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(GAYATRI VIDYA PARISHAD)

MOTHER EARTH AND THE HUMAN ANIMAL

June is a month of hope. Transition time for both man and nature as the scorching heat of summer gives way to monsoon showers. Farmers, providers of our food security, put their hands together prayerfully thanking both heaven and earth, the former for welcome rains and the latter for a promising bounty. For the youth too this is the time to make intelligent choices about their studies and future, having completed examinations and entrance tests. Indeed a busy month for young and old alike, flora and fauna as well.

June was the month in which 200 delegates representing 50 nations completed the task of drafting the United Nations Charter, after two months of hectic deliberations in 1945. The world body, created to promote peace and development, has during the last sixty five years, launched many initiatives for the benefit of humankind. Among them is the elaborately drawn up United Nations Environment Programme which receives particular attention in this month. June 5 is observed as World Environment Day bearing the interesting acronym WED! Besides the United Nations, several organizations are actively engaged in a world-wide movement to save planet earth. "The rescue of the environment as the central organizing principle for civilization," is their motto.

Human beings are among the millions of species that inhabit planet earth. Nature has assigned each of these species a role to perform. But the human animal, the greediest, the cleverest and the most domineering of all species, has chosen to inflict severe damage and destruction on Mother Earth to satisfy his insatiable greed and inflated ego. Lester Brown, pioneer environmentalist and founder of the World Watch Institute, identified fisheries, grasslands, forests and croplands as the four main foundations of the global economic system being assaulted by *homo sapiens*. Through his numerous writings Brown has presented a grim portrayal of the mindless damage and destruction being caused by the human animal. His book *Twenty-Ninth Day* published three decades ago was among the best sellers.

The prolific writer's latest is *World on the Edge—How to Prevent Environmental and Economic Collapse*. Brown is a relentless fighter against "manhandling nature, by overfishing the oceans, stripping the forests, and turning land into desert." As predicted by him, depletion of natural resources and extinction of several species have been alarmingly on the increase. For instance of 50% of sharks, 80% of white whales and 12% of small birds of various types, are among the extinct category. Renowned scientist Stephen Hawking foresees grave danger to human survival. "Life on earth," he warns, "is at the ever increasing risk of being wiped out by a disaster such as sudden global warming, nuclear war, a genetically engineered virus, or other dangers not yet thought of." Reminding the people of their moral and social responsibility and the debt they owe to planet earth Brown warns: "We have not inherited the earth from our forefathers; we have borrowed it from our children." Killing mother earth amounts to matricide, the worst of all sins, remind environmentalists.

The human animal is ubiquitous, exploring and exploiting every part of the planet for selfish reasons. History bears testimony to the predatory instincts of the human animal. Historian Paul Johnson 'whose work ranges over the millennia and the whole gamut of human activity' described Alexander the Great as 'a murderer and in his battles a mass murderer, a lifelong criminal whose crime was the supreme one of war.' In his book *Heroes* Johnson unmasks the so-called heroes of human history by asking: "How many more would Caesar, had he lived, have killed? Napoleon killed five times as many as Caesar's total, perhaps, five million. Mao Tse-tung, another, admirer of Caesar, killed seventy million. These things need to be weighed when we tell the stories of heroes."

Plants or people, oceans or mountains, —all mean the same for the human animal. A cage in Zambian zoo displayed "The most dangerous animal" - a mirror!

- The Editor

"Air is the vital force; water the progenitor; the vast Earth the Mother of all; day and night are the nurses fondling the Creation in their lap." Guru Nanak Dev

WORLD DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS-20

- Prof. M.N. Sastri

Wages of Growth

“We have an economy where we steal the future, sell it in the present, and call it the GDP.”

- Paul Hawken

Anthropologists believe that the human species, the latest in the evolutionary chain, emerged on planet Earth about three million years ago. Their number was 280 million in 1000, 1 billion in 1800, 2.5 billion in 1950 and currently 7 billion. Increasing by 200,000 per day, this number is projected to reach around 9 billion by the middle of this century. In the past four decades more people have been added than in all history. Apart from the human species there have never been 7 billion of any single species weighing in at more than 30kg each on the planet!

When their number was in millions and local resources for subsistence became sparse, people could simply move to new pastures. But with the projected 9 billion people occupying every corner of the globe (house full!), moving is no longer an option. A stage has been reached when human society should begin deliberating whether the planet can sustain such a huge number.

Concern about the availability of food resources to meet the demands of the rising population (in Europe) was expressed about 200 years ago by Thomas Malthus. He wrote, “The power of population is definitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for the man.” Vast land (e.g. Americas, Africa and Australia) and ocean resources that were opened up at the time through the voyages of discovery however helped Europe tide over the danger. Major advances in agriculture and industry in the wake of the Industrial Revolution also helped exploitation of natural resources. Developments in medical sciences facilitated the growth of human population. With the skills based on science and technology people built vast empires and economic systems by exploiting the seemingly infinite rich natural resources. Between 1750 and 1965, global industrial output increased hundredfold and forty times since 1965. Life expectancy rose from 47 years in 1950-55 to 68 years in 2005-10. as a result of improved healthcare. It now ranges from 63 years in the low-income countries (e.g. Pakistan) to 83 years in high-income groups (e.g.

Japan). The life expectancy in India which is put at 65 years in 2009 represents a 50% rise over the value in 1960. Global industrial output, which in terms of Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP) rose 14 times helped rise in living standards. But this growth was skewed in favour of the technologically developed nations while the developing nations which account for 40 per cent of the global population were deprived of the benefits. The last few decades saw a phenomenal change through the globalization of economy. Developing and populous countries like China, India and Brazil also became partners and beneficiaries of global commerce. They became avid consumers by embracing the lifestyles, which were till recently the exclusive preserve of the developed nations. These changes characterized by consumerist culture are leading to resource base exploitation at staggering rates turning the globalization era into consumerist era.

The adverse effects of increased technological efficiency that supports population growth and higher levels of consumption of limited natural resources were pointed out as early as 1865 by W.S. Jevons by citing coal, the energy source of the time, as an example. This activity persisted unabatedly till 1970s, when the realization dawned that not only many precious natural resources were getting depleted faster than they could replenish but their unfettered use is causing irreversible damage to the environment. A monumental study by a group of 31 scientists, educationists, economists, industrialists and government officials, known as The Club of Rome undertook a detailed study on the subject. Using computer models the Club examined the consequences of unchecked population growth and resource utilization for the period 1900-2000, and published its results in 1972 in the form of a book entitled *The Limits to Growth*. Echoing some of the concerns and predictions of Malthus, the Club observed “If the present growth trends in world population, industrialization, food production and resource depletion continue unchanged, the limits to growth on the planet will be reached sometime in the next one hundred years. The most probable result will be a rather sudden and uncontrollable decline both in population and industrial capacity. It is possible to alter these growth trends and establish a condition of ecological and economic stability that is sustainable far into the future. The state of global equilibrium could be designed so that the basic material

needs of each person on the earth are satisfied and each person has an equal opportunity to realize his individual human potential.” In short the world was cautioned, “We can no longer live on the new earth as if it were the old earth.”

The UN General Assembly constituted in 1983 the Brundtland Commission to address the growing concern “about accelerating deterioration in human environment and natural resources and the consequences of that deterioration for economic and social development.” After an exhaustive study, the Commission presented its report under the title *Our Common Future* in which it invoked the concept of “sustainable development” defined as “an approach towards meeting the needs and aspirations of the present and future generations without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their needs.” Ms Gro Harlem Brundtland, the chairperson, observed that sustainable development “is a concept that can mobilize broader political consensus, one on which the international community can and should build. It requires political reform, access to knowledge and resources and a more just and equitable distribution of wealth.” Jim McNeil, one of the members of the Commission envisaged “a new era of growth, not the type of growth that dominates today, but sustainable growth - growth based on forms and process of development that do not undermine the integrity of the environment on which they depend.”

Thirty years after the publication of “Limits to Growth”, a new study, “Limits to Growth: The Thirty Year Update” (2004), observed little change in the trend. The authors lamented that “the humanity is dangerously in a state of overshoot” and that it “has squandered the opportunity to correct our current course over the last 30 years and much must change if the world is to avoid the serious consequences of overshoot in the 21st century.”

Around the time the Club of Rome was engaged in its exercise, the well known ecologist Paul Ehrlich along with John Holdren highlighted the danger of relentless resource consumption in terms of a simple equation (called the Ehrlich equation)

$$I = P \times A \times T$$

The equation says that the impact (I) of human activity on the planet is the product of three factors: the size of the population (P), the level of affluence (A) of

the population and the technology factor (T) which is the impact of each dollar spent on the planet. Lowering the impact (I) due to growing consumption ($P \times A$) requires that the technology factor (T) of production must be reduced or its environmental efficiency must be improved. Overall the equation says that population rise coupled with resource consumption and technology has an adverse impact on the quality of the environment. In other words a society that develops technologies and consumer-oriented markets without consideration for environment ends in a collapse. This equation now forms the basis for the social and natural scientists for studying the interactions between population and economic growth, resource consumption, agriculture, energy, technological and environmental factors.

In the concluding decades of the 20th century, economists recognized the need to account for the adverse environmental costs brought about by indiscriminate resource consumption. They also warned that the concept of limitless resources is a fool’s dream, and that for preserving environmental and societal security there is a need to instill restraint in resource use in pursuit of growth. To this end they developed a new discipline called environmental economics that focuses on an integrated approach to development, environment and ethics, through reconciling economic growth with resource conservation and environment protection. This, according to them, can be achieved by defining suitable conditions for sustainable development through establishing a delicate balance between improved lifestyles and a feeling of well being on the one hand and protecting natural resources and ecosystems, on which the present and future generations depend.

Nicolas Sarkozy, the French President also took the initiative in this direction and constituted an International Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress to spell out better measures of economic performance in a complex economy that is currently based on quantitative growth. The members of the Commission were the reputed economists J. Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, assisted by several experts. The Commission concluded that any good measure aimed at growth must also take account of sustainability as well as quality of life and that, “just as a firm needs to measure the depreciation of its capital, so too, our national accounts need to reflect the depletion of natural resources and degradation of our

environment.” Stiglitz cautioned, “GDP statistics were introduced to measure market economic activity. But they are increasingly thought of as a measure of social well-being, which they are not.”

Ironically these warnings are yet to have an impact on the governments, who continue to pursue the path of growth (touting it as development) measured in terms of quantity (GDP) and not quality. A government that fails to achieve the promised quantitative growth will soon find itself voted out of office! With this approach nations are splurging their resources as if the limits to growth were far enough away that they would be someone else’s problem. This culture, which is destroying more than it was creating, is driving the global economy and the human imprint on the environment to a flashpoint, turning the beautiful sounding idea of sustainable growth “intellectually bankrupt”. With the overpopulated human species currently extracting an estimated 60 billion tonnes of raw materials from the Earth each year- 50 per cent more than 30 years ago- life support systems have been adversely affected. Several synthetic chemical products, which eventually enter the environment, are also causing damage to life support services. Even with modest projections for population growth, resource consumption and climate change, humanity will need by 2030 the capacity of two earths to keep pace with current rate of resource consumption.

In an article published in September 2009 in the reputed journal *Nature*, a team of environmental specialists headed by Johan Rockstram of the Stockholm Environmental Institute warned that “Human activities have reached a level that threatens the systems that kept climatic conditions over the last 10,000 years in a remarkably stable condition suitable for the growth of human civilizations”. The team identified nine clear lines “in the sand” (planetary boundaries or *Laxmana Rekhas*) that must not be crossed if humans are serious about saving the planet. These are - climate change, fresh water use, pollution, ozone depletion in the stratosphere, land use change, ocean acidification, nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, aerosol loading and chemical pollution. They observe that in the case of three boundaries - species extinction, human induced climate change through fossil fuel use, and the disruption of nitrogen and phosphorus cycles - the acceptable limits have already been crossed. They conclude that these activities, if not checked, would push the earth system outside the stable environmental

state “with consequences that are detrimental or even catastrophic for large parts of the world.”

Climate change through global warming will put great stress on water resources which are already under stress through rising demands from the growing population and economic boom and land use. Many parts of the world, where one major river supplies water to multiple countries, are turning into political hotspots. As a result of the withdrawal of staggering 2,600 cu. km of water annually from rivers, lakes and aquifers for irrigation (70%), industry (20%) and domestic use (10%), many large rivers have diminished flows, and some of them are drying up altogether, and ground water sources are getting depleted. South Asia with more than a sixth of the world population will be most affected by global warming through widespread water mass losses from the melting glaciers and reductions in snow cover in the mountain ranges of Hindu-Kush and the Himalayas. Recently ISRO reported that its satellite survey by Resourcesat-1 over a period of 15 years (1989-2004) showed that 75% of the Himalayan glaciers have retreated over an area of about 3.75 km on average. The Alps glacier in Europe are receding even faster. Added to this, the increasing frequency of heavy precipitation events followed by heavy floods, and droughts and other disturbances in weather systems will add to people’s woes. Producing food to meet the demands of the rising population will be a daunting task in the coming decades because of rising temperatures, as well as land and water source degradation through extensive use of industrial fertilizers. Global warming would cause a sea level rise of 30 to 70 cm. enough to displace 150 million people from the low-lying fertile coastal areas (including mega cities like New York, Shanghai, Mumbai, Kolkata and Dhaka) the world over by the end of the 21st century...

Biologists say that we are living in the midst of a species mass extinction era on par with other great extinction events in history. Humankind already commandeers 35 per cent of the planet’s land surface for crops and pastures causing biodiversity loss and irreversible damage to the natural ecosystems. The planet is losing species 100 to 1,000 times faster than the natural background rates seen in geological record. Ten years ago the Nobel Laureate atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen even proposed a new epoch Anthropocene, representing a new geological epoch extending over two

to three hundred years (compared to other epochs that extended over millions of years) during which “the human mastery over the planet has pushed many species out of their habitats, while others have succumbed to hunting or environmental pollutants.”

Oil supplies are predicted to be peaking by 2014. By 2050s we will have used up 90 per cent of world’s oil resources. Projections indicate that we will also extract 90 per cent of available coal by 2072. With no viable alternate commercial energy sources on board (nuclear power continues to face opposition) our energy-based civilization is destined to go through hard times or even come to a grinding halt.

Metals also have limits in the same way that oil, coal and clean water do. Researchers say that the finite resources of copper, zinc and several other metals such as indium, gallium, hafnium, silver and platinum that are crucial for technological growth, even if recycled, may not meet the mounting global demand.

All these demographic trends sound the warning bells that planet earth is no longer the old planet that can meet our unending demands and that we must not only solve our social, political and related predicaments but should also check the reckless plundering of the limited natural resource base. No doubt the problems are such that they challenge conventional wisdom and vested interests and hence difficult to solve. But Nature will not wait for human inertia. Procrastination will only intensify the risk of a “no future” future for the 10,000 year-old civilization. The 21st century world must learn its lessons from the misfortune that befell the Easter Island in the 15th century (CPS Bulletin, February 2007).

“We are in the middle of a race between human skills as to means and human folly as to ends. Given sufficient folly to ends, every increase in the skill required to achieve them is to bad. The human race has survived hitherto owing to ignorance and incompetence; but, given the knowledge and competence combined with folly, there can be no certainty of survival. Knowledge is power, but it is power for evil just as much as for good. It follows that, unless men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow.”

In “*The Impact of Science on Society*” - Bertrand Russell.

(Concluded)

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Profoundly thankful to Prof. M.N. Sastri

Prof M.N.Sastri's invaluable contribution to the Bulletin of Centre for Policy Studies began with his article on *Nuclear Energy-Friend or Foe?* published in the issue of June 2,1997. Since then forty nine scholarly articles of Prof. Sastri have enriched the Bulletin during the last fourteen years. In 2007 twenty nine of his articles were brought out in book form under the title *The Profligate Civilization* and presented to him on his 83rd birthday as a token of grateful appreciation. CPS deems it a privilege now to bring out in book form the 20 articles published since then entitled *World Demographic Trends* to be presented to him on his 87th birthday on August 5, 2011.

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FOOTPRINTS OF THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

- Prof. Manoj Das

(A seer among scholars the venerable Prof Manoj Das who lives in Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville and teaches at Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education has graciously permitted the publication of this essay from his book My Little India.)

Professor Nigam said in a murmur as we sat down on a rock overlooking the river Sipra and gazing at a serene sunset, not far from the Bhartrihari Cave, ‘Under our feet lies ignored and almost forgotten the legendary Ujjain. A systematic excavation could probably bring to light a wonderful civilization, but...’

I had no difficulty in appreciating his ‘but’. There were as many important mythological and historic sites in India as there are modern ones. So many adventures in exploration - at Toshali, the site of the Kalinga War, at Purnapur, the back-drop of the great Tamil work *Silappadikaram*, and even Dwaraka, the city founded by Krishna, were abandoned or suspended at early stages because of lack of resource.

I agreed with the professor that explorations at Ujjain might yield a diamond mine of knowledge of several phases of the past. It had been associated, apart from mythological figures like Krishna, Sandipani and Sudama, and legendary characters like Vikramaditya and the

Navaratna or the “nine gems” of his court - Kalidasa the great poet and dramatist, Dhanvantari, the physician, Kshapanka, Sanku, Ghatakarpara and Vetalabhata, all poets, Varahamihira the astronomer, Amarasimha the lexicographer, Vararuchi the litterateur and grammarian - with historical personages like Ashoka who ruled the province as the viceroy of his father Vindusar, and Chandragupta who shifted his capital from Pataliputra to Avantika - as Ujjain was then known. Historians dispute one another regarding the time of these remarkable brothers, Bhartrihari and Vikramaditya, but folklore traces them to A.D. 1st century. And this is what the legend has to say about Bhartrihari:

The young king, who was also a gifted poet, enjoyed life, as is evident from his *Sringara Satakam* or a century of couplets glorifying love:

*Is there a heart that girls cannot subdue
When they walk like swans, their bangles jingling,
their girdles tinkling, their anklets jangling,
and their eyes like those of deer glance frank but
timid?*

(Translated by A.L. Basham)

But he was an efficient and compassionate ruler too, loved by all. One day, while he was in his court, a hermit who lived in a cave in the nearby forest, appeared before him unexpectedly. Famous for his occult powers, he was nonetheless notorious for his short temper. He led the king into privacy and offered him a fruit the kind of which the king had never known.

‘Don’t try to identify it,’ said the Yogi, ‘for this is no ordinary fruit but one rich with the power of my *askesis* - an experiment which became a complete success. Whoever eats it would be endowed with a long and ever-youthful life. As I see it, you alone deserve it. Eat the fruit and be happy and let your subjects benefit by your sound rule.’

The Yogi left as unceremoniously as he had arrived. The king stood delighted - but for a different reason. He loved his youngest queen more than anything else on earth - and was sure that she too loved him with equal intensity. He had, of course, bestowed on her all the

imaginable items of luxury but, he wondered if he couldn’t give her something unique, something which no lover had ever been able to give his beloved.

He could - at last! He would happily forgo the prospect of a long and youthful life for himself, for the sake of the queen acquiring that marvellous destiny. King Bhartrihari at once entered the youngest queen’s apartment and passed on to her the miraculous fruit along with its secrets. Satisfied that he had proved his love beyond any doubt, he almost forgot about it. Three days passed. The king was returning to his palace after a leisurely ride along the banks of the Sipra at sundown when a veiled woman signed him to stop. That was a spot between the forest and the city and there was no other soul in the vicinity.

The king dismounted from his horse and the woman unveiled her face. The king was pleasantly surprised, for she was the foremost courtesan of the city - a highly gifted danseuse. ‘My lord, I wish to hand over a gift to you - but on condition that you must not ask me any question about it,’ she said pleadingly. Intrigued, the king could display only an uncertain smile. *The* courtesan brought out a fruit and pushed it into the king’s hand.

‘Whoever eats it would be blessed with a long, youthful life. There is none in my knowledge who could deserve it more than you, my lord!’ she said. The lady drew the veil on her face and walked away briskly without giving the king a chance to find out anything more about the surprise gift.

He gazed at the thing for long. It was unmistakably the very fruit given him by the hermit.

Bewildered, he turned and proceeded to the royal rest-house in the forest and summoned his Kotwal - the chief of the royal intelligence service. After narrating his puzzle to him, he said, ‘I must know in detail, as soon as possible, the process through which the fruit came back to the starting point of its movement - that is myself.’

The Kotwal perhaps already knew much. In any case he presented his foolproof report within twenty four hours, the substance of which was: just as the king loved his youngest queen most, the youngest queen loved a young noble most and had been anxious to prove her

love through some uncommon gesture. The opportunity came when she received the wonder fruit. She lost no time in making a gift of it to her beloved.

It so happened that while the queen was madly in love with the young noble, the latter was enamoured of the courtesan and to prove his love for her, presented the fruit to the courtesan at the earliest opportunity. The prudent courtesan, however, had no illusion about herself or her vocation and had no fancy for a prolonged youth. King Bhartihari was her objective choice for enjoying the fruit's efficacy. Unlike the king of the Arabian Nights who, not content with beheading his faithless wife, would marry a girl in the evening only to behead her the next morning, the stunned Bhartihari was left with only one question to brood over. Had he died four days ago, he would have died with the belief that his queen loved him as much as he loved her, that is to say, he would have died without knowing the truth. Truth, in this case, was a chance discovery for him. Alas, can one ever know the truth behind even the usual happenings in life, with the help of the normal wit and intelligence at one's disposal? And, if truth can prove so elusive even in small things, how much difficult it must be to grasp the ultimate Truth!

He called his younger brother, Vikram, and his ministers and nobles to his forest rest-house and crowned Vikram the king. He then left them as an ascetic, for meditating on the enigma that is Truth. From Ujjain he went to Varanasi and several other places, living in a cave at Haridwar for twelve years, practising Yoga under the great guru of the Natha sect, Gorakhnath.

'How fascinating, though a legend!' I commented.

'There is an area where history and legends are inextricably merged. It is almost impossible to sift one from the other. Sage Sandipani, the teacher of Krishna, belongs to the lore of mythology. But his family stream has continued to flow, uninterrupted and undisputed, to this day, the present scion of it being Pandit Suryanarayan Vyas, the celebrated scholar. Where do we draw a line between myths and history in this case?' asked Prof. Nigam, adding mildly, 'And I wonder if that is necessary.' He almost echoed my thought.

The region abounding in rocks and bushes we surveyed, had probably been a stretch of forest during the era of Bhartihari. The original caves as well as the habitations which must have grown around the caves appeared to have been buried under layers of earth deposited by floods.

The sun was disappearing on the far horizon across the timeless city. The fusion of light and darkness in the twilight was as soothing and significant as the fusion of myths and history at Ujjain.

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THE PLEASURES OF LITERATURE

- Dr. Mrs. Prema Nandakumar

(CPS thanks Dr. Mrs. Prema Nandakumar, an outstanding scholar and writer in English, Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit and a powerful speaker too, for sending for publication in the Bulletin her Social Science & Humanities Day Address delivered at Annamalai University on 18th April, 2011)

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, eminent scholars and academicians, students of this distinguished University, ladies and gentlemen :

At the outset, I would like to express my grateful thanks to the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ramanathan, to the Registrar Dr. Rathinasabapathi and to the Dean, Faculty of Arts for having invited me to your University. I have always cherished my earlier visits to this institution and I deem it a privilege and pleasure to be speaking to you on this day marking the importance of Social Sciences and Humanities in a world that has become increasingly technological and science-oriented. You may remember that as early as 1959, the British novelist and scientist C.P.Snow had pointed out in his Rede Lecture that the humanities and the sciences were not interacting enough; and unless that were done and the two cultures came together, it would not be easy to solve the problems faced by humanity.

Appropriately the day is to commemorate the hallowed memory of Dr. Malcolm Adiseshaiyah and this too makes this occasion a privileged one for me. Dr. Adiseshaiyah was a friend of my father, Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar and my brother, Dr. Ambirajan. My father used

"Our philosophy of *vasudaiva kutumbakam* has encouraged us to accept pluralism as the natural order of all civilized existence." Dr Manmohan Singh

to say that Dr. Adisheshaiah was a power-dynamo. His creative facets were many, both as a teacher and as an administrator. He was an ideal teacher who encouraged his students to fan out into the nearby villages, as he had imbibed the call when he worked in Calcutta and knew Sriniketan and Santiniketan in person. He was never frightened of the unknown as his career and achievements at the UNESCO and other institutions testify; My brother would often refer to the MIDS Library funded by Dr. Adisheshaiah's trust as one of the best for social sciences in India. Dr. Adisheshaiah's gargantuan appetite for books is another facet that I had always admired. He was a great reader and this was reflected in his brilliant penmanship.

I have a connection with Dr. Adisheshaiah too. He was a lover of Tamil literature and obtained UNESCO assistance to the programmes of translation of Tamil classics into English. The series began in 1961 with Rajaji's *The Ayodhya Canto of the Ramayana* as told by Kamban. A.K. Ramanujan's *The Interior Landscape: Love Poems from a Classical Tamil Anthology* came out next in 1967. My Poems of Subramania Bharati followed in 1977. I must also point out with gratitude that he initiated Jeanine Auboyer's research work on Sri Ranganathaswami Temple at my native place, Srirangam. His pointed foreword is a delight wherein he writes:

“Out of India's vast artistic heritage, the temples of South India present to the traveler, to the student of Hindu architecture and its evolution in South India, as well as to the pilgrim – in fact, to all men – a many faceted interest. They are anchored firmly in India's long history and yet soar upwards to emphasise the limitlessness of man's dreams and aspirations. Some gigantic and massive, almost brutally imposing, others light and airy, with delicate towers, columns and elegant porches, collectively they reflect the pageant of the development of one of man's oldest cultures, and individually, through the hundreds of sculptures and paintings which adorn their surfaces, they depict the struggles, failures and successes of the men who made them the centre of their lives. More than that, the South Indian temples are today as much a part of life of those who live at their feet as they were when they were built. They continue to be used daily by hundreds of pilgrims and visitors as religious shrines, cultural centres and places of repose and

meditation.”

Such fine, meaningful writing! This is what makes me very happy to be with you to speak about the pleasures of literature which gave us a stylist like Dr. Adisheshaiah. Before I proceed, I would like to add my thanks to Dr. Ramgopal who got in touch with me and gave the welcome suggestion that I speak on the pleasures of literature.

Literature was born when man learned “to connect”. Two disparate entities were brought together in a double-vision that coalesced into a single seeing as when a lover saw his beloved's eyes as pools of lotuses or watched a baby at home as lovely as a little parrot.

How is this possible? But then that is the secret of creation. As I wrote more than four decades ago while seeking to do a comparative study of Sri Aurobindo and Dante, there is no repetition in nature's infinite variety:

“On the other hand, the universe being certainly a cosmos, and not a chaos of contraries and contradictories, not only is there the ground of transcendent unity, there are also infinite gradations of intermediate unity and similarity, and it could be both an interesting and rewarding adventure to observe these and make recordings.”

These recordings achieved unconsciously in moments of self-lost inspirations become great literature offering shoreless Ananda to generations. This Ananda is also ethical in its deepest sense, a point caught effortlessly by John Keats when he exclaimed:

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty,” - that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Literature is a question of word-combinations, for sure. A dictionary is not literature. But surprisingly, literature seems to cover all the rest! Economics, politics, science, spirituality, religion: all become great literature in the hands of the genius. Hence, the world of literature has appropriated *The Origin of Species*, *Das Kapital*, *Social Contract*, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and the rest. Science, philosophy, history, social studies, even grammar! Dare anyone of us say that the Tamil work on grammar and poetics, *Tolkappiyam* is not literature? I remember my father asking my brother

and me to read carefully the two huge volumes of Holmes-Laski Letters that had been published in 1953 to learn how to use the English language!

All writers use their language as a catalytic agent to convey their thoughts. Their success depends on their mastery over the medium. De Quincey gives us a clue to distinguish literature from what is not. He says: "All that is literature seeks to communicate power; all that is not literature, to communicate knowledge." How does this happen? The eminent literary critic, R.A. Scott-James has a clue:

"The eager scientist is constantly trembling with the excitement and imagination of the artist. The historian is compelled to lift his story above bare fact, to recreate and dramatize incident, reclothe his persons and shape the setting in which he places them."

Books of power or books of knowledge: my life has been inextricably woven with books since I was born more than seventy years ago. I grew up literally in my father's sumptuous personal library. There were no luxuries in our lower middle class home, but one never felt the lack of them. What if there was no fridge nor radio nor a car? My brother and me always had books and we simply traveled in faery lands forlorn. We were also encouraged to have "our own" library for father believed only in books as gifts. I started mine in 1944 when father gave me P.Sri's Andal. This is a book in Tamil and remains the proudest possession of my library.

It also helped that we were multilingual in our household. There were books in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Kannada and English. Never a dull moment! I just cannot think of any time in my life when I have felt "bored" with life. And even all those moments of sorrow, loss, frustration, depression and anger just melted away in a trice when I curled up with a book. Literature has a way of siphoning of all these attacks of unhappy forces in one's life, such has been my experience. Yes, even old age that has been creeping upon me as a tiger in the forests, gets effectively halted when I take down my Globe edition of Wordsworth and open it at random:

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,

And cometh from afar :
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!"

In a trice I am back in my childhood reciting Telugu nursery rhymes with my brother. "Kothi puttinadhendukuraa?" Where have the wrinkles gone? Such is the gift of literature.

So, what are the pleasures of literature? In fact, John Cowper Powys has published a book, *The Pleasures of Literature* (1938). This is yet another of my prized possessions. The Powys brothers and sisters were my father's friends. John's brother Llewlylyn used to correspond with father in the 'Thirties and when my father went to Great Britain in 1951, he visited the Powys sisters, Gertrude and Philippa. Both Llewlylyn and John were great writers. In his introduction to the book, John points out how literature can hold you in a vice-like grip once you have surrendered to its pleasures. I can understand when he writes about libraries and second-hand book shops (another of my weaknesses):

"Though books, as Milton says may be the embalming of mighty spirits, they are also the resurrection of rebellious, reactionary, fantastical and wicked spirits! In books dwell all the demons and all the angels of the human mind. It is for this reason that a book-shop – especially a second-hand bookshop – is an arsenal of explosives, an armoury of revolutions, an opium-den of reactions."

True enough. You never know what you are in for when you take up a book just on hearsay. But then, great literature has a way of making us slip out of the present and travel in unknown pathways, experiencing strange new adventures of the spirit. Mere imagination cannot give this pleasure. It is when imagination is woven with sublimity of utterance that we remain in this brave new world for a while. This is just not pleasure nor profit but a terrifying wonderment that a series of murders can become almost a scripture for the lover of literature. Lady Macbeth is dead. The murders and other evils that Macbeth has perpetrated seem to mock him now. What was the purpose of it all, this corruption of the

"Short term differences between India and the United States caused their estrangement during the Cold War. A similar rift now would not be in the long term interest of either country." Sunil Dasgupta & Stephen P. Cohen 9

flesh, of the mind and of the atmosphere? Is it not a warning to the megalomaniacs in India today who prefer the rosy pathways of corruption?

“To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.”

Or just a crow! Can you weave an unforgettable scenario with a crow that can be terrifying to the soul? And yet, after reading Edgar Allan Poe’s poem, ‘The Raven’ several decades ago, the scene has returned to me, whenever I sit alone, deep into the night, reading Aeschylus or Euripides:

“Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a
flirt and flutter,

In there stepped a stately raven of the saintly days
of yore;

Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute
stopped or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my
chamber door -

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my
chamber door -

Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into
smiling,

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance
it wore.

“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I
said, “art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient raven wandering from the
Nightly shore -

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s
Plutonian shore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.””

In the hands of a great artist, the blood-spattered
guillotine of the French Revolution becomes a lesson in

what constitutes love, pity and self-sacrifice: all that we
hold beautiful, holy, divine. One learns what exactly
literature does to our psyche when reading *A Tale of Two
Cities* by Charles Dickens when Sydney Carton muses a
few moments before he is to be cut down by the
guillotine’s blade:

“I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising
from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in
their triumphs and defeats, through long years to come,
I see the evil of this time and of the previous time of
which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation
for itself and wearing out. . . .

I see that child who lay upon her bosom and who
bore my name, a man winning his way up in that path of
life which once was mine. I see him winning it so well,
that my name is made illustrious there by the light of his.

It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever
done; it is a far, far better rest I go to than I have ever
known.”

This is how the novel concludes. And here is the
unforgettable beginning of the novel:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it
was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it
was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it
was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it
was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we
had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we
were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct
the other way—in short, the period was so far like the
present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted
on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative
degree of comparison only.”

Whenever I look upon the scenario in our
motherland, or read what is happening in Egypt or
Afghanistan or Behrein or Japan, I am reminded of this
passage and take the book down to read it again. Such
is the vision of the great writer, a Seer, a Dhrashtaa as
the Vedas call him. Each time one reads the passage
new significances swirl around our thoughts, a point well
made by Tiruvalluvar:

“Wise men’s friendship is like reading classics:
One derives more and more good.”

The *nava-rasas* that come upon us wave after wave when we read our favourite books cannot be explained in verbal terms. It is something so close to our soul-affinities. There are favourites too even among the classics. I never tire of reading Sherlock Holmes stories but I have no turn for Hercule Poirot. St. Paul's dithyramb on charity is a favourite at any time of day:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails".

Apart from my father who was a bibliophile, I was also able to come into contact with some great men when I accompanied him to their houses. I cannot forget the day I went with father to the house of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari in his Bazlullah Road house on 15th April, 1958. He had just then given up the Chief Ministership. When we entered his room, he looked up from the book he was reading and welcomed us. "Iyengar, you have come at the right time. I am reading Shakespeare". As I sat silently listening to them, for one hour I was transported to the Shakespearian world where much of their conversation was punctuated with Shakespearian quotes! That is another gift of great literature. One or two lines and an entire world opens before us! For these lines were written when the author was somewhere far above the mere questioning, mental level. Sri Aurobindo calls this level of consciousness, the Overmind. For instance, the entire Ayodhya Canto in the Ramayana, with its epic-sized dramatic irony, is unveiled before us in a moment when we hear Sumitra tell Lakshmana:

*Ramam Dasaratham viddhi maam viddhi
janakaathmajaam*

*Ayodhyaam ataveem viddhi gachcha thatha yathaa
sukham*

Indeed, a love of reading great works in any language, cultivated from one's childhood is the best fixed deposit for a purposive and happy life as the uses of literature are indeed innumerable. The sheer joy of word combinations like the line, "beaded bubbles winking at the brim" (which I made the subject of a classroom lecture by an English Professor in my Tamil novel, *Oru Naal Pozhudu*); the sense of pride at being able to tell others how we are no strangers to the Russian Dostoevsky, the German Goethe, the French novels of Alexander Dumas or the Hindi novels of Premchand, thanks to English literature which has a vast amount of translated works from the world's languages; the fulfillment we gain by knowing the story-patterns of classics like *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* cannot be verbalised. I was a little girl when I read Hugo's classic, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* for the first time. When I read it years later, I was older, and I could enter the whirlpools of passion raised by the lust of the Archdeacon and the selfless love of the hunchback Quasimodo for the gypsy girl Esmeralda. There were so many descriptions of the famous cathedral of Our Lady of Paris in the novel that I imagined walking around it myself! Wherever I could (Encyclopaedia Britannica, travel books) I read about it and gazed at the photographs, all the time the heroic hunchback a presence. I never knew that a day would indeed come to me to actually step inside the Cathedral which forms the background for the novel. It is a beautiful representative of Gothic architecture. And when I did enter the Cathedral, it was 2001. I had become quite old. But then, the Cathedral had been restored just then through a period of ten years. The place just glowed and it was fantastic when I went into it at 9 A.M.

With guidebook in hand, it was easy enough to see what I wanted. The stained glass windows, the figures of various saints, the gargoyles and of course Pieta. "Overwhelming", says my diary. The history of the cathedral speaks of great works of art and also immense destruction. Hugo's novel had given me plentiful descriptions and made it all familiar, since the entire action of the novel takes place in and around this Cathedral. As I looked up I could remember Hugo's

"Right thinking is not the outcome of or mere cultivation of the intellect, nor is it conformity to pattern, however worthy and noble. Right thinking comes with self knowledge. Aldous Huxley

description of Quasimodo:

“Many a time had he climbed up the façade composed of several elevations, assisted only by the asperities of the sculpture. Often might he have been seen crawling up the outside of the towers, like a lizard up a perpendicular wall: those two giants, so tall, so threatening, so formidable.”

The Pieta sculpted by Guillaume Coustou held my attention almost totally. The Virgin seated with Jesus Christ on her hands, gazing intently at the face of her Son, the mother’s heart bleeding as the Saviour had on the Cross. As I stood there looking up at the stained glass windows in the background, a riot of yellow, marine blue and red, I found that people were coming in and settling down. Prayer time? Let me not disturb them, was the first thought. So I went out only to see that more groups were coming and standing in rows, as it was filled up inside. What is going on?

I was told that there was to be a Requiem Mass for those who had lost their lives in the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York on September the 11th, just two days earlier. This was the third day. There were some strains of a choir from somewhere at the back. And then the rituals of the Mass. There was deep silence as we stood outside the cathedral, people from ever so many nations, almost all of us strangers in Paris. There were two speeches which we heard with absorption. Both the speakers were priests, one white, one black. They spoke in measured accents, never giving way to anger or raising their voice. They called for patience and courage to bear the tragedy; and they invoked the Virgin’s Grace for global peace. There was not a single wrong note as they referred to Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for mankind.

Now there came to us music from the organ. Not familiar with the words in the verses used for a Requiem, I just told myself in English: “Jesus Lord, grant them everlasting rest.” Somehow the dark romance of *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, the terrible end of Esmeralda and Quasimodo, the calm that comes upon us as we close the novel after all the terror and the fury, seemed to be in tune with the somber mood of the people around me. The kindly heart of Esmeralda, the pure love of Quasimodo and the Passion of Jesus would never have been in vain for mankind. They spread the life-giving

nectar of compassion as subterranean springs to create on this earth a divine life. Such are the sublime moments gifted to us by our love of literature.

After the Mass, I walked towards the Seine river and sat on a bench for a while, watching the boats moving on its quiet waters. The many times I had read the novel, my father explaining some of the passages to me long, long ago, the tragedy of Esmeralda and Quasimodo in the novel and the Twin Towers in America were all churning within me as I sat for quite sometime in that alien land, sorrowing for the lot of mankind. The heart sought for a word of comfort. That came from another great poem of our times, *Savitri* by Sri Aurobindo, my constant companion.

“The Son of God born as the Son of man
Has drunk the bitter cup, owned Godhead’s debt,
The debt the Eternal owes to the fallen kind
His will has bound to death and struggling life
That yearns in vain for rest and endless peace.
Now is the debt paid, wiped off the original score.
The Eternal suffers in a human form,
He has signed salvation’s testament with his blood:
He has opened the doors of his undying peace.”

Literature remains the secret of remaining intellectually rich all one’s life. In my own library I have several series (each with several volumes), from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to Penguins, Pelicans, the Gita Press, the ISCON library, Narmada Pathippakam, Writers Workshop, Collected works of Sri Aurobindo, T.V. Kapali Sastri and so on, the latest entrant being the 12-volume *Collected Works of Kavya Kantha Ganapati Muni* in Sanskrit. And the many volumes on Siddha poetry, and ancient Tamil (like *Kuruntokai*) published by your (Annamalai) University. Most of them have some motto. The one I love most belongs to the *Everyman’s Library* which has, among other volumes, the six volumes of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and *Macaulay’s History of England*. The motto describes best what I have received from literature: “Everyman, I will go with thee and be thy guide, in thy most need to go by thy side”.

The lines are from the medieval morality play, *Everyman*. Here the hero Everyman (who represents all of us) is comforted by another character, Knowledge.

They are both starting on a journey which promises to be full of difficulties and unknown terrors. But Knowledge assures Everyman that as long as he is with the hero, all will be well. As long as these books are with us, as long as literature is loved by us and as long as we cherish our classics, all will yet be well for the future of humanity. And this would also be our tribute to one of the greatest Indians of our times, Dr. Malcolm Adisheshaiah.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INDIA AS A GLOBAL ROLE PLAYER IN THE 21st CENTURY-II

(Prof. S.Bhaskaran Endowment Lecture delivered at Annamalai University on March 18, 2011)

- A.Prasanna Kumar

A significant development at the end of the 19th century was the plea of some nations for conferences and meetings to sort out their differences. The first Hague Conference of 1899 and the Second Hague Conference of 1907 were an important step in the evolution of the modern international system. The Hague Conventions were two international treaties negotiated at international peace conferences at The Hague in the Netherlands. A third conference was planned for 1914 and later rescheduled for 1915, but never took place due to the outbreak of World War I in June 1914. The German international law scholar and neo-Kantian pacifist Walther Schücking called the assemblies the “international union of Hague conferences” and saw them as nucleus of an international federation that was to meet at regular intervals to administer justice and develop international law procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes, asserting “that a definite political union of the states of the world has been created with the First and Second Conferences.” The various agencies created by the Conferences, like the Permanent Court of Arbitration, were “agents or organs of the union.” (Wikipedia)

The First World War that began in 1914 lasted for 1565 days and ended in 1918. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States of America who became a Messiah of Peace with his famous Fourteen Points, played a prominent part in the making of the Treaty of Versailles

which was signed on 28th June 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference, seven months after the armistice ending the First World War. The Treaty marked end of the old order of Europe. Four great empires, the Austro-Hungarian, the German, the Russian and Turkish, collapsed and 1918 saw the beginning of a new era, described by some historians as the dawn of modern times in world affairs. The Treaty of Versailles was a flawed treaty, ‘a one sided treaty’ imposed by the victors on the vanquished. If the first world war was described as ‘a war to end all wars’ the Peace of Paris was criticized as ‘a peace to end all peace.’ It ascribed ‘war guilt’ to Germany and imposed upon it huge reparations payments, territorial and colonial losses, and restriction on military power. The treaty also comprised the Covenant of the League of Nations, an international organization established to promote collective security, and clauses ratifying the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy of the Austro- Hungarian Empire.

The year 1918 is regarded in modern history as significant in many ways because of the rise of democracy, growth of scientific knowledge and technological power, of social sciences and empowerment of women, heralding the advent of modern times in world history. 1918 also saw a drastic redrawing of the map of Europe. Eight great powers emerged in place of the former empires and the rise of Fascism in Italy, Communism in Russia and Nazism in Germany threw up new challenges for the emerging world order. In less than twenty years of the making of the Peace of Paris the world was split into axis and allied powers with Germany, Italy and Japan on one side and USA, Great Britain, France and USSR on the other. War clouds gathered on the horizon faster than anticipated and in 1939 September broke out the Second World War more intense and devastating in damage and destruction of life and property than the First World War. Like a silver lining to a dark cloud two important developments took place in the midst of gloom for the allied powers. On January 1, 1942 President Franklin Roosevelt gave the name United Nations to a concerted effort by allied nations to fight Hitler and the axis powers on rampage. The same year Roosevelt came up with his famous Four Freedoms as vital for a free and civilized world— Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Religion,

“The United States and China’s Asian neighbours remain concerned about China’s current military modernization efforts, including its qualitative and quantitative modernization of its nuclear arsenal.” Nuclear Posture Review 2010 of Obama Administration. 13

Freedom from Want and Freedom from Fear. These constituted the inspirational framework for the future international organization and Human Rights Charter. Another significant contribution came from William Beveridge (born in India) in the form of Beveridge Report of 1942 which sought the eradication of five giant evils—want, sickness, idleness, ignorance and squalor for the establishment of a welfare state. As the Second World was coming to a close the victorious allied powers led by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin prepared to lay the foundations for the United Nations, the Charter of which was drafted at San Francisco in June 1945.

United Nations Organization

The UN Charter was completed on June 26, 1945 after more than 200 delegates from 50 nations worked on it at San Francisco for two months. The Charter was brought into effect as per Article 110 when the Big Five sent in their ratifications and the whole process was completed on October 24 which is celebrated as UN Day.

The Charter is an 8000 word document containing 111 Articles and 19 Chapters. The absence of Big Three Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin made a big difference. UN motto “confidence at all times and conference as often as possible.” The big powers have failed to build up the international society into an international community. ‘We Prepare for war like precocious giants and for peace like retarded pygmies’, remarked Lester Pearson. With an annual budget of 1 billion, now raised to around 5 billion, just one third of the value of cat and dog food sold in US supermarkets, UN's resources are highly limited, as against soaring global military expenditures from 3 billion in 1914 to over 1000 billion today. Dr. Belaunde of Peru said that “UN is a body where something always disappears; when two small powers have a dispute, the dispute disappears; when a great power and small power are in conflict, the small power disappears; when two great powers have a dispute the UN disappears.” The UN is long on promise and short on performance said Irving Whalley. The indifference of the big powers and the irresponsibility of the small nations make the UN ineffective, comment experts.

Is the UN a centre for harmonizing the actions of the nations in the attainment of its goals? Far from it. It is often seen as a forum for diplomats and world leaders to settle their scores through long and boring speeches. Adlai Stevenson said that ‘life at the UN is a combination of protocol, alcohol, and geritol,’ and quipped “Why do so many people feel that to be immortal a speech should be eternal?” Anything important should go into the first ten minutes, nobody listens thereafter, he added The General Assembly is like a World Parliament. President Belaunde said that as President he used French when he wished to be precise, English when he wished to understate and Spanish when he wished to exaggerate. The more it fails the more it is needed, wrote James Reston. There is no alternative to the longest surviving international organization of 192 members.

(to be concluded)

DRAUPADI-II

or

(The ultimate Hindu ideal of an impeccable *pativrata*)

- Sri C. Siva Sankaram

It was Dwapara Yuga. Dharma lost two of its four feet. Hence half-righteousness and half-falsehood reign in this age. King Drupada of the Kingdom of Panchala remained issueless for many a long year. Living issueless means denial of the two worlds which means life futile. The king was seen weighed down by the sorrow of lacking issues. He sought the counsel of the best men of his kingdom. As best men are usually sages they gladly suggested to the king to perform a sacrifice which could effect birth of progeny. Priests from all quarters of the kingdom were summoned for the proper performance of the sacrifice. An auspicious hour was selected to hold the sacrifice in strict adherence to the rules and regulations of the sacrifice. So the ritualist pit was installed for the successful and fruitful culmination of the Vedic sacrifice. The priests adept at proper execution of the ritual procedure began fanning the fire to spread its tongues heavenward. It seemed that they were jubilant to kiss the sun in heaven, it was (the fire) as brilliant as the light produced on the rise of a billion suns at one and the same time. Lo! and behold! there arose out of the leaping

flame a male issue followed by a female issue crying pati, pati, pati, pati and pati for five times. The Angels said; so be it! Amen! She was irrepressibly and exceedingly lustful. So the horrified listeners surmised that the cry meant husbands five for her. Despotism paved the way for its fulfillment. As she was shooting up from the pit of fire sacrifice the bodyless voice of heaven christened her, 'Krishna' denoting the brilliant dark complexion of the babe. In course of time the name Krishna christened by the voice of the heaven was thrown into oblivion to yield place for the prevalence of the name Draupadi. Panchali is the title akin to Draupadi. It denotes the region she belonged to.

The king who yearned for children was happy that he was blessed with issues belonging to two opposite sexes. Life of the king was joyful. He thanked God in heaven and expressed reverential gratitude to the sages and the priests. He drowned all of them in innumerable gifts which the king inwardly meant would result in becoming benediction for the progeny. Drupada was a ferocious ruler little given to conciliation and compassion. Panchali the precious one and only daughter of the imperious king had monopolized the love of her father. She was the cynosure of all eyes including parents, vassals

and courtiers. Drupada lavished his love on her in season and out of season. It was fabulous pomp. It was exuberant affection and egregious indulgence. In a nutshell, she was fondling of the king and kinsmen.

Sita enjoyed ungrudgingly the right of being entitled as Ayonija (not born of human womb). Draupadi also had equal claim to the title Ayonija. She was growing superbly in form and stature as steadily as the moon of the bright fortnight of lunar month. She was beauty par excellence, charm matchless and symmetry arresting. She was like the Bala, the nine year-old facet of Devi She was Lakshmi, Durga, Mahasaraswati and Mahakali. She looked every inch the ideal combination of the spirits of all Goddesses of heaven and earth. The abundance of supernal grace and other mundane traits which were present in her were awaiting impatiently the day of projection. Her inborn magnetism associated matchingly with physical features of allurements were on the brink of blossoming. Signs of ensuing maturity of age were strikingly conspicuous, the vivacity of her gait, the mute expression of throbs of heart were resounding trumpets of fast approaching second stage of a female well groomed.

(to be concluded)

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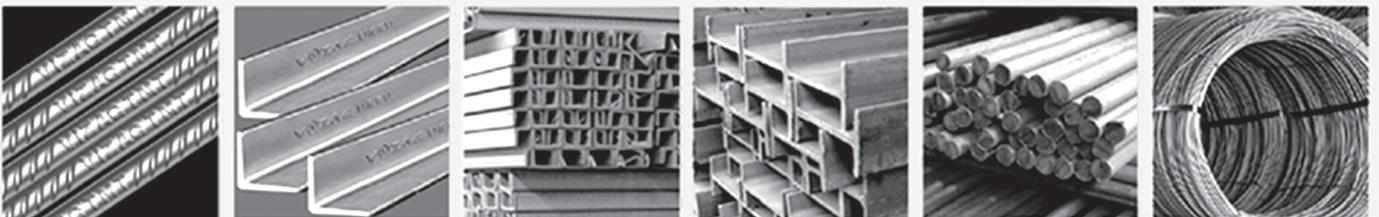
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