



GURUJI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Quarterly Report

April - June 2024

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ABOUT GEF

Guruji Education Foundation (GEF) is a registered trust, which works with underprivileged students to enable their holistic education, and thus provide them with a more equitable access to opportunities and success. As part of its mission of “Education for All”, GEF provides support for holistic education of underprivileged students, based on the principles of:

- Inclusivity
- Quality over quantity
- Cycle of giving
- Customized career planning
- Holistic development
- Collaboration

GEF runs 2 broad flagship programs:

i) Holistic Higher Education (HHE), where high-potential college students from underprivileged sections are identified to catalyze their all-round development by providing them with resources that they may need. The resources could include interest-free loans (to be paid after they start earning), personal mentoring, career counselling and more

ii) Adolescent Development Program (ADP), which aims at enabling schools, especially those catering to underprivileged children, to provide holistic education spanning physical literacy, psychological strength, intellectual prowess, life skills, and entrepreneurial thinking

GEF accords special attention towards education of students from a distressed backgrounds including orphans, single parent families, and families impacted by cancer, covid etc. More than academic brilliance, the emphasis is on providing these students an education that is appropriate to their abilities and can help them in getting meaningful employment.

THE QUARTER IN A NUTSHELL

We are pleased to share with you our report for the first quarter of the new financial year 2024-25.

As always, in this quarter too, we continued our efforts to reach out and collaborate with other like-minded organizations and individuals. Likewise our efforts to conduct special learning & guidance sessions, interviews, and talks for our students to provide them with a wider exposure and guidance, continue. Details of some of these activities are presented in the [Highlights](#) section of this report.

Our Adolescent Development Program (ADP) and Holistic Higher Education (HHE) programs continue to march forward as can be seen in the [ADP Updates](#) and [HHE Updates](#).

We are happy to share that our students and alumni continue to do well in academic as well as extra-curricular activities, and earn laurels for their families, schools, colleges and GEF as well. Some of their achievements and activities are highlighted in the [Student Stars](#) and [Alumni Stars](#) sections of this report.

We have also identified a set of priorities for ourselves for the current year, which are shared in the [Way Forward](#) section. We would definitely look forward to your feedback, suggestions, and continued involvement as we move ahead in our journey.

We reiterate our commitment of working with underprivileged students to enable their holistic education and to provide them with a more equitable access to opportunities and success. With your support, we look forward to continue extending our reach to an increasing number of schools and students in the coming quarters.

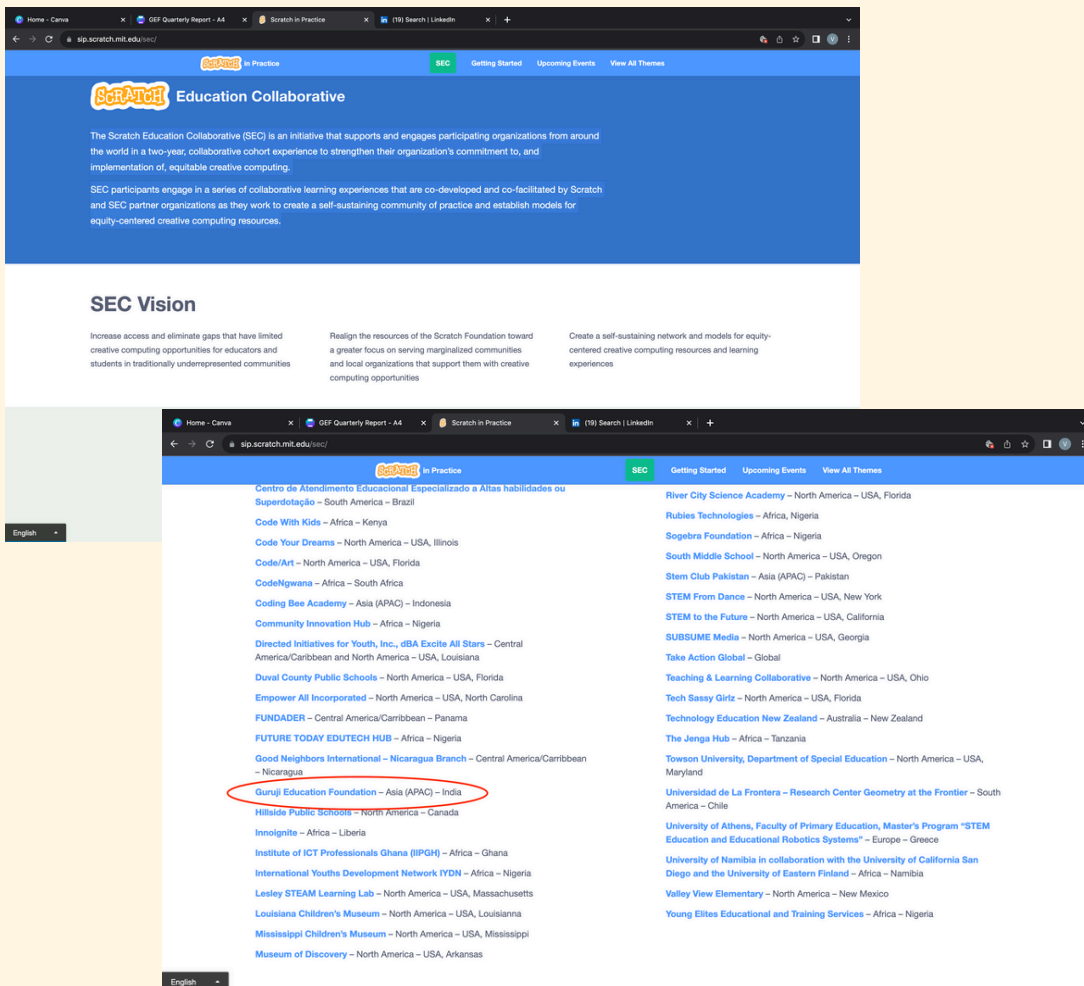
Executive Committee
[Guruji Education Foundation](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

GEF selected to join Scratch Education Collective

It is a matter of great pride that GEF is one among the only 52 organizations selected worldwide to be a part of the 2024–26 cohort of Scratch Education Collective (SEC). SEC is run by Scratch Foundation US, with the objective of getting institutions that are working on developing Scratch skills among underprivileged students, to collaborate with each other.

352 organizations from across the globe had applied for the cohort. The selection was based on an application and interview process. GEF was represented by Mr. Pranay Kalpavriksha, Mrs. Dnyanada Wagh, and Dr. Pradeep Waychal. Only 2 organizations from India got selected, with GEF being one of them.



HIGHLIGHTS

Interview with Mr. Sunil Chitale, President, Kalpavruksh Technologies

GEF conducted an exclusive interview with Mr. Sunil Chitale, President, Kalpavruksh Technologies. Mr. Chitale shared his thoughts of the Future of the IT Industry in the light of the latest technological advancements, and what would the industry look like in the next 5-10 years. He further shared his “success mantras” on how students could adapt to and thrive in the evolving IT landscape. The entire GEF family of students, alumni and supporters benefited from this engaging and informative session. Here is a link to the recording <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCcaH3MFo4Q&t=3s>



Empowering Tribal Communities Through Education

The GEF team of Dr Pradeep Waychal, Managing Trustee, and Sanket Bhojar, a successful GEF alumnus held a productive video conference with Mr. Ravindra Thakare, Additional Tribal Commissioner, Nagpur (IAS 2010 batch). Mr. Thakare oversees 133 Government Tribal Schools, 133 Government Aided Schools, 4 Military Schools, and Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) under his jurisdiction.

The discussion highlighted impressive initiatives such as Bhavishyavedhi, Brighter Mind, and Lift For Upliftment, which have led to remarkable achievements such as

- 37 students clearing JEE Mains, with 15 securing admissions in NITs
- 3 students qualifying for CLAT
- 6 students clearing NEET
- 173 students succeeding in CET

The GEF team commended Mr. Thakare for these milestones, and also introduced the various programs run by GEF across the country.

Mr. Thakare proposed introducing GEF programs in these schools and planning follow-up meetings to finalize the details. He also recommended connecting with the Gondavana Tribal Foundation. We look forward to working together to make a meaningful impact on the lives of tribal children and to support their overall development.



A screenshot from the video conference

HIGHLIGHTS

Visit to ELF Centres by GEF Team

Mrs. Jayashree Raveendran, Mr. Gopal Kalpathi and Dr Pradeep Waychal from Guruji Education Foundation (GEF) visited community study centres of Enriching Life Foundation (ELF), which has been doing excellent work at their 7 centres between Mankhurd and Wadala serving around 50 students each.

GEF initiated its Thinking and Teaming Lab Scratch program at all the centres. Jayashree Raveendran who also serves as the Academic Head for all ELF centres, and Komal Mhapankar, ELF Administrator, will drive the program.



Mr. Gopal Kalpathi & Mrs. Jayashree Raveendran presenting GEF's AKTIV Scratch Handbook to Manju Madam, ELF Teacher and Ms. Komal Mhapankar, ELF Administrator

*Sheer joy!
Their faces
say it all!*



Handing over a GEF AKTIV Scratch Handbook



HIGHLIGHTS

Visit to SSGMMS, Vadakkur

Mr. Gopal Kalpathi and Mr.Venkatesh Kuppuswamy, senior members of our GEF family, visited the Sri Sri Gnan Mandir Matriculation School (SSGMMS) at Vadakkur in Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu. The visit started with an introductory meeting with the new Principal Mr.Karthikeyan. This was followed by a meeting with the teachers associated with various GEF programs viz Spoken English, AKTIV and GRAPES, and sessions on Scratch for students from 7th, 8th ad 9th standards.



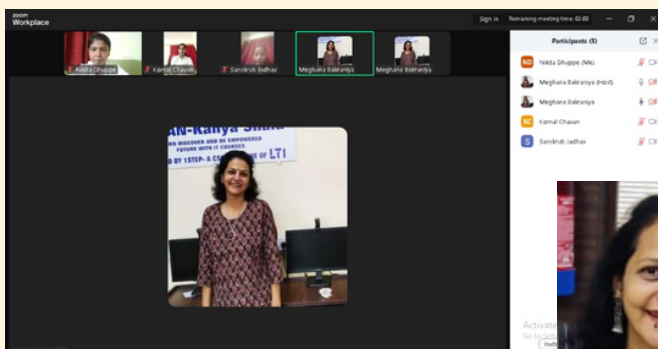
L-R Mr.Karthikeyan, Principal, Mr.Gopal Kalpathi, Mr.Venkatesh Kuppuswamy and HH Sadhvi



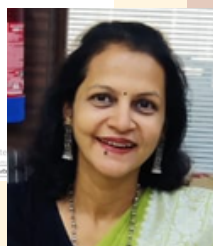
Mr.Gopal with the students

Preparing Students for the Corporate World

CMA Meghana Bakraniya conducted a session to prepare students to face job interviews confidently, and to introduce them to corporate culture. The session started with the importance of preparing a good CV. Since it creates the first impression, a CV is critical in the journey towards securing one's dream job. The session also focused on small crucial points related to different interview rounds, and how these could be handled professionally and effectively. This included tips on preparing for interviews, presentation, projecting a positive body language, responding to commonly asked questions, and do's & don't's for the interview day. The session ended with an engaging discussion on handling the shift from college to corporate, confidence building, and converting Strengths & Weaknesses into Opportunities & Challenges.



The online session in progress



CMA Meghana Bakraniya

"It was superb. We got to know about many things which are important while preparing & appearing for an interview - the choice of clothes to wear, how to speak, how to request the interviewer to repeat a question, how to respond when you don't know an answer, how to handle situations under pressure, questions to ask the interviewer etc. These things will definitely help me for my interview. Thanks to Meghana Ma'am."

- Sanskruti Jadhav, Student

HIGHLIGHTS

Program for UPSC Aspirants

Three students from our GEF family – Nikhil Bagkar, Rutuja Gongane, and Harsh Bhadange, appeared for the challenging UPSC Prelims held on 16th June., and we wish them success. This is just a start, and we hope to have more and more aspirants appear for UPSC exams in the years to come

Workshop on Innovation at College of Engineering Jalgaon

A workshop titled "Need for Innovative Mindset and How to Achieve the Same" was conducted by Dr.Pradeep Waychal for the students and faculty of College of Engineering, Jalgaon. The workshop covered the What, Why, and How of Innovation.



Dr.Pradeep Waychal with the rapt audience

ADP UPDATES

Going from Strength to Strength

AKTIV Thinking & Teaming Lab

- We launched a Scratch Festival on June, 24 which will culminate with a Scratch Day on 10 August 24. Dr Anand Nadkarni will be the Chief Guest for the event, and will address all school students over Zoom. The festival will include a project, a debate, a hackathon, and a quiz in Junior and Senior categories
- 13 new schools have been added under the AKTIV program, thus taking the total number of schools to 39

Spoken English

- We are now running the 35th batch of the Spoken English program, and have covered 375 teachers and college & school students thus far

Math Lab

- Handbooks for the Math Lab are designed, developed and under print

New Initiatives

- We have initiated a project for Rural Divyang students and are currently working with such students from Sawantwadi block
- A 2-day workshop on “Entrepreneurship Mindset” by Prof Ramani from IIT Bombay, is planned to be conducted for Tandulwadi school students
- We are helping “Supporting a Cause” group to execute infrastructural projects at Tandulwadi school. The projects are for replacing the tin roof with a concrete one, and for renovating the toilet blocks to make them more hygienic

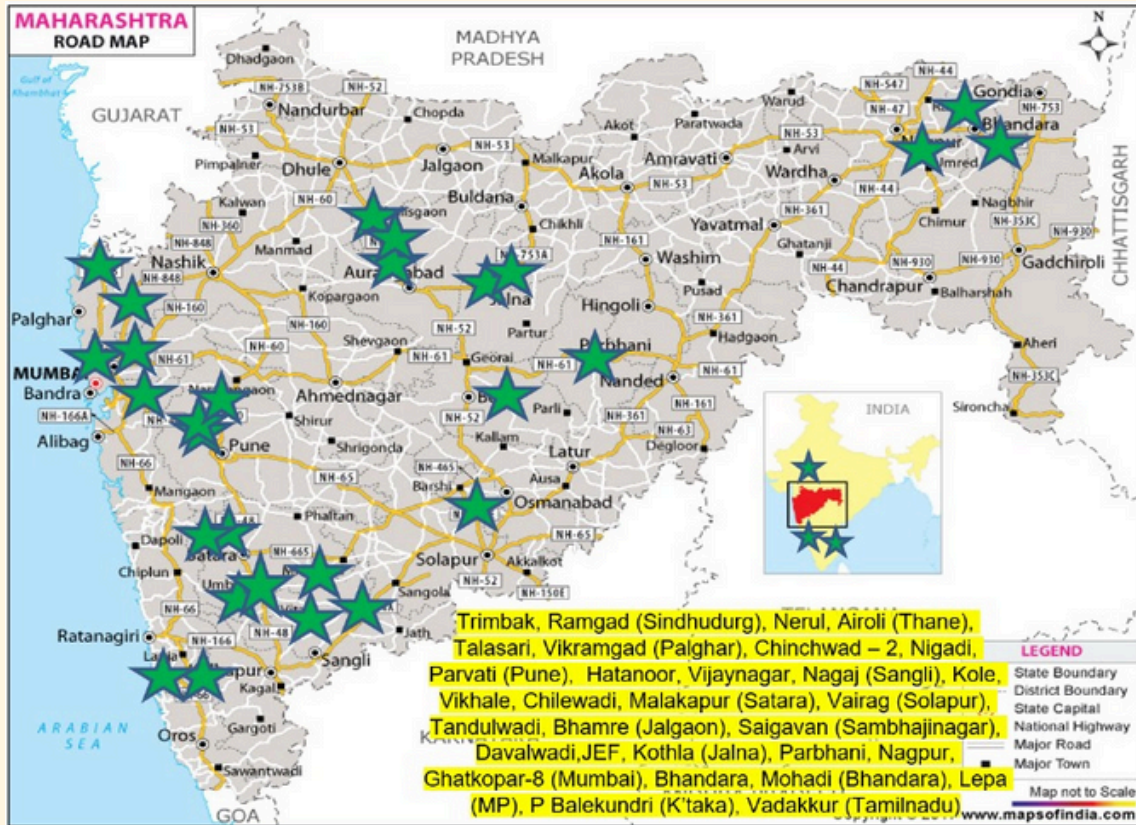


A few pictures from the new ADP Centres at Bhamre, Jalna, Kothala and Dawalwadi



ADP UPDATES

Growing Spread



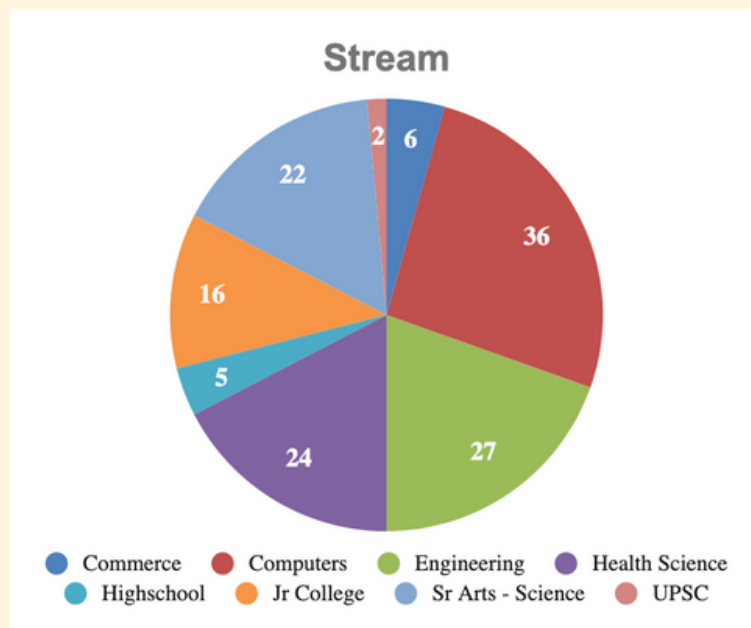
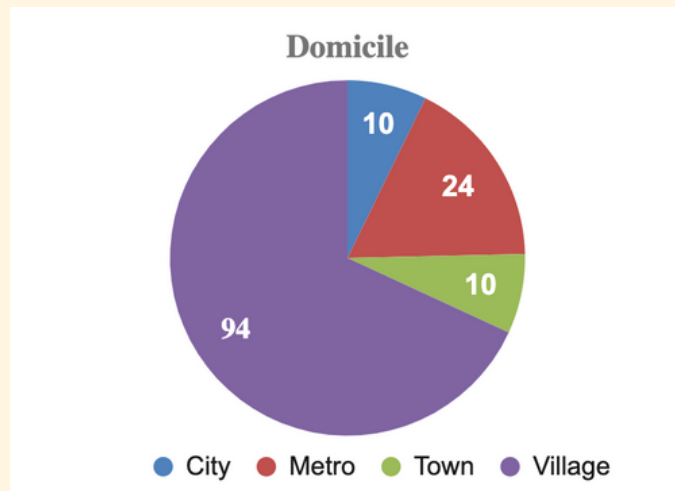
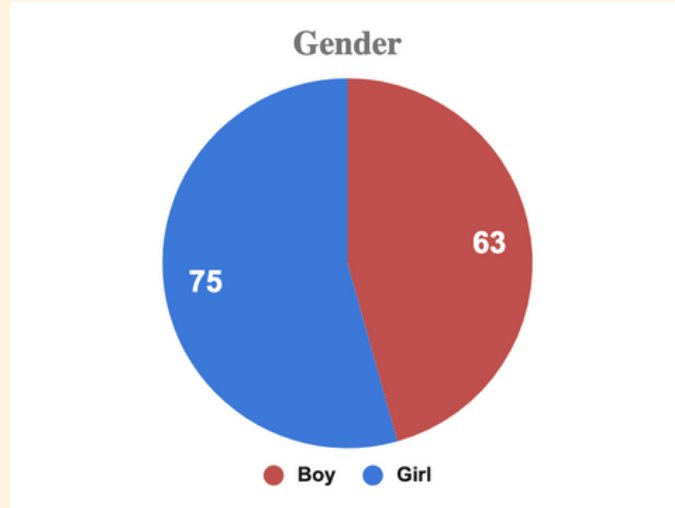
39 schools with around 3600 beneficiaries

GEF Student Leadership Team (GSLT) formed for the new academic year

Mentors meeting held to update them about new GEF developments, and share expectations

HHE UPDATES

Catering to a Diverse Demographic Spread





STUDENT STARS



Gayatri Jadhav Secured 1st Class with Distinction in BE (Elec) from Savitribai Phule University, Pune. She is currently doing an internship with Bharti Airtel, Pune and also has an offer from them.

Gayatri has also been an active participant in extracurricular activities, and was a part of the Brahamasta QUAD Bike (ATV) team from her college, that had won the ISNEE Quad Torc Championship 2 years back.

Sampatti Girgavakar Completed her B.Tech in Electrical Engineering from SGGGS College of Engineering, Nanded. She has received an offer for apprenticeship from Siemens, and another offer from BNC Power Projects Ltd.



Sharvari Patil who has just completed her Class XII, was adjudged as the winner of a Writing Challenge organized by GEF. The Challenge involved reviewing a Times of India article "The Beautiful & The Damned", and writing their views "For" and "Against" the proposition presented in the article.

Shrutika Tawade's project "SheShine" was selected for the Mentorship Cohort round of the "Creators of Tomorrow" challenge. This is a global Challenge conducted by WiX, a company that provides website building solutions & services.





STUDENT STARS



Ravindra Pawar who completed his BTech in Computer Engineering from RC Patel Institute of Technology, Shirpur, has received placement from TCS in the Digital cadre.

Anuja Vaidya scored 198 out of 200 in Pratham Diksha Sanskrit examination.



Molika Sharma was one among the 38 students (out of 150) selected for NSS at her college after 2 rounds of selection process including an interview .

Vishwa Shetty a GEF scholar at Grant Medical College, Mumbai (GMC) was a part of Phoenix - GMC's dance crew that participated in a competition organized by Terna Medical College, Nerul, and bagged the 1st Prize.





ALUMNI



STARS



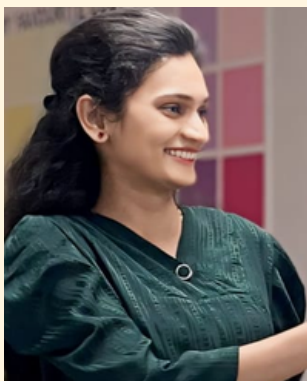
Rajat Bhaskar Pujari was promoted to the role of Manager-Innovation at Urethane Speciality Solutions (USS), Rabale, Navi Mumbai. Rajat had completed his MSc - Chemistry from the prestigious institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai (UDCT) in 2021, and was earlier working as a Research Scientist at USS.

Smita Bhosale has joined as a Project Associate at Smile Foundation, where she is working on implementing the Siemens Scholarship Program. Smita had completed her Masters in Social Work from SNTD University in 2021, and subsequently worked with Doctors for You, and Boston Institute of Analyti worked with Doctors for You, and Boston Institute of Analytics.



Girish Joshi has joined Accenture as an SCM Consultant with a substantial rise. After his graduation in 2019, Girish worked as an Application Engineer - Sales in Aspiration Energy, and then with Birlasoft as an SCM Consultant.

Paresh Dalvi has joined TCS as a Network Administrator. Paresh who graduated in 2010, was earlier working with Reliance Communications



Chhaya Rohane won the Dashing Debutant award at Arena Consultants

WAY FORWARD

Our Annual Plan for FY25 has a budget outlay of INR 1.35 Crores, with the following identified as key actions and priorities for the rest of the year:

01

Holistic Higher Education

- Add 50 new students to HHE
- Regularize meetings of all streams, start annual appraisals, and facilitate real-life projects

02

Adolescent Development Program

- Impact 10000 school students and reach out to 25 new schools
- Start programs in mixed (offline-online) mode with focus on developing brighter students as trainers

03

Entrepreneurship

Considering the overall job situation, we plan to focus on the Entrepreneurship dimension as part of the Adolescent Development Program

04

Geographical Spread

For more effective implementation and greater impact, we plan to adopt a “cluster” approach to scaling our operations by i) adding more schools in the vicinity of existing schools, and ii) adding new locations as hubs with a set of schools in and around the location

05

Improvement in Operations

- Explore right IT solutions for our needs
- Identify institutional donors with long-term commitment to support increasing scale of operations
- Add more mentors and hire administrative staff and coordinators / trainers

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Beautiful thoughts penned down in this article by Dr. Pradeep Waychal, where he emphatically underscores the importance of “trust” as a fundamental human value. Trust and faith in the basic goodness of humans has the potential to lead to an endless cycle of positivity and joy, he argues. This thinking in many ways also reflects in how we work at GEF.

तरुण भारत

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भरवसा - ठेवावा की नाही?

का ही काळापूर्वी 'सोनु, तुझा माझ्यावर भरोसा नाय काय...' असे एक गाणे बऱ्यापैकी गाजले होते. आज त्याची आठवण होण्याचे कारण म्हणजे, नुकतेच वाचनात आलेले ब्रेगमन यांचे ह्यूमन काइंड - अ होपफुल हिस्ट्री हे पुस्तक.

त्यात त्यांनी मनुष्य प्राणी हा कसा जात्याच दयाळू, शांतिपूर्ण व सकारात्मक आहे, हे अतिशय पोटतिडकीने सांगितले आहे. त्यांनी समर्थनार्थ अनेक दाखले दिले आहेत. आणि जे काही प्रयोग वेगळे निष्कर्ष काढतात, जसे की स्टॅनफोर्ड प्रिझन आणि मिलमन प्रयोग, ते कसे चुकीचे आहेत, हे त्यातील ब्रुटीसह दाखवून दिले आहे. त्यातील एक महत्वाचा भाग म्हणजे लॉर्ड ऑफ द फ्लायिंग ही नोबेल पारितोषिक विजेत्या विल्फ्रिड गोल्डिंग यांची कादंबरी. त्या कथानकात एका निर्जन बेटावर अडकलेल्या ब्रिटिश मुलांची कल्पना केली आहे. त्यात शेवटी ही मुले हिंसक आणि क्रूर बनतात, असे दाखवले आहे. अर्थात ही काल्पनिक कादंबरी होती. ब्रेगमनने असा काही प्रसंग खरेच घडलेला आहे का, याची कसून तपासणी केल्यानंतर त्यांना असा एक प्रसंग आढळला. १९६५ मध्ये सहा टॉगन किशोरवयीन मुलांचा एक गट अटा या निर्जन बेटावर १५ महिने राहिला होता. आणि त्या परिस्थितीत स्वतःला सुस्थितीत ठेवण्यात यशस्वी झाला होता. ती मुले दयाळू, शांतिपूर्ण, व सकारात्मक बनलेली आढळली. त्यांच्या मते नकारात्मकता वाढायला प्रसार माध्यमे कारणीभूत आहेत. तेही खरेच आहे.

ब्रेगमन यांनी काही मुद्दे ओढून ताणून मांडण्याचा किंवा पटवण्याचा प्रयत्न केला आहे, असे वाटते. त्यांच्या मते युद्धामध्ये सैनिक आपल्या देशापेक्षा सहकारी आणि मित्रांसाठी जास्त लढतात आणि कोणीही कुठल्याही व्यक्तीला अगदी परकीय सैनिकाला समोरासमोरच्या युद्धामध्ये मारीत नाही. बहुतेक मृत्यू हे बॉम्ब हल्ल्यांमध्ये वगैरे होतात ज्यांच्यामध्ये तुम्ही ज्यांना मारयचे त्या व्यक्तींना पाहू शकत नाही, पाहत नाही. परंतु, पूर्वीच्या काळातील बहुतांशी युद्ध समोरासमोर होत असत व त्यात क्रूरतेच्या सीमाही गाठल्या जात असत. लेखकाने अगदी ओढून ताणून आपला मुद्दा मांडण्याचा प्रयत्न केला आहे, असे वाटते. अशी आणखीनही उदाहरणे आहेत त्यामुळे त्यांच्यावर टीका पण झालेली आहे. त्यांच्या पुस्तकातील सर्व प्रसंगांमध्ये पुरुष आहेत, महिला अजिबात नाहीत. म्हणजे हे पुस्तक ह्यूमन काइंड नसून मॅन काइंड आहे, असे वाटते. दयाळूपणाचा विचार जगाच्या पातळीवर केला तर भारतातील महात्मा गांधी आणि अनेक संत हे त्याचे अतिशय बोलके उदाहरण आहे, परंतु पुस्तकांमध्ये भारताच्या कुठल्याही व्यक्तीचा व प्रसंगाचा उल्लेख नाही.

तरीपण त्यातील मुख्य मुद्दा हा अतिशय महत्वाचा आहे - मनुष्य प्राणी हा जात्याच दयाळू, शांतिपूर्ण व सकारात्मक आहे. त्याच्यावरून विचार करताना पुढील

अनेक गोष्टी लक्षात आल्या.

त्या गाण्याचे सोडा परंतु व्यवहारांमध्ये आपण अनेकदा भरवसा नाही का, भरवसा ठेव... असे शब्दप्रयोग वापरतो. अर्थातच काही ठिकाणी भरवसा ठेवून लोकांची फसवणूक झालेली असते आणि त्यामुळे तो ठेवायचा की नाही याविषयी सामान्य मन साशंक असते.

माणसे अशी का वागतात हा प्रश्न सगळ्यांनाच केव्हा ना केव्हा पडतो. त्याचे मानसशास्त्राने दिलेले उत्तर म्हणजे- वागणूक ही त्याच्या जीवस (जनुके) व त्याला लाभलेले वातावरण यावर अवलंबून असते. हे वागणे कधी सकारात्मक तर कधी नकारात्मक असते. मानसशास्त्राचे जनक मानले जाणारे सिग्मंड फ्रॉइड यांनी व्यक्तिमत्त्वाच्या दोन बाजूंचा उल्लेख केला आहे. एक eros ही सकारात्मक बाजू आहे आणि एक thanos ही नकारात्मक बाजू आहे आणि या दोन्ही बाजू आपल्यामध्ये थोड्याफार प्रमाणात सतत कार्यरत असतात.

प्रसिद्ध मानसशास्त्रज्ञ एरिकसन याने असे दाखवून दिले आहे की, लहान मुलांमध्ये जन्मल्यापासून १८ महिन्यांचा होतपर्यंत त्याची काळजी नीट घेतली गेली असेल तर ते पुढील आपुण्यात भरवसा ठेवते.

प्रत्येकाचे वागणे परिस्थितीनुसार वेगवेगळे होत असते - म्हणजे भरवसा ठेवण्याजोगे अथवा न ठेवण्याजोगे तरीही एकूणतः जास्त घटना अथवा परिस्थिती या भरवसा ठेवण्याच्या योज्य असतात व भरवसा ठेवल्या जाणाऱ्या असतात. म्हणजे ब्रेगमन म्हणतात तसे सगळे जग दयाळू, शांतिपूर्ण व सकारात्मक नसेल तरीही जगाचा तराजू हा दयाळूपणा भरवसा किंवा सकारात्मकतेत झुकलेला होता, आहे आणि असणार आहे, हे निश्चित.

त्याचा सगळ्यात सोपा पुरावा म्हणजे आतापर्यंत जग तगलेले आहे. जग जर निष्ठुर असते तर आतापर्यंत आपण एकमेकांचे गळे घेऊन जगाचा अंत केला असता. जगामध्ये नेहमीच पांडव आणि कौरव म्हणजे सकारात्मक वृत्ती आणि नकारात्मक वृत्ती असणार, आहेत परंतु पांडव जगाला तारत आलेले आहेत आणि यापुढेही तारतील.

अर्थात तुम्ही जेवढा भरवसा ठेवाल तेवढेच लोक तुमच्यावर जास्त भरवसा ठेवतील. तुमच्याच नव्हे तर बाकीच्यांवर पण ठेवतील आणि सर्व जग सकारात्मकतेत झुकायला लागेल. अर्थात आपल्याला परिस्थितीचा डोळसपणे विचार करून हे निर्णय घ्यायला पाहिजेत, परंतु आपण सर्वांनी थोडा जास्त भरवसा ठेवला तर आपण एका आनंदाचे धनी होऊ आणि नाही ठेवला तर एका आनंदाला मुकू, हे आपणास मान्य करायला लागेल. हे वाचून जर तुमच्यापैकी काही जणांनी थोडा जास्त भरवसा ठेवला तर हे लिहिण्याचं सार्थक होईल. ||

प्रदीप वायचळ/९८२०४३१४८२

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