

Nandini

ISSUE 2

APRIL 2009

Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

VOL XIII

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - Rs. 100/-

RS.10/-

**Country is unable to
get rid of some
criminals in Parliament**

**Coming Parliamentary
Elections should not be
a repeat**

LAST DAYS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

On December 12, 1900, Swami Vivekananda returned to India for the last time from his trip abroad. Arriving at Mumbai, he left immediately for Kolkata and Belur Math. When Swamiji arrived of Belur Math, great excitement ensued as everyone joyfully greeted him. He spoke to them for hours, relating his adventures in the West.

Although his health was almost totally broken down, Swamiji decided to leave for Mayavati. He travelled by train as far as the hill station of Kathagodam and arrived at the Ashram on January 3. The trip took its toll on Swamiji, who told Virajananda, "You see, my son, now I have come to the end."

During his stay at Advaita Ashrama, Swamiji had several attacks of asthma. Despite his health problems. Swamiji gave many talks and was a great inspiration to the residents.

Swamiji spent two weeks at Mayavati and returned to Belur Math on January 24. He set about executing a deed of trust through which all powers over the Math properties would be vested in a Board of Trustees, to be composed entirely of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

Swamiji was invited to give lectures in East Bengal and he decided to go there accompanied by his mother, who had expressed the wish to visit the holy places of that area.

While there, Swamiji had an especially severe asthma attack. During the episode, he was heard to remark, "What does it matter? I have given them enough for fifteen hundred years."

People flocked to the Swamiji and he was unable to rest. He delivered two public lectures" "What I Have Learnt" and "The Religion We Are Born In."

Next he travelled to Assam, where he delivered three more lectures. thousands came to hear their Patriot-Saint speak on the regeneration of India. At this point, his health was so poor that he decided to go to the hill station of Shillong for several days rest. Even there, he was busy discussing the problems of India with Sir Henry Cotton, the chief commissioner of Assam, who was an admirer of the Swamiji. On May 12, he returned to Kolkata, having made his last public tour.

When he returned to Belur Math, visitors came from far and near to see him and hear words of wisdom. Although his body was weak, his mind would scale the

heights of truth and he could still speak fire. He seemed totally uninterested in his physical welfare saying, "for the few days more that it lasts, I will continue to work for you all and die in harness."

Sometimes, Swamiji would walk on the grounds of the monastey dressed only in a loin cloth. Then he would sit under the bilwa tree, beside which now stands his memorial temple to rest or meditate. Many were the times he would be lost to external consciousness.

In October, a number of Santal laborers were working on the Math grounds, and Swamiji would speak feely with them. Inquiring after their welfare and hearing of their miseries would cause him to weep. One day, he held a feast for them, he himself supervising its preparation. He told them, "You are Narayanas; today I have entertained the Lord Himself by feeding you." Afterwards, Swamiji spoke of them to the monks: "See how simple hearted these poor illiterate people are! Can you mitigate their misery a little? If not, of what use is your wearing the ochre robe?"

Early in 1902, Josephine MacLeod came to Belur Math accompanied by two Japanese Buddhists, Mr.Okakura Kakuzo and Mr.Hori. They wished to personally invite Swamiji to the Congress of Religions that was to be held in their country. Okakura was then on his way to Bodh-Gaya and invited Swamiji to accompany him. The pilgrims remained there for one week, Swamiji visited the temple daily, and then they travelled to Varanasi.

After Okakura had left to continue his tour, Swamiji stayed in Varanasi for another month, hoping that its dry climate would prove beneficial to his health. However,



LAST DAYS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

his condition continued to worsen. Although he returned to Belur to take part in the celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birth anniversary, which fell on March 11, Swamiji was not well enough to attend.

Once again, Swamiji tried to take up his usual activities at the Math, but his health would not permit it. His feet were so swollen, he could hardly walk.

Still, Swamiji was well aware of his approaching death. On March 28, he said to Josephine MacLeod, "I will not live to be forty." When she protested, he said, "I delivered my message and I must go." "Why go?" she asked. "The shadow of a big tree will not allow smaller trees to grow up. I must go to make room," was his unselfish reply.

By the end of June, Sister Nivedita was in Kolkata, making preparations for her school. Swamiji came to her residence, looked carefully at everything and blessed her and her work. The next day she went to Belur, where Swamiji spoke to her for several hours. Again, on Wednesday, July 2, she visited him. He insisted upon serving her the morning meal, commenting playfully on each dish as he placed it before her. At the end of the meal, he poured water over her hands and dried them with a towel. When she protested, he said, "Jesus washed the feet of his disciples." The significance of these words was not lost on her. Yet, despite the foreshadowings, no one expected he would leave them so soon.

The last day of his life is now seen as a most remarkable one. After bolting all the doors and windows in the room, he spent the morning alone in meditation. He joined his brothers for the noon meal, rather than following his usual practice of eating in his room and in the afternoon taught Sanskrit grammar, intermingled with jokes and stories for three hours.

He talked animatedly to Swami Premananda as they walked together, particularly of his wish to start a Vedic College at the Math and then spent some time talking to the monks. No one could have imagined that they were about to lose the very one who gave meaning to their lives.

"How often," he had once said, "does a man ruin his disciples by remaining always with them. When men are once trained, it is essential that their leader leave them, for without his absence, they cannot develop themselves." He was about to give up his life for their sake.

At 7:00 p.m. he retired to his room for meditation. At the end of an hour, he called in an attendant to fan him. He lay quietly on his bed appearing to be asleep, but after about an hour, his attendant saw his hand tremble and heard him breathe deeply. For a few minutes, all was quiet; then Swamiji took another deep breath and entered mahasamadhi. It was a few minutes past 9:00 p.m.

A pall of shock and sorrow enveloped in Belur.

Swami Vivekananda Speaks

Brothers, you have touched another chord in my heart, the deepest of all, and that is the mention of my teacher, my master, my hero, my ideal, my God in life - Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. If there has been anything achieved by me, by thoughts or words or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped anyone in the world, I lay no claim to it, it was his. But if there have been curses falling from my lips, if there has been hatred coming out of me, it is all mine and not his. All that has been weak has been mine, and all that has been life - giving, strengthening, pure and holy, has been his inspiration, his words, and he himself.



What is meant by renunciation? That there is only one ideal in morality: unselfishness. Be selfless. The ideal is perfect unselfishness... For it is not only the end but also the means. To be unselfish, perfectly selfless, is salvation itself; for the man within dies, and God alone remains.



Desperate Calls

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

Student needs support for education

Sri.S.Kabilan is studying final year diploma course in Electrical and Electronic Engineering in Sri Balaji Polytechnic Collge, Vandalur, Chennai.

Sri.S.Kabilan requests kind hearted persons for a sum of Rs.26,000/- towards tuition fees, books and stationeries etc

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Sri Balaji Polytechnic Collge, Vandalur, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Sri.S.Kabilan

S/o. Sri.K.Sundar (Late), No.8/7, Ragavendra Street,
Plot No.6, Dhara Illam, Urapakkam, Chennai-603 210

Patient needs support for medical treatment

Mrs.G.Mohana , age 27 years, mother of 3 children is suffering from rheumatic heart disease for which she has to undergo open heart surgery (mitral valve replacement). The cost of the surgery is Rs.2,00,000/-.



The cheque may be drawn in favour of Sri Ramachandra Hospital, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Women `s Welfare Syndicate
8/2, Avenue Road, Nungambakkam,
Chennai-600 034

Baby Divya B, two and half years old, is suffering from hemophagocytic cymphous histiocytosis (HCH) blood oriented disease, for which she has to undergo therapeutic protocol for HCH for 40 weeks. The cost of the treatment is Rs.3,00,000.



The cheque may be drawn in favour of Kanchi Kamakoti Childs Trust Hospital, Chennai and sent to the following address

Women `s Welfare Syndicate
8/2, Avenue Road, Nungambakkam,
Chennai-600 034

Disabled person needs job

Sri.M.Sathish Kumar, age 30 years is a physically challenged person. He obtained M.A. degree in Economics. He has undergone computer course and he is also having working experience.



Sri.M. Sathish Kumar requests for suitable job.

Contact address:

Sri.M.Sathish Kumar, No.57, IIIrd Cross
Street, Sakthivel Nagar, Peravallur,
Chennai-600 082

Visually impaired person needs job

Sri.K.Yogeshwaran, age 27 years is a visually impaired person and he has obtained bachelor degree in Tamil Literature. He is waiting for the result of B.Ed. course.

Sri.K.Yogeshwaran requests for a suitable job.

Contact address

Sri.K.Yogeshwaran,
Phone:0369-251370,
Mobile: 9751001909

Child needs support for medical treatment

Master Biraj Sarkar, age 6 years is suffering from blood cancer and is admitted in Apollo Speciality Hospital, Chennai. The boy has been advised to start regular chemotherapy and radiation immediately. The cost of treatment is Rs.2,00,000/-

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Apollo Speciality Hospital, Chennai

Contact address:

Master Biraj Sarkar,
C/o.Dr.Revathi Raj
Consultant in Paediatric Haematology
Apollo Speciality Hospital
Padma Complex,
320 Anna Salai, Chennai-600 035

Needs support for medical treatment



Ms.G. Arul Gowri, age 19 years, studying B.Com IInd year is suffering from brain tumour. She is taking accupunture treatment in G.K.M.Hospital, Chennai. The tumour size has reduced to about 60% because of the treatment .

The patient's father Sri.Govindarajan is hearing and speech impaired person. He requests kind hearted persons for a sum of Rs.4,00,000/- for remaining medical treatment for his daughter.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of G.K.M.Hospital, Chennai and sent to the following address.

Sri.Govindarajan,
C/o.Ms.G.Arul Gowri, Ward No.303, 3rd Floor,
G.K.M.Hospital, Perambur Barex Road, Purasawalkam,
Chennai-600 007

Heart Patient Needs Support

Mrs.S. Pattu, age 33 years is suffering from rheumatic heart disease. She has been advised to undergo open heart surgery. The estimated cost of the surgery is Rs. 2,15,000/-

The cheque may be drawn in favour of The Madras Medical Mission, Chennai

and sent to the following address

Contact address Mrs.S.Pattu, W/o.Mr.Sekar,V
Block 131, Kuppam Beach Road,Singaravel Nagar,
Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai600 043.

Visually impaired lady Driven from pillar to post for housing loan

Ms. T. Meenakshi is a post graduate (M.A.B.Ed.) and visually impaired lady. She is presently working as teacher in a government school in Chennai. She is teaching higher secondary class. Her husband is also a visually impaired person and is a graduate (M.A.B.Ed.) and is working as a teacher in another government school.

Ms. T. Meenakshi hails from poor family and desires to own a flat. For purchasing the flat, she has been running from pillar to post for the last one year to raise loan from nationalized bank / LIC.

As she has an account in a nationalised bank, she first approached the bank for loan. She was asked to approach after one year. Then she has been approaching another nationalised bank without much success so far. She could not even file the application for loan so far in both these banks, since she is not getting the concerned officers to listen to her need and provide her with the prescribed application form.

Being a blind lady, she is in total darkness as to why she is not able to get even someone to listen to her and help her out.

Then she approached LIC for housing loan and again she has not been favoured with any positive reply. Ms. T. Meenakshi wonders as to whether it would not be possible for a visually impaired person to get housing loan at all.

Ms.Meenakshi feels that schemes may be there and there may not be any bar to provide loan for visually impaired persons, But, the ground realities are different when any visually impaired person really seeks to get the loan, particularly when the visually impaired person has no contacts or influential people to provide help.

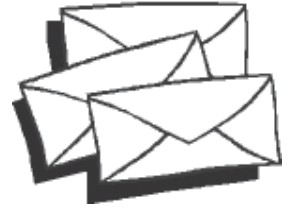
She wonders wheather anyone would help her to realize her aspiration of getting a housing loan, as permissible under law in tune with her earnings.

Contact number of Ms. T. Meenakshi is 98401 79861.

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.



Closure of educational institutions on frivolous grounds

Dear Sir,

It is disturbing to read so often about indefinite closure of colleges on frivolous grounds. Students are often exploited by politicians who hoodwink them for vote bank politics .

While there is need to indoctrinate students on the myriad facets of working of political systems of parliamentary democracy, it is disastrous to exploit the younger generation who are made as pawns for the murky manoeuvring of the politicians. Indefinite closure of schools and colleges citing security reasons and pressing the panic button by throwing students from hostels is highly disturbing.

Chennai

Dr.K.Thiagarajan

"Make money your servant not your master"

Dear Sir,

Money could do anything except bringing back to life a dead person. Because of its capability, people suffer from money sickness syndrome.

Money woes are common not only in terms of financial crisis but also in times of abundance. A creeping social disease of over consumption, commercialism and rampant materialism cause stress, debt, waste, overwork, feelings of deprivation, envy and depression.

Many people are highly motivated by money and controlled by money. This often leads to stress and neuroticism.

In contrast, those who budget their money carefully tend to have internal focus to control and positive feeling towards themselves. They are the masters of money and not slaves of money and they have lower stress.

One of the richest men in the world told an interviewer "I am not to be envied. How can my wealth help me? I am sixty years old and I can not digest my food. I would give all my millions if I could have youth and health".

Money has no connection with happiness, may be with unhappiness

Coimbatore

G.E.M.Manoharan

Selective media coverage

Dear Sir,

Undue importance was given to the incidents involving a few ladies who were indecently dancing in one pub at Mangalore (Karnataka) recently .

Pub culture is of western origin. Attending the pub for consuming liquor and dancing with pub dancer in immodest manner can not be considered as sign of progress. Electronic media exploited the situation by screening the event persistently on their channel.

On the other hand, media have become dumb, deaf and blind in respect of physical torture committed on 6 year old poor innocent dalit girl by the protector of law and order (police)in Yeshwant Pura of Uttar Pradesh. The little girl was beaten and dragged by her hair continuously by the police, when the girl was in their custody on the charges of theft.The media did not care to follow the development in this case.

Mumbai

Sridhar V. Kulkarni

Help the senior citizens

Dear Sir,

In Maharashtra state, senior citizens are allowed to travel freely in State Transport buses. All state governments must emulate this noble example.

There is a small kingdom called Mauritius where the senior citizens enjoy decent pension, free medical aid and free transport. Indian government should follow this practice.

The national policy for senior citizens should be such that those senior citizens whose yearly income is less than Rs.50000/- should be treated as citizens below poverty line and hence eligible for free legal aid.

Chennai

K.N.Narayana Pillai

These politicians

Dear Sir,

Rajaji, our first Indian Governer General axed his own salary to mere Rs.5000/- per month.

But, today our political leaders are jostling in AC cars and have no qualms of conscience. They thrive on bribery, closing their eyes at the poverty overtaking the slums

and villages. They shed crocodile tears on dais and platforms.

They let loose advertisement exhibiting their photos, as if they are involved in a beauty contest.

They are looting public money in crores, which can be diverted to our suffering masses in millions, for their upliftment.

Chennai

K.N.Narayana Pillai

Who rules India?

Dear Sir,

When we dispassionately observe with open mindedness, we can understand that our great country is actually ruled by miniscule minority of the people and the fate of India is decided by around 0.01% of its

citizens. They all, in more ways than one, harbour some kind of political ambitions and they are also politically oriented, including many educated 'blockheads'!

But this fact is not realised by the people in general (the 'Aam Aadhmis') most of whom are not at all aware about it and are actually not even bothered about it! Most of these hapless, gullible and innocent citizens have absolutely no clue about it and hence they are not able to comprehend the seriousness of it at all.

And that is the sad fate of India that our nation is being not only ruled but is also ruined by such politically triggered individuals who have done precious little for it so far!

Chennai

N.Ramesh

nramesh8@hotmail.com

Let us hope more Indians will get Nobel Prizes

Dear Sir,

Sri.Manoharan in his letter (March 2009 issue) has stated that no sane man should accept the prize instituted by Nobel as it is a tainted one. He says that one should not accept the award because Nobel invented dynamite and amassed great wealth by selling lethal weapons. This argument is not only amusing but shocking.

If this kind of reasoning is extended, we should reject Einstein as a great scientist. It is due to Einstein's mass energy equivalence (convertibility of mass into energy and subsequent discovery of nuclear fission), we have the atom bomb used by America to bring war to an end. The bomb not only killed millions instantly but it produced long term harmful radiations that affected the future generations also. Similarly, we have now a large number of merchants of death in those who manufacture cigarettes, alcohol etc. which are silent killers. Are we not studying science, nuclear fission etc?

Are we not getting aid in different ways from US that dropped atom bomb in Japan?

Are we not utilising the tainted money of the government got by way of taxes on cigarettes or income from Tasmac shops?

Further, India is a land where people are forgiven if they realize and accept their mistakes and make amends for the same. This is what exactly Nobel did. His case was a unique one in the world in the sense that he had

the opportunity of reading his own obituary. In an accident, his brother died but by mistake it was published that Nobel was dead and the paper called him the merchant of death. There were very bad references about him. Nobel realized his mistake and he wanted to make amends and he instituted the prizes. It is only a recognition of the persons with outstanding achievement in various fields. So there is nothing wrong in accepting the awards.

February is an important month for India (especially Chennai). It is in February we got the Oscar awards. It is in February 1928, a great discovery was made and C.V.Raman the discoverer got the Nobel Prize for the same.

It may not be out of place to point out that Presidency College, Madras and the Madras University have the unique distinction in India of producing two Noble Laureates (Dr. C.V.Raman and Dr.Chandrasekhar).

This is also the birth century year of Dr.Homi Jehangir Bhaba who can be called the father of Atomic Energy in India. Due to the tireless efforts of Dr.Bhaba and his associates, we are able to achieve peaceful uses (producing isotopes, electricity etc) of atomic energy that was used as an instrument of destruction.

Let us hope that more Indians will get Nobel Prize in future.

Chennai

R.Rajagopalan

ALARMING LAWLESSNESS IN THE COUNTRY

Not a day passes in the country without news about the incidents of rape, murder, dacoity, coercion, mamools and corruption. These kind of incidents take place in all the states in India and what appears in the newspapers is not the whole story, as several incidents particularly taking place in the rural areas go unreported.

Certainly, an atmosphere of lawlessness is prevailing in the country.

The lawlessness in the country has deteriorated to such an extent that no one appears to be safe. Every politician in the government and opposition and the bureaucrats in the government want huge security for themselves. They are protecting themselves from the lawlessness which they have created but the innocent citizens are suffering.



Obviously, the law breakers and criminals do not anymore fear the law enforcing machinery and seem to think that they can get away with any crimes. In a recent meeting, someone who lived in Africa for long time said that conditions in India are really not much different from the conditions in some countries in Africa.

On the one hand, we boast ourselves about the achievements in space science and IT sector and claim that even a developed country like USA depends on India for its technical manpower requirement in large measure. With such claims, a picture is being painted as if India is on par with many advanced countries in many respects. While it has been widely reported that India is one of the most corrupt countries in the world, this does not seem to deter several of us from claiming about the progress in India.

The fact is that civilization and progress of any country should ultimately be determined by the prevailing atmosphere, which should be nearly free of corruption, coercion and nepotism and where lawlessness should be under control. From such view point, we cannot become agitated if someone from abroad would say that India is one of the least developed countries in the world.

There are many talented, cultured and honest Indians but they do not seem to be part of the government and the ruling establishment or the main stream of national life. Such concerned Indians remain helpless and mute spectators, discussing the problems between themselves in private meetings and seminars, which are mostly unreported in the media and ignored by those in the government and in politics.

Looking at the level of lawlessness, one has to invariably come to the conclusion that we have governments that are either not capable of governing or

not interested in governing and that is under the control of the people who are not really concerned about the reputation and fair image of the country.

In any society, the honest and concerned persons can play only a supplementary role and only the government can maintain rule of law and peace. To achieve this objective of quality governance, the government must be under the control of informed and committed people. Unfortunately, it is an obvious fact that the governments today are not in the control of such people but is largely under the control of politicians and bureaucrats who do not have the vision to think beyond their own self interest and who do not have the intelligence to understand the glory of great governance.

What can the concerned citizens do in such desperate conditions? Are they to just give up with feeling of helplessness and remain indoors reading newspapers, writing letters to editors and talking between themselves in hushed tones? In today's conditions, when the politicians and their henchmen have the field day and are fearless, protesting against such conditions would mean inviting violence and threats. Several concerned persons are not willing to pay the price.

In today's electoral system, keeping the criminals out of government and politics seem to be almost impossible.

Since the government is mostly not governing, law and order conditions have become deplorable and the situation is causing extreme concern. Historically, the revolutions and effective protests against exploitation and hooliganism of the ruling people have come only from those belonging to oppressed classes who suffer much more than the middle and upper income group in such conditions. Even such oppressed class are not really

ALARMING LAWLESSNESS IN THE COUNTRY

able to protest effectively in India today, probably because the liquor habit amongst them has spread widely around the country making them weak and insensitive to a large extent.

Under the circumstances, the only way is that concerned people should try to build better atmosphere by interacting with the poor and deprived people and helping them in whatever way possible, preferably by monetary support to facilitate education of the children in the lower income group and creating confidence and hope in their minds.

When the people in the lower income group start gaining confidence that the concerned fellow country men would care for them and they are being provided

opportunities to interact with them, they would start realizing that better people can be in the government and better quality governance is possible.

Mahatma Gandhi built up the movement in the pre independent days by making himself one with the cause of the poor and travelling in third class and even dressing in the way that the poor people can afford.

The concerned citizens can go atleast half the way that Mahatma Gandhi showed and try to build better standards of thoughts and actions in the country, by interacting actively with the deprived people who really represent the vote bank. This would make the politicians and the bureaucrats in the government look small and less bold to indulge in corrupt and self centred activities.

GIVE CITIZENS OF INDIA AN OPPORTUNITY TO PAY FOR MAHATMA GANDHI'S BELONGINGS

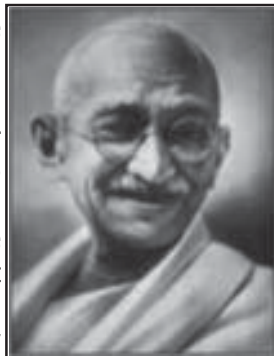
Mr. Vijay Mallya who is involved in several business including that of liquor has paid 1.8 million US\$ in New York to get the five belongings of Mahatma Gandhi in the auction.

One would wonder as to whether Gandhiji would have approved this sort of payment for his belongings. Perhaps, Gandhiji would have wished that such money should be spent for alleviating the sufferings of the deprived.

It is only appropriate that Mahatma Gandhi's belongings should remain in the possession of Government of India rather than any individual.

Even if Mr. Vijay Mallya would hand over the belongings of Mahatma Gandhi to Government of India, the Government of India should accept them only after reimbursing the amount paid by Mr. Vijay Mallya to him. It would be great, if the Government of India would collect the amount by way of voluntary contribution from citizens of India to pay Mr. Vijay Mallya and thus give an opportunity to the citizens of India to pay for acquisition of Mahatma Gandhi's belongings.

If the Government of India would not agree with this suggestion, then the Gandhian followers in India should pool their resources and pay Mr. Vijay Mallya the amount he spent with grateful thanks.



To achieve this task, the Gandhian followers may organize themselves under the leadership of Mr. V.Kalyanam, who is 87 years old and Personal Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, who served Mahatma Gandhi for the last six years of his life and is still happily with us in Chennai serving the cause that Mahatma Gandhi stood for.

IEWS ON THE ABOVE SUGGESTION

Dear Sir,

With due respect to your suggestion of Mr. Vijaya Mallya handing over the belongings of Gandhiji to the Government., I have a doubt as to whether the Government is really concerned about it.

Then it would have taken the initiative what Mr. Mallaya took.

And while in the custody of Government, whether the Government is capable of protecting these treasures is another question.

We all know how our monuments, our archeological treasures, our natural habitats, flora and fauna, are on the verge of extinct, as such assets are not preserved and adequately protected?

Is it not better that an individual who values these things keep these with him?

I know it does not sound nor read nationalistic, but....

Maya Gandhi

maya@excelind.com

WHITHER INDIAN DEMOCRACY ?

Contributed by: **Professor L. S. Ganesh,**

Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute Of Technology, Chennai 600036.

The following principles that are necessary for a successful democracy, especially while addressing and resolving public issues, should be understood.

PRINCIPLE 1: Members of a democracy must respect the PERIODICITY IN ELECTIONS and express their "overall" satisfaction or dissatisfaction, born of different citizenship experiences during a reign, through their vote. Therefore voting is an inviolable right and votes are sacred. Any attempt by anyone to infringe upon this sacred democratic right of any individual citizen must be accompanied by immediate control actions followed by (lengthy?) legal processes to reach a final decision. The infringing persons (and their "superiors") must be considered guilty until they prove that they are innocent.

Explanation: Each voter would have gone through diverse citizenship experiences on various matters of living including access to and enjoyment of public peace and security, education, healthcare, energy, transport, communications, recreation, etc.

The vote should hence reflect the individual voter's "overall" citizenship experience on all these fronts. This is a perfect reflection of life, which is known to be bittersweet. We go through multiple experiences, but are finally able to identify for ourselves a state of satisfaction ranging from "absolutely satisfied", on the positive side, to "absolutely dissatisfied" on the negative. Our intermediate positive ratings could be "highly satisfied", "quite satisfied", "moderately satisfied", "mildly or marginally satisfied", "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", followed by the corresponding negative ratings of our "overall" experiences ("mildly or marginally dissatisfied", "moderately dissatisfied", "quite dissatisfied", "highly dissatisfied" and "absolutely dissatisfied").

Essentially, this is what should translate into our vote. We vote for a



party in power when our "overall" experience is on the positive side, or at least when we wish to give the benefit of doubt to the party. When our "overall" experience is on the negative side, we obviously would vote against the party in power. Moving from the individual voter to a whole society, the entire elections process thus becomes the foundation for any democracy. This is also reflected in the period of 5 years given to any ruling party to prove its worth through its governance of the nation.

Of course, we have excellent Constitutional means and mechanisms to terminate the rule of any party that offers a "hellish" experience to citizens. All this can be seen in totality and we can infer that non-violence, both physical and mental, is a necessary condition for a successful democracy.

PRINCIPLE 2: FAITH IN THE MAJORITY

Explanation: Alternative views or even opposing views must be stated and debated openly and publicly. Once, the majority decides, the minority must learn to bear with the majority until the following elections.

Any protests, even if deemed absolutely inevitable, must be made non-violently and with dignity.

PRINCIPLE 3: EVALUATION AND DECISION MAKING BY GROUPS as opposed to evaluation and decision making by individuals. This must especially hold true for policy formulation and specification.

Explanation: Diversity of viewpoints can arise only in groups.

Paradoxically, democracy is strengthened by diverse views and not by unitary views (as seen in the monarchy and dictatorship forms of governance). Wisdom can arise only from diversity. A democratic society's survival, stability, strength, success and sustainability necessarily depend upon diversity of views. This is also a pointer to the need for elections to sustain a democracy, thus providing another argument for the sacred nature of votes.

PRINCIPLE 4: TRANSPARENCY of views/opinions/ thought content **COUPLED WITH ANONYMITY** of persons holding the same.

Explanation: This is clearly a paradox. How can a view/opinion/thought be made transparent while hiding the person holding the same?

But, such a paradox is necessary for a healthy democracy.

In different words, "what is said" or the "content" of a viewpoint is far more important than "who said it" or the "person" holding the viewpoint. When anonymity is violated in a democracy, history shows that violence usually follows. After all, citizens are human and carry with them all the latent animal tendencies, which usually dominate divine tendencies. This paradox is the basis of our election system: individually secret vote, but collectively transparent election result!!!

Isn't this fantastic in India's democratic traditions? This is another supporting argument for the PRINCIPLE 1 above.

PRINCIPLE 5: FREQUENT SURPRISE IN INFORMATION GATHERING AND CITIZEN FEEDBACK.

Explanation: Surprise provides the basis for discovering the true state of affairs in all establishments and activities.

When government functionaries or officials realize that their actions are subject to scrutiny by frequent surprise, they have little option but to work and behave as expected by the book. Unfortunately, this has been the weakest link in India's democracy. This principle, if adopted and practiced in spirit, can work magic in our democracy. But, who cares?

Given the significant developments in Information Technology, citizens can be enabled to provide direct (anonymous?) feedback on their citizenship experiences. A number of other administrative principles and practices (which exist, but cannot be elaborated upon here) can be successfully used to tackle malpractices by and dishonesty of government servants.

Of course, if the "king" or "queen" is dishonest, what could be done, even in a democracy such as ours? Then, there is only one politically natural consequence - Indian society will degrade and disintegrate, slowly but steadily.

It seems to me that this is what is happening now. But, careful application of the above principles, can reverse this degradation and transform us into a healthy, vibrant, peaceful, prosperous and progressive democracy.

WHITHER INDIAN DEMOCRACY ?

Nandini Voice For The Deprived organized a meeting on 7th March 2009 at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan , Mylapore, Chennai to discuss about the state of Indian democracy.

The meeting was addressed by following distinguished thinkers

- ❖ **Mr. V. Kalyanam**, Personal Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi
- ❖ **Mr. T.S.Krishnamurthy**, Former Chief Election Commissioner
- ❖ **Mr. B.S.Raghavan**, Former Chief Secretary, Govt.of Tripura
- ❖ **Mr. N.Vittal**, Former Central Vigilance Commissioner

The meeting was well attended by large number of people and speakers revealed their thoughts on the subject with clarity and conviction.

Highlights of the speeches delivered during the meeting are provided.

Introductory remark by N.S.Venkataraman, Editor, Nandini Voice For The Deprived

It is high time that the people of India should realize that liberty is not a personal affair but a social contract and it is adjustment of individual interests. Democracy can survive only if it would be practiced with discipline and responsibility.

With law breakers becoming law makers, bad examples are being set particularly for youth in the formative age group. As a result of poor quality of governance, there is sense of fear and insecurity amongst the common men and over all happiness index in the country is low.

Several people now think that Singapore type of governance of "controlled democracy" may be a better proposition for India than the present situation of "free for all democracy".

Considering the prevailing level of corruption and unrest in the country several people have now started wondering as to whether India is paying too big a price for having democracy.

Speech delivered by Mr. V. Kalyanam

Gandhiji said that highest in the land should be servants of the nation and the people must be real masters. Even the person from the lowest strata of society should have the liberty and right to criticize the authority and those in power without any sense of fear.

Unfortunately, the conditions in the country have deteriorated. It is seen that all people are not any more equal before law for all practical purposes.

Military is supposed to be used only to tackle the external aggression and not against the people of the country. In recent time, military and para military forces are being increasingly used against countrymen to suppress the agitations and protest.



(L to R) Mr.N.Vittal, Mr.V.Kalyanam, Mr.B.S.Raghavan, Mr.T.S.Krishnamurthy

As arbitrary exercise of power by authorities are increasingly taking place, incidents of misuse of power are evident and people are becoming restive. As justice are being denied, the country is moving from democracy to mobocracy. This is a disturbing trend.

People accused of corrupt practices should not hold top position in the country. Mahatma Gandhi would not have approved such conditions and would have protested very strongly.

Speech delivered by Mr. T.S.Krishnamurthy

Southeast Asian countries are going through bad time due to lack of quality leadership and mal administration. Crisis in these countries are damaging the institution of democracy. India has to ensure that it would not face the problems that the other countries in Southeast Asia are now facing.

India can not have controlled democracy like in some other countries, since India is a vast country with different cultures. Indians can not be controlled by imposed discipline.

It is sad that after 60 years of freedom, the prestige of the governor and election commissioner and others which are constitutional posts are diminishing due to political interference. Such conditions are serious threat to the institution of democracy.

We need liberal democracy, good rulers, good civil servants and good judiciary. If such conditions can not be assured, democracy is bound to suffer. The problem is that many political leaders are not interested in nation building activities to the extent that they are interested in the betterment of their own self and their families. So many persons nominated by the political parties for the forthcoming parliamentary election have criminal records.

Even after several years of independence, many villages in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh do not get electricity and schools. When we are not able to provide good water and basic amenities to the villages, how can citizens remain satisfied?.

If India would not be able to arrest the negative tendencies, disintegration of India may take place like it happened in USSR.

It is gratifying that inspite of such difficult conditions, we are able to keep parliamentary system operating in the country and constitution is still respected to some extent.

The country needs honest good men who have intention to do good and capability to provide good administration. Citizens asserting their rights and demanding good governance is need of the day, which can alone ensure that good and capable persons only remain in power.

Speech delivered by Mr. B.S.Raghavan

Indians appear to have tendency to highlight the negative events and not to count the blessings.

Every democratic country in the world have gone through difficult times before stabilizing the democratic practices and traditions. Even England, the mother of democracy, have undergone trying times earlier.

The fact is that democracy is a very difficult process and Indian democracy is still evolving.

There are many positive aspects. Younger people are getting into parliament and assemblies as elected members though not in sufficient number yet. Let us not under estimate the importance of younger people being in parliament and assemblies. Majority of members in parliament and assemblies are educated people having degrees and post graduate degrees. These will bring changes in the course of time.

A revolution is taking place in the country particularly at the grassroot leadership level. The fact that self help groups are being formed mostly by women in rural areas is a development of great significance.

e-governance and information technology are taking the country to new heights. Such modern information systems will help root out corruption and official harassment before long.

We have good constitution, panchayats operate at rural level, judiciary is often asserting itself and fairly disciplined defense forces are there. These aspects would stand by the country in the long run.

India needs to learn to applaud the achievements of the country and not exaggerate the bad happenings.

Of course, some bad happenings are taking place.

Careful examination will reveal that people themselves are responsible for such bad happenings. We need to organize ourselves to set things right and forge ahead in the coming years.

While the problems are there, they are not insurmountable. Indian democracy will stand the test of time.

Speech delivered by Mr. N.Vittal

Indian democracy is thriving democracy with free and fair elections taking place at regular intervals.

However, prevalence of extensive corruption is a matter of great concern. It is sad that members of parliament could be bought by money power.

Enactment of Right to Information Act is a unique development. It should be well utilized by the country men to expose corruption and bring accountability in the government.

What is urgently needed in the country is to build climate and environment of probity in public life. This can be done by people.

For any democracy to work successfully, checks and balances are required. Checks and balances can be maintained only by public vigil .

PRIZE WINNERS IN MATHEMATICS IQ TEST

Srinivasa Ramanujan Academy Of Maths Talent, a non profit service organisation, Mylapore, Chennai conducted a Mathematics I.Q test in 14 centres.

1800 students participated in the test.

The students securing the first three ranks were honoured by Padma Bhushan Dr.C.S.Seshadri, Director, Chennai Mathematical Institute, Siruseri, Chennai and Dr.K.N.Ranganathan, Former Prof. & H.O.D.Maths Vivekananda College, Chennai at Swami Vivekananda Auditorium, Mylapore, Chennai on 14th February 2009.

FIRST THREE RANK HOLDERS

Sri.Nalin Ilango Bhavan's Rajaji Vidyashram, Chennai-10	First rank
Sri.Vishal Balali National Public SchoolChennai-86	Second rank
Ms.V.Apoorva P.S.B.B.Chennai-34	Third rank
Sri.B.Kapilan P.S.B.B.Chennai-34	Third rank

The Essay Competition for college students on " Pub Culture - Should it be curbed ?"

Nandini Voice For The Deprived has conducted an All India Essay Competition on the above subject. There have been good response from the college students from all over India.

Contrary to the impression given by media, most of the students have protested against the Pub Culture.

Results of the comptition will be announced in the next issue.



Mr.V. Kalyanam setting an example for the Nation.

Mr.V. Kalayanam, Personal Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, age 87, is seen in this photograph cleaning the street in Chennai.

Mr. Kalyanam does this every morning in the true Gandhian tradition of service to humanity.

Will our country men emulate such role models?.

GAAR ADVT.

Regd No. TN/CC(S)Dn/205/09-11 LICENCED TO POST WPP NO.TN/CC(S)Dn/123/09-11
REGD. WITH THE REGISTRAR OF NEWSPAPER FOR INDIA UNDER R.No.63900/96

Women's liberation movement appears to be only for the affluent and educated Women



PLEASE SUPPORT NANDINI VOICE FOR THE DEPRIVED

Nandini Voice For The Deprived, provides you a meaningful forum to help the cause of the deprived.
Please subscribe for the journal and support the efforts.

Thanks

N.S. VENKATARAMAN, Chief Editor

Annual Subscription : Rs.100/- for twelve issues

Advertisement tariff :

Full Page	Half Page	Quarter Page
Rs.1500/-	Rs.1000/-	Rs.700/-

Discount 40% for twelve consecutive insertions
and 25% for six consecutive insertions

We look forward to your support and encouragement.

DD should be drawn in favour of :

NANDINI VOICE FOR THE DEPRIVED

and sent to: M60/1, IV Cross Street,
Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600 090.

Tel : 2491 6037 Fax.:(044) 2496 1346

E-mail : nsvenkat@md4.vsnl.net.in

Website : nandinivoice.org

Nandini Voice For The Deprived

If undelivered, please return to

PUBLISHERS

Nandini Institute of Chemical Industries
M-60/1, 4th Cross Street, Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600 090.

Edited and Published by N.S. Venkataraman on behalf of **Nandini Institute of Chemical Industries**, M60/1, IV Cross Street, Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600 090.
Phone : 24916037 and Printed by Mervena Printers, No. 14, (Old 23), T.M.M.Street, Thiruvanniyur, Chennai-600 041. Editor : **N.S. Venkataraman**