

Freedom First

The Liberal Position

❖ *The End of A Terrorist*

- Operation Geronimo
- Can India Pull Off an Osama to Get Dawood?

❖ *Lest We Forget*

- The Emergency of Mrs. Indira Gandhi
- The Shah Commission Report - *Lost and Regained*

❖ *The Rural Perspective*

- Whose Money is it Anyway - Only the Farmers'!

❖ *On Rabindranath Tagore's 150th Birth Anniversary*

- Gurudev - A Many Splendoured Life

Tomorrows are
bright, when
Education ^{Loan} is
right.

Union Bank's Education Loan is a dream come true for every Indian student looking for a brighter future through education - be it in India or abroad.

- 'Special Scheme' for studies at Premier B-schools and reputed Institutions
- Privileges for needy students for basic education
- Discounts for female students
- Sanction within 48 hrs
- Fixed rate of Interest
- Avail of our online application facility

यूनियन बैंक
ऑफ़ इंडिया
अच्छे लोग, अच्छा बैंक

 **Union Bank**
of India
Good people to bank with

Contents

<i>Between Ourselves</i>	1
<i>From Our Readers</i>	2
<i>The End of a Terrorist</i>	
● Operation Geronimo	
	Ashok Karnik 3
● Can India Pull Off An Osama To Get Dawood?	
	Firoze Hirjikaka 5
<i>Lest We Forget</i>	
● The Emergency of Mrs. Indira Gandhi	
	R. Srinivasan 7
● The Shah Commission Report <i>Lost, and Regained</i>	
	Era Sezhiyan 8
<i>Point Counter Point</i>	
	Ashok Karnik 11
An Electoral Tsunami in Tamil Nadu	
	S. Radhakrishnan T. S. Gopal 13
Hazare Must Plan for Evolutionary Changes!	
	P. M. Kamath 15
<i>The Rural Perspective</i>	
Whose Money is it Anyway – Only the Farmers!	
	Girdhar Patil 17
Cameron on Kashmir, Churchill on Amritsar	
	Christie Davies 19
“A Stream of Correspondence”	
	K. K. Pathak 21
<i>On Rabindranath Tagore’s 150th Birth Anniversary</i>	
Gurudev – A Many Splendoured Life	
	B. M. N. Murthy 23
Naushervan Framji Suntook	
	V. Balachandran 25
<i>Book Reviews</i>	29

Between Ourselves...

“To talk good of the evil dead is to talk evil of the living good” wrote that great civil servant A. D. Gorwala in his journal *Opinion*. He was writing about someone whom he and many Indians despised. This aphorism almost biblical in its phraseology came to mind when looking at pictures of processionists in Lahore denouncing the killing of Osama bin Laden and making him out to be a hero. Ashok Karnik in his inimitable style puts the issues in the operation which resulted in the killing of Osama bin Laden, in the right perspective. He is followed by Firoze Hirjikaka, who argues why India will not (though it can if there’s the will) to organize a similar ‘expedition’ to capture the gangster Dawood Ibrahim responsible for the bomb blasts of 1993.

We are grateful to Mr. Era Sezhiyan for permitting us reproduce his ‘preface’ to the volume “*Shah Commission Report Lost and Regained*” in which he narrates the circumstances that led him to get the Shah Commission Report reprinted for posterity. At 88 he has lost none of the verve he is noted for. He was an ardent follower of C. N. Annadurai, the founder of the DMK, and a member of parliament from 1962 to 1984. He is respected as a distinguished authority on parliamentary procedures and constitutional conventions. He retired from active politics in 2001.

Yet another round of elections are over. While we publish a commentary on the results in Tamil Nadu, we plan a meeting in Mumbai on June 4 to understand what the voter has sought to convey. ***If you read this before that date, please participate in the half-day discussion beginning at 1030 a.m. at the Indian Merchants’ Chamber.*** For further details phone the editor at 9820016392 or email him at jurasv@gmail.com.

Two months ago we had observed in this column: “Readers may recall that in October 2006 our cover feature read: “While the Economy soars, Governance plummets.” Things have gotten worse since. Perhaps we should devote ourselves to seek answers to some basic questions that have debased our politics and public life. Let’s start with one to begin with however irrelevant it may seem to be: ‘Do we want to be a superpower or a country that has no global ambitions but the modest desire to eliminate poverty and hunger and provide opportunities for our people to develop and grow; for a vastly improved infrastructure with efficiently managed public health and education services’. We publish on page 2 of this issue the response from two readers. We invite you, once again, to share your views with us.

Editor

Founder: Minoo Masani ● **Editor:** S. V. Raju ● **Associate Editor:** R. Srinivasan ● **Advisory Board:** Sharad Bailur, A. V. Gopalakrishnan, Firoze Hirjikaka, Ashok Karnik, Farrokh Mehta, Jehangir Patel, Nitin Raut, Brig. (Retd.) S. C. Sharma, Kunwar Sinha, Sameer Wagle
Publishers: Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF), 3rd Floor, Army & Navy Building, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Mumbai 400 001.
Phone: +91 (22) 2284 34 16 ● E-mail: freedom@vsnl.com
Published by J. R. Patel for the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF) and printed by him at Union Press, 13 Homji Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Phone: 22660357, 22665526.
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.20 ● Annual: Rs.200 (Add Rs.50 for outstation cheques) ● Overseas (IInd Class Air Mail) Annual: \$20 or £10
Cheques to be drawn in favour of **ICCF** and mailed to the publishers at the above address.

From Our Readers

Do We Want India to be a Superpower ...

Or a country that has no global ambitions but a modest desire to eliminate poverty and hunger and provide opportunities for people to develop and grow? We asked readers to send in their views. Here are two – Ed.

If wanting to be a global power means stock piling of weapons of destruction, if it means bombarding civilian population in the name of democracy, if it means wanting to police the whole world and supplying arms for other nations to wage wars, then NO that is not what we want.

If being a superpower means using maximum per capita of natural resources for one's physical comforts ignoring the destruction of mother earth; if it means creating maximum pollutants both on earth and in space, then NO, I think that is not the vision I have for our country. If superpower status is to be achieved by feeding naturally herbivorous cows with meat and killing them to satisfy human hunger then that is not development! If adulterating milk with melamine to increase the Gross Domestic Product then NO, that is not our goal!

What is the use of having the fastest train and the longest bridge over the sea when citizens murder the female child even before she is born just because society thinks a male child is necessary and the government of the country says that one cannot have more than one child, then NO, that is not what we want! In the race to become a superpower a nation thinks it is entitled to encroach on the neighbouring country's land, is that considered right?

If wanting every Indian to be happy and in good health and gainfully occupied, if wanting that farmers get their due share, if wanting that no one should go to sleep hungry, not even animals, if wanting every individual to have a decent roof over his head, decent clothes to wear, decent footwear, and affordable medical services is considered *modest* achievement then why have we not achieved this even after sixty four years of independence.

If wanting that no child should have to give up school to support his or her family, is considered being retrograde then so be it. If wanting every city, town and village to have street lights, power, water, and toilets in their homes is considered *modest* then the magnitude of what we want to achieve is being greatly under-estimated. Today we have more mobile phones than toilets in rural India.

If development means students are so stressed out with competition that they hang themselves; if it means there is no family life because winning the rat race in one's career is the goal in life then of what use is this development?

According to a BBC documentary, "The politics of happiness has led Bhutan to make very different decisions from other countries simply searching for wealth. The capital, Thimpu, is remarkable for its lack of advertising. In an attempt to hold

back consumerism the city council recently banned hoardings promoting Coke and Pepsi. Bhutan has even banned plastic bags and tobacco on the ground that they make the country less happy. Buddhist prayer flags flutter in the wind. In Bhutan the government puts inner spiritual development on par with material improvement. One of the pillars of Bhutan's happiness philosophy is care for the environment. Strict conservation laws are aimed at achieving sustainable development. Development has been moderated and people are less well off financially than they could have been".

Imagine a world with no wars, everyone at peace content with what they have, pursuing arts and music on a full belly! Not wanting to hurt others just to race ahead and be called Number One in the world? Sounds utopian? Was this not the state of affairs when Buddhism was at its zenith? Maybe it will require another event similar to the one King Ashoka faced before wisdom dawns on us.

Hina Manerikar, Vadodra.
hina.manerikar@gmail.com

*

I do not want India to be a superpower. It has never been one and in my opinion it will never be one even if it wants to be so. 5000 years ago India was a great country at the height of a flourishing civilization. 3000 years ago it was a conglomeration of several cultures and civilizations (perhaps Egyptian, Persian, Roman and Greek). This process in helping to achieve better standards and quality of living stagnated and later degenerated the country. The state of affairs as of now being such no reasonable Indian can feel proud or happy. In fact none of the old civilizations (Egyptian, Roman, Greek, Indian or Chinese) will ever regain their past glory, order and achievement. As far as India is concerned even a modest goal of elimination of poverty, hunger, illiteracy seems to be a dream. The moral fibre of the people, their civic sense and discipline are at the lowest ebb..

Maybe I am seen as highly cynical and pessimistic. I wish the youngsters of this country prove one day that my views are wrong and absurd and that day will be the proudest day for the country.

To conclude I wish our leaders stop talking or craving to be a superpower but lead the teeming millions to become honest, hardworking, law abiding, civic minded, simple and austere citizens.

S. Arunajatesan, Chennai.
jatesansbi@gmail.com

*

Operation Geronimo

Ashok Karnik

There is no reason for India to dig Pakistan out of the diplomatic hole that it has dug for itself. India need not lend it respectability when the world is wondering how far it can be trusted as a friend. India can stand aloof and see what Pakistan does to mend its ways.

Ten years of search, 10 months of total secrecy and planning, 40 minutes of military might and Osama Ben Laden was dead – finally killed by the Americans on May 2, 2011. Paradoxically, he was found hiding in the open in a mansion in Abbottabad, only 60 miles from Islamabad.

Abbottabad is a prosperous town, housing the Pakistan Military Academy and retired defence officers. Osama's mansion was close to the Military Academy. Pakistan had always claimed that the Al Qaeda leadership was hiding in the mountains of Afghanistan or in the inaccessible border region. It was untrue as many Pakistani assertions are. Osama's elimination is a great success for the much-maligned CIA and triumph for the American resolve to hit back at whosoever hurts American interests. At the same time, it is a great embarrassment for Pakistan. If it declares that it had helped the Americans, the Pakistani population would resent it; if it claims that it did not know anything about the US operation, it is a blow to its sovereign pretensions and underlines its dysfunctional state.

Pak Reaction

Having been caught with Osama in its bed room, as it were, Pakistan is embarrassed no end. India has commented that this was further evidence of Pakistan sheltering terrorists. The Americans were aware of Pakistan's duplicity. They knew about Osama's presence in Abbottabad since August 2010 but did not share this information with Pakistan. The fact that the US did not trust Pakistan was made clear by the CIA Director. Having achieved what it wanted, the US tried to be magnanimous enough to declare that the victory was a joint achievement for US-Pak-Afghanistan. This was intended to allow Pakistan to save face but Pakistan reacted angrily and declared that any further breach of Pakistan's sovereignty would lead to grave consequences. The US responded by declaring that it was prepared to act again if need be. The world is questioning Pakistan's sincerity in fighting terrorism. India can shout from the roof tops about Pakistan's perfidy while the Americans have to soft pedal

the issue so as not to disturb the equilibrium. How long can the US Administration molly-coddle Pakistan when faced with harsh questions from its own people? Pakistan is trying to do damage control by pinning the blame on the ISI. There is no explanation what the Pak Air Force was doing when the US choppers were in Pak air space. There are snide comments that Osama was sold out by the ISI to the CIA! "Geronimo" (Osama's code name for the US operation) will be an albatross for Pakistan in his death! From charges of complicity to being a dysfunctional state, Pakistan has to answer for a lot.

US Power Play

The whole of Pakistan was unhappy that the US had breached Pakistan's sovereignty by sending its forces into Pak territory. The US has made it clear that it does not care for diplomatic niceties when its vital interests are involved. Other countries may scream blue murder but the US does not care for such impotent sentiments. The CIA was on Osama's trail for the last 10 years. He escaped the Tora Bora (Afghanistan) attack initially and then went underground in the mountainous region of Af-Pak border. There were speculations that he may not be in the mountains but Pakistan always drew a red herring and pointed at the inaccessible border areas as the likely hideout of the terror groups and an excuse for its failure to catch Al Qaeda leaders. Since Osama never used telephone, wireless or electronic equipment, US technology was of no use in tracking him. It finally came back to basic human intelligence when the CIA identified the courier used by Osama and followed him to Abbottabad. The CIA then watched Osama's mansion from a house it rented nearby. After 10 months of relentless surveillance, the CIA finished its 'find and fix' mission and left the final assault to the elite US Navy Seals which had trained for months on mock models of the mansion. Details of the final assault are unclear and may remain so for ever. According to available information, four helicopters carrying 79 Seals and one dog evaded Pak radar (through stealth technology?) and assaulted Osama's bastion. The rest is history. We can admire the determination and resourcefulness of CIA operatives who made this operation

possible and wonder why we, who are the biggest victims of terrorism, cannot do anything of the sort. The bitter truth is that India does not have the military or political clout of the USA to act as it pleases.

Pakistan's Culpability?

Although Pakistan continues to deny helping Osama, ISI's association with the perpetrators of the 26/11 carnage in Mumbai, its patronage of known terrorists like Dawood Ibrahim and leaders of J-e-I, J-e-M and Hizbul Mujahideen etc, make it difficult to accept its word on anything. Its evasiveness over action against known terrorists roaming free in Pakistan adds to the distrust. Even in Osama's case, forgetting the history of double-speak, the following questions beg for answers:

- 1) Would any fugitive from justice seek shelter in a place so near a military establishment that even a cursory security check by the army or the police would expose him? He would do so only if he is assured of protection.
- 2) While the danger of exposure is great, there is built in security as an army cantonment is considered immune from US intervention. Why would Osama take a risk if these factors did not favour him?
- 3) Buying such a huge conspicuous mansion, eight times bigger than any other around, Osama was inviting attention to himself but escaped being detected by even the local constabulary. How?

The man in the street of Pakistan is angry and confused. In his simmering anti-Americanism, he believes that 'Operation Geronimo' might be another plot by the CIA to ruin Pakistan.

Future of Al Qaeda

Let the world not relax that the menace of the Al Qaeda is over. Al Qaeda will survive this setback as the second rung leadership headed by Ayman al Zawahiri is already in place. In any case, terrorist organisations do not function like hierarchies. Al Qaeda is an umbrella organisation which provides financial and technical support, if needed. Each local militant outfit is free to plan and execute its operations. The Al Qaeda may suggest a specific operation and offer assistance as in the 9/11 plane bombing of the Twin Towers in New York but it does not do so on an on-going scale. The terror network would not, therefore, be affected by Osama's demise. However, it is the experience of anti-terrorism experts that once the head is chopped off, usually there is an internecine power struggle to control the movement. Hope

Osama's departure would lead to such a tussle but let us not bank on it!

India's Lesson

Will the death of Osama make any difference to India? We should rejoice that the mastermind of evil is no more! However, it would hardly affect the operations launched by the L-e-T, HUJI or J-e-M against India at the behest of the State of Pakistan. For one thing, Osama's end is not Al Qaeda's end. It can survive the loss. The question which would haunt India is why India cannot undertake surgical strikes against its own "Geronimos". The reasons are many, some valid, some showing lack of political will. Meanwhile, we can only hope that the US would cut off its aid to Pakistan which is now being nicknamed Terroristan! We always wait for a third country to do our job.

Apart from telling the world that we always knew what Pakistan was doing, can India do more? Will insistence on action against the perpetrators of 26/11, bear fruit? Not likely. We have travelled that route several times without avail. Can the US action be replicated? Doubtful, as India does not have the overt or covert capacity to launch such operations. Even if we did so, Pak reaction to our operation would be a cry of aggression and war, which it cannot do with the Americans. However, it would be worthwhile developing capacity for covert operations, remembering the adage that one should keep one's powder dry! India is not pro-active enough for such audacious measures. India should learn to plan in advance and act instantaneously. We start thinking and planning after we are hit but then it is too late to act!

Where does the "Aman ki Asha" programme stand now? Wisdom dictates that the door for talks should be kept open but the time is inopportune. There is no reason for India to dig Pakistan out of the diplomatic hole that it has dug for itself. India need not lend it respectability when the world is wondering how far it can be trusted as a friend. India can stand aloof and see what Pakistan does to mend its ways. There are those who argue that this is not the time to be hawkish; Pakistan is in trouble and India should not do anything to exacerbate its misery. On the other hand, India is not Pakistan's keeper and should allow it to suffer the consequences of its deeds. Pakistan's fragility is its defence; the US cannot abandon it and India cannot push it! The spectre of its total collapse is truly horrible to contemplate.

MR. ASHOK KARNIK, formerly Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Government of India. He is a freelance writer and on the Advisory Board of *Freedom First*. Email: ashokkarnik2001@yahoo.co.in

Can India Pull Off An Osama To Get Dawood?

Firoze Hirjika

America is not a superpower because it is universally respected, but because it is universally feared. India has the opportunity to be feared too, but it has never exercised that option.

Can India pull off an Osama type US operation to get Dawood Ibrahim – or any of the other terrorists on India's wanted list - who is sheltered in Pakistan? Despite the recent confident assertion by the country's army chief, the answer is a resounding NO. Some might ask why not? After all, India has the world's third largest military machine and, barring a few bad apples who have been afflicted with the genetic Indian malady of corruption, the military is proficient and efficient.

Incidentally, the reason India's military is proficient and effective is because it is subject to minimal interference by the country's politicians (like they control the police, for example) because for one, few of them have any clue as to what the military actually does and, more importantly, it sees no percentage (read that as monetary benefit) in interfering.

Our Intelligence Agencies

However, carrying out a successful operation to extract or eliminate Dawood Ibrahim, say, requires more than just brute force. It requires credible and sustained intelligence gathering about the bad guy's activities and whereabouts. And this is where the Indian establishment falls flat on its face. India's intelligence agencies – Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) – are very much subject to government meddling. This is because the ruling party of the day views these bodies as tools to dig up dirt on their political opponents – and help them win the next elections. National security is not a prospect that exercises their minds much; assuming they think about it at all. Couple this with the fact that the three agencies view each other as rivals rather than partners – and individual members are more interested in their promotions and securing a plum government position upon retirement – and you have a recipe for ineffectiveness. Moreover, because of the ever present desire to show up potential competitors by highlighting lapses on their part, the likelihood of leaks is an ever present hazard.

To some extent, the USA, till a decade ago faced a similar problem of inter-agency rivalries, but after 9/11 they got their act together and the result was a unified

Department of Homeland Security. India, however, never learned this lesson even after the Mumbai terror attack in November 2008. There are examples of inordinate delays in the procurement of sophisticated weaponry for use against potential terrorists and subsequent deployment even after the weapons had been purchased.

But over and above all the above reasons is the lack of political will. The plausibility of rival political parties getting together to authorize and support a surgical strike is remote in the extreme. Even the feasibility of opposition parties not being averse to a debacle so that can score political brownie points cannot be ruled out. Moreover, being experts at passing the buck and covering their asses, they would make sure that their hands are clean. No doubt, the army is painfully aware that they would be made the scapegoats in the event of failure.

After the assassination of Osama Bin Laden, there has been the inevitable sabre rattling in Pakistan directed towards India. It is an obvious ploy to divert attention from either their complicity or incompetence in the whole affair. Pakistan's civilian and military establishment has been handing out dire threats of grave retaliation – possibly escalating to nuclear – should India have the effrontery to mount an operation to flush out and eliminate India-specific terrorists comfortably and openly residing in Pakistan, with the full knowledge and cooperation from the Pakistani army and intelligence services (ISI).

Personally, I intend to take that threat with a pinch of salt. Assuming that an Indian team did manage to sneak across the border to eliminate a wanted terrorist; and then got back surreptitiously and safely, that would pretty much be it. There would, of course, be a lot of heated rhetoric and outrage from the Pakistani establishment, but not much else. Despite the bombast and public posturing, Pakistan's generals are not fanatics and they are well aware that their army is no match for India's. Neither are they foolhardy enough to escalate to the nuclear option on their own. Apart from universal condemnation, it is almost certain that America would immediately cut off all military and financial help. They got a taste of India's military capacity in 1971 when they lost half their country – and that was

when India was far from becoming an economic power. Besides, the Pakistan army has always used the perceived Indian military threat to reinforce and sustain their sense of indispensability in the minds of the Pakistani public. They have convinced the average Pakistani that, left entirely to a democratic civilian administration, their nation would soon be engulfed by a marauding India. They would not risk shattering that myth by engaging in a military conflict they were more than likely to lose. They are also aware that they would receive no support from their patron, America, in such a venture.

The problem with India is that it is strangely reluctant to project its obvious military and economic clout, when it would pay dividends to do so. It has allowed Pakistan to repeatedly thumb its nose at its more powerful neighbour. Moreover, it has reinforced this impression with

weak and pathetic responses. Pakistan's constant belligerence is routinely met with feeble and almost humiliating attempts at reconciliation. America is not a superpower because it is universally respected, but because it is universally feared. India has the opportunity to be feared too, but it has never exercised that option. Maintaining diplomatic niceties in situations which call for strong action may earn us somewhat condescending and hypocritical approbation from the international community, but behind the façade is usually a feeling of mild amusement and contempt. Until India's leaders get over their diffidence and timidity, India will remain a potential superpower without actually becoming one.

MR. FIROZE HIRJIKAKA, a retired Civil Engineer is a blogger and freelance writer and columnist. He is a member of the Advisory Board of *Freedom First*.

The Good and Bad of Gujarat

Chetan Bhagat

Narendra Modi is back in the news. Coincidentally, just last week I was in Gujarat and became acutely aware of how much emotion one chief minister can generate. The youth wing of GCCI, an industry body of Gujarat, had invited me to a felicitation function in Ahmedabad.

The function was simple enough. A few speakers spoke about Gujarat's development. The economic numbers were fantastic. The development model seems to be working at the grassroots level too. While India's agriculture GDP growth has averaged 2.5% in the last 10 years (with the government targeting 4%), Gujarat's agriculture grew at a staggering 9.8%.

The entire programme focused on one agenda – development. Industrialists, politicians and IAS officials didn't talk about anything else. It was refreshing to see a part of India functioning well.

But there was someone at the function, whose presence was enough to change the colour of the event, at least in the eyes of those outside Gujarat. Chief minister Narendra Modi, who gave a passionate speech about Gujarat's growth, acknowledged that anyone who was seen with him would be vilified by certain sections of society. He warned that anyone who praises him would be criticized.

When my turn came to speak, I tried to remain neutral. I spoke about the glimpse of youth power in Anna Hazare's movement and how this power needed to be directed at positive goals, such as excellence, good values and entrepreneurship. If Gujarat was doing well, would its chief minister consider getting involved at the national level as we have 27 other states that could benefit from the Gujarat formula

But within minutes, my Twitter page was filled with comments, in language too colourful to be published here. There was the hate-Modi brigade and the love-Modi brigade. However, both points of view are incorrect. Yes, I am acutely aware of the Godhra incidents. I wrote a book on it, and in the process, researched the issue for years. I also understand that the CM is implicated. The recent statements by senior IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt on Modi's role are kicking up a storm.

But there is no judgment as yet. And it is very hard to pass judgment in such a situation, especially when it involves several incidents and provocation from both sides. Just like it was extremely hard to prove Congress' involvement in the 1984 Sikh riots. Even if the state were involved, the fact is a lot of the populace was complicit and that guilt will never go away by making a villain of one person. That doesn't, however, mean we don't investigate properly. We must push for justice, and have enough faith in the process to believe the right decision will be made. Even the CM has no choice but to accept that.

Often, the challenge is not about choosing between good or bad but extracting the maximum good, while keeping the bad at bay. Let's learn what is good from Gujarat, while continuing our quest for justice for the bad that happened.

Contributed by Hina Manerikar, Excerpted from: timesofindia.indiatimes.com

The Emergency of Mrs. Indira Gandhi

R. Srinivasan

Were democratic institutions so fragile as to suddenly cave in and supinely resign to non-democratic forces? In metropolitan areas, civil resistance to the dominant political power just evaporated.

To the average Indian citizen, memories of the Emergency of 1975-77 have almost faded away and to a new generation those nightmarish days are not easy to recapitulate. Those old far off things and battles long ago appear far too distant. Partly intellectuals and public commentators are responsible for this for they have yet to write of this with felt anguish. There cannot be sufficient books to recall those days for the new generation. Extreme minute number of journalists, constitutional lawyers will refer and remember those days. Can those terrible days visit us again?

One reason for this near amnesia has been the systematic attempt at obliterating the vestiges of the Emergency and the sedulous attempts to destroy copies of the authoritative J. C. Shah Commission's Report. The Janata Government appointed Justice J. C. Shah to examine and report on the Emergency and this was a thorough investigation indeed. The re-publication recalling as it does the happenings of the period lays bare again to a new citizen body the excesses of the Executive in those days of undiluted despotism recalling the British Eleven Years Tyranny that we read in our history text books in school (1629-1640). It is for the future generations to ensure that there would be no similar happenings. The citizen has to be educated and we cannot thank Justice J. C. Shah for his admirable report.

The geographical sweep of the report is indeed surprising. A good deal of focus has been on Delhi and its immediate surroundings, where the excesses of the dance of destruction and pillage of the homes of the poor sent a shudder to an astonished public. No region seems to have been spared. We read sections of the North East Frontier Areas too being affected by the authorities. One of the victims whose travails are recorded at length was Lawrence Fernandes, the elder brother of George. It is indeed unbelievable that a civilized society would go to the extent it did in its vain attempts to ferret out the truth about George Fernandes. If Delhi occupies a central place in the attempts at forced sterilization and the forcible destruction of the miserable squalid homes of the very poor, other states too did not lag behind. Almost every state had its sterilization programme and in some areas they exceeded the target. In 1976-77, it was double of the target set up.

The Cabinet as well as important functionaries were kept in the dark when Mrs. Gandhi advised the then President to declare an internal emergency when there already was an emergency (imposed during the conflict with the Chinese in 1962) in the country. Mrs. Gandhi had sufficient time to consult the Cabinet. There was no incitement or circumstances to compel the authorities to resort to this draconian move, there was no breakdown of law and order or serious deterioration in the economic condition of the country, no threat to the wellbeing of the country from within or without. Save the Allahabad Judgement, there was no reason for advising the President to declare an emergency. It was clearly a power grab for Mrs. Gandhi and her minions.

K. C. Pant gave repeated assurances that the MISA would not be used against political parties and that sufficient safeguards were included in the bill against its misuse. All the assurances given on behalf of the government were belied. Fabrication of records was resorted to in a number of cases; the bureaucracy was cowed into fear by reminding them of the disastrous consequences that would follow any failure. About 26,000 public servants were retired; later at the behest of the J. C. Shah Commission's advice, about 14,187 were reinstated.

One of the outstanding findings is how easy it was for an obstinate government to trample upon the rights of the people and how well-established institutions could be twisted to serve the purposes of the government; institutions such as the press, which had a hallowed history could be manipulated by a determined government. There were no countervailing forces to restrain the executive. The supersession of the seniority principle was a punishment to a dissident but courageous judge and a compliant judge such as A. N. Ray was promoted.

Were democratic institutions so fragile as to suddenly cave in and supinely resign to non-democratic forces? In metropolitan areas, civil resistance to the dominant political power just evaporated.

DR. R. SRINIVASAN is retired professor of Political Science, University of Mumbai, and Associate Editor of *Freedom First*.

The Shah Commission Report - *Lost, and Regained*

Era Sezhiyan



On the occasion of the 36th Anniversary, when Independent India lost its democratic system for 21 months (June 25, 1975 - March 21, 1977) we publish the preface to the book "The Shah Commission Report - Lost, and Regained" by its editor Era Sezhiyan. He tell us of the circumstances that led to its publication.

Mr. Sezhiyan has rendered great service in resurrecting the Report and put it back as part of our recorded history. We believe every library should have a copy available for scholars and students and the people of India, at large.

On the last day of August 2010, I came across a news item that under the Right to Information Act (RTI), S. C. Aggarwal had requested the President to give him 'complete and detailed information' on the declaration of the Internal Emergency on June 25, 1975 by the then President. In response to his request, the President's Secretariat said:

"The communication between the then President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the imposition of Emergency nearly 35 years ago cannot be made public."

The same news story referred to a similar request, under the RTI Act made to the Prime Minister's Office by M. G. Devasahayam, former IAS officer, had been accepted by the National Archives of India to whom the request had been transferred by the Home Ministry. Two weeks later, I received from Devasahayam the correspondence he had with the Information Officers on his request.

It seemed strange that there were contradictory response on a same request to the two highest constitutional authorities, the President who is Head of State, and the Prime Minister, Head of the Executive.

There was a similar instance of contradictory decisions about the release of a copy of the Memorandum to the President dated January 16, 2009 from Chief Election Commissioner, N. Gopalaswami, recommending removal of Navin Chawla from the post of Election Commissioner for his alleged 'partisan' conduct.

To the request from the applicant Aggarwal, there

was no response from the President's Secretariat and the applicant approached the Central Information Officer who advised the President's Secretariat to seek the consent of the Election Commission in this matter. By that time, N. Gopalaswami had retired and Navin Chawla had been appointed as Chief Election Commissioner. Navin Chawla as Chief Election Commissioner rejected the request on the ground that the document 'does not merit disclosure'.

The matter did not end there. Another person S. S. Ranawat from Bhilwara, Rajasthan, had made a similar request under the RTI Act to the Law Ministry for supply of a copy of the Memorandum of the CEC to the President. On not receiving any reply, he made an appeal to the Appellate authority concerned.

On February 8, 2010, there were press reports that the Law Minister, M. Veerappa Moily, had released the ninety-three page Memorandum of the CEC to the President. Newspapers had described it as a letter 'bomb'. It is not known as to why the letter 'bomb' took more than a year to explode.

When the correspondents asked about the release of the Memorandum by the Law Ministry while the President's Secretariat had refused earlier to make it public, the Law Minister said: "Rashtrapati Bhavan cannot release a document, because it was the job of the administrative ministry. In the case of the Election Commission, the Law Ministry is the administrative ministry".

If the Law Ministry was the administrative ministry of the Election Commission, the President's Secretariat should have forwarded the letter for consideration of the Law Ministry and not to the Election Commission. Does it mean that the President's Secretariat was not even aware of the legal position that it could not release any information sought for under the RTI Act?

I thought of writing an article about the inexplicable

SHAH COMMISSION REPORT *Lost, and Regained*. Compiled and Edited by Era Sezhiyan, former Member of Parliament
● Published by Aazhi Publishers, 12, First Main Road, United India Colony, Kodambakkam, Chennai 600 024. Phone: 044-26222939 ● Web: www.aazhipublishers.com ● Email: info@aazhipublishers.com ● No. of Pages: 284 ● Price: Rs.950.

contradictions in the decisions of the two units of the Union Government. I can also supply the information sought under the RTI Act about the declaration of Internal Emergency on the basis of details given in the Shah Commission Report submitted to Parliament in 1978.

I brought down the dusty bundles of the old records and books from the top row of my bookshelf and located the three volumes of the Shah Commission Report with all my markings and notes.

When I went in search of some particulars in the internet about the 1975-77 Emergencies, I was confounded by several assertive statements that on her return to power in 1980, Indira Gandhi had arranged to recall every published report of the Shah Commission and had the copies destroyed. It was affirmed that “not a single copy of this report now existed in India.”

On pursuing further the websites, media reports and biographies of Indira Gandhi, I was baffled at the conclusive declarations on the complete disappearance of the copies of the Shah Commission Report. There was a positive statement that “the third and final report of the Commission seems to have slipped out and is currently held by the National Library of Australia.’ Another source was categorical: “The only existing copies of the three volumes of the Report are in the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.”

While the Shah Commission Report is available for students and research scholars in Australia and United Kingdom, I was wondering as to why the same facility should have been denied to the historians and research scholars in India. Then, I decided to have the Shah Commission Report reproduced in full, along with a write-up about the significance of the investigations done and conclusions arrived at by the Commission as a whole.

The Shah Commission Report is an important document, administratively, politically, constitutionally and historically.

I have compiled and edited this compendium into three parts: (1) Introduction and my comments on the issues raised, (2) Some of the important cases investigated and the sagacious observations by Justice Shah and (3) The text of the Shah Commission Report as Annexure for reference.

In bringing out this compendium including the Report which is supposed to have been ‘buried without epitaph’, I am not seeking to open the Pandora’s Box and unleash the charges of several misuses and abuses of

power during the 1975-77 Emergency period. The incidents investigated by the Commission of Inquiry and its the Reports took place thirty five years ago and they cannot be taken up now for any action.

About the purpose of history, Tacitus (A.D.56-A.D.117) who was senator of Rome and a great orator and historian, wrote:

“My purpose is not to relate at length every motion, but only such as was conspicuous for excellence or notorious for infamy. This I regard as history’s highest function, to let no worthy action be uncommemorated, and to hold out the reprobation of posterity as a terror to evil words and deeds. So corrupted indeed and debased was that age by sycophancy that not only the foremost citizens who were forced to save the grandeur by servility, but every ex-consul, most of the ex-praetors and a host of inferior senators would rise in eager rivalry to propose shameful and preposterous motions. Tradition says that Tiberius as he left the Senate-House used to exclaim in Greek: “How ready these men are to be slaves.” Clearly even he, with his dislike of public freedom, was disgusted at the abject abasement of his creatures.” (Annals, Book III, Section 65).

[In the above quote, the word ‘praetor’ denoted in Rome a ‘magistrate’ or a ‘consul as leader of the army’. Tiberius (42 B.C.-A.D.37) was an unscrupulous Roman emperor (A.D.14-37)]

The objective of this compendium is also to preserve the historical document of the Shah Commission Report so that the worthy actions of those who stood firm will be commemorated and the rule of terror and despotism reprobated by posterity.

After completing my compiling and editing to reproduce the full report of the Shah Commission as submitted in 1978 as Annexure, the title of the book has been chosen purposefully as ‘**Shah Commission Report lost, and regained**’. In a writing, if we put the symbol comma, it denotes that the sentence is continuing and when we put a full stop, it means that the sentence has to come to an end. The Government of 1980 thought that by withdrawing and destroying the copies of the Shah Commission Report and its source materials in India, they had succeeded in putting an end to the life of the book itself. No, it was not a full stop; it was only an illusory break, a comma, and we have now resurrected the book in full.

Our reproduction has ‘regained’ the book that was considered to be ‘lost’ for some persons in power.



End-to-end solutions: the products that your process needs

Point Counter Point

Ashok Karnik

Every issue has at least two sides. A wise man examines all sides before coming to a conclusion. This is an attempt to present various sides of an issue so that a considered opinion can be formed.

In Lighter Vein

1. According to usually unreliable sources, the murder of Osama has shaken the conscience of several bleeding hearts all over the world. Some of them have appointed themselves as members of a Commission of Inquiry into a poor, lonely man's death. The Commission is led by Justice (ret'd) Kalsi Patel, Aradhana Ray, Ahmed Shah Peelani and several other notables. They propose to visit Abbottabad, Florida (base of the US Navy Seals) and Washington to get to the root of the conspiracy to eliminate Osama. The questions raised by the Commission are:

- a) Whether Osama Ben Laden was really a terrorist as no court of law had declared him to be so.
- b) Whether Osama should have been shot in the head? Was there no way to arrest him? Can his death be justified morally or legally?
- c) Whether the Seals warned the inmates before firing? Was a Law Officer (Magistrate) present during the encounter?
- d) The US should produce Osama's body under the *Habeas Corpus* provisions to prove that he is dead
- e) Why was Osama's body not handed over to his friends (Pakistanis)? It would demand that a martyr's memorial be erected at Abbottabad for Osama by Pakistan with financial aid from the US.

1. The Commission members strongly feel that Osama was a victim of a capitalist, neo-colonialist conspiracy. He was not a terrorist but a victim of state terrorism himself. The Commission's resolve is strengthened by the authoritative findings of a French researcher, endorsed by a well-known Marathi journalist, that 9/11 was a CIA-Pentagon-State Department conspiracy to malign the Muslim *ummah* and uphold the despicable 'Clash of Civilizations Theory'; similarly the 26/11 attack in Mumbai was found out by a Urdu journalist and endorsed by a Congress honcho, to be a 'Conspiracy by the RSS to kill Karkare'. In the circumstances, Abbottabad was obviously an extension of the same evil-doers. Washington has a lot to answer for and the Commission would insist on answers from the White House. It would like to interrogate the 79 Seals and the lone dog that went on the mission to Abbottabad. It would like to question the CIA operatives who were instrumental in 'finding and fixing' Osama. It would like to examine the stealth helicopters used by the Seals to understand the mechanics of the operation. It will also meet ISI officials who have been maligned so badly and listen to their version of the incident. It would interview a wide section of the population of Abbottabad. It would like to call on all the five wives and known children of Osama to convey to them the fraternal greetings of the oppressed people of the planet. The Commission would take about 7 years to complete its work and submit its report to the International Court of Justice and the Amnesty International and demand action against the guilty.

Purulia Arms Drop

2. The ghost of December 1995 has been disinterred. The air drop of tonnes of arms in Purulia (West Bengal) on that fateful night has been shrouded in secrecy. The foreign aircraft which made the air-drop escaped the radar, did its job and vanished from Indian air space. There were speculations even then that the British Intelligence (MI 5) had alerted India about the drop and still India could not prevent it or intercept the plane after the event. The surprising thing was that the same plane returned to the Indian space from Thailand two days later and was forced to land in Mumbai. To cap the incident, Kim Davy who

2. Since Kim Davy is facing extradition from Denmark to India, the story is coming out again with embellishments. It is claimed by Davy and Peter Bleach, his colleague who suffered a jail sentence for the offence, that the entire operation was planned by the R&AW of India and MI 5 of UK. If true, the immediate speculation was that the Central Government had hatched this conspiracy to destabilize the Communist Government in West Bengal by arming the local populace. This appears far-fetched because there was no popular movement against the State Government which could be armed by the Centre. The

was in charge of the plane, got off the plane at Santacruz airport and walked away without being challenged. This is difficult to believe even in a film script.

Who says you cannot walk into a mall with a weapon? It is a licensed gun and no one could have been stopped?

Nikhil Khadse, son of BJP legislator Eknath Khadse,
Mumbai Mirror, May 9, 2011.

first suspicion was that the arms were meant for the Anand Margis who were prone to taking up arms for their divine (devilish?) aims. However, Anand Marg was anathema to the Centre, which could hardly use it as a handmaiden for a local revolution. Secondly, if the Centre was a party to the arms drop, would it have forced the plane to land and detained it? Would it ask the CBI to get Davy extradited? On the contrary, it would do everything to bury the case. Let the mystery continue till Davy is here with more disclosures or fanciful defence in court.

National Recognition

3. India's victory in the Cricket World Cup was greeted with tumultuous applause all over the cricket mad country. Along with the euphoria, there were some discordant voices of those who were disturbed by the importance accorded to cricket at the exclusion of all other sports and the money showered on cricketers in this poor country. We are a nation of cribbers and must find something to argue about even in moments of glory. We have forgotten the joy of celebrating with an open heart. National recognition for the glory achieved for the country is nothing new. The success of our countrymen builds the confidence that we are second to none in the world; it cannot be weighed in terms of money earned or spent. The nation raises its head high and that is an invaluable gain, be it the shooters, wrestlers or cricketers. National pride is something beyond evaluation. It is something to hold on to as there is very little else to cling to in a "poor, ravaged country".

3. What irks most critics is the quantum of money showered on the cricketers; crores were gifted away to each member of the team. The amount is immediately compared with what it could do for the needy. It is a false notion that money saved somewhere is immediately available for a good cause. In a nation's calculus crores is pittance; thousands of crores are lost in minor transactions. Just recall the figures in 2-G spectrum, CWG and land scams in Mumbai alone. National problems cannot be solved through tooth pickings. Austerity is a gesture to share adversity; it has no validity in economics. In any case, just consider the amounts earned by the State and Central Governments through the World Cup. The BCCI itself earned hundreds of crores through the efforts of its players. What is the big deal if a small part of it is given to those who earned it for the State and the BCCI? The same argument holds good for grant of national honours from Padmashri to Bharat Ratna. Let us stop research into architectural flaws of the Taj Mahal or carry out its cost audit. For once, let us learn to rejoice without holding back.

Readers are invited to send their points of view on serious issues of the day to ashokkarnik2001@yahoo.co.in

Need for Moderation

Our cricketers are being treated as national heroes, and rightly so. Gifts are being showered on them, in cash and kind. It has been a windfall week for the entire cricket team and a number of others who have contributed to the win in some near or distant way. Our cricketers have turned from lakhpatis to crorepatas overnight, and in return for their gift of a cup to the nation, they are the recipients of crores of rupees, housing plots, luxury villas, first class AC class passes in our Railways, and free lifetime travel in one particular airlines from anywhere to anywhere as privileged guests.

Apart from cash gifts and land, railway stations, bus stops and airports are proposed to be named after some cricketers, the road connecting Captain Dhoni's ancestral village to Dehra Dun is to be laid as a reward for his achievement. Dhoni is also to get a honorary commission in the Territorial Army. The Maharashtra legislature has recommended Sachin Tendulkar for the award of the nation's highest civilian honour, viz. Bharat Ratna. Many other players are to be awarded state-level honours.

While the nation has bestowed the highest status on cricket as the leading national sports, not even a fraction of that attention is being devoted to other games. Hockey, which once upon a time, was a household sport and was patronised by the government and the civil society as a game that had put India on the Olympic map is languishing for want of support today. Does anyone remember any of the hockey stalwarts today and recall their names? Who are our soccer and football stars and to what extent is the game itself patronized outside West Bengal and Kerala?

COURTESY: S. Viswam and Janata, April 12, 2011.

An Electoral Tsunami in Tamil Nadu

S. Radhakrishnan & T. S. Gopal

In the final analysis *sans* statistics, the victory once again establishes the efficacy of democracy.

Anger and anguish are best expressed by the ballot.

The results of the assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, have belied all pre-poll predictions with regard to the margin of win of the AIADMK. It emphatically reaffirms India as a vibrant democracy. The single largest winner in all the constituencies in Tamil Nadu was the Election Commission. Cash, ironically with the Mahatma Gandhi's picture printed on it, packaged in various sizes, from small envelopes to large bags, meant to entice the voters were seized; rules relating to elections were strictly enforced and many bureaucrats enforced the rules. Another institution that played its role though indirectly was the Supreme Court which, with its recent pronouncements, fuelled Jayalalitha's call against corruption.

It was pathetic to watch Congress spokesmen from seniors like Kapil Sibal to the still-wet-behind ears Karthik Chidambaram downplaying the steam roller win saying corruption was not the issue and that as always Tamil Nadu voters wanted a change every five years. The Congress-DMK alliance, they assured would continue as a matter of principle despite the drubbing. But it is expected that members of the Congress in the state of Tamilnadu, in particular the Youth Congress favoured ending the alliance.

Jayalalitha on the contrary won the election comprehensively solely on the issue of corruption and prevent Tamil Nadu from becoming a family enterprise. When the polls registered an impressive 85 percent with a huge women voter turnout, it was clear that the DMK was on its way out. Such an increase in the number of those who voted even in urban areas clearly indicated that even the normally indifferent upper and middle class and the educated were braving the sun to express their anger. Anger. Yes, at no time did so much silent anger cut across economic, social, geographic barriers all over the state than during this election. The led to the DMK's decisive defeat. Jayalalitha could sense that and thus her main thrust was on corruption and the family take-over of the state.

Every section of the society suffered one way or another under this family rule – the corporate sector, the film industry, real estate, the education sector, all felt the

impact. What stirred the voter's mind was the quantum of corruption that the 2G spectrum with its mind boggling zeroes threw up. The general perception that the rural folk hardly bothered about this was wrong. Auto rickshaw drivers in small towns circulated booklets in Tamil about the scams. There were also street corner shows. What really hit the DMK were the details of how the scam money percolated to the family – the tax payer's money going into the pockets of one family.

While power cuts were not felt in Chennai it was a routine day of darkness in small towns, villages and industrial towns. The frequent power cuts prior to the election were dubbed as deliberate ones to facilitate distribution of freebies and cash to entice voters. The election result proved that even if this was true, voters took the freebies and voted against the 'benefactors'.

The print media, particular the vernacular ones, played a major role in influencing the people. Fearlessly highlighting the folly of those who govern, the language media were the first to bring to light the dark deeds like 2G and real estate scams years ahead of the election. The views of eminent journalists like Cho and activists like Gurumoorthy also impacted the common man with telling effect. Video clips of the speeches about the 2G scam, circulated widely further fuelled the anger of the people. In short, there was a silent movement picking momentum, reminiscent of the Emergency days in the seventies, before bursting into a Tsunami on polling day.

Basking under the pretext of restoring Tamil to its past glory – 'Tamilize Tamil Nadu' – cost not only the exchequer but also the Chief Minister his government! His snide remarks about Hindu mythologies often hurt many believers. The DMK's plan to impose Tamil as the medium of instruction for technical courses put a scare among students whose global employment opportunities could be reduced and worse still, be confined to the state.

Their siblings' war for a share of power was the reason for dividing the party while decisions taken at places other than at ministers' meetings was another. As a partners of the UPA coalition at the Centre the DMK

often flexed its muscle to get its their way. This often resulted in sloppy and/or unpopular decisions being taken due to what came to become a common excuse - coalition compulsions. Helpless Congress members seethed with anger not only in Delhi but more so within the state. As alliance partners of the DMK the Congress also went down in a humiliating defeat

The massive win could also be because of silent cross voting by DMK's supporters . Old dedicated DMK party men were unhappy because of the family take over and sibling fight for power; the family's internal fights disillusioned the DMK cadres. On the Congress front, cross-voting could have been because of the in-fighting that went on till the filing of nomination of the local party president followed by expulsions which cost him his seat and the Congress its image.

The people of the State have handed down a massive mandate without coalition strings attached to Jayalalitha in the hope that more than the freebies she would head a corrupt free government that would hear the voice of the people and assure good governance. They hope she would take a leaf from Gujarat that has bravely faced the tribulations of a non-congress government and become the best governed state. She appears to have mellowed but still see the glint of anger, when she said she would not occupy the new Assembly Complex. It was

built with tax payer's money. Anger should not be aimed at brick and mortar but in correcting the wrongs.

Jayalalitha has come back to power with her party obtaining an absolute party. Her coalition partner Vijayakanth has stated that he will not be staking a claim to be part of the government. There are no coalition compulsions for her to dilute her decisions. One hopes she will be remembered by her deeds and not by statues, schemes and buildings named after her. The people are not asking her to do the impossible like making the auto rickshaw meter work, but continue with the infrastructure projects that benefit the people and provide them with a better quality of life.

In the final analysis *sans* statistics, the victory once again establishes the efficacy of democracy. Anger and anguish are best expressed by the ballot. It happened once before – silent anger waiting to explode after the Emergency was lifted. It is time Jayalalitha with past experience and present strength rebuilds the economy and the state with more vision, and with less anger that could be misconstrued as vindictiveness.

PROFESSOR S. RADHAKRISHNAN, Professor of Economics and formerly National Coordinator of the Indian Liberal Group. MR. T. S. GOPAL, a social activist and a leading member the Indian Liberal Group in Chennai. Email: gems_43@yahoo.co.in

Good News for Indian Democracy

Nothing better could happen for Indian democracy than for powerful political dynasties to be trashed through the ballot box. Only when this happens, will people with better political credentials than the right surname get a chance to participate in the increasingly cloistered world that electoral politics has unfortunately become. So pervasive is hereditary democracy that even lowly village officials try to pass their humble positions on to their kith and kin. In nearly every case the reason for this is the same: politics has become the easiest way to make money in India.

For me personally, the results from West Bengal were as heartening as those that came from Tamil Nadu. Having grown up in socialist times when Leftist political thought was so ascendant that if you disagreed you would be labelled a CIA agent, I am happy to see the last Leftist bastion crumble. Had it happened ten years ago, West Bengal may perhaps have counted among our most prosperous states. It has every reason to be rich and booming. If it has fallen behind, it has been because in the Stalinist vision of the communists who ruled for nearly forty years, it was enough to give people the barest rural minimum. Anyone who dared to dream of bigger things left Bengal. And, Kolkata, which as Calcutta was once the grandest city, fell to pieces before our eyes. Even if Mamata Banerjee can do no more than sell Bengalis a bigger dream, it will be more than they have had for a long, long time.

If looked at superficially, last week's results seem good for the Congress Party. It has won Assam for a third time, won back Kerala and Mamata is their ally in West Bengal. But, a closer examination of the results may indicate that the foundations of our oldest political party are beginning to shake. Hereditary democracy and Leftist economy policies are two of the Congress Party's central pillars and it seems that Indian voters are beginning to be sick of both.

COURTESY: Tavleen Singh and *The Sunday Express*, May 15, 2011.

Hazare Must Plan for Evolutionary Changes!

P. M. Kamath

In February this year, I addressed several groups of people interested in international political issues like the developments then in Egypt and elsewhere in West Asia. During my lectures, one question that was raised by many was: Will the Tahrir square spirit catch up with Indian civil society? I was then a little hesitant to say a firm 'yes' as I reasoned that because of Indian society being highly pluralistic – divided on caste, sub-castes, regional and sub-regional, religious and sectarian, and language considerations – it is unlikely that we can present such an united front against the government in India! However, now I feel that Anna Hazare's fast unto death has changed all that. He has provided an anchor of safety for every one who wants to liberate India from the corrupt practices of bureaucracy and its supportive-guardian politicians.

It is unlikely to develop into a movement like the one led by Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) against the Indira Government in the 1970s. There are two major reasons for this observation. First, those lending Anna Hazare support are all from outside politics. JP was aligned with the opposition parties. When Om Prakash Chauthala and Uma Bharati went to Jantar Mantar, the venue of Anna's fast unto death, they were hooted out! Second, Dr. Manmohan Singh's government has not taken a confrontationist approach towards Anna Hazare, enabling an early solution to the issues raised by him.

What is the demand of Hazare? Since government has been dilly-dallying for the last forty two years on drafting an effective Lokpal bill as the Super watchdog against the cancer of corruption, he demanded that drafting be done by a committee with fifty percent government representatives and fifty percent representing civil society.

Of all the arguments against accepting Anna's proposal, put forward by the government, the stupidest one is: There is no constitutional provision for people's participation in the drafting of the bill! Hence, it goes against the very grains of parliamentary democracy! The Maharashtra government refuted Anna Hazare's claim that some of the important laws like that of RTI in Maharashtra were drafted by civil society.

We witness a hundred mutinies every day - burning buses, stone pelting on passing cars and rail/road roko. The most amazing feature of the support to Anna Hazare was the that the movement is peaceful and supported by the youth.

Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd)

These people also put forward an argument that there is no precedent for such participation by the people unrelated to the government machinery! Those who put forward such an argument forget the fact that the parliamentary system itself had its origin through the *Magna Carta*, a charter of rights, drafted by the people (Barons) against the wishes of the King and not by the king's corrupt ministers, on 15 June 1215. Even in terms of Austinian sovereignty, what the King permits becomes the law! Hence, if elected parliament and cabinet accept a proposal mooted by the people, or by a quasi-government panel, it becomes a proposal of the legally established government when it is approved by Parliament.

Even if it becomes a precedent, it will only enrich the content of Indian democracy. In well established democracies as in the US (at state levels) or, as in Switzerland, there are provisions for initiative by the people to write laws and put them for people's vote. Let us make a new beginning in strengthening Indian democracy by accepting the utility of Public Initiative before it is blown off by people's wrath!

In a sense, by accepting Anna Hazare's demand the Prime Minister has accepted the relevance of public initiative albeit unknowingly under extraordinary circumstances.

However, it cannot be limited only to the working of the federal government in Delhi as corruption is not limited to New Delhi. It is there at the level of states, local bodies like municipalities and Panchayats. It is more harmful at the level of local bodies as every citizen has to go to these bodies for several services.

(Cont'd. on page 28)

Quality *Redefined* Quality *Reassured*

'Jyoti' Medium Voltage Switchgear

now Type-tested at

PEHLA

testing laboratory at Ratingen Germany



**3.6 kV TO 12 kV INDOOR
CIRCUIT BREAKER PANEL**
Ratings : 12 kV up to 3150A, 40 kA



Vacuum Circuit Breaker (Front View)

Vacuum Circuit Breaker (Rear View)

Type Tests conducted as per IEC-62271-100/200

1. Basic Duties T 100s to T 10 at 40 kA.
2. Single Phase Test at 40 kA.
3. STC Test at 40 kA for 3 sec.
4. H.V. & Lightning Impulse Voltage withstand test.
5. Temp. Rise Test

Type Tests conducted as per IEC-62271-100/200

1. Basic Duties T 100s to T 10 at 26.4 kA.
2. Single Phase Test at 26.4 kA.
3. STC Test at 26.4 kA for 3 sec.
4. H.V. & Lightning Impulse Voltage withstand test.
5. Temp. Rise Test.
6. Cable Charging current Switching Test at 25 Amp.
7. Single Capacitor Bank Switching Test at 400 Amp.



Jyoti Ltd.

Water • Power • Progress

SWITCHGEAR DIVISION

J/44-59, B.I.D.C., Gorwa, Vadodra-390 016 (India).

Phone : 2280770 (5 lines), Fax : +91-265-2280153

E-Mail : switchgear@jyoti.com

Website : <http://www.jyoti.com>

- Offering a complete range of Indoor / Outdoor Switchgear
- Ratings : 3.6 to 36 kV, 400 to 3150 Amps and 12.5 kA to 44 kA
- Retrofitting of MOCBs with VCBs in all ratings (3.6 kV to 36 kV)
- Spares for MOCBs and VCBs

65 YEARS OF ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

Whose Money is it Anyway – Only the Farmers’!

Girdhar Patil



The Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank (MSCB) is an apex body that finances Cooperatives in the State of Maharashtra. It has often been in the centre of controversies for misdemeanors’ and misuse by politicians. While this is not unknown to Maharashtrians, it has now drawn national attention because of the involvement of nationally known political heavyweights from Maharashtra following the sacking of its entire 44-member Board of Directors by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the appointment by the state chief minister of two Administrators to take charge of the MSCB.

The MSCB is the prime nodal agency in the agro-finance supply chain formed by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to reach out to farmers in remote villages in state. It gets lucrative income by way of commissions simply by transferring funds received from NABARD to District Cooperative banks and other cooperatives. The District banks in turn finance farmers through their branches and coop societies at the village level.

Farmers are shareholders of cooperative societies and a part of their share capital goes to the MSCB via the District banks. Thus the basic capital requirements are furnished by share-holding farmers. NABARD charges MSCB a 3% interest while the farmer has to pay almost 14%. This 3-tier system thrives on a high interest income. The quantum of agro-finance is so huge that the 3-tier system collects massive amounts by way of interest alone. This itself is a good reason why there is need to reassess the rates of interest of interest paid by poor farmers who already are overburdened with other liabilities.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Report on cooperative financing has drawn attention to the fact that sugar cooperatives alone have defaulted in the repayment of loans amounting to Rs.34,000 crores – which

The capital invested is that of the farmers in Maharashtra and every rupee lost is their loss. They risk losing their share capital if something goes wrong.

is really the taxpayers money- which is unrecoverable and may have to be written off.

There are numerous examples of violations of banking norms and procedures including various provisions of the Co-operatives Act under which all these institutions operate. Not only has the state co-operative ministry failed to enforce fiscal discipline but is also responsible for letting corruption reach such enormous heights because of its inaction. This is what compelled the RBI to take corrective and preventive action and to hold further enquiry into these irregularities. As already pointed out the capital invested is that of the farmers in Maharashtra and every rupee lost belongs to them. They risk losing their share capital if something goes wrong.

Leave alone the apex bank, whenever any co-operative goes bust because of corruption or financial mismanagement, the first victims are its shareholders – in this case the farmers - who already have lost crores of rupees in such liquidations, when government also writes off huge amounts of liabilities in the form of guarantees given for fictitious loans. This has been going on for years together and nobody really wants to get to the bottom of this.

On the other hand it would appear there is a conspiracy between the state government, the bank management (both bureaucrats and politicians) to defraud the farmers by entering into cozy arrangements in which it would seem that government and the bank administration have positioned themselves as both plaintiff and defendant now! Even a cursory examination will reveal that the very same people on both sides are taking on inter-changeable roles as the occasion demands! On the one hand they apply for a loan on behalf of a co-operative institution, and on the other they themselves sanction by virtue of the position they hold in the government or the bank! We have heard of two persons sharing a plate at a time, but here the one person concerned has the privilege of eating from two plates at the same time. This is a clever

(Cont'd. on page 27)

Two Crusades Or One?

by V. B. Karnik

One of the favourite arguments of the Prime Minister, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, in support of his stand of neutrality in the worldwide struggle between the free nations and Soviet Russia has been that it is in the nature of a crusade by each against the other and wise and tolerant men should, therefore, keep away from it.

In a recent speech in Bombay, he gave expression to the idea in the following words:

‘The two big Powers, Russia and the United States, representing two ideologies, were afraid of each other. If their ideological pursuits were peaceful, it would be possible for the people of the world to make their own choice. But they were using means other than peaceful and each believed that it was carrying on a “crusade” against the other. The “crusades” that the two countries claimed to carry on were for their own ideologies, characterised by the same zeal, fanaticism and bigotry displayed by the crusaders of medieval Europe.’ ...

... The Prime Minister has represented as if the struggle is joined only between the United States on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. This is a very superficial reading of the situation. America is no doubt the most important nation on one side of the struggle. But it is as the leader of the free nations of the world that America is shouldering that burden. The struggle that is developing is between the free nations of the world and Soviet Russia.

The idea that the free nations of the world are waging a crusade against Russia will be found to be without any substance when it is realised that those nations are not bound by any one economic or political system....

With such differing views on economic and political matters, the free nations differ many a time on vital issues of international politics. The difference of opinion between Great Britain and the United States of America on the issue of recognition of the People’s Republic of China is a glaring example of this lack of unanimity amongst the free nations....

Communism has no place for that freedom. Under communism, the all-wise, all-powerful coterie constituting the State decides everything and the people must blindly and ungrudgingly accept all those decisions and act according to them. Communism cannot conceive of two answers to any question or of two solutions to any problem. There is always one and the only answer and the one and the only solution. Under communism, there can be only one economic system, only one

social order and only one centre of political power. It is the duty of communists to establish all over the world that communist economic system and social order and to develop that centre of communist political power. Communism is a world religion and, according to its prophets, it can succeed only when it is established all over the world. If, therefore, there are any crusaders, they belong to the communist camp and there is no doubt that the crusade carried on by them is characterised by, as stated by Mr. Nehru, “the same zeal, fanaticism and bigotry displayed by the crusaders of medieval Europe.”

The crusade is not a matter of choice for communists or communist Powers. It is enjoined upon them by the doctrines of their faith. Moreover, the very existence of free nations is inimical to the growth and sustenance of communism and communist Powers. They could not tolerate the existence as a free nation of even such a tiny and harmless country like Tibet. The breath of free air that blows from those quarters undermines the foundations of communism. Tyranny cannot regard itself as safe so long as freedom exists anywhere in the world....

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru has gone a grave injustice to the anti-communist fighters for freedom by labelling their struggle as a crusade for the imposition of an economic ideology. Nothing could be farther away from the minds of those fighters than the imposition of an economic ideology upon anybody on which they are not agreed amongst themselves. Such a wrong characterisation of that struggle creates confusion in the minds of the Indian people. That confusion is harmful not only for the world struggle against communism but also for the cause of Indian freedom and democracy. The Prime Minister may be indifferent to the former but cannot but be vitally interested in the latter. It is desirable, therefore, that he should think a little more calmly before pronouncing such hasty options on matters of such grave import.

*

Asoka Mehta

We heartily welcome the election of Mr. Asoka Mehta to the House of People. We should be pardoned if we take some sort of personal pride in the fact that a member of our Executive Committee has been elected to the highest law-making body with an impressively large majority. We have no doubt that the intellectual atmosphere in the House will bristle with Mr. Mehta’s accomplishments. He will enliven the debates with his scintillating eloquence and enrich their content by his penetrating study and thoughtful pronouncements. The Committee has now two distinguished members of its Executive Committee in the Indian Parliament and we are sure that the voice of freedom will acquire a firmer tone because of their presence there.

*

Cameron on Kashmir. Churchill on Amritsar

Christie Davies

Indian readers can perhaps now understand why the British people hold Cameron the apologist in such contempt. Anyone who doubts what I say should talk to a Korean, an Armenian or a Lithuanian.

Mr. 'Dave' Cameron, Britain's inept and inadequate Prime Minister has managed to anger both Indians and his own people by saying on a visit to Pakistan that Britain had caused the conflict in and over Kashmir. Indians were angry because it implied he is sympathetic to the Pakistani cause. By absurdly blaming his own nation for the dispute he had exonerated Pakistan. No wonder he was so warmly applauded by his Pakistani audience. Sixty years of Pakistani intransigence and aggression against India had been erased from the record.

The British were angry because the callow Cameron, like the blurring Blair before him, insists on blaming their ancestors for matters in which they were only peripherally involved and where they were not wicked but at most mistaken or clumsy. By implication the British people ought to be feeling guilty about Kashmir. I do not feel a single molecule of guilt. Besides, when India became independent, I was five years old and Britain's inexperienced, slab-faced Prime Minister was still locked into his previous incarnation. What has Kashmir got to do with either of us? Nothing.

No, the fault lies entirely with Pakistan and with the arrogant unwillingness of the Muslims of the sub-continent to agree to live in a religiously plural society with a national commitment to secularism. Muslims everywhere have an undemocratic and unreasonable belief in the 'divine' superiority of their own laws and right to rule. They have never really forgotten the 'glorious' days of their imperial rule over much of India. There is no reason at all why the Muslims of Kashmir should not settle for the equal citizenship promised by the Indian Constitution, together with a reasonable degree of local autonomy. But for the political agitation by, and terrorist incursions from, Pakistan, they probably would have done so. Pakistan stands for those two great causes of war, irredentism and *revanche*. The underlying problem with the Muslims in India is the anachronistic and subversive idea of loyalty to the *ummah*, the idea that Muslims should place solidarity with their Muslim brothers above loyalty to country. It is one that today afflicts Britain as well.

That is the real reason for Mr. Cameron's unmanly

and unworthy apology. Back home he has a discontented, unassimilated and troublesome Muslim minority, a large part of whom (or their ancestors) are from Pakistan and some from what they insist on calling 'Azad Kashmir'. In an earlier clumsy public outburst Cameron had said truthfully that Pakistan was not doing enough to combat terrorism. By this he implied also terrorism within Britain itself by British Muslims, who go back and forth between their houses in Britain and their homes in Pakistan. By contrast Britain's Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Parsees are model citizens and so Cameron does not need to placate them. It is not those who deserve an apology who get one but the undeserving ones known to make trouble – in this case Britain's dubiously loyal Muslims.

The British authorities did not handle the situation in India in 1945-47, the years just before Indian independence, at all well. The manner in which they quit India was far worse than the way they had ruled it. However, the cause of this lay in the feebleness in military and economic power of the British at that time.

In 1945 Britain was utterly ruined after six years of war and the Americans had cut off the lend-lease arrangements that had sustained Britain during that war. Also, due to the policies of Attlee's new socialist government, living conditions in Britain in 1947 were in some respects worse than during the war. Not only was food still rationed but the rations were lower than they had been in wartime; even the potato, that most basic of British foodstuffs, was rationed, which it never had been before. Thanks to the collusion between the miners' union and 'Manny' Shinwell, the minister in charge of fuel and power, there was a shortage of coal and the supply of electricity was cut off. Many factories could only run four days a week.

In 1945 the veteran soldiers of the British army, including those who had, along with their Indian comrades, fought off the imperial Japanese invader at Imphal, were demobilised and had returned to their families in Britain. The British army consisted largely of inexperienced and under-trained eighteen year old conscripts. Britain was no longer the confident and puissant imperial power celebrated by Kipling. That is why Wavell, as Viceroy of

India in 1943-47, was unable properly to deal with the inter-communal violence of 1946. If Mr. Cameron still insists on apologising, it should be to the Indian victims of Jinnah's 'direct action' communal terrorism, notably in the Great Calcutta Killing of 1946. It should have been prevented by firm action from the British authorities notably Sir John Burrows the Governor of Bengal and its instigators severely punished.

As for the question of the accession of Kashmir and Jammu to India, decisions are made by individuals not entire nations and there were so many players that I will offer no opinion on which individuals were to blame at the time. I do not know enough and I lack the ill-placed, old-Etonian self confidence that leads Cameron to shoot his mouth off on matters of which he know little. Is Mr. C. blaming Mountbatten? Why? Chuck it, Cameron.

It is possible that the muddled Mr. Cameron merely means that Britain should never ever have exercised even indirect power over Kashmir. But why are there Muslims in Kashmir anyway, an area whose original inhabitants were Hindus or Buddhists? It is beyond Mr. Cameron's comprehension that the Muslims originally came to India as alien, imperial invaders forcibly converting the local people at a time when the British had not yet emerged by sea from their cold, remote little island.

Early English travellers to Ladakh recorded that a sharp line that divided the Muslim polygamous villages with their invisible downtrodden womenfolk and innumerable children from the polyandrous villages of the peaceable Buddhists, who because of their lower birth rate were more far prosperous. The line was where it was because this was the point at which the supplies of the Muslim armies ran out and their brutal conquest halted. The Buddhists to the north-east of the line remained free, unlike the Buddhists of Afghanistan who had disappeared, leaving only the fine monuments so shamefully destroyed by the Taliban. If Kashmir had been annexed by Pakistan in 1947 the remaining Buddhists would have been driven out of Ladakh much as the Hindus of Sind were or else forcibly converted. The Hindus of Kashmir and Jammu would have been expelled or as Penderel Moon describes in his memoir, *Divide and Quit*, forced to convert by fear. Ethnic cleansing: a fine old Pakistani tradition. None of this will have crossed Mr. Cameron's mind.

The test of whether the representatives of the British people today should consider apologising for an imperial past is not whether their ancestors behaved badly by contemporary standards but whether in an age when empires were prevalent, one might say 'normal', they behaved worse than those ruling rival empires at that time.

Yet nations whose imperial record is far worse than that of the British – the Japanese in Korea and China, the (Soviet) Russians in the Baltic States and Kazakhstan, the French in Vietnam, the Portuguese in Goa, the Turks in the Middle East and particularly in relation to the Armenians – will not even admit that they might have been at fault. Likewise they did not concede independence to those they ruled or negotiate with independence movements. They had to be kicked out as with the French and Portuguese or else lost a major war and their rule, indeed sometimes their entire political order collapsed; in the Soviet case the entire social order evaporated. Indian readers can perhaps now understand why the British people hold Cameron the apologist in such contempt. Anyone who doubts what I say should talk to a Korean, an Armenian or a Lithuanian.

Yet there is one truly horrible event of which the British need to remember even now in the twenty-first century the Amritsar massacre of 1919 when Brigadier-General Dyer, with the connivance of his Irish superior, Lieutenant Governor Sir Michael O'Dwyer, callously and pointlessly slaughtered an unarmed crowd. His troops fired at the crowd without warning, and kept on firing at people desperate to escape. When some of his troops fired high in order to miss, he ordered them to fire lower to kill. It was a pre-meditated war-crime, an act worthy of the Gaddafi whom the reckless Cameron is now so keen to be rid of by force.

Let us see how Winston Churchill described and abhorred that event. It cannot be said that Churchill's attitudes to India becoming independent were either sensible or moderate and indeed this was one of the reasons he was kept out of office in the 1930s when the National Government in Britain was negotiating with Gandhi and Churchill was rallying the Prince's defence League. Churchill was a great warrior, a trained soldier who had commanded Sikh troops in the Malakand field force, the descendant of Britain's greatest general, Marlborough. Churchill was a man infused with *kshatriya-dharma*, the warrior who stood against Hitler when others flinched because he was committed to action not the fruits of action. It meant he also had the distinctive blindnesses of a warrior; the Mahatma's philosophy was quite outside his comprehension, as was the need to divert resources from the waging of the second world war to alleviate hunger in Bengal. Yet Churchill's habitual belligerence and false perceptions of the Indian independence movement make even more remarkable his unflinching account and condemnation of the Amritsar massacre. Let me quote parts

(Cont'd. on page 28)

“A Stream of Correspondence”

K. K. Pathak

The author is an educationist (since retired) with the Rajasthan College in Agra. He enjoyed a unique relationship with C. Rajagopalachari, CR or Rajaji as he was more popularly known. This resulted in a “stream of correspondence” between Mr. Pathak and CR that lasted for over 15 years. Mr. Pathak has decided to publish these letters and has chosen the Rajaji Foundation to be the publisher. The book (to be published) is appropriately titled “A Stream of Correspondence.” Meanwhile the author has agreed to share with readers of *Freedom First* excerpts from his book in this and forthcoming issues of *Freedom First*.

We begin with excerpts from the Preface and Foreword. – Ed.

The idea of writing about my correspondence with the C. Rajagopalachari has been in my mind over the last two decades or so, though it is personal and intimate. It was around the time when Dr. Manmohan Singh was Finance Minister in the Narasimha Rao cabinet that the idea struck me. It has taken me almost eighteen long years to pen down about the stream of correspondence between C R and me. When I retired from Rajasthan College Education I was invited by Dr. Manmohan Singh to lunch, giving me honour I hardly deserve. He asked me for a book on CR’s philosophy of life. Since no such book was there, I asked him to make do with the two volumes of CR’s writings he had sent me in June 1963 as a token of his affection for me. Later on Mr Jaswant Singh of the BJP, a friend of long standing, expressed his keen desire to write a book on CR, extending an offer to be a co-author with him. I readily accepted his kind offer and I am glad that the book both of us have written is being brought out, giving a brief account of CR’s views and opinions on men and matters as reflected in his writings from 1955 to 1966. Quite naturally, the idea of writing about CR’s letters to me had to be postponed by me for some time.

I should like to point out that I have selected some letters he wrote me, leaving out many more for reasons I need not enumerate. The letters I have selected are of some topical interest, throwing light on matters which could not be included in the book on CR, Mr. Jaswant Singh and I have written.

The name of Chakravarty Rajgopalachari struck my imagination as a ‘*chakravarti raja*’ when I was at school in the early nineteen forties. It was in the first half of the forties that I used to read about him in the local newspapers. I hardly thought a day would come in my life when I would meet him and maintain a stream of correspondence with him for over the last fifteen years of his life.

As a student at Allahabad I was a socialist in the first half of the fifties, as it was a craze to be called a socialist those days. As a matter of fact, socialism and communism flourished by leaps and bounds after the Second World War almost all over the world, more particularly in Eastern Europe. In India Nehru was the father of socialism and made it the official policy of the Congress party at the Avadi session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in 1955 when he coined the phrase ‘a socialistic pattern of society’ as the aim of national reconstruction after Independence, though he had to coin another phrase, ‘democratic socialism’ within four years of his socialistic pattern of society. Around the time he revised his brand of socialism I had rejected it as it seemed to me a negation of democracy. It was in 1959 that it became my settled conviction that communism was the culminating point of all varieties of socialism.

CR had already ceased to be a Congressman in 1955 and did not attend the Avadi session. He did not get his four annas membership of the Congress Party, an organisation he had been associated with since 1919, renewed after 1955. When a conclave of some eminent intellectuals was held at Bangalore in 1959 CR founded the Swatantra Party. I was already following his line of thinking for a long time and in 1959 I was extremely happy to note that he had taken up the cause of building up an institution of a strong Opposition to make our democratic set-up more functional than ever before. Nehru had made the set-up a guided affair with little dissent. CR’s alternative to Nehru’s guided democracy was a matter of delight and I started writing letters to him much before we met in 1961 at Agra, my native town.

I quite remember I purchased Will Durant’s *The Story of Philosophy* way back in 1956. Right from Socrates down to John Dewey I became a little familiar with some

of the leading philosophers of the West, inducing me to read Hume, Thomas Paine, Rousseau, Berkley, Bentham, Thomas Moore and many other thinkers who influenced the European mind, leading to one peaceful revolution of ideas after another and culminating in a remodelling of society in one country after another. By the time CR founded the Swatantra Party I had read the best of thinkers of the West, shaping my views and opinions on the basis of a kind of synthesis of leading ideas into a coherent and somewhat settled convictions of my own.

CR's writings from 1955 to 1959 were a little different from what he wrote after the formation of the Swatantra Party. The philosophy of life reflected in his writings appealed to me most and I started writing him letters, pointing out how his line of thinking coincided with the best thinkers the world had produced. It was neither insincere flattery nor blind appreciation. I was rather somewhat critical on many occasions. His postcards started arriving almost as a matter of routine on a regular basis, encouraging me to go ahead with the practice of writing him letters. The letters he wrote me from 1960 to the early part of 1962 are no longer with me. They were a few postcards, most of them one or two liners and two or three inland letters. Their disappearance is still a matter of surprise, if not a mystery to me. From around April/May 1962 till October 1972 all his letters are with me, duly protected and preserved with all possible care. It is these letters which constitute the subject matter of this small book with my comments, making contexts and background clear for a proper understanding of the reader. I trust, rather firmly believe, that an intelligent reader will not only like them, but also find them enlightening on men and matters of the day.

It is not possible to categories them according to topics or to classify them under various headings. My simple approach is to quote in brief the contents of the letters in a chronological manner with brief notes by me with a view to explaining the circumstances and contexts in which CR wrote them in response to my letters. Unfortunately, I never kept copies of my letters to him, written mostly on plain paper as I did not have any letterhead. A holder with a relief nib and Parker's Quink Ink were used by me. His letters were mostly typed by his assistant, apart from some hand-written letters. At times he was so much excited after reading my letters to him that he would not wait for Krishnamurthy Rao, his assistant, and would immediately write his response and send it. I am writing this neither for name nor fame nor even for money. Mine is a mission to square up the account with CR whose unbounded love and affection for me had induced some of the best parliamentarians like H. V. Kamath, N. G. Ranga and M. R. Masani to tell me in different words

that CR was "over generous" to me and even partial to shower love on me. I used to shrug my shoulders, telling them that I wish I could help it.

I earnestly hope the reader will take this in a spirit intended by me, imputing no other motive. I have stated the truth without adulterating it to make the story spicy in any way whatever. No part or line of this book needs any further explanation or elucidation for the ignorant media men of today who know very little and listen to none let alone understand and appreciate things after the fashion of a true critic. I am sorry to make this unpleasant observation, although I wish I could avoid making it.

This much said on my part, would enable the reader to read this book without any bias or prejudice, as getting to the truth of a matter is always without these preconceptions on flimsy grounds much against the grain of sanity in these explosive times in which people pretend to be what they are not, desiring things evil with an opinion of their being good! These are queer times in which sanity is fast becoming a rare virtue as we are tending towards evil with a frightful speed leading to national ruin in which time-honoured norms have been thrown to the winds, replacing them with recklessness which leads to degeneration of society in a way we can hardly afford to put up with any longer. I am reminded of Milton's words put in the mouth of Satan who had risen in revolt against God: Awake, arise, or be forever fallen!

Let us revive the ethical and moral values for restructuring our society in an attempt to give a kind of regeneration to the rotten stuff we all have come to be. I appeal to the elite in the country to rise to the occasion and come forward, shedding their indifference to the cause of Regeneration, without which neither affluence nor moral stature of India could be of much avail. Affluence without morals is as useless as intellect without honesty of purpose. I am an optimist and my only prayer is that we awake, arise, and not get fallen in the quagmire of degeneration any more. We have the proud privilege of having a person like Dr. Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister. If things do not improve under his leadership, there is little hope of any kind of regeneration taking place in this country.

(To be continued)

Gurudev – A Many Splendoured Life

B. M. N. Murthy



He began writing verses as a child of eight and he was dictating verses on his deathbed at eighty.

Sometime around 1868, a little Bengali boy about 7-8 years of age returned home from his school repeating two lines from a Bengali nursery rhyme taught in his class: “JAL PADHE, PATA NADHE” which in English means ‘The rain patters, the leaf quivers’. The jingle in the rhyme held the special attention of the boy and he went on repeating it continuously even to the amazement of his parents. Often he would sit down and scribble a four line Bengali poem out of his own imagination, mostly about nature and its indescribable beauty. When this news reached the ears of the school headmaster, he wanted to test the ability of the boy as an amateur composer. One day he wrote two lines on the blackboard and asked the young lad to complete it appropriately. Without batting an eye-lid, the little boy completed the other two lines appropriate to the context and won the admiration of the headmaster. The headmaster was so impressed that he immediately called all the boys of the school in a congregation and made the boy recite his poem in their presence. This gifted boy was no other than Rabindranath Tagore who brought glory to his motherland India by winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 for his poem “Geetanjali”.

Rabindra was born on 7th May 1861 to Sharada Devi and Devendranath Tagore, an aristocratic family in Calcutta (now Kolkata). The head of the family was a kind hearted noble person who used to mix freely with everyone and commanded their respect and love. The neighbours in the vicinity used to address him as ‘Thakur’ with a lot of affection and respect. During British rule, this was anglicized to ‘Tagore’ and that got stuck as the family name.

When Rabindra’s initial education began at home with private tuition, the rigorous routine and the strictness of the teachers choked Rabindra who enjoyed freedom over the need to conform. When he was later admitted to the Oriental Seminary School, the teachers exercised

absolute control over the students and punished them even for minor lapses by awarding such punishment as ‘stand upon the bench’ with their books and slate in hand. This left a bitter impression on young Rabindra’s mind. To him, the school became a prison and going to school a punishment. It was at this stage that his mind, turned towards the more enjoyable hobby of composing poems.

When Rabindra was 11 his father performed the thread ceremony of his son and took him to the Himalayas on a holiday. On their way, they halted at a place called Bolpur where his father had built a small cottage, which he had named “Shantiniketan” – the ‘abode of peace’ – and this place was meant exclusively for his meditation and prayers. The cottage had a lovely garden with sylvan surroundings and plenty of open spaces with greenery, flowers, trees and beautiful lawns. This stay had a profound impact on the young mind of Rabindra who had all along grown up in the stifling atmosphere of Calcutta. This visit also acted as a turning point in his life since it enabled the hidden poetic genius of Rabindra to blossom.

As an ardent lover of nature, Rabindra enjoyed his exposure to the full beauty of nature with all its Himalayan glory and splendour. This opened up a whole new world for him and broadened his outlook. On returning to Calcutta, his mind had changed so much that he stopped going to the school with all its regimentation and rigidity and started self-education by reading the great works of Kalidasa, Shakespeare and the like as also the works of well known Bengali authors like Bankim Chandra Chatterji.

Towards the end of 1874 when Rabindra was just 13, the ‘*Tatvabodhini Patrika*’ of Calcutta published one of his earliest Bengali poems called “*Abhilasha*”. This was just the beginning of an outpouring of more than 2000 songs in Bengali and thus contributing to the richness of Bengali literature. Tagore lived to be 80; nearly 70 of these years were productive of literature. He began writing verses as a child of eight and he was dictating verses on his deathbed at eighty. Poems, songs, dramas, short stories, novels, letters, diaries, essays flowed from his pen in an incessant stream for over two generations. Even though

he started to write in English rather late, he quickly became so famous in the English speaking world that on his passing away, the '*Times Literary Supplement*' [TLS] wrote: "Perhaps no living person was more religious and no man of religion was more poetical than this great Indian Tagore".

At 22 Tagore married 10 year old Bhavatarini, the daughter of an employee in the Tagore Estates. The family renamed her Mrinalini after the marriage, appointing tutors to teach her the civilities and manners of a premier household. She was also sent to Loreto School to learn English. In this makeover, Mrinalini developed her own unique personality as the mother of five children.

Rabindranath wrote several letters to Mrinalini from 1890 to 1902, the year of her untimely death. But what did he write about? Mostly about functional household matters: how were the children Beli and Koka: was the Estate doing well; had money been paid to so and so; what happened to 15 *seers* of ghee that had been purchased? whether Mrinalini was taking regular walks and whether she continued to read novels. Occasionally Rabindra mentioned that he missed his home very much and that he occasionally dreamt of his wife and children. Mrinalini passed away in 1902, a devoted wife, mother and partner in Tagore's struggles. But she was never his Muse.

Right from his youthful days, Tagore had a desire to found an institution to impart education to children in tune with national ideas, which would develop patriotism in them. Sometime in 1901 this took some concrete shape when he decided to start a residential school based on our ancient Gurukul system. The bitter memories of his earlier education with its rigidity and regimentation made him think of a system where the students could exercise complete mental freedom with no barriers between the teacher and the students. His obvious choice to locate such a school was at Shantiniketan.

As he was already married by that time, he shifted his family to Bolpur in December 1901 and started the Brahmacharya Ashram in Shantiniketan on 22nd December 1901 with just about half a dozen students. This is the seed, which eventually spread into the huge banyan tree "Shantiniketan". Tagore was an affectionate teacher here and was popular with all the students who addressed him as 'Gurudev'.

Like Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan, Tagore had imbibed the spirit of the Upanishads in several of his works. Particularly in his work '*Sadhana*' there are ever so many quotations from the Upanishads, which show

how deeply he pondered over the sacred texts and he pointed out their relevance and significance to the modern mind. Probably it is this aspect of Tagore's writing that made Sir S. Radhakrishnan observe: "Tagore's philosophy of life is only the ancient wisdom of the Upanishads restated to meet the needs of modern times. His writings form a modern commentary on the Upanishads and the soul of ancient India is mirrored in them".

By 1912 Tagore had a series of bereavements in the family, which had an adverse effect on his health. It was decided that he should go to London for surgical treatment. However, just on the eve of his departure he suddenly took ill and the voyage was postponed. He therefore shifted to their farmhouse in Sealdah near Calcutta for rest and recuperation. It was in this peaceful atmosphere of the countryside that Tagore began translating some of his poems chosen from different collections into English. He called this compilation as "*Geetanjali*" [song offerings] which was published towards the end of 1912. It secured him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. This unique recognition made Tagore one of the greatest literary figures of his time. The University of Calcutta honored him with an Honorary Doctorate and the British Government conferred on him a Knighthood on the occasion of the birthday of the King.

In 1918 Tagore started an International University in Shantiniketan with the specific purpose of developing a base on which the Oriental and Occidental cultures could meet in fellowship and strengthen world peace and brotherhood. The name, which he chose for this University, was 'Vishwabharati' which reflected the twin objectives of world peace and universal brotherhood. Aptly he chose the Upanishadic mantra '*Yatra Vishwam Bhavati Eka Needam*' [where the world meets as one single nest] as the motto of the University. Soon after the University was started, the Jalianwalla Bagh tragedy took place in April 1919. This shocked and upset Tagore so much that he wrote a letter to the British Government stating that the Knighthood conferred on him was a 'badge of humiliation' and returned the Knighthood to the Government*. In 1921 he dedicated Vishwabharati to the people of the country. This included land, buildings, library, the Nobel Prize money and other personal belongings.

On 8th August 1941 Tagore passed away peacefully in Calcutta at the age of eighty.

*See Freedom First No.526, April 2006 for the text of his letter to the Viceroy titled "Honour Declined."

MR. B. M. N. MURTHY is a retired Engineer. Over the last ten years he has been writing weekly articles recalling India's great heritage. Email: bmmurthy@vsnl.com

Naushervan Framji Suntook

When the Media Turned a Patriot into a Traitor

V. Balachandran



On 10 April 1983, a Bombay newspaper, once the leader of the city's fourth estate announced with a banner headline, "India's Top Spy Missing: Biggest escape since Philby. US suspected destination, panic in ruling party".

The paper's New Delhi correspondent reported that Naushervan Framji Suntook, India's "master spy", head of the Research & Analysis Wing (RAW), had "defected to an as yet unknown country with some super sensitive documents". It mentioned that the passenger manifest revealed that he and his wife took a flight on 30 March to the United States. The report quoted a senior intelligence officer saying that "Santook's defection" was "conclusive evidence of a major penetration of the country's counter-intelligence by an as yet unknown foreign espionage network". It further said, "While almost all that RAW did and had, would now be the property of the country of adoption of Santook, according to this intelligence officer, nothing like this in the cloak and dagger world had happened anywhere since the defection of British MI 6 double agent Kim Philby over two decades ago."

This "defector" spy was the late Noshir Framji Suntook, a former naval officer who joined the Indian Police Service after Independence. In the early 1950s, while working in the Bombay Presidency, he volunteered to serve in the unpopular Andaman Islands where he did pioneering work in befriending the remote "Jarawa" tribe, instead of following the traditionally hostile police policy.

In 1957, he opted to go to the Northeast by joining the Indian Frontier Administrative Service (IFAS), successor to the British Indian Political Service. He soon learnt the complexities of that region. In 1968, the legendary R.N. Kao chose him to head an important wing when he set up our foreign intelligence department (RAW). In 1977, Suntook was selected by Prime Minister Morarji Desai to head RAW after a major purge following Indira Gandhi's defeat in 1977.

He became the second longest serving RAW chief (1977-1983). During this period he frustrated a surreptitious move by some elements in our foreign ministry, who, by taking advantage of the inexperience of the Janata government, tried to persuade them to sign the Nuclear

Non-Proliferation Treaty against India's traditional stand.

It was testimony to his apolitical service integrity that Indira Gandhi chose to retain him in this sensitive assignment after storming back into power in January 1980, although he had worked closely with her political rivals.

Suntook was to retire from service on 31 March 1983. He was to hand over charge to Girish Chandra "Gary" Saxena, later governor of Jammu and Kashmir. However, just before the formal transfer of charge, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi received an SOS from the head of a friendly foreign government. He was suspecting a possible coup instigated by foreign powers and wanted very discreet advice on how to counter it. The situation was grave. He could not trust his own agencies and chose to turn to India. Indira Gandhi thought only Suntook could give that effective advice in such a crisis. Thus he had to fly out to that country, cancelling his transfer of charge. Fertile brains in some sections of the bureaucracy and in an equally ill informed media chose to impute motives.

When Suntook returned to New Delhi on 12 April, after completing this assignment successfully, he did not realise the storm his hurried secret departure had caused in Parliament despite an official statement by the then Home Minister P.C. Sethi that he had gone abroad on duty. Suntook told me that he was pained that even leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who knew him well, had tried to make political capital out of the Prime Minister's inability to reveal the truth. He told me that he did not get a satisfactory answer from Vajpayee when he met him on his return. Neither did he get any apology from the media. What a way to treat a patriot!

In later years, Suntook would be appointed as member, Minorities Commission and was also to be involved in secret talks with Naga rebels in 1988. BBC correspondent Subir Bhowmik had said that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi chose him because of his deep knowledge of our Northeast problems

MR. V. BALACHANDRAN, former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India
Courtesy: *Sunday Guardian*, April 24, 2011

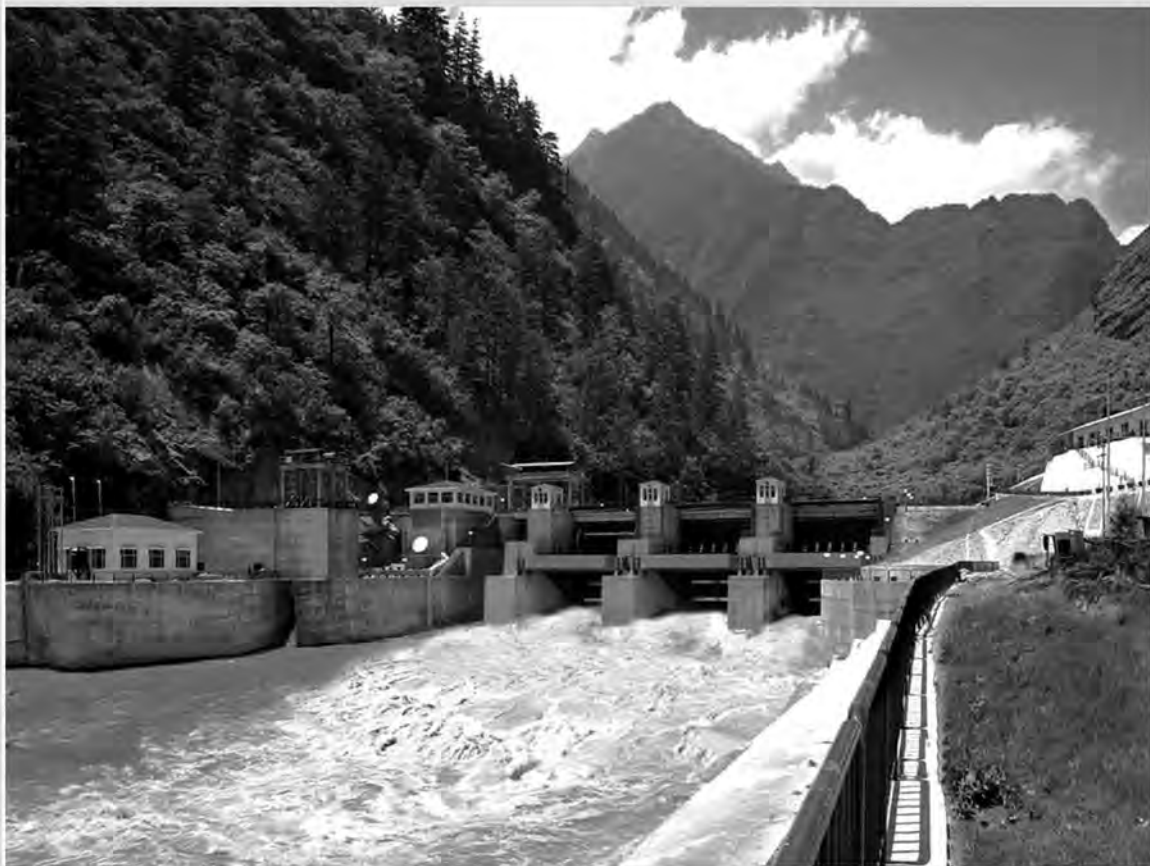
A COMMITMENT TO BUILD A BETTER LIFE

A globally recognized leader in construction of large scale river valley and other hydro power projects.

The Jaypee Group has been turning convention inside out. With youthful enthusiasm and courage, we've gone where few have ventured. We have explored possibilities where none existed. And while doing so, we have established benchmarks for others to follow.

No wonder then, you will find shining examples of our resilience not just in hydropower, but in Engineering & Construction, Cement Manufacturing and Real Estate.

It is our dream of a brighter India that gives us the courage to brave the odds, and to emerge successful. It's no small dream. But then, it's not too big either.



400 MW VISHNU PRAYAG H.E. PROJECT

HIGHLIGHTS

- Largest producer of hydro power in India in private sector
- Built Asia's highest rock fill dam
- Largest single location cement producing facility
- Largest operating hydropower station in private sector (400 MW Vishnu Prayag)



Construction
Power
Cement
Hospitality
Real Estate

— NO DREAM TOO BIG —

www.jalindia.com

Whose Money is it Anyway – Only the Farmers! (Cont'd. from page 17)

conspiracy to pocket funds on the one hand and raise queries on their misuse on the other!

It is also observed that this three tier system has proved to be the main obstacle in making available low interest loans to farmers. The Vaidyanathan Committee has suggested that NABARD finance farmers directly through district banks. Farmers can avail loans at the rate of 6% under this arrangement. But then our politicians lose an opportunity to play with such easy money for their political gains and games. Just as Jihadis often warn of Islam being in danger to justify their brutality, our political champions always declare the co-operative movement to be in danger, so as to siphon off funds, at the cost of the common man and poor farmer.

The RBI decision to dismiss the Board for incompetence & fraud (to put it mildly) is based on accepted banking norms, but it is now being tainted with political colors, neglecting proper investigation &

corrections. The blame game between Sonia's Congress and Pawar's NCP is diverting attention from the extent and nature of the misappropriation of farmers' share holdings. The state government where too the two are coalition partners, not surprisingly, does not seem to be serious enough. It has appointed two of its officials, as administrators. Both are known to have been mute spectators of the entire process for years together and failed in their legitimate role of preventing irregularities when they occurred. Their appointment, therefore is not so hopeful and does not give room for much confidence.

These initial moves on the part of state government are quite indicative of a desire to hush up the entire scam. This should not be allowed to happen.

DR. GIRDHAR PATIL is an agricultural activist, and a commentator particularly rural matters He is also a medical practitioner based in Nashik, Maharashtra. Email: Girdhar.patil@gmail.com

Making For A Far Better Audit

The *Hindu Business Line* of May 5, 2011 carries two related reports, Bloomberg - "*Big 4 audit firms may face UK anti-trust probe this month*" and on the Accountancy page by Mohan R Lavi entitled "*Towards better audit*". Both highlight the malaise pervading in the august profession the world over, more particularly in the USA, UK and our own India.

Having articulated in one of the Big 4 and subsequently an audit lead partner a 'small' practicing audit firm as the CAG and RBI empanelled auditor conducting audit of corporates and trusts large and small, I am inclined to entirely endorse all that is written in both the reports.

The audit profession has failed to reform itself. Post-Enron with massive stakeholders' loss, other than winding up of Arthur Anderson, nothing seems to have been done, except to create the PCAOB, which incidentally could not stall our own Satyam fraud, which PwC, USA paid heavily.

The ICAI has not come out with any substantive reforms claiming that the members are behind the bars! In other parts it began with BCCI, Palmart, Tycon, Lehman Brothers not to speak of the "stressed bank assets" that required massive bailouts. The fallout in the European PIGS economies is yet to come out with accurate numbers. All these conditions should have come out in the public domain had the Auditors done their duties as alert blood hounds and not meek watch dogs.

Ministries of Finance, as well Corporate Affairs, the Regulators SEBI and RBI should put on their thinking caps to come out with some worthwhile and well thought out audit practices and processes.

The ICAI is still pussy footing on its report on the Companies Bill. It is full of vested interests, many Central Committee Members lack practical hands on audit knowledge and expertise.

There is an urgent need to get senior Chartered Accountants, may be retired, like Raghavan and Malegam/ ex DHS with international exposure, and members from India Inc. like Mohandas Pai/ex-Infoys, Sheshasayee/ Leyland, Deosthale/L&T and the like. They are all low profile unlike the Central Committee Members of ICAI who only hog the limelight by virtue of their positions. They can be expected to contribute substantive intellectual inputs.

Nagesh Kini, FCA Mumbai.
nageshkini@hotmail.com

Hazare Must Plan for Evolutionary Changes! *(Cont'd. from page 15)*

The success of Anna Hazare is confirmation that Indians are fed up with corruption and highhandedness at every level. The Municipal Corporation of Mumbai is corruption personified. You need a certificate stating that the water you provide from your school taps is potable since it is provided by the BMC. But you cannot get it without paying a bribe. Corruption at the state level is equally mind-boggling. You try to register a property you bought; you have to pay speed money. If you pay a hefty bribe, you can get an encroached land declared as non-agricultural in the name of the encroacher! In the absence of your willingness to pay a bribe you will run from pillar to post to get a small playground for a school transferred in its name though reserved as a playground! It is a government policy that every school must have a playground, but when it comes to implementation, without bribe nothing moves!

Anna Hazare, having tasted victory, now wants to push for recall of elected representatives. Recall can wait. Civil society should focus on strengthening the first victory arising from popular initiative by taking it to its logical end of its introduction at all levels of government! Anna should concentrate on evolutionary changes to strengthen the working of Indian democracy instead of diluting popular energy by pushing for too many reforms at too short a time. If he diverts popular energy to another issue, the gains made in combating corruption might be lost!

PROFESSOR P. M. KAMATH, Professor of Politics (Retd.)
Hon. Director, VPM's Centre for International Studies,
Mumbai. Email: pmkamath@vsnl.com

Cameron on Kashmir. Churchill on Amritsar *(Cont'd. from page 20)*

of his speeches to the British parliament in 1920 made in the teeth of objections by a handful of die-hard Dyerites. Churchill said:

“One tremendous fact stands out – I mean the slaughter of nearly 400 persons and the wounding of probably three to four times as many, at the Jallianwala Bagh on 13th April.....

“Let me marshall the facts. The crowd was unarmed, except with bludgeons. It was not attacking anybody or anything. It was holding a seditious meeting. When fire had been opened upon it to disperse it, it tried to run away. Pinned up in a narrow place considerably smaller than Trafalgar Square, with hardly any exits, and packed together so that one bullet would drive through three or four bodies, the people ran madly this way and the other. When the fire was directed upon the centre, they ran to the sides. The fire was then directed to the sides. Many threw themselves down on the ground, the fire was then directed down on the ground. This was continued for 8 to 10 minutes, and it stopped only when the ammunition had reached the point of exhaustion. It stopped only when it was on the point of exhaustion, enough ammunition being retained to provide for the safety of the force on its return journey. If more troops had been available, says this officer, the casualties would have been greater in proportion. If the road had not been so narrow, the machine guns and the armoured cars would have joined in. Finally, when the ammunition had reached the point that only enough remained to allow for the safe return

of the troops, and after 379 persons, which is about the number gathered together in this Chamber (the House of Commons) to-day, had been killed, and when most certainly 1,200 or more had been wounded, the troops, at whom not even a stone had been thrown, swung round and marched away.”

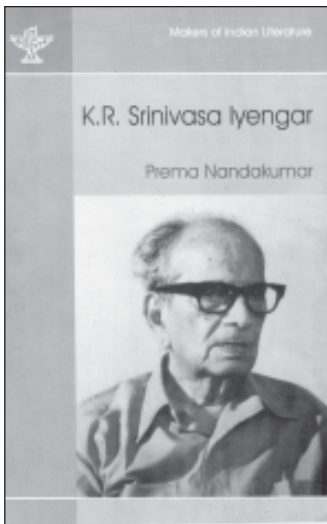
Churchill's account may not be entirely accurate and I have changed slightly the order though not the wording of his remarks but his straightforward recital of the facts is utterly damning and expressed in a powerful concise English quite beyond the capacity of the blethering Cameron. The conclusion Churchill draws from what he called this “monstrous event” is just as unequivocal:

“There is surely one general prohibition which we can make. I mean a prohibition against what is called “frightfulness.” What I mean by frightfulness is the inflicting of great slaughter or massacre upon a particular crowd of people, with the intention of terrorising not merely the rest of the crowd, but the whole district or the whole country. We cannot admit this doctrine in any form.”

Churchill's speech should be taught in Britain's schools. Perhaps then Britain's young people would understand why in 1997 Queen Elizabeth II placed a wreath at the site of the Amritsar massacre.

PROF. CHRISTIE DAVIES is the author of *The Strange Death of Moral Britain*, New Brunswick NJ, Transaction 20066

BOOK REVIEWS



K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR by Prema Nandakumar, Sahitya Akademi in their series **Makers of Indian Literature**, Rabindra Bhavan, 35, Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi ● Pages: 124 ● Price: Rs.40/-

Reviewed by Dr. R. Srinivasan, retired professor of political science, University of Mumbai, and Associate Editor, *Freedom First*.

The series, *Makers of Indian Literature* treated mainly creative writers (an early exception being the book on Pramatha Chaudhary), who remained very important names in the literary firmament. With this book the series breaks new ground in detailing

and assessing the career and the writings of a major literary critic Professor K. Srinivasa Iyengar. Many of us have gone to school with his massive *Indian Writing in English* – a handbook, a guide and a never failing work of reference. His slim books and monographs introduced many to modern literary figures of eminence as well as Tagore and Shakespeare. One recalls reading his Lytton Strachey with gratitude for unfolding the many-sided genius that the biographer was. His small book of translation, *Musings of Basava* published more than half a century before Ramanujan's *Speaking of Siva* opened up our eyes to the writings of the stellar figures Basava and Akka Mahadevi. To students of modern Indian history, a surprise awaited us in the library stacks of the University, the slim book *S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Story of a Decade of Indian Politics*. His was only a passing name then and it unfolded the remarkable career of this leader and this is perhaps still indispensable now, unjustly forgotten by the epigoni.

classroom. Even more important were the hours spent in personal interaction of budding minds with the Professor during long walks with them and many of the students were to make a mark later in public life.

Also, he was to be in the highest of administrative positions in University administrations, strengthening and putting them on a sound basis.

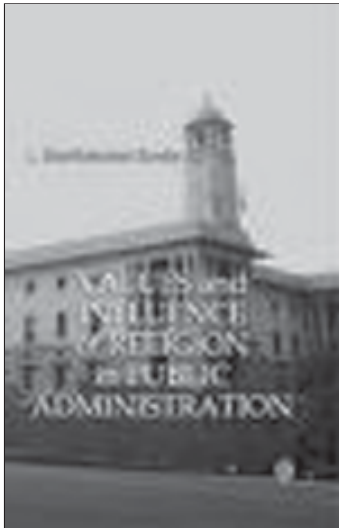
In his ripe age, he began re-working and re-interpreting the great cultural traditions, both Sanskrit and Tamil. His *Sitayana* is a re-interpretation of the Ramayana from the perspective of Sita. He attempted, as have other Tamil scholars of the *Sacred Kural* and of Saints – poets like Tirumular and Ramalingam. Like many of the Tamils who hold the *Sundara Kanda* of Valmiki in deep veneration, he translated it as the *Epic Beautiful*. His massive volumes from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother form an important analysis of these remarkable visionaries.

A new generation of students of English literature and Indian culture will find this small book informative and inspiring.

10 Things to Learn from Japan

1. **THE CALMNESS:** Not a single visual of chest-beating or wild grief. Sorrow itself has been elevated.
2. **THE DIGNITY:** Disciplined queues for water and groceries. Not a rough word or a crude gesture.
3. **THE INCREDIBLE ARCHITECTS,** for instance. Buildings swayed but didn't fall.
4. **THE GRACE:** People bought only what they needed for the present, so everybody could get something.
5. **THE ORDER:** No looting in shops. No honking and no overtaking on the roads. Just understanding.
6. **THE SACRIFICE:** Fifty workers stayed back to pump sea water in the N-reactors. How will they ever be repaid?
7. **THE TENDERNESS:** Restaurants cut prices. An unguarded ATM is left alone. The strong cared for the weak.
8. **THE TRAINING:** The old and the children, everyone knew exactly what to do. And they did just that.
9. **THE MEDIA:** They showed magnificent restraint in the bulletins. No silly reporters. Only calm reportage.
10. **THE CONSCIENCE:** When the power went off in a store, people put things back on the shelves and left quietly.

Teachers of a bygone era educated whole generations with the subtleties and niceties of English literature and enlarged the mind that a study of literature entails. For decades, their students remembered them with gratitude – for instance in far off Bombay, one heard of Professor Saranathan and of his inspiring teaching. They were cultural brokers in the best sense of the term and Iyengar too continued the tradition. For two decades and more, teaching in the emerging great educational centres of Bombay and Karnataka, he instilled values that a study of literature embodies and exposed new sensibilities to students who were steeped in traditional social mores and enlarged their minds through a careful minute study of the classical texts of English literature, whether they be by Shakespeare, Milton, Congreve, etc. This was in the



VALUES AND INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION by L. Shanthakumari Sunder ● Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd, B1/1-1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area, Mathura Road, New Delhi 110044 ● sagepublications.com ● Year of Publication: 2011 ● Pages: 289 ● Price: Rs.795.

Reviewed by Mr. N. Vittal, IAS, was Chairman of the Public Enterprises Selection Board and retired as the Central Vigilance Commissioner.

The author of this timely book, when corruption in governance has become a major issue of political debate, is an IAS officer of the 1974 batch belonging to the Karnataka cadre. She

retired in 2009 as the Additional Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner of Karnataka.

As a member of the same service of the 1960 batch, I can appreciate the efforts of the author. She has examined the issues of the values that provided the steel in the ICS which was called as the steel frame by the British Prime minister Lloyd George. ICS earned an excellent reputation for probity, commitment to public service and excellence in governance. Peter Drucker, the great management guru, wrote a book in 1989 called 'The Shape of Things to Come' about the management systems that will prevail in the 21st century. One of the three models he identified was that of the district collector in 19th century British India. The fact that thousand members of the ICS ruled effectively a continent sized country of 330 million was by any standards a remarkable feat in the history of management.

The most enjoyable part of this book is the clear and limpid light it sheds on how the British established their rule in India and how the ICS developed its ethos. The author has drawn the various strands in the development of history, social movements, philosophy and religion to trace how the ICS evolved its excellent code of public service. On page 116 she observes:

"The first major influence on the ICS and its leaders was the Christian faith up to the end of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth centuries, thereafter Enlightenment and the secular moral thought. In the secular moral thought, Deism had influenced many ICS officers. Edmund Burke who launched the attack on Warren Hastings was a Deist. Enlightenment or Rationalism totally opposed the organized religion of Christianity and the church. The motives for being honest, sincere and with integrity could be located originally in the virtues of Puritanism and

Evangelicalism, and thereafter in Rationalist Humanitarianism. The ICS took pride in maintaining strength of character and stood for justice and fairness in their official dealings, with honesty, integrity and courage. With missionary zeal they tried to reform the evils in Indian society. They tried to uplift the poor and the downtrodden in India and fought to eliminate the social evils of Indian society at that time."

This does not rule out the fact that these ethical values were within the constraints of colonial rule, which itself could not be justified by Christian faith or Western moral thought. Economic exploitation of other countries cannot be justified in the name of bringing Christianity or civilization to the Asiatic countries, looking at it as the white man's burden, as personified by Rudyard Kipling, the imperialist poet. Though Colonial Ethics moved the British to uphold life affirming principles like opposition to Sati and infanticide and to alleviate the suffering of the people by providing medical help and education, their Christian and Enlightenment ethics could not redeem them from their greed, exploitation and racial arrogance. It was not sufficient enough to show the self sacrificial love as shown by Christ for the downtrodden or the militarily weak countries they conquered. Neither could it give them the virtue of humility which would have made them consider the conquered Indians as humans, enabling them to have social relations with them. Thus the British brought to India both positive Western ethics, which included Christian ethics and Rationalist Humanitarian and the negative Western ethics of Social Darwinism. Though at the macro-level, the attitude of the British rule remained till the end that of Social Darwinism, at the micro-level, Christian ethics and Rationalistic Humanitarianism brought in the exemplary qualities exhibited by the ICS officers at the individual level.

One of the excellent books I had read about the ICS was 'The Men Who Ruled India' by Phillip Woodruff, ICS. One gets an idea about how the great civil servants of the 18th and 19th century like Boy Malcolm and Thomas Munro who worked almost 24x7 and displayed exemplary commitment to duty. It is they who laid the foundation for the British administration, developed systems and procedures and set excellent standards of professional commitment. It is in this book I could fully grasp the

background of historical forces and the developments in different sectors that shaped their values.

The IAS is a service that succeeded the ICS but have the standards of the service gone down? In these days when the IAS officers are known to be corrupt and some like the notorious couple in Madhya Pradesh had amassed Rs 300 crores in cash, the question arises why has the service come to this sorry state? In her book, Shanthakumari Sunder has tried to study the underlying causes. She explores the commonly perceived causes and comes to the following conclusion.: [page 246]

“The IAS was transformed from the steel frame of India to a bamboo or plastic frame of India mainly due to the loss of values with regard to public probity. Three reasons may be assigned to this – first, due to the corrupt practices of the political leaders, second, due to the dilution in the recruitment processes and third, due to the influences of the values shaped by varnashrama dharma of Hinduism, which has no sense of the equality of all people nor the transparency of truth, accepting exploitation and consequently corruption as a way of life. Corruption which was considered shameful during the British time has become an accepted practice and a creditable thing. The corrupt officers have money and are looked up to as people who know how to live within the system. Today as long as crumbs are thrown to the poor masses – which consist of the bulk of the Indian voters – they do not consider corruption as a crime. Social stigma attached to corrupt money has been erased from society.”

One important contribution of this book is a well thought out survey of the actual values of the members of the IAS in Karnataka. She has conducted a survey both by questionnaire and by interview. Her major findings are as follows: [page 192]

“The existence of a gap, between the prescribed values and the ground realities consisting of the operative values becomes quiet obvious here. The Indian, mainly Hindu, ethos is definitely different from the values enshrined either in the Constitution on the model of the western democracy and in the prescribed conduct rules of the service, which bear the unquestioning influence of western religion and moral thought. This is the problem of the service and the modern society in India, which is not able to reconcile its traditional values, molded by Hinduism, which has been superimposed by Western values left behind by the British when India obtained its independence. These two influences seem to be totally different. The assimilating tendency of Hinduism has tried to assimilate democracy in its own way, without really

absorbing the values or tradition behind it. The influence of British rule and its moral values seem not to have gone deep enough to change the morals taught by Hinduism.”

In chapter 5 the author has tried to examine Hindu ethics covering the ancient scriptures like *Upanishads*, *Bhagwad Gita*, *Manusmriti* and *Arthashastra*. While the section dealing with the ICS values is broadly sympathetic, a hostile tone pervades when it comes to examining the Hindu ethics. I do not know whether the fact that the research was *inter alia* conducted with the assistance of professors from the South Asian Institute for Christian Studies (SAIACS) was a factor that influenced the perspective and introduced a bias against appreciating the nuances of the Hindu religion.

Two examples will suffice. The first relates to the much maligned caste system. While the caste system based on the *Manusmriti* gets the harsh comments which it richly deserves, even a straight forward understanding of the shloka 13 in chapter 4 of the Bhagwad Gita, which highlights that caste ultimately depends not on mere birth but ultimately on one's nature [*guna*] and actions [*karma*] seems to be missing.

*chaturvaranyam mayashrustam
gunakarma vibhagasha*

A straight forward translation of these words would mean:

“created the four varanas but each person achieves his caste by his nature [*guna*] and actions” [*karma*]

Instances are known in Hindu mythology itself where a kshatriya like Vishwamitra achieved the status of the highest Brahmin, Brahmarishi, through his rigorous penance. And accepted as such by Vasishta himself.

The second relates to the reforms in Hinduism. On page 233, the author observes:

“The Islamic rule was not a theological challenge, whereas the Christian missionaries challenged Hinduism on the basis of theology and its archaic and unfair social system based on Karma theory and caste system. These challenges led to reforms in Hinduism in the nineteenth century.”

The history of Hinduism is replete with reforms led by visionary thinkers and leaders from time to time. Buddhism and Jainism were reform movements against ritualistic Hinduism just as Martin Luther's movement against indulgences and the established Catholic church in the middle ages was. In the 6th and 7th century, Adi

Sankara led the movement bringing order into the chaos that was Hinduism and established the Shanmathas – worship of the Sun, Shiva, Skanda, Shakti, Ganesha and Vishnu.

Even more revolutionary was Ramanujacharya of the 11th century who brought into the fold of *Srivaishnavas*, all castes including toddy tappers and barbers. Much before him in the 5th and 6th centuries the 12 *alavars* had propagated the concept of total surrender – *sharanagathi* – to Lord Narayana as the ultimate supreme deity. Except four, eight *alavars* were non Brahmins. Many of the 63 Nayanmars in Shaivism were not Brahmins .

The Bhakti movement in Maharashtra and the Sufi movement at the time of Mughals, showed that much before the British came, reformist urges found expression from time to time. The great weakness of the author's analysis of Hinduism is that it leaves one with the feeling that Hinduism has no ideal or model of good governance to preproject before the people.

What about the universally recognized ideal of *Rama Rajya* which even Gandhiji referred to? Are not the Ramayana and Mahabharata the projection of *Dharma* as the root of good governance?

Dr. Gurcharandas has rendered a great service to the anglicised secular middle classes of today by his book 'The difficulty of being Good': the subtle art of Dharma'. The ideal of good governance has been emphasized in the literature of many regions. *Tirukkural* in Tamilnadu is an excellent example.

At the end of the book the author has made some positive suggestions which are welcome. The question is whether the political class would be ready to implement these suggestions which may amount to *hara-kiri*.

In short, this is a welcome addition to the literature on an important aspect of civil service. It is also very timely in the context of the current debate on establishing good governance in the country and getting out of the quagmire of corruption in all sectors.



VIRAT INDUSTRIES LTD.

(An ISO 9001:2008 Company)

**A Leading Manufacturer & Exporter of
EXCELLENT QUALITY SOCKS**

Our Export Markets include UK, Switzerland and U.A.E.

Our main customers are John Lewis, Ted Baker and
Jaeger in the UK, Migros in Switzerland and Shoemart in UAE.

We produce Mens, Ladies and Childrens Dress and Sports Socks.

We also produce speciality Football and Rugby Socks.

For more information, you may visit our website: www.viratindustries.com

Corporate Head Office:

605, Veena Killedar Industrial Estate
10/14 Pais Street, Byculla (West)
Mumbai 400 011 (India)
Tel: (022) 3294 4131 or 3294 4217 /
Fax: (022) 2306 0486
Email: sales@viratindustries.com

Regd. Office & Factory:

A-1/2, GIDC Industrial Estate
Kabilpore
Navsari 396 424
Tel: (91-2637) 265 011 or 22 / 325805
Email: factory@viratindustries.com

Freedom First

Freedom First speaks for the silent majority - the majority that wants to be left in peace to pursue its goal of improving its quality of life, but has been suffering in silence, the indignities heaped on it by insensitive governments who have abrogated to themselves the right to decide what is good for the people. In the process, the whole country has been turned into a cesspool of corruption. Public morality and character have reached an all-time low.

Freedom First affirms that much of the unrest and ferment in our society is a direct result of excessive State intervention in the day-to-day lives of our people. While the people's initiative has been stifled, the economy is in shambles. The Journal believes that while India needs a strong government that ensures the rule of law what India does not need is a meddlesome government – the system so far that has led to impoverishment, insecurity and instability.

Freedom First therefore stands for minimum government and maximum freedom, tempered by a sense of individual responsibility, in which the people's genius has a fair opportunity to develop and grow.

Freedom First rejects any ideology, movement or policy that sets one group of citizens against another, be it based on class, caste, religion or envy.

Freedom First

3rd floor, Army & Navy Building, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Mumbai 400 001
Phone: (022) 2284 3416 ● email freedom@vsnl.com

SUBSCRIPTION FORM (In Block Letters Please)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ PIN

PHONE /MOBILE NUMBER:

EMAIL: _____

Cheque enclosed / Sending by money order (cancel whichever is inapplicable)

SUBSCRIPTIONS PAYABLE BY CHEQUE/DD DRAWN IN FAVOUR OF ICCF AND PAYABLE AT PAR IN MUMBAI. IF NOT THEN PLEASE ADD BANK CHARGES RS.50 FOR OUTSTATION CHEQUES WITHIN INDIA.
Subscriptions can also be paid by Money Order

Subscription

Within India & SAARC countries

- ☐ 1 Year : Rs.200
☐ 2 Years : Rs.350
☐ 3 Years : Rs.500

Overseas

(By Second Class Airmail)
Annual: \$20 / £ 10

Do A Favour

to your friends
send them
a sample copy of
Freedom First
with your compliments.

Freedom First

3rd Floor, Army & Navy Building,
148, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Mumbai 400 001.

Please send a sample copy of
Freedom First to the following with my
compliments:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Pin _____

*

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Pin _____

*

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Pin _____

*

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Pin _____

*

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Pin _____

Sender's Name & Address

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Pin _____

AFL PRIVATE LIMITED



Lok Bharati Complex,
Marol Maroshi Road,
Andheri East,
Mumbai 400059