

Nandini

ISSUE 4

JULY 2010

Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

VOL XVI

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - Rs. 100/-

RS.10/-

**ENSURING QUALITY EDUCATION
AT AFFORDABLE COST
FOR POOR STUDENTS
IS GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY**

**GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED
IN THIS TASK**

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA SPEAKS



WHERE IS THE STRENGTH?

Swami Vivekananda often exchanged his thoughts with the disciples and clarified the matter in simple language in convincing manner.

Discussions that the Swamiji had with his disciple on one such occasion is given in this article.

Disciple: But where is that strength in us? I should have felt myself blessed if I had a hundredth part of your powers, Swamiji.

Swamiji: How foolish! Power and things like that will come by themselves. Put yourself to work and you will find such tremendous power coming to you that you will feel it hard to bear.

Even the least work done for others awakens the power within; even thinking the least good of others gradually instills into the heart the strength of a lion. I love you all ever so much, but I wish you all to die working for others – I should rather be glad to see you do that!

Disciple: What will become of those, then, who depend on me?

Swamiji: If you are ready to sacrifice your life for others, God will certainly provide some means for them. Have you not read in the Gita the words of Shri Krishna. "Never does a doer of good, O my beloved, come to grief"?

Disciple: I see, sir.

Swamiji: The essential thing is renunciation. Without renunciation none can pour out his whole heart in working for others. The man of renunciation sees all with an equal eye and devotes himself to the service of all.

Does not our Vedanta also teach us to see all with an equal eye? Why then do you cherish the idea that the wife and children are your own more than others? At your very threshold, Narayana Himself, in the form of a poor beggar, is dying of starvation! Instead of giving him anything, would you only satisfy the appetites of your wife and children with delicacies? Why, that is beastly!

Disciple: To work for others requires a good deal of money at times and where shall I get that?

Swamiji: Why not do as much as lies within your power? Even if you cannot give to others for want of money, surely you can at least breathe into their ears some good words or impart some good instruction, can't you? Or does that also require money?

Disciple: Yes, sir, that I can do.

Swamiji: But saying, "I can", won't do. Show me through action what you can do and then only I shall

know that your coming to me is turned to some good account.

Get up and put your shoulders to the wheel – how long is this life for? As you have come into this world, leave some mark behind. Otherwise, where is the difference between you and the trees and stones? They, too, come into existence, decay and die. If you like to be born and to die like them you are at liberty to do so.

Show me by your actions that your reading the Vedanta has been fruitful of the highest good. Go and tell all,

"In every one of you lies that Eternal Power", and try to wake It up. What will you do with individual salvation? That is sheer selfishness. Throw aside your meditation, throw away your salvation and such things!

Put your whole heart and soul in the work to which I have consecrated myself.

Swamiji: First of all, make the soil ready and thousands of Vivekananda will in time be born into this world to deliver lectures on religion.

You need not worry yourself about that ! Don't you see why I am starting orphanages, famine relief works etc.? Don't you see how Sister Nivedita, a British lady, has learnt to serve Indians so well, by doing even menial work for them? And can't you, being Indians, similarly serve your own fellow countrymen? Go, all of you, wherever there is an outbreak of plague or famine, or wherever the people are in distress and mitigate their sufferings. As the most you may die in the attempt – what of that?

How many like you are being born and dying like worms every day? What difference does that make to the world at large? Die you must, but have a great ideal to die for and it is better to die with a great ideal in life. Preach this ideal from door to door and you will yourselves be benefited by it at the same time that you are doing good to your country.

On you lie the future hopes of our country. I feel extreme pain to see you leading a life of inaction. Set yourselves to work – to work!

Do not tarry the time of death is approaching day by day: Do not sit idle, thinking that everything will be done in time, later on! Mind – nothing will be done that way!

Desperate Calls

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



Child suffering from cancer

Ms.Evelyn Kerketta, age 11 years is suffering from blood cancer. The doctors advised her to undergo chemotherapy treatment for atleast two years. The total cost of the chemotherapy for two years at Apollo Hospitals,Chennai is Rs.5,00,000/-

Mr. Martin Luthar Kerketta requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his daughter's treatment

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Apollo Hospitals, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Mr.Martin Luthar Kerketta
S/o.Lt.Micheal Kerketta, Sathkyah Tea Garden,
P.O>Chalsa, Dist.Jalpaiguri, West Bengal

Differently abled boy needs job

Mr.V.Saravanan, is a poor disabled boy. He has passed Bachelor of Engineering in computer Science and Engineering.

Mr.V.Saravanan requests for a suitable job.

Contact address: Mr.V.Saravanan
No.12/26, Rajaji Nagar, Ist Street, Cotton Mill Road,
Near to New Bus Stand, Tirupur, Pin-641 602



Differently abled person needs tri cycle

Mr.C.Boopathi is a poor differently abled man. He is doing button hole work and button stitching in a tailoring shop.

Mr.C.Boopathi requestes kind hearted persons for donation of tri cycle to attend his working place

Contact address: Mr.Boopathi, A/74, G.R.Street,
K.K.Nagar, Ullagaram, Chennai-600 094



Needs support for medical treatment

Md.Tamim, 5 months old is suffering from congenital heart disease. Cost of the open heart surgery at Wockhardt Hospital, Bangalore is Rs.1,25,000/-



Master.Surjit Patra , age 12 years is suffering from ASD & RPS stenosis. Cost of the surgery at BGS Global Hospital, Bangalore is Rs.1,25,000/-

Ms.Trisha, age 4 years is suffering from congenital heart disease. Cost of the open heart surgery at Wockhardt Hospital, Bangalore is Rs.1,25,000/-

The cheque may be drawn in favour of concerned hospital and sent to the following address:

The Secretary, Save Poor Lives, No.22, Perumal Koil
Street, Aminjikarai, Chennai-600 029.



Need support for education

The following students need support for education.

Ms. A. Rabiyyathul Basariah, studying in II year B.Com course in J.P. College of Arts & Science,Tenkasi, Thirunelveli Dist. Tamil Nadu.

Contact Address:- Ms.A. Rabiyyathul Basariah,
D/o M. Abdul Hasan, 18A, South East Koil Street,
Tenkasi - 627811, Thirunelveli Dist.

Ms.B. Bharathi has completed her 10th standard examination with 475 marks and wants to join plus one course.

Contact Address:-
Ms.B. Bharathi D/o Sri. D. Balaji,
4/255, Vaigai Street, Aathikulam, Madurai - 600 014.

Differently abled biotechnology student needs job

Ms. G. Pechiammal a differently abled girl has completed B. Tech (Biotechnology) from Anna University, Trichy. She needs a job immediately.

Contact Address:-

Ms. G. Pechiammal,
D/o Sri. M. Ganapathi, 72,B, Pallava Nagar,
Main Road, Thiruvannamalai - 606 602.

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.



Godmen farthest from God

Sir,

Looking at the various misdeeds and questionable events around the priests and Godmen in several parts of the world in recent times, I feel that the priests and the godmen are the farthest from God.

Indore

T. Gunasekaran

So called VIPs in Tirupathi temple

Sir,

I congratulate you for giving an opportunity to the concerned citizens to express their feelings about the unjustified special treatment extended to the so called VIPs in Tirupathi temple. This is the same case in several other temples in India. Due to the behaviour of such so called VIPs and the temple authorities, the sanctity of the temples in India are being affected.

It is surprising that these so called VIPs, most of whom are business men, politicians and bureaucrats, often involved in corrupt practices and possess ill gotten money, think that God would ignore their misdeeds and bless them with greater prosperity.

The Hindu theory of Karma clearly say that one would reap the results of his actions. Mere visiting temples by these so called VIPs and their massive donations cannot be adequate to become close to God.

Mumbai

K.A.Appa Rao

The conversion galore

Sir,

I work amongst lower income group in a few states like Andhra Pradesh and Orissa as an employee of a NGO.

I often come across instances of conversions of people in the lower income group who originally belong to Hindu religion to other religions. Most of these poor people get themselves converted as they are lured with material gifts and money by some religious groups. These are very unhealthy practices and the government should stop this kind of conversion from one religion to another amongst innocent citizens. Just like divorce between the couple being approved by the court after some separation period, the religious conversions should also be permitted only after some scrutiny and "cooling off period".

It would be a tragedy if number of Hindus would quantitatively shrink in India due to such lured conversions.

Name withheld on request

Disservice to dalit students in Tamil Nadu

Sir,

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has done disservice to the dalits and scheduled caste students by lowering their cut off mark for admission in engineering colleges to 35%.

These poor and innocent students who can only get 35% marks in plus two would fall prey to the temptation of becoming engineers and are most likely to become unemployable engineers and suffer life long.

Coimbatore

K.P.Murali

Why Maoists are spreading ?

Does the government realise that the corrupt dealings of the politicians in India including ministers and their hobnobbing with the business men in India and abroad to take away the land for setting up mining projects and industries by driving away the tribals and locals , are the reasons that the methods of Maoists find acceptance amongst tribals and poor people in states like Chattisgarh, Orissa and West Bengal?

Weeding out the corrupt elements in government is the sure way to defeat the maoists.

VOICE OF RAJAJI

IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL VALUES

**Asurya naama te lokaa andhena tamasaavrtaa
taanste pretyaabhigachchant ye ke cha aatmahanojanaah**

- Isa Upanishad

**Those who (in their minds) do away with the soul,
die their deaths (by that denial) and do about wandering in sunless worlds,
dense darkness over hanging.**



I am a superstitious person in the etymological sense of the term, a revivalist, everything unintellectual. I believe in some things not related to reason and rationality. I believe reason and rationality cannot cover all things and some of them are too important to be ignored. My irrationality is fairly well known now and therefore will not unduly disturb readers.

If one does not believe in a soul, individual or cosmic, one must wander in deep darkness. The world for such a one will be sunless.

If man has only a body and no surviving soul, there can be no values – only pleasure and pleasure producing objects remain. Shall we hang on to life for these?

Then remains the question why should we work for the good of humanity that is, for future generations? Why must one do anything for them? What binds one to do it? And why should even humanity or future generations live and struggle if there is no soul but only body? Indeed, if there is no soul, all values disappear for each one of us and for all of us.

Let me get out of my superstitions for a moment. Let me talk the language of evolution, taking for granted that man came after millions of years through countless accidental mutations of the genes during the period and that, through natural selection, he became man as he is today.

Values such as honesty, fellow feeling, respect for life, respect for contracts, the co operative spirit, compassion, gratitude, etc. grew up and fixed themselves in man's mental make up because they had all great survival value. If we reject them, it would be like the lion and the tiger discarding their reckless ferocity, or like the birds throwing away their wings, or the bull its horns or man himself casting away his brains and his upright posture.

The values men so greatly cherish are evolutionary products and it is well we stick to them. They are all important for man's survival and progress.

What go by the name of "traditional values" are values prevailing all the world over but differing in degree from nation to nation. Where secular forces and institutions have come to cover the same values, the traditional character of some of them may have got blurred or forgotten.

If destructive skepticism develops over these traditional values and a movement to discard them should succeed, man would go back to the condition he emerged from by the grace of accidents; and he will be but a poor and feeble wild beast and probably disappear from the face of the earth.

What I have said must have been said by some people long ago, although I have not read it. I guess Herbert Spencer must have said it and must have said it much better.

But as could be guessed from what I have confessed at the outset, I do not accept the theory of blind blundering evolution. I believe there is design in it of some inscrutable kind and these values are therefore part of man's divinely designed being. They will not, I believe, be given up by mankind although some men may discard them and suffer for it. Secularly enforced laws can never adequately take the place of traditionally inherited values.

It is pretty easy to sit in one's study and indict traditional values in the light of modern life and reason and derive there from intellectual satisfaction and a sense of conquest. We are safe as long as the mass of our people are loyal to these values, the criticism of intellectuals notwithstanding.

The civilization and culture from which we derive whatever happiness we get in life is one knitted fabric. And what a sorry state a knitting is reduced to, when the yarn that runs through and holds all the loops come out in one of the corners; To that same state will our civilization and culture be reduced and disappear, if our traditional values are discarded by the mass of our people.

SURVEY ON PEOPLE'S VIEW ON LAND FOR MLAs IN OLD MAHABALIPURAM ROAD, CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister announced that 50 acres of land along the Old Mahabalipuram Road in Chennai would be allotted to MLAs at market value, so that they may construct their homes. Old Mahabalipuram road is an area in Chennai where the land prices are skyrocketing.



Nandini Voice for the Deprived, conducted a survey amongst the citizens of Tamil Nadu to know their views on whether such special allotment of land for MLAs is justified.

Nandini Voice For the Deprived contacted around 3000 citizens, belonging to the cross section of society at various education and income level through email and letters. The details about the survey was also published in a few newspapers. In addition, several persons belonging to lower income group were contacted in person and their views ascertained during the informal discussions.

In all, 510 persons responded with their views including those who conveyed their views through email and over telephone and during informal discussions.

Findings of the study

Of the 510 persons who responded, not even single person said that the Chief Minister's move to allot land for MLAs was justified. The proposal was questioned and criticized on several counts.

Several persons said that they were afraid to convey their dissenting views since the matter concerned the politicians and the decision of the Chief Minister and they insisted that under no circumstances, their name should be revealed. This shows the sense of fear and insecurity prevailing amongst the citizens in expressing their views, particularly on matters concerning politicians.

Most of the persons expressed their helplessness and wondered whether their dissenting view would matter

at all, since the Government and politicians do not really seem to care about public opinion and views of the common men and they go ahead with their agenda, whatever they may be.

Several persons also opined that this move should be stopped which can be done only by filing a public interest litigation in the High court. However, very few said that they would file such petitions themselves.

Many citizens expressed the hope that their dissenting views should be made known to the government and the Chief Minister, so that the Chief Minister would withdraw his move to allot land to the MLAs.

Highlights of some of the views expressed

Absolutely not! You need to raise the strongest protest you can against this.

Anant Trivedi

I think it is totally unwarranted and an abuse of power to make such an allocation.

G Chandrasekhar

This is highly objectionable and an attempt at subverting *democracy* and independence of MLAs. In addition, it is discriminatory as against the ordinary members of the public *vis-a-vis* their elected representatives.

Aurobindo Banerjee

It is atrocious. It creates a bad precedent and would perpetuate this practice. Already, development authorities are allotting out of turn sites to interest groups and Chief Minister allots such sites at his sole discretion.

K.S.Parthasarathy

Ridiculous to say the least.

S.M.Arasu

I guess it would depend upon how transparently the "market price" bit is handled. Going by the track record of our politicians, this is likely to end up as another scam!

P.Venkatesh

SURVEY ON PEOPLE'S VIEW ON LAND FOR MLAs IN OLD MAHALIPURAM ROAD, CHENNAI

A big NO.

The MLAs make tons of money. They could buy on their own.

They should set example of simple living like leaders during freedom struggle.

All retired MLAs would want similar facilities sooner or later.

So, the Govt. should just DROP the idea.

P.Chandrasekaran.

This is a bad precedent. Next set of MLAs will demand similar concession/ scheme (plots). This will percolate to Municipal / Corporation/ Panchayat Ward members also.

K.Shanmugavelayutham

I work in a slum in Bangalore and though the plots were meant for the poor, several of the plots have been taken by people close to the MLAs and the political party bigwigs, their families and friends.

Please do add my name to the list that accepts that "No land be given to MLAs".

Brinda

I think it is disgusting that the land is being allotted to politicians, most of whom have done nothing but line their own pockets.

The Government would do well to reconsider this decision.

S. Chinny Krishna

The decision to allot house sites on the Mahabalipuram road is yet another sop

The present Government. seems to believe in wasting tax payer's money. To stifle the already decimated opposition and with a view to lure them with further sops like offering seats in the Legislative Council, the Government. is on a spree to offer the house sites.

It is unfortunate that the majority of the media in Tamilnadu is silent on this issue .Perhaps, a second round of sites to media persons, artistes etc. may be the next to follow.

M.S.Venkataraman

I do not think it is necessary. Almost all of them have made enough during their term. This is totally unnecessary.

Desikan



Land is a complex issue and marginalised community have been struggling for livelihood and homestead land.

Government finds it easier to allot land to Industries, MLAs, MPs and not to its citizens. Land for MLAs is not a good idea and it should be opposed.

Vijay Bharatiya

I am totally against giving govt land to MLAs who already own houses let them think about great leaders like Jeeva, Kamaraj, Rajaji, Kakkan.

Ilanahai

There is nothing special about MLAs In fact, they are far less than special. Our so-called rulers have reached a situation where they can proclaim anything including land for the 'oh-so-deprived' MLAs.

D. Rajan

I used to believe, like Mahatma Gandhi, that looting will stop when the Britishers retreated from our great country.

Like Abraham Lincoln, that our largest Democracy in the world is of the people, by the people and for the people.

Like Martin Luther King, that we shall overcome.

After several decades of Independence, those beliefs are still only that, beliefs. Britishers have been replaced by Indian politicians who are even worse.

There has to be a revolutionary change in the Indian psyche to improve the situation. and alas it will not be in my life time.

Sundaresa Venkataraman

I guess they are thinking they can do whatever they wish. Later during elections, they can apply those special costly techniques and win.

SURVEY ON PEOPLE'S VIEW ON LAND FOR MLAs IN OLD MAHABALIPURAM ROAD, CHENNAI

Whatever may be the reason, this government's decision of giving lands to MLAs is for no good. It will serve only as another direct proof that most of the tax money we are paying is getting wasted only.

Kasthuri

Firstly, MLAs are not the permanent representatives of the government and they change every time the elections take place or the goodwill is lost.

After earning the benefits under such scheme, they may not be re elected as MLAs after next election ,but will continue to have the advantages bestowed on them

Secondly, it becomes a precedent for all time to come.

K V S Krishna

They do not deserve it all. They should not be allotted.

A.Sethupathy

This is highly exploitative and is the misuse of the state power of politicians and state ownership of all territories.

Only a public agitation will make the politicians realize and withdraw from such move

Susheela Kaushik

There are few unanswered questions:

01. What about the previously elected MLAs?

02. If few of them are not alive, will their immediate kith or kin get the benefit?

03. What about future MLAs ? Will they also be provided with land for future allotment?

04. What about the MPs from Tamilnadu?

05. If the MLCs come into existence, will the MLCs also be eligible for the sites?

06. What about yester-year MPs from Tamilnadu?

07. What about the people who elected these MLAs and MPs? Well they don't deserve anything !

G.Krishnan

It is unfortunate that such schemes are initiated at the cost of tax payers. There are many questions.

1. The MLA already most likely to have a house in his constituency. What is the point in providing another in the city.(he is given an office and phone in his

constituency. this is ok.). At the most , he may need to be accomodated when the assembly is in session. There is no justification for a permanent residence in the city.



2. Is this for the present and also for the future MLAs.

Council is also in the offing. Imagine the cost on the Exchequer on all these.

3.What is the guarantee that these will not sold for a premium and pave way for the MLAs , which would be one more way of enriching themselves.

Nagarajan

Apart from other reasons, the decision requires to be opposed for the main reason that it looks to be the best way to buy the MLAs. The proposal needs to be opposed.

SKumar

Chief Minister has no right to gift away prime land to people who just do not deserve it.

If you feel strongly about this issue, please forward the message from Nandini Voice for the Deprived to your friends. I have just done it.

Gopal K.

My family and I disagree with the plan and decision of Chief Minister to allot land to MLAs and that too in the prime area. Governor should stop this public area being swindled.

KJ Sethuraman

Land to MLA's is just another worst decision from the Government.

Government is not for the people but it is for the government officials and MLAs

This has to be stopped...

Suresh Jayaraj

Ashamed of this move.

Sendhildadhan A.

Not warranted, except for landless/houseless MLA's.

S.P.Ambrose

It is the usual land scam and loot. Blatant buying of political support at public cost. Time and again, the ruling dispensation has allotted prime land to bureaucrats and party people in housing projects under some govt quota or Minister's discretionary quota at what they describe as market rate. This is nothing but a blatant lie. It is corruption.

Good example are the erstwhile green areas in Annanagar which were converted to residential and allotted to select people. The opportunity cost was 20 times the so called market price fixed by the govt . This is how millionaires are created by Govt of people who already are multi millionaires, having amassed money in the course of their "public service".

Poramboke land meant for public and community purposes and land acquired for public purposes (by paying a pittance to the original owners) must be used and developed by Govt in a responsible and transparent manner to subserve the common good. And not treated as private property of politicians and bureaucrats. Let us fight this . A PIL is called for, apart from public agitation.

Menezes

The Government's actions of freebees as vote / support garnering dirty trick are abominable to say the least.

Millions of people must send mails/postcards and SMSs to the Chief Minister to protest against the rabid move.

Let people give as much vent to their feelings as possible, while indicating existence of innumerable unattended/improperly attended issues. An unending essay could be written against the proposal.

Sant Mathur

Jai ho and shame to the so called Indian democracy!

Bedabrata Banerjee

I strongly object to Chief Minister's view of allotting housing plots for MLA.

An experienced politician like Karunanidhi should have rejected this proposal. The very idea of allotment of Government land to MLA itself is an act of corruption. Poor Government servants who served through out their life are not given a piece of land at their retirement. How can an MLA who hardly contributed anything to this country is eligible for a piece of land.?



What right a chief minister has got to allot a Government land to a politician.?Some good lawyer should file a writ on this to prevent this act of corruption.

S.D.Joseph.

It is anti poor policy. When thousands of poor of the area need house site, the allotment of land to MLAs is inhuman.

R. Gangi Reddy

It is the same old monarchy regime under the new umbrella of democrazzzzzzzzy. To be honest , it is sickening to read about allocation of land to any MLA who are after all representatives of the people of the constituency and nothing more.

K Ramesh Shankar

It is completely unwarranted. They will not pay the market price. If we need to go to court to stop this, we should do so.

In fact, 50 acres will mean nearly 400 plots . Let us act. Also we should ask the court to lay down guidelines for allotment of the land if at all it is agreed to.

D.K. Oza

The proposal to give away lands to MLA s near I T corridor is totally improper and unjustified.

T. Kaleeswaran

Many MLA 's and MP's run self financing colleges for engineering as well as Arts and Science, many schools and "mint money".

Therefore, I think the MLAs instead of asking for land should provide houses for people belonging to below poverty line; atleast 10 to 15 persons every year.

N. Balakrishnan.

LIVE IN RELATIONSHIP – TAKING INDIA TOWARDS DISASTER

The citizens expect that the judiciary would constantly guide the country in adhering to the constitutional provisions and interpret the law from time to time in a fitting manner and check any violations if and when it would happen.

However, in recent time, we have found that some of the pronouncements and judgments of judiciary have created controversy in the country. The pronouncements become controversial, particularly when they have not been in relation to interpretation of law but amount to questioning the basic ethos and traditional practices and cultural values that have been cherished over the last several centuries. The recent judgment of the Apex court ruling that live in relationship and pre marital sex could not be construed as an offence has sent shock waves in the country.

There is already enough evidence that personal morals are taking a beating amongst the people in various age groups and economic level. With liquor consumption increasing at alarming rate and life style of western countries being increasingly followed by the youth, the basic family oriented traditions are being gradually uprooted.

Divorces, multiple marriages do not anymore cause surprise. Reports often appear in the press about pre marital relationship. These developments cause enormous damage to the fibre and fabric of the society, pushing the future of the country to a chaotic state.

Unwed mothers should be a matter of shame for any society but is now becoming common in India. The judgment of the Apex court approving live in relationship

would only further encourage such negative trend and happenings.

The Apex Court ruling that live in relationship and pre-marital sex could not be construed as an offence anymore, coming at a time when broken marriages are on the rise, is a bolt from the blue. When the modern-day youth feel proud aping everything Western and look down on anything traditional, the observation of the judges giving blanket permission without understanding the nuances of our age-old traditions and practices comes as a rude shock to millions who still believe and uphold the sanctity of marriage .

Obviously, one of the reasons for such negative deplorable developments is that the people occupying top positions in political parties, government, in business establishments are no more role models for the youth. Media has become commercially oriented, showing vulgar shows and news to increase their viewership. Even the behaviour of the religious heads often cause concern. Due to their immoral and unethical behaviour, we find that common man particularly, the youth tend to think that moral standards are not essential requirements for civilized living. This is a tragedy.

One wonders what would happen to societal norms and practices followed since centuries?

In such circumstances, judiciary giving verdict approving live in relationship would be the last nail in the coffin of Indian culture and civilization, that have been developed over centuries influenced by the thoughts of great saints like Adi Sankara, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and others.

ELLIOTS BEACH IN CHENNAI NOW AN OPEN AIR THEATRE

One is not sure as to whether the multi million so called beautification project of Elliots beach launched by Chennai Corporation has been completed or is under implementation.

In any case, there is no evidence that Elliots beach has acquired any sort of beauty in recent time. On the other hand, the conditions are deteriorating, with a fish market on one side, large number of two wheelers and three wheelers causing atmospheric pollution, the cinema shooting often causing chaos and the visitors throwing the eatables and waste materials everywhere on the sand. Ofcourse, the stray dogs sharing the space with the visitors is a conspicuous scene.

In addition to all these problems, recently a huge screen has been mounted on the sand to show some films to the visitors in the evening. The film is accompanied by noisy music and talk, adding noise pollution as if other forms of existing pollution in the Elliots beach are not adequate. It is not clear as to whose idea was it to install a screen on the beach sand and make it an open air theatre. Apart from this film shows, on sundays, some folk dances are organised on the sand, which appears to be more noise than music for a visitor.

The noise in the evenings due to the above programmes, has made the beach extremely unpleasant for the visitors who want to spend some time in the evening peacefully enjoying noise free and clean breeze.

TACKLING MAOISTS PROBLEM

V.Rajagopal
E.mail:rajvel44@gmail.com

‘A hungry person listens neither to reason or religion nor is bent by any prayer and where hunger rules, peace cannot prevail’

Seneca 3000BC.

This applies aptly to the maoists who are not born terrorists but forced by circumstances to take to arms after having failed to get the basic needs for which they were entitled.

The poorest of the poor whose level of hunger was overlooked and those who possessed a small land grabbed for industries and their livelihood disturbed turned ultimately to revolt against the system which was responsible for their utter neglect for decades. The present food inflation, unemployment and uncertainties lead them to frustration and they lost reasoning power and became irrational in their approach.

If more than 80% of the maoists can be rehabilitated with their entitlements, then the problem would be mostly solved and others will fall in line gradually.

Any stern and violent action by the government is bound to boomerang with multiple counter attacks in several places with violent protests.

IS ALL POVERTY THE SAME ?

V. Rajagopal, Tirupathi

According to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Washington, ‘all poverty is not the same’.

On global level, IFPRI divided the population living on less than US \$ 1/- (Rs.45 and below) per day into three categories :

1. Subjacent poor – US \$ 0.75 to 1.0 with 485 million people
2. Medial poor _ US \$ 0.50 to 0.75 with 323 million people
3. Ultra poor _ US \$ less than 0.50 with 162 million people

Among these, India may contribute substantially to all the three categories, especially ultra poor.

India has wide gap between the rich and the poor based on the per capita income (Pci). The conditions differ depending on the population, gross domestic product etc.

The Government had fixed norms in 1993 94 to declare the population based on income above and below the poverty line , APL/BPL. Recently, a committee has re-fixed the BPL (Below poverty level) categories. This

categorization reflects on the level of poverty in a given State as for example over 40% BPL (Below poverty level) in Orissa and less than 10% in Punjab.

In the present context of cost of living, an income range of Rs.500/ to 1000/ per day may be considered as rich, while Rs. 300/- to 500/- as moderate, Rs.100/- to 300/- as poor and Rs.100/- and less per day as ultra poor. It is the last category that represents mostly the chronic hungry population, while the poor category still fall under serious hunger group. Put together, India will have now over 35 to 40 crore people in the above two categories.

So poverty is not the same in all States within India, as it also happens in African countries, where people with ‘alarming to extremely alarming hunger’ exist in large numbers. The present food inflation impacts adversely the ultra poor whose accessibility to essential commodities is seriously inadequate. So the spread of under nutrition and malnutrition among the children will ultimately lead to increasing global hunger index of India. This does not augur well for the country with financial and human resources being not enough to tackle the problem of poverty/hunger.

NEED FOR CITIZEN'S MOVEMENT TO MAKE POLITICIANS BEHAVE

There is no doubt that the process of democracy have been usurped by the politicians and their family members in several countries in south east Asia such as Sri Lanka , India and Pakistan. This has caused difficult situation for the citizens, as these politicians now control the destiny of the country and their misdeeds directly cause sufferings and problems for the people.

While politics and politicians are necessary part of democratic process and they have a due role to play in the democratic governance, unfortunately many countries in south east Asia could not ensure that dishonest and self centred people would be kept away from entering politics. On the other hand, the first choice of criminal elements in these regions appear to be to get into the politics and seize political power . In such conditions, several people think that the democracy in several south east Asian countries have become a counter productive exercise doing more harm than good.

While it is well recognized by political thinkers all over the world that democracy is the most civilized and desirable form of governance in spite of its limitations, the time has now come to fine tune the process of democracy in practice. Otherwise, the democracy can well become an oppressive regime of politicians , who manipulate the electoral process and corrupt the entire system in their efforts to attain power and stay on in power. The present time calls for a citizen's revolution that appears to be inevitable in the evolving process of democracy.

Obviously, most of the politicians are corrupt and they indulge in manipulative politics, with an attitude and approach not much different from the feudal lords (zamindars) of the earlier days. Unless the citizens would effectively assert themselves and insist on fair play and good governance, the politicians will go out of control that would inevitably lead to chaos and turbulence in the society.

The serious problem today is that the media, which should be the vehicle for airing the views and grievances of the citizens are now being largely controlled by the politicians and most of the politicians are now part of business enterprises directly or indirectly. With media itself being deflected, by and large, from its ethical standards and principles, with paid, motivated and

selective news becoming the order of the day, the sane voice of the citizens often do not get media coverage. The question is how a citizen's movement to make politicians behave can be launched in the absence of media participating in the movement in a big way.

The challenge facing the future of democracy is really hard and it calls for efforts from principled and dedicated citizens, who should combine quality of wisdom and courage to fight for genuine democratic practices.

The outpourings of the individual citizens in the internet expressed in the blogs only go to indicate the frustration and anger of the average citizen about the role of politicians in the country. But, such anger are not translated into effective voice that would put fear in the minds of the politicians and correct their behaviour.

The politicians really are banking on the innocence and economic vulnerability of the poorer sections of the society, who are sought to be appeased by extending some free schemes to them from time to time. The politicians appear to think that they can continue their games by making false and cosmetic promises to the poor people and keeping the media under their control to publicise their tempting schemes.

While the poor people who are the real targets of the politicians may not understand their game due to their innocence and vulnerability, the educated section of the population should raise their voice at every opportunity. The question is whether the educated and informed people in adequately large number would rise to the occasion and convey their protests to the politicians unmindful of the hazards involved.

The hope is that there are some concerned citizens who are protesting and one should pray that the seeds that they sow should grow into a positive and vibrant movement of the citizens to reform the politicians and the political system.

THE MENACE OF FOOD ADULTERATION

EATING HAS NOW BECOME A CALCULATED RISK

The supply of adulterated food and spurious / outdated drugs is a heinous crime.

It can be justifiably said that those who indulge in such supply practices are mass murderers, as the impact of such misdeeds on the innocent consumers is severe and often life threatening.

While it is obvious that those who indulge in such practices are unscrupulous and greedy elements, the question is as to how they dare to indulge in such practices, inspite of the severe legal measures that can be enforced against them.

It is very difficult for everyone to carry out such practices, without the knowledge of the concerned officials and all powerful government machinery. Obviously, such practices are the result of collusion between the criminals who indulge in such practices and the corrupt government officials. In the government machinery, it is difficult for any one individual employee to collude with

such criminals without the knowledge of the other government employees in the department at the lower and higher level. It goes without saying that the root cause for such adulteration practices is the collusion between the group of government employees at various levels in the concerned departments and the unscrupulous persons who adulterate the food, make spurious drugs and sell the outdated drugs in the market.

One of the pre requisites to totally curb such obnoxious practices is to ensure corruption free administration in the government machinery, which is supposed to be the watchdog. The ministers and top bureaucrats and senior police officials should have the will to do so. One cannot but say that the prevalence of the adulterated food and drug in the market is a reflection on the character and quality of the overall administration.

Subtle and crude ways of adulteration

Adulteration of food takes place in many ways and some of them are subtle and some of them are very crude.

Even the Tasmac outlets in Tamil Nadu are reported to be selling the liquor that is well diluted with water at retail level, with specification of the sold liquor far different from the prescribed norms. One would not even know as to what quality of water would be used for diluting the liquor meant for human consumption.

It is reported that cow dung powder are mixed with dhanian powder or other flour, to increase the weight. Well designed stones being systematically mixed with the rice and wheat are also not uncommon. Even use of blotting paper in the preparation of ice creams have been reported.

Artificial ripening of the fruits with harmful chemical like calcium carbide has often been reported.

There are number of chemicals that are used as additives in food products and sugar. Such chemicals used should be of food grade in specification which is high purity level. Often the food companies use technical grade chemicals instead of food grade chemicals to save cost, as the price of technical grade chemical with lower specification would be less compared to food grade chemical. For example, the sugar industries are supposed to use food grade phosphoric acid that would contain no arsenic or sulphur. But, several sugar units are said to be using technical grade



THE MENACE OF FOOD ADULTERATION - EATING HAS NOW BECOME A CALCULATED RISK

phosphoric acid and such practices go largely unnoticed.

Use of synthetic colours

There are many synthetic colours which are produced and now extensively used for colouring the food products as well as the fruits. Most of these chemicals can be undesirable additive.

While natural plant extracts were largely used in the food colourings earlier, the synthetic colours have replaced the natural plant extracts in recent times to a considerable extent.

With imposition of ban on use of several synthetic dyestuffs (colours) particularly in Europe in recent years, the natural colours are gaining importance around the world. But, this is not the case in India.

However, not all the natural colours are safe to use. Although plants exhibit a wide range of colours, not all of these pigments can be used.

- * Some do not dissolve in water

- * Some cannot be adsorbed on substrates

- * Some others fade when washed or exposed to air or sunlight.

- * Therefore, the use of plant materials as natural colour have to be selective. In the case of natural colour, there is lack of standardization and consistency in specification and product quality. There is need for the use of a mordant for enhancement of the fastness properties of natural colours in some cases.

Regulation default of ayurvedic drugs

According to the Health Ministry of Government of India, over half of the companies in the Rs 80,000 million Indian Ayurveda industry default when it comes to compliance with the regulatory requirements of domestic manufacturing standards.

The data was compiled in collaboration with state drug regulators of India.

Shelf life and storage

Apart from the quality of ingredients used in the food products, the shelf life of the products and conditions in which they are packed and stored are also vitally important.

We often see food items being sold in public places and mutton shops operating in open and in unhygienic surroundings. Several shops do not maintain proper refrigerated conditions for storage of food items and meat products and it is not uncommon to see foul smell emerging from such shops.

Food products from tiny entrepreneurs

There are several tiny entrepreneurs who make food products like pickles, papads in the household and distribute it to the consumers. These pickles and papads are not subjected to any test or certification procedures and one would not know as to what would be the content. There are umpteen number of shops who make snacks (like "murukku") and no one would know the type of oil used for cooking the product and other additives added. Many examples can be readily cited.

While the producers in the organized sector could be indulging in deliberate adulteration to multiply their profit, it is possible that the tiny entrepreneurs make the products with a level of innocence and they themselves may not be knowing the extent of contamination in the ingredients.

As these products are consumed by people of various age groups and health conditions, any harmful impact can be even life threatening.

Has eating become a calculated risk?

The fact is that we have army of food inspectors and drug inspectors in the government and they are conspicuous by their lack of vigil and their lethargic attitude and perhaps willful collusion with the adulterators in some instances.

The citizens seem to be living today in conditions where they really do not know the quality of the product that they consume and eating has become a calculated risk.





DEMENTIA – MY EXPERIENCE

Contributed by: K.N.Narayana Pillai

Senior citizens, are seen suffering from the deadly disease dementia. I was a victim for 7 years. To my luck, the moment the symptoms were sighted, an NGO,

Dementia Club manned by Novartis India Ltd, at 127 Marshalls Road, Egmore (Phone:28554565) came to my rescue.

First Sunday, on alternate month, session would start at 11 .a.m. at Dementia club to be wound up by 1 p.m. The participants are the patients and their caretakers. The doctors participate in the interaction and clarify all the issues raised by the patients and their care takers. To keep one and all in good humour, free coffee or tea with snacks is served.

In my own case, since my wife was bedridden I had to cook our food. To facilitate cooking. I used aluminium vessels. By sheer chance, the doctor was apprised of my plight. He immediately advised me to do away with the aluminium vessels and to switch over to stainless or earthen vessels, since aluminium has the deadly impact on brain that can worsen my condition. I followed his advise.

The doctors further guided me to keep always busy, to read books ,to attend bhajans or music, to have exercise, to stop too much of liquor consumption etc. Since I am a teetotaler, my risks were less.

The doctor prescribed pro-dep 10 mg tablet for me. The consumption controlled the ailment.

Three elderly women who joined the club in critical condition collapsed and expired. Hence it is absolutely essential for a patient to seek medical guidance at the outset of the disease itself as demonstrated by this humble self.

The following were the symptoms that captured me.

Often momentary loss I suffered, I forgot to collect the balance from the shops or bus conductors. Pick pocketing I had to endure regularly. I lost umbrella often. At home, once I forgot to close the front door, a stranger entered the house and visited our bed room. With difficulty he was driven out. Lights were not switched off. Current bill shot up. Taps were not closed. Persons could not be easily recognized. People often mistook me as arrogant.

One day I got down at Panangal Park in Chennai to attend a meeting near Venkatnarayana Road, I moved in the wrong direction towards West Mambalam. It took half an hour to realize the error, I fell often on pavement

Had I consulted a private doctor, it would have cost me thousands of rupees. Dementia Club saved a lot for me.

Newage Bearings Pvt. Ltd.

75, Nagadevi Cross Lane, 1st Floor, P.B.No.3137, Mumbai-400 003.

Tele:Off:23438879 / 23401280, Fax:91-22-2341 0655 E-Mail: newagebearings08@yahoo.com

HOUSE OF GENUINE BEARINGS

UP TO 500 MM BORE

BALL BERINGS

TAPER ROLLER BERINGS

NEEDLE ROLLER BERINGS

SPHERICAL ROLLER BERINGS FOR ROLLING MILLS

SKF/FAG

ZKL

URB

GPZ/MPZ

HOW MANY POOR CHILDREN HAVE YOU HELPED THIS YEAR FOR THEIR EDUCATION?

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) 2446 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-600090.