



## LOOKING BEYOND THE BUDGET BLUES

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### The Unseen Budget

Such is the Indian politician's lack of interest in matters of national security that the nation's defence budget is rarely if ever, discussed in Parliament. The fate of the taxpayer's hard-earned money, voted for national defence, therefore, remains a matter of indifference to MPs until the Comptroller and Auditor General opens the musty cupboards of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to reveal skeletons of financial imprudence or tardy project implementation.

In keeping with this tradition, Parliament voted, without debate, an amount of Rs. 2, 46,727 crore (US \$ 40.4 billion) for defence for the financial year 2015-16. This amount is dwarfed by the US and Chinese defence budgets of \$ 620 billion and \$ 180 billion respectively. However, for a nation like India, in which hundreds of millions continue to subsist on less than one or two dollars a day, the defence budget represents a major proportion of government expenditure and warrants our scrutiny – even if Parliament doesn't have the time.

Although the 2015-16 budget represents an increase of about Rs. 22,000 crores over the previous year's allocation, it has evoked a general sense of disappointment, amongst defence analysts and military pundits, on a number of counts. Without going into the arcane specifics of budgetary planning let us take note of some areas of concern.

### Areas of Concern

The first significant point to note is that as a percentage of GDP, the defence budget has dropped from 1.81% in 2014-15 to 1.75% in 2015-16. While this is not the lowest ever, it does represent a steadily declining trend since 2000 when it was 2.31%. The dwindling share of GDP can be ascribed to the greater availability of resources on account of a growing economy. Equally, it

may be a disheartening indicator of complacency and the declining priority being accorded to defence in a deteriorating security scenario.

This year's budgetary allocation has grown by only 7.7% over that of 2014-15; which dashed widespread hopes of double-digit growth. A small hike of this nature is a cosmetic gesture because it is neutralized by inflation, exchange-rate variations and annual cost-escalations, routinely imposed by all equipment and material suppliers. In real terms, such a meager increase will aggravate the steadily growing gap between resource requirement and budget allocations; and prolong the stagnation in capital expenditure.

The bad news does not end here. We learn that the MoD in 2014-15 not only failed to spend (yet again) the full amount allocated for expenditure on capital acquisitions but has also allowed the capital-to-revenue expenditure ratio to be skewed to 40:60. Thus we are spending significantly more under the Revenue head (on pay and allowances, stores, repair and maintenance of equipment) than under the Capital head (on modernization of our fighting forces and acquisition of new capabilities).

There may be more ill-tidings for national defence if recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission, seeking re-orientation of centre-state fiscal relations, reduce the central Government's resource base; but we will not go into that. Instead, we need to look beyond fiscal symptoms; at the deeper malaise afflicting India's national security edifice; because we are living in dangerous times and further aggravation of our existing vulnerabilities could endanger the integrity of the Indian state.

### The Parlous Security Scenario

China's geographic proximity and its huge economic and military disparity vis-a-vis India leaves us with no option but to find a *modus vivendi* and even seek economic cooperation till we can find a resolution to bilateral problems. If this was not bad enough, China has made Pakistan the centre-piece

The objectives of our foreign policy are the preservation of peace and the enlargement of human freedom.

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of its anti-India grand-strategy; and by arming it to the teeth with conventional and nuclear weaponry, it has completely skewed the natural balance of power on the sub-continent; placing India in the jaws of a pincer.

The Machiavellian Sino-Pakistan nexus, has not only checkmated India militarily, but also stymied Delhi's ambitions to be a leading Asian power. The display of belligerence by the Chinese and Pakistani armies, during the recent past, conveyed signals of their possible future intent and even the possibility of collusive action on 'two-fronts'. The unforeseen rise of ISIS in the Middle-East could have grave implications for India if it spills over into an unstable Afghanistan and a strife-torn Pakistan.

While a totalitarian China, steadily surging forward, on the back of a burgeoning economy, is now within sight of great-power status, India's unique brand of democracy has created political conundrums that have impeded progress. The past decade was witness to policy-paralysis, economic slowdown and social unrest; with long-term repercussions for national security. While the new government is certainly showing signs of greater resolve and vision, its success in policy implementation will depend on how adroitly it manages the turbulent political environment and an obdurate bureaucracy.

Given Prime Minister Modi's proactive focus on foreign affairs, he has used every opportunity to mend neighbourhood fences. He has also reached out to nations and leaders likely to play a role in shaping India's economic and geo-political destiny in the medium/long term future. Showing an acute sense of 'realpolitik' Modi has courted both the US and China with gusto. The signs – at long last - seem propitious for the evolution of an Indian grand strategy; modest in scope but coherent in substance.

However, should diplomacy fail and should India's internal and/or external security scenarios take a turn for the worse, our political leadership would expect the armed forces to be combat-ready and

prepared for any eventuality. This is unlikely to be the case unless our decision-makers can address five grave lacunae in our security edifice with alacrity.

### **Addressing Security Lacunae**

Firstly; the time has come for the Indian politician to shed his detachment, acquire comprehension of security issues and involve himself directly rather than depending on an ignorant bureaucracy. When Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz declared war to be an 'instrument of policy' and a 'branch of political activity' he was placing the onus of responsibility for national security and strategic decision-making squarely on the politician's shoulders. It is time that our Parliamentarians earned their keep by following the example of British MPs and American Congressmen who are intensely involved in vital matters affecting national defence.

Secondly; we must know the destination before we can chart a path to it. In the seven decades of independence, neither the Government nor Parliament has considered it necessary that a defence white paper, a national security doctrine or strategy be issued. No government has ever undertaken a strategic defence review or defined national interests and threats. Parliament remains blissfully unaware of the strategic priorities that drive India's military modernization; or the rationale underlying costly investments in military hardware acquisition/development programmes. It is sad that thousands of crores of public money have been squandered, on such programmes with no benefit to national security and without public debate or questioning.

Thirdly; let us educate our security decision-makers. With budgets likely to plateau or even dwindle, in real terms, there is a dire need for prioritizing the requirements of weapon systems and other hardware projected by the Services. Elsewhere in the world, the complex and onerous responsibility of prioritization is vested in a senior military functionary such as the Chief of Defence Staff on whose advice the MoD undertakes the process of balanced and long-term modernization

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Universal peace depends on the peace of the society, which in turn depends  
on the peace of the individual.

– Sri Satya Sai Baba 3

of the armed forces. The modality for such an exercise does not exist in India, at present.

Whether it is the accretion of an army corps, the acquisition of an aircraft-carrier or selection of a new combat aircraft, the sponsoring Service must be able to justify its need and relevance against the prevailing threat scenario and economic situation. Military modernisation must be viewed as a continuum in which acquisition choices are exercised across the full spectrum of land, maritime and aerospace warfare capabilities, rather than as decisions taken to meet the aspirations or enhance the prestige of a particular Service. Today, no one in MoD is either qualified or has the authority to pose tough questions to the Service HQs regarding proposed acquisitions.

In the current set-up, generalist IAS officers rarely serve in MoD long enough to gather the necessary experience/expertise regarding military force-planning and equipment-acquisition. Military personnel are marginally better because they happen to be 'users' of the equipment. Consequently, there is hardly a military acquisition programme in India today which has run its course satisfactorily or delivered on time and cost. There is urgent need to impart formal training and create a corpus of experts, civilian and uniformed, well-versed in 'military acquisitions' and 'contract formulation and management' to staff the MoD.

Fourthly; the imperative need for drastic restructuring of the military-industrial complex must be faced. No country can stake claim to the status of a major power unless it can design and produce a major proportion of the hardware required by its armed forces. In this context, India's failure to attain self-reliance in production of weapon systems must rank as one of the most egregious failures of its post-independence leadership. Starting from almost a similar techno-industrial base in the early 1950s, China is, today, the world's third largest exporter of military hardware whereas India remains the world's largest arms importer.

While the culpability for this colossal failure rests on two departments of MoD - Defence Production and DRDO - blame must also be shared by the political leadership for being 'asleep on the wheel' for six decades since independence. The first step towards reform would be to split the current all-powerful post of 'DRDO Czar' in MoD into three separate entities: Director-General Defence R&D, Secretary DRDO and Scientific Adviser to RM. One of these could be a uniformed person; representing the all-important but, so far, ignored 'user'. The laudable objective of 'Make in India' can only succeed if the vast resources of the DRDO and Defence PSUs are re-cast on the lines of successful models that exist in the UK, Israel, Singapore and elsewhere.

Fifthly; we must create a 'single-point source of military advice' to the Government. Whether it is a Chief of Defence Staff or an empowered Permanent Chairman COSC, he will not only plug a crucial gap in the nuclear command chain, but would also take a holistic view of capability-acquisition/modernization proposals, and nurture the tri-Service commands and organizations. He would also prepare a 5-10 year roadmap for integration of the armed forces and implementation of the transition to 'theatre commands'. For this measure to succeed, it must be accompanied by creation of joint-Services staffs at the Command level, and the professionalization of the MoD through the substantive induction of uniformed personnel.

## **Conclusion**

The defence budget will have a real significance only if it is underpinned by political purpose and is linked with the implementation of a national grand strategy. This calls for the political leadership to create time and mental space for involvement in national security issues.

The time has come to stop pumping 25%-30% of our defence budget into the coffers of Russia, Israel, France, South Africa or USA for purchase of arms and

Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory.

- Mahatma Gandhi

ammunition. Apart from depriving our own economy and industry of these funds, we also make ourselves hostage to these nations in the crucial arena of national security.

All this will only come about if we are willing to take some difficult decisions, and initiate drastic reform in our defence organizations so that we may become masters of our own destiny.

(Courtesy : Vayu Aerospace, April 2015)



## **XI VISIT TO PAKISTAN ELEVATES BI-LATERAL RELATIONSHIP**

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Chinese President Xi Jinping concluded his two day visit to Pakistan on Tuesday (April 21) and in addition to Beijing committing itself to energy and infrastructure projects worth \$ 46 billion , the two countries have now elevated their ‘all-weather’ relationship which has been described as being ‘sweeter than honey’ to an “all-weather strategic cooperation partnership.” The visit of the Chinese President to Pakistan has been postponed more than once over the last year and the Nawaz Sharif government left no carpet unrolled to highlight the importance accorded to the Xi visit.

Pakistani fighter aircraft escorted the Chinese President’s on Monday (April 20 ), the visiting dignitary was accorded the rare privilege of addressing a joint session of the legislature and Mr. Xi was also conferred with Pakistan’s highest civilian award – the Nishan -e- Pakistan – which for the record was also given to former Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

The leit-motif of the Xi visit was that of a ‘brother’ coming home and the two countries sought to repeatedly dwell on the all-weather characteristic of the bi-lateral relationship and the manner in which they have stood by each other over the decades. A total of 51 agreements and MoU’s were signed during the current visit and cover a wide spectrum of areas from energy and transport infrastructure; trade and economic facilitation ; climate change, marine research

and people-to-people contact amongst other domains.

The core objective is to advance the ambitious Xi vision of a land and maritime connectivity project (also referred to as the Belt and Road Initiative – BRI ) that will link the Pakistani port of Gwadar to Kashgar in the Xinjiang province of western China.

If realized , this innovative land-sea connectivity grid will have a very significant impact on the geo-economic, geo-energy and geo-political contours of the southern Asian region with implications for the larger global strategic framework. Can China realize this tantalizing objective given the domestic political contestation and related internal turbulence that envelops the Pakistan- Baluchistan-Xinjiang region?

The Xi visit could be perceived as an audacious attempt to use the economic and fiscal weight that Beijing can now bring to bear to a bi-lateral relationship to trump or sideline intractable political and security related dissonances. In the current visit Xi linked the envisaged Sino-Pak economic cooperation with security. “Our cooperation in the security and economic fields reinforce each other, and they must be advanced simultaneously,” he said. In return, Pakistani PM Nawaz Sharif noted: “I assured President Xi that Pakistan considers China’s security as important as its own security.”

This sub-text wherein China and Pakistan reinforce their security and economic cooperation with an element of simultaneity has to contend with the reality of the spread of radical jihadi ideologies and their myriad non-state entities scattered through the region – some of which are a major challenge to the Chinese government in Xinjiang. Concurrently the internal situation in Baluchistan (where Gwadar is located) is far from stable and the local inhabitants have long resented the jack-boot of the Pakistani military and are struggling for an elusive political autonomy.

The Chinese Belt-Road initiative does have a macro sheen to it and some parts veer towards a wishful kind of phantasmagoria and the world will be watching this project unfold with a mix of rapacious geo-economic interest for the possibilities this will throw up and yet leavened with some political skepticism.

In the evening of my busy life during a great and eventful period of Indian history, the writing of these two books wherein I have retold the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, is, in my opinion, the best service I have rendered to my people. - C. Rajagopalachari

While commendable for sheer scale and geographic scope (the BRI will encompass Asia, Europe and Africa), it is not yet proven that vast fiscal investments and selective political engagement can lead to the ultimate realization of Beijing's objectives. Both Myanmar and Sri Lanka and recent Chinese experience in these nations are instructive about the limits and fragility of such certitude.

Specific to Pakistan and the Xi visit – the central issue is how will Beijing harmonize the Rawalpindi investment in terror as an instrument of policy with the normative 'responsible global power' image that China now wishes to exude ?

The answer to this conundrum will have a crucial bearing both on the rise of China, the reality of a prosperous and secure Afro-Asian region – and as it happens - the Modi visit to Beijing later in May that will review the uneasy Sino-Indian relationship.

These issues were discussed inconclusively in April 1954 at the first Bandung conference in Indonesia. Perhaps some indications will be discernible in the 60th anniversary commemoration event that will be unveiled in Bandung on April 24, where both the Chinese President and the Japanese Prime Minister will outline their vision of Asia and the 21st century. The current Xi 'yatra' is part of this aspirational lattice.

( Courtesy: Quint – April 21, 2015)



## **Unfashionable Thoughts : VIII An ex-policymaker's perspective on regulation in education**

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

The surge in the demand for technical manpower witnessed from mid-1970s picked up further momentum from mid-1990s, and turned into a tsunami because of the IT boom. Thus in 1985, there were over three hundred odd engineering colleges; 190 more colleges were established during

the decade 1987-97, 193 during the three year period 1997-2000 itself, 373 over the next three years 2000-3, 251 during 2003-6, 877 during 2006-9, and 421 during 2009-12. The demand for professional education received a further boost from late 1990s because of the economy moving to high trajectory of growth, benefits of development increasingly accruing to middle and lower middle classes, and raising expectations of economic opportunities from good education. Before 1992, average annual increase in the per capita income during a five year plan never exceeded 3.3%. It registered a growth of 4.6% during the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), 3.5% during the Ninth Five year Plan (1997-2002), 5.9% during the Tenth Plan (2002-07) and 6.3% during Twelfth Five Year Plan (2007-12). The huge surge in the demand for professional education and even general education courses perceived to secure good employment was ahead of the enhancement of the fiscal capacity of Central and State Governments so much so that the demand could be met only by self-financing institutions and courses. The self-financing model which began with engineering and medical education rapidly spread to other areas like management, computer applications, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing and so on. The huge surge in demand also led to the proliferation of private universities. It was only from 2005 that the country began to witness another bout of spectacular expansion of Central Government technical institutions. In 2005 the intake of the existing institutions was enhanced by 54% so as to ensure that the seats available for the non-reserved categories were not reduced because of the introduction of reservation of OBCs. A little later, Central Government decided to increase at one stroke the number of IITs from seven to sixteen, National Institutes of Technology (formerly called Regional Engineering Colleges, RECs) from twenty to thirty, IIMs from five to thirteen, and Central Universities from 24 to 40. The pace of expansion is reminiscent of the first phase of educational development. Though it might not be fashionable to say this boom was possible because of the economic reforms undertaken from 1991, the

We have to chart our course by the distant stars and not by the dim street-lights.

- S. Radhakrishnan

consequential escape for the Hindu growth rate of about 3.5%, and the enhanced fiscal capacity of the Central Government.

It is common to come across what I would call 'neo-liberal hypothesis'. It postulates that the growth of private educational institutions is due to the adoption of the neo-liberal economic policies by the Government in general and market oriented reforms introduced in higher education, and retreat of the State from its obligations to the citizens and reducing the budgetary allocations for social services like education. It was in 1991 that Government had to opt for structural adjustment policies and begin dismantling the license-permit-control raj in order to extricate the economy from the unprecedented macroeconomic crisis. Ironically the growth of self-financing institutions began during the radical Garibi Hatao phase of Indira Gandhi's regime when she loomed large like a colossus over the Indian political landscape and put in policies which were anti-business and antiforeign companies. The neo-liberal hypothesis does not explain the genesis of self-financing institutions and their growth before 1991. Nor does it explain the acceleration in the growth of private unaided institutions during the 1990s and 2000s. Those who put forth the neo-liberal hypothesis miss out two vital facts: the inadequate and prolonged fiscal capacity of the Governments, and the fact that no Government is a homogeneous entity with a single directing mind. They presume that Governments could have expanded higher and professional education to the extent demanded if only they would, and further that the 'would not' is explained by wrong economic belief which possessed Governments. To believe that the State could step up budgetary resources for higher education if only it would is wishful thinking. Many academics and public intellectuals absolve themselves of considering the problems of financing public expenditure and put forth enchanting policy prescriptions. They assume budgetary resources are perfectly fungible, and budgetary priorities can be re-ordered with ease; this is not so. The policymaker cannot wish away resource constraints and

competing priorities. The policymaker does not have the luxury of being able to go by what Max Weber called *Gesinnungsethik* (the ethics of conviction) whereby good intentions and mouthing uncompromising thoughts are good enough and one is not bound to act, and much less take the responsibility for the consequences of actions by others based thoughts one espouses. Once in office, even the most fervent ideologue has to occasionally deviate from his belief and adopt policies which are not consistent with his belief. He has to go by *Verantwortungsethik* (the ethics of responsibility), has to play by the cards dealt and is judged not by his intentions and ideas but what he accomplishes. To illustrate, unable to sustain the ballooning expenditure on education even the Left Front Government of West Bengal which cannot be accused of being pro-market had to opt for private self-financing colleges.

Contrary to the belief of those who have no direct experiential knowledge of how Government functions, Government is not a monolith; it is a constellation of different entities like Ministries and it is rare for all these entities to act in concert driven by a common purpose, vision and ideology. It is common knowledge that the spirit underlying economic reforms did not extend to most Bhavans housing Government of India Ministries and to most of the States. Most Ministries and States went ahead as if it were business as usual. The views espoused in the documents of the Finance Ministry that higher education was a non-merit good was view of a Ministry and not of the Central Government as a whole, not to speak of the various State Governments. Between them, Arjun Singh and Murli Manohar Joshi presided over MHRD for fourteen of the nineteen years from June 1991 to May 2009. Neither of them can be considered to be neo-economic liberals; nor were they pushovers in the Governments of which they were ministers. While Arjun Singh went out of the way to flaunt his opposition to the economic policies of the Government and did everything possible to embarrass the Government, Joshi was the ultimate votary of Swadeshi ideology. Few know how much

Swami Vivekananda was one of the moulders of the modern world especially as far as Asia is concerned, the first Indian religious teacher to make an impression outside India.

- A.L.Basham

freedom the MHRD had in shaping the education policy or the *inter se* investment priorities in education. The decision to give priority to elementary and adult education and to induce higher and technical education institutions of the Central Government to raise fees and mobilise non-budgetary resources was not guided by any 'neo-liberal' ideology but by the reports of the Ramamurti Committee (1990), the CABE Committee on Policy (1992), the Punnayya (1992-93) and Swaminadhan (1993) Committees. Many members of these committees had worldviews diametrically opposite to the neo-liberal point of view, and quite a few would have been at a loss if asked to spell out what neo-liberalism is. The ultimate decision makers in MHRD were not guided by any ideology but by a conviction that one should be guided by pragmatism and commonsense. Suffice to say that neither the Central Government nor the State Governments planned any grand retreat of the State in the field of higher education nor did the State Governments. In the face of resource constraint and competing priorities the State Governments did not have adequate reassures to finance the expansion of technical education on a scale necessary to meet the demand and they, particularly the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, pragmatically felt it would be fool hardy not to avail the willingness of private entrepreneurs to set up institutions and the willingness of parents to pay fees far higher than those charged by Government institutions. It was only after Kapil Sibal became Minister did the MHRD began to openly acknowledge a role for private and foreign educational providers.

Before moving on, I should also touch upon the question that whatever might have happened in the past, is it possible for the role of private and foreign providers to be reduced. My answer has to be regrettably no, even if the Indian economy moves out of the present morass and gets back to the trajectory of high economic growth. My reply is based on the comparative experience of other countries. Yet another factor driving the diversification is the inability of Governments in

developed countries to fund universities on the scale needed for near-universal enrolment is one of the reasons for the increasing role of private players in higher education, and for the pressure on public institutions to generate more and more own resources. In Britain and elsewhere in Europe, even those inclined to the Left are grudgingly getting reconciled to the fact the treasured principle of higher education as a public good entitled to unstinting public support had gone into the dustbin of history, and that denouement which is unavoidable. The winds of change are sweeping even countries like France with a deep rooted tradition of unrestricted admission of everyone with a baccalauréat to State universities and receive free education. It is increasingly recognised that behind the facade of an ostensibly egalitarian system is gross iniquity. While brightest students compete for places at the elite, fee-paying grandes écoles the rest are consigned to overcrowded institutions with few facilities, and high rates of dropouts and failures. Private investment in education is coming in different forms. Public institutions are under increasing compulsion to mobilise more of their own resources through various means including enhancement of tuition fees. Given the inexorable pressure to raise own revenues, a public-funded university is increasingly coming to acquire the characteristics of a University Inc., partly a community of scholars with a mission to explore, generate and disseminate knowledge, and partly a business enterprise that finances its missions through conventional businesslike revenue-generating activities. It is the relentless pressure to raise revenues which drives many institutions turn to 'markets' in countries like India. The intrinsic tension between the academic mission and the money-making poses acute existential dilemma to academics as well as top university administrators.

Lest what I say is dismissed of talking about developments in capitalist countries which inappropriate for India, let me briefly outline the developments in China, a country still ruled by a Communist Party and which calls its economy market socialism- socialism all the same. The trajectory of

The environmental problem does not necessarily signal our demise,  
it is our passport for the future.

the reforms of higher education initiated in 1985 follow a path similar to that in United Kingdom and elsewhere. In 1985 the establishment of private universities was permitted, and the concept of 'ultra-plan' enrolment of 'self-supporting' students was introduced. This concept is similar to that underlying the practice followed in our country of private institutions collecting higher fees than corresponding Government institutions. In 2002, the Law for Promoting Private Education was promulgated to provide a more solid legal basis for the governance of private universities. By 2008, China had 640 private universities and degree granting colleges, and their enrolment was about 20% of the total enrolment in higher education. It is interesting that private universities are called in Chinese Minban meaning 'run by the people'. The policy documents do not hesitate to proclaim that one of the objectives of reform is 'to introduce market forces to liberate education, create impetus for change, and encourage competition for improvement'. China enacted legislation to regulate foreign institutions as early as 2003. By 2008, well over 1,000 foreign academic institutions had some kind of collaborative arrangement in China, of British universities. Among those active in China were the Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Michigan. Two British universities had full-fledged branch campuses. The reform of the higher education system included the introduction of 'fee paying principle', and abandoning provision of higher education as public goods for which no user fee is charged. By 1999 all university students are required to pay fees. Public universities were explicitly asked to generate more of their operating expenses so much so in the recently released THES ranking of research universities in BRIC countries. Peking University which secured the first rank got the maximum score for industry income. It has been successful in attracting money from industry and businesses for carrying out research and development. In terms of its research impact it again performed pretty well.

It is very unlikely that India could do what developed countries and China could not, and

transform the higher education system from elite to a democratic system relying exclusively on Governments. It should also be remembered that unlike most developed countries, India has to invest heavily in the expansion and qualitative improvement of high and higher secondary schools. Equity demands that schools are accorded a higher priority in public investment. To think that it is possible for the State to finance by itself the expansion of higher and professional education on the scale required is to be detached from reality.

(to be continued)



## THE SHADOW OF THE SILENT PRINCESS (II)

**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* )

Raja Maun had lately found a friend, philosopher and guide in Nawab Amir Khan, 'the most notorious villain India ever produced' in Tod's opinion. Khan, his purse filled to the brim by Maun, pretended to be a well wisher of those of the Marwar nobility who conspired against Maun. A 'feast of friendship' was thrown by the conspirators in honour of the new entrant into their circle. Music and dance were at a high pitch when the lieutenants of the honoured guest, Khan, unleashed their hidden sabres and butchered Maun's detractors to the last man. Even their innocent valets and coach drivers were not spared.

Safe from enemies at home and rid of any urge for suicide, once again Maun's attention went over to Princess Krishna Kumari. Meanwhile the Jaipur army had gone back. But as soon as Maun's intention became known, Jaipur reiterated his claim over the princess.

The two rulers continued to send their well-chosen emissaries to the Maharana's court. In flowery and poetic language what the emissaries conveyed

A University should be a place of light, of liberty, and of learning.

- Benjamin Disraeli

was that if the Maharana chose one prince, the other would take it as his sacred duty to ravage the city of Udaipur as well as the kingdom of Mewar.

The Maharana did not know what to do. Alas, never had the virtues of a daughter - beauty, tenderness and wit that caused such a crisis for a father.

A nobleman famous for his worldly and pragmatic prudence, who had apparently come on a mere courtesy visit to the Maharana, whispered in the ruler's ears: 'Can Mewar risk the enmity of any one of the two contenders?'

'I'm afraid, no. Militarily we are weaker than any of them at the moment.'

'I thought as much,' said the visitor, his words steeped in sympathy.

'But what is the way out?' asked the Maharana. Anxiety had reduced him to his own shadow.

The visitor smiled, 'There's a way out, my lord, there is!' he assured the Maharana. Indeed, he had come equipped with a highly original solution. He confided it to the Maharana. 'This done, neither Marwar nor Jaipur should have any reason to quarrel with each other or with you,' he said displaying yet another wave of his sinister smile.

'Oh no! I can never do that,' cried out the Maharana. The nobleman nodded with understanding. 'Maharana, did I say that you have to do that? But someone else in the royal family must. You cannot entrust an ordinary assassin with the task of dispatching our beloved daughter to safety!'

The visiting nobleman was none other than the same Nawab Amir Khan. This explains Tod's comment on him quoted earlier. Raja Maun suspected that as soon as the situation became normal the Maharana would marry his daughter to Jaipur. That would be a terrible blow to Marwar's prestige. Hence this charitable advice from Amir Khan, Marwar's emissary.

But who would execute the scheme? No member of the royal family agreed to do it. The senior ladies of the palace were privately told about the necessity of the operation. They wept bitter tears.

Time was running out. Both Marwar and Jaipur were growing apprehensive of the Maharana's intention. Spies brought news of both the parties preparing for a fresh march upon the city of Udaipur.

It was a moonlit night. The princess was taking a stroll on the terrace. 'Leave me alone,' she said. Her maids retired. Suddenly she became aware of a shadow. Someone was stealthily coming closer to her, hiding behind the colonnade. The princess was surprised, for there was no possibility of any stranger popping up in that part of the palace.

She surprised the intruder, catching up with him.

'Is it Uncle Jawan?'

It was he - Jawandas, a cousin and confidant of her father.

The unsuspecting and innocent address by the princess chilled Jawandas. 'Oh my child!' he exclaimed and trembling like one possessed, sat down at her feet. A diamond-studded dagger slipped off his hand. The soothing moonlight, the tran-quillity of the terrace and the purity of the princess could not but have imparted such a loathsome irrelevance to the weapon!

The princess gazed at the glittering stuff, but betrayed no tension.

'What's the matter, Uncle? You were not here to guard me against some unknown danger, I'm sure!' she asked. She had begun to smell the sinister.

The sobbing uncle confessed to his having undertaken the task of doing away with her - for the sake of the ancient dynasty and the security of Udaipur and Mewar.

'Pardon this sinner, my daughter!' was all he could cry out before running away.

But it was not the question of any one man's sin; the atmosphere had grown sombre with the sin of cowardice. Princess Krishna Kumari had lost the zest for life, a life that must be sustained by breathing in that accursed air.

With determined steps she entered her chamber and ordered her maids to prepare a deadly concoction. They understood. Weeping, they handed over the cup

What is needed in India today is the destruction of that defeatist spirit.

- Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam

of death to her. She drank from it, but life was most reluctant to depart from that beautiful body. Three times more did the maids serve her with it. She closed her eyes after the fourth cup. Along with the rays of the morning sun spread the news of her death. Respectable ones from both Marwar and Jaipur came to check the fact. Bards do not tell us if they brought any bouquet with them. Their business was to ensure that the bone of contention between their masters was gone. A mere look and they grew sure - for no other face could combine so much beauty with that faint smile of scorn.

The sun had set when I came out of the old palace. Apart from Krishna Mahal - the apartment in which the princess poisoned herself to death - I remembered nothing though I saw so many memorials.

I sat absentmindedly brooding over the four illustrious women of Mewar - each of whose lives had left a sad commentary on her contemporary men. Rani Padmini's trouble accelerated with her husband's going out of the fort, unarmed and unprotected, to bid goodbye to Aladin Khilji. He thereby made it possible for the cunning enemy to kidnap him and demand her as the ransom; Meerabai was harassed by her male guardians; Dhatri Panna's nobility and sacrifice showed Banbir a pitiable creature.

But probably the sharpest comment was left by the silent princess - Krishna Kumari.

My chauffeur had driven me to the charming park surrounding the hilltop statue of Rana Pratap. The wooded elevation, Moti Magri, overlooked the famous lake of Udaipur with its island-like palace turned into a luxury hotel. A serene evening was setting in. This is the hill on which Maharana Udaisingh is believed to have received the inspiration for building the city in 1559.

Every climax has an anti-climax hidden in it. Before leaving the city, I bought a book, '*Udaipur Invites*,' from the airport bookstall. Published by the city Municipal Council, it contains a list of Oldest/Biggest Things. I quote: "In India, following are the oldest, earliest, most ancient, most modern, longest, largest, highest, biggest, grandest, most unique, most

versatile, fiercest, most beautiful, most spectacular and most enchanting things at Udaipur and its environs." It speaks of the Aravali hills, the most primitive geological formation, the Gambhiri river, the abode of early man, Tower of Victory, etc., and then suddenly breaks into an unsuspected ecstasy:

"Shri M. L. Sukhadia, who was a councillor of Udaipur City Corporation (1946-52), Minister (1952-54), Chief Minister of Rajasthan (1954-71), and is now Governor of Mysore (Feb. 1972), has been versatile public man of numerous virtues."

I wonder if Shri Sukhadia, whose "forward" (sic) adorns the book, ever knew what his native municipal council knew – that he belonged to the category of India's 'oldest, earliest, most ancient, grandest' things.



## **Mahatma Gandhi Martin Luther King Center for Peace and Justice in Tamil Nadu**

**Shri Devendra Oza, IAS(Retd.)**

(Former Vice Chancellor,  
Gandhigram Rural University, Tamil Nadu)

Gandhigram in Dindigul Dist of Tamil Nadu is a big complex consisting of three separate but integrated entities. Those three are

- a) The Gandhigram Trust (which is the mother institution)
- b) The Gandhigram Rural University (of which I was the Vice Chancellor 1990-1993)
- c) Gandhigram Institute for Rural Health.

These three came into existence in the mid 40s. They were founded by a husband and wife team – Dr. G. Ramachandran who was an Educationist and Dr. Smt. Soundaram Ramachandran who was a medical doctor. Dr. Ramachandran had spent many years of his life (from about 1920) at Shanthineketan and in the early thirties he joined Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha. Dr. Smt. Soundaram came from an aristocratic Brahmin family (called TVS) and joined the Gandhi Ashram around the same time as Dr. Ramachandran. They met

My humble plea to those in power is, 'Shed the VIP Syndrome – before the iron gets into your soul.'

- Fali S.Nariman 11

there and she, a child widow, took the bold step to remarry. Gandhi acted as the Priest at their wedding in the early 40s and asked them to start work in a village “which should be at least ten miles away from a main road”. This command of Gandhi they implicitly obeyed, and came to a village called Chinnalapatty which was, and is, famous for its handloom sarees. It is located about 250 miles south west of Chennai, or 50 miles north of Madurai. In those days (mid 40s) there was no road at all and Dr. Soundaram started her medical work by engaging a bullock cart, going round the surrounding villages. Dr. G. Ramachandran was both a Scholar and Educationist hailing from Kerala. He started the Gandhigram Rural Institute to train village boys **and girls** for self employment in rural areas. The focus was on Agriculture, animal husbandry, spinning and weaving, rural agro industries, etc.. For almost 30 years – up to 1975, they carried on this way, but Gandhigram Rural Institute became a University in that year, retaining the old name “Institute” Over time, a The University started teaching more and more subjects – Languages, Pure Sciences, applied Sciences, Cooperation, Rural Industries, Rural Sociology, etc. In short, it is now a modern University leading right up to Doctoral Program in several disciplines. One important faculty in the University is Gandhian Thought and Peace Studies for which it has an excellent, well deserved, reputation. It is largely a Residential University with a total strength of about 4000 students. It gets students from the north eastern states of India (Assam, etc) and some years ago we had students from several African countries.

The Gandhigram Institute for Rural Health runs a very well equipped rural hospital. As I said above, Gandhigram Trust is the Mother Institution, although the University has turned to be a much larger Institution since it is a Federal University with a large budget. Basically the Trust has stuck to large Rural Development Programs which include Water Supply and Sanitation, Khadi and Village Industries, Training of Panchayat Presidents, and training of the rural youth for self employment. The Trust also runs a very big rural school based on Mahatma Gandhi’s model of Basic Education. They also have special programmes for women.

Now I will explain to you the **background and purpose of my visit to Atlanta** (Georgia) in the US, in April 2015.

At the Gandhigram University Prof Ragupathy teaches Political Science. In May 2014, he organized a Seminar on “Lincoln, Gandhi, Martin Luther King”. Some well known scholars from South India participated. By special invitation, Sri. Subash Razdan, Chairman of the Gandhi Foundation USA also came for a day. Before Sri. Razdan left, we formed a small group, and discussed with him the possibility of creating some permanent program in the name of Martin Luther King who had visited Gandhigram in February 1959. Sri. Razdan agreed and encouraged us. I then took the responsibility of establishing the “Mahatma Gandhi -Martin Luther King Center for Peace and Justice” as an integral part of the Gandhigram Trust. Sri. Shivakumar who heads the Trust agreed to give us the basic infrastructure for our work. The Center, which we call Gandhi King Center was formally inaugurated in July 2014. Sri Razdan during his second visit to GRI in January had invited me and Prof Ragupathy to come to Atlanta to form a Network with the big King Center there. **That is what brought us both to Atlanta.**

As soon as I returned to India in early May 2015, I have drafted the following Plan of Action for the GK Center.

1. Since Gandhigram Trust does not have any large fund, we have to make some low cost programs.
2. We must include in our Plan things like running an e-journal, also asking for space in the GRI Bulletin, creation of a proper website, etc.
3. Our PoA should have two sections, namely, the first 12 months and the first 36 months.
4. We must maintain continuous contacts with Gandhi Foundation, USA through Mr. Razdan.
5. The GRI Department of Political Science should be able to give us two or three volunteers who can give three hours a week to the GK Center.
6. I think we must name the Center as originally agreed, namely, Mahatma Gandhi Martin Luther

A State divided into a small number of rich and a large number of poor will always develop a government manipulated by the rich to protect the amenities represented by their property.

- Harold Laski

King Center for Peace and Justice. The letter papers could be printed simply "Gandhi King Center" and the full name can be given just below. It is not necessary to bring in the word "DEVELOPMENT". The website should be carefully constructed. The Department of Computer Science of GRI can help us. I have also recommended the name of one Sri. Suresh who has designed the website for Anasuya Foundation for Women and Children.

7. We must first prepare a list of Gandhian Institutions in Tamil Nadu, thereafter in South India and thereafter in India. This will help us to form a NETWORK .We must write articles in English and other Indian languages announcing our PoA.
8. One or two Seminars at Gandhigram will be useful to get new views. This is important.
9. A modest amount of fund raising must start immediately.

This list is purely illustrative and we can think of more.

So far we have held several meetings with students, with academics and with rural women on issues of Peace and Justice. We are now planning three Training Camps for Peace and Justice as indicated below:

1. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 2015 – training camp at Chennai for NGOs
2. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of October, 2015 – training camp at Gandhigram Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu (for a mixed group of NGOs and senior students)
3. 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> of January, 2016 – training camp at Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu for mixed group of students, panchayats leaders and rural women. (Rev Martin Luther King came to Gandhigram on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1959)

The GK Center hopes to become one of the important "Peace and Justice NGOs in India". I suggest you can give me your opinion about what the GK Center can do. More important, what we should do over the next twelve months and how we can work together.

Those who wish to see more could visit the websites Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram Trust, etc. I am the Coordinator for the GK Center and my telephone numbers are 044-24422269 and 9444216627. Sri. Shivakumar who is heading the Gandhigram Trust in Dindigul District Tamil Nadu has the telephone number 0451 2452326 and his email id is [secggmtrust@gmail.com](mailto:secggmtrust@gmail.com).



## SHIMMERING WITH A STEADY GLOW

Dr. (Mrs.) Prema Nandakumar

Jawaharlal Nehru and India remained closely aligned to each other for several decades. Whether for Nehru or for the nation, the Past we know; the Present, we can gauge with some degree of accuracy, provided we keep ourselves somewhat neutral; the Future, ah, who knows? Hence the seminarians gathered for these two days can give a fairly plausible account of the Nehru inheritance, by taking up the different segments with diligence and enthusiasm.

There is the Past, the life of Nehru (1889-1964), his achievements. The son of Motilal Nehru, a prominent lawyer and nationalist statesman and Swaroop Rani, Nehru was a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge and the Inner Temple, where he trained to be a barrister. Upon his return to India, he enrolled at the Allahabad High Court, and took an interest in national politics, which eventually replaced his legal practice. A committed nationalist since his teenage years, Nehru became a rising figure in Indian politics during the upheavals of the 1910s. He became the prominent leader of the left-wing factions of the Indian National Congress during the 1920s, and eventually of the entire Congress, with the tacit approval of his mentor, Gandhi. As Congress President in 1929, Nehru called for complete independence from the British Raj and instigated the Congress's decisive shift towards the left. History has recorded his strivings, jail terms and role in getting the Congress enter the provincial

Franklin D. Roosevelt used the depression to change the Americans' relationship to their government, and the second world war to change Americans' relationship with the rest of the world.

- Harry Truman

elections, get powers to administer, the Quit India Movement and finally the dismemberment of the Indian nation with the British Rulers leaving the land leading to his Prime Ministership for the seventeen years following India's independence.

This brief recap of a momentous life need not make us feel guilty for it is all an open book. Nehru's India during his years as Prime Minister and even for a few decades after, was largely the creation of his ideas of socialism. The problem with Jawaharlal Nehru was that he was not a dictator. Given the immense popularity he enjoyed when he came to power in 1947, he could have assured India of never having to look back at poverty and disparity by taking harsh steps. But he was no Stalin. Industrialisation was his mantra and he turned away from his mentor, Mahatma Gandhi's ideal of Small is Beautiful. Russia had almost caught up with the United States with its huge industries. India shall follow suit. Thus was born the famous Five Year Plans concept.

An under-developed country like India, almost undeveloped when it came to heavy industries, had to be carefully nurtured as it was a fledgling democracy. Of course, one had to take infinite care with its defence and finance. But industries? Ah, Nehru was in a hurry. To him the Russian Five Year Plans seemed a disciplined genii that yielded the desired results at an early date. After all Planning was a way of giving direction to the mass and so there had been Bombay Plan, Gandhian Plan and so on. But this was to be a State funded Plan with clear cut objectives. As early as 1959 when I was a doctoral student in Andhra University, my brother, Ambirajan, published his book, A Grammar of Indian Planning. For almost one whole year the house had reverberated to discussions and arguments and exchange of ideas between my father, Prof. Srinivasa Iyengar and my brother.

Though my subject was literature, I imbibed enough of economics in those days which would help me later when I became a journalist writing for

Swarajya that was being piloted by Chakravarti Rajagopalachari. One thing troubled me then. How were they going to achieve the Five Year Plans when the First Plan itself did not adhere to the time slot of 1951 to 1956? Such plans which poured in huge resources could not waste time. And yet the first Plan was released only in 1953, eighteen months behind schedule! I was a student of literature and all I could gather from the newspapers and discussions at home was that by the end of 1956, there was going to be a terrific amount of expenditure – 2378 crores in the remaining three years: it seemed so terrific in those days. All this did not seem visionary but just Alnascharism, day-dreaming to put it plainly. Already the dreadful news about forced labour in Russia was making the rounds: what price Planning and Progress?

Soon I entered the world of journalism and my days of journalism remain memorable for the guide was no less a person than Chakravarti Rajagopalachari and these were the last years of Nehru as the Prime Minister. Days of reading books and papers carefully, marking, taking down notes to reveal the problems that had crept in with the unbridled expenditures of Planning and the resultant power-brokerage that was underlined by the powerful coinage of Rajaji – Permit-Licence-Quota Raj: heady days indeed! And this Raj seems to continue till today. Jawaharlal Nehru would not have gone for the kind of suppressions of freedom like Emergency nor would he have accepted corruption as an inevitable, global failing. With the kind of popularity he enjoyed, a free economy may have helped India better than the mire of mixed economy we have found ourselves in with the increasing failure of our Five Year Plans to show results. The reason is not far to seek. The iron hand behind the administration was absent. The red rose on the shirt's lapel was mistaken for a take-it-easy attitude. I am surprised by the accurate prescience of my brother Ambirajan when he wrote way back as 1959:

“In a sense our Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, is our greatest asset, for while he enjoys the prestige and wields the authority of a dictator, he has also the

It is the business of journalist to stand in permanent opposition to government.

- H.L.Mencken

emotional nuances and ready adaptability of a true democrat. Even as he is conscious of the possibilities of planning, he is not unwilling at the same time to acknowledge the limitations of democratic planning. But the Prime Minister is not the whole of the administration, and there is always the danger that the circumstances may turn the best asset into a dangerous liability. The Prime Minister should be an example, not a glittering façade for others to hide behind and pursue their respective ends.”

This is precisely what has happened, but that is not our subject today. It is Jawaharlal Nehru.

A seminar which is ready to discuss the relevance of Nehru for India’s future is a bold attempt, and a welcome one too. For, this would make us go back to Nehru again. Fortunately for us, he has left behind a few good books that act as guidelines on cultured living, patriotism and humanism. There is his ancestry, son of a very capable lawyer of Allahabad, Motilal Nehru. In Cambridge Nehru was a student of Science but had an interest in reading books on politics and economics. He studied law and returned home to follow his father’s footsteps as a lawyer. But he could not. He has confessed that the profession did not interest him and meanwhile he had been drawn into politics.

The story of Nehru’s work as a fighter for Indian independence under Gandhi’s leadership and his holding the Prime Minister’s post for seventeen long years is well known. Biographers apart, Nehru himself has been honest enough in writing his autobiography which was published in 1936. I came to his books quite early for when I expressed my ambition to become a writer, my father directed me to a long list of books that were a must for the seed time of an Indian journalist. All the three books of Nehru were included in this list: Nehru’s Autobiography, Glimpses of World History and The Discovery of India. I was fascinated both by the content and the style, and what seemed to me then to be a rare open-mindedness. The fascination continues and has led me to write and

speak about him, even to criticize him at length, but I have never doubted the lambent sincerity of his writing. The Autobiography, for instance. Back in the ‘thirties, how sure he was about the way the Indian National Congress was moulding India’s future under Gandhi’s direction! As this passage:

“I have no doubt whatever that Hindustani is going to be the common language of India. Indeed it is largely so today for ordinary purposes. Its progress has been hampered by foolish controversies about the script. An effort must be made to discourage the extreme tendencies and develop a middle literary language, on the lines of the spoken language in common use. With mass education this will inevitably take place.

Some people imagine that English is likely to become the lingua franca of India. That seems to me a fantastic conception, except in respect of a handful of upper-class intelligentsia. It has no relation to the problem of mass education and culture. It may be, as it is partly today, that English will become increasingly a language used for technical, scientific, and business communications, and especially for international contacts....This does not mean that English should be neglected, but, if we are to have a balanced view of the world, we must not confine ourselves to English spectacles.”

Sometimes he gets into trouble unwittingly as when he lashes out at Hindu Mahasabha as communal in Banaras Hindu University with Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Vice-Chancellor, presiding over the function. But were not Moslems communal? There is widespread criticism in the papers. Though he knows he has committed a faux pas, Nehru wriggles out by saying, “Deliberately I laid stress on the reactionary character of the Hindu communalists, for there was no point in my criticizing Moslems before a Hindu audience.”

Again, it was very obvious that Motilal Nehru who had presided over the Amritsar Congress in 1919, had wished his son to follow his footsteps and become

the Congress President sooner than later. There were other stalwarts (Subhas Chandra Bose, Vallabhbhai Patel to name a few) but Mahatma Gandhi saw to it that Nehru's name was proposed at the very last moment, taking everyone by surprise. But who dare speak out at that moment? And Nehru became the President of the Indian National Congress. What should interest us in this questionable election (which probably changed the future course of India) was how Nehru perceived it and was honest enough to put it down in words, which must have cost him quite a pang. He says that his election went unchallenged in a spirit of resignation from the members of the All-India Congress Committee:

"I have seldom felt quite so annoyed and humiliated as I did at that election. It was not that I was not sensible of the honor, for it was a great honor, and I would have rejoiced if I had been elected in the ordinary way. But I did not come to it by the main entrance or even a side entrance; I appeared suddenly by a trap door and bewildered the audience into acceptance. They put a brave face on it and, like a necessary pill, swallowed me. My pride was hurt, and I almost felt like handing back the honor. Fortunately I restrained myself from making an exhibition of myself and stole away with a heavy heart.

Probably the person who was happiest about this decision was my father. He did not wholly like my politics, but he liked me well enough, and any good thing that came my way pleased him. Often he would criticize me and speak a little curtly to me, but no person who cared to retain his good will could run me down in his presence."

This honesty is what makes the Autobiography readable and even touching at times. The Discovery of India and Glimpses of World History also charm us by the easy flow of his language, and the style was a great help to me in sculpting my own approach to journalistic writing. Indira Gandhi's foreword to the 1980 edition of the Discovery is a moving and correct appraisal of the author and his writing. She says:

"Books fascinated Jawaharlal Nehru. He sought out ideas. He was extraordinarily sensitive to literary beauty. In his writings he aimed at describing his motives and appraisals as meticulously as possible. The purpose was not self-justification or rationalization, but to show the Tightness and inevitability of the actions and events in which he was a prime participant. He was a luminous man and his writings reflected the radiance of his spirit."

One could find faults with many of Nehru's statements like the Aryan invasion of India theory, but all that is beside the point. What we must admire in him is that in spite of his western education, he remained a child of India and took proper pride in India's past so that, "Out of that distant past, which is history and the present, which is the burden of today, the future of India is gradually taking shape. We must have an intellectual understanding of these mighty processes of history. We must have even more, an emotional awareness of our past and present, in order to try to give right direction to the future."

A wider canvas is taken for Glimpses of World History which brings out the priceless habit of reading good books Nehru had cultivated from his days as a student in Cambridge. All was grist to his mill and hence when the Glimpses is read, one gets an accession of health, getting injected by the precious blood of master-spirits, as Milton described a good book. Which Indian will not be proud of his past, when it is brought so in the brush-strokes of an excellent communicator? Nehru writes:

"We are apt to be taken in a little by the glitter of Europe and forget the past. Let us remember that it is Asia that has produced great leaders of thought who have influenced the world perhaps more than any one or anything elsewhere—the great founders of the principal religions. Hinduism, the oldest of the great religions existing to-day, is of course the product of India. So also is its great sister-religion Buddhism, which now spreads all over China and Japan and Burma and Tibet and Ceylon. The religion of the Jews

One of the fundamental problems of India is a peculiarly Indian form of bad governance.

- Mark Tully

and Christianity are also Asiatic religions, as their origin was in Palestine on the west coast of Asia. Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Parsis, began in Persia, and you know that Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, was born in Mecca in Arabia. Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ, Mohammed, and Confucius and Lao-Tse, the great philosophers of China— you could fill pages with the names of the great thinkers of Asia. You could also fill pages with the names of the great men of action of Asia. And in many other ways I could show you how great and vital was this old continent of ours in the days gone by.”

And lest Indira feel disheartened by the contemporary fall of Asian countries, Nehru hastens to assure her the good days are coming, one can already see Asia awakening, “The eyes of the world are upon her, for everyone knows that Asia is going to play a great part in the future.”

Nehru went to prison nine or ten times but certainly they turned out to be the most fruitful for the world’s granary of prison literature. History may have its own judgement regarding Nehru’s life and times. But Time the great critic, has pronounced that when it came to writing he produced classics which can be glimpsed in his individual speeches as well. The Tryst with destiny” speech on the day we gained independence: it must have cost Nehru quite a lot emotionally to be speaking in such a positive tone when his sensitive soul was getting news of the Partition massacres that had already begun. With adroit care, Nehru does slip in his thoughts about what is happening as a grim reminder:

“Peace has been said to be indivisible; so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make an appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion

of free India where all her children may dwell...

It is a fateful moment for us in India, for all Asia and for the world. A new star rises, the star of freedom in the east, a new hope comes into being, a vision long cherished materialises. May the star never set and that hope never be betrayed!”

Half a century has passed by since he wrote his last word, and left his notepad with Frost’s poem ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’:

“The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.”

And yet, I return to him often, and thousands do so. Once you have entered Nehru’s world, it becomes a constant search for the personality of Nehru, an attempt to discover him, which would be the task of the scholars gathered at this seminar. To conclude with the words of my father, Professor Srinivasa Iyengar:

“... we go to these books, we linger in their company, we return to them again and again, for a very different reason – to know Jawaharlal Nehru, to watch the leaps of his agile intellect, to follow the sinuous movements of his singular sensibility, to exchange pulses with this great son of India who is verily the greatest internationalist of our time ...Wisely and widely learned in the ancients and the moderns, enjoying the companionship of great thoughts and great minds, Jawaharlal Nehru’s writings too breathe the life-giving air of culture and lightly shimmer with a steady glow.”

With this mesmerizing subject on hand, I am sure it is going to be a wonderful gathering. I wish the seminar all success.

(Inaugural Address at the UGC National Seminar on “Nehru’s India, Past, Present and Future” at the Centre for Nehru Studies, Bharatidasan University, Tiruchirapalli on 30th March, 2015.)



The study of practical politics is ultimately the practice of higher politics.

- Harold Lasswell

## How and why I adopted the Hindu religion

SISTER NIVEDITA

I am a born and bred English woman and unto the age of eighteen, I was trained and educated as English girls are. Christian religious doctrines were of course early instilled into me. I was even from my girlhood inclined to venerate all religious teachings and I devotedly worshipped the child Jesus and loved Him with my whole heart for the self-sacrifices He always willingly underwent, while I felt I could not worship Him enough for His crucifying Himself to bestow salvation on the human race. But after the age of eighteen, I began to harbour doubts as to the truth of the Christian doctrines. Many of them began to seem to me false and incompatible with truth. These doubts grew stronger and stronger and at the same time my faith in Christianity tottered more and more. For seven years I was in this wavering state of mind, very unhappy, and yet, very very eager to seek the Truth. I shunned going to Church and yet sometimes my longing to bring restfulness to my spirit impelled me to rush into Church and be absorbed in the service to feel at peace within, as I had hitherto done, and as others around me were doing. But alas! no peace, no rest was there for my troubled soul all eager to know the truth.

During the seven years of wavering it occurred to me that in the study of natural science I should surely find the truth I was seeking. So, ardently I began to study how this world was created and all things in it and I discovered that in the laws of Nature at least there was consistency, but it made the doctrines of the Christian religion seem all the more inconsistent. Just then I happened to get a life of Buddha and in it I found that here, alas, also was there a child who lived ever so many centuries before the child Christ, but whose sacrifices were no less self-abnegating than those of the other. This dear child Gautama took a strong hold on me and for three more years I plunged myself into the study of the religion of Buddha; and I became more and more convinced that the salvation he preached was decidedly more consistent with the truth than the preachings of the Christian religion.

And now came the turning point for my faith. A cousin of your great Viceroy Lord Ripon invited me to have tea with him and to meet there a great Swami from India who, he said, might perhaps help the search my soul was longing for. The Swami I met here was none other than Swami Vivekananda who afterwards became my Guru and whose teachings have given relief my doubting spirit had been longing for so long. Yet it was not during one visit or two that my doubts were dispelled. Oh no! I had several warm discussions with him and I pondered on his teachings for more than a year. Then he asked me to visit India, to see the Yogis and to study the subject in the very country of its birth, and I found, at last, a faith I could lean upon and obtain my Mukti through the uplifting of the spirit till it is merged into Ananda. Now I have told you how and why I have adopted this religion of yours. If you care to hear more, I would gladly go on.

I love India as the birth-place of the highest and best of all religions; as the country that has the grandest mountains, the Himalayas; as the place where the sublimest of mountains are located. The country where the homes are simple; where domestic happiness is most to be found; where the woman unselfishly, unobtrusively, ungrudgingly, serves the dear ones from early morn to dewy eve; where the mother and the grandmother studies, foresees and contributes to the comfort other belongings, regardless of her own happiness, and in the unselfishness raises womanhood to its highest eminence.

You, my sisters, each of whom I dearly love for being the daughter of this lovely land of India, each of you I urge to study the grand literatures of your East in preference to the literatures of the West. Your literature will uplift you. Cling to it. Cling to the simplicity and sobriety of your domestic lives. Keep its purity as it was in the ancient times and as it is still existing in your simple homes.

Do not let modern fashions and extravagances of the West and its modern english education spoil your reverential humility, your lovable domestic ties consisting in the loving forethought the elders display for the beloved ones, depending on them, and the resulting respectful deference filially and dutifully

In politics if you want anything said, ask a man; if you want anything done, ask a woman.

- Margaret Thatcher

accorded by the young to the aged. I make this appeal not to my Hindu sisters only but also to Mohammedan and other sisters of mine too. All are my sisters being the daughters of my land of adoption and where I hope to continue the work of my revered Guru Vivekananda.

### **Editor's Introduction**

*Sister Nivedita, who was born Margaret Noble, came to India inspired by Swami Vivekananda. She devoted herself to the cause of education of women and to Hinduism. On October 2, 1902, she was invited to speak to the Hindu Ladies' Social Club in Bombay. The organizers had requested her to speak on 'The Virtues of Indian Womanhood'. Sister Nivedita met the members of the audience before her talk and decided to change the subject other speech. In her own words, 'at the sight of the large assemblages of Hindu ladies, I feel it would be presumption on my part to speak to you on the 'subject because Indian womanhood is better understood and practised by each and everyone of you than by me.' She was requested, instead, to speak on what induced her to change her religion. This speech was the account other conversion to Hinduism. Many of the values about Indian womanhood that Sister Nivedita upheld are utterly unacceptable today but the speech is an unusual one as it provides a moving account of an Englishwoman's conversion to Hinduism.*

(from *Great Speeches of Modern INDIA* - Edited by Rudrangshu Mukherjee) Courtesy : Google.



## **The Guest who came Uninvited**

**Prof. Sachidananda Mohanty**

*Department of English, University of Hyderabad*

May 31, 1893. From the deck of the passenger ship, the young man looked wistfully at the receding shoreline of Bombay. Companionless, without home, he knew, he was heading towards an unknown destiny. Ahead lay a long and arduous sea voyage across dark waters dotted with ports such as Colombo, Penang, Singapore and Hong Kong. Over land, he had to cross Yokohama, Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo. From Yokohama to Vancouver lay an equally vast and forbidding

expanse of the Pacific. He would have to take another ship to reach North America.

He was armed with a ticket for the journey that the Maharaja of Khetri had bought for him. The King had also presented an attractive orange robe for the event he was eager to attend in the New World.

Providence was on his side. By the middle of July, the voyage was over, and the visitor found himself wandering in Chicago. Dazzled by the Western World, he looked around and wondered as to how he could gain entry into the cherished venue. He gazed 'mouth agape, in the world's fair, the Universal Exposition of Chicago'.

He retraced his footsteps to Boston. Luck or divine grace favored him. A chance meeting with a wealthy lady from Massachusetts in a train took him to J.H. Wright an eminent Professor at the Harvard University. From him he received a letter of invitation to participate at the gathering that brought celebrity speakers from all over the world. He traveled back to Chicago.

The young man, as some of you may have guessed by now, was none other than Swami Vivekananda; and the gathering the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. In popular folklore, Swamiji is portrayed as a figure that conquered the West by his speeches at Chicago. That is true of course. But the account and the fabled narrative glosses over the trials and tribulations that young Vivekananda went through. The odds were against him. He nearly missed the Event.

On Monday, 11 September, 1893, as the Convention opened at the World Parliament of Religions, there were many official delegates from India: Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, official representative from the Brahma Samaj, Nagarkar from Bombay who came on behalf of the Theists, Gandhi (not the Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi we know), representing the Jains, and finally Chakraborty with Annie Besant, on behalf of the theosophists.

Vivekananda had no affiliation, no insignia and no written paper.

I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth.

- Swami Vivekananda 19

Undeterred, he waited as each of the celebrities spoke, each highlighting the uniqueness and the greatness of his/her faith. For, was the gathering not meant to proclaim the supremacy of their Religion and way of life?

Vivekananda remained quiet and still. He knew he had carried with him the blessings of his Gurus Ramakrishna and Sarada Devi. In his flowing orange robe and majestic physique, he must have looked resplendent. Gazing at the crowd, he uttered the words that have become immortal in the annals of faith: 'Sisters and Brothers of America!' There was a spontaneous and thunderous applause. Two further utterances were added regarding the Universal Religion he was presenting:

'Whoever comes to me through whatever form, I reach him'

'All men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me'

There are many biographies of the life of Swami Vivekananda. We can do no better than read them again and again in our times of strain and stress. As the incident narrated above shows, they teach us the true meaning of faith, multiple approaches to God and indeed, the many ways of discovering and realizing this Truth. We also come to empathize with his ordeals, 'the God's Labor', the physical pain, the pangs of hunger and deprivation, and the homelessness that Swamiji faced relentlessly as he spread the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and established the Ramakrishna Mission Order throughout the world.

As I walked on the flower laden pathway facing the placid waters of the Great Lake of Chicago, in 2005, close to the museum that today stands at the Exhibition of Chicago and the Parliament of World Religions, my heart missed a beat and I was overtaken by emotions. In Swami Vivekananda's journey to the West, we see the working of an indomitable spirit working for the future of mankind.



## Book Review:

### *Lessons from Ruslana*

#### In Search of Transformative Thinking

AMIT DASGUPTA

(Harper Collins Publishers India, 2015 p.p.200, Rs.299/-)

Amit Dasgupta, former diplomat and ambassador, is a prolific writer and much sought after public speaker who has enriched Vizag's literary landscape during his short stay here. This book of 198 pages published by Harper Collins was released just before Dasgupta's departure from Vizag to take up Headship of the S.P. Jain School of Global Management, Mumbai. He started writing this book in 2009 in Sydney where he was India's Consul General. The motivation for writing it was the suicide of nineteen year old Russian supermodel Ruslana Korshunova in 2008 and one of her last messages: "I am so lost. Will I ever find myself?"

In this thought-provoking work Amit Dasgupta narrates his method of study of the complex human mind, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour and how they are conditioned by the interplay between reality and illusion. 'The harmonious interplay between 'us' and 'outside-us' lies, therefore, at the very heart of contentment and inner peace,' says Dasgupta. The strength of this narrative lies in the fact that profound philosophical truths are explained in simple words with the help of examples and incidents drawn from our daily lives. The wise words of philosophers, psychologists, spiritual leaders and scientists are appropriately quoted in explaining the problems that confront us and the solutions that lie in our own minds. As Sudhir Kakar said about this work, this indeed is 'a thoughtful book by a thoughtful man on some of the important ethical issues of our time.' It is possible to change our attitudes not only for our own benefit but for the larger social good. Dasgupta makes a persuasive and pragmatic plea to think 'differently' and for 'transformative thinking' that comes from 'deep within'. One is reminded of Dr.Radhakrishnan's famous reply to President Kennedy in 1963 when the latter expressed his disappointment over rain playing the

Nothing is so much to be feared as fear.

- Henry David Thoreau

spoil-sport as umbrellas had to be raised while receiving the Indian President at the airport. Said the philosopher statesman to the disappointed American President: "We cannot change the course of events, but we can change our attitude towards them." That was the second quote of Radhakrishnan to have entered President Kennedy's diary.

Adjustment to reality is said to be one of the challenges of the world we live in. Dasgupta studies the problem from different angles. One of his popular lectures in Vizag was 'Why we do, what we do?' That is a part of the theme of this fascinating study of human mind and behaviour. He begins by referring to 'mind-boxes the organized shelves in our mind.' He defines the 'mind-box as a construct we consciously accommodate and there are various reasons as to why we do so.' Quoting a Buddhist saying that we are the result of what we think, Dasgupta writes 'I am what I think'. Our behaviour, he writes, is determined by expectations we inherit and imbibe. Perceptions and values are socially formed, he adds.

The references to Steve Jobs and the Dalai Lama, in particular, convey a message very relevant for our times. How an ad commissioned by Steve Jobs resurrected Apple's philosophy and how his own *mantra* for everyone working in Apple transformed Apple's image and stature is vividly narrated by quoting Job's biographer Walter Isaacson. 'Steve Jobs co-founded Apple in his parents' garage in 1976, was ousted in 1985, returned to rescue it from near bankruptcy in 1997, and by the time he died, in October 2011, had built it into the world's most valuable company. Along the way he helped to transform seven industries: personal computing, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, retail stores, and digital publishing,' writes Isaacson. Steve Jobs motivated his employees by explaining to them the difference between working *for* a company and working *in* it. The impact of his visit to India is described by Jobs himself thus: 'Coming back to America was, for me, much more of a cultural shock than going to India. The people in the Indian countryside don't use their intellect like we do, they use their intuition instead, and their intuition is far more developed than in the rest of the world. Intuition is a very powerful thing,

more powerful than intellect, in my opinion. That's the big impact on my work.' Among the many key characteristics of Jobs that Isaacson identifies, the core defining one is his continued, almost obsessive, emphasis on 'focus'.

In the words of Dasgupta 'we need to empty the mind and shut out the incessant chatter of our mind-boxes. The need is to tune out distractions and unclutter the mind.' He quotes the Dalai Lama who calls for the 'awakening of the mind or the sifting through and discarding of what might be tricking the mind.' What the Dalai Lama and many other spiritual masters say is that clarity of vision lies entirely rooted in what we wish to seek and thus, be.

The Dalai Lama, when asked what surprised him most about humanity, had no hesitation in saying: 'Man.' "Because," said the spiritual leader, "he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices his money to recuperate his health. And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result is that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as if he never going to die, and then he dies having never really lived." Renunciation as a concept is often misunderstood as referring to rejection. Emphasizing the value of compassion the author quotes Mother Teresa who described it as 'love without any qualification and without any limits.' Mahatma Gandhi's famous words are also recalled: "*Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny.*"

What then is the solution for the puzzle of life? Why we do, what we do? The panacea lies in five key points offered at the end of the work. 'The first piece of the puzzle is recognizing the immense power the mind-boxes have over our thinking and, thus, over our behaviour. The second piece is the conscious decision the individual takes to break out of the stranglehold of the mind-boxes. When it happens, the second piece of the puzzle fits neatly with the first. Searching for the third piece begins when the individual recognizes that this aspiration must come from within. To find the fourth piece, we need to control the 'I' in us. We

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

- Winston Churchill

need to become aware that it is the heavy load we carry around, which weighs us down. We need to be conscious of the negative influence it has on us and learn to put it down. The fifth piece is the recognition of the important role that values play in our everyday life. We need to decide what our core values are. Dasgupta stresses the need for 'filling our minds with compassion.' All the pieces of the puzzle have finally come together and we know why we do what we do. Life and living have a meaning, and we have found it. Enjoy the journey,' sums up the author.

The low profile former diplomat who seldom flaunts his massive scholarship, writes in conclusion: "I have enjoyed the writing. It now remains to be seen if it makes for enjoyable reading." All those who read this 'thoughtful book' will certainly recommend it as one that must be read and widely discussed.

**A. Prasanna Kumar**



***Release of Dialogue and Democracy  
Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies  
(3rd in the series) by Shri Ashok Gajapathi Raju,  
Union Minister for Civil Aviation on May 15, 2015.  
(Newspaper report on the function)***

### **"DV role in growth of city will be long remembered"**

Union Minister for Civil Aviation P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju on Friday described former Mayor D.V. Subba Rao as a man who had "earned the love of the people" with his noble deeds.

The Minister was speaking after releasing the book, 'Dialogue and Democracy - Reflections on Ideas, Issues, and Policies', brought out by the Centre for Policy Studies (Gayatri Vidya Parishad), at the Visakhapatnam Public Library. The book, the third in the series brought out by CPS, was dedicated to the former Mayor.

Terming DV as an "odd man out in politics," Mr. Raju said that he would be remembered for long for his contribution to the growth and development of the city.

Underlining the importance of teamwork, the

Minister said that Indians were highly successful as individuals, but when it came to performance as a team, the commitment was lacking.

Calling for a change in the mindset of the people, Mr. Raju felt that elementary things such as cleanliness and sanitation should not be lost sight of in our pursuit of higher goals.

Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command Vice-Admiral Satish Soni traced the genesis of the ENC from a small Naval outpost during the World War II in 1939 to becoming the Headquarters of the ENC.

Hailing the work of the CPS, he described it as "more than a think-tank."

AU Vice-Chancellor G.S.N. Raju, District Collector N. Yuvaraj, GVP president A.S.N. Prasad, and CPS Director A. Prasanna Kumar spoke.

(Special Correspondent *The Hindu*, May 16, 2015)



## **GOD IN HUMAN BODY**

**Sri. C. Sivasankaram**

Occasionally Almighty assumes human form. Although the human and suprahuman are recognized as similar there exists distinct difference between the two. If we make minute study of the two 'apparently' there is striking difference. Inner workings of the two are diametrically opposed to each other. The human being is burdened by selfishness and eye on reward and fruit. But God in human body is free from earthly intents and selfish interests. The difference between God in human form and pure humanbeing is solely outward. Outwardly one can never perceive the difference between the two. The analogy depicting the difference is thus:- The disc recorded and the disc unrecorded look alike. However if the disc recorded is connected to the sound box there are heard many a lilting ditty. Outward similarity between an ordinary man and an extraordinary human being is not uncommon. In the supreme human being we find *purvatvam* in its totality whereas in the ordinary man we experience vacuum. Therefore when *purvatva* is recognized in a human being he is undoubtedly akin to the truth about God.

A Parliament is nothing less than a big meeting of more or less idle people.

- Walter Bagehot

Begin Sadhana (endeavour) today itself. It is astonishing to see the invaluable jewel of your life is being frittered away as if it is a valueless tinsel. If you squander your life without striving for self- realization there comes a day when you rue over the foolish way you wasted your time on hand. Recovery of lost time will never occur. One should never be forgetful of his main interest in life, if God- consciousness arises in you at the hour of your final departure it will not be of help to you. Yama the God of hell will not gloss over your misdeeds and acts ungodly. He metes out the very punishment your shortcomings deserve. He is not cruel. He acts upon the data your life lived presents. Lapses and derelictions in performance of duties thrust on man will not be forgiven. So make most of your time while the sun shines before the dusk engulfs and dawnless night enters upon.

Do everything with heart wholly dedicated to God what is being studied, heard and contemplated, offered as worship must have their direction toward God. The ultimate purpose of human effort and endeavour is merger with the principle of deity. As this happens to be the primary aim of God- conscious soul whatever deed done by him must find its way for the attainment of Godhead.

The peasant struggles hard day in and day out in his endeavour to reclaim the land lying fallow and filled

with vain weeds for raising crop on it. During the course of getting the soil under plough he fells trees minor and major, weeds out shrubs and their ilk which obstruct the healthy growth of the crop he desires to raise. Towards attainment of this end he minds no trouble, like the tolerant camel in the desert he single mindedly works hard, losing neither temper nor patience. His aim is reaping bumper crop. In the same manner, taking a leaf from the hard working peasant the seeker after the principle of Godhead too must continue his striving. Favourable fruit of this striving will be self realization. The end of man's birth is self-realization. The seeker must do even things earthly as offerings to God. Sincerity is the bedrock of all including ephemeral and eternal. If the seeker's penance is effective as it has been supported by robust faith in God and confidence in himself he will be amply rewarded. Once things done in the name of God with mind oriented to Him bear required reward sin never dare enter in such persons rigmarole-praises of God moving on the tongue. Believing relentlessly in that the world is supreme lord's manifestation we will be beneficiaries of God's mercy. Chanting of God's praise if associated with stern practice will yield the desired result. In the carrying out of our duty to God we should not lose our heart even when trying circumstances confront us.



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### वाइजाग स्टील के उत्पाद पोर्टफोलियो

उत्पाद	ग्रेड
ब्लूमस	माइल्ड स्टील/निम्न, मध्यम एवं उच्च कार्बन स्टील, फॉर्जिंग गुणवत्ता
बिलेट्स	माइल्ड स्टील/निम्न, मध्यम एवं उच्च कार्बन, स्प्रिंग स्टील, उच्च एम एन एवं फॉर्जिंग गुणवत्ता स्टील
राउण्ड्स	माइल्ड स्टील/निम्न, मध्यम कार्बन, चमकीली छड़ एवं फॉर्जिंग गुणवत्ता
रिबार्स	थर्मो मैकेनिकली ट्रीटेड (TMT) छड़ें अथवा विभिन्न प्राप्ति क्षमताएँ
स्ट्रक्चरल्स	स्ट्रक्चरल स्टील एवं उच्च टेंसाइल स्टील
वायर रॉड्स	निम्न कार्बन, वायर ड्राइंग, चमकीली छड़, टायर-बीड एवं अन्य कार्बन ग्रेड्स
विशेष स्टील	केस हार्डनिंग स्टील, कोल्ड हेडिंग स्टील, इलेक्ट्रोड, स्प्रिंग, बीयरिंग तथा फ्री कटिंग स्टील

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