

Nandini

ISSUE 3

MAY 2007

Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

VOL XII

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - Rs. 100/-

RS.10/-

**More than
250 million Indians
do not get square meal a day.
Remember this
whenever you eat everyday.**

LET US FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF GANDHIJI

Gandhiji wanted a Free India which will not tolerate:

- Politics without principle!
- Wealth without Work
- Commerce without Morality
- Education without Character
- Pleasure without Conscience

Today's India, let us honestly confess, is fast coming to represent a negation to all the values and the purity in public life for which Gandhiji stood.



Principled politics has become rare like desert blooms. The popular image of a politician is one who is unabashedly given to double-think and double-talk, quite contrary to Gandhiji's dictum that there should be perfect accord of thought, word and deed.

Amassing wealth without any exertion has become the goal of, alas! a good many of our young men and even not-so-young men!

We have forgotten Long-fellow's exhortation:

"The heights by greatmen reached and kept,

Were not attained by sudden flight.

They were toiling upward in the night".

Today, many are looking to the Stock Market for becoming instant rich, not realising that abiding prosperity cannot come via Stock Market, which can only lead to addiction like sleeping pills. There is no substitute for honest, hard, dedicated toil.

The increase in the litigations that come up before the Consumer Redressal Fora is sufficient evidence of the thriving culture of commerce without morality.

As for education, a false interpretation of the concept of our secularism has taken away from our educational curriculum much of the religious, ethical and moral lessons devoted to character moulding.

Similarly, traditional restraints with regard to legitimate pleasures are all being cast to the winds. Power, and pleasure divorced from morality are having a field-day.

Gandhiji gave us directions to follow not only in the political but in the social, economic and religious fields as well, so that the nation can march along with it and the Standard of Life would be raised side by side with the

Standard of Living. Village uplift and rural regeneration formed the cornerstone of his economic thinking.

The present decline in the standards of public morality has been conspicuously steep. We may have no answer to posterity if it asks: "Why did you allow the country to slip from that standard that Gandhiji set for it for all time?"

Rajaji, the great crusader for purity in public life, once observed: "When one sees a great evil, one must fight it. Otherwise, there is no purpose in life... I have seen landslides of moral standards like mountain-slide toppling down during an earthquake".

The time to act is now. Let us not hesitate any more. All sections of the society, academicians and administrators, doctors, lawyers, workers and peasants, mediamen and artists, teachers and social workers, especially the students and youth of the country should lend their wholehearted support to face the challenge and strive to build up an India that is strong and vibrant, both materially and morally - an India of Gandhiji's dreams.

The hour before dawn is the darkest. There is, however, a silver lining in the cloud. Happily there is some awakening among people.

There is a growing realisation at least in some quarters that character is the humus on which everything noble and enduring grows, that ends and means are indissolubly inter-linked and that right means alone will lead to right ends.

Gandhiji had hoped to live up to 125 years to serve mankind through India. Yes. Gandhiji has to re-emerge. Let us hasten his resurrection. This is the only meaningful way we can pay our homage to him. Then, and then alone, will all be well with our India whose soul, as Shri Aurobindo averred, is still sound.

Courtesy: Mahatma Gandhi Eternal Pilgrim of Peace & Love

Desperate Calls

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



Support self employment activity

Sri.P.Venugopal is a hearing impaired person. He has self employed himself by making thambulam bags for marriage and other functions.

Sri.Venugopal requests for support
Sri.P.Venugopal
S/o.Sri.Sttukone
No.35/14,Kusa Street,
Thiruvannamalai-606601

Disabled person needs support for self-employment

Sri.C.S.Balachander, age 40 years lost his legs in his childhood due to polio attack.He is taking tablets for heart ailment.



Sri.C.S.Balachander is married and he has two children. He has the responsibility to look after his aged mother and mentally retarded and kidney patient sister.

Sri.C.S.Balachander requests financial help for setting up petty shop for self employment.

Contact address:

Sri.C.S.Balachander, 32, Kandan Street,
Perambur, Chennai-600 011

Needs support for education of children

Sri.S.S.Rajender is a poor handloom weaver. His first son is studying 10th std and the second one is studying 6th std.

Sri.Rajender requests financial help for buying his son's school uniforms and note books.

Sri.S.S.Rajender,
657,1010 Handloom Weavers Colony,
Mukasipedariyur Village,
Chenimalai-638051 Erode District, Tamil Nadu.

Child suffering from cancer

Master Rahul Datta,age 7 years is suffering from acute lymphoblastic leukemia (a type of blood cancer). Tata Memorial Hospital's doctor advised that the child should undergo life saving chemotherapy treatment for a period of two years.

Estimated cost of the medical treatment is Rs.3,00,000/-.The parents are not in affordable situation.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of "ICI-Poor Patient A/c.No.976" and sent to Mr. Hanif Aalam, Chief

Functionary, ICI Poor Patient Guidance Centre, Islamic Council of India (Trust), D/E.Sector, Near Star English High School, Opp.Sunni Islamia Masjid, Cheeta Camp, Trombay, Mumbai-400 088

Poor girl student has to undergo surgery

Ms.K.Santhya is the daughter of Sri.V.Krishnan, a poor carpenter and she is studying I year B.Sc.

Ms.K.Santhya is suffering from heart disease. Shree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology, Thiruvananthapuram has advised her to undergo heart surgery.Estimated cost of the surgery is Rs.63,000/-

Sri.Krishnan is unable to meet Santhya's surgery expenses because of his recent marriage expenses for his eldest daughter and debt and loans.

Sri.Krishnan requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his daughter's surgery.

Contact address:

Dr.Rajeshwari

e-mail: aashrayam@gmail.com

Phone:04637320843,9894868576

Respond to the educational need of the deprived

With the beginning of the next academic year, the poor families are driven from pillar to post to find money to meet the educational needs of the children. With the educational institutions largely going into the hands of the business men, quality education has become unaffordable for the lower income group students Still only way of improving their conditions is by educating themselves and acquiring skill. Under the circumstances, the poor students face enormous stress as the next academic year begins.

Nandini Voice For the Deprived is receiving number of desperate requests for educational support. While Nandini is doing its level best to meet the requirements, the kind hearted countrymen who share the concern for the poor can seek details of the students requiring help from Nandini. Alternately, they can send their contribution to Nandini Voice For The Deprived, so that the amount can be distributed to the needy students and the receipts from the students sent to the donors.

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.



HANG CORRUPT ON LAMP POST

Dear Sir,

Hearing Rs.1000 crore fodder scam of Bihar, in which a Central government minister prominently figures, a Bench of Supreme Court, comprising Justice S B Sinha and Justice Markendeya Katju, during hearing of bail application of one accused Bihar government officer on 7.3.07 had to make a scathing observation that the only panacea to rid the country of corrupt elements was to hang a few them on lamp post.

Justice S B Sinha remarked: "Every where we have corruption. Nothing is free from corruption. Everybody wants to loot this country. The only solution to this menace is to hang some people in the public so that it acts as a deterrent on others".

The learned Judges were at pain to say that the law does not permit us to do it, but, otherwise we would prefer to hang people to the lamp post.

Such observation reveals that how much the judges are concerned about prevailing rampant corruption in government machinery, which is eating the resources and is depriving common man of his basic rights.

But, alas, our present day politicians and leaders are least concerned about it. They are shielding some corrupt persons and even have made them ministers in the cabinet, as the power depends on their support. They have no sense of shame or regard about moral, ethical concern .

This state of affairs does not pinch many citizens too, as corruption has become a component of life and the Indian society appears to have accepted it as routine.

Mumbai Brijmohan Goel

THE BANDH MENACE IN TAMIL NADU

Dear Sir,

Reacting to the Supreme Court's stay order on implementation of 27% quota for OBCs in the Central Educational Institutions, one day bandh was organized by the DMK Government in Tamil Nadu.

The normal life went out of gear on the bandh day when thousands of passengers from various destinations suffered stress and strain over long hours. The entire business of the state wore a look of deserted look, more out of fear from anti social and goonda elements.

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu congratulated his party workers for the "wonderful response". He was not concerned about the inconvenience and suffering of those, who had to face the adverse effects of the bandh.

A responsible government should not indulge in such activities, which paralyse the administration and create suffering for the masses.

Chennai

S.Sivaraman



Dear Sir,

On 31.3.2007, Chennai Water and Drainage Board advertised in media that it was the last date for the payment of the tax. Knowing fully well that the state had let loose bandh and holiday for the day, what was the necessity for such a wasteful warning?

The productivity and activities of the state came to a stand still by an unwise political decision .

The entire event reflects the sectoral parochial interests of the various vested interests in deciding educational policies.

Chennai

k.N.Narayana Pillai

GOVERNOR'S REMARKS ON SANSKRIT

Dear Sir,

The Governor being the head of the State and the Chancellor of State universities should be a good administrator, academician and should have knowledge about India's culture and traditions.

Recently the Governor of Uttar Pradesh in his Convocation address at Sampurnananda Sanskrit University made derogatory remarks about ancient Sanskrit language.

As reported, he said that "Sanskrit language has no use in modern life, as it can only produce pundit and teacher and a person cannot earn much money. It is a bullock cart language".

Sanskrit is the oldest divine language and mother of various languages of the world. Its vocabulary is rich and words are adopted in all languages. It has cultural, philosophical treasure of religious heritage of knowledge. Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana and Literature were written originally in Sanskrit language and translated in many languages all over the world.

Recently, this Sanskrit University in collaboration with Germany has developed a package of computer calculations in Sanskrit language and has found that Sanskrit is complete scientific language and lot of research is being carried out in various countries.

Such poor remark by a Governor of State about such divine, ancient and complete language is a disgrace to Indian culture and will hurt the feelings of common man and deserve strong condemnation.

Mumbai

Brijmohan Goel

MOUNI SADHU

THE RUSSIAN DISCIPLE OF BHAGAVAN RAMANA MAHARISHI

This article was written by Andrew Bukraba.

Andrew Bukraba was born in Lithuania. After higher studies in Poland, he fled communist Eastern Europe and eventually arrived in Australia, where as a householder he studied Advaita Vedanta with Ramakrishna and Chinmaya Missions. He spent seven years at the ashram of Mata Amritanandamayi in Kerala before settling at Arunachala (Ramanashram in Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu.) in 2001.

Courtesy: The Mountain Path, Aradana 2005

Nothing happens by mere chance,
Nothing happens that is meaningless



After running away from Poland afflicted by Communism, I spent two years in England, I was looking for a country to settle.

I read a small and mysterious book, "Man's Past, Present and Future" given to me by my aunt.

I realised that the first step towards conquering my restless mind was to develop concentration. So, I started with great interest reading the next book by Mouni Sadhu, "Concentration: A Guide to Mental Mastery".

Then I discovered that Mouni Sadhu in his Preface to the book stated that the translation was made in Melbourne, Australia. I thought there might be a chance that he was still around and started a systematic investigation to locate Mouni Sadhu in Australia.

Unfortunately, I had missed Mouni Sadhu by eleven years. But in my search, I discovered his grave in Springvale cemetery in Australia. This cemetery is as beautiful as any world class botanical garden. The vast area is

organised in sectors of different faiths and all sorts of decorative trees and shrubs grow on the banks of artificially made creeks and waterfalls. A common 'economy' section has stone walls two metres high, with 4 to 5 rows of niches for the ashes of cremated people. Mouni Sadhu was cremated in 1970.

It was here that I came upon a bronze plate that had inscribed on it: 'Mouni Sadhu greatly missed by all his friends', along with his age and the exact date of his samadhi. Checking with the Cemetery Administration, I found that here too he was registered under the name of Mouni Sadhu. The address of his last residence also did not provide any link to his original name.

It was probably Mr. Gangopadhyaya, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Australia, who directed me to Ms. Vera Rundus, a Czech, well known as a hatha yoga teacher from a suburb of Melbourne called Brighton. I was directed to her as she had once been associated with Mouni Sadhu. So on a rainy afternoon, we met in her school. One more person knowing the departed Sadhu was also there. He was an old, retired high school teacher. Our meeting formally scheduled for half an hour turned into a satsang that lasted over four hours.

I learned that Mouni Sadhu was a Russian..Mouni Sadhu completed his education in France. There he learned about Sri Ramana Maharishi from Paul Brunton's "Search in Secret India", given to him in a park by a stranger.

Later as an engineer, a specialist in building power stations and high voltage lines, Mouni Sadhu worked in Brazil where he formed a group of seekers following the Maharishi's teachings. There he also wrote a small book "The Direct Path" which was translated into Portuguese, printed and which he later personally offered at the Feet of Bhagavan.

It was at some point after World War II that Mouni Sadhu migrated to Australia and settled in Melbourne, from where he made his only trip to the abode of the Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi in India. Everyone who was associated with Mouni Sadhu believed that during this short visit, being a ripe soul, he successfully completed his life long Sadhana in Bhagavan's Presence.

On perusing the book page by page, Bhagavan noticed a quotation from Adi Sankara's Vivekachudamani and asked Mouni through the translator to add a footnote regarding this source in the next edition.

In Melbourne, Mouni Sadhu formed a group of Ramana Maharishi's devotees called the 'Arunachala Group'. It was located in the suburb of Burwood. This information is also found in a small printed note in one of the books which I bought on a later occasion. While living in Melbourne and continuing to work with the Electricity Commission of Victoria, Mouni Sadhu also helped in conducting classes on meditation and spiritual unfolding in a few yoga schools.

Failing health made the last years a bit of a struggle for Mouni Sadhu. He retired and committed himself to putting together his vast notes dealing with the methods of sadhana. I was told that he passed away at the toilet. His personal attendant, a Russian nurse named Natasha, upon hearing a sudden sound, tried to enter the toilet but Mouni Sadhu said firmly, "No need to help! It's time for me to go".

At the time of his sudden death, probably from cardiac arrest, all his notes together with the almost finished manuscript of a book about the 'influence of diet and health

on a Quest', were with his attendant Natasha. In spite of persistent attempts I was not able to locate her, as over ten years had passed since his samadhi.

Vera Rundus also told me that after Bhagavan's maha samadhi, devotees from Brazil frequently visited Mouni Sadhu, as he was for them a guide and living link with their Guru Sri Ramana Maharishi.

For all the sixteen years of my stay in Australia, I went at least once a week to 'Necropolis' to meditate at Mouni Sadhu's grave. At every Easter, Christmas, Guru Purnima or Onam. I burned incense and offered him my prayers. He was guiding me. This was always evident.

With time, my sadhana intensified to the point where disillusionment with mundane life drove me into leaving Australia. Renouncing worldly life, I became an inmate of a Math in Kerala. Impelled by circumstances, I took my first long break and left for a twenty-one day retreat to Tiruvannamalai. Is it not strange? So many years of dreaming about it, such long diversions.... and now I am bathing in The Presence, listening attentively to His words of wisdom and truth emerging from a thundering silence. Finally my unforgettable teacher Mouni Sadhu led me to The Master! So lucky am I!

Is all of this mere coincidence? An inmate of Sri Ramanasramam, on seeing me borrowing from the ashram library a copy of Mouni Sadhu's translation of Sedir's Initiations, asked me if I happened to know anything about the name and life of this most mysterious disciple of Ramana Maharishi. Such was the beginning of this article.

The huge circle in time is closing now!

Sex Education in Schools - A Stupid Idea

This country has been living for thousands of years, by and large with good family systems and traditions that have stood the test of time. The attempts of the so called educationists (only a very few of them though they get enormous media coverage) to canvass for sex education in schools is yet another attempt to devalue the Indian traditions and push the negative aspects of western culture into this country.

Already, cinemas and TV media focus excessively on sex as a tool for business promotion, unconcerned about the harm that it is doing to the psyche of the nation, particularly amongst the youth in the formative age group.

Already we see disturbing conditions that occur too frequently with the male teachers molesting the women students, eve teasing in public places etc. The women are increasingly being chased and viewed as mere objects of pleasure in this country. The introduction of sex education in schools will only hasten such dirty developments.

Traditionally, the parents have taken up the responsibility for providing sex education to children in a subtle and dignified way.

Let not this subject be "professionalised."

GOVERNMENT ENFORCED BANDH AMOUNTS TO DICTATORIAL METHOD

One more Government enforced bandh has taken place in Tamil Nadu on 31st March, 2007 which passed off peacefully with citizens remaining indoor, commercial and industrial establishments closed and the day passing off eventless. Tamil Nadu is not the only state where such government enforced bandhs have taken place frequently and other states like West Bengal and Kerala have also adopted such practices too often. Such bandhs are enforced by the state when any development takes place that would not be to the liking of the ruling parties in power.

Such bandhs are supposed to be enforced as a mark of protest. The ruling parties which enforce such bandh unilaterally do not appear to have cared to think as to whether there would be any other form of protest that would be less costly and more democratic.

They do not seem to be concerned about the crores of rupees of the income being lost to the government and industries due to such bandh and serious inconvenience caused to the common men and establishments due to such total suspension of public activities in the state. Many individuals and organizations are forced to cancel or reschedule the meetings on the bandh day and the government does not appear to care about such problems of the helpless citizens and establishments.

In most cases, such bandhs are announced and enforced without adequate notice and at the spur of the moment, possibly to score political points by the ruling parties for themselves.

There could be number of cases when persons suffering from serious ailments such as heart attacks could have been prevented from being rushed to the hospitals on the bandh day. Persons attending job interviews and business meetings in other states could find themselves stranded at railway stations and airports. Software companies and industrial organizations operating internationally with firm export and trade commitments could find it extremely difficult and embarrassing to explain to the international associates abroad about such instant bandhs and the reasons for the same.

What is even more sad and unacceptable about such bandh is that the ruling parties do not care to ascertain the public opinion while enforcing such bandh unilaterally for their own reasons. They seem to think that their political interests are the only thing that matter to the state and the society. These bandhs achieve no results, as the cause and effect are already well known.

In the enforced bandh, the government suspends the public transport system, declares holiday for all establishments and virtually paralyses the life of the society. When the public transport systems are suspended, most people are prevented from leaving their residences to their work places even if they would disagree with the reason for the bandh and would like to proceed with their work or other activities.

If the Government would refrain from suspending the public transport and declaring holiday on the bandh day, perhaps several citizens would have gone ahead with their

pursuits and the real level of participation of the common men in such bandh programme would have become clear.

The state enforced bandh is an undemocratic and totally dictatorial method of the government, which enforces its will without the sanction of the law and without any consideration for the rights and privileges of the citizens. Further, with the state itself supporting and enforcing the bandh and the police machinery that is part of the government virtually supervising the enforcement of the bandh, the citizens could even be fearful of defying the bandh even if they would want to.

Bandh is not the best form of protest, as it causes loss of crores of rupees of income, put the self employed persons particularly at the lower income group level into serious difficulties and cause inconvenience to the individuals.

The government should opt for other forms of protest that would not be undemocratic and that would not interfere with the privileges of the individuals. Perhaps, the politicians forming the government and the employees in the government and the public who agree with the cause could go on a massive one day fast instead of one day bandh as a form of protest. Fasting is certainly a more Gandhian and more genuine form of protest, where the true response of the citizens to the cause for the bandh would become clear.

In a genuine democratic society, the government should not force anything on the people that does not have the sanction of the law and established procedure. If the politicians in power would not realize this essence of the democratic concept, then the judiciary, which is fast emerging as the corrective machinery in the country, should impose a ban on the practice of state enforced bandh.

**FEEDBACK ON EXHIBITION SALE
OF THE PRODUCTS
MADE BY THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSONS
AT CHENNAI
ON
24TH AND 25TH OF MARCH 2007**

EXTRAORDINARY TALENT AND ASPIRATIONS

Nandini Voice for the Deprived organized an Exhibition Sale of the products made by differently abled persons at CP Arts Centre, Eldams Road, Alwarpet, Chennai on 24th and 25th March 2007 from 9.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m.

Differently abled participants

67 differently abled persons (both men and women) from all over Tamil Nadu participated in the exhibition and exhibited their talent and products with considerable enthusiasm.

The differently abled persons including orthopaedically disabled, visually / speech / hearing impaired and mentally ill persons participated in the exhibition, exhibiting and selling their products

The differently abled persons came from different parts of Tamil Nadu including Nagercoil, Madurai, Dindigul, Perambalur, Thiruvannamalai, Villupuram and Chennai city.

The products exhibited in the exhibition included paintings (acrylic and batik paintings), consumer items, wooden articles, plastic bags etc.

Kind hearted visitors

Nandini Voice for the Deprived contacted more than three lakh residents in Chennai and invited them to visit the exhibition. The invitations were sent through SMS (Courtesy BSNL), email, post cards, printed invitations and telephone messages.

Most of the principals of the city colleges and chairman/ managing director of leading industrial and commercial enterprises having offices in Chennai city were sent printed invitations with personal letters requesting them to visit the exhibition and communicate the information about the exhibition to the students/staff.

Many neighbourhood newspapers prominently published the details of the exhibition before the event with photographs.

While substantial efforts were made to reach the message to the residents and invite them to the exhibition.

184 kind hearted persons visited the exhibition and purchased the products, interacted with the differently abled persons and encouraged them.

Objectives

- * To bring to the attention of the society about the talent and skill acquired by the differently abled persons
- * To support the differently abled persons in marketing their products
- * To sensitise the society about the need to help the differently abled persons

Enthusiastic participants

The sense of pride amongst the differently abled persons in their work was clearly seen, as they interacted with the visitors and explained their background and the efforts made and the difficulties encountered.

In spite of the fact that all the differently abled persons who participated in the exhibition were from lower income group with a number of them having hand to mouth existence and many of them have to be physically carried as they cannot even use wheel chair, the pride and confidence level displayed by them was extraordinary.

Striking observations/Attitude

Some of the striking observations/attitude of the differently abled persons, who have developed their talent in spite of the poverty and adverse conditions confronting them, should be seen to be believed. A few instances are given below:

Sri. A. Mani

Door No.119/A/3,
Thangammal Compound,
Mellakallungadi, Vadacherri,
Nagarcoil, Kanyakumarai District.



Mr.A. Mani, another severely disabled person is from Nagercoil who cannot walk. He makes excellent wooden show pieces. As he was coming from Nagercoil in the train (in "a handicapped coach") with a sum of Rs.210/-, some one picked the money from his pocket. Mr.A.Mani realized this but he had no legs to chase the person and just helplessly saw him going away with "his entire wealth".

This story was narrated to a kind hearted visitor during the exhibition and the visitor offered to compensate the amount by providing this amount to Mr.Mani. But Mr.A.Mani, the severely disabled person who lives in poverty condition, refused the offer without hesitation and said "It is God's will that I should lose. I am sure that God will enable me to make this money by selling my products in a dignified way". The kind hearted visitor have no words to express and simply purchased Rs.2000 worth of material from Mr.A.Mani.



Ms. Velliammal

Thottanampatti P.O.,Veelkasander TK.,
Dindigul Dist 624 005.

Ms. Vellaiammal, age 30 is a severely disabled lady having hand to mouth existence.

She saw a girl child, who wanted to have the piece made by her but the child's parents were unwilling to buy the product, as they perhaps thought that this would not be useful. Ms.Vellaiammal straight away gifted the piece to the child (obviously from rich family) and made the child smile happily. Ms.Vellaiammal must have lost some money in the process which she badly needs but she gained great satisfaction.



Sri .R. Udhaikumar

63/4, Elumalai Avenue
Nehru Nagar,Ramapuram,
Chennai - 89. Tel : 55323974

Sri R.Udhaikumar, age 32 is suffering from muscular dystrophy (a debilitating disease) and makes excellent and artistic paintings He can not sit or walk and has to be always in the lying posture. A kind hearted visitor wanted to buy his paintings and wanted discount.Sri R.Udhaikumar, the severely handicapped person straight away refused and said firmly but slowly due to his physical weakness that his work can not be the subject of price negotiation.



Support from the press

It is gratifying that several newspapers sent their reporters and photographers to the exhibition, who interacted with the differently abled persons and every one of them talked to the media with great enthusiasm.

Doordarshan also sent five crew members with all camera facilities, who recorded the talk of every one of the differently abled persons assembled in the hall.

Satisfying event

On the whole, the event provided great satisfaction to both the organizer and all the differently abled persons assembled.

The differently abled persons were provided food and refreshment by Nandini Voice for the Deprived and also reimbursement amount of travel expenses.

The staff of NANDINI worked with considerable dedication and derived satisfaction by organizing this meaningful event.

Expectations

Any visitor to the exhibition would have understood that what the differently abled persons need is not charity but only understanding and support.

Many of them are excellent artists and spoke with considerable maturity and have no ill will towards the better placed and more affluent citizens. They came from all over Tamil Nadu in spite of considerable mobility problems, as they found this event to be an opportunity not only to interact with the society but to mingle between themselves and encourage one another.

Perhaps, it would have been even more satisfying if the large number of invitees would have found time to visit the exhibition in much larger number.



T. NAGARAJAN DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSON SELLS ON PLATFORM



95% of the differently abled persons consisting of orthopaedically disabled, hearing/speech/visually impaired and mentally ill persons live below poverty line. Faced with the problem of poverty, poor health and physical immobility, most of the differently abled persons are living in desperate conditions. Many of the people better placed in life and belonging to middle and upper income group do not even know the extent of suffering and misery of the differently abled persons.

In desperation, a few differently abled persons try to acquire skill, self employ themselves, make their products and try to sell it in the market.

Here is one Sri.T. Nagarajan, age 25 years, a severely disabled person who cannot walk and can move only in sitting posture. He has taken upon himself the task of

marketing the products made by differently abled persons in his own small and humble way.

He gets the products such as toys, consumable items, plastic bags etc. made by the differently abled persons from different parts of Tamil Nadu and exhibits them on the platform near Adyar Telephone Exchange in Adyar, Chennai.

He sits on his tri cycle along with the products in the forenoon and evening, with a placard inviting the passers by to see the products and buy the products and help the differently abled persons.

Sri Nagarajan says that he sells hardly to the value of Rs.100/- to Rs.120 per day on an average. Nominal wages are provided to him by Nandini Voice For The Deprived for the service rendered by him to the differently abled persons, so that Sri. Nagarajan can sustain himself. The proceeds of sale are entirely given to the differently abled persons who have made the products.

Sri Nagarajan can be considered as a role model, who makes his best efforts to help other differently abled persons, inspite of himself being one.

Contact Address :

Sri T. Nagarajan,
No. 84, Ellaiamman Koil Street,
Vannanthurai,
Chennai-600020.

APPEAL TO GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU PREVENT GOVERNMENT SCHOOL MANAGERMENTS FROM DEMANDING MONEY FROM POOR STUDENTS

It is gratifying to learn that the Government of Tamil Nadu has waived tuition fees for poor students at the graduate level in the government owned and government aided colleges irrespective of the caste affiliations. This is a positive move which will go a long way in enabling the poor students to continue their education at higher level.

The government has already waived the fees for the students in the government owned and government aided schools .

While such steps taken by the government are laudable, it is often found that several government owned and government aided school managements as well as corporation schools demand fees from the students under various pretext such as for parent teacher association, building funds, computer fees, purchase of uniform etc.

All these practices put the families of poor students into difficult conditions and also has the effect of defeating the purpose of the benevolent schemes initiated by the government.

As we are now entering the beginning of the next academic year, Nandini Voice For the Deprived requests the government of Tamil Nadu to immediately take the following steps.

1. Firm instructions should be given to the Headmasters of all Corporation schools/Government owned and Government aided schools that no fees should be collected from the students under any pretext.



2. The affected students and parents should be encouraged to file complaints with the government in the case of such extortions.

3. As some poor parents and their children may be afraid to file such complaints, NGOs who come across such instances should be encouraged to report such matter to the Government..

4. The government should appoint a special and an exclusive officer to receive such complaints , keep vigil over school administration and enforce discipline to prevent the government owned / government aided and corporation school managements from demanding money from the students.

FREE SPOKEN ENGLISH COURSE FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED AT PERUNGUDI, CHENNAI

Nandini Voice For The Deprived, is presently running seven free computer schools at different centers all over Tamil Nadu providing six months free computer training for the boys and girls belonging to lower income group. The students who have passed plus two and whose family income is less than Rs. 3000/- per month are admitted in the free schools. Placement services are also provided. At any time, around 280 students undergo training in the seven schools in Tamil Nadu and so far during the last few years, around 3000 students have successfully completed the course and most of them have been placed in jobs.

Nandini Voice For The Deprived will start a free six months spoken English course immediately at Perungudi, Chennai. The boys and girls who have passed plus two and whose family income is less than Rs.3000/- per month and below 23 years age are eligible for admission. The students do not have to pay any fees whatsoever.

Those desiring admission are requested to contact

**Nandini Voice For The eprived,
54, First Main Road, Thirumalainagar Annexe, Perungudi, Chennai-600090
Tele:- 24964137 / 24961792**

FARMERS ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE NATION DO NOT IGNORE THEM

Large number of farmers have committed suicide due to debt and poverty in recent times in different states in the country.

The media has publicised such events as if it is a routine news item. Prime Minister has made one or two visits to the affected farmers and made tall promises and then withdrew back to his head quarters. After extending some concessions and benefits, perhaps the Prime Minister thinks that he has done his job, though the farmers continue to commit suicide.

Unfortunately, the plight of the farmers continue. While the contribution of agriculture to the national economy has come down to the level of just around 26% due to the support given to the non agricultural sector by the Government during the last few decades, agriculture still supports more than 60% of the population in the rural areas, for providing them sustenance and employment.

Farmers committing suicide is not a matter of mere sensation and statistics. On the other hand, it reflects the

huge level of suffering of the poor farmers living in the rural areas in difficult economic and social conditions.

Any civilised society should feel disturbed and humiliated about such deplorable condition but in India the government and media largely treat such sad events as "non - events" and all the time rejoice about the so called GDP growth, massive growth in information technology and building up shopping complexes, hotels all around.

We should realise that when the farmers become weak, the country really becomes weak and the basic foundation of the nation gets disturbed and distorted. Such conditions will affect the progress of the nation inevitably both in the short term and long term.

Nobody can build a society on the corpse of the farmers. It is high time that we realise this and the government moves closer to the ground and see the writing on the wall.

ANDHRA PRADESH FARMERS TOP IN INDEBTEDNESS

The farming community in Andhra Pradesh, which holds the dubious distinction with a high number of farmers' suicides, faces an uphill task with high level of indebtedness, stagnancy in farm and non-farm employment and dwindling holdings.

Statistics show that the indebtedness in farm households in the State is the highest in the country. About 82 per cent of the 60.34 lakh farm households are found weighed down by the loan burden compared with the national average of 48.60 per cent.

According to the National Sample Survey and the State Directorate of Economics and Statistics, the average outstanding loan per farmer household in Andhra Pradesh is Rs 23,965, almost double the national average of Rs 12,585.

The cumulative financial burden on the indebted 49,49,300 farm households is about Rs 11,861 crore.

The indebtedness among the social groups in the State too is higher than the national average - 78.40 per cent in

STs (36.54 per cent nationally), 79.20 per cent in SCs (50 per cent), 83.25 per cent in OBCs (51.41 per cent) and 83.72 per cent in others (49.48 per cent).

Landless farmers

The statistics also highlight substantial level of landlessness. Farmers are being forced to sell or give up their land because of their inability to repay debts. A good part of the loans generally goes to unproductive purposes (current and capital expenditure) and not into the farming-related activities and they end up in huge debts.

Frequent droughts, lack of planning and knowledge on institutional credit, farming practices, dwindling size of land holdings and excessive reliance on private money lenders are some more issues the farmers face.

While the cost of cultivation is going up (on an average, farmers spend Rs 10,000 per hectare in commercial crops), yields and prices are not going up.

**We have an Agriculture Minister pre occupied with cricket
while farmers commit suicide due to debt and poverty.**

POVERTY DOWN, BUT POOR REMAIN

Poverty has come down over the decade of reforms, but a fifth to a quarter of the population still remains poor, according to the latest estimates of poverty released by the government.

The poverty ratio in 2004-05 was 21.8% as compared to 26.1% in 1999-2000, according to the poverty estimates released by the government. As compared to 1993-94 levels, the poverty ratio was 36% as compared to 27.5% in 2004-05. The statistics of 2004-05 in comparison with that of 1999-2000 and 1993-94 are based on different consumer expenditure patterns.

The poverty level/ratio is defined as the percentage of population below the poverty line.

There is also marginal difference in the poverty levels of urban and rural India with poverty ratio of 28.3% in the rural areas and 25.7% in the urban areas in 2004-05. The difference in poverty levels of urban and rural areas has actually shrunk from the 1993-94 levels. The poverty ratio in the rural and urban areas in 1993-94 was 37.3% and 32.4% respectively.

While the overall average divide in poverty levels of rural and urban India is not much, in some states the divide is rather sharp. For instance, in rural areas of Jharkhand, 46.3% of the people live in below the poverty line in comparison to 20.2% in the urban areas. In some states like Madhya Pradesh, urban areas are poorer than rural areas. In rural Madhya Pradesh, poverty ratio is 36.9% compared to 42.1% in urban parts of Madhya Pradesh.

The poorest states are Orissa, Bihar, Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh with poverty ratio of 46.4%, 41.4%, 40.9% and 38.3% respectively. In some states, the poverty levels are much higher than the average. For instance, the poverty levels in rural parts of Bihar and Chattisgarh are 42.1% and 40.8% respectively. The same is the case in the urban areas of the two states.

The poverty levels compared with 1993-94 are based on consumption in which the consumer expenditure data is collected from a 30-day recall period.

State specific poverty lines in 2004-05

(Rs. Per capita per month)

State/Union territory	Rural	Urban
Andhra pradesh	292.95	542.89
Assam	387.64	378.84
Bihar	354.36	435.00
Chaattisgarh	322.41	560.00
Delhi	410.38	612.91
Goa	362.25	665.90
Gujarat	353.93	541.16
Haryana	414.76	504.49
Himachal pradesh	394.28	504.49
Jammu & Kashmir	391.26	553.77
Jharkhand	366.56	451.24
Karnataka	324.17	599.66
Kerala	430.12	559.39
Madhya Pradesh	327.78	570.15
Maharashtra	362.25	665.90
Orissa	325.79	528.49
Punjab	410.38	466.16
Rajasthan	374.57	559.63
Tamil Nadu	351.86	547.42
Uttar Pradesh	365.84	483.26
Uttarakhand	478.02	637.67
West Bengal	382.82	449.32
D&N Haveli	362.25	665.90
All India	356.30	538.60

NEED FOR PRESSURE FROM BELOW

Why does so much of distortion exist in the distribution of national income in the country?. It is only because some section of the society have huge income and the remaining section suffer from hunger and poverty. Why are such conditions allowed to remain unchallenged as near permanent feature of the country?.

Obviously, the poor and deprived persons accept their deprivation as inevitable conditions due to their birth. They accept poverty as fact of life. This is the problem.

The poor have to assert themselves and protest in a meaningful way.

There is great need for applying pressure from below that would force the government and the better placed countrymen to realise their responsibility to the poor and downtrodden and initiate drastic and quick remedial steps.

WHY NOT THROW INDIAN CRICKET INTO DUSTBIN FOR SOMETIME?

In India these days, cricket is played in media rather than in the play ground.

Indian cricket is dominated by politicians, businessmen and money minded advertisement crazy cricketers. More than cricket, the priority in the minds of these people is to acquire position for themselves, wield influence, get publicity in the media, make money to the extent possible and promote business opportunities for themselves. As a result, Indian cricket has lost it's sense of direction and purpose, with several undesirable activities such as betting and corruption becoming the essential aspects of the "game".

We have President of Indian Cricket Control Board, who is a politician and cabinet minister. He is incharge of the Indian agriculture. Even as his ministry remains mismanaged and many farmers around the country commit suicide due to poverty and debt, the minister did his level best to adopt all kinds of methods to become the President of Indian Cricket Control Board. As a result of his twin responsibility, both cricket and Indian agriculture remain in disarray. There is no one to tell this gentleman that he should focus all his time on the Agriculture Ministry instead of splitting his time between cricket and agriculture.

Businessmen are always very clever and shrewd people and that is why they are in business. They have systematically created an image of national idols for the cricketers and they use relentlessly such "idols" to deceive the gullible consumers to sell soft drinks, automobile tyres, confectioneries and anything and everything. Cricketers make huge money in the process.

What has cricket as a game to do with all these practices?

Tasting the quick money, the cricketers never withdraw even after retirement. When they cannot anymore play

due to age and other factors, they try to become politicians or film stars or commentators or selectors. If they would not get anyone of these, they make allegations and sharp comments about the fellow cricketers and the obliging media publicise their views, however useless and unproductive that it may be.

The nation is losing time and energy on viewing and talking about cricket, though it brings no benefit except to the politicians and businessmen and cricketers involved in the show.

Recently, a political party said that the cricket should be banned for five years. No one in the country take the calls from the politicians and political parties seriously anymore. But the politicians like businessmen are clever people. They try to utter anything at the right time in tune with the mood of the country.

Today, the country is in frustrated and feel humiliated for pre occupying itself with cricketers.

The political party which has called for banning cricket has caught the mood of the nation.

POLITICIANS AND CINEMA STARS FOR DELIVERING CONVOCATION ADDRESS

With the mushrooming autonomous colleges and deemed universities all over the country, education has become a business activity losing the traditional dignity that it once commanded .

With the politicians and businessmen and even money lenders getting strangle hold over the educational spheres in the country and becoming Chancellors and Pro Chancellors, the deterioration in the overall educational standard has become inevitable.

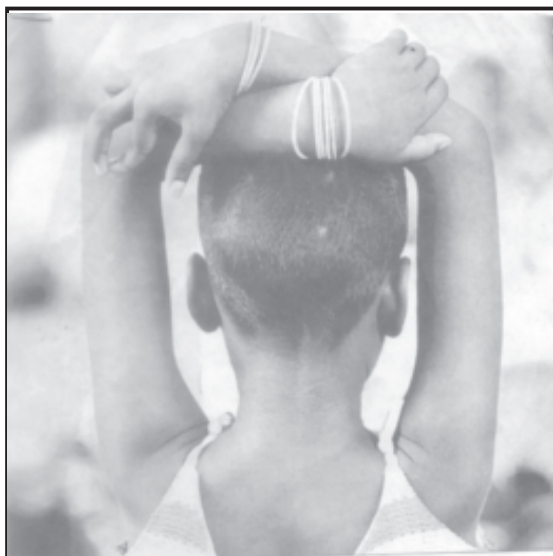
The falling standard will be clearly evident, if one would carefully read the name of the persons who are invited to provide convocation address in these deemed universities and even in the established universities. These universities also vie with one another to confer honour and doctorate on politicians, cinema stars and others and there appears to be no rhythm or logic at all about the choice of the persons for conferring the honours.

During the convocation address, the students, who have high aspirations and hopes, look forward to talk of wisdom and advise from those who have credentials to speak on the subject with blemishless track record and services to the society.

Unfortunately, the students of these days do not get such privilege any more.

ADVERTISEMENT

Regd No. TN/CC(S)Dn/205/06-08 LICENCED TO POST WPP NO.TN/CC(S)Dn/123/06-08
REGD. WITH THE REGISTRAR OF NEWSPAPER FOR INDIA UNDER R.No.63900/ 96



**It is society's responsibility
to provide her opportunities
to grow and prosper**

PLEASE SUPPORT NANDINI VOICE FOR THE DEPRIVED

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

Thanks

N.S. VENKATARAMAN
Chief Editor

Annual Subscription : Rs.100/- for twelve issues

Advertisement tariff :

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

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

We look forward to your support and encouragement.

DD should be drawn in favour of :

NANDINI VOICE FOR THE DEPRIVED

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

Tel : 2496 1792 Fax.:(044) 2496 1346

E-mail : nandini@giasmd01.vsnl.net.in,

nsvenkat@md4.vsnl.net.in

Website : nandinivoice.org

Nandini Voice For The Deprived

If undelivered, please return to

PUBLISHERS

Nandini Institute of Chemical Industries

M-60/1, 4th Cross Street, Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600 090.

PERIODICALS

Edited and Published by N.S. Venkataraman on behalf of **Nandini Institute of Chemical Industries**, M60/1, IV Cross Street, Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600 090.
Phone : 24916037 and Printed by Mervena Printers, (Old 21/B), 18, T.M.M. Street, Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai - 600 041. Editor : **N.S. Venkataraman**