

Freedom First

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A Well Deserved Honour – Kudos to the Post Office

It was really heartening to read that a commemorative postage stamp featuring Bollywood's beauty heroine late Madhubala was released recently by the Postal Authorities. It is better late than never. She deserved it the most. Her excellent performance as Anarkali in *Mogul-e-Azam* opposite Bollywood's legendary hero Dilip Kumar was truly unforgettable. But she received her call from heaven at a young age. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

But it is disheartening to observe the omission of the names of other Bollywood celebrities the reason for which is not known. Some of the most popular among them are: Suraiya, Motilal, Nutan, Shobhana Samarth, Durga Khote, Raaj Kumar, Sunil Dutt, Ashok Kumar, Devika Rani, Leela Chitnis, Meena Kumari, Bhagwan, Talat Mohammed, Rehman, Noor Jehan, Naseem Banu and Balraj Sahni.

There may be still more names but celebrities should be ignored. The Postal authorities may take a note of this.

M. S. Kilpady, Mumbai

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Education in Andhra Pradesh

This has reference to *Freedom First*, February 2008 on Education in Andhra Pradesh. Most of the state governments have failed in their constitutional duty to look after primary and secondary education. Andhra is no exception. While working at Dr.M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai in 1996-97, I visited an elementary school at Erimalai in the Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu. Though sanction was given to run classes up to standard V, there were hardly 20 students from the first to the fifth standards. The school had only one teacher who visited the school from his hometown Dharmapuri and returned on the third day of every week. On the other hand there is a school building which is not seen in many rural areas.

In Orissa I visited Malkangiri, Koraput, Nowrangpur and Raigada districts; the standard of elementary education was appalling and even the minimum facilities were missing.

Recently, in December 2007, I visited elementary schools in Mussoorie district along with a state educational officer and the condition of government-owned schools are far below expectations in most of the areas of this district in Uttarakhand. This must be the case with schools in all other districts in the state.

Generally speaking education in India has become a way of business – right up to the deemed university stage.

Raman Dharmalingam, Kotagiri, Nilgiris District.

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“The Democratic Spirit”

Recently, Mr. Rahul Gandhi, General Secretary of the AICC and Member of Parliament, toured Karnataka as a part of his “Discovery” tour. At that time, he lamented the absence of the democratic spirit in our political parties. It is amusing to hear such facts all the more from a leader of the Congress Party. For, there is not even a semblance of the democratic spirit in that very party. Everything is decided by their supremo (We must be ashamed of ourselves for having such supremos in other parties as well). The Gandhi family thinks that only it has the hereditary right to rule the country. The Party actually practices nepotism of the worst kind. For, otherwise, it is anybody's guess as to what would have been the status of the late Sri Rajiv Gandhi, his wife or his son.

It was amusing to see how even senior leaders of the party, including an ex-governor were at his (Sri Rahul Gandhi's) beck and call during his recent visit to Karnataka. They were actually acting as his courtiers. It was simply disgusting to see sycophancy being practised so openly.

Incidentally, it is interesting to notice how these Gandhis bear the tikka mark (Vermillion/kumkum) on their foreheads during their visits to backward areas. I am afraid it is a clear case of trying to mislead and woo the gullible (vote bank politics). Unfortunately, we do not have a law to prevent the misuse of caste-marks for political purposes.

Mrs. Sonia Gandhi allows her photograph to appear in the display advertisements of the Central government, and the like, as though she is a part of the national emblem. I wonder how the President of India allows the misuse of public funds for private purposes. Unfortunately, it is so despite people, like me, bringing concrete cases to the notice of the President of India. Why does not our Finance Minister prevent the diversion of public money for private purposes? Perhaps he dare not even try!

K. N. Krishna Prasad, Mysore

‘Whatever For? They Are Only Doing Their Duty’

A Retired Soldier’s Observations on the 6th Pay Commission’s Recommendations

Eustace D’Souza

Never since Independence have emotions been stirred to the extent they have arising from five earlier Pay Commissions, not only among serving Services personnel but among retired personnel as well.

Never before since Independence have the Armed Forces reacted with such unison to express their deep disappointment at the recommendations of Justice Srinivasan’s Sixth Pay Commission currently being hotly and emotionally challenged by All Ranks, serving and retired, of our Armed Forces.

The Babus or the Mandarins in Delhi who considered the issue brings back to mind an incident at the 7th Course of the National Defence College New Delhi in 1967. The speaker for that morning was the Defence Secretary. At the conclusion of his presentation three serving officers, Captain (IN), E. Chandy Kuruvilla (later Vice Admiral), Air Commodore Idris Hasan Latif (later Air Chief Marshal, Chief of the Air Staff) and the undersigned, then a Brigadier fresh from facing the PLA (the Communist Chinese Peoples Liberation Army) on the high altitude East Sikkim Watershed, rose in unison and posed this question: “The Armed Forces have been on the *qui vive* ever since Independence: the Punjab Boundary Force, Kashmir, counter insurgency in the North East, the ill-fated 1962 War against the Chinese, the 1965 War against Pakistan yet keeping a wary eye on China in the East – there were four skirmishes at Yak La and Nathu La – that there was no National War Memorial to the thousands of our gallant soldiers, sailors and airmen who had sacrificed their lives for the Nation. Yet, the British had erected the most impressive war memorial, the India Gate on the high visibility Raj Path, a tourist landmark, for Indian troops that sacrificed their lives in World War I. Pat came the typically suave *babu* reply: “Whatever for? They are only doing their duty”!

It was only after the 1971 War that the then PM the late Indira Gandhi agreed to a National War Memorial in the form of a *Samadhi* but under the Imperial National War Memorial. Dwarfed by the imposing landmark of India Gate very few of our countrymen stop to say a silent prayer or place a posy of flowers. Compare this memorial with the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, or the Arc de Triomphe on the Champs Elysee in Paris, or Arlington in Washington, or Sofia in Bulgaria or even in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia or

in Brasilia, wherever? This incident has been mentioned because it is a true reflection of the very same babus who comprise the Pay Commissions. It is obvious that their motto is “I’m alright you’re alright so what’s the problem?” This attitude became glaringly evident in the 6th Pay Commission’s recommendations.

In an earlier article in *Freedom First* on the shortage of officers in the Armed Forces, one of the reasons discussed was the comparison between emoluments of the Private Sector and the Armed Forces which was not only dissuading young Indians from applying for Commissions, but even seeking premature retirement to move to greener pastures. And why not? Officers of the Armed Forces need to live decent lives, educate their children and plan for an early retirement between 50 and 60 depending on their ranks and not as in the civil services at 60.

The writer would like to give his own example. On being promoted to Lt.Col. after 16 years service, he was separated from his family from 1958 to 1960 in the militant-prone sector of Poonch, and 1962 to 1967 in North Bengal and Sikkim. His separated family had to live in a part of an ancient private bungalow in Mhow Cantt; there was no separated family accommodation for an officer serving in high altitudes! There were no English medium schools in Mhow for boys so he had to pack his sons off to Mount Abu. This meant maintaining three establishments on a miserable salary of a Lt.Col/Brig. After a short spell of 2½ years in Delhi, he moved on promotion to the Kashmir Valley as an operational divisional commander and was separated from his family for 4 years. This resulted in maintaining four establishments. As a result of these prolonged separations his wife suffered a nervous breakdown! There are numerous such examples. And the salary of a Major General then was a mere Rs.2,700/- Admittedly conditions have somewhat improved with separated family quarters and better salaries but certainly not comparable with their counterparts in the Civil Services and consonant with the risks the soldiers have to take. We have had in the recent past Officers of the rank of

Colonel sacrificing their lives leading from the front in counter militancy and insurgency operations But do Pay Commissions consider these occupational hazards that the Armed Forces face? There was the case of a fairly senior IPS Officer who died of heart attack in Mumbai, living with his family in the comfort of city life, because of the strain of policing!

Which babu sitting in his luxury office in South Block sends his sons to the Army? Because of his stability he is able to send his children to Ivy League institutions in India and abroad. How can such a bureaucrat ever get the feel of the inbuilt hazards of soldiering in its current avatar?

This calls to mind an incident during the Defence Ministership of George Fernandes. One of his first missions was to visit our troops in Siachen and observe for himself the conditions of service in the highest battlefield in the world, facing a live enemy. He was aghast to note the shortage of Snowmobiles used for transporting supplies including kerosene from helipads/dropping zones. On his return to South Block he called for the files and was shocked to learn that his babus were totally unconcerned in processing the case for acquisition of these vehicles. To teach them a lesson he packed those responsible to get a taste of Siachen. The files thereafter were cleared expeditiously!

Never since Independence have emotions been stirred to the extent they have arising from five earlier Pay Commissions, not only among serving Services personnel but among retired personnel as well. Barred from paying homage at Amar Jawan, as a silent and disciplined sign of dismay, 30 meetings were held at War Memorials in different parts of the country – Delhi (Jantar Mantar), Chandigarh, Amritsar, Bangalore, Nerul Navi Mumbai *et al.* Protesting through demonstrations and speeches are contrary to the Armed Forces culture and so all these meetings were conducted in a dignified manner by remembering the thousands who sacrificed their lives for the country. Nevertheless the three Service Chiefs, in a demonstration of solidarity, met the Defence Minister A. K. Anthony and expressed their strong sense of dismay and unhappiness at the Pay Commission's recommendations on which there was no representative of the Armed Forces. An ex-Army Chief Gen. Malik made an impassioned written appeal to the Prime Minister bringing these patent injustices to his notice. Perhaps, as a result of all these efforts a lunch meeting was arranged with the Cabinet Secretary and the three Chiefs. It is not the intention in this article to list out the problem areas as these are well known. These glaring disparities were highlighted in a responsible and dignified manner as per the custom of

the Services. Basically these are:

- the need to have a separate Services Pay Commission for obvious reasons;
- the inclusion of a representative from the Armed Forces in the existing structured Pay Commissions;
- in this case, the appointment of a review committee drawn from a Group of Ministers (GOP) of which more anon;
- And a revision of emoluments, Issue based and the long standing plea for one rank one pension.

Logic demands that service in the Armed Forces of India based on historic grounds since Independence cannot be equated with other Civil Services. Unless the whole procedure and composition of Pay Commissions are revised, the Services will no longer be sought by our youth as careers, especially in the Officer cadre. This is obvious from the marked short fall in intakes for Commissions and the increasing number of Service personnel seeking premature retirement. Can the Nation afford to reach such a dangerous impasse with cross border militancy on the increase as evidenced in the recent Samba and Pulwama incidents; the growing problems of Naxalites; the location of Chinese nuclear missiles on the Indo Chinese border facing India and its strident claims on Arunachal; the growing Maoist influence in our immediate neighborhood and our UN commitments?

To refresh readers' memories, our Armed Forces today are entrusted with five roles and these are:

- integrity of our international borders;
- internal security which covers counter militancy, counter insurgency;
- disaster relief within and without the country;
- international peace keeping commitments;
- and protection and conservation of the Environment.

It is common knowledge that when all else fails call in the Armed Forces to bail the country out, the latest example being the proposal to hand over the Commonwealth Games to the Armed Forces.

To sum up, the following steps are recommended on this sensitive issue of emoluments:

- As a long term measure there should be a separate Pay Commission for the Armed Forces.
- In the case of the 6th Pay Commission recommendations, a GOP of Ministers from all parties representing all States be set up to examine and rectify

the 6th Pay Commission's recommendations. This high level group should be divided into subgroups to examine the serving conditions of the Services in Siachen, the desert, the tropical jungles of the North East, J & K and NEFA and the plight of ex servicemen.

- The equation with the Civil Services should be rectified.
- The Supreme Commander our President should be apprised of these glaring deficiencies.
- Early retirement ages should be compensated by lateral entry into the Public Sector.

- Our TV Channels should have a debate on this issue both in Hindi and English so that the person in the street is made aware of these disparities.

Do we want to be deprived of the splendid Armed Forces that we have because of discontent? Today as per surveys made by journals like India Today whereas in the field of public services, devotion to duty, discipline and integrity, the Services stand first on a scale of 1 to 9, they occupy the last position as a career option and in the marriage market!

MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) E. D'SOUZA, PVSM is a freelance writer and a frequent contributor to *Freedom First*.

Needed - A Committee to Probe the Sixth Pay Commission

J. N. Chopra

The army guards the frontiers of the country so the country can prosper in peace. Soldiers stand guard on all the high altitudes and snow bound areas, where 'not a blade of grass grows', where nothing can be seen for miles except snow, where a letter may take weeks to reach. Has our 'Shining' India made any provision for them to date?

At the time of the Kargil war, lakhs of rupees were paid to the next of kin of the soldiers who laid down their lives in the face of the enemy. There are still many survivors and families of the brave of previous wars, struggling for survival. What about them?

Is it any wonder then that the proud and valiant Indian Army which wins kudos around the world, is now running short of manpower at all levels? Which middle class or upper class parents, in their right mind, would want to send up their sons and daughters into a service where they are on duty round the clock, to earn a piddling sum with a few perks thrown in, when the same qualifications can earn them five and seven figure salaries in even the public sector?

Yes, we do have a core reserve of service-minded families, with decades of service to the nation behind them, who still send their young to hold up the honour of the land. But what happens to them eventually? A few thousand rupees for pay and a prayer, and a paisa for pension, only after a specified period of service.

The fact of the matter is that all our policy makers and their advisors, the *netas*, the *babus* and the lobbies that influence them are totally unaware of the harsh facts of service conditions. This is because not a single one of them has ever sent a son or a daughter into the armed forces. That is why there is no sympathy for the Armed Forces. In a state like Gujarat, there are those at the top levels in industry and trade, with admiration for America

but lack knowledge of its Army's track record, who question: 'Why should we pay them? We do not need such a big army? Just take a few soldiers and give them computers and technology and let them fight like the American Army does'

Remember Defense Minister George Fernandes giving *safe passage* to the Pakistanis after the Kargil War? Did our young people lay down their lives to offer safe passage to the enemy after having been instructed by their seniors to make every bullet count as it had cost the country dear. George Fernandes garnered himself a lot of publicity as the first minister to visit the Siachen glacier. What did he do for the soldiers after that, apart from some orders, kickbacks for which went into the commodious pockets of the *netas*?

Ahimsa paramo dharma is all very well. But you cannot fight a war by holding a gun in one hand, while the other hand is held tight by *netas*. I recall a statement by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, to the effect 'why make so much noise about the Chinese taking some land in Ladakh. Not a blade of grass grows in that area;' to which the late Mahavir Tyagi, MP, responded 'Panditji, not a single hair grows on your head should I ..'(He made a gesture of slitting the throat)!

How many Indians can fathom the feelings of a soldier when he is hit by an enemy bullet? Listen ye politicians, *babus* and industrialists pontificating on policies and finances in air-conditioned comfort but have never

seen a border region and its dangers: Have you seen a *Baraf Ka Gola* (an ice ball)? Yes, that ice candy made of shaved ice flavoured with colorful sherbets which is common summer delicacy? Just imagine that lonely soldier in the mountains, ill clothed for the minus 60 degree temperature, being hit by a bullet. A fountain of blood oozes onto the snow at his feet in just the patterns of that *gola*; and during those few seconds between being hit and actually dying, his whole life flashes before his eyes in a fast rewind: the dilapidated house that needs repairs, the father who needs medical attention, the young wife with a small kid who will have a tough time in his absence, the land dispute that has yet to be settled, the mother's denture which needs replacing - will the pension cover all this plus food, shelter, education and security for the young, old and the infirm? With just about three years of service, there is not much in the PF or the savings account. Perhaps the last words before he breathes his last would be "God take care of my family."

But God has many other problems to tackle, including hundreds of such unsung soldiers who die day in and day out. It is up to the government of IAS *babus* and *netas*. But do they? Rather would they? They might, only if there is something in it for them. Another Kargil?

How many of our leaders, political or otherwise, have a son or a daughter in the Armed Forces to know where the shoe pinches? When the daughter of a *neta* was kidnapped, the entire government machinery was subverted to release terrorists to get her safe release. When it comes to making provision for the pay and pension of soldiers who are committed to lay down their lives for the country, every paisa is begrudged on the ground: 'Why do we need the Army?' Leave alone making provision for

their pay and pension, no *babu* or *neta* has ever moved forward to bring back the prisoners of war who are rotting in Pakistani jails for decades. Perhaps because none of them have a *neta* or a *babu* for a relative.

Meanwhile, while the soldier serves in the most difficult of terrains, in all manner of climes, surrounded by mountains, forests, glaciers or even mines, the *babus* sit in their air conditioned offices and conferences halls to pontificate on military pay and pensions, how many PCOs or *Paan* shops may be allotted to those who survive the loss of limbs in the field. Has anyone ever examined the fortunes of the IAS *babus* and those of their offspring; how were those offspring educated and then employed etc. For every *babu* offspring who gets into the top schools in India, how many offsprings of *Fauji* officers make it?

The unfortunate part is that the soldiers have no forum for venting their grievances. If anyone speaks up at the Darbar, believe me, he will never be heard of again. In the case of the Sixth Pay Commission, it was left to retired officers to take up cudgels on behalf of the serving personnel who cannot speak out.

What of the grievances of the retired personnel? In Gujarat, they were promised 16 acres of land each. A handful got that land and the rest ran from pillar to post to return empty handed. Neither the *babu* nor the senior officer wants to touch this problem.

How much more do we add before resting our case before the Committee which has been set up to examine the recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission?

CAPT. J. N. CHOPRA (Retd.) works for a TV channel.

Breaking Traditional Moors

Here are two separate encouraging stories that traditional mores are being challenged. The two are not connected in any way – yet they are. They represent the coming of age in parts of India's backlands.

The first relates to farmers in the village of Hiware Bazar in the district of Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. They decided to take a vacation – a revolutionary concept where India's farmers are concerned. The village receives poor rainfall. The farmers focussed on dry-land farming, sowing onions and tomatoes and a water harvesting programme that ensured their crops get enough water through the year. But they had 12 power cuts everyday. So their Gram Sabha decided why toil needlessly in the hot summer and why not use this failure of the state to provide uninterrupted power, to good advantage, put away their tools for six weeks and take a summer vacation! This was last year. This year too they are currently "on leave", said Popat Pawar who has been behind this movement to convert a challenge into an opportunity.

The other is from far off Meerut in Uttar Pradesh. A young woman, daughter of a grocer who runs a little shop in Muzaffarnagar decided that she would do something different and more challenging. So she enrolled in a grooming institute in Meerut. Soon she was found competent enough to take on a job as a flight attendant in a private airline. It was not easy initially – not the training course but the neighbours. In the beginning Aanchal Arora, that's the young woman's name, with the support of her mother, 'lied' that she was doing a course in fashion designing. After she got her job with the airlines, she became "the darling of her neighbours" with their wanting to know the 'key of her success. Many of them want to break the middle class mindset to break social barriers and grab employment opportunities.

Both reports are based on news items in *Hindustan Times* of May 5

VIJAY TENDULKAR

January 1928-May 2008

The Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom salutes the Memory of a "fearless writer who didn't hesitate to portray the darker side of society."

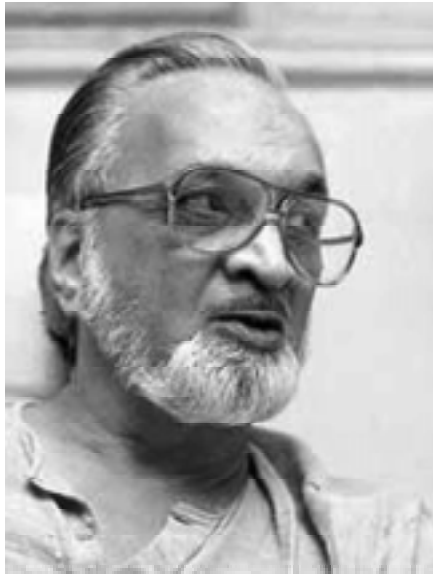
The passing away of octogenarian Vijay Tendulkar is a major loss to the Indian literary scene, more particularly to Marathi literature. The consummate writer that he was, his unorthodox views made Mumbai's intelligentsia think about the real nature of human beings. Tendulkar was a thinker who fitted into the mould prepared by Edward Said, who defined an intellectual as an individual with a vocation for the art of representing, whether by talking, writing, teaching or appearing on television.

Tendulkar did not advocate any philosophy. He was neither a pacifier nor a conscience-builder, but he was a communicator whose whole being was staked on a critical sense. Was he an anarchist? Can non-conformism be equated with anarchism? Tendulkar was a non-conformist and took different intellectual positions on different occasions.

He had his own logic which he laid out convincingly. I believe that, contrary to the general impression, he was not an activist in the true sense of the term, although he was seen heading many progressive rallies. Call him what you may, he was always unwilling to accept easy formulae or readymade cliches. He swam against the current of populist emotional overflow and never hesitated to voice his opinions in unambiguous language. And he was ready to pay for his opinions — the true hallmark of an intellectual. Once Kartar Singh Thatte, a maverick *Chitpavan*, came to the Loksatta office with a cane and hit Tendulkar for his 'unorthodox' and 'defamatory' writing. Tendulkar did not even attempt to stop him, nor did he argue with him. He silently bore it.

Tendulkar's detractors commented that he wrote for effect and that he revelled in controversies. Some labelled him 'a rebel without a cause'. Those who

understood him knew that his entire life was an investigation — an enquiry into the innermost recesses of the human mind which, according to him, was not as noble, gentle and pious as is made out by the poets and writers of yesterday, but selfish, promiscuous, and even cruel.



Tendulkar's contributions to diverse fields of Marathi literature in the form of newspaper columns, plays, film scripts, or essays should be viewed against this backdrop.

A popular diktat of the performing arts and writing prevented artistes and writers from showing the darker side of society. Tendulkar was emphatic in saying that to leave them out was a cowardly exclusion. That is why his early plays, such as '*Silence, The Court Is In Session!*', '*Sakharam Binder*', and '*Gidhade*' (Vultures), when performed for

the first time on stage, shocked the prudish. A ghazal of poet Suresh Bhat's has the line: "*Vijay to kasalaa uraavar jakham jo karanaar naahi*" (What is that Vijay (victory) which does not show a wound on the chest). Tendulkar obviously took pride in this eloquent line as for a long time the ghazal was displayed in his assistant editor's cabin in *Loksatta*.

Tendulkar mellowed with the times. In the last decade he became more contemplative. His speeches became more philosophic, with all his originality. His thoughts wandered around destiny. It was odd to hear this from a self-made man who by sheer dint of talent and industry made a name in the international world of letters. But that happens to most thinking persons, perhaps. Tendulkar, at least, should have been spared.

COURTESY: DNA and Aroon Tikekar, a political commentator. This is an extensive extract from his tribute in the DNA of May 30, s2008.

Point Counter Point

Ashok Karnik

*Every issue has at least two sides. A wise man studies all sides before coming to a conclusion.
This is an attempt to debate all issues so that a considered opinion can be formed.*

Olympic Boycott?

1) The Beijing Olympics (August 2008) are in the eye of a storm over the issue of Tibet. Tibetan protesters disturbed the journey of the Olympic flame in various places. There is also a demand for boycott of the Beijing Olympics unless China deals with Tibet in a humanitarian manner. The issue poses a moral dilemma. Various arguments are presented vehemently for or against China:

- a) Should sports be mixed with politics?
 - b) Have Olympic boycotts served any purpose? Moscow and San Francisco Olympic boycotts achieved nothing durable. Where would such protests end as every country is faced with some internal strife that can be used by its opponents to cause it embarrassment?
 - c) Can India countenance similar demands with regard to J&K and North Eastern states as a price for holding the next Commonwealth Games?
 - d) Should India antagonise a rising power like China at this juncture, when even the US is treading cautiously?
 - e) Having accepted Tibet as an Autonomous Region of China, does India have any room for manoeuvre?
 - f) Should India watch meekly as brute force crushes a non-violent agitation against the destruction of a culture?
 - g) Olympics is a matter of pride for all the Chinese and any humiliation on this count would bring the entire Han Chinese population together, strengthening the hands of the communist regime and hardening their stance against the Tibetans.
- 1) There is a deliberate obfuscation of issues here. The answers are not very complicated:
 - a) Sports and politics should remain separated. Political issues have no place in sporting encounters. However, the question remains whether China is not using Olympics for politics.
 - b) Boycotts have served no purpose except creating temporary embarrassment for the host countries. Even the Dalai Lama has not called for the Beijing Olympic boycott.
 - c) Tibet on the one hand and J&K-North Eastern states on the other are not comparable. Tibet is not fighting for secession, only for autonomy. On the other hand, India is fighting a proxy war in J&K and secessionist demands in the North Eastern region. The friends of China in India are creating the confusion deliberately.
 - d) We Indians worry too much about what others think about us. We should worry about what we think about ourselves. Can we face ourselves in the mirror? India should stop worrying about pleasing or displeasing China or any other country. It should do what it considers right. No amount of pandering will ever make China more accommodative to India. Hoping that a “friendly” China would stop bothering India over the border dispute is naive and flies in the face of decades of disillusionment.

Tibetan protesters are making use of the Olympic stage to draw attention to their plight. India, being sympathetic to their humanitarian demand, should deal with them with understanding and compassion. The Indian Government may have some diplomatic constraints in supporting the Tibetan cause but the people of India need not hesitate and should support the Tibetan cause loudly and clearly.

Will Beijing Olympics Repeat History?

“All autocrats tend to do things that will ultimately boomerang. Who would have thought two months ago that Tibet would come to the center of the world’s attention? A relay carrying the theme ‘Journey of Harmony’, has helped bring host China under international scrutiny.

The autocracy’s troubles indeed may only be beginning. This year could prove a watershed. Just as the 1936 Berlin Olympics set the stage for Nazi Germany’s collapse, the Beijing Games could end up as a spur to radical change in China. Those who see Tibet as a lost cause forget that history has a way of wreaking vengeance on artificially created empires.”

Brahma Chellaney, *The Times of India*, May 1, 2008

Moral Police – Yet Again

2) Cricket's new show, the Indian Premier League - T20 tournament has become a debating issue. Its opponents have several objections to it, some genuine and some born out of jealousy:

- a) It is a slave bazaar,
- b) A *tamasha* that has nothing to do with cricket
- c) It will ruin serious cricket
- d) Its Cheerleaders are vulgar and do not fit into the Indian ethos. The Maharashtra Government of the Bar Girls fame jumped into the fray with alacrity and announced that it would ban the Cheerleaders. Fortunately, better sense prevailed later and a ban was not imposed.

However, moral policing has become an important occupation of some political groups and the whole issue of public morality needs a serious debate.

While showbiz celebrities are not surprisingly on the list of famous cheerleaders – including Meryl Streep, Halle Berry and Madonna - it also includes two former presidents as well as the current one. George W. Bush, Ronald Reagan and Franklin D. Roosevelt were all part of their university cheerleading teams.

The Indian Express, April 30

2) Any new venture has its critics. They are not prepared to give it time to see how it works. The IPL is no exception. Some people are not prepared to give it a chance. The Cheerleaders' "vulgarity" came as a handy weapon. The Indian Cricket League (ICL) was going on earlier for a month, with a similar display of bodies! It went unnoticed. One may hold that the Cheerleaders are extraneous to the game and were not needed but to say that the show damages our high moral values amounts to doubting the strength of our values. One could agree with the irrelevance of the cheerleaders to cricket but to ask for government action over issues of little import is unhealthy.

We may not like certain things but we have no right to ban everything we do not like. In fact, the State should have no role to play in deciding our moral code. The Government of Maharashtra belatedly realised that there was no law to ban cheerleaders! A storm in the tea cup or is it the morality brigade's growing clout? Religious extremists are constantly attacking arts and literature for alleged insults to their gods, others are claiming damage to their culture, our Health Minister is opposed to movies showing drinking and smoking. Somebody else may ask for ban on artificial fiber, claiming it to be injurious to skin. Where do we stop? It is time to wake up before we join the ranks of the Taliban.

Cruelty to Animals

3) The Animal Welfare Board set up by the Government is supposed to ensure that animals are not maltreated. Film Producers and even ad-makers are required to take the approval of the Board before/after producing a film or an ad. using animals to ensure that during the shooting the animal used was not "maltreated". Animal lovers have lobbied hard to get this legislation in place. PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) has been in the forefront of the movement. Everybody should have been happy that the right thing had been done for the welfare of animals.



3) The right thing had been done but nothing succeeds like excess. Good intentions are often paved with wrong turns. The Government created a bureaucracy (the Board), which functions like a bureaucracy, meaning that it defeats the very purpose of its being. The Board fails to meet, does not take decisions on the basis of commercial urgency and generally believes that it is there not to serve a purpose but to control the errant world; in short, it takes its own sweet time to take a decision. The issue has drawn public attention because of a cheerful little ad. showing a cute dog running after a bus transporting its human friend/ owner to school. Animal lovers allege that the dog was heartlessly made to run after a bus and, therefore the ad. should be banned. They further hold that no animal performs willingly in any case and all such uses of animals are cruel. In view of this assertion, we must guard against training our dogs to sit or go out for - you know what! We may all be guilty of cruelty. Is there no sense of proportion in anything we do? Has everything to be carried to its logical non-sense?

Readers are invited to send in their points of view on serious issues of the day to avkay@mtnl.net.in

How Strong are the Roots of Globalisation?

P. M. Kamath

If the Internet facilitated economic globalisation, it has also facilitated political liberalisation on a global scale. Hence, globalisation is an all-embracing process. One cannot say that we pursue globalisation in the economic arena but avoid it in science, education, culture or politics. Those who still wish to cling to old concepts of national sovereignty and protection of national economy cannot pursue globalisation.

Alan Greenspan, a highly respected economist describes himself as a Libertarian Republican. He is the former chairman of the American Fed Reserve, who retired in 2006. He published, last year, his memoir *The Age of Turbulence: Adventure in a New World*. He is an all out champion of Globalisation and free market economy. He attributes the American economy's resilience and its fast recovery after the 9/11 terrorist attacks by Al Qaeda to the US policy of globalisation. Though the attack was meant to cripple the American economy, it bounced back within three months. He also says that it is globalisation that facilitated the "forward thrust towards global market capitalism...embrace of free market capitalism helped bring inflation...and interest rates to single digits globally."

What does economic globalisation mean? The economic characteristic of the process of globalisation refers to a fully interconnected world market of different countries largely on account of the liberalization of trade, capital investment and diffusion of services across the world. This amounts to characterizing globalisation as synonymous with free-market capitalism.

Globalisation is different from economic interdependence. In the 1960s, scholars of international relations spoke of the interdependence of economies. As a result it used to be said that if America sneezes, Europe catches cold! That is because of the fact that no product is completely made in any one country but its parts came from different nations. It used to be said, for instance, that US Telephone had parts coming from some 42 countries!

Yet, the telephone was 'Made in USA'; or for that matter, a shirt you buy could carry a 'made in USA' tag. This was so almost till the end of the 1980s. Today, however, under globalisation, even if you tour the whole country it might be difficult to get a shirt or a trouser carrying a 'Made in USA' tag! That is because manufacturing is completely outsourced to different countries which provide cheap labour and good quality

work so that American consumers could get inexpensive commodities, and companies could maximize their profits. At the same time the US could concentrate on what it does best, like heavy industries and manufacturing based on high-tech research.

How did Globalisation happen? It came about largely because of the communications revolution. Alan Greenspan, in his memoir, speaks about the roots of globalisation: "A number of global forces have gradually, sometimes almost clandestinely, altered the world as we know it. The most visible to most of us has been the increasing transformation of everyday life by cell phones, personal computers, e-mail, Blackberries and the Internet... A large percentage of the world's population gained access to technologies that I, in setting out on my long career in 1948, could not have imagined except in the context of science fiction."

Globalisation, however, could not be limited to the economic arena. Through the Internet, people could only easily transfer millions of dollars from one end of the world to the other not only leading to the globalisation of economic activities but also encouraging the globalisation of terrorism. One has to only remember how money was transferred to Saudi-citizens based in the US for organizing the 9/11 attacks by a Pakistani from Indian sources! While the use of the Internet for terrorist activities is an aberration of globalisation, it is worth remembering that while we in India are used to terms like cross-border terrorism, Alan Greenspan introduces us to new terms like cross-border finance and cross border labour.

As a result of the Internet, money travels where it can easily get the best rates of interest. Labour moves where it gets the best wages. Manufacturing moves where it gets the best profits. Again, Greenspan says in his book that free market economy has helped bring inflation and interest rates to single digits globally. Free market economy and capitalism have become buzzwords in all countries, developed or developing.

Another result is that young men and women are

able to use the Internet to look for well-paying jobs after their education and move anywhere in the world where they can get best facilities and best pay. They can talk to their prospective employers on inexpensive international telephone lines and be interviewed before they are selected. If you are willing to move, globalised economies offer you the unheard-of career opportunities not available say, prior to the 1990s. That is how, lakhs of Indians moved to the US giving up stable jobs in India to take up employment in the US during the IT boom in the last decade of the 20th century. At the same time it has also enhanced the expectations of Indian parents from their siblings especially the first generation of the educated young.

If the Internet facilitated economic globalisation, it has also facilitated political liberalisation on a global scale. Hence, globalisation is an all-embracing process. One cannot say that we pursue globalisation in the economic arena but avoid it in science, education, culture or politics. Those who still wish to cling to old concepts of national sovereignty and protection of the national economy cannot pursue globalisation.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 not only revealed this fact, but also exposed the miserable state of the centralized economy behind the 'Iron Curtain'. Even if Gorbachev had not come to power in 1985 the Berlin Wall would have probably fallen. But Gorbachev, by emphasising *glasnost* and *perestroika*, not only made the transition to globalisation a well regulated affair in Russia but also gave a boost to the globalization of the economy by going capitalist after the break up of the communist empire.

Others have argued that globalisation is two-dimensional — one, it serves as a powerful vehicle that raises economic growth, spreads technology and contributes to better living standards in countries of both the developed and developing world; and two, it "assaults" the sovereign authority of the nation-state, "erodes" local culture and tradition and even "threatens" economic and social stability.

When it comes to India, Alan Greenspan, thinks that the Indian economy is not yet fully globalised. He describes India as symbolizing "most powerfully both the productiveness of market capitalism and the stagnation of socialism." Have the fruits of economic growth percolated to India's poor? While one can certainly say that market capitalism has made more people rich in India, with more than 250 million poor, according to Alan Greenspan, "elevated" out of "the extreme subsistence poverty incomes of less than \$1 per day."

On the other hand to say that the poor have become

poorer is not a *cliché* but a statement of fact when you learn that millions of Indians continue to live on less than a Dollar a day! With farmers committing suicide; school and college going students joining the farmers in committing suicide as they find it difficult to compete and survive in a globalised world; and with inflation reaching seven percent, one wonders which meaning of globalisation applies to India! As going back to a centralized planned economy is not an option anymore, the only answer to push for further liberalisation is to break loose from the bureaucratic stranglehold over the Indian economy.

The US economy currently faces recession and also inflation. Since global economies are interconnected inflation and recession have already hit major economies in the Asia Pacific - countries like Australia, New Zealand, and Hong Kong, including South East Asian countries. There has been crucial linkage between Indian, Chinese and US economies since the last three years. According to a McKinsey Survey, while 74 percent of executives felt that US recession and inflation will have a negative impact on India, 64 percent of Chinese Executives interviewed felt that way (*Hindustan Times* April 7, 2008.) Under these global circumstances, it is comical to read Indian Marxists asking the Indian government to insulate India's economy from American influence!

While the Greenspan book deals with many more topics of public interest, he comes out with a rare admission for an American 'former' official, when he writes: The "Iraq war is largely about oil. Thus, projections of world oil supply and demand that do not note the highly precarious environment of the Middle East are avoiding the eight-hundred-pound Gorilla that could bring world economic growth to a halt." It is this observation that invests added value in pursuing more vigorously the insurance policy taken by the Indian government in signing the Civil Nuclear Deal with the US to make alternate sources of energy available for our economic development. Unfortunately, thanks to Indian Marxists, while China goes on acquiring new oil resources in Myanmar and Sudan - outbidding India, and forcibly occupying islands in the South China Sea, India is effectively prevented from developing even an alternate source of energy!

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Communist China's Record of Boycotting Olympics

In 1956, China withdrew from the Melbourne Olympic Games in protest of the inclusion of the Taiwanese delegation. China then did not participate in the Olympics again until 1980. In 1972, China explicitly declined an IOC invitation to the Olympics because of Taiwan's participation.



Cornucopia

Firoze Hirjikaka

Boycotting The Beijing Olympics – A Good Idea?

I recently read an interesting article by Chinese actress and director, Joan Chen in The Washington Post. The thrust of the article is that the current clamor for boycotting the Beijing Olympics – or, at least, the Opening Ceremony – by some people and politicians in the West is likely to prove counter productive.

For the uninformed, Chen is an acclaimed actress, both in Chinese and Hollywood movies. Her list of international acting awards would be the envy of many Hollywood stars. Although she now lives in San Francisco, she was born in Shanghai and goes back regularly for visits.

Although Chen was born to a family of doctors and was therefore relatively well off, she did not have a pleasant childhood. She grew up in Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution and personally witnessed some of its excesses. Those who are too young to recall the Cultural Revolution may not appreciate how bad things were back then. In his messianic zeal to transform China into a ‘workers’ paradise’, Mao Tse Tung tried to impose his own distorted version of Chinese culture on a country of a billion people. He virtually tried to dictate what his people should think. They read what he wanted them to read and saw what he wanted them to see. The consequences of resistance were severe. If a group of hooligans (dubbed as ‘patriots’) decided that an individual or an enterprise was ‘bourgeois’, they would be paraded through the streets and sometimes even strung up. Even a basic exercise like getting enough food on the table was sometimes harrowing.

Chen compares those dark days with today’s China with its booming economy, where the Chinese people have not just full bellies, but sufficient disposable income to indulge in small luxuries. Yes, some of the basic freedoms that people in the West take for granted – like freedom of speech; and freedom to read and watch whatever one wants – are still in short supply, but it does not seem to bother the average Chinese too much. Compared to his lifestyle a few decades ago, he feels he never had it so good.

What does irk the Chinese is that, despite being the world’s second largest economy – far ahead of many European countries – they are still treated with a certain amount of disdain by people and governments in the West. Americans, for example, will happily buy Chinese products for a quarter of the price they would pay for similar

American ones, but they still display a measure of contempt for those who make them. Rightly or wrongly, many Chinese feel they are not getting their due.

That is why the 2008 Olympic Games are so important to them. They have pulled out all the stops to make it a glittering event. It is their opportunity to demonstrate that anything the West can do, they can do as well – if not better. When Chen went to Shanghai last month, she saw for herself how proud and excited the man in the street is about the Games. He regards it as a wonderful opportunity to showcase modern China to the rest of the world.

For sure, there are a sizeable number of Chinese who are disturbed by the recent protests in Tibet. But they do not condemn their government for cracking down on rioters indulging in arson and looting, to restore law and order. They are also bewildered at the sudden international outcry about a region that has been part of China for more than 50 years.

Perhaps there was no justification for China’s annexation of a defenseless Tibet all those years ago. Unlike the first Gulf War where Saddam Hussein paid a heavy price for annexing Kuwait, the Western governments of that time made depreciatory noises, but actually did nothing. At the risk of sounding cynical, my personal opinion is that the West did nothing because, unlike oil-rich Kuwait, Tibet held nothing of value to them. As far as the Chinese are considered, the annexation is ancient history.

Some people and governments in the West justify their rancor by pointing out that China is currently trying to overwhelm the local Tibetan population by importing millions of Han Chinese. True enough, but this in itself is hardly a revolutionary historical event. The native populations of America and Australia were almost obliterated by White conquerors and settlers centuries ago. Nobody raised a murmur then.

The recent demonstrations against the Olympic

torch in San Francisco and other places may make for exciting television footage, but they are not going to achieve anything. If George Bush does not attend the Opening Ceremony, the Chinese will be offended, but the

games will go on. Perhaps it is time for the rest of the world to recognize the Olympics for what it is – an international sporting event.

Maharashtra Reserved For Marathis Only

Aren't we supposed to be living in a democratic society, where the government is of the people, for the people? What right, then, does any politician have to issue a decree or fatwa, like some old style dictator or absolute monarch?

Much has already been written about Raj Thackeray's self-serving jingoism; so I shall focus on one particular statement uttered during his most recent speech. Thackeray has decreed that, apart from Maharashtra Day, no other celebrations would henceforth be allowed in Maharashtra.

Let us give Thackeray the benefit of the doubt and presume that his statement was made out of genuine conviction; and was not blatant pandering to a particular vote bank. In his speech, Thackeray singled out Uttar Pradesh Day and *Chhath Puja*, since North Indians seem to be his particular bugbear; by implication, however, he means to ban Christmas and Parsi New Year and Baisakhi and Guru Nanak's Birthday and on and on. These occasions are, after all, alien to the Marathi *manoos* and have no

business, therefore, to be celebrated in a Marathi state.

Perhaps Thackeray would be more comfortable if all non-Marathis left his state and returned to where they, or their ancestors, came from. Who needs the Tata's and the Godrej's and the Ambani's and the Mafatlal's - not to mention Tarun Tahilani or Kareena Kapoor or Katrina Kaif (aliens, all)? And why are so many Marathi *manoos* riding on Hero Honda bikes and scooters? Isn't the company owned by Brijmohan Lall, one of the hated North Indians? Ironically, Thackeray's rival, his cousin Uddhav, has already taken the first step by inaugurating an exclusively Marathi *vada-pav* enterprise for the sons of the soil. Let the 'foreigners' leave. Maharashtra is for the Marathi's.

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A Student's Tribute to Prof. S.V. Kogekar

Dr P. R. Dubhashi

26th May this year, was the first death anniversary of the late Prof. S.V. Kogekar. I had the privilege of being his student at Fergusson college way back in the year 1948-49. Prof. Kogekar was teaching us an undergraduate course in political science. His young but highly dignified personality, with an ever smiling face, made him our favourite teacher. He was erudite but carried his learning effortlessly. He had a felicity of expression, an ease of communication. There was a flow in his presentation. He had an analytical style suitable to the teaching of political science. His aim was not to unload a text bookish knowledge on his students; rather he aimed at kindling a process of thinking and a keen desire for reading much beyond the prescribed textbooks.

Professor Kogekar was a student of Prof. Harold Laski at the London School of Economics. Laski had clearly left a deep imprint on his mind. Laski's ideology was reflected in Prof. Kogekar's teaching, which always seemed to underline the values of freedom and equality, often conveyed in the term "Democratic Socialism". Though Prof. Appadurai's *Substance of Politics* was the text book, he introduced us to Prof. Laski's *Grammar of Politics*, which was intellectually stimulating. Indeed such was the stimulus provided by this book, that even as an undergraduate student I read all his books, including *American Democracy*. Prof. Kogekar often mentioned that with Maharashtra's long intellectual tradition it would take a lead in translating it into reality the concept of Democratic socialism. However this was not to be and Prof. Kogekar himself felt disappointed in later years. I myself had the opportunity of studying at the London School of Economics in 1962-63.

Prof. Kogekar's intellectual influence lasted throughout my life and our student teacher relationship continued life long. Such kind of relationship has become rare in recent years in our academic world.

National Security – The Contemporary Paradigm (4)

The Concept of “Federal Crime” and a Federal Police Force

V. Balachandran

Mr. V. Balachandran, former Special Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of India, presented a Paper on “A New Paradigm for Indian Internal Security Management” at the Annual Conference of the Maharashtra Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration on 12 October 2007. Excerpts from the Paper were published by Freedom First in four instalments. The first three instalments appeared in Freedom First No.487 of December 2007, No. 488 of January 2008 and No.491 of April/May 2008. This is the fourth and concluding part.

The Suppression of Thugs – A Case Study

A long forgotten chapter in Indian history is the suppression of the “Thughees” by a remarkable individual named William Henry Sleeman. Unlike many of his peers in the British service, Sleeman was a polyglot having mastered Arabic, Pushtoo, Hindustani, Gurkhali and Persian. He was interested in agronomy, ethnography, political economy, paleontology, printing and was also responsible for introducing Mauritian sugarcane in India through his Mauritian wife of French origin. The subject of Thughee engaged his attention as a magistrate. Till then there were only rumours about this secret sect, which, according to later historians, had started operations during Akbar’s rule. Like modern terrorist groups they transcended religion and caste, used secret codes and a language called “Ramsee,” believed in omens and led double lives. They were so secretive that even their families did not know of their activities. The British started taking notice of this menace in 1810-1812 when their sepoy and an officer named John Maunsell disappeared. The looting of an Indian bank convoy in Malegaon in 1828 jolted them into action. The estimates on the number of killings over the centuries varied from 200,000 according to the Guinness Book of Records to 50,000 by some British historians.

Although Governor-General Bentinck gave logistical support in 1829 by designating Sleeman as the “nodal” officer in British India to fight the Thughee menace, there were formidable difficulties. Even the roads and landmass of India had not been surveyed till 1832. He had to counter the fragmented and corrupt princely state police who did not extend any cooperation. His “modern technology” consisted only of pen, paper and indexes. However, he methodically collected every scrap of paper on 200 gangs all over India, creating an impressive database of 4,000 names with family trees as well as Muslim and Hindu aliases. British historian Mike Dash wrote in his book *Thug – The True Story of India’s Murderous Cult*: Some of the techniques that he developed in the early 1830s presaged

methods that would not come into common use in police departments at home in Europe for another 50 to 60 years.”

Reports on each Thughee murder all over British India were sent to Sleeman for collation. Each Thug was assigned a unique number. This department spread all over India from Delhi’s border to Hyderabad, comprised only a staff of seven assistants besides 300 “*najibs*” (native soldiers). Later it was known as the Political Intelligence Department, which became the “Intelligence Bureau” after Independence. By 1830, he managed to arrest 350 Thugs based on this databank.

The *modus operandi* of this anti-crime force was the same as any modern anti-terror unit like centralized collection of information, collation, analysis, and dissemination to the other police systems besides conducting important centralized operations. Interrogation of captured Thugs was used to collect advance intelligence on their next operations. Secret funds were used to break die-hard Thugs to convert them as approvers. Bentinck approved Sleeman’s hot pursuit of Thugs anywhere in India and overruled objections from princes and British residents. In 1831, Sleeman blasted the fort in Jhansi to catch a Thug leader when the ruler objected to his entry. All Thugs so arrested by Sleeman were brought to trial only in two special courts located in Sagar and Jabalpur. 4,500 Thugs were tried between 1826 and 1848 of whom 3,504 were given extreme sentences like hanging and life imprisonment. Only 250 were acquitted. The Thug menace disappeared by 1840. This alone will indicate what a federal anti-terror police can achieve.

Centralized operations against subversive elements have always produced better results. When IRA terrorism was ripping apart England, London Metropolitan Police’s Special Branch, which had tackled the menace earlier, was designated as the nodal authority to detect and prosecute IRA terrorism all over the country till MI5 (their domestic intelligence agency) was able to take over the responsibility

in 1992. While the British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary were indulging in their turf wars in Northern Ireland, Mrs. Thatcher appointed the retired Chief of MI-6 (Their foreign intelligence agency) as “Co-coordinator of Security & Intelligence” in N.Ireland to assist the Secretary of State. The book *A Biography of Sir Maurice Oldfield* by Richard Deacon gives a vivid account of the centralized operations conducted against IRA, forcing them to start negotiating. In the United States, all crimes against the nation’s security are investigated by federal agencies like the FBI even when the states have full control over their police. We have an extremely serious situation now, which calls for out-of-the box solutions to be made acceptable to the state politicians.

Conclusions & Recommendations

- (a) The state police as structured now cannot handle the growing traditional and non-traditional security challenges. They should concentrate on day-to-day crime and law and order and leave inter-State crimes that affect national security to the Central agencies. Besides, the capability of State police forces vastly differs.
- (b) Recruitment of more police personnel to increase public-to-police ratio will only result in more management problems. For example the percentage of housing provided to policemen is now only 40.7% of the total strength of nearly 10.5 lakhs. Recruitment of managerial staff and their training to “high end” crimes associated with globalization and expansion of the economy will be a stupendous task. It will also be wasteful considering the transfer policy of the state police where none will be allowed to stay in the same place beyond three years.
- (c) It has been realized that trans-border issues like terrorism, money laundering, drug running, human trafficking and transnational crime cannot be fought by national governments alone. The tendency all over

the world is to integrate such operations by pooling resources on a transnational basis. The State Police cannot do this since opportunities for such co-ordination exist only at the Central level. In most cases immediate action will have to be taken on leads from abroad.

- (d) It may be true that Central agencies by themselves may not be able to totally put down terrorism or insurgency. However management will be better because of the possibility of better specialization, longer tenures and opportunities of co-ordination with foreign governments dealing in terrorism.
- (e) The Prime Minister should take personal charge of convincing state leaders about the utility of introducing the concept of “Federal Crime” which affect national security like terrorism and Naxalite menace. If they are unwilling the Centre should resort to the “Emergency provisions” as recommended by the Government of Maharashtra. A separate Federal police should be formed to do anti-terrorist operations including collection of intelligence, investigation and prosecution like the FBI in USA.
- (f) Terrorism Intelligence Integration Centres should be set up in Delhi and important State capitals by the MHA to pool all intelligence related to terrorism, which should include Naxalite activities. Representatives from state police should be made members. This should be manned round the clock like the US Homeland Security control rooms.
- (g) Non-Security sectors including corporate bodies operating transport, shipping, communications, share market and disaster management should be represented in these Control Rooms at a non-sensitive level as part of the decision making process to counter terrorism and trans-border crime.

Concluded

Mao tse-Tung and the Flag of Tibet

In the 1980s, I had interviewed Phuntso Tashi Takla, the Dalai Lama’s brother-in-law who was in charge of the Tibetan leader’s security when the latter visited China in 1954-55. Takla recalled, “At that time (in 1954) because the Chinese occupation of Tibet was not complete, the Chinese extended full courtesy and cooperation to the Dalai Lama. On some occasions Mao Tse-tung himself came to the Dalai Lama’s residence (in Beijing). During one of the several discussions that the Dalai Lama and Mao Tse-tung had, Mao (suddenly) said, ‘Don’t you have a flag of your own, if you have one, you can hoist it here (on the Guest House)’.” Takla was surprised to hear Mao Tse-tung speaking thus.

For more read Claude Arpi’s “Flying the Flag of Tibet”: <http://peoplefortibet.blogspot.com>

Points to Ponder

Kusum Choppra

Why Should a Slap make Headlines?

Cricketer Shreesanth may be a junior but is he really that ignorant about the realities of cricket, especially big time cricket, that he has taken *pungas* (punjabi slang for taking umbrage) with the senior players?

Every cricket novice knows that even after “seniors” finally retire, they still carry enough clout to wreck any promising junior *via* their new *avatars* in the commentary boxes, the *bak bak* (Hindi slang for chatter chatter) panels or the selection committees. Remember another player Sivaramakrishnan, who has only recently started being seen again?

Just because M. S. Dhoni got away with keeping the seniors out of his Twenty20 team, can every young player follow on against those holy cows?

While the world is shouting from the roof top that corruption has to be eliminated from the bureaucracy, it is obvious that corruption is making new inroads. Witness the senior players carrying on despite injuries, bad health etc. Why? All because of the lolly obviously. The older they get, the heftier are their advertising contracts and the longer their obligations to the advertisement companies, which are obviously dependent on their place in the team. If they are dropped, the amount lost would be massive enough for desperate negotiations to stay in the team, come hell come high water - or a spreading of the lolly all around?

As a nation addicted to stupidities, we sit and listen to all that cover up nonsense on our TV screens where a slap between two players is of more consequence than the overlooking of the Defense services in the latest Pay Commission.

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The Tyranny of the TRP

Last week, the editor of a TV channel took pains to explain that TV channels are driven to focus on single scandal stories per day. Because of the tyranny of the TRP (Television Rating Point) editors, these days are too busy running from seminar to seminar while their journalists are PR fed and feted and given handouts. TRPs, he says, rule the roost and decide the story and TRPs reveal that people want only gossip about celebrities and little else. Obviously he was unable to explain why TRPs only reflected the tastes of selected households whose opinions were created to give legitimacy to the decisions taken by channel editors *et al*.

Does this channel’s preoccupation with celebrity gossip and the issues of the well heeled to the total exclusion of the Other India or Bharat as they tend to call it, not sound very much like India taking a steep downturn?

History is replete with examples of great cultures which are struck down as soon as the ruling elites become too preoccupied with their pleasures, pastimes and luxuries to be bothered with the masses.

Look at the Roman orgies which preceded the invasions of the Barbarians or the demise of the French and the British empires. And, in our times , the ruin of the USA which is now overrun with leisure industries and preoccupations rather than the needs of the silent majority.

Is this media driven preoccupation with the lives of films and cricket stars, *netas* and models and their life styles and its requirements, the IPL fantasias etc. a sign of India taking the downturn even before it actually reaches the top?

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Why is the US Again Eyeing Afghanistan?

On May 3 a TV headline read “US eyes Afghanistan again”. Why is the US eyeing Afghanistan again. Since the politics of the Taliban and *al Qaeda* have already been exposed fully, there is now a lesson in international economics there.

The US got over its Great Depression, thanks largely to the influx of orders for its industry during the Second World War. The end of the War saw the US Aid Industry give its economy an unbelievable boost which lasted well into the Cold War and made it the richest country in the world, along with conferring it Super Power status.

It was only when countries, flooded with US aid which brought them American goods and took away their resources and their sovereignty, started rejecting that aid, that the US economy started taking a sharp downturn. The largely man-made wastes in Africa, along with war-torn Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Afghanistan and Iraq are living witness to American misadventures.

The American economy has now possibly touched its pits. Hence the prospects of renewed adventures into a country already pulverized by the US Air Force and its bombs. Are we witnessing yet again, the cycle of aid to gouge out the aided country’s innards to feed the American economy?

MS. KUSUM CHOPPRA is a freelance journalist.

Why I Like Kerala?

G. D. Karve

During those years, it was not called Kerala but Travancore-Cochin (or TC) State

When I went to report for duty as the office of the Regional Director (Food), Madras I was asked to go to Trivandrum and report to the Assistant Director (Food), TVM (or Trivandrum) . It was 1 July 1955. I had just graduated with Honours in Science and was appointed as a Fumigation Assistant. I did not even know the meaning of fumigation and the nature of my duty.

I reported at the office of the AD (Food) and to my surprise all my colleagues were fresh from school or college and were so nice that without my knowledge, I became one of them. Even today, I remember practically every one of them. C. A. Hariharan, a Tamilian from Palakkad was my most beloved friend, more than my brother, then P. V. Kunjiraman, K. Ramachandran, P. V. Nambiar, S. Gopalan, N. K. Ravindran, K. Shivadasan, K. Veluswamy. We were just like one big family – staying in a big house 2-2, 3-3 persons in a room as per the status. I took the kitchen which was lying vacant (because it was said to be haunted!)

I enjoyed my stay in the kitchen for almost 6 months i.e. till I saw the ‘ghost’ of the lady who had committed suicide by jumping from the kitchen platform. The ghost did not do anything to me but merely touched my forehead. I thought I was dreaming but her hand was so cold that I screamed. The shout was so loud that every one rushed to my room. Finding me fast asleep they woke me up and called me to their room. I declined stating that it was a dream and went back to sleep. Next morning my roommates’ people were shocked to hear the details of my dream. A young girl, very fair, got down from the roof of the kitchen, perhaps she was coming from the bathroom because water was trickling from her long black hair and water drops were on her face too. She looked at me and touched my forehead. All my friends were so scared that practically everybody except Hariharan decided to vacate the haunted house and as Hariharan and I could not afford the rent we too shifted to another room near our office.

During those days of 1955-56 Trivandrum was a wonderful place. Extremely neat and clean. Very pleasant climate. Not like Bombay. For some reason I always had the feeling that I belonged to this place. I do not know much about painting but I was a regular visitor to the Art Gallery ‘Chitralayam’ mesmerised by the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma. Similar was the case with Sabari Mala. One fine morning in the the January of ’56 I submitted to my superior an application for a week’s casual leave or CL

as they were known so that I could witness the *Makara Vilakku* at Sabari Mala. My application was turned down stating that I was entitled only to one day’s CL.

In the evening as I was about to leave the foodgrains godown, I was called by the AD(F). He told me that though he was a Christian, he was first a Malayalee so he would not come in the way of my visiting Sasta i.e.the Ayyappan Temple. He asked me to give a fresh application without putting any date and requesting for a day’s casual leave for “today” so that in case an officer from the Regional Office Madras visits and enquires about the only Tech person employed in the godown, he can be shown my application for a day’s CL. The person who gave me a lift in his car from Trivandrum asked me whether I was a Malayalee and if yes how was it that I could not speak either Malayalam or Tamil. Without a thought I told him that during my last birth I was a Malayalee and I used to visit Sabari Mala! When I reached the shrine I had the continuous feeling that I had visited this place earlier. This explains my attachment for Kerala. After reading your letter my memories became fresh and there was a keen desire to visit Kerala my “Devabhumi.”

When I was transferred from Trivandrum to Madras, I packed my luggage. Naturally, my neighbour called us for dinner and morning breakfast too. When our luggage was loaded and we were about to leave our neighbour approached with a big tiffin carrier and told me that I should accept the tiffin carrier containing our lunch. In those days, trains did not have dining/pantry car. People used to get down at Shencottah or some big junction and take their meals. I thanked him for the lunch but wanted to know how to return the tiffin carrier to him. He gave me the address of a relative in Madras and said I could deliver it to him and he would arrange to have the tiffin carrier returned to him. People reading this today may not believe this. But it happened to me. I will always be obliged to all Malayalees for the great affection and love they gave us.

MR. G. D. KARVE is a retired officer from the Food Corporation of India.

Editor’s note: This article is a letter from the writer Mr. Karve to Mr. Pankajakshan, a *Freedom First* subscriber, whose quite unusual ‘Farewell letter’ we carried in July 2007. Like his own epistle, Pankajakshan felt *FF* readers would be interested in reading Karve’s memories of the mid ‘fifties. While forwarding this letter reader Pankajakshan writes: “Mr.Karve is settled now alone in Manmad (his wife passed away three years back) He worked in Kerala and he has pleasant memories about Kerala. I wonder at his memory in remembering the names of his friends in the 1950s.”

Book Review



OUR POST HUMAN FUTURE by Francis Fukuyama ● Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York ● Year of Publication 2002 ● No. of Pages:256 ● Price: \$25 (Rs 800)

Reviewed by Sharad Bailur a free lance journalist.

Francis Fukuyama first came to international notice in 1989 with his book, "The End of History and the Last Man". That book merely said that, with the collapse of communism and the triumph of democracy, history as we have known it, has ended. He follows a tradition coming down through history from Plato through Fichte, Nietzsche, Hegel and Marx that history is somehow a sort of river in which mankind may tumble about but is inexorably drawn along by forces outside of itself, over which it has no control.

The modern version, which can be traced to Hegel, said that history had "ended" with the establishment of the perfect German State under the Kaiser. Hegel, the more prudent, ended his thesis with what he saw having taken place. Marx went the whole hog. His argument was that if history had followed a particular course in the past it would continue to do so in future. This led him to conclude that the establishment of Communism would result in, "the withering away of the state". Fukuyama acknowledges his debt to Hegel but not to Marx.

The issue is one of what Sir Karl Popper called "The Myth of Historicism". If the meteorite that hit Siberia in 1908 had arrived seconds too late. It could have obliterated a large European city with devastating consequences to the history of the world. Had Princip's bullet missed the Duke at Sarajevo in 1914 there would have been no First World War. As a consequence the Bolshevik Revolution of 1918 may never have succeeded. If the satchel containing the bomb that Stauffenberg carried to the Wolfsschanze in July 1944 had not been pushed behind a wooden support of the table at which Hitler sat, it would have killed him. Germany would have sued for peace. Eastern Germany and eastern Europe would not have gone under Soviet domination. Of such chance events is history made and recorded for posterity. There is no theory or philosophy that can explain it. Even Arnold Toynbee's 'Challenge and Response' (A Study of History) begins to look suspect. Popper trashed historicism nearly half a century before Fukuyama wrote his book.

The book under review comes in the same genre of promising too much and delivering too little – a mouse delivered by Mount Everest. It is an over-ambitious attempt to pontificate about a subject of which the author seems

to have only a layman's understanding. The predilection for grandstanding with earth-shaking titles merely irritates.

In essence Fukuyama says that the emerging biotechnological revolution is going to "have profound and potentially terrible consequences for our political order, even if undertaken by ordinary parents seeking to "improve" their children", to quote from the blurb on the jacket. He goes on to mention the increasing uses of drugs like Ritalin to control ADS (Attention Deficiency Syndrome) in children and its consequences. In doing so he acknowledges his debt to Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World".

Fukuyama's argument is that the enforcement of happiness as described in the "Brave New World" is unsatisfactory because it dispenses with the concept of individual freedom. Fair enough. So what does Fukuyama suggest? It is best to quote him: "The answer to the question of who gets to decide on the legitimate and illegitimate uses of science is actually pretty simple, and has been established by several centuries of political theory and practice: it is the democratically constituted political community, acting chiefly through their elected representatives that is sovereign in these matters and has the authority to control the pace and scope of technological development."

So a democratically elected government should control technological development. It might. But it might not. If therefore it legislated the wholesale and compulsory use of Mescaline as mentioned in "Brave New World", it is perfectly all right. Individual rights can take their comeuppance.

Fukuyama is Bernard Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at the John Hopkins University. He is emphatically not an expert on biotechnology. He wrote this book in 2002. Before he took up what turned out such a cropper, he could have read Dr. Philip Kitcher's take on the same topic titled "The Lives to Come – the genetic revolution and human possibilities" published in 1996. Dr. Kitcher is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of California in San Diego. He has a much clearer understanding of the science behind biotechnology. The book is low key, erudite and deep and

contains a thoughtful analysis of the human consequences of the biotech revolution.

Ten years after Kitcher and four after Fukuyama's book under review, there is increasing evidence that the whole of science, including biotechnology will inevitably be overtaken by pure Physics and the molecular engineering revolution, probably within the lifetimes of the readers of this review. Fukuyama has, it seems, never heard of K. Eric Drexler's "*Engines of Creation – The coming era of nanotechnology*" (1986). He comes close to touching on this subject with his references to Bill Joy and Ray Kurzweil, but then backs off, apparently intimidated by the science behind it.

Nanotech and the molecular engineering revolution will raise questions far more profound than those that come up with the biotech revolution. For instance, it could abolish all illness and extend the human lifespan indefinitely. Dr. Ray Kurzweil has discussed this possibility in some detail and Dr. Ben Bova in his book, "Immortality" discusses the consequences. Nanotech could make a science like Economics irrelevant; a quaint relic of the day when infinite human wants could not be satisfied by infinite means. At that point a paraphrased version of Karl Marx will come true: From each according to his ability to each according to his desires.

The consequences to the concept of nationhood, not to mention the human social structure itself, boggles the mind several times over. The social consequences of biotechnology, which Fukuyama makes much of, will then be a mere footnote in the history of mankind like the electric

typewriter and the janitor. Kitcher (1996) can be forgiven because Drexler (1986) was considered science fantasy even ten years after he wrote his book. But this was untrue four years ago when Fukuyama wrote his book, and is even more untrue today as seen below.

The first intimations of molecular engineering are quietly becoming reality already. *Headlines Today*, the news channel reported on its 9 pm news on March 15, 2006 that nanotechnology had restored eyesight to blind mice. We already have on sale in India refrigerators and air conditioners that never smell and underclothes and socks that never need cleaning: A silver-nano coating ensures that dirt never sticks to the surface of these things. An article about systems for delivering nucleic acids that incorporate virus like functions in artificially produced nanoparticles written by Enrico Mastrobattista and others in the February 2006 issue of *Nature- Reviews*, on Drug Discovery gives details of the use of artificial nano engineered viruses to manipulate genes.

So biotech is already in the process of being overtaken by nanotech or molecular engineering. At the moment nanotech may be termed multidisciplinary but very soon all other sciences will be subsumed under it and nanotech is nothing but pure Physics.

Daniel Boorstin in his book "The Image", described a celebrity as someone who is well known for being well known The description certainly fits Fukuyama. This book is an object lesson that readers should not be taken in by the fame that comes before the name. I must confess, I was.

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Between Ourselves ...

Freedom First founder Minoo Masani died ten years ago on 27th May, 1998. We wrestled with the question whether we should carry an article by him or on him. We decided to do neither because we feel that every issue of *Freedom First* that manages to come out is in itself a tribute to him. He knew from personal experience how difficult it was to keep this journal going. Yet he managed to do just that for 45 years and we have taken it forward another ten years, for we are now in the 55th year of publication. These thoughts come to mind when remembering him on his 10th death anniversary.

The Armed Forces, the Election Commission and the Supreme Court are three institutions bequeathed to us by the fathers of our Constitution (one of whom was Minoo Masani) that have, despite the battering they have received as a result of the loathsome politics of opportunism and self-aggrandizement of our political class, managed to retain the confidence of the Indian people. Therefore when one of these institutions feels angry and hurt, we the people need to take heed and listen. The Armed

forces have taken umbrage over what they consider a raw deal dealt to them by the Sixth Pay Commission. Major General Eustace D'Souza and Capt. Jain both retired officers have drawn attention to this in their articles (see pages 3 to 6).

But just as this issue was going to press, Major General D'Souza sent us the following information which was too late to include in his article. So we do so here. It speaks for itself:

"15 officers of the rank of Col/Lt Col nominated for the Higher Command Course of a year for future promotions to flag rank have declined to sign the five years mandatory bond to continue in service and one of the reasons is the 6th Pay Commission's paltry recommendations for the Armed Forces. And here we have militancy hotting up and China deploying her missile bases facing India! When will they ever learn!"

Editor

Many Voices

We remain committed to economic reform and liberalisation. In ancient India, a monarch was regarded as a good king if he did not interfere too much in the life of the people. That has been our guiding principle as well.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, *Hindustan Times* April 18

However ungifted they may seem in other respects, members of (the US) Congress are geniuses in finding ways to evade ethics rules.

Charles Peters, in his column "Tilting at Windmills", *The Washington Monthly*, Jan-March 2008

Media heavyweights today make so much money that they have lost touch with the reality lived by most Americans.

Charles Peters, in his column "Tilting at Windmills", *The Washington Monthly*, Jan-March 2008

Most people don't value sunshine because it is free! If sunshine was priced, there would be many marketing plans and we would be buying into them.

Eco-nutritionist Kavita Mukhi, *EducationWorld*, May 2008

We don't want an elitist society.

Union Education Minister Arjun Singh, *Link*, May 5

A journalist is good at reporting facts; he is not a therapist. Accepting this limited role needs humility.

Salil Tripathi, *Link*, May 1

When you have been abused as many times as I have, mate, you are bound to understand some Hindi and Urdu.

Former Indian cricket coach Greg Chappell cited in *The Week* May 11

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Published by J. R. Patel for the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF) and printed by him at Kaiser-E-Hind Private Ltd., Plot No.A-191, Road No.16A, MIDC, Wagle Industrial Estate, Thane (W) - 400 604. Phone: 25804162

Typeset at **Shubham Print & Web** 59, Dr. V. B. Gandhi Marg, 1st Floor, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Phone: 2284 2619 • Mobile: 98929 21277

Single Copy: Rs.10 • Annual: Rs.150 (Add Rs.50 for outstation cheques) • Overseas (Incl Class Air Mail) Annual: \$20 or £10

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