



भीमाशंकर

Story unfolded

25th June - 11

The season of Gads:

Well, after doing Katraj to Sinhgad night trek and Pratap gad to Mahabaleshwar recently, it was again a time for “here to there” kind of a trek. This time the *here* was Khandas gaon and *there* was Bhimashankar via Shidi ghat.

Introduction:

Bhimashankar is ~127 kms from Pune. The place famously known for god Shiva temple. It also has a unique Bell in front of the temple which was presented by Chimaji Appa (Brother of Bajirao Peshwa). It is one of the collections from two Bells that he had won from war against Portuguese.



Story of Bhimashankar:

Years ago, the dense forests of Dakini, on the lofty ranges of the Sahaydris lived an enemy of god named Bhima with his mother Karkati. When Bhima could no longer sustain his suffering and curiosity about his existence, he asked his mother to unveil the mysteries of his life and to tell him who his father was and why he had abandoned them in the wilderness of the forest. After much hesitation and with a lingering fear, his mother Karkati, revealed to him that he was the son of the mighty Kumbhakarna, the younger brother of the Lankadheeshwara. And Lord Vishnu in his incarnation as Lord Rama destroyed Kumbhakarna. Father was killed by Ram in the great war.

This set Bhima in fury and he vowed to punish Lord Vishnu. To achieve this he embarked Tapasya to please Lord Brahma. The sympathetic creator was pleased by the dedicated devotee and granted him immense skills, the terrible mistake. Bhima caused havoc in the three worlds, he defeated King Indra and conquered the heavens. He also defeated a firm devotee of Lord Shiva - Kamarupeshwar, and put him in the prison.

He started torturing Rishis and Sadhus. All this angered the Gods. They all along with Lord Brahma requested Lord Shiva to come to their rescue. Lord Shiva consoled the Gods and agreed to rescue them from the evil.

On the other hand Bhima insisted and ordered Kamarupeshwar to worship him instead of Lord Shiva. When Kamarupeshwar denied, the tyrant Bhima raised his sword to strike the Shiva Linga, to which Kamarupeshwar was doing Abhishekam and Puja. As soon as Bhima managed to raise his sword, Lord Shiva appeared before him in all his magnificence.

Then the terrible war began. The holy wise man Narada appeared and requested Lord Shiva to put an end to this war. It was then that Lord Shiva reduced the evil demon Bhima to ashes and thus concluded the saga of cruelty. All the Gods and the holy sages present there requested Lord Shiva to stay there for the safety of the world. Lord Shiva thus decided to stay there in the form of the Bhimashankar Jyotirlingam.

It is also believed that the sweat from Lord Shiva's body after the battle formed the Bhimarathi River.

The beginning:

We started by train from Pune at 06:00 A.M. to reach Karjat by Sinhgad Express. Everyone was having a great time, the train was moving fast, air-cutting the magnificent greenery. In the general dabba, boys were standing and enjoying, girls were sitting and enjoying more. We gave a kind of innocent look (not once but so many times) to girls but no one from Bhavana, Kanchan, Kavita, Prajakta, Rupali or Sanjeevani gave a thought to give us a place to seat, not even in dreams :-p.

While the innocent look was still ON, the train somehow started to slow down. For a moment I thought it's my mind and body who have started to slowly respond to the fast moving train. But guess what, I was still OK and the train had really slowed down and stopped. After usual rumours of train getting delayed by few hours, we started to think alternatives for Bhimashankar trek. The alternative was Loh gad. The idea was scrapped immediately, firstly because its normally a kids trek, fairly easy trek. Secondly, the one who is a real लढवैया will always forgive the weaker and conquer the mighty. So we decided to stick to our earlier plan, Bhimashankar. On our visit near the engine compartment, we met the man himself, the railway engineer, we got the information that the track had broken would be fixed in ~30 mins !! Yes thought it right, if the train had passed over it, it must have got de-railed. But the train stopped in time, we were re-born.

Just to tell you the reality before you start thinking about the condition of Indian Railway:

- Considering the size of country population, number of tracks and trains, we are having fairly less amount of accidents, imagine the big picture, it's an achievement.
- The accidents which happen are most of the time due to human errors on which we have very little control. Imagine automatic management of hundreds of trains and tracks, not a piece of cake, when thousands of lives are at stake, am sure they must have taken enough safety steps.
- I travelled to Ahmedabad today in 3AC, Duranto express, the ticket amount and total distance in kms is same. That means one rupee per kilometre in AC in one of the best superfast nonstop trains in India. The cheapest railway fare you will ever find in this world.
- Considering the literacy ratio and standard of living, I think it's a good job done.

Things are improving day by day, be proud to be born in India and give your best. *Don't leave the country for the sake of better condition but live in the country for the sake of better condition* 😊. The "Goras" would go mad if they had so many people to manage.

Anyways, returning back to trek, on right is the newspaper cutting about the incident. Our trek making news, great !! (Those who can't read Marathi, relax, see the broken track picture and bhavnao ko samjo)

सिंहगड एक्सप्रेस अपघातातून बचावली

जांभूळ गेटजवळ रूळ तुटल्याने रेल्वेसेवा झाली अर्धा तास विस्कळित

खडगाव पावळ/ पुणे, ता. २५ : चाकरमान्यांना मुंबईला पोचविणारी सिंहगड एक्सप्रेस शनिवारी मोठ्या अपघातातून बचावली. खडगाव ते कान्हे रेल्वे स्थानकादरम्यान रेल्वे रूळाचा पडलेला तुकडा चालकाच्या वेळीच लक्षात आल्याने गाडीला 'ब्रेक' लागला अन् संभाव्य दुर्घटना टळली.

सिंहगड एक्सप्रेसचे नियमित प्रवासी व पुणे-मुंबई रेल्वे प्रवासी संघाचे कार्याध्यक्ष हेमंत टपले यांनी ही माहिती 'सकाळ'ला दिली.

टपले म्हणाले, "नेहमीप्रमाणेच सकाळी साडेसहाच्या दरम्यान



जांभूळ गेट : खडगाव-कान्हे रेल्वे स्थानकादरम्यान पुणे-लोणावळा यात्रेकडील लोहमार्ग तुटल्याने रेल्वे वाहतूक शनिवारी विस्कळित होती.

सिंहगड एक्सप्रेस निघाली. सव्वा तासाच्या सुमारास खडगाव ते कान्हे रेल्वे स्थानकादरम्यान ही गाडी पोचली असता रेल्वे रूळाचा तुकडा

लावला. त्यामुळे मोठी दुर्घटना टळली. गाडीत सुमारे दोन हजार प्रवासी होते. शनिवार असल्याने नेहमीपेक्षा कमी गर्दी होती. रेल्वे प्रशासनाने अर्ध्या तासात दुरुस्ती केली व गाडी मार्गे लागली. सर्व प्रवाशांनी गाडीच्या चालकांचे आभार मानले."

दररोज सकाळी नऊ वाजून पंधावून मिनिटांनी छत्रपती शिवाजी टर्मिनसला पोचणारी ही गाडी सकाळी अकरा वाजून वीस मिनिटांनी मुंबईला पोचली. त्यापाठोपाठ धावणाऱ्या पुणे-लोणावळा लोकल व डेक्कन क्वीन या गाड्यांना आधी तास उशीर झाला.

I am still not able to figure out that how could the train driver detect such a thing when the train was moving at fast speed. Many successful people have long term vision but that certainly doesn't mean they can detect a broken track from a long distance. Hats off to that driver, saved many lives with a single brake lever. I wonder, people do so much good work and donations at temple etc to earn little Punya but much more Punya can be earned with just a brake lever operation at a RIGHT time!!

After reaching to Karjat SAFELY, we did a headcount and waited as Chinmay and three others went to hire three 6-seaters. Here, Sachin and Amar promised our empty stomachs some dose of famous Karjat Wadapao. We sat down in "six turned to unlimited" seater to reach Khandas Village, the base point for the trek, Wadapao still missing. Here again the girls overpowered innocent boys and

occupied most of the sitting space. I could see couple of innocents barely getting a place in our unlimited seater and most of the times were floating in the air. All adventurous girls please develop face recognition skills before next trek!!

We finally reached to Khandas village. Time for yoga, everyone after getting down started to stretch their body parts as they had no chance to flex it throughout the ~45 kms journey. As promised, Wadapaos were here. Again girl's power, holding the Wadapao parcel bag as you can see in the picture!!



We started our exciting journey from here. The initial patch was quite simple. We kept walking through simple patches and drizzling. Although some might feel the steps are little high and tough on thighs. The jungle is really dense and full of green carpet. Pleasing noise of birds and water droplets falling on tree leaves takes you into a different kind of a world.

Horror in the Jungles:

At a fabulous windy point Me, Abhay, Ronny and Sudhir were having a good time, actually a great time. Perfect place to relax and arrest some oxygen into body. In the midst of dense fog, a dark image appears, a woman carrying Lakdi in one hand and walking towards us. First impression was like the same lady from the popular horror TV serial on Doordarshan – Aap Beeti. Of course, a modern day Bhoot would be in a modern dress. Who expects a Bhoot to wear white sari and trek Bhimashankar?

The image was moving closer, but we decided to stay with the breeze instead of running, remember लढ़वैया??!! The image was more near and now we could clearly identify that she was no star from



Aap Beeti with Lakdi in hand to beat us but was our very own, jolly, ever laughing Rupali Aaji with Lakdi in hand for support☺. Rupali, for a moment we thought this is it, this is how the end of life must be :-p.

After a long breath and returning back to life, we started moving. Abhay and gang still in the shock decided to stay back to recover and for some photography.

Aaji (बुढ़िया):

After the horrifying event, we continued again our journey to the top. After a while, again I heard a humming sound. This time I knew its “Rupali Aaji the Poet” and not... So here it is, humming elaborated..

आजीची वाटेवर केलेली वात्रटिका:

धुक्यात हरवलेली "वाट",
वाटेत हरवलेले आम्ही लोक "सात",
चोकलेट गोळ्या "वाट"त "वाट"त,
चढत होतो सगळे शिडीचा "घाट",

रस्ता शोधत जाता जाता,
त्या वाटेत दिसला एक वात्रट "वाघ",
तोही पाहत होता कोणाची तरी "वाट",
त्याला पाहता लागली आमची पुरती "वाट",

काय करावे आता पुढे ?
कोणालाही कळेना,
"वाट"सरू चा मार्ग सोडून,
वाघ काही पुढे जाईना,

मग सुचली काकांना एक भन्नाट "युक्ति",
मोबाईल चे लाइट दाखवून जिरवली त्याची "मस्ती",
धूम पळाला जंगलाचा राजा,
बघून KPITचा गाजावाजा,

म्हणुन सांगते मंडळी,
लागू नका आमच्या नादी,
आम्ही KPITचे गोंधळी,
दिसतो तशी नाही साधीसुधी.

डोकं by - आजी रुपाली

पाठींबा by - काका महेश

One of its kinds!! That was fun. Thank you Aaji, “Vat” lagadi!!



Ronak and his Rocky shoes:

First of all, hats off to men who must have carried parts here and assembled the staircase for safety. Below shown staircase is just near a point of difficulty where a little slip of your shoe can magnify that error into quick descend of about 25 feet. And if you are lucky, you might go down up to Khandas gaon from where the trek had begun.

The patch after climbing this staircase requires alertness, firm grip of hand and legs. So for most of the people it was advised to remove shoes and venture. That's what our very own singer and guitarist Ronak decided to do. But where to keep this Rocky shoes was a question so Chinmay who was near by providing helping hand to everyone suggested to tie it to the bag.



This is where the tragedy for Ronny and comedy for all of us started. Well, when someone is centre attraction for most of the disaster that day, why not she be the one for this one too ?? Yes, you guessed it right, its Rupali again. The task of tying the shoe was given to her and I guess she could not sustain the weight of the shoe and dropped it down. The error was magnified till 25 feet only.

I am sure if the massive shoe had fallen on someone's head, it could have caused severe head injuries. Till the shoe was back,

Ronny had to trek with open legs. Thanks to – do I need to mention??

Ok, moving ahead, we continued towards the top. The last patch of about an hour is toughest as the slope is quite stiff. In next picture, half of the mountain is covered under the cloud so imagine the giganticness.

Each one of us brave hearted did it on time and reached to the top, The Bhimashankar Temple. Few of us who had still some energy left decided to go down 200 steps to visit the temple while others waited and negotiated with Taxi drivers for onwards journey.

Two Taxis were booked. Again a "10 turned to unlimited". 1st Taxi had 15 + 1 people and second one in which I was sitting had same count. But wait what Chinmay saw outside his window? Two people roaming and searching for a place. What to do, let's fit them. The last compartment of Taxi could fit six as per company design, we fitted eight and with little more adjustment, finally we fitted ten!! This was not enough for the Taxi owner so he added two more of his people to hang outside the car. So total



goes to $17 + 3 =$ twenty, double the capacity. Again as usual, it was fun with Mahesh and Tushar singing songs.

The End of a fantastic day as we reached to Manchar village. From here we took bus and returned back to Pune. One more memorable journey.

Yours on paper,

“I

I M P

I M Patel

Isheet Madhukant Patel

Isheet Saroj-Madhukant Patel”