



Summer Edition- September 2016

# IECB NEWSLETTER

असतो मा सद्गमय ।  
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।  
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ॥  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

## Teachers day- a tribute to Servepalli Radhakrishnan

by Prabhat Avasare



September 5th is celebrated in India as "Teacher's day". On that day, I remember in the school thanking our favourite teachers for their teachings. Most of the time it was out of genuine respect but sometimes respect mixed with little awe. In our lives, there are always a few individuals/teachers who make influential contributions, which later makes us what we are today.

Today is the day to thank those souls - alive or dead - for their contributions in success we have achieved in our lives. Thank all those teachers, colleagues and other beings from whom you learnt different values and knowledge to make you reach where you are now!

In India, we also celebrate this teacher-student relation on "Guru Poornima" - on a full-moon day

of month "Ashadha" (around June-July). The students thank their Guru for the knowledge they share. But this tradition is mainly followed by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. However, The tradition of celebrating September 5th as Teachers' day all across India started in remembrance of our great Indian philosopher (and teacher of course) Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan.

When asked by his students and followers how he would like to celebrate his birthday, he replied that instead of celebrating his birthday, it would be a great honour if his birthday is remembered as Teachers' day across India, and hence started this beautiful tradition of honouring all the teachers in India to celebrate their contribution in building next generation of citizens.

S. Radhakrishnan was a great philosopher and one of the most distinguished twentieth century scholars on Eastern philosophies and comparative religions. He was India's first vice-president and then subsequently served as India's second president. Radhakrishnan tried to bridge western and Indian philosophies - while staunchly defending Indian philosophies, he also tried to point to good values in western philosophies and its influence on what we are today.

As an academic and later statesman, he has made immense contribution in showing the world spiritual gems of Indian philosophies. His books on Indian philosophy classifying and comparing them to different Western philosophies are still used as textbooks. Deeply believing in Vedanta philosophy, he tried to interpret it to the modern times. Religion for him was the conquest of fear over failure and even over death. For many, he symbolizes the pride of Indians in their own intellectual traditions mixed with religion.

On this occasion of Radhakrishnan's birthday, we should also remember that India as a nation is standing on the base of contributions of such great personalities who guided us like a teacher during initial times of our independence and made India a more mature nation as what we are today.

Remember all those great teachers we as a nation had! Those are the people who have guided India to make a nation as what S. Radhakrishnan wrote - Democracy is a faith in the spiritual possibilities of not a privileged few but of every human being. We are surely progressing towards this.

### IECB events

30 Jan 2016: First weekend school day

13 Feb 2016: Marathon Dream (Lekha Warrior and Venu Gopal Goru)/weekend school

27 Feb 2016: Is natyashastra genesis of Physiotherapy?(Krithika Iyer)/weekend school

5 March 2016: Organic myth (Steven Desmet)/weekend school

13 March 2016: weekend school

9 April 2016: Photography tips and tricks (Nishant Deshpande)/weekend school

17 April 2016: How to talk to kids: alternative to punishment (Dr. Aiste Grubliauskiene)/weekend school

24 April 2016: Sport facilities in Belgium (Sunil Bhadouriya)/weekend school

8 May 2016: IECB 6km group running at '15km Woluwe'

22 May 2016: Health and nutrition guidance (Dr. Vijaya Bhagvat)/Weekend school

5 June 2016: Good touch and bad touch (Titoo Khambayate)/weekend school

19 June 2016: Hobbies and sports and origami session (Raj Kini)/weekend school

4 September 2016 : Keys for survival in Belgium-culture and job (Sehul Shah)/weekend school

11 September 2016: Introduction to access consciousness (Rupal Bosamia)/Weekend school

2 Oct 2016: Pregnancy in Belgium (Jennifer Rose)/weekend school

20 Nov 2016: Men are from mars and women are from venus (Dr. Prishnee)/weekend school (Other upcoming topics: Health and nutrition guidance, why natural cosmetics)

Please check our website [www.indiaeducationcentre.eu](http://www.indiaeducationcentre.eu) for further updates and location.

## Diwali Edition

**Our next newsletter/magazine will be a 'Diwali edition'. Articles are welcome from you all! An article can be a poem/recipe/travel experience/advertisement/book review/kids activities, drawings etc. The article does not necessarily need to have Diwali based theme but it can be!**

**It's a Halloween period. So Halloween related material is welcome too. The submission date for articles is before 10<sup>th</sup> October.**

Editors  
Ruta Kapre, Mugdha Baviskar, Prabhat Avasare, Sidheswar Vazare, Sachin Kinge

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# Weekend school page

## Admissions for weekend school

The first semester of academic year 2016-2017 has begun and admissions are full for regular sessions. Places are available for Khel session only. For the second semester from January 2017 there will be few additional entries available.

Taking into account valuable feedback from many of you and Indian community around, we have tried to introduce as many interesting topics as possible.

### Syllabus structure:

School is intended for kids of 5 year and above age. Before beginning of each school year parents will receive a detailed syllabus. During each class we will print the class notes for kids. The topics which we intend to cover in the syllabus are:

### My India (in English):

Basic level: India map, cities, rivers, national anthem, food differences, cultural and linguistic plurality, Stories from Indian mythology and legends etc., introduction to Indian music/instruments etc.

Intermediate level: Great kings in Indian history, Indian climate, Natural vegetation and wildlife etc.

Advance level: Architectural aspects of Indian heritage, Indian freedom movement, tracing changes through thousand years-regions and empires, new kings and kingdoms etc.

Indian classical music, dance introductory courses will be also introduced this semester.

### Sanskrit (instructions in English):

Basic/Intermediate/advance: Shlokas/subhashitas and Geeta recital, focus on pronunciations

### Hindi:

Basic level: Devanagari- letters writing, reading, rhymes, and basic words

Intermediate level: writing and reading small sentences, basic conversation

Advance level: Writing and reading big paragraphs, fluent conversation

(Other language courses possible on request.)

### Khel-Indian games:

In each month there will be a 'khel' (games) session. It will include traditional Indian games like, lingorcha, carom, chess etc. We will start this session with shlokas and will conclude with kids-yoga, Surya-namaskar and relaxation.

Group 1: age 4-7

Group 2: age 8-12

## Fees

In order to follow the courses regular attendance of kids is required. Hence kids need to register preferably for the whole year. However, admissions will be possible every semester until Sept or Feb. In case of sickness it's possible to reimburse the school

fee for that day upon showing valid certificate by doctor.

### For IECB members:

Yearly fee for all classes (classes + khel): Euro 290 (due on/before 31st August)

If paid in two instalments: Euro 150 per semester (due on/before 31st August and 31st Jan)

Yearly fee for all classes except khel sessions: Euro 210

Yearly fee for only khel sessions: Euro 80

### For non-members:

Yearly fee for all classes (classes + khel): Euro 360 (due on/before 31st August)

If paid in two instalments: Euro 185 per semester (due on/before 31st August and 31st Jan)

Yearly fee for all classes except khel sessions: Euro 260

Yearly fee for only khel sessions: Euro 100

(You can become IECB member at any time of the year by paying a yearly membership fee of euro 50. Membership will give you right for reduced school fee but also for the parents right to attend all IECB sessions for free or with reduced rates. ( $\pm 20$  sessions per year). You will also receive IECB newsletter every season).

For more information about previous sessions and IECB please consult our website [www.indiaeducationcentre.eu](http://www.indiaeducationcentre.eu) or write us at [indi.edubel@gmail.com](mailto:indi.edubel@gmail.com)

## Museums for children in Brussels and surroundings: an introduction

by Dheepa Rajan

With the flurry of 1- and 2-day holidays in Belgium in April and May, I was suddenly faced with the task of finding activities for my almost 4-year-old for these one-off days off school. In past years, these school holidays were spent mostly at home on a weekend rhythm of eating and sleeping. I realized quickly that this year would be different, with an avid pre-schooler ready for stimulation who no longer took afternoon naps.

I am by no means a museum or culture expert so here is just a simple introduction (definitely not comprehensive in scope) to a few museums in the Brussels area for you to take your children on a rainy day (not an entirely rare occasion in this part of the world).

### Toy museum, Brussels ([www.museedujouet.eu](http://www.museedujouet.eu))

After a bit of internet research and seeking advice from friends, I took my daughter to the Musée des Jouets near Botanique in Brussels on a Sunday morning. We arrived at 11am when a puppet show (in French) was about to start for an extra 2€. My daughter was enthralled with the husky-voiced elderly lady (who sounded to me as if she'd been smoking all her life) telling the story of Princess Lilli Jolie completely by heart, with perfect voice modulation and a knack for bringing the children into the story at the right moments.

The museum is located within a grand old turn-of-the-century Brussels house, dusty and creaky as if to prove its age. The house is chocked full of toys -- from handmade dolls to wooden trinkets to old-style pushchairs. Every corner is overflowing with toys and more toys and the museum rules allow children to touch and play with most of them. One has the impression, however, that whatever has been given to the museum has been put there for storage and display; it is not really curated or organized much.

Nevertheless, my daughter was delighted with a kitchen corner and decided to spend 45 minutes there play-cooking while I play-ate -- until the museum receptionist kicked us out for their lunch break at 13:00. If you have children under 5, this museum with its old-world charm is definitely worth a visit!

**Toy Museum, Mechelen**  
([www.speelgoedmuseum.be](http://www.speelgoedmuseum.be))

I hear from many friends that this museum is much more sophisticated than its Brussels incarnation. I have personally not yet made it down there but a bit of online research and a brief phone call shows that they are clearly more organized and professionalized than the Brussels Toy Museum. Firstly, they have a permanent exhibit as well as curated temporary ones. They have a web site that doesn't seem to be designed and managed by students and where information can be located easily. They have a lending service for games and toys as well as an official play corner for children where they can be left briefly while parents enjoy a break in the café. My impression is that older, 10+ children would also have plenty to be entertained by here, along with their under-5 siblings. ..So this will doubtless be our next rainy day destination).

**Museum of Natural Sciences, Brussels**  
([www.naturalsciences.be](http://www.naturalsciences.be))

The Museum of Natural Sciences is a part of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences and may not immediately sound child-friendly to first-time parents getting used to typical children's activities in Europe. What makes it tailored for children is the way the exhibits are organized, the explanations provided, and the interactivity of the displays.

One of the most impressive collections is the Dinosaur Gallery, a humongous 3000 m2 space with dozens of minutely pieced-together dinosaur bones. It is the largest room in Europe entirely devoted to dinosaurs, their discovery, lives and evolution. For younger children such as my daughter, the sheer size of the dinosaurs and the awesome impression it makes when entering the room is what constitutes the fun of

the museum adventure. For older children, it is probably worth participating in the various organized tours, camps, and other such activities on offer by the museum.



**Museum of Ixelles, Ixelles**  
([www.museumofixelles.irisnet.be](http://www.museumofixelles.irisnet.be))

One of my good friends who is a teacher in a Flemish school in the centre of Brussels highly recommended this museum. Apparently, this contemporary art museum has won many prizes and is constantly trying to innovate and create. Upon first visit, it may not seem particularly geared towards children but they have several children's workshops and guides specialized in explaining art to children. Apparently, it complements what children are introduced to in art class in school from about ages 6/7 upwards -- so I will have to wait a couple of years to take my daughter but it will definitely be on my to-do list!

## Thought corner

by Dr. Prishnee Datta, (Ph.D.),  
Clinical and Developmental Psychologist/  
Psychotherapist

Indians are generally fun loving, and love giving a hug when we meet each other, especially observed among the exuberant Sikh community and Indian men and women. Touch conveys more than words, as depicted in the image above. So here is some food for thought: how about hugging someone next time you meet to feel a sense of closeness, wellbeing and community! Be the vehicle to spread some happiness in a person's life.

### HEALTH BENEFITS OF HUGGING

- Hugging makes us feel good.
- More hugs equals lower blood pressure.
- Hugging may alleviate or soothe our existential fears.
- Hugging can be good for our hearts.
- Adults can benefit from hugging the most as it decreases feelings of loneliness.
- If you are feeling stressed, give

someone a hug. When we embrace, immediately the amount of the stress hormone Cortisol produced in our bodies is reduced. Hugs also make our bodies release tension and send calming messages to the brain, when done mindfully.

- Well-hugged babies are less stressed than adults when done in the early years of life.



### Hugging is good medicine.

It transfers energy and gives the person hugged an emotional lift. You need four hugs a day for survival, eight for maintenance, and twelve for growth. Scientists say that hugging is a form of communication because it can say things you don't have the words for. And the nicest thing about a hug is that you usually can't give one without getting one.

<http://www.spiritualunite.com>

## Believe in yourself

by Lekha Warrior

Believe in yourself  
the line is not far..  
Cross over first & become a star  
Jump over quick,  
Jump over nimble  
Take your determined step and move on,  
don't worry about the stumble.

Don't get too comfortable  
in your cushy seat,  
when there are so many other  
challenges to meet.

The world has so much more  
than what you imagine,  
It can only get possible when you  
get rid of mundane.

Better yourself with arms more than one,  
Be positive and live life like its just begun  
When you feel that your day is just not right,  
Remember there are so many terrors that get  
absorbed in the night.

Be happy, be brave  
Your path has much to offer,  
The best days of your life  
are just around the corner

## Recipes with local and seasonal ingredients- Broccoli

It is one of the best vegetables when it comes to nutrients. It is an excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin K. Raw broccoli also contains moderate amounts of several B vitamins and the dietary mineral manganese. Broccoli contain a compound called sulphoraphane which can function as an anti-cancer agent. Boiling broccoli reduces the levels of sulphoraphane, with losses of 20–30% after five minutes, 40–50% after ten minutes, and 77% after thirty minutes. (Less cooked- more healthier!).

### Broccoli guacamole

- 2 broccoli florets
- 1 garlic clove
- 2 spring onions
- ½ green pepper
- Juice of ¼ lemon or lime
- ¼ bunch coriander
- salt



Peel and boil the florets or steam them until tender in 8 min. Press the garlic. Cut the onions and peppers very fine. Use only the leaves of the coriander and chop very finely. Puree of boiled broccoli florets and add garlic and lemon juice. Mix then the rest and add salt as per taste. Serve with tortilla chips or chapati/nan.

source: <http://www.dewittebeek.be/category/broccoli/>

## 'Brussels Mandir'- A brief story.....

Sachin Kinge and Sidheswar Vazare

The Indian community of Belgium or the least around the Brussels know about 'Brussels Mandir' and probably visited it sometime. But most of them do not know is the groundwork done behind the foundation of it.

For decades Indians have immigrated in Belgium in small pockets. Gradually the community thought of setting up a platform for Indian families to interact. And the idea of 'Indian Cultural Centre (ICC)' was put forward in 2010. Further was also proposed foundation of a Mandir under ICC as a place for Indians with diverse thoughts to come together. Rather than setting up an Indian regional or language specific organization the ICC and the Mandir has been devoted to enforce unified Indian identity only! The temples' central location in Evere is just coincidental; but as it turned out to be an ideal one due to recent growth in Indian expat population in the vicinity. However, the most heartening were the efforts of the Indian community to raise the funds for establishing the Mandir, when most of the financial institutions turned away from, even partially, lending, on the grounds of being an initiate of a Non-Profit Organization! But it proved to be a very tiny hurdle to stop the community from moving forward. The contributions were raised by door to door persistent efforts of the founders finally leading to the groundwork of the Mandir in 2012.

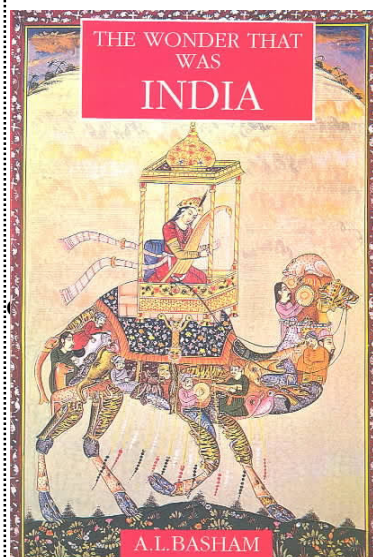
ICC arranges several cultural events. Such as Indian Brussels Mela on 15th of August every year with several interesting activities of folk dances, Indian cuisine.

In 2012 and 2015 Shri Shri Ravishankar jee visited the Mandir. Other festivals are celebrated too such as Janmashtmi, Maa Durga Jagaran. Of course, apart from attending the festivities and providing funds in order to support the activities there are many ways the community can contribute to the Mandir activity, as the founding committee insists. "Mandir Seva" can be even in participating small activities of the Mandir or even coming forward to build new community specific initiatives. After all, such noble initiatives should inculcate humility and a strong bonding within Indian community in Belgium.

## Wonder that was India by A. J. Basham

### - a book review

by Prabhat Avasare



In times when images about India were filled with negative stereotypes, indologist Basham wrote a shining book mainly aimed at western audiences about ancient Indian history and culture. It is said that this book has "decolonized" Indian history - so is the greatness the book and its impact on generations of Indian historians even after more than seventy years. The book talks about ancient Indian civilization from Harappa till arrival of Muslim invasions. It talks about Vedas, cultures, religions developed in India during that

period, how societies were structured in those times, how political structure was organized, how everyday life in those times was. How arts, cultures and religions flourished, how advanced languages and literatures were in those times. How the society was trying to pursue intellectual and philosophical questions more than being materialistic - with a clear emphasis that such an advanced state of society is unparalleled in history of mankind.

What struck me the most while reading the book was not the scholarly attitude in detailing facts about India but an incredible amount of author's love and respect towards India - it is so overwhelming! It makes me wonder how much efforts the author must have taken to comprehend ancient languages and literature to create such a scholarly commentary. It is this book which made me look ancient India in its true and glorious form. For a person interested in ancient Indian society, this book is an important landmark to experience.

## Huffing my way through the Woluwe Run

By Dany Mani



Social media often draws a lot of flak for its anonymous trolls, for personal moments paraded publicly, for....well you get the idea. However, often it succeeds in achieving what it was meant to in the first place – help one meet like-minded people. That preamble Dear Readers was to tell you how I found myself at the Woluwe Run.

I was new to Brussels and was on the look-out for fellow fitness enthusiasts. That's how I found myself putting up a post on a Facebook page for Indian Expats. 'Anybody out there who would like to jog/train together?' -was the gist of the message sent across. Fortunately for me, a member of IECB reached out and I was welcomed very warmly into a group of running enthusiasts. "Why don't you try the Woluwe Run?" they said. And try I did!

The 6KM run was an eye opener; to the beauty of Brussels and to my lack of stamina. After months of being cocooned in a jacket, I absolutely loved the sunny day and as the route took us through Parc Malou, I was delighted to have witnessed such charming sights. However, at the 3km mark, the charm faded away as my body began to protest. Sad to say, my body wanted to lie flat on the nearest horizontal surface. I realized that my hourly visits to the gym hadn't really helped me build the required stamina to sail through a 6Km run. With three more Kms to go, willpower was my only saviour. Thus, 50 minutes later, I huffed and puffed my way to the finish line. I must say though, there is something about the euphoria of achievement even when every muscle in your body is screaming in pain.

The highlight of the run for me came somewhere around the 5km mark. There I was, painfully slow-jogging my way uphill when a 60-something-year-old man breezed past me (Wow!) but not before he advised me to jog without scrapping my feet!

Someday, I hope to be fit enough to breeze past a much younger person on an uphill run!

## Food for thought: mindful eating

a session By Mrs. Vijaya Bhagwat-Shintre  
written by Mugdha Baviskar



With her abundance of knowledge and experience, Mrs. Vijaya Bhagwat-Shintre gave us a very practical and informative session over "Health & Nutrition", the indispensable aspects of our lives. As stated by her, health indeed is a very broad concept and it depends on a range of varied factors.

Health is defined as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" by the World Health Organization.

With changing times, the focus on "health" has shifted more towards "diet". Mrs. Shintre insisted that we should not stress ourselves over the so called "Fad diets". Thanks to the likes of Facebook, Twitter and the numerous articles in the newspapers written over the perfect diet that people like me often end up having all the knowledge about the nutritional aspects of foods but fail to practice what is preached.

Often viewed from a physical point of view, psychology & mental Health is equally important for a healthy body. Poor mental health is a risk factor for chronic physical health conditions and depression is often connected to these. Thus having a healthy body is often just a result of a healthy mind.

For years now, our parents have advised us to have a king size breakfast before heading to school or work. Mrs. Shintre reiterated the same and suggested that we should indeed opt for multi-grain bread instead of sugary breakfast snacks.

With the advent of globalization, we often have negative perceptions of certain foods like fats. But not all fat is bad and in fact there are 8 Essential fatty acids that cannot be produced by our body and must be consumed. As per Mrs. Shintre, we must re-think before completely omitting certain foods and in fact consume them in moderation. I have always heard my mother saying "too much of anything is bad" and I can see it certainly applies to food.

The session was concluded with a line from a Marathi Shloka "Udarbharan Nohe Janiye Yadnyakarma" which in fact means eating is not merely filling your stomach but a sacred act of consuming a healthy meal and be humbled and satisfied with the food. With so much to read, listen and ponder over, I would like to wish everyone "Mindful eating, Mindful living"!!!

## Multicultural multilingual

by Sachin Kinge

I often have cultural and especially linguistic dilemmas and nostalgias. Flavors of chapati, roti, or naan linger on my taste buds. But calling all together as a 'pancake' in English is soul less!! for me atleast! How do I translate, lassi, falooda, sherbet? Although I enjoy all these to the core of my heart.

One of the things that I miss from childhood are 'open doors' of neighbours. Those are the living educational institutes for children to learn languages, cultures, manners. All kids whatever the origin or language playing all together and all around houses, flats, chawls, jhopadis... We could simply walk to the neighbors who would be speaking, diverse languages, dialects: Gujarathi, Sindhi, Kachchi, Marathi, Bengali, Kannada... and so on. It was not only about the languages but food, festivals, dresses all we enjoyed and relished over and over again. Without formal education we knew and we have learnt and preserved those multicultural, multilingual heritages. We knew whom to say ma, aai, mummi, ba, and amma,....and get pampered with sweets!!!

So were the names, works of great sages, writers, poets, saints like Budhda, Mahavir, Guru Nanak, Jalaram, Jhulelal, Tukaram, Mahavir, Thiruvallvar, Surdas, Kabir, Tagore...all showering on us directly, indirectly. If someday I sit in solitude, all those thoughts reverberate in my heart. This is not a story of me alone but each one of the us who grew up in India. Each one of us has this heritage enshrined within us.

But even then sometimes it surprises me to hear friends' conflicting opinions about introducing multicultural and multilingualism to our kids. Most of them agree significance of the former but many of them are not convinced about the later...!!

**Why learn Indian languages or other languages, why should kids talk in our mothertounge, why waste time and energy and so on...** I believe it is necessary to understand that it is well known fact that there is strong link between the language and the development of culture.

Well the best way is to address the issue is based on scientific evidence specially from linguistics- the study of languages. (A curious fact I found is that the earliest activities in the description of language have been attributed to the 4th century BCE Indian grammarian Pāṇini, who was an early student of linguistics and wrote a formal description of the Sanskrit language in his Aṣṭādhyāyī). I am not sure if this is a good reason to be proud or feel pity with current situation.

The fields like neurolinguistics which is study of language processing in the brain; and language acquisition, which investigates how children and adults acquire a particular language has shown that learning multiple languages in any age is very advantageous for several reasons. In adults it can benefit to delay dementia by reinforcing the brain activity. In case of children below 12 years' there is a special language window which renders them possibility to learn languages quickly. Up to the age 7 the children have photographic memory that is they can absorb the languages readily. The more they learn and exposed to, more reinforcement of their neural synapses!

Further, leading linguistics like Dr Kelndall King and Dr. Alison Machey state that learning multiple languages is an invaluable edge or advantage for everyone. This is evident not only through tests on intelligence and academic ability, but also in children's enhanced creativity, self-esteem, cross-cultural understanding and future job opportunities. There is enough evidence that children with multicultural, multilingual backgrounds have better flexibility, adaptability, sensitivity for others. Their academic skills improve so does their ability to face challenging, discriminatory circumstances.

Should one be teaching 'dying languages' to children? Certainly Yes! 'Cause scarcity creates demand! If you are one of those who can speak 'Bidyara' Language (Spoken in Australia between Tambo and Augathella, Warrego and Langlo rivers, 20 speakers found in 1981; effectively extinct by 2008) certainly you are in high demand for academics. If you are one of the millions who speak a certain language like English then sure you have advantage of making new friends, enjoying new cultures and rending global view. In this age of information where reverse brain drain is happening, it is no wonder that so called dying languages will never perish in oblivion but revive and flourish. In this century extinction of language could be reversed. There would be always enthusiasts who would find out, learn and preserve such heritages. And keep this world diverse and beautiful.

But being an overseas Indian, this cultural advantage and heritage is not readily available to our children at our disposal. How can we make this available to them?

We can all make some efforts to share this heritage in a common platform. We can also offer, and preserve multilingualism in our kids. Not only learning local languages but preserving the spirit of culture through studying our mothertoungs. So let's make some efforts by speaking in our mothertoung, or by simply introducing your best friends' language to your kids; ask what literature they read.... If possible listen, learn, absorb...

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