

INDEPENDENCE DAY *Celebration of Hope*

As the nation gets ready to celebrate the 67th anniversary of independence it is necessary to ponder on the significance of that day, August 15,1947 when India made a transition from the darkness of bondage to the light of freedom. Basking though they might be in the unfading memory of those stirring moments when the celebrations reverberated across the country at the historic midnight hour the then midnight's children must now be over the hill. In contrast are today's children and youth who constitute the majority of India's more than a thousand million population who are expected to change the course of history by securing for India her rightful place in the comity of nations.

India, history reminds us, was a prosperous country till two centuries ago. In 1700 AD India had a 27%share of world's income and till 1820% India's economy was the second largest in the world. Fifty percent of world's GDP was contributed by India and China. India's GDP crashed to less than 3% by 1900 to remain stagnant for the hundred years that followed. An article in *the Guardian Weekly* of 27-06-14 by Ian Jack titled '*China may give Britain the India treatment*' reveals some distressing facts. 'The Bengal economy was destroyed by the technology of Britain in what Jeremy Seabrook has called "the first great de-industrialization of the modern world." The handloom weavers of Bengal who produced some of the world's finest fabrics at a cheap rate 'became beggars' due to a conspiracy of British cloth manufacturers who 'cut off the fingers of the poorly paid Bengali artisans,' according to the article. British technology and markets destroyed India's economy and ruined the lives of poor labourers and artisans of India. It was not British taxes but India's revenues that filled the coffers of Britain's treasury. Socially too India was in disarray thanks to the divide and rule policy of the colonial masters with communal tensions and regional rivalries accentuating the situation. India on the eve of independence was an economically impoverished and socially fragmented country.

In the midst of rising expectations India emerged as a vibrant democracy vowing to secure for its people equality and justice and professing its commitment to promote peace and goodwill among the nations of the world. In the very first decade itself India came to be hailed as a role model for the newly liberated countries and an inspirational leader for the third world countries of Asia and Africa.

Alas! all that has been reduced to 'a faded golden age' as the cautiously raised edifice of democracy caved in to a new culture of politics dominated by corrupt and selfish elements. People have lost faith in the credibility of the three branches of government. Private-public participation, the new mantra of development, has become the masthead of Indian economy. There is, however, force in the criticism that it has led to "privatization of profits and nationalization of losses."

As Nani Palkhivala said "our people must cast off the shackles of political feudalism. The modern ruling class consists of the 5,000 members of Parliament and the state legislatures. It is pathetic to see the servile behaviour of our people towards ministers and legislators." As many in number, wrote *The Economist*, are the I.A.S officers whose stranglehold on India's administration has been detrimental to India's development. Why blame the elected rulers and selected civil servants only? What about the billion plus people, seventy percent of whom are eligible voters and game changers in electoral politics? The responsibility lies as much with the people at large, the civil society in particular.

What is there to celebrate? many ask today. The answer is celebration of hope, seen in the bright young faces in every town and village as they salute the national flag and sing the national anthem on August 15. Their soaring spirits and creative minds may take India into that 'heaven of freedom' before long.

- Editor

India is free but she has not achieved unity, only a fissured and broken freedom.... a vast inner and outer progress is needed if we are to fulfill India's true destiny. Sri Aurobindo

NATIONAL SECURITY IMPERATIVES FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT

Admiral (Retd) Arun Prakash

Former Chief of Indian Navy, Ex-Chairman NMF

As it savours the impressive mandate handed to it by India's multi-ethnic, multi-religious electorate, the new BJP government must remain mindful of the tremendous expectations it has raised amongst a sanguine public. Of the innumerable, often contradictory, demands that will be made on the time, energies and resources of the new government, none is more critical than that of socio-economic development; with educational opportunities and job-creation for a growing youth-population commanding utmost priority.

And yet, if there is one lesson we should have learnt during our 67 years as a sovereign republic, it is that security shortcomings, both internal and external, have repeatedly served to distract our attention and divert resources away from the pursuit of development. The history of India's post-independence conflicts has conclusively proved that the 'guns Vs butter' debate is futile in our case; we cannot have one without the other, and must embrace both.

The 'hawks' amongst us loudly bemoan the steady decline in India's defence expenditure; which has hit a low of 1.74% of GDP. The common man, on the other hand, wants to know whether the Rs. 2, 24,000 crore (US \$ 38 billion) recently voted for defence, is being spent wisely enough to buy us the security we need. He asks: are India's core national interests being safeguarded; are our borders and territories inviolate; and are our citizens protected from the threat of terror-strikes? These are all valid questions, given China's increasingly aggressive attitude and Pakistan's relentless use of cross-border terrorism as a low cost weapon.

The term heard most commonly in India's national security discourse is 'surprise'. It is used in the context of the 1947, 1962, 1965 and Kargil conflicts as well as the IC-814 hijacking and the 26/11 Mumbai terror strike, and denotes abject intelligence failures. A closely related phrase, heard only in whispers, is: 'lack of preparedness' of the armed forces. Our short

memories have tended to overlook many past blunders.

For example, in the bitter winter of 1962 we sent our Jawans to fight the Chinese, clad in summer uniforms, armed with World War I bolt-action rifles. The Bangladesh War was won only because General Manekshaw had the courage to seek a grace of nine months to equip his troops. While celebrating Kargil Vijay we forget the army Chief's words in 1999: "We will fight with whatever weapons we have." But to ignore dire warnings continuously emanating from South Block about the military's current lack of combat-readiness would be folly of the highest order.

A reality check will show the new government that the reassurance we derive from our large conventional forces and expensive nuclear arsenal is an illusion; for two reasons. Firstly; the languid and wayward functioning of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has, over the past decade, served to erode the qualitative and/or quantitative edge that the armed forces may have had over potential adversaries. Secondly; successive governments have refused to integrate the Service HQs with the MoD and to usher in Jointness amongst the three armed forces. As a direct consequence, today our national security structure is not only flawed but badly outdated and incapable of coping with multifarious 21st century threats.

So far, India's political leadership, in an unfortunate display of indifference, has distanced itself from national security issues. At the same time, the armed forces have been deliberately excluded from a role in national security decision-making. The net result is a strange situation in which, India has collected, at huge expense, the trappings of a major military power without having a real idea of how to leverage them for political ends. Further evidence of strategic neglect is to be found in adoption of a model – unique amongst democracies – in which the armed forces are placed under the total control of a civilian bureaucracy, which barely understands complex defence and security matters; especially those related to weapon-acquisition programmes.

As PM Modi contemplates the nomination of a suitable person to assume the crucial post of Raksha Mantri (RM), he must also charge him with the

Today, in the name of India, I give for the whole world the freedom of this India that had never died in the past that shall be indestructible in the future and shall lead the world to ultimate peace. Sarojini Naidu

conception of a national security vision. This vision must span - not just the customary 100 days but - a decade or more; and instead of looking at superficial symptoms, it should address the root of the malaise afflicting India's national security.

The first priority of the RM must be to eliminate the baseless and paranoid suspicion of our patriotic and apolitical armed forces; a lingering Nehruvian legacy which has kept them outside the edifice of the Government of India (GoI). This would logically lead to the next important step of constituting a Chief of Defence Staff and integrating the Service HQs with MoD. This vital step has been repeatedly recommended by successive Standing Parliamentary Committees as well as by government-constituted Task Forces. But lack of political will and bureaucratic resistance has succeeded in stalling it.

This should be accompanied by a review of the "1961 GoI Rules of Business", so that the three Service Chiefs are nominated as functionaries of the GoI; responsible to the RM for the defence of India's land, maritime and aero-space domains. The last but most

important action-point for the RM would be the long overdue restructuring of our inefficient DRDO and Defence Production organizations to lay the foundations of a functional indigenous arms industry.

Lastly, one hopes that the new RM will have the stature and self-confidence to examine, urgently, the internal health of our armed forces. Events of the recent past, including misdemeanours at senior ranks, episodes of mass indiscipline and occurrence of serial mishaps, have raised concerns amongst the public. The spectrum of concern extends from quality and quantity of officer-intake, to ethical and professional standards of the officer-corps, and from the material state of hardware to the standards of maintenance and safety being followed. A joint effort by the RM and the Service Chiefs, with full support of the MoD should 'find and fix' all that is wrong with our armed forces.

(Courtesy IANS)

(CPS offers its thanks to Admiral Arun Prakash)



**To
Prof. M.N. Sastri
greetings on his
90th birthday and grateful thanks**



Dr M.N.Sastri, Retired Professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry, Andhra University, is a distinguished scientist and prolific writer on energy and environment.

Born on August 5, 1925, he studied at the Andhra University where he obtained the M.Sc degree in 1947 and D.Sc in 1951. He went to the United Kingdom on a Government of India scholarship for higher studies and took the Ph.D.degree from Durham University in 1958.

Joining the Andhra University's Chemistry Department in 1948 as a demonstrator, Dr Sastri became Reader in 1959 and Professor in 1966. He carried out extensive studies in the fields of Volumetric Methods Chromotography, Precipitations from Homogenous Solutions, Chemical Kinetics and Tracer Methods. He organized the first full- fledged M.Sc course in Nuclear Chemistry in the University and was the Founder-Vice President of Indian Association for Nuclear Chemists and Allied Scientists. Prof. Sastri was mainly responsible for establishing the Centre for Nuclear Techniques in Andhra University with financial support from the Atomic Energy Commission. He was Visiting Professor at La Trobe University Australia in 1976 and Adjunct Professor, San Jose State University, USA in 1986 and Fellow, National Academy of Sciences, Allahabad.

On the Brink of a Nuclear War, the latest and fourteenth in the present series of articles titled *Nuclear Genie*, is carried in the current issue of August 2, 2014. The fourteen articles published in the series and the two that will follow, sixteen in all, are now being brought out in a book form titled *Nuclear Genie* and released on his 90th birthday, on August, 5, at a function in Andhra University where he had studied and taught before retiring as Professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry.

True service means participation in social activities after ridding yourself of egoism and possessiveness and manifesting your qualities of compassion and kindness. Sri Satya Sai Baba

THE NUCLEAR GENIE- 14

On the Brink of a Nuclear War

Prof. M.N. Sastri

Though the Cold War is marked by nuclear deterrence strategy through the buildup of nuclear arsenals capable of destroying life on the planet, not a single nuclear weapon was used in any of the wars that followed World War II. The Cold War terminology came from the fact that "it never became a shooting war *per se* but more of a cat and mouse game." On several occasions nuclear powers only considered invoking, for political advantage in times of international crises, their nuclear option to deter aggression. The US considered the possibility of using nuclear weapons in the Korean War but dropped the idea. When France was facing insurgency in Vietnam in 1954, the possibility of saving the French forces under siege in Dien Bien Phu through the use of nuclear weapons was considered. When the islands of Jimmen and Mazu (Quemoy and Matsu) which were under the control of Taiwan were bombarded by the Chinese Communist Government in 1954, President Eisenhower threatened the use of nuclear weapons. During the Suez crisis in 1956, Khrushchev and Bulganin threatened UK and France with nuclear attacks if they did not withdraw their forces from Egypt. A similar note was also sent to Israel which was providing support to UK and France. The Berlin crisis of 1961 turned out to be so serious that at one stage leaders feared that a misstep could trigger a nuclear war. The crisis however ended with the erection of the Berlin Wall. Throughout the Cold War the nuclear armed submarines operated by the nuclear powers were in the forefront of both defence and offence operations, cruising off the opponents' bases and protecting their own bases from possible attacks.

There were also occasions when crises mounted to stages when nuclear options appeared inevitable. The Cuban missile crisis, which almost triggered a nuclear war between the US and the Soviet Union, was an event that put the world on tenterhooks for thirteen days starting October 16, 1962. An unsuccessful adventure by US backed Cuban exiles, called the Bay of Pigs Invasion, to overthrow the Cuban dictator Fidel Castro was the precursor to this crisis. Fidel Castro began looking for means to defend Cuba from another attack. While the US could attack the Soviet Union with its long and medium range missiles based in Europe, the Soviet Union could not counter the attack as it was lagging behind in its long range

ICBM programme. When Castro approached for support Khrushchev readily responded by agreeing to install Intermediate Range Missile bases in Cuba, since this provided the Soviet Union the opportunity to defend itself against a possible US attack. When the installation of the Soviet missile bases was revealed to the US by reconnaissance, President Kennedy immediately ordered quarantining Cuba and announced US readiness for attack using even nuclear weapons. President Kennedy in a letter dated October 22 to Khrushchev said, "... I have not assumed that you or any other sane man could, in this nuclear age deliberately plunge the world into war which is crystal clear no country would win and which could only result in catastrophic consequences to the whole world, including the aggressor." Frantic diplomatic activity involving US, Soviet Union, UK and France and former US Presidents followed. The crisis was finally defused by Khrushchev backing out from the adventure. In his letter dated 26 to President Kennedy, Khrushchev said, "If, however, you have not lost your self-control and sensibly conceive of what this might lead to, then Mr. President, we and you ought not now to pull on the ends of the rope in which you have tied the knot of war, because the more the two of us pull, the tighter the knot will be tied. And a moment may come when that knot will be tied so tight that even he who tied it will not have the strength to untie it, and then it will be necessary to cut that knot and what that would mean is not for me to explain to you, because you yourself understand perfectly of what terrible forces our countries dispose. Consequently if there is no intention to tighten the knot and thereby to doom the world to the catastrophe of a thermonuclear war, then let us not only relax the forces, pulling the ends of the rope, let us take the means to untie the knot. We are ready for it." When in a private letter to Khrushchev, Castro suggested that the Soviet Union be prepared to launch a preemptive nuclear strike against the US, Khrushchev reacted strongly and wrote to him explaining the catastrophic consequences of a thermonuclear war. He further stated that the US also understood this. The world heaved a sigh of relief when a deal was reached by which the Soviet would dismantle the weapons sites in exchange for a pledge from the US not to invade Cuba. In a separate deal, which remained secret for more than 25 years, the US also agreed to remove its nuclear missiles from Turkey. Ironically the Cold war and arms race continued!

In view of the great risks involved in the use of even a single nuclear weapon the nuclear superpowers evolved and put in place stringent measures to ensure

No economic reform, however intrinsically desirable, can lead to desirable changes in individuals and the society they constitute, unless it is carried through in a desirable context and by

desirable methods. Mahatma Gandhi

that nuclear explosives are used only under properly authorized circumstances and never detonated either unintentionally or by accident. This protocol is known as *command, control, communication, computers and intelligence* (C⁴I). The nuclear weapons are guarded with electronic locks with a secret code which has to be inserted before the operators can act. This code which is changed periodically is kept under close guard with the decision-making authority.

The command and control authority of US is vested in the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) comprising the President, the Secretary of Defence and "their duly deputed alternates and successors", with the chain of succession clearly spelt out. The US President is the authority to order attacks by the US forces. He is always accompanied by a military attaché, carrying the briefcase, called the NUCLEAR FOOTBALL, which contains among others the launch codes, the procedures and authentication orders for launching nuclear weapons. In Russia the ultimate control of nuclear weapons lies with the President who is also the Supreme Commander. He is advised by a Defence Committee. The Russian nuclear briefcase is called CHEGET, which allows the Russian President to monitor the crisis and make decisions. In the UK the Prime Minister exercises the authority over nuclear forces. He can order the use of nuclear weapons with assistance of one person, possibly the Chief of Defence Staff. This two person rule operates throughout the nuclear command chain from the Prime Minister to the servicemen in the field. The complete codes for authorizing a nuclear strike are held by both individuals and only when the sections are brought together can a fully authenticated launch order be transmitted to the nuclear forces. In France the President exercises supreme command over all nuclear forces. His autonomy of decision is almost completely unlimited. As China is an authoritarian state not much is known about the linkages of its nuclear command and control structure. Essentially the Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party would decide on the use of nuclear weapons.

India has established a Nuclear Command Authority that includes a Political Council and an Executive Council. The Prime Minister chairs the Political Council which is the sole body to order a nuclear strike. It includes home, defence, finance and external affairs ministers. It includes the three service chiefs, top officials from DRDO, Department of Atomic Energy and others to provide inputs and execute directions given to it by the Political Council. Alternative chains of command are also established if

the political leadership is "decapitated" in a first strike. The nuclear arsenal is placed under the charge of the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Forces Control Command.

In theory the Prime Minister of Pakistan is the Chairman of the country's Nuclear Command Authority, which handles the command and control of its strategic nuclear forces. But it is the military that enjoys absolute authority over the control and use of nuclear weapons. Among all the nuclear weapon states Pakistan is the only country where the nuclear assets are effectively under the command and control of the military and not the civil authority.

During the Clinton Administration the codes used by the US President were mislaid for months but were promptly replaced. In Russia in 1980, a group of inspecting officers from the general staff was visiting Strategic Missile Force Headquarters. They asked Gen. Georgy Novikov what he would do if he received the missile launch order but the safe containing the launch codes failed to open. Novikov replied that he would "knock off the safe with a sledgehammer" which he kept nearby!

Unauthorized strikes ordered by an individual or agency other than the appropriate authority, such as a rogue general or a mad submarine commander, could spark off a nuclear war. Unforeseen breakdown of systems could result in accidental strikes. Decisions based on incomplete information and even errors in intelligence reports could also trigger a nuclear war. During the Cuban crisis ninety eight Soviet tactical nuclear weapons were located in Cuba and the Soviet ground commanders were authorized to use these weapons should the US choose to invade Cuba. Some Soviet submarines escorting ships to Cuba were also armed with nuclear tipped torpedoes. The US intelligence was however not aware of this. On October 27, 1962, which was considered the most dangerous day of the Cuban Crisis, a series of depth charge attacks were made by the American destroyer USS Beale on a B-29 Soviet submarine carrying a nuclear-tipped torpedo. In the absence of communications from Moscow, the commander of the Soviet submarine believed that war between the US and Soviet Union had begun. He prepared to fire the nuclear torpedo at the giant aircraft carrier USS Randolph, which was leading the US taskforce. However authorization to fire the torpedo required the concurrence of three officers on board. Two were in favour of launching the weapon while the third officer Vasili Alexandrovich Arkhipov was not. As a result the

A revolutionary political change has been inscribed in India's book of destiny.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

launch was stalled. Kennedy and Khrushchev were not in the know of these developments! If the nuclear torpedo was fired the carrier would have been destroyed and the US would have retaliated. The nuclear war would have spread from sea to land. The first targets would have been Moscow, London, the air bases of East Anglia and troupe concentrations in Germany. "The next wave of bombs would have wiped out economic targets, a euphemism for civilian targets." According to one CIA officer, "October 27 is a day I will never forget. The planet could have been destroyed." The world owes a debt of gratitude to Arkhipov, the saviour! His decision was certainly worthy of the Nobel Prize for Peace!

Another incident which nearly led to a nuclear war due to judgment error occurred on January 25, 1995, four years after the Berlin Wall was brought down and the mistrust between Russia and the US was persisting. On that day Norway launched a research rocket from a Norwegian offshore island to study the Northern Lights. The rocket launch with separation of multiple stages and bearing the radar signature looking just like a US submarine launched Trident missile, led the officer at Russia's Olengursk believe that it could be a nuclear attack. Boris Yeltsin was alerted and immediately given the Cheget to connect to senior officials. The nuclear submarine commanders were ordered to be on full battle alert, pending instructions. Fortunately Yeltsin, who was not sure that the US would attack, was wavering in ordering a retaliatory attack. Within five minutes the Russian radar signaled that the missile was harmlessly headed out to sea. The final decision not to launch a nuclear missile attack was given short of the ten-minute deadline. Similar erratic intelligence episodes have also been reported earlier during 1979, 1980 and 1983. Some US militarists even fear that the impact of an asteroid could be mistaken for a thermonuclear explosion, triggering a nuclear war.

Unforeseen events also could trigger nuclear weapon explosions leading to destruction of life and property over a wide area. One such episode was reported by a Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Strategic Rocket Forces. According to him, "Following a heavy rainfall, water leaked into a silo and flooded a missile. Had there not been a short circuit in the missile system, Ukraine would not have escaped a second Chernobyl." In another incident the US escaped a disaster worse than the devastation brought in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On January 24, 1961 a US B-52 air force bomber broke in half in mid-air and two

nuclear bombs with an explosive yield of 3.8 megatons (the yield of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs was 0.03 megatons) hit the ground in North Carolina. In the words of Robert McNamara, the then US Secretary of Defence, "By the slightest margin of chance, literally the failure of two wires to cross, a nuclear explosion was averted."

Boris Gorbachev once observed, "It is entirely possible for a man worn out by problems of daily life to make a mistake when carrying out work on nuclear rockets. This would not only trigger a chain reaction of nuclear charges but would scatter nuclear materials over dozens of kilometers."

In the current global scenario the real danger of a nuclear war lies in the possibility of a rogue state acquiring nuclear weapons capability. Even without access to a delivery system (missile or an aircraft), the state can use the weapons in local conflicts directly or through terrorists. The danger could be greater if a wide variety of portable nuclear weapons are developed through advanced technology.



DECODING HIGHER EDUCATION

Needed a Fresh Look at UGC

Prof. R.L.M. Patil

(Member Karnataka State Higher Education Council, Bangalore. Retd Professor of Political Science, Bangalore University who held Dr Zakir Husain Chair in Mysore University and Sir Ratan Tata Professorship at ISEC, Bangalore.)

Out of nearly 450 universities in India not even one percent of them could be qualified to be in the top 100 universities of the world. As the chief custodian and main regulator of the higher educational system in the country the UGC has much to answer for this indignity.

The recent furore over the Delhi University's Four-year Degree Programme reflects a deeper malaise. Delhi University administration has done a wrong thing but the UGC has done many more wrong things. Delhi University being what it is - a sort of doyen of the universities - was able to challenge the UGC's highhindedness, but the poor sister universities of the various states could hardly be expected to throw the gauntlet at the UGC whenever the latter has sent down its directives.

The UGC in its conceptual essence was fathered by Lord Curzon way back when he partitioned Bengal.

I have little doubt that a free India on every plane will play a big part on the world stage, even on the narrowest plane of material power. Jawaharlal Nehru

The imperial design was obvious. The UGC, then and now, whatever the statutes, is a mechanism to control and breathe down the neck of universities. After independence, the centrality of the UGC in the field of higher education was reiterated and reinforced. The great statesmen who designed the Constitution were more in favor of an in-built tendencies of centralizing the administration of the nation - be it the Election Commission, Supreme Court, CAG, UPSC or any other federal institution. It is well-known that bureaucratic institutions tend to send down strong roots to make themselves unshakable as well as to grow in side-spaces to make them all-pervasive, the institution of the UGC became a virtual monopoly in the crucial field of higher education. In later years, a few parallel organization were created like AICTE but they were a mere shadow of the UGC in many respects.

What was missed at the initial stages of creation of an agency to monitor, mentor and control the higher educational institutions in independent India was never corrected. The UGC was and remains to be a Centre's creation. The states which give birth to nearly 90% of universities go unrepresented on the governing body of the UGC. Even if a few nominees manage to get into the system it is more because of their own individual standing than any clout of federal units behind them. This tendency has over the years made the UGC virtually unaccountable except to the Government of India through the Human Resources Development, Ministry, which on the whole is textbookish.

The UGC is a bit famous {notorious?} for its flip-flop attitude towards a number of issues: M.Phil/Ph.D. requirements for appointment of Lecturers, selection of grades of Universities ('University-of potential for excellence'), reservation of posts in Central Universities, autonomous colleges, Deemed Universities, etc. It is also noteworthy that there is virtually nothing in the life of a university, which is not touched by UGC directive/regulations. And, yet, whenever violations of their directives/regulations do occur, the UGC hardly is able to enforce its rules because of some 'technicalities'! Of course, as in the present instance of DU's FYUP, the UGC if it really wishes, on its own or on directions, come down heavily on erring universities! There are 30-40 percent teaching posts lying vacant in various universities and colleges - which does indeed impact on the quality of higher education. UGC is turning a blind eye to it. There are some unscrupulous people who manage to become Vice-Chancellors of universities at least a few of whom, as in U.P. and Bihar, go underground or get

arrested or dismissed for reasons of misconduct. But UGC is unable or unwilling to plug the loopholes which permit this development. And yet UGC is supposed to be the principal custodian and controller of quality education in our university system.

Things would have gone on well if the higher education system turned healthy and strong. Indeed, there is not one single villain but multiple villains in the field. The states ought to take a good deed of blame for not realizing their own stakes in the functioning or malfunctioning of monopoly organization like the UGC (and other similar bodies). Hardly has there been an education minister in any of the states of India who had visualized contributory role for the states in moulding higher education except for the limited purpose of setting up a university on local demands in their chosen constituencies or naming them. The IAS babus who should be guiding them would prefer to sync with New Delhi more than any other entity. The Vice-Chancellors of various universities in the states would, of course/be preoccupied with solving local headaches than spend their time, talent and energy on contemplating matters of national academic importance, except, perhaps, in organizing conferences for UGC. The media, which is a real force in the modern society, would not take a look at the universities, unless there is a scandal to give a 'breaking news' to its viewers.

Coming back to the UGC, it is difficult to understand the secret formula behind its decision to allocate finances among the various universities. Nearly forty years ago it was said that 75 percent of its finances went to four of the then Central Universities (Delhi, JNU, Aligarh, BHU and possibly Hyderabad later) while the remaining paltry sum of 25 percent went to all the state universities put together! Has the picture undergone any significant change, one wonders. Interestingly, the UGC provides in its annual budget even to this year a significant amount to college hostels in Delhi! Surely a university situated in far corner of India in south would be envious of a College hostel in Delhi. But the UGC won't change. And the state ministers are unaware as well as unprepared to ask questions on the fair hand of the UGC.

The time has come now to take a fresh look at the functioning and structure of several federal institutions established under the constitution and under parliamentary statutes. "Federalize, not centralize", should be the guiding watchword in that exercise.



The Flag links up the past and the present. It is the legacy bequeathed to us by the architects of our liberty. S. Radhakrishnan

Sri Aurobindo's 142nd Jayanthi

August 15, 1872 - December 5, 1950

'I have always held and said that India was arising, not to serve her own material interests only, to achieve expansion, greatness, power and prosperity, though these too she must not neglect, -- and certainly not like others to acquire domination of other peoples, but to live also for God and the world as a helper and leader of the whole human race.'

Sri Aurobindo

From his message on August 15, 1947

Saviour of Humanity

Dr. C.R. Reddy

In all humility of devotion, I hail Sri Aurobindo as the sole sufficing genius of the age. He is more than the hero of a nation. He is amongst the Saviours of humanity, who belong to all ages and all nations, the *Sanatanas*, who leaven our existence with their eternal presence, whether we are aware of it or not. | The *Rishi* tradition is the most glorious and priceless element of Hindu culture. Its origin is lost in mystic antiquity, but its flow has never ceased. It will continue its sublime course till it mingles itself with eternity. We had *Rishis* in the Vedic era. And then a succession of Seers, of whom Gautama Siddhartha the fairest flower and fulfilment of humanity, towers to the highest heaven, and the Sages of the Upanishads, Mahavira, Nanak, Ramadas, the inspirer of Shivaji, and in our own times Dayananda Saraswati, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi, and he to whom we are today presenting our National Prize, Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo excels in the range and compass of his genius. He is a poet, dramatist, philosopher, critic, interpreter and commentator of Vedas, the Gita, and all the transcendent lore and legend of India, and he is something higher than these, the Saint who has realised his oneness with the Universal Spirit, and has fathomed the depths and brought up treasures of supreme value and brilliance. But these many aspects of Sri Aurobindo possess an organic unity of thought, impulse and purpose. They all reflect in their several phases the light of eternity that is in him.

3. In Sri Aurobindo, literature, metaphysics, and the *Sadhana* of realisation, are a spiral ascending from Earth to Heaven in mutual support and unison. In the superb summary of Mr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, "the Seer has fronted reality; the Poet has hymned his 'Gloried Fields of trance', the Philosopher has sought to interpret the vision in terms of reason; the Yogi has formulated a method, a multiform technique, for achieving the desired change in consciousness; the sociologist has thrown out significant hints in regard to the organization of tomorrow's world; and the creative critic has sensed the rhythms of the 'future I poetry' and described how the 'new' poet will ride on the wings of an elemental spirituality and articulate the ineluctable rhythms of the Spirit".

He presents his gospel in a book that is a landmark in the history of human thought and aspiration, "The Life Divine", which Sir Francis Younghusband has acclaimed as the "greatest book published in my generation". Pythagoras spoke of the Music of the Heavens. Here is the Music of Humanity, no longer still sad, ascending to Heaven. Sri Aurobindo believes that we shall evolve into a higher stage of being; and this evolution will enable us to overcome the limitations and miseries of our present existence and lead us to a world whose course is equable and pure—a life of harmony and bliss. This process of evolution is actual. It is operating steadily here and now, and will not stop short of fulfilling itself. In due course Man will attain the New Life, in which pains and sorrow will have no existence and death no sting.

(From *Essays and Addresses* by C.R. Reddy, Andhra University Press)

Sri Aurobindo's Teaching Style

Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar

As a Professor at the Baroda College — at different times he taught French or English and sometimes both — Sri Aurobindo effortlessly won the admiration and love of his pupils. Many of his pupils of those distant days — K. M. Munshi, for instance, who was Sri Aurobindo's student in 1903—have eloquently testified to his tremendous hold on the undergraduates. At first, perhaps, he could not quite acclimatise himself to Indian conditions. His pupils

A civilized society is one where good people become good citizens

Aristotle

found his lectures a bit “too stiff”, and on his part he found his wards too passive. “What was surprising to me was”, he said many years later, “that students used to take down everything verbatim and mug it up. This sort of thing could never have happened in England”. One reason was that, in Oxford or Cambridge and in the British universities generally, there was “a demand for the student’s point of view”. But in India the students were apt, not only to take down whatever their professors said, but more particularly to secure the notes of professors from Bombay, “especially if they happened to be examiners”. Sri Aurobindo knew that, unlike his brother Manomohan who was painstaking with his books interleaved and crammed with notes, he himself “was not so conscientious as a professor”. He had his sense of the text before him, he seized the meaning by direct intuitive grasp, and spoke as his mind and the moment directed him. Once while giving a lecture on Southey’s *Life of Nelson* he said things not in agreement with what was given in the Notes of the edition being used by the students. When they brought this to his attention, he replied that he hadn’t looked into the Notes, and they were mostly rubbish in any case! The main thing in the study of literature was to let the mind absorb what it could¹ by coming into direct contact with “the precious life-blood of a master-spirit”. Describing Sri Aurobindo’s usual method of teaching, Mr. Patkar writes:

“In the beginning he used to give a series of introductory lectures in order to initiate the students into the subject matter of the text... After preparing the student to understand the text ... he used to start reading the text, stopping wherever necessary to explain the meaning of difficult and obscure sentences. Then ... dictate general lectures bearing on the various aspects pertaining to the text.”²

The method must have yielded salutary results, especially when applied to a classic like Burke’s *Reflections on the French Revolution*, which Sri Aurobindo taught in 1902. After the first years, Sri Aurobindo seems to have taken the measure of his wards and they too seem to have made the most of their exceptional opportunities, thereby turning the classes into adventures in the realms of ideas and values.

The influence Sri Aurobindo exercised on his students was not of course confined to the class-room, important as it was; he was, besides, the Chairman of the Baroda College Union and Debating Society, and this brought him into contact, though less frequently, with the entire student body. He had to introduce visiting lecturers to the Union; he had to regulate the course of debates in such a way that the best in the students came out and they didn’t miss the spirit of intellectual inquiry in the excitement of the moment. His own speeches — though they were not many — were doubtless memorable events in the history of the Union. “He was never an orator”, says Mr. Patkar recapitulating the scene, “but a speaker of a very high order, and ... the audience used to listen to him with rapt attention. Without any gesture or the movements of the limbs, he stood, ... and the language used to flow like a stream from his lips with a natural ease and melody that kept the audience almost spell-bound”.³

(from K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, *Sri Aurobindo: A Biography and a History*, 1985)

One of the greatest men that ever lived

Shri Nani Palkhivala

15 AUGUST IS the birthday of free India. It is also the birthday of Sri Aurobindo, one of the greatest men that ever lived. He combined an intellect of the highest order with a rarely equalled spiritual force and a vision that transcended the limits of time and space.

He had an unshakable faith in the future of this great country. Having predicted the eventual independence of India three decades before the event, he wrote a Declaration on 15 August 1947, which is of momentous significance. After stating that the coincidence between the birthday of free India and his own was not a fortuitous accident, but represented the sanction and seal of the Divine Force that guided his steps in all his life-work, he dealt with the evolution of mankind and India’s role in the unfolding future. World movements had begun in which free India might well play a large part and take a leading position.

Sri Aurobindo said that this transformation of the human race would come about in an iridescent moment which will look like a miracle. Even when the

first decisive change is reached, it is certain that all humanity will not be able to rise to that level. This endeavour to be in the supramental sphere will be a supreme and difficult labour even for the individual, but much more for the human race generally. Nevertheless, it would be a transformation and a beginning far beyond anything yet attained. It is a measure of the distressing apathy of our nation that the works of Sri Aurobindo are not studied throughout the length and breadth of India. The words of wisdom from the writings of this great spirit deserve to be taught in every school and college. No other thinker of modern times has seen so vividly the pattern of the human cycle down the ages and in the aeons of existence that lie ahead. His life-work will always remain a feasting presence, full of light.

(From *Nani Palkhivala Selected Writings*)

Sri Aurobindo as a Nation- Builder

Prof. Manoj Das

‘Sri Aurobindo as a Nation-BUILDER’ has to be considered in its two aspects. What Sri Aurobindo did through action, through organisation, and through active participation in the events of the nation’s destiny constitute the first aspect. His vision of the nation, her true character and her future as he has put forth in his works constitute the second aspect of the subject. These two aspects of course mostly go together as Sri Aurobindo’s action and vision went together.

Well known today—although not yet realised as properly as they should be—are the ways Sri Aurobindo showed for India’s emancipation from the foreign rule. Within a remarkably short period of his plunging into open politics, he succeeded in changing the political climate of the country. Freedom was no more a Utopia or a remote prospect to be realised piecemeal. Its achievement was a must, its achievement in a brave way was a must—and the resolutions sponsored by Sri Aurobindo on the methods of the freedom struggle in the Calcutta Congress of 1906 and the great storm at Surat the next year when the moderates refused to reiterate these resolutions marked the beginning of the end of the

British rule. Needless to remind anybody that the principles evolved by him were followed all through the succeeding decades of India’s struggle for freedom, though not always in the fashion Sri Aurobindo would have liked them to be followed. They were the principles of Swadeshi, non-co-operation, etc.

At Pondicherry he pronounced what true education was and how best it could serve the national genius. The role India as a nation must play in the world has been clearly envisioned by him, and the Mother has given us a symbolic illustration of the vision in the making of Auroville. He has not only delved deep into every aspect of our culture and heritage and has interpreted their mysteries for us, but also has told us how best they can contribute to building our future.

(from *The Relevance of Sri Aurobindo Today*)

Centenary of a Defiant Gesture

Dr. Mrs. Prema Nandakumar

This month we are celebrating the centenary of Sri Aurobindo’s launching of *Arya*, the journal in which many of his magnificent philosophical and cultural studies appeared as serials for the first time. The journal was a defiant gesture towards the increasing militarism that led to two Balkan Wars in 1912-13. Assassinations had become common and terrorism was in the air. Can the world be educated not to regress? Sri Aurobindo was assisted in his venture by two remarkable personalities from France, Paul Richard and Mirra Richard.

The Supreme has not created the world to have it destroyed! Philosophy, current political and social scenario and pellets of wisdom gathered from world literature would be presented in the magazine. It was a bold dream which became a grand reality and remained so for more than six years. A superhuman feat as Sri Aurobindo was managing the journal single-handed while in self-exile in Pondicherry and had to fill up the pages as well, since the exigencies of the First World War had taken the Richards away to Japan. As I spend the centenary year of *Arya* browsing through the pages of the magazine, Sri Aurobindo appears in his Viswarupa. So many facets to the same personality!

The 21st century must prove that development is best assured when democracy is assured.

P.V. Narasimha Rao

Great men whom we have known like Acharya J.B. Kripalani, Veluri Chandrasekaram and T.V.Kapali Sastriar eagerly waited for the first of every month to get at the journal and read it repeatedly for the new approaches to Vedanta, the return to the Vedic past and the firm foundations of Indian culture. Most of the classics of Sri Aurobindo – **The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, The Ideal of Human Unity, On the Veda, The Psychology of Social Understanding** – saw the light of day in *Arya* and were read avidly at that time. Paul Richard and Subramania Bharati also contributed now and then. Begun on 15th August 1914, the journal's last issue came out in January, 1921.

It is from *Arya* that we come to know Sri Aurobindo, the reviewer. He is totally focused on the book he is reviewing and sees it always in a larger background and analyses the significances of the publication. His review of **Shamaa**, a quarterly edited by Mrinalini Chattopadhyay reveals his generosity of understanding. This is the second issue and is certainly “a sure promise, of a progressive reawakening of the higher thinking and aesthetic mentality in India after a temporary effacement in which the eastern mind was attempting to imitate in the wrong way elementary second-rate occidental ideas.”

Wholesome praise. But where Sri Aurobindo's critical blade flashes out, it does its work thoroughly, with brilliant finality. Criticism, yes; but not invective. That was always Sri Aurobindo's style in all his writings. Writing of J.B. Raju's essay on S. Radhakrishnan's work on the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore published in **Shamaa**, Sri Aurobindo teaches us how to make a corrective statement in a review:

“The criticism gives unhappily, in spite of its interest, an impression of ability very badly used, for it is throughout what a criticism of this kind should not be, censorious, hostile, bitterly incisive and sometimes almost brutal in the inimical tone of its phrases. A philosophical discussion should surely be conducted in a graver and more impersonal tone.”

In fact one of the reviews he wrote for *Arya* became a book! Beginning as a review of John Woodroffe's **Is India Civilized** which in its turn was a

rebuttal of William Archer's despicable book, **India and the Future**, the serial review is now the well-known masterpiece, **The Foundations of Indian Culture**. It was our good fortune that Archer should be reviewed by Woodroffe and Sri Aurobindo be inspired by the review to teach us how to take pride in our culture. All, all because the noble *Arya* came into existence on 15th August, 1914 !

THE SOCIAL VISION OF SRI AUROBINDO

Prof. Sachidananda Mohanty

The traditional view of Sri Aurobindo is that he was a poet and mystic who propounded the theory of creative evolution, the system of integral yoga and established an ashram in the south of India. Romain Roland called him the greatest synthesis between the East and the West. Aldous Huxley nominated him for the Nobel Prize for literature. Rabindranath Tagore treated him as leader. To his followers, Sri Aurobindo was an avatar who envisioned a new millennium, the coming of a new race, a new species of humanity whose guiding principle would not be the fractured humankind but what he termed in *The Life Divine* the Supermind or the Gnostic Consciousness. His detractors, however, find fault with Sri Aurobindo's retreat from political action to the life of a spiritual recluse. At the international level, he spoke of the need to democratize the UN Security Council, prophesized that communalism, of the Bolshevik kind would not remain a monolith, and that certain forms of it might even take the shape of cooperative socialism, more in keeping with the freedom of the individual and the ultimate realization of human unity. These were some of the seed-ideas and founding principles of Sri Aurobindo's political philosophy. Many of them have already been realized. Today, liberation of India and Asia is an accomplished fact. And we are inexorably heading towards the actualization of the rest.

(CPS thanks Dr. Mrs Prema Nandakumar & Dr. D. Venkateswara Rao of Sri Aurobindo's Society, Visakhapatnam for their help.)



A University man must consider himself the torch bearer of his country's culture, and our country's culture stands second to none in its comprehension of high moral values no less than in the amplitude of its philosophic outlook. C.D. Deshmukh

The Sage of Constitutional Wisdom - Granville Austin (1927 - 2014)

"The Constitution has served the nation remarkably well. The democratic features of the Constitution were as risk-taking as, the unity features were cautious. The Constitution, by its very existence, was a social revolutionary statement. It was to be a modernizing force. Social revolution and democracy were to be the strands of the seamless web most closely related. Democracy, representative government, personal liberty, equality before the law, were revolutionary for the society. Social- economic equitableness as expressed in the Directive Principles of State Policy was equally revolutionary.

The Indian Constitution was an ably conceived and drafted document showing a creative, if not an original, approach to the nation's constitutional needs. Equipped with the basic qualifications, attitudes, and experience for creating and working a democratic constitution, Indians did not default their trust with destiny."

(From The Indian Constitution Cornerstone of a Nation Oxford University Press 1966)

"..... the Constitution is in hourly use as a benchmark and measuring stick for citizens and officials (some say it is new *Dharmasastra*), touching lives in ways great and small, learning of its working truly opens a window into India."

(From Working a Democratic Constituion The Indian Experience Oxford University Press 1999)

OUTSTANDING LEGAL SCHOLAR

Shri D.V. SUBBA RAO

(President Gayatri Vidya Parishad, Chairman Centre for Policy Studies, Former Chairman Bar Council of India, Member V.S. Malimath Committee on Reforms in Criminal Justice Delivery System)

Prof. GRANVILLE AUSTIN, who passed away at

the age of 87 years, is an outstanding legal scholar. His two monumental works viz., "The Indian Constitution; Corner Stone of a Nation" published in 1966 and "The Working of Democratic Constitution" published nearly 34 years later are priceless contributions on the Constitution of India.

The First book was referred to as the "biography of Indian Constitution". The two books, unrivalled in scholarship and a treasure house based on rare documents culled out of National Archives are unparalleled for their scholarship and depth of research. As an Indian, I can without fear of contradiction say no Indian author attempted such a research on the working of the Indian Constitution and chronicled it.

If Shri Durgadas Basu's "Constitution of India" was a profound commentary on the Constitution of India and Shri HM Servai's "Magnum Opus of the Constitution of India" running into four volumes, was a critical, clinical and incisive analysis of Constitution of India and its Provisions and Courts interpretations thereof. Professor Austin's two books belong to a different genre. The 1st book deal with several fundamental features, India's social *milieu* and what he describes as seamless web unfolds the diverse social, economic, political concerns of the Indian polity and a Constitution that endeavored to tackle the same resulting in the making of the Indian Constitution.

The 2nd book traces the trauma of the nation as the social ferment unfolded into classes and castes, frictions between the States and Centre. The crises in the working of the Constitution are his invaluable contribution to study of Indian Constitution and that these works are penned by a foreign intellectual enhances the importance of his priceless contribution. The nation should reverentially bow and salute GRANVILLE AUSTIN, the legal scholar for his immortal chronicles on Constitution of India and its working.

I love India because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great sons. Rabindranath Tagore

Gracious reply to the Editor of the Bulletin

GRANVILLE AUSTIN
131 11th Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

(202) 544-3567
FAX (202) 544-5302

11 February 2011

Dear Sir,

I have received your
kind letter and your evocative
"Bulletin" about the Constituent
Assembly and the resulting
Constitution. It is a fine
article. I share your
sentiments.

With all good wishes
and warm regard,

Yours sincerely,
Granville Austin

THE SAGE BEYOND AGE

Prof. R. VenkataRao

(Vice-chancellor, National Law School of India
University, Bangalore.)

The Constitutional jurisprudence will never be
the same again.

Death descended coolly and quietly on Granville
Austin on 6th July 2014 bringing the saga of a historian
and a juristic colossus to a mortal end. A person who
by sheer industry and sagacity made a profound and
monumental contribution in unveiling the mystique
backdrop of the Constitutional making and the post-

constitutional developments, and a scholar eminently
decorated with the fourth highest civilian honour in
India, 'Padma Shri' in 2011 in recognition of his writings
on the framing and working of the Indian Constitution
– "what a piece of work Granville Austin is!"

The radiance of his multi-faceted and multi-
talented genius – as reflected in his forays as a
litterateur, a journalist, a photographer, a historian and
above all a keen observer of Constitutional
developments in India – is bedazzling. His two seminal
works on the Indian Constitution – first, his "Corner
Stone" where he left no "Stone" unturned and then
his "Working a Democratic Constitution" where he left
no "Tone" unturned – are two magnificent gems that
have sculpted the immortal frame of this
'Constitutional Maharshi'.

What greater tribute is required to testify the
Constitutional wisdom of Granville Austin than the
Supreme Court of India (in the case of *Minerva Mills
Ltd., v. Union of India*, AIR 1980 SC 1806) appreciatively
recalling his immortal words – "The Indian Constitution
is first and foremost a social document. The majority
of its provisions are either directly aimed at furthering
the goals of social revolution or an attempt to foster
this revolution by establishing conditions necessary for
its achievement. Yet despite the permeation of the
entire Constitution by the aim of national renaissance,
the core of the commitment to social revolution lives
in Parts III and IV, in the Fundamental Rights and
Directive Principles of State Policy. These are the
conscience of the Constitution".

Whereas ordinary mortals are satisfied with
having information about and knowledge of the
Constitution, Granville Austin transcending the
frontiers of information and knowledge imbued
himself with Constitutional wisdom in all its effulgence.
A Sage beyond Age and a Scholar beyond body
constitution – indeed! Here goes one, whence comes
the next.

Gandhi was a thinker as well as a man of action. He was the Marx as well as
the Lenin of the Indian Revolution. B.R. Nanda

Unfashionable Thoughts : III

An ex-policymaker's perspective on regulation in education

Dr. R.V.Vaidyanatha Ayyar I.A.S.(Retd)

Former Secretary HRD Govt.of India &
Professor IIM Bangalore

(Lecture delivered at Workshop on Education Policy at TISS, Hyderabad on 18 December 2013)

III. Regulation of Higher Education: New Lamps for Old

Looking back, the approach of Central Government to regulation of higher education institutions swung back and forth between a 'hard' and 'soft' approach. The Medical Council of India, the first regulatory body to be established as early as 1933, has statutory power to lay down norms and standards of medical education, recognise degrees, and more importantly to derecognise the degrees of any institution which does not conform to the norms and standards laid down by it. A medical college could be established or expanded only after MCI was satisfied that the infrastructure, facilities and faculty conformed to its norms and standards, and the Central Government sanctioned the establishment of the medical colleges based on the recommendation of the MCI. When after Independence, the Central Government sought to enact legislation to regulate higher education, it initially sought to put in place a regulatory system analogous to medical education, with a Central Council of University Education playing a role similar to MCI. The Bill drafted proposed that the approval of the Central Government was required for an institution to be deemed to be a university; mere legislation by a State would not be adequate. The Central Government could derecognise a degree awarded by a university if the Central Council noticed any lapse in the maintenance of standards by a university and if that university failed to comply with the directions of the Central Council to rectify the lapse. The proposal created a furore in 1952 which now seems to be a remote past the idea of external regulation of a university seemed to be an abomination. Just a year earlier, the University Education Commission chaired by S. Radhakrishnan declared that 'the right public

policy is to give a university the best possible constitution, securing among other things the inclusion, of wisely chosen external members of its governing body and then leave it free from interference'. The opposition of a solid phalanx of irate Vice-Chancellors doomed the attempt to keep higher education on a tight leash. Having failed in its attempt to stringently regulate higher education, the Central Government swung to the other extreme and enacted the UGC Act wherein the regulator had to rely on persuasion and a weak fiscal lever to get the higher education institutions to fall in line. It had no powers to issue any directives to any institution or derecognise degrees of any institution. The only power it has to discipline a university or college is to withhold grants, which in any case are meagre for a State University. No wonder a noted writer on higher education described the UGC as toothless, and that it 'made a virtue of leaving the universities to act on their own', and 'elevated non-intervention into a principle'. From 1990s, UGC became a little pro-active and began laying down regulations; yet its ability to enforce regulations remains unaltered so much so figuratively it is more barking without biting. A good example is accreditation. A few years after NAAC was formed, UGC made accreditation mandatory. It even issued a regulation to that effect in 2009. However, as I set out a little while ago, even now less than one-third of all universities and only 13% (5156 out of 35,539) of colleges have been accredited.

The Central Government swung again to the MCI model during the formulation of NPE, 1986. By 1986, when Independent India's second National Policy on Education was laid down, the growth of private self-financing institutions in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu was too conspicuous to escape the notice of policymakers. The policymakers equated the growth of such institutions with commercialisation of education, and came to the conclusion that the UGC model of persuasion and offer of grants as an incentive to maintain standards were inadequate to curb commercialisation, and that a more direct physical regulation was necessary. To that end, in 1987 the AICTE was vested with statutory licensing powers to regulate the establishment and expansion of technical and management institutions as well as starting of new

The spirituality of science and the spirituality of religion may flow as a united stream to fertilize all aspects of human life. Swami Rangathananda.

courses. As originally envisaged, no institution impairing technical and management education was exempt from its purview, not even universities. In 1993, similar powers were vested in the National Council of Teacher Education. By early 2000s, all the licensing organisations in higher education such as MCI, AICTE, and NCTE fell into disrepute. AICTE presided over the largest ever proliferation of institutions, with engineering and MBA colleges, dime a dozen, sprouting in cubbyholes. So much of power was centralised in it that even for a nominal increase in the number of seats in an engineering college anywhere in the country, institutions had to court the AICTE for its approval. Vesting too much licensing power in a body, even if it were composed of professionals, leads to arbitrariness and rent seeking behaviour inherent to the license-permit-control *raj*. No wonder that in 2009 the Chairman and Secretary of AICTE were arrested on corruption charges. So was the Chairman of MCI in 2010. The functioning of the National Council of Teacher Education was no different so much so that in 2011 MHRD superseded it for irregularities. The search for alternate models of regulation acquired a sense of urgency. Three agencies were involved in that search, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFA), the National Knowledge Commission, and the MHRD. The NKC was constituted as a high level advisory body to the Prime Minister. Its remit was to outline the reform measures needed in different areas such as education for transforming India into a knowledge economy. The NKC had four academics as members including the eminent political scientist Pratap Bhanu Mehta and the eminent sociologist André Béteille. However, its composition was broad based and was not limited to academics. In November 2006, NKC submitted its report on higher education, and six months before that Mehta and Béteille resigned from NKC in protest against the decision of the Government to provide for reservations to other backward classes in Central Universities and other institutions of higher learning. However, rather than act on the recommendations of the NKC, Arjun Singh the then Minister, MHRD, chose to appoint a committee headed by Yash Pal, former Chairman UGC to suggest the measures needed for the renovation and rejuvenation of higher education. It was a body predominantly

comprising academics with 19 of the 24 members being academics. The appointment of the Yash Pal Committee is an example of the fact that contrary to the opinion of those who have no direct experiential knowledge of how Government functions no Government is a homogeneous entity with a single directing mind. The career of Arjun Singh subsequent to 1991 can be admirably summed by the one-liner that the gifted Telugu journalist Tirumala Ramachandra came up with to explain frequent change of political parties by Acharya N.G.Ranga till 1980 when Ranga moved to Congress party and stayed put in that Party till his death: *prathama sthanam raadu, dwitheeya sthanam paniki radu* (cannot get the first position but cannot be reconciled to the second position). As Minister in the Congress-led Governments dirge 1991-96 and 2004-09, Arjun Singh was an inveterate challenger within the Congress Party, using his championship of secularism, leftist economic ideology, and social justice as a tactical weapon to discomfit at every opportunity Prime Minister P.V.Narasimha Rao and later Manmohan Singh. The fact that NKC was a high level advisory body to the Prime Minister in fact encouraged him to set up his own committee. Whatever, the recommendations of the NKC and the Majority Report of the Yash Pal Committee differs substantially in respect of many issues such as the role of private organisations in the development of higher education, the conceptualisation of the new apex body to be constituted, and the development of the higher education system as a destination for students from all over the world. The approach to regulation adopted by the little known Kausik Basu's Note of Dissent to the Yash Pal Committee is closer that of NKC. While both NKC and the Yash Pal Committee proposed a new apex body which would cover all areas of higher education excluding agricultural education, the MOHFA was particular that in view of the distinctiveness medical education should be excluded from the purview of the apex body. It came up with a proposal to establish a National Commission for Human Resources for Health (NCHRH). That commission would take over the functions of the MCI, Dental Council and Nursing Council in regard to the regulation of medical, dental and nursing education. In May 2009 Kapil Sibal succeeded Arjun Singh as Minister, MHRD, and this

I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King.
Queen Elizabeth I (after 1588 Spanish Armada)

transition brought about a sea change in the Ministry's approach to issues like the regulation of private and foreign education providers. However, it did not put an end to the turf battle between MHRD and MOHFA over the regulation of medical education. It would be unfair to dismiss off the MOHFA as mere possessiveness over turf because no other area of higher education are practice and teaching so inextricably intertwined as in medical education.

Let me now briefly outline the divergent views of the Majority report of the Yash Pal Committee, Basu's Note of Dissent, and NKC Report. The Majority Report articulates the long-standing belief of most academics. That belief system has three tenets. First, higher education should be preferably, if not exclusively, funded by Central and State Governments. Secondly, if private participation is absolutely unavoidable for expanding the higher system it should be allowed with a great deal of circumspection. The functioning of private institutions should be strictly controlled so that there is no scope whatsoever for profiteering. Thirdly, all the ailments of the higher education system in general and of universities in particular are due to intrusion of politics and too much interference by Governments. All would be hunky dory if two conditions are met. First, higher education should be insulated from politics, and universities freed from control by Governments. Secondly, Governments should provide whatever funds are needed without asking any questions. The policy prescriptions of the Majority Report follow from the belief system I have outlined now. Thus it recommended that only not-for-profit organisations should be permitted to set up institutions, and that their accounts should be subject to exacting audit. Private institutions should be compelled to offer courses which might not be commercially viable, to offer scholarships and stipends to a stipulated proportion of students admitted, and to pay faculty salaries stipulated by Government. It also recommended that the promoters and their family members who do not have 'experience or competence relating to education' should be debarred from holding positions in governing bodies of the institutions. Almost all these recommendations in regard to private institutions are incompatible with the decision of the Supreme Court in the Inamdar Case (2005) which is

still the law of the land in regard to private unaided colleges and universities. The Court held that the right guaranteed by the Constitution to carry on an occupation or business included the right to establish self-financing educational institutions. Therefore legally there is no bar on a for-private organization setting up an educational institution. By virtue of the constitutional right to set up an educational institution as an occupation or business, the Government has no right to impose on institutions to which it does not provide any grant its reservation policy or fix fees lower than that necessary to recoup the cost of education. Such an imposition would amount to expropriation without compensation. Whatever, the private-scepticism of the Majority report is not shared by Basu or NKC. The NKC was categorical that so huge is the need to expand the higher education system that every possible source of financing investment in higher education needs to be explored. In his dissent note, Basu contended that it would be a fallacy to think that if someone is interested in profit, that person will not be interested in providing good education. It is like assuming that if Tata Motors is interested in making profit it will not be interested in producing a good small car. In reality, it is precisely because it is interested in making profit and do better than its rivals did Tata Motors come up with an innovative product, namely good yet cheap small car. That being so, there is no reason why a profit-making company should not be allowed to start a university or a college. In his view a disproportionate amount of energy is being spent on setting up barriers for establishing and expansion of universities. Therefore, licensing of educational institutions should be abolished as was the case with industrial licensing in 1990s. Far more important is the establishment of a system which would provide information to the parents and students about the quality of education imparted by institutions. Further, one should not be flustered over the fact that private institutions would offer only commercially attractive courses and cater to the relatively rich. Thereby Government could use its resources better to promote other courses and assist the poor to have access to higher education rather than spread its resources thin. The NKC, however, does not go as far as Basu to suggest doing away with the entry licensing system.

The more knowledge you attain, the more you will realize the extent of your ignorance.

Justice P.V. Rajamannar

At the heart of the Majority Report is the 'idea of university', and that idea is heavily influenced by the fact that Yash Pal was an alumnus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). MIT is one of the finest examples of the well known Humboldt model of a research-cum-teaching university. The Humboldt model has three organising principles; first, the unity of teaching and research, secondly, the freedom to teach and to learn, and thirdly, the principle of self-governance within the confines of a single institution, for the cultivation of all significant branches of knowledge. The idea of university espoused by the Majority report goes beyond Humboldt model in that it envisions a 'universal' university whose remit would extend to the 'vocational education sector' comprising polytechnics, industrial training institutions, and so on. No wonder that the Majority Report strongly recommended that IITs, IIMs, and even agricultural universities should diversify and transform into full fledged universities of its conceptualisation. With relentless logic, the Majority Report carried forward its uncompromising commitment to its idea of university, and came out strongly against institutions engaged solely in research. It recommended that research institutions should associate themselves with universities nearby, and thereby create teaching opportunities for their researchers. As it expected that all existing and new universities should sooner than later conform to its idea of university, the Majority Report was particular that all universities should be treated alike in the matter of funding and relationship with Governments. The Majority Report's idea of university was not embraced by Basu. In his Note of Dissent, he forcefully put forth the view that no Government could finance three hundred odd universities with equal generosity without triggering a fiscal breakdown or dooming the university system to mediocrity. To expect the *outcome* to be the same across individuals and universities is to court failure. Therefore a differential treatment of institutions and universities and also of individuals is unavoidable. By recommending the establishment of 50 national universities which were to provide education of the highest standard and serve as exemplars for the rest of the nation, the NKC implicitly took the position that all universities cannot be equal. NKC expressed the

view that some of the existing universities were much too large, for ensuring academic standards and providing good governance, and that it was necessary to establish universities which would be smaller, more nimble, responsive to change and easier to manage. The 1500 universities it recommended are presumably such universities.

There is yet another difference in the conceptualisation of the Indian higher education system by the Majority Report and the other two. The Majority Report implicitly assumes that the higher education system would cater to Indian students. Even when it spoke of NCHER promoting global connectivity it was particular that we should create our own world class standards. In contrast to the Majority Report Basu and NKC were quite enthusiastic of the possibility of India as a major destination for students from all over the world. No wonder, they suggest Government taking up pro-active measures for India to emerge as an 'exporter' of education.

(to be continued)



Into The World's First Quiz - Master's Realm

Prof. Manoj Das

*(A seer among scholars the venerable Prof Manoj Das who lives in Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, has graciously permitted the publication of this essay from his book **My Little India**)*

A few stars on the eastern horizon, lingering as if in a resolution to defy the dawn, were losing their lustre and, through the fog, looked like smudges made by carelessly strewn drops of fluorescence. Trees flanking the railways were yet to shake off their sleep.

The train with its old-pattern bogies was slowing down. I descended from my upper berth slowly and cautiously so that the two passengers on the lower berths were not disturbed. But both had rolled up their beddings. The older one - probably in his seventies - had made a turban out of his long muffler and sat on the berth right below mine, thoroughly wrapped up in a blanket. His eyes were shut, but his folded legs

Wisdom cannot be attained except by investigation and discussion.

Adi Sankara

shook nonstop, indicating his determination to keep inertia away.

His young companion was snoozing, his back resting on his luggage, on the opposite berth.

'My son, I must remind you that you're a fool,' said the old man, imparting fresh gusto to his knee-shaking.

'Jee!' I responded through the most precise Hindi at my disposal, even before fully realising the import of his observation and the attitude of its intended beneficiary.

'But why?' he demanded, his eyes still shut. I relished every syllable of the riddle posed by the old man, for I was already on the frontiers of the legendary city of King Vikram and the whimsical spirit known as the *Vetala* - the world's *first* quizmaster who narrated one enigmatic story after another and challenged the king to solve the riddles on which they ended.

But the old man's Vikram was in no mood to respond. Like a bigger wave following half a dozen normal ones in the sea, the young man's head would droop violently after a few shorter spells of dozing. He opened his eyes wide after one such major drooping, surveyed the situation, but quietly resumed his repose.

Probably ready to get down, both had sat on the same berth a little while ago, the old man beginning to impart a lesson or two to his ward on life's little ironies. When the latter had broken away to another berth the old man seemed unaware. However, I was in a mood to be his proxy, leaning on my previous single-syllable mastery of Hindi, uttered in an interrogative mode: 'Jee?'

It worked. Slowly but with rock-like confidence, the old man released his wisdom: 'My boy, Providence endowed man with ears so that he would hear his woman, but woman was sanctioned ears so that her man could give them a twist when necessary.'

I sat amazed and enlightened. The most profound *raison d'être* for ears I had read so far was that they showed how farsighted Nature was in anticipation of man's one day inventing spectacles, the

handles of which would require resting places. I realised in that foggy morning, with the rhythmic chugging of the train, that the old man's thesis was in no way inferior to my earlier knowledge on the justification of ears on our overburdened physique.

'What nonsense are you blabbering! Get up!' the young man exhorted his wise counsellor, lifting the luggage of both. Only then did the old man open his eyes. He stood up and eyed me suspiciously. The train stopped and they got down.

My destination, the next station, was only a few minutes away. I was prepared to sit alert and unblinking. Rarely had I felt so deeply eager to see a place. A thrill shot through my being when my eyes at last caught the legend on the platform: Ujjain in English and Ujjayini in Hindi.

I had neither any work there nor any friend. I would check into a hotel and visit the four ancient institutions of my interest at leisure: the temple of Mahakaleswar around which the city cropped up; the temple of Kalika, the deity whom the pride of Ujjain, Poet Kalidasa, worshipped; the Sandipani Ashram, the residential gurukul where the young Krishna had his education and, last but not least, the Bhartrihari Cave.

Ujjain on the river Sipra (Kshipra) is of course a place of great mythical antiquity, and one of the seven sacred seats capable of bestowing salvation on seekers, the other six being Ayodhya, Mathura, Kashi, Kanchi, Puri and Dwaraka. As the capital of Avanti, the city was sometimes known as Avantika and its other names were Dharanagari (popular during Kalidasa's time), Kushasthali and Kanakasringha.

Ujjain is also one of the four sites where the Kumbhamela takes place, drawing tens of thousands of devotees.

For people other than religious pilgrims, Ujjain's attraction are the memories of Kalidasa and King Vikramaditya. There are no ruins directly linked to them, but the cave which King Vikram's elder brother, Sage Bhartrihari, performed his askesis, is traditionally traced to a stone chalet (U the city's outskirts, though the hillock containing the cave had disappeared.

Since my decision to make this trip from Surat

We know that it is possible to build cultures in which each person is proud, each person feels that he or she is a worthy inheritor of what has gone before and a worthy guardian of what is to come after.

Margaret Mead

was sudden and I was not expecting anyone to receive me, I had no reason to take position at the door of my compartment as the train crawled into the platform.

I got down leisurely. But was not the gentleman walking briskly and peeping into compartments too familiar to be missed?

'I wondered if you were asleep!' Prof. G.P. Gupta sounded relieved as he hugged me.

'But you were supposed to be elsewhere!' I said apologetically.

'I was, until a couple of days ago. A friend of yours at Surat informed me over the phone, almost at midnight, of your visit. Please relax. No meeting for you here, no formal business. All I propose to do is help you see Ujjain.'

His words refreshed me like a bath in a hot spring on that winter morning. Dr. Gupta, the Founder Professor of Business Management at the University of Ujjain, had retired, but within a day I got enough proof of the love and esteem in which he was held by the elite of the city. Though trained in the West, he had given an imaginative Indian orientation to the principles of management and had produced a couple of highly readable volumes on the subject.

I was lodged at the Kalidas Academy, though the food was imported from Prof. Gupta's kitchen, active under Mrs. Vimla Gupta's care, for me and any number of guests.

'If thank me you must, do it only for the guide I have arranged for you,' said Prof. Gupta. I looked at him, expecting some elaboration.

'He is Nigam,' the professor advised me when I settled down in a cosy room of the Academy.

'That reminds me, Prof. Gupta. Do you know where Dr. Shyamsundar Nigam, the historian of Ujjain lives nowa-days?

Which Nigam do you think am I referring to? It is Shyamsundar who will be your guide. Nobody among our contemporaries knows more than him about Ujjain.'

I was delighted. The kind, courteous and

unassuming Dr. Nigam devoted two full days to me, driving me from one significant site to another, explaining their antiquity and narrating the legends behind them.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached the Bhartrihari Cave.

'Nigam-ji, I would like to sit in silence inside it for a while,' I said after peeping into the cluster of chalets bearing the memory of several Natha Yogis.

Dr. Nigam was hesitant. 'Well, do not sit for long,' he warned me politely. 'I'll wait outside.'

He looked happy when I came out. 'It is believed that; those who sit in these caves for long are likely to...'

'Grow crazy?'

'Something like that,' he agreed. 'But that inexplorable law cannot apply to you!'

'Thanks.'

The impression that people could lose the balance of their minds if they sat in such caves for long was not a mere superstition. There were powerful occult formations in such atmospheres and a seeker, not sufficiently guarded, may not be able to ward them off or to absorb and transcend them and that brings about disharmony in one's consciousness - say those with knowledge of occultism and those who, like Hamlet, believe that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy'.

'But so far as Bhartrihari was concerned, he had been 'able to restore the harmony of his consciousness through his meditation here! This place protected him from a possible madness!'

'You're right,' said Dr. Nigam. 'So, you are familiar with! the story of Bhartrihari!'

I was. In fact, the legend of Bhartrihari, the elder brother of King Vikramaditya, was one of the most fascinating legends in Indian folklore. Nobody can vouch for its factual veracity! But its philosophical import is indisputable. Forget about the issue of the ultimate Truth - whether one can realise that or not.

Pleasure and pain are two creatures with one head.

Plato

But can one, a creature of average consciousness, differentiate between what appeared to be true and what was really true, in the course of one's normal transactions in life - the life that was itself so short? That was the question which tormented Bhartrihari once upon a time - may be some 2,000 years ago - after the dramatic denouement of a chain of intriguing events.



John Beames and the Making of Modern Orissa - II

Prof. Sachidananda Mohanty
Professor of English
University of Hyderabad

III

How did colonial administration respond to these charges in 19th century Orissa? John Beames (1837-1902) who served as the Collector of Balasore and Cuttack, became an important interlocutor of local linguistic and cultural aspirations. Little known even in Orissa, his evocative *Memoirs of a Bengali Civilian*⁷ is generally confined to antiquarian circles. The classicists remember his celebrated *Comparative Grammar of the Aryan Languages of India* and essays in *Indian Antiquary* and *Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society*. And yet, Beames remains foremost in his interventions for the survival of the Oriya language. He made outstanding contributions for regional formations in Eastern India.

Born at Greenwich on 21 June 1837, Beames was the eldest son of Rev. Thomas Beames, preacher of St. James's Piccadilly and grandson of John Beames Esq. of Lincoln's Inn. Educated at Merchant Taylor's School and Hailey bury College, in his fourth term, he won Classic and Sanskrit prizes as well as the Persian Medal. Appointed to the Indian Civil Service, (I.C.S.), he arrived in India in 1858 and served in the Punjab from March 1859 to late 1861. From December 1861, to the conclusion of his service he was employed in the Bengal Presidency, becoming a permanent Collector in 1867, a Commissioner in 1881 and thrice officiated as a Member of the Board of Revenue. By the time he

retired from the ICS in March 1893, he had gained extensive knowledge of Indian life in all its complexity and richness.

Beames's scholarly contributions began early in his career. While at the district of Champaran, Bihar, he published essays in the *Bengal Asiatic Society*. These dealt with the question of retaining Arabic element in the official form of Hindustani. Treating Bishop Caldwell's *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages* as a model, he commenced work on the counterpart of Aryan languages.

To *The Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society*, Beames contributed essays on Chand Bardoi and other old Hindi authors and studies on the antiquities and history of Orissa (1870-1883). In 1891, he published a pioneering volume *Bengali Grammar*, and after his retirement, he wrote for *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review*. His reputation rightly rests on the *Comparative Grammar of the Aryan Language of India*, published in volumes in 1872, 1895 and 1879.

Beames's *Memoirs* records his stay in Orissa as a period of great happiness and productivity. Orissa had just recovered from a severe famine in 1866 when he arrived in Balasore in 1869. He learnt Oriya and wrote on its language, literature, temple iconography, fortresses and folklore. He identified with local sentiments for the preservation and promotion of the Oriya language. *On a Copper Plate Grant from Balasore AD 1483*, argued that Oriya script had developed from a southern variety of Kutila type. He wrote on the poetry of Dinahrushna Das pioneered comparative folk culture studies with the publication of his *folklore of Orissa*.

Whether in his *History of Orissa Under the Muhommedan, Maratha and English Rule: Notes on Akbar's Subah, on Buddhist Remains in Orissa, Notes on Rasakallola : An Ancient Oriya Poem or Folklore of Orissa*, Beames revealed a scholarly bent of mind and attention to details based on actual documentary evidence.

Beames's exposition of the origin of Oriya language and study of its evolution brought him closer to the Oriya people who were battling then for the survival of their language. Three notes remain

Technology feeds on pleasure centres, but is squeezing out our human spirit,
intensifying our search for meaning. Nina Naisbitt

supremely important in this regard. 'On the relation of the Oriya to the other modern Aryan language,' 'On Oriya language, script and literature' and 'Urya.' These refuted the claim that Oriya was a dialect of Bengali, specifically seen in Pandit Kanti Chandra Bhattacharya's tract named 'Uriya not an independent language.' 'This little work,' observes Beames referring to Bhattacharya's diatribe, 'though profoundly destitute of philological arguments has created some stir among the natures on the province, who are somewhat disgusted at finding their native language treated as a mere corruption of Bengali.' (94) Beames examines both the languages from close quarters and suggests that as a separate language "Uriya extends along the sea coast from Subarnarekha to near Ganjam.' Landwards, its boundary is uncertain, it melts gradually into the Boud and other rude hill dialects and co-exists with them."

IV

While in his scholarship Beames appears to be largely objective and sympathetic, he seems far more ambivalent in his attitude to the colonial rule as manifest in his *Memoir*: No doubt, he often indicts the colonial system and exposes its collusion with the corrupt native administration, both revenue as well as the police system. His reminiscences are extremely well written and his observations full of minute details. He offers insight of men and matters that come under his purview. He is polite but unsparing of the superiors such as Commissioner T.E Ravenshaw as well as the vanity of the visiting dignitaries from Bengal. His account of salt making in Balasore remains unrivalled and the burden imposed on the nature for salt making that he singles out would indicate why it became a symbol in the hands of Gandhiji during the freedom struggle.

Beames offers memorable portraits of Englishmen like George Faulkner, "the Englishman to whom India has become a second mother country." (213). An engineer from Lancashire, he worked for the irrigation company at Cuttack.

Beames shows that the field visits of dignitaries like Sir Richard Temple from Calcutta were a matter of sham and self-deception. "The idea that a hurried

tour...a governor can make himself really acquainted with a province as big as England is a delusion." (194) Similarly, Beames' description of the port of Dhamra and the lighthouse of False Point and his portraits of the solitary Captain Geary and Captain Harris remain memorable.

Throughout Beames insists on his ordinary and commonplace background. In his preface to *Memoirs of a Bengali Civilian*, for instance, this is what he had to say:

If it should be asked why so obscure person should think it worth his while to write the story of his life at all, I reply that it is precisely because I am an obscure person- an average, ordinary, middle-class Englishman-that I write it.' (239)

Despite his avowed sympathy with Orissa, Beames, in his memoirs, emerges paradoxically as somewhat distant and withdrawn. His world is insular and does not include the larger universe of the Oriyas, the Oriya gentry and their day-to-day struggle for economic and cultural emancipation. The memoir is silent about contemporary Oriya journals and Oriya reformatory movements. He concedes that British system is unfair and yet cannot identify with the tribals of Orissa whom he describes as 'barbarians.' 'Moyurbhanja' he writes at one place, 'had brought 600 with him—and a band discoursing barbaric, discordant music.' (220).

John Beames represents perhaps the best face of British colonialism in Orissa. Educated, enlightened and well meaning, he adapted to the land and its culture. While his contributions in the field of administration will be forgotten, his linguistic and cultural legacy remains historic. Beames empathized with the local culture and aspirations and made decisive interventions in the comparative study of languages. His support of the cause of Oriya was timely. It contributed vitally to community formation in Orissa during the 19th century.

In his personal memoir however, Beames appears to be somewhat distant from the larger world of Oriya society and culture during the mid and late 19th century. His reminiscences are silent about the contemporary movements for literary cultural

Tranquility is not the natural state of the world, peace and security are not the laws of nature.

Henry Kissinger

emancipation. There are no references to journals and periodicals such as *Utkal Deepika* or the response of the Oriya literati for their self-definition. Thus Beames has left behind a mixed legacy.

These contradictions or dissonances are not surprising. The outcome, in the colonial context, is perhaps inevitable. It goes to the credit of John Beames that although implicated in the colonial system, through his many endeavors, he aided the shaping of a regional imaginary in colonial India.

(Concluded)



Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa - The *summum bonum* of all faiths

Sri. C. Sivasankaram

He was no born saint. He was a saint evolved through life's several physical, psychical and spiritual vicissitudes, trials and experimentations. The way of evolution was distinctly his own. Gadadhar, an illiterate Vaishnava Brahmin boy with no spectacular background or ancestry, scaling greater heights than the other great contemporaries of his, grew up to be revered as Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa.

Gadadhar used to play the role of Krishna or Siva in village dramas. The youthful maidens of the same sect at Bengal's sequestered village, Kamarpukur, used to form into a ring around him in those plays, as Gopika's were known to gather around Krishna. With his charm and the inherent transparent divinity, the lad could acquit himself as Krishna the celebrate inviolate.

Gadadhar was born in Kamarpukur on February 18, 1836-just two years before the advent of Shiridi Sai Baba. By the time the lad came of age, circumstances had so shaped that the family perforce migrated to Calcutta, the then imperial capital of India. Destiny was awaiting him in suburban Dakshineswar, a few kilometers away, to shape him into Sri Ramakrishna, 'the son of God'. Following the expiry of his elder brother, Gadadhar was initiated into priesthood and installed as the archaka of Kali Temple there. As the priest. Ramakrishna's ways of worship were so odd and

unconventional that they enraged the temple's founders, but they never toyed with the idea of removing him. The invisible hand of the Divine was working within and soon the elders and others, too, started enjoying the crazy manners of the priest.

The family elders thought it fit to get him married as a curative measure of his supposed madness. Gadadhar himself chose as his bride a five-year old girl who was to blossom into Mother Sarada Devi later, and he remained a celebrate inviolate.

The extraordinary souls that wrought change in the unusual life of Ramakrishna were a beautiful Brahmin woman and Totapuri. His intellectual brilliance was prodigious. He was able to become an adept in any kind of knowledge in an amazingly short time.

All was natural and spontaneous about him. In his philosophy man was the central figure. Around him the gamut of his thought was vigorously composed.

The century was the mother of many a pronounced reformative and rationalistic movement. The rugged wind of the well-disciplined movements clamouring for radical change had silently made inroads into the mind of the saint in the making. His intellect was ever alert and never slumbering. It was unbroken 'Kaali' Consciousness.

'He keenly observed the winds of change and the personalities under whom the movements were smarting. His religion was human and at the same time spiritual to the core and enlightened like that of the Buddha, like whom he was for founding of the kingdom of Earth or Kali, the supreme primordial principle of Prakriti within it the unmoved mover reposes. Prakriti reveals the face of Purusha in boundless and countless forms. That is Kaali the Mother," all beauty and all bliss". The mystic touch of Hers in all that is thrills and amazes and enhances the ageless urge of man to delve deep into Reality.

Ramakrishna's sayings possess flair and beauty of their own like that of the Buddhist Dammapada which the Chinese savant Lin Yutang believes is more impressive than the Bhagvad Gita.

Swami Vivekananda is the complement of the Truth which was Sri Ramakrishna,
and the whole is 'Ramakrishna- Vivekananda.' Swami Ashokananda

Ramakrishna's abhorrence of woman and gold smacks of Christian asceticism. Mother Kaali saw him mellowed and strikingly reasonable in his attitude towards the woman as the virtual stumbling block on the road to Beatitude. He came to conclude in the dazzling dusk of his marvelous life that woman was the mother and honest women were the noblest gifts in the world. Though Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrism besides Hinduism, maintain more or less equal share in his outlook as epitomized in the eloquent form of his sayings it will be blasphemous if we call his philosophy eclectic. They are universal Divine Mother's spontaneous overflow of unvarnished feelings, the immanent spirit's superb outpourings.

His mission was to establish the worship of the Divine Mother quite contrary to the mystic adoration of the impersonal. To erase the stigma of the 'products of sin' from the face of woman he elevated the ideal of womanhood into Divine Motherhood. Ramakrishna possessed the yogic powers but seldom he exercised them. He vividly proved in his life and thought that he was a novel avatar who was the summum bonum of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and all other religions of the world. The catholicity of certain Christian men of wisdom tended to draw comparisons between Jesus the Christ and Ramakrishna the Paramhansa. Unless one is an ascetic, one is a sannyasin, one cannot convince oneself to

sweep and clean the dingy tenements of the outcaste. That Ramakrishna did the job was logical conclusion of his sublime awareness that all is Chaitanya who is one. This world is the manifestation of Kaali the Divine Mother in whose lap the saint and the scoundrel, the savant and the sinner the vicious and the virtuous"took rest. The Divine Mother held olive branch to one and all to live in calm serenity of consummate reconciliation.

Hardly a decade after the absorption of the Paramhansa in the Brahman (August 16, 1886), there appeared an article in a British periodical, the Imperial and Quarterly Review of 1896. The title of the article was 'A modern Hindu Saint'. It was the able pen work of C.H. Tawney. The distinguished professor's dispassionate article aroused wildfire interest in the European learned circles, of whom the scholar-extraordinary and the legendary orientalist, Max Mueller, was one. He contributed a brilliant short sketch of Sri Ramakrishna entitled, 'A Real Mahatman'. The celebrated sketch aroused antagonistic criticism in the diehard Christian and Theosophical world.

Sri Ramakrishna transferred his life-long savings of esoteric and ethical attainments to the virile Vivekananda who, in turn, by his fiery enterprise roused the soul of the world. Thus Sri Ramakrishna turned the 'Trivikrama' of limitless expansion.



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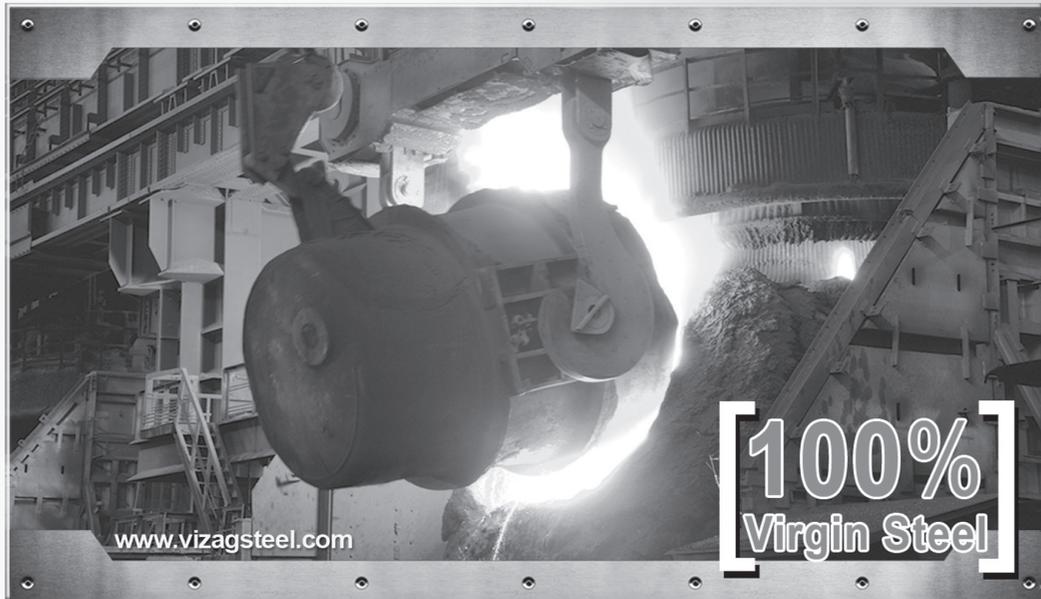
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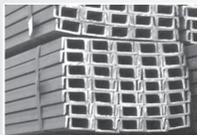
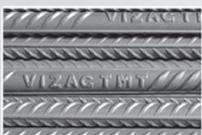
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