Poetry in science—Results of the competition

Readers may recall that *Current Science* helped organize a competition on poetry in science three months ago. There was a good response, with over 40 entries in English, seven in Hindi, one in Oriya, one in Sanskrit, four in Tamil and four in Marathi. In addition, there was a whole collection of previously published poems in Marathi, submitted by Professor K. D. Abhyankar of Hyderabad. For want of enough entries to choose from, poems in these languages were not judged, and the evaluation was restricted to those in English and in Hindi. I thank Professors Sujit and Meenakshi Mukherjee of Secunderabad for judging the poems in English and choosing the best five entries, and Professor Kalidas Sen of the University of Hyderabad for judging the entries in Hindi and choosing the best three.

D. Balasubramanian

An unequal race

Declared the single sperm "I've won the race"
Penetrating the egg's vitelline lace

'No, no', shouted the idlers behind Lashing their flagella with a single mind

They thundered in unison 'This race is null and void' 'Let us test him for anabolic steroid'

T. S. Suryanarayanan Department of Botany Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College Chennai 600 004

There was an old scientist from Patna
Who was awarded the Bharat Ratna
What he did, no one knew
But he thanked Laloo,
Mother Earth, and then God for this ghatna.

"Jai Vignan", the headlines scream Indian science – cream of the cream Many years later, lips still sealed Was it thermo? What was the yield? Did it really happen or was it a dream?

> Raghavan Varadarajan Molecular Biophysics Unit Indian Institute of Science Bangalore 560 012

Haikus

DNA was prime, Till Prions came, defying The monopoly

This unique process, Gene programmed apoptosis, Kills to promote life.

Limerick

Used to simplify many a complex sum;
We hear that Moriarty's treatise,
Caused its popularity to rise.
A shortcut to multiplication and less humdrum,
From ${}^{n}C_{o}$ to ${}^{n}C_{n}$ goes the Binomial theorem

Laasya Samhita G-9 Brigade Park View Apartments B.P. Wadia Road, Basavanagudi Bangalore 560 004

A professor once said of his grad student "He is like God"; asked why, he said "I believe he exists, but haven't seen him around"

The angry professor yelled at his students "Time I heard some Eureka around Here" Police arrested two of his students next day.

"We are very strict on rules",
The Administration Man told the scientist
"You cannot buy ballpoint pens
since your grant has no provision for equipments,
However, you can buy refills
Since they come under consumables"

R. Jayaraman School of Biological Sciences Madurai Kamaraj University Madurai 625 021

Cricket

With a chirp and a roar, A cricket may declare: My legs bear an ear, And whiskers another; The tail has a cere, With yet one more!

Lichens

We are the crusty soldiers,
Hardy, tough and bold
Lords of rocks and crags,
Conquerors of cold;
We are the spicy lichens
Green cells in a mesh of mould
Masters at team play,
Worth our weight in gold!

Mushrooms

Time has come, the mushroom said
To quit this green hued clan;
Glycogened we, not starchy staid,
No paper coats, but chitined with elan!

Madhav Gadgil Centre for Ecological Sciences Indian Institute of Science Bangalore 560 012

गर्भ शक्तित

प्रकृति का संतुलन एक अनन्त है। धरा पर बनता थल इस ओर तो मिटता उस ओर है। कहानी जल की भी वही रही; समुद्र थे कभी विशाल जहाँ, पर्वत श्रंखला हैं आज वहाँ। प्रमुखता रही गर्भ शक्ति के वितरण की, क्रियायें सभी थीं वसुन्धरा के गर्भ से जुड़ी।

> Archana Tripathi Birbal Sahni Institute of Paleobotany 52 University Road Lucknow 226 007

'सृष्टि'

प्रारम्भ हुआ 'सृष्टि' का दस अरब वर्ष पूर्व, एक सान्द्र अणू-बिन्द् के विस्फोटन के फलस्वरूप । यही है 'बिग-बैंग' थ्योरी जिसने पाई मान्यता, सृष्टि की उत्पत्ति की यह करती है व्याख्या । अनगिनत 'आकाश-गंगा' निहित हैं इस सृष्टि में, और असंख्य'सौर–मण्डल' प्रति आकाश – गंगा में । 'सूर्य' तारा है केन्द्र बिन्दु सौर – मंडल के हमारे, बादल धूल और गैस के जिसके चारों ओर घनेरे । आदि सूर्य पर छाए बादल टकराए जब आपस में, प्रादुर्भाव हुआ 'पृथ्वी' का तब 'गर्म - तरल' रूप में । तरल रूप फिर लगा बदलने तापमान के गिरने से सघन हो चली धरा 'खनिजों' के विगलन से । 'वायुमण्डल' की हुई उत्पत्ति ज्वालामुखियों के फटने से, 'महासागर' हुआ निर्मित बादलों की वृष्टि से । कल्पना से परे धरा थी एक बड़े भूखण्ड रूप में, नाम दिया था 'पैन्जिया' जिसे जर्मन 'वैगनर' नें । कालान्तर में जनमें इससे अन्य दो भूखण्ड, उत्तरी था 'लौरेशिया' और दक्षिणी 'गोण्डवानालैण्ड' । रूका नहीं इन भूखण्डों के टूटने का क्रम कभी, 'महाद्वीप' अब सात फलतः देख रहे हैं हम सभी । जन्मीं पृथ्वी इस तरह साढ़े - चार अरब वर्ष पूर्व, किन्तु हुआ आरम्भ जीवन लगभग तीन अरब वर्ष पूर्व । शुरू हुआ जीवन 'सागर' में 'हरित – नील' शैवाल से, लेकिन थल पर जनमें पौधे 'सिल्यूरियन - डिवोनियन' काल से । शनैः शनैः जलवायु बदली 'वृक्ष-विशाल' आ गये, जीव-जन्तू, वनस्पति विभिन्न इस धरती पर छा गये । तरह-तरह के जीव जनमें हर 'यूग' हर 'काल' में, 'आदि मानव' से जनमा 'मानव' वर्ष पूर्व दस-लाख में ।

> Alpana Singh Birbal Sahni Institute of Paleobotany 52 University Road Lucknow 226 007

निर्मम हत्या

पिछले चार दिनों में चार मौतें हो गई, मौत क्या कहें, यूँ कहें कि मार दिया गया, सरे—आम, खुले—आम कत्ल हो गया आपका हमारा नहीं, न ही युवाओं का, चार वृद्धों को मौत के घाट उतारा गया, पहले बाहों को काटकर अपंग बनाया, फिर सिर को गर्दन से अलग उड़ाया, धीरे—धीरे टाँगों को खोखला कर दिया, बस फिर तो हद हो गयी..... गर्दन से बाँध कर रस्सी, यूँ खीचाँ गया चरमराहट हुई, ज्यूँ कराह रहे हों, वो महुआ के पेड़, दिल रो उठा, अश्रु बह निकले,
गिर गये वो शरीर खुले मैदान में,
जैसे पड़ी हों चार लाशें,
बच्चे पूछते हैं, क्यों लाल है इसकी लकड़ी,
क्यों निकलता है दूध इसमें से,
मन कह उठा, क्या बताएँ तुम्हे,
ये तो रुधिर है, जो बहाया है हमने।
कब तक करेंगे हम अत्याचार,
बस करो अब, बंद करो,
ये कत्ले आम वृक्षों का।।

Nisha Raghav P.G. Department of Botany S.M.M. Town PG College U.B. Singh Purvanchal University Jaunpur 222 002

CURRENT SCIENCE

Special Section: Recent advances in epilepsy

(25 March 2002) Guest Editor: Sanjeev V. Thomas

Epidemiology of epilepsy

R. Sridharan Apollo Hospitals, Chennai

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Manjari Tripathi and Satish Jain All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi

Recent advances in epileptogenesis

Jayant N. Acharya University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, USA

Imaging in epilepsy

William H. Theodore National Institutes of Health Building, USA

Newer antiepileptic drugs and recent advances in drug therapy of epilepsy

Torbjörn Tomson Karolinska Hospital, Sweden

Surgical treatment of medically refractory epilepsy

Kurupath Radhakrishnan and Girish Menon Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram

Epilepsy and pregnancy

Sanjeev V. Thomas

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram