

Solitude is bliss

Solitude always offers a different perspective of life

BY V PRADEEP KUMAR

Years ago, I didn't understand the deeper meaning of the word solitude. With familiar struggles of a middle class existence, desire for solitude grew ever stronger.

It was therefore a blessing that I moved over to Dubai some years back.

In the city's multi cultural environment, I began to savour a life in solitude.

I was an atheist until I lost my father quite suddenly at an early age. When I discovered that his death was predicted by an honourable sage, I started crawling my way back into theism.

Therefore, a corner in the kitchen of my Dubai home served

as my prayer room. I would stand there, faced often with some hopeless situations and tears would roll down automatically, and unabated.

But my father, my family deity, infant Jesus and the Baba of Shirdi, like four pillars of life, have always answered my prayers, carrying me in their arms and solving all my problems.

Life in solitude helped me realize the importance of relationships. The love and affection of a wife, an aged mother and a growing up son began to be seen in a new perspective.

As they continued to depend on me, I began to depend on them; my mother for moral support, my son for our future and my wife for practically everything else.

I also realized an important lesson of life, that we are often hurt more by our near ones.

Therefore, I began to look at relations more carefully, avoiding over indulgence as much as under nur-

turing.

I also began to read more and my writing finally seemed set to take off.

I could now enjoy the chirping of birds, feel the fragrance of fresh air, appreciate every little piece of greenery in a desert city and feel for the sufferings of fellow human beings, either caught up in war or devastated by natural disasters.

Every death of a relative or an acquaintance back home brought sadness as much as the excitement of a new born baby of even distant cousins.

Relatives not so close often visited me in my dreams bringing a smile on my face.

Today, probably I am wiser and more complete than I was in my pre-solitude days.

Whether you are a beginner or in the twilight of your life or someone in between, this is the medicine I will prescribe: go in search of solitude and you won't regret it.