A TRIP TO POLAVARAM- ENJOYING THE LYRICS AND LEISURE

Description

Iâ??m a beast of hopefulness and no chains of low spirits can prevent me to seek what is good to me and for my health and whatever agrees with me to achieve it. Having spent a gloomy month of January; drowning myself in the thoughts and recalls of my wife and bringing together and compiling the fallen leaves of one year of her absence. Working hard the whole month, each day I have to remain tough trusting my strong sense of firmness not to drift away from my mission: to commit myself to reading and put in writing my perspectives.

Having spent gloomy days for longer spells Iâ??m looking for a getaway for a while; possibilities are many but Iâ??m selfishly possessive not so eager to hang around with all and the sundry. Iâ??m used to mingling only with my own choice of amigos. Like not to boast about but my very dear smallish circle of pals; my alter egos; grew up attached to forty years of familiarity. And next, I prefer the liveliest: the bouncing, matured group of Rotary Club of Vijayawada in which Iâ??m an active member for the last twenty years. Beyond the two hundred membered sociable cheery agents of goodwill: I never chose to wait for favors in the last two decades to ask for anyoneâ??s hand of friendship. This small group of Rotarians have never given me any reason to go out and look for better sociable pastures. Iâ??m happy, content, taken care of, and comfortable to be a share of this respectable company of mostly grey-haired outstanding gentlemen.

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One morning, a week ago I received a call: a trademark, polite, well-mannered tone of one of the Rotarian asking me to join up for a day-long trip to Polavaram project: a three-hour distance from our city. â??Yes, this is what Iâ??m looking for,â?• I told to myself and making sure my closest buddies are on board I gladly confirmed for the trip.

A brief outline of Polavaram project:

Polavaram is a multi-purpose irrigation project on River Godavari, near Ramayyaapeta village of Polavaram Mandal of West Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh. The significance of Polavaram Project dam is to divert and store in a reservoir a fraction of 3000 TMCs of water that flows as wastage every year. The dam when built can help divert and utilize Godavari waters to Krishna and other rivers. The Dam once completed will benefit all the 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh, to make the state drought-free forever.

The reservoir is planned to hold a live storage or useful storage of 75 TMCs and gross storage of 194 TMCs. (1 **T**housand Million Cubic Feet (TMC)= roughly 28 billion liters.)

The project once completed, as planned by Government of AP, partially by 2019, and to its full capacity by 2022, can irrigate nearly 24, 00,000 acres. Besides, the hydroelectric power project will enable 960 Mega Watt power generation. The latest estimated budget for the project is 50,000 crores which include land acquisition, relief, and rehabilitation.

One flourishing badge of exclusivity of the Rotary club is that all guidelines are precisely followed by the members and whatever the program it is carried out with devoted teamwork. On 10th February, thirty bespectacled, salt and pepper haired but remarkably talented, eminently successful in their domains of business and specialties: assembled at the first light of the day and boarded a swanky luxury bus. The best Iâ??m fond of our Rotary group is the spontaneous presence of bonhomie: the friendliness bursting to the brim: that makes me feel, invariably, even after twenty years into the club, Iâ??m an intimate integral part of the whole group. The common nature of its members goes around as one notices as a whiff of collective mental ambiance that welcomes any newcomer with a familiarity we show to our next door neighbor.

The sleek bus with its plush interiors and deeply cushioned seats are now playfully buzzing with a lineup of between 50 to 75 years old but age-defying, high-spirited machos. The bus picked up speed snaking through the well-laid highway flanked by green lush fields; frequently spaced by tea shacks, and shanties doubling up as quick and fast eateries for the heavy trafficked highway. Inside the bus, the all-rounders are making themselves ready for the â??entertainment partâ?? of the trip.

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The aura in the bus was simply laid-back and easy. No blasts of sounds, no explosive display of enthusiasm as we witness when a group of crazy adults joins as a chorus. No mockery and cheap laughing.The leisurely vibes gathering around seemed pleasantly uplifting; I couldnâ??t hold myself any longer as a withdrawn loner. It appeared to me like Iâ??m floating in a decent bubble of gentle recreation and in the initiative to step up the cheer and let the jolly moods get going. At the first leg of three-hour ride, the merrymaking was commenced by one cushy, easy going Rotarian. Although the fun and games were trivial and simplest he was successful in engaging the stiffest chaps to chirp and chant the old Telugu melodies. Right away, the bus started filling with gentle tones and soft humming like waves clashing with slashes of morning sunlight pouring inside. The entire journey was such a melodious walk-through and, enjoyable, everyone contributed to the beauty of rhythmsâ?? and humming.

It was about midday when we reached Ramayyaapeta village the home of the engineering marvel we are to visit: the Polavaram project. Earlier, I had been to Nagarjuna Sagar, Sreesailam dams: and admired at the massiveness of the planning and creation; awestruck at the apocalyptic torrent of water gushing out. But, never gone to a dam in the making: closely with an eager attention.

As we climb up the dusty roads leading to the site of the dam, I could see on one side bare hills being stripped of its green cover and shredded into huge boulders and further, ultimately hammered and heaped into mini hills of assorted sizes of gravel. The other side I look at the serene, lush green hills fearfully silent as if waiting their turn for the destruction and annihilation. The huge gravel heaps presented an uncomfortable picture making me admit, â??The hue and cry raised by environmental activists seem to be validâ?•.

Once the dam is built, it is argued that there would less number of hills around and even lesser tribal groups living on them; 10,000 acres of thick dense forests would be submerged, and also a good part of Papikondalu wildlife sanctuary will be submerged. Many tribal villages will just disappear from the map. Massive earth moving trucks in hundreds, the curiously huge drilling machines, and the ear-shattering clamor of drilling rigs: in a way, menacingly stand as a warning how fast the foreboding silence is ready to swallow the range of forests and hills in years to come.

The dam is at its various stages of progress going on at a rapid speed assisted by the best engineering conglomeratesâ?? in the world. The technology, the sophistication of the equipment at the dam construction site is beyond any laymanâ??s grasp. The engineer who was assigned as a guide to our group seemed to be very passionate about the whole concept and, the patience and pleasure with which he went on clarifying the nitty-gritty points for all us for about four hours demonstrate how much he is attached to the project.

Before we got into the bus, at the end of the day, we captured every angle and aspect of the upcoming dam in our thirty Smartphones, in an awe and anxiety not to let any spectacular angle to be missed by our phones; selfies with the dam as a backdrop. We gathered as much information about, that we havenâ??t known before, the construction and significance of spillways and spillways gates, and the two coffer dams being built across the river: the main purpose of them is to keep the riverbed dry to provide protection for the construction of Earth Cum Rock Field dam and diaphragm wall (ECRF DAM).The diaphragm wall a 1.5-meter thick concrete wall built into depths from 40 to 150 meters below the river bed under the earth dam which is the first of its kind in India. The diaphragm wall acts as a foundation of ECRF dam. ECRF dam is the most crucial component of the entire project, constructed across the river Godavari and plays a major role in holding river water not to flow into the sea and to be diverted to the reservoir formed by the dam. (Polavaram project information courtesy: medium.com; Wikipedia.)

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For many years cut off from social gatherings, trapped in a fate imposed melancholy, I found myself enjoying the lyrics and leisure. It felt like Iâ??m sitting through a wakeful dream. After my wifeâ??s demise, after spending a year passively, I decided to spend a day to be among the right kind of people. Loving and humming along with their melodious chorus, it appeared that all of the kindly Rotarians have assembled in this trip to favor me; to help reconnect me once again to the active world: giving me the right medicine in the best serenading way.

Category

1. Uncategorized

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