

Freedom First

A LIBERAL QUARTERLY

50TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

JANUARY – MARCH 2002

No. 452

RUPEES TWENTY-FIVE

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

The Tibetan
Triangle

Civil Liberties and
Civil Society in
India



CHINA'S RECORD IN TIBET
MORE THAN A MILLION KILLED!
MORE THAN 6,000 MONASTERIES
DESTROYED! THOUSANDS IN
PRISON! HUNDREDS STILL MISSING!



'NO MATTER HOW HARD THE WIND OF EVIL MAY BLOW, IT CAN NEVER EXTINGUISH THE FLAME OF TRUTH' HIS HOLINESS THE XIV DALAI LAMA

CHINA, GET
OUT OF TIBET

www.friendsoftibet.org

Friends of Tibet (INDIA) Post Box 19731 Borivli HPO Bombay 400091 Email support@friendsoftibet.org

Freedom First

Founder
Minoo Masani

Editor
S. V. Raju

Associate Editor
R. Srinivasan

Advisory Board
Sumant Bankeshwar
Arvind Deshpande
Geeta Doctor
Nissim Ezekiel
Yogesh Kamdar
Jehangir Patel
S. A. A. Pinto
Nitin Raut
Abe Solomon
Ajay Varadachary

Cover Page
Design by Creative Literati, Bangalore
Illustration by Anil Reddy

Publishers
Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom*
3rd Floor, Army & Navy Building,
148, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Mumbai 400 001.
Phone: +91 (22) 284 34 16
E-mail: freedom@vsnl.com

Published by J. R. Patel for the
Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom
and printed by him at
Kaiser-E-Hind Private Ltd.,
300, Perin Nariman Street,
Mumbai 400 001.

Typeset at **Kotak Printers**,
59, Dr. V. B. Gandhi Marg,
Fort, Mumbai 400 001.
Phones : 204 60 18 - 284 26 19.
Telefax : +91 (022) 204 60 18.

Single Copy : Rs.25
Annual : Rs.100
(Add Rs.30 for outstation cheques)

Overseas (Ind Class Air Mail)
Annual : \$10 or £7

Cheques to be drawn in favour of
ICCF and mailed to the publishers
at the address marked *.

BETWEEN OURSELVES ...

A Jayaprakash Centenary Committee, headed by Shri Narayan Desai, and sponsored by the Sarva Seva Sangh, the Sarvodaya Mandals throughout India, the Citizens for Democracy, the People's Union for Civil Liberties and the Prabhavati Institute, has decided to organise programmes to suitably observe the Birth Centenary Year of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan.

Freedom First compliments these organisations for their initiative, and in response to their call, is honoured to dedicate this issue to the memory of this great son of India. The title 'Loknayak' conferred on him by a grateful people, is far more precious than the Bharat Ratna awarded to him posthumously by an establishment which shamelessly betrayed him. It is appropriate therefore that this is a people's initiative and not a state sponsored one. The Loknayak was indeed the keeper of India's conscience.

The cover facing this page is meant to draw the attention, yet again, of our readers to Communist Chinese terror in Tibet. Ironically they are partners in President Bush's International Coalition against Terror!

Our Next Cover Feature

Mera Bharat Mahan was a slogan popularised by Rajiv Gandhi. You will see it on the rear of almost every tempo and truck. What precisely does this slogan mean to the tempo and truck drivers who have had this slogan painted on their vehicles. Have they had this slogan painted because the RTO made it mandatory? Or because everyone else has done so or does it mirror their feelings?

We invite readers to tell us what in their opinion makes or would make Bharat Mahan.

MEERA BHARAT IS MAHAN BECAUSE...
OR

MEERA BHARAT WILL BE MAHAN WHEN...

Last date for contributions: March 30, 2002

You can send your contributions by email (preferred) at freedom@vsnl.com or on a floppy disk (Word 95), or by fax 022 284 3416 or by ordinary post.

Editor

Contents

January-March 2002
No.452

<i>Many Voices</i>		2
<i>Of Cabbages & Kings</i>		3
<i>Jayaprakash Narayan -</i>		
<i>Keeper of India's Conscience</i>		5
A Personal Tribute	Arvind Deshpande	8
The Architect of India's Second Liberation	Prem Vaidya	9
Testament of Protest- An Open Letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi	Jayaprakash Narayan	17
The Tibetan Triangle	E. D'Souza	23
Civil Liberties and Civil Society in India	Prasenjit Maiti	27
<i>Reflections Serious and Facetious</i>	Louella Lobo Prabhu	31
<i>Debate</i>		34
South Korea : When East Meets West	Manuwant Choudhury	37
<i>Book Reviews</i>		39

WITH MANY VOICES

*"The deep moans round with many voices. Come, my friends
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world" - Tennyson*

Whatever they may be, the Taliban are not Chicago gangsters. They are fanatics, they are religious bigots, they kill easily and sacrifice themselves in the process.

Mr. C. R. Irani, *The Statesman*, October 16, 2001

Hindusim assimilates, coopts, unites. Hindutva rejects, alienates, divides. Therein lies the difference.

Ms. Anita Pratap, *Outlook*, November 26, 2001

Indian industry is, by and large, a long way away from being world-class

Editorial in *The Times of India*, December 10, 2001

If there is one ministry, and for one cabinet minister for whom the December 13 attack came as a blessing in disguise, the ministry is defence, and the minister is George Fernandes.

Prem Shankar Jha, *Outlook*, December 31, 2001

If forcible obstruction of railway tracks and roads in the name of 'bandh' is democratic, use of force to remove such blockades is also a similar right.

West Bengal's communist-led ruling Left Front Chairman, Biman Bose, *The Statesman*, January 6

The CPI-M is a crocodile and not a leech. A leech only sucks blood, but a crocodile eats up its victims alive.

West Bengal's communist-led government's State Minister for Agriculture and Forward Bloc Leader Kamal Guha, *The Statesman*, December 25, 2001

Mr. Dhirubai Ambani said wealth would no longer be judged by the money and property a person has. "In future, it will be judged by the knowledge a person has."

The Times of India, December 29, 2001

Does a \$25 million reward of the US government for getting Osama bin Laden, dead or alive, denote Osama's price or his value?

Rajeev Ahuja, *Business Standard*, December 20, 2001

What kills a city are not earthquakes and bombings - but the dismantling of the network of human trust and exchange that constitutes its lifeblood.

Architect Charles Correa, *Outlook*, February 4

Give me charge of the Metro (Bombay) for a year and watch how I will make it a dream city, better than the best megalopolis in the world.

Stock Market Scamster "Big Bull" Harshad Mehta, who died of a heart attack recently, *The Week*, January 13

Our society has become so fractured and intolerant, you can't say anything unflattering about anybody.

Historian Bipin Chandra, *India Today*, December 10, 2001

History is never 100% true. So protect our children from such misinformation.

RSS thinker Dinanath Batra, *India Today*, December 10, 2001

You are not protecting a potential rival when you invest in India.

Union disinvestment minister Arun Shourie telling Japanese businessmen that India is a better bet than China, *India Today*, December 24, 2001

The terrorism we now face requires that the criminal justice system be made to function more efficiently. POTO is no solution. Nor is war, limited or not.

Tavleen Singh, *India Today*, December 11, 2001

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS

Enriching the English Language – Learning some Lessons

Remember 'Bollywood' making it to the Oxford English Dictionary? It is now the turn of *dosha*, *kapha*, *vata* and *pitta* to make it to the OEP. These are terms used in Ayurveda. According to a report in *The Times of India* (January 19, 2001):

"Two years ago Ayurveda products became part of the average British shopping basket with popular cosmetics company Body Shop launching its Ayurveda range. The OED says Ayurveda deserved to be included because it is 'very popular and so much in general use.'"

Is there any wonder that English is considered a universal language and no longer a language of the Anglo-Saxons alone?

There are lessons to be learnt here. One, that by teaching English in schools at the primary level as an additional language to the mother tongue, we are not perpetuating a colonial mindset as the misguided champions of *Hindutva* would have us believe. Quite the contrary, we are equipping our children with an asset – fluency in a universal language and not a 'foreign' language which will stand them in good stead when they grow up and take up a career; and two, there is no reason why Hindi cannot enrich itself by absorbing English words. For instance why *Vimantla* or *Hawai Adda* why not the universally understood 'airport'? Some words already have. Railway station is one and there are many more in common usage. Among other benefits, the south would be less resistant to this North India import. Language is after all a medium of communication. No ideology is involved; no issues of 'patriotism' or 'nationalism'.

India's National Flag – Free At Last!

India's National Flag imprisoned by the establishment these 50 plus years is free at last not because the government in power decided to do so but because a citizen in free India sought the help of the Supreme Court in establishing his right as an Indian

"the time has come," the walrus said,
"to talk of many things:
of shoes-and ships-
and sealing wax-
of cabbages -
and kings-"



citizen to display his country's flag all 365 days a year and not only on Republic and Independence Days. All honour to him.

The Flag was the symbol of India's freedom struggle. It was the same tricolour with only one change, the Asoka Chakra replacing the Charkha. The tricolour with the Charkha continued as the flag of the Indian National Congress. And this was one of the reasons that led to the identification of the party with the state in the mind of the not so literate voter. Now of course you have the tricolour with all kinds of symbols – the hand, an alarm clock etc.

In the United States when a citizen was being prosecuted for desecrating the US Flag, the case went up to the Supreme Court where in a majority decision the Court decided that the citizen had done no wrong. Delivering the majority opinion, Justice William Brennan observed: "We do not consecrate the flag by punishing its desecration, for in doing so we dilute the freedom that this cherished emblem represents."

India's National Flag no less represents the spirit of freedom for which many Indians fought and died. It was free in colonial India but imprisoned in free India! Republic Day 2002 will be remembered as the day the Tricolour was freed.

Let's hope that the revised flag code that the government is drafting is liberal and not foolishly restrictive.

Cable Operators decide what we shall and shall not see

Once again Cable operators in Mumbai decided what viewers in the city can see and what they cannot. This happened not because of political interference (though there are instances where the party with the necessary muscle power can make this happen) but when cable operators and TV Channels get into a battle generally over prices charged.

Incidentally during the civic polling in Mumbai on February 10, TV screens went on the blink. The only message on the screen was: "The telecast has been temporarily suspended so that you can go and cast your vote. It will return soon." Rumour has it that one of the parties whose candidates' victory depended on a large turnout got the local cable operators to switch off!

In the not so distant future technology will make cable operators redundant. Till then we shall have to reconcile ourselves to the fact that while in the days of TV monopoly the state decided what we shall and shall not see, today it is the Cable operators who so decide. Individual Dish antennas are prohibitively expensive hence our dependence on cable operators. We shall have to await television sets with inbuilt dishes hopefully in the not so distant future to free us from the monopoly of cable operators!

Judicial Delays

That we are a democracy cannot be denied. That we are a flawed democracy also cannot be denied. We have all the trappings of a democracy. Perhaps more than trappings. We have a free press. Considering our size, our elections are, by and large, free despite bogus voting, or booth capturing in some parts of the country, particularly in the North. But the vitals of our democratic system are being gnawed away by corruption, by the blatant criminalisation of politics and by judicial delays. Here is data that should disturb anyone who reads this. "A survey last year found that there are 38 million cases pending in various Indian courts. Many cases have been pending for 20 years. The oldest case being tried in the Mumbai High Court was filed in 1968....Lawyers say many witnesses, frustrated with the long-drawn-out delays simply turn to other places or turn hostile. As a result the general conviction rate is around 6%..." Devastating to say the least.

The AHAR Agitation

On entering a middle-class restaurant for a snacks and coffee the other day, I was greeted by a poster that warned me: "Your Favourite Restaurant will soon shut down thanks to government's brutal tax policy."

Your Favourite Restaurant will soon shut down

THANKS TO GOVERNMENT'S BRUTAL TAX POLICY

EXCISE FEES

In the year 1998 - Rs. 15000
2001 - Rs. 1,50,000
and now in 2002 - Rs. 5,00,000

Sales Tax on liquor

increased from 0% to 20%

Earlier exempted items like Milk products, Batata Vada, Cold Drinks, and Ice Cream have now been taxed

! Food Hawkers sell 100% hazardous food and get away without paying any taxes

Police Licence Fees

increased from Rs. 750 to Rs. 10,000

BMC Licence Fees

irrationally increased from Rs. 4000 to Rs. 40,000

Police Performance Licence Fees increased from Rs. 9000 to Rs. 5,40,000

Is it Fair?
Eventually it will be you who bear these Heavy Taxes

FOR PETROLEUM
PRODUCTS
TAXES
AND
DUTIES
ON
IMPORTS
AND
EXPORTS
AND
ON
SALT
AND
SUGAR
AND
ON
CIGARETTES
AND
Tobacco
Products

Join us in our protest to serve you better

ASSOCIATION
OF
HOTEL
AND
RESTAURANT
OWNERS
AND
MANAGERS
OF
MUMBAI
AND
SUBURBS

One government after another, without exception has been slapping taxes without a thought as to how such establishments can survive. What is worse, most of these taxes go to pay the salaries of a large army or drones. According to Dr. C. S. Deshpande, Executive Director of the Maharashtra Economic Development Council, out of every rupee collected by the government of the State of Maharashtra, 73 paise is spent on salaries. The state governments not only in Maharashtra but in other states too are borrowing recklessly and taxing mercilessly even as they drive themselves and the country into bankruptcy

"Is it Fair?" ask AHAR (Association - Hotel and Restaurant) which is spearheading this agitation. Of course not! Because you are being mulcted for government's profligacy.

"Eventually it will be you who will bear these Heavy Taxes" warns AHAR. We know that and therefore, by publicising your cause, which is our cause as well, because we as consumers are the ultimate victims, we at *Freedom First* support your agitation.

SVR

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

He realized that Gandhiji's success in the freedom struggle had showed that it was possible to bring about change without sacrificing one's values.



Jayaprakash Narayan was born on October 11, 1902, in Sitabdiara, a village on the border of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. His father Harsudayal was a junior official in the Canal Department of the State government and was often touring

the region. Jayaprakash, called *Baul* affectionately, was left with his grandmother to study in Sitabdiara. Since there was no high school in the village, Jayaprakash was sent to Patna to study in the Collegiate School.

While in school, Jayaprakash read magazines like *Saraswati*, *Prabha* and *Pratap*, books like *Bharat-Bharati*, and poems by Maithilsharan Gupta and Bharatendu Harishchandra which described the courage and valour of the Rajput kings. Jayaprakash also read the *Bhagwad Gita*. He excelled in school. His essay, "The present state of Hindi in Bihar" won a best essay award. He joined the Patna College on a government scholarship.

Jayaprakash was married to Prabhavati, daughter of lawyer and nationalist Brij Kishore Prasad in October 1920. Prabhavati was very independent-minded and on Gandhiji's invitation, went to stay at his ashram while Jayaprakash continued his studies.

Jayaprakash, along with some friends, went to listen to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad speak about the Non-cooperation movement launched by Gandhiji against the passing of the Rowlatt Act of 1919. The Maulana was a brilliant orator and his call to give up English education was "like leaves before a storm: Jayaprakash was swept away and momentarily lifted up to the skies. That brief experience of soaring up with the winds of a great idea left imprints on his inner being." Jayaprakash took the Maulana's words to heart and left Patna College with just 20 days remaining for his examinations. He joined the Bihar Vidyapeeth, a college run by the Congress.

Higher Studies in the USA

After exhausting the courses at the Vidyapeeth, Jayaprakash decided to go to America to pursue his studies. At age 20, Jayaprakash sailed aboard the cargo ship *Janus* while Prabhavati remained at Sabarmati. Jayaprakash reached California on October 8, 1922 and gained admission to Berkeley in January 1923. To pay for his education, Jayaprakash picked grapes, set them out to dry, packed fruits at a canning factory, washed dishes, worked as a mechanic at a garage and at a slaughter house, sold lotions and accepted teaching jobs. All these jobs gave Jayaprakash an insight regarding the difficulties the working class faced.

Jayaprakash was forced to transfer to Iowa State when fees at Berkeley were doubled. He was forced to transfer to many universities thereafter. He pursued his favourite subject, Sociology and received much help from Professor Edward Ross, the father of Sociology.

In Wisconsin, Jayaprakash was introduced to Karl Marx's "*Das Capital*". News of the success of the Russian revolution of 1917 made Jayaprakash conclude that Marxism was the way to alleviate the suffering masses. He delved into books by Indian intellectual and Communist theoretician M.N. Roy. His paper on Sociology, "Social Variation", was declared as the best of the year.

Return to India

Jayaprakash had to cut his doctorate short when news came that his mother was seriously ill. Jayaprakash returned to India in November 1929, "a mature young man with an enquiring mind, original in his thinking, and with the fierce, idealistic desire to devote himself to serve society." For Jayaprakash it was not enough that the nation attain political freedom. To him, the definition of freedom was freedom from hunger, poverty and ignorance.

Congress Socialist

While Jayaprakash became a believer of the Communist school of thought, Prabhavati became an ardent Gandhian. He respected Prabhavati's choice and

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

did not force her to change her views. In 1929, both Jayaprakash and Prabhavati left for the Congress session at Lahore under Jawaharlal Nehru's presidentship. There Nehru invited Jayaprakash to join the Congress, an offer that Jayaprakash gladly accepted. He began work in the Labour Research Cell of the Congress at Allahabad.

Following the 1930 'Dandi March', most of the top Congress leaders were arrested. Jayaprakash immediately set up an underground office at Bombay to continue Congress work. He travelled all over the nation, printing, distributing and organizing secret meetings. After an underground meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Banaras, Jayaprakash went to Madras where he was arrested. The next day the newspaper headlines screamed, "Congress Brain Arrested!"

In British Jails

In the Nasik jail, Jayaprakash had the opportunity to meet thinkers like Ram Manohar Lohia, Asoka Mehta, Minoo Masani, P. Dantwala and Achyut Patwardhan. All of them were impatient for freedom and agreed to steer the Congress towards the goal of Socialism. Jayaprakash was released from jail in 1933.

In 1934, Jayaprakash and his friends formed the Congress Socialist Party under the Presidentship of Acharya Narendra Deva and Secretaryship of Jayaprakash himself. The group intended to function as the Socialist wing within the Congress party and aimed to make socialism the goal of the Congress. In a book "Why Socialism?" (1932), Jayaprakash explained why socialism would be right for India. He was adored by the youth for his idealism.

Jayaprakash was arrested for speaking against Indian participation in the Second World War in February 1940 and sent to Deoli detention camp in Rajasthan. Jayaprakash was appalled at the conditions in Deoli. He organized a hunger strike to protest the conditions in 1941. The Government immediately released him. He was again arrested in 1942 for participating in the Quit India movement. In November 1942, Diwali night, Jayaprakash along with five others escaped the prison by scaling a 17 feet high wall while the guards remained distracted by the festivities. A Rs.10,000 reward was offered for Jayaprakash's

capture, dead or alive. Jayaprakash escaped to Nepal and organized a guerilla army called the "Azad Dasta". Jayaprakash and Ram Manohar Lohia were captured briefly but were rescued by the Azad Dasta members, who set fire to a hut to distract the guards. Both freedom fighters escaped to Bihar. Finally the British closed in on Jayaprakash in Amritsar when he was on his way to Rawalpindi to meet Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. Jayaprakash was taken to Lahore Fort, notorious as a "Torture chamber" on September 18, 1943. 16 months of mental and physical torture followed. Jayaprakash was put in solitary confinement for the first month. Then came interrogations, physical torture and humiliation. Jayaprakash was released from jail on April 12, 1946.

Jayaprakash returned to a nation he could barely recognize. Talk of partition and riots between Hindu and Muslims dominated the atmosphere. Jayaprakash rushed to Bihar to assist in curbing the riots. He pleaded with the Congress Working Committee not to accept the partition plan.

From Marx to Gandhi

Independence finally came on August 15, 1947. Within a year Gandhiji was assassinated. Prabhavati hid her sorrow behind the spinning wheel, but Jayaprakash's mind "churned (with) grief and horror." He began to see the wisdom in Gandhiji's insistence on truth and non-violence.

The Socialists led by JP lost to the Congress in the 1952 elections. Nehru invited Jayaprakash to join the Cabinet. When Nehru could give no assurances on the implementation of Jayaprakash's 14 point plan to reform the Constitution, the Administration and Judicial system, nationalize the banks, redistribute land to the landless, revive Swadeshi, and setup cooperatives, Jayaprakash refused the offer.

Jayaprakash turned his attention to the trade unions he was President of. He, along with the unions was able to get a minimum wage, pension, medical relief and housing subsidy introduced. At the same time, Jayaprakash was keenly watching events in Russia. The bloody purges and imprisonment convinced Jayaprakash that communism was not for India. He realized that Gandhiji's success in the freedom struggle had showed that it was possible to

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

bring about change without sacrificing one's values.

Sarvodaya Leader

On April 19, 1954, at a meeting in Gaya, Jayaprakash made the dramatic announcement of dedicating his life (*jeevan daan*) to Vinoba Bhave's Sarvodaya movement. He renounced all self-interest, gave up his land in Sitabdiara, and withdrew from all personal activity to devote the rest of his life to the movement. Prabhavati was delighted at this declaration. Jayaprakash set up an ashram at Hazaribagh, a poor and backward village. He gave Gandhian concepts a new dimension by using modern technology to uplift the village.

Jayaprakash believed that every village should be like a small republic - politically independent and capable of taking its own decisions. It was a marriage of Gandhian-Indian concepts and modern Western democracy. His thoughtful, well-researched and brilliant book, "The Reconstruction of Indian Polity," won him the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

Taming the Naxals

In June 1971, Sarvodaya workers in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, received a letter threatening to kill them. The area was continuously threatened by Naxalites, which was made up of young men. Jayaprakash walked into the heart of Naxal territory armed only with love and sympathy. He knew that the cause of the violence was that the youth were frustrated because of poverty and unemployment. He lived in Musahari block for many months and experimented to alleviate the problems of the Naxals. Jayaprakash was also a key person in acquiring the surrender of dacoits in the Chambal Valley.

On April 15, 1973, Prabhavati died of cancer, leaving Jayaprakash alone.

Call for Total Revolution

1974 ushered in a year of high inflation, unemployment and lack of supplies and essential commodities. Jayaprakash was asked to lead a peaceful agitation by the Navanirman Andolan of Gujarat. On April 8, 1974, at the age of 72, he led a silent procession at Patna. The procession was lathi charged. On June 5, 1974, Jayaprakash addressed a mammoth crowd at Gandhi Maidan in Patna. He declared, "This is a

revolution, friends! We are not here merely to see the Vidhan Sabha dissolved. That is only one milestone on our journey. But we have a long way to go... After 27 years of freedom, people of this country are wracked by hunger, rising prices, corruption... oppressed by every kind of injustice... it is a Total Revolution we want, nothing less!"

In Indira's Jail

On June 12, 1975, the Allahabad High Court held the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, guilty on charges of corrupt practice in her election. Jayaprakash advised her to resign until her name was cleared by the Supreme Court. Instead, she clamped Emergency on June 26. Jayaprakash was arrested and sent to Chandigarh where he was kept prisoner in a hospital. "My world lies in shambles around me," he cried. As his health worsened, he was moved to a hospital in Bombay.

Finally in January 1977, the Emergency was lifted. Fresh elections were declared. Under Jayaprakash's guidance several parties united to form the Janata Party. The party incorporated all of Jayaprakash's goals in its manifesto.

Jayaprakash was weak and helpless by that time. He felt his work was done, but he had to sorrowfully witness the collapse of the Janata Party government. Jayaprakash died on October 8, 1979. People hailed him as "Loknayak" or leader of the people.

Courtesy: www.indiaisthebest.com



Courtesy: R. K. Laxman and *The Times of India*.

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

JP – A Personal Tribute

Arvind Deshpande

Here was a man who wielded no power or authority, had no wealth, but innate goodness, compassion, patriotism. Yet all those with power, wealth, bowed before him.

Some time in the early 60's, Prof. A. B. Shah, Managing Editor of *Quest*, invited me to the biennial meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom. I was delighted when I learnt that JP, Minoo Masani and Ashok Mehta would address the meeting. To my generation who were 9 to 10 years old in 1947, great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajaji and Rajen Babu, were too senior and remote. But even for us school going boys, leaders like JP, Masani, Lohia, Mehta, Aruna Asaf Ali, Achyut Patwardhan, S. M. Joshi, *et al*, of the Quit India Movement were the real heroes. So to get a chance to meet JP, Masani and Mehta was an exciting and rewarding boon. I was deeply moved by the way JP talked to me, showing concern, interest in my career and future after that meeting.

A few years later in 1968, when I started working for the Leslie Sawhny Programme, JP asked his old comrade and friend, Minoo Masani, to organize a seminar under the auspices of the LSP to work out a Declaration on the Social Responsibilities of Business. That brought me in close touch with JP and the association continued till his passing away in 1978.

Gandhiji's True Heir

JP struck me as the true heir

of Gandhiji. I had always felt that JP, Achyut Patwardhan, Lohia, Masani and other Congress Socialist leaders who had as their role model, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and who after disappointment with him went their own ways, should have stuck together to provide a radical liberal alternative to Nehru's Congress. They were the natural successor-leaders. Had they done that, Indian politics and history would have been gloriously different.

Serving through Failure

There is now a vulgar fashion among many to call JP a 'failure'. These people neither understood him nor the meaning of success or failure. The great Gopal Krishna Gokhale was once asked what if India didn't become free in his lifetime? He said 'we are destined to serve India and the large cause through failure'. And, were Gandhi, Nehru, Subhash successful and in what way? The fact that JP, considered as natural successor to Nehru as Prime Minister, chose to withdraw from politics, to engage in the more enduring struggle against poverty, social evils and violence, itself shows that there's nothing like 'failure' in such a life of struggle.

I would like to recall one incident to show that JP was a totally different kind of leader and

man. In 1969, I had to see him in New Delhi at his friend, J. J. Singh's place, to get his signature on an appeal he and Nani Palkhivala were to make to industrialists, urging them to accept social audit. While I was sitting with him, the charismatic Kashmiri leader, Sheikh Abdullah, suddenly entered the room and said something very harsh to JP. It seemed JP had asked Sheikh Abdullah to go and see Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and get confirmation on assurances she had given JP on Kashmir. But when the Sheikh went to the Prime Minister, she said that JP had got it all wrong. So the Sheikh walked out and came straight to JP, spoke harshly and stormed out. Both Mr. J. J. Singh and I were stunned by the Sheikh Saheb's behaviour, but **not** surprised by Mrs. Gandhi's denial. But what was JP's reaction? He stopped signing papers and sat like a statue with tears rolling down. When we asked him what had happened, he just shook his head and said in sorrow, "How could Indira do this to me? (i.e. lie to him). She is like my elder brother's (Nehru's) daughter. How could she do this to me?" No anger, no harsh words for the Prime Minister- only deep sorrow.

And yet, after attending JP's funeral, Mrs. Gandhi could write to Mrs. B. K. Nehru, "Poor JP! What a sad and confused life he led. I think he became a victim of

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

Gandhian hypocrisy. He was forced to live the life of a celebate. Because of this and the envy he had for my father, his life and conduct took a strange turn. To say that he did not want to exercise power or the Prime Minister's post is foolish". What condescending drive! Naturally, those who consider JP a 'failure', must consider Mrs. Gandhi a resounding success. Any way, what struck me was JP's innate nobility, capacity to endure without submission or bitterness.

I was privileged to be with him throughout the emergency period. He came to my Trusteeship Foundation office a couple of times and attended (but did not speak) a seminar in May 1976. He was the only leader who could tell us in February 1977 that the Congress Party would be wiped out in North India and that even Mrs. Gandhi would lose. Like Gandhiji, he was a 'moral force'. That he could not eliminate corruption in public life

is not his failure but his countrymen's.

Here was a man who wielded no power or authority, had no wealth, but innate goodness, compassion, patriotism. Yet all those with power, wealth, bowed before him.

MR. ARVIND DESHPANDE is Honorary Secretary of the Leslie Sawhny Programme.

JP – The Architect of India's Second Liberation

Prem Vaidya

On August 15, 1966 I was covering for Indian News Service, the Prime Minister's Independence Day Address from the ramparts of New Delhi's Red Fort.

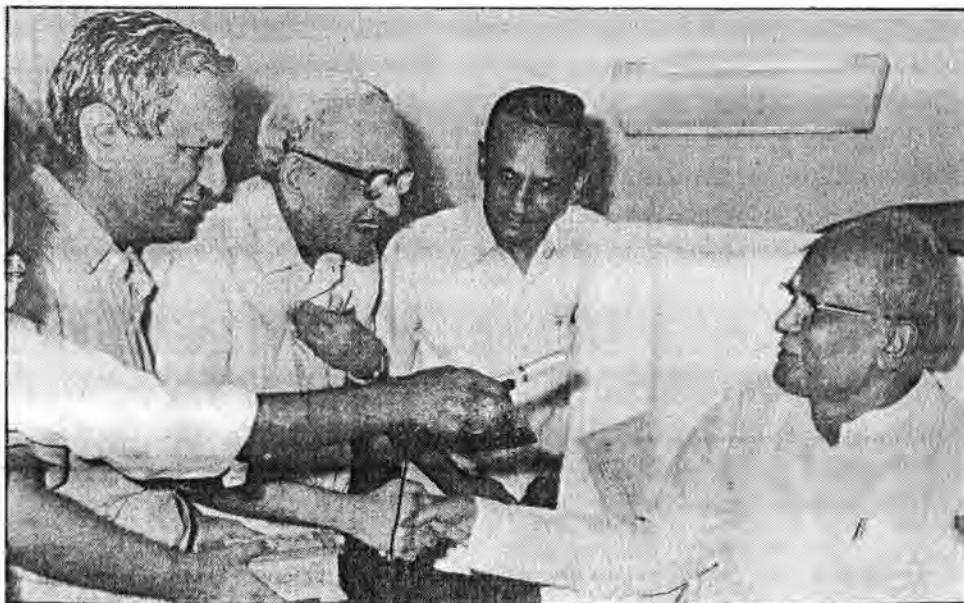
At the end of her speech, she made the customary appeal to the audience to join with her in a three-time 'Jai Hind' chorus. When the roars were reverberating in the air, we all felt a mild tremor on the ramparts.

As we were packing our equipment, someone came and informed us that it was a low-scale earthquake and a house near the Jama Masjid in Dharmapur area had collapsed. The next day, August 16, I journeyed to Haridwar to cover the rail accident on the Suswa bridge site on the Haridwar-Dehradun line.

As the days passed, a spate of alarming reports started appearing in newspapers and on radio. Rice riots in Kerala ... Mizo

tribe in revolt in the North-East-Frontier ... the demand for separate state for the Punjabi-speaking population ... and above all, about an unprecedented erratic weather

and its adverse effect on crops in the fertile Gangetic plains of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.



On April 30, 1977, Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan was conferred the title "Rashtra Bhushan" with a cash award of Rs. One Lakh at Jaslok Hospital by M. C. Chagla. Mr. Chagla said that he felt honoured to present the award to the greatest Indian of our time. The Fuel Instrument Engineers (FIE) Foundation, Ichalkaranji, founded by Panditrao Kulkarni had instituted the award. The photograph shows from L to R: (second person Mr. Panditrao Kulkarni, Mr. M. C. Chagla shaking hands with JP at Jaslok Hospital.

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

Drought in Bihar & U.P.

The dry spell had already proved to be one of the worst – both in its severity and magnitude. People in the area hardly remembered anything of this kind ever before. The drought in UP and Bihar soon emerged as a major national problem.

On November 5, 1966, I was assigned to cover a two-day flying visit of the Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi, to the drought-hit areas in Bihar and UP. About a million people, mostly malnourished, unemployed farmers and landless labourers had lined along the 80-mile long route of the Prime Minister's cavalcade as she motored through the districts of Monghyr, Bodh-Gaya and Patna in Bihar. It was not the usual cheering crowds with smiling faces shouting *zindabad*, but masses of worrying and starving breathing skeletons asking 'where do we get our next meal?'

The government of Bihar had requested for 4,00,000 tonnes of foodgrains per month. "We may not be able to accede to the request and even if we want to, we do not have enough stock in our hand," was the reply of the prime minister to newsmen.

A little while later, I was assigned to cover the drought-hit areas. Our entire unit of five members drove by road from Delhi on November 30, 1966 towards UP and Bihar. After two days on the road, passing through Moradabad and Lucknow, we reached Manikpur in Banda district. Banda was famed as the rice granary of UP. But now it was in the grip of the century's worst food shortage.

Help from the Missionaries

At Churai Kesarva village, instead of government agencies and political leaders working in the field, we found people from the Ramakrishna Mission and the Catholic Relief Society (CARE) of U.S.A. distributing foodgrains, clothes and medicines to the distressed people. Suffering knows no frontiers. We jumped out of our van and started capturing on our camera these mercy-missionaries of Krishna and Christ.

We were eager to know from Swami Kshetrananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, how he came to know about these remote places and the suffering of the people? "First we had sent our volunteers to find out where the worst-affected were that needed help. And that's how we are here".

We came to know that the Swamiji had more precise information about the drought in the region than any government official or politician. Based on his information, we moved to Kamalpur in Allahabad district where more than 700 people were working at one spot to build a bunting wall to block rain-water as and when it rained. Young boys and girls, old men and women, all were busy on relief work. Some women were working with soil-laden baskets on their head and infants tied to their shoulders, sucking their dry breast! We were recording this pathetic visual. Sukhlal, a villager was facing our camera:

"How long you have been working here?" Kapil (a member of our unit) asked.

"Three weeks".

"How much do you earn?"

"Thirteen annas a day", (About 80 paise).

"Do you get grains?"

"Once in two weeks".

We now moved towards Mirzapur and Varanasi covering on the way, relief works. The problem undoubtedly was colossal and could not be solved all at once. The pity was, 'no rain' had become a handy excuse for the politicians-in-power and perpetuated the sluggish mentality of government officers.

Callous Politicians

Passing through Varanasi, we entered the Bihar border and saw a big official hoarding written in Hindi: "*Ghoose Lena Dena Paap Hai*". (It's a sin to take or give bribes). This gave us an idea of the state of affairs in Bihar. We reached Patna. According to local newspapers, this was the worst drought in Bihar in the last two centuries! But in Patna we found complete indifference. The forthcoming General Election seemed to have greater priority than the drought. We decided to leave Patna the next day for Bodh Gaya. Passing through the famous Grand Trunk Road, we could see an unending stretch of parched land. From the interior, reports were steadily coming in of large scale migration of landless labourers and marginal farmers to the neighbouring states of West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. To us the situation looked very grave.

As we were approaching Bodh Gaya in the evening, just seven miles from our destination, we saw a grim-faced crowd by the roadside at a village called Achama. We were told that the drought-

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

stricken people had gathered for quite some time at a fair price shop in the hope of collecting foodgrains.

From the distance we could see a big crowd in front of the fair-price shop. An old frightened woman, almost at the fag end of her life was sitting in a corner holding a dirty bag of grains. We got busy filming the entire sequence of distribution and the sale of foodgrains to the waiting crowd. After the filming was over, I saw the old lady had not moved from her place. I went near her and spoke to her. She hardly had any strength to speak. Her name was Satia ... she had walked all the way from distant Gopalpur village ... she had no food for the last three days ... she had just received four kg. grains ... she was a 'red-card' holder – identification for the destitute that are entitled to free foodgrains from government fair price shops during droughts. Those who could afford to purchase their grains at the controlled price, were given 'white cards'.

I requested her to open her bag. She meekly obeyed. The grain given to her was dirty, full of dry grass and pebbles. I was disturbed. I asked the *Mukhiya* whether he had given this dirty stuff to her?

"Yes"

"Will you eat such dirty wheat?"

"I am helpless, what I receive, I distribute".

"This old lady is a 'red card' holder and she is entitled to free rations from the government and not this dirty stuff which you and I can't eat". I could not control myself. "You better clean this stuff and give what is due to her". I was

almost shouting at him.

"I belong to the upper caste", showing his *Janeu* (sacred thread), he said. "Sieving of foodgrains is not my job", he retorted.

"You will have to do it", I insisted.

The waiting crowd and my unit members supported me. Assessing the situation, the *Mukhiya* was forced to sieve the grains most unwillingly. After the dirt was removed, the wheat was again weighed. It was 700 grams less. I asked the *Mukhiya* to replace it with clean wheat and give it to her. Reluctantly he obeyed. We took in writing from him about the 700 grams of dirty stuff given to the 'red card' holder and got it countersigned by the *Gram sevak*, a village volunteer. I took the note along with the dirty stuff with me – hardly knowing what to do with it!

The site of this village was hardly seven miles from Bodh Gaya where Lord Buddha had attained enlightenment. And yet his teachings seemed to have had no impact on the people here!

We moved on to the district of Palamau. 1966 was the second successive year of drought in this district, affecting 1.3 million people, mostly peasants, tribals and landless labourers. To increase the purchasing of the people of the district under what came to be known as the 'Palamau Experiment', the District's Deputy Commissioner had planned to provide jobs for 3,00,000 people on relief work. A scheme for 'Food for Work', His blueprint was ready with 1,500 labour schemes, which

were production oriented. But in the state capital Patna it was gathering dust because of complete apathy towards the drought.

JP's Free Kitchen Movement

The socialist leader, Babu Jayaprakash Narayan (JP), Chairman of the Bihar Relief Committee, was the lone voice to suggest an in-depth study of the 'Palamau Experiment'. He said, "Any aid delayed would amount to aid denied".

Age had not withered the rebellious spirit of sixty four-year-old Jayaprakash Narayan, a man who never sought fame or position. He was a down-to-earth social worker, concerned with doing things wholly on pragmatic grounds and solving problems.

In 1966, Babu Jayaprakash Narayan (JP), was the only name on the lips of government officials and the drought-stricken people all over Bihar and UP. After two days of filming in and around Daltonganj, we moved to Nava village, about 20 miles away. None of our unit members had ever witnessed hunger on such a large scale. Hundreds of starving people had lined-up, holding empty bowls outside the "Free Kitchen" run by the Bihar Relief Committee under JP's Chairmanship. According to JP, 35 million people were starving in Bihar during that famine in December 1966. He feared that the number of hunger-stricken people would swell by another ten million in the coming months. Drought had turned into scarcity and scarcity into famine.

JP's 'Free-Kitchen Move-

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

stricken people had gathered for quite some time at a fair price shop in the hope of collecting foodgrains.

From the distance we could see a big crowd in front of the fair-price shop. An old frightened woman, almost at the fag end of her life was sitting in a corner holding a dirty bag of grains. We got busy filming the entire sequence of distribution and the sale of foodgrains to the waiting crowd. After the filming was over, I saw the old lady had not moved from her place. I went near her and spoke to her. She hardly had any strength to speak. Her name was Satia ... she had walked all the way from distant Gopalpur village ... she had no food for the last three days ... she had just received four kg. grains ... she was a 'red-card' holder – identification for the destitute that are entitled to free foodgrains from government fair price shops during droughts. Those who could afford to purchase their grains at the controlled price, were given 'white cards'.

I requested her to open her bag. She meekly obeyed. The grain given to her was dirty, full of dry grass and pebbles. I was disturbed. I asked the *Mukhiya* whether he had given this dirty stuff to her?

"Yes"

"Will you eat such dirty wheat?"

"I am helpless, what I receive, I distribute".

"This old lady is a 'red card' holder and she is entitled to free rations from the government and not this dirty stuff which you and I can't eat : I could not control myself. "You better clean this stuff and give what is due to her". I was

almost shouting at him.

"I belong to the upper caste", showing his *Janeu* (sacred thread), he said. "Sieving of foodgrains is not my job", he retorted.

"You will have to do it", I insisted.

The waiting crowd and my unit members supported me. Assessing the situation, the *Mukhiya* was forced to sieve the grains most unwillingly. After the dirt was removed, the wheat was again weighed. It was 700 grams less. I asked the *Mukhiya* to replace it with clean wheat and give it to her. Reluctantly he obeyed. We took in writing from him about the 700 grams of dirty stuff given to the 'red card' holder and got it countersigned by the *Gram sevak*, a village volunteer. I took the note along with the dirty stuff with me – hardly knowing what to do with it!

The site of this village was hardly seven miles from Bodh Gaya where Lord Buddha had attained enlightenment. And yet his teachings seemed to have had no impact on the people here!

We moved on to the district of Palamau. 1966 was the second successive year of drought in this district, affecting 1.3 million people, mostly peasants, tribals and landless labourers. To increase the purchasing of the people of the district under what came to be known as the 'Palamau Experiment', the District's Deputy Commissioner had planned to provide jobs for 3,00,000 people on relief work. A scheme for 'Food for Work', His blueprint was ready with 1,500 labour schemes, which

were production oriented. But in the state capital Patna it was gathering dust because of complete apathy towards the drought.

JP's Free Kitchen Movement

The socialist leader, Babu Jayaprakash Narayan (JP), Chairman of the Bihar Relief Committee, was the lone voice to suggest an in-depth study of the 'Palamau Experiment'. He said, "Any aid delayed would amount to aid denied".

Age had not withered the rebellious spirit of sixty four-year-old Jayaprakash Narayan. a man who never sought fame or position. He was a down-to-earth social worker, concerned with doing things wholly on pragmatic grounds and solving problems.

In 1966, Babu Jayaprakash Narayan (JP), was the only name on the lips of government officials and the drought-stricken people all over Bihar and UP. After two days of filming in and around Daltonganj, we moved to Nava village, about 20 miles away. None of our unit members had ever witnessed hunger on such a large scale. Hundreds of starving people had lined-up, holding empty bowls outside the "Free Kitchen" run by the Bihar Relief Committee under JP's Chairmanship. According to JP, 35 million people were starving in Bihar during that famine in December 1966. He feared that the number of hunger-stricken people would swell by another ten million in the coming months. Drought had turned into scarcity and scarcity into famine.

JP's 'Free-Kitchen Move-

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

ment' in this area saved hundreds from dying of hunger. At the 'Free Kitchens', there were many in the crowds with bowls in their hands, who avoided facing our camera. Probably, this was the first time in their life, that they had been forced to stand in a food line.

We were very eager to meet the man behind this 'Free Kitchen Movement' and the Chairman of the Bihar Relief Committee and so we rushed back to Patna. We positioned our camera in the open yard of JP's residence in the 'Mahila Charkha Samiti', an institution named by his wife Prabhavati Devi. Through our camera, JP was addressing his appeal to the nation:

"I regret very much to say that although the need of the drought-stricken people of Bihar is enormous, the response from the country has not been encouraging. This may be due to lack of adequate information about the severity of the situation. Please remember that this is not an ordinary drought. This is an unprecedented drought, the like of which this part of the country has not seen in the past centuries. At present, the most pressing need is for clothing and blankets. I appeal to all of you to spare from your ration whatever you can, as some people are already doing. There is need for cash contributions, small and large, with which we can buy whatever is needed ..."

Among the political leaders in India, JP was the only one who was alive to the grimness of the situation. Under his direct supervision, the 'Free Kitchen' service was now increased from 1,000 to 1,400 and on an average,

about 700 people were fed daily from each kitchen. As the situation worsened, he increased the facilities within his available resources.

We reached Delhi on December 29, 1966. My family members found me to be a changed man. My food intake was reduced ... I would not tolerate any tap leakage ... No wastage of food or water in my house and so on.

On December 29, as we were working on the editing of the film, Mr. Bhowmagary, our Film Advisor, introduced me to Mr. Haakon Lie, a Labour leader from Norway and a dear friend of JP. He had come all the way from Norway to see the drought condition and to help JP. In Patna, JP informed him of our film coverage of the situation in U.P. and Bihar and asked him to see Mr. Bhowmagary. Lie requested, part of our coverage within two days as, on January 1, 1967 he was to fly back to Oslo. Bhowmagary informed him that the film was yet to be edited and it was far from complete. ... Haakon Lie pleaded to have with him for 3,000 ft. or half hour visual material. When three cans of the unedited film were handed over to him on January 1, he almost hugged me saying, "This is a New Year gift to me".

After six weeks, on February 24, 1967, I received a rewarding letter from Lie:

"When I came back, your film was screened for the news section of our TV company. A programme on India was set up which lasted for more than one hour and had eight participants. A short version of 'Drought in India' was used as an opening of the

programme, which then turned into a discussion on what Norwegians could do to help. The drive which followed has turned out to be a success – greater than we had dared to hope for. Here the film was the major factor in arousing the people and making them participate ... You, shall, however be glad to know that it was due to your excellent work that the labour movement in a small country could make a contribution of 2.5 million rupees to your efforts to increase food production in Bihar".

All this was due to JP.

By March 1967, the results of Fourth General Election started coming in which marked a watershed in Indian politics. Although the Congress Party retained its majority in the Lok Sabha, the losses that it suffered were the heaviest so far. Its stalwarts and senior leaders faced defeat. S. K. Patil in Maharashtra lost to George Fernandes, Atulya Ghosh was defeated in West Bengal, K. Kamaraj, the Congress President was defeated by a young man of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu. However, Indira Gandhi was elected with a vast majority, which strengthened her position in the party. The period also witnessed defections and the historic split in the Congress Party in 1969. Incidentally, 1969 was the Mahatma Gandhi birth centenary year.

Three years and nine months later, the Lok Sabha was dissolved prematurely on December 27, 1970 by the Prime Minister and mid-term elections were held in 1971. Indira Gandhi had outmaneuvered the older leaders in her party to gain

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

control over the Congress. She won the elections with an overwhelming majority. She was sworn in a second time as the Prime Minister in 1971.

But the manner in which she had won the election from the Rae Bareilly constituency was questioned by the Opposition. It was challenged in a court of law by her defeated rival, Raj Narain of the Samyukta Socialist Party on the charge that she had used corrupt practices. Raj Narain filed an appeal in the Allahabad High Court against the election result. The case dragged on.

The second challenge to her leadership and her party came from the Nav Nirman Samiti's agitation in Gujarat in January 1974, led by the students, against the failure of the Congress Party led ministry, to protest against the food shortages, inflation, unemployment and corruption. The Chief Minister had to resign and President's Rule was imposed in Gujarat in February.

The agitation in Gujarat was now followed by the students in Bihar in March 1974 who launched a massive movement against the Congress-led Gafoor ministry.

On April 8, 1974, Jayaprakash Narayan led a silent protest march on the streets of

Patna along with students, the Shanti Sena Sangharsha Samiti and the Bihar Sarvodaya Mandal against excessive centralization of power and the Congress government's failure to bring down prices. His protest was unique. The marchers had taped their mouths and tied their hands. People were reminded of Gandhian methods of protest during the Raj.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave was not happy with the direction in which JP was taking Sarvodaya workers. In mid-March, a conference in Paunar in which both Vinoba Bhave and JP participated, ended with a compromise – individual Sarvodaya workers were permitted to do as their conscience dictated. About 80 per cent of the Sarvodaya workers followed JP.

In the name of 'reforms' after the nationalization of Banks, Mrs. Gandhi, with authoritarian high-handedness followed up with the takeover of general insurance, the coal industry, the oil refineries and abolished the privy purses and privileges of the former princes.

Events now took a new turn. Most of the Opposition parties joined hands with the Sarvodaya leader. There was indirect support from many Congressmen, including a Union Minister! Being a man of truth and having tremendous inner

strength and courage like Gandhiji, JP finally gave his clarion call:

*Sampurna
Krauti Ab Naya
Hai,*

*Bhavi Iltimas
Hamara Hai*

(Our slogan is: Total Revolution. The Future is Ours)

A three-day Bihar *Bandh* called by JP from October 3 to 5, 1974 was most successful. Another massive demonstration took place on November 4, in which JP was hit by a *lathi* by the Patna police and the marchers were tear-gassed.

For the first time since Independence, Opposition parties were moving closer together, under JP's leadership to save democracy in India. On March 6, 1975, millions from all over the country joined JP's "People's March" to Parliament to present a memorandum on price stabilisation, need-based wages; effective land reforms, assurance of full employment, creation of a regimen for national austerity, education and civil liberties; eradicating political corruption ... It was a spectacular 'people's procession' the like of which Delhi had never seen before.

On June 12, 1975, the Allahabad High Court found Mrs. Gandhi guilty on two charges of electoral corruption. She lost her seat and was debarred from contesting elections to Parliament for six years. But the Judge granted a 20-day stay order to allow her to appeal to the Supreme Court.

Now the Opposition leaders demanded Mrs. Gandhi's resignation. There was a crumbling of democratic political system in the country. JP's first concern was to save it from total collapse with the help of *Janashakti* – People's Power. He called upon all political parties to participate in the movement. On 25th June, JP was the main speaker

Emergency Detainees

Under MISA	34,988
Under Defence of India Rules (DIR)	75,816
Total	1,10,806

(Source: Shah Commission, Final Report).

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

at a mammoth rally in New Delhi, under the auspices of the 'Lok Sangharsh Samiti' headed by Morarji Desai, JP spoke for about ninety minutes. He announced a nationwide week-long satyagraha from June 29, asking Indira Gandhi to resign as she was found guilty of telling lies and misleading the people on various occasions. He also appealed to the police and armed forces not to obey any order that they might consider illegal or immoral.

'Not to obey illegal orders' was taken serious note of by Mrs. Gandhi. It was interpreted as a call to the armed forces to mutiny. On the midnight of June 25, 1975, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed signed a declaration of a State of Emergency in the country on grounds of threatened internal disturbances. At pre-dawn on 26th June, JP and Morarji Desai were arrested along with Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L. K. Advani, Chandrashekhar, Charan Singh, Madhu Dandavate, Raj Narain, Biju Patnaik and six hundred others all over the country. Most of them were to stay in jail for the next 18 months. The process continued with midnight arrests, the denial of fundamental rights, total press censorship. The proclamation of draconian ordinances became the order of the day. The wheels of democracy started rolling backward with ruthless autocracy. R. K. Malkani, the editor of *Motherland*, who was critical of Mrs. Gandhi's rule, was the first media man to be picked up in Delhi. But four other journalists, C. R. Irani of *The Statesman*, R. N. Goenka of *The Indian Express*, Minoo Masani of *Freedom First* and A. D. Gorwala of *Opinion* continued boldly to defy the censorship and supported JP's

movement and criticized the Emergency.

JP was just thirteen years younger to Jawaharlal Nehru and was his close associate in the early days of the freedom struggle. He used to address Nehru as "Bhai". JP's wife, Prabhavati Devi was a close confidante of Kamala Nehru. As a seasoned politician, JP could foresee the problems Mrs. Gandhi was creating by her authoritarian rule. On July 21, 1975, in a letter written from prison, JP advised Mrs. Gandhi *inter alia* to mend her ways:

It is unfortunate that JP's fatherly advice was not heeded by Indira Gandhi.

There are some events that get registered permanently in one's memory. A documentary film made on JP by an independent producer was thrust upon the Films Division for all-India release. In this film, JP was shown as a 'criminal in Hitlerian garb, George Fernandes as a rabble-rousing maniac and Morarji Desai as an imposter.

On July 1, 1975, four days after the Emergency was imposed – Mrs. Gandhi announced a '20-Point Programme' followed with a 'Five Point Programme' by her younger son, Sanjay Gandhi. One of the points, 'Family Planning' was zealously followed to meet target.

The atrocities that had gone to achieve the target were most shocking. Orders were issued to make films on each of the items in the '20-Point Programme'.

Sanjay Gandhi's Family Planning (Sterilisation) Targets

Target fixed for 1975-76	24,85,000
Number Sterilised	26,24,755
Target for 1976-77	42,55,500
Number Sterilised	81,32,209

(Source: *The Indian Express*, June 25, 2001).

It is unfortunate that the Emergency period was termed as *Anushashan Parva* by Acharya Vinoba Bhave and the irony of it was that his own *Ashram* at Paunhar was raided on June 11, 1976 for copies of the *Ashram* journal, *Maitree*.

JP had become the target of the rulers during the dark period of the Emergency in the country. He spent six months under detention, most of it under solitary confinement. Suddenly, on September 28, he suffered acute pain in the lower abdomen indicating a serious ailment. The pain continued on and off for about a month and he became too weak to bear it. Fearing their hands would be blood-stained if anything happened to him under detention, he was flown in a state of coma to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, and finally released on November 12, 1975 on parole with a special medical fund allotted by Mrs. Gandhi. JP refused the fund.

JP came to Mumbai for treatment. His illness was diagnosed as kidney failure. He was treated at the Jaslok Hospital. The doctor who treated him said: "He could not keep awake for more than a moment or two, and would lapse into stupor as he was talking. He needed dialysis before his physical strength was largely

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

restored. However, he had to be on dialysis for the rest of his life, said Dr. Mani.

Jaslok Hospital is just opposite the Films Division office, where I was working. In fact, from my cabin-window, I used to watch the hospital building and pray for the patient in room 1904, who was fighting the last battle of his life to bring back democracy to India.

As soon as the news flashed about JP's kidney failure, there were donors from all over the country. The Cumballa Hill Post Office, just opposite Jaslok Hospital was flooded with letters. According to Dr. Mani, "people from all walks of life, from every corner of the country, volunteered to give one kidney, both kidneys, any part of their body, to save the Loknayak"

On January 18, 1977, Mrs. Gandhi dissolved the Lok Sabha and announced her decision to hold elections and released all Opposition party leaders. But she kept many of the Emergency laws

in force. There was a churning of most of the opposition parties. The Jan Sangh, the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Socialist Party of India and the Congress (Syndicate), merged to form the Janata Party. The guiding force were Acharya J. B. Kripalani and Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan.

Hospital Room No.1904 became the sanctum sanctorum for many visitors. On April 30, 1977, Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan was conferred the title "Rashtra Bhushan" with a cash award of Rs. One lakh. The presentation was made by Mr. M. C. Chagla. Mr. Chagla said that he was honoured to present the award to the greatest Indian of our time. The Fuel Instrument Engineers (FIE) Foundation, Ichalkaranji, founded by Panditrao Kulkarni had instituted the award.

There was another unique function at Jaslok Hospital. About 80 leading smugglers led by Haji Mastan, Yusuf Patel and Narayan Bakhia gave a solemn assurance to

the Sarvodaya leader to give up smuggling. The Imam of Minar Masjid read out the Holy Scripture and Swami Ranganathanandji of the Ramakrishna Mission spoke of repentance as being part of the Hindu philosophy.

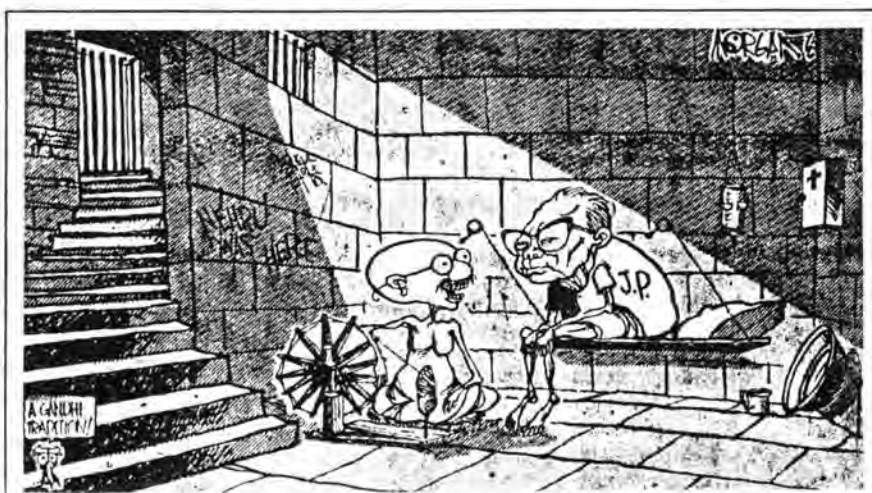
Even while needing regular dialysis, JP toured the country. Large enthusiastic crowds everywhere that greeted him invigorated and energized JP. The election tide all over the country was in JP's favour though he himself did not seek election. A unique example in post-Independent India! The Janata Party came to power and Mrs. Gandhi and her party were routed. Nineteen months of tyranny and untold terror suffered by the people came to an end. Once again, Peace, Freedom and Democracy came back in the form of a second liberation of India.

I was fortunate to be one of the 19-members with Sir Edmund Hillary (Ed) on his "Ocean to the Sky" expedition from Ganga Sagar in West Bengal to Gomukhi in the Himalayas on three jet boats. After crossing the Farakka Barage on September 2, 1977, we entered the Bihar territory on the Ganga.

On September 6, Ed called on JP at his house at Kadamkuan along with some of us. Despite his frail health, JP got up from his wheel chair and walked slowly towards the door to greet the Everest Hero.

The impact on Ed to the half-an-hour long meeting with JP is recorded in his book: "Ocean To The Sky".

"...We had a memorable experience when we visited J. P."



"I was only imprisoned by the British Raj, you were jailed by the Indian one too."

Courtesy: Far Eastern Review, February 20, 1976.

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

Narayan, one of the great figures of the twentieth century Indian politics, and a man held in the highest respect throughout India. He was an old man and unwell, with a kidney ailment requiring weekly dialysis. Nevertheless, when I met him in his modest but comfortable home, I was deeply impressed. He had an air of serenity and incorruptibility; there was something saintly about him, not a common quality in Western politicians ... I left feeling that we had met a great man.

On the front door of JP's room, I saw a touching Urdu couplet written in Hindi:

*Malik Teri Raja Rahe Aur Tu-Hi-Tu Rahe,
Baki Na Main Rahu Na Meri Araju Rahe.*

This original couplet was on the lips of a freedom fighter, Ramprasad 'Bismil', aged 30, when he was taken to the gallows on December 19, 1927 during the British Raj.

A week after celebrating his 78th birthday on Vijayadashmi Day, JP had a meeting with his old associate, Achyut Patwardhan. According to newspaper reports, JP told him, "I am lingering on. I am waiting for death". 15 hours after this meeting, on October 8, 1979 JP died in his sleep at 05.45 hours. Thus ended the eventful era of a man who brought back democracy to India.

MR. PREM VAIDYA, a documentary filmmaker, was with the Films Division of the Government of India.

Testament of Protest

An Open Letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi

JP wrote this letter on December 5 1975 from the Jaslok Hospital in Bombay. It was of course not published in the Indian press, but was secretly circulating. The Far Eastern Economic Review published from Hong Kong carried the full text of the letter in its issue of February 20, 1976. A month earlier, its correspondent in India Mr. Lawrence Lifschultz was asked to leave for his open reporting of the Emergency excesses. In an introductory note carrying JP's open letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mr. Lifschultz, after paying tribute to Jayaprakash Narayan as one of the great patriots of India, observed inter alia "There are woolly areas in his thinking ... his weakness is that he did not explore all the implications of his more recent political programme to rid India of corruption. That oversight led him to a bizarre association with opponents of Mrs. Indira Gandhi - opportunists who were themselves stinking with corruption and by no means lily-white disciples of Mahatma Gandhi. Narayan has explained that the more urgent task was to rid India of Congress misrule and the question therefore would resolve itself.

"That some of the corrupt politicians used Narayan's dazzling halo to distract from their own self-serving purposes has been exploited by the Indian Prime Minister to discredit him, but Narayan's sincere commitment to Indian democracy, social justice and honesty in Government are irrefutable."

'Dear Prime Minister,

I am appalled at press reports of your speeches and interviews. (The very fact that you have to say something every day to justify your action implies a guilty conscience). Having muzzled the press and every kind of public

dissent, you continue with your distortions and untruth without fear of criticism or contradiction. If you think that in this way you will be able to justify yourself in the public eye and damn the Opposition to political perdition, you are sadly mistaken. If you

doubt this, you may test it by revoking the Emergency, restoring to the people their fundamental rights, restoring the freedom of the press, releasing all those whom you have imprisoned or detained for no other crime than performing their patriotic duty. Nine years, Madam,

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

is not a short period of time for the people, who are gifted with a sixth sense, to have found you out.

The burden of your song, as I have been able to discover, is that (a) there was a plan to paralyse the Government, (b) that one person had been trying to spread disaffection among the ranks of the civil and military forces. These seem to be your major notes. But there have been also minor notes. Every now and then you have been doling out your *obiter dicta*, such as the nation being more important than democracy and about the suitability of social democracy to India, and more in the same vein.

As I am the villain of the piece, let me put the record straight. This may be of no interest to you – for all your distortion and untruth are willful and deliberate – but at least the truth would have been recorded. About the plan to paralyse the Government. There was no such plan and you know it. Let me state the facts.

Of all the states of India, it was in Bihar alone where there was a people's movement. But there, too, according to the Chief Minister's many statements, it had fizzled out long ago, if it had ever existed. But the truth is – and you should know if your ubiquitous Intelligence has served you right – that it was spreading and percolating deep down in the countryside. Until the time of my arrest "*janata sarkars*" (people's organizations) were being formed from the village upwards to the Block (ward) level. Later on, the process was to be taken up, hopefully, to the district and state level.

If you have cared to look into

the programme of the *janata sarkars*, you would have found out that for the most part it was constructive, such as regulating the public distribution system, checking corruption at the lower levels of administration, implementing the land reform laws, settling disputes through the age-old custom of conciliation and arbitration, assuring a fair deal to Harijans, curbing such social evils as "*talak*" and "*dahez*" (divorce and the dowry system) etc. There was nothing in all this that by any stretch of imagination could be called subversive. Only where the "*janata sarkars*" were solidly organized were such programmes as non-payment of taxes taken up. At the peak of the movement in urban areas an attempt was made for some days, through *dharna* and picketing, to stop the working of Government offices. At Patna, whenever the Assembly opened, attempts were made to persuade the members to resign and to prevent them peacefully from going in. All these were calculated programmes of civil disobedience, and thousands of men and women were arrested all over the state.

If all this adds up to an attempt to paralyse the Bihar government, well, it was the same kind of attempt as was made during the freedom struggle through non-cooperation and satyagraha to paralyse the British government. But that was a government established by force, whereas the Bihar government and legislature are both constitutionally established bodies. What right has anyone to ask an elected government and elected legislature to go? This is one of your favourite questions. But it has been answered

umpteenth times by competent persons, including well-known constitutional lawyers. The answer is that in a democracy the people, too, have the right to ask for the resignation of an elected government if it has gone corrupt and has been misruling. And if there is a legislature that persists in supporting such a government it too must go so that the people might choose better representatives.

But in that case, how can it be determined what the people want? In the usual democratic manner. In the case of Bihar, the mammoth rallies and processions held in Patna, the thousands of constituency meetings held all over the State, the three-days' Bihar *bandh*, the memorable happenings of November 4, and the largest ever meeting held at the Gandhi maidan, on November 18, were a convincing measure of the people's will. And what had the Bihar government and Congress to show on their side? The miserable counter-offensive of November 16, which had been master-minded by Shri Barooah and on which, according to reliable reports, the fantastic sum of Rs.60 lakhs rupees were spent. But if that was not conclusive enough proof, I had asked repeatedly for a plebiscite. But you were afraid to face the people.

While I am on the Bihar movement, let me mention, another important point that would illumine the politics of such a type of movement. The students of Bihar did not start their movement just off the bat as it were. After formulating their demands at a conference they had met the Chief Minister and the Education Minister. They had had several meetings. But unfortunately the

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

inept and corrupt Bihar Government did not take the students seriously. Then the latter *gheraoed* the Assembly. The sad events of that day precipitated the Bihar movement. Even then the students did not demand the resignation of the Ministry nor the dissolution of the Assembly. It was after several weeks during which firing, *lathi* (baton) charges and indiscriminate arrests took place that the Students' Action Committee felt compelled to put up that demand. It was at that point that the Rubicon was crossed.

Thus in Bihar, the Government was given a chance to settle the issues across the table. None of the demands of the students was unreasonable or non-negotiable. But the Bihar government preferred the method of struggle, i.e. unparalleled repression. It was the same in Uttar Pradesh. In either case, the Government rejected the path of negotiation, of trying to settle the issues across the table, and chose the path of strife. Had it been otherwise, there would have been no movement at all.

I have pondered over this riddle: Why did not those governments act wisely? The conclusion I have arrived at is that the main hurdle has been corruption. Somehow the governments have been unable to deal with corruption in their ranks, particularly at the top level – the ministerial level itself. The corruption has been the central point of the movement, particularly corruption in the government and the administration.

Be that as it may, except for Bihar there was no movement of its kind in any other state of India. In Uttar Pradesh, though *satyagraha*

had started in April, it was far from becoming a people's movement. In some other states though, struggle committees had been formed, there seemed to be no possibility of a mass movement anywhere. And as the general election to the Lok Sabha was drawing near, the attention of the opposition parties was turned more towards the coming electoral struggle than to any struggle involving civil disobedience.

Thus, the plan of which you speak, the plan to paralyse the Government, is a figment of your imagination thought up to justify your totalitarian measures.

But suppose I grant you for a minute, for argument's sake, that there was such a plan, do you honestly believe that your erstwhile colleague, the former Deputy Prime Minister of India, and Chandrashekhar, a member of the Congress Working Committee, were also a party to it? Then why have they also been arrested and many others like them?

No, dear Prime Minister, there was no plan to paralyse the Government. If there was a plan, it was a simple, innocent and short-time plan to continue until the Supreme Court decided your appeal. It was this plan that was announced at the Ramlila grounds by Nanaji Deshmukh on June 25 and which was the subject matter of my speech that evening. The programme was for a selected number of persons to offer *satyagraha* before or near your residence in support of the demand that you should step down until the Supreme Court's judgement on your appeal. The programme was to continue for seven days in Delhi,

after which it was to be taken up in the states. And, as I have said above, it was to last only until the judgement of the Supreme Court. I do not see what is subversive or dangerous about it. In a democracy the citizen has an inalienable right to civil disobedience when he finds that other channels of redress or reform have dried up. It goes without saying that the *satyagrahi* willingly invites and accepts his lawful punishment. This is the dimension added to democracy by Gandhi. What an irony that it should be obliterated in Gandhi's own India!

It should be noted – and it is a very important point – that even this programme of a *satyagraha* would not have occurred to the Opposition had you remained content with quietly clinging on to your office. But you did not do it. Through your henchmen you had rallies and demonstrations organized in front of your residence (begging you not to resign). You addressed these rallies and, justifying your stand, advanced spurious arguments and heaped calumny on the head of the Opposition. An effigy of the High Court Judge was burnt before your residence. Posters appeared in the city suggesting some kind of link between the Judge and the CIA. When such despicable happenings were taking place every day, the Opposition had no alternative but to counteract the mischief. And how did it decide to do it? Not by rowdiness but by orderly *satyagraha*, self-sacrifice.

It was this 'plan' and not any imaginary plan to paralyse the Government that has aroused your ire and cost the people their liberties and dealt a deathblow to their

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

democracy.

And why was the freedom of the press being suppressed? Not because the Indian press was irresponsible, dishonest or anti-Government. In fact, nowhere under conditions of freedom is the press more responsible, reasonable and fair than it has been in India. The truth is that your anger against it was aroused because on the question of your resignation, after the High Court's judgement, some of the papers took a line that was highly unpalatable to you. And when on the morrow of the Supreme Court judgement all the metropolitan papers, including the wavering *The Times of India* came out with well-reasoned and forceful editorials advising you to quit, freedom of the press became too much for you to stomach. That cooked the goose of the Indian press, and you struck your deadly blow. It staggers one's imagination to think that so valuable a freedom as the freedom of the press, the very life-breath of democracy, can be snuffed out because of the personal pique of a Prime Minister.

You have accused the Opposition of trying to lower the prestige and position of the country's Prime Minister. But in reality, the boot is on the other leg. No one has done more to lower the position and prestige of that great office than yourself. Can you ever think of the Prime Minister of a democratic country who cannot even vote in his Parliament because he has been found guilty of corrupt electoral practices? The Supreme Court may reverse the High Court's judgement – most probably it will

be in this atmosphere of terror – but as long as that is not done your guilt and your deprivation of your right to vote remain)¹.

As for the "one person" who is supposed to have tried to sow dissatisfaction in the armed and police forces, he denies the charge. All that he has done is to make the men and officers of the forces conscious of their duties and responsibilities. Whatever he has said in that connection is within the law, the Constitution, the Army Act, and the Police Act.

So much for your major points, the plea to paralyse the Government and the attempt to sow dissatisfaction in the armed and police forces. Now a few of your minor points and *obiter dicta*.

You are reported to have said that democracy is not more important than the nation. Are you not presuming too much, Madam Prime Minister? You are not the only one who cares for the nation. Among those whom you have detained or imprisoned there are many who have done as much for the nation as you. And everyone of them is as good a patriot as yourself. So, please do not apply salt to our wounds by lecturing to us about the nation.

Moreover, it is a false choice that you have formulated. There is no choice between democracy and the nation. It was for the good of the nation that the people of India declared in the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, that "we, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute into a Sovereign

Democratic Republic ... give to ourselves this Constitution." This democratic Constitution cannot be changed into a totalitarian one by a mere ordinance or a law of Parliament. That can be done only by the people of India themselves in their new Constituent Assembly, especially elected for that special purpose. If Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity have not been rendered to "all its citizens" even after a quarter of century of signing of that Constitution, the fault is not that of the Constitution or of democracy but of the Congress party that has been in power in Delhi all these years. It is precisely because of that failure that there is so much unrest among the people and the youth. Repression is no remedy for that. On the other hand, it only compounds the failure.

I no doubt see that the papers are full these days of reports of new policies, new drives, show of new enthusiasm. Apparently you are trying to make up for lost time, that is to say, you are making a show of doing here and now what you failed to do in nine years. But your 20 points² will go the same way as your 10 points did and the "stray thoughts". But I assure you this time the people will not be fooled. And I assure you of another thing too: a party of self-seekers and spineless opportunists and "jee-huzurs" such as the Congress, alas, has become, can never do anything worthwhile. (Not all Congressmen are such. There are quite a few exceptions, such as those who have been deprived of their Party membership and some of them their freedom. There will be a lot of propaganda and much ado on paper but on the ground level the situation will not change. The

¹ The Supreme Court did in fact uphold Mrs. Gandhi's appeal.

² Mrs. Gandhi's new economic measures.

³ JP's wife.

Jayaprakash Narayan – Keeper of India's Conscience

condition of the poor – and they are in great majority over the greater part of the country – has been worsening over the past years. It would be enough if the downward trend were arrested. But for that your whole approach to politics and economics will have to change.

I have written the above in utter frankness without mincing words. I have done so not out of anger or so as to get even with you in words. No, that would be a show of impotence. Nor does it show any lack of appreciation for the care that is being taken of my health. I have done it only to place the naked truth before you, which you have been trying to cover up and distort.

Having performed this unpleasant duty, may I conclude with a few parting words of advice? You know I am an old man. My life's work is done. After Prabha's³ going I have nothing and no one to live for. My brother and my nephew have their family and my younger sister – the elder died years ago – has her sons and daughters. I have given all my life, after finishing education, to the country

and asked for nothing in return. So, I shall be content to die a prisoner under your regime.

Would you listen to the advice of such a man? Please, do not destroy the foundations that the Father of the Nation, including your noble father, had laid down. There is nothing but strife and suffering along the path that you have taken. You inherited a great tradition, noble values and a working democracy. Do not leave behind a miserable wreck of all that. It would take a long time to put all that together again. For it would be put together again, I have no doubt. People who fought British imperialism and humbled it cannot accept indefinitely the indignity and shame of totalitarianism. The spirit of man can never be vanquished, no matter how deeply suppressed. In establishing your personal dictatorship, you have buried it deep. But it will rise from the grave. Even in Russia, it is slowly coming up.

You have talked of social democracy. What a beautiful image those words call to the mind. But you have seen in eastern and central Europe how ugly is the reality: Naked dictatorship and in the ultimate analysis Russian overlordship. Please, please do not push India towards that terrible fate.

And may I ask to what purpose all these

draconian measures? In order to be able to carry out the 20 points? But who was preventing you from carrying out the 10 points? All the discontent, the protest, the *satyagraha* were due precisely to the fact that you were not doing anything to implement your programme, inadequate as it was, to lighten the misery and burden under which the people and youth were groaning. This is what Chandrashekhar, Mohan Dharia, Krishna Kant and their friends have been saying for which they have been punished.

You have talked of "drift" in the country. But was that due to opposition or to me? The drift was because of your lack of decision, direction and drive. You seem to act swiftly and dramatically only when your personal position is threatened. Once that is assured, the drift begins. Dear Indiraji, please do not identify yourself with the nation. You are not immortal, India is.

You have accused the Opposition and me of every kind of villainy. But let me assure you that if you do the right things – for instance, your 20 points, tackling corruption at ministerial levels, electoral reforms, etc., take the Opposition into confidence, heed its advice – you will receive the willing cooperation of everyone of us. For that you need not destroy democracy. The ball is in your court. It is for you to decide.

With these parting words, let me bid you farewell. May God be with you.

– Jayaprakash

COURTESY: *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 20, 1976.



First edition of 'Prison Diary' written by JP is presented to him by publisher Ramdas Bhatkal of Popular Prakashan. Next to him is S. M. Joshi at Jaslok Hospital.

LOADED WITH MORE NEWS



KOLKATA

Business Standard

The Statesman

We joined coalition for
security: Musharraf

Why settle for less?

From Monday through Saturday, The Statesman now carries four informative pages of the Business Standard as well as a number of new supplements on local and world news. All in all, a good place to invest your money.

• *Kolkata Plus (Kolkata)* • *Bengal Plus (Rest of Eastern India)* • *World Focus (Delhi)*

The Tibetan Triangle

E. D'Souza

We in India who enjoy freedom must continue to support with vigour the aspirations of the people of Tibet.

The recent visit of Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji to India, including Mumbai, is the *raison d'être* for this article, to remind readers that the docile Tibetans, followers of Lord Gautama, are in serious danger of ethnic cleansing in their own homeland, and their centuries old culture systematically destroyed. The Chinese are going about this pogrom with calculated and alarming persistence, precision and planning while the so-called free world that cherishes its own freedom, pays scant attention to the festering Tibetan problem. The visit of Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji to Mumbai provided an opportunity for this docile and peace loving people that have sought refuge in this land of Lord Buddha, to draw the attention of all lovers of freedom and human rights, to their plight, through the Gandhian method of non violent protest. One hopes that these peaceful demonstrations of protest against the unabashed and ongoing rape of this once peaceful and remote Shangri La, perched on the roof of the world, will have impinged on not only China but also the free world.

Having faced and being engaged in four skirmishes with Communist China's People's Liberation Army during the 1965 War along the high altitude passes on the Sikkim watershed at Natu La, Cho La, and Yak La, and being privy to the steady ethnic cleansing

of the Tibetans when a sub unit of his own battalion, the 1st Bn The Maratha Light Infantry was the last to withdraw from Yatung and Gyantse in 1955, this writer has been involved in the Friends of Tibet movement in Mumbai, keen to associate himself with the Tibetan freedom struggle Chinese protests notwithstanding.

His interest in this then mysterious Shangri La began in the fifties when he read with much interest Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufschnaiter's brilliant book "Seven Years in Tibet". He had of course read reports of the "European" invasion of this mysterious land by Francis Younghusband who led a British/Indian force through Natu La into Tibet establishing the British presence at Yatung, Gyantse and Lhasa. As a regimental historian, he was also privy to very sketchy reports of his own regiment's spells of duty in this once 'forbidden' land.

In 1956, this writer recalls how he accompanied a small escort with a Chinese prisoner who sought repatriation to China, after the Korean Campaign under the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission Scheme. It was in February, in the middle of winter where the only access to Natu La, the handing over point, was over a narrow mule track four mile 5 on what is now the Gangtok-Natu La highway. No officer was allowed to

accompany the party but this writer did so in the uniform of a sepoy. To irritate the Chinese at the Pass, the handing-over was deliberately delayed for four hours, to a very irritated Chinese Political Officer dressed in immaculate typical dark blue Chinese uniform and mounted on a caparisoned sturdy Tibetan pony. The superciliousness of the Chinese Officer was evident as he fretted and fumed over the delay.

During the 1965 War against Pakistan, this writer, then a Brigade commander, encountered the PLA in an eyeball to eyeball confrontation when the Chinese moved up 1000 men towards the Pass in an attempt to relieve pressure on the beleaguered Pakistanis in the West. When the Marathas at the Pass did not budge under intense provocation after four skirmishes, quiet descended along the watershed except for the ongoing proxy war. All this is by way of background.

On January 3, 1967, the Chinese, using bonded Tibetan labour joined their side of Natu La with a motorable road from the road head in the Chumbi Valley below. Since those days Tibet has undergone a sea change. Using reprehensible means beyond the pale of human rights at even the most basic level, the Chinese Government did all in its power to settle the Han Chinese from

Mainland China in Tibet at the expense of the Tibetans. In this coldly calculated plan the Tibetans (6 million) have been outnumbered by the mainland Chinese (7 million), a situation that will be further aggravated when the Gormu-Lhasa railway linking mainland China is completed. It is on record that the Chinese President has stated that though the construction of this rail link is uneconomical, it will be completed and extended to Shigatse and then on to Sinkiang. The labour for this project has been imported from China! Under the guise of improving the lot of the locals of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, developmental activities are proudly shown to tourists as efforts being made to improve the lot of the Tibetans. This is far from the truth. These developmental activities are meant to enable China to strengthen its stranglehold on this once peaceful land to a point of no return. In doing so thousands of Tibetans have either lost their

lives or have sought refuge in India. The rest is history.

That the Chinese are most sensitive to any criticism of their hold on Tibet, their human rights record and other illegal activities as, for instance, using it as a dumping ground for nuclear waste, is too well known to deserve recall. When such issues were raised with a nine member high powered Chinese delegation at a seminar held recently in the University town of Manipal in Karnataka, the reaction of the delegation, when issues relating to Tibet was raised, invariably drew violent reactions of protest. The rape of Tibet, its age-old culture and its people continue, judging from the number of ethnic Tibetans who escape to India. Their stories record vividly the grossest violation of human rights and Chinese sensitivity to any such references drawing strong protests.

When our Mumbai Tibetans

held a silent and non-violent hunger strike during the visit of Zhu Rongji, the Mumbai police were explicit in prohibiting any demonstrations in areas being visited by the Chinese Premier. However they were permitted to hold a hunger strike on Azad Maidan where about 200 Tibetan protestors and their Indian friends participated. In his brief address to the protestors, this writer stressed the need never to give up hope. He drew attention to the Tibetan flag with the rising sun as a sign of hope: the sun was not setting but rising. Decrying the fact that the free west chose to keep silent on the rape of Tibet, this writer suggested that the only way to stimulate the involvement of the West in their freedom struggle was to discover oil in Tibet!

The strong urge for justice and the return of freedom to this peace loving people is so strong, that one young protestor, Tenzin

Friends of Tibet

The Maharashtra Tibetan Refugee Association and Friends of Tibet (India) have organized a 24-hour hunger strike beginning 5 p.m. today to coincide with the visit to the city of the Prime Minister of Communist China Mr. Zhu Rongji.

Even while welcoming him and his delegation to this city, we express our solidarity with the hunger strikers whose aim is to draw the attention of the citizens of Mumbai to Communist Chinese imperialism and their oppressive regime in occupied Tibet.

The People's Republic of China is part of the "Coalition against Terror". How hollow its protestations are can be gauged from the fact that their oppression in Tibet amounts to nothing less than cultural genocide of the Tibetan people where the Tibetans have become a minority in their own nation. The Chinese Communists have made Tibet a dumping ground for nuclear waste. As the Dalai Lama noted in his March 10, 2001 statement, "the situation inside Tibet it seems is almost hopeless in the face of increasing repression, environmental destruction, and alarming developments undermining the identity and culture of Tibet as a result of massive transfer of Chinese into

Tibetan areas".

We unequivocally condemn the Chinese action which is nothing short of state terror. Ironically the People's Republic of China is a part of the USA-sponsored "Coalition against Terror". A tragedy of gigantic proportions is unfolding in front of our very eyes where the whole Tibetan nation is sought to be wiped off the face of the earth. It is tragic that while the Middle East or Kosovo or Chechnya or Kashmir has attracted worldwide attention, few so-called liberty loving nations seem to care about the despoliation of Tibet.

The Hunger strike is a symbolic protest by a peace-loving and non-violent people.

M. A. Rane
President,
Citizens for Democracy,
Bombay Branch.

Yogesh Kamdar
National Vice-President,
People's Union for Civil Liberties.

T. K. Somaiya
Bombay Sarvodaya Mandal

S. V. Raju
President,
Indian Liberal Group

Tsundue managed to evade the strong police cordon at the Oberoi Towers in which Zhu Rongji was residing, and clambering up to the tenth floor unfurled a banner demand Tibetan freedom, as a striking and visible form of protest.

It is time that we let the world know that those fleeing Tibet including the Dalai Lama have been given ready refuge in India and that under Indian law they are

permitted to demonstrate within the requirements of security and diplomatic convention.

It would be an interesting exercise to ascertain the wishes of the Tibetan people through a neutral body under UN auspices to determine whether these peace loving people want Independence or wish to remain under Chinese rule.

We in India who enjoy freedom must continue to support with vigour the aspirations of the people of Tibet.

For its part, *Freedom First* has, time and again, drawn the attention of its readers to the continuing rape of Tibet and the systematic destruction of the culture and the people of Tibet.

MAJOR GENERAL (Retd.) EUSTACE D'SOUZA (PVSM) is a regular contributor to *Freedom First*.

Panchayat Raj - with a difference

Mind-boggling Atrocities against Women by U.P. Kangaroo Courts.

It was a great blunder indeed to have introduced 'Village Panchayat Raj' in regions, where over 60% of the people are totally illiterate.

Kangaroo courts set up by village panchayats are mushrooming in some districts of U.P. Justice is administered by these panchayats with utter disregard for the rule of law. These village panchayat members have not even heard of the rule of law, let alone our Indian Penal Code, Criminal and Civil Procedure Codes. They are not even aware of the existence of our courts! For them, their kangaroo court is the Supreme Court against the judgement of which there is no appeal for these poor villagers! These panchayats have no judicial powers, and yet, they have arrogated to themselves judicial powers!

Heinous crimes are being perpetrated against women by members of some of these village panchayats in U.P. which have set up their kangaroo courts. Here are a few sample cases (illustrative, but not exhaustive) reported in the press recently:

1. A boy and a girl (both adults), belonging to different castes, married against the wishes of their parents, in Alinagarka-Majra village, U.P. The kangaroo court set up by the panchayat members of this village and parents of this couple ordered the hanging of this couple unanimously and executed this couple in public on 6th August 2001.
2. An unwed mother was sentenced to death on 15th August this year in another village called Devipur, Kushinagar district, U.P., by panchayat members of this village with the approval of the parents of this unwed mother. The girl's father was first ordered to kill his daughter, and when he refused to do so, one panchayat member sat on her chest and went on hammering her head

in full public view with an iron rod till she died, for sullyng the image of this village! In fact, these panchayat members and their kangaroo courts have sullied the image of our entire country by their mind-boggling and inhuman brutalities!

3. A scheduled caste boy married a girl of a higher caste in Khandravali village, U.P. The village panchayat members executed them in a brutal manner. Their throats were slit in broad daylight in public in August last, by a crude farm implement called 'Ganda'.
4. In Muzaffarnagar, U.P. on 30th March this year at 11 a.m., a young couple was hacked to death by the village panchayat members, with the approval of the couple's parents, for marrying outside their caste!

Our Supreme Court should take *suo moto* action on all these incidents reported in the press. The guilty members of these panchayats, who held kangaroo courts, and executed the young couples, with the approval of their parents, for marrying outside their caste or community, should all be lined up against a wall and shot dead without any mercy, after a fair summary trial. The guilty parents too should be similarly punished, after a fair summary trial.

Let us hope some enterprising film producer will venture to produce a film based on these incidents reported in the press. Such a film will be a box office hit, creating social awareness among our socially backward people.

Are you listening, Mr. Shekhar Kapoor and Mr. Shyam Benegal? Bollywood?

S. S. Bankeshwar

Armayesh

The Finest Hand Embroidery - Forever

ARMAYESH, world leading Manufacturer-Exporters of the finest quality Hand Embroidered designs and products supplied around the world, also guarantees the same international quality and timely delivery **FOR THE INDIAN MARKET.**

You can select from many existing international designs or order any design of your choice for your Sarees (Parsi Garas are our Speciality), Dupattas, Ghagras, Cholis, Jackets, Vests, Handbags, Cushion covers and other products which will be exclusively hand embroidered for you.

Please telephone Ms. **NILOUFER IRANI** or Ms. **VARSHA ADVANI** on 2662987 / 2658071 / 2661364 to finalise the date and time of your visit to our **DESIGN STUDIO AND SHOWROOM.**

Armayesh Fashions Pvt. Ltd.

Design Studio & Showroom
Kamanwala Chambers, 2nd Floor,
Sir P. M. Road, Fort,
Mumbai 400 001.
Fax : (91-22) 266 2183
E-mail : armayesh@vsnl.com
Website : www.armayesh.com

Civil Liberties and Civil Society in India

Prasenjit Maiti

So the expansion of India's civil society has made Indians less certain of the transformative power of the federal state and more confident of the power of the individual and local community.

Part XVIII of India's Constitution allows the state to suspend civil liberties and the exercise of certain federal norms during the President's Proclamation of Emergency. The Constitution provides for the following emergencies: a threat by "war or external aggression" or by "internal disturbances", a "failure of constitutional machinery" in the country or in a component state and a threat to the financial security of the nation or a part of it. Under the first two emergencies, the Fundamental Rights - with the exception of protection of life and personal liberty - may be suspended along with other federal norms. Any Proclamation of Emergency, however, automatically lapses after a couple of months if not approved earlier by both Houses of the Union Parliament.

The President can even dismiss a state government if it can be ascertained, upon receipt of a report from the state Governor, that the constitutional machinery has broken down therein. This is also known as the President's Rule as the President of India can assume any or all functions of the state government, transfer the powers of the state Legislative Assembly to the Parliament or adopt other measures necessary like suspension, in whole or in part, of the Constitution and its federal norms.

However, President's Rule cannot interfere with the exercise of authority by the state's High Court. Once approved, President's Rule ordinarily continues for six months, but it may be even extended up to one year if the Parliament ratifies. In exceptional cases like insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir during the early and mid-1990s, President's Rule had continued for more than five years.

President's Rule has been used ten times during the tenure of Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri, from 1947 to 1966. Under Indira Gandhi's (daughter of Nehru) two stints as Prime Minister (1966-77 and 1980-84), President's Rule was used forty-one times. Despite Indira Gandhi's frequent use of President's Rule, she was in power longer (187 months) than any other Indian Prime Minister apart from Nehru (201 months). Other Prime Ministers have also frequently taken recourse to this authoritarian and anti-federal measure: Morarji Desai (eleven times in twenty-eight months), Chaudhury Charan Singh (five times in less than six months), Rajiv Gandhi (eight times in sixty-one months), Vishwanath Pratap Singh (two times in eleven months), Chandrashekhar (four times in seven months) and P.V. Narasimha Rao (nine times in his first forty-two months in office).

State of Emergency has been proclaimed three times since India's Independence (1947). The first was in 1962 during the Chinese Aggression. Another was declared in 1971 during the Bangladesh War. The next Emergency was imposed in 1975 to stem political opposition to Indira Gandhi.

The Indian state has authoritarian powers underpinned by such constitutional provisions for Proclamation of Emergency and President's Rule. The Preventive Detention Act was passed in 1950 and remained in force until 1970. Shortly after the Proclamation of Emergency in 1962, the government passed the Defence of India Act. This law provided for the Defence of India Rules (DIR) that allow for preventive detention of individuals who have acted or who are likely to act in a manner detrimental to public order and national security. The Defence of India Rules were again imposed during the Bangladesh War. They remained in force even after the war had ended and were invoked, among other instances, for arrests made during a nationwide railroad strike in 1974.

The Maintenance of Internal Security Act (1971) (MISA) also provides for preventive detention. This was revamped during the 1975-77 Emergency to allow the government to arrest individuals

without mentioning charges. Tens of thousands of opposition politicians were arrested under the Defence of India Rules and the MISA, including the leaders of the future Janata Party government. Soon after the Janata government came to power in 1977, Parliament passed the Forty-fourth Amendment Bill that revised the domestic circumstances cited in Article 352 from "internal disturbance" to "armed rebellion." Parliament also repealed the Defence of India Rules and the MISA. However, after the Congress (Indira) returned to power in 1980, Parliament passed the National Security Act authorizing security forces to arrest individuals without warrant on suspicion of action that subverts national security, public order and essential economic services. The Essential Services Maintenance Act of 1981 allows the government to ban strikes and lockouts in sixteen economic sectors that provide critical goods and services. The Fifty-ninth Amendment (1988), restored "internal disturbance" in place of "armed rebellion" as the just cause for any proclamation of Emergency.

The Khalistan Movement in Punjab in the 1980s provoked additional authoritarian laws. In 1984 Parliament passed the National Security Amendment Act that allows security forces to detain

prisoners for up to one year. The 1984 Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Ordinance provided security forces in Punjab with unprecedented powers of detention, and also permitted secret tribunals to try suspected terrorists. The 1985 Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) provided for capital punishment and empowered authorities to tap telephones, censor mail and conduct raids when individuals are considered to pose a threat to the unity and sovereignty of the nation. The law renewing the TADA in 1987 provided for in-camera trials, and reversed the legal presumption of innocence if the government produces specific evidence linking a suspect to any terrorist act. In March 1988, the Fifty Ninth Amendment increased the period that an emergency can be in effect without legislative approval from six months to three years, and did away with the assurance of due process of law and protection of life and liberty with regard to Punjab (Articles 20 and 21). These rights were subsequently restored in 1989 by the Sixty-third Amendment.

Political participation in India has been transformed in many ways since the 1960s. New social groups have entered the political arena and begun to use their political resources to shape the political process. Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes, earlier excluded from politics because of their position at the bottom of India's social hierarchy, have begun to take advantage of the opportunities presented by India's democracy. Women and environmentalists constitute new political categories while the spread of social movements and voluntary organizations has shown that despite the difficulties of India's political parties and state institutions, the country's federal democracy continues to prosper.

An important aspect of this rise of civil society is the expansion of non-governmental organizations. To an extent, this has been sponsored by the Indian state. For instance, the central government's Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-89) recognized the contribution of NGOs in facilitating development and substantially raised their funding. The 1987 survey of 1273 NGOs found that 47 percent received funding from the central government. NGOs have also received overseas donations. Certain NGOs even cooperate with the central government to implement public policies like poverty alleviation in a decentralized manner. Other NGOs like the Association for Protection of Democratic Rights or the People's Union for Civil Liberties act as watchdogs of India's civil society. NGOs also try to enhance the political awareness of different social groups, encouraging them to demand their rights and resist social injustice.

Beginning in the 1970s, activists began to form broad-based social movements that championed social interests so long neglected by the state and political parties. A case in point is the farmers' movement that has organized hundreds of thousands of

Interbellum Silent Legis (The Law sleeps during a war)

Ordinances are always bad, as they bypass the representative voice of Parliament. In this instance, TADA, a draconian law, is replaced by an even more draconian ordinance, which could have awaited the reconvening of Parliament, when dissenting voices could have modified the worst aspects of the legislation. One must grant that an extraordinary situation does exist in Kashmir and calls for laws which can prevent or punish terrorism adequately. However, the muzzling of the Press cannot be justified, whatever the Emergency. Under the Ordinance, a reporter who happens to interview a terrorist, will have to inform the police of his actions. Protection of sources is one of the pillars of Press Freedom. Not any more.

Dr. Louella Lobo Prabhu.

demonstrators in the National Capital Territory of New Delhi, demanding higher prices on agricultural commodities and more investment in rural areas. Members of Scheduled Castes led by the Dalit Panthers have reasserted the identity of former Untouchables. Women now interact and exchange ideas in order to define and promote women's issues. Environmental activism like the Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save the River Narmada Movement) has also emerged, compelling the government to be more responsive to environmental issues and redefining problematics of development, displacement and democracy by accommodation of indigenous cultures, and sustainable development.

With its competitive elections, relatively independent judiciary, media watch and civil

society, India continues as a democratic federal system. Still, India's democracy is under stress. Political power within the Indian state has become centralized at a time when India's civil society has become mobilized along the country's multicultural axes. India's political parties are also in crisis. The Indian National Congress has been in a state of decline. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, although it has a stronger party organization, is yet to transcend the limits of its Hindu nationalist agenda and formulate a program that would appeal to India's plural society. The Janata Dal continues to suffer from lack of leadership and factional warfare.

So the expansion of India's civil society has made Indians less certain of the transformative power of the federal state and more confident of the power of the

individual and local community. This development has shifted a larger share of the initiative for resolving India's social problems from the state to the civil society. Fashioning party and state institutions that would accommodate the multiple interests that are now being mobilized in Indian society is the major challenge confronting Indian federal polity in the new millennium.

MR. PRASENJIT MAITI, Department of Political Science Burdwan University, India and ex-Research Associate Institute of Federalism, University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

Reject POTO in Toto

This All India Conference of the Indian Radical Humanist Association held at Karad District, Satara in Maharashtra on 24-25th November, 2001 condemns unreservedly the backdoor enactment of The Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance 2001 (POTO) by the NDA government without taking the citizens into confidence and without getting it passed as an Act by Parliament.

This Conference is of the view that POTO is a revised version of TADA, containing worse provisions such as section 18 under which the Government of India has already declared certain organizations as terrorist organizations under POTO without giving any opportunity to defend themselves. Besides the list is biased, as it excludes certain organizations belonging to the majority community.

This Conference recalls the experience that TADA was grossly misused particularly against the minority communities giving rise to harassment and was therefore repealed on the demand of a number of citizens.

This Conference is of the definite view that POTO like TADA will be definitely misused by the ruling parties, the bureaucracy and the police in view of the vague definition of the term Terrorist and vast discretionary powers conferred on the police and other executive authorities, resulting in large scale deprivation of human rights of the citizens and also rampant corruption.

This Conference therefore calls upon the citizens to oppose POTO and upon every Member of the Parliament to reject POTO in toto and refuse to pass it as an enactment.

Was Hanuman International Terrorist No.1 ?

Mr. Rajendra Yadav, editor of the well-known Hindi monthly 'HANS' in his article has dubbed Hanuman as the first international terrorist in the world, who sets Sri Lanka on fire! He has obviously not studied Ramayana at all. Hanuman went to Sri Lanka to rescue Sita from Ravana's captivity in a commando operation and not to set Sri Lanka on fire. When his tail was set on fire by Ravana, Hanuman had only four options:

1. Enter into a dialogue with Ravana. (It would have been as futile as Prime Minister Vajpayee's dialogue with President Musharaff);
2. To seek diplomatic support (There was no UNO at that time!)
3. To suffer silently till he was burnt to death;
4. To retaliate in the only way he could under the circumstances and rightly so.

Can you call Hanuman's action as an act of terrorism?

Mrs. Suman Bankeshwar
M. S. Kilpady
Mrs. Smita Chandaver
Mrs. Savita Karnad
Mira Road, Thane District,
Maharashtra



For over half a century, Forbes Marshall has been building steam engineering and control instrumentation solutions that work for process industry. But we're proud of much more than just the products we make. We're committed to creating a progressive work culture that uniquely puts people first.

Creative contributions for organisational competitiveness and productivity, is a way of life at Forbes Marshall. We encourage employees to share experiences, to achieve the competitive edge. People participation is the only way we can become industry's best choice to better harness their steam, air and water.

Forbes Marshall Ltd.

Mumbai-Pune Road, Kasarwadi, Pune 411 034, India. •Tel: 91(0)20 - 7145595 •Fax: 91(0)20 - 7147413
www.forbesmarshall.com

The Gospel According to Marx!

The Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji was recently in Bangalore, India, when he gave instantaneous permission for Inforsys to set up a unit in Shanghai. The insincerity of this gesture must be read with the fact that plane loads of armaments were delivered to Pakistan almost about the same time as China and Pakistan pledged their mutual friendship and solidarity!

Zhu also wanted to study systems law, administration and the like. This is fruitless, and would even be adverse to Chinese productivity. It is the only nation that has been able to achieve an economic breakthrough, without the corresponding reforms that shattered the communist regimes in Eastern Europe.

A senior member of India's Parliament, who has visited China eight times, mentioned that when a factory

accepts an export order, units of the Red Guards, are present throughout the working day, to see that targets are maintained. If you go out street-shopping, items like pens are sold by the dozen, not individually. I have noticed that China's exports are not ideologically based. Though Marx and Mao agreed that religion is the opium of the people, some of my most beautiful radium statues of the crucifix; the Infant Jesus, and the Virgin Mary, are of Chinese manufacture. I have also bought, in Mangalore, some wonderfully designed towels, which, however, have to be used as ornamental chair rests, as they are pitifully thin in texture. The Church, in China, is rather, like the Church in England. While allowing the Sacraments of the Church to be dispensed, Bishops are chosen by the State. However, it is reassuring to know, that religion, in whatever fashion, is allowed to exist, diluting the Gospel according to Marx.

Requiem for Ashok Kumar

Indian Cinema has lost a great hero in Ashok Kumar (Ganguly), who passed away after a 3-year illness, at the age of 90, on December 10th. Like Maurice Chevalier, his career spanned six decades, well into his 80's. He came to films reluctantly, when Himansu Rai of Bombay Talkies asked him to play a role opposite the sophisticated Devika Rani, who spoke fluent English. He did play the role, and against his will, became a star. Stardom was thrust upon him – his family (Bengali, settled in Madhya Pradesh), was keen on his following the legal profession. He never typecast himself in the many roles he played, and was an "anti-hero", long before Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan made this *genre* their speciality. Despite being advised that "good guy" roles alone were good for his image, he even played downright villains.

He appeared on the *filmi* scene before yellow

journalism turned its spotlight on the lives and loves of stars. But friends from the industry, remembering him, all record his warm, genial and human personality. Few people are remembered in their private and public personae as being competent on the sets, and lovable in human interaction. No breath of scandal touched his long acting career.

I personally remember one of his kind acts: His daughter Bharati Ganguly, was acting in a play staged by my school, the Convent of Jesus and Mary. The part required her to show a bald pate, as the villain, and she had long luxuriant hair, beyond the amateur make-up capabilities of the staff. The make-up man looked after Bharati's makeup, and gave a professional touch to the other players, as well. I never met him, but the above act is a testimony of his generous spirit.

Some Stray Thoughts on Women

Three nights running, Star TV has shown us a mixed-caste couple, hanged before the very eyes of their parents. An inter-caste couple, separated, with the girl in fear of her life. In both the cases, the village panchayat (all male) presided over these decisions. In yet one more case, a girl who was married as a child, was going to re-join her husband, having come of age. At this point, an infant was found, and its maternity ascribed to her. She was beaten to death, outside her hut, with her stricken parents watching

death unfold before their eyes. The police did not come. This is Uttar Pradesh, India.

In Sri Lanka, India was represented by Chokila Iyer, at a meeting of Foreign Secretaries in the South Asian Region. She acquitted herself very well. This is also India. Urban India, though even urban India is not without its quota of dowry deaths.

In Indonesia, Meghawati has taken over as President. It is a paradox of India and the rest of Asia, that they accept women leaders, but the position of women remain low. All these Asian women "leaders" have attained office through a connection with a powerful male relative. They did not climb up on their own. Mrs. Gandhi did come to power through her father, but a recent *India Today* poll showed people yearning for her strong leadership again, despite the shadow of the Emergency. Meanwhile, Vajpayee and Sonia,

though having slipped several notches in popularity, still remain one and two, on the popularity scale, and great enthusiasm has been generated by Priyanka Vadra's visit to Amethi, with her 11-month old baby, Rehan Vadra (Gandhi?). He is already being described as a princeling, and the Congress pins its hope on their as yet inarticulate marvel, who is no different from any other child. "An infant crying in the night, and with no language but a cry".

Who Will Judge the Judges?

Ms. Arundhati Roy is having a bad time *vis a vis* the Supreme Court, which has framed a possible charge of contempt against her. This law has been invoked, quite often lately; one of the early victims being a Secretary to the Government of Karnataka. Deve Gowda, all praise to him for that, went to Delhi several times, actually shedding tears, but the Secretary had to suffer imprisonment the Court had prescribed. Star TV therefore took up a very pertinent issue, in its debate, "Judging the Judges". The participants were former Chief Justice Ahmedi, former Attorney General, Mr. Ashok Desai, and Ms. Indira Jai Singh, Supreme Court Advocate. The last walked away with the show, exuding wit, vivacity, and the capacity to pack the unforgiving minute, with a virtual fountain of speech.

These were some of the conclusions which emerged:

1. Justice Ahmedi said that Judges are highly over worked. A tempo full of reading material is reached to his house every day.
2. Pay and Pension, as written into the Constitution, hardly leaves a retired Judge with money to pay a driver, on the pension he receives.

3. Ms. Jai Singh deplored the fact that members of the Judiciary tend to come from the elite classes, not knowing the pain and discrimination litigants have suffered.
4. At times, there seems to be a direct nexus between the position of a sitting judge, and the practice of a near relation, especially someone operating from his very home.
5. That the income of a lawyer should not be the test of his competence for elevation.

Many lawyers of great competence, who do public interest litigation, have immense practice without a corresponding bank balance.

All were agreed that since the Government appoints the judges, it cannot effectively discipline them. The Parliamentary procedure for impeachment is extreme, and no clear viewpoint can emerge from a splintered Parliament. The Judges, like the press, must evolve their own code of conduct, so that their invulnerability does not make them arbitrary and arrogant. The contempt of Court procedure should be used with great restraint.

Ethics Wanted in the Financial Sphere

The Finance Ministry, and the Reserve Bank have decided to cut the rate of interest on Employees' Provident Fund, Public Provident Fund, and other various funds. The rate has effectively come down from 12% to 9.5% currently, with a further drop threatened by the Ministry. Unilateral alteration of a contract violates the law of contracts. When one puts one's funds in a scheme offering a certain rate of interest, that rate should apply till maturity.

The continuous downward spiral of rates, has hit hard pensioners and fixed income groups who found in bank rates as they used to be, security, liquidity, and a fairly decent return. Shares are out. Government is reneging on its principal contractual commitments. Where is the investor

to go? Investment in government bonds has the further disadvantage, that returns are not monthly or quarterly, but once or twice a year.

The Professional Tax is being hiked from Rs.2,500 to Rs.7,500 per individual, irrespective of how well or badly that individual is doing in his or her profession. This is a sop to the State government but not to the persons taxed.

It was believed when this government took office, that it would move to a broad base with low taxation. It has, instead, offered us, a somewhat broader base, undoubtedly, but with higher taxation.

Re-Writing History

History is the study, of things from our hoary past,
Which historians, in their best judgement set down:
Although it may happen that a ruling power,
The whole of the Truth may endeavour to drown.

To re-write old history is patently bad:
For the next regime, could also, as well,
Re-write History from its own point of view,
And then where, would the Truth, really dwell?

The facts should be written without any bias,
Without fear and without favour too –
So that young people's minds are not rendered confused,
And can come to their own point of view.

Knowledge, should be open, for free winds to blow,
Not moulded, by regimes, which may come and may go.

Author's Note:

1. It is reported in the *New Indian Express* that Mr. Murli

Manohar Joshi is trying to get standard texts of Indian History revised, to correct the anti-Brahmanical slant of Romila Thapar and three other authors. Their crime was the contention that the Vedic people ate beef and had animal sacrifice. They also appear to give the impression that Brahmins subtly moulded the mindset of the post-Vedic age, bringing in vegetarianism, as a part of the superior status they gradually came to claim. Today's Brahmins are the new Dalits of the post-Mandal order. They have to compete on merit for the few seats left in education, and government service. Much as it pleases many people, to hate them for devising the Manuvadi paradigm, the fact remains that their gene pool, conditioned by centuries of intellectual pursuit – is superior. However, the remarks made by Romila Thapar are factually true. And whether it is the re-writing of history – by the Left or the BJP – “doctoring” history is bad *per se*.

2. I have, for the most part, used the complex anapestic meter, with the occasional imbaic foot.

The Nobel, V. S. Naipaul and India

India always rejoices when an Indian, or a person of Indian origin, wins a major foreign honour. Sir V. S. Naipaul, Nobel Laureate, traces his roots to India, and his country-of-origin, feels justly proud of him. In fact, he has been a British citizen for 50 years, and is considered a part of the British Literary Establishment, though the theme of his books, finally borders on rootlessness – the relentless search for an identity. He finds this, not in countries – Trinidad, India or Britain – but in his own creative subconscious. Coincidentally, one of his early titles, “*A House for Mr. Biswas*”, was published in 1961. It is exactly 40 years later, than he has won the Nobel. The Booker Prize was a significant signpost along the way, and in 1991, his knighthood by the Queen.

His literary output is not large, but it encompasses many genres, of which the most meaningful has been “*Among the Believers*”, a study of Islam in the Middle East. It turned out to be quite a prophetic volume, and is particularly relevant today. With his fine sense of nuance, he senses the phenomenon shaping under his eyes. The Nobel Academy referred to his prose style: an instrument of precision, finely tuned to the needs of the subject.

Sir Vidya is not personally a being of “sweetness and light”. He wrote publicly about the fact that E. M. Forster was “gay”, while he himself confessed to being “all right” and having flaming affairs, during his marriage to his recently dead wife: a bright girl whom he met during his

literary studies in Oxford.

In fact it is naive to expect that those who create heroic characters, are themselves cast in the mould they made. It is enough that they give us reading pleasure. Sir Vidya certainly has.

Republic Day 2002

Republic Day 2002,
We need an introspect to do.
Were our Constitution-makers here today,
I wonder what they would think;
what they would say?
They would be sad: The nation is astray.

Partition which brought two nations to birth,
With blood has bespattered our precious earth.
Eyeball to eyeball, two nations, near the front.
Are straining one another to confront ...

With barns quite full of food, the people cry,
“Do not let us, from famine die”.
Out in the cold, or in the sun, the homeless lie
In this cold, sun-seared, where the Book once lay –
Your breed of men and women: all have gone.

Debate

Harm That Bad English Does

Sharad Bailur's article on bad English (*Freedom First*, July-September 2001) in the media is interesting. It is, however, felt that the discussion needs to be modified and enlarged to include factors which affect the quality of our English press.

Sharad Bailur has correctly pointed out that conditions in India are not conducive for entry of competent entrants into journalism. This lacuna can to some extent be overcome by dedication and hard work in a fair and free environment where competence is rewarded. Such suitable conditions are to be created by the top management. Unfortunately, the fourth estate, which is supposed to represent free and democratic society, has been converted into money spinning machines and publishes for the highest bidder. In other words, lofty ideals have become a victim of human greed. This situation is hardly conducive to creating an environment of excellence in journalism.

Our journalists have not lagged behind. They have taken a cue from the top management and are functioning according to prevalent values of the society with instances of corruption coming to light in spite of massive cover up operation of the press. Considering the present situation in the country, we cannot see any improvement in our journalism in the foreseeable future. We even suspect that some of our media on occasions act at the behest of forces inimical to India.

These journalists by default become our intellectuals and are supposed to analyse India's problems and suggest solutions. Failure of our so-called "think tanks" on this front is too evident to warrant any detailed discussion.

Satish Oberoi, Ahmedabad.

Smt. Pramila Dandavate

In the passing away of Smt. Pramila Dandavate, India has lost a graceful women's activist, social worker and a model politician. She had a Master's Degree in the Fine Arts.

I had the opportunity and the privilege of working with her for a few years. I met her for the first time in 1978 at her residence in Dadar, a suburb in Mumbai. She was totally unassuming, an attribute rarely seen in VIPs. Her husband Mr. Madhu Dandavate was then a senior Cabinet Minister. My friends and I used to discuss with her poll strategies for the 1978 Assembly elections and later the civic elections. She allowed us to have our own way of campaigning in constituencies where people disliked not only loud noise but long windbags. Later, we had the privilege of working for her when she stood as a candidate for the Lok Sabha. She won the election and very graciously acknowledged our contribution to her success.

She won many admirers by her straight forward simple manner of speaking. Her supporters posed her many interesting issues and the audience enjoyed her debating skills and frank replies.

After hearing her speak at a seminar on women's issues and quota for women in Parliament, I posed her the question of quality of women parliamentarians rather than quantity. She readily agreed that mere quantity will not do.

Her success in social activities, championing women's rights and in the hurly burly of politics was due to her simple, graceful way of speaking. This skill won the hearts of the rural illiterate and the educated urban alike. Her deeds and words reflected her concern for real issues and her sincere efforts to solve them.

In her demise, India has lost an honest public figure, who loved the Fine Arts. Rest In Peace, Pramilaji. Heart-felt condolences to Professor Shri Madhu Dandavate.

R. Ramakrishnan



If corruption grows at this rate, the State must perish one day.

C. Rajagopalachari,
Swarajya, April 6, 1963

YOU CAN TASTE THE MOUNTAIN
FRESHNESS & THE FULL DARK POETRY OF PURE COFFEE

Every bean that goes into Coorg Pure Coffee is born from the freshness

of Tata's Coffee plantation - the largest and finest in Southeast Asia.

All the mountain freshness of Coorg Country is brought out by the Roast-master.

Roasted just right Ground and blended, with great care and high art.

So when you taste a cup of Coorg Pure Coffee from Consolidated Coffee,



you taste the sunshine, you taste the mountain breeze,

you taste the full dark poetry of pure coffee,



COORG COFFEE IS COORG COUNTRY



Float on **MRF ZVTS**

The most
comfortable
radial ever



Now available for:

FORD

Ikon
Escort

GM-OPEL

Club
Corsa
Swing
Astra

HONDA

City / VTEC

MARUTI

Esteem
Maruti 800
Maruti 1000
Maruti Van
Zen
Alto
Wagon R
Baleno

DAEWOO

Lancer
Indica V2
Indica

DAEWOO

Cielo
Matiz

FIAT

Palio
Siena
Uno
Weekend

HM

Ambassador
Contessa

HYUNDAI

Accent
Santro

IMPORTED CARS*



Mileage and a Comfortable ride on Indian roads? Is it possible? Yes. But only if you are on MRF, the tyre that has mastered Indian roads. In fact with MRF ZVTS, you get the reliability, mileage and control MRF has always given you. Plus unmatched comfort. So experience the new **Z** force on Indian roads. Get MRF ZVTS... and float.

MRF - India's Largest Tyre Company - 12th Largest in the World

In case, you need assistance to procure these comfortable tyres, please get in touch with us at Customer Reach-Out Center, MRF Ltd., 124 Greaves Road, Chennai 600 006 or e-mail us at mrfmktg@vsnl.com. Please do provide us your name, address and phone number so that we can service your requirements promptly.

* Please check with the nearest MRF office

South Korea : When East Meets West

Manuwant Choudhury

Democracy and Human Rights are Universal Values

Images of New York - hijacked airplanes crashing into the twin towers of the World Trade Centre - it will be difficult to forget September 11. A nightmare on television. This clearly shook the world from its stupor but at least for many of us who had just returned from the 6th Young Leaders Workshop on 'Democracy and Human Rights in South Korea' we were already a worried lot. We young people from Asian countries who gathered in Seoul to take stock of democracy and rights in Asia (not as Western or eastern values but as universal values), we not only got first hand accounts of people fighting for democracy against all odds but we also had to battle our way to evolve a consensus on issues that some of us liberals thought needed no discussion.

Arriving at Incheon International Airport in Seoul even as I filled my immigration papers I found the immigration official bowing thrice before I moved on. I sensed this invite was not ordinary. We were invited by the Kim Dae-Jung Peace Foundation. Driving into Seoul city along the Han River with its orange bridges, and riverside promenade and skyscrapers dwarfed only by the backdrop of the surrounding mountains, Seoul can pass-off as a western city. But you cannot miss the Asian warmth - Korean's breeze past in their business jackets and mobile phones but with enough time for a quick bow and a smile.

Seoul for me was like a window to Asia. My Vietnamese friend Young arrived from Boston in the United States of America because he cannot return home since Vietnam still has a communist government disallowing

any democracy. His father was jailed and he, only 12 years of age, was placed in a detention camp from where he escaped to the Philippines and then America. Now he is a chemical engineer leading a happy married life but never forgetting his dream of a democratic Vietnam. Friends from Burma cannot return home because of an oppressive military junta there even as Aung San Suu Kyi fights relentlessly. In Cambodia where they don't even have internet access because the government has blocked them - you only get the official government site!

I was on the political working group and we chose to focus on those countries which did not have any democracy, those which had military regimes and dictatorships, Tibet, and those which had elections but where democratic rights were suppressed. While we remembered Afghanistan and the entire middle-east non-democracies we concentrated on those countries who were represented at the workshop.

But even our draft resolution met with opposition in the plenary session. Delegates from Pakistan opposed the use of the term 'military dictatorship' in Pakistan. They said General Parvez Musharraf was not a 'dictator', that the military coup was 'bloodless' and that people in Pakistan are 'happy'. Such defence of military regimes in a workshop on democracy was unthinkable. Emil Kirja, Secretary General of the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth, said, "The entire world knows that Pakistan has a military dictatorship. If this conference chooses not to condemn it then I would return home very disappointed." James Gomez from Think Centre in Singapore (he is

fighting for democratic rights in Singapore) said, "That gives me an idea. I will return to Singapore and tell my military to take over and make me President but don't kill anyone and people will be happy." And of course our friend John Coronel, executive director, Council of Asian Liberals & Democrats, made strong protests. And it was an achievement for democracy that we got the Pakistani delegates themselves to reject the 'military regime' in their country. To us there is little difference between a dictatorship or a military regime. Or can military dictatorships be 'democratic'?

A visit to the Blue House was the highlight of the visit - the Presidential Palace of Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, also recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for reducing tension between South and North Korea. He told us of his own struggle against the military regime in South Korea and the reason why he thinks it is critical that democracy be strengthened in Asia. Kim Dae-Jung still suffers from the torture inflicted on him by the military. He also spoke to us on his 'Sunshine Policy' - unification of North and South Korea, voicing the aspirations of divided Koreans. A visit to Kwangju cemetery where those killed in the pro-democracy uprising of May 18, 1980, are buried. We understand better what President Kim was talking about. A photo-museum there is a must see. It has photographs of the many killed in the uprising and no there is no censorship - the photos reflect brutal oppression. Tanks on the streets, ordinary folk and students being huddled onto trucks, many being shot dead on the streets. Love for freedom has a price which the Koreans have paid and so its not surprising that when

they do have a democracy they are taking steps to bring about transparency in public life.

Entire mountain slopes being afforested and you don't see shanties in Korea and the freeways are comparable to the best in the world, although I would have loved to take the dirt track. There must be pockets of poverty. Mokpo is an interesting sea-side town - quiet but with a lot many traditional sea-food eateries. Koreans eat from a low table while sitting cross-legged on a floor and the food is exotic - variety of raw fish and *kimchi*, which is fermented, pickled chinese cabbage. There are hundreds of *kimchi* varieties. I remember *kimchi* was among the few items I managed to hold with my chopsticks. And from Mokpo a three hour catmaran ride over the sea took us to an island Hongdo where only 500 people live. A one hour boat-ride on cobalt blue waters around the island was right out of Discovery Channel - the rock formations were simply breathtaking. Back in Seoul you can take a birds eye view from the Seoul Tower or go shopping to the 24-hour shopping mall. And yes the Korean model is about brand names: Hyundai, LG, Daewoo, some of the big names, they are everywhere. Like LG petrol stations!

And so it was just right to include the free market economy in our resolution. While liberals wanted a free-market economy, amendments were moved by some delegates for a 'fair market economy'. So the consensus was for a free and fair market economy. Later I did speak to some who pushed amendments since it was for the first time I had heard the term 'fair market economy' but the debate led nowhere with only Arnab Hazra from the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and Babar Naseem Khan from Pakistan understanding each other. They called it 'Institutional Economics'.

But nothing teaches like life itself. My Pakistani friends accompanied me on my return flight and at Seoul airport we saw two Pakistanis, one businessman in a suit and the other a Pathan in his ethnic

attire, trying to talk to each other with little success. My Pakistani friend Gulmina Bilal, from Rawalpindi who knew Pashtun, helped out the Pathan with the check-in but the Pathan who had purchased two blankets wanted another help, 'Call this telephone number and tell the shopkeeper that I know he has cheated me.' As we laughed at this strange request, I scored my point. Can any 'institutional economics' help this man? A market

is a place where we cheat one another. I told my Pakistani friends, 'Watch this man, he will sell these blankets in Pakistan at a profit and return to Seoul even before we do.' And right I was. At Bangkok during transit we saw his passport was full of visas, except he hadn't heard of the frequent flier program.

MR. MANUWANT CHOUDHURY is a reporter for NDTV.

Railway Safety

The recent levy on railway passengers, ostensibly for ensuring safe railway travel, is unjustified. Safety can be ensured by enforcing strict rules which have been evolved since 1853 when the Railway transport started in India. It seems that there are about 50 rules to be followed before a main-line train starts all evolved over decades with one on air passenger safety. Even a small railway functionary like a bridge inspector can stop the entire system if he opines that any bridge is unsafe. There are many other safety measures. Neglect in following them is the main cause of railway accidents.

Renewal of worn out tracks, rolling stock and strengthening or rebuilding of old bridges is long overdue. The recent bridge collapse disaster near Kozhikode (Calicut) in Kerala is a red signal to the authorities. If the present neglect continues, similar accidents will take place all over India.

The constraint for improvements is not funds, but lack of will on the part of politicians and railway employees.

Unfortunately, the Railways in India have become a a milch-cow for many politicians, bureaucrats and railway employees. Its facilities are used as free transit camps for political followers and political parties shamelessly vie with each other in encouraging their followers to travel without tickets for attending mass rallies.

In some parts of the country, ticketless travel has become a fundamental right, and a lax Railway administration tolerates it.

The top railway brass panders to the whims of politicians, and is busy enjoying its saloons, foreign tours and other perquisites. Officers down the line take the line of least resistance. Fleecing of fare-paying passengers and businessmen who use freight services by railway staff, results in huge loss of revenue.

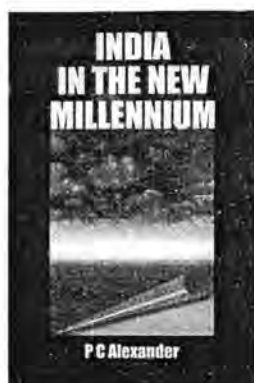
Mafia gangs have a free run of many goods yards, and a number of railway platforms have become housing colonies.

No wonder, railways have no resources and travel has become a hazard, in spite of enormous managerial and employee capabilities which can give India a world class railway system.

A change can come only when the public clamours and compels the politician and railway authorities to give to the country a good and honest system evolved over nearly a century and a half.

M. R. Pal

BOOK REVIEWS



INDIA IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

By P. C. Alexander

Published By

Somaiya Publications Private Limited, 172, Mumbai Marathi, Granthasangrahalaya, Dadar, Mumbai 400 014.

Year of publication: 2001. Number of pages: 281. Price Rs.400.

Reviewed by

Brig. S. C. Sharma (retired) currently working in industry in managerial posts and as advisor.

The author was Principal Secretary to Indira Gandhi. The book deals with the various aspects of Indian polity like the Constitution of India, challenges to the democratic process, development of political leadership, economic policies, ethics and values and human development. The author expresses satisfaction with what has been achieved in most of the areas. There is no discussion on the mismanagement of the public sector and inefficiency of capital caused by the state monopoly of financial institutions and banks. Nor is there any reference to the Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi.

The twentieth century was marked by a consolidation of the institution of nation states, two world wars fought with weapons of mass destruction made feasible by the rapid advance of science and technology and the rise of communism. Colonialism came to end giving rise to new independent nations. Before the close of the century, we notice an erosion in the sovereignty of nation states due to ethnicity, tribalism and religious fundamentalism in Asia/Africa and due to voluntary action elsewhere where large economic unions have been formed. The communist system in the USSR has collapsed; but the thought of social justice has become a model for all the states. It is to be seen whether the USA will continue

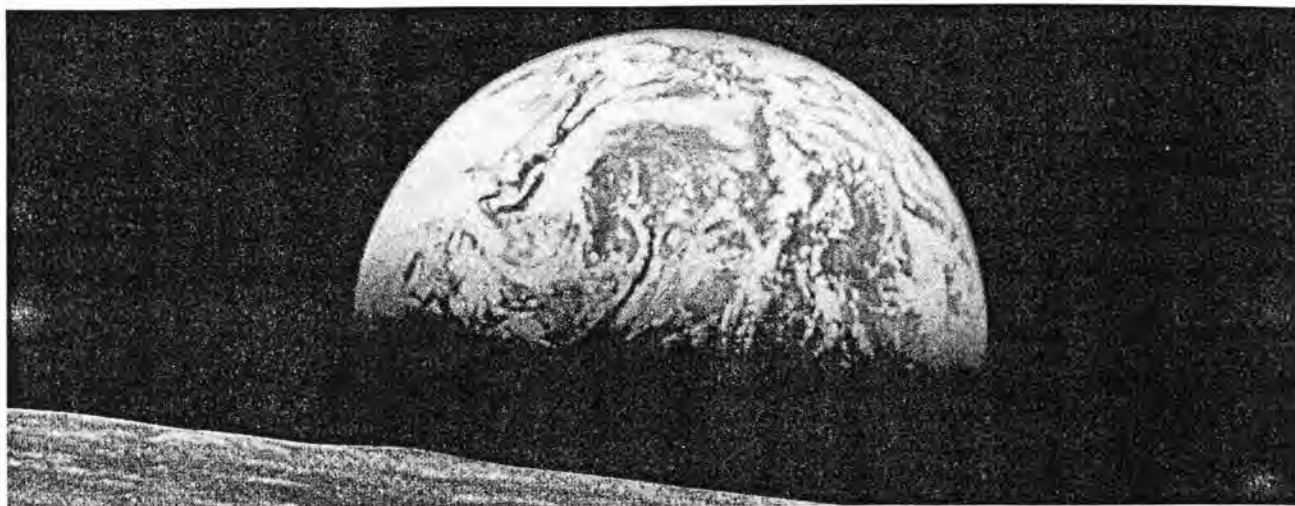
to be the dominant military power and to what extent India and China will realize their potential to influence the new century.

Spread of democracy was another important event of the last century. India adopted the democratic model. The Constitution of India is quasi-federal with a strong center. The towering personalities of national leaders like Nehru, Patel and Azad and the authority of the planning commission have resulted in more powers to the centre. A reverse trend has set in due to the rise of regional parties, defections and lack of clear majority for any party in the parliament or assemblies. India lacks the tradition of parliamentary democracy. The author has refuted the thesis of European historians that prior to the British rule India was only a geographical identity and not a nation. Through ages India was very much a nation based on a unique civilizational identity. The fundamental rights of dignity, equality and justice have remained on paper. The author blames it on the lack of consciousness of citizens. This is not the whole story. This lacuna has much to do with the failure of our earlier national leaders to reform the judicial system and state control of economic and financial activities.

After independence, the Government of India opted for

continuing controls on investment, foreign exchange and imports to promote Indian industry. This policy did bring about entrepreneurial development in some industries but had a disastrous effect on India's share in world trade, since the Indian industries enjoyed a competition-free and assured market in India. The policy was continued too long even after it became counter-productive since it suited the politicians and bureaucrats. Another disadvantage was that India missed the technological revolution. The economic reforms of 1991-92 were forced by the desperate situation of high inflation and low foreign exchange reserves. This has given a new impetus to Indian industry. Agricultural production needs to be increased to meet the demands of growing population and industrial needs. The suggested thrusts are better management of water resources, application of science and technology and importance of non-crop sectors like livestock.

The principles of selection, promotion and conduct of the civil servants are well described in the book. Few will agree with him that the civil services in India are not bloated or that their promotion is based on merit. Almost the complete absence of supersession is a pointer to the lack of merit based promotion. He laments the introduction of



apocalypse now?

It's not as though we have anywhere else to go. She is our only home. If she dies, we die.

Already, we have stripped her of her forests. Polluted her air and water. Blasted a gaping hole in her delicate protective atmosphere.

If we continue to live the way we do now, then by the year 2025, about 75% of her rain forests will be wiped out. Over 50,000 species will be extinct. 40% of her fertile land will be barren. Her rivers and seas will turn toxic. Her weather patterns will spin out of control.

But if enough concerned, aware people act now, there is still hope. And what is called for is not heroic but rather very simple.

Check your equipment and your processes regularly. Recycle waste products. Use technology that's environmentally sustainable. On an even more basic level, don't leave a tap running when you're not using it. Don't leave lights on when there's no one in the room. Write on both sides of a sheet of paper. Check your vehicle regularly. Recycle old plastic bags. Pool your car.

Such simple things, we can all do them. We can all teach our children to do them.

Start today. Because tomorrow, we may not have a planet left to save.



TATA ENGINEERING

Vehicles that deliver on emission norms ahead of legislation. Manufacturing processes and design that preserve the environment. A harmonious co-existence with ecology. All part of TATA Engineering's drive towards a healthier planet.

multiple levels in the civil service. He has not commented as to what steps he took as a senior civil servant to reduce these levels and why should sanction of the Government be necessary for the CBI to investigate and prosecute a civil servant.

The author is well aware of the difficult situation faced by the civil servant working under a corrupt political master. He advises that the civil servant needs to develop a healthy and harmonious relationship with the political masters, help in evolving policies and implement them. To take shelter behind the judgement of Justice Chagla in the Mundra case that the minister must fully and squarely accept the responsibility of the decisions of the civil servant is against the principle of responsibility. A civil servant is paid to take correct judgements and be accountable for it. At the root of all the evils recounted by the author is the lack of accountability and greed which sometimes exceeds that of corrupt politicians. The author is silent on what can be done to ensure competence and clean behavior in the present circumstances. We need to

recognize that a number of civil servants are keen to serve their corrupt political masters and join the nexus.

He laments the lack of primary education for half the population and the low quality of university education. There is no mention of the causes of poor performance of colleges like interference by politicians, indiscipline amongst students and the poor salary of teachers.

The contribution of non-resident Chinese in the industrial development of China has been far more marked than that of NRIs in India. The reasons are the larger number of non-resident Chinese, their comparative level of prosperity and the lead taken by China in liberalization. India suffers from bureaucratic obstacles and lack of infrastructure. Fiscal reforms alone will not go far unless there are improvements in the judicial system, law and order and work discipline.

The Constitution of India does not lay down guidelines for action by

the governor, when there is a hung assembly. The author has given his own experience. He invited the party which was likely to win the support of the majority. This practice has generally worked better than to invite the leader of the largest party or take note of pre-election or post-election alliances.

The author has given a good analysis of the events in the days leading to independence and the greatness of Gandhi. Equally fascinating is his comments on the Vedas, ethics and values. A fitting tribute has been paid to the work of Dr. Ambedkar. There is no mention of definite steps required to take India towards her potential except for platitudes like citizens' consciousness and good behaviour. How can it be developed and will the vested interests, the corrupt politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen, allow such a change? A change in the legal system is the first requirement. India is beset with armed insurgency and hostile neighbors and yet there is no mention of Defence or Security issues.

*

Telecom Tariff Reduction – Wooing the Consumer

The reduction in telecom tariff is not a windfall for subscribers, but a long overdue correction. The country has suffered from high tariff and low density of telecommunications because of the rigid structure, outdated technology and low degree of consumer awareness during the days of the Department of Telecommunications. Even after liberalisation, less than 5,000 I.T.S. officers in the Telecom Department (with a few honourable exceptions) dictated the telecom policy to preserve their grip over the system, at the cost of the subscriber and the country's long-term interest. At the operational level, as a telecom official privately described, there was management by linesmen.

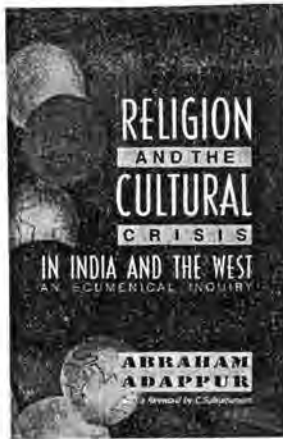
With enlarged competition, fortunately, those unpleasant days are over and the providers have to run after and please subscribers.

The emergence of many new technologies has now made it possible for a telecom revolution (witness China and some other South-East Asian countries) enabling the spread of telecommunications at affordable cost to every nook and corner of the country. Where *ownership* is not possible, there can be *access* to phones to all citizens.

When this development takes place fully, more than the urban centres, the rural economy, will get a tremendous fillip. The growth in rural purchasing power will in turn set off a vigorous revival of industries in urban areas. More important, many self-employment opportunities will be created all over the country, thus mitigating the unemployment problem.

M. R. Pai

(Member, Government of India High Level Committee on Telecom Reorganisation - 1991)



RELIGION AND THE CULTURAL CRISIS IN INDIA AND THE WEST
by Abraham Adappur, S.J.

Published By

Intercultural Publications (P) Ltd., A-1/270, Sec. 4,
Rohini, New Delhi 110 085.

Year of Publication: 2000. No. of pages: 482. Price: Rs.650

Reviewed by

Dr. Sarto Esteves, a freelance journalist for over 40 years, has
authored several books on socio-political subjects.

This is a thought-provoking book on religions in general, but with a lot of emphasis on Christianity and Hinduism. The author is full of admiration for the work done by the various religious groups and leaders in India. This is the right approach and should go a long way to bring about a better understanding and appreciation of what particularly Hinduism is. It will lead to genuine ecumenism in India which is necessary and appears to be also one of the purposes of this study given the fact that Christianity is devoting a lot of attention to the subject both in India and elsewhere especially after Vatican II. The Church has devoted a lot of effort and resources for several centuries now to know India and its religions from its roots; but much remains to be done. "Indian thought came under the spell of Christianity not only because it upheld the dignity of the human individual, but also because in many ways it seemed to be in harmony with important aspects of oriental tradition". Political motives and controversies apart, it is true that Indians following various religions and religious traditions have not failed to recognise the progressive, creative and scientific temper that Christianity has promoted and encouraged the world over, besides the spiritual and theological aspects of Christianity. By and large, this sums up the views and opinions of a large section of scholars, writers and leaders who have made a study of

Christianity like Keshub Chandra Sen, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Debendranath Tagore, Gandhi and others. They studied Christianity and looked at it to a large extent impartially and dispassionately with a view to getting at the truth and after doing so did not hesitate to admit, as Keshub did: I am a child of Asia. Her sorrows are my sorrows, her joys are my joys, Christianity was founded and developed by Asiatics, and in Asia. Jesus is akin to my oriental nature, akin to my oriental habits of thought". This is the approach all Indians need to adopt in order to live in peace and harmony in this multi-religious land.

They were the pioneers of the renaissance that European intellectuals and missionaries like Roberto de Nobili in South India and Matteo Ricci in China brought about to an extent. For a real study of the philosophy and religious speculations of India, a mastery of Sanskrit was and is necessary even today. This is what the missionaries, among others, initiated; they were followed by many more - men of rare intelligence, patience and perseverance. They really introduced India to Europe. "They had their effect on the cultural development of Europe". With their studies began the work of true "discovery" of the East in Europe which was almost unknown to it earlier except some vague ideas about it gathered from explorers, warriors,

travellers and traders. They (Christian missionaries) are the ones who provided the West with authentic, reliable information about India and its religions, about Hinduism and its philosophy, about its history and its culture, for the first time. They indeed performed yeomen services particularly during the last four centuries by putting the real, genuine India, its culture, customs and beliefs into Europe; and thus enlightened the West to a large extent as to what constitutes the essence of India and the East. What Europe received through the efforts of Christian missionaries was also not the distorted and superficial views contained in the reports and writings of the British, French or Portuguese soldiers and administrators but the result of real scholarship by men who mastered the Indian languages, history and philosophy. It was the work of men like Hanxleden, Paulinus and Gundert in South India, and William James and others in the north. This was not an easy task. There were no translations of any of the works of the Indian sages and gurus except in Sanskrit, and whatever they had or knew, was kept a closely guarded secret by the Brahmin class who considered themselves the guardians of those teachings of Hinduism. They thought it was their duty not to make them known to anyone.

All this "admirable work" undertaken by the early Christian

missionaries as a labour of love does not, however, seem to have been carried forward very consistently and with missionary zeal by the Church or by the members of the various religious congregations in recent times when such works are required much more than ever before since millions in India are now educated, enlightened and are anxious to know not only what Christianity is but also what it has done and is doing for the country. The world today is a tiny village. Men and women in every part of the world hunger for knowledge, information and enlightenment, and they have the resources to acquire such knowledge. In India itself over 500 million are literate and are anxious to know who is what. They are not satisfied with mere platitudes and admonitions. They want to be convinced with facts and figures. Absence of such proper, documented information has led to the spread of a lot of misinfor-mation and misunderstanding regarding the Church and its activities, and the chasm has widened between a certain section of the Hindus and the Christian community. Supply of such well-substantiated information and data regarding the work done by the Church would have gone a long way to dispel many of the fears about and highly distorted ideas that the Hindu fundamentalists have about Christianity. The primary task of the Church is "to teach all nations". This has to be carried out in word and deed and the Church must be seen doing so. It has no alternative except to love and serve all men and enter into a genuine dialogue with men and women of all races and nationalities. It has to pursue the mission keeping behind man's prejudices, racial pride and colour differences. Christianity and Hinduism must meet in Christ. "The religion of my brother becomes also for me a personal religious problem". A real meeting between Christianity and Hinduism cannot take place in the doctrinal sphere if Hinduism simply ignores Christianity or vice versa. Truth, in whichever

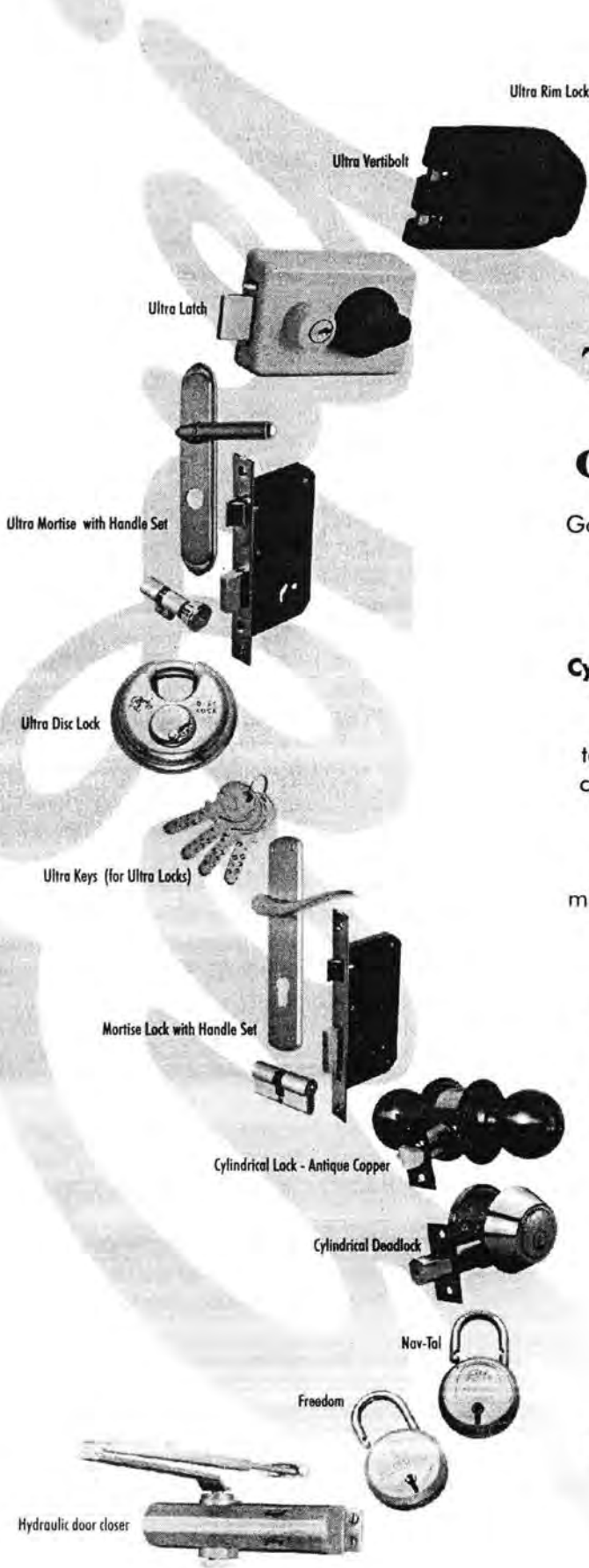
religion it exists, is not to be denied, but upheld. The whole truth revealed to the Church by God must be acknowledged by Hinduism after proper and detailed study. It will ennoble Hinduism.

The crises that has overtaken Christianity during the last three centuries or so which receives a lot of author's attention, is actually a phenomenon prevalent largely in the West - the lands where it was almost fully accepted as "the way, the truth and the life" for several centuries. But the message does not seem to have really "touched the depths of the European soul." The havoc wrought by scholars, philosophers, ideologues and intellectuals like Nietzrsche, Marx, Camus, Sartre, Jules Romains, Malraux, Paul de Kock, Andre Gide, Moliere, and many more is the result of that half-baked, superficial knowledge of their religion. The rise of what is known as "atheism" in the West was their creation; they produced it leading to the collapse of the sanctity of marriage, the mushrooming of a whole legion of freethinkers, people with some ludicrous discipline and grotesque superstitions, "miracle workers" with many of them claiming to be God incarnate. If at all these low-brow intellectuals discovered some "disciples" in some of the colleges and universities of India, and among its intelligentsia, it has been no more than mere youthful intellectual curiosity. There has been no attempt among them to blindly ape those virulent writers of the West whose objective seems to have been mainly to dethrone and demolish the message of Christ to mankind - the message of love, peace, forgiveness, harmony and justice. The Indians wanted to actually enlarge their knowledge with a few exceptions. The "atheists" in the West wanted to establish themselves as bigger Gods.

Influenced by these "revolutionary" writings by a whole generation of thinkers, the youth in

the West felt they should free themselves from the moral norms, religious duties, family restraints, and restrictions imposed by their religion. They found in the theories propounded by these intellectuals an escape route and justification for throwing away religion itself and all decency and respect for anything noble and sacred. The terrible reality is that this "atheism" sprang up, grew, flowered and prospered in those lands "where Christianity has been preached for two thousand years" and was accepted by the people. Therefore, the antidote to the attacks on almost everything that it teaches and holds dear should have come from the Church (the people of God) in a determined, organised manner. For centuries the Church almost took much of it lying down probably thinking that since God is on its side no worldly power would be able to demolish "His kingdom". It is this attitude towards its opponents, which gave its "enemies" the upper hand like many other incidents in history. That approach made them advocate every type of ideology designed to force the masses forsake Christ, imagining that they would carve out a niche for themselves as some sort of demi - gods if not attempt to found their own religions.

Christians had to and have to bring about religious reforms "in the humble awareness of their own crimes, sins, failings and limitations". They have to shed their lethargy, their laziness, their slovenly behaviour, shun a life of ease and comfort, and move with the earth-shaking events that are taking place the world over whether in the religious, social, economic, political or technological sphere. There is not a word in *The Bible* to suggest that even the cloistered atmosphere of the convents and parochial houses or of the seminaries can be an excuse for inaction. Man's God - given talents are to be used to enlighten the world. The people of God, the believers, are



Godrej®

The Signature of trust on every door.

Godrej has long been making finest of the locks for homes and offices.

The product range includes **Mortise Locks, Rim Locks, Padlocks, Cylindrical Locks** and **Furniture Locks** encompassing the traditional lever mechanisms to the **Ultra**, the technologically advanced multi-row pin cylinder mechanisms. **Hydraulic Door Closers** are also available.

Ultra Locking Systems have over 100 million combinations, are unpickable and capable of multi-level Master Key arrangements.

Give an edge to your door with the best combination of appearance, application and strength
— **Install Godrej locks today!!!**



**Peace of mind.
Guaranteed.**

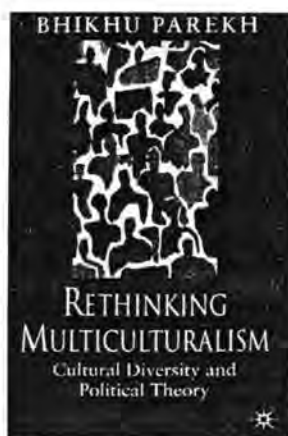
For further information visit
www.godrejlocks.com
www.godrej.com
E-mail: locksmkt@godrej.com

GODREJ & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd.
Locks Division, Plant 18, Pirojshanagar,
Vikhroli, Mumbai 400 079.
Tel: 0091-22-596 4854, 596 4855
Fax: 0091-22-596 1511

prone to commit mistakes like any other human being. To err is human. But that human weakness need not make anyone take to the life of least resistance. In every situation whatever is humanly possible should have been done. If the writings of these intellectuals were affecting the teachings of Christ and his Church, if they were making a divine institution appear to be a hoax, then there was no alternative but to take necessary steps to rescue its followers

from falling into their trap. A close study of the happenings in the Church particularly in the West during the last three centuries must convince everyone that people expect the spiritual leaders to live real Christianity, to lead a life of struggle, suffering and risks in order to find an answer to man's problems of poverty and destitution, sufferings, trials and tribulations because man is both matter and spirit. No one can close himself in a room and pretend to have

solved the problems of his fellow human beings. In the final analysis it must be also admitted that "atheism" and "secularisation" (as understood in the West mainly) have reawakened Christianity. The Church has to a certain extent come to realise the gravity of the situation and its failure to live up to the demands of Christ. "The Church has come to realise how the spread of unbelief was in part due to their own failings, especially to their divisions and rivalries".



RETHINKING MULTICULTURISM, CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND POLITICAL THEORY

by Bhikhu Parekh

Published By

Palgrave Publishers Ltd. (Formerly Macmillan Press Ltd.),
Available in India from Macmillan India Ltd., 75, Bajaj Bhavan,
Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021.

Year of Publication: 2000. No. of Pages: 379. Price: Rs.285.

Year of Publication: 2000

Reviewed by

Professor A. R. Momin, Department of Sociology, University of Mumbai.

In recent years, there has come about a growing recognition and acceptance of cultural and ethnic diversity across the world as well as within individual countries and nation-states. A plural country may be characterised by wide-ranging cultural and ethnic diversities but may choose to play them down and emphasise cultural uniformity and homogenization. This, for example, is the case with China. A multicultural society, on the other hand, is not only composed of diverse ethnic groups and religious communities but it also publicly acknowledges and cherishes diversities and allows sufficient autonomous spaces to different cultural communities. As a social and political philosophy and as a model of societal organisation, multiculturalism entails certain value premises such as the tolerance of differences, peaceful co-existence in a democratic framework, respect for

human and community rights, and a commitment to the resolution of social and ethnic conflicts through dialogue and reconciliation.

There is some thing unique and unprecedented about the emergence of multicultural societies across the US, Europe, Australia and many parts of Asia and Africa. International migration, the world-wide resurgence of ethnic consciousness and identity and the process of globalisation have played a key role in the emergence of multicultural societies. Multiculturalism has led to a rethinking of certain cherished ideological and political assumptions, such as homogeneous national cultures, the universality of the nation-state and the assimilation of minority groups and cultural communities in the dominant population.

Professor Bhikhu Parekh, an internationally renowned scholar, emeritus professor of political theory at the University of Hull in the UK and a member of the House of Lords, has written a thought-provoking, stimulating and highly readable book on multiculturalism. Lord Parekh's discussion of multiculturalism and its promise and prospects in the contemporary context is marked by evident erudition, remarkable perceptiveness and refreshing lucidity. In addition, it is also informed by exceptional sensitivity and compassion.

Parekh emphasises the centrality and salience of culture and points out that, in recent years, the interface between culture and politics has been redefined, that culture is now seen as a politically relevant category. He maintains that cultural diversity is intrinsically valuable in that living in a culturally plural

environment expands people's horizons of thought and sensibility.

The state plays an important role in multicultural societies. The dominant theory of the state presupposes a homogeneous national culture. Parekh argues that this model of the state has become untenable and needs to be reconceptualised in the context of multiculturalism. To quote him: "The state need not consist of a single people and could be a community of communities, each enjoying different degrees of autonomy but all held together by shared legal and political bonds".

All multicultural societies are faced with the formidable problem of reconciling the conflicting demands and pressures of national unity, on the one hand, and cultural and ethnic diversity, on the other. Though Parekh is an ardent advocate of multiculturalism, he is not starry-eyed about it. Aware that multicultural societies are beset with

a number of perplexing problems, he offers a set of guidelines to cope with them. He makes a forceful plea for having a constitutionally-embedded system of fundamental rights. The state needs to ensure that these rights are available to all sections of society in all significant areas of life such as employment, criminal justice, education and public services. Parekh maintains that positive equality, as a fundamental right, entails that all citizens are able to enjoy not only equal political, civil and economic rights but also cultural rights. He discusses the issue of the rights of minorities with remarkable sensitivity and concern. He justifies affirmative action for the marginalised communities on grounds of justice, social harmony and national integration.

The state bears the responsibility of ensuring that the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution are made available to all sections of society without partiality,

discrimination or injustice. Parekh says, "It is of the utmost importance that the institutions of the state – Parliament, government, bureaucracy, police, judiciary – should be, and be seen to be, impartial in their treatment of the members of the different communities". He further says that these institutions should be as representative of the wider society as possible. This observation is particularly relevant in the context of Indian society. It is a well-established fact that the representation of the minorities, Dalits, and other marginalised communities in Parliament and state legislatures, army, police and para-military forces, bureaucracy, educational institutions and public and private sectors is far from adequate. The role of the police and para-military forces in combating communal and inter-caste violence is marked by partiality, brutality and inefficiency. In a harsh indictment of the police administration, the Supreme Court recently dubbed the

POWERING INDIA'S GROWTH for MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS

Thermal • Hydel • Nuclear • Diesel • Gas • Wind

A leading ISO-9001 Engineering Company

Products & Services offered :

- Medium & Large Pumps
- Hydro-Electric Generating Systems
- L.T. & H.T. Alternators and Motors
- Special Rotating Electrical Machines
- H.T. Switchgear & Switchboards
- Electronics & Control Systems
- Jyoti assumes single-source responsibility for implementing Turn-key Projects.
- Jyoti Pro/ENGINEER Design Service Centre offers CAD / CAM / CAE solutions to improve engineering processes.



Jyoti Ltd.

Nanubhai Amin Marg, Industrial Area, P.O. Chemical Industries, Vadodara - 390 003 (India).

Phones : (0265) 280633, 280627 Fax : (0265) 280671, 281871

E-Mail : encl.jyoti@sn3.snl.in Website : <http://www.jyoti.com>

50 Years of Engineering Excellence

law-enforcement agencies in the country as 'engines of oppression'.

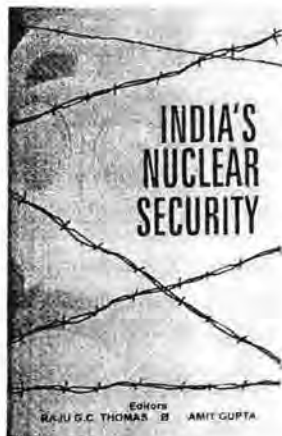
It is significant to note that the US has an important institution, known as Equal Employment Opportunity Agency, which deals with complaints of discrimination against ethnic and cultural minorities. The UK has a similar kind of institution, known as Commission for Racial Equality. Unfortunately, India has no anti-discriminatory agency or institution.

Parekh is against the unwilling assimilation of religious minorities and cultural communities in the culture of the dominant group. He points out that the model of assimilation has always resulted in failure in the long run. The latest example of this failure is provided by

the US where the experiment of the melting pot has miscarried. Parekh rightly asserts that assimilation is not necessary to ensure political unity and is not a precondition of equal citizenship. He holds that "the demand for total assimilation springs from intolerance of differences, and for the intolerant even the smallest differences are sources of deep unease". This observation has a striking relevance in the present context in India where the ruling establishment is surreptitiously seeking to push its hidden homogenising agenda in the fields of education and culture.

Parekh discusses the question of national identity in a multicultural society with great perceptiveness and sagacity. He argues that national identity should be defined in political

and not ethnic terms, that it should be inclusive and accommodating rather than exclusive and parochial, that it should allow for multiple ethnic identities without any aspersions being cast on certain communities. National identity should be so defined, he says, that it includes all its citizens and makes it possible for them to identify with it. "Minorities cannot feel part of the (national) community if its very self-definition excludes them and treats them as outsiders". This provides a refutation of the ideology of *Hindutva* which is premised on a fallacious conflation between national identity and Hinduism and which excludes the minorities, Dalits, tribals and other marginalised communities from its purview.



INDIA'S NUCLEAR SECURITY

Edited by

Raju G C Thomas and Amit Gupta

Published By

Vistaar Publications, 32M Block Market, Greater Kailash 1,
New Delhi 110 046. Pages 275 (13 Chapters); and Pages 33: List of
Acronyms, Bibliography, The Contributors, Index; Price Rs.595.
Year of Publication: 2000

Reviewed by

Maj. Gen. E. D'Souza (retired) is a regular contributor to *Freedom First*

India's Nuclear Security concerns appear to have resurfaced as a result of the tacit nod given by the Foreign/Defence Minister Jaswant Singh to the US to the decision of the Bush Administration to go in for a Nuclear Defence Missile (NMD) programme. This stance was later amplified by the ruling dispensation that India's avowed policy was governed by the decision of the sole Superpower to reduce its nuclear arsenal in consonance with India's consistent stands for a nuclear free world.

At a presentation made to Officers of the Corps that participated in Exercise Poorna Vijay, on India's nuclear security interests, a point was raised by one of the senior officers that the Government should revoke its decision of a No First Strike policy, implying that it was akin to the allegorical fable of closing the stable gates after the horse had bolted.

Can India afford to be hit first by a hostile power? It is not the intention of this review to examine

this recommendation but its relevance to the book under review makes it all the more necessary for concerned Indians to acquire a copy of this publication, INDIA'S NUCLEAR SECURITY, as it will clarify many doubts of the whys and wherefores of India going nuclear after Pokran II.

Raju Thomas and Amit Gupta have involved an impressive group of academics, 12 scholars, from diverse backgrounds, to offer their views on this still debated topic

including three non Asians: the well known Stephen Cohen of the Brookings Institute, USA, Ben Sheppard Editor of Janes Sentinel, and Clifford Singer, Professor of Nuclear Engineering, University of Illinois. The Asian contributors are Mohammed Ayooob, International Relations, Michigan State University, Sumit Ganguly, Professor Political Science, Hunter College New York, Co-Editor Amit Gupta, Associate Professor, Stonehill College, Massachusetts, Prem Shankar Jha the Kashmir Expert, who needs no introduction, Dinshaw Mistry, researcher Brookings Institute, Deepa Ollpally, currently researching at the UN Institute of Peace after teaching at Swarthmore College, Editor Raju Thomas, Allis Chalmers Professor at Marquette University, S R Valluri who studied in the US and now heads the Aeronautical Developmental Agency in India, and Farah Zahra, research fellow, Harvard University.

Significantly, all these well known contributors have been involved in American Academia and hence they generally project the US view. This is a very well documented book presented through a series of articles covering a wide spectrum of issues such as political considerations, types of nuclear doctrines, political and economic consequences, technological ramifications, impact of the South Asian tests, and possible arms control measures, resulting in an

insightful, comprehensive and topical publication for those of us concerned with political issues, international relations as India tries desperately hard to remove the sanctions imposed consequent on the Pokran II tests, strategic planning including the command and control set-up for nuclear conflict, and important policy issues arising from the nuclearization of South Asia.

Of equal importance to the serious reader is that the book covers Pakistan and China in its ambit. This is of importance to strategic planners as there is a tendency not to consider China as a nuclear player in South Asia though it has a very prominent presence in Tibet which is West and South of the Himalayan chain demarcating South Asia from the Asian mainland. Perhaps the most important chapter arguably is Chapter 6 where Mohammed Ayooob has made a very frank assessment of the threat to India from China, pooh-poohed at one stage, and in doing so suggests that the US should back India becoming a permanent member of the proposed expanded Security Council, and to that extent accept India's stand of minimum deterrence from her two possible detractors.

Yet another interesting Chapter is Chapter 9 by Dinshaw Mistry who with the aid of reliably documented tables, covers Technology for Defence and Development: India's Space

Programme. He is able to project his views lucidly on Indias Space and Missile Technology from which he is able to derive sensible conclusions.

What is equally appealing about this book is that a discriminating reader can savour each Chapter independently without having to go through the whole book in one reading, to understand the *raison detre* for its publication.

The Editors have taken infinite pains to include a list of Acronyms used, Bibliography, brief CVs of the distinguished and knowledgeable contributors, and a comprehensive Index.

There can be little doubt that although the views expressed may be US centered, it is a must for all those concerned with Indias nuclear policy and is therefore well worth a buy.

One cannot help but mention in conclusion that the reviewer met Madam Li Hui Min, Deputy Director, China Association of International Friendly Contact in Mumbai recently and her immediate concern was India's stance on NMD. It is obvious that China is deeply concerned with George Bush's decision to embark on a NMD programme. This book may well clarify China's concerns and Indias decision to go nuclear. Should China embark on a NMD programme will it force India to do likewise?



This much is true - that through all the vicissitudes of JP's life, there has throughout been an internal consistency. JP has tried to place Man in the centre of the picture. It is a part of the Indian tradition that he has sought to revive...

Minoo Masani,
in his book: *JP - Mission Partly Accomplished*



For the special occasion called life.

Raymond presents its stunning range of fabrics, in a wide variety of colours, designs, textures and blends. All-wool, wool-rich, poly-wool blends and more. Whatever you're looking for, you're sure to find it with Raymond.

The Complete Man

Raymond

S I N C E 1 9 2 5

www.raymondindia.com



Whatever.

Whenever.

Wherever.

At AFL, we move anything and everything to anywhere.

Now tell us when, where and what.



Where movement is a science



AFL FREIGHT SYSTEMS • AFL LOGISTICS • AFL INDTRAVELS • AFL SHIPPING • AFL INFOTECH