



Story Nook

Kathalaya's Chronicle - May & June 2026

A warm editorial by Geeta Ramanujam

Mist fills the Himalayan ranges as we wind up the mountains and valleys. Layers of them stretching beyond the horizon. We drive up as we have just met. Three scrooges, three saints set out to discuss Life and the Vidyha dharas.. There was a silence and a pause as a Kite comes before the car and swooped down for some food. We peeped out of the window. Forest fires lighting up the evening sunset. A mystery awe concern in everyone's mind. Our conversations meandered like mountain streams. We spoke of Sat-Chit-Ananda, of the conscious and unconscious mind, of education and whether financial wisdom should be taught alongside mathematics and science. We debated, questioned, and reflected.

Do animals tell tales?

Are coincidences merely accidents or messages from a deeper intelligence?

Stories emerged from our childhoods, from temples and pilgrimages, from books and eachers who had shaped our lives. Then, amidst all the words, there would come a pause. A silence. The pine trees seemed to insist upon it. The mighty deodars whispered into our ears.

In those moments, I began to understand the value of stillness—a rare phenomenon in human life. Instead of filling every pause with thought, I found myself laughing, telling a joke, and then allowing the silence to return. Slowly, I realised that one needs spaciousness to descend into the hidden caves of the soul.

Perhaps it was age. Perhaps it was experience. We belonged to different generations—one in the late thirties, another in the early forties, and I in my late sixties. Yet our thoughts often converged as though we were fellow travellers from another lifetime.

Knowledge, too, found its place in our journey. Mohan enriched our conversations with profound sayings from Kannada literature by DVG, Manku thimma or an associated tale and phrase from his sharp memory storage box while Rajesh wove in timeless wisdom from Sanskrit shlokas, Bharathiyar, and Tiruvalluvar. Their words added texture and depth to every dialogue.

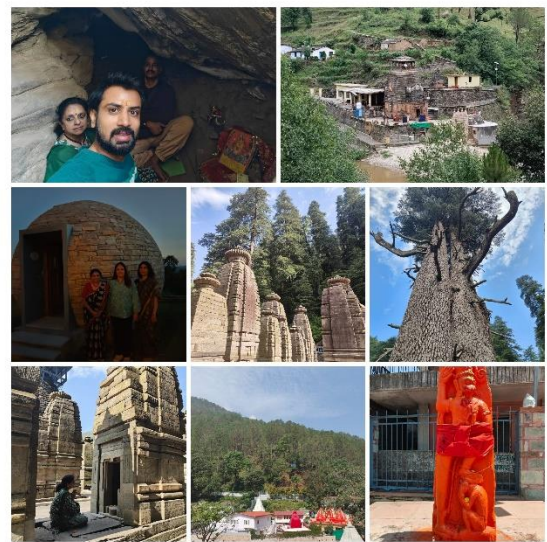
Our stay at the KFI retreat in Jalna turned our attention toward life and deeper questions—love, death, meditation, and the mystery of being. The mountains seemed to invite contemplation. Climbing the sacred steps of Mukteshwar and Kasar Devi united us in reverence. We bowed not merely before shrines but before something larger than ourselves.

At Patal Bhuvaneshwar, descending into the ancient cave temple, I confronted my own limitations. My willpower faltered, and for a fleeting moment I felt disappointed. Yet a deeper lesson emerged—it did not matter whether I entered every cave or conquered every challenge. Acceptance, too, is a form of strength.

In Jageshwar, the stones spoke ancient stories. The silence of the stones carried a great message. The forests echoed with forgotten prayers. At Neem Karoli Baba and ashram, the saint seemed to have unfolded many mysteries from the unknown. The saints presence lingered in ways words could never fully explain. There were lighter moments too.

Dressing up as a tea picker filled me with childlike delight. Suddenly I felt twenty again, singing movie songs amidst the emerald plantations. The fruits we tasted were vibrant and sweet, as colourful as the journey itself. And then there was Kausani. It was there that I found my muse.

The Himalayan night stood before me adorned with a skirt of diamonds. The distant peaks shimmered beneath a sky overflowing with stars. Poetry arrived unannounced, and I welcomed it like an old friend.



The gentle mountain winds, coupled with the care and companionship of my fellow travellers, made me vulnerable enough to lay bare my emotions. I learned to accept life as it is—without resistance, without judgement.

We read, discussed, argued, laughed, reflected, and supported one another through every bend in the road. Together, we journeyed through landscapes both outer and inner. Most importantly, I slowed down.

I listened.

To the rustle of the pines.

To the whispers of the valleys.

To the silence between conversations.

And to the soft, almost inaudible hum of the sun rising and setting behind the Himalayan hills. The mountains had not merely shown me their beauty. They had taught me how to be still. And when the journey ended, I carried home not souvenirs, but something far more precious—a quieter heart, deeper friendships, and a renewed capacity to simply be.

Story shared plants a seed of empathy, imagination, and hope...



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MAY & JUNE AT A GLANCE - ISSUE 3

TEACHER TRAINING

The month of May began on a high note with a series of impactful teacher training programs in the Art of Storytelling. Kathalaya conducted trainings at The Sports School (Bangalore), Soundarya School (Bangalore), Jain International School (Bangalore), Saadhak National School (Bangarpet), and SSVM Institutions (Coimbatore).

A total of 700 Pre-Primary, Primary, and Middle School teachers were trained, empowering educators with storytelling tools to make learning more engaging, meaningful, and child-centric.

INSTITUTION NAME	TEACHERS TRAINED
The Sports School, Bangalore	50
Soundarya School, Bangalore	40
Jain International School, Bangalore	25
Saadhak National School, Bangarpet	45
SSVM Institutions, Coimbatore	500
TOTAL	660





KATHALAYA

OUR COURSES

Diploma in Storytelling

The 39th Diploma Course at Kathalaya was a vibrant journey filled with stories, songs, conversations, reflections, and inspiring performances by participants. Each session reaffirmed the transformative power of storytelling and the joy of learning together.

We remain grateful not only for the paths we walk, but also for the wonderful people who walk them alongside us.

Intensive Beginners Courses

Our 183rd Intensive Beginners Course in June witnessed a full house of enthusiastic and soulful participants eager to embark on their storytelling journey.

This was followed by our 184th Intensive Beginners Course at the Himalayan Writing Retreat in Satkhola, which was also fully booked. Participants experienced the magic of storytelling amidst the breathtaking serenity of the Himalayas, making it a truly memorable learning experience.



www.kathalaya.org



WORKSHOPS

Summer Special – TALETRAIL: Online Storytelling Workshop for Children

Our specially curated five-day online workshop, provided children with an immersive storytelling experience. Through stories, puppetry, theatre, voice, movement, and creative expression, participants explored the magic of storytelling under the guidance of Kathalaya's experienced facilitators.

The workshop helped children build confidence, enhance communication skills, and express themselves with imagination, energy, and creativity.

Art of Haiku Workshop for Adults

"Not a story. Not an explanation. Just a moment—felt deeply."

Participants joined an enriching hands-on Haiku Workshop led by K. Ramesh, award-winning poet and educator. The workshop introduced the art of observing, feeling, and expressing life's moments with simplicity and depth. They learned to write their own Haiku, experience poetry beyond words, explore observation, silence, and expression, appreciate the beauty of mindful creativity.

"Not a story. Not an explanation. Just a moment—felt deeply."





WHAT'S AHEAD IN JULY & AUGUST

18th July Krishna's Last walk -A soulful storytelling performance by Geeta Ramanujam at Shankaraa Foundation ,Kanakapura road, Bangalore to join contact 8277389840

19th July Krishna's Last walk -A soulful storytelling performance by Geeta Ramanujam at The Bangalore Room ,Indira Nagar, Bangalore to join contact 8277389840

24th -26th July Anthardhwani- The Voice of Consciousness
A 3-day Residential Spiritual Retreat. This retreat amidst the backdrop of the Mountain called Arunachala-Still light will open ourselves and respond to the quiet voice calling from our innermost abyss. To know more click [www.kathalaya.org/ files/ugd/cb1044_a9f367da47cd41c28ede3d2147e403e9.pdf](http://www.kathalaya.org/files/ugd/cb1044_a9f367da47cd41c28ede3d2147e403e9.pdf)

21st -23rd August Certified Intensive Beginners course in Storytelling batch 185 Begin your storytelling journey with Geeta Ramanujam, pioneer of storytelling in India. Register: <https://forms.gle/8B2xAo9oQAia7pdH6>

PODCAST

Stories that Inspire, Heal, Connect, and Transform

Watch this insightful conversation between Dr. Ajai Kumar and Geeta Ramanujam as they reflect on the timeless power of stories and their role in inspiring change, fostering connection, and transforming lives.

Podcast Link: <https://youtu.be/5FmzPWEg8pU>

Every story we tell has the power to change a life.
Thank you for being part of Kathalaya's journey.

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