



International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)
A Peer-Reviewed Bi-monthly Bi-lingual Research Journal
ISSN: 2349-6959 (Online), ISSN: 2349-6711 (Print)
Volume-I, Issue-IV, January 2015, Page No. 167-172
Published by Scholar Publications, Karimganj, Assam, India, 788711
Website: <http://www.ijhsss.com>

‘Anamaniya’ a Novel of Ashapurnadevi **Sambhu Chakrabarti**

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Introduction: The novel "Anamaniya", is one of the excellent creations of the authoress, Smt. Ashapurna Devi. It is set against a social background, full of friction and contradiction. Here is found, the combination of two different worlds : one at the outside of the apartment's gate and the other, inside of apartment; one very loyal, ethical, systematic and sympathetic but the other ,just the opposite; one very poor, humble and submissive but the other very harsh, rough, rash, arrogant, proud and inhuman . And in cross emigration of the persons of these two worlds in vice versa, their behaviour also changes partially. The distance and disagreement between these two worlds, introduce an unfamiliar relation which is the basic ground of tension, meted in an accidental occasion. The writer has a good control on the action that gradually develops through excitement and in suspensive presentation. The sequence of incident is arranged with an excellence. The thematic presentation is also successfully achieved, with due exposure to the so called modern society, based in metropolitan city. The novel is posed to social and psychological incorrectness, subject to be brought in the attention of the mass people, though such incorrectness is common in almost every character around us, consciously or unconsciously. The authoress is credential in culminating the fact, in a very descent manner and with an upgrading effect. The recurrent psychological agitation is the common characteristic of the age which is dealt in this novel, with an utter seriousness.

Outline story: The story starts through a violent situation, centring an apartment in a city, with a terse admixture of threat and rush. Here a violent mob chases a person, for running over a teenager girl of 8, while riding on his own byke. The person rushes into Dipak Mamsion, an apartment of elite society, at which his father-in-law has taken an accomodation and has been living since the years. The mob rushes up to the gate and also demands the residents, to ignore a shelter to their prey, as they had intended to strip his skin, to punish him adequately as the return of his perpetration. The culprit, named Bivashkamal was an obstinate man and till the last did not concede to the fact that he was responsible for arising an untoward situation by undergoing a rash driving. Finally Bivash escapes, at the technique of his rich and powerful father- in- law, Sri Ranjit Mittir; who tactfully manages the mob and also the gurdian of the victim, at a minimum cost. But this step of intervenor, displays Mr Mittir, a very shrewed, heartless and selfish person though Bivash had to pay also a huge toll, having his family dissolved , due to a very dangerous decision, chosen by his wife, Rita; the only virtuous lady and ideal character in the novel .She remained insistent on her dedcision, to appear the court with an appeal, asking divorce. The other characters are Nita, the younger sister of Rita, Sulekha, the mother of Rita and their only brother's wife Swati, the Girl, Labu, treated as underdog and his poor and incapacitated father Sushil Mistri. A group of young men of the locality, who play a role of a collective Character, effecting reaction at that callous-but-daredevil accident, also occupy a remarkable position serving the purpose of a prologue.

Title: The title of the Novel is accurately coined from the following corners. Here the characters, whether the protagonist or his counterpart are equally inflexible structures. The bengali term, "Anamaniya" points to any kind of inflexibility. And here the villain Bivashkamal is an inflexible character as well as his wife Rita, though their inflexibility is vice versa. One is the traffic on a positive direction and another one is obstinately to the reverse direction, ignoring the logic.

The husband Bivash is adamant not to look behind, or have a self-analysis that would allow him to identify own flaws and demerits. Had he the benevolence to concede to his own wrongs, it would save

him from undergoing a penalty of conjugal separation. Because the acknowledgement of own mistake is not a cowardice job. But Ego draws a circle of limitation around him like an ordinary villain. So he is restricted from spontaneous flow of common understanding. That is the reason why we don't find a single bit of remorse in his behaviour, even propelling an innocent child, the daughter of Sashi Mistry, to her brink of life : by driving own motorbike on her both legs, affecting a permanent loss of limbs that finally leads to death. To him the instant balancing of own honour and dishonour got more priority than repenting on own misdeed. As he was over tensed at the reproach, hurled at him by the irritated mob, on hit of the moment, he loses the common feeling of humanity. The scar of threatening and riotous censure pelted at him, reacted in a hysterical effect. So he is blind to logic.

The other characters including Mr. Ranjit Mittir, his wife Sulekha, Younger daughter Nita, daughter-in-law Swati etc. all appear insensible and heartless creatures, as they can't come out from the shade of prejudice, under the search light of justice, impartiality, and unselfishness . The obligation of relation retards them to acknowledge the truth and to declare in presence of Bivash that he was the actual defaulter for arising a hectic situation, in front of Dipak Mansion .Hence, they all looks very rigid or Anamaniya to change their stance.

Finally, the sequence of incidence is also very straight and rigorous to lead the victim to death. It makes the readers realize, the level of her injury and the depth of situation. The spell of melancholia escalates a common incident to an uncommon height.

Analysis of the Novel in reflection to the society: The story narrates the situations from a feminist point of view and interprets the characters from the core of their essence. It conveys many a message and one of those highlights the fact that a man can't identify another man, still they co-exists year after year under the same roof, until the situation deteriorates or the disposition arises. The real man from everybody comes out, when the turning points are met. The normal course of life never allows our sight to run straight up to the inner image of the man, stands before us.

Secondly no man can tolerate his or her closest one to be extreme selfish, immoral, cruel, and opportunist. As there doesn't remain any room to rely on such persons they are naturally outlasted. Such men are always assessed as the worthless creature. The relation between the two men gets imposed on the pillars of mutual trust, mutual faith and mutual understanding. And in dearth of even a single one, the relation crumbles down. What Mr. Bivash had did, that he lets the primitive nature of men to be exposed in his behaviour. And this is the tragic flaw which invokes his punishment. The writer had picked up this incident to vindicate that the pride, not only blinds the people but navigates them to the level of eccentricity that enroots the social violence.

Another key point the authoress touches, is the type and pattern of nepotism that kills the perfectness of man. Owing to this reason, in spite of committing an obvious default for seriously injuring and finally taking the life of an innocent child Labu, the Villain Bivash was not adequately charged or rebuked by the persons around him at the house of Dipak Mansion. Here the only exception remains his wife. But had he really faced even a milder protest from the members, inside the house, in addition to his wife, I suppose he would not appear so rigid, unconvinced and arrogant, and he could at least adjust the situation in a supple mind. Thus, with due rectification of character, he would also pursue the truth along with own fault. At that condition, his punishment would be a voluntary acceptance and probably would remain within the limit of mental affliction. But as he flinches back, he was heavily penalized with the 'demolition of own family'.

On the other hand, a number of characters who maintains sweet relation with Mr. Bivashkamal, reduce their own merit, on occasion of their biased judgement in favour of Mr Bivash. Because while pampering Mr. Bivash, their favourite one, they got fastened to the prong of narrowness. They unknowingly ignored the universal inter- relation of mankind .That is the relation of man with another man beyond any calculation of profit and loss. Ignoring this relation is impossible, unless someone belongs to an insensible mind or has an utterly selfish option.

We make ourselves confined in our social Zoo, behind the railing of relation or obligation. Thus we minimize the area of our own movement.

The only extraordinary character, Rita, a living embodiment of conscience, stands uncompromising to serve the purpose of the authoress. She is presented most sensible, practical, and sharply conscious, regarding the concurrent incidents and its outcome. Very stark and strictly she enumerates the accident, occurred by her husband. She ignores to come under any compulsion for overlooking it, even at the cost of own conjugal future. Not only up to this, his decision sounds stern

and horrible when she proposes the future of own daughter: " if she (Rita's daughter) would like to maintain a poverish life, she must stay with own mother, else for a rich livelihood with her father" . The repeated effort, undergone by her parents and relatives to impress and convince Rita, foiled to her strong, adamant and upright argument. Any gust of counter reasoning couldn't reinstall her defective conjugal setup, as she came to know the genuine definition of relation. She has developed an immense hatred against her life partner who according to her is nothing but **a coward**. Regarding the personality of the males, she has a mixed impression which may be categorized in three steps:

- 1) Ideal Man (her brother, Sanjit)
- 2) Medium Man (her father, Mr. Ranjit Mittir)
- 3) *The worst (her own husband, Mr. Bivash)*

She reflects that living with a machine or a mechanical personality, is impossible to perpetuate. As such as the context of Mr. Bivash Kamal, her legal husband arises, he is felt no better than a machine and his rough and rakeless driving of byke is the outcome of his mechanization of personality. The byke is here a symbolic to format the character of its rider .Rita expected the purgation of Bivash through punishment in Jail. In her view Bivash was a **callous Murderer** *whose rectification is not possible without jail. Towards the end of Novel she regrets to a philanthropic person Mr. Nikhil Sen, who rescued Labu from the spot of accident, "...rubbing the brush of money if the stains of crime are possible to delete, the word "Crime" will exist as a meaningless term.*

Rita tried utmost to save labu at any cost, without any commitment to any witness but out of cordiality and actual obligation of perfect humanity, which appears faded in behaviour of the other characters in the Novel. For better treatment she sought bed for Labu in the most reputed hospitals in the city which was actual duty of either Bivash or Mr. R. Mittir. She had to fight at home for upholding this steady decision, even against her own mother Sulekha. Sulekha prevails on Rita by telling that as Sashi has received large money, the additional cooperation of Rita, looks much excess. But Rita refutes, "Sashi received money not for daughter but in lieu of daughter". Rita gets tired in bothering Bivash and so finally seeks divorce. Here we see her to choose also the way of self-dependence i.e; a service for own livelihood. This step of Rita must be viewed undergoing a voluntary atonement, for the sake of own husband. As he himself escapes his due punishment, she would accept the botheration:"...Iwill not be able to be fed the rice of a murderer".

Authoress very peculiarly matches, two deadly contradictory character in this conjugal bond , framed by Sri Bivashkaml with Miss Rita Mittir. The inflexibility of these bonded characters decides the character of the Novel **Anamaniya**.

The compactness of the novel is like an one act play, the fact being imposed in a dramatic style with an abrupt start, busy sequence, and well strewn suspense . It arouses a varied sense .The texture of the Novel is smooth, spontaneous, vivid and the fact is imposed on single incident.

The Novel starts with an action and also finishes through a counter action, flowing a suspense althrough. The fact veers about, on a single idea and disposes with a number of messages. The language is simple and touching. The fact of the Novel is tragic but complete, having a classical layout. The devil is not directly punished, either physically or legally, in turn of anticlimax, but not also completely spared. He is held as a great loser, out of own behavior. The authoress tries to balance the action, by inflicting indirect punishment, upon the villain. In equation of life, a death cannot be equalized by any other loss. Yet the authoress has tried to compansate it, in a logical manner, at least to desperse the air of depression from the atmosphere. She makes her best the situational treatment of the characters. She believes more on turning of situation than the action. Action is existent but in a milder form. The story is narrated in a melodramatic pattern, with activation of both the character and destiny.

But from a certain view, the writer has accurately done the same, as the society runs. The world had banned long behind, the theory of blood and revenge, in factual life. Naturally, the treatments of villains have gone slower and milder. They suffer in an indirect but comprehensive manner with the rotation of circumstances. The time takes the role of best judgeman and supreme executioner, who prosecutes the punishment in a long and tardy way, when the perpetrator has already forgotten his crime or has started to repent on what he has done. Probably, the villain of this Novel BivashKamal and the son-in-law of influential father-in- law, Mr. Ranjit Mittir would face same measure.

But a doubt peeps, having read the nature of Mr. Bivash. As his character doesn't cross the rim of questions, confusion arises: Had Mr. Bivash owns self-taken his divorce as a punishment or a relief

from the obligation?

Suspicion further asks, considering his inhuman attitude and the regular knack to drinks: **what the harm Mr. Bivash had inserted on the family of Sushil, could he infact realize its signifance?**, How serious his crime was, though it was an unintentional murder! But surprisingly he stands all along busy and anxious for regaining his own prestige, own position, and also for retaliation, exactly on that crucial moment, when the life of Labu is at stake. Instead of mourning the mischief he had done, he ridiculously grows vindictive to the insulting mob. The existence of his own daughter even failed to weaken his heart. He refuses to have any feeling for the victim who might be even his own daughter instead of anyone else. Ego prevents him to undergo the daring job self-analysis. So, he confines himself in a dark ignominy, remaining isolated like a commonplace villain. Mr. Bivash, in profession is an engineer but he can't be either a good father or a good husband. Addiction is his first beloved and Rita, his wife was its next. To him the accident is an ordinary and simple incident, ordained to happen. The basic root i.e.; his own callousness is here non-existent. So he is unbent to mourn over his unintentional role, though on his part it was essential, to look himself a normal man. He has not any knowledge of a father's heart. Has he the same, he will have given up the tendency of overpowering the situation with a blank blandishment. And his attempt of suppressing the inner house protest, is also a silly reaction and not necessary at all. As much he tries to prove himself flawless and not responsible for the accident, he appears rougher and barbaric. It causes in him an excitement and inspires to borrow an evil logic. From very beginning of story, Bivash has tried to divert the emotion of the house in his own favour, taking the advantage of violent protest outside, which is infact against his own perpetration. But, Bivash is caught in his technique of escaping, at the hand of his own wife. As a result he over reacts and gets irritated to herself. The authoress has here spared much time in imparting us the intensity of public grievance, which outwardly shows as an overreaction.

This incident reflects the responsibility of the modern, educated and established persons, who conveys the society to its adversity. These so called gentlemen mostly survive for their own, keeping aside the sense of social accountability. Addiction, which is one of the routes to degradation, is thus tried to declare legalized, and a part of the normal social life. This established group of society, pours their life in utter consumption and licentiousness, getting lost the sense of the right and wrong that sometimes causes major and damaging interference on others life. But they have no sense to compensate it or even to show a minimum sympathy. As the ego of possession and position blinds them, humanity is flung away to thousand miles. Naturally, such people require the public pressure, for regaining sense and consciousness. Which the writer has attempted, by concentrating her focus, for a long time on the violent protest, raised by the young men from neighbourhood of Dipak Mansion. This protest is justified to check at least the untoward incidents in society, happened due to the thoughtless activities of the so called gentlemen.

The silence maintained by the inhabitants of Dipak mansion on the face of threat and verbal assault, on a guest in their apartment, looks peculiar and points to a negative site of human nature. Whatever may be the reason, at least the residents, ought to have resisted the mob, instead of allowing to growth. In her explanation what the writer adds interpreting this attitude is such ----- these coward, selfish, self-content and reaction fonding gentlemen and gentle ladies see and hear the every happening from behind the screen and desires the botheration for their neighbours, which must be acute or worse than the worst.

Thus the concept of social unity dissolves, in warmth of jealousy. These saturated families require the masala, for preparing and serving the verbal recipes, required in passing out the huge fund of loose time at colourful hobnobbing. Out of this tendency, they surrender the basic human sense of help and cooperation, essential for social retention. On the other hand this silence imparts a passive support to the hooligans, who try to maintain and divert the social unrest, to their motivated direction. How the seed of disintegrity is sown in society, is here obvious side by side the display of sagging backbone, held by the metropolitan gentlemen. Here doesn't remain any hesitation to mention that this very frailty is one of the causes of criminal outfit in society.

Protest is the basic criteria of rectification provided, that is not conducted in some one's vested interest. Further the protest doesn't mean the hooliganism, as was demonstrated in the novel **Anamaniya** by a group of rowdy boys, the self-style keeper of discipline and justice in society. And it is their overreaction that made the situation simply complicated and yielded nothing else. Such groups

grow active in a certain issue and most casually, having no cordiality to lead the struggle up to an achievement. The people get involved in such agitation have no consistency or fixed target. As a result, they obtain the immediate failure. In spite of their hours long agitation, full of threat, brandishment, warning, and offensive verbal attack, by the young men, gathered in front of Dipak Mansion, could achieve none of the followings: either the punishment of the culprit or the recovery of adequate compensation in favour of victim; but simply a bitter memory of cacophony and a vociferous experience rests in remembrance.

Poverty is the mother of multiple problems, reflected by the family of Sashi Mistry. Where a burning heart of a father due to sudden disability of the only child Labu, is quenched, simply at the payment of a handful of money. The hunger is such an imp, ironically converts a man into animal. Money is the only treatment known to the solvents, which treads over the chest of poor ones. So Mr. Ranjit Mittir, an excellent artful person takes the father of the victim girl in grip, simply throwing down a few pieces of currency, hardly one thousand, in addition to expressing a lip-deep (an unfelt) sorrow, for his daughter being run over. Though for a moment Sashi has a feeling that Mr. Mitra has approached him to bribe, he instantly gets a control over own self, considering own position. In case of the unfortunate mother, money also partially soothes the pain, playing a magical effect. The deploring mother even at the point of her mental derangement quarrels with her husband regarding the possession of a little money, while her only daughter suffers at hospital, due to the serious injury in an accident and has stuck to a possibility of losing both her legs. At para no. 8 of page/ 35, the lamenting mother of Labu can't suppress her fallacious expression, "Losing her feet, fortune has returned to my Labu".

Labu, that innocent girl yet didn't know why Rita, her Mem Masiam visits her regularly at hospital. She asks Smt. Rita if her legs would recover before the puja as she has an ambition to put on white socks and a pair of buckled shoes in that occasion. This question aggrieves Rita, out of her motherly feeling. Probably, the face of ailing Labu reminds her, of own daughter. As Labu had no possibility to have active, her pair of legs, ever in life, she avoids the question of little Labu, by simply replying, "How can I predict, am I God?"

This very weak point (poverty), is used as a convenient press-button, by the rich people in this world, to get the havenots, easily at their good and evil purpose. The Poors always appear simple to the Riches and have a tendency to please the rich men. So any type of harm, rolled on them may be washed away with a minimum spare of sympathy and money. Picking up this trend, Mr. Ranjit Mittir, the most solvent and authoritarian character of the novel, runs his shameless effort to save his crime performing son-in-law, in the Novel. Whatever, sympathy and mourn, he happens to perform is, just the eyewash and to keep own self away from public doubt.

No moral duty or manly accountability, his chief aim was to put the uncontrolled situation in own grip, dismissal of public grudge through mitigation, finding solution through negotiation and at a minimum cost, finally keeping the opposition away from the court. For which he deploys a diplomatic treatment. He adopts a policy not to be irritated anyhow or against any type of instigation. We hear the same person, to make two different types of remark in variation of the place which contradicts to each other. In presence of the offensive people, he commits to afford all the necessities, the victim requires and also to take various types of effort in favour of Labu, provided the child remains saved in life. He made an artificial show of anxiety, regarding the risk on the victim child. But in fact, he made this casual show of benevolence, at least to take the mob in confidence. In his initial commitment when he approaches the irritated crowd, first at his residents' gate, he talks like a professional diplomat. The **mob claims no compensation**, but firmly demands Mr. Bivashkamal, the actual culprit, who had ran own byke, over an innocent teenager girl, the daughter of Sashi Mistry of the locality. But Mr. Mittir very tactfully censured his son-in-law in presence of the mob, to please and satisfy them and also to clarify his own stance in that dispute. He offered to handover the culprit at their hand to appease the crowd, pretending surrender. But getting success in his entire effort, when he gets free of the anxiety and met the father of victim to be sure of her survival, he changes his motto.

Just getting out of Sashi's house having maintained a formality of expressing sorrow and mourn when he found his daughter seriously realizes the loss of the both legs by the victim girl, Mr. Mittir, an outwardly sympathetic man, trashes his daughter Rita and discourages her for being over sympathetic. He snubs Rita for her loose emotion, at the injury of the unfortunate girl. He consoles

Rita by commenting that such hands and legs are getting cut off every day of so many persons. So She shouldn't is worried at that case. This comment unmask the real character of Mr. Mittir, and uncovers his beastly quality.

Again we see this man to get miser even going to pay the compensation. He decided to pay the unfortunate Sashi as an aid, Rs. 5000 /- but visiting the situation and duly taking to conversation he paid him Rs. 1000/- only.

By virtue of being an experienced labour officer, ever in life, Mr. Ranjit Mitra, was well versed in public character. That's, so he was brave and confident on the power of own verbal art. By softly interrogating one by one point, with a show of his ignorance, regarding the fact, he on the spot had finished his enquiry and also took the instant decision. Pretending to accept the fact, outwardly in open mind, he had already decided his scheme that, the excited mob would be allowed to realize their own potency and seem everything in their hand, even the matter of punishing the culprit. The cooling down and simplifying such a hectic situation with prompt effect, ranning through the hours, is really a job of challenge and efficiency. Here Mr. Mittir really surprises the readers and claims to have an extraordinary quality. Except, his selfishness and inner cruelty, Mr. Mitra is actually an ideal character. In presence of himself and his elder daughter, the character Bivash looks very sombre and charmless.

Here, the scopes allow remarking that while setting the characters, the writer got partially biased for her weakness to femininity. E.g. she has given the most priority in framing the character of Rita, the heroine than Bivash, the protagonist. However, she interprets the characters from the core of their essence.

The sequence of time, place and action are well maintained as per the option of the present day. The accident on road causes the accident in relation; the first one occurs the physical disability, promoted to death but the second one only the disability. A disabled conjugal life that promotes the semi-orphanage and uncertain future for an innocent child. The fact proves to be very comprehensive, as the daughter of villain suffers the rest of the suffering, left behind by the victim, the daughter of Sushil Mistry.

Conclusion: This book doesn't simply cater any, food of casual option but also assures a learning provision, essential for an ideal society. If the View of Rita (The heroine of Novel) regarding accident, would be shared by the country's administration, I suppose thousands of life would be saved, in every year from the gape of accident and its effected situations.

We tread over, many trivial matters, in hurried life style of the day,
But some of those pull us back, and ask the toll, to pay!
