

# Nandini

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## *Voice For The Deprived*

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

VOL XIII

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**May Gandhi Jayanthi Day  
inspire the youth  
to follow his ideals of  
truth and non violence**

# THOUGHTS OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARISHI

Question: Is there no way to escape from worldly suffering?

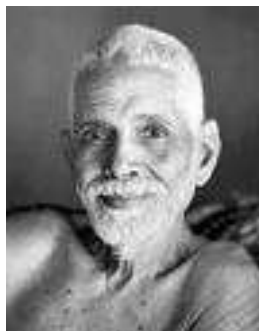
Answer: The only remedy is to remain in the state of Self without losing awareness of it

Question: Bhagavan all through my life, I have been experiencing nothing but suffering. Why do I suffer so much? Is it due to my sinful karma of my previous births?

Answer: Instead of thinking that this is due to past sins, find out to whom the present suffering relates. Happiness alone exists. What comes and goes is suffering.

Question: Many great sages like you toured around giving lectures, which pass on beneficial wisdom to the people of the world. You have attained jnana for yourself. But you are sitting in a corner keeping silent. Of what benefit is this to the world?

Answer: To know the Self and to remain in the state of Self is alone the greatest benefit a person can give to the world. All the lectures delivered from stage will be effective for some people only as long as the person is on the platform. But the lectures of silence can always be heard all over the world. It will be ever effective.



Question: What about Siddhis (supernatural powers)?

Answer: To remain unchanged in the state of Self is the eternal siddhi and greatest of all the siddhis. Other siddhis are trivial. Practising of them will only fatten the ego still more. All the siddhis will come and wait upon the perfected jnani.

Question: What is a mind that has a form and a mind without form?

Answer: Pure mind is a name 'Mana Akasha' (space of the empty mind). Immediately on waking from sleep, a clarity of awareness arises, without exception, in all people. That is formless mind. Thoughts such as 'I am the body, this is the world', arise after that. This is the mind with form.

In a cinema show the light appears first, the forms appear on scene only after that. Likewise the light of the Self comes first and provides space for everything that follows.

Question: Sometimes there is meditation, but other times there are worldly activities. What is difference between the two?

Answer: To be in meditation and be in activity are both the same. Like the elephant using the same trunk for two activities of breathing and drinking water, like the cobra using its eyes for two functions for seeing and hearing, like the crow having one eye but seeing in two different directions.

## THE GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA God Intoxicated State

Do you know why Krishna has a deep-blue complexion? And why He is of such small stature – only three and a half cubits measured by His own hand? God looks so as long as He is seen from a distance.

So the water of the ocean looks blue from afar. But if you go near the ocean and take the water in your hand, you will no longer find it blue; it will be very clear, transparent. So the sun appears small because it is very far away; if you go near it you will no longer find it small.

When one knows the true nature of God, He appears neither blue nor small.

But that is a far off vision: one does not see it except in samadhi. As long as 'I' and 'you' exist, name and form will also exist. Everything is God's lila. His sportive pleasure.

As long as a man is conscious of 'I' and 'you,' he will experience the manifestations of God through diverse forms.



# Desperate Calls

*You can enjoy your prosperity  
only if you share your income with the deprived  
and thus discover the satisfaction that it provides.*

## Child suffering from hearing loss



Master T.Karthikeyan, age 4 years old, is suffering from profound hearing loss. The doctors advised him to undergo cochlear implantation (ear surgery). The estimated cost of the imported cochlear implant, ear speech processor, surgery including hospitalization are as per the

details given below

- \* Approximate cost of nuclear freedom cochlear Implant (contour advance with freedom speech processor) (from Australia) Rs.9,48,000
- \* The cost of Med-El pulsar ci 100 with OPUS 2 behind the ear speech processor (from Austria) Rs.8,98,000
- \* The cost of HiRes 90K bionic ear hi focus with Harmony BTE processor (from USA) Rs.9,10,000
- \* The cost of surgery including hospitalization and rehabilitation Rs.1,18,600

Cheque may be drawn in favour of Madras ENT Research Foundation Charitable Trust, A/c. T.Karthikeyan, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Mr.Thurman,  
2/484, Thunery, Kil Kothagiri Bazar Post, Nilgiris-643 271

## Disabled boy needs job



Sri.S.Purushothaman is a poor disabled boy and he has discontinued B.Com course. He has passed typewriting English higher grade and has also underwent computer training.

Sri.S.Purushothaman has undergone one year apprenticeship training in the field of banking conducted by Ministry of Human Resource

Development, Board of Apprenticeship Training (Southern Region) Chennai

Sri.S.Purushothaman requests for a suitable job

Contact address:

Sri.S.Purushothaman S/o.Sri.N.Sivagnanam  
No.14, 1<sup>st</sup> Cross, Kalaingar Nagar, Manavelly,  
Ariyankuppam, Puducherry-7

## School girl needs medical treatment

A young girl Geetha studying in 6<sup>th</sup> std at Menon Para UP School, hailing from Nalluveetil Challa near Menonpara in Vadakarapathy Grama Panchayath in Palakkad District is at Paeditric ICU in Government Medical College Hospital, Mulamkunnathukavu, Thrissur District, Kerala.

She is suffering from acute demyelinating syndrome and is in a paralysed condition. Her recovery chances would be better if treated by gama immunoglobulin.

But the drug is costly and had a steep hike in the price during last few weeks. The cost increased from Rs.1000 per gm to Rs.2500 per gm. The dose is 400 milligram per kg of body weight. That means she needs 8 gm per day for five days. So the total need is 40 mg costing more than Rs. 1 lakh. Sri.Subrahmanyam, her father is an agricultural labourer.

The patient's friends and relatives collected a sum of Rs.60,000/- for her treatment. She needs Rs.30,000/- more for her medicines

For further details please contact

Mr.Priyesh

[helptolive@yahoo.com](mailto:helptolive@yahoo.com)

## Disabled boy needs tricycle



Sri.R.Elumalai is a poor disabled boy and he is studying in 12<sup>th</sup> std.

He requests kind hearted persons for donation of tri cycle for going to the school

Contact address:

Sri.R.Elumalai S/o.Sri.Raj  
Mariamman Koil Street,  
Aragandanallur & PO Thirukoviloor (Tk),  
Villupuram Dst.

### Poor lady needs hearing aid



Ms.T.Saroja is a poor hearing impaired lady.

Ms.T.Saroja requests kind hearted persons for donation of hearing aid.

For Further details, please contact

Ms.T.Saroja

D/o.Sri.Thandabani

North Street, Vazhapattu (Village)

Veeramoor (PO),

Villupuram (Tk), Tamil Nadu

### Disabled man needs help for studying computer course

Sri.M.Subramani, age 28 years is a poor disabled man. He has passed 12<sup>th</sup> std. His parents are no more.

For finding a job, Sri.M.Subramani wants to study one year HDCA course in CMTS Computer Centre, Manaparai. The monthly fees for this course is Rs.500/-

Sri.M.Subramani requests for financial help for studying computer course

Contact address:

Sri.M.Subramani S/o.Sri.Muniappan,

V.Pusaripatti Post, Manjampatti (Via)

Manaparai, Tiruchi District. Pin:621307

## TODAY'S YOUTH SHOULD SEEK INSPIRATION FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Yet another birthday of Mahatma Gandhi would be celebrated on 2nd October, 2008.

It has become a conventional practice for ministers and government officials to garland the statue of Mahatma Gandhi and for some people to offer prayers on the day. Even in India, the birth place of Mahatma Gandhi, most schools and colleges do not celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's birthday beyond declaring a day's holiday. The world is facing the risk of losing Mahatma Gandhi to history instead of utilizing his lofty principles and methods to achieve better quality of life in the society.

It is high time that all of us realize that Mahatma Gandhi's life style and teachings are perhaps the only solution for the problems confronting the mankind today.

The level of violence, conflicts and unrest around the world today clearly indicate that the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi is no more in the thoughts of most people. The Gandhian philosophy has been largely ignored in several aspects and the citizens should accept the blame for such conditions to a large extent.

We can ill afford to view Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy simply as a seminar subject or view his birthday as an occasion to award prizes to one or the other for achievements. It is time that the youth and the future generation should take Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of truth, non violence and honesty of purpose as the hall mark of their life.

While the world has failed to perpetuate the memory of Mahatma Gandhi by honouring him with Nobel peace prize which would have done the world proud, the

younger generation and the youth around the world should turn themselves as the torch bearers of Gandhian philosophy. To reform the world and human mind, of course, one cannot expect everyone in the world to play such a role but a small band of dedicated youth in every town and city in the world can make the difference.

There are certainly quality minds and enlightened youth still in large number all over. All that is needed is that they should care to come forward and devote themselves to spread and implement the Gandhian philosophy. Unfortunately, there are no role models for youth in the world today like the way that Mahatma Gandhi existed in his time.

When the youth have no one to emulate presently to match the standards of Mahatma Gandhi, the only alternative is to catch up with the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and try to live in the way that he did.

Mahatma Gandhi, apart from being a seeker of truth, was an unbending fighter, marked by his willingness to make sacrifices for the chosen cause to any extent. The story of Mahatma Gandhi walking into Navakali in West Bengal in India at the time of bloody Hindu Muslim riots in forties in the last century should be told to the youth repeatedly.

The world has no alternative other than remembering Mahatma Gandhi and dedicating itself to the path shown by him. Let the coming 2nd October, 2008 be an occasion for the world community and particularly the youth to remember Mahatma Gandhi in a meaningful manner and move forward toward peace, harmony and happiness of Gandhian standards.

# Readers' forum

Readers' forum provides space for the enlightened readers to give expression to their views on a variety of socio economic issues that is of relevance to the society.

Further enrichment of the journal with your thoughtful inputs would certainly go a long way in promoting the cause that the journal seeks to espouse.



## Do away with corrupt political parties

Dear Sir,

After becoming independent, we, the citizens of India enjoyed our first general election. The chosen few candidates, who represented the handful of political parties that existed were stalwarts. We had a proud, vibrant and dedicated democracy in the early years.

In India today, most of our candidates who contest elections are no match before them. What is the cause of this deterioration and collapse of values?. Now corruption is spreading cancerous growth into our body politics. The solution may not be hard to find, if we are determined to be redeemed.

Now, in every nook and corner of our nation, we deliberate, pass pious resolutions and present to the authorities, highlighting the actual problems we are facing. A few months later from the same platform and thousands more countrywide, we repeat the same exercise with no result except gather promises and promises.

We have no choice, no way. That is unless we are bold and dare to act. We have to do away with these corrupt political parties.

Gandhi Seva Sangam, Quilon Frankpet Fernandez

## Free Legal Aid for senior citizens

Dear Sir,

Every year, 9<sup>th</sup> November is celebrated by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

One vital policy of NALSA is that citizens whose annual income is less than Rs.50,000/- are considered to be below poverty line (PBL) and are therefore eligible for free legal aid (FLA).

Such a policy is a blessing to senior citizens who are deprived of physical support and adequate fiscal support.

In my case (my age 80), the Madras High Court Legal Service Committee sanctioned FLA from 2002. But my petition to District Legal Services Authority, High Court Legal Services Committee and Tamil Nadu State Legal Services Authority have been dragging on, driving me from pillar to post.

Ultimately, the Madras High Court Legal Service Committee advised me that only citizens having annual income less than Rs.25000/- are eligible for FLA. The developments were hence brought to the notice of Member Secretary NALSA, praying for justice. It wrote two letters to the Member Secretary, Tamil Nadu State Legal Service Authority to intervene and after action respond to NALSA, maintaining a copy of the correspondence to me. It never happened.

Chennai

K.N.Narayana Pillai

## The affluent people are not helping the poor

Dear Sir,

India is reported to have more number of billionaires than in other Asian countries. But their contribution to eradicate the poverty of the downtrodden is negligible nil. The corporates show huge profits in their balance sheet. Why can't they set apart a sum for helping the poor and disabled?.

Mukesh Ambani proposes to build a palace worth Rs.4500 crores. Vijay Mathayyar wants to construct a 28 storey posh building in Bangalore. Lakshmi Mittal has offered Rs.1.5 crores to sportsman Bindra for his securing a gold medal in Olympics.

Should they not consider the lot of poor society of the country by giving donation to associations which do service to them or open orphanages and homes for elders and handicapped to improve their condition?

Coimbatore

M.R.Pillai

## A small spark is needed

Dear Sir,

Everyman in his life in one way or other is involved in corruption. It is not that he wants to do it. He has no other way except to do it because of the prevalence of corrupt practices in every sphere of life.

The problem is there is no stringent punishment and there is no prequalification for a politician to become a MP, MLA and even President. Is it not ridiculous?.

A small spark some where should start a wild fire which will clear all the mess created by our political system.

Chennai

Janarthanam

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANTI CORRUPTION MEETING ON INDEPENDENCE DAY AT CENNAI

Nandini Voice For The Deprived organised anti corruption meeting on 15th August (Independence Day) at Chennai.

The meeting was supported by Transparency International India and Shamdhasani Foundation, Hong Kong.

The meeting was presided over by Dr. L.S. Ganesh, Prof & Head, Dept. of Management studies, IIT, Madras. The keynote speech was delivered by Mr. N. Mittal, Former Central Vigilance Commissioner, Government of India.

The meeting was also addressed by Mr. A.K.Venkatasubramaniam IAS (Retd.), Dr. V. Chockalingam, Cardiologist, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai and Col. K. Dharmadhikary, Transparency International India

Respected Mr.V.Kalyanam , who served as personal secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, now 86 years age, graced the occasion and spoke.

Five college students presented their views on corruption in India.

The following eleven college students from all over India who won prizes in the All India essay competition on "Rampant Corruption in India - Who is responsible?" were awarded certificates and cash prizes during the meeting.

- \* Mr.Amir Hamza Syed  
B.A. Hons. Economics  
Shri Ram College of Commerce  
University of Delhi, New Delhi
- \* Ms.Amulya Kulkarni  
3rd year Bachelor in Technology (ECE) course  
Sri Devi Women's Engineering College  
Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University  
New Delhi
- \* Mr.Arun Kumar  
1st year Under Graduate Course  
Delhi University, Delhi
- \* Ms.A.Chitra Devi  
3rd year B.Sc., Maths course  
Kongunadu Arts & Sci. College  
Gnanambikai Mills (P.O.), Coimbatore-641029
- \* Mr.Jayanta Mazumder  
1st year L.L.B. (Hons) Course  
Dr.Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University  
Lucknow (U.P.)
- \* Mr.Kaiser  
4th year B.E. Software engineering course  
Sathyabama University  
Chennai
- \* Mr.Naveen Nallappan  
3rd year B.E. Automobile Engineering Course  
Hindustan College of Engineering, Chennai

- \* Ms.S.Parvadavardini  
3rd year L.L.B.Course  
KLE Society's Law College  
Bangalore
- \* Ms.Ritu Soni  
5th Year Student  
Gujarat National Law University  
Gandhi Nagar  
Gujarat
- \* Ms.S.Rosemita  
3rd year B.com Course  
Fatima College,  
Mary Land,  
Madurai
- \* Ms.V.Swetha  
Student  
Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT)  
Vellore

Five college students who spoke during the meeting and their team members (total of fifteen college students) were provided certificates and cash prizes in appreciation of their efforts and observations.

Dr. L.S. GANESH spoke with great eloquence and passion and said that if the corruption would continue at the present pace, it may lead to a situation where the corrupt people (both the givers and takers )would become shameless and even a sense of shame would not deter them from indulging in nefarious activities. The situation cannot be allowed to deteriorate further and the corrupt forces in the country should be defeated at any cost.

Mr. N. VITTAL suggested the use of modern technology to fight corruption. He said that the use of modern gadgets like cell phones with cameras will certainly help reduce corruption to a great extent, if the gadgets could be effectively used to expose the corrupt practices. He said everyone can become a citizen journalist by doing sting operation on corrupt official.

The meeting was attended by over 250 persons and was hosted by Dr.MGR Janaki college of Arts & Science, Chennai.

Mementos to the prize winners were provided by Transparency International India and cash awards were provided by Shamdhasini Foundation,. Hongkong.

The over 250 participants consisted of former IAS officers, NGOs, professionals and large number of persons from lower income group. There were many visually

impaired persons, orthopaedically disabled persons and speech impaired persons present on the occasion.

Nandini Voice For the Deprived distributed food packets to several persons from lower income group including disabled persons who travelled long distance to attend the meeting in spite of their personal discomforts.

The consensus of the meeting was that efforts should be made to develop hatred about corrupt practices and corrupt elements in the society and such corrupt persons, whether they are politicians or ministers or bureaucrats or business men or teachers or doctors should be boycotted by the society.

Mr. N.S.Venkataraman, Trustee, Nandini Voice For the Deprived welcomed the gathering and explained the highlights of the observations made by the college students from all over India who participated in the essay competition.

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## **Highlights of the views of the students on corruption**

\* Corruption in India follows a vicious cycle, but the root of the problem lies in the corruption of the political system. The nexus between corrupt politicians and corrupt bureaucrats makes it look that any fight against corruption is the fight against the government itself.

\* As long as the work is done, it is fine – this attitude of the people could be another root cause for the rampant corruption in India. We have a tendency to blame the politicians, government employees or higher authorities in any sector for putting money in their pockets. But, have we ever introspected about own selves to see how true are we as citizens, with regard to the issue of corruption? How many of us do not look for “contact” for getting our children in good school or college?

\* Tolerance of people towards corruption, almost complete lack of intense public outcry against corruption and the absence of strong and effective public forum to oppose corruption allow corruption to reign over people. This could be the underlying cause.

\* What intrigues is that why is it that even the well informed people in India have put up with this corruption burden so long and have not revolted? Is this linked to an unflinching faith in karma theory or is it a reflection simply

of utter helplessness? Even the efforts of great fighters like Anna Hazare have not made a dent, as even the educated people are not supporting such efforts adequately.

\* The fight against corruption must begin at home. Family and schools are the twin indispensable social institutions which must be activated to fight for value system in life. Functioning of these institutions at high ethical level can usher in a revolution to change the mind set of both the giver and the taker. We need a second freedom struggle.

\* The pressure must come from the public by agitating against corrupt practices. The youth can make a difference if there would be role models for them.

\* Most people who talk about corruption and ethics today appear to be of plus sixty age group. Most of them had been part of the corrupt system in public life in one way or the other earlier and had not fought against the issues when they had the power and energy. At plus sixty stage, when they preach, they do not inspire confidence amongst the youth.

\* One would shudder to think as to what would happen to the peace of the society, if the common men whose interests are defeated by the forces of corruption, would feel frustrated and helpless and take to violence as the only option available to them.

## Useful programme on evils of corruption on independence day

Contributed by: R.Narasimhan

E-mail:chottanash@yahoo.com

I would like to congratulate Nandini Voice for the Deprived for organizing a wonderful programme on evils of corruption in our country on 15th August, 2008 at Chennai.

I am amazed to see the participation by young students particularly girls from different colleges. A girl who spoke called our democracy as corruption of the people, by the people and for the people. It is really sad reflection on all of us. The fight against corruption will have to be a movement by people at various levels. Since the youngsters are appearing to take initiative, there is some hope.

As one of the famous writers Chesterton wrote, the world is in danger not because of person who commits

crime, but it is because of others who simply watch the crime being committed without taking any action.

Therefore, it is important that people should not be silent spectators of corruption in all levels. Everyone will have to fight against it. Of course, the most important thing as pointed out by some of the speakers, is that most of us are responsible for corruption because we want to by pass the rules for quick gains.

There should be a movement, that in every institution where large number of youngsters are employed, we should initiate and encourage a group pledge for following the rules in our day to day life to reduce or eliminate corruption.



A college student presenting her views



Mr. V. Kalyanam, Personal Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the gathering



A section of the gathering



Mr. N. Vittal, Former Central Vigilance Commissioner presenting cash award to the prize winning student

# ALL INDIA ESSAY COMPETITION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS ON THE EVE OF GANDHI JAYANTHI DAY ON "FAST SPREADING DRINKING HABIT AMONGST YOUTH - HOW TO SAVE THEM FROM DISASTER?"

In the context of the forthcoming Gandhi Jayanthi Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008, Nandini Voice for the Deprived, is organizing an All India Essay Competition for the College students on the following subject :

## **"Fast Spreading Drinking Habit Amongst Youth – How To Save Them From Disaster?"**

### Objective of the Competition

Mahatma Gandhi laid great stress on personal character and discipline. The prohibition principle was one of the subjects closest to Gandhiji's heart. By insisting on prohibition, Gandhiji wanted to improve the living conditions of the citizens particularly belonging to lower income group and ensure good thoughts and deeds amongst the individuals.

Unfortunately, with prohibition being lifted in most parts of the country and the state governments seeking to increase their income by sale of liquor unmindful of the consequences, the liquor consumption amongst the youth have gone up by leaps and bounds all over the country. There is considerable concern amongst the right thinking people about the disastrous consequences of such trend.

In this connection, to give an opportunity to the college students to introspect on the subject, understand the

Gandhian philosophy better and suggest solutions to improve the scenario, Nandini Voice for the Deprived is organizing this All India Essay Competition.

### Rules for participation

- \* Essay competition is open to college students all over the country
- \* Essay can be written either in English or Tamil
- \* Maximum words of the essay should not exceed 2000
- \* Essay can be sent by post or by email

The last date for receipt of the entry is 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

### Prize distribution

Ten entries would be chosen for the cash awards.

The cash award would be presented during the meeting that would take place at Chennai on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008.

During the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2008, six students from colleges would be invited to present their views on the subject.

Respected Mr. V. Kalyanam, Personal Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi will preside over the meeting and present cash awards to the students.

# ESSAY COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS ON GANDHIJI'S LIFE & THOUGHTS

In the context of the Gandhi Jayanthi Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2008, Nandini Voice For the Deprived, is organising an essay competition for school students in Tamil Nadu on the following subject

## **"WHAT APPEALS TO ME IN GANDHIJI'S LIFE AND THOUGHTS"**

The objective of conducting the essay competition is to encourage the school students to study the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi and his life style, thoughts and actions.

The competition is open to all school students studying in Tamil Nadu . The essay can be written in Tamil or English and should be maximum of one thousand words.

Cash awards would be presented to best of five entries during a meeting at Chennai that would take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2008 (Gandhi Jayanthi day.)

Participating school students are requested to carefully study the life sketch of Mahatma Gandhi and write the essay. While they can get general guidance from teachers, elders and parents, the organisers of the competition expect that the essay should be written by the students exclusively by themselves and should be self certified by the individual student himself/herself.

The essay should be sent so as to reach on or before before 20<sup>th</sup> Sept., 2008

# CHILDREN OPT FOR ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS AND NOT MOTHER TONGUE

Contributed by Dr.Susheela Kaushik E-mail:susheela\_kaushik@hotmail.com

The facts that the report of NIUPA (Times of India, Delhi May 2008) has revealed on the medium of instruction in schools opted by children, make sad reading.

With the increase in enrolment in schools to the tune of three crores and plus, one would have expected that more children would be opting for their mother tongue. But, actually (and surprisingly) the percentage of children opting for English is much more except in the Hindi speaking region.

The situation thus has turned a full circle. It has also meant a change (or a reverse) from the days of Independence. Not merely all the efforts and the aims of the language movements are failing but the linguistic nationalism, revivalism and pride in one's own language have all gone into thin air. The parents with their practical sense and future prospects of their children, are preferring the public (private) school with English medium from class I. It is indeed sad to see that even those belonging to the low income groups like drivers, peons, workers in unorganized sector, are shelling out the major percentage of their income for school fees, books, uniforms etc. and feel happy when their children sing western nursery rhymes in view.

Why this sorry state of affairs? Does it mean that in the job market, the local language have no use or are the dealings done only in English?

The standards and quality of education in the English medium schools are taken for granted. Actually, it is not so with the English oriented "Public Schools" having become a money making racket or a small scale business. The management of most of such schools do not worry about the aims or quality of education carried out there. With less qualified teachers, low salary, little infrastructure etc, the products from these 'factories' are also equally of poor quality. Many of these English medium schools turn out half baked children, who are ultimately neither good in language or content nor can communicate well in English or regional language.

One wonders, what happened to all the self pride of post Independence years? What happened to the "teach in mother tongue" movement? What happened to all the arguments citing the example of Japan, Germany and China that the average intellectual, scientific and vocational achievement of average citizen in these countries is high only because the medium, even up to college, is in the language of the country?.

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX RANKINGS ITS IMPACT ON OLYMPIC MEDALS

Contributed by: Sri. KVS KRISHNA, Chennai

The Human Development Index Rankings are made in three categories. They are

- High human development
- Medium human development and
- Low human development

There are 70 countries in the high category, 85 countries in the medium and 22 countries in the low category. India is ranked 128th, with Pakistan at 136 and Sri Lanka at 99 all in the medium development category. China is ranked at 81.

With this background of human development Index, the results of the recent Olympics in China, just concluded was analysed to see how the performance correlates to the human development index ratings.

Category	Total Number of countries	Number of countries securing medals
High human development index countries	70	49
Medium human development index countries	85	32
Low human development index countries	22	2

Of the 177 countries listed for human development index rankings, only 83 countries or 46.8% of the countries have secured medals. So the results are quite clear that medal securing at the Olympics is closely related to the human development index rankings.

India has low rating in human poverty index, which measures severe deprivation of health by the proportion of people, who are not expected to survive age 40.

# DISABLED PERSON BEATEN BY POLICE AT CHENNAI ARE CITIZENS HELPLESS?



It is distressing to know that a disabled person, Sri. M. Ramesh age 23 and an engineer, was severely beaten up by the police men at Koyambedu bus stop in Chennai in the early hours on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> august, 2008. Sri. Ramesh arrived in the bus terminus from Villupuram and as it was early morning, he was waiting in the bus stand to catch the first bus to the city. The police men on duty questioned him and even as he was explaining, he was beaten by the police men.

The City Commissioner of Police ordered an enquiry.

However, later on, the disabled person who was beaten up by the police and who said that he lost Rs.1000/- and his mobile phone in the process, withdrew the case. One does not know as to whether he withdrew the case due to coercion or magnanimity. But, the fact is that the guilty police men have gone scot free

Perhaps, they will beat someone else on another occasion on a different day.

Such behaviour by the police men will only further widen the gulf between the police and the common men, making the police more feared than respected. It is unfortunate that the police men appear to think that they can beat anyone, without any consideration for stipulated legal procedures. If such things can happen in a public place like a bus stand, one shudder to think as to what would happen inside the police stations. In today's conditions, any one can be a victim. In several cases, it is seen that the police men provide enough "punishment" to the victims even before the due process of law would be completed.

This present case of police men beating a disabled person indicate the attitude of the police towards the public and their lack of sensitivity. The senior police officers should accept responsibility for such conditions, instead of simply blaming the police men at lower level. The senior police officers should care to visit police stations very frequently themselves and put some fear in the minds of the police men at lower level in the hierarchy.

This beating of the disabled man is a test case and we need to see as to whether the government would punish the guilty policemen, instead of simply giving them warnings or transferring them from one place to another.

Many of such cases reported in the past have not seen improvement in situation, as the media report it for a day, the government makes vague promises of severe action and then the poor victims are left all to themselves.

## LOAN FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Against target of Rs.4 crores to be disbursed as loans to persons with disabilities for launching self employment venture during the period of 2008-09, only Rs.31.8 lakhs has been disbursed as loans till July in Tamil Nadu.

According to 2001 census, there are 16 lakhs of people with disabilities in Tamil Nadu alone and most of them belong to lower income group.

The loan amount that can be provided without insisting on collateral to disabled persons is Rs.50,000 only. As several of the disabled persons are unable to provide personal security or guarantee, they are unable to take higher amount of money as loan.

Further, disabled persons have problems in getting the loan even within the limit of Rs.50,000/- as financial institutions are often not cooperative and make the poor disabled persons run from pillar to post to get the loan sanctioned.

There are not enough facilities available to provide skill acquisition opportunities or marketing support to the disabled persons.

Obviously, the implementation of government schemes to help disabled persons are only half hearted measures.

# INDIA WALKS INTO THE NUCLEAR DEAL TRAP

India has walked into the nuclear trap set up by the developed countries to help their companies and business houses to get huge nuclear business in India, by getting orders for technology, equipment and raw material.

This is now a win win situation for the business dealers in USA and Europe.

It is not surprising that the developed countries are so happy about Dr.Manmohan Singh and his team.

Till today, Government of India has not told the country as to what would be the economic capacity and investment cost for the nuclear power projects to be set up under the new conditions and the cost of power that would be generated. It is reasonably expected that the cost of nuclear power in the new conditions would be much more than the present price level, which would call for huge government subsidy to enable the industries and consumers to buy and use such nuclear power.

It is a trap because India cannot get out of the nuclear power projects after investing several hundred crores of rupees, whereas the suppliers from overseas countries can stop supply of spare parts or raw materials under one pretext or the other, which would make the projects in India inoperative. In short, the Indian nuclear projects would be at the mercy of overseas suppliers and the Governments in USA and Europe.

Finally, there is huge environmental issue of dumping nuclear waste, which has made several developed countries not to invest in future nuclear power projects. There is no comment on this serious issue from the government.

One cannot be blamed, if he would suspect the motives of those in power in India, who have rushed with nuclear deal with the US inspite of serious concern and misgivings

expressed in the country by various well meaning quarters. Obviously, it is highly improper on the part of the government to commit the country to such a deal of far reaching consequences inspite of lack of national consensus.

It is absolutely not correct to argue that India has no alternative other than going for nuclear power projects with US assistance. At best, nuclear power project can be described as an option.

The present Indian installed capacity for power in India is 1,45,588 MW. Of this, contribution of nuclear power is just around 2.75%. There are many other options for the country like solar power, wind power etc. Huge untapped potential for hydro electric power in northeast region is waiting to be exploited.

There are great opportunities in the field of biofuel based on jatropha in which government does not seem to be interested. The Government needs to explain to the countrymen about its pursuing with the nuclear power projects inspite of severe opposition, while ignoring project like jatropha based biofuel which are appropriate to the country.

It is not good for the government to proceed with such international deals without gaining the country's confidence.

## CHENNAI MARATHON –IS IT AN EXERCISE IN FUTILITY?

Many people were sceptical about the recently organized Chennai marathon as to how it would really benefit the poor and deprived persons, commensurate with the hype and publicity given to it. After seeing the marathon, such people would have been convinced that their scepticism was justified.

One aspect about Chennai marathon was that though it was supposed to be towards the cause of downtrodden, it looked like an entertainment and festival running. There was no mention of the poor or any attempt to sensitise the runners about the distressing conditions, in which the poor people live.

At best, it can be termed as the get together of those in middle and upper income group, for some of whom it could have been an opportunity to burn the calories.

Cinema actors, politicians and social activists participated and gained publicity.

We need to stop these kind of farce shows, if we really want to attack the root cause of the problem and help the have nots.

It was said that more than 28000 people were involved in running. If everyone of them have taken the initiative to dedicate themselves to help the education of atleast two deprived children in their life time, perhaps it would have been more beneficial.

There were types of movements that were organized by Mahatma Gandhi that was so soul filling. Unfortunately, the neo rich, who have the resources to help the downtrodden, are merely copying the western methods of demonstrations of concern.

# Disposal of nuclear waste a grim problem

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The splitting of uranium atoms in a nuclear reactor creates the exceptional heat that drives turbines to provide electricity. The process also creates radioactive isotopes such as cesium 137 and strontium 90 that take about 30 years to lose half their radioactivity. Higher level leftovers include plutonium 239, with a half life of 24,000 years.

Direct exposure to such highly radioactive material, even for a short period, can be fatal. Indirect exposure, through seepage into groundwater, can lead to life threatening illness for those living nearby and cause environmental damage.

For now, the best scientific solution for getting rid of the most lethal waste appears to be to shove it deep under ground.

The deadliest bits such as fuel rod casings and other reactor parts as well as concentrated fuel residue containing plutonium and highly enriched uranium must be sealed and stored away. That is what dumped 10 feet underground at the Normandy plant: More than 7,000 cylindrical steel canisters are stacked and sealed upright in holes beneath the floor. Some contain compacted radioactive metal, the others hold spent fuel that has been vitrified into glass.

Thousand of canisters of highly radioactive waste from the world's most nuclear energised nations lie beneath in Normandy.

The spent fuel, vitrified into blocks of black glass that will remain dangerous for thousands of years, is in interim storage. Like nearly all the world's nuclear waste, it is still waiting for the long term disposal solution that has eluded scientists and governments in the six decades since the atomic era began

Yet no country has built a deep geological repository. The governments face protests from the nearby residents each time one is proposed to be built.

Greenpeace and Norwegian environmental group Bellona say that European nations have for years been illegally shipping radioactive waste to Russia and leaving it there.

In the United States, the Yucca Mountain waste site in Nevada was commissioned in 1982 and is still awaiting a license.

Another option is recycling. Countries such as France, Russia and Japan reprocess much nuclear waste into new fuel. That dramatically reduces the volume: Forty years' worth of France's highly radioactive waste is stored under just three floor surfaces, each about the size of a basketball court at Beaumont-Hague.

Recycling produces plutonium that could be used in nuclear weapons but it would cause proliferation and therefore is banned in USA.

But not all waste can be reprocessed.

Among other ideas once floated for disposing of nuclear waste have been shooting it into space (deemed too risky because of the volatile rocket fuel) or injecting it in the ocean floor (stalled because testing its feasibility is too costly) or shipping all the world's waste to a collective nuclear dump.

Current research in France which relies on nuclear energy for more than 70 percent of its electricity is focusing on new chemical processes that would shrink nuclear waste and cool it faster.

It will be at least 2040, though, before these might be put to use.

## Site for dumping nuclear waste in USA

Yucca Mountain, more of a ridge line than a peak, has been studied since 1978 as a place to house spent nuclear fuel from the nations 104 operating reactors.

The US has invested \$11 billion since 1983 on the site, which was supposed to start accepting waste in 1998. But due to many problems, the opening has been delayed until 2017 at the earliest, though many obstacles remain, including stiff congressional opposition and getting required permits.

After more than six decades, high level nuclear waste is piling up above ground and governments are starting to spend billions on underground facilities intended to store them for hundreds of thousands of years.

# HALF OF INDIANS LIVING ON LESS THAN RS. 55 A DAY SAYS UN REPORT

The World Bank has come out with the startling estimate that one third of the poor in the world live in India. While the full report has not yet been released, a briefing note, sent by the Bank had some of the data and what that showed was that the poverty rate – those below \$1.25 per day – for India had come down from 59.8% in 1981 to 51.3% by 1990 or 8.5 percentage points over nine years.

According to the World Bank data, India's poverty rate declined by 19 per cent between 1990 and 2005, as against 38 per cent globally. China has achieved much faster rate of poverty reduction, it said.

"The number of poor people living below 1.25 dollar a day has increased from 42.1 crore in 1981 to 45.6 crore in 2005. This is the biggest challenge facing India," the multilateral lending agency said in its update on International Comparison Programme today.

The World Bank further said even while the number of people living on less than a dollar a day has come down, "there is a large number of people living just above this line of deprivation and their numbers are not falling."

The new international poverty line of \$1.25 per day has been arrived at as the average poverty line found in the poorest countries, according to the briefing note. In other words, more than four out of 10 Indians live below what the world's poorest countries consider the poverty line.

The new estimates are sobering not just for India but for the developing world as a whole, as they reveal higher levels of poverty than earlier estimated. For instance, even in China's case, they suggest that 208 million people are 16% of the population and are below the new international poverty line rather than the 130 million estimated earlier.

For achieving higher rate of poverty reduction, India will have to address inequalities that impede poors from reaping benefits of growth, the update said and added that the high economic growth rate witnessed in the recent past did help in reducing the incidence of poverty.

The government will have to focus on education, healthcare and create opportunities commensurate with spectacular growth to reduce poverty, it said.

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## SEND A PEACE MISSION TO JAMMU & KASHMIR

While various explanations for the unrest in Jammu and Kashmir are being advanced such as ISI hand, communal divide, the separatist element getting upper hand etc., the fact that one cannot miss is that the political leadership of the Government of India has lost the confidence of the average citizen in Jammu and Kashmir. Obviously, the people of Jammu & Kashmir feel that the leadership of the Government lack credibility and moral authority.

No government can rule a state or a country by depending on armed forces, after losing its communication channel with the people. Even the Britishers could not do so and had to give independence to India unable to face the unrest.

The time for the government and the country appear to be slipping in Jammu & Kashmir. The congress party in general and Dr. Manmohan Singh in particular will be blamed by history if separatists have their way in Kashmir.

The government of India is giving an impression that it has no clue and thinks that time would solve the problem. The time would certainly solve the problem but may do so at India's cost, If Dr. Manmohan Singh's government would remain paralysed.

The government should immediately constitute a team of senior people who enjoy blemishless image and who are not in the government and politics to go to Jammu and Kashmir and find a way out there, that would be fair to the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir.

For a moment, Dr. Manmohan Singh should place less confidence on his cabinet colleagues, political associates, bureaucrats and armed forces and think of Gandhian ways to solve this problem

Perhaps, Gandhiji if he were alive today, would have simply walked into Jammu & Kashmir unescorted and the people there would have bowed to him.

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