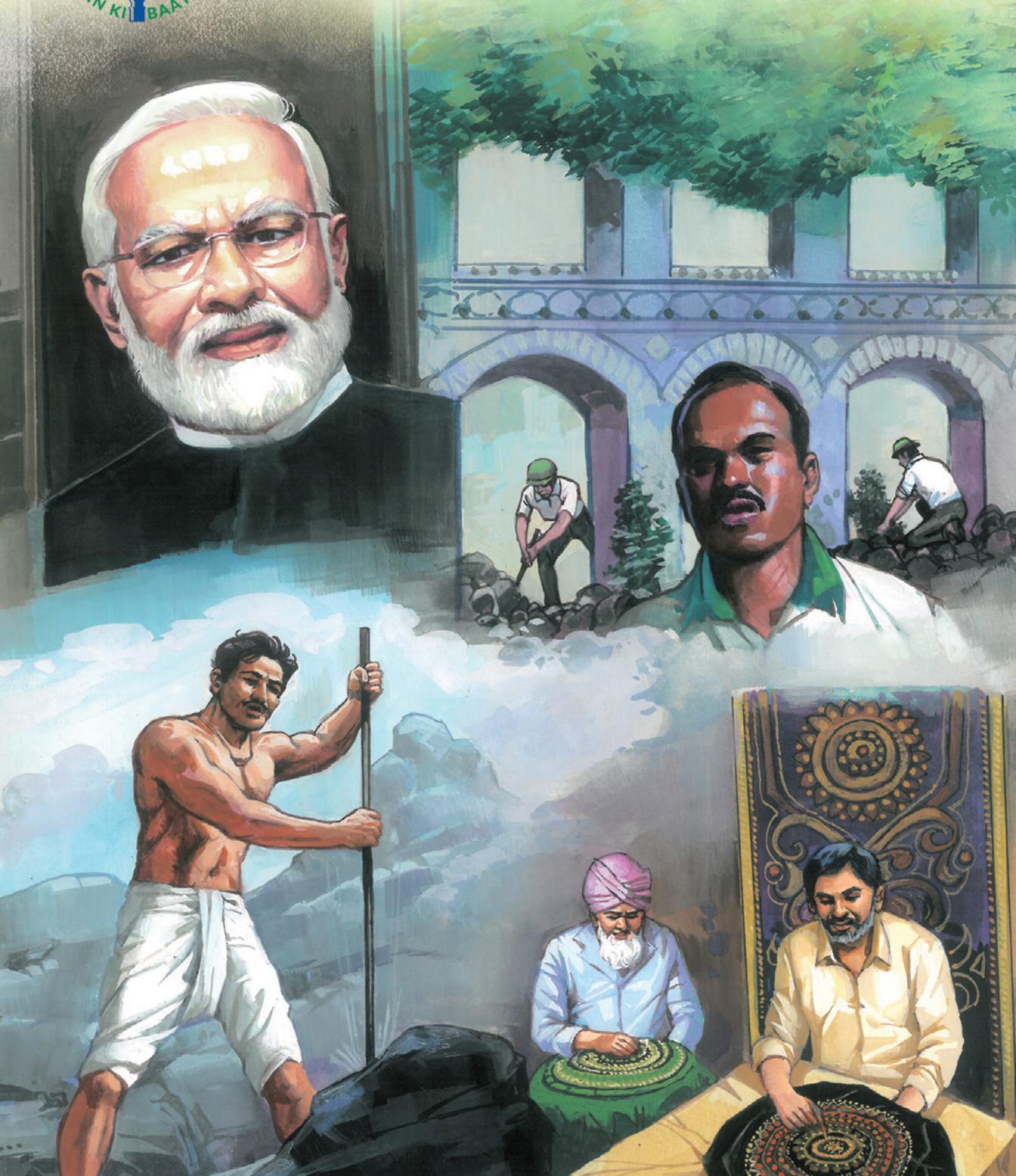




MANN KI BAAT

VOL.11



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My dear children,

Our culture has always believed in the saying, “Mata, pita, guru, daivam.”

N.K. Hemalatha, a Tamil teacher, has lived up to this. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when schools were closed, Hemalatha ji made animated videos of the lessons and distributed them among her students.

There is also Sripati Tudu, a professor of Santhali. After months of research, Sripati ji translated our Constitution into Santhali. Now, many Santhal people can finally read about their rights – something I wish for every Indian citizen to be able to do.

However, a great teacher is not always found in a classroom.

Abdul Gafar Khatri, a Rogan artist, has trained over 200 girls in this ancient form of cloth painting, giving them a place in a historically male-dominant field. Similarly, the Lidi Krou Society of Nagaland aims to keep Naga traditions from dying out, by conducting workshops for the next generation.

As Gandhi ji said, “A thousand candles can be lit from the flame of one.” Learn passionately and teach generously. When you light someone else’s candle, it might just become the torch that leads change.



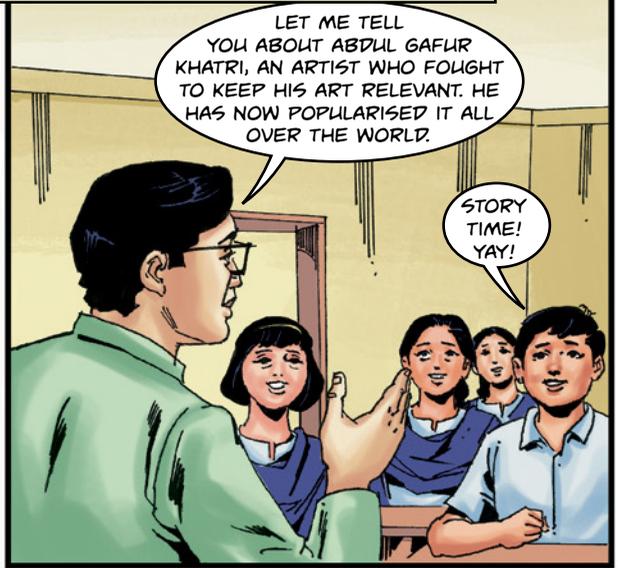
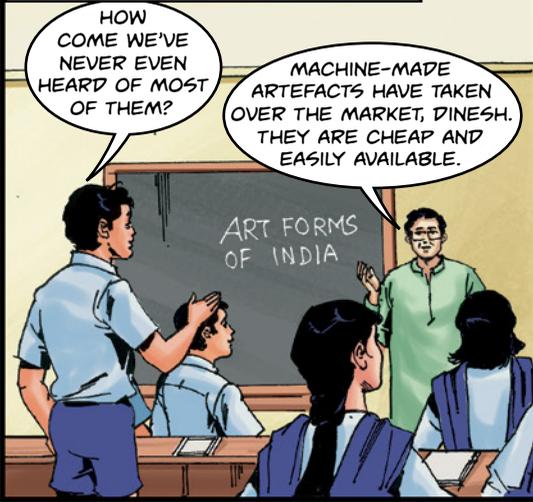


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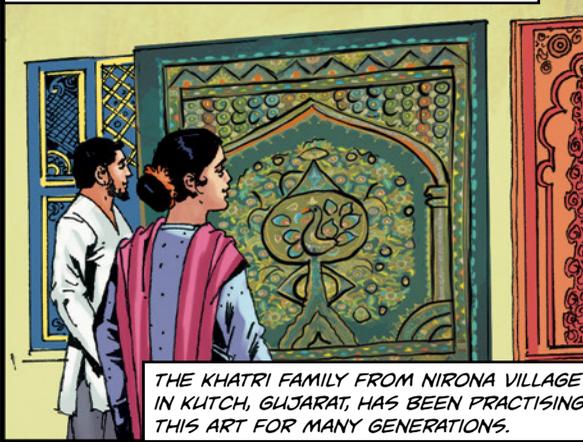
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ABDUL GAFUR KHATRI

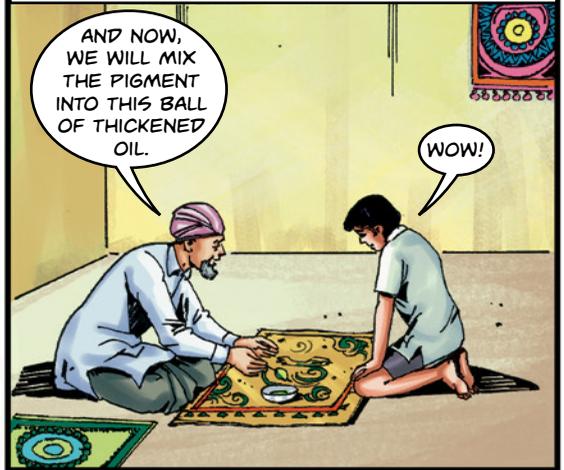
THE CHILDREN WERE LEARNING ABOUT THE VARIOUS ART FORMS IN INDIA.



'ROGAN' ART IS AN ANCIENT ART FORM THAT HAS COME TO INDIA FROM PERSIA. ROGAN, A MIXTURE OF CASTOR OIL AND COLOUR, IS USED TO MAKE INTRICATE PATTERNS ON FABRIC BY HAND.



IN 1965, A BABY BOY WAS BORN INTO THE KHATRI FAMILY. HE WAS NAMED ABDUL. HE GREW UP WATCHING HIS FAMILY PRACTICE ROGAN ART.



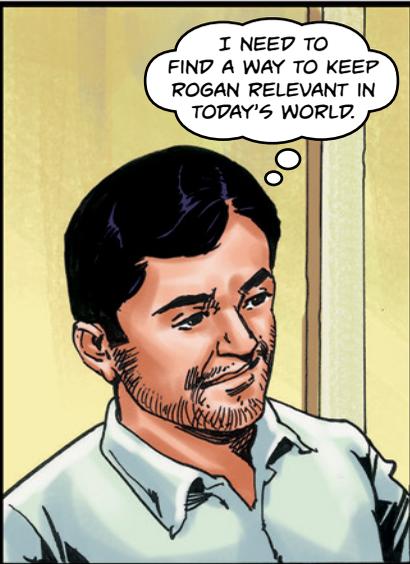
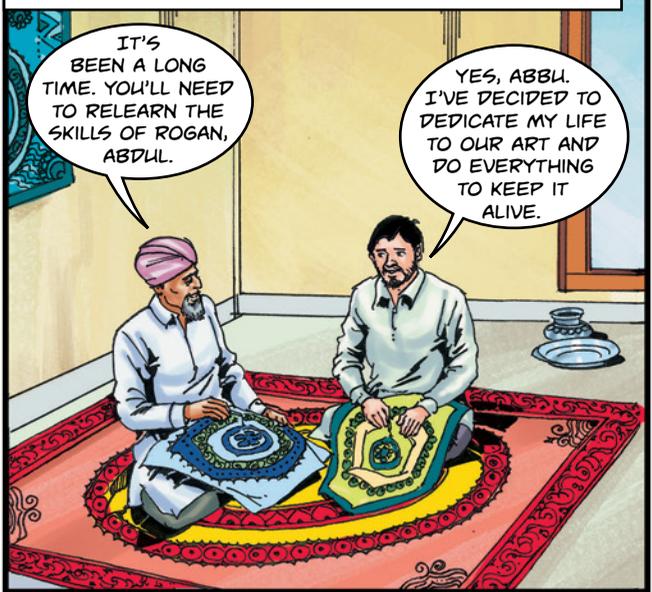
UNFORTUNATELY, BY THE LATE 70s, THE ART FORM WAS ALMOST EXTINGUISHED.



SOON, ABDUL TOO HAD TO MOVE TO THE CITY FOR WORK. HE LIVED FOR A WHILE IN AHMEDABAD AND THEN IN MUMBAI.



IN THE LATE 1980S, AN ORDER FOR ROGAN ARTWORKS CAME FROM THE GUJARAT GOVERNMENT. ABDUL DECIDED TO RETURN HOME AND WORK ON IT WITH HIS FAMILY.



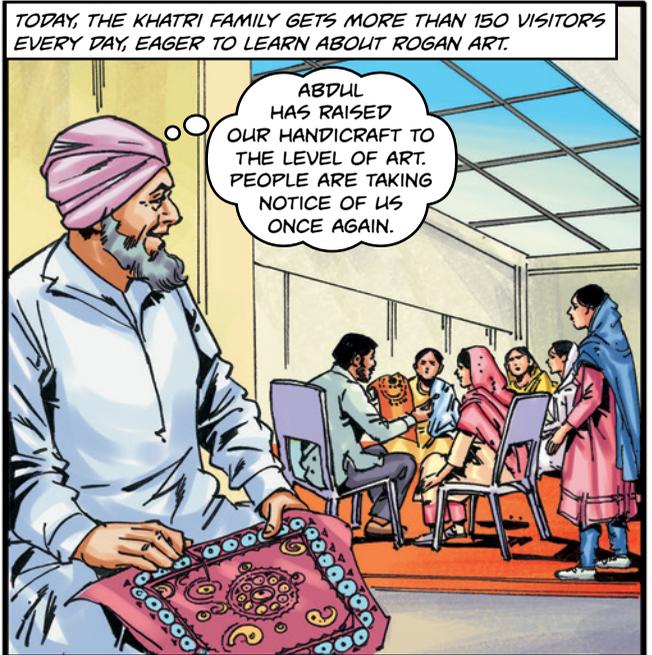
SOON, ABDUL REINVENTED TRADITIONAL ROGAN DESIGNS TO INCLUDE BAGS, BEDSHEETS, JACKETS, KURTAS AND MORE, ALONG WITH WALL HANGINGS.





THE NEW PRODUCTS ARE SELLING OUT! TOURISTS HAVE REVIVED BUSINESS IN A BIG WAY.

SOON, THE KHATRI FAMILY BEGAN HOLDING DEMONSTRATION WORKSHOPS AND 'QUESTION AND ANSWER' SESSIONS WITH TOURISTS TO GENERATE MORE INTEREST IN THE ART FORM.



ABDUL HAS RAISED OUR HANDICRAFT TO THE LEVEL OF ART. PEOPLE ARE TAKING NOTICE OF US ONCE AGAIN.

TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR HIS ART PIECES, ABDUL BEGAN TRAINING MORE THAN 200 GIRLS FROM HIS VILLAGE. THIS IS A MONUMENTAL STEP IN A TRADITIONALLY MALE-DOMINATED FIELD.



YOU GIRLS HAVE MUCH MORE PATIENCE THAN ME AND MY BROTHERS, WHEN WE WERE YOUR AGE. HA HA!

IN 2014, THE ART REACHED THE HEIGHT OF ITS PROMINENCE WHEN PM NARENDRA MODI GIFTED ONE OF ABDUL'S ROGAN PAINTINGS DEPICTING THE TREE OF LIFE TO THE THEN PRESIDENT OF U.S.A., BARACK OBAMA.



FOR SINGLE-HANDEDLY REVIVING ROGAN ART, ABDUL WAS AWARDED THE PADMA SHRI IN 2019.



MANY MEMBERS OF THE KHATRI FAMILY HAVE ALSO RECEIVED NATIONAL AWARDS. ABDUL WAS SPECIALLY LAUDED BY PM MODI ON MANN KI BAAT FOR HIS DEDICATION AND INNOVATION.

BANDU DHOTRE

THE STUDENTS WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF A DISCUSSION.

I HAVE READ THAT THE TAJ MAHAL USED TO BE PRISTINE WHITE EARLIER. THE POLLUTION OVER THE YEARS HAS CAUSED IT TO BECOME A DULL YELLOW COLOUR NOW.

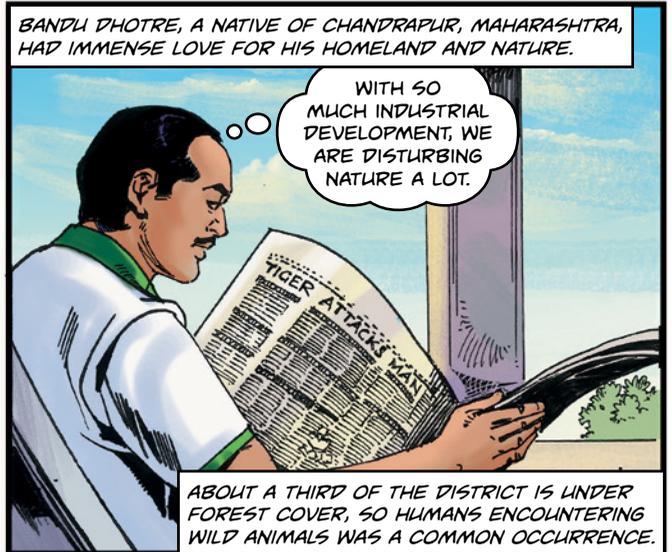
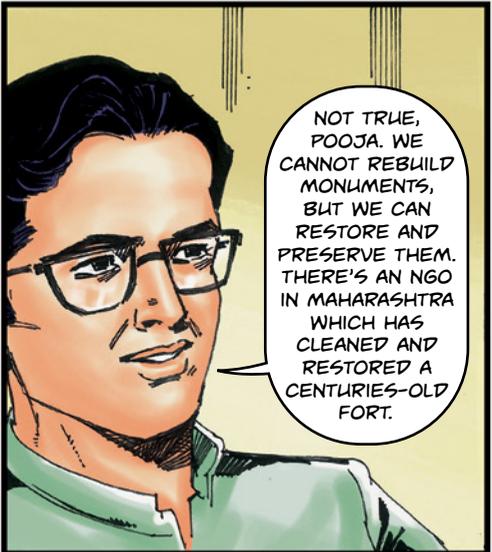
BUT WE CANNOT FIX THESE DAMAGES OR REBUILD THE MONUMENT. THERE IS NOTHING TO BE DONE.



BANDU DHOTRE, A NATIVE OF CHANDRAPUR, MAHARASHTRA, HAD IMMENSE LOVE FOR HIS HOMETLAND AND NATURE.

NOT TRUE, POOJA. WE CANNOT REBUILD MONUMENTS, BUT WE CAN RESTORE AND PRESERVE THEM. THERE'S AN NGO IN MAHARASHTRA WHICH HAS CLEANED AND RESTORED A CENTURIES-OLD FORT.

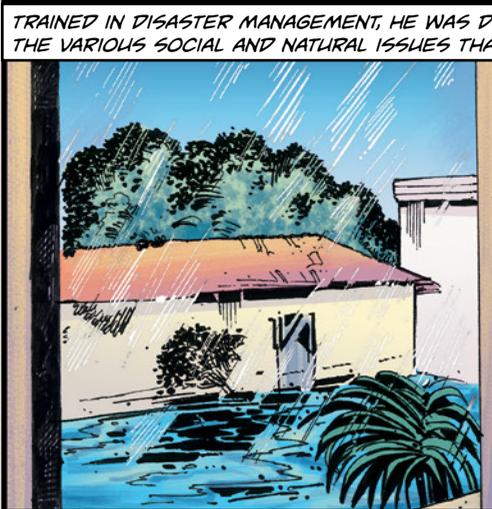
WITH SO MUCH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, WE ARE DISTURBING NATURE A LOT.



ABOUT A THIRD OF THE DISTRICT IS UNDER FOREST COVER, SO HUMANS ENCOUNTERING WILD ANIMALS WAS A COMMON OCCURRENCE.

TRAINED IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT, HE WAS DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT THE VARIOUS SOCIAL AND NATURAL ISSUES THAT THE REGION FACED.

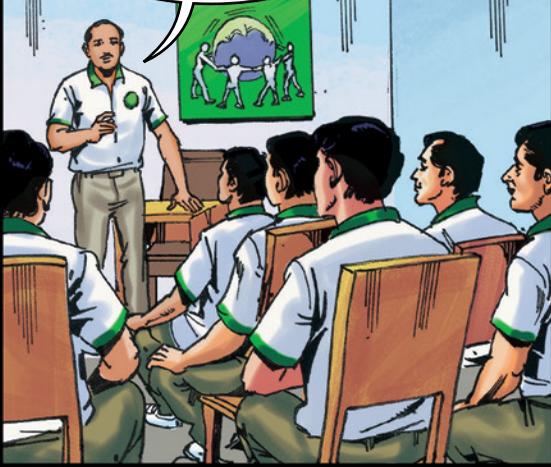
I SHOULD PUT MY EXPERTISE TO GOOD USE AND TRAIN SOME VOLUNTEERS FOR EMERGENCIES LIKE THESE.





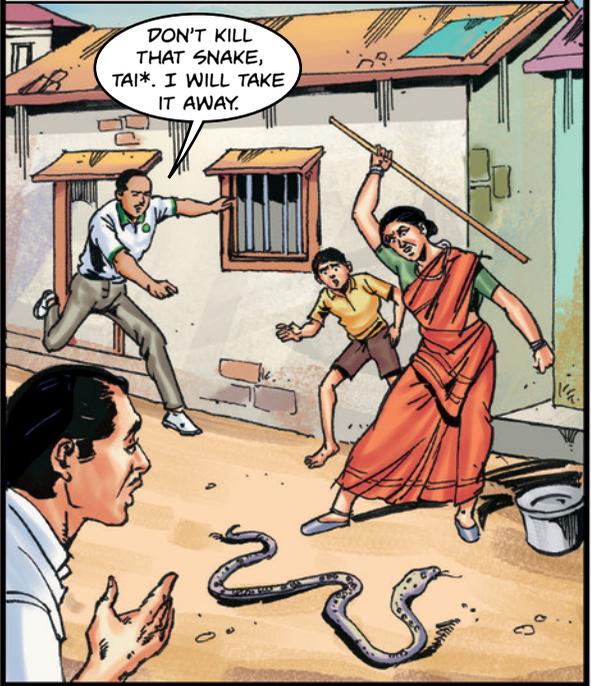
IN 2006, BANDU FOUNDED AN NGO CALLED ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION ORGANISATION, ALSO KNOWN AS ECO-PRO.

OUR GOAL IS TO CONSERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE, WHILE ALSO BEING PREPARED TO MANAGE NATURAL DISASTERS AND HELP THE CIVIC BODY CARRY OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.



AS PART OF ECO-PRO, VOLUNTEERS WOULD ENGAGE IN A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES, LIKE ANIMAL RESCUE...

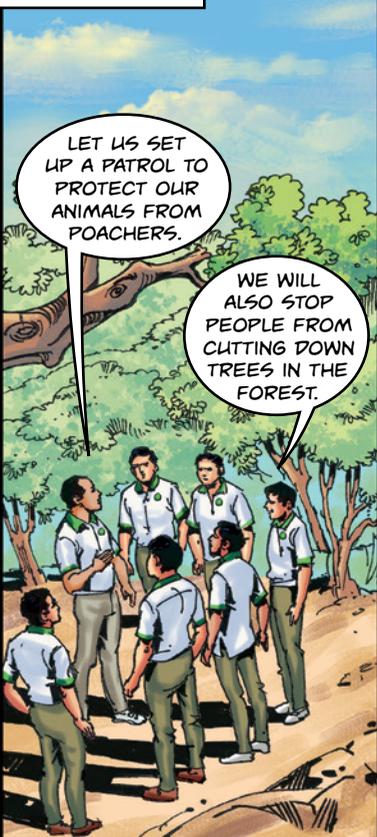
DON'T KILL THAT SNAKE, TAI*. I WILL TAKE IT AWAY.



...CONSERVATION...

LET US SET UP A PATROL TO PROTECT OUR ANIMALS FROM POACHERS.

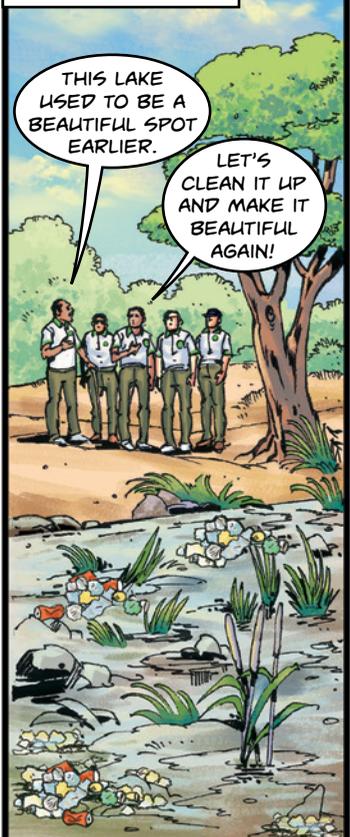
WE WILL ALSO STOP PEOPLE FROM CUTTING DOWN TREES IN THE FOREST.



...CLEAN-UP DRIVES...

THIS LAKE USED TO BE A BEAUTIFUL SPOT EARLIER.

LET'S CLEAN IT UP AND MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL AGAIN!



...AS WELL AS PROTESTS AND AWARENESS RALLIES FOR SOCIAL CAUSES.

AIR POLLUTION LEVELS IN OUR TOWN HAVE RISEN IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. STRICT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN OR OUR CHILDREN'S HEALTH WILL SUFFER.

YOU ARE RIGHT, THE AIR IS BECOMING WORSE EVERY DAY.

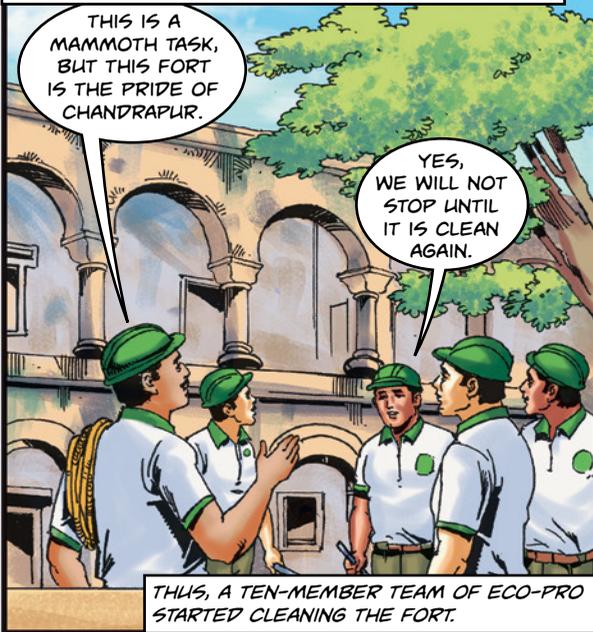
WHAT SHOULD WE DO, BHAI*?



*SISTER IN MARATHI

*BROTHER IN MARATHI

ONE OF THE PROJECTS ADOPTED BY ECO-PRO WAS THE CLEANING AND RESTORATION OF CHANDA FORT.

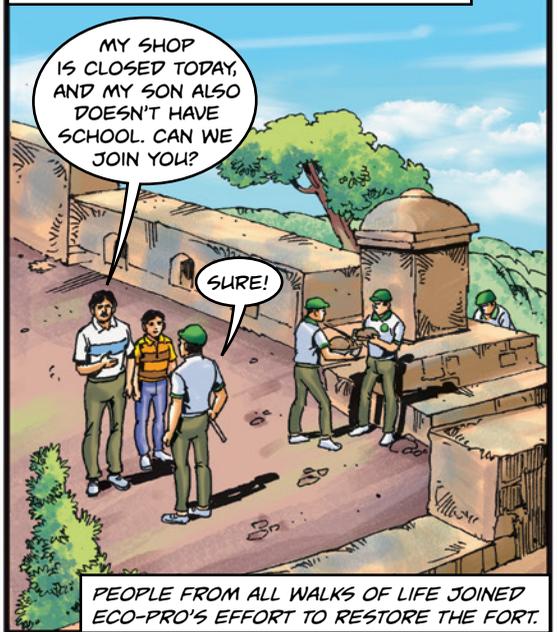


THIS IS A MAMMOTH TASK, BUT THIS FORT IS THE PRIDE OF CHANDRAPUR.

YES, WE WILL NOT STOP UNTIL IT IS CLEAN AGAIN.

THUS, A TEN-MEMBER TEAM OF ECO-PRO STARTED CLEANING THE FORT.

EVERY WEEKEND AND HOLIDAY, OTHER VOLLINTEERS WOULD ALSO JOIN THE TEAM.



MY SHOP IS CLOSED TODAY, AND MY SON ALSO DOESN'T HAVE SCHOOL. CAN WE JOIN YOU?

SURE!

PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE JOINED ECO-PRO'S EFFORT TO RESTORE THE FORT.

AFTER 200 DAYS OF CONTINUOLIS WORK, MOST PARTS OF THE FORT HAD BEEN CLEANED.



WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY, TEAM. I AM SO PROUD OF US, AND ALL THE CITIZENS WHO HAVE HELPED US.

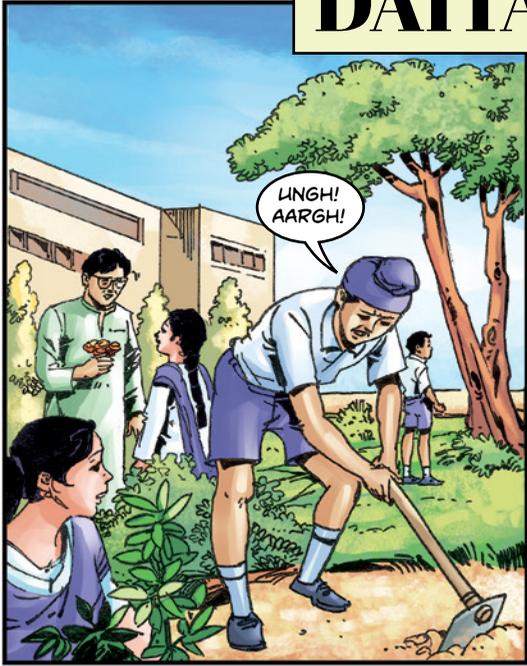
YAY!

ECO-PRO'S ACHIEVEMENT WAS PRAISED BY THE PRIME MINISTER AS WELL.

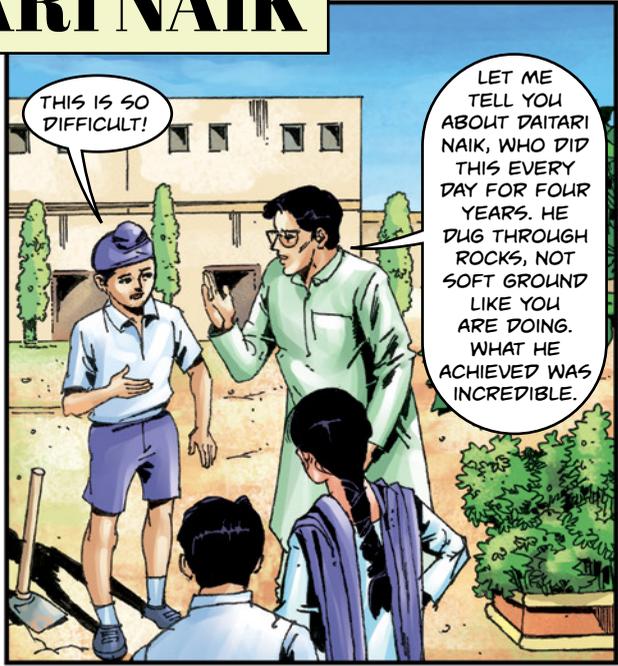


FORTS ARE SYMBOLS OF OUR HERITAGE. IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL COUNTRYMEN TO KEEP OUR HISTORICAL HERITAGE SAFE AND CLEAN. I CONGRATULATE THE ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION ORGANISATION, THEIR ENTIRE TEAM, AND THE PEOPLE OF CHANDRAPUR.

DAITARI NAIK



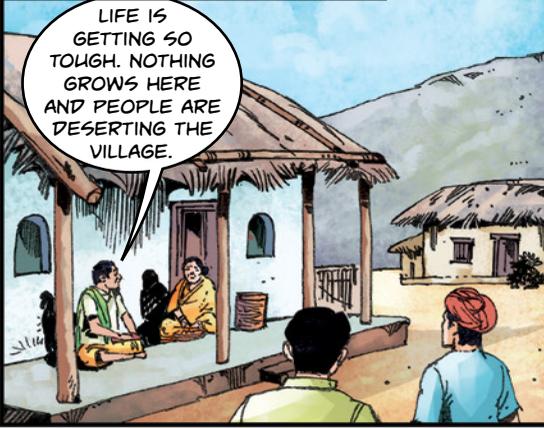
LUNGH!
AARGH!



THIS IS SO
DIFFICULT!

LET ME
TELL YOU
ABOUT DAITARI
NAIK, WHO DID
THIS EVERY
DAY FOR FOUR
YEARS. HE
DUG THROUGH
ROCKS, NOT
SOFT GROUND
LIKE YOU
ARE DOING.
WHAT HE
ACHIEVED WAS
INCREDIBLE.

DAITARI NAIK LIVED IN THE ROCKY
AND DRY VILLAGE OF TALABAITARANI
IN KEONJHAR DISTRICT OF ODISHA.



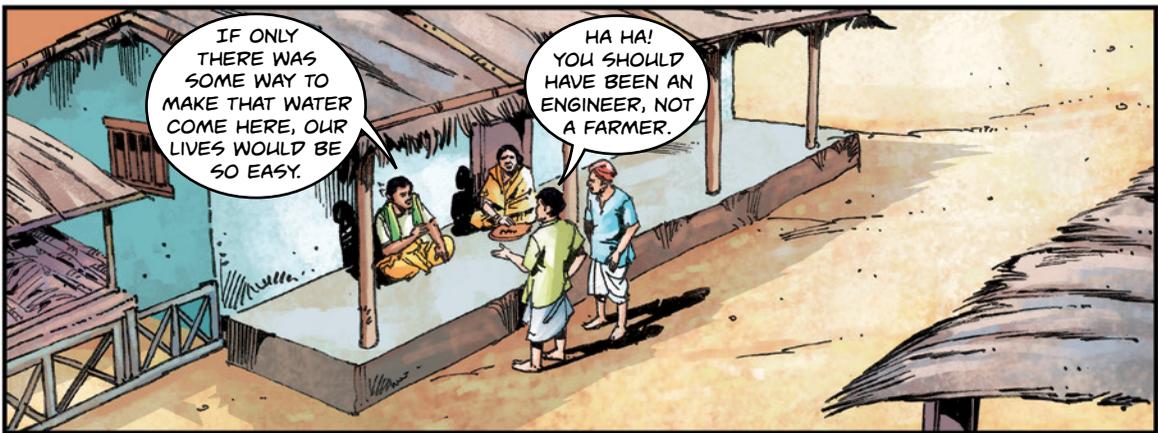
LIFE IS
GETTING SO
TOUGH. NOTHING
GROWS HERE
AND PEOPLE ARE
DESERTING THE
VILLAGE.



WHAT CAN
THEY DO? THERE
IS NO WATER HERE.
CROPS GROW ONLY
WHEN IT RAINS AND
EVEN THEN, THERE'S
NOT ENOUGH TO
SELL.

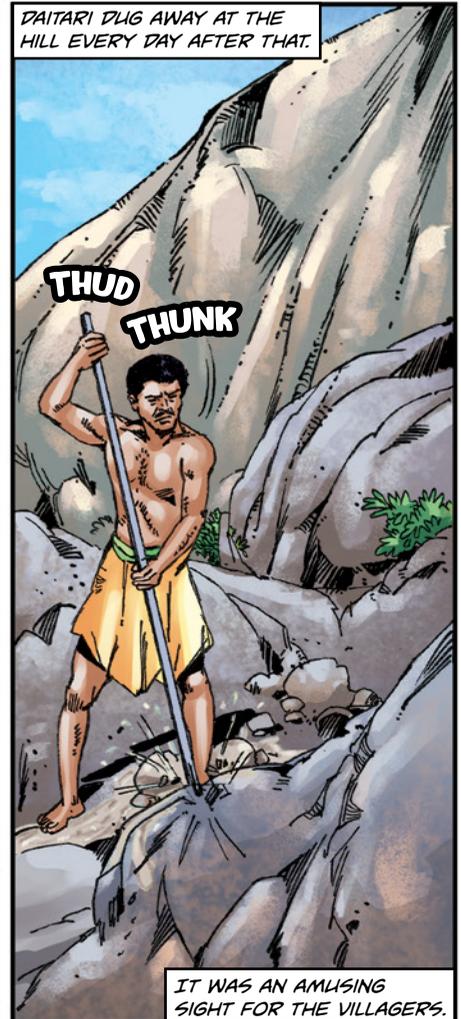
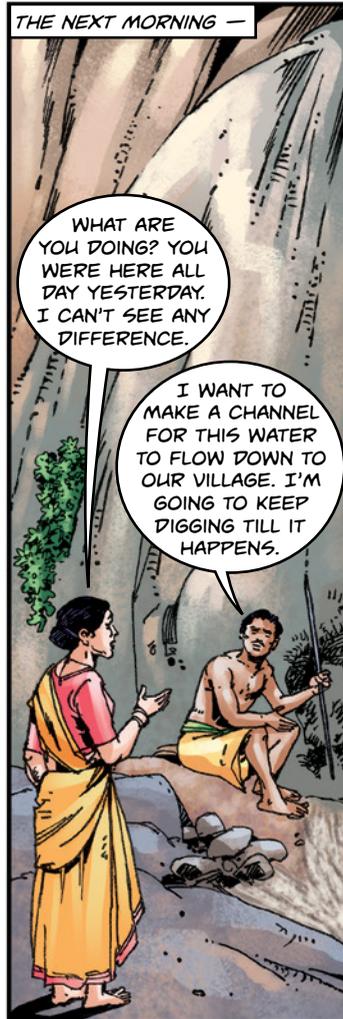
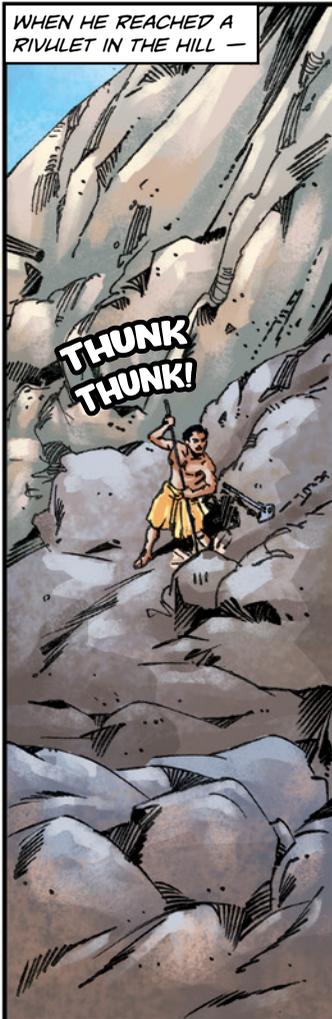
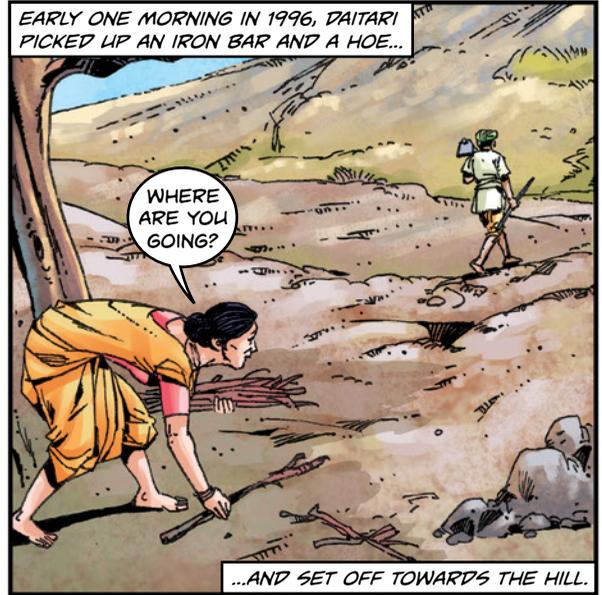
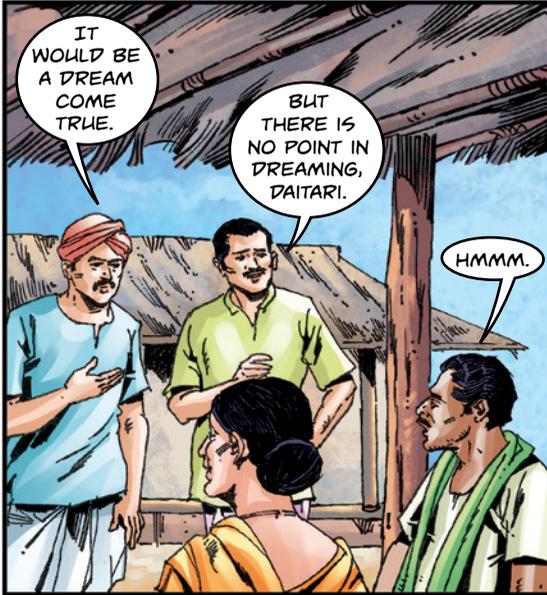
I CAN
HEAR THE
WATER GUSHING
BEHIND THOSE
HILLS BUT NOT A
DROP COMES
HERE.

THE GUPT BAITARANI RIVER FLOWED THROUGH
THE GONASIKA HILL BEHIND DAITARI'S VILLAGE.



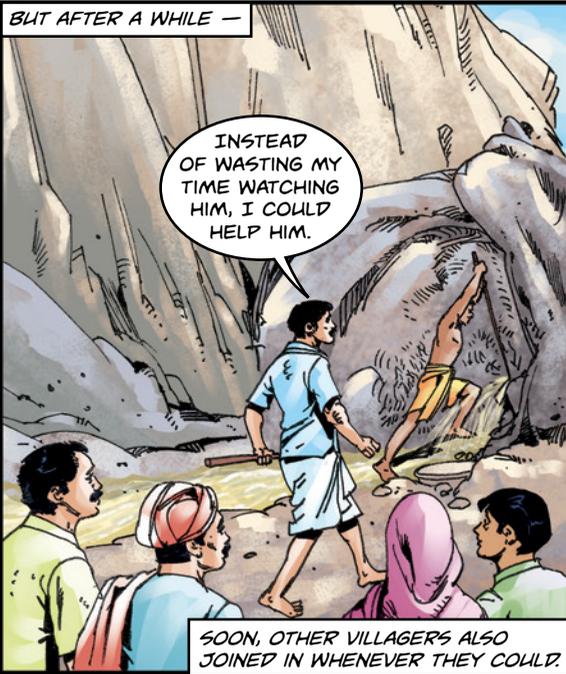
IF ONLY
THERE WAS
SOME WAY TO
MAKE THAT WATER
COME HERE, OUR
LIVES WOULD BE
SO EASY.

HA HA!
YOU SHOULD
HAVE BEEN AN
ENGINEER, NOT
A FARMER.





BUT AFTER A WHILE —



INSTEAD OF WASTING MY TIME WATCHING HIM, I COULD HELP HIM.

SOON, OTHER VILLAGERS ALSO JOINED IN WHENEVER THEY COULD.

SLOWLY, THE ROCKS BEGAN TO GIVE WAY. FOR FOUR LONG YEARS, DAITARI DUG A ROUGH, THREE-KILOMETRE-LONG CANAL DOWNHILL FROM THE RIVER, UNTIL —

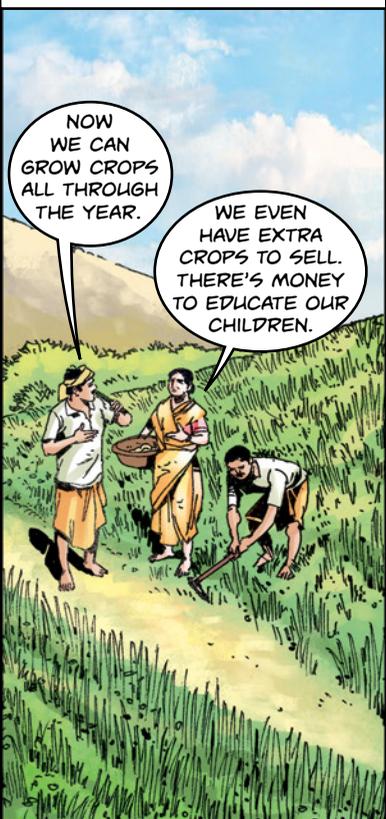


WATER! WE HAVE WATER!

ALMOST 100 ACRES OF TALABAITARANI GET IRRIGATED BECAUSE OF THE CANAL THAT DAITARI DUG. WITHIN A YEAR, THE LIVES OF THE VILLAGERS CHANGED.

NOW KNOWN AS THE 'CANAL MAN OF ODISHA', DAITARI WAS AWARDED THE PADMA SHRI IN 2019. HE WAS ALSO APPRECIATED ON MANN KI BAAT.

BUT DAITARI HAS A REQUEST.



NOW WE CAN GROW CROPS ALL THROUGH THE YEAR.

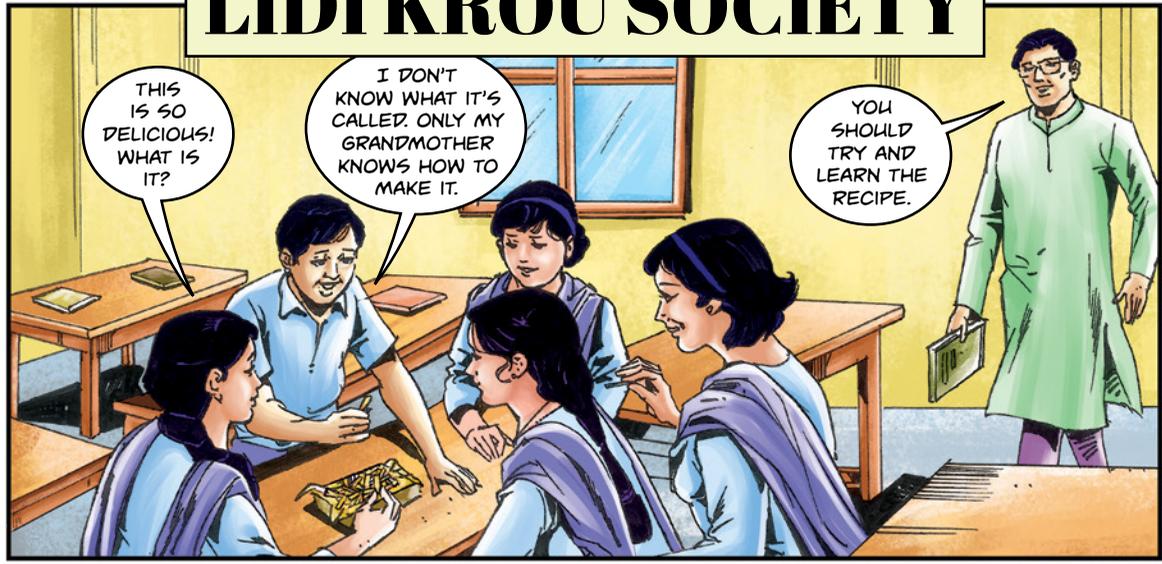
WE EVEN HAVE EXTRA CROPS TO SELL. THERE'S MONEY TO EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN.



THE CANAL HAS BEEN DUG, BUT IT NEEDS TO BE MAINTAINED. IF THE GOVERNMENT COULD REINFORCE IT WITH CEMENT, THAT WOULD BE A BIG HELP.



LIDI KROU SOCIETY



THIS IS SO DELICIOUS! WHAT IS IT?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S CALLED. ONLY MY GRANDMOTHER KNOWS HOW TO MAKE IT.

YOU SHOULD TRY AND LEARN THE RECIPE.



THE BEST WAY TO KEEP OUR CULTURE ALIVE IS TO LEARN AND PRACTISE IT. A GROUP OF PEOPLE IN KOHIMA ARE PROMOTING NAGA CULTURE AMONG THE YOUTH.



IN 2012, KOHIMA -

OUR CHILDREN HAVE NO CONNECTION TO THEIR CULTURE.

YES, TRADITIONAL CLOTHES, MUSIC OR FOOD DONT INTEREST MY CHILDREN.

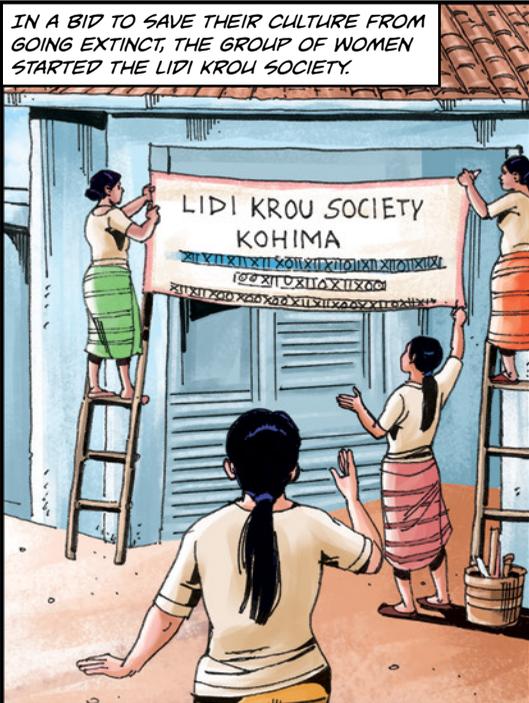


IF NOBODY LEARNS THESE THINGS, OUR CULTURE WILL SLOWLY BE LOST.

WE MUST DO SOMETHING TO PASS IT TO THE NEXT GENERATION.



IN A BID TO SAVE THEIR CULTURE FROM GOING EXTINCT, THE GROUP OF WOMEN STARTED THE LIDI KROU SOCIETY.



MOST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY WERE MOTHERS, WHO WERE PART OF A CHOIR GROUP.

THEY CONDUCTED WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE TRADITIONAL WAYS OF THE NAGAS, LIKE THEIR HOUSEHOLD PRACTICES...



LET ME SHOW YOU HOW WE POUND RICE.

...COOKING THEIR DISHES...



NOW THE FISH IS READY TO BE COOKED INSIDE THE BAMBOO.

I HAVE HAD IT ONCE, IT WAS SO FLAVOURFUL!

...THEIR MUSIC...



LET'S RECORD THESE SONGS AND MAKE AN ALBUM WITH IT.

GREAT IDEA!

...THEIR DANCES...



THEY HAVE TRAINED THESE KIDS WELL.

TRUE. I HAVEN'T SEEN SUCH A BEAUTIFUL PERFORMANCE OF OUR FOLK DANCE SINCE MY CHILDHOOD.

...AS WELL AS THEIR CLOTHING AND LIFESTYLE.

OUR TRADITIONAL WEAVES ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR IDENTITY AND HERITAGE. I ALWAYS WEAR THESE ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS AND FESTIVALS.

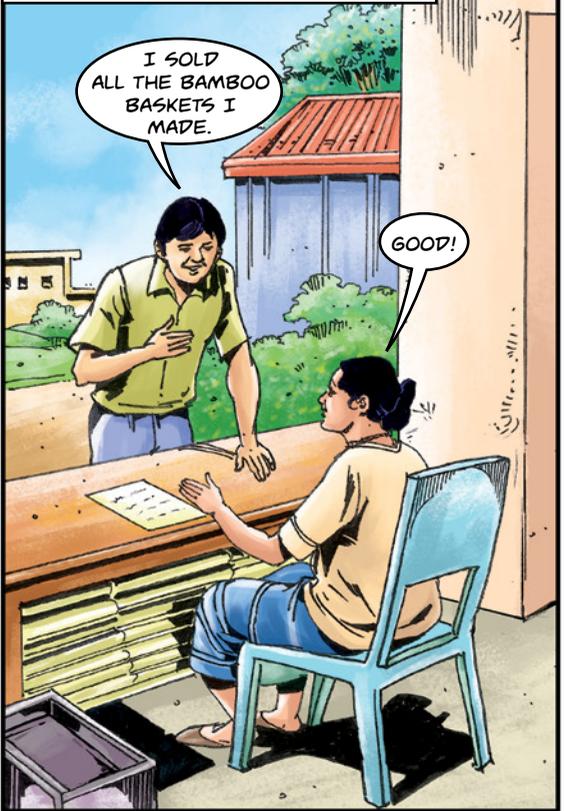
I THINK I WILL WEAR THIS MEKHALA* TO OUR SCHOOL FAREWELL.



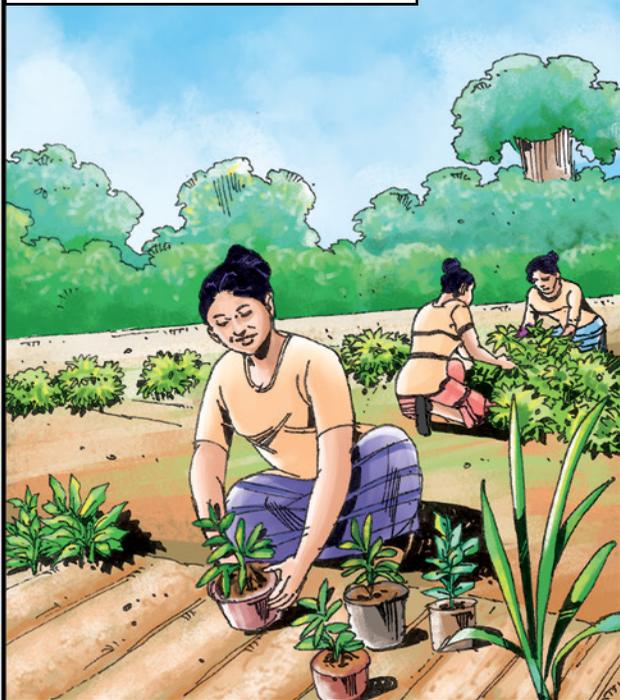
PEOPLE COULD EARN THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

I SOLD ALL THE BAMBOO BASKETS I MADE.

GOOD!



LIZI KROL'S MISSION OF REVIVING NAGA CULTURE HAS BEEN A SUCCESS.



THEIR WORK COULD BE AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS.

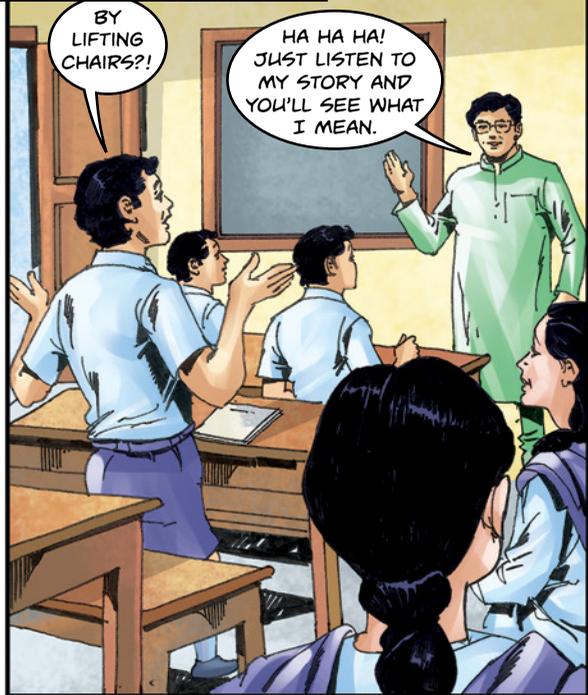
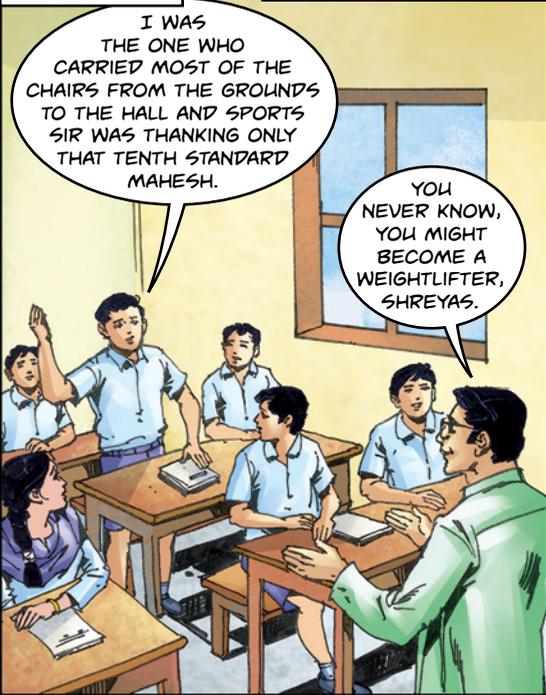
FRIENDS, THERE WILL BE SUCH CULTURAL STYLES AND TRADITIONS IN YOUR REGION TOO. YOU TOO CAN MAKE SUCH EFFORTS IN YOUR RESPECTIVE AREAS.



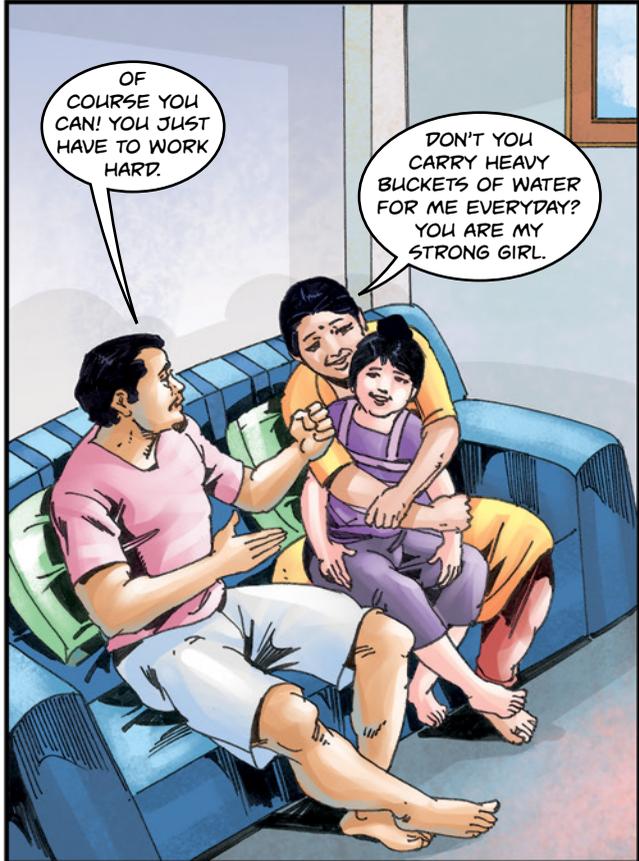
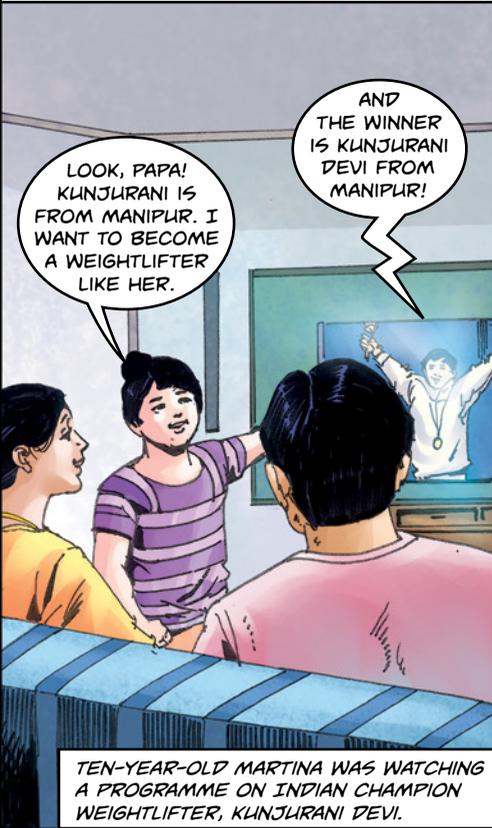
*A TRADITIONAL NAGA GARMENT, USUALLY WORN AS A SKIRT

MARTINA DEVI

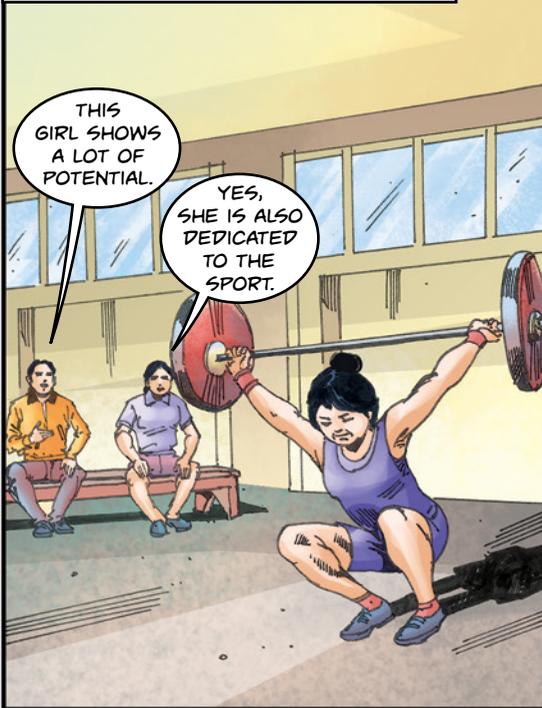
SHREYAS WAS IN A BAD MOOD.



IN 2016, IN A REMOTE VILLAGE OF MANIPLUR —



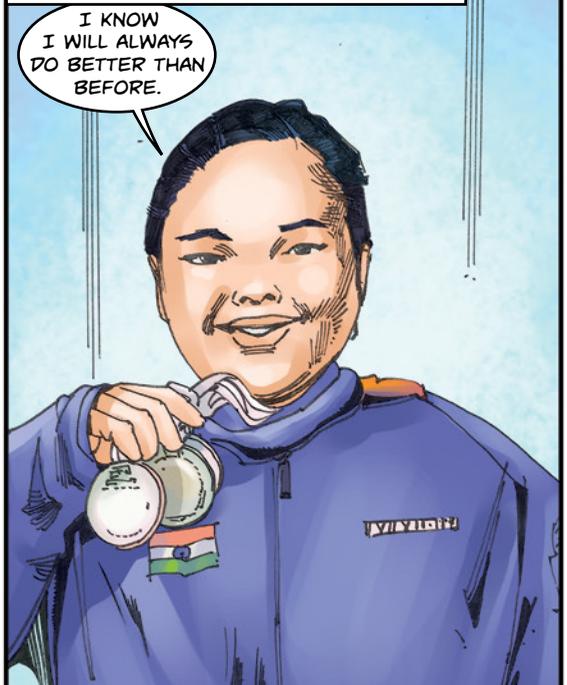
FOR MARTINA, HER PARENTS' CONFIDENCE IN HER WAS ENOUGH. SHE BEGAN TRAINING IN DECEMBER THAT YEAR.



THAT DEDICATION, ALONG WITH SUPPORT AND TRAINING AT THE SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA (SAI), LUCKNOW, RESULTED IN MANY VICTORIES.

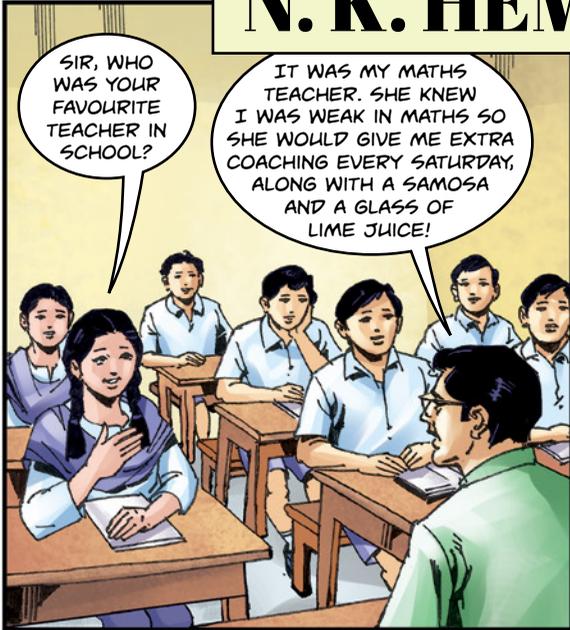


MARTINA'S IMMENSE CONFIDENCE IN HERSELF ECHOES IN HER OWN STATEMENT.



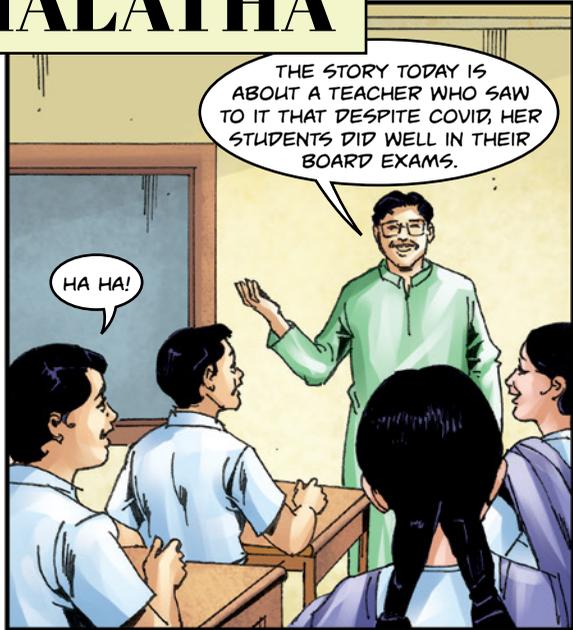
THE FACT THAT PRIME MINISTER MODI HAS LAUDED HER ACHIEVEMENTS IN HIS RADIO PROGRAMME, IS PROOF ENOUGH OF MARTINA'S SUCCESS.

N. K. HEMALATHA



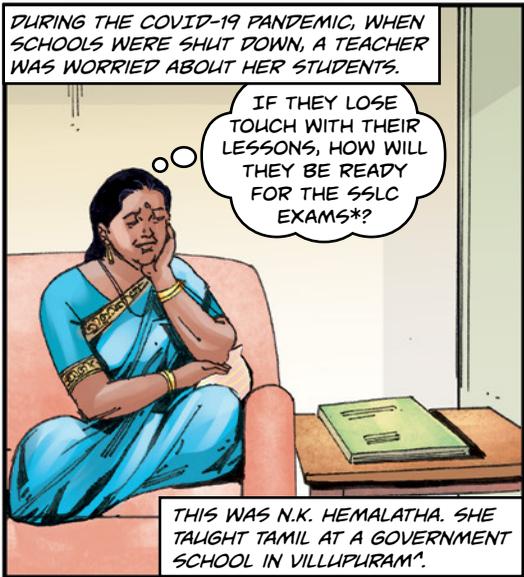
SIR, WHO WAS YOUR FAVOURITE TEACHER IN SCHOOL?

IT WAS MY MATHS TEACHER. SHE KNEW I WAS WEAK IN MATHS SO SHE WOULD GIVE ME EXTRA COACHING EVERY SATURDAY, ALONG WITH A SAMOSA AND A GLASS OF LIME JUICE!



THE STORY TODAY IS ABOUT A TEACHER WHO SAW TO IT THAT DESPITE COVID, HER STUDENTS DID WELL IN THEIR BOARD EXAMS.

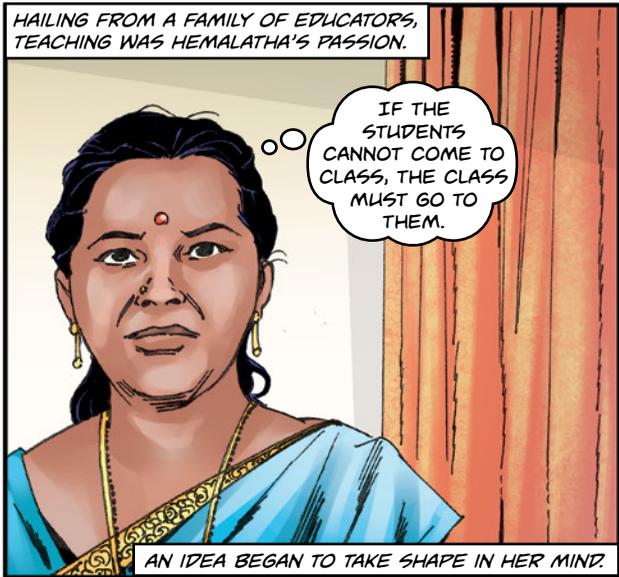
HA HA!



DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WHEN SCHOOLS WERE SHUT DOWN, A TEACHER WAS WORRIED ABOUT HER STUDENTS.

IF THEY LOSE TOUCH WITH THEIR LESSONS, HOW WILL THEY BE READY FOR THE SSLC EXAMS*?

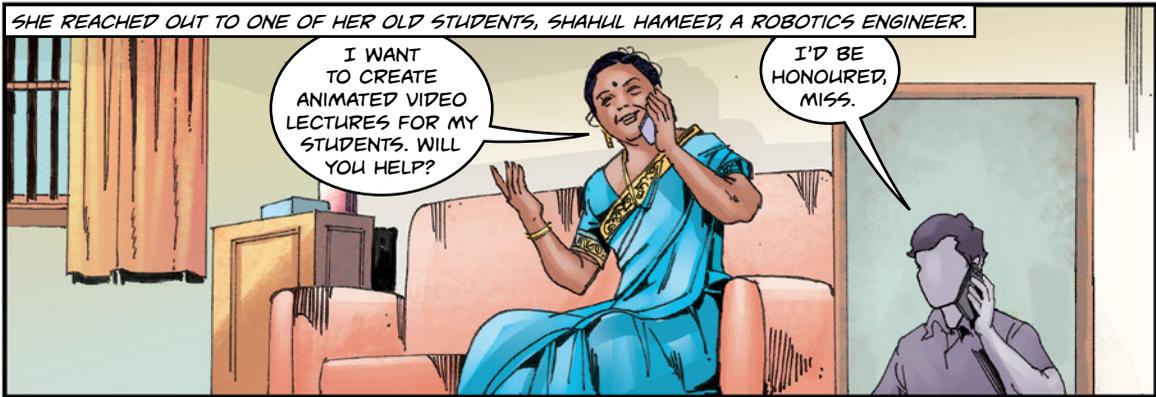
THIS WAS N.K. HEMALATHA. SHE TAUGHT TAMIL AT A GOVERNMENT SCHOOL IN VILLUPURAM.*



HAILING FROM A FAMILY OF EDUCATORS, TEACHING WAS HEMALATHA'S PASSION.

IF THE STUDENTS CANNOT COME TO CLASS, THE CLASS MUST GO TO THEM.

AN IDEA BEGAN TO TAKE SHAPE IN HER MIND.



SHE REACHED OUT TO ONE OF HER OLD STUDENTS, SHAHUL HAMEED, A ROBOTICS ENGINEER.

I WANT TO CREATE ANIMATED VIDEO LECTURES FOR MY STUDENTS. WILL YOU HELP?

I'D BE HONoured, MISS.

*SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE, ALSO KNOWN AS THE GRADE 10 EXAMS *A DISTRICT IN TAMIL NADU

HEMALATHA RECORDED OVER 50 VIDEOS, DOING WHAT SHE DID BEST – TEACHING.

OPEN YOUR TEXTBOOKS TO PAGE 33. IN THIS CHAPTER, WE'LL BE LEARNING THE THIRUKKURAL*.



SHAHUL AND A FEW OTHERS ANIMATED THESE VIDEOS AND GOT THEM READY.

THE VIDEOS WERE UPLOADED ONTO 30 PEN DRIVES AND DISTRIBUTED TO HEMALATHA'S STUDENTS.



THE WHOLE INITIATIVE COST SEVERAL THOUSAND RUPEES, WHICH CAME OUT OF HEMALATHA'S OWN POCKET.

SHE EVEN CALLED HER STUDENTS DAILY TO CHECK ON THEIR PROGRESS.



ANY DOUBTS IN TODAY'S CHAPTER?



NO, MISS, IT WAS VERY CLEAR.

UNSURPRISINGLY, THEY PERFORMED WELL.



ANOTHER CLASS OF YOURS WITH A FULL PASS PERCENTAGE!



MY STUDENTS ALWAYS MAKE ME PROUD.

OVER THE YEARS, HEMALATHA HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS AWARDS FOR HER INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS.



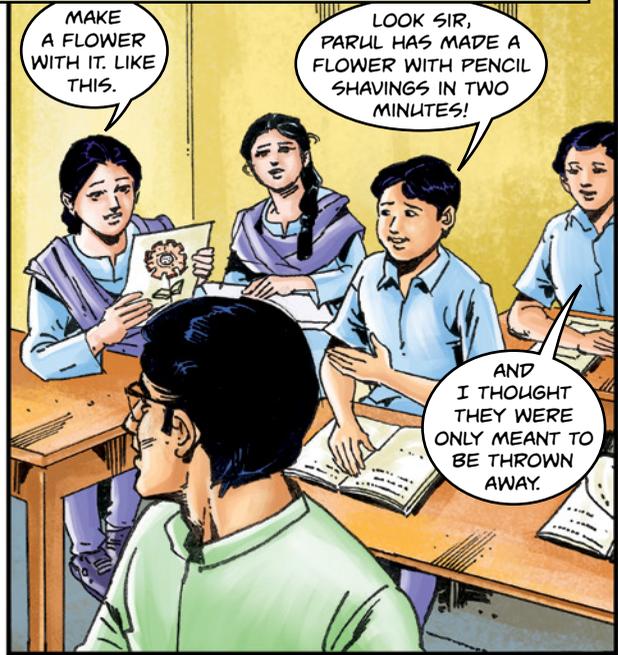
SHE REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND HOPES TO IMPACT MORE STUDENTS.

MA SARASWATI SELF HELP GROUP



HEY, DON'T THROW THOSE PENCIL SHAVINGS AWAY. I WANT TO USE THEM.

FOR WHAT?



MAKE A FLOWER WITH IT. LIKE THIS.

LOOK SIR, PARUL HAS MADE A FLOWER WITH PENCIL SHAVINGS IN TWO MINUTES!

AND I THOUGHT THEY WERE ONLY MEANT TO BE THROWN AWAY.



THE STORY TODAY IS ABOUT SOME WOMEN FROM UTTAR PRADESH WHO CONVERTED BANANA STEMS, THAT WERE CONSIDERED AS WASTE, INTO FIBRE.

BANANA FARMING WAS A MAJOR OCCUPATION IN THE ISANAGAR BLOCK OF LAKHIMPUR KHERI*.



LOOKS LIKE A GOOD HARVEST!

YES, BUT LOOK AT ALL THESE BANANA STEMS.



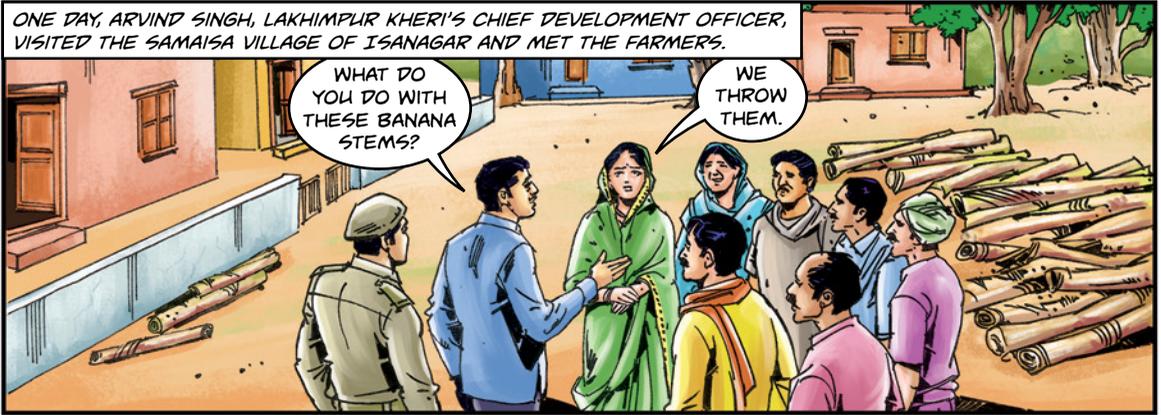
WHAT ABOUT THEM?

I WISH THERE WAS A WAY TO GET RID OF THEM. IT'S SO MUCH WASTE AND WE HAVE TO PAY TO GET IT CLEARED EACH TIME^.

*DISTRICT IN UTTAR PRADESH

^A BANANA PLANT FRUITS JUST ONCE. AFTER THAT, THE STEM IS CUT DOWN AND NEW SHOOTS ARE ALLOWED TO GROW INTO A NEW PLANT.

ONE DAY, ARVIND SINGH, LAKHIMPUR KHERI'S CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, VISITED THE SAMAISA VILLAGE OF ISANAGAR AND MET THE FARMERS.

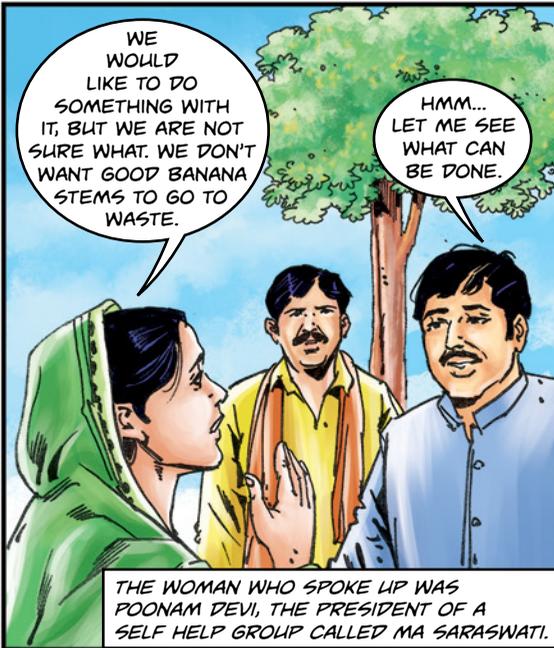


WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THESE BANANA STEMS?

WE THROW THEM.

WE WOULD LIKE TO DO SOMETHING WITH IT, BUT WE ARE NOT SURE WHAT. WE DON'T WANT GOOD BANANA STEMS TO GO TO WASTE.

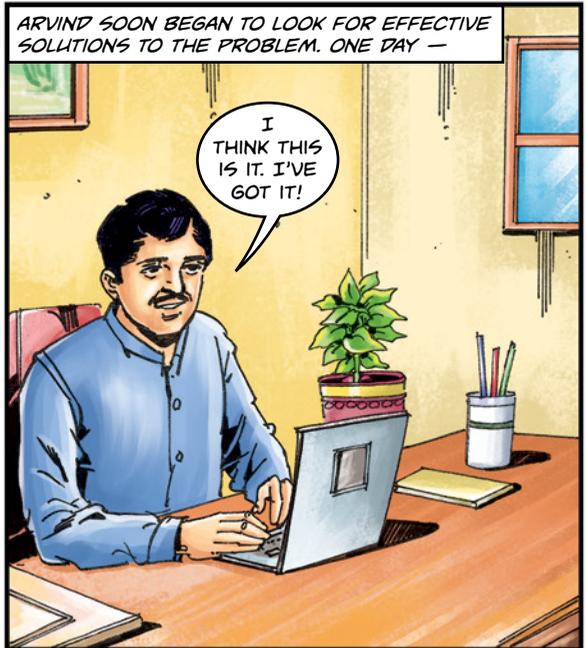
HMM... LET ME SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE.



THE WOMAN WHO SPOKE UP WAS POONAM DEVI, THE PRESIDENT OF A SELF HELP GROUP CALLED MA SARASWATI.

ARVIND SOON BEGAN TO LOOK FOR EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM. ONE DAY -

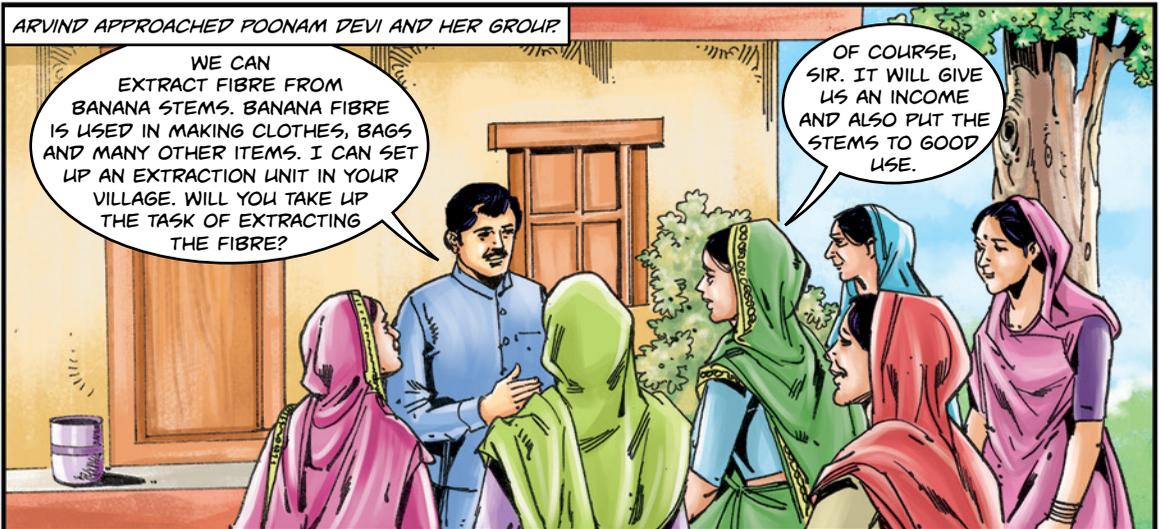
I THINK THIS IS IT. I'VE GOT IT!



ARVIND APPROACHED POONAM DEVI AND HER GROUP.

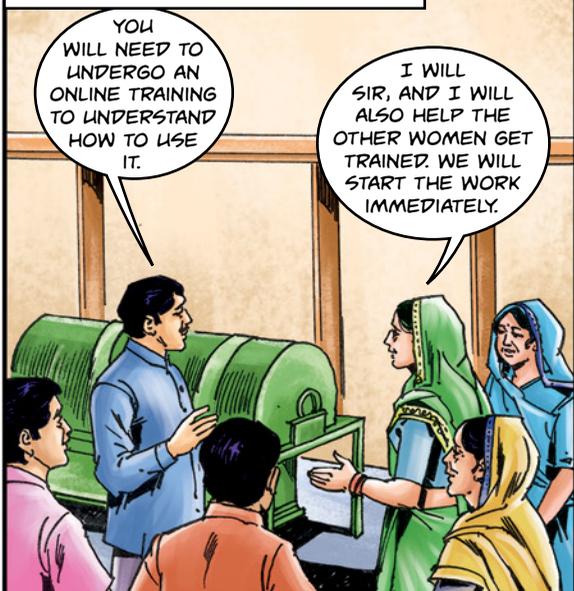
WE CAN EXTRACT FIBRE FROM BANANA STEMS. BANANA FIBRE IS USED IN MAKING CLOTHES, BAGS AND MANY OTHER ITEMS. I CAN SET UP AN EXTRACTION UNIT IN YOUR VILLAGE. WILL YOU TAKE UP THE TASK OF EXTRACTING THE FIBRE?

OF COURSE, SIR. IT WILL GIVE US AN INCOME AND ALSO PUT THE STEMS TO GOOD USE.





ARVIND SOON PROCURED THE EQUIPMENT AND SET IT UP IN SAMAIISA.



YOU WILL NEED TO UNDERGO AN ONLINE TRAINING TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO USE IT.

I WILL SIR, AND I WILL ALSO HELP THE OTHER WOMEN GET TRAINED. WE WILL START THE WORK IMMEDIATELY.

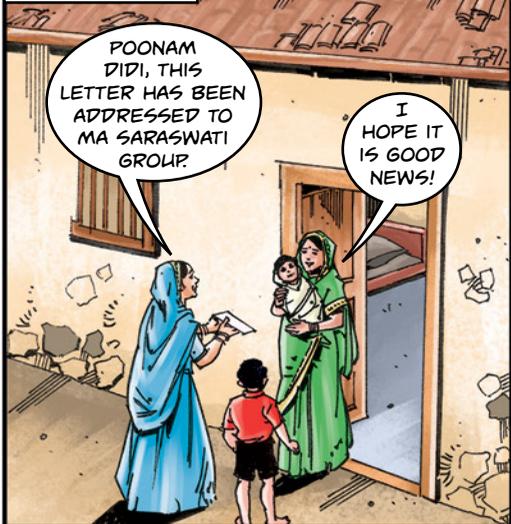
A FEW WEEKS LATER —



THIS IS THE DRIED AND SEPARATED FIBRE.

THIS IS EXCELLENT. LET ME SEND IT TO COMPANIES FOR TESTING AND TRIAL AND HOPEFULLY SOMEONE MAY WANT TO BUY IT.

IN JUNE 2021 —



POONAM DIDI, THIS LETTER HAS BEEN ADDRESSED TO MA SARASWATI GROUP.

I HOPE IT IS GOOD NEWS!

AND IT SURE WAS —



A GUJARAT-BASED COMPANY CALLED ALTMAT WANTS 200 KG OF BANANA FIBRE. THEY ARE EVEN READY TO GIVE US A TOKEN OF RS 21,000.

THAT'S AMAZING!

TODAY, EACH OF THE 40 WOMEN MEMBERS OF THE GROUP EXTRACTS FOUR TO SIX KGS OF FIBRE A DAY.



WE MAKE RS 400 TO RS 600 EVERY DAY. THIS INITIATIVE HAS GIVEN US A GREAT LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITY.

THE WOMEN HOPE MORE COMPANIES BUY THE FIBRE. THIS WILL NOT JUST INCREASE THEIR INCOME, BUT ALSO HELP HANDLE A HUGE AGRICULTURAL WASTE.



SMARTGAON

THE RECESS WAS OVER AND THE CHILDREN WERE SETTTLING BACK INTO CLASS.



WHAT'S WRONG, SHARADA? YOU'VE BEEN AWFULLY QUIET ALL DAY.

MY MOTHER SAYS WE MIGHT HAVE TO GO BACK TO OUR VILLAGE NEXT YEAR. CAN YOU IMAGINE LIFE WITHOUT PARKS OR THE INTERNET OR YOU ALL?

WHEN NAIR SIR ENTERED THE CLASS —



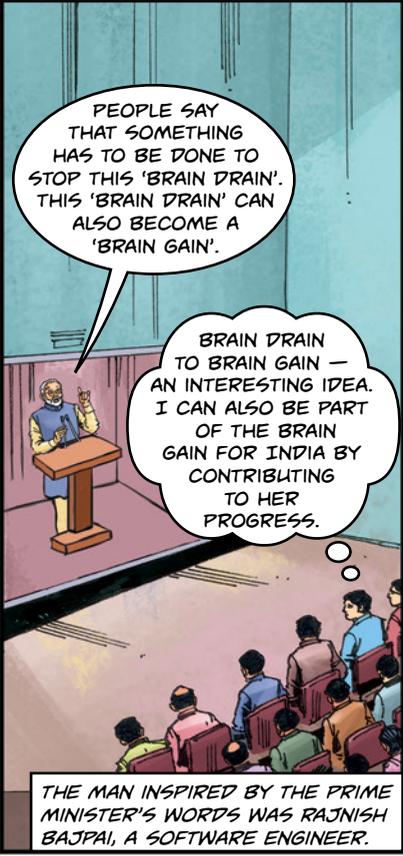
SIR, SHARADA MAY HAVE TO GO BACK TO HER VILLAGE. SHE DOESN'T WANT TO.

YES SIR, IT WILL BE VERY BORING FOR HER.



I DO HOPE SHARADA DOESN'T HAVE TO LEAVE, BUT INDIAN VILLAGES ARE BECOMING MODERN TOO. TWO YOUNG MEN, YOGESH SAHU AND RAJNISH BAJPAI, ARE ON A MISSION TO TRANSFORM THE VILLAGES OF INDIA AND ARE DOING A GREAT JOB.

IN 2015, PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI VISITED SAN JOSE* AND GAVE A SPEECH AT THE SAP CENTRE¹.



PEOPLE SAY THAT SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE TO STOP THIS 'BRAIN DRAIN'. THIS 'BRAIN DRAIN' CAN ALSO BECOME A 'BRAIN GAIN'.

BRAIN DRAIN TO BRAIN GAIN — AN INTERESTING IDEA. I CAN ALSO BE PART OF THE BRAIN GAIN FOR INDIA BY CONTRIBUTING TO HER PROGRESS.

THE MAN INSPIRED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S WORDS WAS RAJNISH BAJPAI, A SOFTWARE ENGINEER.

A FEW DAYS LATER, RAJNISH CALLED UP HIS COLLEGE FRIEND, YOGESH SAHU, A MUMBAI-BASED ENTREPRENEUR.



YOU REMEMBER BACK IN COLLEGE WE WOULD TALK ABOUT DOING SOMETHING FOR OUR VILLAGES. I HAVE A PROJECT IN MIND. DO YOU WANT TO WORK WITH ME?

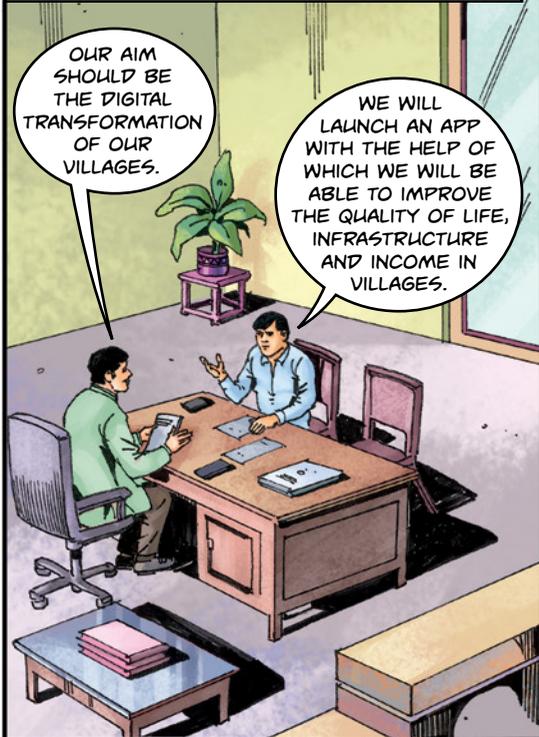
OF COURSE, I DO.

*CITY IN CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

¹INDOOR ARENA IN SAN JOSE



OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THEY HAD MULTIPLE DISCUSSIONS AND ARRIVED AT A PLAN.



OUR AIM SHOULD BE THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF OUR VILLAGES.

WE WILL LAUNCH AN APP WITH THE HELP OF WHICH WE WILL BE ABLE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INCOME IN VILLAGES.

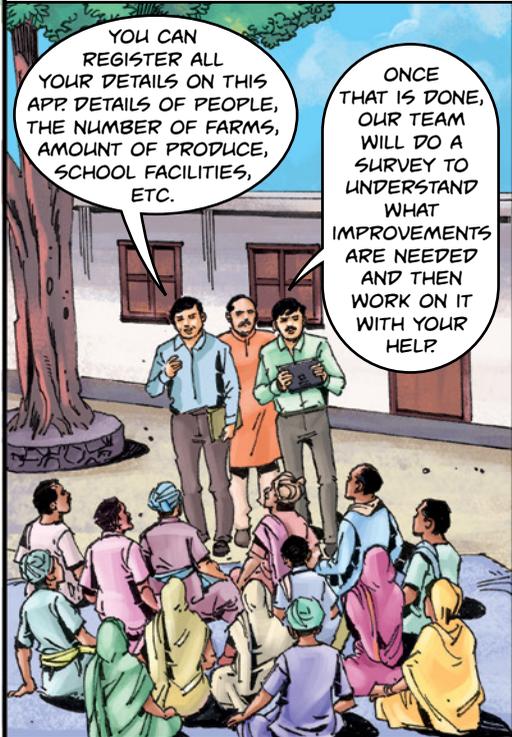
IN 2017, THEY LAUNCHED THE SMARTGAON DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION AND THE SMARTGAON APP.



IT'S TIME TO TEST OUR PLAN OUT. WHERE DO WE START OUR PILOT PROJECT?

WHY NOT START IT FROM YOUR NATIVE VILLAGE, TALDHAHPUR*? AFTER ALL, YOUR BROTHER IS THE PRADHAN*, SO GETTING SUPPORT WON'T BE DIFFICULT.

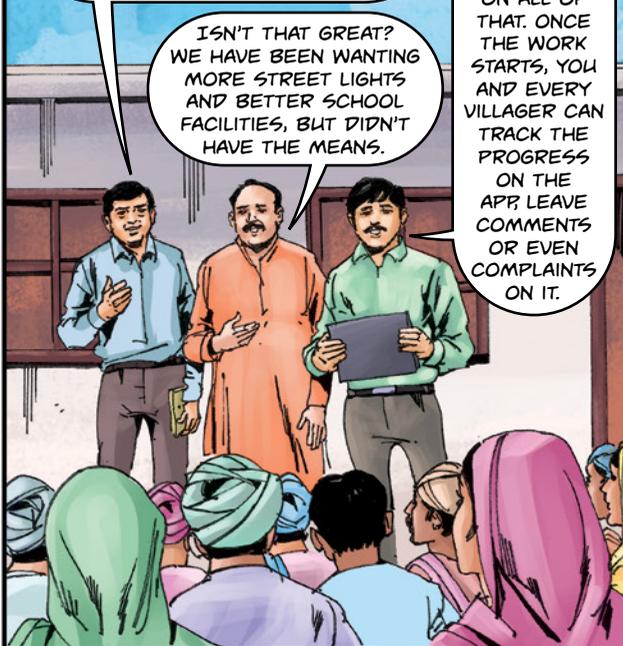
ARMED WITH THE APP AND PLANS TO CHANGE THE VILLAGE, THE DUO REACHED TALDHAHPUR AND CALLED FOR A MEETING OF THE VILLAGERS.



YOU CAN REGISTER ALL YOUR DETAILS ON THIS APP. DETAILS OF PEOPLE, THE NUMBER OF FARMS, AMOUNT OF PRODUCE, SCHOOL FACILITIES, ETC.

ONCE THAT IS DONE, OUR TEAM WILL DO A SURVEY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED AND THEN WORK ON IT WITH YOUR HELP.

WE WILL WORK WITH YOU AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE, BASED ON DIFFERENT ELEMENTS - CLEANLINESS, HEALTH AND HYGIENE, SKILL AND INDEPENDENCE.



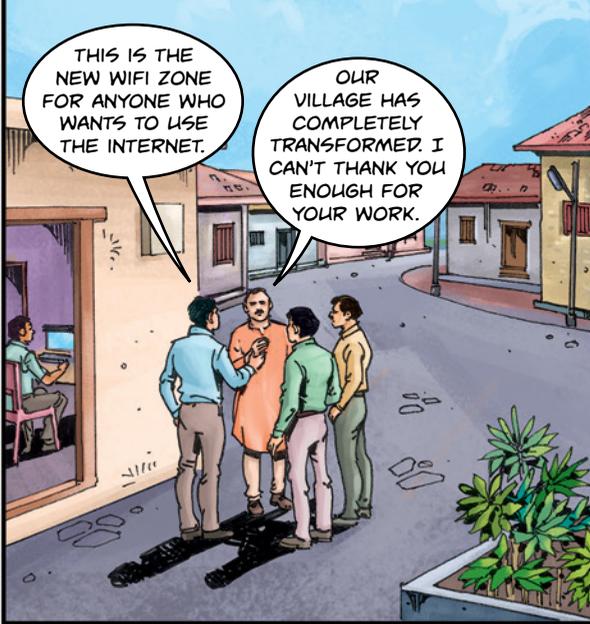
ISN'T THAT GREAT? WE HAVE BEEN WANTING MORE STREET LIGHTS AND BETTER SCHOOL FACILITIES, BUT DIDN'T HAVE THE MEANS.

YES, PRADHAN, WE WILL WORK ON ALL OF THAT. ONCE THE WORK STARTS, YOU AND EVERY VILLAGER CAN TRACK THE PROGRESS ON THE APP, LEAVE COMMENTS OR EVEN COMPLAINTS ON IT.

*VILLAGE IN RAEBARELI DISTRICT, UTTAR PRADESH

*VILLAGE HEAD

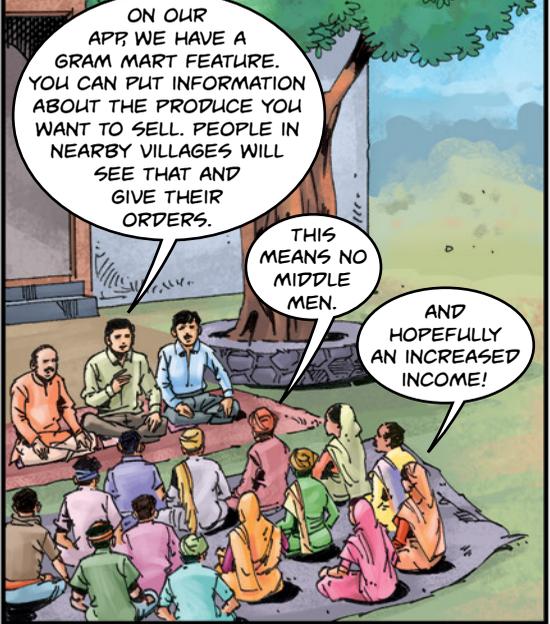
OVER THE NEXT YEAR, THEY GOT INTERNET SERVICE IN THE VILLAGE, STREET LIGHTS, TOILETS, BETTER POWER SUPPLY AND BETTER HEALTHCARE SERVICES.



THIS IS THE NEW WIFI ZONE FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO USE THE INTERNET.

OUR VILLAGE HAS COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED. I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR WORK.

THE DUO'S WORK, HOWEVER, WASN'T DONE. THEY SOON MET UP WITH THE FARMERS IN THE VILLAGE WITH A PLAN.



ON OUR APP, WE HAVE A GRAM MART FEATURE. YOU CAN PUT INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRODUCE YOU WANT TO SELL. PEOPLE IN NEARBY VILLAGES WILL SEE THAT AND GIVE THEIR ORDERS.

THIS MEANS NO MIDDLE MEN.

AND HOPEFULLY AN INCREASED INCOME!

RAJNISH AND YOGESH ALSO HAD A PLAN TO IMPROVE THE INCOME OF THE WOMEN IN THE VILLAGE.



THERE IS A FEATURE CALLED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY ON THE APP. IF YOU WANT TO SELL ANY OF YOUR PRODUCTS, YOU CAN DO IT THROUGH THE APP.

AFTER YOU ATTEND OUR TRAINING WE CAN CONNECT YOU TO PEOPLE AND HELP YOU SELL YOUR CREATIONS AND INCREASE YOUR INCOME.

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, RAJNISH AND YOGESH REPLICATED THE SUCCESS OF TAUDHAKPUR IN 14 OTHER VILLAGES.



REST ASSURED YOUR VILLAGE WILL SOON HAVE CLEAN DRINKING WATER.

WE ONLY NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

TODAY, RAJNISH AND YOGESH ARE WORKING WITH OVER 20 VILLAGES AND HAVE ABOUT 22 START-UPS COLLABORATING WITH THEM.



OVER TIME, WE WISH TO REACH EACH AND EVERY VILLAGE OF THE COUNTRY AND MAKE THEM ALL SMART VILLAGES.

THE SMARTGOAN VENTURE HAS GAINED POPULARITY OVER TIME AND EVEN FOUND MENTION IN PM MODI'S MANN KI BAAT.

SONALI HELVI

THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS WERE COMING AND ALL THE STUDENTS WERE EXCITED.

I'M JOINING A DRAWING CLASS THIS SUMMER! WHAT ABOUT YOU, DINESH?

I WANTED TO GO FOR CRICKET COACHING, BUT MY MOTHER WANTS ME TO JOIN ABACHIS* CLASSES.

I DON'T LIKE MATHS, BUT SHE THINKS ACADEMICS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SPORTS.

YOUR MOTHER IS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS THAT, DINESH. LET ME TELL YOU A STORY ABOUT AN ATHLETE WHO WENT AGAINST HER FAMILY'S WISHES AND FOLLOWED HER HEART.

SONALI HELVI WAS BORN IN A RURAL PART OF SATARA IN MAHARASHTRA. HER FATHER PASSED AWAY WHEN SHE WAS VERY YOUNG.

SONALI, YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING OUTSIDE THE WHOLE DAY. YOU SHOULD BE STUDYING FOR YOUR EXAM!

SONALI WAS BEING RAISED BY HER MOTHER AND HER OLDER BROTHER.

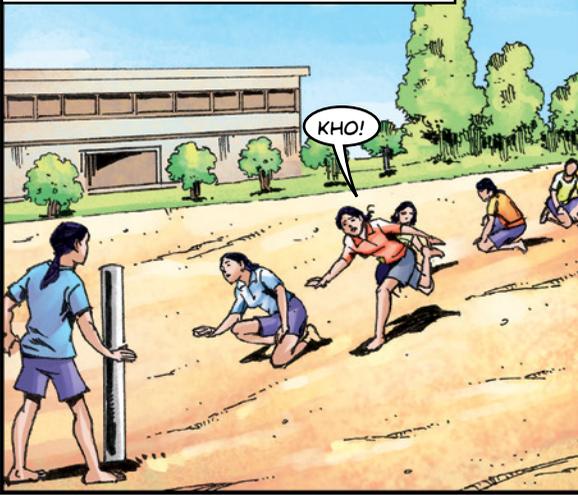
SONALI HAD A NATURAL TALENT FOR SPORTS BUT DUE TO THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION, HER FAMILY HAD OTHER DREAMS FOR HER.

YES, SONALI, YOU MUST SUPPORT YOURSELF AND ALSO GIVE ME A HELPING HAND.

I WANT YOU TO STUDY HARD AND GET A GOOD JOB.

*DEVICE USED TO PERFORM COMPLEX CALCULATIONS QUICKLY

HOWEVER, SONALI WAS A STRONG-WILLED CHILD. SHE FOLLOWED HER PASSION AND STARTED PLAYING KHO-KHO*.



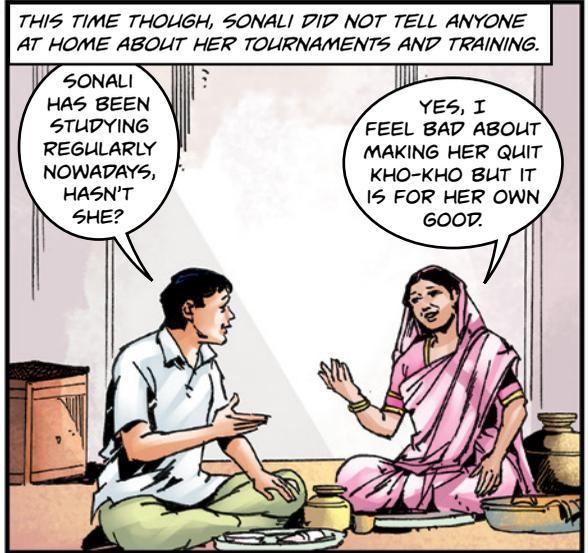
I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO MISS SCHOOL FOR THESE KHO-KHO TOURNAMENTS. FOCUS ON YOUR STUDIES, CHILD.

BUT AAI[†], I LOVE KHO-KHO!

SOON, SONALI'S INTEREST TURNED TOWARDS KABADDI**.



KABADDI.. KABADDI.. KABADDI.



THIS TIME THOUGH, SONALI DID NOT TELL ANYONE AT HOME ABOUT HER TOURNAMENTS AND TRAINING.

SONALI HAS BEEN STUDYING REGULARLY NOWADAYS, HASN'T SHE?

YES, I FEEL BAD ABOUT MAKING HER QUIT KHO-KHO BUT IT IS FOR HER OWN GOOD.

THE GIFTED YOUNGSTER PLAYED AND WON GOLD IN HER FIRST JUNIOR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT WHEN SHE WAS ONLY IN THE EIGHTH STANDARD.



WE WON! WE WON!

WELL DONE, GIRLS!

*TRADITIONAL INDIAN GAME PLAYED BY A ROW OF SEATED CHASERS AND DEFENDERS
**TRADITIONAL INDIAN GAME CONSISTING OF RAIDING AND DEFENDING TEAMS

[†]MOTHER IN MARATHI



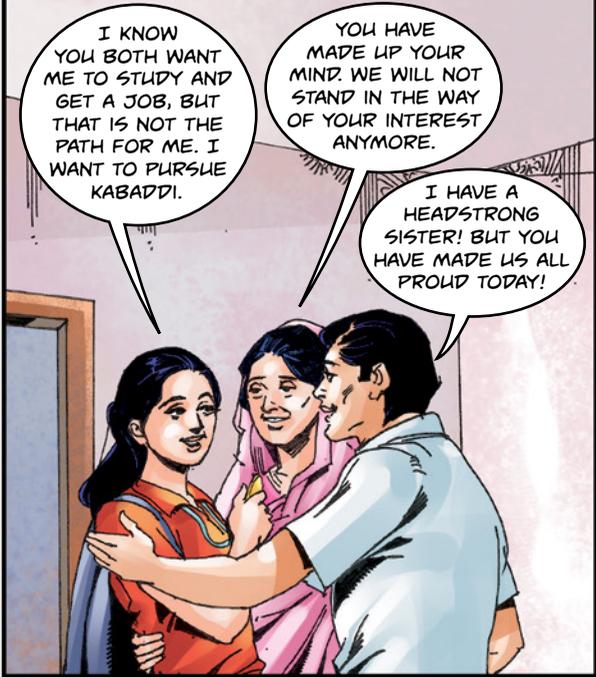
AFTER THE BIG WIN, SONALI KNEW IT WAS TIME TO TELL HER FAMILY.



LOOK, AAI! I WON A GOLD MEDAL IN THE KABADDI JUNIOR NATIONALS.

YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING KABADDI?

JUNIOR NATIONALS?



I KNOW YOU BOTH WANT ME TO STUDY AND GET A JOB, BUT THAT IS NOT THE PATH FOR ME. I WANT TO PURSUE KABADDI.

YOU HAVE MADE UP YOUR MIND. WE WILL NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF YOUR INTEREST ANYMORE.

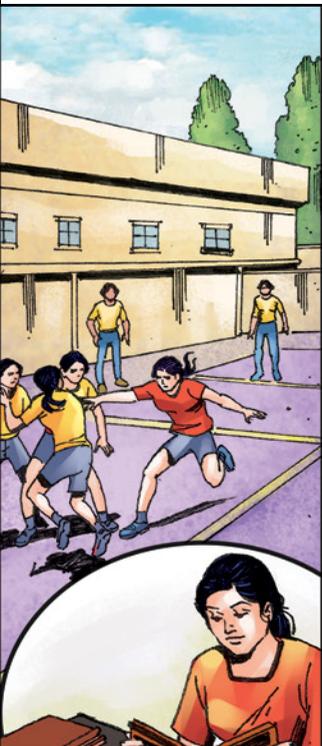
I HAVE A HEADSTRONG SISTER! BUT YOU HAVE MADE US ALL PROUD TODAY!

FROM THEN ON, THERE WAS NO LOOKING BACK.



PUSH YOURSELF SONALI, AND YOU WILL REACH GREAT HEIGHTS.

TODAY, SONALI IS KNOWN FOR HER AGGRESSIVE RAIDING STYLE AND FOR BEING AN EXCELLENT ALL-ROUNDER. SHE FOLLOWS HER PASSION, WHILE BALANCING HER EDUCATION AND WORK.



SONALI STARTED TRAINING IN EARNEST AND BECAME THE CAPTAIN OF THE MAHARASHTRA TEAM IN 2008.

HER PASSION AND DETERMINATION WERE CELEBRATED BY PM MODI ON HIS RADIO SHOW, MANN KI BAAT.



DESPITE SOME RESISTANCE FROM HER FAMILY AND COMMUNITY, SONALI HAS PROVED THAT WHERE THERE IS A WILL, THERE IS INDEED A WAY!

NOW, SONALI HAS HER EYES SET ON HIGHER GOALS, LIKE GETTING SELECTED IN THE INDIAN NATIONAL TEAM.

SRIPATI TUDU



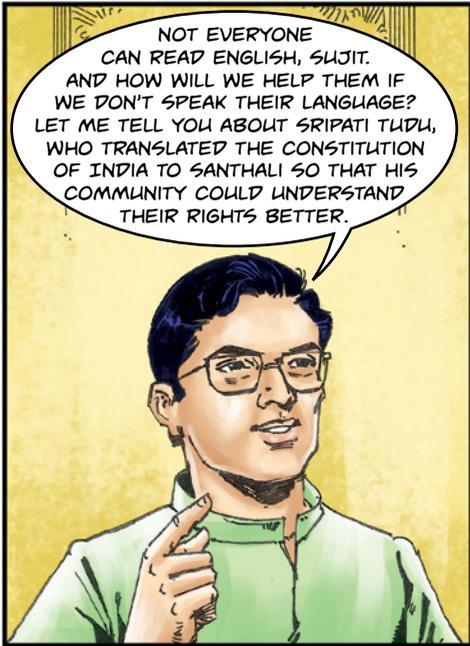
HOW MANY OF YOU ARE FLUENT IN YOUR MOTHER TONGUE?

ME!

I AM.

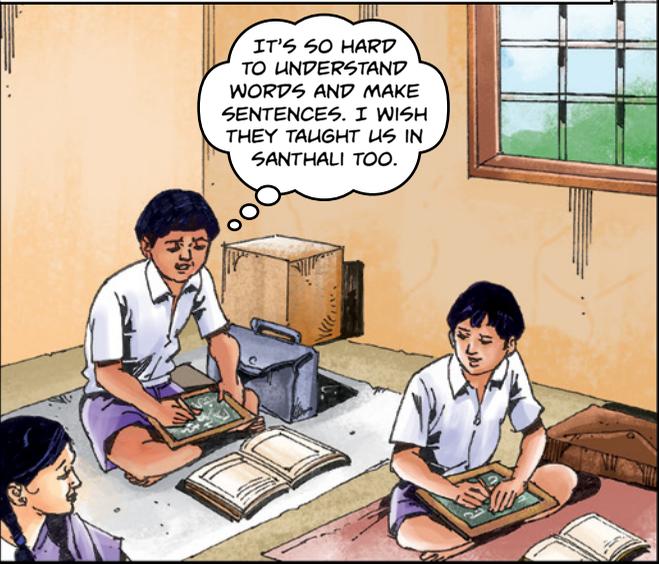
I CAN ONLY SPEAK, NOT READ OR WRITE.

WHAT IS THE USE, SIR? ALL IMPORTANT THINGS ARE IN ENGLISH THESE DAYS.

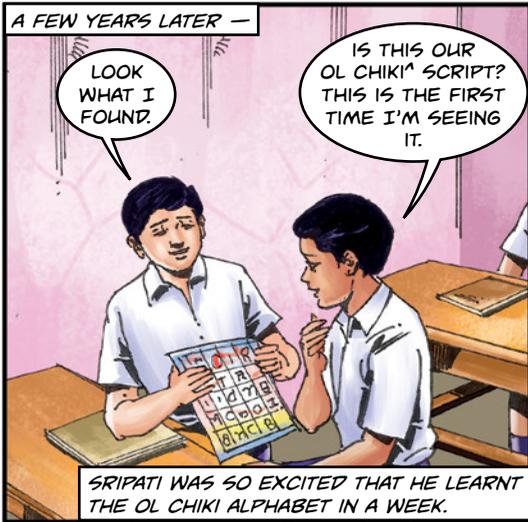


NOT EVERYONE CAN READ ENGLISH, SUJIT. AND HOW WILL WE HELP THEM IF WE DON'T SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE? LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT SRIPATI TUDU, WHO TRANSLATED THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA TO SANTHALI SO THAT HIS COMMUNITY COULD UNDERSTAND THEIR RIGHTS BETTER.

SRIPATI TUDU, FROM WEST BENGAL, WAS BORN INTO THE SANTHAL* COMMUNITY. HE SPOKE SANTHALI AT HOME BUT THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AT SCHOOL WAS BENGALI.



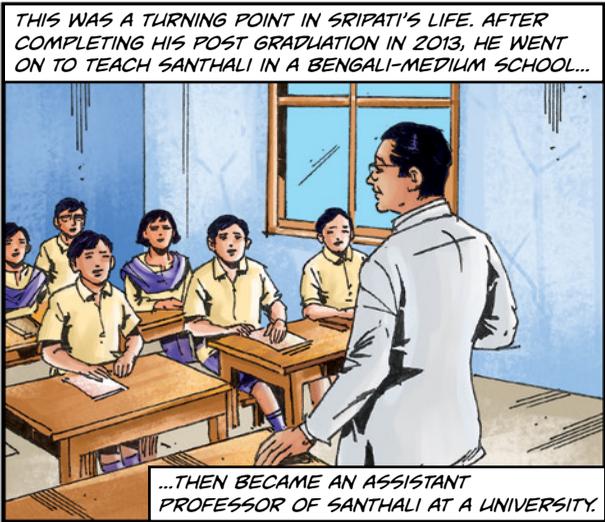
IT'S SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND WORDS AND MAKE SENTENCES. I WISH THEY TAUGHT US IN SANTHALI TOO.



LOOK WHAT I FOUND.

IS THIS OUR OL CHIKI* SCRIPT? THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'M SEEING IT.

SRIPATI WAS SO EXCITED THAT HE LEARNT THE OL CHIKI ALPHABET IN A WEEK.



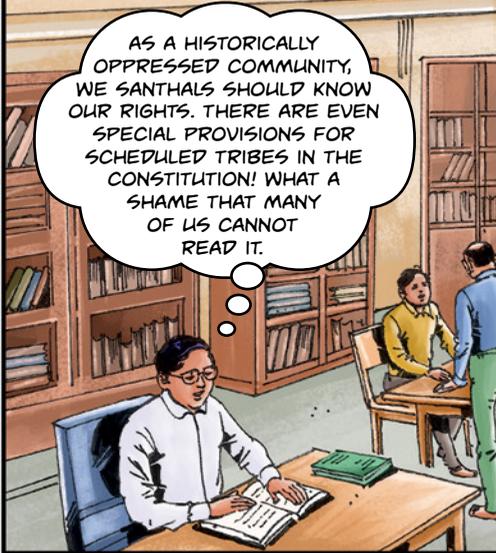
THIS WAS A TURNING POINT IN SRIPATI'S LIFE. AFTER COMPLETING HIS POST GRADUATION IN 2013, HE WENT ON TO TEACH SANTHALI IN A BENGALI-MEDIUM SCHOOL...

...THEN BECAME AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SANTHALI AT A UNIVERSITY.

*A TRIBE NATIVE TO THE REGION, ALSO FOUND IN BANGLADESH AND NEPAL
 *NAME OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE SANTHALI LANGUAGE



SRIPATI HAD HEARD OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA, BUT IT WAS NOW THAT HE FINALLY GOT TO READ IT IN ENGLISH.



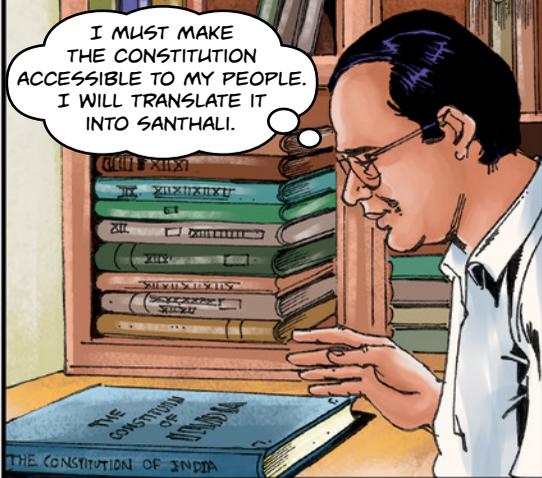
AS A HISTORICALLY OPPRESSED COMMUNITY, WE SANTHALS SHOULD KNOW OUR RIGHTS. THERE ARE EVEN SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES IN THE CONSTITUTION! WHAT A SHAME THAT MANY OF US CANNOT READ IT.

IN 2003, SANTHALI WAS RECOGNISED AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE. AS GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS STARTED TEACHING IT, A DEMAND FOR SANTHALI TEXTBOOKS SLOWLY AROSE.



SRIPATI WAS ONE OF THE ACADEMICS HIRED TO TRANSLATE EXISTING TEXTBOOKS INTO SANTHALI.

IN 2019, AFTER YEARS OF TEACHING SANTHALI AND MASTERING THE ART OF TRANSLATION, HE BEGAN THINKING OF A PROJECT THAT HAD NEVER LEFT HIS MIND.



I MUST MAKE THE CONSTITUTION ACCESSIBLE TO MY PEOPLE. I WILL TRANSLATE IT INTO SANTHALI.

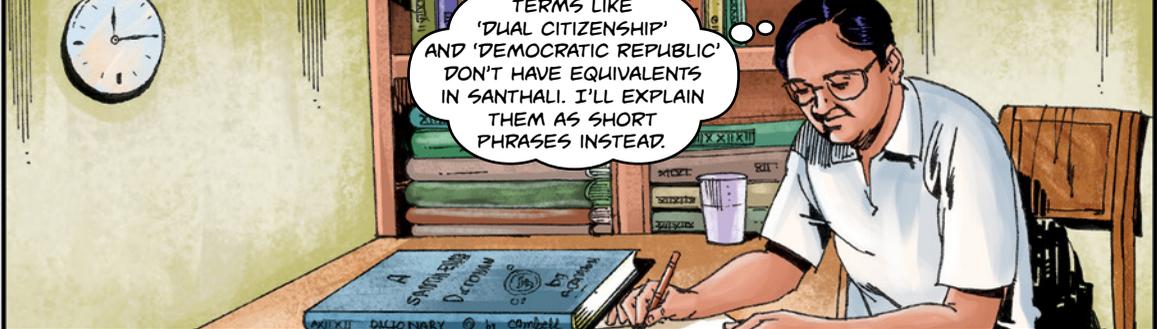
SOON, THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN GAVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET STARTED. HE CONSULTED THE ENGLISH, HINDI, AND BENGALI VERSIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION.



THERE ARE SO MANY COMPLEX WORDS. THIS IS AADI JATIL KAMI*.

MANY CHALLENGES SURFACED.

BUT WITH PERSISTENCE...



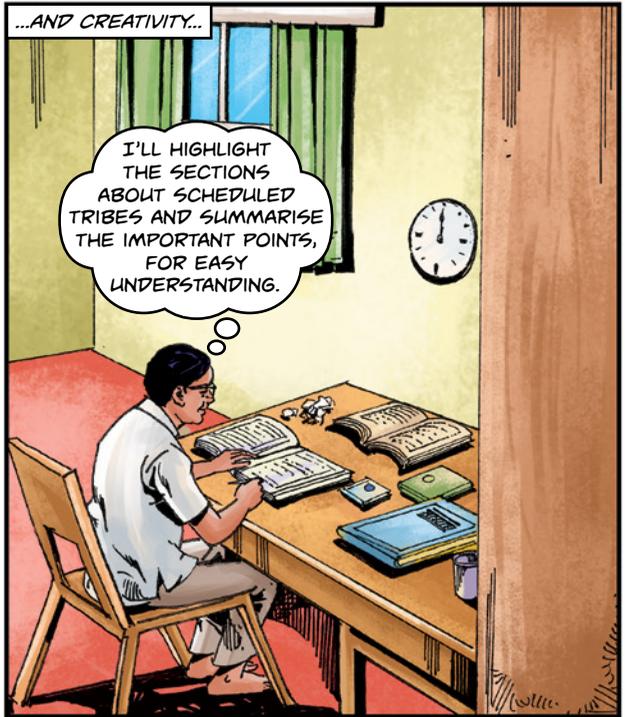
TERMS LIKE 'DUAL CITIZENSHIP' AND 'DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC' DON'T HAVE EQUIVALENTS IN SANTHALI. I'LL EXPLAIN THEM AS SHORT PHRASES INSTEAD.

*VERY COMPLICATED WORK



...PRECISION...

HOW DO I TRANSLATE 'PREAMBLE'? MAYBE I CAN USE 'BOTOLO', SINCE THAT MEANS SOMETHING SPOKEN AT THE BEGINNING.



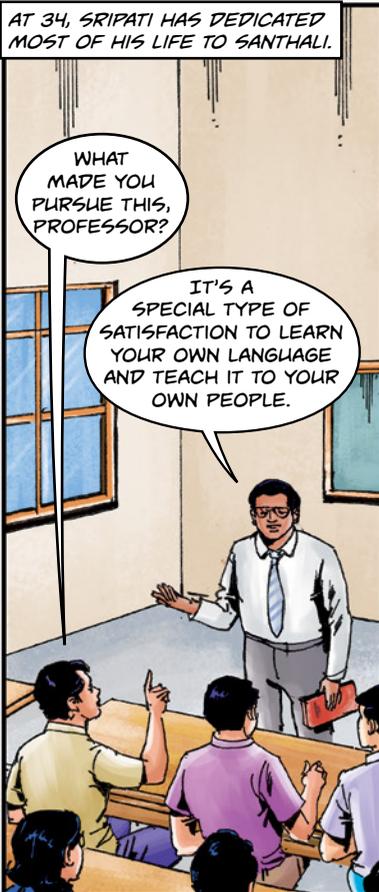
...AND CREATIVITY...

I'LL HIGHLIGHT THE SECTIONS ABOUT SCHEDULED TRIBES AND SUMMARISE THE IMPORTANT POINTS, FOR EASY UNDERSTANDING.



ABO BHARAT REN DISUA, BHAROT MITAN AANHUT*...

...THE TRANSLATION WAS COMPLETE IN NINE MONTHS.



AT 34, SRIPATI HAS DEDICATED MOST OF HIS LIFE TO SANTHALI.

WHAT MADE YOU PURSUE THIS, PROFESSOR?

IT'S A SPECIAL TYPE OF SATISFACTION TO LEARN YOUR OWN LANGUAGE AND TEACH IT TO YOUR OWN PEOPLE.



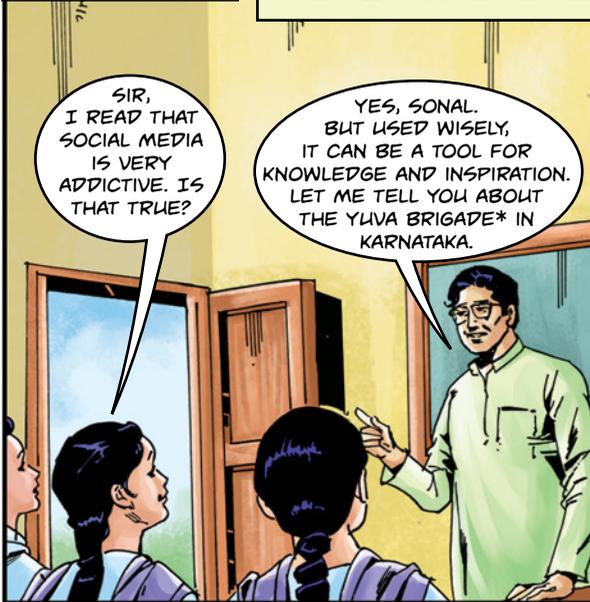
WILL YOU BE DOING MORE SUCH TRANSLATIONS?

YES, I WANT TO TRANSLATE CLASSICS FROM MAINSTREAM LITERATURE INTO SANTHALI. IT'S A WAY TO BRING THE WORLD CLOSER TO OUR LANGUAGE, RATHER THAN FORCING US TO LEAVE IT BEHIND.

*"WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, HAVING SOLEMNLY RESOLVED TO CONSTITUTE..." THIS IS THE FIRST SENTENCE OF THE PREAMBLE.

YUVA BRIGADE

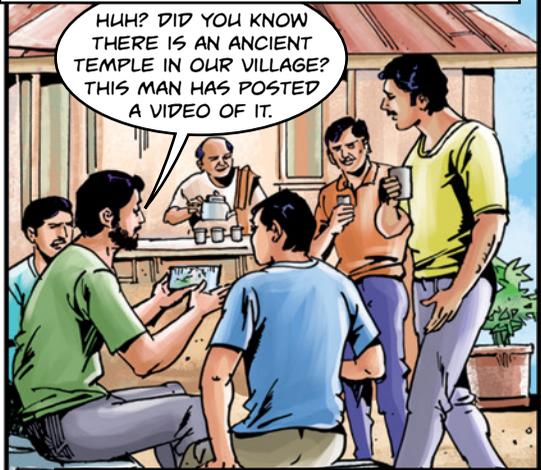
ONE DAY IN CLASS —



SIR, I READ THAT SOCIAL MEDIA IS VERY ADDICTIVE. IS THAT TRUE?

YES, SONAL. BUT USED WISELY, IT CAN BE A TOOL FOR KNOWLEDGE AND INSPIRATION. LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE YUVA BRIGADE* IN KARNATAKA.

IN EARLY 2020, IN GANJAM VILLAGE NEAR SRIIRANGAPATNA IN KARNATAKA, SOME YOUNG MEN WERE SCROLLING THROUGH THEIR PHONES.



HUH? DID YOU KNOW THERE IS AN ANCIENT TEMPLE IN OUR VILLAGE? THIS MAN HAS POSTED A VIDEO OF IT.

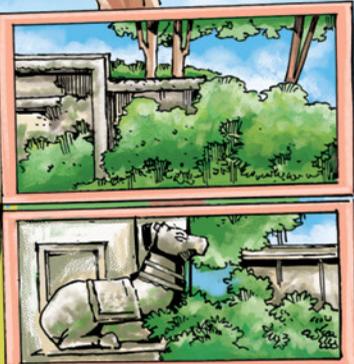
ALL THE OTHERS RUSHED TO SEE THE VIDEO.



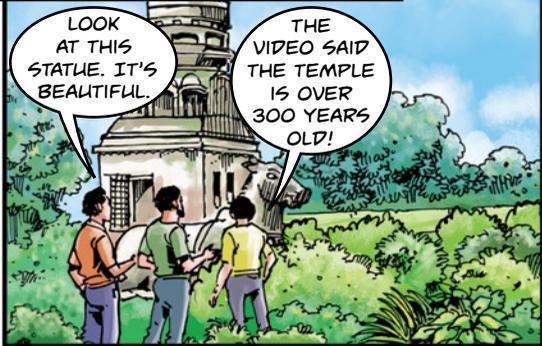
IT'S IN SUCH A BAD STATE!

IT'S OVERRUN WITH WEEDS AND CREEPERS...NO WONDER WE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT.

THIS IS NOT RIGHT.



ALL THE YOUNG MEN WERE PART OF A GROUP CALLED THE YUVA BRIGADE. THEY SOON VISITED THE TEMPLE.



LOOK AT THIS STATUE. IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

THE VIDEO SAID THE TEMPLE IS OVER 300 YEARS OLD!



OKAY, LET'S START! I'M GOING TO CLEAR UP THIS CORNER.

I'LL DO THIS ONE.

IT WAS A TOUGH TASK. THE TEMPLE HAD BEEN NEGLECTED FOR DECADES.

*YOUTH GROUP

SINCE THEY ALL HAD JOBS, THE MEMBERS OF THE YUVA BRIGADE WORKED ON THE TEMPLE ON WEEKENDS.

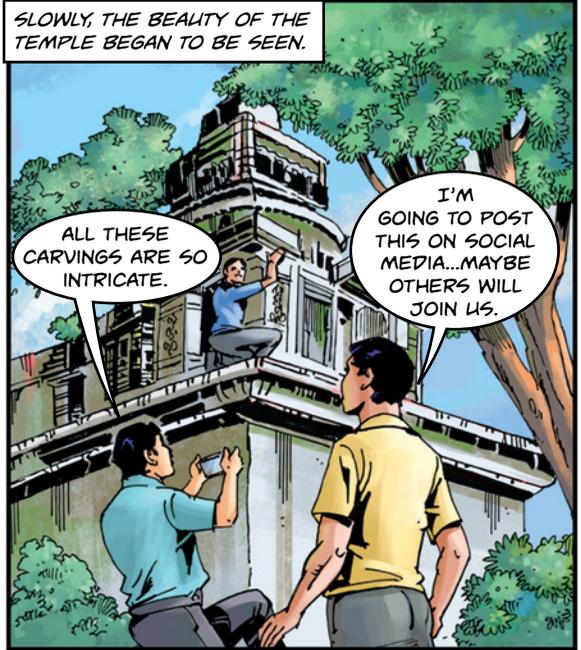


OOF, THIS TUNNEL IS FULL OF MUD.

WATCH OUT! SNAKE!

UNDETERRED, THEY CONTINUED THEIR CLEANING.

SLOWLY, THE BEAUTY OF THE TEMPLE BEGAN TO BE SEEN.



ALL THESE CARVINGS ARE SO INTRICATE.

I'M GOING TO POST THIS ON SOCIAL MEDIA...MAYBE OTHERS WILL JOIN US.

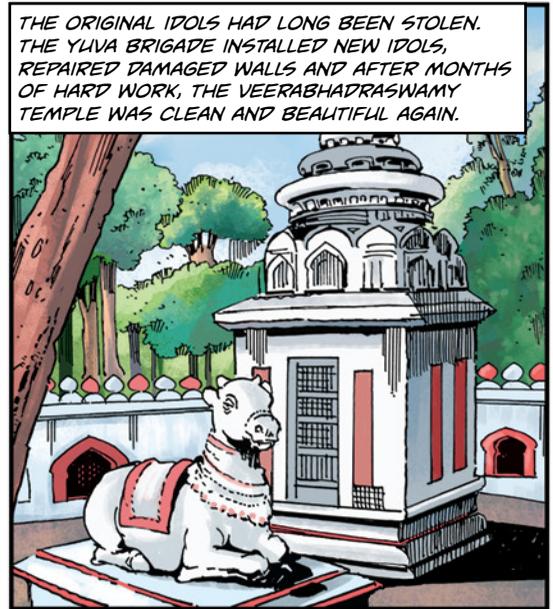
SOON —



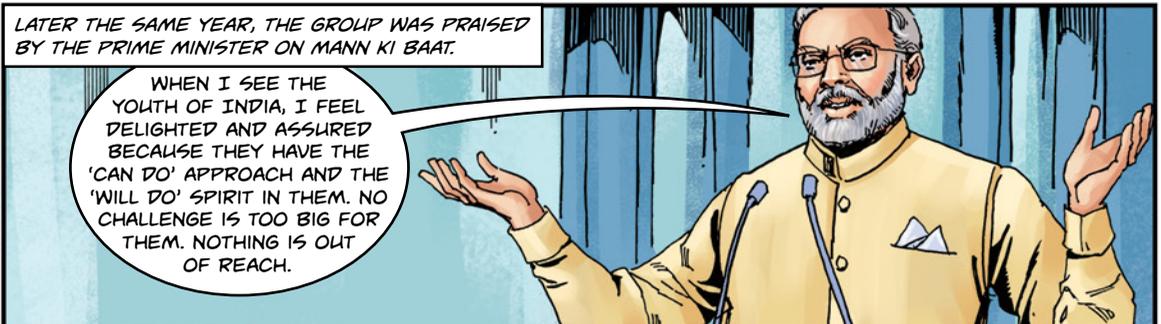
I SAW YOUR POST. I HAVE A CEMENT BUSINESS. I CAN HELP WITH MATERIALS FOR THE RESTORATION.

I CAN SUPPLY PAINTS.

THE ORIGINAL IDOLS HAD LONG BEEN STOLEN. THE YUVA BRIGADE INSTALLED NEW IDOLS, REPAIRED DAMAGED WALLS AND AFTER MONTHS OF HARD WORK, THE VEERABHADRASWAMY TEMPLE WAS CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL AGAIN.



LATER THE SAME YEAR, THE GROUP WAS PRAISED BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON MANN KI BAAT.



WHEN I SEE THE YOUTH OF INDIA, I FEEL DELIGHTED AND ASSURED BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE 'CAN DO' APPROACH AND THE 'WILL DO' SPIRIT IN THEM. NO CHALLENGE IS TOO BIG FOR THEM. NOTHING IS OUT OF REACH.





MANN KI BAAT

VOL. 11

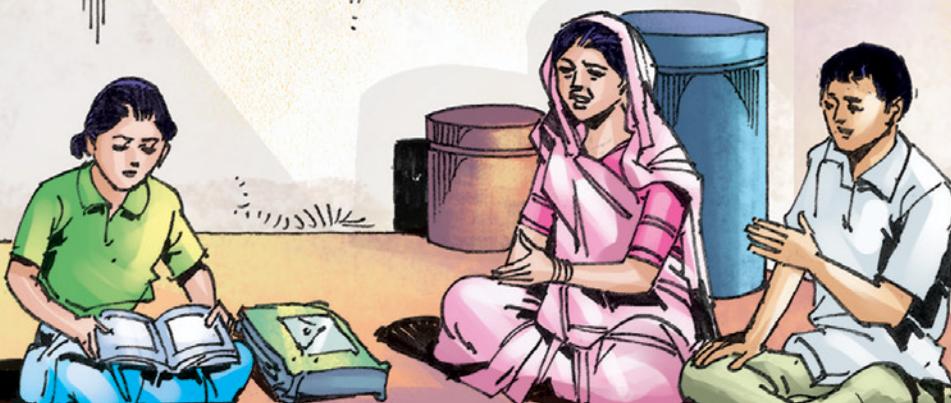
The eleventh volume of Mann Ki Baat, based on Prime Minister Modi's radio show, proves that where there is a will, there is a way.

Daitari Naik lived in a village where the ground was parched, crops were dying, and the gush of water from behind the hills was always heard but never seen. One fateful morning, he set off with an iron bar, a hoe, and the will to make history. Years of toil later, a canal filled with lifegiving water stands as the testament to this will.

Sonali Helvi was born with big dreams under the crushing weight of poverty. Her interest in kabaddi was discouraged by a family that saw report cards and entrance exams as the only path to success. But Sonali's will was strong. Over the years, it has turned as many matches into medals as she has, skeptics into supporters!

Sripati Tudu has spent his life in service to his mother tongue, Santhali. When he discovered that the Constitution of India did not exist in this tribal language, his will awoke. It stood by him, in the months of painstaking translation, and brought the knowledge of their rights to Santhal people.

This collection of eleven inspiring stories is as much about the will to try, as it is about the way to succeed.



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