

Grand opening of restaurant The Arjun Bagh Udaipur



Udaipur: The newly-established restaurant located at Shobhagpura The Arjun Bagh held its grand opening ceremony on Tuesday June 7 where the chief guest was Rajasthan PCC chief Sachin Pilot in the presence of prominent citizens of the city. Presided over by former parliamentary secretary Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. Special Guest was former MP Raghuvveer Singh Meena. Sachin Pilot of the previous director of the restaurant on arrival at Arjun garden Bhadesar, former chief minister and Arjun Singh Chundawat and Krishnapal Singh Chundawat make the bouquet, Mewari confection welcomed and garlanded. Director Krishnapal Singh Chundawat informed that the restaurant is fully air-conditioned and the in the main dishes prevalent are traditional and regional quality and taste will be provided. Former legislator Mangilal Garasiya, former MLA Arjun Bamania, former MLA Gopal Singh Shekhawat, Kshatriya Mahasabha president Balus Singh Kanawat, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth Vice Chancellor Prof S S Sarangdevot, PA District Congress Committee president Lal Singh Jhala, Intech state president Jagdish Raj Shrimali, PCC secretary Pankaj Kumar Sharma, Joginder Singh Bambori, Padam Singh Malari, Suraj Bhan Singh Daka along with city's chief industrialists, builders, marble business, Congress office holders and activists, including prominent citizens were present at the ceremony.

Water Conservation in Smart Village begins

Udaipur : Digging of Anicut has begun at the village Umaria Fala, at Smart Village selected by MPUAT. The digging work is conducted by Vice Chancellor Prof Umashankar Sharma under the direction of Chancellor to reserve the water. Director of Broadcast Dr G.S Tiwari, Mining Expert Dr Shaitan Singh Rathore, Dr I.J Mathu and local villagers were present during the digging process. There is no technical possibility of digging new lake in the villages hence anicuts are being preferred for distilling work. After digging the anicut, there will be 10 lakh liter capacity of water in it and it will also help nearby wells to get water which will be beneficial for agricultural lands.

6 Gits Students Selected By Pyrotech

Udaipur : Six students of Geetanjali Institute of Technical Studies are appointed by Pyrotech Electronics Private Limited in Off Campus Interview on various technical job profiles including Research and Development. Arvind Singh Pemawat, training and placement head of GITS has informed that Pyrotech is one of the most reputed companies of Udaipur which is manufacturing Electronic Process Control Instrument since 1976. Pyrotech HR Manager Arpita Agarwal and her team briefed students about Pyrotech and its achievements. Thereafter they conducted written test to shortlist candidates and finally selected 6 students Sarthak Maru, Naina Soni, Shreya Bhardwaj and Garima Ameta (Electronics and Communication Engineering) and Giriraj Sharma (Electrical Engineering Branch). Students Giriraj Sharma and Shreya Bhardwaj are selected for Research and Development Department. Principal of GITS Dr M Venugopal Rao has congratulated students for this achievement.

Environment Day at Wonder Cement

Udaipur : Environment Day was celebrated in Wonder Cement plant near Nimbahera. Navin Vyas R.O. Pollution Control Board appreciated efforts made by WCL in developing extensive green belt. President Works, S.M. Joshi requested all employees to follow environmental protection measures at their respective operation site. Khejri trees were planted by all employees in mass plantation program. C.S.Sharma Jt. President, Bhanupriya, Environment Engineer, RPCB, P.K.Jain, GM(QC) have also addressed the audience. Team of Environment Department with Narender Bhatt, Anil Gaur, Motilal Paliwal have organized the program.

JRNU : Principal on the Way to US



Udaipur : The principal of Udaipur School of Social Work, Professor Manju Mandot departed to United States for a 15 days educational trip. Mandot is going to represent Vidyapeeth in an international seminar. Vice Chancellor of Vidyapeeth Prof S.S. Sarangdewot, Kul Pramukh Bhanwarlal Gurjar, Dr Manish Shrimali Director of IT Department presented bouquet to Prof Mandot and extended their wishes for successful journey. Prof Mandot will present her research paper on Algorithm developed on Fusion Incursion Technology of Image Processing in a seminar going to be held in New Jersey. She is also going to present her research paper in Texas University on 9th June during a seminar on " On Crossing Border: People Capital & Culture". Mandot said that due to the conference many self held group of women are prevailing



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This story has been interpreted in many diverse ways. Some critics have treated it as a didactic story narrating how even birds can be a source of motivation for man and how the human world needs to draw a lesson from the animal world, which of course, is a world of Nature:

"The Sparrows" is a wonderful story where nature teaches man to behave himself. What human beings could not demonstrate nature's tiny creation a happy sparrow-couple could effortlessly achieve this story is remarkable not just for its narration but also for its characterization of the infra human, yet ultra humane sparrows. This is a very moving story of sorrow and disappointment of a supposedly hard-hearted man. His transformation from utter cruelty to one of endearing love and compassion forms the life line of the narrative.

Rice and Other Stories (1947) published in the year of transfer of power dubbed as the freedom, depicts the prime concern of the country at that time i.e. the question of poverty and hunger. Rice is the main meal of about one third of the population of this country. Abbas never minces his words to draw a realistic picture of the plight of the people. The world wars and the economic depression had brought in the Ration Control System and the people had to stand in que for hours waiting for their turn in front of Fair Price Shop. Abbas describes the plight of the people in a very convincing style:

Twisting like a serpent, creeping at a snail's pace, buzzing like a swarm of bees, two Long ques- one of men and the other of women- were advancing towards the Government Grain Shop. The women's que was even longer than the men's- quite a Furlong in length with its tail end in a narrow alley round the street corner. (RAOS13) Talking about the importance of the story 'Rice', Ravi Nandan Sinha makes a very apt comment:

'Rice', the first story in the first anthology is significant in the sense that it strongly points to the direction most of Abbas's stories would take. It relates to the period just before independence. Durga delivers a child while waiting in a que for a small measure of rationed rice...The story reminds us of Mulk Raj Anand's story 'Birth'. Durga epitomizes the destitute millions of India. Penny takes away from her even the natural dignity of motherhood. (135)

In the next collection of stories called Cages of Freedom and Other Stories (1952) also the same question of poverty and starvation finds expression. The story 'Flag' narrates the story of a poor labourer Ramoo rendered jobless for quite some time. He doesn't have anything to eat or to feed his daughter and wife. It is the day of freedom. He comes to know that some generous patriot is distributing Puris and Laddoos.

He goes there and gets his share. He then asks for the share of his daughter and wife. But he is rebuked and insulted. The distributors ask him why his wife and daughter themselves come and take their share. Ramoo is too shy and humble to say that they have only one cloth to cover their bodies and when one goes out, the other two have to stay home. It might appear an exaggeration to some, but the fact is that this kind of stark poverty has been a reality and is a reality in some parts of the country even today.

This concern for the common man and his suffering runs through all the collections of short stories published by Abbas. The characters change with the locale but the issues continue to haunt the imagination of the author. In a story called "Thicker Than Water" published in his anthology The Gun and Other Stories (1985) Abbas depicts the plight of urban poor who are unable to find any employment. In their misery they resort to selling of blood- a problem which appears quite contemporary even in twenty first century. Of course, the menace of selling human organs has also added to the gravity of the situation. From the first collection of the stories to the last Abbas shows a consistent growth in his concern towards the poor down-trodden people. He depicts his characters with utmost sincerity and compassion. He is conscious of the socio-political causes of poverty and does not regard their poverty as a 'fit punishment for their vices.' The poor are portrayed with respect and conviction.

The question of dignity of women in the society is discussed very passionately these days. The instances of violence against women at work place, in public transport and at home have created a furor in public space lately. More often than not the victims of gender violence are common women, especially those who are forced to work out of their economic necessities. The stories of Abbas depict this pathetic state adequately. The protagonist women in his stories include village girls, struggling actresses, nurses, flower girls, dancers and extras in film industry. However, these characters do not accept humiliation lying down but assert their identity and right in strong words. The best example of such assertion is the story 'The Dumb Cow'. The protagonist in this story is a young girl named Bholi. Her step father thinks her to be a burden and wants to get rid of her by marrying her to a greedy old and lame person. Bholi tries to resist but is not given any space to express her views. She later realizes that the lame old man is too greedy and her marriage is more of a commercial transaction. She refuses to marry him. The exchange of words between the father and daughter indicate the author's sympathies with the daughter: "Pitaji, take back your money. I am not going to marry this man."

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Short Stories of K.A. Abbas: Valorising the Common Man

Concluding part.....

" Bholi are you crazy?" Ram Lal shouted, "You want to disgrace your family? Have some regard for our izzat daughter." " For the sake of your izzat I was willing to marry this lame old man. But I will not have such a man, greedy and contemptible coward as my husband. I won't. I won't. I won't." And she reiterated her determination as if she was in the grip of hysteria. (The Walls of Glass 74)

'Flowers for her Feet' is yet another story in which sexual exploitation of a girl is depicted. Chandra, the dancing girl is harassed and exploited by all, especially the economic elite as the rich people think that women are commodities which can be bought or sold for money:

The matter was clear. Chandra was a drop of honey over which poisonous flies were hovering greedily. Her body was a machine to make money and everyone was trying to own it. (83)

There are more than half a dozen women characters in the stories of Abbas. All of them do not belong to one category. There are characters like Chandra in 'Flowers for her Feet', Bina in 'Twelve Hours', Zafrani in 'Saffron Blossoms' and the unnamed wife of Rehman Khan in the 'Sparrows' who represent traditional Indian women resigned to their fate. They accept the condition of oppression and subjugation as something inevitable. Durga in the story 'Rice' and Sylvia in the story with the same title form another category. They represent the enlightened women working with men folk and conscious of their role in the society. They are not merely domestic women confined to the chores of daily life but are equal participants in the socio-economic and political activities going on around them in the society. They represent the women rising and freeing themselves from the traditional bounds of slavery and subjugation. Mehmooda of the novel The World Is My Village and Ajitha of The Naxalites can also be included in this category. There is yet another category of women in the stories of Abbas. This includes worldly wise women like Radha in the story 'Cold Wave' published in the collection Thirteenth Victim and Other Stories (1986). The hero of the story Nirmal is a young graduate who falls in love with this girl Radha who is a prostitute. She also expresses her ardent love for him. Nirmal's father doesn't permit his son to marry Radha and threatens to disown him. When Radha comes to know that Nirmal will be disinherited of all the wealth of his parents, she rejects his love and addresses him in a very cold way as if he was a complete stranger. In a story titled 'Ajanta' published in the collection The Gun and Other Stories Abbas describes some women, both Hindu and Muslim, who rejoice in the cold blooded murder of victims of communal violence. Abbas was conscious of the struggles of people across the

world. He had travelled round the world and had met world leaders like Khrushchev, Roosevelt, Nehru and Indira Gandhi. As a journalist he kept an eye on the happenings around the world. This gave him an added advantage as a fiction writer as well. His canvas is vast and covers the issues of the entire humanity. The story 'The Black Sun' portrays the racial discrimination suffered by the Negroes in the United States and even at the UNO. The unnamed black lady who assists the black leader to enter UNO building describes how the black people were treated as second class citizens in the United States but when it came to fighting in the Korean War, they were sent to Korea to fight with the white American soldiers and die fighting an enemy whom they did not even know:

And then there was the Korean War and the white ones decided that though we blacks were not good enough to worship with them in their churches, or to send our children to their schools, or even to travel with them in the same railway compartment, we were good enough to be sent with them to this war to die along with white soldiers. (78)

Abbas is essentially a film director. Even in his short stories he is able to create such scenes which would make a grand climax in a film. The ability to visualize the irony in a grim event of death enables him to imagine the death of Young Henry who is shot dead in his school by a bullet fired by the white demonstrators who were opposing the admission of black students to the school where children of white Americans studied. Young Henry clasped the Bible close to his heart. That was all with which he could defend himself. The bullet hit at the very page where were written the Ten Commandments including the one- "Thou Shalt Not Kill." The whole incident is described so dramatically that it appears as if the incident was taking place right in front of the reader. Abbas was against all discrimination be it on the basis of race, colour, creed, gender or religion. He never misses a chance to attack such artificial divisions in his writings. In his autobiography I Am Not An Island he talks about these 'Walls of Glass':

I dared to suggest it was not a question of the colour at all. Otherwise why should white complexioned Nazis be persecuting equally white complexioned Jews? Why should the 'Yellow' Japanese be overrunning the territory of Yellow Chinese? Briefly, I stated the historical interrelation between imperialism, militarism, capitalism and Fascism. (158) In the Indian context it is the caste-based prejudice against the untouchables. Though the Dalit movement had not become sufficiently visible during the time Abbas was writing but still there are stories in which Abbas depicts Dalits getting united and asserting their rights. The close reading of the writings of Abbas reveals

that the spirit of defiance expressed through organized collective strength becomes more pronounced in the later writings of the author. Abbas is an admirer of Gandhi in the initial phase, becomes an ardent supporter of Nehru and also an admirer of Indira Gandhi but towards the later part of his career he developed admiration for the revolutionary movements specially that of Naxalism which he depicted in the novel The Naxalites. In the story 'The Gun' published in the collection The Gun and Other Stories (1985), depicts the uprising of the untouchables. Ruldo, a young Harijan boy draws a bucket full of water from the Pucca well in his village. The village priest sees him do this. As a result a collective fine of one hundred and fifty rupees is imposed on the Harijans of the village. If not paid, they were threatened of dire consequences. But these villagers who had always served the upper caste people without ever raising a question are not scared now:

Now the Harijan Khet Mazdoors were also very defiant. They replied, "Today only Ruldo came - tomorrow all of us will come to the well with our buckets and pots. We will see who dares to stop us. (80) Aradhika Sharma, in her review of the collection An Evening in Lucknow talks of the relevance of the stories of Abbas in 21st Century. She remarks, "K. A. Abbas's stories, written years ago, are as relevant to this day and age as they were half a decade ago. He has written on the themes of poverty, sadness, rural issues, people beset with hunger and oppression. His are stories of the ordinary people, the aam aadami log who are always around us but (thanks to the globalised glitz we prefer to soak in) we are not really interested in. Neither do we like to read stories about them nor watch them in TV serials or even look at or acknowledge them when we pass them by. (The Tribune, Dec.4, 2011) Suresh Kohli, who edited the autobiography of K.A. Abbas and also the last collection of the stories, also makes some very relevant remarks about his stories:

Abbas raised a silent furrow in his vast attempts at creative communication. He was an unabashed admirer of Ernest Miller Hemingway's narrative of combining fact with fiction to tell some simple, direct, humanistic stories without being moralistic or judgmental. There is nothing epic or ephemeral about the narratives that are generally full of pathos, dealing with everyday mundane experiences, and are characterized by understatement. And even though some of them have seemingly been culled out of journalistic reports, they are apolitical, but reflective of the times.

He further comments about the narratives chosen by Abbas, his characters and the way he treated his themes. It is interesting to note that the stories written by Abbas do not have a single outstanding historical figure as a hero. His narratives

are drawn from every day life and so are the characters. In fact, none of the stories have a hero in the traditional sense of the term. Nor are there any typical villains in the stories. As a leading progressive writer of the country, Abbas knew very well that the socio-political and economic conditions and forces were responsible for the condition of the society. So, if one were to look for the villains in his stories, one would find them in the form of socio-political and economic conditions at a given time. Kohli writes:

Abbas...had a greater awareness of the changing scenario and growing reality around him. His stories had compassion devoid of any romanticism that characterized the work of his contemporaries. Each character in his stories, consciously or unconsciously, had a reason for his action.

The stories are both in rural and urban settings and provide an insight into his thinking both as a writer and a journalist with a social awareness. In his preface to one of his early short story collections, he observed: "A few stories may provoke high-brow critics living in isolated ivory towers to utter the dread word 'Propaganda'. But these stories are basically not about plans, projects, or policies of the government. They are about men and women, our contemporaries, the people of a new India, and how their subjective 'inner life' (their moments of tenderness and passion, frustration and exultation) are inexorably being changed by the dynamics of life, in which the positive values of socialism (even where hesitantly and half-heartedly adopted by our government) are playing their own part...there are no heroines or villains in these stories which are primarily concerned with the loves and hates of the people, their urges to work, to fight for their rights, even to commit violence in fits of blind passion, of ordinary human beings - men and women!"

Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, while making his films also chose young men and women from the ordinary life as actors. In Dharti Ke Lal, a film that he made for the Progressive writers Association of India, it was principally decided that the cast will include the members of the Association only. Literature, journalism and films were the media to approach the masses and depict their lives with a mission to bring about a progressive transformation in their lives. This was perhaps the motto behind all his works. The short stories are no exception. Carol J. Slingo while paying K.A. Abbas a tribute at the time of his death rightly said- "Khwaja Ahmed Abbas died on June 1, 1987 after 41 years as the most prominent voice of the left in Indian commercial films. While other political filmmakers addressed their work to educated viewers, he spent his life trying to reach the mass, more or less uneducated, audience of millions.

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Maharana Pratap Birth anniversary Celebrations

Udaipur : Maharana Pratap Smarak Samiti celebrated the 476th birth anniversary of Maharana Pratap by conducting yagya and prayers at Moti Magri Smarak early this morning. The program was attended by Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar, president of the samiti and Mayor Chandra Singh Kothari. Yudhveer Singh Shaktawat, secretary of the samiti informed that every year samiti organized special programs to mark the historic occasion of Pratap Jayanti. This year too it was a merciful environment at Moti Magri. Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar conducted yagya and offered garland to the statue of Maharana Pratap. Thereafter four riders of Legendary Riders of Scenic Mewar 6001 Club proceeded to Kargil Tour on Bike as a part of the awareness tour. Colorful procession was also carried out today by Mewar Shatriya Mahasabha to mark the Birth Anniversary of Maharana Pratap. Tens and hundreds of people from various communities and social organizations took part in the event which begins from Moti Magri by garlanding Pratap's gigantic statue. A grand celebration was held at Gogunda the place of Coronation of Maharana Pratap to mark the 476th birth anniversary. The town was decorated and a large number of people were accumulated in the procession. Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar, Trustee of Maharana Mewar Charitable Foundation, Sachin Pilot, President of Rajasthan Congress Party, Girija Vyas, ex Cabinet Minister, Lal Singh Jhala President of Udaipur District Congress and many prominent personalities attended the event.

