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THE MENACE OF CORRUPTION

Corruption, like poverty and unemployment, is a serious challenge for Indian Polity. In fact a causal relationship between corruption and poverty and violence is perceived in the Indian political system. The nexus between the neta, (politician) babu (bureaucrat) lala (businessman) and dada (criminal) was explained in detail by the former Central Vigilance Commissioner who came out boldly against this 'low-risk high-profit business.'

In the first week of November every year a cacophonous exercise, called the National Vigilance Week, is organised by the government establishments during which time leaders and heads of organisations make platitudinous speeches. Every institution and public place is decorated with slogans and placards against corruption. Despite all these exercises and exhortations our nation is said to be more corrupt than before and on the global corruption scale prepared by Transparency International India's place is somewhere around 73, lower than before.

The great Indian expert on statecraft Kautilya wrote that there were about forty types of corruption. In modern times a systematic study of corruption has been made by scholars who trace its roots and growth. The term corruption has, it seems, its origin in the Latin word 'rumpere' which means 'to break.' A simple definition of corruption is 'abuse of public office for private gain'. According to a USIS publication it contains four main features: a) misuse of a position of power b) gaining advantage for those who, actively and passively, are parties to the misuse c) undesirable effects on third parties and d) secrecy surrounding the transaction.

Governments act as monopolies in many ways because of the discretionary power enjoyed by them and their agencies in decision-making. Often governments take shelter under the cover of secrecy and are not always accountable for their actions. Gunnar Myrdal ex-

plained how in Asian countries corruption had been institutionalised. According to him 1) Bureaucrats involved in corruption do not lose their jobs. They are not sent to prison nor are they made to part with their ill-gotten wealth. 2) The law enforcing officials are corrupt and they share their booty with the corrupt. 3) People not only tolerate corruption but show respect for those who made fortunes and 4) It is easier for the citizen to pay for the work (corrupt money) than to wait for his turn. The strategies and institutions to fight corruption are formal and ineffective according to experts.

A recent report of a Parliamentary Committee referred to the alarming growth of black money at least by 20% when the economy was struggling to achieve an annual growth rate of 6%. Loans given to industrialists, bureaucrats and politicians amounting to over Rs. 60,000 crores were written off. Strange but true, official reports showed a decline in the rate of corruption during a twenty year-period with CBI cases coming down from 1349 in 1972 to 1231 in 1992 and the number of persons prosecuted by the CBI which stood at 300 in 1972 came down to 164 in 1992.

After the annual exercise involving a plethora of meetings, workshops and publications to fight corruption four states have gone to the polls to be followed by a general election in 2004. It is now accepted that the coming general elections will be the costliest in the history of our democracy. In simple terms electoral politics have come to mean a business of investment and returns or rewards. In such a situation how can the nation produce leaders with will and courage to tackle the menace of corruption? Not only ancient Rome but many countries in modern times have been ruined by corruption and moral vacuum. Time to wake up and act before it is too late.

- The Editor

"Just as it is impossible to know when a fish moving in water is drinking it, so it is impossible to find out when government servants in charge of undertakings misappropriate it."

- Kautilya

"WESTERN NATIONS' POLICIES DRAW FLAK"

(CPS organised a book discussion on October 30, 2003 on Fareed Zakaria's "Future of Freedom-Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad.")

Freedom and democracy, though conceptualised and promoted through institution building in the West, are not the preserve of any great power, and Western nations, led by the US, cannot claim any monopoly over them. The US, shaken by the terrorist attack of 9/11, seems to be overreacting to global events and the Western powers, which preached and practised colonialism for centuries are not justified in setting a global democratic agenda. This opinion emerged from speakers participating in a discussion on 'Future of freedom-Illiberal democracy at Home and Abroad' the latest book of the 'Newsweek' editor, Fareed Zakaria, organised by the Centre for Policy Studies here.

Initiating the discussion, the former KGH superintendent, S. Satyamurthy, came down heavily on the Western powers and the American attack on Iraq and other nations in the name of freedom. "The World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation are symbols of monopoly and neo-imperialism, he said. Ms. Nalini from the faculty of Andhra University Politics Department quoted Arundhati Roy to show that what the US and the Western powers practised in the name of democracy "is anti-poor and anti-progress." She lamented that such an agenda and approach were being promoted in India, particularly in AP. The Head of AU Department of Law, R. Venkata Rao, explained how the author had argued that democracy should not grow at the expense of individual liberty and how democracy had to strike a balance between freedom and security in the 21st century. "Democratisation of violence is the new phenomenon," he remarked quoting from the book. The Centre's director, A. Prasanna Kumar, introducing the book, said : "If Woodrow Wilson, the professor turned President, wrote 100 years ago that the world must be safe for democracy, Zakaria argues that today democracy must be made safe for the world." Constitutional liberalism, which implied rule of law, free media and judicial independence, alone made democracy meaningful, he said and quoted Zakaria to emphasise that "majority may not be always right as for instance the execution of the great Socrates, which was democratic but not liberal and just."

(Courtesy : The Hindu, November 2, 2003)

THE ROLE OF HRM IN INSURANCE DEVELOPMENT - II

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3. PEOPLE SIDE OF THE BUSINESS

3.1 The People: In any business, people are the most important resource and failure to recognize this runs the risk of incompetent execution of business. In the 21st century, more talent is required to handle growing busi-

ness in insurance in particular and other financial services in general. Business success depends on the vision to look beyond the obvious.

3.2. Four-Ceps : People are of four types, it seems. Those people who don't know and don't know that they don't know - these may not be disturbed. Then there are those who don't know and know that they don't know - these are willing to learn and you can teach them. Next are those people who know but don't know that they know - wake them up and spur them into action. Lastly are those people who know and also know that they know - follow them as these are destined to lead.

3.3. The Learning Curve: Training and development of human resources are the important concerns of every business today. As the business environment grows riskier by the day the need for continual updating of the knowledge and skills should be given top priority. The needs assessment is a continuous process as the actual performance has to keep pace with the desired performance dictated largely by competition in the market place. To maintain this efficiency, learning in knowledge, skills and attitudes at the organization level, task level and people level becomes a top priority. Failure to recognize this throws organizations into the vicious circle of low learning levels, low goal-setting, low performance and losing perspective.

High performance requires a powerful priority system based on simple synergism - average performance exploding into high performance once the right set of relationships are achieved - of the learning curve. Such a priority system can help guard against low level needs crowding out high payoff opportunities. The topmost priority of such a priority system is that the organization should plan to be in a position to change than planning to be in a particular position. Coming up short some times is very much human. But, to routinely accept less than high performance is incompetence. High performers do not gamble but devise numerous contingency plans and play them constantly at different levels. Every change is not important for high performance and implementing massive changes defeats the very purpose. Making a number of small changes and adjustments on the way underlie the strategy of search by high performers. Small changes at all levels of the organization and on a continuous basis lead to course corrections without basic disruptions and to stay in tune with the market place.

High performance requires bracketing the future into scenarios. It works out the most likely scenario and works on it with a contingency plan to change the position when necessitated. 'Dealing with uncertainty is like playing with a thousand pound bear, one does not lead but only stays prepared to follow every move'.

3.4. Hard Work Alone is Not Sufficient: Hard work underlines high performance though not sufficient by itself. It requires applying the well learned principles of human endeavour. They are, a sense of humor, a desire to improve things, a sense of a strategic position and

a number of contingency options to bracket the future for survival and prosperity of organizations.

3.5. Dealing With People: Every organization has a culture that sets the tone for dealing with people. In this connection two basic tenets serve the best. One is to establish a strong communication base and the other is to keep the communication system consistent. A strong emotional communication base makes an organization a pleasant place to visit. As a result, customer relationships get cosy providing the core business. Customers like to be treated as the king. Once the relationship is established, the companies do not have to hard sell their business.

3.6. Organizational Culture: People are the most important resource. But more important than the people are the core cultural values of an organization. They are the set of collective attitudes towards self-image, objectives, values, customs and styles of working in an organization. They are the invisible treasure embedded in the attitudes of who the people are and what they do of the organization, by the organization and for the organization. It is this culture that should manage the people but not the bosses and the archaic hierarchies. The bosses should spend time and money in creating such cultural environment which in turn motivates the people to perform. It is this environment that helps each individual endowed with different energy levels and responses to relate his/her values with the organizational culture.

3.7. Help Others Grow: No single individual has monopoly over sound ideas. Everybody is endowed with the necessary potential. It is only in their efforts to relate themselves with the organizational values that they continually search out new ideas and opportunities. In this process every one learns from every other person. No matter how smart a person is he/she also learns a lot from the colleagues. In this way all people are important asset of the organization. A healthy imperative of this environment is that you help your associates grow and in turn they let you stand on their shoulders for you to reach further heights of high performance.

This maxim applies to your competitors also. An educated competitor would be a safe rival. He won't damage the market place. He would not create external diseconomies to you through myopic policies and market pollution.

4. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

4.1. Industrial Relations Mobility: Fixed structures, fixed assets, fixed locations and long-term employees was the order of industrial activity in the 20th century. The days of molecular manufacturing are over. The days of leasing equipment and rental work-force are here to stay. Firms are shifting their "center of gravity" from core competence to the centrifuge of vertical specialization going offshore. Therefore, the industrial relations have to increase their mobility. Organizations are unfolding into holding companies where the subsidiaries are

simultaneously growing shorter and leaner. As a consequence, the industrial relations need to shift their center of activity from conflict legitimization to mutual trust and cooperation. Such mobility enables the industrial relations systems to "out grow" the confines of a specific industry-centric focus into network relations and team structures.

4.2. Unions' Role in the 21st Century: Is there a role for the unions in the 21st century? The answer is a definite yes but not as structured and operated as at present. There is need for a new age "business unionism." The salient features of this would be : (1) they extend their reach geographically but not by industry and play a proactive role in the development of the organizations ; (2) the new unions will work with the employers for providing job-related training in updating skills including computer and technical literacy. This improves mobility of the members and reduces inertia and ineptitude; (3) the new unions work with "portable packages" of comparable "plug in options" for more mobility with less cost to the individual; (4) the new unions can serve as advocates of development in cooperation with the management and (5) the new unions will work for industrial relations climate full of harmony, openness and responsibility towards absence of any discordant notes in their relationship with the management.

Such should be the new unionism in the establishment of a new industrial relations system. In such a system unions are exalted by the rights they sacrifice most for.

(Concluded)

A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF INDIA'S CURRENT STATUS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT - II

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In the ultimate analysis one should remember that the progress and prosperity of a nation depend not only on the material resources at its command, but to a greater extent upon its human endowments which in turn are influenced and determined by demographic processes at work. Human capital formation and development which is the process of increasing the knowledge, skills and capacities of the population and its effective utilization, plays a strategic role in social and economic development of any nation. The upgradation of mental ability and increase in physical ability tend to the formation of human capital. The interaction between human resource formation and development, socio-economic development, and demographic transition is a three dimensional process.

The goals we put in this regard will succeed only if they mean something to the billions of individuals for whom they are intended. The goals must become a na-

tional reality, embraced by their main stake-holders-people and Governments. They are a set of benchmarks for assessing progress and for enabling poor people to hold political leaders accountable. They are also commitments by national leaders who must be held accountable for their fulfillment by their electorates. Many of the solutions to hunger, disease, poverty and illiteracy are well known. But what is needed is for efforts to be properly resourced, and for services to be distributed more fairly and efficiently. Otherwise, slogans like Sustainable Development, Human Development, and Gender Equity remain on paper as catch words and fashionable metaphors, useful for our profession but definitely not serve the purpose of common man. In this new millennium, nations are judged not by their GDPs or per capita incomes but by the well being of their peoples, by levels of health, nutrition and education, by the civil and political liberties enjoyed by their citizens, by the protection guaranteed to children and by provisions made for the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

Spread of literacy and education, increasing availability of affordable reproductive and child health services, convergence of service delivery at village levels, participation of women in paid work force, together with a steady equitable improvement in family incomes will facilitate early achievement of the socio-demographic goals envisaged in the Tenth Plan. Its success will be achieved if the action plan contained in the National Population Policy-2000 is pursued as a National Movement.

(Concluded)

THE THERAPEUTIC AND PROPHYLACTIC ROLE OF MUSIC - III

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Every one of us responds to music- from the newborn infant to the patients suffering from terminal diseases and from physically or mentally strong to those who are handicapped or disabled. Several psychotherapists have of late, used music to enhance their efficacy in treating neurotic disorders. Client and the therapist improvise music together, building a creative musical process that itself becomes an end in itself. The therapy enhances communication and helps people live more resourcefully and creatively. It helps in controlling blood pressure, emotions, liver functioning and all the psychosomatic disorders. It is relevant here to recall the words of Paul Nordoff, a musicologist, who commented that once a musician begins to work as therapist, he'll find new depths in the art of music itself. Developing a clinical musical skill would no doubt release the world music

from the narrow clutches of entertainment to a greater expansion towards service to humanity.

Musical Experience

Musical experience is unique in the sense that it can impart an experience of extraordinary freedom to rise beyond limitation of one's physical beings. In other words, one's consciousness level could be increased to the next higher realm, with the appropriate dose of music.

Meditative music where melody and rhythms are combined with inspirational words and expressions (lyrics) as *bhajans, kirtans, Veda recitations* etc do enhance meditation and concentration and enable the mind to focus inwards - far from the madding crowd around. This form of internalisation or inward looking brings about its own advantages such as strength and security and peace and tranquillity to those who are trauma victims. Through music and by letting one's mind go after it, one experiences a deep state of relaxation which cannot be even guaranteed with the help of chemical or synthetic drugs without their accompanying side-effects.

Some ragas are traditionally believed to have certain therapeutic effects: listening to specific kinds of music at specific time of the day is believed to have curative effect on some ailments. Although no clinical endorsements are forthcoming, there's enough scope for future research.

Music Therapy

In recent times, the subject of music therapy does not seem to have received adequate attention as in the West. This is surprising for a nation, which had in the past, made great strides in combining emotional melodies with intellectual beats and which has even codified those ragas which are therapeutic as in the ancient text of *Raga Chikitsa*. The musical tradition of the country had dissected the ragas to arrive at their very crux so that which raga could be helpful to which conditions.

Therapeutic Carnatic Ragas

To cure insomnia, one listens to bits and pieces of *Nilambari* raga; likewise martial fervours are believed to be instilled in people by making them listen to pieces in *Bilahari* or *Kedaram*; *Sriraga*, when sung or listened, after a heavy lunch is said to aid in digestion and assimilation; While *Saama* raga is to restore mental peace, *Bhupalam* and *Malayamaarudham* when sung before the dawn serves as an agreeable invitation to people - including the Lord of the Seven Hills - to wake up from their slumber. Relief from paralysis is reported to be there by listening to pieces of *Dvijaavanti Raga*. Those who are prone to depression, are often recommended with a dose of lilt in *Bilahari* to overcome their melancholy. *Nadanamakriya*, yet another raga, is supposed to 'soften' the adamant people and even hardened criminals.

"History has only one lesson to offer--it is that mankind's best vision is conceived in times of adversity."

- Abid Hussain

CONCLUSION

It is a well-known fact that expressive music activities like singing or playing instruments improve coping mechanism and self-confidence. For the terminally ill, music provides greatest solace. Besides a comforting environment, it is found to be of great help in pain management. A combination of touch therapy, imagery and music provides an environment for a peaceful passage.

Soothing and organizational properties of music helps the mentally handicapped. Limitless creative opportunities available in singing or playing instruments provide avenues for their self-expression, which is, otherwise, unavailable to them.

Musical exercises aid in organizing one's thought processes and help in over-coming one's inhibitions and restrictions. The creative process of music takes over one's mind and emotion and leads to the feeling of wholeness and completeness with the Universe in all levels of existence: physical, moral or intellectual. It helps in over-coming all forms of inadequacies or frustrations in life.

Music as a therapy, is not exclusive for just a disease; it is meant for all patient groups. From the terminal ill to the temporary sufferer, it suits everybody and guaranteed no side effects Alzheimer patients, chronic pain sufferers, premature infants, terminal patients etc. all respond to the healing power of music. Symptoms of anxiety, depression and pain in terminally ill are overcome by the healing power of music. Thanks to music, multiple handicap patients gain a variety of skills. It provides a solid foundation for learning various skills including speech, language, self-care and adaptation.

In long term care settings; music is used to exercise a variety of skills. Cognitive games help with long and short-term memory recall. Music, combined with movement as in modern gym and aerobic sessions, improve physical capabilities. Music by itself or in combination with other media such as art, aroma or dance offer unlimited scope for experience for the sensory-deprived, which is caused by coma, injury or degenerative diseases.

Musical Opportunities

It is the birthright of every child to be trained in singing and music. Every citizen should be exposed to maximum amount of music in his life. In earlier days, the aristocrats in India like zamindars used to entertain their tenants and labourers with performers and musicians like *Yakshaganbayalata*, *Kathakali*, *Sadir Katchery*, *Koothu* etc. In the temples, concerts could be arranged on festival days where musicians and instrumentalists using powerful and far-reaching sounds as for example, in nadaswaram-, drums, cymbals and the like which touch the nooks and corners of the village even without any amplifier facilities. In some Western countries, low paid workers and those who are to work in noisy factories are

given free passes to attend musical concerts. There is a real joy when people attend to live music. Even in factories and offices, melodious music should be a normal input for creating conducive atmosphere of harmony and peace in employees who work in tense situations.

(Concluded)

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THE UNEMPLOYMENT EXPLOSION IN INDIA

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Inaugurating the Dr. V.S. Krishna birth centenary seminar on "Reforms and Quality of life" at the Andhra University school of Economics on October 8, 2003. Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao, the noted social scientist, observed that the most unfortunate aspect of the economic reforms is that the role of the State has been eliminated and unemployment and deprivation had increased. He struck a right note when he advocated the need for strong safety net in the background of reforms.

The problem of unemployment is faced by nearly all the countries of the world ranging from the U.S. in the affluent West to India in the poor third world block. It is one of the Directive principles of our Constitution that the citizens have the right to an adequate means of livelihood. It is therefore, a constitutional obligation on the part of the government to provide gainful employment to every able-bodied citizen of India.

Unlike in the advanced countries, the unemployment in India is chronic in nature because of a lack of development. Both during the earlier years of planning and in the present liberalisation and globalisation period, fast economic growth could not increase the employment opportunities. In fact since 1991, the unemployment had further aggravated. Against the growth rate of job-seekers at 2.5 per cent annually, job creation had dropped from 2.1 per cent during the Eighties to mere 0.8 per cent during the Nineties. During the recent past, the rate of job creation has further declined to only 0.5 per cent despite a reasonably high growth rate of 4.4 per cent during 2002 - 2003 which is expected to rise to 7 per cent during 2003 -2004.

One obvious fact that emanates from the figures is that the faster economic growth does not translate into more jobs unless it is employment oriented. It has to be realised that anything and everything cannot be left to market forces and there is a need for State action in certain areas to improve the quality of life.

Of the three types of unemployment agricultural, industrial and educated, agricultural unemployment which is quantitatively the biggest has become worse after the

reforms and much of the policy-making during the 1990's tended to take place as if the agricultural sector did not exist and it has remained shackled by a number of restrictions and control on movement and trade of farm products. The Centre and the State Governments would do well to go in for industries that absorb more of human labour power instead of concentrating heavily on I.T. The fall in public investment from 1.6 per cent of G.D.P. to 1.3 per cent in agriculture has been a cause for concern and it is in the fitness of things that it should be increased in irrigation capacity, water management, rural roads, waste land development which will open up localised employment avenues and can help slow down rural urban migration and thus ease the pressure on the urban infrastructure. Some sort of ban on migration from rural areas to urban areas as in China would also help in the growth of food-processing industries in rural areas and generate employment.

It has been said that India ranks among the first seven industrial nations of the world but it does not warrant us to conclude that all is well with our industrial economy. The pace of industrialisation lags behind the growing unemployment and it is not commensurate either with its vast resources or with the growth of population. In India unlike many other developing countries, it is the service sector rather than the manufacturing that has led the growth process. The manufacturing sector grew more slowly in September 2003 than in September 02. (6.8 per cent versus 7.6 per cent). The real challenge is to arrest the pronounced deceleration in the manufacturing sector which employs about 12.8 per cent of labour force. The performance of the service sector alone cannot guarantee economic well-being. Some industry analysts have opined that public investment levels should be restored to those achieved in the Eighties as the government is the major employer. The Government would also do well to review the indiscriminate disinvestment policy which has been affecting the workers' interests and throwing them out of employment.

In extent and nature, the kind of unemployment that is prevalent among the educated classes of our country is undoubtedly unparalleled in history. In the post independence era, with the democratisation of education there has been "Educational Malthusianism" in our colleges and universities. Unfortunately, in spite of development schemes and programmes, avenues of employment have not kept pace with the increasing number of educated youth entering the employment market.

There has been a high degree of wastage of university education because of the artificial nexus that has come to be established between the winning of a degree and getting of a job. It is necessary to have a close interaction between the universities and employment sectors to minimise the gap between the skills offered by universities and those required by the employers. The present system of education should be given a vocational and

work-oriented bias and it must be accompanied by schemes of economic development with the result that jobs are ready when technical hands come out of the technical institutions. The expansion of education and training facilities should be closely linked to the future requirements of the country, with improvement in the techniques of man-power planning and database.

Further, as Prof. Raj Krishna opined the policy of delinking the degrees with the jobs as in China and Japan should be given a serious thought overhauling the self-employment schemes. It is time that the Centre and the States adopted a uniform retirement age policy. Above all the current reservation policy needs a review and the setting up a Group of Ministers (G.O.M.) to study the possibilities of a Constitutional Amendment Bill to provide for job reservation to the forward caste on economic grounds is a step in right direction.

In the ultimate analysis, it is only by raising the public spending on education from the present dismal level of 3.5 per cent of the G.D.P. to a higher level that the problem can be solved and no country can survive for long if it denies employment to its people but also offers them no safety net to keep them alive.

ELECTORAL REFORMS : NEED OF THE HOUR

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The survival and successful functioning of any democratic system in any country depends, to a very large extent, on the organization, manning and honest working of the political parties that which in fact sustain it. Any number of examples can be cited to prove that, it was weak political parties with no sense of direction, no constructive programme, no strong organizational foundations and seriousness of purpose, that were very much responsible for a thorough failure of democratic exercises very seriously undertaken by various countries all over the world ever since the end of the second world war. Though, it is undoubtedly the political parties which play a major role in the successful working of any democratic mechanism, there are various other very significant factors, the presence of which as well contribute to the success of any democratic exercise such as, (a) the constitutional bodies with the necessary and required powers and authority (b) institutional support structures to conduct the governmental functions for the realization of the democratic goals (c) responsible and responsive electorate with a clear understanding of its rights and duties with particular reference to the democratic processes (d) a dedicated leadership with a strong grounding in political, social, economic philosophy in a cultural setting peculiar to each political territorial entity; (e) a thorough and clear understanding of the plural setting with a complexity not easy to comprehend, in which all political

"Science has always been to the greater glory of God and for the relief of man's estate."

systems function in modern times, (f) and above all, provisions, constitutional and statutory for the realization of the above mentioned, and as well to get all efforts integrated into deep commitment on the part of all concerned segments as mentioned above to co-operate and coordinate in putting forth efforts to make the democratic experiment a success at any cost.

Though there are a number of scholars who consider the democratic exercise a success in India as we could conduct regularly elections to our legislatures in a successful manner for the past more than five decades, there are equal or more number of scholars who do not consider it so. According to them, simply conducting elections through regular intervals, that too evidently with the help of the armed forces on one hand, and with evil practices like rigging, impersonation, booth capturing etc, being widely practiced by political parties for electoral gains, can not be considered as a mark of democracy gaining legitimacy. Further more as pointed out by an eminent scholar, "The real failure of the current phase of Indian democracy is not the failure to hold free and fair elections, nor the inability of the people to effect change in governments through the exercise of their free vote, but the growing distortion in the mechanism of political representation, the growing distance between the electors and the elected, the inability of the mechanism of competitive politics to serve as a means of exercising effective policy options. Clearly, the institutional frame of democracy has failed to translate popular participation and enthusiasm into a set of desirable consequences" (Seminar, 506 October 2001 p. 19)

However, as of now, due to the dominating role and influence of variety of extra constitutional political forces and anti-social, political and economic elements with self interest playing havoc with the Indian polity on one hand and the malfunctioning of various organs of the political system on the other (with particular reference to the working of the political parties, certain constitutional bodies and governmental agencies in the context of elections), has got so much vitiated over the past five decades, more seriously over the past three decades, that, if the same are not addressed immediately, Indian democracy is sure to lose its meaning and relevance. Among the most serious problems haunting the democratic system, politicization of crime and criminalization of politics are regarded as the ones to be tackled on a priority basis as the legislatures are getting flooded with criminals, against whom cases on grounds of heinous crimes are registered and are being tried. Scams and scandals involving several crores of public money involving highly placed political leaders and government officials hit the head lines of newspapers day in and day out, only to be followed by appointment of enquiry committees or commissions, but with no one ever seriously punished or any disciplinary action taken. Recourse to judiciary for justice is proving totally futile, even as a total

lack of faith in the efficacy of the judiciary coupled with the inordinate delays in settling cases, appear to be at the root of the evils haunting the Indian democracy today. In fact, the Vohra Committee constituted by the Government had stated in very strong terms that the nexus between the crime syndicates and political personalities has become very deep and the trend needs to be arrested immediately. The Committee quoted other agencies to state that the mafia network is "virtually running a parallel government, pushing the State apparatus into irrelevance". According to a report of a survey conducted by the Election Commission in 2002, roughly forty percent of MPs and 700 of the 4072 legislators of various State Assemblies have a criminal track record. As of today as pointed by a learned scholar, "the list is unending as several legislators from almost all the states of this country are involved in several crimes without either losing their *ministerial post or legislative membership*".

It is in this context that the issue of electoral reforms assumes high significance. In recent times apparently there was a stand off between the legislature and the judiciary on this issue. An activist role by the Judiciary and by the Election Commission has also resulted in restraining and regulating the legislature and the political parties from harming democracy any further. For example, in very recent times while upholding the order of the Delhi High Court in a case popularly known as the ADR Case (Association of Democratic Reforms v. Union of India, AIR 2001 Dei 126) the directive of the Apex Court advising the Election Commission to ask the candidates contesting election to disclose their assets and liabilities, educational qualifications and criminal records, has done excellent service to the cause of Indian democracy. Even as all the political parties came together by exhibiting a very rare sense of unity in trying to thwart the Judiciary from compelling the contending candidates to disclose a variety of personal details, the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court have issued directives to the Election Commission to make necessary arrangements for providing voters all the relevant information on the criminal antecedents, educational qualifications and assets possessed by the candidate, his or her spouse and dependent relations. In fact, disagreeing with the contention of the Union of India, and relying on its earlier judgments, the Supreme Court held that the directions earlier issued by the Delhi High Court to the Election Commission can not be said to be beyond its jurisdiction in view of the following; (a) the jurisdiction of the Election Commission is wide enough to include all powers necessary for smooth conduct of elections (b) the word "elections" under Article 324 is used in a wide sense to include the entire process of election which consists of several stages and embraces many steps (c) when Parliament or State Legislature has made a valid law pertaining to elections, the Election Commission will be required to act in conformity with the provisions of law. In case where

law is silent, Article 324 is a reservoir of power to act for the avowed purpose of having free and fair elections. Accordingly, the EC can exercise its residuary power to fill the vacuum till there is legislation on the subject: (d) in Kanhiya Lal Omar case (Kanhiya Lal Omar V.R.K. Trivedi, (1985) 4 SCC 628) the Supreme Court construed the expression “superintendence, direction and control” in Article 324 (1) and held that these phrases should be liberally interpreted empowering the EC to issue necessary orders; (e) the views expressed by the Apex Court in the Common Cause case (Common Cause (A registered Society) v. Union of India, (1996) 2 SCC 752), need to be followed: (f) democracy, being an important ‘basic feature’ of the Constitutional scheme, grants the right to the electors to know full details of the contesting candidate : (f) the significance of Article 19 (1) and (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution of India deserve to be taken seriously as voter’s speech or expression in case of election would include casting of votes, that is to say, voter speaks out or expresses by casting vote, and thus necessitates all details relating to the contestant: and finally, if the field meant for legislature and executive is left unoccupied detrimental to the public interest, the Supreme Court would have ample jurisdiction under Article 32 read with Articles 141 and 142 of the Constitution to issue necessary directions.

Keeping in mind the recent order of the Election Commission’s Notification issued very recently in connection with the ensuing Assembly elections in five states, seeking the filing of affidavits with information on criminal antecedents (if any), movable and immovable properties, liabilities, and educational qualifications (which has been made mandatory on March 27, 2003) a step forward has been taken to make elections and electoral process more closer to the true democratic philosophy. But how efficiently and effectively such information will be communicated to the electorate, and in turn how the electorate would use it for its own benefit remains to be seen. Keeping aside the debate relating to a conflict between the legislature and the judiciary, and the talk about separation of powers between the three organs is under threat, it would be highly beneficial to the entire democratic system in a broader sense, if the covert operation of the principle of checks and balances is accepted and appreciated.

JESUS CHRIST

Sri Challa Sivasankaram

Had I lived in Palestine, in the days of Jesus Christ of Nazareth I would have washed his feet, not with my tears but with the blood of my heart - Swami Vivekananda

The most possible years of the birth of Jesus of Bethlehem in Judea range from seventh to fourth year before the change from B.C. to A.D. It seems indisputable that Jesus was born during the repugnant reign of

Herod the Great. Herod belonged to the later decades of B.C. while Kamsa belonged to the later centuries of Dwaparayuga or Silver Age. It may be that Kamsa resurrected as Herod after a lapse of about three thousand years of his death at the hands of Sri Krishna. Fear of assassination by the violent hordes of Kamsa drove Vasudeva to shift Sri Krishna to Yadukulam. Fear of massacre by the fiendish henchmen of Herod compelled Joseph to remove the infant Jesus to Jerusalem. Sri Krishna tended the cows (fourlegged mammals) embodying the spirit of inviolable sacrifice. Jesus reared the sheep, holding in his arms a young of the block hugging to his breast. The little calf symbolises the Jiva (soul) identifying itself with mortal body. It had, therefore fallen to the lot of Jesus to restore the Jiva to its original state, Self, dispelling the illusion of body consciousness. The sheep are examples of sheer mass mindset. They had to be awakened and educated on knowledge of the Self. i.e. the knowledge of discrimination and discernment. Sri Krishna sported flute to charm the cows Jesus wielded the Staff to frighten not to thrash the sheep, to drive into them the value of discipline and disciplined way of life.

Virgin Mary was the mother of Jesus. Holy Ghost caused the birth of Jesus, therefore the conception of many was immaculate. Thus the phrase immaculate conception came into vogue. In other words Jesus created himself (Atmanam Srijamyaham as Krishna said in the Gita) To avoid social ostracisation and popular calumny moved by extreme sense of chivalry Joseph came forward to own the infant as his son. The infant Jesus was thus saved from the label of bastard.

As all this was going on there were spotted three wisemen from the East. Saying, where is he that is born king of Jews? for we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him (Matthew 2-1-2) The reference was to the appearance of a Morning Star, a star that preceded the sun at dawn, rising in the east shortly before sunrise. Joseph surmised from their appearance and attire that they were astrologers coming from the East. India was implied.

Even before the prechristian Era by the wise drive and missionary zeal of Emperor Ashoka who lived if I am not incorrect from about 273 to 232 B.C. there had been worldwide spread of Buddhism. His historic and verily Buddhist command. “All are my children. Just as I would wish my children to enjoy blessings and joy of that are to be found in heaven and on earth. So I do wish the same all the people”. He despatched Bhikkus of proven honesty and dedication armed with the said command to Egypt, Greece and Syria. Ashoka was reputed as supreme patron of proselytism. There was the ordinance of Sakyamuni Go, Ye monks and travel afar for the benefit of and welfare of many, out of compassion for the world, to the advantage and welfare of the gods and the mortals. Practice the teaching that leads mortals

to good. Preach in spirit and letter. Show in your perfect sinlessness how the religious life should be lived. Self effacement, poverty, humility, utmost austerity were the shining principles of the monks. The Buddhist monks entered into the said countries and the countrymen lent intent ear to the missionaries who spoke the language of peace, Dharmam and Ahimsa, conciliation and concord. Jesus as a boy was able to astound the priests in the temple of Jerusalem with his precious wisdom and prescience. He could say with ready authority what had happened already and what was going to happen. He was twelve or thirteen years old at the time people came to realise that he was a prodigy and descended on earth to save the mankind; he was deemed a savior. Now the boy moved to the city of Nazareth. In those days about twelve was the age at which it was customary for a boy to get married. The merciful God was on his side that Jesus escaped the curse of marriage which becomes stumbling block and a hazardous add on the road to freedom through realization of self. Divine will that he should remain celibate. Something in him made him impatient. He had yet to begin the task for that he descended on the beautiful earth.

The pious Buddhists amidst whom he was meandering got completely convinced of the view that Jesus was an incarnation of Padmasambhava. Padmasambhava was a renowned Buddhist saint. Even before Emperor Ashoka despatched Bhikkus to Egypt, Syria and Greece, India saw her Vedic pundits visit Athens, Sparta, Asia Minor and Egypt. India's message of harmony in human relations and need of self realization as the end and purpose of life caught the mind of the occident and orient. Jesus' mind was galvanised and fertilised so profoundly by India's Vedanta. The propounder of Adwaita Vedanta Adi Sankara preceded Jesus by over two hundred years. Adi Sankara was labelled as concealed Buddhist. Jesus was charmed by the Buddhist accent on celibacy, self effacement, sacrifice without motive for the larger good of fellow men and above all compassion unlimited for all life. He wandered into India, lived incognito in the mighty wisdom producing Himalayas and made Srinagar the Capital of Kashmir and cradle of India's ageless wisdom and timeless culture as the seat of learning. As he vowed to be lifelong parivrajaka (itinerant Bhikku) he kept at any place not more than a fortnight. Prapatti or Atmanivedana he chose as his life's sole guiding principle.

Jesus was a man of miracles. By the sleight of hand he could materialise anything. he could transform a barrel of water to wine. He was a healer, Diseases defied medical science with its numerous medicines got cured by his Healing Touch. His suprahuman ingenuity proved that leprosy was no incurable malady. His miracles are legion. His compassion was at its acme at the time of saving a woman charged with adultery and sentenced to the punishment of being beaten by stones. The woman was brought to Jesus for mediation. The prosecutors of

the summary punishment deposed that the woman was adulteress (so punishable under the law of the land) Jesus without raising his bent head asked the men if anybody of them was free from guilt. To this the answer was disappearance of all men. He offered asylum to the forsaken woman.

Gautama Buddha about two thousand five hundred and fifty years ago sought to elevate the plight of a beautiful penitent court dancer to the status of a respectable Buddhist nun. He relished her hospitality as an unearthy guest. She embraced the Buddhist fold of Astanga Marga. Her name is Ambapali Instances of this kind of show of compassion in the life of Buddha were myriad. A chandala was admitted in his monastery. Krishna's love, Buddha's compassion and Sankara's non-duality merged in and with the life of Jesus. Once again the compassion and unalloyed forgiveness of Jesus saw the light of the day at the time of Crucifixion. No semblance of agony and no sign of pain were seen when he was nailed to the Cross. He accepted it. His universal soul uttered, "Father forgive them they do not know what they do". It was the Himalayan compassion and oceanwide forgiveness of which Jesus was symbolic expression that uttered the words of forgiveness to save the savage hoodlums of faith reposed (in them) by Jesus. His life and teachings maintained all along the noble heritage of Buddhism and lofty tradition of non plurality of Vedanta philosophy. Jesus was heard, as saying that "there arises a nondualistic stage in which man realizes the God that he has been worshipping is not only the Father in Heaven and on earth but that 'I and my father are one' The worshipper realizes in his soul that he is God Himself. All that is real in me is He and all that is real in Him is I. I find the Reality in my soul. Further he says the kingdom of Heaven is within you" The Jewish idea was a kingdom on this Earth. That was not the idea of Jesus. Again Jesus perorates. "Father, just as I am with you, so make them all one with me "Sell all that you have and give it to the poor and follow me". He goes on to say "Inasmuch as you have done it unto me the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me"

Jesus does not permit any proclamation that he is the messiah, and indeed he expressly forbids his disciples to declare any such thing (Mark 8:30). In Mathew, Jesus is portrayed as the consummation of the Mosaic Religion and as the Messiah announced by the prophet.

In the learned words of Swami Vivekananda "Christ was God incarnate. They could not kill him. What was crucified was a semblance, a mirage". "The doctrine of Christ exceedeth of all doctrines of the holymen and he that hath the spirit will find therein the hidden manna."

Almost all Christianity is Aryarn. Jesus taught to serve. He never taught that the earth is an enjoyable place" (Swami Vivekananda).

The renaissance in the realm of religion given im-

petus by Sri Krishna gained momentum in the Avatar of Buddha and attained its consummate logical fulfilment in the Avatar of Jesus Christ.

Amen

ANNIVERSARIES

Traditionally a special kind of gift is associated with a few of the anniversary celebrations.

The following are the nomenclature appropriate for the number of years.

Cotton	-	01	Lace	-	13
Paper	-	02	Ivory	-	14
Leather	-	03	Crystal	-	15
Flower/fruit	-	04	China	-	20
Wood	-	05	Silver	-	25
Iron/Sugarcandy	-	06	Pearl	-	30
Wool	-	07	Coral	-	35
Bronze/Electrical			Ruby	-	40
Appliances	-	08	Sapphire	-	45
Copper/Pottery	-	09	Golden	-	50
Tin	-	10	Emerald	-	55
Steel	-	11	Diamond	-	60/65
Silk and fine linen	-	12			

(Collected by Shri V.V. Ramanaiah)

BOOK REVIEW

MANY SIDES OF FREEDOM, ABID HUSSAIN
Asian Institute of Transport Development, New Delhi, 2003.

It is India's good fortune that there are some distinguished men (and women too) of letters who through their lectures and writings strengthen our value system and enrich our public life. Notable among them is Dr. Abid Hussain, a multi-faceted intellectual and tireless crusader for social good and national reconstruction. The former civil servant and Indian Ambassador to the United States of America held with dignity and distinction a number of positions in India and abroad. He was UN adviser to Turkey on Community Development, Chief of industrial technology, human settlements and environment in

UN-ESCAP, Special Rapporteur to UN on 'Freedom of Opinion and Expression', Member of the UNESCO Panel on 'Democracy and Development', Member Planning Commission of India, Member Prasar Bharati, and Member of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution. As the Vice-President of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation he organised a series of lectures on different themes by internationally renowned experts and published them.

'Many Sides of Freedom', Abid Hussain's latest work, is a collection of ten lectures delivered by him in India and abroad. Beginning with Challenges for India's Polity, the book unfolds articles on Education, Freedom, Democracy, Science and Society, Democratic Values, Fault Lines of Indian Democracy, Search for Peace and the Emerging International Relations. In simple yet persuasive style Abid Hussain writes with conviction on different subjects and raises some basic questions about our polity and society. He pleads for reforms with a human face and misses no opportunity to emphasise the Gandhian values of truth and non-violence. His insistence on commitment to moral values in public life enhances the quality of the work. When he writes that schools hold the key to the development of a national ethos, one is reminded of the words of a philosopher who said that if war begins in the minds of men, the minds of men are nurtured in nurseries. Power not only tends to corrupt but it inebriates according to Abid Hussain. He is confident that ultimately human will and innate goodness will triumph over adversity. 'Mankind's best vision is conceived in times of adversity' he writes and exudes optimism about the future. In the 21st century, he hopes, reason and morality will triumph over irrational beliefs and political ideologies which had dominated the twentieth century. Abid Hussain's friends and admirers know that there can never be a dull moment when he is around. This gifted orator-visionary presents through this eminently readable work a vision of a bright new world dominated by peace and happiness. Asian Institute of Transport Development deserves to be complimented for bringing out these thought-provoking essays in such an elegant book form.

- A. Prasanna Kumar

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