

THE NUCLEAR GENIE-5 UK, FRANCE AND CHINA JOIN THE 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.



SOCIO ECONOMIC RIGHTS : A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE EXISTING REGIME

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Introduction :

Since the inception of the human rights discourse at the global arena, second generation rights have been relegated to the background. The debate surrounding the lack of enforceability and justifiability of economic, social and cultural rights have posed a herculean challenge in implementing these rights in domestic settings. On the contrary, first generation of civil and political rights have seldom encountered such resistance and have been universally promoted in national scenario. Though numerous scholars have expressed the indivisibility and interdependence paradigm between first and second generation rights, in reality the latter are seldom regarded as legal rights. The effective realisation of these has especially been problematic in developing countries.

The International Covenant of Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (hereinafter ESCR) remains the normative framework for second generations rights. A sprinkling of ESCR can also be sourced in other global human rights treaties like CEDAW, CEC, CERD, CRPD etc. The individual complaint mechanisms for the ICESCR is still in the pipeline. Regional human rights instruments impinging ESCR also exist-the European Social Charter, San Salvador Protocol etc.

Specific Obligations under ESCR Regime

The nature of obligation under ESCR varies. There are three integral elements of it. The Duty to Respect is tantamount to the negative obligation imposed on the State to refrain from acting in a manner that would either prevent access to rights or affect the enjoyment and exercise of the same. The Duty to Protect imposes upon the States the duty to prevent interference from third parties. And this requires a positive obligation on the part of the State establish regulatory frameworks that combat violations from third parties. The Duty to fulfil obliges the State to take affirmative action to ensure access and enjoyment of ESCR by all. This talks about an immediate achievement or a minimum standard to be progressively achieved.

Mapping Diverse Enforceability Approaches

Several countries world over including in the Asian region have endorsed innovative ways in promoting and protection of economic, social and cultural rights. Despite the issues of progressive realisation as well as lack of resources for ESCR some countries in the last few decades have made substantial inroads in the arena of justiciability of ESCR.

The Directive Principles Approach in India is one such illustration for essaying plethora of jurisprudence on second generation rights. The Constitution of India embodies ESCR predominantly in Part IV and has with unique procedural initiatives like the Public Interest Litigation adjudicated effectively on the enforceability of ESCR. It is in the recent past that the Parliament has also legislated extensively on numerous types of ESCR – National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, Right to Education Act etc. The adjudication of ESCR by Indian court has also meant series of orders directing implementation of various schemes like the Mid-Day Meal Scheme to actualise ESCR.

The Bill of Rights Approach is unique to South Africa which though does not relegate ESCR but talks about

availability of fund for them to materialise. The Grootboom case was instrumental in two arenas-identifying the minimum normative core content of ESCR as well as the criterion of progressive obligation. The Court endorse these two parameters as being fundamental in assessing the State's compliance and willingness to implement ESCR. The Courts have also repeatedly emphasised on sustaining public pressure on the Government for rights to be more encompassing as well as to actually materialise especially in the realm of ESCR.

The European context adopts the Indivisibility Approach. Relying on the European Convention on Human Rights, the Courts have endorsed second generation rights by interpreting it in civil and political rights provisions of ECHR. Both procedural and substantive guarantees against States as well as third parties has been enumerated by the European Court on Human Rights evolutive interpretation of civil and political rights.

Profiling Asia : Complexities Galore for Socio Economic Rights

The Asian continent as a region is diverse and heterogeneous. Political instability dots many countries especially in the South Asian context. Military rules, dictatorial States, totalitarian governments are commonplace. The region has also over the decades experienced a legacy of bloodbath and severe human rights transgressions with armed conflicts and civil wars being pervasive in many nations. Political instability is pervasive. Economic development has set in but in an inegalitarian and lop-sided fashion. Poverty continues to be the predominant cause of human rights abuses in many countries.

The Asian continent is also conspicuous for being the sole region bereft of a regional human rights mechanism unlike its European, Inter America, African and even Arab counterparts. Independence of institutions is also problematic-especially the judiciary and this has impacted severely the facilitation of human rights. The glaring absence of human rights ombudsman to assist in effective and sustainable implementation of human rights has been yet another illustration of negligible or minimal commitment to human rights by the Governments. Lack of a vibrant civil society set up that engages critically with the Government on human rights concerns has further added to the exiting woes.

And lastly State controlled media with sweeping censorship laws in many nations has culminated in human

rights being a 'non-issue' in several nations. The resistance to numerous human rights norms on grounds of cultural relativism especially in the domain of second generation rights is yet another impediment. Archaic cultural and traditional practices has been yet another reason to curtail rights of certain subaltern groups- women , children, minorities etc. Some pockets in the region like South Asia have also witnessed series of refugee producing nations like Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Tibet, Nepal etc. and this has also challenged regional peace and security.

Globalization, economic liberalisation and development has also implied a sizeable population been internally displaced due to development projects. The out flow and inflow of migrant population is another commonality in the region. Furthermore issues of caste, religion, gender, disability etc. have resulted in marginalisation and social exclusion that have grave repercussions on access to rights. Empowerment has been a rhetoric and despite rapid urbanisations and development and hardships, sufferings and quest for survival continues to haunt many Asian States. Issues of corruption, lack of accountability, skewed public distribution system etc. are a few more factors responsible for ineffective realisation of ESCR.

MDGs : Role of Asia

The Millennium Declaration was a product of the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 wherein world leaders concurred on the greater need to promote human rights and justice globally. The Declaration chalked out 8 time bound Millennium Development Goals to be achievable by 2015 by all countries in the world. All the 8 goals have a direct bearing on diverse economic and social rights- health, education, food, maternal and child health, environment. The MDGs were also unique for the North South collaboration and partnership it envisaged to accomplish these goals.

The Asian region is centrifugal to the world's vision of access to these enumerated 8 basic and core rights. For the entrenchment a human rights culture domestically as well as globally the role played by the Asian region in addressing the proposed 8 MDGs is extremely vital. The successes and failures of the Asian States vis-à-vis the MDGs would largely determine the success of this endeavour at the global front.

However in most South Asian States these have remained mere 'aspirational precepts'. Mainstreaming of economic, social and cultural rights is vital for the

holistic development and progress of a given nation. There is a dire need to re-invigorate the commitments from States for the actual, effective and sustainable realisation of these rights in contemporary settings.

Goal 1 : Eradicate Extreme Poverty & Hunger, Goal 2 : Achieve Universal Primary Education, Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality & Empowerment of Women, Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality, Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health, Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability, Goal 8 : Develop a Global Partnership for Development.



INDIA'S POTENTIAL OF MARITIME GOOD NEEDS PROMPT ACTION

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The seventh East Asia Summit (EAS) that concluded in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on November 20, 2012, offers certain maritime possibilities for India to impart greater content to its two-decade-old 'Look East' policy — one conceived by late Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and his then-finance minister Manmohan Singh. It is appropriate that Manmohan Singh has now been given this rare opportunity as the Prime Minister and his personal commitment to this major Indian policy initiative is palpable. While the 'east' has an inclusive geographical expanse that covers distant Japan and South Korea, it is the Asean collective that is at the core of the Indian 'Look East' policy. Over the years, Delhi's tentative linkages with its south-east Asian neighbours have become more robust and sustained — albeit quantitatively more modest in relation to what China currently enjoys in trade and economic determinants.

The EAS, launched in 2005 at Kuala Lumpur under Malaysian aegis, had envisaged a regional grouping of 16 states including India. At the time Chinese reservations about admitting Delhi were overcome by the concerted efforts of Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore. But the first few EAS summits did not include the US — the security guarantor to many Asia-Pacific nations who were part of this effort. However given the altered dynamic in the extended south-east Asia, more nations were admitted progressively and both the US and Russia joined the EAS in 2011. Thus, the EAS in many ways reflects the core of the Asian resurgence of the 21st century and it is instructive to note that barring the European Union and Latin America — either as a collective or individual states

— all the major powers are represented. In short, the EAS has gone well beyond the exclusive and limited contour that was envisioned by Malaysia and China in the conceptual stage.

The most complex challenge for ASEAN, which prioritises the agenda for the EAS remains the Chinese claims over islands in the South China Sea. The Philippines and Vietnam have challenged the Beijing position of claiming sole ownership of these islands and this had led to an unprecedented impasse in July this year.

The ASEAN foreign ministers meeting, for the first time in 45 years, did not reach consensus and was, hence, unable to issue a joint statement. In the interregnum from July to November, there has been a leadership change in China — though PM Wen Jiabao attended what will be his last EAS meeting. The perception was that the ASEAN states would not raise the territorial disputes in deference to Beijing's sensitivities and more consensual issues would be addressed. However, much to the dismay of the hosts — Cambodia and its patron, China — the Philippines and Vietnam were vocal about their own concerns and this was echoed by Japan in relation to the East China Sea island dispute. Thus, US President Barack Obama — making his first international appearance after re-election — was able to exhort the EAS forum to respect international law and the freedom of navigation.

This is the equivalent of the red rag to the Beijing bull and while China may have succeeded in creating a rift within ASEAN — with some states being more receptive to it (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and to an extent Thailand) — the communist giant was unable to prevent the so-called 'internationalising' of these contentious territorial disputes. Thus, it was prudent of PM Singh to maintain a fine balance and encourage his interlocutors that "together, we can create an open, balanced, inclusive and rule-based architecture in the region for our collective security, stability and prosperity". It is evident that the EAS states excluding China and the few that have been drawn into Beijing's orbit are keen to include the US and India into this rulebased security architecture. Given the centrality of the energy determinant and the nature of the maritime domain that links India to the 'east' — as also the 'west', the summit statements contain a significant reference to the potentialities that exist at sea for more substantive cooperative engagement.

The elusive code of conduct for the South China Sea that will be binding on all parties was again mooted and while this may 'tether' Beijing — both Tokyo and Delhi

have good reason to monitor the fine-print.

This could well be the Helsinki variant for East Asia and China's response will be instructive for the US, Japan and India. The Cambodia EAS also witnessed the US acceding to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships and supported the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum that envisages greater coordination among members states including piracy, health of the maritime environment, resource management and related capacity building.

Many issues were flagged at the EAS but India has the pedigree and the post-2004 'tsunami credibility halo' to identify certain proven niches in the maritime domain where it can meaningfully contribute to some of the agreements arrived at. But the challenge will be in Delhi — to implement 'swiftly' — so that the next EAS acknowledges India's ability to contribute to the collective good of its maritime neighbourhood.

(Courtesy : *Economic Times* Nov 22, 2012)



THE 'PURITY SYNDROME' RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN A SECULAR AGE

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The quest for the 'Origin' in all aspects of life seems to be characteristic of the human condition. Archetypes across cultures speak eloquently of the 'Creation Myths' that attempt to explain the mysteries of existence. Systems of thought — East and West — give primacy to worldviews that claim to be 'unique' and exclusive. Our embattled social and political life, indeed, the entire domain of our contemporary identity politics, is defined by the notion of competitive supremacy. The journey of the explorers into the Sahara, the Kalahari and the Amazons in search of the 'Lost World', the Star Trek expeditions into the outer space, attempt to discover the denizens that are 'pristine' and 'pure'.

The search for the 'pure' has not lost its currency despite the passage in time, and despite Jacques Derrida. If only this search was not innocent in human terms! After all, much of the social and religious strife and upheavals have been caused by the 'purity syndrome'. The Nazi eugenics attempted the diabolical creation of the Super Race, destructive and atavistic in character. The Hindu Religion, in its organized aspects has relied on the

questionable creed of 'purity' and 'pollution', just as the followers of Judea-Christian system continue to battle out their own conflicting destinies in terms of the notion of the 'chosen' people of God.

Why is that the children of God everywhere preach the gospel of war? Why must they constantly parade their claim to being the 'unique' and the 'pure'. The search for the 'pure' is not only elusive in practical terms; it seems to contradict the basic tenets of the Religions themselves. In a striking travel book, entitled *From the Blue Mountains: A Journey in the Shadow of the Byzantium*, celebrity author William Dalrymple, disproves the rival claims of the Semitic religions. He shows that their inter-religious conflict has been the source of much of the blood and mayhem of the contemporary world.

As we travel with Dalrymple in the ancient world, we encounter startling archeological and cultural facts. The oldest serving manuscript of *The Spiritual Meadow*, the Armenian Cathedrals of Turkey, 'The Mausoleum of Cirrus' in Syria, the Monastery of Koshaya in the Qadisha valley in Lebanon, the sculpture from the Temple of the Sun of Baalbek—all reveal, as Dalrymple shows, a rich and complex mosaic of cross-religious affinities that parallel the leit motifs of ancient monuments: the home monastery of Mar Saba in the wilderness of Judaea, the monastery of St. Anthony, Egypt and the Great Kharga Oasis.

As Dalrymple travels and savors the scent and sights of this ancient world, he sees inevitably the contact between the 'Mediterranean and Celtic fringe' and the 'Egyptian ancestry of the Celtic Church'. (Dalrymple: 418) Indeed, he realizes that the search for a 'break' between 'the pre- and post-Muslim Conquest' is a vain one.

(Dalrymple: 335.

The lessons in ethnic and religious pluralism that Dalrymple's journey across the Biblical lands teaches us have parallels with the major religious and spiritual traditions of the world. While Indic religious traditions have taken pride in projecting themselves as open, liberal and eclectic; in practice, however, the followers and their worlds often do not meet in social, ceremonial, canonical and spiritual terms. And thus, the Jains, the Buddhists and the Hindus live apart. The manifest absence of conflicts among themselves does not disguise the fact that they live separate lives. It is true that Hinduism speaks of Swabhava and Swadharma, the characteristic law of one's being. Many households have Isha Devatas

of the local traditions. In the ideal sense, here the folk, the mass and the canonical co-exist. The worship of the Mother Goddess is a good example of this. Durga, Kali, Chandi and Chamundi are the many variants in the Indian villages, all equally venerable. The Sufi and the Peer traditions abound.

And yet, Religion in practice at the societal level, across class and caste, often manifests a degree of strident separatism. A peaceful coexistence of the uneasy kind is an inevitable consequence. Underlying affinities in terms of faith are often suppressed by zealous followers. Images and iconography, that are eclectic and syncretic in character, often give way to polarized differences in sharp, polemical terms. Religious practices that are hybrid and pluralistic in nature are often derided as 'impure' lacking canonical or scriptural approval. The Buddhism practiced in Sri Lanka, for instance, combines iconography from the Jataka and Hindu myths. The idols and inscriptions in the temples of Kandy and Anuradhapura of Sri Lanka, speak eloquently of the syncretic character of the Ceylonese Buddhism and Hinduism, whereas their counterparts in Bodh Gaya and Sarnath in the Indian mainland, are more exclusive in religious terms. There is thus a disjunction between religious precepts and practice. The sectarian strife among sects and denominations of a single faith, be it Islam or Christianity, Buddhism or Hinduism, does not come for public criticism as much as inter-religious conflicts among the major Religions of the world.

How then can we recover the syncretic character of Religion and Spirituality? How may we banish the notions of the 'impure', the 'heathen' the 'infidel' from the lexicon of the Religions of the world? What could be pedagogy that will prepare the new generation of the young to deal with matters of Faith and Reason, accommodate the claims of faith with those of secular modernity? Can we teach followers to go beyond the fact of uneasy co-existence to the genuine acceptance of pluralism?

It would thus be seen that Religions must free themselves from what I call the 'purity syndrome'. Only a progressive approach, open minded and exploratory, marking a radical break from the past habits of thinking, can save Religions from the pitfalls of bigotry. An enlightened Reason can be the antidote to sectarianism. Our educational system must stress the virtue of a syncretic and comparative approach to the study of Religions. That is what Dalrymple's travel to the Levant essentially teaches us, just as the lives and teaching of

modern Saints like Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo are living testimony to genuine pluralism.

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ELECTORAL REFORMS, POLITICAL PARTIES AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

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(Summary of a lecture delivered at CPS on November 19, 2012)

Reforms in the electoral system of the country are not going to be exercised in isolation. The Election Commission, Political parties and the Parliament have to accept changes in their functioning if reforms are to be of any meaning. Of course, there are numerous and oft repeated proposals of reform. Not all of them merit attention. Some of them are held out mostly because they have become fashionable. Like the Recall of the elected representative. A proposal of this kind is simply not implementable in our country – unlike in Switzerland where it is practised albeit rarely – the signatures of those who are a party to a petition of recall cannot be verified or authenticated at all. Likewise the idea of introducing the proportional representation in lieu of the present first-past-the-post method is fraught with possibility of cure being worse than the disease. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in an interview to Michael Brecher (Nehru, 1959, OUP, p424) Shot down the proposal saying “ I can think of nothing more conducive to creating feeble ministry and a feeble government than this (proposal)”. He was right absolutely. If proportional representation was to be adopted here, the story of Pakistan’s instability would have repeated here as well. The Congress party which has been the main ruling party would not have managed Single- Party government at all even in the Nehruvian days. In fact this party has never received 50% or more number of popular votes in any general elections to the Lok Sabha.

The remedy to the electoral system’s defects does not lie in applying off- the – shelf medicines. Some people have suggested that we should switch over to the presidential(US) system in place of the present parliamentary system(UK). This too begs the same question. Perhaps it would fare worse than the existing system.

What, then, we require to do is to impose certain conditions through law and the Constitution to check the misuse and abuse of the loosely structured provisions and institutions related to the elections.

First of all, the election commission should be given the power to register and de – register political parties which wish to contest elections. No independent candidate should be permitted to contest the elections: if anybody wishes to do so he must be required to open a party to suit his convenience and get it registered properly. The parties which do seek registration with the Election Commission have to necessarily fulfill a number of simple conditions. They must have a well – publicised document governing their structure and functioning through democratic and open method. Their finances must be annually audited and thrown open for public scrutiny. Their nominees for electoral positions anywhere should be such that their credibility to represent the public is acceptable (No criminal charges, no outstanding public loan, no pendency or evasion of taxes, sufficiently educated and having a minimum of social/public services).

This above condition is not difficult to enforce by the Election Commission if small changes are made in the Representation of people’s Act. However to allow time to scrutinize the credentials of candidates the parties should be asked to file their nominations sufficiently in advance , along with possible alternatives. Rajaji had once advocated that parties should nominate their candidates five years in advance! One of the advantages of this novel suggestion was that one would work hard at least five years prior to the elections. Secondly, there would be avoided a must rush for and unpredictability of getting party tickets by aspirants.

If general elections are to be held at regular and specific time, the above suggestion may work out. However, if in an unseen circumstance a sudden election is ordered, suitable modifications could be made in the requirements. The Election Commission should be empowered to call for nominations in general anytime.

The Constitution of India does not specify anywhere that we have to follow the British model of parliamentary democracy. Yet, we are doing it, without following the spirit of it. Party-loyalty is something conspicuous by its absence. Splits and marriages of convenience are often observed in the making of and functioning of ministries. The number of ministries is unlimited. Often political horse- trading as witnessed in

Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Goa, Bihar, UP or Haryana has brought a bad name to democracy in our country. One or two dissident members of a ministry are enough to bring down the government of the day.

To check this prospect a suggestion may be made that as in Switzerland or in the US federal system, in our country, too, we can fix the number of ministries. In Switzerland this restriction is made through Constitutional provision while in the US this objective is achieved through Congressional Law. We have proliferated our ministries to 75 in a state like Uttar Pradesh, 70 in the central Government, and in Meghalaya almost all the MLAs of the ruling (or even the opposition) party had a chance of becoming a minister as if by a method of rotation through changes in the composition of the ruling alliance.

To overcome this problem, first of all the number and nature of ministries need to be mentioned in the constitution or by Law. There is no justification to have 75 ministries in one state and ten in another. Depending upon the size and specific requirements of a state, the ministers may be instituted without scope for manipulation. Secondly, the Central Government should necessarily have only those ministers which deal the subjects allocated to the centre by the Constitution. There should be no place for cabinet ministers at the centre for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development. Thirdly, there should be developed consciously among the leading political parties the practice of setting up a shadow-cabinet or an alternative government in the waiting. If an MP or MLA is put in charge of a subject of a ministry he may train himself in all respects to tackle the subject efficiently either as an opposition member or a ruling/treasury bench member what we witness now –a- days, however, if anybody can become any Minister and fail to make any impression Politically or even Constitutionally the government of the day is answerable to the Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha. There is no mention anywhere in the Constitution that the government should be made up of only one party. So, sometimes, a coalition or alliance of parties have formed the government. And some other times, even a ‘minority’ party (meaning not having a majority number of MPs on the floor of the House) has run the government. Smt. Indira Gandhi and Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao were adept at this practice. However, for want of an assured majority, many a Governor has dismissed ministries at the state level. Defections, re-arrangements of parties in alliance etc., have been

witnessed at various levels. Though immoral these have been justified as being politically correct and Constitutionally tenable. To avoid this unseemly spectacle a suggestion can be made which looks unconventional but answers to political and constitutional needs. This is to allocate years/months of rule to the major parties which are represented in the Lok Sabha or Vidhana Sabha. If a party has won 55%, 60%,75% of the seats in the House, it can function as ruling party for 55%, 60%, 75% of the tenure of the House. This is even more relevant and meaningful when no party has secured 50% of the seats. The parties aspiring or dying to form government would make unethical compromises just to stay put in power because of uncertainty of number. Instead of this risky exercise, they can all form governments, one after another, for a reasonably fixed period without let or hindrance. After all one has witnessed in the case of Karnataka a combination of Congress and JD(S) ruling for some twenty months followed by a combined governments JD(S)and BJP for the next twenty months. If so why not allow JD(S), Congress and BJP twenty months each to rule the state without being thrown out by the “opposition”?

If one examines the electoral manifestos of all political parties, he finds that most of them say the same thing : clean(i.e. corruption- free) administration, roads, hospitals, education, water and electricity! If the Congress and BJP in words and their practices were to be examined with respect to economic policy, telecom policy, foreign policy, defence, Kashmir, Telangana, administrative and judicial reforms, one would find a ‘virtual identity’ of views or standpoints! Then, why not allow them to rule one after another? The present practice of one party almost monopolizing the ‘ruling’ and another party or parties almost monopolizing ‘opposing’ reminds one of Aristotle’s observation that some are born to rule while others to be ruled (or to oppose).

If ‘coming to power’ is all that there is to election, democracy cannot survive for long in its true spirit. Corruption in the form of desire to occupy seats of power, would spoil the entire body politik. It has been truly well said that while power corrupts, lack of power corrupts absolutely.

The aim of the elections should be a sportive competition to serve the public. And elections should not be the be-all and end –all of democracy. True democracy lies in the spirit of accommodation, discussion and healthy cooperation between the opposing parties.

An alert public opinion, strong judiciary and independent media are indeed the touch-stone of democracy. Not electoral outcomes.



CALL FOR ELECTORAL REFORMS

(Newspaper report on Prof. R.L.M. Patil's lecture at CPS on November 19, 2012.)

VISAKHAPATNAM: Member of Karnataka State Council of Higher Education R.L.M. Patil called for electoral reforms, including right to recall a member if he fails to live up to the expectations of the electorate.

He said that the candidates who contest in the elections should have minimum qualification of being able to read, write and comprehend the issues of State and the problems of the people.

Delivering a talk on 'Constitution and Coalition Dharma' organised by the Centre for Policy Studies here on Monday he said that politics is nothing but an art of running a coalition government.

Coalition by itself is not bad when it is for the good of the people, he added.

Further, he was totally against independents contesting elections. Similarly judiciary's functioning also should be split into three wings including trying of only constitutional cases, setting up of an ombudsman bench and leaving trial of all cases to High Courts and lower courts without having to review subordinate court judgments.

The US Supreme Court, he pointed out, entertains less than 100 cases per year and that too cases of constitutional importance. He suggested that we adopt the Switzerland style of approval of constitutional amendments.

Director Centre for Policy Studies A. Prasanna Kumar said that Indian democracy itself is a grand coalition of multiple languages, religions and castes. India should mature from pursuing coalition politics to coalition culture. Regional parties which represent regional cultures pose a serious challenge even as the countdown for 2014 election begins.

Ex-Mayor D.V.Subba Rao said that he basically was not finding fault with Constitutional bodies like Parliament, Executive or Judiciary but men who are

manning those institutions as it is they who could make or break them.

(The Hindu November 20, 2012)



THE 'GOD-SOULED' HIMALAYAS

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*.)

A pre-dawn hour in winter at Rishikesh is hardly the time for coming out of one's room, more so if one had been put to sleep by the sweetest music imaginable, the lullaby of the Ganga flowing a couple of yards beyond one's window, her music capable of working into one's subconscious and moulding one's dreams.

*Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp-laced
With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds:
Lower grew rose-oaks, and the great fir groves
Where echoed pheasant's call and panther's cry,
Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
Of circling eagles:—Under these the plain
Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
Of those divinest altars.*

—Edwin Arnold: *The Light of Asia*

But the shouts were too intriguing to be ignored: *Gangajine Shivjiko hadap liye* (Goddess Ganga had kidnapped Lord Shiva!) I came out to the banks of the river. The rescue party, consisting of three young Sadhus, had plunged into the awfully cold water with strong current. But they were brave and well-familiar with the playful whims of Mother Ganga. The impressive image of Shiva, newly installed on the ghat and swept away by one of those sporadic surges of the river, was discovered after an hour's search and brought back to the shore.

The gigantic masses from which the Ganga was rushing towards the plains were still dark outlines against the sky but for a faint glimmer on a peak. An invisible drizzle transported me to a surreal plane, where gods and goddesses were as matter-of-fact as men and women.

I realised then that the geographical definition of

Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory.
Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat. - Sun Tzu

the Himalaya was no clue to its psychic character. It was an alternative to and a suppressed laughter on the world dominated by intricacy, ego, ignorance, violence, anxiety, conflicts and clashes. It was a world of faith invincible and of innocence sublime.

The Himalaya is a stunning wonder, but it does not stupefy, it only inspires aspirations for a knowledge of things beyond. It is too big to make one feel small; it does not look down upon the dwarf that is man; it arouses the urge in him to transcend his dwarfism.

Apparently nothing but a physical phenomenon, the Himalaya proves itself to be a fusion of the physical and the occult the moment one begins meditating on it. An observation like this can be dismissed as a thing subjective, but if so many people experience the same revelation, we should be unorthodox enough to accept it as objective - if not at the scientific, at the psychological plane.

Liberated spirits for whom the Himalaya is the abode, we are told, dwell not in the physical, but in the subtle ranges of this infinite grandeur. It required a Kalidasa to capture in poetry the visible as well as the invisible features of those invisible valleys. He wrote further how certain plants and creepers of the Himalaya grow fluorescent at night - and how hidden from the human eye there are valleys of minor divinities like the *Gundharvas* and the *Kinnaras*. Somewhere atop a high peak nestles a lake known as the *Saptarsi*, teeming with lotuses frequently plucked away by celestial beings.

My familiarity with the Himalaya (at least in my present incarnation) was limited to its often-haunted spots, but I was lucky to have met people who had the gift of beholding the 'god-souled' mountains in their special and exclusive ways.

Among them was Svetoslav Roerich, the great Russian painter.

Svetoslav and his wife Devikarani lived in a sylvan corner of Bangalore during the last phase of their life. As he showed me and went on interpreting to me some of his paintings that he valued most (and also permitted me to reproduce them in *The Heritage*), for a moment I had the delightful hallucination that I sat in meditation in a remote Himalayan cave, overlooking a million deities lost in trance. I requested my educationist companion and Svetoslav's confidant, Aditi Vasisth, to record his statement:

'What truly makes a place important is the spiritual message it contains and conveys. The Himalayas carry a wonderful imprint of the thought that was generated for thousands of years by the greatest men, the Rishis of ancient India. We know that thought lives. Here we come directly under the radiation of that Eternal Thought which these heights reflect back to us in a wonderful way. Hence the Himalayas contain a treasure of great ideas and energy imprinted upon their slopes and sacred peaks. Only those who are truly sensitive can feel and receive these vibrations. I have travelled widely and seen several other mountain ranges in the world which are also beautiful, but they haven't got all that concentrated wealth of the Himalayas. Indeed, they haven't got the spiritual presence of the Himalayas, and that makes all the difference.

Years before I undertook brief travels in the Himalaya, I encountered the thoughts of another indefatigable explorer of the unfamiliar areas of that splendid world whose experiences I loved to hear— Pramod Kumar Chattopadhyay, author of the Bengali classic, *Tantrabhisir Sadhusanga*. He, too, was a renowned artist, though, unlike Roerich, not exclusively devoted to the Himalaya. What made him undertake long and lonely travels in the region was not so much the spell of the mountains but that of the Tantriks and Yogis residing in the little-known or unknown hermitages amidst them.

He met several of them. But one of the experiences that came to him uninvited in the course of his explorations, was astounding!

We believe that Gomukh is the source of the Ganga. But is that so? (After all, the real source of the Amazon was discovered only in 1971 by Loren McIntyre!) Pramod Kumar was told by a mystic that the Ganga's source was farther north, in a snowy realm simply inaccessible to men. He was then young and he ventured out into the desolate north in search of the secret source of the holy river. He stumbled into a bewildering valley - a world breathing an air which filled one's consciousness with delight and made one's body light. He communicated with the inhabitants of that world, probably in a state of somnambulism though it appeared to him to be a normal transaction and, on the third day, was shown the secret source of the Ganga. He was led out of the region into the gross geographical point from which he had taken his unintentional diversion.

Was his experience a hallucination? I do not know. He would swear that it just happened - that there were supra physical realms interspersed with the physical in the Himalaya and the one he had accidentally entered was the valley of the *Gundharvas*. 'Do you believe you could find your way there again?' I asked him.

'Nobody could experience the repetition of a dream by will. Though mine was no dream, I do not think I can ever enter that region at my will,' was his response. But even as a bare physical phenomenon, as a geographical reality, it was an institution *non pareil*. The more I saw it, the more I agreed with K..M. Panikkar:

"To the peoples of the south, a thousand and five hundred miles away, to the men of the sea coast, to the dwellers of the desert land of Rajputana no less than to the inhabitants of the Gangetic Valley the Himalayas have been the symbol of India. The majesty of the snow-clad peaks, visible from afar, the inaccessibility of even the lesser ranges, the mysteries of the gigantic glaciers and the magnificence of the great rivers that emerge from its gorges have combined to give to the Himalayas a majesty which no other mountain range anywhere can claim." (*The Himalayas in Indian Life*)



BOOK REVIEW :

THE MONEY SYNDROME

Towards a Market Economy Free from Crises

Helmut Creutz

First German hardcover edition published by Langen Miller Herbing, Munich 1993. First English Edition Paperback 2008. PP 626.

"*Dhanam Mulam Idam Jagat*," Sanskrit proverb

"For the love of money is the root of all evil" New Testament (1 Timothy 6:10)

People grapple with many bread and butter issues such as unemployment, indebtedness (both private and public), inflation, environmental degradation and apocalyptic social changes. They are often baffled by the way their lifestyle is changing but have very limited understanding of the causes.

On the one hand, money is a public facility, but at the same time, it is also private property, even though nothing in the world can serve two masters. At the heart of all human triumph and misery is this dichotomy implicit

in the nature of money. Students of economics learn of the relationship between monetary expansion, interest rates, national debt / national product, inflation and so on: an increase in money supply not matched by increase in economic output leads to inflation; the monetary authority then raises the interest rates to contain inflation; an increase in the national debt raises the debt service obligation, generally heating up the economy, impoverishing the poor. Sometimes, anti-inflationary measures initiated by the State lead to deflation, again impoverishing the poor. The villain of the piece in both the scenarios is interest on debt, both private and public.

The author, a financial practitioner with over five decades of experience, goes beyond the confines of classical economics and dives deep into the turbulent waters of monetary economics. He extensively researches the German economy, both before and after the unification of East and West Germany, compares notes with other countries in Western Europe. He analyses the data within the conceptual framework of modern economics and makes some very thought provoking observations. He shows how high interest rates often led to increases in monetary assets far out of proportion with the increase in the economic output and the resultant transfer of resources from the poor to the affluent.

The book consists of 5 parts:

Part 1 introduces the basic terms, parameters and functions relating to money.

Part 2 is all about "interest and other erroneous structures."

In Part 3, "Problematic Consequences for Money," he discusses in detail the issues relating to private debt, corporate debt and public debt, the consequences of excessive growth of monetary assets and the excess growth of interest flows and excessive speculation in banks and on bourses.

Part 4 contains Helmut Creutz's recommendations for Overcoming Dysfunctional Structures: Towards a Market Economy Free from Crises.

Part 5 While interest helped in accumulation of capital so necessary to re-build war ravaged Germany, the exponential growth of monetary assets compared with the modest growth of the real economy caused serious asymmetry between growth and development.

The spirit of India has always proclaimed the ideal of unity. This ideal of unity never rejects anything, any race or any culture. - Rabindranath Tagore

This discordance is primarily due to the interest charges making a huge claim on the national product. The rest of Europe nearly followed suit. Since no economy can grow exponentially in the long run, a systemic collapse could be foretold. Very few authors explained the devastating effects of compound interest so vividly and with such documentation. While finance professionals are only too aware of the effect of compound interest on individual loan accounts and whole portfolios, Helmut Creutz illustrates it at the macro economic level.

The author traces the current global economic malaise to the inherent conflict between money as a medium of exchange and money as a means for saving value. Money has been a very efficient medium of exchange since time immemorial. When people needed more money for buying goods and services, the money lying idle at the hands of those not in its immediate need started changing hands, and as an incentive to the lender, a little more money was returned. Thus, the concept of interest took shape. Interest earning interest (compound interest) led to the creation of monetary assets. Monetary assets suffered erosion in value when their growth outstripped the availability of goods and services (inflation).

Inflation in modern times causes severe social injustice. When interest rates rise by, say, three per cent per annum, employers cannot compensate the workers by a 3% increase in wages since there is also a corresponding increase in the interest charge on capital. It pushes up the revenue expenditure leading to increase in public debt, causing greater price rises. In effect, the poor fund the rich. Public debt has to be invested in creating income-generating assets and not frittered away in facile, populist spending. It is here that most Governments falter as politics takes over sound economics.

Helmut Creutz then goes on to examine the ethical issues in creation of capital when it is used to manufacture weapons, and make huge profits in their sales to the third world. The development aid given to the developing countries by donor countries is often diverted by the former into procurement of armaments manufactured by the latter. He even attributes the two world wars to the baleful impact of interest on capital and erosion in the value of money. And the aid is a soft loan carrying a nominal interest rate. Over the years, the new aid is merely sufficient to service the total foreign debt of the third world for a few weeks, the remainder

having to be internally generated. Thus, there is a net transfer of funds from the poor to the rich countries through the interest rate mechanism. He terms this as the third world war. Funds also flow from the South to the North through unfair pricing of the South's natural resources and poor compensation to the workers. Thus, laborious, expensive and environmentally degrading manufacturing activities have been off-shored! .

Helmut Creutz's solution to the conundrum of money lies in resolving the following contradictions: between the public and private ownership of money, between money as a means of exchange and its long term storage value, and between cash and monetary assets.

In the author's own words, "if the growing monetary assets are not put back into the economy via loans, a deflationary recession results. If the monetary assets are put back in the economic cycle, this results in excessive indebtedness, and, as a result, to an economic-social or an ecological collapse.... Social collapse is inevitable because the environment cannot cope with continuous economic growth...with a simultaneous increase in the population..." This money syndrome can be changed only by lowering the interest rates, and thus excessive growth in monetary assets. He advocates a drastic reduction in human want and even recommends living in joint families and communes!

The Money Syndrome draws heavily on the German and the European economic experience. However, its applicability is universal. This seminal work by Helmut Creutz deserves to be read by every serious student of economics.

B.V.V. Rajeswara Rao

(An alumnus of Andhra University during 1966-68, Mr. Rajeswara Rao worked as lecturer in English and later as an officer of State Bank of India. Presently he is a financial consultant for corporate and SMEs.)

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'SKILL ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH FOR SUCCESS'

(Newspaper report on a Symposium on Ethics in Management, jointly organized by School of Management Studies and Centre for Policy Studies, Gayatri Vidya Parishad on October 6, 2012)

VISAKHAPATNAM: Character defines the person and when combined with skills it ensures success and

happiness in the long run, Commissioner Visakhapatnam City Police J. Purnachandra Rao said.

Persons with skills may get applause but without character they will neither get respect of society nor happiness, he said at a symposium on 'Ethics in Management' organised by the Centre for Policy Studies and the Gayatri Vidya Parishad's College for Degree & PG Courses at the College here on Saturday.

Taking the example of cricket star Sachin he explained to MBA students of the College why society respects a person with character and how skill alone is not enough to be a success. His interactive method drew the students to participate in the discussion on the subject. He exhorted the students to achieve a balance between character and skill to achieve lasting success and also not to get carried away by short-term gains.

Each one of us has to deal with the issues as they come up and we should not build prejudices, Chief Vigilance Officer Dredging Corporation of India S. Vasudeva Rao said. Every decision as a manager has ethical under-pinnings and the dilemma can be resolved only when the individual introspects, he added.

Ethics elaborated

Underscoring the need to adopt new technologies, he said that today the companies are including metrics on vigilance and anti-corruption on their websites. The Right to Information has successfully brought down corruption by nearly 25 per cent, he added.

Referring to the issue of ethics in Maryada Purushothama Rama killing Vali from behind a tree, president (fin & admin) R C Bothra Shipping Company B Rama Gopal said that Bhagwan Satya Sai Baba explained that "while killing an animal one has to kill like an animal". He advised the students to stay on the path of the righteousness. "If your life is based on right conduct your life will be happier," he said. Saying that source of all happiness is inside he advised the youth not to go astray and get carried away by instruments of momentary pleasure.

'Maximise values'

Director of Centre for Policy Studies and former Rector of Andhra University A. Prasanna Kumar urged the students to "minimise rules and maximise values". He

called upon them to link private ethics with public duty to achieve a happy and successful life.

Vice President of Gayathri Vidya Parishad V. Sitaramayya, Secretary Gayatri Vidya Parishad P Somaraju, Secretary and Correspondent of the College D Dakshina Murthy, Associate Director Centre for Police Studies P V Sarma, Director School of Management Studies in the PG College Prof. S Rajani, faculty of the college and students were also present.

(The Hindu, October 7, 2012)



DRAUPADI - X

or

(The ultimate Hindu ideal of an impeccable pativrata)

- Sri C. Siva Sankaram

Sri Krishna was the Avatar of the age proving as the incarnation of the people left neglected by kings. His ministry was limitless in curing the people of their wickedness and moral decadence. Yet, the villainous were on the raids. People short of faith in God and custom were assuming menacing proportions. Giants as we understand were not a separate species. They happened to be blood-brothers of citizens famous for their civility, fair disposition and decency. Some extremity in the make up one of their constitution and immaturity in attitude paved the way to label them demons. The giants to whom reference is made were called Keechakas and upakeechakas. Simhabala Keechaka the commander-in-chief was the notorious eve-hunter. He had been a Machiavellian Epicurean indulgent in woman and wine. His frequent visits to the interior chambers meant for stay of the king's family, zemana gave him 'chance' to see 'Draupadi' with devouring eyes of a blatant immoral man. Draupadi in the garb of servant-maid too by her physical charm could enslave Simhabala to the spate of lust. He resolved to have her share his bed by hook or crook means fair and foul. Her regal grace, stately gait were not veiled either by change of name or status of vocation. They were vividly transparent to feast on by people of Keechaka's breed. As conditions were so, Keechaka when weather was fair, climate was congenial approached his sister Sudheshna to mediate in this nefarious affair- Goaded

Thyagaraja's music is way to peace.

His Krithis are wonders, Goddesses of enchanting beauty. - William L.Jackson

by filial bond, she deputed Draupadi to go to Keechaka's den to fetch pot-ful of liquor from him to quench her own thirst. Intuitive Draupadi could grasp the malevolent-aim of Sudheshna. It was obviously a pretext to drive her into the embrace of Simhabala. Foreseeing the danger looming large she invoked the Sungod to grant her invincible energy to face triumphantly any hazard in the den of Keechaka. Heart was beating at high pitch. She had by duty bound entered the demon's den conscious as she was of the sure bestowal of energy by Sungod. Pot meant to fetch liquor fell on the ground due to roguish overtures of the demon on her. Sun god blessed her with spirited energy in mind and body to push him back. The giant kissed the earth. She took advantage of the brute's helplessness, ran back to the princely palace like the antelope being hounded by a wanton hunter. The Court was sitting, unusually packed with the King, vassals and feudal lords owing allegiance to the kingdom. The Pandava Five were present intermingled with the rest. The atmosphere of the court was not uncongenial to listen to the plaintive note of Draupadi. Little time she lost before she left the cat out of the bag. She acquainted the court in detail, with the purpose she in panic hurriedly hastened to it. The court was chaired by the king. The grievance of the aggrieved was woven round the outrageous attempt of the giant at molestation of her meticulously guarded honor.. It was not merely a complaint couched in varnished words but

an outburst. It was given patient ear by the court and Pandavas.

As the court was in a dilemma there came Simhabala like bolt from the blue to the court. Sairandhri still stood there. Yudhishtara the doctrinaire adherent of wooden Dharma took exception to her undue stay there. He accused her caustically with the unbecoming term, danceuse. She was touched. Her timely repartee and retort came to her rescue, Summoned courage, paid him in the same coin yes, I am a danceuse as my husband is a dance teacher. As things were in such a fluid state the demon kicked her. The wounded deer could no longer tarry there. Before vacating the court she exhorted to the court to raise in revolt against such a timid king who allowed himself to be pawn in the hands of such a brute like Keechaka.

Her emotion overflowed. She was not pacified. Centuries of inhumanity done to womankind by impudence of man in the name of *streedharma* and custom grievously affected her. She allowed it to rain as a downpour of agonized tears. Draupadi the noble representative of enslaved womankind bides time to avenge the wrongs perpetrated on it by blind dharma espoused by insolent might of a few.

(To be continued)



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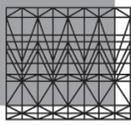
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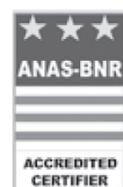
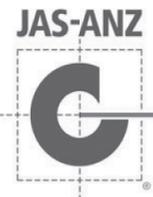
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