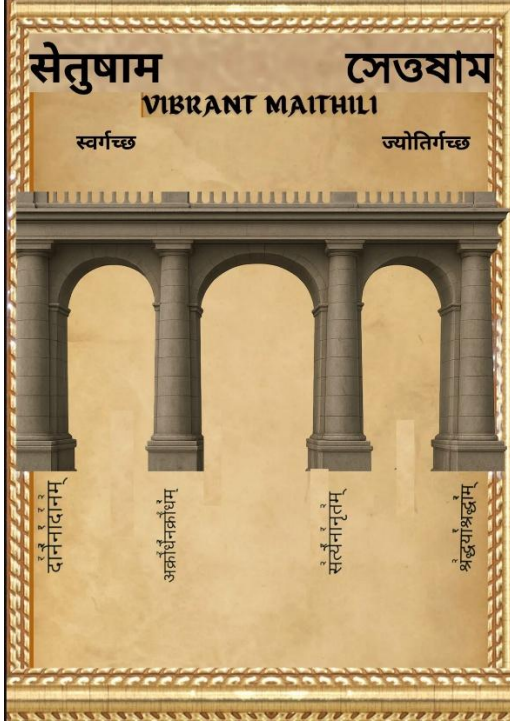




Setushama: Vibrant Maithili

*[Focusing on the literary works of
Gajendra Thakur and Preeti
Thakur in the Maithili language-
2nd Volume]*

Editor: Ashish Anchinhar

Translation from Maithili into
English: Gajendra Thakur

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सेतुषाम Setusham: Vibrant Maithili
Editor: Ashish Anchinhar

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We offer worship to the Comely-formed, for the sake of protection, like the easily-milking cow to the milker, day after day.

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We invoke you, the Lord of the hosts (Ganapati)... - Blessings
(Ashish Anchinhar)

May Varuna and Mitra lead us on the path of righteousness... -
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(Presented by Ashish Anchinhar)

Saraswati, with her banner, awakens the great flood of consciousness. She illuminates all intellects.

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May the Soma-bearing Fathers purify me, may the Grandfathers purify me, may the Great-Grandfathers purify me, with the purifying filter that grants a hundred years of life. May the Grandfathers purify me, may the Great-Grandfathers purify me, with the purifying filter that grants a hundred years of life, so that I may attain the full span of life.

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****Dedication****

****To the Creator****

We invoke you, Ganapati, the leader of the celestial hosts, the most renowned among the sages.

We invoke Brihaspati, the eldest and supreme ruler, the Brahmana (lord of prayer). Listen to us with your strengthening powers and occupy your seat (in the sacrificial chamber).

The meaning of the Samaveda is the "Veda of Song," that is, a Veda that can be sung. The Rigveda Samhita is meant for recitation, not singing. The recitation of the Rigveda is based on three accents: Udatta, Anudatta, and Svarita (including their sub-variants). Later, those hymns of the Rigveda that could be sung were compiled, and by adding some more hymns to them, a new Veda was created:

the 'Samaveda'. In the Gita, Krishna considers the Samaveda the most important among the Vedas; the reason behind that is singing. Since Krishna himself is an artist (a flute player), it was natural for him to give importance to the Samaveda. This is a natural and simple matter.

There is a tradition that the folk song 'Sohar' became the melodic basis for the singing of the Samaveda. If we believe this tradition, it can be said that the basis of Sanskrit singing was the folk song Sohar. The three notes (Shadaj-Sa, Rishabh-Re, Gandhar-Ga) of Sohar became the foundation for the early singing of the Samaveda. Later, the remaining notes were also developed. Almost all music scholars believe that the basis of

Indian classical music is the Samaveda. That is, if the tradition is considered correct, then the fundamental basis of Indian classical music became the folk song Sohar. There were more than 1000 branches (methods or ways of singing) of Samaveda singing, as Panini indicates in his Mahabhashya. But at present, there are three branches of it: the Kauthumiya branch, the Ranayaniya branch, and the Jaiminiya branch. In most of North India, including Mithila, the Kauthumiya branch is prevalent, but other branches are also recited.

Since the singing of the Samaveda was inspired by folk language, it had to adopt many elements from it, which is why the then Rigvedic scholars also opposed it. In the Rigveda, only the words present in

the original mantra are recited, but for singing, lines suitable for breath are needed. Therefore, in the singing of the Samaveda, in addition to the original mantra, other meaningful lines are also sung to make it rhythmic and appealing to the people. In the Kauthumiya, Ranayaniya, and Jaiminiya branches, the practice of providing those meaningful words along with the original mantra differs in each. The number of mantras also varies according to each branch. There is also a provision for how long to pause on which syllable of a word, and it is indicated in their own ways. There are fixed rules for how many times a word from the mantra and words taken separately from the mantra are to be sung, according to each branch. What is called the 'Tek' in folk songs (like 'Lalana re' in Sohar, 'Ram...' in Bisahari

songs, etc.) was also adopted. The Tek usually has no meaning of its own, but it completes the singing. In the Samaveda, this Tek is named "Stobha". The Stobha of the Kauthumiya branch of the Samaveda is 'Ha uha'. The Stobha in other branches also varies accordingly. In the Kauthuma branch of the Samaveda, in the Aranya Gana, there is a mantra called "Setushama". The original form of this mantra is as follows:

Ahamasmi prathamaja rtasya
purvam devebhyo amritasya
nama.

Yo ma dadati sa
idevamavadahamannamannama
dantamadmi.

The meaning of this mantra is: "I
am the first-born of the cosmic

order (Rita), I existed even before the gods, and my name is Amrita (immortality). He who gives me, he indeed protects me. I am the food, and I also eat the eater of food." In short, it can be understood that this mantra describes that form of the cosmos which is present in everything and in which everything is present. But when this mantra is sung as a Sama, see what its form becomes:

Hau-hau-hau. Setumistara. (Three times). Dustaran. (Twice thrice). Danenadanam. (Three times). Hau-hau-hau.

Ahamasmiprathamaja ṛtasya.
 Hau-hau-hau. Setumistara. (Three times). Dustaran. (Twice thrice). Akrodhenakrodham. (Twice). Akrodhenakrodham. Hau-hau-hau. Purvamdevebhyo amṛtasyanama. Hau-hau-hau.

Setumistara. (Three times).
Dustaran. (Twice thrice).
Shraddhayashraddham. (Three times). Hau-hau-hau. Yomadadati
sa idevamayaṭ. Hau-hau-hau.
Setumistara. (Three times).
Dustaran. (Twice thrice).
Satyenanṛtam. (Three times). Hau-
hau-hau.
Ahamannamannamadantamaḍmi
. Hau-hau-hauva. Esha gatih.
(Three times). Etadamṛtam.
(Three times). Svargaccha. (Three
times). Jyotirgaccha. (Three
times). Setumistīrtvācatura.

(Samaveda/Kauthumiya/Samhita
/Aranyakageya/Prapathaka
2.1/Arkaparva/Svargyam
Setushama)

In addition to the original text, in
this singing, words like

Setum'stara, Dustaran,
 Danenadanam,
 Akrodhenakrodham,
 Shraddhayashraddham,
 Satyenamṛtam, Esha gatih (three
 times), Etadamṛtam (three times),
 Svargaccha (three times),
 Jyotirgaccha (three times),
 Setumistīrtvācatura, etc., have
 been added. Along with this,
 instructions are written on how
 many times a word is to be sung,
 for example, Setum'stara (three
 times). Here, 'three times' written
 in brackets means that it is to be
 sung three times here. Other
 editors also indicate this by
 writing the number 3. Other
 symbols can be learned from a
 knowledgeable Vedic reciter.

The simple meaning of the other
 texts added in the above mantra,
 as I understand it, is: "Build four

bridges, cross four obstacles." What are the obstacles and how to cross them? These obstacles are Anger, Greed, Disbelief, and Untruth (Falsehood). How to cross these four? Cross the obstacle named Anger with the bridge of non-anger, i.e., peace. Cross the obstacle named Greed with the bridge of charity. Cross the obstacle named Disbelief with the bridge of faith. Cross the obstacle named Untruth (Falsehood) with the bridge of truth. Go towards heaven, go towards light. Now, if you combine the meaning of the original mantra and the added text, you will understand that whoever crosses these four obstacles becomes that very form of the cosmos which is present in everything and in which everything is present. Later, these sentences were also used in other texts according to the time, for example, see a verse from the

Mahabharata:

Akrodhena jayet krodham.
Asadhum sadhuna jayet.

Jayet kadaryam danena. Jayet
satyena canritam.

(Mahabharata/Udyoga/39/73)

Anger can be conquered by peace,
a wicked person by good conduct,
a miser by charity, and falsehood
by truth. In the texts of Buddhism,
these very things were written in
the contemporary language.

In this world, some people are
such that their morality works in
every situation of life within moral
bounds, and in other words, it can
be said that such people keep their
personal life and social life as
similar as possible. If such people

are associated with writing work, their writing and conduct remain consistent. Among such people is Gajendra Thakur. In his life, Gajendra Thakur has crossed the four obstacles by building the four bridges of the Setushama mantra of the Samaveda and continues to inspire others to do the same.

Not only in personal life, but Gajendra Thakur has also crossed obstacles in literature by building bridges. There are mainly four obstacles in Maithili literature. First - Platforms, Garlands, Microphones; Second - Awards; Third - Literary Theft; Fourth - Not letting others move forward, not helping. Gajendra Thakur is away from literary platforms, garlands, and microphones, is not in the race for awards, has exposed literary thieves by name, and Gajendra Thakur has brought forward more

writers in the last 40-50 years than anyone else had. The literature of a language in which these four obstacles are crossed becomes vibrant.

This is the second book edited by me on the contribution of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur to Maithili literature. If put in other words, it would also be correct to say now that "this is the second book edited by someone on the contribution of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur to Maithili literature." My first edited book was "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili," which was appreciated for its name, presentation, and the quality of its articles. And I received this information through various means, bits and pieces, etc. No significant review or criticism

came for that book of mine, and that was nothing new for me. This is the identity of Maithili literature. Still, four reviews did come to my notice, which were all published together in Videha issue 398, July 15, 2024.

But despite the obstacles, the fact that we could edit a second book on the contribution of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur, the real people worthy of thanks for that are the writers and readers of Maithili, with whose creative cooperation we could reach this point. While editing this second book, I have exercised some precautions, which it seems appropriate to share with the readers, such as:

- 1) For the readers, the book "Preeti

Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili" was the original book. That is, it is neither possible nor necessary that all the information contained in it can now come into a second or third book. But even so, in many ways, these two books complement each other. The reason is that this book contains articles on those subjects that were not in the first edited book "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili." However, despite this, some subjects still could not be covered, such as "Research articles published in Videha," etc. For the work Gajendra Thakur did for the language, I could not collect any articles for this book either. The reason is the same as I wrote in the preface of the first book. Until now, no significant criticism has been made of all the literature written by Gajendra Thakur, especially his children's literature.

It is expected that in the future, evaluations of various subjects related to Gajendra Thakur and Videha will happen.

2) From the writers who wrote in the first edited book "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili," I intended not to have them write in this book, but this was not a strict rule. Therefore, if the writers from the first book wrote on other subjects, I have included them in this book. However, this number is small (only two), which has brought novelty to this book.

3) In the first edited book, both old and new articles were compiled, whereas this book contains only new ones.

4) As I have made it a rule for every special issue and every edited book, accordingly, in this book too, I have got articles written from such writers who either do not consider themselves writers or whom the mainstream of Maithili literature does not consider writers. But despite that, they all write for Videha, and the result is that the book gets a multi-dimensional quality. It does not appear framed like an edited book in the mainstream often does.

5) Lok-Veda is the greatest saying of Mithila, in which Lok (folk) comes first and Veda comes after. So, just as the presentation of the first edited book "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili" was based on Maithili folk songs, the presentation of this second book is imbued with the aura of

the Vedas. This could also be one reason why Sanskrit mantras are given in some issues of Videha and in books. There is a very old tradition of Vedic recitation and study in Mithila. Many scholars believe that the Riga of present-day Sitamarhi was famous for the Rigveda, while the Jajuar of present-day Muzaffarpur was famous for the Yajurveda, and due to that, the name of this village became Yajuara, which is pronounced as Jajuar. Jajuar is also my maternal uncle's village. In this book, you will see that along with the index, you will find details of mantras, symbols (Anjis), etc., along with information from Videha. For a general reader, this is like a treasure. When the reader reads both of my edited books, the presentation of both books will seem similar in tone to them, but the flavor will be different. And I

have done this knowingly and deliberately. From the beginning to the end of this book, Vedic hymns have been used intermittently to connect one part to another. For example, a hymn is used for the index, a hymn for the preface, a hymn for the list of works of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur, a hymn for the Preeti Thakur section, a hymn for the Gajendra Thakur section, a hymn for the contributor introductions, and finally a hymn for all the readers – meaning a total of 7 hymns have been used.

6) In this book, the list of contributions of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur is being provided again. This list was also in "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili". I have done this work only for the convenience

of the ordinary reader. I think that for whatever reason, whether good or bad, is being said about the authors in question, the ordinary reader should have a common basis for it. For additional remaining information, such as the introduction of Gajendra-Preeti Thakur, their published books, etc., the reader will have to read "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili".

7) In the first edited book "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili", there was no article by me on Gajendra Thakur. In this book too, no article by me about him will be found. I have some articles on him, and certainly, by adding more articles to them, I will present a separate book before you all. The work of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur, how much work they have, cannot be

known from just two edited books.

8) For the special issues of Videha, I also approach those people for articles, inform them, who are staunch opponents of me, Videha, or Gajendra Thakur. And for this book too, I have done the same. A few people may say that they did not receive information, so my request to them is that they at least check their WhatsApp, Facebook, or email message boxes (inboxes). I hope that the result of this effort of mine will be visible in this book, including the special issues of Videha.

9) As far as I know, this book is the second such book in Maithili in which the contributions of a writer couple (husband and wife) have been evaluated together. The first

book is "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili" edited by me. There is a detailed discussion on this subject in the first edited book. If we talk about magazine issues, then even in the entire Maithili, the Lakshman Jha 'Sagar' special issue (published in 2022) published in Videha magazine is such an issue in which, for the first time, an attempt was made to evaluate both the husband (Lakshman Jha) and wife (Shail Jha) together in a single issue. After that, Videha did this same work in the Narendra Jha special issue and the Shivshankar Srinivas special issue. And there is no need to tell you all that the editor of Videha magazine is Gajendra Thakur.

10) If you are reading the PDF of this book, and you see any word or line underlined in blue or any

different color, understand that a link has been provided there for reference, and if you click on it, that link will open. Links have also been provided in some photos. Through this medium, readers can study the references in less time. However, this facility is not available in the book published in print.

11) When you read the articles given at the beginning of this book on the contribution of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur to Maithili, and then read the article by Mukesh Anand ji at the end, you will understand what the world of Maithili is like. Whatever that world of Maithili may be, there is no doubt that Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur will continue their contribution to Maithili.

12) If the reader has a problem with any subject, starting from spelling, then first, they should read the preface of "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili". In this book too, I hold the same views.

General information about the seven hymns used in this book is given below, but I have deliberately not provided information about the deity, meter, and sage of those hymns. My purpose is that the reader studies the Vedas along with this book.

For the Index-

Surupakritnumutaye - Just as a cow that gives sweet and

nutritious milk every day is cherished, similarly, we invoke Indra, the performer of beautiful sacrificial rites, for our protection. This is the basic meaning. In literature, the protectors of the sacrificial fire, which is like an edited book, are the participating writers. As an editor, I invite the participating writers just as the rishi was invoking Indra in the Rigveda. (Rigveda Samhita, Mandala-1, Sukta-4, Mantra 1)

For the Preface-

Gananaam tva Ganapatim
havamahe - O Ganapati, Lord of
the hosts, we invoke you. You are
the best among the wise (kavis)
and the supreme. You are also the
lord of Brahman (Brahmanaspati).
Listen to our prayer and kindly
come before us and be seated.

(Rigveda Samhita, Mandala-2,
Sukta-23, Mantra 1)

For the List of Works-

Rijuneeti no Varuno Mitro - The wise gods Mitra and Varuna lead us all on the path of straightforward policy. Aryama, the companion of the gods, makes us all progressive along the straightforward path. (Rigveda, Mandala-1, Sukta-90, Mantra 1)

For the Preeti Thakur Section-

Maho Arnah Saraswati - Goddess Saraswati, who, in the form of a river, flows with abundant water. That goddess Saraswati, who awakens good intellect, sharpens the wisdom of all the worshippers. (Rigveda Samhita, Mandala-1, Sukta-3, Mantra 12)

For the Gajendra Thakur Section-

Punantu ma Pitarah - May the Fathers, filled with Soma, pure, purify me with the purifier for a long life. May the Grandfathers purify me. May the Great-Grandfathers purify me. May the Grandfathers, pure, purify me with the purifier for a long life. May the Great-Grandfathers purify me. Thus, inspired by you all, may I, benefiting from a pure life, utilize my full lifespan. (Yajurveda, Chapter 19, Mantra 37)

For the Contributor Introductions-

Namo Ganebhyo
Ganapatibhyashcha - Salutations
to the hosts (Ganas) and the lords
of the hosts (Ganapatis).

Salutations to the Vratas (assemblies / bodily organizations) and the lords of the Vratas (Vratapatis). Salutations to the Gritsa (the wise / the subtle-minded) and the lords of the Gritsa (Gritsapatis). Salutations to the Virupa (unusual / divine form) and the Vishvarupa (omnipresent / multiformed). (Yajurveda, Chapter 16, Mantra 25)

For all the readers-

Madhumatiroshadhirghava - May the sky be honey-sweet for us all, may the space be honey-sweet, may the medicinal herbs be honey-sweet, and may the lord of the field also be honey-sweet. Having attained immortality, becoming its follower, may we roam the entire world. (Atharvaveda, Kanda-20, Sukta 143, Mantra 8)

Now this book is in the hands of the readers; they can tell me whatever they feel. I will respectfully preserve their suggestions for the next edition of this book and for future editing work.

- Ashish Anchinhaar

*****Rijuneeti no Varuno Mitro
nayatu vidwan. Aryama devaih
sajoshaah. *****

Here, the specialties of Gajendra Thakur and Preeti Thakur and some of the works done by them in Maithili language and literature that are the first for Maithili are given:

1) Preeti Thakur is a full-time children's literature writer in Maithili. She herself draws the pictures for her picture stories. The imaginary pictures of some heroes isolated from the mainstream of Mithila have been drawn by her. Readers can see the pictures of these heroes in her picture stories.

2) Preeti Thakur is the creator of the first picture story in Maithili.

First, in 2002, she translated a picture story named "Chhot A Paigh" and in the year 2008, her original Maithili picture story "Gonu Jha A Aan Maithili Chitrakatha" was published.

3) The first presence of Maithili on the internet was the blog "Bhalsarik Gachh" run by Gajendra Thakur, which existed from the year 2000.

4) Samdiya is the first literary blog in Maithili, which Gajendra Thakur created in 2004.

5) Gajendra Thakur is the first person to bring the Panji into the public domain, in digital and book form for the common people. He completed the work of digitizing the Panji around the year 2007. For this work, those two other people from whom Gajendra ji received assistance have been included as

editors in this work. In the year 2007 itself, he gave a copy of it to Anshuman Pandey without any conditions, so that Pandey ji could complete his research from the University of Michigan, USA. The subject of the research was "Recasting the Brahmin in Medieval Mithila: Origins of Caste Identity among the Maithil Brahmins of North Bihar". This research was published in 2014, and on page 22 of it, Anshuman ji has acknowledged the aforementioned work of Gajendra Thakur ji.

Before Gajendra Thakur, the Genealogical Society of Utah (United States) came forward for the preservation of the Panji, but they built an archive for themselves, not for the society. For this, with the help of some local people, they reached the

Panjikars, and the Panjikars received some money, and it is very likely that the local guides also received funds. The common public cannot use the Panji archive that is with the Genealogical Society of Utah because the Genealogical Society took it by paying money; now its digital form is their property, which they use for their own research. Nowadays, many people are found saying that the Panjikars do not cooperate in giving the Panji; perhaps that is a result of the work of the Genealogical Society. The Panjikars would have thought that someone else would come again and take it by paying money. But in contrast, Gajendra Thakur, with his willpower and hard work, made the things of Mithila accessible to the people of the entire country at both digital and print levels for Mithila. An idea of

how secretive the digital work of the Genealogical Society people is can be gauged from the fact that Bhairav Lal Das, who is a good scholar, commented on one of my Facebook posts that even after much searching, he could not find the Genealogical Society people. The screenshot of the comment is given at the end. The link to my Facebook post is: <https://www.facebook.com/anchinhar/posts/pfbid02Sr82dVYSSAYf8JoFZ2ZvjcfY8R6WTPPUfxbuuPoJC9yQv13dAJ3S6PjNUNgQBp6nl>

6) Gajendra Thakur is the first person to make Dushan Panji public. This is the first attempt since the beginning of the Panji to make it public. For this work, Gajendra Thakur received threats and abuses in his emails.

7) Videha is the first e-magazine of Maithili, which has been running since the year 2008 and whose

founder is Gajendra Thakur. <http://videha.co.in/> This is under the new name of the blog Bhalsarik Gachh. That means the predecessor of Videha is 'Bhalsarik Gachh'.

8) Videha magazine is the first Maithili magazine to receive an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number). Immediately after that, Gajendra Thakur has directly helped those magazines which received ISSN.

9) Videha is the first Maithili magazine that is published in more than one script (Devanagari, Tirhuta, Braille, Kaithi, Newari, IPA, Brahmi, Kharosthi, Urdu, Tibetan, and Tibetan-Ume). Videha does this work through the technique of Transliteration. A simple question may arise in the reader's mind: do the editor of Videha or the people associated

with it know all these scripts? The simple answer to that is that it is not necessarily mandatory. Although it is based on Transliteration technology, it can certainly be considered a symbol of interest and self-study. It is very possible that on the strength of this self-study, people associated with Videha may become experts.

10) The first digital library of Maithili was started by Videha in the year 2008.

11) Gajendra Thakur is the first Aruji of Maithili (Aruji means one knowledgeable about the prosody of Ghazals and its pioneer). Gajendra Thakur is the person who reintroduced Vedic meters through the medium of Ghazals.

12) Gajendra Thakur is one of the trio of editors of the first computer-based dictionary of Maithili.

13) The first book in Maithili in Braille script is by Gajendra Thakur ji. This book is the novel named "Sahasrabadhani".

14) Gajendra Thakur ji has the most books in Tirhuta script.

15) Gajendra Thakur is the first editor in Maithili who publishes issues of a magazine in more than one script.

16) The first blog for literary translation on the internet is <http://Madhubani-art.blogspot.com>, which was created by Gajendra Thakur ji.

17) A blog for children's literature on the internet came under the name "Nena-Bhutka", which has existed since 2009 and was created by Gajendra Thakur.

18) The first effort for Maithili Wikipedia was made by Gajendra

Thakur in the year 2008, various translation works continued until 2013, and in 2014, Maithili Wikipedia received approval. Wikipedia is a community project in which all work is done for the society without payment.

19) Videha is the first aggregator of Maithili, where a list of various other internet sites of Maithili is found.

20) The first effort for Google Translation was made by Gajendra Thakur in 2011, and Google approved it in May 2022. Google Translation is a community project.

21) The first blog focused on Maithili drama is "Videha Maithili Natya Utsav", which has existed since August 2011 and was created by Gajendra Thakur.

22) Videha: Sadeha: The first

Tirhuta (Mithilakshar) blog, whose link is <http://videha-sadeha.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

23) Videha: Braille: The first blog in Maithili in Braille script, whose link is <http://videha-braille.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

24) Videha Radio: The first podcast site of Maithili, whose link is <http://videha123radio.wordpress.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

25) Videha Maithili Sign Language - The first Maithili sign language blog, whose link is <https://maithili-sign-language.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

26) Videha Brahmi - The first blog in Maithili in Brahmi script, whose link is <https://maithili->

brahmi.blogspot.com/. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

27) Videha Kharosthi - The first blog in Maithili in Kharosthi script, whose link is <https://maithili-kharoshthi.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

28) In Videha Kaithi script - The first blog in Maithili in Kaithi script, whose link is <https://maithili-kaithi.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

29) In Videha Newari script - The first blog in Maithili in Newari script, whose link is <https://maithili-newari.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

30) In Videha IPA script - The first blog in Maithili in IPA, whose link is <https://maithili-ipa.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is

Gajendra Thakur.

31) Videha- The first blog in Maithili in Urdu Nastaliq script, whose link is <https://maithili-urdu.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

32) Videha- The first blog in Maithili in Tibetan script, whose link is <https://maithili-tibetan.blogspot.com/>. Its founder is Gajendra Thakur.

33) The credit for translating Japanese poetry forms Tanka/Senryu/Haibun into Maithili goes to Gajendra Thakur ji. Before this, only Haiku existed in Maithili. Since 2008, there is also a blog for Maithili Haiku/Tanka/Senryu/Haibun, where Haiku have been collected from Videha's Facebook version. This blog can be seen at this address: <http://maithili->

haiku.blogspot.com/

34) "Shruti Publication" is the result of the combined efforts of Gajendra Thakur (Creative Idea) and Nagendra Kumar Jha (Resources+Technical Approach). Shruti Publication is the first standard publisher of Maithili. Standard publisher means one who publishes books without taking money, and despite that, the copyright remains with the author. This publication has published more than 100 books so far, which includes my book "Anchinhar Akhar" (2011).

The above list has been taken from my book titled "Maithili Web Patrakarita ka Itihas". Readers can obtain detailed information by reading that book. This is not the final list. Many 'first' works might have escaped my notice, which I

will provide in the future. Additionally, there are some such first things whose description is in various articles within the book. Incidentally, here I would also like to inform the reader that, observing the work of Videha, the name of a meter (behr) used in Maithili Ghazals has been kept as Behr-e-Videha. Its detailed discussion is found in my Ghazal collection "Kumari Ichchha". It is also requested that if any reader disagrees with my preface, the list provided by me, or any fact given in the articles of this book, or if that work was done even before the 'first' work mentioned in this book, then please come with references, and I will make immediate corrections accordingly.

[illegible]

two centuries.

The largest hinderance to a proper study of *pañjī prabandha* and other aspects of brahminical society in north Bihar during the medieval period is access to sources and the paucity of primary sources on this topic. While the *pañjī* records offer a vast amount of detail on Maithil Brahmins, the records themselves are difficult to access. The difficulty is not one of language or script or completeness of content; rather, it is one of privilege. The *pañjikara*-s whose families have maintained these records for generations are often reluctant to allow others to pursue their records. It is a matter of 'intellectual property' to them. I was fortunate enough to receive a complete digitized set of *pañjī* records from Gajendra Thakur of New Delhi in 2007. I was allow permitted to browse through transcriptions of records that are in the possession of Hetukar Jha of Patna in 2013. The second limitation is the lack of historical records about the general society, culture, and polity of the Karnata period. Several scholars have complained about this.⁴³ Apart from the genealogical records, there are very few sources directly related to the origins of the records. Although *pañjī prabandha* took place during Karnata rule, the kings of this dynasty left no epigraphic sources, such as copper-plate grants to Brahmins. The absence is quite curious because the *pañjī* records provide ample proof of Brahmin settlements in north Bihar. Equally curious is that there are epigraphical sources from the borderlands of Mithila slightly preceding and during Karnata rule, which show land grants being made to Brahmins in areas of north Bihar. Moreover,

⁴³Sircar, *Studies in the Society and Administration of Ancient and Medieval India*, 140; Chaudhary, "Political History of North Bihar," 281.

****Presentation - Ashish
Anchinhaar****

*****Maho Arnah Saraswati pra
chetayati ketuna. Dhiyo vishwa
vi rajati.*****

*****Section-1: Preeti Thakur*****

****A Proficient Writer of the
Child's Mind - Mrs. Preeti
Thakur****

****Munni Kamat****

For any creation, the first churning, the first foundation, and the first brick standing on it are of great importance. Because any skyscraper built afterwards imitates only that. In Maithili children's literature, it is Mrs. Preeti Thakur who, along with the first conceptualization of the picture story, also gave it the form of a book. Whatever the creation, it has to go through many stages. Just as a potter, from the clay scattered here and there in the field, creates skilled and well-shaped utensils. Any construction, is it easy? Construction has always

been difficult. Building literature and building children's literature are two different streams. One is a shower of words, the other is the simplicity of emotion. Therefore, building children's literature becomes a bit more difficult than building literature. To create children's literature, the writer first has to become a child of that age; only then is the exchange of emotions possible. Excellent creation in children's literature happens by incorporating the child's mind into a conscious body. Based on this very notion, the children's literature of respected Preeti Thakur is proving its worth.

Who does not know the respected Shri Gajendra Thakur, who, like the sun, awakens Maithili literature with his light? His better half is Mrs. Preeti Thakur. In Maithili literature, very few such couples are seen who are

completely dedicated to their mother tongue. Just as the future of a building is based on its foundation, similarly the future of a language is based on its children's literature. The stronger our linguistic foundation, the more vast and robust its future will be. Perhaps this was the reason that attracted writer Preeti Thakur towards children's literature. Living in the Mithila literary environment, Preeti Thakur's literary creation is very mature. Her childhood was spent in a joint family, in the affection of her grandparents. Before this creation, her identity is that of a mother who understands the child's feelings and interests. She saw the children's attraction and churned her own childhood memories, the result of which is the various children's literature written by her, which are as

follows:

1. Gonu Jha A Aan Maithili Chitrakatha (Gonu Jha and Other Maithili Picture Stories)
2. Maithili Chitrakatha (Maithili Picture Stories)
3. Mithila ka Lokdevta (Folk Deities of Mithila)
4. Vidyapati ka Purush Pariksha (Vidyapati's Examination of Men)

'Gonu Jha A Aan Maithili Chitrakatha' is the first picture story book in Maithili children's literature, composed by Preeti Thakur and published by Shruti Publication in 2008 AD. This children's literature is based on the mythological stories of Gonu Jha, the great scholar, clever, and wise man of Mithila. Almost every Maithil must have heard these stories from their grandparents. These stories have been given the

form of a book, along with incorporating some other mythological stories. The specialty of this book is its artwork, which attracts the child's mind. All the stories are crafted very interestingly with simplicity and ease. This simplicity makes it excellent at the child psychological level.

Her second book is 'Maithili Chitrakatha'. In this book, composed by Mrs. Preeti Thakur and published by Shruti Publication in 2009 AD, a total of 10 mythological stories have been beautifully described through picture stories. Mythological stories like Vidyapati, Raja Saheb, Dina Bhadari, etc., have found their place in this book.

The third, 'Mithila ka Lokdevta', composed by Preeti Thakur, was published by Shruti Publication in

2010 AD. This book contains within itself 18 picture stories and 6 folk-prevalent anecdotes. The story of Baghia (the tiger) included in this collection reminded me of my own childhood. The 18 picture stories included in it are very attractive. A speciality of Preeti Thakur's writing is that, incorporating the traditions of Mithila, she introduces the child to both their culture and history.

Her fourth book is 'Vidyapati ka Purush Pariksha'. Purush Pariksha is a versified text composed by Vidyapati. This book of Vidyapati was translated into Hindi by Chandrakant Pathak in 1927 AD. This book is an invaluable text composed in prose-poetry verse. The stories described in it contain the historicity of their time along with excellent knowledge and inspiration. The new experiment that Preeti Thakur has done in her

fourth book to arouse children's interest in stories is commendable. In the preface of this book, the writer herself writes:

"Take the original stories from Chandrakant Pathak's 1927 published Purush Pariksha open source book, kids.

After reading the stories from the link given above, you have to identify the stories whose pictures are drawn below. Line drawings of 25 stories from the above-mentioned stories are given below. Give titles to all of them, leave space for dialogues in the photos, and fill colors in the remaining space."

Through this book, children are developing in many ways at once. Entertainment along with a lot of knowledge. A very good and beautiful effort has been made by

the writer to hand over their heritage to the new generation. Her translation work is also commendable. The work done in her mother tongue on the child's first book shows how serious and relevant her thinking is for children's literature. My best wishes for her literary journey.

****Preeti Thakur's Contribution to Maithili Picture Stories****

****Ira Mallick****

The world of Maithili literature is enriched with scholars and learned women. Remarkable litterateurs, novelists, story writers, poets, critics, and reviewers have been enriching Maithili literature by giving their invaluable contributions. In that same sequence, for the first time in another genre, the picture story writing style, Mrs. Preeti Thakur ji has provided a new and distinctive direction. Maithili folk tales have been read, written, or heard orally or in writing since ancient times. But this new experiment to preserve folk tales for children through the medium of picture stories is extremely commendable

and memorable. Preeti Thakur is a full-time such litterateur in Maithili literature who, by creating pictures for her picture stories, connected it to the literary mainstream. The importance of a picture story is self-evident; it is inherently impactful, where any matter is clearly communicated through pictures. Stories and tales are the most beloved genre for the child's mind. When the origin of script had not occurred, the origin of listening emerged to express the meaning of the story through language. While listening to the story, the image that was imprinted on the mental screen of the listener or the storyteller, the imagery that emerged, from that very place originated the art of painting. We easily see its direction in cave paintings, rock paintings, and pattachitras in temples. Pictures enhance the interest or appeal of a story. Before

everyone else, Preeti Thakur ji translated picture stories from other languages into Maithili, and after that composed original picture stories. Some of her many compositions are as follows:

1) In 2002, she translated the first picture story named "Chhot A Paigh".

2) In 2008, "Gonu Jha A Aan Maithili Chitrakatha" was published.

3) In 2010, the children's literature "Mithila ka Lokdevta" was published.

4) In 2012, "Vidyapati ka Purush Pariksha" (children's literature) was created.

Many stories, heard or unheard, that children hear from their elders at home, grandmothers, and tell among friends, Preeti

Thakur has very skillfully encapsulated all those stories in Maithili picture stories. The picture story has succeeded in easily acquainting the reader with all sections of their society. In "Gonu Jha A Aan Maithili Chitrakatha", the hero of sixteen stories is Gonu Jha. And in the remaining ones, Reshma Chudharmal, Naika-Banijara, Mahua Ghatwarin, Raja Salhes, Chhechhan Maharaj, Bhagata Jyoti Panjiyar, and Kalidasa – all these characters are representative characters of Mithila culture. The stories of Gonu Jha reside in the throats of every household in Mithila. The valor, prowess, and lofty personalities of characters like Naika Banijara, Raja Salhes, Chhechhan Maharaj, Jyoti Panjiyar established them from folk heroes to the form of folk deities. Similarly, Kalidasa occupies an important position in

Indian culture with his erudition. Mahua Ghatwarin is an ideal of a love story. There is a very deep relationship between society and culture. The point is that culture is created relative to time. That, in its essential form, later takes on a cultural form. Preeti Thakur ji has created picture stories through the medium of lines and colors.

Every picture or line is factual. It provides a clear form to the story. The picture story is a silent expression. Language, color, line, and picture are its integral parts. Preeti Thakur ji's picture stories are observed as a traditional life philosophy. Writing has special significance in Mithila painting. Preparing the subject matter for writing and advancing it, by depicting Mithila folk tales through the medium of picture stories, the emergence of composition in a new style

occurred in Maithili literature. Providing a modern form to the new style, new subject matter, in a traditional way, Preeti Thakur ji's creative style is excellent and praiseworthy. Children who have no inkling of alphabet knowledge also understand the stories clearly through the medium of pictures. This picture story medium has proven very effective for that class.

In Preeti Thakur's picture stories, besides mythological stories and folk tales, social issues, women's empowerment, the importance of education, environmental protection, along with the challenges of rural lifestyle, have been very well incorporated. The figures sketched in her story-pictures have dynamism. The entire sequence of events has been displayed very carefully in a single frame. In the use of various colors,

along with natural colors, modernity has been skillfully employed. Preeti Thakur ji, in her pictures, has created using the Kachni and Bharni techniques with extreme subtlety, keeping artistry in mind. It is no exaggeration to say that this new creation in Preeti Thakur's literary genre is a wonderful effort to connect the new generation with their culture, their roots, their land and water. Her picture story style has carved a reliable and commendable niche on the international stage, which is truly praiseworthy.

*****Punantu ma Pitarah
somyasah punantu ma
Pitamahah punantu ma
Prapitamahah pavitrena
shatayusha. Punantu ma
Pitamahah punantu ma
Prapitamahah pavitrena
shatayusha
vishvamayurvyashnavai. *****

*****Section-2: Gajendra
Thakur*****

****The Creator of the Digital Era for Maithili: Gajendra Thakur****

****Kailash Kumar Thakur****



The history of Maithili language and literature is full of its own distinctiveness and richness. This distinctiveness and richness of Maithili, including the Buddhist Siddhas and the works of Kavisheshwaracharya

Jyotirishwar, Vidyapati, Govinddas, and the scholars of the Malla royal dynasty, must have appeared to other linguistic communities like the Ethiopian volcano named 'Hale Gubbi' that

erupted after 12,000 years. Therefore, seeing that literary creation and its creators in Maithili, later litterateurs like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Rabindranath Tagore, and Ramananda Raya started creating literature in their own local folk languages and revitalized the language and literature of the local people. In the modern era, immediately after Manbodh, many writers including Chanda Jha expanded Maithili through the medium of prose. This expansion was for the language as well as for literature.

Contemporary litterateur Ashish Anchinhaar, in the preface of his book "Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili," asks, "For the development of a language, it is essential that whatever progress other developed languages are

making in the time period you are in, that same progress should happen in your language. What have you done for that?"

The above question of Anchinhaar stands as a very big challenge, forever, for the language workers, preservers, and litterateurs of Mithila-Maithili, divided by the border of two countries. The reason is that in India, English and Hindi, instead of being positive, are very dominantly negatively impacting Mithila, weakening the role of Mithila-Maithili. And in Nepal, a similar situation is arising due to English, Hindi, and Nepali. That is, the priority and formal use of English, Hindi, and Nepali in education, systematically neglecting the extensive form of Maithili on both sides, is causing the children of Mithila to become

cut off and distanced from their mother tongue. Especially due to easy access and use of Hindi, Nepali, English language films, the Internet, social media, and Artificial Intelligence (AI), the erosion of Mithila-Maithili is increasing even more rapidly. Due to this, Mithila-Maithili's own identity, thousands of years of glorious knowledge and science, literature, traditions, and practices are being destroyed, and the children here, becoming devoid of culture and consciousness, like a character 'Chhadma Sannyasi' from Mahendra Malangiya's play 'Chhutaha Ghail', use their mother tongue Maithili in a distorted form and are becoming followers (who have no knowledge of their motherland, mother tongue, literature, culture, and civilization, or who disdain them) of Hindi, English, and Nepali,

moving towards self-destruction – saying this should not be an exaggeration.

Possibly, seeing and being distressed by the future plight of Mithila due to the craze for English, Hindi, and Nepali, the litterateur and linguist Gajendra Thakur has been doing very important work in the field of Maithili language, literature, and its preservation, promotion, and development through the medium of the Internet for the past 26 years. The litterateur and editor Anchinhaar ji has mentioned his works point by point in his book 'Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Redefining Maithili'. Among those works, four or five seem very important to me, which appear distinct from their capabilities. The reason is that Gajendra ji's

own labor, time, effort, and money must have definitely been spent in doing those works, but what achievement he got from them has not been known until now. Perhaps these things will come to light in the future. He connected Mithila and Maithili language and literature to the Internet in various ways, making it global and accessible to everyone, and even now, after 26 years, he continues to move forward, giving meaningful shape to his capabilities. The four or five works that seem very important and useful to me are these:

(a) He first brought the Maithili language onto the Internet.

(b) He created a global network (www.videha.co.in) for the creation and study of Maithili language and literature. Gajendra Thakur publishes the Maithili e-magazine 'Videha' in eleven

scripts (Devanagari, Tirhuta, Braille, Kaithi, Newari, IPA, Brahmi, Kharosthi, Urdu, Tibetan, and Tibetan-Ume).

(c) The creation of Wikipedia in the Maithili language.

(d) The creation of a digital library in Maithili, computer/mobile-based dictionaries, and Google Translate.

(e) He digitized the Panji for everyone publicly and also published it in book form.

Gajendra ji started the work of connecting Maithili language and literature to the Internet in 2000 AD by writing a blog named 'Bhalsarik Gachh' in Maithili. In 2008 AD, he transformed this blog into Videha (www.videha.co.in) and has been regularly publishing

it as an e-journal through the medium of the Internet on the 1st and 15th of every month. This fortnightly e-journal magazine has received an ISSN number (ISSN 2229-547X) from the United Nations, and before Videha, no Maithili magazine had an ISSN, meaning Videha is the first in Maithili to get an ISSN. Videha is proving to be very, very important, useful, and extremely necessary not only for Maithili language and literature but also for all scholars, researchers, litterateurs, and the common people. The reason is that due to Videha's global availability, for the first time, Maithili writers and readers are free from the bonds of geographical boundaries and are available anytime via the Internet. So far, thoroughly, more than 350-400 new and old writers have been provided a global platform by 'Videha'. The high-level guardian-

like role that Videha (www.videha.co.in) is playing in the preservation, promotion, and development of the written form of Maithili language and literature is possibly not being fulfilled by any other platform at present. Certainly, the foundation pillars of this high-level guardian-like platform are Editor Gajendra ji, Anchinhaar ji, and others. For this, the conscious people of Mithila are always grateful, directly or indirectly.

A very important and extremely necessary work done through the medium of the Internet for Maithili language and literature, through Gajendra ji, is the creation of Wikipedia in Maithili. In the final stages of this creation, Rajesh Ranjan ji also provided assistance. In October 2014 AD, Maithili

Wikipedia went live and gained formal status. Gajendra ji had been doing the foundational work for this since 2008. Due to lack of time, when Gajendra ji received the proposal to become an admin of the newly created Maithili Wikipedia, he, after consulting with Rajesh ji, made Biplav Anand from Nepal the admin. That Biplav Anand now wants to take credit for all the work done by Gajendra ji for Maithili Wikipedia himself, which is a misfortune for Mithila-Maithili. The reason is that when such people are confronted with evidence and facts, they get agitated and start doing many wrong things against Mithila-Maithili, which not only harm Mithila-Maithili but also make the common people of Mithila mentally distressed regarding their own motherland Mithila and mother tongue Maithili. Therefore, Gajendra Thakur and the 'Videha'

team need to be cautious about this matter. Gajendra Thakur ji himself and under his leadership, he sowed the first seeds of Maithili Wikipedia. This was not just a task of creating a website, but a great struggle to secure the identity of the Maithili language in the digital age. Because starting a task from zero and taking it to a high level of success is not easy. Around 2007-08 AD, when the world's major languages were establishing and strengthening their place on Wikipedia, Maithili was struggling for its existence. Gajendra Thakur realized this seriously: if Maithili is to be connected with future generations, then it is imperative to bring it to the 'Open Source' knowledge platform of the Internet. With Gajendra ji's efforts, the 'Incubator' phase of Maithili Wikipedia began. The Incubator is like a laboratory

where a language has to prove its utility. Despite his personal busyness, Gajendra ji started writing new articles daily and revising old ones. Possibly, he knew that doing this work through any institution would involve more hassle and trouble, so he moved this work forward solely through his personal struggle.

The biggest challenge for Maithili on Wikipedia was script and standardization. At that time, typing Maithili in Devanagari script and using Unicode correctly was very difficult for common people. Gajendra ji himself learned the technical aspects and also encouraged his colleagues towards this work on the other hand. The Wikipedia interface was in English. So he worked tirelessly and translated Wikipedia's 'system messages' and technical

terms into Maithili, so that even an ordinary Maithili speaker, upon opening the site, would feel it was their own. He attempted to give a standard form to words like "Khoju" (Search), "Sampadan karu" (Edit), "Itihas dekhu" (View history). In this work, 'Videha', run by him, became the foundation stone of this struggle. Through 'Videha', he already had access to many rare materials and articles of Maithili. Gajendra ji adapted those materials suitable for Wikipedia and uploaded them from 2008 to 2014. During this period, to make Maithili Wikipedia live, he created an environment where the ancient literary forms and modern literature and information of the Maithili language could establish complete harmony with each other. According to Wikipedia's policy, there are some essential and strict

conditions for giving a language a 'live' (independent domain), such as the number of regular editors, the quality and quantity of articles, and continuity. For many years, Gajendra ji tirelessly played the role of an 'active editor' along with his dedicated team. Due to few writers, there were times when Wikipedia administration indicated the possibility of closing this project, but Gajendra ji took Rajesh Ranjan ji's help here, and along with that, the intense effort and sufficient work of his team compelled the successful launch of Maithili Wikipedia. He connected volunteers from every corner of Mithila and the world, created workshops, and kept motivating people to edit through email and social media. The fruit of Gajendra ji's continuous effort for seven-eight years was obtained on August 14, 2014, when the Wikimedia Foundation declared

Maithili Wikipedia fully 'live'. That was a historic day for Maithili language and literature. Now, under the name www.mai.wikipedia.org, Maithili has its own encyclopedia. Behind this success is Gajendra Thakur's vision, which directs Maithili not just as a language of songs and poetry, but towards knowledge and science, literature and traditions, space, geography, agriculture, spirituality, and many other subjects directly or indirectly connected to the life and world here.

Even after Wikipedia went live, Gajendra ji is not silent. He still focuses on ensuring that citations in articles are correct. He has made articles authentic by providing references from thousands of books from his

personal collection. Due to his struggle, today Maithili Wikipedia has more than 15,000 articles available, which is the largest repository of Maithili on the Internet.

Perhaps saying that the work done by Gajendra ji for 'Maithili Wikipedia' proves to be greater than the work done by any academy would not be an exaggeration. In this, by investing his time, money, and energy, he has given Maithili that place in the digital world for which the present and future generations will remain indebted to him. Gajendra Thakur ji has proven that an individual, based on his vision and determination, can respectfully establish his mother tongue alongside other developed and global languages. Similarly, another very important work done

by Gajendra ji for Maithili language and literature is the creation of a digital library on the Internet, a dictionary for computers/mobiles, and Google Translate.

The history of Maithili language and literature is more than a thousand years old. But at the beginning of the 21st century, when a revolution occurred in the information industry, defending the existence of Maithili and aligning it with modernity was a big challenge. At such a time, Gajendra ji resolved to take Maithili out of its traditional boundaries and make it a mainstream language of the digital world. The work done by him since 2008 is proving to be a 'Digital Renaissance' for Maithili. The reason is that in 2008, when

Maithili's presence on the Internet was very negligible, he created a vast digital platform for Maithili language and literature through 'Videha'. He scanned rare books, ancient manuscripts, and contemporary literary works of Maithili and gave them digital form. Its main objective was that Maithil people sitting in any corner of the world, as well as scholars and researchers of Maithili language and literature, could read Maithili literature in the Maithili language. For this, by regularly publishing the fortnightly e-magazine 'Videha', he made it a global platform. So now it is not just a magazine but has become the first systematic 'Digital Archive' of Maithili. That is, a place where digital content of Maithili language and literature is systematically collected and preserved for the future. The vitality of a language also greatly

depends on its vocabulary and the system by which it can be used easily. So, possibly for the development of Maithili, Gajendra ji created a digital dictionary and made it available on the Internet. This Maithili dictionary is available in Maithili-Maithili, Maithili-English, and English-Maithili in print and digital formats. He understands that if Maithili is to be brought into computer and mobile search engines, it has to be made Unicode-based. Possibly this is a very complex process and time-consuming work. Nevertheless, due to the day and night hard work of the Videha team, typing Maithili and searching for meanings on mobile and computer have become easily available.

Like Wikipedia, the inclusion of

Maithili in Google Translate is also not a normal event. Behind this, the day and night hard work of Gajendra Thakur and his team alone was not enough. For this, computer-related study and expertise were absolutely necessary. To teach a global Artificial Intelligence (AI) based system like Google a language, a 'Parallel Corpus' is required. Under Parallel Corpus, a text in the source language and its translation done in another language (target language) are kept side-by-side. Gajendra ji, through 'Videha', prepared data of millions of Maithili sentences and also, at a personal level and through various forums, encouraged people in the Google community to check the accuracy of Maithili translation. The result of his efforts is that today any foreigner or non-Maithili person can understand Maithili through

Google. These efforts of Gajendra ji have given Maithili a respectable place in the internet world today. The work done by Gajendra ji in the digital library, mobile dictionary, and Google Translate is the foundation for the future of Maithili. The Videha team has proved that a language can survive only when it harmonizes its glorious history with modern technology. From studying the works done by Gajendra Thakur ji, it is known that his contribution in the field of Maithili language, literature, and culture is multi-dimensional.

His role in the preservation, promotion, and interpretation of Mithila's Panji Prabandha (Genealogy) according to modern times is extremely important. According to him, the Panji is not

just a record of genealogy, but it is a vast historical document of Mithila. He believes that the Panji system is the basis of the sociological structure of Mithila, in which the purity of blood and detailed history of families are preserved, without the study of which complete knowledge of Mithila's medieval history is impossible. His biggest contribution in the field of Panji Prabandha is the preservation of its rare manuscripts. He, in collaboration with the Panjikars, collected genealogies written on ancient palm leaves and papers. To maintain the relevance of the Panji in the modern era, he digitized it and secured this repository of knowledge for future generations through the internet and databases. He views the Panji system not only from a traditionalist perspective but also from a scientific perspective. He

emphasizes that the concept of "Mool-Gram" and "Shakha" in the Panji is very useful for the study of genetics and social migration. In his writings, a detailed analysis of the migration and marital relations of various castes of Mithila through the Panji is found. But he also attacks the discrepancies prevalent in it. He believes that keeping the Panji system confined only to some specific class is wrong. There is a need to make it inclusive for the entire society of Mithila on a broader scale. He also expresses concern over the economic condition of the Panjikars and the decline of this knowledge. Gajendra Thakur's work related to the Panji proves that the Panji is not just a means to obtain a "rights document" for marriage, but it is a symbol of Mithila's identity and distinctiveness. Through his

various books and articles, he has given a new definition to the Panji system by connecting it with modern linguistics and sociology.

'Videha' (fortnightly e-magazine), run under the editorship and vision of Gajendra Thakur, has given a very wide expansion to Maithili language and literature. For a language to survive, its oral use alone is not enough; it is imperative to connect it with written tradition and modern technology. In the context of the Maithili language, Gajendra ji has done this work. He has not let Maithili language and literature remain confined only among Maithili-speaking people in Maithili books. Rather, by broadening the scope of this language and giving it a 'digital' and 'multi-script' form, he has made its quality global. The

'Videha' magazine, being published under his editorship, is the only magazine in the world today that is being published in eleven scripts, establishing an amazing record of language inclusiveness. Its most revolutionary aspect is multi-script publication. Possibly, Gajendra Thakur must have felt that the roots of Maithili are very deep and its sphere of influence in history was not limited to the geographical boundaries of Mithila alone. Actually, it would be important to publish his thoughts and perspectives in this regard. Maithili's own original script 'Tirhuta' (Mithilakshar) was becoming extinct. Gajendra Thakur has revived it by giving it an indispensable place in his magazine. At the same time, by continuing publication in Devanagari, he has easily

connected a large class of readers. Presenting Maithili texts in ancient scripts like Brahmi and Kharosthi is not an ordinary task. This is an invaluable gift for researchers. This effort of Gajendra Thakur proves that Maithili's connection is linked to the most ancient civilization of India. Mithila-Maithili language and literature have had relations since ancient times with the Kathmandu valley of Nepal, the Newar-Newari language and literature community, and also with Tibet. By publishing 'Videha' in Newari, Tibetan, and Tibetan-Ume scripts, Gajendra Thakur has refreshed those forgotten historical connections. This highlights the 'trans-Himalayan' identity of Maithili.

In the field of democratization of language and literature, the Braille

edition of 'Videha' is a milestone. Visually impaired Maithili speakers and other enthusiasts can also read Maithili literature – this thought reflects Gajendra Thakur's sensitivity. Therefore, he also published his novel 'Sahastrabadhani' in Braille script. This cannot be seen merely as a published literary work. This first Braille book in Maithili proves how sensitive Gajendra ji is for Maithili language and literature. His work is an important step towards the creation of inclusive Maithili literature. Maithili's presence in Urdu script establishes the message that Maithili language and literature belong not just to a particular caste or a particular religion-sect, but to a vast geography. By reviving the Kaithi script, which was once the main script of the common people and courts of Mithila, Gajendra Thakur

is also preserving the documentary tradition that was becoming extinct. This 'multi-script yajna' being performed by Gajendra Thakur will be written in golden letters in the history of Maithili literature. He has proven that Maithili is not the language of narrow-minded people, but it possesses the potential of a vast global language. 'Videha' magazine has become a laboratory of linguistics today. Due to the selfless and tireless efforts of Gajendra Thakur and the Videha team, the high and authentic global position that Maithili has received on the internet and in the digital world, the entire Mithila world will remain indebted to them. This work of his will continue to act as a lighthouse for the preservation, promotion, and development of the Maithili language for the present and future generations. Gajendra

Thakur ji and 'Videha' (www.videha.co.in) have done such work in the field of Maithili language and literature that it has become impossible to ignore. When there was only nominal content for Maithili on the internet, Gajendra ji, with his foresight and firmness, made 'Videha' a platform where today thousands of literary data or base materials of Maithili language and literature are preserved on the internet. Using these literary materials as data, new articles/essays can be written by sharing them with computer-mobile applications like Gemini-ChatGPT, or they play a very helpful role to a very large extent in writing new articles. This has opened new dimensions in the development of Maithili language and literature, which cannot be considered ordinary. The full

credit for this goes solely to
Gajendra Thakur,
www.videha.co.in, and his team.

But, in my experience, this is only half the work done for the preservation, promotion, and development of Maithili language and literature, or one very, very important dimension has not yet been opened in Maithili. I do not understand whether Gajendra Thakur and the Videha team consider the role of that dimension insignificant or if they are preparing to open that dimension. But in my view, it is very important and useful. That dimension for the preservation, promotion, and development of Maithili language and literature is: podcasts on social media, high-level interviews (video), recordings or live video posts of academic-level discussions on

social media, and film production and screening. (The subject of film production and screening may not be necessary for the Videha team). Today, whether or not video posts discussing matters related to literature are being made across North India, thousands of YouTube channels and Facebook pages are creating videos in Hindi on various subjects including politics, religion, science, controversy related to society, state, country, and abroad, as well as on many other topics, and posting them on various social media platforms, especially YouTube and Facebook. Their viewers, as subscribers, number in the millions and crores, and many channels, pages, and operators are earning millions and crores in income. Apart from Hindi, other major languages of North India are becoming weak and shrinking,

moving towards extinction. Looking at it in the context of language development and destruction, the terrifying state of destruction for Maithili has arrived long ago due to the above reasons. The surprising thing is that thousands and lakhs of scholars of Mithila-Maithili, living in the country and abroad, are subscribers to those Hindi-English-Nepali language platforms on social media, but they remain indifferent to continuously creating and posting videos in their mother tongue Maithili on their respective professions or subjects.

There are so many Hindi YouTube channels and Facebook pages where videos are made on contemporary and every major national and international event, 'live discussions', group

discussions, and interviews are conducted. Due to this, the dominance of Hindi is seen very strongly across North India. But, where is Maithili in this matter? If Gajendra Thakur and the Videha team want to preserve, promote, and develop the extensive internal structures of the Maithili language (so-called Angika, Bajjika, Thethi, Jolaha, Kisani, etc.) and its literature, then it is absolutely necessary to do work similar to the aforementioned YouTube channels and Facebook pages. They must soon ponder upon this subject and take the necessary steps. All matters of society, state, country, and world cannot be contained only in written literature in any language. Possibly many offspring of Mithila-Maithili understand this, but no institution or individual has come forward to take the necessary

steps in this direction.

The surprising thing is that Gajendra Thakur and the Videha team, who started the 'Digital Renaissance' and 'Digital Revolution' of Maithili language and literature 26 years ago, have also abandoned this important subject on some basis? Whereas, to express one's views, to present one's history before the world, to build one's own narrative based on truth and facts, the audio-visual medium is a very powerful medium. In today's time, the language-literature-information revolution has moved far beyond the 'text' stage and has expanded into the era of 'audio-visual' and 'academic discourse'. But, compared to Hindi, English, and Nepali languages, Maithili's presence in digital form remains limited to poetry, stories, or news

on digital platforms. Due to this, the geography of Maithili language and literature is under attack not from two sides but from four sides. On one hand, news channels, podcasts, various types of interviews, films, and TV serials in Hindi, English, Nepali, and other languages are attracting and absorbing the people of Mithila, including the educated and affluent, towards themselves. On the other hand, efforts are being made to break the internal structures of Maithili by giving them various pseudonyms according to selfish interests. But, no concrete step is being taken by any institution or individual to protect and promote more than four crore Maithili speakers from this fatal attack. Has this indifference also been spread by the Videha team? Neither is the Videha team itself creating a

platform that connects the world with the geography of Mithila through audio-visual media, nor are they getting it done through any other medium. There is still a severe lack of serious discussion on every subject of life and the world through systematic audio-video and social media, where 'academic' discussions on philosophy, linguistics, history, sociology, knowledge, and science take place. Until Maithili-speaking scholars, scientists, doctors, engineers, litterateurs, lyricists, and leaders do not discuss, deliberate, and converse through videos, the preservation, promotion, and development of Maithili language and literature will not have any particular significance or utility. Whatever the educated and enlightened class, including all types of scientists, doctors, engineers, litterateurs, teachers, lyricists,

leaders, and distinguished people, is, their words, speech, behavior, way of thinking, and speaking are followed by the common people. Therefore, from the common people of any state to specific individuals, they remain connected to their mother tongue, literature, traditions, civilization, employment, conduct, trade, and every aspect, and on this basis, any state remains secure. But, no matter how many publications print books and send them to every household, no matter how much the Videha team translates original Maithili literature and every literature of the world into Maithili and puts it on the internet, not even twenty percent of the common people of Mithila read literary books or go on the internet to read literature. This is probably the situation with all languages in this matter. Therefore, in today's

time, podcasts on social media, high-level interviews (video), recorded and live video posts of academic-level discussions on social media, and film production and screening are extremely necessary.

It is not known why Gajendra Thakur and the Videha team are not doing podcasts, high-level interviews (video), recorded video posts of academic-level discussions on social media, even after 26 years, for the preservation, promotion, and development of Maithili language and literature. Is there a lack of time, suitable people, colleagues, or funds required for this work? If there is a lack of money or colleagues, then why is the Videha team not doing the said work based on funds, donations from around the world? Would

Gajendra Thakur, Ashish Anchinhaar, and the Videha team, being honest and transparent, get the tag of spending money on them? If the Videha team is not doing or getting this work done due to that thought-feeling, then it is a very big misfortune for Mithila-Maithili language and literature. The reason is that this is the era of social media, details of every donation and expenditure can be shared on social media, so that no one can be maligned. There are many such exemplary personalities who are doing important work for their society, state, country, and world based on donations. India's Dr. Syed Rizwan Ahmed (lawyer) is one such personality. Gajendra Thakur ji and his team have resources, experience, and a network of scholars. They must take some important steps to lead in this

'visual' revolution as well, such as:

1) The Videha Podcast: The present time is of podcasts. 'Videha' should start its own official podcast series. This could invite not only litterateurs but also Maithili-speaking sociologists, scientists, linguists, and various other distinguished individuals and professionals. So that discussions in Maithili could match the level of English's 'The Seen and the Unseen' or Hindi's popular podcasts, where serious discourse happens instead of superficial talk.

2) Oral History Project: There are thousands of such scholars of Maithili who possess an immense store of knowledge, but they could not write or no one has written about them. The Videha team could record and broadcast 'video interviews' of such scholars. This would not only be interviews but

would become a 'primary source' for future researchers.

3) Video Essays: At the international level, 'video essays' are very important. A 10-15 minute exploratory video could be made on a single poem or a historical site, using Gajendra ji's research insight and Videha's archive.

4) Cross-Language Communication: The problem with Maithili is that it remains limited 'from Maithil to Maithil'. 'Videha' should use English and Hindi 'subtitles' in its digital programs. When any non-Maithili scholar wants to know about Mithila's philosophy or literature, they would find such material on Videha's platform. Many personalities including research scholars from universities, doctors, engineers, writers, and

litterateurs are already associated with Gajendra Thakur and the Videha team, and there is a need to bring more Maithili scholars working in various countries of the world into the digital movement of Maithili language and literature. Technically expert students of the new generation can give modern form to Gajendra ji's knowledge and 'Videha's archive. As long as the voices of young men and women are not included in academic discourse, it will remain a victim of inertia. 'Videha' in Maithili should be made into an 'Intellectual Hub' of that level. When someone wants to do a PhD on Mithila's culture, their first destination should be the video library of www.videha.co.in.

Gajendra Thakur and the 'Videha Team' have become synonymous with an 'institution'. His team has

the capability to create not just a 'corner' on the internet for Maithili, but an empire, which is extremely necessary. Through social media, academic-level podcasts, interviews, group discussions, and many other video series on local to global subjects would not only enrich Maithili language, literature, civilization, and culture, but also the roots of Maithili and its internal structures would become more profound and developed, and Mithila-Maithili would stand again in its full identity. This would enable the local people to make themselves competitive in every aspect and dimension of birth, life, death, and the world, and strive to make their livelihood as wonderful and thrilling as divine. Language and literature are not just for writing and reading stories, poems, and novels; in fact, they are a simple

medium to express, through poetic and prosaic words, based on the level of their evolving consciousness, the experiences and proofs of every dimension of birth, life, death, and the world. It is extremely important that work be done towards enabling the people of the four-limit Mithila (bounded by the Himalayas in the north, the Ganges in the south, and the Kosi and Gandaki in the east and west respectively) to use that linguistic medium in a parallel manner. Because the use of language and literature is no longer limited to writing, reading, and listening. The use of academic-level language and literature is now also rapidly happening in audio and video forms, in which matter Mithila-Maithili is very far behind. It is hoped that Gajendra Thakur and the 'Videha' team will soon take steps in this direction.

****Editorial Note:****

1) Expectations are from those who work. And when those expectations are not fulfilled, it is those who do the work who face resentment and reproach. Videha accepts all the reproaches that have come in Kailash ji's article.

2) Videha is Gajendra Thakur's personal initiative. It is not run by the government, nor by any institution, nor does it have a paid staff. Videha has nothing in the name of funds; Gajendra Thakur does all this work from his monthly expenses. Along with that, we ourselves are associated with this magazine out of our own interest. In such a situation, many things that are thought of cannot be done. Yes, there is an effort that some reduction be made from

Gajendra Thakur's monthly expenses to spend on Videha's technology, and I try to work as much as possible on Videha's good projects. Videha has only this much capital.

3) In every era, technology changes, and it is not necessary that the same person works repeatedly with the new technology of every era. This is neither appropriate nor practical.

4) Videha also has an audio-video archive where some audio-video created by Videha is available, along with links to other people. Similarly, on Gajendra Thakur ji's YouTube channel, his lectures for university and Bihar and Indian Administrative Service examinations are also posted.

5) Videha believes that if one person or one team does all the work, then quality cannot come in

that work. For quality, different people and different teams are needed. Yes, wherever someone needs any advice or suggestion, they will definitely be given from Videha's side as much as possible.

6) When readers from India read this article, they must keep in mind that this is Nepali Maithili, and they may not understand the meaning of some words or the spelling of some words may seem strange to them. For this, readers should read the many books of Maithili writers from Nepal available on Videha.

7) The photo in this article was made by Kailash Kumar Thakur himself.

****Maithili in the Digital Age:
Videha and Gajendra Thakur****

****Vikas Vatsnabh****

The history of language has been inextricably linked with the development of human civilization. As human civilization developed progressively, the development of language also continued in a similar sequential manner. The modernization of language has also been ongoing for the expression of human progeny's dreams, struggles, and various other emotional experiences. In the primitive age, humans used various types of sound signals for their expression. Over time, its form continued to develop through the medium of shapes, symbols, diagrams, etc.

With the development of civilization, human life became organized, and language, expressed through sound signals, shapes, symbols, and diagrams, also continued to adopt its specific form. Just as a disciplined lifestyle was created from the discipline of life and social discipline, similarly, language, refined on the basis of its grammar, usage, and concerns, adopted a systematic form. With the development of science and technology, diversity has come in the form and communication of language, and along with that, with the development of information technology, the speed of language propagation has increased unpredictably. For technological adaptability, language has been transformed through the 'binary number system' and made comprehensible for the computer processor.

Today, after about 6 million years of development of human civilization, only a few among the more than 7000 available languages have been able to develop such a form that they are being predominantly used through the 'Internet' and other 'digital spaces' and devices. At this time of such rapid development of information technology, this is a thought-provoking question as to why only a few among the more than 7000 available languages are being used on the 'Internet' with capability. Statistics from the 'Internet Society Foundation' say that the highest presence on the Internet is of the English language (49.5%). In second place is the Spanish language (6%) and in third place is the Russian language (6%). Among the languages included in the data of W3TECH

(April 24, 2025), a total of twelve languages that are most used on the internet have a total contribution of 88.4%. These languages include English, Spanish, German, Japanese, Russian, French, Portuguese, Italian, Turkish, Persian, Dutch, and Chinese, and these languages are ruling the 'Internet Space'.

In such an environment, it is necessary to assess what is the current state of the Maithili language on the internet and how and when did the presence of Maithili in textual form on the internet occur. It is known that the practical use of the internet began in 1991 AD by 'Tim Berners-Lee' through the 'World Wide Web', and 9 years later, i.e., in 2000 AD, evidence of Maithili's presence on the internet is found. Various

statistics say that out of the more than 7000 languages discussed in the world, only 3 to 5% have a footprint on the internet. Currently, about 200 to 400 languages are in use on the internet. Among these, about 100 to 150 languages have made their place on the internet in the last 10 to 20 years. From these statistics, the intensity and necessity of the development of this trend can be easily assessed. That is, the use of various languages on the internet is increasing day by day, and this can be considered a positive aspect for local languages.

Regarding the primary presence of Maithili on the internet, the discussion of the year 2000 AD is based on the combined issue of October-December 2009/January-March 2010 of the magazine named 'Antika'. In this combined

issue, an article titled 'Antarjal A Maithili' by Gajendra Thakur was published. In this article, he writes: "I had started working on Maithili on the internet in 2000 AD on Yahoo Geocities in 2000-2001, but all those sites were deleted after Yahoo discontinued the service. Created on July 5, 2004, 'Bhalsarik Gachh' <http://www.videha.com/2004/07/bhalsarik-gachh.html> is still available, it still exists as the first presence of Maithili on the internet." It is also necessary to mention here that for easy implementation and effective presence on the internet, a local language has to face various practical and technical problems. Among these, problems of script compatibility with the related device, problems of Unicode and rendering, problems of search engines and keywords are visible

as problems of the initial level. A discussion of the subject matter related to this has been done in detail by Gajendra Thakur in an important article. This article was published in the 313th issue of Videha magazine under the title 'Bhasha A Pradyogiki (Sanganak, Chhayankan Kunji Patal/ Tankan Takniki)'.

Whenever there is a discussion of the word 'Internet' in the context of Maithili language and literature, the name 'Videha' inevitably comes up. A comprehensive list can be made of the important work and collections done by Videha regarding the availability of Maithili-related material on the internet. In fact, in the modern scenario, whatever 'Digital Presence' is discussed as necessary, Videha, in many senses,

realizes that importance for Maithili. Its authenticity is also confirmed by the fact that if you try to search for something related to Maithili literature through various search engines available on the internet, the results obtained in the Maithili language prominently feature the availability of Videha's material in their references. A measure of the richness of any language on the internet is also how much content is available in that language on the internet. From that perspective as well, Videha is currently a pioneer in the context of Maithili. The issues of 'Videha' are published in multiple scripts. Transliteration technology works for this task. For local languages on the internet, transliteration acts as a lifeline.

'Videha', established by Gajendra Thakur, is the first e-magazine of Maithili which has been active

since 2008 till date. Videha, in light of its continuity and the vast availability of readable material, has become the flag bearer of Maithili literature on the internet. No other literary portal appears to be as active and systematic. Videha is the first Maithili magazine to have received an ISSN. With the passage of time, the form of Videha has now become multi-dimensional, apart from just an e-magazine. Videha is also active as a digital library. Many important works from early literature to contemporary literature are available here in 'PDF' format for download. Looking at the problem of availability and distribution of Maithili literary books, the concept of Videha's digital library has proven to be an epoch-making endeavor. Here, material for various competitive exams for Maithili, issues of some important magazines, and availability of

classic works of Maithili are also found. Apart from this, many important works related to Mithila's history, culture, society, and literature, which are written in the English language and are often unavailable, their presence is also found in Videha's digital library. Videha is also acting as an 'Internet Aggregator' for Maithili. Here, links to the sources of various Maithili-related materials available elsewhere on the internet are provided. With its meaningful presence on the internet as a source for Videha's audio-video collection, Maithili children's literature picture series, archive and sculpture collection, details and illustrations of Mithila's great men, and many other important pieces of information, it is playing an important role for Maithili.

Apart from Videha, one notable work among the important works done by Gajendra Thakur is the creation of three dictionaries:

1. Maithili-English Dictionary
2. English-Maithili Dictionary
3. English-Maithili Computer Dictionary.

The editing of all three dictionaries was jointly done by Gajendra Thakur, Nagendra Kumar Jha, and Panjekar Vidyanand Jha. Here, it seems necessary to discuss the third, i.e., the English-Maithili Computer Dictionary and its usefulness. For a strong presence of any local language on the internet, it is very important for that language to have its own terminology. According to

statistics from Statista-2012 and IRD ONLINE, India's rank in the Digital Literacy Index is 73rd. Only 38% of Indians are digitally literate. Among its various factors, the most important factor is the lack of knowledge of the English language. Therefore, to increase digital literacy, the availability of internet-related terminology in the local language is essential. It is noteworthy that even now only 19 to 20 percent of people in India can speak English. Now various social media sites, global brands, and local manufacturers are attempting to use local languages in their product advertising content and services. Google and other websites are striving to integrate local languages into their various devices. In such a situation, for qualitative results in those languages, software developers need the standard and

technical terminology of that language so that compatibility to properly understand the society, culture, environment, and literature associated with that language is achieved. Its effect is also being directly visible in the life of common people. The outcome of this endeavor can be easily seen in 'voice-search', where using the internet has become possible not only through English but also through the medium of local languages.

Another historical work done by Gajendra Thakur is the digitization and transliteration of the Panji-Prabandha. Panji-Prabandha is essentially described as the written genealogy of Mithila's Brahmins and Karna-Kayasthas, whose initial period is considered to be the seventh century. Its systematic form is said to have

become prevalent in the fourteenth century during the time of the Karnata dynasty king Harisimha Deva. In Mithila, it is still used for matching genealogies at the time of finalizing marriages, although in the light of modernity, its practicality in society has gradually decreased, and due to lack of preservation, many manuscripts have been destroyed and some are on the verge of destruction. There would be many people who have only heard about the Panji but may not have seen its form. Questions have been raised regarding its intent, its nature, and its concerns, but apart from that, it is also accepted that Panji-Prabandha has been a carrier of Mithila's specific knowledge tradition. The virtuous effort that Gajendra Thakur made for the digitization and transliteration of this Panji-Prabandha with his

scholarly talent and dedication is praiseworthy. In fact, this is a Herculean effort made in the field of preservation and promotion of one's own language and culture. Gajendra Thakur collected the manuscripts of the Panji and got them published in the form of three books:

1. Genome Mapping (450 AD to 2009 AD) Mithila's Panji-Prabandha,
2. Genealogical Mapping (450 AD to 2009 AD) Mithila's Panji-Prabandha -2,
3. Dushan Panji.

In this work, he was accompanied by Nagendra Kumar Jha and Panjekar Vidyanand Jha. Regarding the importance of these three books, Bhavnath Jha writes: "In addition to these three books, he also made the digital copies of

the manuscripts available for public use on the Videha website. If I use miraculous language, it can be said that just as Hanuman ji brought the entire Sanjivani mountain, similarly, whatever he got, he made available to society for further research."

In almost every important achievement that Maithili has obtained on the internet, Gajendra Thakur's contribution, directly or indirectly, is visible. Here we will only discuss some important achievements through which the position of Maithili on the internet has gradually strengthened. First of all, discussion about the 'Unicode Tirhuta Font' seems necessary. The credit for this goes to Anshuman Pandey for his research done at the University of Michigan. Anshuman Pandey was

trying for approval of his research titled "Towards an Encoding for the Maithili Script in ISO/IEC 10646" and he succeeded. It is necessary to quote here that in the second and third applications given for approval during that research, he expressed gratitude for the help of Videha and Gajendra Thakur. An authentic article on this subject has been written by Gajendra Thakur in the 351st issue of Videha. The second subject is the approval of Wikipedia in Maithili. Wikipedia calls itself a web-based multilingual free encyclopedia that is written and edited by contributors from around the world. Ashish Anchinhaar, in his famous book 'Maithili Web Patrakarita ka Itihas', under the title 'Maithili Wikipedia Shuru se Approval (2008 se 2014) tak', has written in detail about the presence of Maithili on Wikipedia,

which makes it clear that the initial efforts for Wikipedia were made by Gajendra Thakur and the translation-related work to fulfill its eligibility was also completed by Gajendra Thakur's efforts. Similarly, in many other important works like the approval of Maithili for Google Translate, the approval of Maithili in Bing Microsoft Translator, efforts for the approval of Maithili in Alexa, Gajendra Thakur has played a significant role. For detailed and systematic information on these facts, Ashish Anchinhaar's book 'Maithili Web Patrakarita ka Itihas' is an authentic source. It is important to quote here that the works done by Gajendra Thakur are the result of his personal efforts. Accomplishing so many achievements through personal effort clearly stands out as a distinct achievement. Now the

world is entering the era of 'Artificial Intelligence'. This technology mainly works on the basis of available data. First, the available data is collected, then the collected data is processed, and finally, decisive results are given. Now it is very necessary for local languages that the availability of data, text, and modules on a large scale be ensured, and for that, abundant availability of content in local languages on the internet is necessary. I have full faith that in building a strong future for Maithili on the internet, akin to its golden past, Videha under the able leadership of Gajendra Thakur will always continue to play a pioneering role.

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****Gajendra Thakur's
Contribution to the
Preservation of Mithila's
Panji****

****Bhairav Lal Das****

The study of Mithila's Panji system has been the focus of attention of domestic and foreign scholars. Among these, Caroline Brown Hinz, Radhakrishna Choudhary, R. Inden, R.W. Nicholas, U.N. Jha, Ramanath Jha, Prof. Hetukar Jha, etc., are prominent names. The study of the Panji has been done from various different perspectives. In the management of Mithila's Panji, the contribution of Shri Gajendra Thakur ji will be eternally memorable. Scholars of Mithila will continue to benefit from his research, study, and

publications in this field.

Shri Gajendra Thakur ji got Mithila's Adi Panji 'Genome Mapping' (two volumes) published along with two other editors (Nagendra Kumar Jha and Panjekar Vidyanand Jha). Along with this, his attention also went to Dushan Panji. He got Dushan Panji published and made it visible. In this process, he had to endure many kinds of unkindness from many sides. By publishing Mithila's Panji, Shri Gajendra ji has been completely successful in attracting society's attention towards the preservation of the Panji and the discipline of Panji management. What benefits society has got or will get in the future from this publication, its evaluation, whatever has been done now, but in the future, it will be counted as a social guide.

Research and study are being conducted all over the world on how many types of genetic disorders occur from marriage between close blood relations. A similar study was done by Professor Alan Bittles of Edith Cowan University and Westmead Hospital, Australia, and its conclusion makes it clear that marriage should not be performed between close blood relations. The Marriage Act of Australia, 1961, does not mention any such prohibition, but socially, public awareness is created there too against marrying close blood relations. The implication of the conclusion is that the prohibition of marriage between close blood relations is done in all cultures.

In England, there is a very old

tradition of maintaining genealogical records. England has been famous as a colonial ruler. From the records of Fort William (Kolkata) of 1765 AD, it is clear that the wife of the then Chief Justice, Madame Impey, used to have paintings of Indian flowers, plants, and trees made, and for that, the expertise of various art fields of Europe and India was also sought. In England, there is also a practice of maintaining genealogical records of dogs.

During the study of Mithila's Panji management, the perspective of scholars has been broad. Due to this social system, the effect of the caste division that occurred in Bengal also fell on Mithila. In the Brahmin class, there was no separate caste group named Shrotriya before, but a new sub-

group was formed due to the decision taken for the separate maintenance of the branch Panji. Not only this, the Panjikars were also patronized by the Raj Darbhanga. Before the publication of the 'Ashwajan' decision letter, the Maharaja's permission was necessary. With this, the entry of errors in Panji management began, which always raised questions about the role of the Panjekar. Actually, many Panjikars were respectable before and are still following completely pure conduct, whose behavior has never been questioned.

But the purpose of Panji management has not been only the decision of Ashwajan. The Panji is considered a primary source for the social study of Mithila's Brahmins and Karna Kayasthas. Previously, Rajputs also had

Panjis, but over time, with continued violations, the Panjis got broken. In the Sudhi caste, 'Panjiyar' is still considered prestigious. From the study of Genome Mapping, it is clear that without its study, the social study of the upper castes of Mithila cannot be completed.

From the critic's point of view of Panji management, this system was never useful for society. The word 'Ashwajan' was misused greatly. The Brahmin class was the most affected by this. Following Bengal, the Brahmin class got divided into four classes. They continued to get support from the royal side. There is mention of some such instances in Genome Mapping where those who were not Brahmins earlier were given a Panji basis and they became mixed

in the Brahmin class. Not only this, the evil practice of polygamy developed in the Brahmin class. Despite the mention of Brahmin ancestors in Mithila's Panji, the system of Dogamiya (bigamy) started. Earlier, the superiority of Brahmins was linked to knowledge, they had their own specialty of Tripravar and Panchapravar, but due to misuse of the Panji, the pursuit of knowledge was neglected, and in the 'first class', those people occupied positions who, leaving knowledge, kept acquiring other things. According to Prof. Hetukar Jha, this Panji management also contributed to the decline of Mithila.

The second example of misuse of Panji management is seen in the Panji of Karna Kayasthas. In the Panji, no consideration of high-

low, small-big has been made. In this, from the progenitor to the present, mention of the paternal and maternal sides is found. But over time, the calculation of the root started happening from the perspective of high and low. Panji management became the management of the Panjikar. Darkness spread in society. Knowledge, science, and enterprise had no place. Whoever became a leader through Raj Darbhanga, their Panji became of high quality. The uproar of dowry spread in society. Those who could not become high through the Panji came under pressure and kept doing various types of 'power displays'. The harmony of society deteriorated.

A new definition of Maithil also came to the fore. The meaning of

Panjibaddha was derived: those whose marriage was with a Panjibaddha person. That is, those whose ancestors were already mentioned in the Panji were compelled to marry there. But this also had its own limitation. Some dominant class did not consider it appropriate to keep themselves in this discipline and, by marrying their sons and daughters in other regions, in a way, they broke the discipline of the Panji. Now the Panji had no importance for them. Initially, there was certainly a turmoil between the Panjibaddha and the Apanjibaddha, but it was accepted by the family and society.

The first defect of the Panji management was that it was limited to only a few castes, i.e., Brahmins, Rajputs, and Karna Kayasthas. Even if there is customary discussion about it in

other castes of Mithila, most castes of Mithila kept themselves away from this tomfoolery. But that does not mean that they married blood relations. Just as the Rajputs chose a simple path not to marry blood relations: not marrying in the maternal side of their paternal grandfather. Similarly, other castes, according to their convenience, chose some path or the other. In common parlance, this is called leaving a gap. This is a subject of social study: which caste or which class did what kind of work in this direction. But everyone kept paying attention to the discipline of prohibition of blood relations.

In this context, it is necessary to discuss the role of the government. Even during Muslim rule, there was a system of 'Mardshumari'. In

tribal culture too, the chief's decision was considered important in marriage decisions. After the permission of 'Ashwajan' by Raj Darbhanga, any Panjekar could finalize the marriage. After the decline of Raj Darbhanga's dominance, there was no control over this. Earlier, if any Panjekar dared to take a wrong decision of Ashwajan, Raj Darbhanga would punish him. But later, the responsibility of maintaining the Panjekars fell on society. Earlier, Panjekars used to travel and update their Panjis. During their travels, they would roam village to village, become acquainted with society, and the householders would also benefit from the Panjekar's experience. Later, all this stopped. The Panjekars' offices ceased to exist. Later, their condition became pitiable, and they became objects of ridicule in society. The fabric that existed

before marriage in society was damaged. People in society started finalizing marriages through their own contacts, and in that process, they primarily paid attention to the prohibition of same-gotra. After the marriage was finalized, the groom's and bride's sides would come to the Panjekar's door to get the 'Siddhant' written. A big problem of migration came in society. For their livelihood and bread and butter, people of society started leaving Mithila and settling in other countries and regions. They neither took the 'Genome Mapping' with them nor took all the Panji books. Then, the Panji and Siddhant remained just a formality. Over time, very few people continued the practice of writing Siddhant. The path of marriage in other castes and religions became wider.

Among Shrotriya Brahmins and Karna Kayasthas, Siddhant used to be a kind of 'celebration'. According to the convenience of the groom's side and the bride's side, people from both sides would gather at some public place. The groom and bride would not be present there. The Panjekar would be given a token fee in advance. The Siddhant would be conducted in a brief but dignified manner. Word would spread throughout the caste that the Siddhant of so-and-so groom had taken place with so-and-so bride. Such efforts were initiated by Raj Darbhanga with the objective of eradicating child marriage, polygamy, and the dowry system. But, some people, eager for 'display', encroached upon this practice as well. Nowadays, a lack of dignity is being seen in this day by day. Wearing a red dhoti over full pants, lifting a lota (water pot), the

Panjikar also having to wear a red dhoti, exchanging expensive 'gifts' instead of pan-masala, and now the popularity of 'ring ceremony' is making the Siddhant meaningless.

In this process of Siddhant, when the Panjikar used to say that the Siddhant of so-and-so groom is taking place with so-and-so girl, the people present would ask the Panjikar, "Have you checked the rights (adhikar)?" And the Panjikar, with great confidence, would say, "According to the Panji management, there is right (adhikar), say it is auspicious, it is auspicious." But how many are aware of the inside story, because now whether marriages are happening with right (adhikar) or without right (anadhikar), most people are unaware of this fact.

The situation has become so bad that even the Panjikars do not have the Panjis. I would even request Gajendra ji that he try once more for Genome Mapping and also get the complete Panji of Karna Kayasthas published.

I am a great admirer of Shri Gajendra ji's efforts. Because, I have direct experience of what condition Mithila's Panji is in. In this context, I had a talk with a scholar in Manigachhi. He was very sad that the Panjekar's Panjis of his village had been eaten by rats and silverfish, and finally, the leaves of the Panji turned into pulp. The reason was that in the second and third generation of the Panjekar, no one took up the Panjikari work. They started going to Delhi-Mumbai for jobs because they felt it was difficult to make a living from Panjikari. The Panji

was tied in a cloth and kept on a loft. Due to lack of resources, the house started leaking, and water kept falling on that bundle. In the end, everything was destroyed.

After this incident, I myself felt very sad. We, along with INTACH, New Delhi, oriented a corpus of fifteen lakh rupees. At that time, Dr. Shivkumar Mishra was the in-charge officer of the Lakshmishwar Singh Memorial Museum in Darbhanga. We got a local lab established in that museum and got preservation-conservation experts brought from Lucknow to Darbhanga. Our idea was to get the Panjis of all castes and all varnas of Mithila, along with old documents, preserved so that the documents could remain safe for the next five hundred years. This facility was

being made available free of cost to the Panjikars or the householders. Only one Panjika, Shri Jiyanand Babu of Nanour, got his entire Panji preserved there. A Panjika from Darbhanga got his old books conserved. No one else came. We stayed with a Panjika from Madhubani for four hours, but could not convince him for this matter. A deceased Panjika from Madhubani was found to have kept the entire Panji in one place, but due to lack of unanimous decision, nothing could be done. The detailed experience of this incident, perhaps another time. No Panjika was willing to understand that their Panji was not being digitized. They were being benefited by the conservation of the Panji so that it could become long-lasting. Later, it came to light that in 1989 AD, during a digitization drive of the Panji in Mithila, the Panjikars had

suffered a lot financially, and they were again gripped by the fear of that financial loss.

From the publication of Gajendra ji's 'Genome Mapping', information about Aryabhata is found, and the matter of determining his period 476-550 comes to light. Whatever was learned about Gonu Jha should be considered new. Information about the origin and end of the Sauriya dynasty is obtained from this. The Panji is indeed a living document of social study. Once, the Maharaja of Darbhanga wished to see the ruins of the old palace of the Sauriya dynasty. Going there, he became very sad. There was a place in the Sauriya kingdom named - Dandkhor. Criminals used to be punished there. The grandson of Ayachi

Mishra got a jagir in Dhaka as Dhaka Kavi. Who would believe now that the knowledge of our Mithila had spread up to Dhaka? Description of a debate between Halli Jha, a tantric, and Shiv Kumar Shastri is found. Through the Pratyahara speech technique, Halli Jha rendered Shiv Kumar Shastri speechless.

By publishing both parts of 'Genome Mapping' and Dushan Panji, Shri Gajendra ji has saved the important heritage of Mithila from being destroyed. For this, he is extremely commendable. My request will remain that he remain enterprising for the publication of the remaining Panjis as well. This is very necessary work for the cultural promotion of Mithila. In today's globalization, people are imaginative that the Panji management should be

computerized. Connecting the Panjikars' accounts to this, it should be made online. People living in distant lands can take advantage of this facility by paying fees for the decision of 'Ashwajan' or for 'Adhikar Mala'. Cooperation of the Panjikars is not being received in this work because the Panjikars fear that if the entire Panji is digitized once, their livelihood will be finished. But I have not received any news of the creation of any such software yet. The fear of the other Panjikars is baseless because now very few people are concerned about the 'Ashwajan' prohibition. For the Gen Z, this is a lament. They marry according to their own will, now they inform their parents about this in advance. After some days, it will become prevalent in society that the marriage of foolish grooms is done by parents, wise

boys take care of their own marriage themselves. Then what is Panji and what is management.

****Diversity and Videha: The
Consciousness-Based
Renaissance of Modern Maithili
Literature****

****Poonam Jha 'Sudha'****

The common meaning of diversity is ensuring a definite participation of minorities, Dalits, and women in any society, institution, public work, etc.

The Maithili language is known for its historical heritage, cultural vibrancy, and richness of folk traditions. The folk life, folk songs, puranic references, and works of ancient scholars of Mithila have continued to strengthen its inner power. But there is also a truth that in modern times, Maithili literature, due to its stability and

conventional standards, did not give adequate space to social diversity. The full nature of Maithili, which is socially extensive, linguistically colorful, and generationally mixed, and which is truly a living language, was not reflected on the literary platform for a long time. In this situation of lack, when a digital literary platform like 'Videha' emerges, it is not just a magazine, but initiated a new consciousness, a new discourse, and a new movement based on diversity in the Maithili language. Under the editorship and leadership of Gajendra Thakur, 'Videha' brought the modern psyche of Maithili literature to that place where the many forms, many levels, many classes, and many voices of the language could get their actual place. In this article, an expanded, analytical, and research-based discussion of the

work related to 'Diversity' done by Videha is being presented.

1. Linguistic Diversity: An Absent Discourse - Diversity is now considered a fundamental principle of linguistic discourse worldwide. Because a language lives only when it is used by all people of society. But in the mainstream of Maithili literature, for a long time, these three problems persisted:

A) Emphasis on forced uniformity
- There was insistence on a particular type of 'standard' in Maithili writing. Due to this, literature in rural dialects was published less, the place of women's writing remained limited, and the experimental form of young writing became a target of criticism.

B) Lack of discussion on other

styles of Maithili - In Maithili, the dialects/versions of Darbhanga, Madhubani, Saharsa, Supaul, Jhanjharpur, Kosi, Champaran, Deoghar, Godda, and Nepal are abundant, but Maithili literature got confined to the voice of only a limited area. Due to this, at the language level, Maithili literature appears monochromatic.

C) Centralization of literary power
- For many centuries, writers of some specific class and place continued to control the literary environment and direction of Maithili writing. Due to this, supporters of power blindly imitated that same environment and style, and those who tried to do something different were punished by the powerful by excluding them from platforms, awards, etc.

The result of these three above reasons was that the Maithili

language forgot its extensive identity. In such a situation, a discourse on "Diversity" was essential.

2. 'Videha' (Literary Revolution of the Digital Age) - When the digital age arrived, like many Indian languages, new possibilities opened up in Maithili as well. Along with it, there was also fear: "the language will deteriorate on the digital platform", "discipline will end", "the literary standard will fall", etc. Amidst all these fears, 'Videha' established its distinct identity. Videha says: "The true voice of a language resides where it is spoken. The responsibility of literature is to give recognition to all those voices." This thought was completely new in Maithili literature. Because here, more emphasis was placed on the 'vibrancy' of the language than its

'purity'. Videha is not a magazine; it is a laboratory. Videha's working style is completely different from ordinary literary magazines. It is fully digital. It is based on mass participation. It is an open platform; anyone can write. Videha is not a proponent of editorial rigidity, but of linguistic freedom. Under the leadership of Gajendra Thakur, this platform proved to be "the first experiment in the democratization of Maithili literature." The diversity that Videha provided shelter to can be understood in three concrete parts:

A) Linguistic Diversity - Videha says: "Maithili is not just a uniform vocabulary collection, but a language that lives with many dialects." Therefore: colloquial sentences of folk language, traditional rural idioms, sound variations according to

district/province, technical terms, mixed vocabulary were all given equal status. This was unique in the history of Maithili literature.

B) Writerly Diversity - If you look at the list of authors published on Videha, it becomes clear: veteran writers of all castes, young students, female creators, rural writers, the Maithili community living abroad, experimental writers – all have their writings published with equal respect and honor. This was the first time in Maithili literature where "the age, place, status, and caste identity of the writer" did not become an obstacle.

C) Thematic Diversity - Videha did not remain limited to just poetry and stories. Here, criticism, language research, history, folk discourse, technology and society, along with all other subjects,

gained entry. This made the scope of Maithili literature extremely broad.

3. Videha's Impact on the New Generation - Videha became the most influential platform among the younger generation. Due to digital availability, readers from villages read and write Videha on their mobiles. This became the biggest proof of the democratization of Maithili literature. Earlier, the younger generation used to fear the unnecessary strictness of the standard. Videha said: "You write in your dialect, write in your language – this is the real Maithili." This statement proved revolutionary for the new generation. Maithili poetry, free writing, modern experiments, social-media style, which many people considered "low", all got space on Videha and established

their value. Videha became a creative safe-zone for the younger generation.

4. Linguistic Future and Videha's Contribution - Videha played an important role not only for the present but also in the construction of the Maithili language in the future. Videha is the first platform where facilities like e-magazine, e-publication, online library, digital copyright, etc., are available, through which Videha has connected the virtual reader communities with Maithili. The future of Maithili literature depends on digital platforms; its first successful experiment was done by Videha. It brought the language to society. When literature moves away from the people's language, it gets cut off from society. Videha reconnected the language of literature with the heart of folk life. Compositions

written in folk language gave readers the essence of their family's dialect, due to which Videha's readership increased exponentially. Videha built a bridge between various groups of society, such as rural and urban, old and new, men and women, domestic and foreign writers and readers. This increased the unity of the Maithili community. Videha enhanced the cultural importance of Maithili linguistic diversity. Diversity is not just a literary issue; it is also a question of cultural existence. Maithili is one language, but within it reside many sub-languages, including the folk tunes of Mithila, the songs of the Madhubani region, the sounds of Janakpur, the pronunciation of the Kosi region, of Saharsa. For Nepal, Videha became a platform to preserve all these dialects, sounds, and styles. In the history of literature, this work holds great

significance. Because when a language preserves its internal diversity, only then does that language have the capacity to move with the times.

5. Resistance to Diversity - Resistance to diversity in society has always existed. Wherever new thinking occurs, its resistance is inevitable. The same happened with Videha. Many traditionalist groups said - the language is deteriorating, hearts are breaking, discipline is over, the new generation is going in the wrong direction. But Videha's answer was clear - "Language is not a museum piece. Language is alive, and whatever is alive, keeps changing." Many established literary groups did not like Videha's openness. Because this platform has no titles, no power, no alliances, no award groups - nothing. Only writing. This fact

was uncomfortable for the power centers of Maithili literature. Videha continued to give space on its platform to all criticism and even criticism of criticism. This too was a completely new step in Maithili. Because here, the "voice of opposition" was respected - not suppressed.

Conclusion - Amidst much opposition and support, Videha, through diversity, has not just created a whole new chapter in Maithili literature, but has announced a new era.

****Diversity and Videha****

****Dr. Shiv Kumar Prasad****

Seeing the time, situation, and lineage, people bestow honor.

Rahim, without you, who is God for the poor and orphaned?

Poet Rahim passed away in 1627 AD. About four hundred years ago, he wrote and told this fact that people bestow honor (respect) on others seeing their time, situation, lineage, etc. He said this observing the social situation. In Maithili literature and Mithila, even now, the truth of that time prevailed until twenty-five-thirty years ago from today. In Maithili literature, even now, that tradition or

practice exists, albeit somewhat diminished. Casteism, bigotry, groupism, favoritism towards one's own and discrimination against others are rampant. In such a situation, breaking the shackles above, an iron man of the Maithili language appeared. For whom, those children of Mother Maithili who, though deprived of lineage and status, were masters of wordcraft, he felt an inclination towards Maithili. He started publishing the first e-magazine of Maithili literature and decided to give space in that magazine to those creators who were cut off from the elite society of Maithili literature, rebuked, and engaged in literary creation in anonymity.

In Maithili literature, firstly, there was a scarcity of women creators, and secondly, those who did exist remained hidden in corners. With

the advent of this magazine, they all got a strong foundation. The editor of this magazine, Videha, Shri Gajendra Thakur, is that same iron man who, taking on the entrenched oligarchs in the magazine, created a diversion and gave space to new word-artists of various origins among the creators of this magazine. Not only in the magazine itself, but he also made invaluable contributions to establishing them in the literary world by publishing their excellent works in book form through his Shruti Publication.

Humans are called social animals. A person's birth, upbringing, and education, the kind of life they lead in their family and society, their speech or dialect, and behavior are similar. This diversity is also easily seen in the

behavior and traditions of people living in the village society of Mithila. This fact can also be easily observed in literature. This diversity is also present in Maithili literature. Just as 'Videha' magazine, accepting this diversity, gave space to all kinds of creators, it is not seen in other Maithili magazines. Hundreds of issues of this magazine have been published, and similarly, the wealth of stories, poems, plays, one-act plays, essays, articles, etc., of hundreds of creators rooted in the soil and water of Mithila are spread here. Till now, 435 issues of 'Videha' magazine have been published. This magazine neither accepts any donations nor do the creators get any remuneration for the works published in it. The editorial work is also unpaid. In Maithili literature, this magazine, in my understanding, is the first magazine of the current era that is

moving forward by continuously and timely giving space to the works of creators from small to big.

Shri Gajendra Thakur, in his book 'Kurukshetram-Antarmanak', while reviewing Subhash Chandra Yadav's story collection 'Banait-Bigadait', writes: "The era of calling oneself a horse and a tiger and others a donkey and a goat distances oneself from the core direction and problems. This situation of self-absorption by reviewing one's own stories and poems arises from the reviewer's weakness. I have a disgust for this single word, and I see its remedy in the Maithili literature movement of "Videha e-magazine" against the slow-poisoning of Maithili. Here, within a year, the most writers joined, and the number of

readers crossed a lakh. The way non-Maithil Brahmin-Karna Kayastha readers and writers gathered along with children and women was amazing." (1)

This view of Gajendra ji on Maithili criticism indicates the ideological poverty prevalent in Maithili literature. Along with the publication of 'Videha e-magazine', a special class of litterateurs emerged in Maithili literature. Among those litterateurs, the first name can be taken of Shri Jagadish Prasad Mandal ji. In the literature of respected Jagadish Babu, the folk songs, soil, and water of Mithila constantly surge. Along with vignette stories, short stories, novels, and plays, most of his books of poetry literature have been published. Regarding him, Gajendra ji writes: "...and here the stories of Jagadish Prasad Mandal

ji save the journey of the Maithili story stream from becoming one-sided." But his insistence and ability to make the narrative purposeful (in vignette stories, short stories, novels, plays, inspirational stories) establish him at that place in Maithili literature from where the history of Maithili literature will be read in two parts: "Before Jagadish Prasad Mandal" and "After Jagadish Prasad Mandal." ... This is due to his equal perspective towards narrative and action, and due to the superiority of his personal and social life. Whatever he thinks, whatever he does, he writes the same—that is the reason." (2)

Hundreds of stories have been published from Jagadish Mandal's 'Bisanrh' till now. For the first time, in the form of Jagadish Prasad Mandal, Sahitya Akademi gave its award to a non-forward

caste writer. His novel 'Pangu' was honored. Before this, Shri Mandal ji had also been honored with the 'Tagore Award'. This award has been given in Maithili only to Shri Jagadish Prasad Mandal ji. Thus, 'Videha' e-magazine gave space on its pages to such story-tellers who proved to be milestones of Maithili literature.

In this chain, there are many names that have been published in Videha and are still being published. Some names are: Shri Umesh Paswan, Shri Rajdev Mandal, Nand Vilas Ray, Ram Vilas Sahu, Umesh Mandal, Ramdev Prasad Mandal 'Jharudar', Durganand Mandal, Bechan Thakur, Kapileshwar Raut, Laldev Kamat, Munni Kamat, Akhilesh Mandal, Shiv Kumar Prasad, Narayan Yadav, Subhash Kumar Kamat, Santosh Kumar Ray 'Batohee', Rameshwar Prasad

Mandal, Bhuvneshwar Chaurasia 'Bhunes', Pradeep Kumar Mandal, Manushee Singh, Pallavi Kumari, Poonam Mandal, Shri Ram Prawesh Mandal, Ram Krishna Mandal, Balram Sah, Kishan Karigar, Chandrashekhar Kamati, Jai Prakash Mandal, Kapileshwar Sahu, Radhakant Mandal 'Raman', Manoj Kumar Mandal, Prabhat Ray Bhatt, Mo. Gul Hasan, Pawan Kumar Sah... etc. All these non-caste (avarn) creators, gradually flourishing and blossoming through the medium of 'Videha' e-magazine, are establishing a parallel creative world to the Maithili literary stream. Very few among these creators have had their works published in any other Maithili newspaper or magazine.

Umesh Paswan - is a young poet.

His poetry collection is 'Varnit Ras'. Varnit Ras is indicative of the distinctive vision of a poet of various rasas (essences). Along with this, there is a description of the experienced reality of a Dalit. In this collection, he does not grieve over being a Dalit himself, but he cannot be deceived or misled away from the truth. A discussion about Varnit Ras is noteworthy: "Then what should be said to all of 'Varnit Ras'? Does the poet's spring only see flowers and leaves that only give fragrance, give pleasure to the eyes, but would that be pleasing to a burning stomach? Therefore, the poet's depicted spring's essence cannot be a beautiful flower devoid of fruit, and that is indeed the case. Dalit discourse by a Dalit, and that too by that Dalit whose influence is like Salhesh, who has not forgotten his culture, speech, language, has not forgotten Sohar-

Samdaun. And that is Umesh Paswan." "The vision with which he sees his spring, sees the N.H. crossroads, is broad, hence his poetry is also broad." (3) And this vision was seen in 'Videha' e-magazine. Today, Umesh Paswan is not just a poet of Maithili, but has been honored as a young poet by the Maithili Sahitya Akademi.

Shri Kapileshwar Raut, whose works 'Ulahn' (Vignette and Short Story Collection) 2013 Shruti Publication, 'Purnava' (Story Collection) 2017 Pallavi Publication, 'Panchdeep' (Poetry Collection) 2018 Pallavi Publication, and 'Marayal Jinegi' (Story Collection) 2023 Pallavi Publication have been honored by the Bihar Rajya Sanskrit Akademi, Patna, has also been an active creator of 'Videha' e-magazine.

Due to illness for the past two years, his activity has decreased somewhat. But in parallel story writing in Maithili story literature, his contribution is significant.

Shri Rajdev Mandal - apart from his professional realm, he is engaged in parallel Maithili literary creation. His first poetry collection 'Ambera' was published in 2010 by Shruti Publication. In the preface of this book, it is written about his poetry: "But when Rajdev Mandal writes poetry -

'With drops of blood dripping continuously

The earth is becoming saturated

The sparrow is asking

This question to its mind

Will this dark and heavy night that
is coming

Or will my caste not survive...?'

Then it sends a shiver through all
of us. What is the caste of the
poet's poetry, the caste of that
sparrow... What global audience
and self-absorbed preface does
this poetry need? What global
audience and purification of the
path does this sensitivity need?"

(4) The essence is that when the
dialect or language for poetry is
kneaded with soil and water, then
the emotion, fragrant with the
scent of soil, becomes intensely
aromatic. Therefore, Gajendra
Thakur considers Ambera "there
is no doubt in considering it the
best Maithili poetry collection of
the first decade of the 21st
century." (5)

Rajdev Mandal ji's second poetry

collection is 'Vasundhara'. This book was published in 2013 by Shruti Publication. In this poetry collection too, the poet does not consider himself safe -

"I am hidden in that very place

Where everything has a price

They have plucked everything

The flesh and bone of my body

I see everything

I am being torn apart." (6)

'Hamra Tol' is a novel by Rajdev Mandal published in 2013 by Shruti Publication. In this Tol (neighborhood), many colors of life are mixed. Along with happiness-sorrow, laughter-leisure, casteism, love-conflict, and the cruel chapter of burning lovers alive together, women's

discourse has also been presented. After this novel, his novel 'Jal Bhanwar' was published in 2017 by Pallavi Publication. Along with 'Jal-Patkatha' - 2015, 'Tyag' one-act play - 2017, 'Panchaiti' one-act play - 2017, 'Wapsi' one-act play - 2018, etc., many works have also been published in Hindi. He was given the main prize of Videha Samman-2012 for his poetry collection 'Ambera' and Videha Samman-2013 for his overall contribution. 'Triveni ke Rang' is his story collection book. This collection was published in 2021 by Pallavi Publication. Even now, Rajdev ji's pen is in motion.

A good creator of 'Videha' e-magazine is Shri Bechan Thakur. He can be called a unique creator of Maithili dramatic literature. He is an amazing playwright of

contemporary environment and situational emotions. His specialty is not just writing plays, but also directing and staging them. In dramatic literature, writing a play is not a big deal; its staging is important. There is no play of Bechan ji that has not been staged. His plays have often been seen performed from the original manuscript. In the roles of male and female characters, his student community acts with great dedication. Some performances are of high quality. Regarding the subject matter of his play 'Chhinardevi', Ashish-Anchinhaar raised a question: after Prof. Harimohan Jha, what was the purpose of Bechan ji taking up his pen again after so many days? "This question arose in my mind: despite Prof. Jha writing so powerfully against superstition, why did Bechan ji need to write again after 60-70 years? There

could be two reasons for this. First, despite Prof. Jha's attack, superstition did not disappear... and the second reason could be that Bechan ji did not find any subject." (7) He has also given its answer. I only have this much to say on this matter: a one-sided vision is destructive for literature and society.

Unless there is a balanced vision, a litterateur cannot do good for literature and society. Bechan ji used to direct his students of his institution for the staging of his new play every year on Saraswati Puja day. This sequence has now slowed down, but the writing continues. His first play 'Bap Bhel Pitti A Adhikar' was published in 2012 by Shruti Publication. 'Vishwasghat' in 2013, 'Beti ke Apman', 'Chhinardevi', 'Oonch-Neech', 'Bhont', 'Nab Ghar', 'Barham Baba', 'Ghogh Bali

Kaniyaan', 'Rasun-Piyaj', etc., have been published. Plays and one-act plays like 'Teen Bal Sangi', 'Harinam me Vivaad Kie', 'Marba Parhak Mahees', 'Thak', 'Honhar Chela', 'Simariya ka Panda', 'Sapoot', 'Rakhi ki Laaj', 'Khachhar Kahin ke', etc., are unpublished.

Thus, his work on drama literature is flowing as a parallel stream in Maithili drama literature. Gajendra Thakur considers him a playwright of the parallel tradition. "The play 'Vishwasghat' announces the beginning of Bechan Thakur ji's second innings. This play written by him on the 'N.H.' road project proves that the playwright of the parallel tradition moves and lives in society, is connected." (8)

When Maithili literature is discussed, usually that same traditional and pedantic literature

is talked about. At the beginning of the 21st century, a new class of Maithili literature emerged who started writing the literature of pain hung on the peg of experienced reality. It should be made clear here that even before this, there certainly were occasional litterateurs who created from the perspective of their own ideas. Like respected Subhash Chandra Yadav, Prof. Dr. Ashok Mehta, Buchru Paswan, Mahendra Narayan Ram, etc.

In the 21st century, I am talking about those creators who are true village storytellers. True playwrights. True poets and novelists. Whose language has the fragrance of the village soil. Who use the true vocabulary of Mithila. They live the village life, the village fields, embankments, ponds, thatch and weeds, enduring the blows of floods and famines, living

a life of living and dying, and express that tragedy through the medium of words. In the creations of such creators, there is no external ostentation, no hypocrisy, no polish, no mocking the life of the lower classes, but rather they are writing the account of the mould, thought, and irony of their lives in their own language. So, there is no harm in calling such creators creators of the parallel stream.

Among those creators, I can take the name of Ramvilas Sahu. His book 'Rath ka Chakka Ulati Chalaee Baat' (poetry collection) was published in 2013 by Shruti Publication. 'Ankur' (short story collection) in 2016 by Shruti Publication, 'Kosi ka Kachher' (poetry collection) in 2017 by Pallavi Publication. 'Gamak Sukh' (poetry collection) was published in 2018. The poem 'Bhikh Mangni'

from this collection is a sad tale of social irony of the proletariat class, where after marriage, a young woman is tormented for being childless and forced to leave home. 'Dudhbecni' is his story collection published in 2019. 'Anshuman' is his story collection published in 2021. 'Netradan' is a long poem different from both works, published in 2021. 'Manak Mail' is also his poetry collection published in 2018. He was honored with the Narendra Award in 2018. Shri Sahu, engaged in agriculture and working as a teacher in a non-governmental organization, is always devoted to writing and teaching.

Nand Vilas Ray has been associated with this magazine for years. He is a storyteller, poet, playwright, one-act playwright,

and memoir writer of the village milieu. Not just in the magazine, today many of his books have been published. His first short story collection 'Sakhari Petari' was published in 2013 by Shruti Publication. 'Marjad ke Bhoj' and 'Bhardutiya' were published in 2018 by Pallavi Publication. Poetry collections 'Hamar Charu Dham' and 'Chhathik Dala' were also published in the same year 2018 by Pallavi Publication and released at the Sagar Raati Deep Jaray story gathering.

In the year 2021, three of his books were published. All three were published by Pallavi Publication. 'Saraswati Pujak Prasad' (story collection), 'Bahinpa' (short play), and 'Apan Beetal' (memoirs). In 2022, three of his books were also published. 'Pait' (one-act play collection), 'Mon Padae' (memoirs), and 'Asal Puja' (story

collection). All three books are published by Pallavi Publication. Through characters following the circumstances, environment, hopes, aspirations, and ideals for that of the lower and middle-class families of Mithila's villages and homes, he writes his stories, poems, and one-act plays. His two memoir books tell a lot about life.

Nand Vilas ji, who has borne the burden of conducting the 'Sagar Raati Deep Jaray' story gathering overnight for years, with his diligence, does not need recognition today. He has also been the coordinator of the 83rd Sagar Raati Deep Jaray. A very accurate thing written about him is understood: "A true creator, Nand Vilas Ray ji, living in the village and composing tales of the village, observing and experiencing village life closely and presenting his open views in

story form, has also registered his presence in the Maithili literary sky on his own merit." Thus, Nand Vilas ji is still dedicated to the development of Maithili literature. In the context of 'Videha' e-magazine, it is no exaggeration to say that the selection of poets, storytellers, novelists, playwrights, critics, etc., in this magazine is based on their talent, not on their lineage, clan, or specific caste or religion. (9)

In this sequence, the next creator who emerges is 'Munni Kamat'. When no one knew or recognized her, her work got a place in 'Videha' e-magazine. Taking the life and language of the true, rustic Balan basin, she debuted in Maithili literature. Social irony, daughter, mirage of life, waiting life in garbage heaps, resolution, emerging words, dowry frenzy,

our lost form, etc., are her early poems published in Videha. In 'Umakal Shabd' she writes:

"Will neither take away nor leave
anything

Just one lamp that burns

Here always, in everyone's heart

Will be my creation,

The light of my deeds." (10)

To my knowledge, two poetry collections of Munni Kamat have been published so far. 'Sukhal Man Tarasal Aankh' Pallavi Publication, Nirmali - year 2014, and 'Antatah' Geetashree Publication, Patna - 2019.

'Matik Suvas' was published serially in Vachi quarterly magazine from 2022 to 2023. This novel was published in book form in 2023 by Navarambh

Publication. 'Chukka' (children's story collection) was published in 2022 by Navarambh Publication, Madhubani. For the novel 'Matik Suvas', she was honored with the 'Maheshwari Singh Mahesh' Award in 2024 by Chetna Samiti, Patna. In 2025, she was honored with the Bal Sahitya Samman from Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, for the story collection 'Chukka'. Currently, she is associated with the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) and is engaged in research work, doing well. Where Munni Kamat has reached today, its beginning was from 'Videha' e-magazine. Her four books are safe in Videha's archive. She will progress further. The diversity of creators in 'Videha' e-magazine is truly exemplary. Maithili language and literature are the legacy of the people living in the entire Mithila. Its development is possible through the combined efforts of all

creators engaged in Maithili literary creation. For that, the effort of Videha e-magazine is praiseworthy.

In this diversity, I would like to add one name, that of Durganand Mandal ji. Durga Nand Mandal was a teacher by profession. Now he has retired. In Videha e-magazine, his identity is as a storyteller. When respected Jagadish Prasad Mandal ji was invited to 'Kochi' for the 'Tagore Award', Durga Nand ji had also gone with him. As an inspiring storyteller, he has a distinct identity. Regarding his narrative, editor Shri Gajendra Thakur writes: "If we discuss love stories, then Durga Nand Mandal's Lal Bhauji, Sujit Kumar Jha's Ekta Adhikar... Kamini Kamayani's Tatal Tara and Rajnath Mishra's

Mastee are directly love stories, but all these, different from each other, also identify humor, seriousness, and feudalism in their own way." (11)

'Katha Kusum' is his first story collection published in 2016 by Pallavi Publication. It contains 24 stories. Most of the stories collected in this collection are related to social concerns. In 'Postmortem', 'Kukarma', 'Jehan Karni Tehan Bharni', where subjects related to moral degradation are there, similarly many stories are didactic, like 'Paaras', 'Asli Heera', etc. His second book is 'Chakshu', published in 2018 by Pallavi Publication. This book is labeled "Essay-Treatise-Review". It has a total of 23 titles. He has written good essays on Shri Jagadish Prasad Mandal's 'Maulayil Gachh ka Phool', 'Jeevan-Maran', Shri

Bechan Thakur's plays 'Beti ka Apman' and 'Chhinardevi', the Tagore Literature Award journey (travelogue or memoir), Mrs. Preeti Thakur's 'Gonu Jha A Aan Maithili Chitrakatha', and on 'Doosar Maithili Chitrakatha' related 'Beautiful Picture Stories for Children'. Also on 'Nishtuki' by Umesh Mandal, 'Jeevan ki Jeet' by J.P. Mandal, 'Ulahn' by Kapileshwar Raut, 'Sarkari Petari' by Nand Vilas Ray, etc., many stories; similarly, on 'Gaabay Mithila Lok Preet' by Preetam Kumar Nishad, 'Navki Putoh' by Narayan Yadav, 'Hamra Bin(u) Jagat Sunna Chhai' by Ramdev ji, 'Gamak Sukh' by Ram Vilas Sahu, 'Hamra Tol' by Rajdev Mandal, 'Sonhaat-Ansonhaat' by Dr. Shiv Kumar Prasad, Durga Nand ji has expressed his views, big and small. Reporting of the program at Deoghar for 'Sagar Raati Deep

Jaray' is also collected in this collection.

The most important thing about 'Chakshu' is that whichever creators' reviews are in it, all are associated with Videha e-magazine as contributing creators. Secondly, the books and creators discussed in it prove the 'Diversity' of Videha e-magazine. Durga Nand ji is a skilled stage conductor of 'Sagar Raati Deep Jaray'. In this sequence, he has also coordinated the Sagar Raati Deep Jaray story gathering in his village Deep Godhanpur (Jhanjharpur). Regarding his work of criticism, the editor of Videha, Gajendra Thakur, comments: "Durga Nand Mandal ji's dozen and a half articles will be remembered in the field of Maithili literature essays and criticism for their clear and sharp vision... He discusses the society

moving parallel to the broad highways and simultaneously the airplanes... and that is why his criticism can understand all these types of creations, can grasp them, can grasp and hold them." (12)

Videha e-magazine, weaving diversity into a thread of unity till today, among those it has helped move forward, includes Shri Umesh Mandal. Working as a young writer, Umesh ji has today become established as a prominent personality in the Maithili literary world. He pursued his livelihood path with respected Dr. Ramanand Prasad ji. In the Nirmali Nagar Parishad area, Umesh ji is still known by the name 'Doctor' Saheb. His other form is as a servant of Maithili literature. Along with that, he started playing with computers

and typing. Simultaneously, studying and contemplating Maithili literature, he joined the 'Sagar Raati Deep Jaray' story gathering and established proximity to Maithili language and literature.

First, due to his studious nature, after post-graduation in Maithili literature, he obtained a Ph.D. degree. Today, he is working as a Guest Assistant Professor in the Maithili Department of Sarvanarayan Singh Mahavidyalaya, Saharsa (Bhupendra Narayan Mandal University, Madhepura). Secondly, becoming the patron of Pallavi Publication, he has published hundreds of books. Thirdly, for about fifteen (15) years, he has been diligently involved in organizing the famous story gathering of Maithili story literature, 'Sagar Raati Deep

Jaray', quarterly. Fourthly, by associating with Videha e-magazine, he tried to give shape to the diversity character of this magazine, joining with the editor and trying to connect hundreds of such creators by honoring them who were ostracized until yesterday.

I cannot help but praise his printing art. He typed his own four-hundred-page dissertation himself. Then he also got the same research work printed himself, six copies each.

As a creator, he has one book, 'Nishtuki', published in 2009 by Shruti Publication. In this book, various forms of poetry are collected. Poetry, short poetry, haiku, tanka, senryu, ghazal, etc., this book is capable of saying straightforward (nishtuki) things in its own format. See the magic of

haiku:

"Kera ka veer
apan veerata ke
ghonkachone chhai"

Similarly -

"Andi chhahari
dait aachhi rahati
koshikanha me."

This tanka can also be seen:-

"Samashya aapt
solhani sajal
sahityakar
lekhe puran chhai aatript
kena etai yatharth.."

Regarding this book, Shri Gajendra Thakur writes: "Umesh Mandal's 'Nishtuki' is a collection of poetry,

short poetry, haiku, tanka, and ghazal. One should not give prestige to the new generation of Maithili just based on age if they are not progressive. And that should also happen, respect is for work, not for age or oldness... Umesh Mandal says something — 'Nishtuki' says, all the tangled cobwebs are spread in all four directions, but they are clearing them, not entangling them." (13)

After this original book, his interest has grown more towards editing and research articles. 'Mukt Purush' is his collection of research articles, in which research articles on various books of respected Jagadish Prasad Mandal ji are collected. Under the name 'Panchdev', a collection of 100 stories (five stories each) of Jagadish Babu was published in 2018, total 500 stories. Under the name 'Devashram', details and

story excerpts about Jagadish Babu are collected in many parts. In 'Nirvikalp', 'Jeta'e Ne Jaye Kavi Otay Jaye Anubhavi', 'Handbook se Facebook Dhari', 'Samashya se Samadhan Dhari', also, excerpts from various books of Jagadish Babu are collected. 'Swatisut' is also a similar collection. 'Chaupahal Chehra' and 'Kiyo Karaye Aap le Maye le Nai Bap le' also. His book published under the title 'Jagadish Prasad Mandal ka Kavya Sansar' is a research article on Jagadish Babu's poetic world. In 'Tootait Man ka Judav', he has collected 26 stories written in various time periods. In 'Antardhwani', he has also collected 15 stories. Thus, according to his inclination, Umesh ji is engaged in the service of Maithili literature.

As a contributing creator of Videha

e-magazine, Shri Laldev Kamat has been providing support till now through his reviewer medium. His name is easily accessible in many issues of Videha e-magazine for reader response or book review. He has also presented good introductions to his acquaintances and respected persons. He is always ready for his research related to Maithili culture and rural society for the magazine 'Koshi-Sandesh: Mithila ka Aawaj' published from 'Hatni'. His book 'Divya Drishti' (Pallavi Publication, Nirmali) was published in 2022 AD as a collection of essays-treatises-reviews, in which a total of 48 essays, reviews, and reader responses are collected. According to his capacity, he remains always absorbed in his writing work.

Among the creator-contributors of this magazine, the name of Shri Sandeep Kumar Safi can also be mentioned. Shri Safi, a resident of Mehath village, associated with Videha e-magazine along with 'Bhakhjogni' and 'Vasant Panchami'. The content and emotion of Safi ji's poetry, rooted in the village environment, are capable of giving a new voice to the irony of Dalit society. See this line from his 'Bhakhjogni':

"Baua kana'e bhakhjogni lae
bada'e chahoon or
pakad rau, bhulla, hokwa
thaha-thahee anhariyame luti
nene math par narak anti
tharthara'i chhi pachhuar me."

His first book 'Vaishakh me Dalan par' was published in 2014 by

Shruti Publication, Delhi. In this, along with excerpts from his autobiography, creations in four genres are collected under the headings poetry section, vignette story section, and thought-point section. In the short story section, there is a story 'Pasikhana'. In this story, there is an unmatched excerpt of language craft and emotion that has planted the post of Dalit discourse among us: "Then a small child, with open hair, eating leftover rice in a small bowl and muror shaag (a leafy green) came out of the courtyard saying - Our father is asleep. At night, there was a quarrel with mother, he slept hungry, hasn't woken up yet." (14) "... Similarly — That Jalalah (wretched one) ever since I came to the beggar's house, I have never eaten or drunk in peace. ... The sari that Naichara (grandfather?) gave in the

wedding, mother-father, that very sari, we manage with half a blouse." (15)

It seems I don't need to say much about his narrative and emotion. Regarding his autobiography, at that time (2014), Shri Gajendra Thakur wrote: "There has been an absolute lack of Dalit autobiography in Maithili. Sandeep Kumar Safi's autobiography, in terms of Mithila's literature, society, and culture, fulfills that lack." (16)

Ashish Anchinhaar has also written the preface of the book under the title "Business me apan naam karitau".

A heartfelt mind of a Maithil —

Business me apan naam karitau,

Mithila ke aagu naam karitau."
(17)

"The beggar of Maithili, Thakur Ramdev Prasad Mandal 'Jharudar', gives soil and says - Without me, the world is empty." (18a) Ramdev ji's brooms are also of various types. "Ramdev ji writes songs and also colorful brooms like pani-soak. As the problem, so the broom. And in Maithili, when the tendency to keep gotra-based surnames is seen in some new and old writers, then what does this surname "Jharudar" say without saying everything?" (18b)

The creator of Videha e-magazine, Ramdev Prasad 'Jharudar', is fully capable of realizing the situation and environmental conditions with his "broom". To my knowledge, his only book published is 'Hamra Bin(u) Jagat Sunna Chhai' in 2012 by Shruti Publication, Delhi. This book is a collection of brooms and songs. In his view, respect for women is

paramount. See his broom on that subject:

"Jai ghar me hoi nari puja,

O ghar hoi chhai swarg saman.

Oi ghar ke tan narak maanu,

Jatay hoi nari ka apman." (19)

He says -

"Deep jaraabu premak bati,
bharik taime sinehak tel.

Phutai aabha sukh shantik, jan-
janme hoi sammat mel." (20)

Writing about the life of farmers
and laborers -

"Chaahe ola pus girabai, tapaki
rahal hoi jethak ghaam.

Likhalka kismat kahaan vidhaata,
bais gharme kari araam." (21)

And finally, see his humanity —

"Taaj mile sampurna jagat ke, a
bani jibae jharudar.

Manav me manavta hoi ta',
badalai nai okar avataar." (22)

Truly, "Jharudar" ji's broom is
filled with rainbow colors.

Apart from the creators
mentioned above, there are other
creators as well, about whom I will
write in detail in the future, such
as - Narayan Yadav, Shiv Kumar
Prasad, Achche Lal Shastri, Deep
Narayan Vidyarthi, Subhash
Kumar Yadav, Bhuvneshwar
Chaurasia 'Bhunesh', Mo. Gul
Hasan, Vindeshwar Thakur,
Virendra Ku. Yadav,
Shubhchandra Ray, Rameshwar
Prasad Mandal, Jai Prakash
Mandal, Badrinath Ray, Manashi
Singh, Poonam Mandal, Pallavi
Mandal, etc. Like these, fifty

creators are still left out. The creators mentioned in this article and their references are primarily based on Videha Sadeha-2012. Many old and new creators associated with Videha and connected to the title of this article still remain.

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'Jharudar', 2012, p-104

****Videha and New Writers****

****Kalpana Jha****

It becomes the responsibility of any established litterateur or editor that if they see talent within any newcomer interested in literature, they should help in refining their pen and giving it an appropriate direction. So that a new generation of writers can be prepared. When one becomes established as a senior litterateur themselves, they should pay attention to preparing the next line. Spending time on new writers in this way is called a kind of literary service. But such a spirit of doing literary service is not seen in the senior litterateurs of Maithili, in the present time. No one is born great from their mother's womb as

a great litterateur or a capable editor. Every great litterateur had someone as a guide, then they became great. Many people also publicly admit this fact. Now I am writing articles on 'Upendra Nath Jha 'Vyas's contribution to Maithili literature'. In this process of biography-writing, it is coming to light that 'Vyas' ji kept getting many guides at every step. Not just in matters of literary creation, but also in other activities of life. From the time he was a school student, through his 'Engineering' studies and literary creation, in all activities, he kept getting someone or the other to provide selfless guidance. It was due to the encouragement and guidance of many people like Dhirendranath Laha, Balbhadra Babu, Dayanath Babu, Ramanath Babu that 'Vyas' ji became 'Vyas' ji. His innate talent was recognized by some

kind-hearted people, and to bring refinement to that talent, they supported him with their body, mind, and wealth. Thereafter, the personality that came before society is understood by everyone. What he did for society, very few people can do in their lifetime.

In the present time, when there seems to be a famine of those who provide selfless guidance and encouragement, the Videha team evaluating the talent of new writers and providing them opportunities is commendable and exemplary. The Videha team, meaning editor Gajendra Thakur or Ashish Anchinhaar, it's all the same thing. Although the Videha team is not a team of senior litterateurs. By age, they may not be senior, but in knowledge, wisdom, and maturity, they are senior. In matters of foresight,

they are senior. The 'vision' that these people have, where is it seen in the editors of any other magazine? In fact, the editor of Videha is fulfilling the responsibility of an 'editor'. Meaning, the Videha team has the urge to see talent within someone and 'polish' it. They also have the courage to give them opportunities. And generosity too. Meaning, spending time on others is not considered a waste of time by these people. They also have the insight to judge someone's talent. In filmi language, what is called 'zigra' (guts), they have that 'zigra'. And its lack is visible within other editorial groups. I cannot guess what the reason behind this could be, but Ashish Anchinhaar, in one of his Facebook posts, revealed the reason in this way: "The old creators of Maithili do not want to

take risks. Some are afraid that the new ones might surpass them somewhere, some are afraid that the new ones might overshadow them all. And ultimately, Maithili has to bear the brunt of this." Along with this disclosure, he also welcomes 'fearless new litterateurs' in Videha's courtyard. The Videha team indeed properly welcomes those newly holding the pen. This I have seen with my own eyes, and I am also providing a photo of this post. Before this, Ashish ji, for his genre of ghazal, encouraged many new writers and connected them to the ghazal genre, and these new ghazal writers also wrote in Videha.

In the present time of social media, spotting new talent and judging their writing ability has also become very easy. Nowadays, everyone is writing their heart out

on social media in large numbers. If one has a discerning eye, they can observe Facebook posts and evaluate talent. They can encourage them. They can help in giving their pen the right direction. And this is exactly what the Videha team is doing. If a new creator gets encouragement like "You can do good work in this genre, give it a try", then one can imagine how much the creator's morale would increase. And they might actually do good work.

Here, I feel it necessary to share my own experience. However long my writing journey has been, I have met many writers and editors. I have known and recognized them all. The beginning of my writing journey was on Facebook, writing some short short-stories/vignette

stories. After that, I started noting down my reactions after reading some books. A simple housewife could never have developed so much confidence that she could write something worthy of being included in any important book. Worthy of being published in any magazine. First among the people I got to know through social media, Shri Ashok Mehta ji, trying to boost my confidence, started giving me some tips selflessly to improve my writing. Those tips continue to reach me till date. Thereafter, the editor-team of 'Videha e-magazine', especially Ashish Anchinhaar, has played an important role in boosting my confidence. The noteworthy thing here is that by boosting the morale of a newcomer creator, the Videha team is not only benefiting that creator but also their mother tongue. Along with that, it is certainly more beneficial for the

magazine as well. With the entry of new people with new ideas and new language style, freshness comes into a magazine's content, and it is certainly appreciated. My experience with this team has been very positive. I am grateful and will remain grateful to this team for life. When the 'Kedarnath Choudhary Special Issue' was announced by the Videha team, I was told, "We estimate that you can write criticism." Along with that, Ashish ji also sent PDFs of two or four books by Kedarnath Choudhary on WhatsApp. In this way, he gave a direction to my pen. This indeed is the work of a responsible editor!

And it's not just me; there are many such creators who, when they were in their early days, when they were struggling, the

Videha team supported them. Guided them. Some names among such creators are as follows. This list includes writers of every genre who were encouraged by the Videha team, and today many writers have become established - Poonam Mandal, Madhulika Mishra, Tulika, Svastika Thakur, Nilima Choudhary, Sunita Thakur, Rashmi Priya, Priyanka Jha, Kiran Choudhary, Neetu Kumari, Sandeep Kumar Safi, Durganand Mandal, Ram Vilas Sahu, Kapileshwar Raut, Nand Vilas Ray, Jagadish Prasad Mandal, Umesh Mandal, Bechan Thakur, Rajdev Mandal, Umesh Paswan, Ramdev Prasad Mandal 'Jharudar', Kundan Kumar Karn, Vindeshwar Thakur, Tripurari Kumar Sharma (actually he used to write ghazals in Hindi before), Sunil Kumar Jha (now Sunil Kumar 'Bhanu'), Vikas Jha Ranjan (now known as Vikas 'Vatsnabh'), his writing journey

also progressed forward only through 'Videha'. In addition, many creators like Roshan ji, Deep Narayan Vidyarthi, Mihir Jha, Om Prakash ji, Pravin Narayan Choudhary Prateek, Shanti Lakshmi Choudhary (now a politician) made their mark. There are some more names like this, Pradeep Pushp, Vineet Utpal, Ravi Mishra 'Bhardwaj', Jagadanand Jha 'Manu', Ajay Thakur 'Mohan', Prabhat Ray 'Bhatt', Anil, Ira Mallick, Manohar Kumar Jha, Kumar Pankaj Jha, Swati Lal, Nishant Jha, Jagadish Chandra Thakur 'Anil' (Anil ji was already engaged in writing, but I mentioned him in the context of ghazal), Avinash Jha Anshu, Naval Shri (Pankaj Choudhary Naval Shri), Chandan Jha, Amit Mishra, Mihir Jha, Rajeev Ranjan Mishra, Kranti Kumar Sudarshan, Shiv Kumar Yadav, Jawahar Lal

Kashyap, Munni Kamat, Balmukund Pathak, Sumit Mishra, Ramkumar Mishra. These are the names that come to my notice. Apart from these names, there would be many others who started their writing journey by writing on Videha. Certainly many names must have been missed now. It is also noteworthy that many of these new writers had their first book published by Videha and Shruti Publication.

But the number of names I have written is not small either. The Videha team continues to do the work of giving opportunities to such a large number of new writers and guiding them. Along with that, Ashish Anchinhaar has also been providing appropriate guidance to many old and established litterateurs. Among the names listed in the above

paragraph, there is one name, Jagadish Chandra Thakur 'Anil' ji. His experience, discussing that is necessary. I am keeping his own written words (Facebook post) as it is. From his words, it becomes clear what, how much, and how the Videha team is helping, not just new writers but even old and experienced writers. It seems to me that their principle is that whoever needs help (in writing work), they will definitely get it, no matter what. See/read the experience of Jagadish Chandra Thakur 'Anil' ji, which he got after associating with Videha and Anchinhar Akhar. He says about Videha:

"Saw Videha-e: Felt very happy seeing the fortnightly Maithili internet magazine 'Videha-e'. I have not met editor Gajendra Thakur ji. Silently thanked him for this. He wrote a lot himself and

prepared a vast class of writers and readers. I came to Patna after retirement in February 2011. The magazine was coming out regularly. I started writing in it regularly: songs, ghazals. The speed of writing increased. Most of my ghazals were published in Videha. Also saw Videha Sadeha."

Similarly, Anil ji writes for Anchinhar Akhar:

"It was difficult to create an independent website for ghazal writing in Maithili on the net, present ghazal shastra on it, inspire many people to write ghazals, give guidance, run award schemes, present special issues like children's ghazals, devotional ghazals, present a series of ghazal writers' introductions, etc., which Ashish ji (Ashish Anchinhaar) did, and became the subject of

criticism for all of us.

A few of my ghazals had been published in Hindi and Maithili magazines. No one had pointed a finger anywhere. At the age of sixty, when I heard that some ghazals were flawed from a grammatical perspective, it hurt my ego. For many days, I did not deem it necessary to pay heed to this matter. But now and then, this thing would come to mind.

Ultimately, the ego was defeated. The desire arose to know what I didn't want to know, the intention arose to read what I didn't want to read. Seeing so much material on the grammar of ghazals on the 'Anchinhar Akhar' site, I was delighted. It seemed a matter of pride for Maithili. We were paying attention to radif and qafiya, one thing was missing. That is Beher (meter). We all want freedom

from the hassle of Beher, because we haven't practiced it. Those who have understood what role Beher plays in a couplet feel that how can a ghazal be without Beher. Amidst acceptance and opposition, many ghazals with Beher are being written."

In the above statement of Jagadish ji, the thing that caught my attention is - "Ultimately, the ego was defeated. The desire arose to know what I didn't want to know, the intention arose to read what I didn't want to read." This ego does not get defeated for many established litterateurs. And that is why they can neither express a desire to benefit from the work done on ghazal by Ashish Anchinhaar, nor can they appreciate/praise his work. Discussing another senior litterateur, Arvind Thakur ji,

would also be relevant here. How Ashish Anchinhaar kept trying to boost his morale. And as a result of his encouragement, Arvind Thakur's inclination towards writing criticism/reviews increased. When Arvind Thakur's first book of criticism "Roshanai ke Lokpaksh" was published, Ashish Anchinhaar's sentiments were expressed like this: "Today when I have received Arvind Thakur ji's first book of criticism published in 2022, "Roshanai ke Lokpaksh", it feels like this book contains my own image. Like it is my own book. I also get the opportunity to write on this book, after reading it. The book contains criticism, but it has been called Maithili non-fiction prose.

I have always felt that if a writer's observation is given fearlessly, then the whole universe helps to fulfill it (a bit filmy). So this was

my observation. It's another matter that Arvind ji has been writing criticism for a long time." The noteworthy thing in this sentiment is that Ashish Anchinhaar does not appear eager to take credit himself. He says, "It's another matter that Arvind ji has been writing criticism for a long time."

While he kept encouraging him, kept saying publicly, "I feel that Arvind Thakur is only and only a critic. But due to the constraints of the genre in Maithili, he kept writing stories, poems, etc. This is my thought, and I kept making it public. In 2019, I made a Facebook post, in 2020 when I got the opportunity to edit the Arvind Thakur special issue of Videha in book form, in its preface, I clearly placed Arvind ji's criticism before his other genres."

Through various mediums, Ashish

Anchinhaar has also expressed that "Arvind ji should have a total of 20 books of criticism, of which this is the first, and 19 remain. Hopefully, we will get the remaining nineteen."

I have taken references from Ashish Anchinhaar's aforementioned Facebook posts as proof. This was necessary. So that people do not mistake my writing for some kind of self-praise. Anyway, the power to praise others and listen to one's own criticism resides in very few people. Well, whatever. This effort of the Videha team, meaning the effort/readiness to help give an appropriate direction to the pens of everyone, from new writers to old writers, is truly commendable, praiseworthy, and exemplary.

But this 'commendable and praiseworthy' work, especially giving opportunities to new writers, is not that easy a task for any editor. While seeing talent within a new writer, the editor needs to keep many things in mind. To judge a new writer's talent, it is necessary to keep an eye not just on linguistic purity, but on several points like their vision, their learning ability, originality, understanding of the subject, etc. If an editor's ability to judge new writers on all these points develops, then they can see the glimpse of a strong writer even within an ordinary writer. And they can polish that ordinary writer's pen with their guidance. That is, the editor does not just play the role of a selector, but plays the role of a guide. Refining that new writer's writing craft and vision is also the work of a good editor. They guide the writer so

that their writing can become clear, coherent, and effective. Along with this, it is also necessary for the editor to ensure that the writer's original identity is not suppressed. Meaning, efforts should be made to ensure that the writer's original identity remains and their writing style gets refined. That is why I said this is not such an easy task. And that is why most editors do not get into this loop. Whatever was sent for writing got published. Job done.

At one time, many writers started their writing journey by writing in the Mithila Mihir magazine, who later became respected as good writers. What is the current state of Maithili magazines (print), is not hidden from anyone. For the magazine 'Ghar-Bahar' published courtesy of Chetna Samiti, I sent

several pieces, they were also published. But I don't remember till date the editor ever giving any suggestions to write this genre or that genre. Whereas, the dignitaries active in Chetna Samiti are like guardians to me. So I wished to get some guidance.

A good editor also needs to ensure that the tradition of old established writers continues, while also giving opportunities to new writers. Meaning, be experimental, but keep the roots intact. So that new writers also read, ponder upon, and learn from the old established writers. Meaning, in the company of old writers, moving along with them, a strong "new bench" should be prepared. So strong that they prove to be "long-distance runners". And the Videha team is fulfilling this responsibility very

skillfully. Many writers who are now in much discussion, when they were struggling to make their mark, received ample support from the Videha team.

A good editor not only assesses the writer's capability; they also gauge the writer's aspirations. Along with this, a capable editor is also not unaware of the readers' expectations. In this way, the editor acts as a 'bridge' between the writer's capability, aspirations, and the readers' expectations. It is necessary to hold both ends of this bridge firmly. Meaning, keeping the readers' expectations in mind, there should be an urge to take work from the writer according to their capability by seeking their cooperation. Fulfilling the duty of a good editor is not a morsel of rice

and lentils. Putting the 'Editor' stamp on one's forehead just for the sake of it is child's play, but becoming a true editor and proving it is as difficult as chewing iron gram.

How many editors and writers there are among those working within the Maithili language sphere is understood by everyone. Many people from the Maithili literary world are seen moving towards moral decline. Some established litterateurs, instead of encouraging new writers, try to take personal advantage of their talent. Some do not hesitate to try to fool them. I have never seen such a mentality in the Videha team. Although my writing journey is not very long, I have come across some editors whose mentality is that publishing only the works of senior litterateurs

increases the prestige and reputation of their magazine. Completely opposite to this, Videha continues to give space to the works of creators of all types, old and new. Not only is space given, but new creators also receive proper guidance from the Videha team. If any creator has gone astray, the Videha team has also done/does the work of showing them the right path. I am saying this based on personal knowledge. What a great service this is to the Maithili language and literature, intellectuals understand it very well. And they do understand. Whether they pat the Videha team on the back or not. But people silently admit that the Videha team is definitely doing something for Mother Maithili that is solid, factual, and will prove very useful for future generations.

Keeping themselves away from platforms, garlands, and microphones, the Videha team only knows how to focus on their work. New ideas, which might not occur to any eighty-year-old experienced, veteran editor, come to the minds of these people, and they work on those ideas and get them done. To get work done, the Videha team even contacts their opponents. Meaning, keeping their personal 'ego' aside, their focus is on how much and what good work can be done just for their mother tongue. This is the biggest specialty of this team. "People who oppose Videha, who are not supporters of Videha, who disagree with Videha, the Videha team goes to them. Works on them. Highlights their contribution. In the past, Videha has done such work and will continue to do so in the future." This is said by Ashish Anchinhaar.

Further, he says, "Videha's goal is 'Maithili', not personal likes and dislikes. In this context, Videha is the only magazine in Maithili that brings the contribution of even its opponents before society." And he speaks/writes all these things publicly. Meaning, there is no room for any doubt about the truth of these matters. Whatever he is doing is in front of people. Whatever he is saying is also in front of people. People can understand/see for themselves how much consistency there is between his words and his deeds.

Gajendra Thakur and Ashish Anchinhaar have in their hearts not just the greed to benefit (economically/socially/literarily) by holding the plow of mother tongue Maithili, but the desire to do some quality work for the

mother tongue. This is not just visible to me, but to the entire Maithili society. Certainly visible. Whether they appreciate it or not is a different matter! In fact, there is a scarcity of true servants like the Videha team for Mother Maithili.

Ashish Anchinhar's post



Videha www.videha.co.in

Ashish Anchinhar · 3 April 2014 ·

मैथिलीक पुरान रचनाकार सभ रिस्क नै लेब चाहैत छथि। किनको डर छनि जे नव कहीं हुसि मे जाए तँ किनको डर छनि जे नव हमरा सभक पछाड़ि देत।

आ अंततः एकर फल मैथिलीक भोग पड़ि रहल छै।

निर्भीक नव साहित्यकार सभक विदेहक अंगनमे स्वागत अछि।



Gajendra Thakur and 6 others

14 comment



Like



Comment



Send



Kumar Padmanabh

पछिला किछु साल मे पाँच-छओ टा किताब पढ़लहँ, ओहि मे दू टा किताब महत्वपूर्ण छल, अंग्रेजी मे "डिफिकल्टी आफ वीहिंग गुड" आ एकटा मैथिली मे "पुरोहित". पहिल किताब लिखने छलाह प्रोक्टर एंड गैम्बल के भूतपूर्व सी.ई.ओ "गुरचरण दास" दोसर किताब क लेखक छलाह हमरे गौआँ. दुनू लेखक क ई सबसँ पैघ किताब नई छलनि. मुदा एक चीज जे सबसँ महत्वपूर्ण छल ओ छल दुनू किताब लिखबाक लेल काएल गेल तैयारी. गुरचरण दास सी.ई.ओ पद सँ इस्तीफा द' के तीन साल क छुट्टी पर रहलाह आ केवल यह किताब लेल पढ़ाई करैत रहलाह. हमरे गौआँ ओहि किताब लिखबाक लेल तीन साल धरि भारतीय पुरातन इतिहास क अध्ययन करैत रहलाह. कतेक लोक क मुँह सँ सुनने छी जे कम सँ कम दस घंटा प्रतिदिन पढ़ाई अवश्ये करैत छलाह. हमरा बुझने ओ दुनू लेखक यदि ओतेक पढ़ाई नई केने रहितथि त आइ ओ किताब दुनियाँ क मे सफल नई भेल हतैक. हमरा हिराब सँ लेखक-कवि बनए सँ पहिने नियमित पाठक भेनाए जितौत आवश्यक. मैथिलीक सबसँ पैघ समस्या जे आब पाठके नई बचल अछि. आइ किओ लोकनि जँ किताब लिखि केँ पाँच सय कापी बेच देखि त आश्चर्य क गुप् होएत. साढ़े चारि करोड़ मैथिली बाजए वाला लोक मे यदि पाँच सय एहेन नवयूवक नई जे

Ashish Anchinhar
 6h

ये लोक विदेहक विरोध करते छथि, जे विदेहक सहयोगी नहि छथि, जे विदेहसँ असहमति राखै छथि तिनको लग विदेहक टीम जाइत अछि। हुनकापर काज करैत अछि। हुनकर योगदानकेँ खोजाकिन करैत अछि। भूकालसभ विदेह एजन्ड काज केने अछि आ अभियोगीको करैत रहत।

विदेहक उपेय मैथिली छै मे कि व्यवस्थित राख-दुबेय। एहि संदर्भमे विदेह मैथिलीको एकमात्र पत्रिका अछि जे अपन विरोधीको योगदानकेँ सेहो समाजक सामने अनैत छै।

विदेह
 प्रथम मैथिली पत्रिका छै पत्रिका

[\[1929 मूल आ प्रकाशक संकेत \]](#)
[\[1930 मूल आ प्रकाशक संकेत \]](#)
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Ashish Anchinhar
10 March 2023

हमरा सम दिन लगेत रहल जे अरविन्द ठाकुर **Arvind Thakur** मात्र आ मात्र आलोचक छथि। मुदा मैथिलीमे विधा केर विषयतामे ओ क्या-क्या विधा आदि लिखैत रहलाह। ई हमर सोच अछि आ से हम सार्वजनिक करैत रहलाह। 2019 मे फेब्रुवारी पोस्ट देहल। 2020 मे खजन विदेक अरविन्द ठाकुर विशेषांक पोथी रूपमे संपादित कबाबअवर भेटल तखन ओकर भूमिकामे हम सर्फ-सफ अरविन्दजीओ आलोचनाके हुनकर आन विचार सँ पहिने रहल।

आइ जखन कि हमरा सन् 2022 मे प्रकाशित अरविन्द-ठाकुर पोथीओ पहिल आलोचनापोथी 'रोशनाइक लोकपद्य' आएल अछि। तखन हमरा लगीए जे एहि पोथीमे हमर अपनए छथि हो। हमर पोथी हो। एहि पोथीमे एहि विख्याक अवरसे सोच आ मात्रा भेटल। पोथीमे आलोचना त ई मुदा कयन मैथिली क्षेत्रमे देखा कहल गेलैन।

एहि तखन लगीए जे निर्माता हक क ओ लोकमे लेखक केर आवश्यकता नै देल जाए तँ पुरा ब्रह्मांड ओकरा पुरा कबाबक लेल सहानुता करैत छै (कने फिल्म)। तँ ई हमर आवश्यकता नै छल। ई अलग बात जे अरविन्दजी आलोचनामे बहुत पहिनेसँ लिखैत छथल।

विभिन्न माध्यमसँ हम ई व्यक्त करैत रहलहुँ अछि जे अरविन्दजीक कुल 20 टा आलोचनापोथी एबाक चाही जाहिमेसँ ई पहिल हक अछि आ 19 टा बाँकी रहल अछ। उम्मेद ई उन्नीसौ बाँकी भेटल हमरा समर।

एहि सँस हुनक दीर्घ कथापोथी 'जड़ताक प्रतिवाद'मे सेहो आएल अछि। आ हमरा एक्को पदवाक अछि।

****Scarcity of Non-Forward Caste Writers in Maithili and Gajendra Thakur****

****Munnaji****

The litterateurs sitting on the literary power in Maithili sometimes issue decrees, sometimes narratives. Since time immemorial, there has been one such baseless narrative - "Where do non-forward caste writers come from in Maithili literature?"

The credit for breaking this unspoken conspiracy of the oligarchs of Maithili's literary power is given to Gajendra Thakur through Videha since 2008. Through Videha, within a few years, minority and non-forward caste writers became the majority and shone brightly. Now the self-

proclaimed scholars/writers started feeling uneasy. Surpassing the category of novices, becoming polished writers, one after another creators emerged before everyone and thumped their presence. One such creator of Videha was Shri Jagadish Prasad Mandal, who turned his presence in Maithili story literature into the golden period of Maithili literature. Creators from the smallest to the quirky, who were stuck like a stubborn root, all became motivated. When suddenly excellent creators started appearing, then these same oligarchs started saying - We will not consider them as creators at all. They don't know grammar, spellings are wrong...! Not knowing what word and deed, they started playing dirty tricks. On the other hand, Gajendra ji, searching for lost and scattered

creators from every corner, created a new line. And... now non-forward caste and newbie writers, turning from minority to majority, have roamed the open field of Maithili and hit a flurry of fours and sixes. Which has been continuing uninterrupted for the past 18 years.

In contemporary Maithili literature, Shri Jagadish Prasad Mandal ji today stands like a boundary. Meaning, in stories and novels, there is 'before Jagadish Mandal ji' and 'after Jagadish Mandal ji'. A line has been drawn, crossing which is like a challenge. Even the Dalit writers who were part of the mainstream had ignored Jagadish ji before Videha. A Dalit writer had even returned his manuscript. Gradually encouraging Shri Jagadish Babu from there, getting his books

published, bringing him to the Tagore Award and the main award of Sahitya Akademi, Gajendra Thakur's contribution will remain unforgettable.

Now the tears of those who were jealous dried up, but the reliance on speech still remains. Now they started counting - I brought so-and-so, I shouted so-and-so. The first generation writers who emerged from Videha also, by demonstrating their knowledge and creating excellent works, started connecting the new generation of creators. Inspired by Thakur ji, Bindeshwar Thakur from Janakpur, Nepal, Sandeep Safi, Manoj Mandal, Subhash Kamat, and Munni Kamat honored with the Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Award are notable names.

He brought lost, scattered, and new writers and placed a stream of the marginalized before the mainstream of Maithili literature. Due to which literature remained balanced, saved from being one-sided. In making it balanced, Gajendra ji had to endure financial, physical, mental obstacles, and social ridicule, but he remained steadfast on his path and succeeded in giving a new repository to Maithili, with which Maithili will remain adorned for a long time.

****The Pro-People Stance of Videha Magazine****

****Dr. Dhanakar Thakur****

Videha is a fortnightly e-magazine (internet magazine) whose 450th issue will soon be published, meaning this magazine has maintained its frequency, continuity, or regularity. In this magazine, material from all genres of Maithili is usually found. But is it remembered only for this reason? Is it expected from Videha or any other magazine that along with literary excellence, it should be useful to the people? Not just in literature, but in activities other than literature as well. Language is considered a medium of communication of thoughts, and the scope of thought is limitless.

Then any so-called literary magazine can knock on the door of philosophy and can also touch the shore of knowledge and science, in fact, it should touch, but despite this, something would still be lacking in the scope of any magazine if it does not raise the issues of neglected individuals, classes, or communities.

When we test Videha on the above criterion, it seems that Videha magazine has certainly taken some steps that indicate its pro-people stance, but much of Videha's pro-people work still remains undone. However, it is also true that compared to all other ancient and modern magazines of Maithili, Videha has much more pro-people stance. I see Videha's pro-people stance mainly divided into four or five points:

- (1) Linguistic Pro-People Stance,
- (2) Pro-People Stance towards the Class of Writers,
- (3) Pro-People Stance of Subject and Genre,
- (4) Pro-People Stance of Awards,
- (5) Pro-People Stance of Special Issues.

Now, I am presenting my brief thoughts regarding the above five pro-people stances:

(1) First of all, Videha talked about making language useful for the people. Despite having its own standard language, it encouraged its writers to write in their own spelling. Actually, two results came to the fore: first, the articles published in Videha seem raw at the language level and sometimes even incomprehensible, and the second result is that this boosted

the confidence of writers, and along with the number of creations, the number of writers also increased. Videha still adheres to this linguistic pro-people stance. Even now, there is a lack of spellings in Videha's creations, but in every issue, some new writer or the other is definitely found. It is very possible that these new writers, taking confidence from Videha, move forward, improve their language, and become famous later. The objective of any magazine should not be just to publish in standard language. If any magazine could not bring forward a large number of new writers in its time, then all its efforts are futile. From the perspective of bringing new writers, after Mithila Mihir, it is Videha that comes, and this is the first angle of its pro-people stance.

(2) Even before Videha, there have

been writers from non-forward castes in Maithili, their works have been published in famous magazines, and their books have also been published, but no magazine of Maithili could create an environment where non-forward caste writers could publish both their good and bad works together without any hesitation. In this context, Videha is the first magazine in Maithili that opened itself to the majority population of Maithili. I feel that due to Videha's language policy, the majority population of Maithili started considering it their own. Before Videha, no other magazine in Maithili could do such work. Therefore, in Videha, writers of all castes and classes are found writing equally. This is the second but most impactful angle of Videha's pro-people stance.

(3) In Maithili, the editors of all

magazines are from the writer class, and Videha is no exception to this. It is observed that whichever genre or ideology the editor of a magazine is associated with, the influence of that genre or ideology becomes more prominent in that magazine. Such editors compromise in terms of genre to run the magazine, but not with their ideology. Therefore, it is seen that in most Maithili magazines, whether poetry, story, drama, or other genres, the same ideology is found with which their editor is associated. In such a situation, where do writers of other ideologies in Maithili go? Any magazine that selects works in the name of its ideology cannot be pro-people at all, but when one looks at the works published in Videha, along with hard-left works, devotional songs are also found. Along with the desire for change, worship of tradition is also found,

and this was the reason for connecting many writers of the majority population and non-forward castes with Videha.

(4) Regarding awards, Videha was so pro-people that it also announced a parallel Sahitya Akademi award, although I personally have always been opposed to this, because the word parallel should not have been there, as due to the perseverance of many scholars, Maithili has become prestigious in the Sahitya Akademi. Therefore, only 'Videha Award' would have been sufficient, but still, this should also be understood as an indicator of Videha's pro-people stance. Videha's parallel Sahitya Akademi award was not only for literate writers; this award was given to those who beat drums and pipes and to those who wrote poetry sitting on a buffalo's back, which

was Videha's true pro-people stance, but later, no information about this parallel Sahitya Akademi award of Videha was seen. Later, Videha started bringing out special issues focused on many literary personalities (as far as I have seen the names, these people have not yet received the Sahitya Akademi award, but their pioneering role in Maithili writing, study, and development has been significant). I have written in one of my articles "Videha O Gajendra" that "bringing out many personality-focused issues in between is fine, though the parallelism there is not that objectionable."

(5) When Videha started bringing out special issues, even then there was pro-people stance in them, whether related to the writer, the writer's caste, or concerning subject matter other than the

writer. For example, Videha had opened itself to the non-forward castes in the first phase, so when it published special issues, more names of forward castes came, but the thing to think about is that even those forward castes on whom Videha published special issues were also disconnected from the mainstream of Maithili. This was a different perspective of Videha's pro-people stance that saved this magazine from becoming fanatical. Videha published special issues not only on writers but also on various organizations, including Mithila Student Union, Mithila Vikas Parishad, and the International Maithili Council. Videha's special issues were not only on literature or institutions; it also published on activist 'Pokhari Purush - Narayanji Chaudhary', linguist Dr. Ramavatar Yadav, and manuscript

expert Bhavnath Jha. Such special issues are indicative of Videha's broad pro-people stance. This broad pro-people stance of Videha proves that apart from literature, other subject matter is also essential for society, and this pro-people stance of Videha takes it far ahead of any ancient or contemporary magazine.

If I summarize all my five points and say that "Videha's pro-people stance is not a follower of any particular person, ideology, or class, and that is why this magazine has reached from the literate people to the common village reader", then that would be more appropriate.

****Gajendra Thakur and the
Discipline of Maithili
Criticism****

****Hitnath Jha****

Some people's work progresses silently, leaving an indelible mark on society, keeping themselves away from the left-right crowd and uproar, but possessing a microscopic vision, to preserve the wealth of their heritage, using new perspectives on ancient methods, experimenting in the developed world of digitization for renewal, to prove to be a boon for future generations, a person who continuously immerses themselves in it and does not desire any reward from society for that purpose, such a person is rare and very rare in any society,

appearing only after many eras.

This is one aspect. If, in addition to all these qualities, that person also possesses another aspect, being aware of the creative merits and demerits of their language and literature from the ancient generation to the newest generation, being a skilled creator themselves, and having the ability and courage to critique candidly as a critic, then imagining that person's scholarship and foresight naturally generates a feeling of respect.

Another thing. The person I am talking about also has the quality of editing, and the fortnightly e-magazine 'Videha' has been continuously published since 2008, and meaningful elements

emerge after successful experimentation in the laboratory of this magazine with many new experiments. Presenting just one example of this is sufficient proof of this magazine's foresight. This is the first magazine in Maithili in which, till date, a total of 17 special issues on living litterateurs and 3 special issues on institutions have been published. In addition, 1 special issue on Madhupji, and 17 special issues on other subjects, totaling 38 special issues have been published.

On the site of this magazine, 1. All old issues of Videha, 2. Maithili audio-video collection, 3. Maithili infant, child, and adolescent literature, 4. Student-useful material for Maithili as an optional subject in Union Public Service Commission exams, etc., are available, which are useful for literature enthusiasts and

researchers, free of cost, which is a boon for everyone.

Today, I am discussing a book of criticism by that very person, published in 2022 by Pallavi Publication - 'Maithili Samikshashastra' (The Discipline of Maithili Criticism), and the critic is Shri Gajendra Thakur. His creative literature exists in many genres, and he also has books of criticism. He believes that 'Criticism is absent in the mainstream. In the parallel stream, one can see Videha's criticism issues; here we have our own discipline of criticism.' (Preeti Karan Setu Banhal - Ed. Ashish Anchinhaar p-436). This collected work, taken and sifted from that same Videha repository, has been published, and he himself also says that this book is a discipline of criticism parallel to the

mainstream.

The subject matter on which the discipline of criticism is presented in this book includes: the place of vignette stories in prose literature and the discipline of criticism of vignette stories, the place of short stories and the discipline of criticism of short stories, in poetry literature and its discipline of criticism, the discipline of Maithili ghazal criticism, the discipline of criticism of Maithili haiku/haiku/kshanika, doha/rola/kundaliya/thoughts on prosody, the discipline of criticism of dramatic literature, the discipline of criticism of infant, child, and adolescent literature, treatise-essay-criticism, the discipline of criticism and the criticism of criticism, translation theory and the discipline of criticism of translated literature, the place of the novel and the

discipline of criticism of the novel.

From the observation of the subject matter, it immediately seems that his attention has fallen on all those genres on which creation is currently happening on a large scale, and good writing is happening, as well as bad. Upon close observation, a state of anarchy is also visible in contemporary Maithili literature, technically speaking, spelling-wise, region-wise, and class-division-wise. Malicious attempts are being made to divide regions and language-literature into fragments. In this adverse situation, the discipline of literary criticism would prove helpful in providing proper direction to new and other creators as well, in which the presentation of this book holds special importance.

There is a fine line between vignette stories and short stories; most people consider them the same. But if there is a fine line, and many books of vignette stories are also published, and from time to time, discussions and deliberations are also organized by critics and creators, and now many critics are also trying to analyze and critique them separately, among them, Gajendra Thakur's view is as follows: "The subject matter of a vignette story is not just moving events. Vignette stories should also be written for children, on moral education, and on religious subjects. We travel by train or bus, we sit and chat casually on the veranda at home, and only those experiences are coming into vignette stories. Social and economic problems can also be a permanent subject matter.

Political questions and natural disasters can be made subjects of description. While critiquing, a vignette story critic does not do mythological criticism, meaning they do not do criticism like 'Shiva is the greatest in the Shiva Purana and Garuda is the greatest in the Garuda Purana'. That is, they do not say that whatever it is, it is a vignette story, regardless of its nature." (Maithili

Samikshashastra - page number 9-10)

The writer moves forward from creating the atmosphere of a short story, describing its characters, the format of the short story, and describing the people and circumstances for it. You can write a short story by taking any one aspect from these. The critic should see how excellent the work is and what has been missed in it.

Its evaluation should not be one-sided; the critic should understand and write what message is hidden in that creation, which direction it is pointing towards. The mainstream of the short story should be identified. One's own ideology should not be imposed on the short story under review. Show in what form the significance of that short story lies, identify its main elements. Identify the writer's life philosophy, their vision and doubts regarding the real, imaginary, and ideal. Discuss the artistic aspect of the writer's writing style, their ability to tell a tale, the structure of the creation, and the art of connecting its various parts, just as a good carpenter makes a solid and artistic bed, then the second carpenter's emphasis is only on being solid, and the third's on artistry, similarly..." (Maithili

Samikshashastra, page number - 21) On this template, he gives examples of some of the best vignette stories and short stories in Maithili and considers the stories of both genres worthy of delight in terms of quantity and quality, narrative, and craft.

One of the most important in this book is 'Ghazal Samikshashastra i.e., Ghazal Shastra'. On 54 pages, there is a detailed discussion on ghazals, with examples, the origin of Maithili ghazals along with other languages. Without going into the details of his analysis of ghazals, I must say one thing: those creators who are thinking of embarking on the path of the ghazal or are already on that path must read this article, so that they get all the resources to follow a specific path for the Maithili ghazal, and the future

contribution to the enrichment of Maithili literature through ghazals will certainly be especially noteworthy. In simple words, this will act as a school for ghazal creation. "If I write a ghazal in the Maithili language, I will write it according to the rules of prosody, and for that prosody, I will use Arabic-Persian, but in addition to that effort, the Rigvedic prosody with t-gana and m-gana is more scientific and simple, and I believe that this will make it easier for people to write, read, and hum Maithili ghazals. At the time of the Vedas, the word 'Hindu' had not even been born, so just the use of Vedic prosody, I don't think, will make the Maithili ghazal Hindu." (Maithili Samikshashastra, p-63)

He has also expressed disagreement with some critics'

comments and has said: "Yes, but there are certainly attacks that force the critic to say, stick in hand, 'These are Maithili ghazals, these are ghazals.' Ghazals can be written in many ways, in many meters, in many prosodies, this is true, but the right to freedom of the rules of calculation exists neither in syllabic-quantitative calculation nor in syllabic-qualitative calculation." Maithili Samikshashastra, p-85)

Haiku/haiku/kshanika has also been written in Maithili, albeit sparingly. This is a Japanese poetic form. Thakurji says - "The Maithili language and the Indian Sanskrit-dependent script system are most suitable for haiku." (Maithili Samikshashastra, p-93).

Discussing many genres like drama, children's, novel, criticism-review, translation, etc., he writes at one place: "The classical discipline is for the writer, not for the reader. If the writer writes ghazal, rola, doha, kundaliya on a classical basis, then only will the reader like it; if the writer shies away from effort, then literary readership will decrease. The method of breaking the bounds of the shastra is also within the shastra; if you look at the Savitri mantra with classical orthodoxy, it is not in the Gayatri meter, but we all consider it in Gayatri because 'svah' was done for the self to fulfill the calculation." (Maithili Samikshashastra, p-148)

The difference seen in this book from other books of criticism is

that it is a review of the subject matter, not a review of a person's work. From this perspective, this is perhaps the first book in which such a detailed analysis of the discipline of criticism in Maithili literature has been done, attention has been paid to every minute detail. His thoughts on literary terminology: "The fundamental concern of literature is with the subject matter. But if there is a famine of words among litterateurs, what will they communicate, how will they clarify the subject matter? Whatever the condition of Hindi literature is, the same will happen to Maithili. The acceptability of vocabulary is determined by the vocabulary spoken in the village of the native speaker, not by the vocabulary spoken by a diaspora distant from culture. The acceptability of vocabulary is determined by the vocabulary

spoken in the village of the native speaker, and if the vocabulary spoken by a diaspora cut off from culture is made the basis, then good literature will seem to have emerged with great difficulty, and literature reviewed by globalization-based critics will seem unnatural." (Maithili Samikshashastra, p-148), seems meaningful. Prof. Balakrishna Jha has a book on the discipline of criticism. Without going into the details of that book, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the critic's discourse provides proper guidance: "The author's ideology should be like salt in water, not like oil in water." (Samikshashastra-p-149)

If we consider this book in its entirety, it will serve as a guide for teachers and students, research

supervisors and research scholars,
creators and readers, in situations
of both dissent and consensus.

****Gajendra Thakur: Writer, Historian, and Architect of Modern Maithili Studies****

****Praveen Kumar Jha****

Gajendra Thakur is a prominent writer, historian, educationist, lexicographer, and script specialist of the Maithili language. He primarily writes in the Maithili language and has made significant contributions to literature, Panji (genealogy studies), dictionary compilation, and the revival of the Tirhuta (Mithilakshar) script. His work connects Mithila's classical intellectual tradition with modern academic and digital frameworks.

Early Life and Background

Gajendra Thakur was born on March 30, 1971, in Bhagalpur, Bihar. His ancestral village is Mehath, in the Madhubani district of Bihar. He is the son of Kripanand Thakur and Lakshmi Thakur. He is married to Preeti Thakur. Around the year 2000, he was the victim of a serious accident, due to which he had to walk with the support of crutches for about 18 months. This time proved decisive in his intellectual life, because during this period he became deeply involved in the study and textual criticism of ancient palm-leaf manuscripts.

Language and Script

Gajendra Thakur primarily writes in the Maithili language. He is proficient in both the Devanagari and Tirhuta (Mithilakshar) scripts. His contribution to the

preservation, revival, and scientific documentation of the Tirhuta script is particularly noteworthy. His scholarly suggestions also played an important role in the Unicode standardization of the Tirhuta script.

Literary Works

Kurukshetram Antarmanak
(Seven-Volume Series) -
Kurukshetram Antarmanak is an important multi-volume project in modern Maithili literature, in which Gajendra Thakur's multi-faceted literary talent is clearly reflected.

1. Treatise-Essay-Criticism
2. Sahastrabadhani (Novel)
3. Sahastraudi ke Chaupar par
(Poetry Collection)

4. Galpa-Guchchh (Vignette and Short Story Collection)

5. Sankarshan (Drama)

6. Tvanchahanch a Asanjati Man (Epic)

7. Bal Mandali/ Kishor Jagat

This series is considered one of the most extensive and ambitious literary undertakings in modern Maithili literature, in which seven genres are included in a single book. In this sequence of literary books, he has many more books which can be seen on the Videha list.

Historical and Genealogical Studies

Genome Mapping – Mithila's Panji Prabandha (450 AD - 2009 AD)

One of Gajendra Thakur's most

significant scholarly achievements is Genome Mapping – Mithila's Panji Prabandha (450 AD - 2009 AD), which he edited along with two other editors. In this work, he has compiled, critically edited, and published approximately 11,000 palm-leaf Panji manuscripts. This work is an extremely valuable source for the study of Mithila's social history, lineage, marriage customs, and inter-caste relations. Later, its second volume was also published. Along with this, its third volume was published under the name "Dushan Panji," which provides written evidence confirming inter-caste marriages in ancient Maithil Brahmin society.

Lexicography

Gajendra Thakur has played an

important role in the modernization of the Maithili language through dictionary compilation, along with two other editors. His major lexicographical works are:

Maithili–English Dictionary

English–Maithili Dictionary (in which the inclusion of computer and digital terminology is especially noteworthy). These dictionaries have helped connect the Maithili language with modern education, technology, and the academic field.

Editorial Work

Gajendra Thakur is the editor of the fortnightly e-magazine of the Maithili language, 'Videha'. Under his editorship, Videha has become a major platform for Maithili literature, criticism, research,

drama, poetry, and children's literature. Under Videha, many collections and texts on various subjects have been published.

Translation and Biography

Gajendra Thakur has translated many of his own works from Maithili into English. In addition, he has translated works from Indian languages like Kannada, Telugu, Odia, and Gujarati into Maithili through the medium of English. He has also written a biography titled 'Jagadish Prasad Mandal – Ekta Biography', which was published by Videha e-magazine.

Social and Cultural Impact

Gajendra Thakur has played an important role in the Maithili

language movement. His work has taken Maithili literature out of its elite and caste-limited sphere and made it accessible to the wider society. His research on Panji manuscripts preserved the historical records of Mithila, while his contribution in the fields of script and digital technology connects Maithili with the modern era.

Honors and Legacy

Gajendra Thakur is a member of the Maithili Lekhak Sangh. His contribution to the Unicode standardization of the Tirhuta script has been specially recognized by scholars. Through the Videha magazine and his multi-faceted writing, he has created a lasting platform for Maithili literature and research.

Conclusion

As a writer, historian, lexicographer, and script specialist, Gajendra Thakur is a central figure in modern Maithili literature. His overall work forms a strong bridge between Mithila's ancient intellectual tradition and the modern digital age.

Editorial Note:

1. In the year 2000, Gajendra Thakur was returning from a raid in his then workplace, the Excise Department, during which he met with an accident. In such work, there is also a possibility that the person raided might have given a contract to kill the officer; this possibility cannot be ruled out either.

2. Gajendra Thakur has not been

actively associated with any institution till now. However, he is a life member of Chetna Samiti and also of the Maithili Lekhak Sangh. Along with this, he is also a life member (subscriber) of many Maithili magazines. At the insistence of Narendra Jha, the founder and then president of the Maithili Lekhak Sangh, he became a member of this organization. Because of him, Gajendra Thakur also created the website of the Maithili Lekhak Sangh. For some years, this website ran at Gajendra ji's expense; later, Gajendra ji converted this website into a blog, the link to which is below.
<https://maithililekhaksangh.blogspot.com/>

****An Incomparable and Unique Contribution****

****Kundan Karn****

Respected Gajendra Thakur ji is a subject of curiosity for me. Until 5 years ago, I did not even know his name; I am not a literary person. On social media, I got some information about vignette stories, so I started writing one or two vignettes on Facebook. Around that time, during the Corona period, I made a vignette post on the Corona lockdown. I got a call from a senior person (Munnaji) who said that my vignette story seemed good; he asked where I had read it, and then said that it had been published in some souvenir. This was a very big thing for me. In that very conversation,

upon inquiring, I found out that there is a magazine named "Videha" that is being published continuously, where more vignette stories could be sent. It felt as if someone had picked up a child and lifted them up; since then, I started writing vignette stories.

Then, for some reason, I had a WhatsApp conversation with respected Gajendra Thakur ji. He used to respond to my words with great affection; until then, I had no idea about him, that he was a government officer, the creator of such a huge and epoch-making work in Maithili, that he had made such a Herculean contribution to research and collection. Until you don't know about someone, you interact with them in a childlike, friendly comfort zone; the same happened with me. His affectionate, supportive, and ego-

free behavior was also a reason why I could not gauge his vast personality. But when I got the opportunity to know him over time, I was stunned – such a mountain-like contribution at such a young age, that too without participating in any race for positions or awards.

I feel that I am still unaware of his personality and works, and I have not even met him in person. But based on whatever information I have, I can say that his incomparable and unique contribution in research, Panji collection, writing, etc., will prove to be epoch-making. In addition, connecting countless youths with their mother tongue is also unparalleled. I am not very familiar with his creative work, but from the editorial column, I can gauge his writing.

****Gajendra Thakur ji's
Contribution to Maithili
Literature****

****Jagadanand Jha 'Manu'****

To shed light on the work of Gajendra Thakur ji in Maithili literature means showing a lamp to the sun. Nevertheless, here an attempt is being made to show a lamp, through my words, to the sun named Gajendra in the infinite space of Maithili literature. Gajendra ji's birth - March 30, 1971 (Bhagalpur), now at the young age of about 54 years, to have so many achievements is very rarely seen in the world. Till now, Gajendra Thakur ji has written more than 125 books, mainly in Maithili and English, including research, Panji

history, linguistics, Maithili-English dictionaries, translation, and original literature. That is like an infinite series, like a galaxy, for Maithili literature, in which students as well as scholars of Maithili literature, history, and research can quench their thirst for knowledge. There is no genre of Maithili writing in which he has not done remarkable work. As a historian, establishing Mithila and Maithils in the present time, creating modern Maithili-English dictionaries, collecting and compiling the ancient Panji system of Mithila – accomplishing such a difficult task seems no less than a miracle. Not only this, but he also writes all his creations, research, and texts in the original script of Maithili, Tirhuta script (Mithilakshar), along with Devanagari, thus working extensively on the development

and promotion of the very ancient Tirhuta script, not just preserving the heritage and literature of Mithila. Along with this, his work in Braille script cannot be praised enough.

There are many genres in Maithili literature whose existence was non-existent or almost non-existent before the Gajendra era; his contribution to establishing many such genres in Maithili literature cannot be overstated. For example, Ghazal Shastra, Vignette Story, Rubai, Tanka, Senryu, and Haibun, etc., etc. Gajendra Thakur ji introduced Tanka, Senryu, and Haibun, these three Japanese poetry forms, into Maithili. Haiku existed in Maithili before, but Tanka, Senryu, and Haibun were not in Maithili before Gajendra ji. Gajendra Thakur ji is not just a historian, archivist,

scholar, litterateur, writer, storyteller, poet, ghazal writer, critic, and master of the pen, but he also possesses all the qualities of a great leader. With his literary knowledge, love for his mother tongue Maithili, and leadership qualities, he spread on the internet and brought together Maithili-loving readers, students of the Maithili language, and litterateurs living in different parts of the world, and brought the pace of development of Maithili literature on par with other developed languages of the world.

The first presence of the Maithili language on the internet was by him in the year 2000 in the form of 'Bhalsarik Gachh'. This same Bhalsarik Gachh came in 2008 as a fortnightly magazine under the name Videha. Currently, the work

done for the Maithili language and literature through Videha is not hidden from anyone. That work includes establishing new genres in Maithili, spotting new talents through the internet, honing them, polishing them, and presenting them to the world. Countless new talents, who had no connection whatsoever with literature or Maithili literature, are now known as established litterateurs, writers, poets, ghazal writers, storytellers, etc., by connecting with Gajendra Thakur ji through Videha and other internet mediums. Along with promoting new genres and new talents, Videha provided an opportunity to bring old and established Maithili litterateurs before the world with just a click of a finger. Not only that, along with the facility to read all the old past issues, the e-versions of many books by many authors and litterateurs are kept in the Videha

archive for Maithili book download. That in itself is a unique achievement. In the world of the internet, there is a library that gives students, researchers, litterateurs, writers, readers, and Maithili enthusiasts the opportunity to read without any cost and with freedom of time.

At a time or period when no government, institution, or academy is working with complete dedication for the Maithili language or literature, the fact that Gajendra Thakur ji has done so much work individually is unimaginable and unbelievable. So much work shows his knowledge, ability, and dedication towards his mother tongue Maithili, and along with that, it also involves both time and money. In today's time, an

ordinary person lacks both money and time, and those who have them lack the will. Here, Gajendra Thakur ji has the blessing of Ganesh ji's wisdom and Saraswati ji's knowledge, along with the vast courage given by the great goddess, that he is doing Herculean work for the Maithili language and literature without any desire for money or any kind of name or award. No amount of praise for this Herculean work would be enough. This dedication of his towards the Maithili language and literature cannot be measured by any value or award; it is invaluable and priceless. It is superior to any award. He will be remembered for ages for this contribution to the Maithili language and literature.

****Gajendra Thakur: The Bridge-Person for the Renaissance of Maithili Language and Literature****

****Ujjwal Kumar Jha****

In the modern history of Maithili language and literature, some personalities appear who seem to represent not just a creator, but an era-consciousness. Looking at all their works, it seems that they are not limited to their personal writing and creation, but are engaged in laying the foundation for the entire linguistic society, cultural heritage, and future generations. Gajendra Thakur is one such distinctive name. He is the one who gave global recognition to the Maithili language in the digital age, an

editor of Panji Prabandha, a lexicographer, an editor, a cultural karmayogi, a historian, a critic, and a writer. His entire body of work appears like a continuous sadhana – the sadhana of saving, preserving, and enriching the mother tongue.

Born in Mithila's Bhagalpur on March 30, 1971, Gajendra Thakur is originally from Madhubani district. Mithila is not just a geographical area, but has been a center of a thousand-year-old knowledge tradition, scholarship, folk culture, and linguistic identity. This land has had a rich tradition of scholarly debates, the Panji system, folk songs, folk tales, and cultural discipline. Growing up in such an environment, a natural affection for language and culture awakened in Gajendra Thakur's mind. From childhood, studiousness, curiosity, and a

tendency towards writing developed within him. The most notable characteristic of his personality is that he is multi-dimensional. Usually, a writer remains limited to poetry or stories, but Gajendra Thakur expanded his literary journey in many directions. He is an editor, a prose writer, a playwright, a critic, a historical researcher, and a skilled translator as well as a lexicographer. Maintaining equal activity in all these roles is no ordinary feat. This makes it clear that for him, literature is not just a means of emotional expression, but a comprehensive cultural responsibility.

Gajendra Thakur is the first person to bring Maithili onto the internet. Understanding the importance of the digital age in time is proof of

his foresight. He was the first person in the entire Maithili world to understand that if a language does not have a presence on the internet, its existence could face a crisis in the future. With this thought, in the year 2000, he became the first user of Maithili on his Yahoo blog. This initiative introduced Maithili to the digital world. And later, in 2008, he started this blog as a fortnightly e-magazine under the name Videha. Videha e-journal, the online archive of old issues, Maithili book downloads, audio-video collections, and various digital resources – all these efforts have reached Maithili to global readers. Maithili-speaking people living abroad also remain connected to their language and culture through this medium.

An extremely important aspect of

Gajendra Thakur's contribution is the preservation and standardization of the traditional Mithilakshar, i.e., the Tirhuta script. The Maithili language has been written in the Mithilakshar script since ancient times, but in modern times, with the increasing prevalence of Devanagari, this script gradually became sidelined. A script is not just a medium of writing, but a symbol of cultural identity. If a script becomes extinct, the historical memory of the language also weakens. Gajendra Thakur seriously felt the gravity of this crisis and played a pioneering role in reviving Mithilakshar. He made significant contributions to the process of its standardization by working on the form of the script, character composition, spelling standards, and digital usability. His contribution was also recognized

in the effort for Unicode encoding. The Tirhuta script got a place in Unicode at the international level, and his participation in it was acknowledged. This achievement is extremely historical because once included in Unicode, a script gets a permanent identity in the digital world. This effort made it possible to use Mithilakshar on computers, mobiles, and the internet. As a result, the script is starting to come alive again, and the new generation is becoming familiar with their traditional writing system. This contribution of Gajendra Thakur holds special significance in the cultural history of Mithila.

As a historian, Gajendra Thakur's contribution is especially worthy of discussion. Mithila's Panji system was a unique socio-cultural arrangement, in which systematic

records of genealogy, marriage relations, and social structure were maintained. Gajendra Thakur saw this Panji not just as a tradition, but as a historical source. In works like "Genome Mapping – 450 AD to 2009 AD – Mithila's Panji Prabandha," he has analyzed the long-term social history of Mithila by connecting Panji material with modern research methodology. This work is an innovative contribution to the historiography of Maithil society.

Gajendra Thakur's name is incomplete without "Videha". The "Videha" magazine can be considered the biggest undertaking of his literary life. Editing 435 issues so far is no ordinary achievement. Through this platform, countless writers,

poets, and researchers have found a place. "Videha" has become not just a magazine, but a literary family. Here, along with established writers, new talents have also received equal opportunities. In this way, he has presented a beautiful example of literary democracy.

His contribution as a lexicographer is extremely important for the Maithili language. If a language wants to establish its place at the academic and research level, it is necessary to organize its vocabulary. Maithili remained deprived of the expected work in this area for a long time. Gajendra Thakur seriously felt this lack and started working on word collection and word organization. This effort provides a scientific basis to the language and paves the way for future researchers.

As an educationist, Gajendra Thakur guides new writers and researchers. He is not limited to his own writing, but also encourages the talent of others. Many young creators have come into the field of writing inspired by him. In this way, he presents a modern form of the guru-shishya tradition.

In the field of creative writing, his vision is deeply connected with folk life. In his overall work, the soil, fragrance, seasonal cycles, folk customs, and sensibilities of the people of Mithila are naturally present. He emphasizes meaningfulness more than ornamentation. For him, words are not just decoration, but carriers of meaning. For this reason, his language becomes

simple, natural, and effective. In his prose writing as well, the reality of life, social contradictions, and cultural questions clearly emerge.

In drama and story writing, he presents the image of Mithila's changing society. Depicting the struggle between tradition and modernity is a major theme of his writing. In his creations, he remembers the past, but does not just sing praises of glory; he also raises questions of the present. This balanced vision gives him a distinct identity from contemporary writers.

Gajendra Thakur's literary criticism is especially noteworthy. For him, criticism is not a personal reaction, but an intellectual

discipline. He examines the work from three perspectives – history, society, and language. In his writing, ample use of facts, logic, and references can be seen. For this reason, his criticism appears balanced, authentic, and reliable. He analyzes the trends of Maithili literature and guides its direction.

His notable work "Sahastrabadhani" also attracts special attention in the literary world. In this work, the depth of language, thought, and cultural consciousness can be seen. This creation is proof of his original thinking and creative strength. He sees traditional subjects with a new perspective and makes his own distinct mark.

Gajendra Thakur is not limited

only to Maithili. He considers linguistic exchange as the basis of literary richness. He has made Maithili literature accessible to a wider readership by translating from Maithili into English. Along with this, he has also translated into Maithili from other Indian languages. Translating the works of poets and writers from Kannada, Telugu, Odia, and Gujarati languages into Maithili through the medium of English is proof of his multilingual vision. Bringing the works of creators like Ashok Hegde, N. Aruna, Shaikh Muhammad Sharif, Annavarani Devender, Basudev Sunani, Bharat Majhi, Babu Suthar, Ajay Sarvaiya, Rajendra Patel, Hemang Ashwin Kumar Desai to Maithili readers is his bridge-building effort. Through this translation work, Maithili literature connected with the broader landscape of Indian languages. Readers became

acquainted with the experiences of other cultures, and freshness came into Maithili literature.

His dedication to children's and adolescent literature is especially noteworthy. He understands that the future of a language depends on the younger generation. If children do not read and write in their mother tongue, the language will weaken. For this, he emphasized making children's literature, simple material, and interesting texts available.

His language style is balanced and refined. He neither adopts unnecessary complexity nor excessive simplicity. In his writing, scholarship and simplicity go hand in hand. Factuality, logic, and cultural sensitivity are the main

qualities of his style. He emphasizes reason more than emotion.

In the contemporary scenario, when the Maithili language is facing many challenges – urbanization, migration, the dominance of English and Hindi, the decreasing linguistic attachment among the new generation – at such a time, personalities like Gajendra Thakur inspire hope. His work is not just literary creation, but a movement for language preservation. He connects Maithili with the past, keeps it active in the present, and secures it for the future.

In essence, Gajendra Thakur's entire life is a story of dedication – dedication to the mother tongue,

dedication to culture, and dedication to the pursuit of knowledge. His work shows that even one person, with strong determination, can change the history of language and literature. He presents a beautiful synthesis of creation and organization, research and editing, tradition and technology.

Seeing his achievements, it can be easily said that Gajendra Thakur is the bridge-person for the renaissance of Maithili language and literature. His contribution is multi-dimensional, lasting, and of historical significance. He is not only a writer of today, but also a source of inspiration for future generations. When the future of Maithili language and culture is written, Gajendra Thakur's name will be respectfully inscribed in

the front line. His body of work is proof that if dedication is pure, new life can be given to language and culture.

****Gajendra Thakur's Absence
from the Forums of Mithila-
Maithili: Causes and Effects****

****Mukesh Anand****

I got information about the work done by Gajendra Thakur for the upliftment and preservation of the Maithili language from the book named 'Preeti Karan Setu Banhal', which is edited by Ashish Anchinhaar ji. I wrote this article inspired by Ashish Anchinhaar ji himself. I am a person who finds it very difficult to write. Along with that, I am also afraid to write, because I have not received education in Maithili, and the indifference prevalent towards one another in the Maithili literary sky frightens me. Living in Delhi, I also keep realizing that here, the

main goal of litterateurs is to reach the stage in programs organized by the Sahitya Akademi, the Maithili-Bhojpuri Akademi, and other institutions. I do not consider myself separate from this sentiment either, although I have not been successful in this. In the literary world of Maithili, recognition and financial support are guaranteed by respect and the microphone on the stage. Here, there are many institutions that keep seventy to ninety percent of their own members in their programs. And they glorify and award litterateurs who are known. There is no great harm in this, but the problem is that no serious work seems to happen in all this. In this context, discussing Gajendra Thakur seemed appropriate to me.

Gajendra Thakur's contributions

to the Maithili language are many. Nowadays, the internet plays a very big role in increasing the importance of any language. Through this, the language reaches readers far and wide. In the situation of migration from Mithila that happened in the past, the internet and social media have a very big contribution in staying connected to one's roots and knowing them. This trend was seen more during the Corona period. Its presence on social media affects government statistics and through that, people in the government as well as political personalities. Therefore, Gajendra ji's biggest contribution should be considered this: that he brought Maithili onto the internet in the year 2000 and established it.

In addition, Gajendra ji has

different forms. Gajendra Thakur is the one who brought and established Maithili on the internet, and is also continuously working for the development of the language. Thakur ji is the one who made the Panji accessible to the general reader, the one who reaches the readers of the magazine in a total of 11 languages including Tirhuta, the creator of dictionaries, an editor, a researcher, and a litterateur. But the most noteworthy thing is that he is a person who works silently. This behavior of his is completely opposite to the stage-lust prevalent in Maithili literature. But even more surprising is that the institutions working in Maithili literature do not deem it necessary to discuss his work and creations. If I had not come in contact with Videha or Ashish Anchinhaar, I would not have understood this either.

Probable Reasons for Absence

The respect for any language increases only when there is high-level, epoch-making, and contemporary work in that language. Along with this, the speakers of that language recognize those who contribute to their language, respect them, and discuss them in every household. In Maithili, this sentiment is very lacking. I cannot say specifically about other places, but in Delhi NCR, factionalism is at its peak. In such an environment, it is difficult for people like Gajendra Thakur, who stay away from the stage, to be discussed. The irony is that Gajendra Thakur lives in Delhi, and so do I, but in my view, I have never seen him on any stage. Forget seeing him, it does not even occur to me that he has been

discussed in any meeting or gathering; this is unfortunate. People here are more eager to write in Maithili than to read Maithili literature. Reading not only improves language and writing, but also increases the vocabulary and word stock in Maithili. But more than all this, the reader understands how much work has already been done in Maithili. This can help litterateurs come out of a sense of inferiority and confidently move towards new creation with strength. Due to being unaware of the work done before them, many litterateurs' creations have a predominance of Hindi words, and their literature becomes very light and devoid of essence. I know many such people who write their composition the night before or on the way in the metro. From personal experience, I can say that there is an abundance of such people in the

Delhi literary scene. It is not that everyone is like this, but they are in the majority. The stage and awards are received by such people. In such circumstances, waiting for epoch-making creations would be futile.

Another problem has arisen due to the lack of study of the literary work done before one. That is the lack of good critics. It seems in Maithili as if there are no bad creations. Critics hesitate to call an average or bad creation bad. This feeling is strong that something is happening in Maithili. But in my opinion, if not publicly, then privately, this should be said. The matter should not stop here; what is right going forward should also be said. There is a lack of the guru-shishya tradition. A bigger problem than that is that no

litterateur accepts that there is scope for improvement in their creation. For the newly active workers of Maithili, the stage and garlands are the most important. For most migrant Maithils, the stage and awards are a priority. For active litterateurs, invitation letters received from government institutions like the Sahitya Akademi and Maithili-Bhojpuri are certificates of scholarship. And in this cycle, no proper work is able to happen in Maithili. Whereas Gajendra Thakur, away from the stage, has done much more work for Maithili in less time. There is a strange way of giving awards in Maithili. No matter how learned and capable you are, if you do not come on the stage of any institution, they do not select you for any award. It is possible that for this very reason, institutions might not consider Gajendra Thakur or the entire

Videha team worthy of honor. Another reason could be that Gajendra Thakur does all his work without the stage. But the Maithil psyche is festival-loving; they don't want work, they want festivals. And the first condition of a festival is give-and-take. So, it seems to me that in the give-and-take system of institutions, the work of Gajendra Thakur or Videha might have been left out. Whereas it should be that institutions make announcements for those who are worthy and do work, whether they come on their stage or not. Or whether Videha or Gajendra Thakur will do something in return for your honor or not.

There is a scarcity of determined people who take far-reaching steps for the preservation and

promotion of the Maithili language. It is also important to say here that Gajendra Thakur did not do this work alone. To fulfill his work or vision, two such people came forward with whose help the entire history of Maithili literature changed. Gajendra Thakur kept bringing new ideas, and these two people kept working on the arrangements for how the idea would be fulfilled. Among them, one is Nagendra Kumar Jha and the other is Panjekar Vidyanand Jha. Gajendra Thakur's wife, Mrs. Preeti Thakur, is also quite active for Maithili. Ashish Anchinhaar also has an important role in this. As far as I know, Ashish Anchinhaar has also made significant contributions in maintaining distance from the stage and garlands and in giving various other ideas. Along with this, it is also appropriate for the reader to know that these four –

Gajendra Thakur, Nagendra Kumar Jha, Panjekar Vidyanand Jha, and Ashish Anchinhaar – are absent from the stage. In other words, the entire Videha team is absent from the stage.

Maithili litterateurs and readers should continuously keep the contributions of Gajendra Thakur and all their ancestral litterateurs in their hearts, keep discussing them in front of society, and this work is necessary to open new paths for Maithili. However, I believe that if Gajendra Thakur or the Videha team is absent from the stage, then the speed of their work has increased, and the entire energy of Videha has been saved for meaningful work. In such a situation, if Gajendra Thakur is absent from the stage, then this is a new event and a matter of good

fortune for Maithili, at least there is one brave person in Maithili. It would not be inappropriate to say here that whatever the reason for Gajendra Thakur or the Videha team being absent from the stage is a different matter, but what is society's duty? If today's society does not discuss the doers of work, then how will the present society be assessed in the future?

*****Salutations to the hosts and lords of the hosts, to you, salutations. Salutations to the assemblies (Vratas) and lords of the assemblies (Vratapatis), to you, salutations. Salutations to the wise (Gritsas) and lords of the wise (Gritsapatis), to you, salutations. Salutations to the diverse forms (Virupas) and the universal forms (Vishvarupas), to you, salutations.*****

*****Contributor Introductions*****

I may be 'Anchinhar' (unmarked/unknown), but the writers who have contributed to this book are not unknown (anchinhar) to the readers, hence their detailed introductions have not been given. These names themselves are an introduction in

their own right.



1. Munni Kamat (Young Writer)
2. Ira Mallick (Young Writer)



3. Kailash Kumar Thakur
4. Vikas Vatsnabh (Young Writer)
- (Young Writer, Nepal)



5. Bhairav Lal Das, (Mahatma

Gandhi expert, many books published on Gandhi ji, researcher. Contact-9430606724)

6. Poonam Jha 'Sudha', (Young Writer)



7. Dr. Shiv Kumar Prasad (Translator, Critic, and Poet) literature scholar, critic, and

8. Kalpana Jha (Upendranath Jha 'Vyas', story writer)



9. Munnaji (Pioneer of Maithili

vignette stories and writer)

10. Dr. Dhanakar Thakur (Mithila state activist and litterateur)



11. Hitnath Jha (One who gave new life to the 'Gramgatha' genre in Maithili, pioneer of the reader-response genre)

12. Praveen Kumar Jha (Young Writer)



13. Kundan Karn (Young vignette story writer)

14. Jagadanand Jha 'Manu',
(Young Writer)



15. Ujjwal Kumar Jha (Young
Writer)

16. Mukesh Anand (Young Writer)

****Editor Introduction****



****Ashish Anchinhaar****

Founder and editor of the internet magazine (in blog form) "Anchinhar Akhar" focused on Maithili ghazals and sher-o-shayari. Author of a total of 11 books including the grammar and history of Maithili ghazals and the history of Maithili web journalism, and editor of 4 books. For a special introduction, you can visit the link <https://mai.wikipedia.org/s/5i>. E-mail ashish.anchinhar@gmail.com

*****May the sweet (or honey-like)
plants flourish, may the waters
be sweet for us, may the sky be
sweet. May the lord of the field
be sweet for us; may we,
unharmmed, follow him. *****

*****For all readers*****

