

Preaching Through Puppets

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Every morning the *peetam* (stool) would be brought and placed in the centre of the room. Finding his balance on it, Padmini Rangarajan's father would begin reciting *shlokas*. She didn't realise then, but his daily narrations were slowly leaving a strong imprint on her mind. With sufficient voice modulation and hand gestures, he got her addicted. Years later, it all manifested in Rangarajan becoming a storyteller. For her, the choice of props are puppets. Complementing educational puppetry with mainstream academics has been her effort. The idea is to teach language skills, mathematics and social and civic sciences in collaboration with teachers

and institutions. Her work entails preserving and promoting a platform for stories and puppetry.

Her observation has been that in the states in the north and east, storytelling is still a work in progress. In the south, however, there is far more scope of experiencing it.

Right now she is working on stories of mahatmas, acharyas and women of India. Some of these include Sri Ramanujacharya, Kakatiya Vaibhavam and Komaram Bheem.

The medium has now become such a powerful catalyst for knowledge sharing and learning that Rangarajan wishes to take it to all those who haven't experienced it yet.



MOST UNELEGANT THING YOU DO. I often meet people wearing a paint stained dress and hands

WHAT MAKES YOU CRY? Old and ageing people who long to talk

Describe the times we live in, in three words. Most precious one

