOURDS AND RARE SEEDS. THIS WAS MENTIONED BY THE PRIME MINISTER DURING AN EPISODE OF MANN KI BAAT.



RAM LOTAN JI'S EFFORT MAKES US PROUD AND AWARE OF OUR INDIGENOUS PLANTS.

IT IS JAGGI WHO IS THE VOICE OF CAUTION IN RAM LOTAN'S JOURNEY AND HE GRUDGINGLY AGREES.



HE IS GETTING OLD AND UNLESS HE GETS SOME HELP, HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE WORKING ON HIS OWN.

IF I COULD GET HELP FENCING THE LAND, PROTECTING IT FROM WILD ANIMALS AND DIGGING A WELL SO THAT MY PLANTS GET WATER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, I COULD DO A LOT MORE TO PRESERVE OUR PRICELESS SEEDS.

TARIQ AHMAD PATLOO



WHY ARE SHREYAS, CHARAN AND PARUL ABSENT TODAY?

I HOPE IT'S NOT COVID AGAIN.

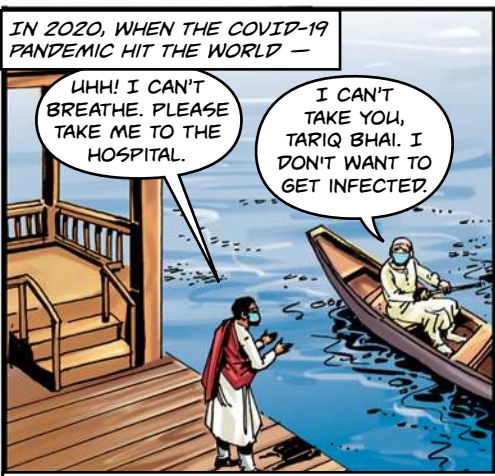


I HOPE SO TOO. SO MANY PEOPLE SUFFERED BECAUSE OF A LACK OF BEDS IN HOSPITALS. THE SITUATION IN VILLAGES WAS EVEN WORSE.

TRUE, BUT WE MUST NOT FORGET THOSE WHO WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO HELP PEOPLE. LIKE, TARIQ AHMAD PATLOO OF KASHMIR.



ON THE BEAUTIFUL LAKES OF SRINAGAR IN KASHMIR, LIVE A GROUP OF PEOPLE CALLED THE HANJIS OR 'WATER DWELLERS'. THEY LIVE AND WORK ON BOATS. TO GET TO THE LAND, THEY USE A SYSTEM OF HITCHHIKING OR 'TAAR' ON SMALLER BOATS CALLED SHIKARAS.



IN 2020, WHEN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HIT THE WORLD —

UHH! I CAN'T BREATHE. PLEASE TAKE ME TO THE HOSPITAL.

I CAN'T TAKE YOU, TARIQ BHAI. I DON'T WANT TO GET INFECTED.



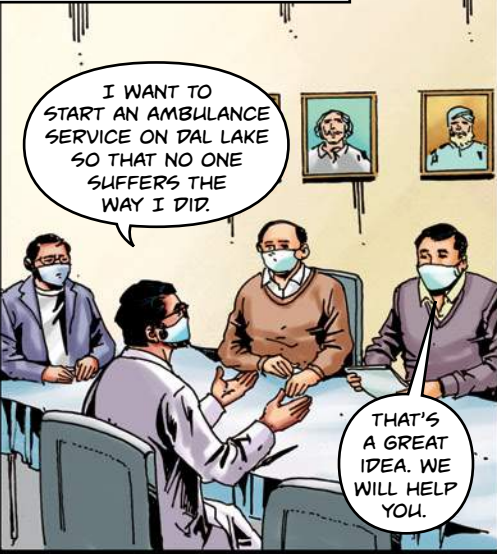
FINALLY, A FRIEND TOOK HIM. AT THE HOSPITAL —

SO MANY OF MY PEOPLE ARE DYING BECAUSE THEY CANNOT REACH THE HOSPITAL ON TIME. I COULD HAVE DIED TOO.

TARIQ AHMAD PATLOO WAS A HOUSEBOAT OWNER ON DAL LAKE. HE HAD COVID BUT NO ONE WAS READY TO FERRY HIM TO A HOSPITAL.

LUCKILY, TARIQ RECOVERED, BUT WITH AN OVERWHELMING NEED TO SET THINGS RIGHT.

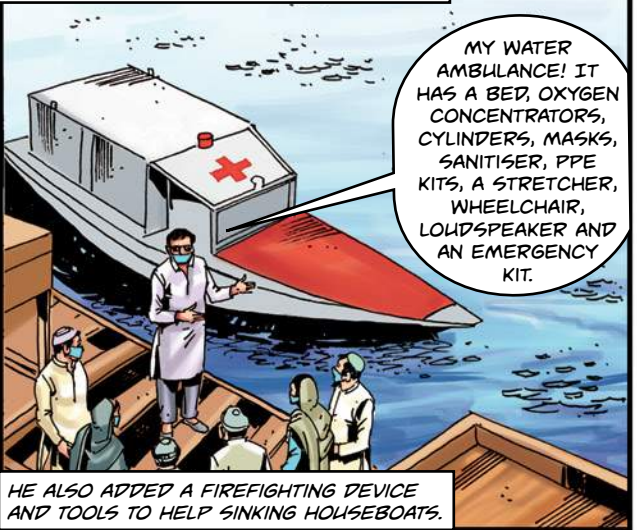
HE SPOKE TO THE DELHI-BASED NGO, THE SATYA REKHA TRUST.



I WANT TO START AN AMBULANCE SERVICE ON DAL LAKE SO THAT NO ONE SUFFERS THE WAY I DID.

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA. WE WILL HELP YOU.

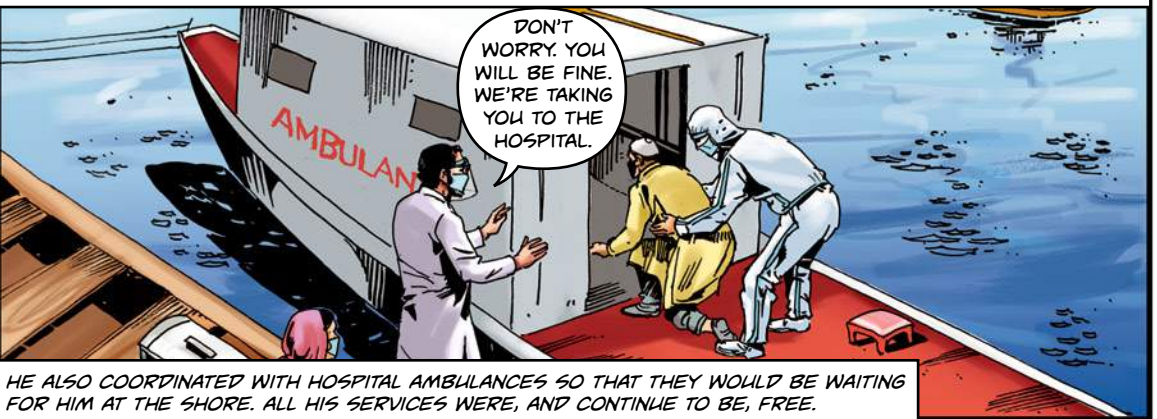
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE TRUST, TARIQ BUILT A BOAT, FITTED IT WITH EMERGENCY FACILITIES AND ATTACHED A SIREN.



MY WATER AMBULANCE! IT HAS A BED, OXYGEN CONCENTRATORS, CYLINDERS, MASKS, SANITISER, PPE KITS, A STRETCHER, WHEELCHAIR, LOUDSPEAKER AND AN EMERGENCY KIT.

HE ALSO ADDED A FIREFIGHTING DEVICE AND TOOLS TO HELP SINKING HOUSEBOATS.

TARIQ GAVE HIS PHONE NUMBER TO PEOPLE ON THE LAKE AND WAS SOON ATTENDING TO CRISIS AFTER CRISIS.



DON'T WORRY. YOU WILL BE FINE. WE'RE TAKING YOU TO THE HOSPITAL.

HE ALSO COORDINATED WITH HOSPITAL AMBULANCES SO THAT THEY WOULD BE WAITING FOR HIM AT THE SHORE. ALL HIS SERVICES WERE, AND CONTINUE TO BE, FREE.

TARIQ IS CALLED FOR ANY EMERGENCY ON THE LAKE. HE IS ASSISTED IN HIS WORK BY HIS 10-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, JANNAT, TO SPREAD AWARENESS ABOUT CLEANLINESS.



ATTENTION. RED BOAT! DAL LAKE IS OUR HOME. PLEASE PICK UP THAT BOTTLE YOU THREW.

TWICE A WEEK, FATHER AND DAUGHTER ROW OUT ON THE LAKE AND COLLECT ALL THE GARBAGE.

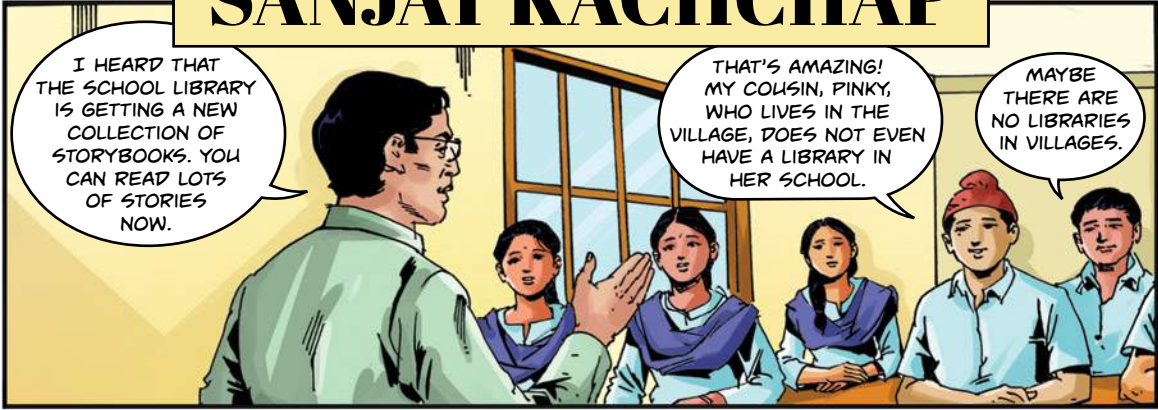
IN JUNE, 2021, PM MODI MENTIONED HIM ON MANN KI BAAT. TARIQ HAS A REQUEST.



I AM DOING THE BEST I CAN, BUT I NEED A HELPLINE NUMBER AND A DOCTOR OR A PARAMEDIC WHO WILL ATTEND TO PATIENTS IN MY AMBULANCE.

CITIZEN INITIATIVES LIKE THIS MUST BE SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE ALIKE.

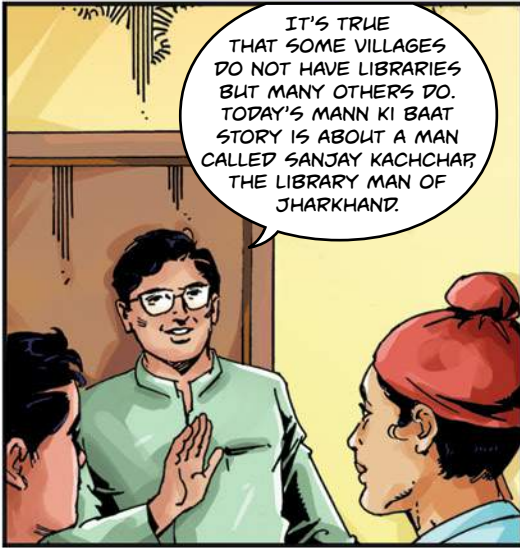
SANJAY KACHCHAP



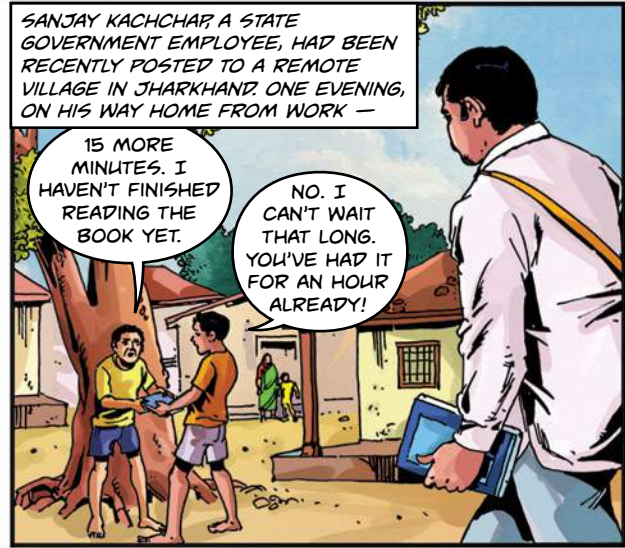
I HEARD THAT THE SCHOOL LIBRARY IS GETTING A NEW COLLECTION OF STORYBOOKS. YOU CAN READ LOTS OF STORIES NOW.

THAT'S AMAZING! MY COUSIN, PINKY, WHO LIVES IN THE VILLAGE, DOES NOT EVEN HAVE A LIBRARY IN HER SCHOOL.

MAYBE THERE ARE NO LIBRARIES IN VILLAGES.



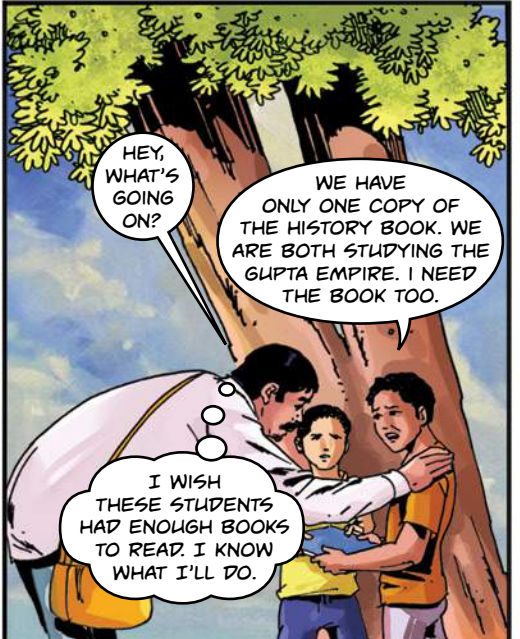
IT'S TRUE THAT SOME VILLAGES DO NOT HAVE LIBRARIES BUT MANY OTHERS DO. TODAY'S MANN KI BAAT STORY IS ABOUT A MAN CALLED SANJAY KACHCHAP, THE LIBRARY MAN OF JHARKHAND.



SANJAY KACHCHAP, A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE, HAD BEEN RECENTLY POSTED TO A REMOTE VILLAGE IN JHARKHAND. ONE EVENING, ON HIS WAY HOME FROM WORK —

15 MORE MINUTES. I HAVEN'T FINISHED READING THE BOOK YET.

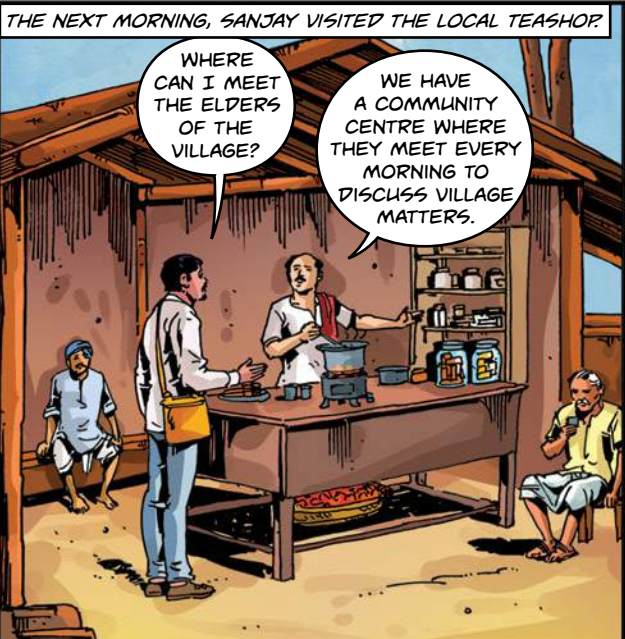
NO. I CAN'T WAIT THAT LONG. YOU'VE HAD IT FOR AN HOUR ALREADY!



HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?

WE HAVE ONLY ONE COPY OF THE HISTORY BOOK. WE ARE BOTH STUDYING THE GUPTA EMPIRE. I NEED THE BOOK TOO.

I WISH THESE STUDENTS HAD ENOUGH BOOKS TO READ. I KNOW WHAT I'LL DO.



THE NEXT MORNING, SANJAY VISITED THE LOCAL TEASHOP.

WHERE CAN I MEET THE ELDERS OF THE VILLAGE?

WE HAVE A COMMUNITY CENTRE WHERE THEY MEET EVERY MORNING TO DISCUSS VILLAGE MATTERS.

THE NEXT DAY —

HI, I'M SANJAY FROM PULHATHI* VILLAGE. I OPENED A LIBRARY IN OUR VILLAGE IN 2018, AND IT HAS BEEN REALLY SUCCESSFUL. ALL WE NEED IS SOME BOOKS AND SHELVES TO SET UP ONE HERE.

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA! WE COULD HAVE IT HERE, IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE!

SOON —

HERE ARE SOME BOOKS. THEY BELONGED TO MY SON.

HERE ARE SOME MORE.

THIS IS GREAT. THANKS SO MUCH!

IN A FEW DAYS, MANY STUDENTS BEGAN TO FLOCK TO THE LIBRARY.

THERE ARE BOOKS ON HISTORY.

AND ON ROCKETS, MY FAVOURITE TOPIC!

ONE DAY —

REMEMBER US, SIR? WE WERE THE ONES WHO WERE FIGHTING FOR THE BOOK THAT DAY.

THIS LIBRARY IS GREAT BUT CAN WE READ THE SAME BOOK AT THE SAME TIME WITHOUT SHARING?

HMMM... NOT YET. I WILL THINK OF SOME WAY TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

YOU ARE GOOD WITH COMPUTERS, RIGHT? CAN YOU HELP ME SET UP A DIGITAL LIBRARY?

SURE, LET'S DO IT. THIS WILL HELP STUDENTS IN MY VILLAGE AND OTHER VILLAGES TOO.

SOON EVERYONE HAD ACCESS TO BOOKS AT THE SAME TIME.

*A VILLAGE IN WEST SINGHBHUM DISTRICT, JHARKHAND



A FEW MONTHS LATER, SANJAY WAS TRANSFERRED TO A REMOTE TRIBAL VILLAGE. SOON —

WE DON'T HAVE A PROPER SCHOOL FOR OUR KIDS. HOW IS HAVING A LIBRARY GOING TO HELP THEM?

EVERY CHILD DESERVES THE CHANCE TO LEARN, EVEN WITHOUT A SCHOOL.

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, SANJAY STARTED LIBRARIES IN OVER 40 VILLAGES AND SOON CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE 'LIBRARY MAN OF JHARKHAND'.

SANJAY WAS DETERMINED TO DO MORE FOR THE STUDENTS. ONE DAY, WHEN HIS FRIENDS VISITED HIM AT A VILLAGE LIBRARY —

I WANT THESE CHILDREN TO GET A CHANCE TO WRITE COMPETITIVE EXAMS.

WE CAN TRY CROWD-FUNDING*!

CROWDFUNDING HELPED EQUIP 25 LIBRARIES WITH COMPUTERS AND BOOKS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

ONE AFTERNOON, IN A SMALL VILLAGE IN JHARKHAND —

I NEED TO STUDY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE EXAMS, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW I'LL BE ABLE TO AFFORD THE BOOKS.

I KNOW JUST THE PERSON TO HELP YOU.

THE VILLAGER DIRECTED HIM TOWARDS SANJAY'S CAR, WHICH HAD BEEN CONVERTED INTO A MOBILE LIBRARY.

I CANNOT BELIEVE THIS! HOW AM I EVER GOING TO REPAY YOU?

I WILL. THANK YOU, MR LIBRARY MAN!

JUST PROMISE TO PAY IT FORWARD. TEACH YOUR JUNIORS IN YOUR FREE TIME.

SANJAY HOPES THAT ONE DAY, EVERY CHILD, REGARDLESS OF THEIR BACKGROUND, WILL HAVE ACCESS TO GOOD BOOKS.

*RAISING MONEY FROM A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH THE HELP OF THE INTERNET

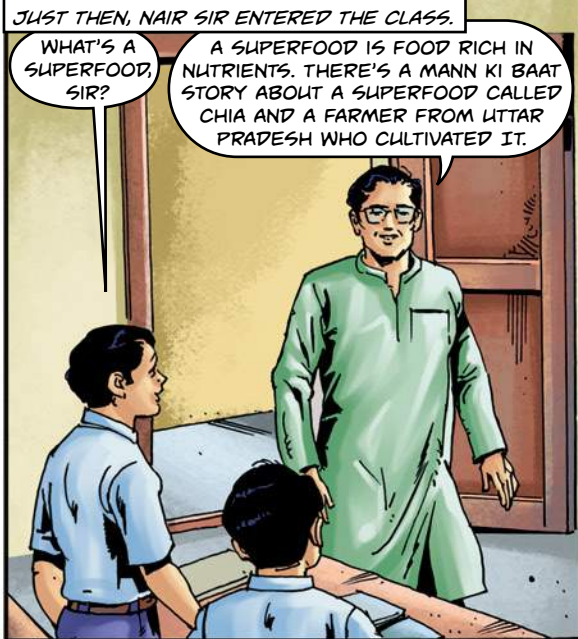
HARISHCHANDRA SINGH



I CAN'T WAIT FOR RECESS. I HAVE BROUGHT PARATHAS WITH MY FAVOURITE AMLA* MURABBA*.

MY MOTHER MAKES A YUMMY AMLA JUICE. SHE SAYS IT CAN CURE COLD AND COUGH AS IT IS A SUPERFOOD.

WHAT'S A SUPERFOOD?



JUST THEN, NAIR SIR ENTERED THE CLASS.

WHAT'S A SUPERFOOD, SIR?

A SUPERFOOD IS FOOD RICH IN NUTRIENTS. THERE'S A MANN KI BAAT STORY ABOUT A SUPERFOOD CALLED CHIA AND A FARMER FROM UTTAR PRADESH WHO CULTIVATED IT.

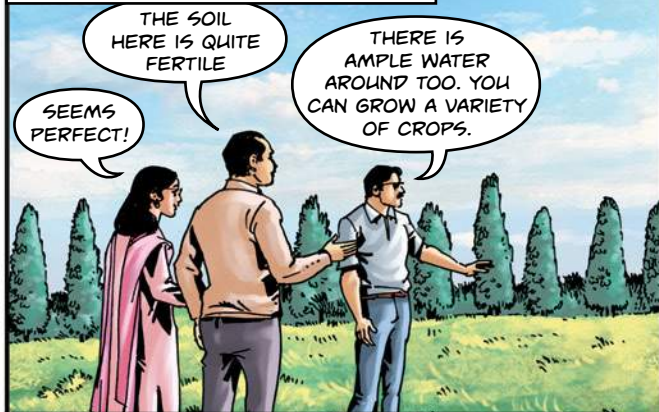
IT WAS 2015 AND HARISHCHANDRA SINGH HAD JUST RETIRED AS A COLONEL FROM THE INDIAN ARMY.



I WAS THINKING MAYBE IT'S TIME TO FOLLOW MY PASSION AND TAKE UP FARMING.

GOOD IDEA! IT CAN BE A GOOD SOURCE OF INCOME TOO.

SOON, HARISHCHANDRA BEGAN TO LOOK FOR PLOTS OF LAND TO BUY. FINALLY —

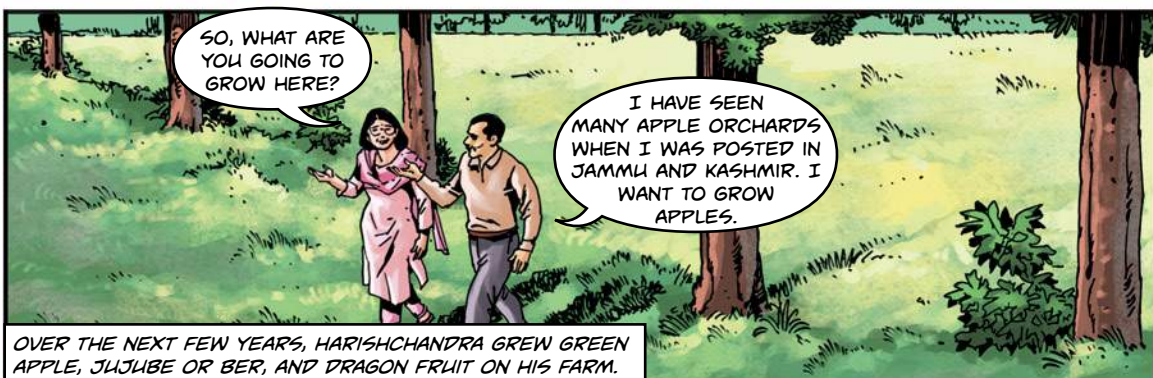


THE SOIL HERE IS QUITE FERTILE

THERE IS AMPLER WATER AROUND TOO. YOU CAN GROW A VARIETY OF CROPS.

SEEMS PERFECT!

HARISHCHANDRA BOUGHT FOUR ACRES OF LAND IN THE AMSERUVA VILLAGE OF SIDDHOUR BLOCK IN BARABANKI**.



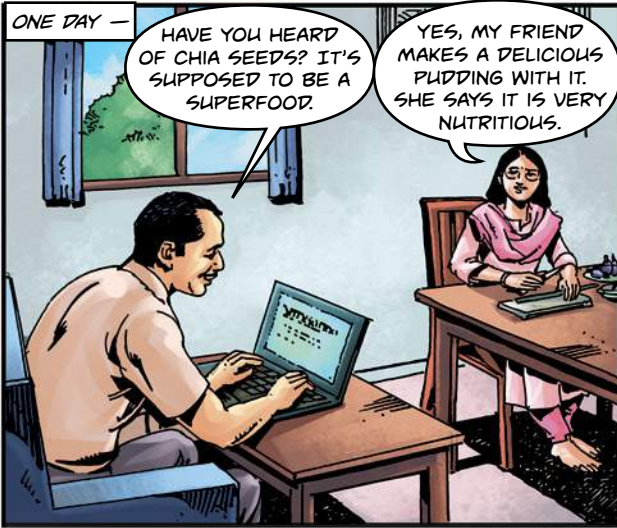
SO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO GROW HERE?

I HAVE SEEN MANY APPLE ORCHARDS WHEN I WAS POSTED IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR. I WANT TO GROW APPLES.

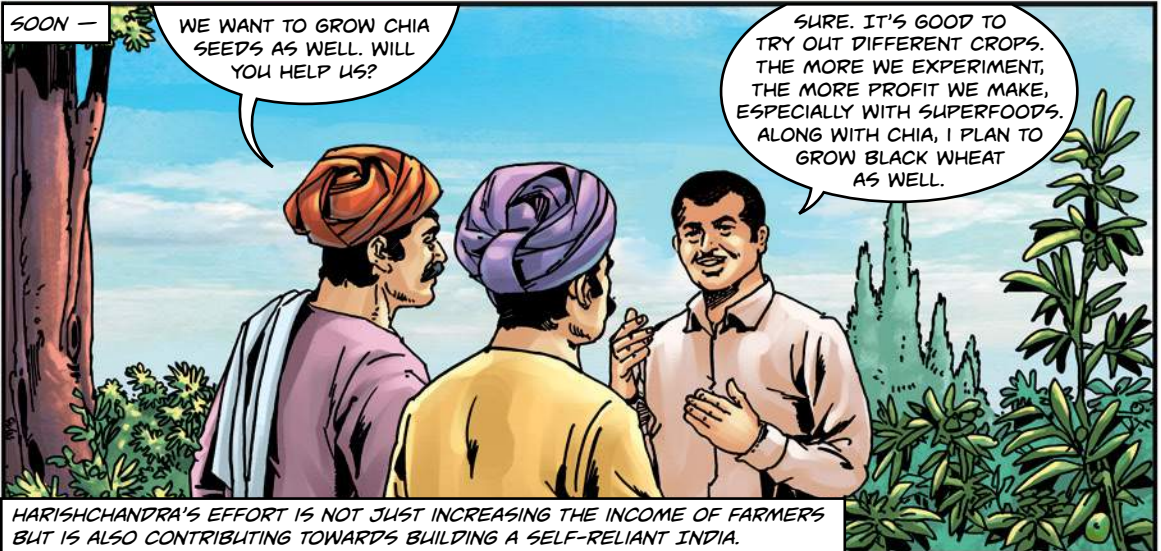
OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, HARISHCHANDRA GREW GREEN APPLE, JUJUBE OR BER, AND DRAGON FRUIT ON HIS FARM.

*INDIAN GOOSEBERRY
*GOOSEBERRY PRESERVED IN SUGAR SYRUP

**A DISTRICT IN UTTAR PRADESH



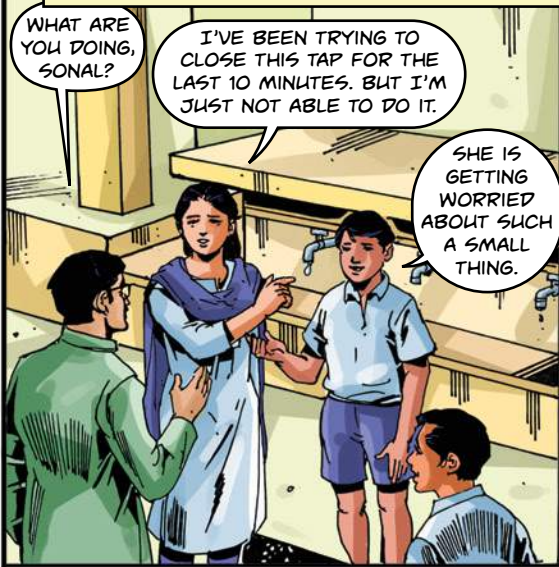
...AND PLANTED THEM ON HIS LAND. A FEW MONTHS LATER —



*ONE QUINTAL IS EQUAL TO 100 KG.



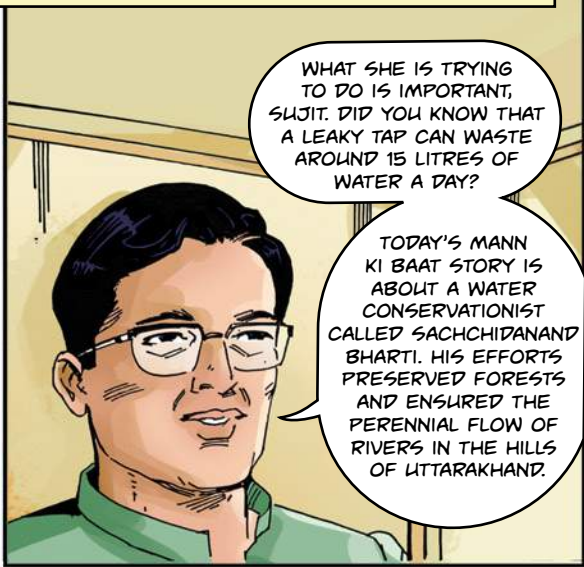
SACHCHIDANAND BHARTI



WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SONAL?

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO CLOSE THIS TAP FOR THE LAST 10 MINUTES. BUT I'M JUST NOT ABLE TO DO IT.

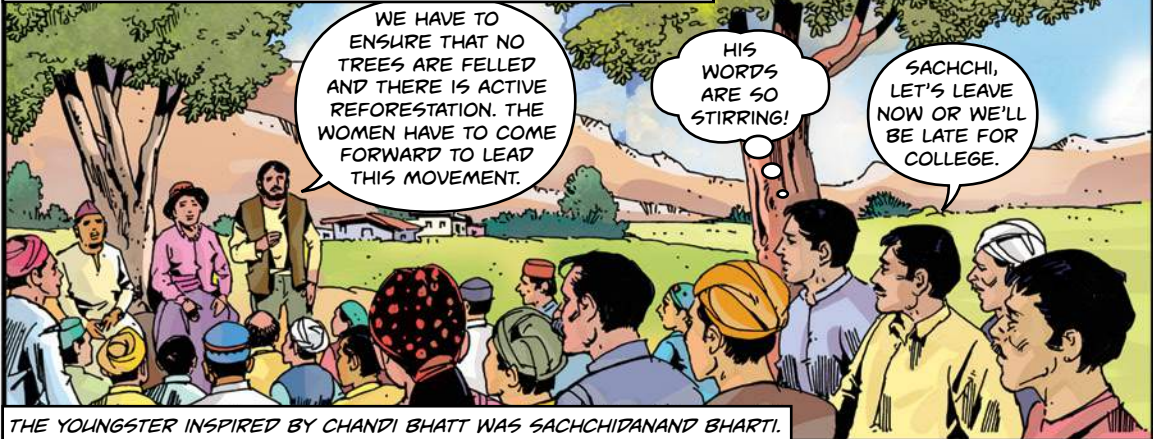
SHE IS GETTING WORRIED ABOUT SUCH A SMALL THING.



WHAT SHE IS TRYING TO DO IS IMPORTANT, SUJIT. DID YOU KNOW THAT A LEAKY TAP CAN WASTE AROUND 15 LITRES OF WATER A DAY?

TODAY'S MANN KI BAAT STORY IS ABOUT A WATER CONSERVATIONIST CALLED SACHCHIDANAND BHARTI. HIS EFFORTS PRESERVED FORESTS AND ENSURED THE PERENNIAL FLOW OF RIVERS IN THE HILLS OF UTTARAKHAND.

IT WAS 1974. ENVIRONMENTALIST CHANDI PRASAD BHATT HAD JUST STARTED THE CHIPKO MOVEMENT* IN GOPESHWAR, UTTARAKHAND



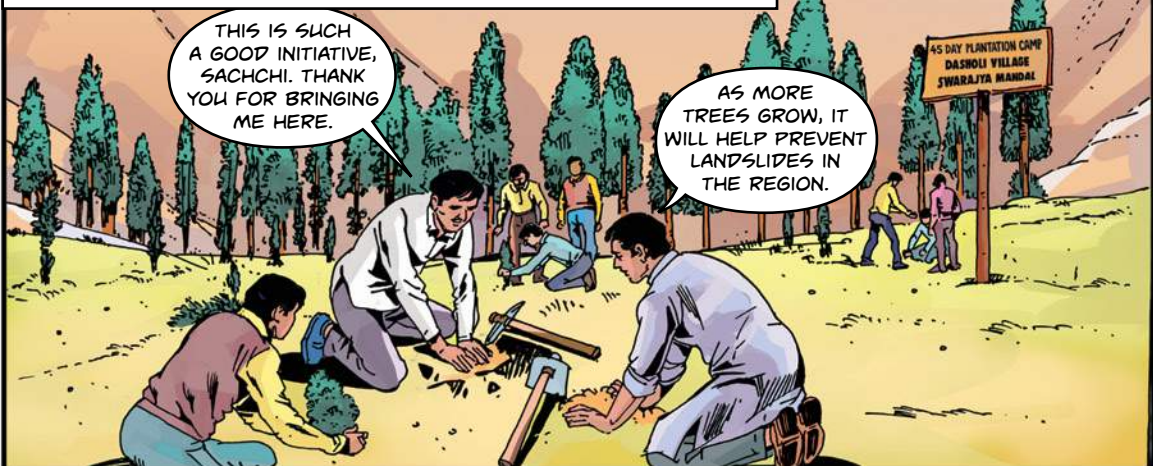
WE HAVE TO ENSURE THAT NO TREES ARE FELLED AND THERE IS ACTIVE REFORESTATION. THE WOMEN HAVE TO COME FORWARD TO LEAD THIS MOVEMENT.

HIS WORDS ARE SO STIRRING!

SACHCHI, LET'S LEAVE NOW OR WE'LL BE LATE FOR COLLEGE.

THE YOUNGSTER INSPIRED BY CHANDI BHATT WAS SACHCHIDANAND BHARTI.

TWO YEARS LATER, SACHCHIDANAND PARTICIPATED IN A PLANTATION CAMP.



THIS IS SUCH A GOOD INITIATIVE, SACHCHI. THANK YOU FOR BRINGING ME HERE.

AS MORE TREES GROW, IT WILL HELP PREVENT LANDSLIDES IN THE REGION.

45 DAY PLANTATION CAMP
DASHOLI VILLAGE
SWARAJYA MANDAL

*A MOVEMENT WHERE VILLAGERS HUGGED TREES IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROTECT THEM.

*A TOWN IN THE CHAMOLI DISTRICT OF UTTARAKHAND



AFTER COMPLETING HIS HIGHER EDUCATION IN 1979, SACHCHIDANAND RETURNED FROM GOPESHWAR TO HIS VILLAGE, LUFFRAINKHAL*.



IT'S TIME TO IMPLEMENT ALL THAT I HAVE LEARN'T. AFFORESTING MY REGION IS THE FIRST STEP

IN JULY 1980, SACHCHIDANAND ORGANISED HIS FIRST ENVIRONMENTAL CAMP IN THE DUDHATOLI[^] AREA.

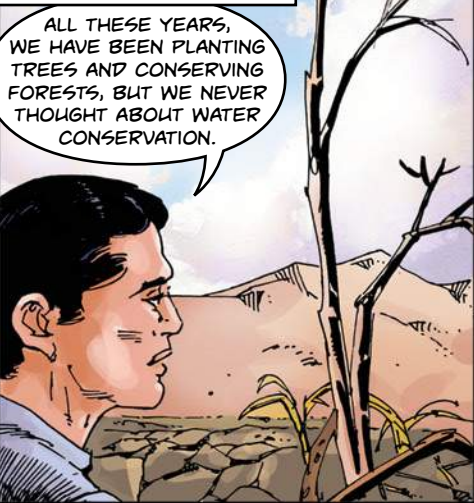
THREE YEARS LATER, HE FORMED AN ORGANISATION CALLED THE DUDHATOLI LOK VIKAS SANSTHAN.



THE TREES WE PLANT WILL ALSO PROVIDE FUEL AND FODDER FOR OUR VILLAGES.

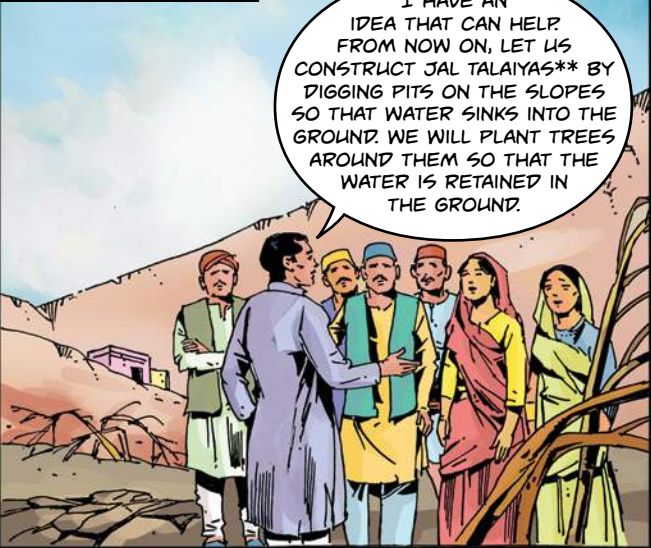
MANY WOMEN PARTICIPATED AND THEY FORMED GROUPS CALLED MAHILA MANGAL DAL'S.

IN 1987, INDIA SUFFERED A MASSIVE DROUGHT. IT ALSO AFFECTED THE FORESTS OF UTTARAKHAND.

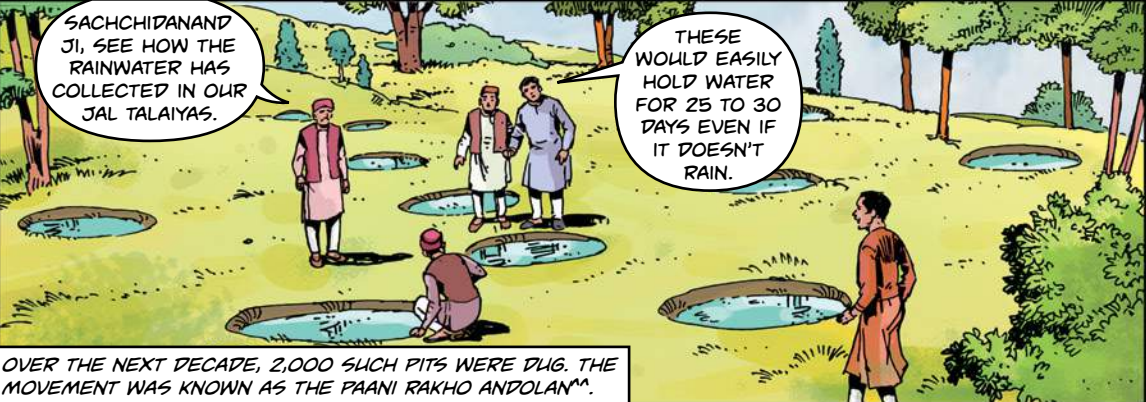


ALL THESE YEARS, WE HAVE BEEN PLANTING TREES AND CONSERVING FORESTS, BUT WE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT WATER CONSERVATION.

A FEW WEEKS LATER —



I HAVE AN IDEA THAT CAN HELP FROM NOW ON, LET US CONSTRUCT JAL TALAIYAS** BY DIGGING PITS ON THE SLOPES SO THAT WATER SINKS INTO THE GROUND WE WILL PLANT TREES AROUND THEM SO THAT THE WATER IS RETAINED IN THE GROUND.



SACHCHIDANAND JI, SEE HOW THE RAINWATER HAS COLLECTED IN OUR JAL TALAIYAS.

THESE WOULD EASILY HOLD WATER FOR 25 TO 30 DAYS EVEN IF IT DOESN'T RAIN.

OVER THE NEXT DECADE, 2,000 SUCH PITS WERE DUG. THE MOVEMENT WAS KNOWN AS THE PAANI RAKHO ANDOLAN^{^^}.

*A VILLAGE LOCATED IN THE PAURI GARHWAL DISTRICT OF UTTARAKHAND.
[^]A MOUNTAIN RANGE RUNNING 25KM ACROSS UTTARAKHAND.

**WATER PITS
^{^^}SAVE WATER MOVEMENT

OVER THE YEARS, THEIR EFFORTS RESULTED IN HUGE SUCCESS.

THE SUKHA RAULLA* IS FLOWING ALL YEAR NOW!

YES, EARLIER IT USED TO SWELL UP DURING THE RAINS AND RUN DRY BY NOVEMBER.

IT'S HAPPENING THANKS TO THE WATER PITS.

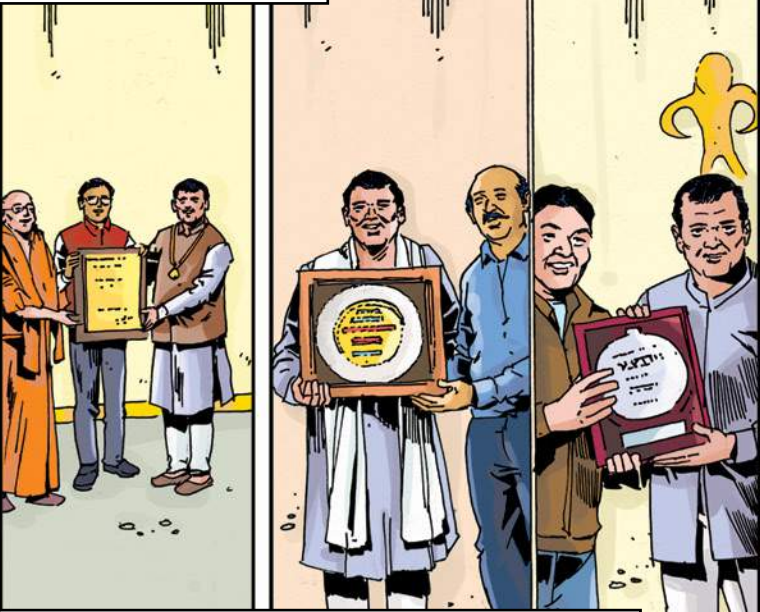
THE VILLAGERS RENAMED THE SUKHA RAULLA AS GADGANGA, AFTER THEIR VILLAGE GADKHARAK.

ALONG WITH THE JAL TALAIYAS, SACHCHIDANAND ALSO CONSTRUCTED HUNDREDS OF PONDS AND CANALS IN THE MOUNTAINS TO CAPTURE MORE RAINWATER AND PRESERVE THE FORESTS.

WE CAN DRINK WATER FROM THE STREAMS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR NOW.

FOR HIS EFFORTS, SACHCHIDANAND HAS BEEN GIVEN MANY AWARDS, INCLUDING THE UTTARAKHAND GREEN AWARD 2011, THE MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL AWARD 2013, THE INDIRA GANDHI ENVIRONMENT AWARD 2015, AMONG OTHERS.

TODAY, THERE ARE 30,000 WATER PITS IN 150 VILLAGES IN THE PAURI GARHWAL HILLS.



IN JUNE 2021, PM MODI RECOGNISED SACHCHIDANAND BHARTI AND HIS EFFORTS IN HIS MANN KI BAAT PROGRAMME.



BY SERVING THE ENVIRONMENT, I FEEL LIKE MY LIFE HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE.

SACHCHIDANAND AND THE VILLAGERS HAVE PLANTED OVER 50 LAKH SAPPLINGS IN 40 YEARS. HIS CREATION OF WATER PITS HAS PREVENTED FOREST FIRES IN THE REGION.

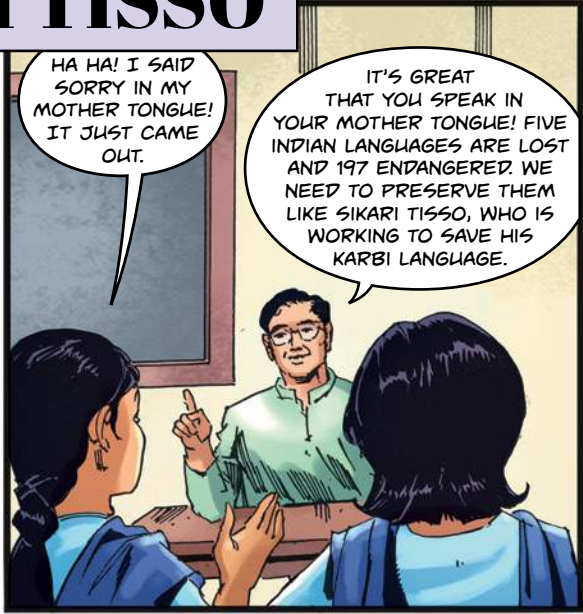
*DRY RAVINE

SIKARI TISSO



KHYAMA KARIBE*, HOW DID I DROP IT?

WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?



HA HA! I SAID SORRY IN MY MOTHER TONGUE! IT JUST CAME OUT.

IT'S GREAT THAT YOU SPEAK IN YOUR MOTHER TONGUE! FIVE INDIAN LANGUAGES ARE LOST AND 197 ENDANGERED. WE NEED TO PRESERVE THEM LIKE SIKARI TISSO, WHO IS WORKING TO SAVE HIS KARBI LANGUAGE.

IT WAS THE YEAR 2000. SIKARI TISSO, AN EMPLOYEE OF THE FISHERY DEPARTMENT OF ASSAM, WAS TAKING AN EVENING WALK THROUGH HIS VILLAGE, LONGJONSARPO IN KARBI ANGLONG*.



KARDOM**, SIKARI, COME OVER HERE. I HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL YOU.

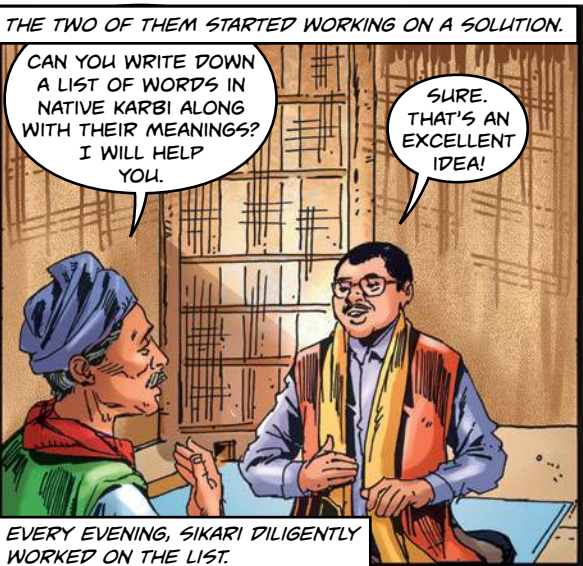
KARDOM, UNCLE. WHAT'S THE MATTER?



IT'S GOING TO RAIN! WHAT FUN!

LOOK, THEY ARE SPEAKING ENGLISH. THEY HARDLY SPEAK KARBI ANYMORE. WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING TO PRESERVE OUR LANGUAGE.

WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO?



THE TWO OF THEM STARTED WORKING ON A SOLUTION.

CAN YOU WRITE DOWN A LIST OF WORDS IN NATIVE KARBI ALONG WITH THEIR MEANINGS? I WILL HELP YOU.

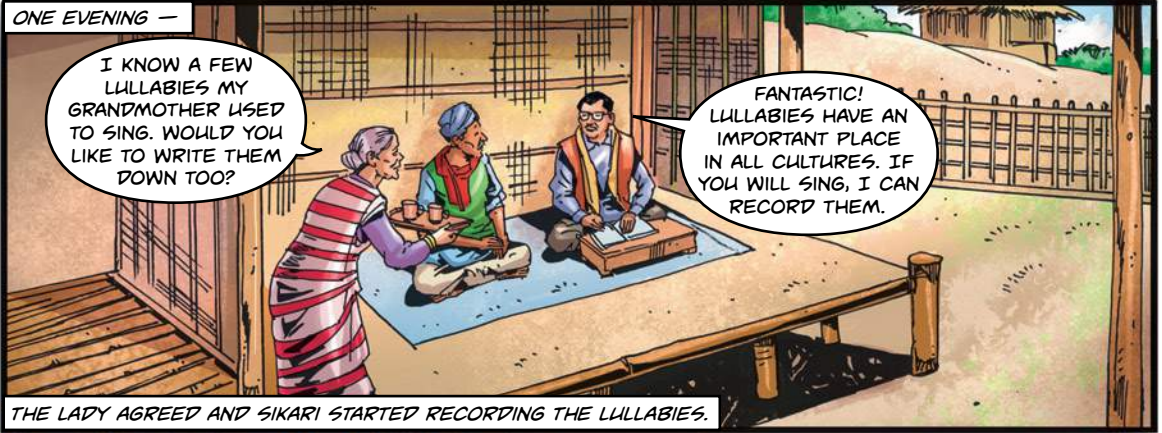
SURE. THAT'S AN EXCELLENT IDEA!

EVERY EVENING, SIKARI DILIGENTLY WORKED ON THE LIST.

*PARDON ME, IN ODISA
 *ONE OF THE LARGEST DISTRICTS IN ASSAM

**GREETING IN KARBI LANGUAGE

ONE EVENING —

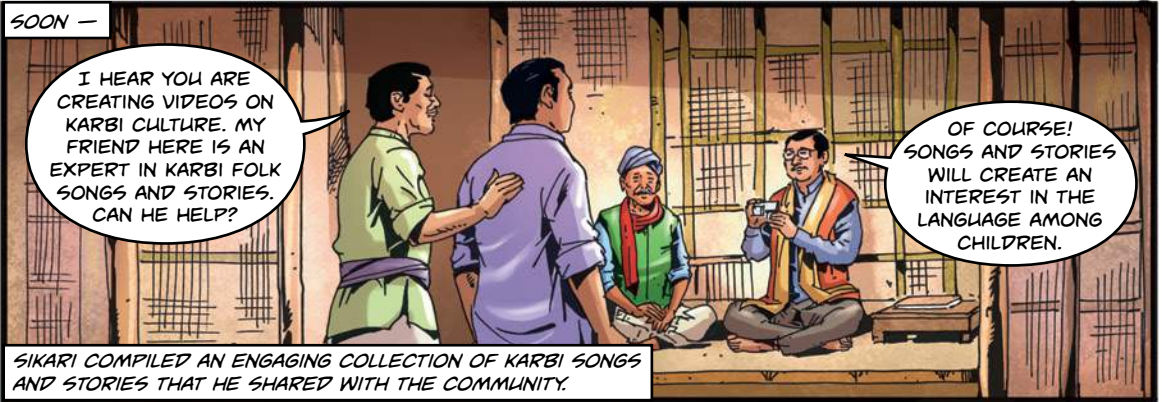


I KNOW A FEW LULLABIES MY GRANDMOTHER USED TO SING. WOULD YOU LIKE TO WRITE THEM DOWN TOO?

FANTASTIC! LULLABIES HAVE AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN ALL CULTURES. IF YOU WILL SING, I CAN RECORD THEM.

THE LADY AGREED AND SIKARI STARTED RECORDING THE LULLABIES.

SOON —



I HEAR YOU ARE CREATING VIDEOS ON KARBI CULTURE. MY FRIEND HERE IS AN EXPERT IN KARBI FOLK SONGS AND STORIES. CAN HE HELP?

OF COURSE! SONGS AND STORIES WILL CREATE AN INTEREST IN THE LANGUAGE AMONG CHILDREN.

SIKARI COMPILED AN ENGAGING COLLECTION OF KARBI SONGS AND STORIES THAT HE SHARED WITH THE COMMUNITY.

TO GATHER MORE INFORMATION ON KARBI, SIKARI TRAVELLED TO VARIOUS PLACES IN ASSAM AND MEGHALAYA. ON HIS RETURN —



THE WAY PEOPLE SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE CHANGES WITH WHERE THEY LIVE. WILL THEY UNDERSTAND OUR KARBI DICTIONARY?

WHY DON'T WE MAKE IT A BILINGUAL DICTIONARY WITH MEANINGS IN BOTH KARBI AND ENGLISH? THIS WILL HELP OUR CHILDREN AS WELL.

I WILL ALSO INCLUDE THE DIFFERENT VARIATIONS OF KARBI WORDS IN IT.

SIKARI AND THE VILLAGE ELDER BEGAN WORK ON THE DICTIONARY. A FEW MONTHS LATER —



GOOD EVENING, UNCLE SIKARI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

SHH... IT LOOKS IMPORTANT. LET'S GO PLAY.

NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M SAVING OUR KARBI LANGUAGE BY WRITING DOWN EVERY WORD. IF WE DON'T LOOK AFTER IT, IT MIGHT DISAPPEAR.



WE WANT TO HELP TOO. WHAT CAN WE DO?

YOU CAN LEARN TO SPEAK KARBI AND TEACH OTHERS AS WELL. TOGETHER, WE'LL KEEP OUR LANGUAGE ALIVE.

FINALLY, THE DAY I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR.

OVER THE YEARS, SIKARI'S WORK BECAME RECOGNISED THROUGHOUT THE STATE. ONE DAY, HE WAS INVITED TO A NEARBY SCHOOL.



SIKARI SIR IS HERE TO GET YOU INTERESTED IN KARBI.

I WILL DO THAT BUT I AM FIRST GOING TO TEACH YOU ALL A RHYME FROM MY BOOK, KLIMSO*. REPEAT AFTER ME — 'KLIMSO, KLIMSO, KLIMSO KARBI RHYMES TO MAKE YOU GLOW!'

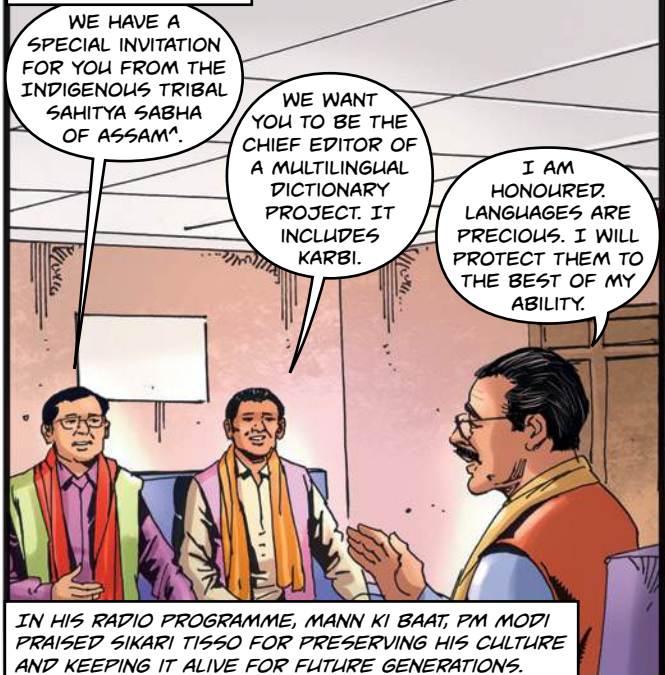
THE CHILDREN LEARNT THE KARBI RHYMES WITH DELIGHT.

IN 2021, SIKARI RETIRED FROM HIS JOB. THAT NIGHT —



NOW I CAN DEVOTE MORE TIME TO MY DREAM OF PRESERVING OUR NATIVE LANGUAGE. THIS IS THE SOLE PURPOSE OF MY LIFE.

A FEW DAYS LATER —



WE HAVE A SPECIAL INVITATION FOR YOU FROM THE INDIGENOUS TRIBAL SAHITYA SABHA OF ASSAM*.

WE WANT YOU TO BE THE CHIEF EDITOR OF A MULTILINGUAL DICTIONARY PROJECT. IT INCLUDES KARBI.

I AM HONOURED. LANGUAGES ARE PRECIOUS. I WILL PROTECT THEM TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY.

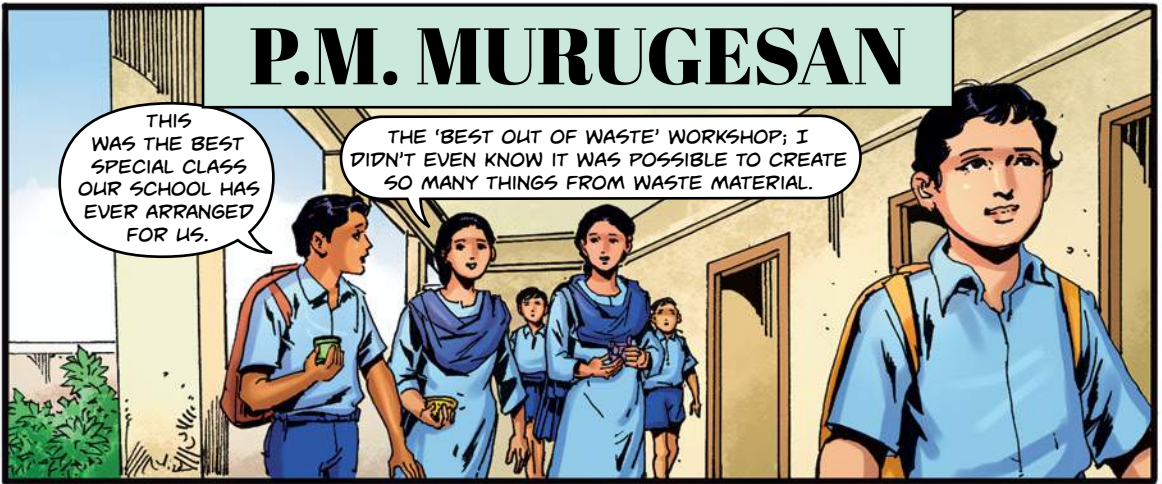
IN HIS RADIO PROGRAMME, MANN KI BAAT, PM MODI PRAISED SIKARI TISSO FOR PRESERVING HIS CULTURE AND KEEPING IT ALIVE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

*CHILDREN IN KARBI LANGUAGE

*A GROUP OF PEOPLE WORKING ON PRESERVING TRIBAL LANGUAGES IN ASSAM



P.M. MURUGESAN



THIS WAS THE BEST SPECIAL CLASS OUR SCHOOL HAS EVER ARRANGED FOR US.

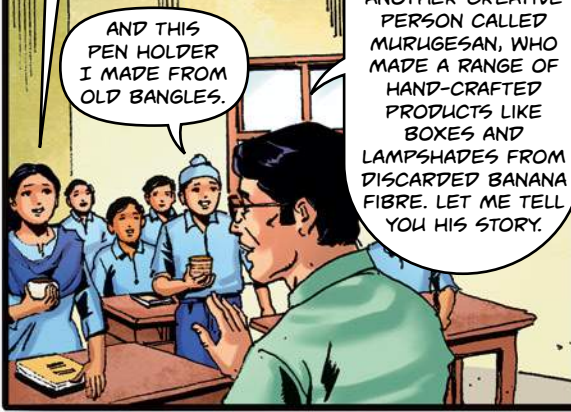
THE 'BEST OUT OF WASTE' WORKSHOP; I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT WAS POSSIBLE TO CREATE SO MANY THINGS FROM WASTE MATERIAL.

WHEN NAIR SIR CAME INTO CLASS —

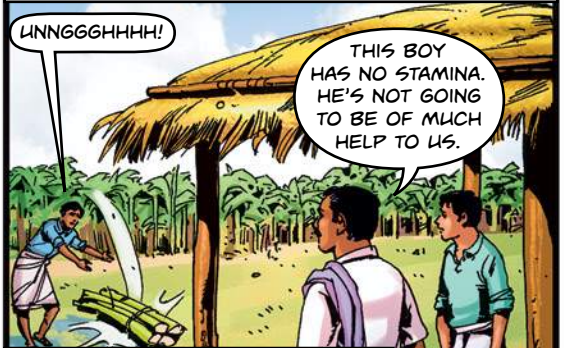
SIR, LOOK AT THIS COCONUT SHELL CUP I PAINTED.

AND THIS PEN HOLDER I MADE FROM OLD BANGLES.

THESE ARE BEAUTIFUL! THIS REMINDS ME OF ANOTHER CREATIVE PERSON CALLED MURUGESAN, WHO MADE A RANGE OF HAND-CRAFTED PRODUCTS LIKE BOXES AND LAMPSHADES FROM DISCARDED BANANA FIBRE. LET ME TELL YOU HIS STORY.



WHEN HE WAS IN CLASS EIGHT, P.M. MURUGESAN FROM MELAKKAL VILLAGE IN MADURAI, HAD TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL TO WORK ON HIS FAMILY'S FARM.

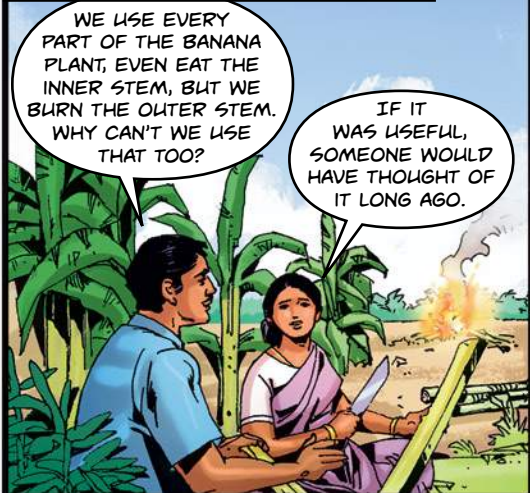


LNNGGGHHH!

THIS BOY HAS NO STAMINA. HE'S NOT GOING TO BE OF MUCH HELP TO US.

THEY WERE POOR, AND ALL THE FAMILY MEMBERS HAD TO WORK ON THE FARM TO MAKE ENDS MEET.

GROWING UP, MURUGESAN WAS NOT THE BEST FARMER BUT HE HAD A SHARP MIND AND WATCHED ALL THE FARMING ACTIVITIES WITH INTEREST. IN 2009, WHEN HE WAS 41 YEARS OLD —



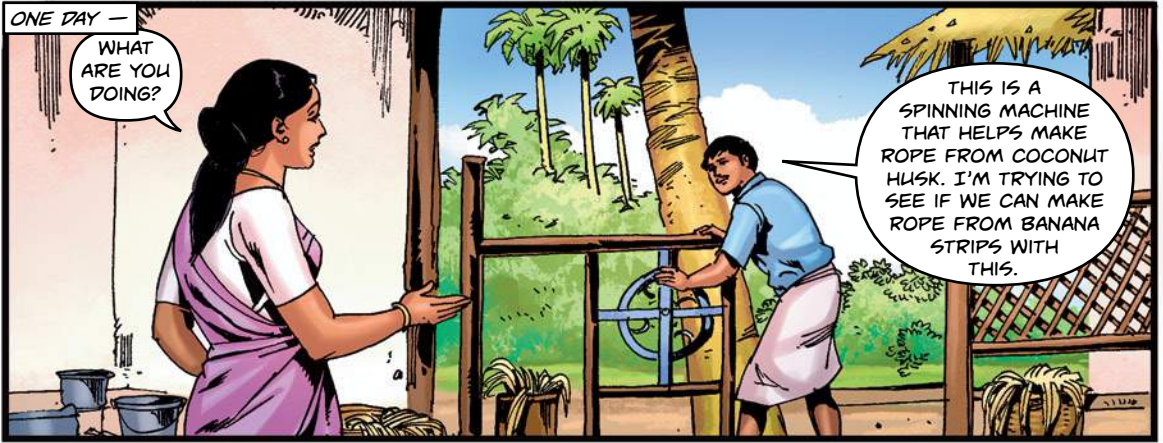
WE USE EVERY PART OF THE BANANA PLANT, EVEN EAT THE INNER STEM, BUT WE BURN THE OUTER STEM. WHY CAN'T WE USE THAT TOO?

IF IT WAS USEFUL, SOMEONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF IT LONG AGO.

MURUGESAN WAS NOT CONVINCED.



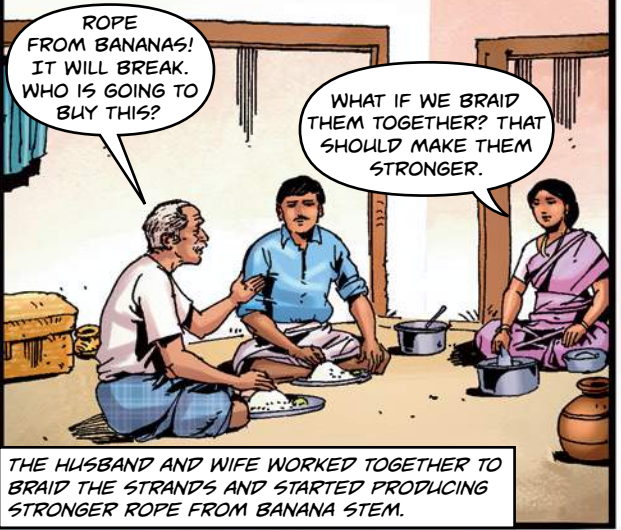
THE SHEATH OF THE STEM HAS SO MANY LAYERS...IF WE SEPARATE THEM AND STRIP THEM... HMMM....



THAT DID NOT WORK BUT MURUGESAN WAS NOW ON A PATH OF INNOVATION. AFTER MUCH TRIAL AND ERROR —



WITH A BICYCLE WHEEL AND PULLEYS, MURUGESAN WAS ABLE TO SPIN THE BANANA FIBRE INTO ROPE.



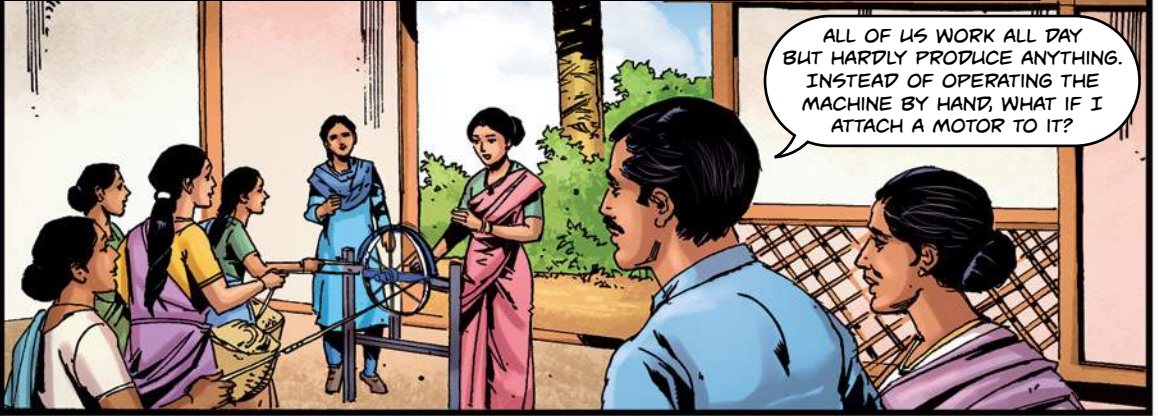
BUT IT WAS STILL NOT AS STRONG AS OTHER ROPES IN THE MARKET, SO NO ONE WANTED IT. IT LOOKED LIKE MURUGESAN'S EFFORT HAD BEEN WASTED. BUT —



BAGS, BASKETS, FLOOR MATS...THE COUPLE FOUND THAT THEY COULD MAKE MANY THINGS WITH THEIR ROPE.



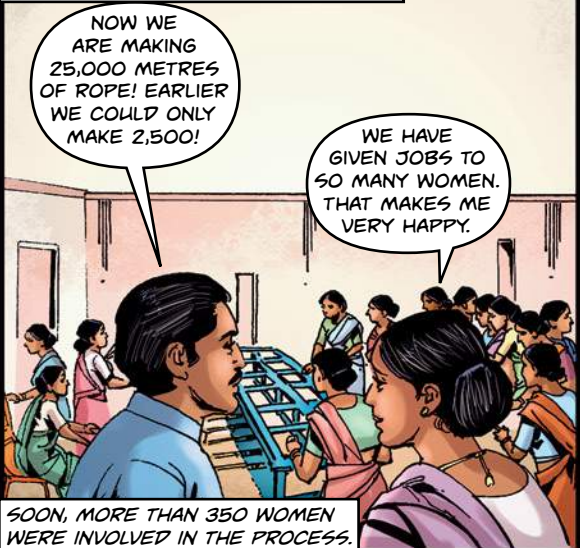
SOON, MURUGESAN SET UP A COMPANY CALLED M.S. ROPE PRODUCTION CENTRE. HIS SMALL TWO-PERSON UNIT GREW TO TEN. BUT, MAKING THE ROPE WAS A VERY TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS.



ALL OF US WORK ALL DAY BUT HARDLY PRODUCE ANYTHING. INSTEAD OF OPERATING THE MACHINE BY HAND, WHAT IF I ATTACH A MOTOR TO IT?

THIS WAS A SUCCESS. THE PROCESS BECAME MUCH FASTER AND MURUGESAN PATENTED HIS IDEA. THEN, IN 2016, HE MADE A NEW MACHINE WHICH COULD MAKE SIX ROLLS OF ROPE INSTEAD OF ONE.

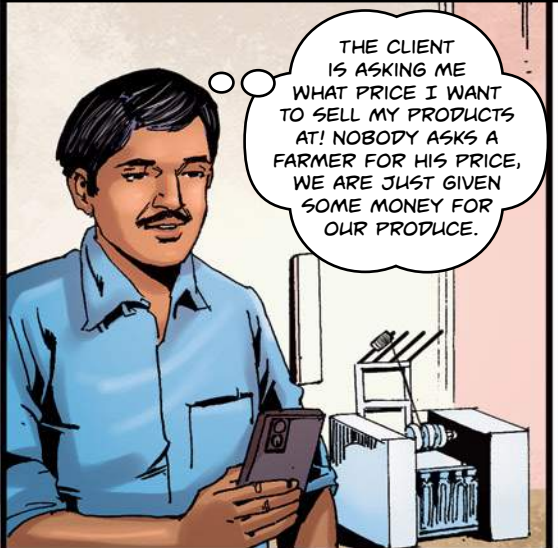
THE VERY NEXT YEAR, MURUGESAN DESIGNED AN AUTOMATIC MACHINE THAT COULD MAKE THE ROPE AND ALSO TWINE IT. HE ALSO STARTED MAKING MORE PRODUCTS AND WAS SOON EXPORTING THEM.



NOW WE ARE MAKING 25,000 METRES OF ROPE! EARLIER WE COULD ONLY MAKE 2,500!

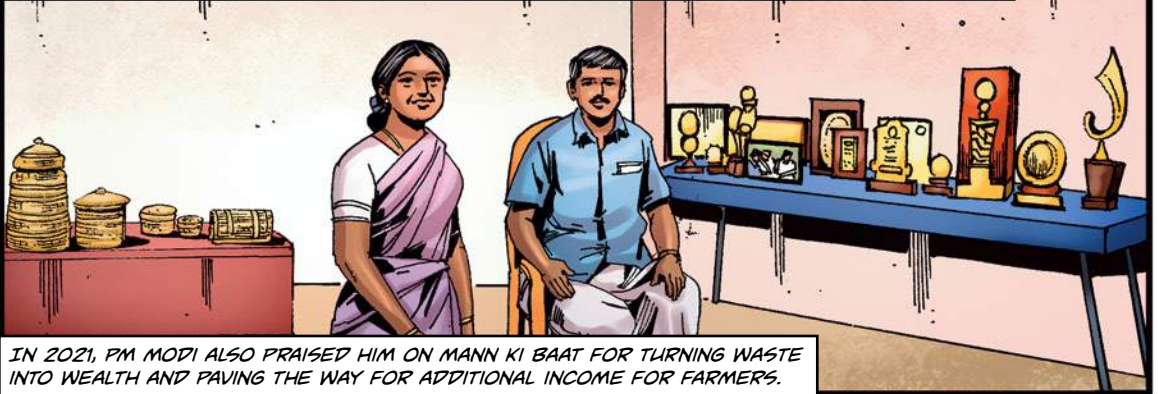
WE HAVE GIVEN JOBS TO SO MANY WOMEN. THAT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY.

SOON, MORE THAN 350 WOMEN WERE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS.



THE CLIENT IS ASKING ME WHAT PRICE I WANT TO SELL MY PRODUCTS AT! NOBODY ASKS A FARMER FOR HIS PRICE, WE ARE JUST GIVEN SOME MONEY FOR OUR PRODUCE.

MURUGESAN'S PRODUCTS ARE BIODEGRADABLE AND AN ECONOMICAL ALTERNATIVE TO PLASTIC. HE HAS WON SEVERAL NATIONAL AND STATE AWARDS FOR HIS AGRO-INNOVATION. HE NOW TRAINS PEOPLE IN THIS PROCESS AND ALSO MANUFACTURES HIS MACHINES FOR THE GOVERNMENT.



IN 2021, PM MODI ALSO PRAISED HIM ON MANN KI BAAT FOR TURNING WASTE INTO WEALTH AND PAVING THE WAY FOR ADDITIONAL INCOME FOR FARMERS.





MANN KI BAAT

VOL.3

The third volume of Mann ki Baat shines a spotlight on citizens from different walks of life who are doing their bit to improve the lives of people around them.

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