



Illustration by Sudhasattwa Basu

True, anti-nuke story – the Story of Sadako

When America dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima during the Second World War, Sadako was only two years old and too young to remember the bomb. She lived a mile away from Hiroshima, so nothing much happened to her, although more than two hundred thousand people died in the holocaust. After the reconstruction of Hiroshima, Sadako began to attend school. Sadako was now eleven years old. One day while she was practicing for the relay race she fell down unconscious. She was immediately rushed to the hospital. The doctors found out that she had leukemia - a sort of blood cancer. Lots of people had earlier died of this disease by radiation. Sadako was admitted to the hospital. She felt afraid because she knew that everyone who had got this disease had died. Sadako wanted to live. She did not want to die. One day her best friend Chizuko came to see her. She had brought with her some squares of white paper. Chizuko took a paper square and folded it into a bird - a beautiful crane. She told Sadako that the crane was sacred to the Japanese and that it lived for over a thousand years. She told her that if a sick person folded a thousand cranes she would surely get well. Every day Sadako tried to fold the cranes. But the disease left her very weak. On some days she would fold twenty cranes while on some other days she could fold only three. Sadako knew that she would not become all right but still she was determined to fold the cranes. On one particular day she could manage only one. But she kept on making cranes

until she could not make them anymore. She folded 644 cranes. Sadako Sasaki died on October 25, 1955. Her friends folded the remaining 356 cranes. Her friends admired her brave and hopeful spirit. Sadako's death made them feel very sad. Her friends collected money to build a monument of PEACE AND LOVE in the memory of Sadako. This monument is called the Children's Peace Monument, and is in the Peace Park, right in the middle of Hiroshima, where the bomb was dropped. The statue depicts Sadako standing on the Mountain of Paradise, holding a golden crane in her outstretched hands. Every year, on Peace Day, children hang garlands of paper cranes under the statue. Their wish is engraved at its base.

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THIS IS OUR PRAYER
PEACE IN THE WORLD**