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President of India - *a mere figurehead or custodian of national values?*

Who will succeed Pranab Mukherjee as the fourteenth President of India in July 2017 is the question heard everywhere. With quiet dignity, the veteran leader and the first Bengali to hold the highest office of the Head of State, Pranab Mukherjee has completed four years and eight months of his five year tenure. Except the first President, Rajendra Prasad, no president was elected for two terms. Of the twelve presidents who succeeded him, two presidents, Zakir Hussain and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, died in office, the former holding office for less than two years and the latter less than three years.

With independent India opting for the Westminster type of parliamentary democracy, the Constituent Assembly became the theatre for lively debates and discussions in designing the architecture of Indian democracy, from December 9, 1946 to November 26, 1949. Jawaharlal Nehru and B.R. Ambedkar clinched the issue in favour of 'the more cohesive, more responsible and responsive' parliamentary type of government as against the presidential system. Several crucial and politically sensitive issues were sorted out with clarity and sagacity thanks to the wisdom of the Chairman of the Drafting Committee Dr B.R. Ambedkar, and the dedication and perseverance of such legal luminaries as B. N. Rau and Alladi Krishna Swami Ayyar. When Chairman Rajendra Prasad raised questions about the scope of presidential powers under the constitution, Alladi clarified unequivocally that the president of India would be like a British monarch and there "is no sphere of his functions in respect of which he can go without reference to the advice of his ministers." It was agreed that while the office of the President of India was one of 'great dignity and authority', the president would act only in consultation with his ministers, seldom like 'an umpire' between the states and the union government.

When Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar asserted that the position of Indian President would be 'analogous to the British monarch' it was implied that Walter Bagehot's famous words in his classic on the English constitution that the monarch had the right to warn, the right to encourage and the right to be consulted would be the guidelines for Indian democracy too. Despite a little turbulence in the early years in the relations between President Rajendra Prasad and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, it became abundantly clear that the Prime Minister is the ultimate authority in the parliamentary system which is also called the prime ministerial system.

It was a fascinating, though short and testing, period in the annals of Indian democracy when two men of luminous intellect and high moral integrity, adorned the two highest offices, Head of State and Head of Government. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan as President and Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister gave a new image to Indian democracy and new dimension to India's political culture. S.Gopal, biographer of both Nehru and Radhakrishnan summed it up in his inimitable style thus: 'Without violating the constitution and keeping well above party politics, he(Radhakrishnan) opened out a new horizon for the president ship. The Prime Minister was concerned with government; it was for the president to draw attention to values.' The President is the custodian of national values.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP led government, now riding a wave of success, will allay fears about growing majoritarianism and earn national goodwill by choosing Vice President Hamid Ansari, whose credentials are impeccable, for the high office of President of India. It will be a reaffirmation of our faith in the spirit of the constitution and in our pluralist culture.

- **The Editor**

The President is the head of the State but not of the Executive. He represents the Nation but does not rule the Nation. He is the symbol of the nation. His place in the administration is that of a ceremonial device on a seal by which the nation's decisions are made known.

B.R.Ambedkar

IORA Summit: India's Maritime Opportunity – Analysis

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The first summit meeting of the 21-member Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) concluded on March 7 with the assembled leaders issuing an inspirational vision document entitled the Jakarta Concord.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not among the leaders who were in Jakarta though India was represented by the Vice President Hamid Ansari, a former career diplomat. The domestic political compulsion related to the five assembly elections that included India's largest state Uttar Pradesh was evidently the higher priority and the results declared on March 11 have consolidated Modi's political stature in an emphatic manner.

The Modi-led NDA II government will soon complete three years in office and over the next two years the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will consolidate its position as India's most credible political party. With the kind of numbers that the 'lotus' (BJP's political symbol) has won in Uttar Pradesh, both houses of parliament will have a decisive BJP majority and this kind of parliamentary strength and political capital is unprecedented in India's recent history.

On the foreign policy and security front there are many issues that merit Modi's attention in the last two years of his tenure. And the IORA Summit that Modi was unable to attend draws attention to the maritime window of opportunity that must be prioritized by India. The maritime domain has a distinctive relevance in the calculus of a nation's comprehensive national power. Spanning the trade and economic bandwidth, a country's maritime affinity and competence extends to the military and strategic areas of relevance.

Major power status is an amalgam of many strands of national capability and it has been empirically established that over the last 500 years, every such claimant has maximized its maritime potential in a determined manner. Thus it is no

coincidence that China has identified and invested in this sector over the last 40 years.

President Xi Jinping has unveiled an ambitious connectivity project also called the OBOR (one belt-one road) which has a substantive maritime connectivity component. As of now India is not part of this grand plan though many of India's maritime neighbours are active participants.

It is instructive to note that Indonesian President, Joko "Jokowi" Widodo exhorted his people to turn the archipelagic country into a "maritime nation" on the day he assumed office – October 20, 2014. Soon after this in November 2014 at the East Asian Summit, Jokowi unveiled his grand "Poros Maritime Dunia" (Global Maritime Axis) doctrine.

India for a variety of historical reasons has not been as deeply aware of its maritime potential as it ought to have been. And even if a small group of professionals were cognizant of the maritime domain in an episodic manner – this sector rarely received the kind of sustained high-level political attention that it deserves.

Modi signalled a rare departure fairly early in his tenure and in March 2015 embarked on a three island-nation trip to Seychelles, Mauritius and Sri Lanka. In Mauritius he outlined a shared maritime vision for the Indian Ocean region and declared : "We seek a future for the Indian Ocean that lives up to the name of SAGAR – Security and Growth for All in the Region." Sagar is also the Sanskrit word for the ocean and this multi-lingual trapeze is vintage Modi rhetoric.

A review of the Modi vision outlined in Mauritius in 2015 and the five elements that were identified for collective effort are also reflected in the Jakarta Concord. But the reality is that, despite the persuasive rhetoric of March 2015, India has not been able to enhance its comprehensive maritime capability in an appropriate manner.

Modi's absence at Jakarta was noticeable and the sense was that India is not yet ready to walk the rich maritime talk. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka were represented at the summit by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and President Maithripala Sirisena

The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems.

Mahatma Gandhi

respectively. Other leaders included Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, South African President Jacob Zuma and Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak.

Domestic politics may have prevented Modi from attending a major regional maritime summit, a grouping that was conceived by India in 1997. Regional maritime connectivity and nurturing the Blue Revolution have immense potential that is largely untapped. But if the 'Sagar' vision can be re-infused with the political commitment it warrants, Modi may still be able to orient India towards its inherent maritime destiny before he prepares for the 2019 general election.

(Courtesy : *Eurasia Review - A Journal of Analysis and News*, March 18, 2017)

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The role of the Civil Servant in India

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A former Comptroller & Auditor General of India, while addressing the trainees at the National Police Academy some years ago, expressed his anguish at the deteriorating credibility of governance and the declining morale of the All India Services (AISs). In his words, "too much is at stake for too many in such a situation".

As AISs form the core of the Indian bureaucracy, these observations apply as well to the role of the bureaucracy in general in delivering good governance to the people and planning the future of the economy on sustainable lines.

The civil services in the country owe their existence to Articles 308-323 of the Constitution. The Constitution has provided a unique status for the civil services as they are considered to be the prime instrumentality for delivering governance to the people in line with the objectives enshrined in it. The civil services are bound by the norms laid down by the Constitution and its laws; not by the

whims and fancies of the political executive. The civil servants, who enjoy a longer tenure compared to the political leadership, provide the much needed flow of continuity in governance. While translating the policies enunciated by the political executive into tangible action, it is the civil servants who play the crucial role. It is for the civil servants to point out whether the policies mooted by the political executive are in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The AISs, in view of the very nature of their structure, are expected to act as the crucial administrative link between the Centre and the States. The federal structure envisaged in the Constitution places a special responsibility on the AISs to maintain a relationship between the Centre and the States that is in harmony with the Constitution.

At the time of Independence, when the AISs came into existence, their role was predominantly regulatory in nature. Over the years, as the government undertook a wide range of development programmes in the fields of education, public healthcare, community welfare, agriculture and a host of other activities, the role of the AISs, especially, the officers belonging to the IAS has gradually shifted to that of regulation-cum-development. The role of a regulator need not necessarily be in total congruence with that of a development administrator. Keeping this in view, the government has created independent regulatory authorities in the fields of electricity, telecommunications, water, environment and so on to separate regulation from development administration. Despite this, there remain many areas of economic activity in which the civil servants often find themselves caught in conflict situations, trying to harmonise regulation with development. Since the political executive is usually in a hurry to push through the development projects, the regulatory authority of the civil servant stands compromised, whenever there is no clear institutional division between the two roles. Dilution in regulation, as in the case of protecting the environment, often leads to long-term adverse implications, the cost of remedying which turns out to be far more than what it would have cost,

Consider well the qualities you have to retain and the qualities you have to discard. Give up the undesirable and cultivate the desirables.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

had the environmental impact been contained at an earlier stage. Since the political executive's tenure is hardly five years, its response to such adverse implications will necessarily be myopic, unless the leader of the political executive has statesman-like qualities. Many political leaders are responsive to such situations, provided the civil servants have the necessary clarity of thought to be able to explain the adverse implications of inadequate regulation with facts and figures. Such situations test the mettle of the civil servants and bring out the glaring distinction between a prudent civil servant and not-so-prudent one!

Against this background, it is necessary for the civil services to introspect on the role they are to play in the coming years, at a time when the political executive is under pressure to deliver good governance along with development. Are there some basic concepts that need to be kept in view by the civil servants in meeting the expectations of the political leadership? What are the keys to "good governance"? How does one define "development"?

Before one examines these aspects, it is important to remember that the civil servants are often faced with the challenge of managing the physical resources of the country. Some of these are scarce, depleting resources which, if exploited imprudently, will not last long. There are other resources which, when prudently used, can benefit not only the individuals but also the community at large. The role of the civil services in managing these resources is crucial not only for the present generation but for the future generations as well.

As far as the depletable physical resources are concerned, the Doctrine of Public Trust requires both the political executive and the civil services to treat the same as being held in trust on behalf of the public. For example, Article 39 of the Constitution enjoins upon the State to ensure that "the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good". By implication, the "community" here refers not only the present generation but also the future generations. In the case of high-valued minerals, for

example, Kautilya's Arthashastra (3rd Century BC) prescribed that they should be exploited with utmost care subject to a minimum threshold. When a short-sighted political executive directs the civil servants to over-exploit a precious mineral like bauxite, it is incumbent on the latter to invoke the Doctrine of Public Trust on behalf of the public and safeguard the mineral.

There are individuals in the society who try to claim more than what they need. The Greeks described this as "pleonexia" which denotes "greed". In Gandhiji's famous words, "the world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed."

In the distribution of physical resources, the civil services are often confronted with the decisions taken by the political executive to favour a few individuals or firms. The Indian Constitution is clearly based on the Doctrine of Equality as enshrined in Article 14 and in the other provisions relating to the Fundamental Rights. When a limited and a valuable resource such as the public land is sought to be doled out by the political executive to a few chosen individuals or firms, as it has been the case with the successive governments in Andhra Pradesh, the civil servants ought to have invoked this doctrine to prevent those individuals and firms to profiteer at the cost of the public.

Let us come back to the role that the civil servants should play in improving the tone of governance.

The term "good governance" is often used as a cliché by many and its meaning depends on whose point of view it is looked at. "What the caterpillar calls the end, the rest of the world calls a butterfly" said Lao-tzu, the great mystic philosopher of ancient China. Since the target of governance is the people at large, it will be most appropriate to consider its meaning from their point of view. For the public, good governance should imply greater efficiency in the services delivered by the government, greater public accountability, greater freedom in their day-to-day lives, a predictable state of living and a participative role in decision making.

The requirements for this can be readily summarised as (i) greater **transparency** in the functioning of all public authorities, (ii) a wider **choice** for the people in terms of public services, (iii) greater **competition** in involving private enterprise to improve the efficiency of services, (iv) greater public **accountability** of the executive, especially the political executive, (v) compliance with the **rule of law** and (vi) strengthening the **democratic** processes in decision making at every level.

Since we are predominantly a country of the poor, there is an overarching **seventh** requirement in our case. Gandhiji's talisman to those that govern is, "recall the face of the **poorest and the weakest** man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]". Governance in our country cannot be described as "good" if it is not directed towards the needs of the poor.

Whenever any of these requirements remained unfulfilled, the concerned government had to face severe public criticism.

For example, the debilitating scams associated with the infamous Enron power project in Maharashtra, the more recent coalgate and 2-G spectrum scams owe their origin to the failure on the part of the government to comply with the two primary requirements of ensuring "transparency" and "competition" in governance. The recent measure of demonetisation of the higher denomination currency notes, however wise it may be, has restricted the citizen's choices by forcing him/her to shift to a plastic-card system that is fraught with risks. It is still fresh in our memory how 3.2 million debit cards of well known banks in India were hacked by cyber thieves a few months ago. Whenever the government has chosen to belittle the democratic processes which lie at the core of the Parliamentary democracy we have adopted, there have been conflict situations arising, as for example, in the case of the numerous ongoing land conflicts that have tainted our political system in many parts of the country.

Inadequate attention to addressing the needs of the poor in India has placed India at a pathetically low

rank of 130 in terms of UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI), below Vietnam (HDI: 116), Indonesia (HDI: 110) and Sri Lanka (HDI: 73). According to a World Bank study, India accounts for one in three of the poor population worldwide. For a country which proclaims from the rooftop that its economy is "shining", this is certainly not a comfortable situation.

We will now turn our attention to the term "development" that has become a cliché in the day-to-day discourse of the political executive and the civil servants in our country.

In his outstanding work, "Development is Freedom", Prof Amartya Sen has described the essence of any "development" activity as the one that enlarges the freedoms of the individual, not the one that restricts their choices. In addition, just as in the case of the concept of governance, any activity that is chosen by the people through a democratic process can alone qualify to be described as a "development" activity.

Contrary to these ideas, most so-called "development" projects in India are those imposed from above, not those sought by the people who are expected to be the ultimate beneficiaries.

In a lighter tone, unmindful of the havoc it would wreak on the local agricultural activity, when the Andhra Pradesh government tried to force a sprawling international airport project near Bhogapuram village in Vizianagaram district, the local community resisted it, saying that what they always wanted was a modern bus-stand, not an airport! If one were to carry out an objective, professional social-cost social-benefit analysis of this airport project, it can be readily shown how the cost of the agricultural activity that is lost and the cost of the livelihoods deprived far outweigh the perceived benefits of that project.

In other words, "development" is a concept that corresponds to participative decision making that characterises any genuine democratic political system. Whenever this idea is lost sight of, the governments are blamed, rightly so, of encouraging crony capitalism that allows a few corporate houses to circumvent the law of the land and profiteer.

In this connection, it is interesting to recall an incident that took place more than two millennia ago in ancient Greece.

The market place in ancient Athens, known as the Agora, provided a meeting place for the great men of the day. Once, the great Greek philosopher, Diogenes the Cynic, was basking there in the sun during a cold winter day, when Alexander the Great, riding his majestic horse, appeared there. In a munificent mood, Alexander asked Diogenes to ask for a boon which he will readily grant. Unmoved by Alexander's offer, Diogenes casually looked at him and waved him off saying, "if you stop blocking the sunlight which I am enjoying, that will be more than your boon". Most development projects deprive the people of their natural rights, much more than the benefits they give.

In conclusion, the civil services in our country should remember that they should stand committed to the law of the land and remain accountable to the people, while discharging their responsibilities within the democratic political system in which they function. They should realise that they are merely public trustees of the physical resources they are expected to manage and the bias in governance should lie in favour of the poor.

The successive Pay Commissions have granted sumptuous salaries and allowances to the civil services in India and they should realise that they belong to the coveted higher income groups of the population. Unlike the managers in the private sector, they enjoy Constitutional safeguards in their service. If they fail the country in taking it forward, it will be unpardonable. The responsibility of translating the people-oriented norms of good governance into action rests squarely on them. They are expected not only to change the governance systems in the country for the better but also be the prime movers of the change process themselves. They should remember Gandhiji's words, "be the change that you wish to see in the world."

Failing to take note of what has been stated above and seeking political favours for short-term gains will be akin to a person trying to chop off the

tree branch on which he is sitting. For the long-term survival of the institution of the civil services, this is an important lesson.

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Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Sustainability: Indian Context-I

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(Paper presented at 'India-Sweden Research Conference : Exploring Different Legal Perspectives and Approaches' at School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg on March 8, 2017)

Introduction

No corporation exists in isolation. Every company is interdependent on the society. While society supports the company, the latter also supports the society in many ways. In the era of capitalism, the company was seen as a profit churning machine. From the very conception of a "company" by the British Crown in 1600 A.D., this innovative creature was used as a method of collective investment overseas and later at the domestic level. This also guided the development in the application of the concept of separate legal personality over a period of time on an international level.

India has a long tradition of corporate philanthropy and industrial welfare that has been put to practice since ancient times dating back to philosophers like Kautilya who had emphasized on moral practices and values while doing business in India. CSR has been informally practiced in ancient times in the form of charity to the poor and underprivileged sections of society. There are ample examples in Indian scriptures which highlight the importance of sharing one's earning with the underprivileged section of society. The tradition continues in the modern times with firms like Tatas, Birlas, Godrej, Bajajs, Singhania and Modis practising CSR by setting up charitable foundations, educational

and healthcare institutions consistent with the strong community ethos. The corporate philanthropy involved funding projects for building schools, pilgrim rest houses, places of worship like temples, distributing relief items during disasters, helping the poor and empowering employees. In fact the Tata Group is credited for introducing 'social responsibility' among corporate houses in the country.

'Sustainability' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility' ('CSR') are terms that are sometimes interchanged. However, CSR is a subset of sustainability and is the means by which we attempt to measure sustainable practices. The impacts of sustainable practices are expressed in terms of the 'three legs of sustainability': environmental, economic, and social effects. CSR is the method by which those effects are quantified and reported.

The differences between sustainability and CSR might best be explained through an example. Say a land mine manufacturer stops using toxic chemicals in its manufacturing process and final product. The company writes and distributes the appropriate reports about that improvement. The company might 'score' well from a CSR perspective: both the new manufacturing process and use of the final product will have a smaller effect on the environment. However, the production of land mines, toxic-free or not, is not a sustainable process because it has significant negative social and economic effects. This is why we view CSR and sustainability as two sides of the same coin: related but not identical. A business can adopt sustainable practices but fail to quantify the effects of those practices through the appropriate CSR tools. A business can also fulfil all its CSR reporting obligations while still being involved in unsustainable practices. To date, our focus at Ecology has been on sustainability first and CSR second. While both are important, we believe changing behaviour by encouraging sustainability is the most essential activity.

Brundtland Commission's Report in 1987 defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without

compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This is considered to be a standard definition, judged by its widespread use and frequent citation. However, this definition seems to resolve the apparent conflict between economic development and environment protection only, without highlighting the social dimension of sustainable development. It was in the Johannesburg Declaration at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 that social development as the third pillar of sustainable development was clearly acknowledged.

The emergence of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development as important concerns of business activity is the result of realization that any business conducted with the sole motive of profit maximisation for the shareholders, in disregard of societal and environmental concerns is bound to fail in the long run. The traditional concept of Business has come a long way since the famous economist and Nobel laureate, Milton Friedman famously proclaimed in 1970,

"The business of business is to maximise profits, to earn a good return on capital invested and to be a good corporate citizen obeying the law – no more and no less".

In 1984, Edward Freeman introduced the stakeholder theory and argued that socially responsible activities helped business in building strong relationships with stakeholders, and that management must pursue actions that are optimal for a broad class of stakeholders rather than those that serve only to maximize shareholder interests. In 1989 another prominent economist, Kenneth Andrews exhorted corporates "to focus corporate power on objectives that are possible but sometimes less economically attractive than socially desirable". In 1997, John Elkington first introduced the concept of "Triple Bottom line" to emphasise that a company's performance is best measured by the economic, social and environmental impact of its activities. These developments at the turn of the previous century are only indicative of several parallel

movements, private initiatives and scholarly debates focussed on introduction of reforms in business, corporate governance and management practices. They arose out of a common concern for economic growth, environmental issues, social imperatives and enhanced ethical standards in business. Cumulatively, they brought about an integration of environmental, social and economic aspects of business and espoused societal expectations from business to behave responsibly and deliver better governance.

Based on the various literatures developed as on date, there are four aspects of sustainability which need to be recognised in any CSR activity, namely:

Societal influence, which we define as a measure of the impact that society makes upon the corporation in terms of the social contract and stakeholder influence.

Environmental impact, which we define as the effect of the actions of the corporation upon its geophysical environment.

Organisational culture, which we define as the relationship between the corporation and its internal stakeholders, particularly employees, and all aspects of that relationship.

Finance, which we define in terms of an adequate return for the level of risk undertaken. These four must be considered as the key dimensions of sustainability, all of which are equally important.

The UN Global Compact was the first major initiative by the International organisation to lay down a charter of ten principles for all companies globally to respect and follow in their business operations. By asking companies to embrace, support and enact a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-corruption, it sets the agenda for corporate social responsibility for all corporate enterprises and provides a framework for initiation and practice of sustainability policies. The overwhelming endorsement which it received from the corporate world testifies that the UN Global Compact is the largest voluntary corporate responsibility initiative in the world that forges close

linkage between business, society and environment in all development endeavours. Many other international bodies and associations like the OECD countries were quick in coming out with their set of guidelines for multinational corporations, largely in conformity with the principles of the UN Global Compact.

If in spite of such widespread awareness about corporate social responsibility and sustainable development, both these concepts have for long have been in search of definitions which could separately capture their all-encompassing essence and philosophy, it is because these concepts are dynamic and evolving. Corporate Social Responsibility is the responsibility which the corporate enterprises accept for the social, economic and environmental impact their activities have on the stakeholders. The stakeholders include employees, consumers, investors, shareholders, civil society groups, Government, non-government organisations, communities and the society at large. It is the responsibility of the companies to not only shield the diverse stakeholders from any possible adverse impact that their business operations and activities may have, but also entails affirmative action by the companies in the social, economic and environmental spheres as expected of them by the stakeholders, to the extent of their organisational resource capabilities. This is besides corporate legal obligation to comply with statutory rules and regulations regarding the conduct of business operations, and the duty to compensate the stakeholders in the event of any harm or collateral damage.

It is now universally accepted that corporate social responsibility is not a stand-alone, one time, ad hoc philanthropic activity. Rather, it is closely integrated and aligned with the business goals, strategies and operations of the companies. There is a close integration of social and business goals of companies.

(to be concluded)

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India is not *an* important but perhaps *the* most important, country for the future of the world.
All the convergent influences of the world run through this society. E.P. Thompson

Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Jawaharlal Nehru

I do not know that I am particularly fitted to speak about the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, because he was a man of God and I am a man of earth and engaged in earthly activities which consume all my energy. But even a man of earth can admire and perhaps be influenced by a man of God, and so I have been admiring godly men, though sometimes I do not altogether understand; and though I do not fully understand what they said, I have admired these great men of God, and have been influenced by reading what was written about them by their disciples.

These extraordinary personalities have powerfully influenced their generation and the succeeding generations. They have powerfully influenced great men and changed the whole tenor of their lives. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa obviously was completely outside the run of average humanity. He appears to be in the tradition of the great rishis of India, who have come from time to time to draw our attention to the higher things of life and of the spirit.

What made India great was her broad-mindedness. It was her conviction that truth is many-sided and of infinite variety. How can any man presume to say that he only has grasped the entire truth? If he is earnest in the search of truth, he may say that he saw a particular face of truth but how can he say that somebody else has not seen truth, unless he follows a similar path? So India encourages the pursuit of truth, and of moral values, and that was perhaps the most distinctive feature of India's culture. And in spite of the many ups and downs of her history something of the original impress continues throughout these long ages.

One of the effects of Sri Ramakrishna's life was the peculiar way in which he influenced other people who came in contact with him. Men often scoffed from a distance at this man of no learning, and yet when they came to him, very soon they bowed their heads before this man of God and ceased to scoff and 'remained to pray'. They gave up, many of them, their ordinary vocations in life and business and joined the

band of devotees. They were great men and one of them better known than the others not only in India but in other parts of the world is Swami Vivekananda. He gave us something which brings us, if I may use the word, a certain pride in our inheritance. He did not spare us, he talked of our weaknesses and our failings too. He did not wish to hide anything. Indeed he should not. Because we have to correct those failings, he deals with those failings also. Sometimes he strikes hard at us but sometimes points out the great things for which India stood and which even in the days of India's downfall made her, in some measure, continue to be great.

(From "JAWAHARLAL NEHRU – An Anthology" edited by Sarvepalli Gopal) 1983.

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Farewell To The Workshop of Vyasa

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**)*

Someone made some tender sound behind me, beating his 'ball pen on the metal band of his wrist watch'. 'It is an irony of life that the moments we enjoy most slip away rather fast,' mildly spoke the young and courteous army officer, our guide, trying to pull me down from the world of my reveries into which the tiny memorial to Draupadi, lost in snow and frost, had transported me.

It was time for us to return to Badarikashram. I entered the cave of Vyasa once again and bowed in gratitude to him, trying to compress a million salutations into one. Here was articulated by Vyasa the epic which over the centuries had proved to be the greatest single influence on Indian literature; here also began, through Ganesha in the role of a scribe, the tradition of appreciation - the listener or reader responding to the poet's creation with empathy. No doubt the plane of consciousness at which both acted must have made the two functions a simultaneous experience.

It was Vivekananda alone who preached a great message which is not tied to any do's and don'ts. His message has imparted to man dignity and respect along with energy and power.

Rabindranath Tagore 9

Looking at the deserted Mana village on our return journey, I observed a solitary old man briskly walking through the rocks, sometimes jumping from one boulder to another. Obviously he did so in order to make a short-cut to his destination, but his movement showed no sign of his venerable age, no faltering before taking a risky step. His walk reflected his lifestyle - probably even-his philosophy of life. Identified with him for a rare moment, I really felt a lightness, a joy which for Sir Walter Raleigh had only been a wish:

I wish I loved the human race,

I wish I loved its silly face;

I wish I like the way it walks;

I wish I like the way it talks;

And when I am introduced to one,

I wish I thought *what jolly fun!*

If the walker soon became a speck and was then indistinguishable from several other objects which had lost their contours in the frost, it was as much for the speed of our jeep as for his own incredible fastness.

Probably the walking style of the ancient sages was a finer version of this man's - determined, and undeterred by any vacillation. How did they cover the distance between their Himalayan hermitages and the faraway cities ruled by kings devoted to them?

A hermit once told me, 'There are of course secret passages linking several spots significant to the mystics. For example, I know for certain that an initiate could reach Kedarnath from Badarikashram in a few hours. My guru did so decades ago. But don't think that taking short-cuts or walking at great speed was the true explanation for the Rishis travelling between distant destinations!

He ridiculed our rational approach to the issue, but all he would say when an explanation was demanded, only reminded me of Hamlet's wisdom: 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

Our vehicle was ready to leave Badarikashram

after another brief halt. But I had forgotten the time as I sat under a rock projected like a shelter and gazed at the peaks, Narayana and, behind it, Nilakantha, recollecting the myths connected with Badarikashram.

The current cycle of ages began with Vaivaswata, also called Satyavrata Manu, and this was his home. While bathing in the river Kritamala (a less remembered name of Alakananda), he found a tiny fish in his palms. 'Please protect me from the jaws of the bigger fish!' it appealed to the great ancient.

Manu carried it to his cave and nurtured it in an earthen vessel. As the fish grew up, he transferred it into a stone tub. Soon it proved too big for the tub and Manu led it to a lake. But it continued to grow and Manu directed it to the river.

It was this gigantic fish, which, at the time of the Great Deluge, saved Manu and the *Saptarshi*, the Seven Sages, tugging their boat to a high peak.

To decipher such myths is not easy. This fish is the first Avatar of Vishnu - the descent of a mighty consciousness. The gradual growth of the creature could symbolise the unlimited potentiality of that consciousness. The seven sages were probably the seven planes of consciousness, mystics reveal to us.

The next to inhabit the place were Nara and Narayana -the latter a manifestation of Vishnu and the former, the man, his emanation. Eternally attached to each other, once in a while their relationship grew conspicuous, for example as Krishna and Arjuna.

One of the names of Badarikashram was Naradiya Kshetra. In his frequent travels to the earth (which, the mystics, believe, has not stopped!) Narada always touched Badarikashram first. K.M. Munshi wrote:

'Narayan Rishi lived here with his inseparable companion, Nar, and was served by the divine sage, Narad. Of all the Rishis, Narad appears to me by far the most delightful. As you know, he flies around in the ether throughout the whole Universe; *tambur* in one hand, *kartal* in the other, while the anklets on his feet jingle merrily; sometimes, when in a happy mood, I hear his music in my sleep. He sings

Brute force, no matter how strongly applied, can never subdue human desire for freedom and dignity.

The Dalai Lama

the praise of God from aeon to aeon. Sometimes he permits himself a prose interlude. He acts as a roving ambassador of the gods. Occasionally, with roguish irresponsibility, he indulges in the pastime of creating trouble between two gods. But for his pranks there would be nothing to enliven the cheerless eternity of the heavens where birth is not, nor death, and marriage is eternal with no divorce.' (To Badrinath)

Narada must be descending on either of these mounts. I was scanning the dusky yet dazzling peaks to see if I could discern his footprints or, who knows, if he would drop just then! After all there had been moments when a blessed soul or two could see him!

Among these mountains must be the one at the foot of which a devotee of Vishnu once asked Narada, while the latter was ascending the hill on his way to his celestial abode, to find out from the Lord when he would have the luck to unite with Him. As Narada reached the peak of the mountain, a Yogi, too, made a similar request to him.

Years later, when Narada descended on the hill again, the Yogi eagerly enquired of him if he had brought any message for him.

'My friend, it will take you another twenty lifetimes to meet the Lord!' was Narada's report.

'Still twenty lifetimes ! What a long wait despite my having gone through so very strenuous and long asceticism!' bemoaned the Yogi.

At the foot of the mountain Narada informed the equally eager devotee, 'A hundred lifetimes more and you'll be with the Lord!'

The devotee started jumping and frolicking ecstatically and crying out, 'Only a hundred lifetimes and I'll meet my Lord! Am I that lucky?'

Narada smiled and told him that he was only joking with him and that he had already acquired the merit to meet the Lord at the end of that very life. Thereafter he would be a liberated soul, not bound to the cycle of birth and death. He could take birth only when he desired to do so.

The seeker atop the mountain was *Jnanayogi*, one who approached the Lord through knowledge. The seeker at the foot of the mountain was a *Bhaktiyogi*,

one who approached the Lord through devotion. The anecdote emphasized the superiority of the path of *Bhakti*, marked by humility and gratitude, over the path of *Jnana*, often calculative and demanding.

But true knowledge, too, brings humility; there are always higher possibilities in every spiritual path. The story is a comment on the psychology of seekers only at the average plane.

However, had I a chance meeting with Narada I would have told him, *Devarshi* Great indeed is your patience. But I am also intrigued. Why are you taking this trouble of moving between the heavens and the earth since times immemorial? A sublime purpose alone could motivate you and my common sense tells me, that must be to bring the earth closer to the heavens. How long to wait? When do you think a life Divine would replace the life as it is, dominated by infinite nonsense?'

'Manoj Das is missing!'

It was our guide's voice, not jocular, but tinged with a bit of anxiety.

I hope you did not forget him at Vyasa Gumpha" observed someone.

I got up hurriedly.

"So, my boy, this much was the only time at your disposal with which you hoped for a meeting with me" an invisible Narada would ask if he were descending just then.

But there was no chance of his voice vibrating in my gross mortal ears.

The guide, at my sight, heaved a sigh of relief. I boarded the vehicle, keeping my eyes fixed on the peak behind the shrine for as long as possible. As if:

*Without a wish, without a will,
I stood upon that silent hill
And stared into the sky until
My eyes were blind with stars and still
I stared into the sky.*

- Ralph Hodgson

A Postscript : If I had visited Badarikashram for the first time just before the shrine was to close down

for the season, my latest visit, early in April, 2001, had been possible just when the shrine had opened. The rush of tourists - with only a sprinkle of pilgrims - was maddening. That could not be helped. But what could have been and should have been helped but nobody had bothered to do anything is the desecration of the cave of Vyasa. (Meanwhile an image of Vyasa has been enshrined, ensuring the presence of a priest.) Even though entry to the area is prohibited in principle, the rule exists only in the signboard. So far all is fine. Why should the visitors be deprived of the sacred sight? But how much necessary was it to build a room looking like an extension of the cave in order to facilitate commerce in a popular brand of cool drink, despite a couple of stalls only a few yards down? The thin stream of Saraswati is choking with plastic bags and paper cartons. The experience, contrasted with my earlier spell, was bizarre.

* * * * *

TO BE CONSCIOUS OF OUR SIZE

Dr. Uday Balakrishnan

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As we were getting ready to leave our lecture-hall in Manchester University many years ago, the secretary of our course came in with an 'urgent announcement' that exiting on to Oxford Street would be difficult for the next hour or so as a 'huge' demonstration was imminent. My friend and course-mate, a senior police officer from India, enquired how big the demonstration was likely to be and guffawed in astonishment when informed, that between 50 to a 100 people were expected to gather. "Is that a demonstration?" he asked with visible incredulity, "that is the average gathering at a bus stop in Delhi every day!" he exclaimed.

Here in India, large numbers do not faze, for we seemingly reduce their magnitude. For us a 100,000 passes off innocuously as a lakh and a million a mere 10 lakhs. 10 million window-dressed as a crore is not an intimidating number at all; even an illiterate

person grasps its value without being overwhelmed by the numerous zeros that follow one. Lately government budget documents and company audits are appearing in millions and billions instead of lakhs and crores making those numbers look terribly large. Fortunately, the media continues to report our numerous scams in very manageable tranches of crores, acceptable enough without provoking a revolution, allowing life to carry on as usual.

Our ancestors knew how to absorb and make sense of magnitude and take it in their stride without being intimidated by it and that has fortunately been passed down the ages to us. Britain 'thought' big as a colonial power not the least because it held India and absorbed some of its insouciant approach to size. However, it lost such nonchalance soon after ceasing to hold the subcontinent. This explains why, to our course secretary in Manchester, a demonstration by fifty or a hundred appeared scarily large, and to my friend the Indian police officer laughably small, at worst meriting, as he put it, "no more than a 'mild' lathi-charge," to disperse.

Except China, no other country matches us in population and in diversity. We have little competition in the world. The religious demography of India demonstrates the incredible variety of faiths jostling for space in India. It has more Christians than most other countries in the world do and, going by CIA estimates, more Muslims than any other except Indonesia. It is of course home to the world's largest number of Hindus as well as Jains, however miniscule the community is world-wide.

We Indians with long cultural memories can with unpractised ease, resort to the grandness of cosmology to explain the small and the trivial as well as the vast and the magnificent, suggesting that William Blake had clearly learnt something from us, 'To see the world in a Grain of Sand/And Heaven in a Wild Flower/Hold infinity in the palm of your hand/And Eternity in an hour.'

Robert Oppenheimer captured the spectacular irradiance of a nuclear explosion in cosmic splendor by quoting from the Gita: "If the radiance of a thousand suns, were to burst at once into the sky, that would be like the splendor of the mighty one..." Could anything

If you owe a bank a hundred dollars, it is your problem. If you owe a hundred million, it is the bank's problem. If you are one of many tycoons borrowing billions to finance dud firms, it is the government's problem.

else have conveyed the fearsome awesomeness of an atomic explosion better? A big conflict is always Kurukshetra, for, to the Indian mind, no battle can be bigger than the one between good and evil, fair and unfair, the noble and the iniquitous, for that is what all conflicts boil down to.

Churchill observed, "The true guide to life is to do what is right." For Roosevelt the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour was a "date that would live in infamy." Neither could capture the magnificent simplicity or grandeur of the struggle against wrongdoing better than the Gita, which our former President and Philosopher, S. Radhakrishnan informs us is quiet simply to 're-establish right when wrong prevails.' The exaggeration that we Indians are sometimes accused of resorting to is very possibly no more than outcome of the diet of cosmic grandness we have unconsciously ingested all our lives.

The linguistic reconstitution of India soon after independence in 1947 saw the emergence of states with populations greater than those of most countries. Uttar Pradesh even after its more mountainous parts separated has more people than Russia has, while Bihar and Maharashtra have populations that far exceed Europe's biggie, Germany, while easily matching those of Philippines or Ethiopia.

A walk down Rashtrapathi Bhavan to Vijay Chowk with the massive and overpowering North and South Blocks on either side captures the crowded hugeness of the Indian state exactly as its chief architect had envisioned more than a century ago. Nothing as intimidative as Lutyens Delhi came up anywhere else in the British Empire only because nowhere else was there a need to impose the crushing grandeur required to overawe and overwhelm.

It takes size to make sense of size but it also requires an appreciation of diversities of all kinds to figure out something as varied as India. By the time I left government service six years ago at the end of a long thirty-five-year career working across the country, I could make myself reasonably understood in five different languages while several of my less linguistically challenged friends could hold forth in

several more. No one from India would see anything extraordinary in this, but such multi-lingual dexterity never fails to astound my foreign friends.

India's variety and magnitude unfailingly astonish. That the country miraculously holds itself together, as Nehru famously observed is because of its 'unity in diversity.' That unity is very real but it has been around for so long, we seem to hardly notice or be aware of it; but we must. Conscious of our size we'd learn to be less thin skinned to weather criticism from countries that have far fewer people than many of our cities do and therefore cannot be expected to understand the power of scale. Forgive them we might tell ourselves 'for they know not what they are doing.'

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Higher Education in the United States

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Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
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Higher education in the United States has rightly been heralded around the world for its excellence. In this brief article, I will attempt to highlight the key factors that differentiate the educational experience here. For context, I serve as the Provost (the Chief Academic Officer) and Executive Vice Chancellor (the Chief Operating Officer with budgetary responsibilities) at the University of Kansas (KU). Established in 1865, KU serves 27,565 students, of whom 19,262 are undergraduates and 8,303 are graduate students. These students come from over 100 countries and all fifty states. We are a public university, supported by the citizens of Kansas. We are also one of only 34 public universities to be members of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU). The AAU designation is reserved for universities with high levels of comprehensive research.

One aspect that is readily apparent when you set foot on a University campus here is the presence

As I was typing this last sentence, somewhat hastily, my computer's spellcheck offered 'Brutish' as an acceptable substitute for 'British' rule in India!

Shashi Tharoor

of undergraduate students. Unlike in India, where universities are for post-baccalaureate studies, US universities admit students right after their high school studies. We are a residential university and that means for most of the students, going to KU marks the first time they have been away from family. The acculturation begins right away in terms of planned activities to introduce students to the breadth of offerings at a comprehensive public research university. This also contributes to the emphasis on athletics, the arts, and a whole host of other co-curricular activities. Our mascot, the Jayhawk, is known worldwide. As I write this, our basketball team is in the hunt for the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) tournament title. This 'March Madness' is an annual rite of passage for students and alumni to rekindle bonds of friendship and re-live memories. Basketball is inextricably tied to the story of KU. James Naismith, the inventor of basketball, coached at KU and we are the home of the original rules of basketball. It is also a point of pride at KU that our debate team has also won first place numerous times as national champions. We are #1 among all public universities, having won five National Debate Tournament championships, and qualifying for the last 49 consecutive years to participate in the tournament. Even when I came to KU as a student, this emphasis on excellence, teamwork, and competition, whether in the sphere of the cerebral or the corporeal was an impressive differentiator.

Another hallmark of US higher education is the flexibility it affords students. Every student has to master some common domains of knowledge and demonstrate mastery of specific skills; we term these the common core. At KU, these include Critical Thinking and Quantitative Literacy; Communication; Breadth of Knowledge; Culture and Diversity; Social Responsibility and Ethics; and Integration and Creativity. Beyond this, students can mix and match the courses they wish to take and the paths they choose to blaze. It is not unheard of for students to change their majors, as they explore and examine different disciplines. More than any other aspect, this flexibility is the greatest strength of the US higher

education system. As is the case with many of our peers, we are also examining how to showcase on a transcript not just a student's grade point average (GPA) but also involvement in leadership activities, community service, internships, and study abroad experiences. KU in particular has a rich tradition of global connections and exchanges. 27% of our students participate in a study abroad experience prior to graduation.

There are of course several challenges that face KU as an institution of higher learning. These are the proverbial 'what keeps you up at night' scenarios that leaders must consider. Many of these overlap with the challenges faced by universities worldwide; some are context-specific.

Access and affordability : Public research universities have the moral and fiduciary duty to educate the citizenry of the state while also making discoveries that change the world. Part of the compact is funding from the state government to enable these aspirations. However, the decline in revenues from the state, combined with rising tuition costs, make it a challenge to ensure access and affordability. This means that the leader of a university today must be adept at friend-raising and fundraising.

Healthy dialogue across differences : We live in a 24-hour news cycle and events across the street or across the world achieve an immediacy of impact. As young people navigate turbulent political, economic, and social issues, universities must provide venues and avenues for them to debate and discuss different points of view. After all, universities must be places where student learn to grapple with the pressing issues of the day. This dedication to free speech must also be balanced with creating spaces where diverse viewpoints and life experiences are respected and nurtured.

Productivity and performance : Faculty members at top universities are expected to perform on three arenas: research, teaching, and service. The old model was that each faculty member would and should excel on each dimension. The 'publish or perish' imperative extends beyond securing tenure to promotions and raises. At the same time, the expectations of faculty to be active members of their

History is one subject where you cannot begin at the beginning. The roots of history lie in the pre-human past and it is hard to grasp just how long ago that was.

J.M.Roberts

communities, to encourage and engage in service learning, and student mentoring, continue to grow. Does one size fit all? Or do universities need to adopt the mentality of an orchestra or an athletic team, bringing together faculty who individually excel in specific roles, and collectively advance the mission of the university?

Modes of learning: Leaders of higher education today must ensure we stay relevant and impactful to students across modalities (online, on-ground, hybrid), and outcomes (degrees, certificates, non-degree and extension education). We owe it to our students that they matriculate with capabilities in the “Know, Be, Do” triad. The education experience must also be prepared for a lifetime relationship. How will we gear up for a world where students come back not for degrees, but for refresher courses and updates?

Despite the superficial differences, at the core, the promise of higher education is the same, in India and in the US. My father the late Professor T. Ramesh Dutta, and my mother, Professor T. Padma, worked at Andhra University for decades, and in their every interaction with students, in and out of the classroom, they demonstrated to me and to my sisters what a difference teachers can make, and how endless their influence can be, as it ripples across lives. The bottom line for me is this. Higher education has the power to transform lives and I am honored to be on the frontlines of this noble pursuit. That I get to lead an institution where I have such deep connections is icing on the cake. A photo from early 1969 shows my father, serious in his suit and tie, my mother at his side, my youngest sister in her arms. I am in front, a serious five-year old, clutching my two-year-old sister’s hand. With the help of the entire extended family, my father left India to go to KU for higher education. For close to four years, we did not see him. With no phone at home, conversations were rare and brief. My earliest memories are of my father’s letters telling us of these magical places, Kansas, and KU. It was a dream-come-true for my husband, Venkat, and me to also study at KU. After academic careers at Texas A&M University and The Ohio State University, now, we are back full-circle, at KU and in Lawrence. Rock Chalk, Jayhawk!

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The Crisis in the Classroom

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We often hear of the crisis in education and identify the usual suspects: uncaring parents, a mercenary, and indifferent state, commercial-minded private institutions, powerful industrial empire that try to save their souls by the creation of educational wings proudly sporting their names and lineages, teacher- politicians and their patrons, grant giving bodies that do not discharge their responsibility adequately; and when they do, do not ask of the recipients enough accountability.

We seldom hear of the real crisis, the crisis at the heart of all education, namely the crisis in teaching and the battle in the classroom.

Many of us think that the crisis in education will go away if we were to take timely measures. After all, we celebrate the Teacher’s Day; colleges and universities boast the UGC scales; we do have Academic staff colleges; the number of national institutions devoted to research, policy planning and accreditation in higher education are increasing day by day. And yet, we keep hearing of the crisis in education every now and then.

The crisis in teaching in contemporary India is compounded by various factors; such factors however are not integral to the crisis I have in mind. The researcher who disdains classroom teaching as an avoidable distraction and merrily flies around the national and international seminar circuit, the pedagogue who refuses to read or study anything new in the field and follows the slogan: ‘old is gold,’ the teacher who thinks that educational innovation and syllabi reforms, indeed lesson planning and course completions, are plainly unnecessary to his/her creative genius are equally part of the problem, but they are not endemic to the problem.

We must fathom greater depths in order to find the real causes when we think of the many ways we can be a good teacher in the next millennia. Certainly, mastery of the newer approaches, ICT driven educational technologies, the use of digital media and so on can help. They are necessary but not sufficient conditions for effective dissemination of knowledge in the classroom context.

The real crisis of teaching is the crisis in the classroom. The crisis may be dramatized by the choice between two models essentially; the Socratic model [Socrates taught: 'know thy self'] and the model of Macaulay. [Macaulay, the English educationist had famously decried native languages and education in colonial India and advocated English education instead; sadly we are, for the most part following his footsteps]. Whatever else we may have done, none of the educational planning from the 'Wood's Despatch', to Macaulay's Minutes, the major educational commissions chaired by luminaries like Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Dr. D.S.Kothari have done enough regarding the ongoing debate. Socrates remains a symbol, a lip service and a dream and a mantra. Ivan Illich's goal of deschooling society, only an ideal. Sri Aurobindo's important proposition in the essay 'A system of National Education' in the first decade of the 20th century that the first principle of all true learning is that nothing can be taught, the teacher is not an instructor; he is a friend and a guide remains an elusive and utopian aim, the Mother's radical view of 'No school' in the Auroville experiment as far too idealistic, disconnected from the real world.

Best teaching, it seems, to me cannot take place in the absence of a radical revision of pedagogy and the art of teaching in the classroom.

The time haloed lecture method, sanctified by Thomas Gradgrind of Charles Dicken's *Hard Times* must give way to the teacher as a fellow enquirer and not a repository of knowledge and wisdom. Verbal narcissism of the teacher before a captive audience, the learning with a notebook or an I Pad and the teacher at the podium must be replaced by real dialogues in the class room where problems and issues are articulated, discussed and debated in a respectful but egalitarian manner with the teacher as a facilitator. Thanks to the decline in reading habits

and the ever present google and Wikipedia, even the lecture method has lost much of its sheen.

The Socratic Method must begin early, right from the elementary level with the curiosity of the child kindled. Knowledge must not be regimented by disciplinary boundaries. The teacher must discover himself or herself as a Renaissance personality who treats all provinces of learning as his or her own ethically endowed and intellectually empowered, such a teacher is an example both in words and deeds. Collegiality is a creed and a necessity both to the colleagues in the field and to the learners that are under his/ her charge. When examples are set, evil like plagiarism will be a thing of the past.

The real crisis is indeed the crisis in the classroom. The next decades will witness the crisis in sharper focus. We must change our pedagogy quickly. By restoring Socrates to the class room, we can aspire to be an effective teacher. We need to look within and put the house in order even as we ask for institutional changes and meaningful interventions from outside. Unless we can come up with this new teaching protocol in the classroom, all reforms will remain a chimera.

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LEAVES FROM A MEMOIR: SRINIVASA IYENGAR IN BAGALKOT

Dr.(Mrs.) Prema Nandakumar

Located in Northern Karnataka and very close to Belgaum, Bagalkot was the capital of the Chalukyan empire during the 6th and 8th centuries. The last Chalukyan king, Kirtivarman II was overthrown by the Rashtrakutas. History lay in layers beneath the earth of Bagalkot when Iyengar went to the small town. It was somewhat of a drab place in the 'forties, but Srinivasa Iyengar who was coming from Belgaum had no reason to be unhappy as the place was very close to Koodalasangama and already he had been initiated into the glorious heritage of Basava by Sri S.S. Basawanal. The two professors had produced the well-received **Musings of Basava**. Blessed with a genuine historical sense Iyengar was also

The profligate are rewarded because they flatter the people in order to betray them.

Joseph Stony

delighted that the area was near Pattadakal temples attributed to Vikramaditya II. The Ghataprabha river murmured close by Bagalkot which reminded him of the Tambraparni in the distant south, close to his ancestral village, Kodakanallur.

The move from Belgaum where Iyengar was a professor to Bagalkot is easily explained. The Bagalkot Lingayat Society had started a new college and Sri Nandimath who had been the Principal of Lingaraj College, Belgaum, was taking over as the Principal. By now there had grown a very deep and abiding friendship between him and Iyengar, who had happily helped with the proof-reading of the former's Ph. D. thesis and seen it through the press. Iyengar's interest in the Kannada language and the love and respect he elicited from the town and the academic people as also his secretarial work in drafting matter concerning a college's activities and his editorship of the Lingaraj College Miscellany drew total admiration from Sri Nandimath who invited him to take over the assistant Principalship of the new college. For Iyengar it was a difficult decision to move as he was "established" in Belgaum. But a change was also welcome as it could bring new challenges.

The move was not without some searing problems for his finances. Before the summer holidays began in 1944, Iyengar put in his resignation to the authorities of the Lingaraj College, attended the last day of the term and left for his village. The understanding was that he would come back, join duty, take his salary for the holidays and go to Bagalkot to join the Basaweshwar College. However, the authorities of the Lingaraj College refused to give him his salary. Losing pay of three months was a monumental crisis for Iyengar as back in his village he had spent almost all he had saved to help his elder brother marry off his daughter. Fortunately for him he had a thrifty wife and a happy household. He took the financial blow with philosophical calm and left Belgaum not without regrets. He was always grateful for the College to have given him his first major start in his career as a teacher.

Iyengar took his family to Bagalkot and was welcomed by the family of Sri Guguwad who was a

rich landowner of the town. A portion of the family's huge house was set aside for the Iyengar family. Sri Guguwad was rendering all help to the fledgeling institution and so made the new family feel very much at home in his estate which adjoined a cotton mill. There was no furniture, but it hardly mattered for Iyengar who happily sat on a stone pial in front of his portion and engaged himself in typing his work, unmindful of the children who played happily in the huge yard. Perhaps he found it all soothing too, including the mooing of the cattle from the pen which gave him a perfectly rural atmosphere in which he had grown up in Kodakanallur. After a few months he shifted to an independent house which he rented.

It was a very simple life and Iyengar immersed himself in helping the Principal place the college on sure and strong foundations. In her reminiscences on those days, his wife Padmasani speaks of the strict rationing and difficulty of procuring potable water but apparently there was a good deal of joyous camaraderie in the college set up:

"Almost all the teachers in the new college were youngsters except for Sri Nandimath and my husband. I can only remember a few names: Krishnamoorthy, Kulkarni, Chagla, Venkateswaran. They all got a very good name as teachers within six months! They would return from the college walking in the evening, conversing and laughing...It is not an overstatement if I say that the people of Bagalkot literally revered my husband. He had become a kind of legend as his biography of Mahayogi Sri Aurobindo had been published just then."

Iyengar kept himself busy in replaying the Belgaum days when planning the timetable of the new college. Class room lectures had the precedence but he proceeded to involve the students and teachers in other activities that had a direct bearing on providing the proper cultural climate for the students. E v e r y month there was a public lecture by one of the teachers. Since Iyengar had by then become well known as a public speaker on a variety of topics, these lectures became popular. When he was the speaker, all the lawyers and engineers of Bagalkot would attend and diligently take notes. While literature

My humble plea to those in power is: Shed the VIP Syndrome-before the iron gets into your soul.

Fali S. Nariman

was the main subject, Iyengar could wield with equal felicity politics, history and culture. His mastery and popularity were such that soon his rasikas coined a new proverb: *Aadu muttadha thalaiyilla Iyengar muttadha subject illa* (There is no leaf that remains untouched by the goat, nor any subject untouched by Iyengar)!

This was naturally so because by now he was a well-established literary journalist and wrote tirelessly for non-paying magazines too. One of them was the eminent monthly, **The Indian P.E.N.** Its founder, Madame Sophia Wadia discovered in Iyengar a perfect editor, and a person who had a pan-Indian view of Indian literature, the ideal help for her magazine. Iyengar became a member of the P.E.N. Association and began attending the association's conferences and lecturing at its Bombay headquarters. It was while in Bagalkot that he attended the P.E.N. Conference at Jaipur, and the whole town rejoiced. For, the conference was attended by eminent personalities like Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, A.S.P. Ayyar and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The newsreel at the local cinema hall showed a clipping of Iyengar walking in procession with Sarojini Naidu. The theatre owner had to repeat the news reel many times to satisfy the student population of the place!

More than half a century ago, the Bagalkot area was still rural and so such happenings were an excitement shared by everyone with a sense of wonderment. Iyengar's radio talk recorded in Bombay was to be broadcast and Bagalkot got ready to listen to it. Reminiscing about this talk, Iyengar's wife said:

"We had no radio at that time. Only Basappa Patil had one. On the day of the broadcast they placed mats on the open terrace, and kept the radio outside so we all could sit and listen to the broadcast. The broadcast began with a lady announcing my husband's name. We heard him for five minutes and then there was a lot of disturbance in the receiver. Patil's son did his best with the nobs but in vain! The sounds came again but the time was past and there was only this announcement: You just now heard Prof K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar speak on ..."

Fortunately, the entire proceedings of the First All-India Writers' Conference was edited by Iyengar and published in 1947. More than three scores of years later, the volume brings back the events as if they had but happened yesterday. In his detailed introduction which gives a history of the Indian P.E.N. Club in India founded by Sophia Wadia. It was not easy planning this conference as they were war-years. With his vantage position as a member of the executive committee, Iyengar writes with a sense of relief that Sir Mirza Ismail, the Prime Minister of Jaipur took things in his hand:

"Moreover, the Jaipur Conference was the first important cultural gathering held anywhere immediately after the long awaited and much-delayed conclusion of World War II. During the terrible war years humanity had witnessed the crash -- or seeming final crash -- of its most cherished ideals. Love, goodwill and mutual trust had been crushed; hate, greed and mutual suspicion had played havoc with the destinies of millions of innocent men, women and children. Human values had been treated as a thing of naught and the 'eternal verities' had been all but given their conge."

But this was an opportunity to prove that the free soul of man is more important than economic and political values; also the meet could demonstrate the unity of Indian culture."

The three days' conference had several luminaries gracing the stage: among them, Sarojini Naidu, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, K.S. Venkataramani, Kshiti Mohan Sen and "that torrential fountain of good humour", A.S.P. Ayyar. While reconstructing the speeches and events, Iyengar did not forget the planned excursions:

"A whole rich evening at Amber with its courts and mirrors and hanging gardens and ineffable silences -- an hour or so at the Observatory -- an adventure of discovery to the Hawa Mahal, the wonder palace of the Winds -- a round of visits, covering the Maharajah's College, the Albert Hall and Museum, and the Mubarak Mahal -- and, perhaps, a visit to the bazaar where Jaipur saris and Jaipur

ornamented vases captured your eye and emptied your purse, -- and back again to your tent, to rest for the night, and be ready for tomorrow's programme!"

Iyengar as a master-editor gets fully revealed in this first major assignment of editing the addresses delivered in a conference. He was to do it many times in later years, but already his attention to detail and fairness of presentation get revealed in this volume. There are major names here ... Mulk Raj Anand, Radhakumud Mukherji, Gulabdas Broker, D.V. Gundappa among others. Iyengar's own address on 22nd October, 1945 initiated a discussion on 'The Interplay and Circulation of Thought in the Modern Indian Literatures" with his characteristic sense of humour. The sense of pride the Indian felt in the achievements of the politicians of those days comes through very well:

"Politics are for the hour and politicians all over the world are most of them short-sighted people. But men of letters – and our leading politicians are men of letters – have the vision and the faculty divine, and there is no doubt that with the background of our culture, Aryan, Dravidian and Islamic – and with the unifying drive of an integral leadership in the country, we may be able very soon to outgrow the present period of frustration. Our immemorial Indian tradition and our progressive integral leadership are the forces that have determined, and still determine, the interplay and circulation of thought in the Indian literatures."

The "present period of frustration" was indeed overcome when India became independent in 1947, and entered a new period of rich discoveries in literary achievements. For the present, Iyengar continued his work in the Basaveshvar College with skill and dedication. During these years some of the finest creative writers and scholars used to visit Iyengar's home as he was well known as a regular contributor to **Federated India** and **Mahratta**, leading to lasting friendships. Among these were Principal Sadasiva Ayyar, V.K. Gokak, Prof. Mugali and Masti Venkatesa Iyengar. During this period, his reviews and articles written encouraging publications in Tamil used to come out regularly in **The Indian P.E.N.**

This too brought him close to many leading regional writers like Shankar Ram and Kumudini. In those days, it was almost impossible for regional writers to get mentioned in English language papers and hence Iyengar's writings were most welcome.

The publication of his biography of Sri Aurobindo brought Iyengar to the notice of C.R. Reddy, the Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University. C.R. Reddy was an ardent Aurobindonian, having succeeded Sri Aurobindo in the Maharajah's College, Baroda. When they met, probably in Bombay, Dr. Reddy invited Iyengar to take over the Professorship of English in the University. Iyengar, however, felt quite happy in the mofussil college and in any case, he was not prepared to apply for the post. After the Belgaum interview, Iyengar never attended a job interview, for he had enough of the uncertainties of an interview while pursuing his career. He liked to teach and engage himself in reading and writing. He had ample opportunities for this in Bagalkot. As he had no ambitions of going on and on and up and up the academic ladder, he replied in the negative when Dr. Reddy asked him to reconsider his decision. When Dr. Nandimath heard of this, he was deeply touched but respected Iyengar's decision "not to apply" for any post.

But Dr. Reddy could not easily be thwarted in his objective which was to fill up the young university with the best talents available in the country who could teach and guide research. He suggested to the Syndicate of the University that Iyengar be invited but the members were not keen to change the rules. One had to apply for any of the posts in the university. It was then that Dr. Reddy circulated Iyengar's biography of Sri Aurobindo. Bezwada Gopala Reddy who was on the syndicate was enthusiastic after reading it and soon other members too were convinced to authorise the Vice Chancellor to invite Iyengar to come and head the department of English. The invitation went to Bagalkot.

Once again Iyengar was reluctant. His loyalty was for Dr. Nandimath who was struggling to put the College on strong foundations. Now Dr. Nandimath himself came forward to coax his younger colleague

not to spurn the offer from such an eminent person as Dr. Reddy. The offer had made them all proud and he was particularly gratified that one who had grown up in academic stature when working with him was now being invited to occupy the chair of a distinguished university. : "I was born here. I must be with these people till the end and pass away here. But you have a bright future ahead and so you better go. My blessings are always with you and your family." At last Iyengar yielded and left Bagalkot with a heavy heart. Reminiscing over those days, his wife says:

"Leaving Bagalkot was difficult for us because we had grown very close to the people. However, Sri Nandimath said the offer of a University Professorship for my husband was too good a chance to set aside. And so we bid goodbye to the place and the dear families. How can I ever forget the loving farewells and the forlorn way in which Sri Nandimath and other teachers and friends stood on the platform as our train moved away? But the happy memories remain as those pieces of carbon rock pieces with tracings of a leaf or plant, pieces which we used to collect during our walks in Bagalkot and find shut in the smallest piece, perhaps the history of some millennia."

The Bagalkot years had added a rich space in Iyengar's experiences with academic life as well as with literature. Academically speaking, he went often to Bombay to attend meetings as he had done when at Belgaum, since both the colleges were affiliated to the Bombay University. Since the university area in those distant days was really huge – from Shikarpur and Karachi to Belgaum and Dharwar – he came in contact with the administrative system of Indian universities and had contact with a variety of teachers, students, and teacher-administrators. University education became a major area in his scholarship. Indeed, it was a life-long passion. His first writing on the subject was an article on the Report of the Ceylon University Commission in the **Calcutta Review** in 1929! When he became a Professor in the Andhra University, his studies in university education gained a rounded fullness and he published an important book, **A New Deal for Our Universities** in 1951. Cogitating over the educational policies and vicissitudes in independent India became a life-long meditation for Iyengar and

he continued to speak on the subject till the late 'nineties.

If Iyengar was proceeding to Waltair as one who had mastered the educational problems of India, he was also bringing to the Professorial chair in the Andhra University an enviable halo as the biographer of Sri Aurobindo, a highly respected critic, and one who was keenly interested in promoting the Indian literatures written in various languages and English. For he was already a friend of some of the stalwarts of India's literary world, K.M. Munshi of Gujarat, Masti Venkatesa Iyengar of Karnataka, K.S. Venkataramani of Tamil Nadu and Dilip Kumar Roy of Bengal. And Bagalkot remained a dear space in the family memories always. Iyengar himself now proceeded towards new achievements when he took up residence in the Andhra University campus in the picturesque coastal town of Visakhapatnam in 1947.

(Prof. Srinivasa Iyengar was the Vice Chancellor of Andhra University from 1966 to 1968. CPS thanks his worthy daughter and eminent scholar Dr.(Mrs.)Prema Nandakumar for sending the above tribute on the eve of Prof. Iyengar's birth anniversary on April 17.)

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Book Review

Shaping India's Future - Essays in memory of Abid Hussain

(Edited by Deepak Nayyer and Rana Hasan, 2017, Academic Foundation, pp. 345, Rs. 995/-)

It has been widely held that the foundation for Indian economic liberalisation was laid much before launching of economic reforms by Narasimha Rao-Manmohan Singh government in 1991. A number of Committees and Commissions have done path breaking work towards the strategy of opening up of the Indian economy. Quite a few individuals were actively involved making significant contributions on economic liberalisation. Abid Hussain, affectionately called both by his colleagues and friends apart from his admirers as Abid Saab, was an important member of that distinguished club. Abid, a distinguished civil servant, a passionate diplomat and

a concerned citizen of India contributed immensely to the public sphere in a wide range of areas for an equitable and empowered India during six decades of his illustrious career as an individual and also in association with a number of institutions including UN- ESCAP, Planning Commission and various key ministries like commerce and industries both in AP government and government of India. As chairman of the committee on trade policies he was largely responsible to push for industrial reforms and while in the Planning commission Abid Hussain worked on industrial de-licensing and was a firm believer that a vibrant industrial development was a key aspect of India's prosperity. An uncompromising optimist Abid, an early proponent of economic liberalisation was committed to the idea of a prosperous, liberal, and secular India.

This book of essays, *Shaping India's Future* written in memory of Dr. Abid Hussain is a collection of essays written by eminent people both from the academic fraternity and bureaucracy to which he proudly belonged is unique in more than one sense. One of the editors of the book, Rana Hasan is his son and an unpublished essay of Abid Hussain, Role of Bureaucracy in India's Development is a part of this book. Apart from the essays which form the first and core part under two sections, economy and state and governance and society with contributions from distinguished economists like Deepak Nayyar, Y.V. Reddy, Rajiv Kumar, Rakesh Mohan, Dipankar Gupta, and Sudipto Mundle is another unique feature. Under part two of the book seven prominent persons who had worked with Abid Saab at some point of his long journey paid glowing tributes basing on their personal experiences and in some sense reflecting their association with him. They made a sincere attempt to paint the multidimensional personality of Abid Hussain. They include, Jagdish Bhagawati, Nitin Desai, Aravind Panagariya, Y.V. Reddy, And Deepak Nayyar himself.

Edited books generally have collection of articles either written and published already or written for a conference. While in the former many

have a unified single theme the latter have one as they were all written for a conference or seminar on a specified topic or theme. This book, though a collection of articles, has a unified theme running through, viz, critical evaluation of different aspects of economic and social policies to build a better, equitable, empowered and secular India for which Dr Abid Hussain stood for and worked throughout his life. Incidentally the essays analyse different dimensions of Indian economic policy within the broad theme of building a better India. Contemporary and important issues of economic policy and governance have all been addressed adequately under different heads by the authors.

Countries across the world have been implementing reforms as part of their development strategies with different objectives and outcomes as they are defined by the aspirations and expectations of the people which are also subjected to vary from time to time and country to country. However, the basic objective is to "enhance citizens lives by lowering the cost of services, reducing bureaucracy, and curtailing corruption. Reforms also involve broadening the bouquet of services provided, as well as improving their quality, while keeping the cost to the exchequer at a minimum." India's main object of reforms has been to accelerate growth and make it inclusive and this requires apart from a "particular set of economic policies a just and efficient structure of governance and a society which shares progressive social and cultural norms". This book of essays covers most of these policies.

The role of the State in managing the economy has been at the centre of the discussion on economic reforms. While some countries have opted for a State-led strategy others have taken market friendly economic approach with state playing a facilitating role. In the Indian context the real question is no longer about the size of the State or degree of State intervention. It is about the nature of State intervention and the quality of the performance of the State. Further it is emphasised

that the government must endeavour to change the nature and quality of its intervention in the market, consciously differentiating between the functional, institutional, and the strategic aspects. In conclusion, India needs a development State to shape its future. (Deepak Nayyar).

As societies evolve there will be demand for new institutions to address emerging challenges. Replacement of Planning Commission with NITI Aayog is” intended to capture the new realities of macroeconomic management and Union-State relations, especially the need to foster a spirit of competitive federalism within the context of a broader environment of cooperation.” Recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance commission will be useful to NITI Aayog to take the States on board into a partnership with the Union Government for transformation and development.(Y.V.Reddy). The importance of public investment to build and strengthen infrastructure, particularly in railways is crucial and this requires the creation of coordinating Policy and planning institutions with the requisite technical expertise.(Rakesh Mohan).

Two issues of concern to both professional economists and policy makers in India are low productivity in agriculture and low quality employment both in agriculture and informal sectors. Also, young and aspirational India is looking for quality skills and jobs and this is a big challenge to the government’s as about 12 million people are entering into the job market every year. The success of the inclusive approach to development largely depends on creating productive and well-paying jobs. One sector with continued potential to create reasonably productive and well paying jobs is manufacturing. Fortunately, the governments recognition of the importance of a dynamic manufacturing sector and its “Make in India” programme provides the much needed platform for transforming Indian manufacturing and enabling it to meet its full potential.(Rajiv Kumar and Rana Hasan). (In reality not much might have happened yet on the manufacturing front. The best two measurers of

Indian manufacturing progress could be the extent to which manufacturing imports from China have been slashed and the degree to which Indian manufacturing has taken over export markets.)

Issues of citizenship in the context of the development of nation state, importance of individual freedom and citizenship rights to people of diverse provenances need to be taken care of invoking various constitutional provisions.(Dipankar Gupta and Pratap Bhanu Mehta). Governance issues need to be analysed and articulated not only from the standpoint of service delivery but also from the corruption angle considering their importance to provide quality services to people and also to realise the full potential. Existing socio-political context and values define success of any initiatives in this regard. (Dipankar Gupta, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Sudipto Mundle).

The role and importance of bureaucracy in the implementation of economic reforms needs no special emphasis as the market to become efficient requires accountable and innovative bureaucracy.” Bureaucracy must become more effective and efficient in its core area of enforcing law and order and assume a prominent and active role as a provider of public goods and services to common man. It must recreate the sense of pragmatic idealism which was once its hallmark and should become more mission oriented with a sense of pride in doing service to the people. Achieving this will not be easy, and will require creative solutions acceptable to all stakeholders involved. However, the pay-offs for doing so will be immense”. (Abid Hussain)

It is indeed a privilege to write the aforementioned notes on a book that will definitely attract the attention of policy makers and researchers of the country.

Prof. K.C.Reddy,
Former Chairman, A.P.State Council for
Higher Education

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India’s foreign policy in the twenty-first century is characterized by a marked shift towards pragmatism and willingness to do business with all. David Malone

'India important in shift in balance of power : Y.V. Reddy'

(Newspaper report on the lecture delivered by Dr.Y.V.Reddy, former Governor of RBI and Chairman of the 14th Finance Commission, on February 14, 2017 at Centre for Policy Studies)

'I started my career in Vizag when Abid Hussain was Collector'

Globalisation is very powerful, and if it is not well managed by governments and people, the bad may be more than good, former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) YV Reddy has said.

Delivering a lecture on "Globalisation and India" on Tuesday at the Dr. YV.S. Murty auditorium at a programme organised by the Centre for Policy Studies, he said India was forced to take the path of economic reforms after the balance of payments crisis in the early 1990s triggered by the Gulf war.

Asia would play a crucial role in the shift of global power balance from the West to the East with incremental economic activity and trade likely to shift considerably to Asia. "Though advanced economies are way ahead of the developing economies, India will inevitably be an important part of the shift in power balances," he observed.

Book on Abid Hussain

Earlier, he released a book, Shaping India's future - Essays in Memory of Abid Hussain, brought out by the centre.

Dr Reddy, who was the chairman of the 14th Finance Commission, observed that in the decades after Independence, with self-reliance being the guiding principle,

"India missed the bus in the late Seventies and early Eighties" during the Chinese surge.

Global economy

"China and Russia joined the World Bank, but we did not renew our relationship with the global economy. Many of the developing countries were at that time adopting outward-oriented policies,

particularly with regard to trade. We continued illogical self-reliance policies. 'Reagonomics' and 'Thatcherism' were bringing about a fundamental rethinking about the relationship between the State and the market and we were not even discussing them," he said.

Dr Reddy spoke about his role in ushering in the reforms in the various government ministries, his stints in the World Bank and the IMF, and as the Deputy Governor of the RBI and finally its Governor.

Beginning the lecture on a nostalgic note, he recalled how he started his career in Visakhapatnam in the late Sixties when Abid Hussain was the district Collector.

"The city, 50 years ago, was a small university town and port town, with the Hindustan Shipyard Limited and the BHPV being the major units.

There was a single flight to Hyderabad a day by Indian Airlines at that time. Now Vizag is a part of Indian net-work of cities and on the way to becoming a part of the global network," he remarked.

President of CPS A. Prasanna Kumar welcomed the gathering and former Chairman of the A.P. State Council of Higher Education K.C. Reddy spoke about the book on Abid Hussain.

(Courtesy : *The Hindu*, February 15, 2017)

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'Call for revamping education system'

(Newspaper report on the lecture delivered by Dr.M.M.Pallam Raju, former Union Minister for Defence and Human Resource Development, on February 27, 2017 at Centre for Policy Studies)

The education system in the country needs to be revamped at all levels for optimum use of the available human resources, as India is a young nation with an ancient civilisation, former Union HRD Minister M.M Pallamraju has said.

He was delivering a lecture on the challenges and opportunities in the HR sector at a programme organised by the Centre for Policy Studies here on

Monday. Centre for Policy Studies president A. Prasanna Kumar chaired. Mr Pallamraju expressed regret that before he could get down to his job as the Union HRD Minister, he was caught up in the political storm surrounding the bifurcation of the State. "However, I have studied the subject in depth and my ideas have become clearer during the past two years or more, when I am out of power," he said.

Daunting task

He said it was a daunting task to manage the education system in the country, given its size and diversity, but not an impossible one. "Resource mobilisation is a huge challenge. Even if you get the resources, they have to be used judiciously," he said.

Earlier, he was felicitated by Andhra University Vice-Chancellor G. Nageswara Rao.

(Courtesy : *The Hindu*, February 28, 2017)

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Correction : The last para in the article by Dr. Abid Hussain in the February 2, 2017 issue should read :

Borrowing from Bertrand Russell, the world we should wish to see would be one free from the virulence of group hostilities engendered by differing religious doctrines or clashing political ideologies. Then and only then shall we be able to realize that happiness of all is to be desired from cooperation rather than strife.

The error is regretted

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