



GLIMPSES OF INDIA

PART I – A BAKER FROM GOA



Baker's Role in Goan Villages:

Set during Portuguese rule in Goa, the story centers on a local baker in a Goan village. People consumed loaves of bread, crafted in large furnaces. Bakers, known as "paders," would announce their presence with a distinctive bamboo jingle in the streets.

Traditional Business Continuity:

While traditional loaves are less common today, remnants endure through furnaces and bakers committed to preserving their ancestral trade. The story reflects on the author's childhood, where the baker's daily visits were a familiar routine.

Baker as Friend and Guide:

Beyond a purveyor of bread, the baker becomes a significant figure in the author's life, serving as both a friend and guide. The recollection emphasizes the personal connection forged during those formative years.

Bread's Significance in Goan Culture:

During this historical period, bread held a prominent place in Goan culture, especially the sweet bread known as Bol. The author reflects on how these loaves were integral to various occasions, underlining the cultural importance of the baker's craft.

Distinctive Baker's Attire:

The narrative touches upon the unique attire of the baker, specifically the Kabai - a single-piece frock extending to the knees. This distinctive dress adds a layer of cultural richness to the portrayal of the baker and his trade.

Baking as a Profitable Venture:

Against the backdrop of Portuguese rule, baking emerges as a lucrative business. The story explores the economic dynamics of this time, shedding light on the profitability of the baker's trade.

Bread in Everyday Life:

The everyday significance of bread is highlighted through the author's recollections of maidservants purchasing loaves to accompany their tea. The routine of acquiring and enjoying bread becomes a memorable aspect of daily life in the Goan village.

Cultural and Culinary Nostalgia:

The narrative weaves together cultural, culinary, and personal nostalgia, offering a glimpse into a bygone era when life in a Goan village was accompanied by the comforting presence of the local baker and the aroma of freshly baked bread.

Character Sketch: The Goan Baker:

In the historical backdrop of Portuguese-ruled Goa, the central character is the local baker, a skilled craftsman known as a "pader." Beyond being a mere bread supplier, the baker symbolizes tradition, friendship, and cultural identity. His distinctive Kabai attire sets him apart, reflecting his role as a cultural custodian. The story unveils the economic importance of baking during that time. The baker's impact extends to everyday life, becoming a ritualistic presence as maidservants purchase loaves for tea. Overall, the Goan baker is a nostalgic figure, weaving memories of a bygone era through his craftsmanship and personal connections.

Extract Based Questions:

1. We kids would be pushed aside with a mild rebuke and the loaves would be delivered to the servant. But we would not give up. We would somehow climb a bench or parapet and peep into the basket. I can still recall the typical fragrance of those loaves. Loaves for the elders and bangles for the children.

Q/A:

a. Who are we ' in the extract?

Ans: We in the extract refers to the narrator and his friends.

b. Why could he not fly over on either side of storm clouds?

Ans: The kids were pushed aside so that the bread could be delivered to the servants

c) Which word/phrase in the extract means the same as an expression of disapproval/a scolding'?

Ans: The word 'rebuke' from the extract means an expression of disapproval/a scolding'.

d) What was there in the basket?

Ans. There were some loaves for the elders and some bangles for the children.

Top 10 PYQs:

Short Answer Questions (40-50 words each)

1. What did the baker mean to the narrator during his childhood? How many times did he pay a visit?

Answer: The baker or pader was an important person in the author's life. He was treated like a friend. He used to come twice a day, once in the morning to sell bread and then while returning after emptying his basket. The author used to run to meet him to take the bread-bangles. He chatted and gossiped with him.

2. What did the bakers wear —

(i) in the Portuguese days? (ii) When the author was young?

Answer: Kabai wants a particular dress — a single-piece long frock reaching down the knees which the bakers used to wear in the old days. Later it was replaced by a shirt and trousers which were longer than the shorts and shorter than the full length.

3. What are the elders in Goa nostalgic about?

Answer: In Goa, the elders are nostalgic about the good Old Portuguese days as well as the Portuguese and their famous loaves of bread.

4. What marks of the Portuguese way of life can still be seen in Goa?

Answer: Goa was once occupied by the Portuguese. They were famous for preparing the loaves of bread. They left Goa long ago. But the traditional work of the bakers can still be seen in Goa. The furnaces in which the bread was baked still exist there.

5. What does the author recall about the visit of the baker to his village?

Answer: The author recalls that a baker used to visit the village twice a day. He used to be the author's friend and guide. He used to carry a bamboo stick. The sound of this stick is used to wake up the author and others from sleep.

6. How was the village baker very important for special occasions in the village?

Answer: The village baker was especially important for festive occasions. The villagers were much fond of the sweet bread known as 'bol'. Marriage gifts were meaningless without these sweetbreads. Sandwiches, cakes, and Bolin have been a must for Christmas as well as other festivals. These were made with the bread.

7. When did the baker collect his bills? What showed that the bakers were prosperous?

Answer: The baker usually collects his bills at the end of the month. In the household, the baker's monthly accounts used to be recorded on some wall in pencil. Baking was a profitable business in those days. Their families never starved. Their plump bodies showed that they were prosperous.

8. How can you say that the makers of the famous Goan loaves are still there?

Answer: Many of those eaters of loaves might have died but their makers still exist. The mixers, molders, and those who bake the loaves are still there in Goa.

The fire in the furnace has not yet been extinguished and the thud and jingle of the baker's bamboo can still be heard in the morning in some places. These bakers, known as padres, exist in Goa even today. The family profession is still carried on.

9. Why was the baker, the friend, companion and guide of the children?

Answer: For children, the very sight of the baker was quite exciting. He was their friend, companion, and guide. The jingling thud of his bamboo put them in rapture. They ran to meet and greet him. It was not so much for the love of the loaf what they longed for were the bread-bangles. Sometimes they liked the sweet bread of special make.

10. What importance did the baker's furnace have in the village in Goa?

Answer: The loaves of bread had become an important and integral part of the lives of the people in Goa. Marriages were meaningless without the sweet bread or the bol. No party or feast was possible without bread. The lady of the house would prepare sandwiches for the engagement ceremony of her daughter. Cakes and sweetbreads were a must for Christmas and other festivals. The presence of the baker's furnace was essential in the village.



Heavenly Landscape and Aromatic Air: Nestled between Mangalore and Mysore, Coorg, the smallest district in Karnataka, is described as a heavenly abode. With evergreen forests, coffee plantations, and spice groves, it offers a delightful aroma in the air. Tourists flock here from September to March to enjoy the favorable weather.

Mythical Roots and Cultural Blend:

Legend has it that a segment of Alexander the Great's army settled in Coorg, giving rise to a unique blend of Greek or Arabic descent. Locals wear the distinctive Kuppia, a long black coat resembling the kuffia worn by Arabs.

Bravery and Military Legacy:

Known for their courage, the people of Coorg have a proud military legacy, with the Coorg Regiment and India's first Army Chief, General Cariappa, hailing from this region.

Ecological Significance and Panoramic Views:

Coorg's forests and hills are vital water sources for the Cauvery River. The Brahmagiri hills offer panoramic views of the region, while the Island of Nisargadhama hosts Buddhist monks, adding a spiritual touch to the landscape. In essence, Coorg is a haven for nature lovers, history enthusiasts, and those seeking a unique cultural experience.

Character Sketch: Coorg's Brave Hearts

In the heart of Coorg lies a community known for its fierce independence and courage. Coorgi homes stand as beacons of hospitality, weaving traditions into their warm embrace. The illustrious Coorg Regiment, the pride of the Indian army, mirrors the valor deeply ingrained in the tales of their courageous sons and fathers.

Extract Based Questions:

1. Midway between Mysore and the coastal town of Mangalore sits a piece of heaven that must have drifted from the kingdom of God. This land of rolling hills is inhabited by a proud race of martial men, beautiful women, and wild creatures. Coorg, or Kodagu, the smallest district of Karnataka, is home to evergreen rainforests, spices, and coffee plantations.

Q/A:

a. Which kind of animals are we likely to see at Coorg?

Ans: We are likely to see wild animals in Coorg

b. What is Coorg known for?

Ans: Coorg is known for its evergreen rainforests, spices, and coffee plantations.

(c) Which word in the extract means the same as having to do with war'?

Ans: Martial' from the extract means having to do with war'.

(d) Where is Coorg situated?

Ans: Coorg is situated between the midway of Mysore and the coastal town of Mangalore.

2. The fiercely independent people of Coorg are possibly of Greek or Arabic descent. As one story goes, a part of Alexander's army moved south along the coast and settled here when return became impractical. These people married among the locals and their culture is apparent in the martial traditions, marriage, and religious rites, which are distinct from the Hindu mainstream.

Q/A:

(a) Which descent do the people of Coorg belong to?

Ans : The people of Coorg belong to Greek or Arabic descent

(b) Where can we find the culture of Coorg most apparently?

Ans: The Coorg people's culture is most apparent in their martial traditions, religious rites, and marriages.

(c) Which word in the extract means an act that is part of a religious ceremony?

Ans: Rites' from the extract means an act that is part of a religious ceremony'.

(d) Why did Alexander's army settle in Coorg?

Ans: Alexander's army settled in Coorg because returning became impractical, so they stayed and married among the locals.

Top 10 PYQs:

Short Answer Questions (40-50 words each)

1. Why are the people of Coorg known as descendants of the Arabs?

Answer: The theory of the people of Coorg as descendants of the Arabs draws support from the long, black coat with an embroidered waist-belt worn by the Kodavus known as kuppia. It resembles the kuffia worn by the Arabs and the Kurds.

2. What does the writer say about Coorg?

Answer: The writer says that Coorg is the smallest district of Karnataka. It is known as Kodagu also. Coorg lies between the coastal towns of Mangalore and Mysore. It is a very beautiful place. The writer says that it must have come from the kingdom of God.

3. What is Coorg famous for? What is the best season to visit Coorg?

Answer: Coorg is famous for its coffee plantations, evergreen rainforests, and spices. Thirty percent of its area is covered with evergreen rainforests. The best season to visit this place is from September to March. The air is full of coffee flavor.

4. Describe the people and culture of Coorg.

Answer: Coorg is inhabited by a proud race of martial men, beautiful women, and wild creatures. Coorgi homes have a tradition of hospitality. There are many tales of valor related to the people of Coorg. The Coorg Regiment is one of the most decorated in the Indian Army. General Cariappa, the first Chief of the Indian Army, was a Coorgi. Kodavas are the only people in India permitted to carry firearms without a license.

5. How has the tradition of courage and bravery been recognised in modern India? Give examples from the text.

Answer: The people of Coorg are known for being fiercely independent, brave and courageous. There are numerous tales of valor connected with the people of Coorg. The Coorg Regiment is one of the most decorated regiments in the Indian Army. The first Chief of the Indian Army, General Cariappa, was a Coorgi. The Coorgis are the only people in India who are permitted to carry firearms without a license.

6. Describe the physical and geographical features of Coorg.

Answer: Coorg is a piece of heaven that must have drifted from the Kingdom of God. This is a land of rolling hills inhabited by a proud race of martial men, beautiful women, coffee and wild elephants. Coorg or Kodagu is the smallest district of Karnataka. It is home to evergreen forests, spices and coffee.

plantation. This beautiful region of rolling hills, rainforests and mist lies between Mysore and the coastal town of Mangalore. Rainforests dominate the physical feature of Coorg. They cover more than thirty percent of this district. It rains heavily during the monsoons. The most ideal season for tourists starts in September and ends in March. The river Kaveri obtains its water from the hills and rainforests of Coorg. The region abounds in wild elephants and langurs besides a lot of birds, bees and butterflies. The Brahmagiri hills provide a panoramic view of the entire misty landscape of Coorg. The sixty-four-acre island of Nisargadhama is a little paradise for the tourists.

7. Where and how can we have a panoramic view of the misty landscape of Coorg?

Answer: The tourists are advised not to miss a climb to the Brahmagiri hills. The climb to the Brahmagiri hills gives you a panoramic view of the entire misty landscape of Coorg. Then you can walk across the rope bridge. It will lead you to the sixty-four-acre island of Nisargadhama.

8. How do the most laidback individuals become the life of high-energy adventures in Coorg?

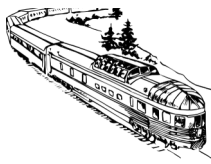
Answer: Coorg offers many outdoor high-energy adventures. Even the most laidback individuals become converts to a life of high-energy adventures. They enjoy river rafting, canoeing, rappelling, rock climbing, and mountain biking. Numerous walking trails in Coorg are a favorite with trekkers

9. Why does the author call Coorg a piece of heaven' that must have drifted from the kingdom of God?

Answer: Coorg, hailed as 'a piece of heaven,' boasts breathtaking landscapes with rolling hills and lush rainforests covering over thirty percent of its expanse. The air is infused with the aroma of fresh coffee from sprawling estates adorned with colonial bungalows. The river Kaveri originates from Coorg's hills and rainforests, providing a habitat for diverse flora and fauna. Kingfishers dive into its waters, seeking Mahseer, while playful elephants find joy in being bathed in the Kaveri by their mahouts. The climb to Brahmagiri hills offers a misty panoramic view of Coorg, enhancing its allure. Nisargadhama, a sixty-four-acre island, stands as a tourist paradise. Temples and Buddhist monks, draped in vibrant robes, represent the heart and soul of India in this enchanting region.

10. Describe the largest Buddhist settlement in Coorg.

Answer: Below the rolling hills lie the largest Tibetan settlement in India in Coorg. The Buddhist temple at Bylakuppe is famous for its grandeur and beauty. The monks in their red, ochre, and yellow robes represent the heart and soul of India, right here in Coorg.



GLIMPSES OF INDIA

PART III- TEA FROM ASSAM



Tea Time Musings:

Rajvir and Pranjol's Assam trip took an interesting turn during a simple tea break. While sipping tea, Rajvir shared a fun fact—people around the world enjoy over 800,000,000 cups of tea every day. Rajvir admired the scenic tea-filled landscape, but Pranjol, lost in a detective book, missed the view.

Assam's Tea Beginnings:

Assam, with its big tea gardens, has a mysterious tea origin. According to a Chinese story, tea was discovered when branches accidentally fell into boiling water, creating a delicious drink. Another tale connects tea to a monk's eyelids, giving birth to plants that resist sleep when steeped.

Exploring Dhekiabari Tea Estate:

Getting off at Mariani Junction, Rajvir and Pranjol explored Dhekiabari Tea Estate. Surrounded by women carefully picking tea leaves, they soaked in the lively plantation vibe. Pranjol's dad, a tea enthusiast, shared his tea wisdom, and Rajvir eagerly expressed his interest in learning more about the fascinating world of Assam's tea culture. The stage was set for a delightful journey into the heart of Assam's tea heritage.

Character Sketch:

Rajvir: Enchanted by Assam's tea, Rajvir becomes a captivating storyteller, sharing trivia—over 800,000,000 cups daily.

Pranjol: Lost in a detective novel, Pranjol adds mystery. His literary pursuits blend with Assam's landscapes.

Assam's Essence: Beyond friends, Assam's tea heritage enriches the journey with depth and mystery.

Extract Based Questions:

1. We have an Indian legend too. Bodhidharma, an ancient Buddhist ascetic, cut off his eyelids because he felt sleepy during meditations. Ten tea plants grew out of the eyelids. The leaves of these plants when put in hot water and drunk banished sleep. Tea was first drunk in China, Rajvir added, as far back as 2700 BC! Words such as tea, chai', and chini' are from Chinese. Tea came to Europe only in the sixteenth century and was drunk more as medicine than as a beverage.

Q/A:

a. Who was Bodhidharma?

Ans: Bodhidharma was an ancient Buddhist ascetic.

b. How is medicine different from a beverage?

Ans: Medicine is used for treating diseases whereas beverage is used for general drinking purpose.

(c) Find the word in the extract which means the same as a drink'.

Ans: Beverage' from the extract means a drink'.

(d) When and where was tea first drunk?

Ans: Tea was first drunk in China as far back as 2700 BC.

2. Do you know that over eighty crore cups of tea are drunk every day throughout the world? Rajvir said. Whew! exclaimed Pranjol. Tea really is very popular. The train pulled out of the station. Pranjol buried his nose in his detective book again. Rajvir too was an ardent fan of detective stories, but at the moment he was keener on looking at the beautiful scenery.

Q/A:

(a) How do we know that tea is very popular?

Ans : We know that tea is very popular because eighty crore cups of tea are drunk every day throughout the world.

(b) Rajvir was a great fan of reading detective stories. Why didn't he like to read at that? moment?

Ans: Rajvir didn't like to read a detective story at that moment because he was more interested in looking at the beautiful scenery that passed by as the train moved

(c) Which word in the extract means an act that is part of a religious ceremony?

Ans: Rites' from the extract means an act that is part of a religious ceremony'.

Top 10 PYQs:

Short Answer Questions (40-50 words each)

1. How does Rajvir describe the tea garden at Dhekiajuli?

Answer: On both sides of the gravel road were acres and acres of neatly pruned tea bushes. It was the second sprouting period. Women wearing plastic aprons were plucking new tea leaves and putting them in the bamboo baskets.

2. Describe the scenery that Rajvir saw as soon as the train pulled out of the station.

Answer: When the train moved ahead, there were huge fields full of green plantations. Rajvir had never seen so much greenery. He called it a 'magnificent view'. The bushes were spread like a sea against the backdrop of densely wooded hills.

3. How can you say that tea was first drunk in China?

Answer: There is an ancient legend about the discovery of tea. A Chinese emperor had the habit of drinking boiling water. One day a twig from the fire fell into the pot in which water was being boiled. It gave a delicious flavor to the water. It is said that those were tea leaves and that was the first tea. It is thus thought that tea was first taken in China.

4. What information was given by Pranjol's father to Rajvir about Assam Tea Estate?

Answer: He was the manager of a tea garden in upper Assam. He showed Pranjol and Rajvir the acres of tea bushes, all neatly pruned to the same height. Groups of women pluckers with bamboo baskets were plucking the newly sprouted leaves.

5. What is the Indian legend about the discovery of tea?

Answer: According to an Indian legend, Bodhidharma, an ancient Buddhist monk, fell asleep during meditation. So he cut off his eyelids. Ten tea plants grew out of the eyelids. The leaves of these plants when put in hot water and drunk banished sleep.

6. Why was Rajvir so much excitement?

Answer: Rajvir had never seen so much greenery before. He was looking at the beautiful scenery. The soft green paddy fields gave way to tea bushes. Against the backdrop of densely wooded hills, a sea of tea bushes stretched as far as the eyes could see. The orderly rows of bushes were pruned to the same height. Rajvir was excited to see the magnificent view.

7. Describe the Chinese legend regarding the discovery of tea leaves.

Answer: *There is a Chinese legend regarding the discovery of tea leaves. One Chinese emperor always boiled water before drinking it. One day a few leaves of the burning twigs under the pot fell into the water. The result was wonderful. The water gave a delicious flavor. Those leaves that gave the water a delicious flavor were tea leaves.*

8. Why did Pranjol's father say in surprise that Rajvir had done his homework before coming there?

Answer: A tractor was pulling a trailer-load of tea leaves at the Dhekiabari Tea Estate. Rajvir asked Pranjol's father if that was the second flush or sprouting period. Rajvir said that the second sprouting period lasts from May to July and yields the best tea. Such detailed information about tea leaves surprised Pranjol's father. He told Rajvir that he seemed to have done his homework before coming here.

9. What landscape did Rajvir notice while sitting in the train?

Answer: Rajvir was fascinated by the scenic beauty of the place. There were vast green tea gardens on both sides of the road. The tall trees at the back of the gardens in the forest on the rolling hills looked beautiful. The women plucking tea leaves looked like dolls. On the way, he saw people drinking tea. He also saw an ugly building with smoke coming out of its chimneys. Rajvir was received by Mrs. and Mr. Barua and was taken towards Dhekiabari Tea Estate. On both sides of the gravel road were acres and acres of neatly pruned tea bushes.

It was the second sprouting period. Women were wearing plastic aprons and plucking new tea leaves and putting them in the bamboo baskets on their backs.

10. It seems that Rajvir had done a lot of homework regarding tea and its history. Do you support Pranjol's father's statement that he gave about Rajvir's knowledge in this regard?

Answer: Indeed, Rajvir had never visited a tea estate ever before in his life. His visit to Dhekiabari Tea Estate was at the invitation of his classmate Pranjol whose father managed the estate. But Rajvir seemed to have done a lot of homework and reading about tea and tea plantations before coming to Assam. He told Pranjol that tea is one of the most popular beverages in the world. More than eighty crores of cups of tea are drunk every day throughout the world. When he saw an ugly building with smoke billowing out of its tall buildings, he at once cried "Hey, a tea garden!". He had been reading as much about tea as he could. He narrated different legends regarding the discovery of tea leaves. It was Rajvir who narrated the legends describing how tea leaves were discovered in India and China. Rajvir impressed and surprised Pranjol's father with his deep knowledge of tea leaves. When he saw a tractor pulling a trailer load of tea leaves he recognized that it was the second flush or sprouting period. He also knew that it continues from May and to July and yields the best tea.