

# Prosanta Pratim Sarmah's Poem

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## **Happy Birthday**

They say that  
It is the date of my birth  
As I complete  
my fifty seventh  
In my continued effort to live  
In the dogged fight for life.  
Quite a long time though  
For something about this world to know.

When my friends wish me  
"Happy birthday"  
I ask myself a query  
Is it really a day to be so happy?  
Many things come to my mind  
Both flimsy and logical  
Those that I never thought before  
Being forced to think now  
Because of my growing age.  
When they wish me "Happy birthday"  
I ask myself another query  
What if I were not born  
On that so called 'happy day'  
How it would have harmed anyone  
Or made a difference?  
Was there really a need  
Of this world  
To have me born in this world?

A birth means a life  
I've seen this since  
the time  
I've been able to know the things of this life  
A life means a struggle  
And a game of win and loss  
Full of conflict  
And a race to live on  
Counting the gains and losses  
The catches and the misses

I am just a small fry  
In this ocean of people  
I am not someone different  
And I am in the race together  
Running to out run others  
Till I get tired

May be I will stop running someday  
When this road ends with no gateway  
But does it mean anything to live in this way?  
As everyone lives for self  
Why I could not become different  
And live more for others?  
If I was born to live for myself alone  
Then what was the need for me to live?

When all wish me  
"Happy birthday"  
I ask myself a query  
Is it really a special day  
Which do I need to celebrate as a happy day?

*Translated by Mriganka Shekhar Chaliha*

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