

VIKRAM Samvat 2047 will come into force from Tuesday, March 27, 1990, and continue up to March 16, 1991. According to Indian faith and tradition, the new Samvat day is considered sacred and festive like Baisakhi. It marks the start of the current lunar Indian calendar, while Baisakhi synchronises with the solar pattern. The first spring Navaratra also takes its birth along with this day.

Hindu scriptures contain volumes of information about the sanctity of this important occasion. Many holy acts such as fasting, alms-giving, worship, meditation and ablation, along with a few rituals, are closely associated with this august day. There is, however, the addition of an obligation to this long list. The celebrants are required to listen to the new year predictions from an astrologer or go through a recorded version of these themselves. In the light of this belief, many readers, I think, will be interested in glancing through the planetary effects likely to prevail from time to time during the year.

The Samvatsar under review, known as "Subhanu" in astrological parlance, conveys the following indications:-

It is generally a year of "vigraha" - conflict. It may not lead to actual war, but warlike activities may continue in full swing. Despite new records set by bumper crops, people may suffer because of panic and insecurity.

The next important influence is that of the King of the year. The Council of Ministers for the current year is headed by Mars. Mars, being the supreme ruler, plays a major role

regarding the welfare of the year.

We anticipate the following outcome when Mars happens to be at the helm of affairs:

Conflagrations take a heavy toll. Contrabandists, smugglers and dacoits create a scare in the minds of the law-abiding people through their nefarious activities. War-mongering rulers remain hawkishly alert to strike at one another. The arms race continues unabated.

Although the two factors - the Samvatsar and its lord - seem to tilt the balance in favour of war, there are a few other points which are strong enough to mitigate the danger. (i) In the annual horoscope we find that Mars is completely surrounded by malefic planets (Saturn and Rahu). Under the circumstances, Mars is not going to sustain its warlike posture as vigorously as it would have done otherwise.

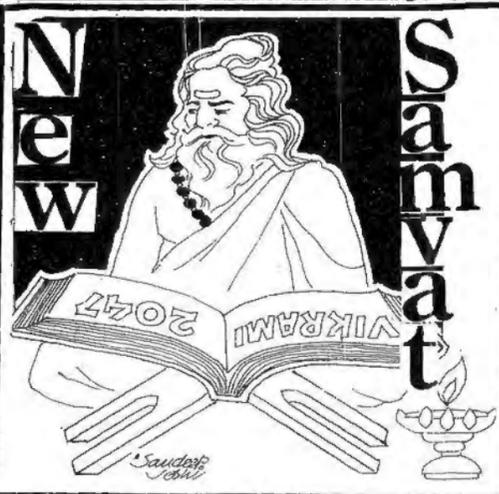
(ii) After the King (Mars), the next position in the hierarchy is that of the Chief Minister. Luckily, this portfolio is held by Venus, a benefic star.

(iii) Jupiter, being the Commander-in-Chief, is opposed to war.

(iv) The ascendant is fully aspected by its lord, Jupiter, which is a star of peace and prosperity.

In view of these conditions, the possibility of a total war seems to have receded to a large extent. The threat of war, however, is likely to persist in one form or the other.

To live in peace and safety is, no doubt, the basic need of human life, but the extent to which a particular year would prove to be economically viable, or otherwise, is another important factor. In this con-



By Dr Sansar Chandra

text, the following astrological aspects and facts need to be studied and kept in view:

(i) The current year will remain under the shadow of clouds named "Pushkara" and "Keelaka", which indicate too much of rain and too little of it also; some regions may experience heavy rain while the rest may have to wrestle with an acute drought. The shortage of commodities, with an alarming price-rise and unbridled greed among the traders, may create discontent.

(ii) With the choice of an ox as the mode of travel the year under review will tend to behave like a hard task master. Despite frantic efforts made by a leadership which may mean business, there will be no let-up in the economic crisis.

(iii) The sea being the abode of Rohini and the gardener's house as that of the Samvatsar (2047), the major part of the country, especially the mountainous regions, along with the catchment areas, will continue to overflow because of incessant downpours for a fairly long time. People will have to face acute hardship because of the floods.

India is a large country. An in-depth study of its annual chart, supported by its birth chart, can prepare the ground for pinpointing the regions which are likely to be hit hard due to some of the adverse planetary positions.

This country is represented by Capricorn - a sign which at the moment is the abode of three malefic stars - Mars, Saturn and Rahu. No doubt, one benefic star, Venus, is also in their company but, being the lord of the sixth house (the

house of disease and enemies), this planet is not likely to play any positive role. Out of the remaining trio, Saturn is the most powerful star. Its focus at the moment is being directed towards the north which is going to be maintained without the least interruption up to June 20, 1990.

Soon after this date, Saturn will divert its visual force towards the west; the situation will remain unaltered up to December 15, 1990.

Saturn will, however, stage a comeback towards the north. The situation will persist till the end of the current year.

The next powerful ally of Saturn is Mars. Mars, being the lord of the year, is inclined to keep its sight set on Kashmir and Afghanistan. Now the third accomplice - Rahu - is in a desperate mood to create problems in Punjab (India), Sind and the N.W.F.P. (both in Pakistan).

The quadruple conglomeration cited above presents an awfully dismal picture vis-a-vis the countries and areas mentioned above which are liable to conversion into virtual dens of subversive, anti-national and anti-social activities. Smugglers, saboteurs and unconvicted elements will join hands to pose a challenge to the law and order authorities of the areas concerned. Spies, infiltrators and agents of foreign powers will sneak into the disturbed territories to further harass and intimidate the peace-loving population. The law-enforcing agencies will, however, deal with these forces with an iron hand. But vio-

lence, arson and deprivation will continue till the malefic stars assembled together take a back seat.

Now something about India's domestic front. Jupiter, the lord of the Lagnam being centrally placed in the Varsh Kundali and exercising full visual control over the Lagnam, is in no mood to effect any big political change. This planet is by and large, a champion of peace and stability and inclines the person at the top to act objectively but the Lagnam itself is not in good shape. It has been occupied by two malefic stars - Uranus and Neptune.

The third impediment is the inimical sight of Rahu, which looms large in its full form. So the highest seat of authority is likely to remain as a hot bed of intrigues and manipulations. Mud-slinging, leg-pulling and mutual acrimony at the cost of the national interest may be rampant. Some notable sections of the power-structure may vitiate the atmosphere by inciting parochial and communal passions.

The strong possibility of a major crisis is foreseen but, thanks to Jupiter, the clouds will ultimately disappear!

Now let us have a look at India's birth chart, which is the foundation of many types of readings, including the annual reading. According to the Vingshottari Mahadasha pattern, we find that at present Venus is the ruling star governing the destiny of India.

Venus, being a benefic planet and the chief of the ascendant, is a hopeful and favourable factor, but there is a big snag which has obliterated its good effect to a large extent. The problem is that it had run into combustion at the time of free India's emergence. Being devoid of lustre at the time of birth, it cannot deliver the goods at least during its own sub-period, which is running at present and goes up to the middle of November, 1990.

Venus is expected to regain its strength after that when its sub-period will be replaced by that of the Sun. At that time the Sun, being second in command, will revitalise Venus in such a manner that it will be in a better position to improve its performance and to bring a change for the better.

The conclusions drawn from vital sources support the view that the dark clouds of internal and external conflicts will continue to hover on the nation's sky and create disorder and unrest till the middle of November. It is, therefore, natural to anticipate that the situation will start shaping up favourably, and in a sound and steady manner, not too late!

Dr Sansar Chandra, the septuagenarian teacher of Sanskrit and Hindi, is also a noted astrologer.

Literary flowering

By John Gambanga



Dambudzo Marechera

Britain had already made an impact.

THREE Zimbabwean authors - Chenjerai Hove, Tsitsi Dangarembwa and Stan Mudenge - have won international awards which testify to the powerful literary flowering underway in the country.

In August, Hove, a former Chairman of the Zimbabwe Writers Union, won the 10th Noma Award for Publishing in Africa with his book "Bones". It was published by Saobab Books of Harare.

Stan Mudenge, Zimbabwe's representative at the United Nations, wrote "The Political History of Munhumutapa - 1400 to 1902", which was selected by the Noma Award jury for special commendation, together with "Just Before Dawn", by Nigeria's Kole Ootose.

Tsitsi Dangarembwa won the coveted Commonwealth Writers Prize, Africa Region, in September with her book "Nervous Conditions". Dangarembwa, currently studying film production in West Germany, won £ 1,000.

Her book was selected ahead of 19 other entries from Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The judges described it as a "beautiful and sensitive exploration of the plight and struggle of an African people subjected to a system calculated to poison and destroy their sense of self."

The Noma jury said Hove's

book, for which he won \$ 5,000, was selected from more than 100 entries from all over Africa. (Six other books from Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa were selected for "honourable mention.") The jury said "it is the first work from a Zimbabwean writer in the post-independence period which is based on the harsh realities of the liberation war and which has, through the process of creativity, digested the experience to produce a work of universal significance."

The main character is a woman, though the author is a man. Critics said it was remarkable how well he had put himself inside the shoes and the mind of the character.

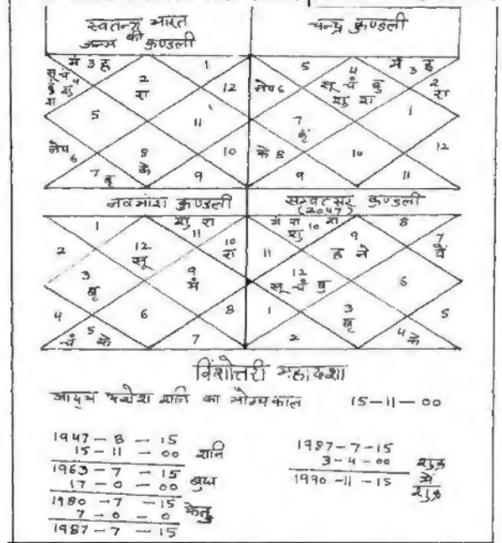
The Noma Award was established in 1979 by the late Shoichi Noma, who was President of Kodansha, a big Japanese publisher. It is open to African writers and scholars whose work is published in Africa, in three categories: scholarly or academic; children's books; and literature and creative writing.

Zimbabwe has made a strong mark in literature. Even before the boom of the last five years, Charles Mungoshi ("Waiting For the Rain"), Stanlake Sankanga ("On Trial For My Country"), and Dambudzo Marechera ("House of Hunger"), which won the 1978 Guardian Fiction Award in

Another post-independence development is the emergence of new publishers. Two of the most prominent are the Zimbabwe Publishing House, run by former British journalist David Martin, and Saobab Books.

Hove - who himself has a new book out, "Up in Arms" - admits there has been a change in writers' themes: "There is a new development of new literary spirit which puts the experience of independence in a critical form." - GEMINI

The traditional horoscope of free India



ARIES

March 21 to April 20
A favourable week when your plans start paying rich dividends. Some important developments are likely to involve you in a new and challenging enterprise. Be sure you will win at the end.

TAURUS

April 21 to May 20
You are in an excellent position to sell your ideas and promote your skills. How very favourable may the response be, your main aim should be to reassess your long-term interests.

GEMINI

May 21 to June 21
Anticipate a slightly erratic period. Relationships with newcomers to your circle are not likely to proceed amicably. There is a possibility of your joining in an arrangement which might be shortlived.

CANCER

June 22 to July 22
A promising week to get a new plan underway. You will be going out of the way to help a needy friend. Do not be reckless while spending or taking any risk in money matters.

LEO

July 23 to August 22
An opportune time to develop stronger ties with a friend you love most. The week is especially rewarding for a happy meeting, a pleasure trip and meaningful social life.

VIRGO

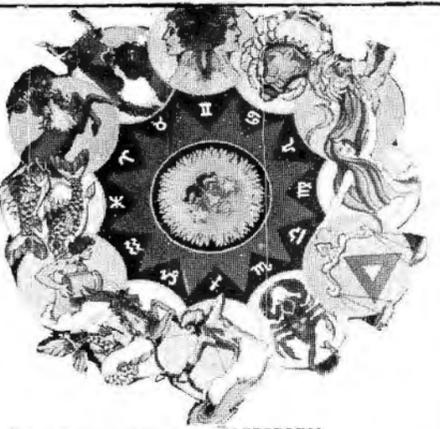
August 23 to September 23
The urge to get out and about and to vary the normal routine will be more than usual. You will be extending the area of your social activities by associating with stimulating people.

LIBRA

September 23 to October 22
The week is slightly nega-

YOUR STARS

By Abhijat
MARCH 25 TO 31



ive. You may experience a minor shock or an unpleasant situation in or around your centre of activity. Try to keep yourself away from un dependable persons.

SCORPIO

October 23 to November 22
Good news from or about a loved one will be coming. Some new development is likely to involve you in an unforeseen commitment or responsibility. However, expect the week to be financially viable.

SAGITTARIUS

November 23 to December 22
A period to exercise control on your debilitating economy. It will be a wise step if you do not lend or borrow money. Take adequate time to decide your future action.

MARCH 25: A year to aim at

harmony and cooperation. There appears to be some minor conflict in personal life. The aspirations and feelings of close companions need to be taken due care of. The Sun, associated with Mercury and sighted by benefics, highlights the activities of youngsters. The general picture gives the impression that you will have to play a key role in watching the interests of your relations. Your relationship with newcomers will prove to be thorny. You should look after your physical welfare from May to August. If interested in political life, try to get yourself proposed for a candidacy.

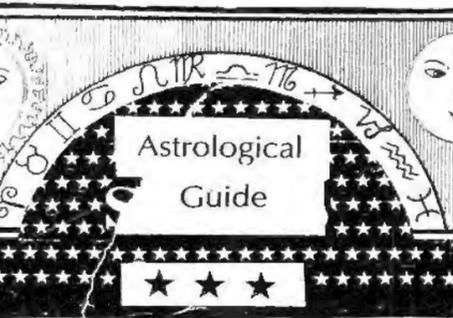
MARCH 26: The passage of

events will certainly move in your favour during the coming three or four months and again during the middle of 1990. This year you will not only get good returns but also find yourself in the run for a rise in status and prospects. If unattached, there is the likelihood of getting involved in a quick moving new affair after mid-September. You will discard old domestic equipment or furnishings or clear out your junk room after mid-November. You may find yourself allied with a person in an influential position which would augur well for a big upturn for you during the rest of the year.

MARCH 27: The new year

signifies a striking balance between work and carefree life. The Mercury-Saturn strong and friendly visual contact inclines you to improve your social set-up and to benefit through your friends, admirers and particularly those who are connected with your professional activities. May and June are lustrous months to make a mark in the display of your

Birthday Forecast



Lucky days

Celebration, entertainment, domestic events
Spiritual quest
Legal and official matters
Commercial enterprises
Investment, lending and borrowing
Travel
Monday up to 10 p.m.
Friday 12 (noon) onwards

Sacred days

Somavati Amavas
New Samvatsar Day and the first Navaratra
The first day of Ramzan
Monday
Tuesday
Thursday

talent and capabilities.

Your personal charm and ability to convince others would be more effective and noticeable during the middle of the year. Going could be tough if you do not stick to your prescribed norms during November-December. You could be attracted towards cultural expeditions or visit a beauty spot during the last phase.

MARCH 28: The year holds

promise of being a stable and rewarding one. There is a possibility of a little spurt in your routine expenditure but you will make serious efforts to put your economy back on the rails. Domestically, some new plans will take shape, leading to a rise in your living standard, but the expenditure involved is likely to be met comfortably during June-July. You will benefit from the good fortune of someone close to you.

MARCH 29: You are on the

brink of a slow, dull and unproductive phase. The weak Moon sighted by the strong Pluto inclines you to waste time and energy over trivial matters. The accent lies on leisure and pleasure and as a result matters entrusted to others remain unattended. You would improve efficiency and be more realistic, especially during June-September. If married recently, your immediate problem will be to keep your spouse happy and contented. Some minor strokes of luck, a cheering celebration and a sudden rise in the for-

tones of a dear and near one may be on the way during the last quarter.

MARCH 30: An action-

oriented year when you should attend to your pending problems with utmost care and determination. A trio consisting of Mars, Venus and Saturn - well-aspected and centrally placed - will incline you to work with renewed zeal to consolidate your position professionally in a satisfying manner. You may expect the first two months of the year as a period of innovations and new enterprise. A sparkling opportunity for the display of your talent will be just at hand during August-September. You should, however, be prepared to bear a minor shock during November-December. You will take a more pragmatic view of life than before.

MARCH 31: A new chapter

(and experience) is waiting for you during the year under review. It may be probably true that you have a lucrative plan which you are keeping to yourself for the time being. To give your project a fair trial you should revise your previous commitments and make effort to get out of tedious jobs which could obstruct the real issue. The expenditure on home life will tend to be heavier than the average during July-August. If you were involved in any form of litigation earlier in the year, the prospects of a favourable outcome would increase from October. Expect a consistent rise in income through a congenial source you are likely to dig up on your own during the last quarter.