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CHANGING GLOBAL SCENARIO *testing times for India*

“I identify the descent of the West as the most important development of the twentieth century,” wrote Harvard historian Niall Ferguson in his book *The War of the World*. Describing the Second World War as ‘the greatest man-made catastrophe of all time’, Ferguson cautioned a decade ago that “We shall avoid another century of conflict only if we understand the forces that caused the last one – the dark forces that conjure up ethnic conflict and imperial rivalry out of economic crisis, and in doing so negate our common humanity. They are forces that stir within us still.”

Are those dreaded ‘dark forces’ at work now turning the world upside down? Countries big and small seem to have been bitten by the bug of ethnic nationalism which *The Economist* of November 19-25, 2016 has described as ‘dangerous nationalism’ of which Donald Trump is the ‘latest recruit’. Trump’s astonishing victory in the American presidential election is a numbing disaster for a large number of people and the influential print and electronic media of the world’s most powerful nation. The U.S. will take quite some time to recover from the traumatic effects of the triumph of Trump. For the western world it was another stunning blow after Brexit had demonstrated how the anger and frustration of the ‘silent majority’ could topple a confident government led by a competent prime minister. Marine Le Pen, President of National Front (FN) of France warned “Today the United States, tomorrow France.” Greatly worried about ‘Islamification of France’ Le Pen predicts ‘Frexit’. Adding chill to the new cold war winds Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed the election of Trump and declared that “Russia is ready and wants to restore fully fledged relations with the U.S.” America’s woes seem to be growing with Russia and China challenging American interest in Europe

and the Pacific. “The United States has not faced a more diverse and complex array of crises since the end of the Second World War,” wrote Henry Kissinger last year, as quoted in *Foreign Affairs* (Sept-Oct 2016).

Power, it is said, is a modifier of positions. Donald Trump has already toned down his rhetoric. He may come up with his own doctrine for the U.S. to outwit the expansionism of Putin. The White House can convert hawks into doves and make presidents forget pre-poll utterances and promises.

India also figures in the list of countries propagating the ‘dangerous nationalism’. This is in sharp contrast to India’s reputation of the past. From Jawaharlal Nehru who pioneered India’s role as a peace maker in world affairs through non-alignment to Narendra Modi, all prime ministers have made sincere efforts and significant contribution for the promotion of peace. Domestic political stability and pluralistic culture lent credibility to India’s foreign policy even in the most difficult times. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is India’s undisputed leader, enjoying advantages which none of his predecessors had during the last three decades. His frequent foreign tours confirm his commitment to India’s foreign policy goal of ‘good relations with all countries and close relations with neighbours’ enunciated decades ago. The prime minister must, however, ensure that India’s secular values and pluralistic culture are not corroded by domestic policies. India’s rank is low not only on the WDI but also in the survey presented annually by Freedom House. The tag of dangerous nationalism being attached to India is unfortunate. A nation that was respected for its adherence to ideals of peace and non-alignment during the dreadful decades of cold war politics knows well how to keep away from ‘the dangerous wave of ethnic nationalism’ spreading across the world. The prime minister should rise to the occasion and lead from the front in effecting the necessary course correction.

The Editor

As a major power we can and must play a role in helping shape the global order.

Shashi Tharoor 1

THE DELUSIONAL WORLD OF PAKISTAN'S DEEP STATE; LESSONS FOR INDIA?

Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd)
Former Chief of Naval Staff,
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The raids across the J&K Line of Control by our Special Forces, on 29th September, were a response (to the Uri terror strike) totally out of character with India's traditional stance of 'strategic restraint'. This putative strategy had served as a fig-leaf for inaction over many decades, and the long-suffering Indian citizen had become reconciled to the idea that the succession of attacks on Indian soil going well beyond Mumbai 2008 (26/11) would certainly not end with Pathankot 2015 or Uri 2016.

But what of the future; are we to treat these 'surgical strikes' as a 'one time' occurrence or the precursor of a new 'Modi Doctrine'? One is reluctant to hazard an answer, but a closer look into the Pakistani mind-set is certainly warranted.

On the 16th anniversary of the Battle of Kargil, in 2015, erstwhile President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf had declared on an Urdu TV channel that, his army had India "by the throat" in June 1999. Adding crudeness to braggadocio, he went on to announce, "We are not Christians that we will turn the other cheek. Muslims know how to take an eye for an eye." We could dismiss these as the idle boasts of a failed former general trying to revive his equally dismal political career. However, they are indicators of a certain, persistent, frame of mind in our western neighbourhood, which bears closer examination.

Re-wind to 4th July 1999; we find Pak Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif arriving by a commercial PIA flight at Dulles International. Sharif was not on a state visit; in fact he had not received even an informal invitation. According to Bruce Riedel, senior adviser to the President on South Asia, Bill Clinton had already struck a hard bargain on the phone: "...come only if you are ready to withdraw from Kargil, without

any conditions" he had told Sharif bluntly two days earlier.

But swallowing his pride, Nawaz Sharif arrived in Washington, and begged for Clinton's help to pull his nation back from the precipice that his foolish and reckless army chief had brought it to. The meeting in Blair House saw some tough-talk by the Americans and Sharif humbly signing on the dotted line. By now, the Indian army and IAF were in full cry; with the Pak Northern Light Infantry in ignominious retreat from Kargil heights.

So much for Musharraf's boast about holding India "by the throat."

This "near war" (it fails to meet the classical definition of "war" which requires at least 1000 battlefield casualties) contains many lessons and much to reflect upon; for both nations. On the Indian side a post-mortem was conducted soon after the conflict by the Kargil Review Committee (KRC) whose findings dwelt at length on the intelligence and other failures which led to our forces being caught by total surprise. The KRC, in turn, led to the constitution of a Group of Ministers, which recommended important changes in the field of national security and higher defence organization.

Pakistan, on the other hand, has always had difficulty learning from its past military failures. But the process of introspection over Kargil seems to have been particularly problematic, because of national schizophrenia engendered by the deceit and duplicity of its own military. Proof of this is to be found in Musharraf's continuing efforts to fool his compatriots.

While examining contemporary issues, India's security elite often fail to view the continuum of Indo-Pakistan relationship through a grand-historical prism. Perhaps that is the reason we find ourselves being repeatedly surprised by Pakistani actions; militarily by the 1947, 1965, and 1999 invasions and politically by the Punjab and Kashmir insurrections. All this while, we have been subjected to regular doses of provocative violence; either through border firings or terrorist attacks.

The genius of America's constitution is to limit the harm one president can do.

The Economist

A major error on the part of India's national security establishment was to coin, the euphemism 'cross-border terrorism' to describe, what were clearly, 'acts of war' by Pakistan. This has repeatedly come back to haunt the nation. Training and arming fighters on one's territory and then launching them across national boundaries to wreak death and destruction, certainly constitutes 'acts of war'.

Following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, President Bush had declared that the terrorists' actions were acts of war and gave US the right to act in self defence under the UN Charter. While dubbing these acts 'cross-border terrorism' may have given India an excuse for exercising 'strategic restraint', we compounded this folly by describing the perpetrators as 'non-state actors'; providing a cast-iron alibi for Pakistan, which went a step further and claimed that they were Kashmiri 'freedom fighters'!

A comprehensive insight into the Pakistani mind-set is necessary to decipher the basis of Pakistan's perception of an everlasting "existential threat" from India, and its visceral hostility towards us. Certain delusions have been assiduously fostered by the Pakistani 'deep state', that unholy nexus of the army's General Headquarters (GHQ) and the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) Directorate, which guides the destiny of this benighted country. Most Pakistanis are, consequently, of the belief that the outcome of partition was neither fair nor just, and that that the Indian status quo in Kashmir remains illegitimate.

American political-scientist Christine Fair has spent many years studying the Pak army's psyche and what engenders such implacable hostility against India. In her recent book titled, 'Fighting to the End; the Pakistan Army's Way of War', she provides an interesting insight: "For the Pakistan Army, simply retaining the ability to challenge India constitutes victory... In this way Pakistan has managed to snatch a, re-defined, sense of victory from each of its defeats in numerous conflicts with India."

Fair describes Pakistan as a "revisionist or anti-status quo" state, on account of its desire to grab

the whole of Kashmir, "...even though Kashmir never belonged to Pakistan in any legal sense." Facing a prosperous and militarily more powerful India, most Pakistanis feel helpless and frustrated at their inability to redress this huge asymmetry and according to Fair, "Pakistan has sought to resist, or possibly retard, India's inevitable ascendance. Despite the fact that India decisively defeated Pakistan in the 1971 war, with half its territory and population lost... Pakistan continues to view itself as India's peer competitor...In fact Musharraf boldly declared that India must accept Pakistan as an equal as pre-condition for peace."

The invasion of Kashmir in 1947 by rapacious tribal lashkars, and the 1965 military adventure were both abortive, and failed to achieve Pakistani objectives. In 1971, the crass stupidity and myopia of Pakistani politicians, coupled with the brutal crackdown, by a savage and uncivilized army, on their Bengali compatriots, resulted in a mass exodus from East Pakistan and provided India a handle for intervention.

The consequent bifurcation of their country convinced the mistrustful Pakistanis that India remained implacably opposed to the creation of their homeland. Thirteen years later, the Indian army's occupation of the Siachin glacier confirmed, in their minds, that India would seek to exploit every vulnerability. Their military planners, desperately, sought chinks in India's armour; and thought they had found one in Kargil.

A common thread running through Indo-Pak conflicts is the Pakistani army's underestimation of India's responses to their transgressions, and overestimation of international sympathy for their own actions. This flawed logic is incomprehensible to Indians who have seen periodic re-plays of Pakistani belligerence with consistently disastrous consequences.

In 1947, Pakistani planners did not anticipate the resolute Indian military response to the marauding tribal in J&K. In 1965, the Pakistan military based their complete planning on the optimistic premise that the Kashmiri population would support the

You should become a 'composer' and not a 'computer'.

Pakistani invaders, and were surprised by the Indian riposte across the international boundary. In 1999 Musharraf deluded himself that the intrusions in Kargil heights were an appropriate quid pro quo for the Indian artillery shelling of Neelum Valley in PoK, and the occupation of Siachin glacier.

For many years Pakistan's military adventures were predicated on the assumption that Pakistani soldier was vastly superior to his Indian counterpart. This mind-set is illustrated by a directive from President Ayub Khan to C-in-C Pakistan army in August 1965: "As a general rule, Hindu morale would not stand for more than a couple of hard blows delivered at the right time and place. Such opportunities should, therefore, be sought and exploited." Apart from the fact that Indians of all religions fought with equal gallantry and patriotism, this does not provide a sufficient rationale for the botched Pakistani planning over six decades. There is another factor too.

For military professionals, the sequence of miscalculations is a clear indication of the Pakistan army's cavalier approach towards operational planning. The 1947 assault on J&K was apparently planned by Maj. Gen. Akbar Khan of the Pakistan army, who wrote out a paper titled "Armed Revolt in Kashmir" to be executed by a serving Colonel who led the "Azad Kashmir" forces. In 1965, the operational planning was confined to a handful of individuals, as President Ayub Khan established a secret "Kashmir Cell", headed by Aziz Ahmed, a career diplomat, to plan an insurgency in Kashmir.

Planning for the Kargil operation seems to have been confined to a handful of very senior officers (including the Chief of General Staff and the COAS); hardly the right lot for the kind of meticulous and detailed staff-work required to evolve a watertight operational plan of such complexity.

Strangely enough, each successive military failure seems to have reinforced the Pakistan army's sense of grievance that either the Indians have "played unfair" by not reacting according to their script, or that they have been "betrayed" by their politicians. This provides further confirmation of the Pak army's ostrich-like attitude to operational planning.

In Musharraf's case, he fervently hoped that once the Northern Light Infantry occupied the Kargil heights overlooking National Highway 1-A, the combination of surprise, terrain, and a "denial and deception" strategy would paralyse India and allow him a brilliant military fait accompli. His subsequent complaint about India's "over-reaction" that led to the Pakistani rout is a clear indicator of dismal staff-work and misplaced overconfidence.

The four unsuccessful wars launched by Pakistan against India have shown its General-Staff to be an intellectually mediocre bunch of officers. Their disastrous military adventures have, invariably, been underpinned by misplaced optimism and brash overconfidence, rather than by sound assessment and professional planning. Given the fiery religious fundamentalism that has permeated the Pakistani armed forces, and the ethnic and sectarian polarization taking place in the nation, it is unnerving to think that the custody and de facto control of the growing Pak nuclear arsenal remains in their unreliable hands.

Pervez Musharraf's, Commando-style thinking and the myths he is trying to nurture are possibly representative of the Pakistani 'deep state's' mind-set. This is an entity that dreads the possibility of peace on the sub-continent and elimination of the Indian bugbear, because this will downgrade its importance, squeeze funding and may even deprive it of its *raison d'être*.

The fiction of an 'existential threat' and anti-Indian hysteria will be kept alive by the Pakistani 'deep state' until such time that (a) an elected civilian government gathers the courage to stop the army meddling in governance and (b) the US shuts the funding that provides oxygen to this venal and duplicitous organization and (c) China realizes that by its unstinted support to Pakistan, it is nurturing a viper in its bosom.

However, none of the above is likely, and one can only hope that India's new 'tit for tat' approach would have a sobering effect on Pakistani hotheads. The question that we really need to ask is: why does Pakistan persist in its endeavours to change the status

quo in the sub-continent when it clearly lacks the tools and resources to take on a country and people five times its size?

There is an argument in Realist Theory which says that States not only should muster the resources needed to protect their interests, but must also trim their interests to fit their resources. In this context, one cannot help recommending to our western neighbours, John Kenneth Galbraith's stark but pragmatic "North American solution"- which envisages the sacrifice of Kashmir as an emotional and military rallying point for Pakistanis and the acceptance of a subsidiary role in South Asia, commensurate with Pakistan's size, population and economic strength. Only then might this troubled sub-continent see some peace and stability.

(Centre for Policy Studies conveys its grateful thanks to Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd))

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Promoting Equal Opportunity in an Unequal Society : What an Equal Opportunity Commission can Do and How?

Prof. (Dr.) N.R. Madhava Menon

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Progressive societies everywhere have been moving from inequality and exclusion towards equality and inclusion with varying degrees of success. If in the beginning the practice was slavery and segregation, in later times, it assumed discrimination and assimilation. With equality becoming the norm, democratic societies under rule of law became defensive by adopting "reasonable classification" to justify unequal treatment or discrimination considered fair and reasonable. "Formal equality"

prevails instead of "substantive equality" in many jurisdictions which subscribe to human rights and social justice.

The Indian Constitution adopted a four-fold approach in dealing with Inequality and Exclusion. Firstly, it abolished certain abominable practices like untouchability and bonded labour and made them punishable as crimes. Secondly, it sanctioned reservation or quota system in education, employment and political participation for exploited groups by way of compensatory discrimination. Thirdly, it prohibited discriminatory practices and allowed individual citizens to move the Constitutional Courts for writ remedies to restore equality. Finally, the Constitution mandated the State to take positive action for achieving substantive equality amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations with a view to minimize inequalities in income, status, facilities and opportunities.

Both the Parliament and State Legislatures have enacted a series of laws in the last six decades in favour of discriminated sections and allocated resources to make a difference in their lives towards equality. However, recent findings of expert committees have shown that what is done is too little in a society long divided and exploited on the basis of caste, gender, religion and language. It is in this context, a recommendation for setting up an Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) was made on behalf of "minorities" and a Draft Legislation was proposed by an expert committee. What can an EOC do in the given circumstances to improve the lot of the excluded and discriminated sections of people in Indian society and how can it contribute to the social transformation envisaged by the Constitution.

While the judiciary can give remedy to individuals unfairly discriminated and the legislature can compensate past discrimination through affirmative action measures, there are not enough mechanisms to address denial of equal opportunities to groups and communities as proposed by Article 38(2) of the Directive Principles. What is expected here is positive action by the State to provide a

Peace and high standard of living are incompatible.

level playing field or parity of conditions to groups unequally situated because of no fault of theirs with a view to achieve substantive equality or equality in outcomes. Ordinarily, the political processes in a democracy should be able to move in this direction; but a variety of historical and socio-economic factors limit the scope of the political process to advance this goal. The minority rights and the Directives of Part IV of the Constitution are, in fact, an acknowledgement of the imbalance in society and are intended to make up for this deficit. However, if the Government does not give due importance to the Directives in its legislative agenda (as it happened to the right to free and compulsory elementary education), the level playing field will remain an illusion and inequalities and exclusion will follow which may not necessarily fall under the description of unfair discrimination under Articles 15 and 16. The data assembled by the Sachar Committee vis-à-vis Muslims do illustrate the point. This is the situation which an Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) can well address in the given circumstances.

The EOC can potentially be a powerful body to intervene against group discrimination in policy planning, resources allocation and programme implementation not only in the public sector but also in the private sector involved in the delivery of public services. Commanding empirical evidence on group discrimination or data on differential impact of governance perpetuating inequalities, the EOC can seek administrative correction from Government and, in appropriate cases, legislation to create a level playing field. Because equal opportunity is part of the right to equality and Article 38(2) involves positive action by the State to ensure equal opportunities for all sections, EOC can legitimately act as a watchdog outside the executive branch to advise, monitor, evaluate and intervene in the entire range of governance at the local, State and Central levels. As EOC acts on the basis of hard evidence on denial of equal opportunity (to identified groups) in different sectors (like education, employment, housing, sanitation, nutrition, health etc.) it can serve the cause of all “deprived groups” belonging to majority or minority communities. When EOC becomes an

effective watchdog on behalf of “deprived groups”, affirmative action including reservation will become less and less relevant to seek equality.

Evidence-based advocacy on deprivation or denial of opportunities is the real strength of EOC for which it has to have a competent data gathering and data processing agency. It is in this regard EOC is different from other Commissions including the Women’s Commission, the Minorities Commission and the Human Rights Commission. Because its actions are evidence-based, EOC can seek even judicial remedies through public interest litigation on behalf of deprived groups. If one Commission at the national level is inadequate for the purpose, it is possible to set up four or more regional level Commissions with concurrent jurisdiction. The Census, the NSS and other official as well as non-official data gathering systems can be invoked by the Commission apart from its own investigating systems. Action can be triggered by individual complaints so long as it concerns group discrimination.

On the basis of its findings, EOC would have the power to undertake any of the following actions :

Direct the departments and organizations to modify their employment or management practices in reasonable time with a view to correct discriminatory treatment including denial of opportunities to identified groups. Whenever required EOC can intervene and mediate the change to the advantage of the deprived groups.

Advise Governments to take fresh legislative initiatives or policy changes to remedy the distortions and unequal impact of policies.

Make public the data-based status of equality of deprived sections in respect of different sectors of the economy and society as was done by the Sachar Committee and demand appropriate action from all concerned.

Evolve Code of Best Practices to advance equality in different sectors and recommend its progressive adoption both in public and private sector.

If I were asked who was the greatest poet produced by India, including the greatest of the ancient Indians, Kalidasa, I would certainly reply : ‘Tagore’ , but not ‘ Tagore, alas!’

Nirad C.Chaudhuri

Departments and organizations not responding adequately can be black-listed or denied privileges. Further, wherever warranted civil and criminal proceedings may be initiated against them.

In short, EOC need not function as a toothless tiger as some other Commissions are alleged to be, the real strength being its capacity to command credible evidence on denial of equal opportunities in given sectors of governance or public services.

A question often asked is how the Commission, which is not a court, would enforce its orders to provide relief to the aggrieved groups. Firstly, it may recommend to the appropriate Government executive action appropriate in the circumstances, which ordinarily no Government that is committed to equality and equity will resent. Secondly, it may publish the inquiry report together with the EOC's comments to the Government concerned and the action taken or not taken by the Government, thereby putting democratic pressure for compliance by both the parties so directed. In the case of corporate establishments, it can be suicidal not to obey the orders of such a Commission monitoring equal opportunity practices.

Ordinarily, the orders and directives of the EOC to a party will be such that the party can implement and claim to conform to Constitutional obligations without much difficulty. To be an Equal Opportunity Employer is a good public relations exercise. The EOC would propose a phased plan of action and assist the party to implement it within a stipulated period.

The EOC would also be authorized to order compensation to the aggrieved party. Again, the Commission can employ incentives and disincentives to make parties comply its orders. For this purpose, an Equal Opportunity Practices Code can be evolved and announced for each sector persuading parties to adopt it in public interest and in fulfillment of their corporate social responsibility. It would be recommended that private enterprises still failing to comply with this Code be blacklisted or denied privileges by the Government. In selected cases, the EOC could play the role of a mediator or conciliator

and work out a settlement for compliance. In extreme cases, the EOC could approach the Courts or tribunals with a petition seeking remedy on behalf of the aggrieved party.

Yes, the concept of "deprived groups" is not coinciding with caste and religious identities and is more descriptive of social and economic factors. This is because the emphasis is on equality of status and of opportunity (the Preambular promise) for all sections whatever be the source of such deprivation. All the criteria to determine deprivation cannot be pre-determined as they vary from place to place, sector to sector and time to time. It is therefore left to the EOC to decide taking advantage of the criteria already declared as constitutionally permissible and judicially acceptable. The report of the Expert Group on EOC have defined the "deprived group" as follows:

"Deprived Group means a group of persons who because of social, economic, educational or other disadvantages or other impediments as may be prescribed by the EOC are unable to access existing opportunities, entitlements or rights available under law, schemes or programmes of the State or private sector establishments".

One can argue that the equality situation in the country would have been different had there been an EOC functioning right from the beginning of the Republic. Dr. Ambedkar warned the Constituent Assembly in the following terms: "We are entering a life of contradictions on the adoption of the Constitution. While in politics we have achieved equality by giving one man one vote and one vote one value, in social and economic life, we continue to have inequality". He asked, "How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions?" and warned that by allowing such inequality, we would be putting our political democracy in peril. Is not the rise and spread of Maoist and Naxalite violence related to the denial of equal opportunities to our tribal brothers and sisters? Should not the fruits of freedom and development be equally available to the backward areas and backward sections of people as promised by the Constitution? What is the mechanism now available for monitoring the efficient

and timely implementation of the Directive Principles on the welfare of weaker sections by the appropriate levels of Government? Is the judicial oversight adequate to redress grievances of groups denied of equal opportunities? It is imperative to address these questions, which explain the need and urgency for establishing an Equal Opportunity Commission, and for comparing it with that exists now in this regard.

Country after country, afflicted with the problems of inequality and discrimination based on race, caste, religion and gender, have set up EOCs in preference to all other Commissions including the Human Rights Commission. In fact, in the UK, the Human Rights Commission has been merged with the EOC. The experience in those countries suggests that the very presence of an EOC has acted as a deterrent to discriminatory practices in both society and government, and has helped in the development of a level playing field for all groups, specially the deprived sections, thereby enabling them to compete with dignity, and avail of all opportunities for development according to one's aptitudes, abilities and potential.

(Centre for Policy Studies conveys its grateful thanks to Prof. Madhava Menon.)

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THE JUDICIARY AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION

Late Shri Nani Palkhivala

JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW are perhaps two of the noblest concepts evolved by the wit of man. The Romans regarded justice as a goddess, impartial, impassive and unshaken. Ancient Indian culture pays a similar tribute to dispensers of justice. But in our own times there has been a precipitate diminution of admiration and a sharp erosion of the values which ought to actuate the administration of justice.

Doubtless, the law is imperfect, and it would be imperfect even if it were made by a committee of archangels. This is understandable. But according to an eminent writer, the court is no longer looked upon as a cathedral but as a casino: if you are dissatisfied

with the trial court's judgement, you double the stakes and go to the Division Bench; if you are dissatisfied with the Division Bench judgement, you treble the stakes and go to the Supreme Court.

A number of observations have been made down the centuries about the legal profession, and few of them have been complimentary. G.K. Chesterton, talking of lawyers, said:

'They fight by shuffling papers,
They have dark, dead alien eyes;
And they look at our love and our laughter
As a tired man looks at flies.'

I asked Sir Noshirwan Engineer, the advocate general of India in 1947, how he viewed, in the light of his decades of experience, the legal system of administration of justice. His answer was, 'I am inclined to the view that it is better to have Kazijustice, where one wise man decides what he thinks is right and that is the end of it.'

The reasons for these somewhat disparaging remarks are not far to seek. If some people in our country believe that the difficulties we face in our administration of justice are due to British influence, I would emphatically dissent from such a view. I do not think the British should be blamed for the ailments afflicting our legal system today.

It has become the fashion to talk of Oxbridge (Oxford and Cambridge) as if they were responsible for undesirable influences. Let us not forget that some of the eminent judges of the Nagpur and Bombay High Courts, including Justice M.C. Chagla and Justice Hidayatullah to whom well-deserved tributes have been paid, were the products of Oxford or Cambridge. If we did not have the rules of British jurisprudence, it would be impossible to administer justice in this country. Our history goes back 5,000 years. More than a dozen civilizations waxed and waned in different parts of India over these fifty centuries. Which system could we have possibly adopted as the national system? We fight over everything. We fight on the issue whether towns on the boundary of one state should not belong to

The brotherhood of man is a tired cliché; the neighbourhood of ocean is a refreshing new idea.

K. Natwar Singh

another state. What would become of the system of administering justice if we left it to be dealt with by historical antecedents without the influence of any foreign system of administering the law? Further, the rule of law, human rights, equality of all citizens, are not traditionally Indian concepts. If untouchability still continues in practice in our country, if sati continues to occur, and thousands flock to the spot where sati has been performed, we do have something to learn from other parts of the world.

I would like to give an example of Nigeria to illustrate what happens when the Western concept of the rule of law does not prevail. An Air-India plane was recently detained by the Nigerian forces. Air-India went to the High Court of Nigeria and asked for the release of the plane. The High Court decided that the aircraft should be released forthwith. But defying the court's order the Government of Nigeria would not release the plane, even after that government's appeal to the higher court was dismissed. Some days later, the Nigerian Government issued an ordinance under which jurisdiction in the case was transferred to the Military Court which refused to release the plane. This is what happens when the rule of law does not prevail; and let us not pretend that the rule of law is a concept which can be regarded as a part of the Indian psyche.

Please recall the events during the Emergency. Our fundamental right to life and liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution was suspended. Our High Courts, let it be said to their great credit, ordered certain detenees to be set free—those who had been arrested under a mistake of identity, or as a result of private vendetta, or at the whim and fancy of the executive, or without being heard at all. Our Parliament, to supersede the judicial decisions, passed an extraordinary law to the effect that 'no citizen shall be entitled to liberty on the ground of natural law, common law or rules of natural justice'. This is typical of what can happen in India when the Western concept of common law, natural law and rules of natural justice are treated as a pernicious outside influence! Another law passed by Parliament was to the effect that 'no police officer shall be permitted (as distinct from compelled) to disclose to

a court of law the grounds on which an individual is detained', and that if a man was released by a court because the detention was held to be unsustainable, he could be re-arrested on the same grounds after he left the courtroom. Such are the laws passed by the Indian Parliament when it is unrestrained by the Western concepts embodied in our Constitution.

It is interesting to read what has been said about the present position of the judiciary and the legal profession in Britain and the United States of America. If there is anything critical to be said, it is better to say it in respect of other countries, rather than our own. The reason is that we Indians do not mind other countries being censured, but we do strongly object to ourselves being criticized.

In Britain, Lord Benson, chairman of the Royal Commission on Legal Services, told the International Commission of Jurists that the public was showing unwillingness to accept high costs, inefficiency, prolixity, incompetence and delay in the legal system: and that the traditional attitude of the legal profession is that 'all change is bad, specially change for the better.'

Lord Devlin has pointed to the obsolescence of the British system of meting out justice, mainly on two counts—the adversary system which wastes time and effort, and the system of taking oral evidence.

Lord Gifford, QC, said last year that British judges were ignorant and biased, the bias being the product of their education and social position. In his book, *Where's the Justice?*, Lord Gifford observes that a male-dominated judiciary is unable to understand the problems of women. Personally, I think the remark was justified in view of some of the amazingly lenient sentences handed down in England in cases of rape where the rapist was let off lightly on the ground that his career would otherwise be ruined, while the judge thought nothing of the girl's career being ruined as a result of the cruel and wicked crime.

Lord Hailsham, the former Lord Chancellor, has expressed himself strongly about the heavy load of work. He even suggested that judges might have to undergo training and part-time job experience, as

A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.

George Bernard Shaw

is necessary in the case of physicians, surgeons and engineers.

Let me come to the United States. In that country the legal profession is perhaps more commercialized than in any other country of the world, though India comes a close second. In America you can work on a contingency fee basis—i.e., a fee depending upon the monetary redress awarded by the court to your client. You will recall how US lawyers rushed to Bhopal to make money out of the miseries of the poor victims of the Union Carbide tragedy. Ambulance-chasing and acting as scavengers is thought to be perfectly in order. Small wonder that citizens of the States of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania demanded in the eighteenth century that the legal profession be abolished.

Judge Learned Hand said, 'As a litigant, I should dread a lawsuit beyond almost anything else, short of sickness and death.'

Justice Douglas said that 40 per cent of American lawyers were incompetent. Justice Warren Burger, the former chief justice of the US Supreme Court, said that 50 per cent of American lawyers were incompetent (disagreeing with Justice Douglas' estimate of 40 per cent). He believed that America was approaching a disaster area, not just a problem. He further stressed that the American judicial system 'may literally break down before the end of this century'. He told the American Bar Association:

'The harsh truth is that we may be on our way to a society overrun by hordes of lawyers, hungry as locusts, and brigades of judges in numbers never before contemplated. The notion—that ordinary people want black-robed judges, well-dressed lawyers and fine-panelled courtrooms as the setting to resolve their disputes, is not correct. People with legal problems, like people with pain, want relief and they want it as quickly and inexpensively as possible.'

A former deputy attorney-general of the United States has warned that the 'legal process, because of its unbridled growth, has become a cancer which threatens the vitality of our forms of capitalism and democracy.' In the United States, \$30 billion is spent

annually on lawyers, which comes to about 1.5 per cent of its Gross National Product. In India, thanks to our complicated laws, the percentage spent on lawyers may also well be 1.5 per cent of our Gross National Product.

There are three grave shortcomings of the present system of administering justice.

First, the commercialization of the legal profession. I do not think the legal profession was ever so commercialized as it is today. When I started my practice in 1946 on the Original Side of the Bombay High Court, if a counsel made a factual statement to the judge, it was implicitly believed to be true. You seldom heard of an affidavit, filed on behalf of the government or any public authority, which did not contain the whole truth. But now all that has totally changed. Counsel often make statements at the Bar which are factually incorrect, and affidavits are often filed even on behalf of public authorities, which do not state the truth. Look at what was going on before the Lentin Commission, and how witness after witness perjured himself. Yet there was no surge of public disgust and outrage. Unfortunately, we accept perjury as a fact of Indian life. The worst danger is not that even persons in high public office perjure themselves. The worst danger lies in public acceptance of such degradation of national character. As a man who loves India not wisely but too well, I ask the question— why can we not have standards as high as those of mature democracies in the world? After all, our ancient culture is the noblest ever known.

Secondly, administration of justice suffers from the intractable complexity of modern society. Life has become far more complex, and corruption and all-round lowering of standards are far more pronounced than ever before.

Thirdly, while all the time we emphasize our rights, we do not lay a corresponding stress on our responsibilities. Part IVA of the Constitution, which deals with 'Fundamental Duties', has been a dead letter from the moment it was enacted by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976.

If I were asked to mention the greatest drawback of the administration of justice in India

If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed.

Mark Twain

today, I would say that it is delay. There are inordinate delays in the disposal of cases. We, as a nation, have some fine qualities, but a sense of value of time is not one of them. Perhaps there are historical reasons for our relaxed attitude to time. Ancient India had evolved the concepts of eternity and infinity. So what do thirty years, wasted in a litigation, matter against the backdrop of eternity? Further, we believe in reincarnation. What does it matter if you waste this life? You will have many more lives in which to make good.

I am not aware of any country in the world where litigation goes on for as long a period as in India. Our cases drag over a length of time which makes eternity intelligible. The law may or may not be an ass, but in India it is certainly a snail and our cases proceed at a pace which would be regarded as unduly slow in a community of snails. Justice has to be blind but I see no reason why it should also be lame: here it just hobbles along, barely able to walk.

A charitable trust, with which I am connected, filed a suit to recover possession of its building. It took thirty years to get the final decision of the Supreme Court. Even after that, the trust has been unable to recover full possession, because there are obstructionists' notices in the Small Causes Court (in respect of some floors) which would take another decade to dispose of. If litigation were to be included in the next Olympics, India would be certain of winning at least one gold medal!

The fault is mainly of the legal profession. We ask for adjournments on the most flimsy grounds. If the judge does not readily grant adjournments, he becomes highly unpopular. I think it is the duty of the legal profession to make sure that it cooperates with the judiciary in ensuring that justice is administered speedily and expeditiously. It is the one duty of which we are totally oblivious.

Sometimes judges are asked to intervene on humanitarian grounds, e.g., in the case of encroachments on public property. Courts of law are there to enforce the law. But in matters relating to encroachments and similar cases the courts are expected to prevent enforcement of the law. Lawyers

who would not allow homeless persons to stay with them in their own houses or build a hutment next to the wall of their own building, act as great champions of the downtrodden in such disputes. Double standards have become shamelessly common in the legal profession.

We take cases in mind-boggling numbers to the court of law. Small wonders that we have colossal arrears in courts. Do we not have to blame ourselves as members of the legal profession for this state of affairs? Lawyers are entitled to earn their living, but not at such an unbearable cost to society.

“What are the ways in which the problem can be even partially tackled?”

First, we must educate our lawyers better. We produce ethical illiterates in our law college, who have no notion of what public good is. In India the number of advocates today is about three lakhs. We have the second highest number of lawyers in the world, the first being the United States which has seven lakh legal practitioners. These large numbers result in a lot of lawyer-stimulated litigation in the two countries. By contrast, the number of practising lawyers in Japan is less than 14,000. About 30,000 students appear for law examinations in Japan and only about 475 succeed, i.e., less than 2 per cent. So stiff is the examination they have to go through! No wonder that in Japan very few cases are filed and disputes are mostly settled out of court.

Secondly, we must improve the quality of public administration which is today at an all-time low. In the last forty-five years India was perhaps never governed so badly as it is governed today. It has been said that in the state of Bihar nothing moves except the river Ganges!

Nothing happens to the tax officer who makes an assessment which no reasonable man would ever dream of making. Few persons know about the administrative scheme announced during the tenure of Mr V.P. Singh as the finance minister. Under the administrative incentive scheme, if a show-cause notice is issued by an officer asking the citizen why a certain amount should not be collected from him

in addition to the amount of tax admitted to be due, the officer and his colleagues are entitled to a reward which may go up to 5 per cent of the amount specified in the show-cause notice, irrespective of the final result of the case. To illustrate: a show-cause notice was served on ITC alleging that a sum of Rs 806 crore was due from that company by way of excise during a period of five years in which the company's total profit was Rs 70 crore. On the alleged excise dues of Rs 806 crore, the officers' reward could go up to Rs 40 crore.

Thirdly, the citizenry must be better educated to evolve a higher standard of public character. Ancient Indian culture must be taught in schools and colleges. The synergic effect of the different cultures, the amalgam of which is called Indian culture, is bound to prove of great ethical value. Will Durant said that just as continuity of memory is necessary for the sanity of an individual, continuity of the nation's traditions and culture is necessary for the sanity of the nation.

(From Nani Palkhivala - Selected Writings edited by L.M.Singhvi, M.R. Pai and S. Ramakrishnan)

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India's n-deal with Japan should not be victim of domestic politics

Cmde (Retd.) **C Uday Bhaskar**

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Two significant developments have taken place in the nuclear domain that will have a long-term bearing on India's overall nuclear profile over the next decade. It will be instructive to see how these issues will be mediated in the current Indian political cauldron.

The developments relate to Japan and China-but differently. The major punctuation relates to Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluding a long-awaited civil nuclear agreement with Japan (November 11), though there are some tangled areas of interpretation on certain key clauses. The second pertains to India's bid to become a member of the NSG (Nuclear Suppliers Group) and China's steadfast opposition to this aspiration. Beijing reiterated that,

as regards the NSG meeting held in Vienna (when Modi was in Tokyo), being an NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) signatory is essential before considering membership.

This, in reality is a veto - since India cannot sign the NPT as a nuclear-weapon state - and renouncing nuclear weapon capability like many such states (including Japan) is not an option.

The conclusion of the NCA (Nuclear Cooperation Agreement) in Tokyo by Modi with his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe is particularly significant - both for its symbolism and its substantive implications. Japan has a very deep sensitivity as regards the nuclear issue and was firmly opposed to India's nuclear tests of May 1998. However, the rapprochement between India and the USA in 2008, epitomised by the conclusion of the civilian nuclear agreement with Washington, and the exceptional status accorded to India by the NSG in September 2008 encouraged Tokyo to review its opposition to India's nuclear aspirations.

This progressive shift was enabled by the personal determination of Abe - and in many ways his resolve could be analogous to that of President George Bush who invested his personal political capital in squaring the nuclear nettle with India in the tumultuous 2005-08 period.

When India was negotiating with the US in that tense phase - one central determinant was India's 'right' to conduct another nuclear test - should its supreme national interest warrant such a step. It was evident to domain experts that there was no way that even a determined Bush could have pushed through any template that did not satisfy his critics - in the US Congress and among nuclear 'ayatollahs' (opposed to any modus vivendi with India).

Domestic political compulsions pushed the deal with the USA to the VERY brink and finally some deft legislation (the Hyde Act in the US Congress) and adroit drafting consensus by the two principal negotiators allowed the civil nuclear agreement to be realized - but it literally came down to the wire. At the very last stage, more assurances were sought from

If men are so wicked with religion, what would they be without it?

Benjamin Franklin

India that it would continue its 'restraint' and then External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee made a formal statement to this effect on September 5, 2008. Two days later, on September 7, India received the NSG waiver it had sought and a long period of nuclear isolation and intimidation ended.

Venial political opposition to then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh within his own party - and to the UPA initiative by the BJP and the Left parties - almost torpedoed what can be described as the MOST significant national interest enabler in the nuclear domain. It ended India's ostracism. The Bush-Singh resolve ensured the according of exceptional status to India by the NSG despite the fact that India was and is a non-signatory to the NPT, and that it had acquired nuclear weapons.

At the time, many experts applauded India for its tenacity and negotiating acumen and an Israeli interlocutor was puzzled. I recall the phrase : "Israel would give its right arm for such a deal and yet your opposition parties are opposing this. Why ?"

Regrettably, a zero-sum template has permeated Indian political conduct even on matters pertaining to national security and this is most evident in the nuclear domain. The Congress could not accept that a BJP-led government with Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the helm had taken the decision to cross the nuclear rubicon. Acquiring nuclear weapons was castigated by the Congress - when in the opposition - despite the fact that Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao had in 1995 considered carrying out a nuclear test.

The tables were turned when the Congress formed the UPA government in 2004 and the BJP-led opposition keel-hauled Manmohan Singh for entering into a civilian nuclear agreement with the USA in July 2005. Any number of hurdles - imagined and exaggerated - were introduced into the domestic political cauldron and the negotiators and their political principals on both sides must be commended for staying the course til late 2008.

But the deeper political understanding was that India would remain committed to its self-imposed moratorium as regards nuclear testing - first outlined

by Vajpayee in 1998. This unwavering fidelity to nuclear restraint accorded India an intangible virtue index and this came to the fore in the Kargil war of 1999 with Pakistan. India was acknowledged as a responsible and virtuous nuclear power.

Today, the agreement with Japan is caught in an opaque zone of interpretative nuance - about nuclear testing. Stock phrases like sovereign right being trampled are being heard - and suggestions made that India is conceding more to Japan in 2016 than it had to the USA in 2008. This kind of sophistry is undesirable and imprudent.

India's exceptional status in the nuclear domain is predicated on its restraint and adherence to the self-imposed moratorium that goes back to 1998. Yes, India can claim the 'right' to test - should an exigency of grave import necessitate such a step. But this step will automatically impose certain costs on India - and objective cost-benefit analysis will be called for.

In the interim, the political discourse in India should not distort the orientation adopted by previous governments and seek any kind of Faustian bargain for short-term political dividends. India should not renege on solemn commitments made by clever sleight of word to assuage domestic sentiment. The agreement with Japan should be upheld and interpreted in a manner that will burnish India's virtue cum rectitude index.

(Courtesy: *Business Standard*)

A Drive With A Dialogue On Dreams

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*)

The General, as he sat down near me in the van, asked, 'Why did you not take me with you to the cave of Vyasa? I'm angry with you and have resolved not to talk to you.'

I was sorry for his anger but happy for his pious resolution, though sceptical about its execution.

At least two thirds of our miseries spring from human stupidity, human malice and those great motivators and justifiers of stupidity and malice, idealism, dogmatism and proselytizing zeal on behalf of religious or political ideals.

Aldous Huxley

'Would you believe? You shook my faith. I feel that Shankara's Illusionism is losing its grip on me,' he regretted.

'The grip, obviously, was not very tight.'

He did not respond to my comment and went on, 'Indeed, I wonder, if all is illusion, how do I know that Shankara was real? I'm afraid I'll go crazy.'

He gushed out the dialectics of his confusion for half an hour. 'Let me tell you a story,' I said, to help him make light of his anguish: A gentleman handed over meat weighing a kilogram to his cook and instructed him in the recipe to prepare a delicious dish. The cook, while tasting his own success, gobbled up the entire stuff himself.

"Where is the meat?" asked his master sitting down for lunch.

"Your cat ate it up!" explained the cook.

'The master immediately took out the weighing scale and weighed his cat. It was one kilo.

"If this is the meat, where is my cat? If this is the cat, where is my meat?" wondered the gentleman.'

The General seemed to relish the story, but expected annotation.

'The predicament of many seekers is no different from that of the gentleman in the story. If the whole manifested universe is illusion, how can we, being a part of it, ever know Reality? If we can hit upon Reality, how can the universe be illusion?'

The General grew grave and pressed his forehead. 'I will probably return home a man different from the one who had left home,' he warned himself.

'We take birth again and again to accumulate different experiences. If in one life you can gain experience enough equivalent to another lifetime's, you condense your personal evolution and reduce the number of births you were normally required to go through!'

If he did not say anything, it was because his eyelids were heavy with sleep.

Badarikashram was fading from my sight, but

was growing more and more picturesque and inspiring in my thoughts and my vision. I was trying to visualise the quiet and tranquil primeval Yogis, Nara and Narayana, lost in their trance, and Indra despatching the nymphs - Menaka, Rambha, Tilottama, Sukeshini, Manorama, Maheswari, Pushpagandha, Pramodvara, Ghritachi, Chandraprabha, Sona, Vidyunmala, Ambujakshi and Kanchanmala - to disturb their meditation.

As the hills vibrated to their rhythmic steps and wondrous music, Narayana opened his eyes - it is difficult to say what he felt - annoyance or pity. He slapped his own thigh and the vibrations assumed the loveliest form imaginable - that of Urvasi - so named because she emerged out of Narayana's *Uru* or thigh.

The nymphs were ashamed realising how absurd it was on their part to dream of disturbing with their beauty the poise of one who could create at will a beauty to surpass all the beauties. As they retreated, Urvasi, too, followed them at his creator's bidding.

Mythology tells us of a time when the celestial beings freely mixed with the earthly creatures. The nymphs were ageless and ever young. Urvasi fell in love with a mortal, King Pururavas, and lived with him on a certain condition. But one fateful night the gods tricked the king into violating the condition, obliging Urvasi to return to her heavenly abode. The distraught Pururavas roaming in what appeared to be an endless search at last had a glimpse of her at Kurukshetra and implored her to come back, but that was beyond her. No mortal could consort an immortal unless first transformed into an immortal himself.

Urvasi disappeared, casting a piteous look at Pururavas, the latter's arms still stretched in a vain hope - and there ends the story as narrated by the *Devi Bhagavatam*.

But the popular mind had refused to accept the tragedy. Folklore creates its own versions of myths. According to the *Kathasaritsagara*, Pururavas comes to Badarikashram and devotes himself to a long penance. A compromise is struck between the laws governing the human world and those governing the

When a man's stomach is full it makes no difference whether he is rich or poor.

Euripides

heavens. Once every year Pururavas could be united with Urvasi.

I woke up from my reverie with a jolt just as the General did from his snooze, for his head, in one of its major swings, dashed against my right cheek.

'Sorry, Sorry!' he mumbled, squeezing my hand and articulating his protest against the phenomenon of sleep: 'What a pity that half of our lives should be claimed by useless sleep!'

He looked at me. 'Is that not a pity?' he demanded response.

I don't know.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean, are you so sure of passing your wakeful state in a meaningful way that sleep should be branded useless?'

'A good question. But, after all, we continue gathering experience when awake. Experiences help us to progress. The process stops when we sleep!'

'Must you eat all the time? Shouldn't you allow time for your food to get digested? It is in your sleep that your experiences get assimilated. Besides, our consciousness continues to be active and continues gaining experience even when we are asleep -sometimes at ranges higher than the wakeful state's.'

'What's the proof?'

'Must a so-called objective proof be necessarily more dependable than your direct subjective knowledge?'

The general's fingers went over to his moustache - an unmistakable sign of his appreciating my observation.

'Do you dream?' he asked me.

'Who does not!'

'Do dreams have any sense?'

'A lot. But that is a vast field of knowledge and I'm acquainted only with its fringe. But I can assure you that your dream can be a great help to you - provided you are receptive to its message.'

'For example?'

'Once again a story for you: A villager carried his ailing son, his only child, to a physician. "Cure my son, please!" tearfully he appealed to the physician.

'The patient's condition was grave. But the physician did his best. The father sat near the boy all day and night, repeating his appeal to the physician from time to time.

The boy's condition grew worse. The father wept ceaselessly and implored the physician to save the child in whatever way possible.

'Towards the end of the night, after many anxious hours, the man had fallen asleep for a moment when his son passed away. The physician feared that the father, on coming to realise his loss, would shriek madly or swoon away. But, surprisingly, the man looked composed, thanked the physician for all he had done and got busy with the funeral rites.

"My friend," the physician asked the man while bidding him goodbye, "You were so upset over your son's illness and were so anxious to save him. How is it that you did not show any of matching sorrow when he died? "

"Dear Sir," replied the farmer, "I dreamt during my momentary sleep that I was a wealthy man with five excellent sons. As I woke up, naturally I lost all of them at once. Tell me, if I did not cry over my five lost sons, why should I cry over the sixth?"

'Thus did a lightning dream helped a mature consciousness to tide over a tragedy.'

'All is dream!' remarked the General.

'What you said may be the gross message of the story. But it may mean different to someone else, may help one look upon the occurrences in life - good or bad - with a certain equanimity even without treating them as illusions 'Look here, my friend,' the General suddenly straightened up, 'my daughter's residence is not far from Rishikesh. We will be her guest for a night. I will reward you with a bouquet of my dreams. I don't mind passing a sleepless night and hope you wouldn't mind either.'

Nehru I regard as one of the few really great people I have ever met—worlds above Gandhi in the strength of character and insight.

I kept quiet. We had reached Rudraprayag. I had already chalked out a different plan. I had included Kedarnath in my itinerary. I informed our guide of my decision.

‘But, Sir, I must see that you reach Rishikesh! How can you break away suddenly? And how would you go?’

Don’t you worry. I’ll board any bus carrying pilgrims. And here is a message for your boss - declaring my voluntary retirement from your kind care, which in any case I’ll miss.’ I wrote out the letter.

Within minutes I found a bus bound for Gourikund and bade goodbye to a smiling though slightly uncertain guide.

But remorse took me over. The General, innocent like a child and so kind hearted, may feel betrayed. I rushed out of the bus and tried to locate him. But he had gone off to a friend’s. I left for him another note of apology with our guide.

(Three years later, through a chance meeting with our guide, I learnt about the General dying peacefully in his sleep at his daughter’s, sometime ago.)

Never had I experienced a more carefree driver. Narrow was the way with deep gorges and slopes to the left, without any wall. Even then the driver let the left side wheels fly several inches off the ground while negotiating the sudden turns. It was evening when I reached Gourikund and checked into the Garhwal Tourism’s guesthouse on a hillock overlooking the hot spring, Gourikund. After a brief meandering through the small, sleepy bazaar, I plunged into the Kund.

The sky appeared to have come closer and looked so different! As if each of its stars was in mysterious communication with one of the Himalayan peaks.

“PV upheld values, says former media adviser”

“He never claimed credit for fiscal reforms: P.V.R.K Prasad”

(Newspaper report on D.Ch.Tirupathi Raju Memorial Lecture delivered by Shri P.V.R.K.Prasad, former Visakhapatnam Port Trust Chairman and former Media Adviser to late Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao organized by Centre for Policy Studies on November 10, 2016)

Former Prime Minister PV. Narasimha Rao went by constitutional provisions and put public interest always ahead without projecting himself for any of his achievements, former Media Advisor to him P.V.R.K. Prasad has said.

Delivering the D.Ch. Tirupathi Raju memorial lecture, organised by the Centre for Policy Studies, on “Values in public life- PV. Narasimha Rao’s role in up-holding them,” here on Thursday, he dealt with the major crises during his Prime Ministership. He never did any favours fully aware that the leaders shunned him during his political hibernation and he did not owe the Prime Minister post to them.

In the Babri Masjid demolition, he went by the assurance given by the then Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh before the apex court and BJP leaders A.B. Vajpayee and L.K. Advani and did not impose the President’s rule respecting the Governor’s recommendation. If anyone had to be blamed it was the Chief Minister and the Supreme Court-appointed Commission specifically sent to protect the structure, Mr. Prasad said.

In the Hawala issue, only when the Supreme Court said it would appoint a commission, Mr. Rao had reluctantly granted permission for CBI inquiry, aware of the electoral damage to Congress, as the CBI and the Revenue Secretary said no case could be made.

Mr. Rao had appointed a Telugu officer, K. Vijaya Rama Rao, as Director going by merit but told Mr. Prasad later that he had paid the price for going by his advice.

Man is by nature a city beast.

Aristotle

He never claimed credit for economic reforms as it would lead to intra-party rivalries and attack against him. He quietly dismantled the licence-permit system.

After coming out clean in four corruption cases, Mr. Rao asked him (Mr. Prasad) to sell his house in Hyderabad to clear legal fee for junior lawyers.

In spite of knowing he would lose his land, he brought in land reforms in the State.

Mr. Prasad said he was never allowed by Mr. Rao to project the latter as media advisor and “shared many important thoughts using me as a sounding board and letting it known that I was his close confidante.”

He recalled the positive attitude of Tirupathi Raju and association with several projects in the city, particularly the Nehru Place (port stadium).

CPS Director A. Prasanna Kumar said in spite of being an outstanding Prime Minister, PV. Narasimha Rao was most misunderstood and least admired. Tirupathi Raju was an embodiment of virtues of Visakhapatnam.

Tirupathi Raju’s son D.S. Varma announced a contribution of Rs.1 lakh to Visakhapatnam Public Library on behalf of D.Ch. Tirupathi Raju Memorial Trust. Perala Balamurali welcomed.

(*The Hindu*, November 11, 2016)

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THE PLACE OF SARASWATI IN ONE’S LIFE

Dr. (Mrs.) Prema Nandakumar

Is there any moment in our life which is not touched by Saraswati? Our life is a constant movement even when we seem to be sitting still. And Saraswati indicates this constant movement that marks human life on earth. This was noted by the rishis of old in the Vedas, which form the Book of Beginnings for us. She is the inspiration that brings out what is lying dormant in us just as the waters of a stream help the earth bring out its riches as greenery. This twin-

faceted significance of Saraswati as a flowing stream and as inspiration is touched upon by Vasishta in his ‘Saraswati Suktham’ in the Rig Veda.

“May auspicious Saraswati grant us

Auspicious gifts;

She moves forward faultlessly.

Gives us food. Recognise us.

Allow Vasishta to worship you

As Jamadagni had done before.”

Commenting on many of the Vedic hymns invoking Saraswati, Sri Aurobindo comments on the term, mayobhuvah, used for the three goddesses of inspiration, Ila, Mahi and Saraswati:

“The epithet means, I think, they in whom there is no false movement with its evil consequences, durtam, no stumbling into pitfalls of sin and error.”

One thing is clear. All these thoughts of an active Saraswati-inspiration have been guiding the Indians unconsciously since the Vedic times. We have always remembered the other terms used for Saraswati such as Vak and Ila in our everyday life. There was a time when we had a flourishing Saraswati-valley civilization. The Salya Parva in Mahabharata evokes magnificently those days of material prosperity, intellectual brilliance and spiritual attainments. The Parva describes Balarama going on a pilgrimage to the various centres of Vedic studies on the banks of the river. Though the river is now gone under, the memory of Saraswati as moving our everyday life continues to be relevant till today.

It is amazing, almost overwhelming to gaze at the endurance of the term, Saraswati. In fact, the Saraswat Brahmins of Karnataka trace their descent from the Vedic rishis of the Saraswati valley of whom one was Rishi Saraswata, who was the very best among Vedic scholars in that region. Turn where you will in Indian homes, you are confronted by either the image or painting of Saraswati or her other form, Sarada. Till the 19th century, the traditional writers always paid homage to Saraswati before proceeding with their writing. The Saraswati-inspired literature in Indian languages is immense. The Mahabharata

We are like moths plunging into the flaming fire, knowing that it will burn us, knowing that the senses only burn us, that they only enhance desire.

Swami Vivekananda (17)

opens each of its Parvas with an invocation to Saraswati:

Naarayanam namaskruthya
naram chaiva narottamam

Deveem Sarasvateem Vyaasam
thatho jayamudheerayeth

It is then obvious that Saraswati rules our days from so many angles: it could be a prayer, an idea, a painting, a book. But is it all merely an external decoration or is there a constant interaction between the idea and one's own acts?

The truth of this interaction came to me early in life. It was Navaratri time in Visakhapatnam. I was a little girl then. A hawker of clay dolls came to our porch and my mother bought a Saraswati for six annas. She placed the image in my hands, saying, "pray to her and you will get good education." I gazed and gazed at the innocent-looking Saraswati standing with a veena in her hand, near a swan. The love and reverence instilled in me at that moment by my mother has remained with me till today. The image has also presided over my work-table for more than sixty years, wherever I have had to go and make a home. Daily I bow in reverence not only to Saraswati and the memory of my parents who taught me the Mahasaraswati Yoga but also to the memory of the unknown hawker who made me an eternally young child of the Saraswati universe.

So what is this Mahasaraswati Yoga? It is simply a constant attempt to get behind the veil of this phenomenal world and gain the Rita, the Rasa of Existence, the Ananda of creation. When my mother bought the image of Saraswati for me she did not stop asking me to study. I had to do my best. And Saraswati was always there to do the rest! That is the place of Saraswati in our life. As the Vedas describe her in this act of being the guardian who encourages us to do our best, she is 'chodayitri sunrutaanaam', she helps to rouse the good people.

Ah, yes. Saraswati helps us gather knowledge. But is that enough? Indeed, is it not dangerous just to accumulate knowledge? This question had nagged T.S.Eliot and he recorded them in The Rock:

"Endless invention, endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;
Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of The Word.
All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance,
All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,
But nearness to death no nearer to God.
Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in
information?"

However, India had taken care that any acquisition of knowledge must be accompanied by a proper self-purification and a certain non-attachment. The so-called ritualism in one's daily life is to repeatedly dip into the consciousness of the individual the need to live a dharmic life. Knowledge has to be accompanied by a moral outlook. For man's mind is a weak instrument. It can be tempted easily to do the wrong thing! The daily rituals act as a strong fortress to guard the individual from himself! From the opening prayer to Mother Earth to forgive him for treading upon her as he gets up from his bed, the individual proceeds by stages through the day offering prayers, whether he is plucking flowers or durba grass, eating his food, or prepares to retire. When he offers sandhya prayers in the morning and in the evening, it is not only to Saraswati but also to her other images:

Sandhya-yai Namah

Savitri-yai Namah

Gayatri-yai Namah

Saraswati-yai Namah

The sandhya ritual itself is addressed to the sun as the main deity. The sun, of course, is the unfailing witness (day and night) to the deeds and thoughts of men. I have often wondered that if crimes against humanity (the Belsen Camp that exterminated thousands of Jews, the Vietnam horror, the dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, among others) would ever have taken place if man had realized the power behind the Sandhya worship that hails the Eternal Witness.

Desire is never satiated by enjoyment; enjoyment only increases desire as butter fed into fire
increases the fire.

Giving importance to Saraswati as a deity does immense good for she is the symbol of all our aspirations for goodness and greatness. At the same time, we should realize that there are vast significations behind this symbol. Subramania Bharati (1882-1921), the great Tamil poet has lightly stressed this point in his famous poem, "Vellai tamarai poovil iruppal":

"She resides in the white lotus,
And rests in the sound the lute makes.
She stays in the heart of poets
Who write verses of heady sweetness;
She illumines from within the Vedas
Which men recite, searching for Truth;
She is the inner significance of words
Uttered by pure sages full of compassion."

Too often we stop with the beautification of the external form. In a sense it is the triumph of art to find so many Saraswati images around us beginning with Raja Ravi Varma's goddess seated on a rock, playing the lute, watched by a peacock. Saraswati on the lotus; the goddess riding a swan. Ever so many!

But remember, Bharati seems to say: the Saraswati idea is much vaster than that. She is everywhere, in all that we see or do or think! The white lotus itself is not Saraswati but the beauty you see in a lotus, the serried ranks of white petals overlapping creating a symmetrical outline design, the heavenly calm that it exudes as it floats on the water held up by its stalk, the Ananda it signifies, that is Saraswati. When it reminds you to go through life as the water drop on a lotus leaf, padma patra ivaambasaa, that is Goddess Saraswati speaking to you.

This first verse of Bharati's famous and significant poem says further that Saraswati rests in the sound that the lute makes. The lute is not Saraswati's seat, but it is the sound made by the lutanist as he plucks the strings which is the resting place of the Goddess of Learning. How marvelously true! And unless the lutanist be a good musician,

how can he offer a comfortable seat for the goddess? A musician must ever aspire towards perfection so that he can prepare a gorgeous and safe and restful throne for the Divine. So too must man strive to reach perfection in all that he does. Thus Mahasaraswati becomes a leader in one's everyday life as he struggles to reach the state of excellence.

Further on, Bharati assures us that if we are on a search to find Saraswati, she is very much present "in the hearts of poets who write verses of heady sweetness". No harshness, no word-play, nor any self-deception! The true poet catches the sparklets of ritam, the Delight of Existence and imprisons them in syllabic rhythm and creates thus a permanent abode for Saraswati. In India, do we lack in such dazzling thrones for Saraswati? The Vedas, the Itihasas, the Upanishads, Kalidasa, and a whole range of them in Sanskrit and twenty other national languages? One can imagine how close Saraswati is to us, all the time.

Saraswati is even in what may be dismissed as mere chanting. In India, recitation is considered holy. It was by recitation that the scriptures were kept alive for all future time. This was no mere repetition but a soul-involved recitation. Recitation is, in its right format, an integral activity, combining karma, jnana and bhakti yogas. While the poets in the earlier lines were in search of Beauty, these reciters are in search of Truth. Their heart gets illumined with spiritual wisdom by Saraswati. To those of us who want to install Saraswati triumphantly in our home, Sri Aurobindo shows the way:

"To be able to receive the Divine Power and let it act through you in the things of the outward life, there are three necessary conditions:

1. Quietude, equality - not to be disturbed by anything that happens, to keep the mind still and firm, seeing the play of forces, but itself tranquil.
2. Absolute faith - faith that what is for the best will happen, but also that if one can make oneself a true instrument, the fruit will be that which one's will guided by the Divine Light sees as the thing to be done -kartavyam karma.

Behind every great fortune there is a crime.

Balzac

3. Receptivity – the power to receive the Divine Force and to feel its presence and the presence of the mother in it and allow it to work, guiding one’s sight and will and action, -- but plasticity to the Divine force alone without bringing in any foreign element, -- the eventual result is sure.”

Finally, what is the point of raising a niche for Saraswati and celebrating her presence as a photograph or a marble image, if the heart is a desert where even no grass of love peeps into the world? Our benefactors are the great sages whose heart overflowed with compassion towards fellow human beings. Where there is generosity of understanding, a generosity that gives and comforts, there is Saraswati as a symbol of this tapasya. Bharati’s poem makes it abundantly clear that prayer is important for the compassionate Supreme helps us in no uncertain terms; but one’s striving is as important as one’s prayers. As the Upanishad says, tapah prabhaavad deva prasaadascha! If one’s tapasya is focused and sincere (and a good householder can be as great a tapasvin as one who renounces the world and goes away to the forest), the Divine’s answering grace is certain to enfold the aspirant in no uncertain terms.

Another great son of India, Sri Aurobindo, has given us a clear idea about the methodology of invoking Saraswati’s presence in our lives. He has analysed many of the Vedic hymns to Saraswati in his intuitive interpretation in *‘On the Veda’*. Though we generally associate Saraswati with studies and the fine arts, she cannot be limited to this areas alone. Mahasaraswati is an all-pervading presence and our life moves within this presence all the time. Sri Aurobindo links the idea to the universal power of Shakti who is realized as many forms, to indicate her many facets. There is Mahalakshmi, Maheshwari, Mahakali and ever so many powers. One does not exclude another, and each represents a particular facet of the Divine Mother. As he points out, Mahasaraswati is “equipped with her (the Divine Mother’s) close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work and quiet and exact perfection in all things.” Certainly, this power is the most important for us to lead an organized life.

Taking cognizance of all the significances poured into the Saraswati-ideal for the progress of our inner life and organization of our external life, Sri Aurobindo says:

“Mahasaraswati is the Mother’s Power of Work, and her spirit of perfection and order.”

Indeed, Mahasaraswati is the perfect objective in this world of human affairs which swears by the slogan of Management by Objectives. One’s body and mind have to be tuned together in our strivings to become an ideal worker. At the same time, our achievements should not turn against us by our own folly, by our incapacity to control the powerful energy that flows from the focused, perfect worker. A mere chip of stone to annihilate space and usher in the internet era with its mind-boggling dances on the computer screen! Will not man grow heady with pride, when so much power is placed in his hands? Will he not dance in glee : I have done it! Man is Supreme!

It was such a mind-set that overwhelmed man when he detonated the atom in Los Alamos in 1945. Ah, soon we were to realize that man had gained power but not the grace that should accompany it when wielding this tremendous authority over the forces of nature. The next we heard of the Man of Power was when he dropped the atom bombs to destroy the beautiful and heavily-populated towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Power without grace is the direct path to hell.

Meditating upon Mahasaraswati helps us to gain self-control over ourselves and learn to build and not destroy. River, goddess, ideal: She is there to help us gain Power with Compassion. We proceed with the work on our hand aiming at perfection, whether it is putting a rangoli on the doorstep or growing vegetables in a small garden patch or intently looking at the test-tube in the laboratory as a research is in progress. We get on with our work calmly with an unwavering faith in Mahasaraswati. I shall do my best: You will do the rest! Such is the life-sustaining assurance given by Sri Aurobindo. The Mother is here, Mahasaraswati is here!

Corruption is like a ball of snow. Once it’s set rolling it must increase.

Charles Colton

“A mother to our wants, a friend in our difficulties, a persistent and tranquil counselor and mentor, chasing away with her radiant smile the clouds of gloom and fretfulness and depression, reminding always of the ever-present help, pointing to the eternal sunshine, she is firm, quiet and persevering in the deep and continuous urge that drives us towards the integrality of the higher nature.”

* * * *

BOOK REVIEW

DEMOCRATS AND DISSENTERS RAMACHANDRA GUHA

Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016, pp.317, Rs.699/-

‘This is the fourth in a series of books exploring the creation and subsequent career of the Republic of India,’ writes Ramachandra Guha in the preface to the book under review, a collection of sixteen essays (including an unpublished lecture summary) written at different periods of time and published in well known journals and newspapers. As a historian, social scientist and cricketologist Ramachandra Guha has earned worldwide reputation as a multi-faceted public intellectual, with his incisive writings and comments on public issues on the small screen. Gifted with razor-sharp intellect Guha is a relentless explorer of past history and a keen analyst of contemporary issues and events. The quotation of Benedict Anderson on the first page of the book eloquently conveys Guha’s commitment to democratic values as much as the preface that follows. The book of 317 pages consists of two parts with the first eight essays coming under the section ‘Politics and Society’ and the other eight under ‘Ideologies and Intellectuals.’

The first chapter titled ‘The Long Life and Lingering Death of the Indian National Congress’ is almost an epitaph on the hundred and thirty year old party that ruled independent India for about forty years. Guha, however, hopes that ‘its legacy which started (roughly) in 1920 when the Congress party and its leaders united a diverse and divided country, will remain.’ It would, perhaps, have been appropriate

if the scholar-historian traced the roots of the legacy dating back to 1885 when the Indian National Congress was born and nurtured by Englishmen, Hindus, Parsis and Muslims. The seeds of pluralistic culture were sown around that time when divided India was being aroused by the stirring call of Vivekananda for national reawakening and Aurobindo’s ‘vision of humanity’. The period between the exit of Vivekananda in 1902 and the advent of Gandhi in 1920 was described by Will Durant as ‘but one step from here to Gandhi’.

‘Debating democracy - Jayaprakash Narayan versus Nehru’, the third chapter of this book narrates their work for strengthening the architecture of Indian democracy, the former without ever holding a public office and the latter exercising power from the birth of democracy for seventeen years till his death in 1964. “Their intelligence was complemented and reinforced by their sincerity” writes Guha, lauding them for setting a tradition of healthy political debate in Parliament and legislatures. Though that tradition has declined the Indian democrat, says Guha, lives in hope. The unwavering Nehruvian adores Jawaharlal Nehru but abhors the politics of Nehru dynasty beginning with his daughter Indira Gandhi whose sons and later the daughter-in-law Sonia Gandhi and grandson Rahul have failed to save the Congress party from rapid decline.

Democracy without dissent provides scope for the rise of authoritarianism. Dissent allied to disruptive forces can lead to anarchy. Andre Beteille, ‘the wisest man in India’ according to Ramachandra Guha, described authoritarianism and anarchy as the main drawbacks of Indian democracy. In the chapter on democracy and violence Guha describes five generic forms of violence resorted to in armed struggles by those following Marxist tradition and the separatists in Kashmir and northern Sri Lanka. The author is unsparing in his condemnation of governmental repression though he concedes that what exactly is ‘the form of autonomy’ the agitating people in Kashmir and northern Sri Lanka seek is not clear. Referring to the solution to these two crises, Guha writes with characteristic frankness, “It can be outlined by scholars with skills that I do not possess.

I do not at all regret leaving Delhi for Bangalore twenty years ago, by which I freed myself from the capital’s absorption with itself as reflected in the behaviour of its academic as much as its political or media elite.

Ramachandra Guha

The historian can merely document and diagnose; prescription and policy formulation he must leave to other disciplines.” writes Guha adding that ‘dignified autonomy remains the most reasonable, the most viable, and the most humane solution to the terrible and tragic conflicts in Kashmir and northern Sri Lanka.’ The chapter that follows focuses on tribal tragedies in Independent India and about the neglect and exploitation of the Adivasis. After seventy years of independence the tribals have ‘gained least and lost most’ and suffer from nine types of tragedies, laments Guha.

There are chapters that touch a chord with poignant narratives like those on Benedict Anderson, Damodar Dharmanand Kosambi and Radhakumar. They are great souls whose intellectual prowess was allied to selfless service. Historian Eric Hobsbawm’s ‘brilliance and dogmatism’ is an intellectually stimulating chapter like the one on Arguments with Sen. The last chapter is a powerful indictment of right wing parties and demagogues. Guha warns against ‘public discourse being dominated by thugs and bigots rather than by scholars and thinkers’.

Ramachandra Guha’s writings, scholarly and thought provoking as they always are have also a touch of wit and humour. A lively anecdote on the humour of Parsis is quoted here to show the author’s dislike for humourless world. In ‘humourless times’ Ram Guha used to overcome boredom by reading the column of ‘Busy Bee’ the popular Bombay Parsi Behram Contractor. Guha recalls a lovely story from Farrukh Dhondy, a Parsi writer raised in Pune, who in turn had heard it from the Pakistani Parsi writer Bapsi Sidhwa. Someone asked Sidhwa, ‘Why are there so few Parsis, why aren’t you breeding more, having more children, you are dying as a race, what’s the problem?’ She answered, ‘It’s all the fault of the Parsi men. Half our men are homosexual, and the other half are statues in Bombay.’ Let us hope that Ramachandra Guha’s creative mind and prolific pen will come up with a book on the Wit and Wisdom of Parsi community and their contribution to India’s culture and development during the last one hundred and thirty years. What a galaxy! Tiny in number but

outstanding in service and contribution to the nation by Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, J.N.Tata and other stalwarts of those times to the luminaries of our times like J.R.D.Tata, Nani Palkhivala, Fali Nariman and Soli Sorabjee. Ramachandra Guha’s latest and superbly crafted *Democrats and Dissenters* is a welcome addition to every library, public or personal.

- A. Prasanna Kumar

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Dr. C.R.Reddy – ‘A Statesman of Education’

(Andhra University celebrates Dr.C.R.Reddy’s 136th birth anniversary on December 10, 2016.)

Andhra University was a gift of modern Andhra Renaissance. The demand for a separate university was articulated along with the demand for a separate state for Andhras in the first two decades of the last century. The Andhra University Act came into force on April 26,1926. The first to be named after the language of the people of a state in south India and the first to be conceived as a residential, teaching-cum- affiliating university, devoted to post graduate teaching and research, Andhra University was formally inaugurated on August 30,1926 at Bezwada by Lord Goschen, the first Chancellor. Stating that the word Andhra appealed to all people Dr C.R.Reddy said that “the word Andhra is used to denote the people whose language is Telugu” and that ‘high educational ambitions were at the root of our years’ long agitation for a separate university.’ Dr C.R.Reddy was the first Vice Chancellor of the university. Dr Reddy, setting aside the claims of other towns, chose Visakhapatnam for locating the university and shifted it accordingly. On September 5, - an interesting coincidence as it was Radhakrishnan’s birthday which later became Teacher’s Day—in 1930 the university started functioning in Waltair uplands.

The choice of Vizag for locating the University was impeccable. Ramanand Chatterjee, founder-editor of Modern Review, said that “freedom seems to rejoice here between the roar of the sea and

He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.

Socrates

the echo of the valley.” A great moment it was for the university when India’s first Nobel Laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore came in 1933 and again in 1934 to give lectures. What an occasion it was to have on the campus India’s first two Nobel Laureates Rabindranath Tagore and C.V.Raman on the occasion with Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in the presidential chair. In his lecture on MAN Tagore said that” Man’s discovery and utilisation of the hidden forces of nature contribute to his well-being.” Having first visited Waltair in the winter of 1933 Tagore came again in the spring of 1934 and directed a dance drama on the campus.

Prof N.K.Siddhanta, the renowned scholar and educationist, lavished praise on the place thus: “ We have dreamt of Utopian plans of a University in the land of perpetual spring— a season, this, that we had heard about but never actually enjoyed. Here at Waltair is this Utopia, where Nature is willing to help man with the utmost cordiality and sustain his efforts for the training of the intellect and the dissemination of knowledge...”

Dr P.V.Rajamannar, the Chief Justice of Madras High Court put it lyrically in his 1961 Convocation Address. He said:” The university is fortunate in having an ideal site. It is rarely that a university can secure such a beautiful campus as this, with all the loveliness of Nature, in all its varied aspects. You have the Hills and you have the Sea—primeval symbols of the static and dynamic aspects of human nature. The hills “ emblems and coruscations of invisible unoriginate perfection” represent tradition and the sea “restless living element” embodies the spirit of adventure and change. What an environment for a seat of learning.”

Dr.Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan succeeded Dr.C.R.Reddy as the Vice Chancellor and he assumed office on May 1, 1931. On July 1, 1931 the University College of Arts was inaugurated with two honours courses in Telugu and History. The College of Science and Technology with honours courses in physics and chemistry, was inaugurated on July 4,1932. The teaching staff of the University was increased from six in 1931 to seventeen in 1933. During 1933-34 the

buildings for the colleges were constructed and a clock tower costing Rs. 30,000 adorned the college of science and technology. In July 1933 technology courses were started. The University Library which initially had 7000 volumes till 1928 had 23000 volumes by 1934 and a qualified librarian was appointed on July 1,1934. The first Convocation was held in 1927 with Radhakrishnan as the chief guest. “I firmly believe,” said Radhakrishnan on the occasion, “that if any part of India is capable of developing an effective sense of unity it is the Andhra. Our generosity of spirit and openness of mind are well known. Our social instinct and suggestibility are still active.” Sir C.V.Raman delivered the oration at the second convocation in 1928 at which Radhakrishnan was conferred an honorary doctorate degree.

It was university’s good fortune that it had in its early years two great visionaries, Dr C.R.Reddy and Dr Radhakrishnan as Vice Chancellors. “The university is lucky” said Prof N.K.Siddhanta, “in having a Vice Chancellor like Dr Reddy as its administrative head and none of us failed to admire his buoyant enthusiasm for the work of the institution and his pride in its success... a good part of the success was due to the communication of the Head’s enthusiasm to all his colleagues who appeared to have unbounded confidence in him. Here we felt was the nearest approach to a happy family that all Universities should endeavour to be.” Sir C.V.Raman hailed Dr.C.R.Reddy’s leadership and said that “by his personality and his example Reddy has been able as perhaps no Indian with the exception of Sir Asutosh Mukherjee to instill into a body of scholars that idealism for which he himself stands. And so long as that idealism that love of truth, impels the University, no one need fear for its future.” Rajaji described Dr.C.R.Reddy as an extraordinary Vice-Chancellor. Journalist N.Raghunathan called Reddy a ‘statesman of education’.

As Dr. C.V.Raman wrote “The work of these two leaders of Andhra will never perish. These two Andhras have not only succeeded in infusing into the minds of Andhradesa a love and regard for the University with which their names are connected but

It is better to act and be sorry, than not to act, and be sorry.

Boccaccio

have succeeded in drawing to it the support of those influentially connected with Andhra.”

Three Bharat Ratnas – Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Dr. C.V.Raman and Dr.M.Visvesvaraya, had worked in the Andhra University in the 30s of the last century and nurtured it into a famous centre of higher learning. Dr. C.R.Reddy returned to the university after Radhakrishnan’s departure in 1934 and was its Vice Chancellor till for Mysore in 1949.

Andhra University, with such a rise to eminence in the field of higher education, was waiting for K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar to come and enrich it with another dimension to its destiny. CR Reddy made the right decision at the most appropriate time. In inviting Srinivasa Iyengar to Waltair the Vice-Chancellor had a larger vision, a goal he set not only for the Andhra University but also for the field of education and beyond. “The light of Pondicherry to spread all over the world,” declared CR Reddy. “ I hail Sri Aurobindo as the sole sufficing genius of the age,” and in 1948, a year after Iyengar joined the university, CR Reddy presented, in absentia the Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy National Prize to Sri Aurobindo at the convocation in 1948. The renowned orator-scholar was at his brilliant best when he presented the citation in which he called Prof Iyengar’s work on Sri Aurobindo “a splendid biography a book written in a style of superlative charm and power and one

which could without exaggeration be regarded as masterpiece in English literature.”

Accepting the honour Sri Aurobindo in his message said “Andhra University has been created by a patriotic Andhra initiative, situated not in a Presidency capital but in an Andhra town and serving consciously the life of a regional people. The home of a robust and virile and energetic race, great by the part it had played in the past in the political life of India, great by its achievements in art, architecture, sculpture, music, Andhra looks back upon imperial memories, a place in the succession of empires and imperial dynasties which reigned over a large part of the country; it looks back on the more recent memory of the glories of the last Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, a magnificent record for any people. Your University can take its high position as a center of light and learning, knowledge and culture which can train the youth of Andhra to be worthy of their forefathers; the great past should lead to a future as great or even greater. Not only Science but Art, not only book-knowledge and information but growth in culture and character are parts of a true education; to help the individual to develop his capacities, to help in the forming of thinkers and creators and men of vision and action of the future, this is a part of its work.”

A. Prasanna Kumar

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