

Nandini

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Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

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**Are the
politicians
floating in
amassed wealth
really concerned
about
the poor and
downtrodden?**

TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA 'LET THE POOR BE YOUR GOD'

"The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna", is the book translated into English by Swami Nikhilananda, of Bengali religious classic Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita by Mahendra Nath Gupta. This magnificent work presents the daily life and conversations of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa in an interesting and realistic way.

For nearly a decade, Swami Bhuteshananda (1901-1998), the 12th President of the Ramakrishna Order, devoted his weekly Bengali religious classes for discussions on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and to this unique religious book, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita .

A few of the spiritual seekers in this earnest and devoted audience decided to record and transcribe these talks. These transcripts were eventually published in a seven volume Bengali work Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita Prasanga.

The present work, "Sri Ramakrishna and His Gospel ", Volume 1, is an English translation of the first three volumes of the original Bengali book.

Title of the book : Sri Ramakrishna And His Gospel Volume I
Edited by : Swami Bhuteshananda
Translated by : Dharitri Kumar Das Gupta
Published by : Swami Mumukshananda
President Advaita Ashrama
Mayavati, Champawat, Himalayas
From its Publication Department, Calcutta

Number of pages : 604

Price : Rs.125/-

Excerpt from this extraordinary book on the chapter "Doing Good To The World" is published in this article.



Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa asked: 'You people speak of doing good to the world. Is the world such a small thing? And who are you, pray, to do good to the world?

First realize God, see Him by means of spiritual discipline. If He imparts power, then you can do good to others, otherwise not.'

Very often we fancy that we can do good to this world. Such ambition is nothing but the projection of our subtle ego in an attractive form.

Jesus Christ once beautifully said: 'Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye? How can you say to your brother, " Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a speck in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the speck out of your own eye, then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye''.

Often we become eager to do good to others without ever thinking about our own condition.

So Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa said: 'Whose world is this? Has He become incapable of doing good to this world so that you have to assist Him?' Besides, what do we know about doing good that we think we should do good to this world? 'The individual self is very small, as small as hundredth part of the end of a hair divided again by a hundred.'

That tiny, insignificant jiva (living being) gloats in the pride of doing good to others! What a preposterous, self-conceited idea it is to think, that we will do good to this world and the entire world will await our help like a beggar!.

That is why Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa reacted sharply on hearing the words' compassion to living beings'!

'Compassion? Who are you to show compassion? Say service to living beings'.

Realising that He abides in all living beings, one should serve others. If we are able to accept this idea,

then all our activities will be transformed into sadhana. Otherwise, if we approach living beings to show our compassion, our ego will be inflated to the size of the Himalayas and crush us under its weight.

Swamiji, who was so eloquent about Karma Yoga also said: 'The world is like a dog's curly tail. We pull it and think we have been able to straighten it, but the moment we release it, it takes its usual form.'

Truly, this world is a school and we have come here to learn. If we work with such an attitude, then only may we gain something, otherwise not. God's chariot moves of its own force. It does not require your strength. You can at best sanctify your life by touching its rope.' So it is vanity to think that we will do good to this world by social reforms or varieties of other philanthropic acts.

God is kind in providing us the opportunity of coming into this world, to consecrate our lives by doing these

things. Let such acts be done in the spirit of service and not out of the feeling of compassion to fellow beings.

That is why Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa said: 'Let the poor be your God, let the ignorant be your God.' He abides everywhere. Serve Him in different places in different ways as necessary. We have to cultivate the feeling that God Himself is present in all places to accept our worship. He has assumed a particular form, as He wants us to serve Him in that form. When the devotional scriptures teach us to worship God everywhere, it is in this way that we should do it.

And our service must not be limited to human beings alone. Let it be extended to all beings. Perform worship according to the requirement of different places. If we act in this way, then all our actions and deeds will become His worship, His adoration!

EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SECTOR UNDER THE CONTROL OF "TRUSTEES"

Contributed by Dr.Susheela Kaushik
E. mail :susheela_kaushik@hotmail.com

Can "social" be divorced from "ethical" and pursued in the name of people by unethical ways, called in other words as "business".

The fast pace of privatization, the unbridled and unregulated growth in the name of private - public partnership and the desperate calls for raising resources have led to mushrooming in private institutions in all the "social" areas, particularly in education and health. The growth has surpassed the expectations and along with that all the good, bad and the ugly.

With ever enlarging 'black money' which needs to be spent (hoarding is of no use, as that way it cannot be multiplied), the private sector is marching victoriously into health and higher education.

Though justified in the name of corporate social responsibility for the private sector, soon the business instinct of profit and loss takes over. The trusts forget their 'trusteeship' and justifies the cost - benefit analysis - by high fees, expensive health education, huge donations and sky rocketing capitation fees. It is a vicious cycle. The doctors and management experts, engineers who come out of them, in turn, try to get back the amount they spend, by way of expensive health care in private clinics, entrepreneurial institutes

of professional education and above all ever increasing dowry.

This is not so much due to globalization as we seem to believe, not even to privatization, as much as to the lack of accountability on the part of the educated people, lack of moral and ethical values and civic practices. What started as liberal corporate value, soon has descended into the traditional, feudal, pre-capitalist and colonial practices based business that had developed as part of the trade.

The role of the state, then, does not reduce but increase. Not merely to control and regulate but to guide and direct the private sector, towards entrepreneurship of a progressive, positive, productive kind. This is not peculiar to India but was true of the USA even, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Cut throat competition, monopolistic tendencies, criminal activities etc, made the state undertake social control, anti trust and anti cartel legislation.

India right now is going through similar situation. The state should nor merely abdicate or disinvest. It should act as a watchdog. This is where central and state government agencies are faltering. Education sector particularly is the sufferer

THOUGHTS OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARISHI

TRACE THE 'I' THOUGHT

The thought 'I am this body of flesh and blood' is the one thread on which are strung the various other thoughts. Therefore, if we turn inwards enquiring 'where is this 'I', all thoughts (including the 'I' thought) will come to an end and Self-Knowledge will then spontaneously investigate its own nature.

It transpires that there is no such thing as mind. The mind is merely thoughts. Of all thoughts, the thought 'I' is the root. Therefore the mind is only the thought 'I'.

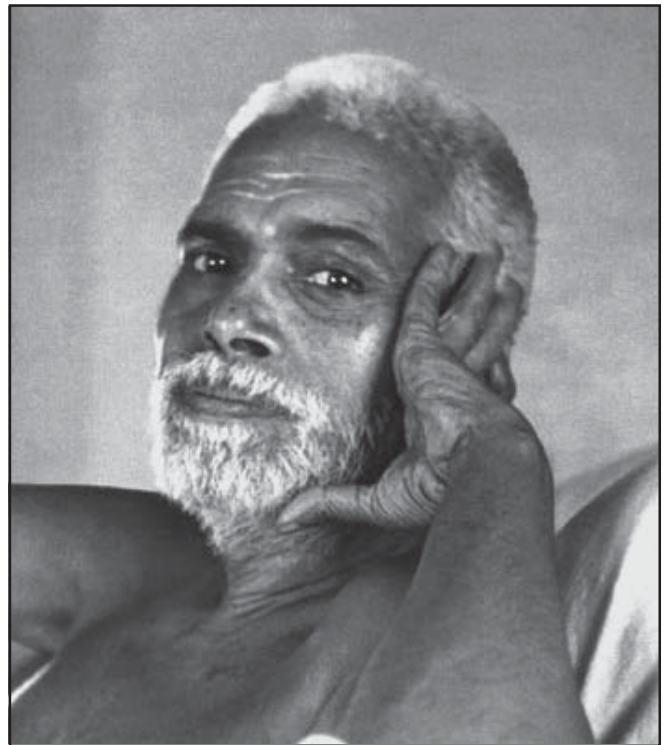
There is an absolute Self from which a spark proceeds as from a fire. The spark is called the ego. In the case of an ignorant man, it identifies itself with an object simultaneously with its rise. It cannot remain independent of such association with objects. If its objectifying tendency is killed, it remains pure and also merges into the source. The wrong identification with the body is dehatma buddhi ('I am the body' idea). This must go before good results follow.

The 'I' in its purity is experienced in intervals between the two states or two thoughts. Ego is like that caterpillar, which leaves its hold only after catching another. Its true nature can be found when it is out of contact with objects or thoughts. This ghostly ego which is devoid of form comes into existence by grasping a form; grasping a form it endures; feeding upon forms which it grasps, it waxes more; leaving one form it grasps another form, but when sought for, it takes to flight.

The birth of the 'I' thought is one's own birth, its death is the person's death. So long as 'I' is alive there is grief. When 'I' ceases to exist, there is no grief.

The ego is described as having three bodies, the gross, the subtle and the causal, but that is only for the purpose of analytical exposition. If the method of enquiry were to depend on the ego's form, you may take it that any enquiry would become altogether impossible, because the forms the ego may assume are legion. Therefore, for the purpose of self enquiry, you have to proceed on the basis that the ego has but one form, namely that of Aham Vritti - 'I' thought - 'I'-ness or 'I am'-ness.

Self enquiry by following the clue of Aham Vritti is just like the dog tracing his master by his scent. The master may be at a distant unknown place, but that does not stand in the way of the dog tracing him. The master's scent is an infallible clue for the animal and nothing else, such as the dress he wears or his stature, etc., To that scent, the dog holds on while searching for him and finally it succeeds in tracing him.



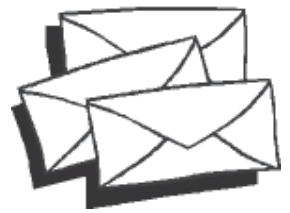
Without the Aham, Vritti can subsist by itself without depending on any other vritti of the mind. So, the search for the source of the Aham Vritti is not the search for the basis of one of the forms of the ego but for the very source itself from which arises the 'I am'-ness. In other words, the quest for and the realization of the source of the ego in the form of Aham Vritti necessarily imply the transcendence of the ego in every one of its possible forms.

From the functional point of view, the ego has one and only one characteristic. The ego functions as the knot between the Self, which is pure consciousness and the physical body, which is inert and insentient. In your investigation into the source of Aham Vritti, you take the essential 'chit' (consciousness) aspect of the ego. For this reason, the enquiry must lead to the realization of pure consciousness of the Self.

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.



Independent candidates ignored

Dear Sir,

Birds of the same feather flock together is an old proverb. But in politics especially in our country, parties with different ideologies and little principles align themselves without any political decency and run away in search of greener pastures after the election.

Further, what really ails our democracy is that people rate the leaders by just one ability i.e. their ability to win by hook or crook in elections with money and muscle powder.

There are many efficient and honest social activists and enterprising and energetic youth who contested the recent parliamentary elections as independents for a change in governance; and none of them appear to have got back their deposits.

Why not these independents of similar views join and discuss and put up a common candidate on their behalf at least in the next elections?

Chennai

K.R.Krishnan

Appreciation

Dear Sir,

This is just a note by way of solidarity and to express my appreciation for the example that N.S.Venkataraman, Editor, Nandini Voice For The Deprived have set by standing for election against all odds. The outcome was perhaps a foregone conclusion and the situation was analysed quite clearly in the subsequent article (May 2009 issue).

Admittedly, I do not subscribe to any newspaper nor do I watch TV (almost the same things get repeated daily and much of it is useless or unreliable). So, I am not up to date with fine details of the election results and I am not really interested either. The broad picture is enough for me.

I think most of the people who know N.S.Venkataraman and have benefited from his work will be somewhat relieved that he can continue to do what he is best known for!

I too have been observing that during recent years, he has been engaging with a wider range of social issues

and have become more visible through programmes and his articles and letters in a variety of papers.

To keep up the activities of N.S.Venkataraman in whatever way he feels would be more effective and useful to society. Nandini Voice journal always contains some thought provoking material. My best wishes and greetings to Nandini Voice.

Chennai

Thomas Tharu

Dear Sir,

After reading the May 2009 edition of Nandini Voice, I learnt that N.S.Venkataraman had contested Lok Sabha election as a candidate of Desia Paadukappu Kazhagam from South Chennai Parliamentary Constituency, despite lack of resources which deserve to be appreciated and congratulated. Unfortunately, he could not succeed.

In fact it is the moral, sacred duty of electorate to elect social activist, the person who is having quality of earnestness towards down trodden and qualified person like him to raise the voice in Parliament for welfare of deprived people. But such social workers are helpless and cannot compete with money and muscle power. Really it is matter of grave concern. It is crystal clear that money was poured like water during election campaign.

Innocent illiterate weaker section electorate are being enticed and threatened by candidates of different political parties to exercise their franchise in their favour. To prevent this, people like N.S.Venkataraman should come forward to lead the society and create political awareness. This is the only way out.

Mumbai

Sridhar V Kulkarni

Corruption remain undefeated

Dear Sir,

Although the election result was expected, I congratulate N.S.Venkataraman, Editor, Nandini Voice for his noble intention with which he stood for the elections.

I did not vote for him because I had other calculations but I will always continue to have respect

for him. The subject of corruption that N.S.Venkataraman has opened is not new but the tools and nonviolent weapons used have proved absolutely inadequate. This requires a very deep introspection.

Chennai

Sreenivas

Reflection on 15th Lok Sabha election

Dear Sir,

The youth and the middle class together played a key role in bringing back UPA to power.

However, the Lok Sabha would be the asylum of crorepatries and criminals who would continue to wage war of words and mud slinging.

By and large, Dr. Manmohan Singh marketed by Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi displayed dignity attracting voters to their fold by speaking about the need for stability. No young leader was in any other opposition parties particularly in BJP to boost its image. The pity is that candidates of caliber, capability, character wedded to Gandhian principles and patriotism already serving society so silently have been ignored by the electorate

and the political leaders. They ought to have been elected unopposed .

The commercial media also cruelly lost sight of the significance of honest people contesting in the elections and miserably failed to mirror such worthy candidates.

Chennai

K.N.Narayana Pillai

Revoke service tax on railway tickets

Dear Sir,

Soon after Mamata Banarjee took over charge as Railway Minister, she made some announcement on concession ticket rates for poor people.

The service charge are levied on travellers on their return journey reservation ticket which has been introduced by her predecessor. This should be revoked. This is totally unfair and is an additional financial burden on the poor and middle class people.

By this scheme, railway administration has been earning daily several crores of rupees as revenue without extending any extra service for railway passengers.

Mumbai

Sridhar V Kulkarni

Disgusting Incidents of rape

Dear Sir,

Not a day passes without the incidents of rape and molestation of women being reported in different parts of the country. Such deplorable incidents appear to be increasing at alarming rate. In many such cases, it is seen that drunken youth, sons and relatives of politicians, senior bureaucrats and police officers are involved.

While media publishes the news with great care and sensation, one really would not know as to what happen to the suffering women and their families. Obviously, they suffer great humiliation and live life long with fear and frustration.

Such conditions only indicate the steep fall in the value system in the country and indicate the fact that the society is going under the control of dishonest and corrupt elements, thugs and rowdies.

India can not any more be called as a civilised country. With so many women being raped day in and day out, is there anything for Indians to remain proud of?.

What is particularly disturbing is the totally unconcerned, and irresponsible people in charge of the government, who now seem to think that the rape of women is a matter of routine in India.

The country has certainly become unsafe for poor and helpless women.

Kolkatta

K.A.Ahmed



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 needs support for cancer treatment

Master Sarbajit Baidya, age 4 years is suffering from acute lymphoblastic leukemia (cancer). Estimated cost of medical treatment is Rs.1,00,000/-

The child's mother Mrs.Soma Baidya is working as sales girl in a store and she is the only earning member in her family.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai and sent to the following address:

Swamy Prashantananda
C/o. Master Sarbajit Baidya,
Bharat Sevashram Sangha
(Home for cancer patients)
263, Swamy Pranavanandaji Marg,
Sector 31S, Vashi,
Navi Mumbai-400 703

Young man suffering from renal disease



Sri.K.Senthil Kumar, age 27 years is suffering from end stage renal disease and he requires renal transplantation.

The cost of the transplantation is Rs.1,50,000/- The cost of medicines for first 6 months will be Rs.10,000/- per month and next 6 months will be around Rs.5,000/- per month. The total expenditure is around Rs.3,00,000-

The widowed mother Mrs.Thilaga and her son Sri.K.Senthil Kumar are working in a small hotel.

Mrs.Thilaga requests kind hearted persons for financial help for her son's surgery.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of PSG Hospitals, Coimbatore and sent to the following address

Sri.K.Senthil Kumar
S/o. Mrs.Thilaga, 184, Nanchundapuram Road,
Ramanathapuram, Coimbatore-45

Poor students need stationery items

Hannah John Special High School is rendering services to poor physically handicapped children.

The school requests kind hearted persons for donation of stationery items to the poor children

Contact address:

The Secretary
Hannah John Special High School
Teachers Nagar
Asanur Road
(Opposite to taluk office
Sandapet, Tirukoilur-605757
Tamil Nadu

Poor girl needs support to set up petty shop

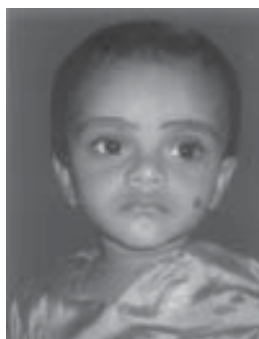


Ms.P.Gejavalli, is a poor disabled girl and she has studied upto 9th std.

Her parents are unskilled labourers Ms.P.Gejavalli requests kind hearted persons for financial help to set up a small petty shop

Contact address: Ms.P.Gejavalli,
D/o.Sri.Pavadai, 4/148, Mariamman
Koil Street, Anangoor Colony,
Anangoor-post, Villupuram Tk, Tamil Nadu

Hearing and speech impaired baby needs help



Baby S.Meerfarhaana , age one year is a hearing and speech impaired child. The doctors have advised the child to undergo cochlear implantation operation. Approximate cost of cochlear implant surgery including hospitalization is Rs.10,50,600/-

The baby's poor father Mr.M.Seeni Abdulrahman requests kind hearted person for financial help for his baby's surgery.

Desperate Calls

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Madras ENT Research Foundation Charitable Trust, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Mr.M.Seeni Abdulrahman
17-C, Mariyamman Kovil Street, Kakkan Colony,
Thiruvarambur, Trichy-620 013, Tamil Nadu

Poor boy needs help for education

Mr.L.K.Akash Agni Mithran, has obtained 95.6% marks in SSLC examination held in March 2009.

His father Sri.R.N.Kathiravan requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his son's higher education.

Contact address:

Mr.L.K.Akash Agni Mithran
S/o. Sri.R.N.Kathiravan
120, 55th Street, Muthamizh Nagar
Kodungaiyur, Chennai-118

Students need support for education

Master Ranjit and Ms.Rubashri belong to poor families and have been promoted to 8th std and 4th std.respectively

Both of them need financial help for continuing their studies.

For further details, please contact:

Sri.G.Chandramohan
Plot No.46, Door No.23, II Main Road,
MGR Nagar, Moolakulam, Pondichery-605 010

Wife of visually impaired person needs sewing machine



Mrs.Papathi's husband Sri.Sakthivel is a poor visually impaired person.

Mrs.Papathi requests kind hearted persons for donation of a sewing machine to earn for her

family and self employ herself.

Contact address:

Mrs.Papathi, W/o. Sri.Sakthivel
Kadaganoor & (PO), Middle Street,
Thirukoiloor (Tk), Villupuram (Dt)
Tamil Nadu

Poor man needs help for surgery

Sri.A.Arumugapandian, age 55 years is suffering from coronary artery disease/triple vessel disease (heart disease) . The doctors advised him to undergo by pass surgery. The estimated cost of the surgery is Rs.1,50,000/-

Sri.A.Arumugapandian is a poor unskilled labour.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Meenakshi Mission Hospital and Research Centre, Madurai and sent to the following address.

Sri.A.Arumugapandian
8/75, Ama Nadar Street,
Kurumbalaperi, Tenkasi (Tk)
Tirunelveli District Pin: 627 806 Tamil Nadu

Jeevan Jyoti, Training Institute for Handicapped, Madurai is offering following courses to the differently abled persons.

Course offered	Duration of the course	Qualification required	Training fee
Computer Training Programme	12 months 9.00 am to 4.00	SSLC PASS/FAIL	Rs.200/- per month
Machine and hand emproidary	3 months	5 th std	-
Saree designing	3 months	5 th std	-
Doll making	3 months	5 th std	-
Fashion design	6 months	8 th std	-

For further details, please contact: Director, Jeevan Jyoti, American College, Madurai-625002
Phone: 0452-2530070, 2532125

POOR SCHOOL STUDENTS FLEECE IN GOVERNMENT OWNED AND GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS IN TAMIL NADU

Nandini Voice For the Deprived , a Chennai based NGO is providing scholarship to the poor school students in Tamil Nadu studying in government owned and government aided schools to the best of its capability.

As the academic year has now begun, Nandini Voice For The Deprived finds that Government owned and Government aided schools are collecting fees under various pretext like parent teacher association , fees for notebooks, building fund etc. from the students, which are unauthorised and against the rules and regulations of the government.

The government owned and Government aided schools are collecting money much more than the stipulated level and insist that the payment should be made only by cash. Cheques are not accepted. Proper receipts are not provided.

Poor families , desiring to see their children adequately educated , are driven from pillar to post to find money to pay to the school authorities and often go into debts at exorbitant interest. There is distinct threat of dropouts of poor students from the schools due to such deplorable conditions.

The government owned and government aided schools collecting such money from students are not only going against the directives of the government but are also doing great disservice to the cause of education of the poor school students.

It is sad that the government remains as if it is not aware of the issue. The same situation prevailed during the beginning of the last academic year also The government then issued some "cosmetic warnings" and carried out raids in a few schools . No school management took the warnings of the government seriously, as they felt that the government was only playing to the gallery.

It is a tragic condition that the only hope for poor families to improve themselves by adequately educating the children are being defeated.

Government of Tamil Nadu should look into this problem of poor students with the urgency that it deserves and ensure that the Government owned and government aided schools would not collect money from the students beyond the stipulated level.

TAMIL NADU GOVERNMENT SHOULD CURB DONATIONS IN SCHOOLS

In the face of the several complaints about the government owned and government aided schools collecting authorized donations from the students, the Tamil Nadu Government says that it can take action only if there would be specific complaints about any particular school.

It is not correct on the part of the Government to insist that there should be a specific complaint about a school before it would make investigation.

The Government owned and Government aided schools tasking unauthorized donations in various form from poor students is not a secret and it is the talk of the day. Last year itself, several reports have been published in media with proof.

The poor families do not have the courage to make complaints as they fear harassment and they are very vulnerable. The Government has investigation departments and vigilance departments and they can easily find out the details.

The immediate task required is that the Government should release massive advertisement in all news papers, indicating that stipulated fees that should be collected from the students in the Government owned and government aided schools. It should also insist that all the Government owned and Government aided schools should prominently exhibit in the notice board of the schools about the stipulated fees.

This would give confidence to the poor families and poor students to protest when they are asked to pay more than the stipulated fees.

As the demand is already being made , the Tamil Nadu Government should move with utmost speed to protect the interests of the poor families and poor students studying in the Government owned and Government aided schools.

ENGINEERING EDUCATION DEBT TRAP FOR POOR STUDENTS

Without proper and transparent study of the demand level for engineers and without matching the capacity creation for engineering education with the job potential for engineers, the Department of Technical Education of Government of India has accorded permission for starting number of new engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu in this academic year.

It is said that the applications for starting more engineering colleges are under the consideration.

The number of seats in engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu is likely to touch 1.4 lakhs this year. The fees in the engineering colleges have also been hiked up substantially.

With the huge number of engineering seats available and with the students and parents largely remaining ignorant about the real state of job scenario for engineers and with little understanding about the overall job scenario, the students are flocking to seek admission in the colleges. More than 1.2 lakhs applications have already been sold out in Tamil Nadu. Many of the students seem to be under the impression that Government would not have permitted so many engineering colleges, if there were to be inadequate job availability for engineers.

Several studies carried out in the recent past by private agencies and NGOs have indicated that the job potential for fresh engineers in Tamil Nadu may only be in the region of 60 to 65% of the seats available. The studies also indicate that the quality of engineering education in several engineering colleges have considerably deteriorated due to want of qualified and experienced teaching faculty and inadequate facilities. The employability of engineers passing out of the colleges have become a big question mark in most of the cases.

In such scenario, under employment and unemployment amongst engineers have become a matter of great concern. While bright engineers with good academic record do get good jobs, those with average or below average standards are remaining unemployed or under employed for several years.

The conditions of the students studying in the engineering colleges from poor families who cannot show



good academic performance are extremely disturbing. Such students pay for their fees, by their families selling away their properties and possessions to raise the resources or taking loan at exorbitant interest. The much publicised educational loan for the students by nationalized banks are largely denied to the students from poor families who can not show any security to back up their loan applications. When such students

pursue engineering education paying a price that they cannot afford, their families are inevitably driven to debt trap. When such students fail to get good jobs in quick time after passing out, the economic misery of the families become multiplied.

Several self financing engineering colleges fleece the students in various ways, apart from collecting the prescribed fees stipulated by the government. They show no mercy for the poor students, as the management of most of these colleges are amongst the business minded people and politicians.

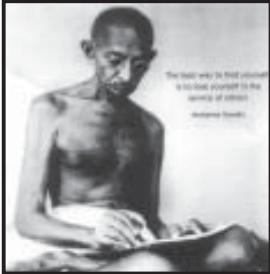
There is no indication that the government has made any study about the plight of such poor students studying or getting into the engineering colleges. The Government appears to have left it to the wisdom of the poor families, who are often ill informed and misled and driven by a tremendous and genuine desire to see their sons and daughters progress in life, by acquiring the "prestigious engineering degree".

The Government certainly has a duty to explain the real scenario to the student community, particularly the poor students, by conducting a study on the job scenario for fresh engineers by an independent and competent body.

DARSHAN OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Dr.J.D.Ramanathan

E-mail:jdramanathan@rediffmail.com



I go back to my school days in 1946-47 when I was in class VII in M.E.A.H.S. School, Leading Road (later became Mandir Marg), New Delhi.

That year I stood first in the annual examination and was given the first prize in the form of books and one of them was "My Experiments With Truth" by Mahatma Gandhi.

During the summer vacation, I went through the book with utmost curiosity and tried to finish reading before the summer vacation came to an end. In that book, I found the vivid and true depiction of the turmoil and hardships that Mahatma Gandhi underwent during his stay in South Africa.

At that time, I made up my mind to get a glimpse of such an extraordinary person.

After spending sometime in the ashram at Wardha, Nagpur, Gandhiji came to Delhi and wanted to stay in the scavenger's colony (bhangi Colony) near the St.Thomas High School for girls and this place was at the far end of the Mandir Marg and also near to our residence.

Within a few days, streams of people started visiting the colony for the darshan and meeting with Mahatma Gandhi. One day, I took the liberty of going to bhangi Colony to listen to his daily prayer meetings between 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. The surging crowd was so dense and I was jostled and pushed to the front and finally I landed in the area where prayer was scheduled to be held.

Suddenly, there was silence and the Mahatma was led to the stage by his two grand daughters. He sat with both legs stretched to the left and pressed his right hand on the dais to stabilize himself. He had a white khadhi towel on his bald head to avoid the glare and heat of the scorching sun.

I saw Mahatma Gandhi and my darshan of him at that time was unforgettable. At that moment, I could feel hairs raising on my fore arms and the profuse sweating on my forehead. The dislikes, coldness and selfishness which were part of my dealings with fellow members went away. The spiritual radiations which emanated from the Mahatma Gandhi were all penetrating. There was something in this man which held my attention as steel are held by a magnet .He conveyed something of great moment to me, yet I cannot easily determine its precise nature. I was pushed into reverence by his incredible saint like appearance.

He started his prayer speech in local Hindi and evolved with chorus singing of "Raghupathi Raghava Rajaram" There was crescendo in the atmosphere and each one of the vast crowd were in trance. His words lit a flame out in mind like beacon lights. Exactly at 5.00 pm, the prayer meeting came to a close and the crowd dispersed without any commotion and it was orderly.

Gandhiji's unchanging commitment to change through non violent means, his belief in the intrinsic worth of all individuals regardless of caste and his faith in God was extraordinary

He made a list of seven blunders of the world that lead to violence

- ❖ wealth without work
- ❖ pleasure without conscience
- ❖ knowledge without character
- ❖ commerce without morality
- ❖ science without humanity
- ❖ worship without sacrifice
- ❖ politics without principle

Within a few days of his stay in bhangi colony, I came to know about the charka classes in the ashram and without wasting time. I joined the class. Soon, I bought a portable box like charka and started to practice the ginning of cotton from the seeds and spun the bunch of cotton into the fine thread and soon gathered a few bundles of spun cotton.

During one of the classes, Gandhiji came out and sat in front of my row and started spinning at his old charka. It was breath taking to sit in front of Mahatma Gandhi.

CORRUPTION IN ELECTION 2009

'Garland' N.Rajagopalan (IAS Retd.)

'Nandini Voice' is born of noble instincts to fight evils, which are undermining the edifice of Bharat. Such magazines have limited scope in circulation, as the inherent genius of the nation remains soaked in corruptive practices; big and small, political, social and cultural., nay everything man is confronted with.

In ancient days, prowess in fighting was prime consideration for adoration.

In Athens, learning and wisdom took the top seat among faculties. In Bharat, wisdom soaked spiritual eminence and dharmic conduct were held in high esteem and were *sine qua non* for a man to be hailed as good and great. And indeed, we had a surplus of them till the last few decades inspite of the foreign occupation suffered for several centuries.

The nation once had taken pride as a *karma bhumi* and *dharma bhumi*

Alas! vicious elements, snakes, bugs and mosquitoes have consumed much of its vitals and the recent 'Election 2009' have exposed the bare bones.

The money spinner knows the law, it is said! NASA, the US Space Agency, was interviewing professionals. The first applicant wanted a million dollars, the second two millions and the third, a lawyer, wanted three million dollars.

Interviewer: 'Why so much more than others?'

Lawyer applicant: 'I shall give you one million dollars, I'll keep one million and send the engineer to Mars'

Election 2009 had highlighted [rather exposed] remarkable commercial trends and abnormal accumulation of wealth admitted by many a candidate, the sources of which remain a well secreted mystery to the man outside and humbly accepted by him as normal while casting his precious votes.

Of course, vigilance agencies are not silent but its arms reach mostly hapless puny segments alone. Of

course, those at the helm of power would seem disinterested in exposing or sharing with the public the secrets of the modus operandi to secure and build up massive money and resources and keep them unhindered safe for obvious reasons.

It is also brought to notice that Indian money unaccounted for at source stands secreted in Swiss safe vaults. Estimates place the quantum at Rs.75 lakh crores i.e.Rs.75000000000000. (Pray pardon me if I had omitted further zeroes!)

There are other helping countries, which make available the solicitous help to swindlers, corrupt elements, cheats, hoarders, criminals etc. The source of these too remain a mystery to people outside!

Of course, those at the helm of power do not seem to be in haste to secure and lay bare the modus operandi in building up and canalizing such wealth of Himalayan proportions and requisition them back to the country for the betterment of its own economy.

Their pre election exercises apparently had all the genius and merits in strict conformity with the dictum of the eternal wise Sage Tiruvalluvar

"Mei varutham parar, pasi nokkar, kann thunjar
Karumame kannayinar"

Constantly, the media presents specimen cases of overt and covert bribery, attendant arrests and hearings more as matters of sensations.

The sacrifices of patriots, hardships of sages and saints and the pains and starvation of the virtuous are all seem to have been wasted now.

INDIA HAS LARGEST NUMBER OF CHILD WORKERS

India has 17 million child workers, the highest in the world, despite laws to eradicate this system, says Society for Integrated Rural Development (SIRD).

With majority of rural poor, lack of uniform minimum wages and inadequate social security have resulted in the growth of child labourers.

A substantial number of school dropouts reach the labour market. As per SIRD's study conducted at government schools in 11 blocks of Madurai district, the total number of girls, who enrolled slumped from 24,719 in 2000-2001 to 19,130 in 2005-2006. During the same period, the number of boys came down from 26,302 in

2000-2001 to 20,116 in 2005-2006. This meant that 23 per cent students had dropped out from school, in which migration of parents and other reasons accounted only for about 3 per cent.

The act to ban child labour covered only 15 percent of the total child labour population in the country.

Number of child labourers in the country	17 billion
Work as domestic help	19 %
Work in unorganized sector	85 %
Children in rural India who have to work	90 %

Source:CRY

BENEFICIARY OF CORRUPT PRACTICES

It is an extremely grave situation that around 150 members of Parliament recently elected have criminal background. One cannot expect a honest and corruption free government which depends on the support of criminal elements. Obviously, some of the ministers have criminal background and questionable track record.

If the country were to be under the control of such elements, one cannot see a resurgent India for the next five years.

Dr. Manmohan Singh is widely believed to be a honest man. But, in the five years of his earlier rule, he could not restore probity in the national life and corruption and nepotism remain undefeated under his leadership.

Many believe that Dr. Manmohan Singh though could be a honest man himself, has been a beneficiary of corrupt practices. Crores of rupees of corrupt money was exhibited in the Parliament that was used to buy the MPs to vote for Dr. Manmohan Singh's government. He did not even care to order an enquiry to bring out the facts and expose the corrupt elements. He conveniently kept quiet to prolong his Prime Ministership.

A beneficiary of corruption cannot be considered better, even if he would be a honest person himself in his personal life.

The country is going down due to the widespread corrupt practices. Several politicians bought votes in the recent parliamentary election. Good and honest candidates without money power but with integrity and character were forced to bite the dust. This is a grim situation.

If Pakistan's problem is terrorism, India's problem is corruption. Whereas terrorism can be put down by force as is evident in Sri Lanka, mere force can not put

down corruption which is eroding the base and fibre and fabric of society. In a corrupt society, the worst sufferers would be the poor and downtrodden.

In corrupt conditions where anyone can be bought with money, no one would be safe and the country's social, political and economic security would be under grave threat.

Unfortunately, the media in the country has practically ignored the level of corruption and money power practiced in the recent parliamentary election. It is hailing the successful MPs and political parties as if they are heroes. Such attitude may serve the interest of the media but not this country.

If Dr. Manmohan Singh would continue to ignore corruption and put up with dishonest persons for the sake of remaining in power, the damage that he would do to the future of this great country would be far more than the good that he can do with his economic theories.

He has an opportunity to go into history as a great person who stood for the cause of truth or go down into history as a person who tolerated corruption for the sake of power. The real calibre of Dr. Manmohan Singh would be tested in the coming days.

INDIA NEEDS ANOTHER GREEN REVOLUTION TO OVERCOME FOOD CRISIS

Food is one of the most basic necessities of life. But, not every one has access to it. Currently, there are more than 850 million food insecure people in the world. Most of these food insecure people reside in developing countries, including India.

The demand for food is rising rapidly in India. One reason is, of course, population growth. So, the demand is growing. But, is the supply meeting the demand? No. Some agriculture experts even say that the growth rate of agriculture has now frozen. Then, what can be done? India needs another Green Revolution.

To overcome the food crisis, the Green Revolution was started in 1967. The basic idea behind it was to boost food production by accelerating efforts to improve the productivity of land. The programme resulted in a substantial increase in the production of food grains,

mainly wheat and rice. By 1980, almost 75% of the total cropped area under wheat was sown with HYV (high yielding varieties). For rice, the figure was 45%. Food-grain yields and the area under HYV continued to increase throughout the 1980s. And this saved the country from the starvation.

If this could happen in 1967, it can happen again now. India is now more equipped with better biotechnological developments. This is the only way we can make our country food secure.

What India needs is to set our priorities correct. India has to choose rain fed agriculture over irrigation, food crops over cash crops and even food production over biofuel production.

Courtesy: TerraGreen, June 2009

ALL INDIA ESSAY COMPETITION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS ON "FUTURE OF INDIAN DEMOCRACY UNDER CONTROL OF FAMILIES"

Nandini Voice For The Deprived, is organizing an All India Essay Competition for college students in the context of the forthcoming Independence Day on 15th August, 2009. on "FUTURE OF INDIAN DEMOCRACY UNDER CONTROL OF FAMILIES".

In recent times, there is alarming increase of incidents of political leaders paving way for their sons, daughters, nephews and nieces to become MLAs, MPs and Ministers, irrespective of their competence.

Under such circumstances, concerned citizens wonder whether India would go back to pre British days (period before India was ruled by Britain), when the country was ruled by several kings, chieftains and mirasdars with the citizens remaining as mute spectators without any say. The concerned citizens are afraid that while the citizens would continue to vote in the periodical elections in future, it would not really empower them, as the individual families would get stranglehold over the country's governance in variety of ways.

Nandini Voice For The Deprived wants to give an opportunity to the college students above 18 years age who have voting rights, to express their views on the subject and provide their critical analysis and recommendations.

The students are invited to write an essay on the subject and the best of ten entries would be selected for cash awards.

Eligibility : College students all over India above 18 years of age are eligible to take part in the competition.

Size of the essay : Maximum of 1500 words

Language : English, Tamil or Hindi

Last date for submission : 5th August, 2009

The essay can be sent by post or e-mail to the following address:

N.S.Venkataraman,
Trustee

Nandini Voice For The Deprived, M 60/1, 4th Cross Street, Besant Nagar, Chennai-600 090
E-mail: nsvenkat@md4.vsnl.net.in, Phone: 91-44-24916037, Website: www.nandinivoice.org

NEED FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON FAMILY CONTROL OF DEMOCRACY

Contributed by Bhamy V Shenoy
bhamysuman@hotmail.com

A good topic for the essay competition and my congratulations to the organizer.

Nandini Voice For The Deprived should consider bringing out a booklet (printed or internet or both) on this important topic with good analytical data.

We need good research to back this up.

We need to find out how we are losing as a result of some one like Sonia becoming defacto ruler by the fact of being the wife of a former prime minister or daughter in law of a former prime minister.

Why Maneka Gandhi despite being similar to Sonia failed to get that coveted position?

How we would lose by Stalin becoming the chief minister of Tamil Nadu or son and daughter of Karunanidhi becoming ministers at the central?

How the son of Thackeray taking over Siva Sena will affect us?

What happened to Bihar as a result of Rabri, the house wife becoming the Chief Minister?

Similarly, there are more than twenty such families who have inherited political space in the Country.

It would be instructive to learn about them in one place and also to find out what if any thing can be done to save our democracy?

GMR ADVT.

Child Worker

“Sign of Growing Indian Economy”



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