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FATHER FORGIVE US !

On October 2, every year we have a plethora of functions and meetings to 'celebrate' Gandhi Jayanthi. Not all of them can be dismissed as ritualistic exercises. Nor can one generalize that only the senior citizens, those born before India became free, are genuine about the sanctity of such occasions when the nation pays homage to the Father of the Nation. Many of the younger generation are keen to work for the promotion of Gandhian ideals. It is soothing indeed to hear children chanting Raghupati Raghav Rajaram....Ishwar Allah tero naam.. every Friday morning in some of our schools. There are also the so called intellectual exercises on the 'relevance' of Gandhi for our times. That smacks of intellectual arrogance and moral bankruptcy. Gandhi does not need to be revalidated annually through sermon and ceremony. Gandhi *jayanthi*, like Martyr's day, is a solemn occasion for introspection and rededication to the ideals Bapu lived and died for---emancipation of the downtrodden, communal harmony and nonviolence in thought, word and deed. The man who walked thousands of miles, fasted on hundreds of days for peace and harmony, practised what he preached, and spent all his time and energy to liberate his countrymen from political bondage, social exploitation and economic misery, described himself with endearing humility as '*a servant of humanity* .' Let us pay our homage to the Father of the Nation through prayer and honest admission of our failures, individual and collective.

Mahatma! When India became free you proclaimed: "*I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs; women will enjoy the same rights as men. This is the India of my dreams.*" On your jayanthi today, Mahatma, we seek your forgiveness for failing to fulfill your dreams. Not one, at least, to be honest.

There are today as many people, if not more, as there were when you brought us freedom, whose tears of sorrow and suffering have not been wiped out. Women continue to be ill-treated and gender inequality is one of India's biggest social problems. The *curse of intoxicating drinks* you vowed to eradicate has become the lubricant for the wheels of government to function. A large number of our younger generation are afflicted with the *curse of drug addiction*. We erased the difference you taught us between *need* and *greed*. We have distorted your *satyagraha* into *asathya* and *duragraha* to spread hatred and violence. When we were busy with midnight celebrations of Independence on August 14-15 you were fasting and praying for communal harmony in the house of a poor family in Calcutta. That day when Bengal ministers led by Prafulla Ghosh called on you for your blessings and guidance you said to them: "*Be humble, be forbearing. Now you will be tested through and through. Beware of power, power corrupts. Do not let yourself be entrapped by its pomp and pageantry. Remember you are in office to serve the poor in India's villages.*" Most of our ministers and officials are doing exactly the opposite in India of your *dreams*!

The inspiration for this supplication comes, of course, from the memorable editorial of *The Hindustan Standard* of January 31,1948. The leading English daily of those times left the entire black-bordered editorial page blank with only these three lines in the middle: "*Gandhiji has been killed by his own people for whose redemption he lived. The second crucifixion in the history of the world has been enacted on a Friday—the same day Jesus was done to death one thousand nine hundred and fifteen years ago. Father, forgive us.*"

Mahatma, you always wanted to forgive even your assassin. We know you would, now from heaven, up above. That is why we offer this prayer now. *Father*, please *forgive us* for disowning you and dishonouring your legacy.

The Editor

I have not the slightest doubt that, but for the pair, truth and non-violence, mankind will be doomed.
- Mahatma Gandhi

THE TRIBUTE OF A FRIEND

by C. F. ANDREWS (Bolpur, Bengal)

My aim, in this article, will be threefold. First of all, I shall try to draw a rapid outline of the deeper religious aspect of Mahatma Gandhi's character. In the second place, the more directly human side of his personality will be brought into the picture. Thirdly, a brief sketch will be given of what I regard as the two most original contributions which he has made to the progress of mankind in the modern age. There are certain cardinal religious virtues whereon Mahatma Gandhi lays most stress. He holds that through them an abiding work may be done in this world by mortal man in the fear of God. The first is called Satya—Truth. This, with him, is a divine quality, which must be made manifest, not only in word and deed, but also in the secret chambers of the soul. Merely to speak no falsehood is not enough, though it is an essential part of truthfulness. The fountain-head of all truth, with him, lies in the heart. How great and profound is Truth may be seen from the fact that he uses the word "Satya" for his impersonal name of God. He constantly utters the formula, "Truth is God, and God is Truth." and it is made clear from his daily life how fervently he worships Truth. To swerve, in however small a degree, from Truth, is to be cut off thus far from the divine source and as a necessary consequence to wither away spiritually. It is to walk in darkness instead of in the light. The daily prayer,

Lead me from untruth to truth,
Lead me from darkness to light,
Lead me from death to immortality,

expresses this in threefold manner. Light and darkness, immortality and spiritual death, are but other aspects of this fundamental distinction between Truth and Untruth. The second virtue which has its source in God is Ahimsa. This word may be literally translated "harmlessness," but it means for Mahatma Gandhi much more than that. It implies the positive quality of doing good. It connotes, in relation to war and bloodshed, active refusal to take part; but it also represents the will to suffer to the uttermost in order to win over those who have done us evil. In its essence, it is God's own Nature, just as Truth is. One of the most ancient and sacred text is Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah—"Ahimsa is the supreme religious duty." Therefore Mahatma Gandhi spends his whole life in exploring the possibilities of this supreme religious duty and harmonizing it completely with Satya—Truth.

For Ahimsa does not merely imply passive resistance in the face of untruth, but rather its active condemnation

yet without anger, malice, or violence. The third cardinal virtue on which Mahatma Gandhi lays the greatest stress in Brahmacharya—Chastity. He points out that the very name, in Sanskrit, is derived from the word "Brahma" which means God. He holds, along with much that is very ancient in Hinduism, that by a suppression of the sex function and then its sublimation, a spiritual energy is generated which becomes a divine power, wonderful in its potency. The true follower of Satya and Ahimsa must also be a Brahmachari, i.e. one who practises complete bodily chastity. Even marriage itself is regarded by Mahatma Gandhi as a concession to human weakness. To put this in other language, complete abstinence from the sex act, together with the elimination of any thought about it, is regarded by him as one of the highest forms of spiritual life to which man or woman in this world can attain. Here I cannot help feeling that the ascetic principle which is so strong in him has carried him too far, just as I cannot understand his fasting without any limit until the object of his fast is achieved. There is something that repels me here, and I have often told him about it. Mahatma Gandhi is essentially a man of religion. He can never think of any complete release from evil apart from God's grace. Prayer is, therefore, of the essence of all his work. The very first requirement of one who is a Satyagrahi—a striver after Truth—is faith in God, whose nature is Truth and Love. I have seen the whole course of his life changed in a few moments in obedience to an inner call from God which came to him in silent prayer. There is a voice that speaks to him, at supreme moments, with an irresistible assurance; and no power on earth can shake him when this call has come home to his mind and will as the voice of God. More and more he finds the fullest confirmation of what he holds to be the pathway of the spiritual life in reading the Gita, which is a part of his daily act of public worship. If I have judged him aright from long and intimate experience, there is always something of the Puritan present in his thoughts of God—"as ever in the Great Task-master's eye".

(From *Mahatma Gandhi* edited by S.Radhakrishnan)



THE POET'S VERDICT

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Occasionally there appear in the area of politics makers of history, whose mental height is above the common level of humanity. They wield an instrument of power, which is almost physical in its compelling force and often relentless, exploiting the weakness in human nature—

Gandhi's social and economic ideas are based upon a realistic appraisal of man's nature and the nature of his position in the universe. - Aldous Huxley

its greed, fear, or vanity. When Mahatma Gandhi came and opened up the path of freedom for India, he had no obvious medium of power in his hand, no overwhelming authority of coercion. The influence which emanated from his personality was ineffable, like music, like beauty. Its claim upon others was great because of its revelation of a spontaneous self-giving. This is the reason why our people have hardly ever laid emphasis upon his natural cleverness in manipulating recalcitrant facts. They have rather dwelt upon the truth which shines through his character in lucid simplicity. This is why, though his realm of activity lies in practical politics, peoples' minds have been struck by the analogy of his character with that of the great masters, whose spiritual inspiration comprehends and yet transcends all varied manifestations of humanity, and makes the face of worldliness turn to the light that comes from the eternal source of wisdom.

(From *Mahatma Gandhi* edited by S.Radhakrishnan)



THE NUCLEAR GENIE-4 SOVIET UNION JOINS THE ARMS RACE

Prof. M.N. Sastri

United Kingdom's atom bomb programme began as early as 1940-41 with the theoretical studies of the refugee scientists Otto Frisch and Rudolf Peierls. Their conclusions were presented to Sir Henry Tizard, the chairman of an important committee for the defence of the country. On Tizard's suggestion, a committee known as the MAUD Committee (Military Application of Uranium Detonation Committee) was constituted with G.P.Thomson, M. Oliphant, P.M.S.Blackett, J. Chadwick, P. B. Moon and J. Cockcroft to study the conclusions. The original authors Frisch, a German and Peierls an Austrian, were officially classified as "enemy aliens" and as such could not be part of this wartime committee! The Committee prepared two reports. The first report concluded that it is feasible to assemble an atom bomb using enriched uranium. The second report concluded that it is also possible to extract energy through controlled fission of uranium in a "uranium boiler." Ironically it is the Maud Committee report that alerted the Soviets, through espionage, about the bomb! The British scientists started working on the first report under the code name TUBE ALLOYS.

But the British Government, already at war with Germany, realized that with its limited sources it was not possible to undertake this expensive developmental work. Tizard, accompanied by Cockcroft, led a mission to Washington to explore the possibility of shifting this programme to the US. These negotiations led to UK along with Canada becoming a partner in the tri-national Manhattan Project under the Quebec Agreement signed in 1943. The British scientists made major contributions to the Manhattan Project. More significantly their participation in the Manhattan Project and the work carried out at the Montreal Laboratory and Chalk River Project in Canada helped them gain expertise in the atom bomb assembly.

Though a significant number of immigrant scientists from Britain, Germany, Hungary, Austria and Denmark played a major role in the Manhattan Project, it was the US scientific community and bureaucracy that controlled and dominated the entire show. At one stage Leslie Groves said that "the United States could have got along without them (the British)." He even excluded the British scientists from participating in the assembly of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. Through the adoption of the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 (known as the McMohan Act) the US Government got complete authority to control and manage the nuclear technology keeping away its wartime British and Canadian allies. With this development UK under the new Labour Government headed by C.R. Attlee decided to build its own nuclear capability. According to one observer, "Possession of the bomb was a symbol of prestige and a sign of power that seemed perfectly normal for a nation that as yet had not realized that it had lost its empire and its former world status." A team was constituted for the bomb production. It consisted of Lord Portal (Air Marshal) (considered as the "British Leslie Groves") as the Controller of Production, Sir John Cockcroft, as the Director of the Atomic Energy Establishment, and Christopher Hinton, an engineer, as the leader of fissile material production. One unique feature of the programme was that it comprised both civilian (power generation) and military (atom bomb production) components.

The programme started at the Atomic Energy

Establishment located at Harwell. The first British nuclear pile became operational at Harwell in August 1947. Reactors for civilian power supply and for production of weapons grade plutonium were located at Windscale (later named Sellafield). During the periods the reactors were not required for producing plutonium for weapons, their operation was optimized for electricity generation for civilian use. A reprocessing facility was constructed for the separation of plutonium and uranium from the spent fuel. The Atomic Weapons Research Establishment was established in 1950 at Aldermaston for the bomb assembly. Sir William Penney, a senior physicist with considerable experience in the Manhattan Project, was chosen for designing the bomb. The first plutonium supply from Windscale was ready by March 1952. But as the plutonium needed for the first bomb was not sufficient for its assembly and testing on schedule, some plutonium was secured from the Canadian sources. Due to the small size and high population density of UK there was no suitable site for atmospheric tests. It had therefore to seek a site in other countries for testing. The first British plutonium bomb under the code name OPERATION HURRICANE was detonated in the Monte Bello Islands, off the coast of Western Australia on October 3, 1952. The bomb had a yield of 25 kilo tons. This achievement prompted Sir Leonard Owen, a scientist to say that, "the McMahan Act was probably one of the best that happened..... as it made us work and think for ourselves along independent lines."

Nuclear research in France began well before World War II with the Curie and the Joliot-Curie couples making classic contributions in the field. But after France came under German occupation the French scientific community was put to great disadvantage having been sequestered from the wartime nuclear programmes in the US. The only exception was Dr. Bernard Goldschmidt who worked with the Anglo-Canadian team at Chalk River and developed the first extraction process for separating plutonium from used nuclear fuel. This process has since become the international standard method.

After the end of the war the French Atomic Energy Commission was constituted by the French

provisional government headed by General de Gaulle with authority to pursue the scientific, commercial and military aspects of nuclear science. Frederic Joliot-Curie was designated as the High Commissioner. In the early stages the programme languished due to political problems with the French communists opposing nuclear proliferation. After the replacement of Frederic Joliot-Curie, himself an ardent communist, by Francis Perrin in 1951 the activity gained momentum. The discovery of large uranium deposits in Central France provided an unrestricted supply of uranium for the construction of nuclear reactors. The French Cabinet led by Prime Minister Pierre Mendes-France authorized in 1954 the programme to develop an atom bomb. The first reactor capable of producing plutonium for the bomb became operational in 1956. In the wake of the humiliating Suez Crisis in October 1956, France decided to abandon NATO's defence cover and accelerate production of its own nuclear deterrent. Felix Gaillard, the Prime Minister signed an official order in 1958 for the assembly and testing of a bomb. The programme received powerful backing from General de Gaulle who became President in December 1958. The first French nuclear test code-named GERBOISE BLEUE was conducted on February 13, 1960 at Reggane in Algeria atop a 105 m tower. This plutonium bomb had a yield of 60-70 kilotons, the most powerful conducted by any country in its first test.

China, the first Asian power to assemble an atom bomb, began its programme as early as 1951, when it entered into an agreement with the Soviet Union for technical assistance in the nuclear field in exchange for Chinese uranium ores. In October 1957 China and the Soviet Union signed an agreement for the supply of a sample atom bomb by the latter and also technical help in nuclear weapon assembly. Assistance was also provided by the Soviet Union for building a gaseous diffusion plant for uranium enrichment. Despite the high cost and complex nature of its production, enriched uranium was considered a far better choice than plutonium. This is because uranium which has a low radioactivity can be handled more easily than plutonium which is intensely radioactive. The metal can also be melted and shaped by simple techniques

with no danger to the craftsmen. It is said that the core of the first Chinese nuclear weapon using enriched uranium was shaped on a lathe by a single technician in one night in an ordinary machine workshop!

The Soviet Union appears to have expected to retain control over the use of the Chinese nuclear weapons. On the other hand China expected to have full freedom to use the weapons. On this count China walked out of the agreement. After the departure of Soviet experts China pursued the programme on its own and succeeded in producing the enriched uranium required for a bomb. The first Chinese nuclear test was conducted at Lop Nor on October 16, 1964. The bomb had a yield of 25 kilotons.

The Five veto-wielding permanent members of the UN Security Council thus constituted the Nuclear High Table.



GLOBAL ENGLISH - THE BRAVE NEW WORLD ?

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The title of this essay might seem somewhat ambiguous. The term “English” that comes after “global” here, may be treated by many as a metaphor and a trope. It may admittedly lead to many discourses that have cross-cultural significance. However, for my purpose, I intend to be less discursive and focus attention on the “global approach to the communicative mode of English Language Teaching”.

There are many ways I could respond to this mandate. Although such a requirement is somewhat absent in the elite English department where I teach, as a Professor of English and a former Head of the Department, I am constantly reminded of my language teaching responsibilities by my colleagues in the social sciences, the hard sciences and other schools such as Management. The University administration also actively seeks our service to equip our library staff with advanced communicative skills so that our Study India Program (SIP) students and international scholars/visitors could be better served. In the railway coaches, at the airport lounges and gatherings, at social and academic events, I am constantly reminded of these responsibilities by elite and non-elite sections of

our globalized society. In the circumstances, the literature teacher of the earlier era who saw no separation between language and literature, indeed the teaching of language through literature, must lead a somewhat anachronistic existence. The statistics are quite telling:

English is used by about 750 million people, only half of whom speak it as a mother tongue. More than half of the world’s technical and scientific periodicals are in English, and English is the medium for 80% of the information stored in the world’s computers. Three quarters of the world mail, telexes and cables are in English. As Mc Crum and Mc Neil (1986) state, “Whatever the total, English at the end of the 20th Century is more widely scattered, more widely spoken and written than any other language has ever been. It has become the language of the planet, the first truly global language.” (Peirce:19)

The Language-Literature conflict in India seems to be a post-independence phenomenon. Thanks primarily to foreign returned experts from UK, the conflict was staged under the benign eyes of the British Council in the classrooms and corridors of the CIEFL (now EFLU). A whole generation of experts comprising Kachru, Varma, Nihalani and Nadkarni debated the merits of Indian English vs. British/International English. The conflict seems to have ended in an uneasy truce. Language and Literature were allowed to operate in somewhat separate spheres, while the college teachers learned to teach English language through anthologies of literary and non-literary texts, usually prepared by University professors.

The globalization of the Indian economy in the nineties seemed to signal the need for a globalized work force: foreign companies that needed an English speaking man/woman power, the BPO, travel, tourism and the entertainment sectors, all clamored for communicative English. Today the industry requirement is clearly driving our college, university and academic bodies like the UGC at the national level. Universities and autonomous colleges are required to increasingly take up self-financing skill-based courses. Communicative English is clearly at the top of the management and parents’ agenda. Literature departments continue, but with a somewhat lower profile. The literature teacher must tread the idealistic terrain of literature as humanism even as he/she employs the latest approaches: post-colonial, feminist, new-historicist and deconstructionist. The language teacher who comes armed with an impressive arsenal of managerial jargon and abbreviations impresses the college managers, parents and students. Thus, we have the TBA (Task Based Approach) and PBS (Process Based Syllabus).

What then are the new possibilities of this global approach to Communicative English? My aim here is not to make a comprehensive survey of all that exists in the field and come up with my own recommendations but to signal the need for a fresh thinking on the subject. In this effect, I shall consider two approaches which to my mind indicate two possibilities almost at the two opposite poles, with which we can relate. In process, I hope, my own preferences become clear.

In an interesting article entitled "speaking to the Global village: Towards Globally usable Accents of English," published in CIEFL Bulletin, 1996, IIT Madras Professor Shreesh Chaudhary, makes a case for a globally accepted Spoken English.

Chaudhary begins by stating that "in recent decades, some kind of ambivalence has marked the attitude of some teachers towards teaching the pronunciation of English. They profess that pronunciation does not matter, yet they seem anxious to speak, hear and teach the 'right sounds'."

Chaudhary maintains that such a global communicative English is not only possible, but also the need of the hour. He not only points out the existence of a growing clientele, comprising his own technology, students aspiring for corporate berths, overseas teaching, research and job assignments, but also a globalized work-force in India as well.

"This model", concludes Chaudhary: can contain common features of the "standard accent". By standard accent, I mean, as in Wells (1982: 34) an accent "which at a given time and place is generally considered correct..." Some common features of this kind are word stress, phrasal pause and vowel length. The global model requires a slow tempo of speech too, a tempo slower than four syllables per second.(Chaudhary,1996:29) Chaudhary attempts to posit his new approaches based on what he calls the "burial of the dead." These include what is known as Received Pronunciation of Britain (RP) and (Rudimentary International Pronunciation) (RIP). While the efficacy of both these varieties have been questioned by Language teachers (Kachru 1985; 1986; 83-99, Kapili, 1988; Nadkarni, 1966: 100; Nihalani et. al. 1979: 203; Gimson, 1978: 45; Widdowson, 1993; Cottle, 1975; Orkin, 1971: 121 and others), he argues that many question the need of a global SE (Spoken English). Those who feel inclined to Chaudhary's answer may go through his paper where he offers arguments in favor of his position. You may consider a local application of his advocacy of a new global Spoken English. I would now like to take up a radically different approach

for our consideration. Based on the work of B. Kumaravadevelu, two Language teachers Sunita Mishra and C. Murali Krishna in an unpublished paper, speak of the "growing field of Critical Applied Linguistics" (CAL).

"Critical Applied Linguistics", maintain Mishra and Muralikrishna bring into sharp focus the issue that Language teaching has been till now operating on a premise that it is context neutral. But to be effective, it has to take into account factors like learner position, textual implication, assumptions underlying teaching methodology etc. This approach, aside from thinking and understanding skills that can be taught to students, also being an socio-cultural and political implications of Language into the classroom.(Mishra and Muralikrishna ,2007: 1)

The main challenge of Critical Applied Linguistics", they conclude is in a certain sense, effectively mapping the micro and macro relations: understanding concepts like ideology, global capitalism, gender, sexuality and class to factors like Second Language Learning, Second Language Acquisition etc. It is an acknowledgement and an acceptance that the site of language learning, whatever be the level, has everything to do with access to power, disparity, desire, difference and resistance.(Ibid:1-2) A logical consequence of this approach is what is described as "Critical bilingualism", defined by Walsh, 1999 as 'the ability to not just speak two languages but to be conscious of the socio-cultural, political and ideological contexts in which the Languages (and therefore the speakers) are positioned and function, the multiple meanings fostered in each. (Walsh, 1991) Politics is the dirty work and most language teachers are weary of political considerations in the teaching of language skills in the classroom context. However, politics here simply means paying due sensitivity to contextual factors. In fact, some theoreticians argue that we need to be upfront about political considerations. For instance, in an interesting paper entitled "Towards the Pedagogy of Possibility in the Teaching of English Internationally: People's English in South Africa," Brownwyn Norton Peirce attempts to challenge "The Hegemony of 'communicative competence' as an adequate formulation of principles on which to base the teaching internationally", she argues that in the teaching of English teachers could help students explore as to what is 'desirable' and appropriate in the use of English. She cites the example of People's English in South Africa where learners try 'to appropriate the language in the interest of freedom and possibility for all South Africans'.

Peirce makes the distinction fundamentally clear. People's English she says, is not one of the 'new Englishes'

such as Indian English, Nigerian English or other forms. It is 'not distinguished syntactically, semantically, phonetically from the spectrum of English uses currently found in South Africa.' The intention, she concludes, 'is not to distinguish People's English from the British English or American English, but People's English from apartheid English.' (p. 413) Such a teaching is based on the principle of process and consideration with a view to the enrichment of an expansion of human potentials. (p. 470)

As I have explained before, the above discussion seems to highlight the two polarities in the teaching of Communicative English. From the use of a global Spoken English we have moved into the domain of the Critical Applied Linguistics and the Pedagogy of the possible in the teaching of English. A dominant aspect of cultural globalization is that it promotes homogeneity and uniformity. I believe post-colonial India needs an approach that is culture specific. Consequently, we must move away from the "one side-fits-all" formula. The implications of this view have been correctly spelt out by Mishra as three fold: Understanding the global and ideological relations that govern the classroom, making pedagogic choices about curriculum development, context, material classroom preparation and Language use, and finally developing teacher sensitivity and competence to recognize and handle heterogeneity and plurality. As teachers of English, both language and Literature, we are seldom aware of the fact that we pay very little attention to the above mentioned aspects in the class room. Very rarely are we self reflexive about our cultural and ideological background and biases vis a vis those whom we teach. Most of us look for the 'ideal' students and decry those who cannot come up to our expectations in terms of language ability or language use. How do the pupils from the semi urban areas respond to textual/contextual situations that are completely alien to them. Are we administering reading material that fits in with our understanding of markers like the caste, class and gender? After all, as studies have shown, effective language learning and comprehension greatly depends on contextual factors, many of which are pedagogic and societal.

How does English operate in the language hierarchy in India? How does it become an emblem of power and hegemony? How to respect the growing need for English with an equal respect for the Indian languages? Clearly these are important questions for the English Language and Literature teachers.

Conclusion:

What then is our vision of the global English of the brave new world? It is to indigenize and localize the teaching of Communicative English, even as we seek the global turf. By such actions, we will be sensitive to plurality in the classroom situation and relate to the varied background the students come from. In other words, as an interesting reversal, we must think locally and act globally. This must be as true of our cultural politics as of the English Language teaching in the classroom.

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INDIA: The dangers of looking for a fast track to international excellence

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Abstract: India's Universities for Research and Innovation Bill envisages a fast track to the global rankings. But it will do nothing for the majority of the universities in the country and will allow a greater role for private universities, without adequate regulation.

The Universities for Research and Innovation Bill 2012, introduced in the Indian national parliament in May, aims to create high-quality research and innovation universities, or world-class universities. These universities are to focus on research and development, to aspire to attain the pinnacle of knowledge in a particular area through innovation in design, and to produce research that will eliminate deprivation by bridging linkages between research institutions and industry. The bill provides for the setting up of new universities by the union government or by private bodies – domestic or foreign – and for the classification of some existing institutions as research and innovation universities.

Viewed as a major component of the India Excellence Initiative, these universities are expected to boost the quality and standards of higher education in the country. It is also hoped that at least some of them will figure in the top 100 or 200 universities in the global rankings – currently there are no Indian institutions in the top 200. With a high degree of autonomy guaranteed, it is hoped that many private and foreign 'promoters' will make huge investments and set up strong universities, and thereby contribute to the currently meagre base of research and development investment and help to build a knowledge society.

India spends very little on R&D in general and research in universities in particular. Total spending on R&D amounted to 0.9% of GDP in 2010, while in many advanced countries it ranges between 2.5% and 4.5%. By the nomenclature, one would feel encouraged at the outset to note that at last some kind of priority is being given to research and innovation in India's universities. In fact, all higher education and research institutions – rather than a few selected 'elite' institutions – are expected to be focusing on research and innovation. A majority of the existing institutions pay only lip-service to research and innovation, however. The bill does not refer to them. There is much need and scope to strengthen existing central and state

universities, in such a way that they become universities with high standards. Perhaps not all, but a good number of universities have the potential to do so. They need (a) assured strong public funding, (b) a high degree of academic autonomy including freedom to hire quality faculty from within and outside the country, and (c) de-politicisation. Unfortunately, the bill is not thinking of these nearly 600 existing universities. A large number of institutions, including many central universities – particularly new ones – are starved of qualified faculty and other critical inputs, including infrastructure and funds.

Holistic approach manifestly missing

An important feature of the bill is the conception of innovation universities as distinct universities, with no relation to other universities and institutions of higher education. Even if all or some of these innovation universities become over years high-quality research institutions, they will remain isolated, with no impact at all on the rest of the higher education system. A holistic approach to higher education in India is manifestly missing.

Then there is the role of the private sector to consider. The government expects huge involvement from the private sector in setting up innovation universities, either in terms of establishing private universities on their own or through various modes of public-private partnership. Going by past experience, one cannot expect India's private sector to be interested in setting up research and innovation universities. Hundreds of engineering colleges and some universities were set up by the private sector, as they yield quick profits. Research and innovation universities may not yield such profits. Of course, the bill provides for a very high degree of autonomy for innovation universities in all aspects, including levying of fees, the generation of resources from other sources and their utilisation. This might be quite an attractive provision for the greedy private sector. Given the resource constraints and government's preference, it is likely that many of the new innovation universities, if at all they come up, will be private ones – domestic or foreign – and the freedom they are guaranteed will result in further growth of private education and a high degree of commercialisation.

But by its very nomenclature, 'research and innovation universities' cannot be expected to be money-generating, and on the other hand they can be expected to be high-level investment propositions, requiring huge investment and a long-term vision. They will be able to generate economic benefits to the individuals who set them up, and to society, only after a long period of investment. If that is the case, and if one takes the nomenclature

seriously, one can argue that it is only the government that can and should take responsibility for setting up such universities. Neither private nor foreign universities will have long-term vision, long-term interests or be willing to make huge investments and wait for a long 'gestation period'. Moreover, apart from the fact that they will be fully autonomous, there is no clear indication of how these universities will become world-class or universities of exceptional quality in terms of research and innovation.

The 'promoter', the chancellor or vice-chancellor and most of the members of the board of directors are not expected, according to the bill, to be intellectuals, researchers or academics of great standard. The board members are expected to be innovators and industry leaders. It is doubtful whether any grand research vision could be developed in such a set-up. One of the most important features of the bill is complete autonomy or unbridled freedom, which may be very dangerous in our society. Universities – not only research and innovation universities, but also existing universities – do require autonomy. But it needs to be autonomy with accountability. Academic institutions require a high degree of academic autonomy, a fair amount of administrative autonomy and much less financial autonomy. The bill places research and innovation universities beyond the purview of any public body. Even the proposed National Commission for Higher Education and Research will not have anything to do with these universities.

Given experience with India's private and even public institutions, a reasonably strong mechanism for providing public control is necessary, so that these research and innovation universities are accountable to society and produce 'public goods' for India rather than 'global public goods'.

Source: University World News (19 August 2012)
Issue No:235



THE TRUSTEE NONPAREIL

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.**)*

My drive from Udaipur to Chittor which started at the crack of dawn gave me the sensation of going through a long lyrical poem, its last stanza being sunrise beyond

the Aravalli hills, with the silhouette of the fort of Chittor outlined against a bright blue horizon.

The zigzag ascent to the fort passed through lush green bushes and creepers interrupted by a living shop or a dead sentry post and ruins of archways. A historic passage indeed, that had vibrated to a million hooves and laughter and cries, to waves of victors and vanquished through the ages.

Guides accosted me as soon I emerged from my car. 'It'll be difficult for you to appreciate the various monuments inside the fort without a guide's assistance,' said one. 'Just tell me the amount of time you're prepared to spend and I'll be selective accordingly,' said another.

A guide, no doubt, is a help, but he is a hindrance to one's personal brooding, reflections and nostalgia. I walked passed them.

'Can I be of any help?' The skeletal aged man seated on a boulder at the entrance extinguished his cheroot, stood up and removed his worn-out cap, some sort of an army relic, in the way of greeting me. His dignified gait, but sad eyes, moved me to a nod. He thanked me and ushered me into the fort.

Within minutes he became, more than a guide, a most genial companion. He was in the army, but lost the job for some disobedience attributed to him and, in the years that followed, lost every other privilege or position he stumbled upon. His nephew running a shop downhill did not mind providing him with food and shelter and he tried to earn a bit as a guide to meet his other meagre needs.

He had no regrets over his past, no great expectations from the future.

'What has Akbar left for you to see?' he asked me, standing amidst the first phase of the giant ruins. 'Art and architecture were of no consideration for the builders of this fort. This was designed with pure safety and its strategic location in view. In normal times Chittor could kick down any enemy, but Akbar struck when the sun of its fortune was already under eclipse - and that over-ambitious foreign invader tried to leave no stone unturned! Well, sir, must you educated people call him "Great?"'

'My friend, you can call Babur a foreigner, but how Akbar? Babur disliked the country that enabled him to wear a solid crown, but Akbar, born in India, loved India and was eager to learn from its heritage. How can you judge a 16th century character with your 20th century values? So far as ambition and ruthlessness are concerned, don't you think

that they are some of the most glittering ingredients of history? Doesn't the evolutionary force get much done though individuals possessed by such qualities or frenzies – Alexander for example?' I became Akbar's lawyer, not so much for the great Moghul's sake, but because I liked to provoke my guide.

But he changed his strategy at once. 'What sin had Meerabai committed to suffer an avalanche of harassment?'

An unusual guide indeed to storm his customer with questions! He kept staring at me, arms akimbo.

'Well, I believe, she was too modern, too great for her contemporaries! For a queen to throw the royal paraphernalia to the wind and sing and dance with ecstasy and abandon surrounded by a motley crowd or to stand entranced by love for Krishna, could be considered abnormal even by you and me!'

My guide listened with attention but without any reaction. I was not prepared to be grilled by him any more: 'Now, my friend, to your duty.'

He gave a start. 'Look at that dark underground hall. There and here on the courtyard had been performed that cloud-licking bonfire of ladies -Johar-led by Rani Padmini. Chittor had seen such holocausts not once but thrice. And look upstairs at those skeletons of once magnificent zenana. That is where the noble Panna, the nurse nonpareil, sacrificed her own son to protect her ward. You know about it, don't you?'

Who did not know! But I was keen to hear his version of the episode. He began in Hindi, but changed into fluent English, albeit unconsciously.

That happened in the later part of the 16th century, he said. The queen of Maharana Vikram died leaving behind an infant son, the sole heir to the dynasty, entrusting him to her dearest maid, Panna.

Panna used to bring her own son, a few months older than the little prince Uday Singh, to the queen's apartment at night, so that she could look after both the infants.

The first quarter of the night was coming to an end; Panna had fed both the boys and had lulled them to sleep. Suddenly she heard some suppressed cries of horror in the outer rooms. A servant dashed in and informed her that Maharana Vikram had been assassinated by an illegitimate son of the dynasty, Vanbir, who was heading towards the zenana.

Panna understood that the next victim Vanbir intended to claim was the infant prince so that he was left

with no contestant for the throne. There was no time to lose. Panna lifted the infant prince from his cradle and handed him over to a confidant, advising him to carry the child under some items of food in a basket to a spot at the foot of the hill. She then brought her own child from the adjoining room and laid it on the bejewelled cradle.

The very next moment Vanbir appeared at the door. His sword was still red with the Maharana's blood. He looked at Panna with contempt, pushed her away and plunged the steel into her son's chest. Panna fainted while Vanbir's sinister laughter echoed along the corridors, but soon regained consciousness and hurried to the appointed spot down the hill for taking charge of the little prince.

She walked the whole night, carrying Prince Uday Singh on her back and reached the castle of the chieftain of Deola. She appealed to him to give shelter to the prince but the chieftain, afraid of incurring the brute Vanbir's wrath, begged to be excused.

Sleepless, hungry and exhausted, Panna resumed walking and reached the hamlets of the Bhils on the Aravalli valley. The faithful Bhils escorted her to yet another castle, that of the chieftain of Kamalmar.

She narrated the woes of Chittor and of herself to the chieftain Asha Shah. 'My lord, people would imagine things only if they see me here. But I'll go away as soon as I can place the prince on your gracious arms,' she said.

The chieftain's arms, only half extended, were unsteady.

'My son, are you not ashamed of your vacillation? Where would you be but for the munificence of the Maharanas? And don't you feel puny as an insect before the incomparable sacrifice, courage and faithfulness of this lady?' It was the chieftain's old mother behind him exhorting him.

Asha Shah received the little prince, his arms fully stretched and steady.

Panna did not wait a moment more. Dusk had set in. While the others were busy taking care of the child, she disappeared into an unknown destiny.

By the time Uday Singh was in his teens, one after another chieftains and nobles began meeting him and offered their allegiance to him, at first secretly but gradually more and more openly as Vanbir's sway began to wane. According to custom, if at a banquet the Maharana offered a dish from which he had already eaten a bit to a noble, the latter felt honoured. One day, when the self-styled Maharana Vanbir showed this gesture to a noble, the

recipient spurned it, and Vanbir was unable to avenge the insult that signalled the sealing of his fate. The news spread; Uday Singh marched upon Chittor and Vanbir fled.

Nothing authentic is known about Panna after she left Kamalmar. She did not return to Chittor, the theatre of her tragic sacrifice.

A tragic sacrifice it was indeed, according to Tod and several other chroniclers, for Uday Singh proved unworthy of her act.

'But Panna's greatness - a true greatness - stands out independent of the worthiness or otherwise of the ward,' my guide remarked in conclusion.

His English had been impeccable. 'What is your mother-tongue?' I queried.

'My mother's tongue was a mixed Hindi, but my father's was English. He was an Anglo-Indian. I am proud of my father. But I am proud to call myself just an Indian.'

I was proud of my guide. Years later I recommended him to a friend, a would-be visitor to Chittor. My friend made a sincere search for him. But he was no longer there and had left with no forwarding address.



BOOK REVIEW

PAX INDICA—INDIA AND THE WORLD OF THE 21ST CENTURY

SHASHI THAROOR

Allen Lane—an imprint of Penguin Books 2012 pp449
Rs 799

This is a timely arrival. An important study by scholar-diplomat Shashi Tharoor on emerging India's role as a major power 'in helping shape the global order' and 'a Pax for the twenty-first century, a peace system which will help promote and maintain a period of cooperative coexistence in its region and across the world.' For India the 21st century is one of great challenge and opportunity and Shashi Tharoor launches his treatise, most appropriately, with the stirring words from Jawaharlal Nehru's historic *Tryst With Destiny* speech: "Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible; so is freedom, so is prosperity, now, and so also is disaster in this One World that can no longer be split into fragments." Nehru "thought not only of India, but of the world." Shashi Tharoor conjures up that

dream and shows the way forward for emerging India to fulfill its mission ordained by destiny.

A comprehensive book on the fascinating though complex subject of India's foreign policy, that too in the era of globalization, is not easy to write. With impeccable credentials and vast experience as a researcher, writer, diplomat and administrator who almost became the UN Secretary General, the former foreign minister lives up to his reputation as an elegant writer of English prose with an insightful mastery on the subject. His academic record is enviable. He obtained his Ph.D in 1978 at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University where he received the Robert B. Stewart Prize for Best Student. At Fletcher he became 'the first Editor of the Fletcher Forum of International Affairs, a journal now in its 35th year.' His articles have appeared in prestigious journals and newspapers including *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *International Herald Tribune*. The award winning author has thirteen books to his credit. As a member of Lok Sabha the brilliant orator would have received the encomiums of the entire house if only it were Nehru's Parliament! Added to these modern accomplishments is the great backdrop of culture and tradition of Kerala, his home state. From Adi Sankara, who travelled the length and breadth of India to consolidate the spiritual, social and cultural foundations of India, to the many distinguished scholars, diplomats, administrators and ambassadors, the contribution of the small state, *God's Own Country* to India that is Bharat, has been stupendous, in fact Himalayan in true sense of the word. Sardar K.M. Panikkar was to Jawaharlal Nehru in articulating foreign policy what VP Menon was to Sardar Patel in completing the gigantic task of integration of the Princely states with the Indian union. Many celebrities like KPS Menon, KR Narayanan, EMS Nambudripad, and VR Krishna Iyer, from the rich Kerala gene pool, have done their land proud with their yeomen service to the nation. To that genre belongs Shashi Tharoor whose latest gift is this intellectually stimulating tome of 449 pages on India's foreign policy.

Foreign policy, wrote Dean Acheson, is expected to represent a nation's 'total culture.' Shashi Tharoor recalls the six criteria set decades ago by Richard Falk for evaluating foreign policy. It should be *a desirable one, effective, popular, legitimate, populist and equitable*. Tharoor refers to the burden of history and 'tyranny of geography' and writes how India once among the riches in the world had been 'reduced into one of the poorest and most backward, most illiterate and diseased societies on earth.' In 1820 India had 23% of global GDP. From 1900 to 1947 the growth rate was not even one percent. "Imperial rule left a society with

16 % literacy, practically no domestic industry and over 90% living below what we would today call the poverty line,” he writes. Defending strongly Nehru’s policy of non-alignment Tharoor says “Nonalignment was both a way of safeguarding sovereignty long fought for and recently won and a way of avoiding compromising it through the compulsions of bloc politics.”

The first five of the eleven chapters of the book focus on ‘Brother Enemy’, ‘A Tough Neighbourhood’ and the littoral states. On the sensitive subject of India’s relations with Pakistan and China he writes with characteristic diplomatic skill and shrewdness, laced with a superb touch of humour. “To paraphrase Voltaire on Prussia, in India, the state has an army; in Pakistan the army has a state.” He quotes the famous quip of former High Commissioner G.Parthasarathy that promoting peace between India and Pakistan is like trying to treat two patients whose only disease is an allergy to each other.” This allergy, adds Tharoor, has to be overcome. In discussing India’s relations with China he aptly reminds us that “there are more true believers in Maoism in India than in China.” The centuries old relations between India and the Arab world and the role of Sufi tradition in enriching Indian culture find a prominent place in the narrative. In Damascus an Indian diplomat found in public places huge portraits of President Hafez al-Assad and Indian mega star Amitab Bachchan! Tharoor commends India upgrading relations with Israel and launching *Look East Policy*, thanks to P.V.Narasimha Rao.

The shortcomings of India’s foreign policy and the structural inadequacies of the Ministry of External Affairs are clinically examined by the former Minister of External Affairs. Interestingly the chapter dealing with domestic underpinnings of foreign policy is titled ‘Eternal Affairs.’ His criticism of universities and centres of learning for neglecting the study of international relations and foreign policy should serve as a warning to the sluggish field of higher education. Tharoor narrates how India is trying to come out of the shackles of the past to play a proactive role in global affairs. From non-alignment to multi-alignment is a perfect transition. India must not be over-enthusiastic to wear the tag of superpower but must cautiously tread the path to its destination bearing in mind its” sense of responsibility to the world of which it is a crucial part and whose destiny it has earned the right to shape.” Democratic and pluralist India must adhere to norms and values that are dear at home and abroad. “India your world needs you” exhorts Shashi Tharoor who deserves the grateful appreciation of the academic, the policy maker and the diplomat for this work of enormous value.

(A. Prasanna Kumar)



FIRST INDIA-CHINA NUCLEAR DIALOGUE : HUGE MISPERCEPTIONS

Cmdr.(Retd.) C.Uday Bhaskar

It is one of those paradoxes of the troubled India-China bi-lateral relationship that the two sides have had little or no formal contact or dialogue on the very complex and contested nuclear issue despite the centrality of this capability in their strategic and security policies.

China became a nuclear weapon power in October 1964 and joined the US led NPT in 1992 – after the end of the Cold War. India in keeping with its hesitant, ambivalent approach to the nuclear issue was indeed very concerned about a nuclear weapon neighbor in China – that too just two years after the 1962 war – and a few months after Pandit Nehru had passed away in May 1964 – in many ways a leader who was broken by the humiliation of 1962.

However it took India a good 10 years to make its first nuclear policy move – the 1974 Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE). But this was exactly what it was – a PNE – and India did not weaponize this nascent technological demonstrator. This decision of ambivalence was very intriguing to the world – since till then there was no such precedent. Critics interpreted this as part of India’s deviousness – and that Delhi was hiding its true intentions and misleading the global community. The latter , led by the USA wanted to impose the NPT on India and make it a permanent non-nuclear weapon state – an NNWS. This was a case of disarming the unarmed – but it was part of the realpolitik compulsion of the Cold War, and many misperceptions about the Indian nuclear intent were promoted.

In the interim, China enabled Pakistan to become a nuclear weapon state (May 1990) and the USA chose to turn a blind eye due to its perceived security interests apropos the former USSR and the Afghanistan occupation. Subsequently India declared itself a nuclear weapon power in May 1998 and Pakistan also followed suit. South Asia had become nuclearized – though Pakistan had acquired the capability in a covert manner in 1990.

Since that development a good 20 years ago, the Pakistan military has progressively used its nuclear weapon capability to promote terrorism / infiltration against India and this includes the Kargil War of 1999 and finally culminated in the November 2008 Mumbai attack. The nuclear weapon had become the shield to wage the proxy war and inhibit India from a robust response.

It is not so much because of any single virtue, but because of the *tout ensemble*, that I felt that among the world’s great men Gandhi and Tagore were supreme human beings. - Jawaharlal Nehru

More recently with the July 2005 India-US civil nuclear accord, India was able to emerge from the quarantine that had been imposed on it by the global community. And when this matter came up for the final review / decision by the NSG in September 2008, it was predictable – but disappointing - for Delhi that Beijing chose to play a less than positive role in relation to the support to India. Considerable dismay was expressed in Delhi – but again – this matter has never been addressed in a substantive manner. This complete absence of any communication between the two Asian giants on a critical issue stems from the fact that China does not discuss the nuclear issue with India at the official level and is unable to accept the reality of May 1998 and India’s nuclear status.

Even at the Track II level, there has been no substantial engagement between India and China on the nuclear issue and the only interaction has been at the infrequent and restricted, multi-lateral forum that brings together retired participants from these countries, with an occasional Pakistani view brought in.

Thus it was very gratifying to be invited to the first ever dialogue on the nuclear issue between China and India in Beijing this week (June 2-3). Entitled “China and India's Nuclear Doctrine and Dynamics”, the event was hosted by the Carnegie-Tsinghua University’s Centre for Global Policy - and put together single-handedly by Dr. Lora Saalman – a US scholar resident in Beijing.

I was one of about 20 Indian participants that included Dr VS Arunachalam, the former DRDO Chief, Admiral Arun Prakash, former Naval Chief and an eminent group which included experienced analysts, academics and younger scholars doing their Ph.D on nuclear issues or China. The Chinese participation was equally illustrious and included some of their better known names in matters nuclear and military.

India’s central concern about China’s nuclear initiatives – the long and uncritical support to the Pakistani WMD program and the latter’s sponsorship of terror – was conveyed to the Chinese participants with candor and appropriate objectivity. It was also pointed out – by speakers from both sides – that there were many areas of correspondence between the two states, including the commitment to No First Use (NFU) and the modest nuclear inventory they have acquired, as also the need to pursue safe nuclear energy as an option to obviate the global warming threat.

For me as an analyst, the more encouraging aspect was the fact that our Chinese interlocutors who expressed ‘surprise’ at the directivity with which the nuclear issue was

packaged by the Indian speakers, did not shy away from the facts that were being presented. Yes, they did indicate that they were not as aware of the fine-print and offered their own perspective on the matter – say for example Pakistan.

It was instructive that one word which came up repeatedly was ‘responsible’ power. At the deliberations, Indian and Chinese participants almost uniformly felt that the ‘other’ was not being ‘responsible’. Clearly there was a sharp divergence about the definition of ‘responsible’. Yet, every Chinese speaker reiterated Beijing’s unwavering commitment to NFU and disarmament – and despite some reports to the contrary, a serving PLA General stated that China had no tactical nuclear weapons – and never had plans to use this capability against India apropos the disputed territorial issue.

The nuclear domain is complex and has many challenges and opportunities and the Carnegie-Tsinghua initiative is to be commended. One hopes that such interactions will become more frequent, now that the taboo has been broken. Many huge misperceptions on both sides need to be corrected.

(This first appeared on the Jagran.com site on June 4, 2011.)



‘N-ARMS RACE OMINOUS: AUTHOR’

(Newspaper report on a lecture-meeting organised by Centre for Policy Studies on August 13, 2012)

VISAKHAPATNAM: Expressing concern over stockpiling of nuclear arms, former Head of the Department of Chemistry of Andhra University M.N. Sastry said Asia and the Middle-East are turning into a nuclear tinderbox in the name of deterrence. Addressing a get-together organised by Centre for Policy Studies at the School of Economics of Andhra University on Monday, he said while western countries were reducing their nuclear inventory the situation in Asia was quite alarming with number of rogue nations and generals. "Even India is guilty of it," he said. Drone technology which the US thought it was superior was being commercialised by some sections and together with miniaturisation of nuclear weapons it could pose a great danger, Prof. Sastry said.

There was a great need to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes but with politicians having the say governments were going in for weaponisation, Prof. Sastry who was instrumental in setting up the Centre for Nuclear Technologies in Andhra University with Atomic Energy

Commission funds said. There was a need to build world opinion for use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes but a section even in the pacifist Japan was in favour of building n-arms, he pointed out.

The octogenarian who joined the department of Chemistry of Andhra University way back in 1948 at the age of 23 said he intended to write a series of articles on the evolution of atomic theory, history of nuclear arms and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Centre for Policy Studies Director A. Prasanna Kumar described Prof. Sastry as a pride of Andhra University for his inspiring teaching. As a prolific writer he contributed almost regularly to the CPS bulletins.

Stating that professors never retire, CPS Chairman D.V. Subba Rao, who presided, lauded Prof. Sastry's continued efforts to illuminate young minds. Former vice-chancellor V. Balamohandas and Director of GITAM School of Law Y. Satyanarayana and a host of distinguished teachers participated.

(The Hindu, August 14, 2012)

"SAM BOB CAUTIONS ON ANAKAPALLE MERGER"

(Newspaper report on a lecture-meeting organised by CPS on September 12, 2012)

VISAKHAPATNAM: Creation of urban agglomerations by merger of municipalities in the corporation will be good only if a master plan is worked out to improve services. Otherwise, there will be a disconnect between areas, Principal Secretary, Municipal Administration and Urban Development, B. Sam Bob, has said. When a municipality is merged with a bigger corporation they expect better services and for that VUDA has to work out the master plan, he said. "There have been demands for merger of Anakapalle in GVMC and I do not know how wise it is," he said.

Mr. Sam Bob, who is the Special Officer of GVMC and Chairman of VUDA, was speaking at a meeting organised by Centre for Policy Studies of Gayatri Vidya Parishad on Wednesday. In the West satellite cities were created with all basic facilities, he pointed out whereas here people had to run for everything, particularly medical care, to the core of the city. On the status of urban local bodies, Mr. Sam Bob stressed the need for strengthening them financially by paying taxes in full. Half of the properties here were either under assessed or un-assessed, he pointed out. Only when people pay taxes well, they would be in a position to assertively demand service. Similarly the water

charges collected were at the minimum. The well-known culture of Visakhapatnam was being disturbed and the city was known for encroachments, he said. On the role of Town Planning Department, Mr. Sam Bob said the master plan should be transparent and generally it was not divulged. Mr. Sam Bob, an alumnus of Andhra University, thanked Prof. A. Prasanna Kumar for encouraging him and being a source of inspiration when he appeared for civil services. Police Commissioner J. Purnachandra Rao wanted Mr. Sam Bob to clear the proposal for setting up 100 new traffic signals in the city that would help not only in regulation of the traffic but crime control as well. Centre for Policy Studies Director Prof. Prasanna Kumar cautioned against "cities becoming mirrors of national crisis" and wanted satellite cities to be developed to prevent choking of urban areas. Visakhapatnam's had immense potential as had been commented upon by Sir Arthur Cotton, he said. On the work of CPS, he said its 100th bulletin would appear in April next.

(The Hindu September 13, 2012)



DRAUPADI - IX

or

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

- Sri C. Siva Sankaram

In both the Western and Eastern literatures, we seldom come across so enigmatic and awe-inspiring a character as 'Draupadi'. Fire mothered her, Rigveda states that fire is the seminal juice of Rudra. '*Rudro Agneeth*' is the pithy hymn. It is no exaggeration if we attach the piety of Sacrificial fire to Draupadi the blessed daughter of Drupada the Panchala king. We know her by several names but none was ceremonially christened.

She was born to fulfil a historical need. She had a specific goal to attain. She had other worldly aspiration of joining the eternal galaxy of ageless *pativrata* like Maitreyi, Anasuya and Sita. Nay, it was Divine Will to see her leave behind a sterling ideal for generations of womankind to come; to see womankind not to be feeble tools in the hands of fake fate. Above all, she was born to do away with the wicked *Kuru* Dynasty built on the loose soil of virulent evil. She was, besides, a woman of pristine Aryan Origin hailing as she was from the brave land of Punjab sanctified and vivified by constant flow of five rivers. Her birth was unique as that of Sita Devi. Sita denotes the furrow made through earth. Earth is the fifth primordial element while fire is the third primordial element. Sita was earth born, Draupadi was fire born. Earth forgives. Fire consumes. The instinct of fire constantly burnt in her.

There is no scarcity of work to improve governance and delivery of services, provided the orientation of government activity can be shifted from 'ruling' the people from the top to serving them at the bottom of the pyramid. - Bimal Jalan

The twelve year long sentence of spending as dwellers of forest at Dwaitavana, came to an end with jerks and jolts, tragedy and comedy, light and shade intermingled. The most perilous and precarious term of living incognito was staring in the face of Pandavas, Matsya Kingdom of king Virata was selected for the hide out, Virata came to power by virtue of lineage. So the succession was peaceful. Generally peace generates complacency. Sequel of complacency is love of ease. Ease is the enemy of will to accept challenges. The King who shirks to face odds valiantly-is considered good for nothing. Things to come prove this equation. Pandavas the kingly nomads followed like shadow by Draupadi reached Matsya principality under the reign of Virata who was committed to neutral policy lest peace should yield to force. All the six members of the party including Draupadi were amicably engaged in six types of domestic vocations. Life seemed protected from the threat of being detected as Pandavas and ' Draupadi' The six were not estranged. They used to meet whenever the house and harem were deserted. Simhabala Keechaka the commander-in-chief used to pay visit to his sister Sudheshna with the ulterior motive of becoming intimate with 'Draupadi' He seemed indispensable for keeping of

Law and Order. The king banked on the capacity of Simhabala's sturdy shoulders. Simhabala's word was divine decree and uncontested law. Beauty enhanced by her rare winsome features projected 'Draupadi' as the cynosure of the eyes of all kings, vassals, feudal lords owing allegiance to king Virata. Simhabala was infatuated, went mad and lost sense of discretion since the moment he cast his lust ridden eyes on her.

(to be continued)



Centre for Policy Studies, launched on Gandhi Jayanti in 1995, offers its grateful thanks, on the occasion of its seventeenth anniversary day, to the Gayatri Vidya Parishad, Members of the Governing Body, its well wishers and readers of the Bulletin.



CPS mourns Prof M.S.Rama Murthy

Centre for Policy Studies deeply mourns the sad demise of Prof M.S.Rama Murthy, on September 21, following a brief illness. The former Professor of English was of immense help to CPS with his valuable suggestions and proof reading work of its publications during the last fifteen years. Prof. Murthy was a fine cricketer in his student days and a popular teacher throughout his career. CPS conveys its sympathy and condolences to his wife Mrs Padma Lakshmi, daughter Meenakshi Suri, son-in-law Sridhar Suri and twin-grandchildren Sreya and Sriya.

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