

Nandini

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Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

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The Naxal issue

**How can it be solved
without rooting out
corruption and nepotism
in politics and
Govt. machinery?**

MAHATMA GANDHI – APOSTLE OF PEACE

“Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth.”
—Albert Einstein



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is one of the most fascinating of history's great men.

He did not start life with any special advantages. But, at a very early age he made a rule for himself – that he would act in accordance with truth. And he took a vow – never to be pushed around.

All of us make such resolves, but we break them easily. He stuck to them. He also decided that he would not use violence, even if others used it against him.

Through insistence on truth and non violence and also active opposition to injustice, he developed enormous power within himself. He attracted large numbers of followers. His example unlocked the power within them.

It is said that he made heroes out of dust. This happened first in South Africa, where he went as a young lawyer and where he fought against racial discrimination. After he returned to India twenty years later, the entire people of his motherland ranged behind him as if he was a Pied Piper. They hailed him as Mahatma or the Great Soul. He led them to freedom from colonial rule.

Mahatma Gandhi was a saint who was active in the world's affairs. He was a man of religion who preached equal respect for all faiths.

He disavowed any new message and claimed that what he said was as old as the hills. He also insisted that what he did, others could do. He wanted people to accept his path only if they were convinced it was right. When his country became free, he held no office or position. He owned no property. His wealth was the love

he gave and got from the people. He was full of laughter and fun.

In the midst of his battle against an empire, he had time to share the cares and pains of the humblest. He was totally unafraid of death. And when he was killed by a fanatic, he had the name of God on his lips.

GANDHI AS OTHERS SEE HIM

Gandhiji's philosophy to me has a meaning and a significance far beyond the confines of his country or of his time.

—U.Thant

Impressions of Gandhi? You might as well ask for someone's impressions of Himalayas.

—Bernard Shaw, in reply to a question about his meeting with Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi will go down in history on a par with Buddha and Jesus Christ.

—Earl Mountbatten

From my background I gained my regulating Christian ideals; from Gandhi, I learned my operational technique

—Rev.Martin Luther King Jr.

Just as an old man in a lion cloth in distant India. Yet when he died, humanity wept.

—Louis Fischer

Gandhi is the symbol of love and understanding in a world wild with hatred and torn by misunderstanding. He belongs to the ages, to history

—Dr.S.Radhakrishnan

I count the days with Gandhi the most fruitful of my life. No other experience was as inspiring and as lasting. No other so shook me out of the route of banal existence.

—William Shirer (author of "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich in "Gandhi: A Memoir")

This is the man who has stirred three hundred million people to revolt, who has shaken the foundation of the British Empire and who has introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the two thousand years.

—Romain Rolland (1922)



Desperate Calls

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

Hearing impaired girl needs hearing aid

Ms.K.Lakshmi is a poor hearing impaired girl. She requests kind hearted persons for donation of hearing aid.

Contact address:

Ms.K.Lakshmi, D/o.Mr.Kuppan
Big Street, Chozhagunam Post, Gingee Tk, Tamil Nadu

Disabled persons need sewing machines

The following disabled persons have undergone training in tailoring and request for sewing machines to self employ themselves

Contact address:

Ms.J.Thulasiammal	Ms.P.Vasanthi	Ms.M.Sudha
D/o.Mr.Jayaraman,	D/o.Mr.Pancham	D/o.Mr.Mani
Chettiyar Street,	Palla Theruvu	Vanakampadi
Melacherri Post	Sevallapurai & Post	Kadali PO
Gingee Tk	Gingee Tk	Gingee Tk
Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu

Ms.C.Ananthi	Mrs.J.Purnima	Mr.S.Ananthu
D/o.Mr.Chinnapayan	W/o.Mr.Jayakumar	S/o.Mr.Selvam
New Colony,	Chinapushpagiri (Village)	Kollaimedu,
Thayanur & PO	Pillayar Koil Street	Barathanthangal
Pin 604 204	Chandavasal (Post)	Village
Gingee Tk,	Polur Tk,	Aalam Poondi PO
Tamil Nadu	Thiruvanamalai Dist	Gingee Tk
	Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu

Visually impaired person needs support for self employment

Mr.N.Kulandaivelu is a poor and 60% visually impaired person.

Mr.N.Kulandaivelu requests kind hearted persons for financial help to set up a small shop in push cart.

Contact address

Mr.N.Kulandaivelu, S/o.Mr.Natarajan
South Street,Kanakan Kuppam Post
Gingee Tk,Tamil Nadu

Needs support for surgery

Mrs. Sumathi and her husband are poor unskilled labourers. Their third child Sri. Vetriveeran is a disabled boy (both legs are affected).

Mrs. Sumathi requests kind hearted persons for financial support for her son's surgery.

Contact address:

Mrs. Sumathi, W/o.Mr.Subramanian
6/818,Thanthai Periyar Nagar
Kanamaruthur & Post, Ulunthoor Pettai -606 102
Villupuram,Tamil Nadu

Needs job

Mr.S.Dhandapani, 27 years has obtained 1st class in B.Com. He has also undergone the course of Higher Diploma course in Computer Application (HDCA) .

He has four years working experience and is a disabled person

Mr.S.Dhandapani requests for suitable job.

Contact address: Mr.S.Dhandapani
No.6, 1st Cross, Vazhudavour Road
Ramanapuram,Pudhucherry-605 009

Needs support for education

Mr.P.Balachandar is a poor disabled boy.

Mr.P.Balachandar requests kind hearted persons for financial support for studying computer course.

Contact address:

Mr.P.Balachandar, S/o.Mr.Periyasami
Siruvangoor (PO), Kallakurichi (Tk)
Villupuram Dist-, Pin:606 202, Tamil Nadu.

Disabled lady needs tricycle

Ms.P.Patchaiammal lost her both legs due to polio attack .She hails from poor family.

Ms.P.Patchaiammal requests kind hearted persons for donation of crutches and tricycle to move from one place to another.

Contact address:

Ms.P.Patchaiammal, D/o.Mr.Patchaiappan,
Perumpoondi, Chozhagunam Post
Gingee Tk,Tamil Nadu

DESPERATE CALLS

Needs support for education

Mr.A.Dhanusu has got admission for B.Ed. course in Venkateswara College of Education, Pondicherry during the academic year 2009-2010.

Mr.A.Dhanusu hails from poor family.

Mr.A.Dhanusu requests help from kind hearted persons for a sum of Rs.45,000/-towards tuition fee, university fee books, unifrom etc.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Venkateswara College of Education, Pondicherry and sent to the following address:

Mr.A.Dhanusu
Murukkeri Main Road,Siruvadi Post & Village
Tindivanam Tk, Villupuram Dist. Pin:604 301

Poor student needs support for education

Mr.M.Jothi Muniyandi is studying M.Sc. 2nd year Biochemistry in St.Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli. His father is an unskilled labourer.

Mr Jothi Muniyandi requests kind hearted persons for financial help to continue his studies.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of St.Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli and sent to the following address:

Sri. Jothi Muniyandi, S/o.Sri.M.Muthu Kumar,
1/148, Middle Street, Thachampathu,
Thiruvudagam Post, Madurai- 625 234

Baby suffering from hearing loss



Baby S.Nivedidha, age 2 years is suffering from profound hearing loss. The doctors advised to undergo cochlear implantation. The cost of the Cochlear implant at Madras ENT Research Foundation (P) Ltd is as follows

* Nucleus freedom with freedom speech processor (imported from Australia) Rs. 9,48,000

* Cost of the surgery is Rs..1,43,000/-

Mr.S.Suresh, the father of the baby, requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his child's surgery.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Madras ENT Research Foundation (P) Ltd., A/c. Baby S.Nivedidha ,Chennai and sent to the following address:

Mr.S.Suresh
4/5, Manthoppu 2nd Street
Maduvinkarai, Guindy,
Chennai-600 032

Disabed student needs support for education

Mr.C.Umasankar is s poor disabled boy. He is studying 1st year Bachelor of Law in Dr.Ambedkar Government Law College, Chennai.



Mr.C.Umasankar requests kind hearted persons for a sum of Rs,. 5,550/- towards admission fee for hostel.

Cheque may be drawn in favour Dr.Ambedkar Government Law College Men's Hostel, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Mr.C.Umasankar BGL 1st Year
Dr.Ambedkar Government Law College Men's Hostel
No.51, Gangatheeswarar Koil Street
Purasawakkam, Chennai-600 084

Kidney patient needs support

Sri. Jay Ravikant Mittal aged 18 years is a disabled person.

He lost his father two years back and the family is run by his mother Ms.Sunitha Ravikant Mittal, with her meagre income through a menial job.

Sri. Jay Ravikant Mittal is suffering from chronic renal failure for the past few years and as advised by the doctor, he undergoes dialysis twice a week, which costs Rs.12000/-per month.

Ms. Sunitha Ravikant Mittal requests for help.

The cheque / DD may be drawn in favour of Jivan Jyoti Drug Bank and sent to the following address

Sunitha Ravikant Mittal
3/3,Satya Jeevan Society, LBS Marg,
Agra Road, Kurla (West), Mumbai - 400070.
Ph:- 022-26523970

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.



'Prohibition policy at cross roads'

Dear Sir,

The article authored by Nandini Venkataraman under head "Prohibition Policy At Cross Roads" (October, 2009 issue) was very impressive and par excellence.

The three guidelines viz. education; awareness and the public opinion suggested by her are really appreciable and the same have to be adopted, for bringing the policy for effective enforcement.

But how far it will be reaching to those, who are at the helm of affairs, is a question.

However, we hope that it will be considered one day by them, when the things go beyond their control.

Vriddhachalam T.S.Murugesan

Would prohibition remain a mirage for ever?

Dear Sir,

Not a day passes without disconcerting news in media about the death of liquor addicts due to over drinking, family quarrels and separation suicides, by wives due to the torture of drunkard husbands. Neither the central nor the state governments appear to be concerned about such disturbing conditions.

In the days of freedom movement, our leaders waged battle against the colonial rule but also against social evils, the main being liquor addiction.

Media then carried strong propaganda against the evils of drinking. It was Rajaji who first introduced prohibition. But the DMK Government cancelled prohibition in Tamil Nadu and till now the state is "earning" huge income by way of sale of liquor. Can there be anything more shameful?

Coimbatore M.R.Pillai

Criminals let scot free

Dear Sir,

It is time that our investigating methods, police actions and judicial system are thoroughly revised to enable law and order machinery to function smoothly and effectively.

Several cases such as Mumbai bombing, book scam of Harshad Mehta, Babri Masjid destroyal, Bihar fodder

muddle and down south Sankararaman murder are all hanging fire without final orders of courts for many years.

Our Government is shamefully unable to nab the arms broker Quattrochi who knows all secrets about Bofors case. The CBI wants to withdraw the case against him. Crores of rupees have been spent on the investigation. A futile trip was made to South America to capture him.

Confirmed criminals have their last laugh as they escape through loopholes in laws.

Coimbatore

M.R.Pillai

Austerity measures

Dear Sir,

Finance Minister's axe has fallen on central ministers, bureaucrats and others in curtailing their travel expenses. His eyes should also keep a vigil on the fraudulent expenses wasted on advertisements, exhibiting photos of ministers etc.

Funds are poured out to states for various schemes. Is there an accountability? What guarantee is there to ensure that each fund is properly used?

Every leader cries for several category of body guards to satisfy his / her ego. A solution has to be evolved to do away with this devilish game. For a genuine leader, people are his/ her body guards.

Chennai

K.N.Narayana Pillai

Corruption is the problem

Dear Sir,

I think our greatest achievement as a country is:

- * We have remained a democracy
- * We have remained united as a country and have successfully passed through various Dravidian movement or the Khalistan movement for separation and I do not think anyone would move away from being part of India.

Readers' forum

* There has been good economic growth in the last 10 years or so and the benefits have needed all sections of society in many states.

* Our democratic roots have become stronger after Sri.T.N.Seshan took charge of Election Commission and the elections now are more "true" than in the early years of independence.

I believe that our root problem is corruption and if we reduce / remove corruption, the dynastic politics will also reduce / disappear.

Chennai

G.Vijayaraghavan

Speed Post losing pace

Sir,

I sent a letter by speed post from Besant Nagar Post office in Chennai to Nagercoil on 22nd September,09.

The letter was delivered at Nagercoil only on 26th September,09 (SP ET201792859 IN) I sent another letter to the same address in Nagercoil on the same day of 22nd Sept. by ordinary post and the letter was delivered within two days.

I had similar experience with another letter sent by speed post to Mumbai from Besant Nagar post office which took six days for delivery. Obviously, something

is going amiss in the speed post delivery systems. Will the postal authorities explain the reasons for the delay ?

Chennai

S. Murthy

Liquor horror

Dear Sir,

I thank you for inviting me to attend the Gandhi Jayanthi Special Meet that took place on 2.10.2009 when college students were invited to speak on evil of drinking.

My own humble views are that it is not possible to stop this horror overnight through a single meeting.

Perhaps, it is just a token of our expressing our regret to our past great leaders, who were firm against toddy – wine or whatever. The college students spoke on the occasion and they said in all sincerity to abjure from the liquor evil and also suggested ways to mitigate it if not stop completely .

But once they get back to the college campus, well God knows what they may do.

No, I am not sadist nor cynical- but the present foreign customs and deteriorating way of life should stop at some level. Individual introspection is the need of the times.

Kanchi

S.N. Dikshit

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA SPEAKS



The earth's bravest and best will have to sacrifice themselves for the good of many, for the welfare of all. Buddhas by the hundred are necessary with eternal love and pity...The world is in need of those whose life is one burning love, selfless.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

When it is all one, who is there to hate, who is there to struggle with? When it is all He, with whom can you fight? This explains the true nature of life; this explains the true nature of being. This is perfection and this is God.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

This little separate self must die. Then we shall find that we are in the Real and that Reality is God and He is our own true nature and He is always in us and with us.

Let us live in Him and stand in Him. It is the only joyful state of existence. Life on the plane of the Spirit is the only life and let us all try to attain to this realization.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING ON GANDHI JAYANTHI DAY
ON
“WIDESPREAD DRINKING HABIT AMONGST STUDENTS AND
HOW TO SAVE THEM FROM CATASTROPHE ”?

Nandini Voice for the Deprived , organised a meeting of college students on “WIDESPREAD DRINKING HABIT AMONGST STUDENTS AND HOW TO SAVE THEM FROM CATASTROPHE ”? on 2nd OCTOBER,2009 at Youth Hostel, Indira Nagar, Adyar, Chennai-20

Thirteen students from different colleges in Tamil Nadu spoke during the meeting expressing their views on the subject.

The meeting was presided over by Justice T.N. Vallinayagam, former judge Madras and Karnataka High Court . Sri. N.S.Venkataraman, Trustee, Nandini Voice for the Deprived welcomed the gathering. Sri. S. Sivaraman, Lecturer, Presidency College commented on the views of the students at the concluding session.

During his introductory remark, Sri. N.S.Venkataraman pointed out that drinking is fast becoming a habit amongst the youth in Tamil Nadu, that is threatening to cause serious damage to the fibre and fabric of the society. The cause of prohibition was dear to Mahatma Gandhi but all states except Gujarat have given up prohibition. He said that garlanding Mahatma Gandhi’s statue on Gandhi Jayanthi Day without honouring his principle on prohibition is a hypocritical act on the part of those in power.

The students from various colleges gave graphic account of the extent of liquor consumption by the youth and student community. They said that school students taking liquor is not uncommon anymore. Even women are incessantly taking to drinking habit, which can have disastrous consequences. The students said that they have no role models to emulate as ministers, politicians, bureaucrats and even college professors and school teachers take liquor regularly. One woman student from Perambalur pointed out a case when a school teacher came to the class in a drunken state but no action was taken against him. Another student pointed out to several instances when school students come to the class drunk in some of the government owned and aided schools in the outskirts of the city and rural areas.

There was no difference of opinion at all amongst the students about the extent of drinking habit amongst

the student community , who said that students taking liquor in the hostels particularly during the week ends has become a grave issue. Many blamed the Government for selling liquor and providing the sanction of the law for liquor habit , for the sake of multiplying its income. This is not an ideal condition in a welfare state, they pointed out.

Many students said that the society is helpless when the Government itself is selling liquor and it shows clear signs of lack of commitment of the Government to implement the Gandhian policy of prohibition. One student said that police men have been caught drinking while on duty and in uniform repeatedly and such information have repeatedly appeared in the press. But, the Government seems to remain unconcerned.

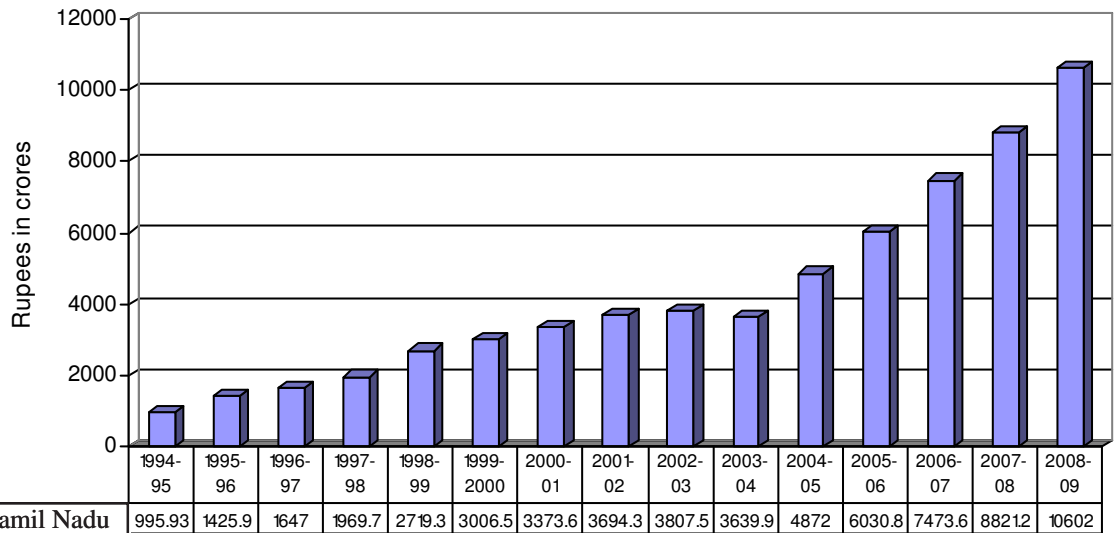
Mr. T.N. Vallinayagam pointed out the importance of children and youth developing respect for parents and teachers, which would provide them sense of values in life. For this to happen, the parents and teachers should conduct themselves as role models for the students. There is no point any more in depending on the government on this issue and society should try to reform itself.

Cash awards were presented to the college students who spoke in the meeting , as mark of appreciation for their efforts and their commitment to the Gandhian cause of prohibition.

Name of the students who spoke in the meeting and were presented with cash awards

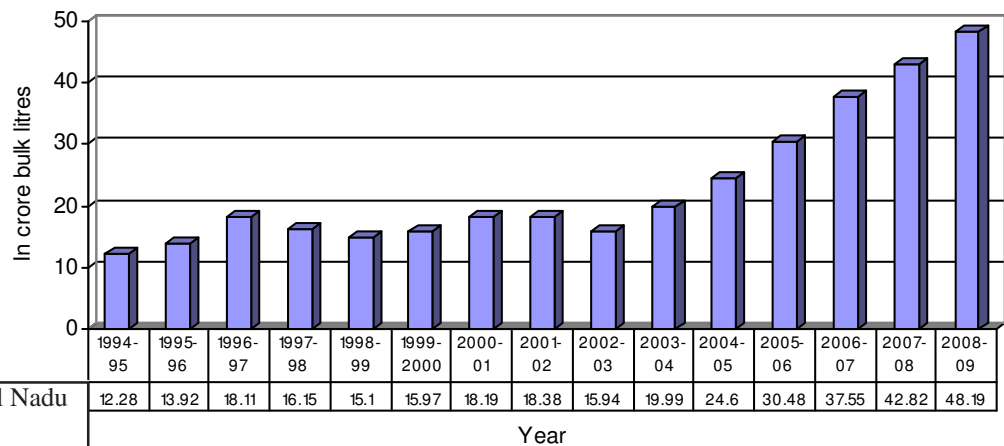
Name of the student	Name of the college
Ms.Vinita Jain , III Year BBA	Guru Shree Shantivijai Jain College for Women, Chennai
Ms.N.Ezhil , II Year Maths	Dr. M.G.R.Janaki College of Arts & Science for Women, Chennai
Mr.Madan Kumar , II Year B.A.English	Presidency College, Chennai
Mr.A.Rajah , M.A.	Presidency College, Chennai
Mr.Kumar , I Year M.A.	Presidency College, Chennai
Mr.Ganapathy	Chenglepet Law College
Mr.Karunanidhi M.Sc.	Annamalai University

Liquor sales in Tamil Nadu - Alarming increase



■ Sale of liquor in Tamil Nadu (In crores)

Production of liquor in Tamil Nadu - Increasing with Govt. Support



■ Production of liquor in Tamil Nadu (crore bulk litres)

VOICE OF RAJAJI

THE RASHTRAPATHI

In the year 1962, Rajaji paid glowing tributes to Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, when he was elected as President of India.

Like several other institutions in the post independence India, it appears that the position of Rashtrapathi has also diminished in the course of time. Apart from controversy during the election time of present President of India, now the controversy has arisen with regard to President's son contesting in Maharashtra State assembly election.

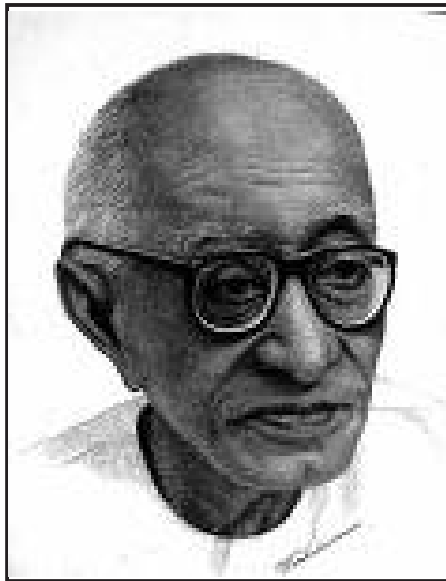
In this context, Rajaji's article on the towering personalities like Dr.S.Radhakrishnan and Dr.Rajendra Prasad, who held the posts of President of India make interesting reading.

Bertrand Russell greeted Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, the then President of India with the remark that his election as President was an honour to philosophy. So also can the profession of teaching claim it as an honour done to it, for Dr.S.Radhakrishnan was for years a professor in the Madras Presidency College. Every other virtue – and there are ever so many – possessed by the new President can sincerely be a reason, for the section with which that characteristic is specially associated, to claim honour for itself by this appointment. Indeed the election is universally acclaimed.

But behind all this satisfaction is a cloud that this is not a complete fulfillment of Plato's ideal. The office of President carries no power or responsibility. The philosopher has not become king. He is king only in name. The kings are still the non-philosophers as before.

If by some impossible constitutional miracle, a binding ordinance were proclaimed today that from now onwards, the President may in his 'individual discretion', in such and such cases, veto the acts of Government notwithstanding any advice to the contrary given to him by the Government in power, it would be universally welcomed.

In fact, some pundits have recently been expressing their opinion in favour of conferring some such powers on the President. But as the Constitution stands now this is impossible. Such powers were not contemplated by the framers of the Constitution. The President was intended to be and is, in fact only a figurehead, a nominal head of the State without real authority or responsibility



– a signing machine. So was good Rajendra Prasad and so must Dr.S.Radhakrishnan be content to remain.

All the same, there is a halo round this seat of honour and a feeling of immense respect flows towards it, to which the new President has been inducted, which he fully deserves by his eminence and character.

Leadership without real authority is relieved by a few exclusive courtesies and forms of distinction which belong to it, such as the receiving of salutes from the armed forces and occupying the place of honour on ceremonial occasions, etc., in which the State is symbolized by

the President to save it from being utterly confused with the party in power. These forms, however unsubstantial, keep minorities of all kinds in integrated union with the nation as a whole, who are thereby saved from sinking into a sense of complete insignificance. These are most important and should be carefully guarded from being ignored or forgotten.

Babu Rajendra Prasad was one of the illustrious old guards of National Liberation and he filled the office of Rashtrapathi with almost the luster of a hereditary monarch. Dr.S.Radhakrishnan has not this advantage of having been one of the Fathers of Freedom, but he has attainments and qualities of his own that amply make up for it. He stands blessed by the rishis whose language he has been speaking all his life and whose message he has been conveying to the whole world. He represents that holy family and may he be blessed with the strength to do so with purposefulness and power.

FUTURE OF INDIAN DEMOCRACY UNDER FAMILY RULE

WHAT DO THE COLLEGE STUDENTS THINK ?

Nandini Voice for the Deprived organized an All India Essay competition for college students on the subject "Future of Indian Democracy under family rule".

The objective of conducting the essay competition is to encourage the college students to introspect and to elicit their views on the recent trend in Indian democracy, where many political parties have virtually become family controlled outfits, with several sons, daughters, nephews and nieces of political leaders cornering the positions as MLAs and MPs and taking important posts in government or becoming ministers.

261 college students from all over India participated in the essay competition.

Twelve college students from all over India were awarded prizes in the essay competition.

NAME OF PRIZE WINNING STUDENTS:

- * Ms. Gurleen Kaur
Govt. college for women, Ludhiana, Punjab
- * Sri. Vishal Raghu,
St. Joseph's College of Engg. & Management,
Chennai

- * Ms. Tephilla Prince
Kalasalingam University, Tamil Nadu
- * Ms. Karishma Bharia
Gujarat National Law University, Gujarat
- * Ms. Bhavya Shalini
Gujarat National Law University, Gujarat
- * Mr. Anil Rajan Jacob
NITK, Suratkal, Karnataka
- * Ms. L. Mangala Vigneshwari
Cauvery College for Women, Tiruchirappalli
- * Mr. Prabhav Joshi
Birla Institute of Science & Technology Pilani,
Rajasthan
- * Mr. Ajay Srinath
Birla Institute of Science & Technology, Pilani,
Rajasthan
- * Ms. Divya Ramesh,
University of Madras
- * Ms. Hema Sundararaj ,
Avinashilingam University for Women,
Coimbatore
- * Ms. Swastika Khosla ,
Govt. College for Women, Ludhiana, Punjab

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE PRIZE WINNING COLLEGE STUDENTS

Dynastic politics is not new to India

The present kind of dynastic politics is nothing new to India, as common men have been used from time immemorial to the rule by kings who would groom their sons and daughters to ascend the throne.

What we see today is a kickback to the times when kings and queens roamed the lands.

For centuries prior to independence, Indian polity was essentially monarchical in governance. Those who were not part of the monarchy were taught to be both differential and subservient. This mindset continued into the British raj and seems to have been passed down today as family heirlooms. The mentality of Raja-Praja has not changed much.

The large section of Indian population who are still not well educated, do not understand the basic concept of democracy and they think that such hereditary succession to the throne is nothing unusual or unethical.

Magic of pedigree

When kings died, their sons took over in the earlier days. People have accepted this concept for several centuries. Now, this concept is extrapolated to the political arena of Indian democracy.

The magic of pedigree work in India due to brand extension because an established name in politics is the political equivalent of a commercial brand. Call it covert dynasticism, but from educated to the illiterate, from rich to the poor, everyone appears to fall under its spell.

Sons /daughters arrive straight from dressing table and are groomed by the patriarch

There is hardly any existing politicians in Indian politics whose other family members are not in politics.

With parent being the political leader, it is easier access for the family members to the party's ticket than a non family member.

In the case of several political parties today, sons, daughters, niece and nephews of top political leaders take over the reign of the party straight from the dressing table. They are groomed by the older politicians and are launched into the political scene by well orchestrated strategic media campaign, portraying them as "yuvraaj".

Media and TV channels help in grooming the image of the family members of the politicians.

Can the political families be justified ?

There appears to be a general feeling amongst section of population that someone from a political family has the right connections and resources to get things done. It is obvious that such ideas stem from ignorance.

It is true that political competence does not come about by conventional education alone. But, it certainly does not come by mere acquaintance or association as well. A competent political leader's wife, son or daughter need not be equally competent.

Some people say that even America and Britain have their own political dynasties. But, there is no culture of "nomination" in their system nor a culture of sycophancy.

It is not true that every family member associated with politics is corrupt. There are exceptions.

It can be welcomed, if political heirs are capable enough to provide quality leadership to the country. But, the overall experience shows that under the control of families over political power, the institution of democracy is groaning hard.

Have the political families come to stay?

Right from the local self government to the national level, political dynasties are everywhere enjoying the fruits of power and prestige.

Once patriarch succeeds in attaining political power, he does not want to lose his bear clasp over it and lets his near and dear ones to come in the line, so that the power would not go outside the family lineage.

The king maker parent will never lose his sense of power. By projecting his son or daughter, as the face of the future, he ensures a lifetime of political clout for himself.

The dynasties ensure that the door to the top of this new pecking order is available to none but to the family members alone.

Harm done by the entrenched political families

Instead of an open and transparent political party being accountable to the public at large, the political parties in India are close family structures that breed

corruption. They ensure that no outsider of the family and insider in the party dares voice dissent.

The control of political parties by families inevitably lead to several undesirable consequences, such as money power, muscle power and caste factors playing in the electoral process. The family politics is not only increasing corruption but also making the government biased, towards a particular section, caste and region to which the family belongs, to get more votes.

Family rule provide greater possibility of producing crooks who will loot the country and its people for their own personal gain , as it is evident in many cases now.

Political families have made India a make believe kind of democracy. Due to dynastic control, citizens who are more talented and have more enthusiasm to work for the public cause but with less family background, find it hard to compete in the elections, let alone make it to the assemblies and parliament.

The menace of political families is comparable to that of termites eating into the roots of a huge tree (symbolizing democracy) and rendering it unable to take nutrients (symbolizing fresh political thoughts).

Who is responsible ?

Humans have a tendency to take up "family jobs". Whether it is inherent in us or imposed upon us due to the social system is debatable.

In 1927, Motilal Nehru suggested to Gandhiji that Jawaharlal Nehru be appointed President of Madras Congress Session. Even though this request was not complied with, this gesture clearly showed the direction that the Indian politics would move.

Who is to blame? There has to be someone. Was it not the Congress party and Jawaharlal Nehru who started the whole concept of family politics, giving India probably the world's most politically powerful family?

Jawaharlal Nehru contributed much to the promotion of the concept of family rule in India knowingly or unknowingly.

Futile efforts of Sardar Patel

Sardar Patel brought about a masterly end to monarchy in India.

Little did he know that the Indian republic would go under the control of families, who would create another form of monarchy rule under the guise of democracy.

The consequences of political dynasties

If this present trend of dominance by political families in Indian democracy would continue, we will

have the emergence of a political caste-a sort of brahminical caste.

Indian democracy will cease to be participatory and it will cease to be a way of empowering people.

Need to change the feudalistic mindset of electorate

The continuance of political dynasties indicate that Indian society by and large, has not yet become free of feudal mindset. With the casteist – feudalistic mindset, the Indian public continue to vote for families instead of ideologies.

Without changing this mindset, it would not be possible to undo the political dynasties in Indian democracy.

Let us face it

One look at the family trees of politicians will make it clear that politics is a family business in India.

Let us face it. Politics in India is business.

While much fuss is made about money's influence on politics, another form of privilege, blood or marriage is taken for granted.

It is extremely distressing that one billion plus population is being controlled by a few families today. This is unacceptable.

Future of Indian democracy at stake

With the reigns of power largely in the hands of family members who manage to get into power without

having the quality of mind or merit, there is a serious doubt regarding the future of Indian democracy.

If the present state would continue, each state will become "a princely state" ruled by the dynasties of political leaders who promote their own kith and kin and the public will become mere spectators.

Elections would be made a mockery by the entry of incompetent or business minded family members. Several of them without the knowledge or vision would not care to represent anyone once they would get elected to assemblies and parliament.

What is the solution ?

The assumption that a member of political family need not have any record of service to the nation to get into power is an insult to the concept of democracy. The only way out is that the people should raise their voice.

The public awareness is the panacea to treat the nearly sick but apparently healthy institution of Indian democracy.

The solution lies with the people who should realize that Einstein's son was not Einstein.

Media provides hopes. There is strong concept of citizen journalism being built in the country. This is perhaps the purest and deepest form of journalism, which can improve the quality of public thinking and public response.

Views on family rule in Indian democracy

Dear Sir,

In my opinion, the following statement of the students sums up all

"The large section of Indian population who are still not educated, do not understand the basic concept of democracy. They think that such hereditary succession to the throne is not unusual or unethical".

Chennai

S.M.Arasu

Dear Sir,

"Indian democracy" needs a separate definition. The larger question is quality of democracy in India.

Social engineering is a slow process and much more so in India, which is still mired in feudalism, casteism, communalism, corruption, lack of leadership.

There are some good signs. Empowerment of the common man and decentralization of powers to the lowest administrative unit are essential. Let us hope that the next generation has more success in establishing "real democracy"

Chennai

S.P.Ambrose

Dear Sir,

The students hit the nail on the head. It is for the electorate to complete the job.

For whatever reasons, Gandhiji acceded to the request to make Jawahar the President of the Congress. Had he kept quiet and the Sardar Patel had taken the mantle, history of India would have been different.

And Gandhiji's call to wind up the Indian National Congress was too late in the day. We all seem to wake up now that the various satraps in the different states are following the example of the centre and the Congress in establishing family rule .

It is never too late to stem the rot. Only the electorate need to be well informed, who are presently being misinformed by the corrupt self interested political leaders and the media (both printed and visual)

Chennai

BRT Rajan

MURDERS UNLIMITED

The recent murder of a mother and a son in Ashok Nagar in Chennai is one more pointer to the fact that the law and order machinery is not at the best of standards and requires toning up to a considerable extent.

While the reason for the slackness in the performance of the law and order machinery is generally known to the public, urgent and effective steps are not being taken by the government to improve the conditions. The several murders that have taken place in Chennai in recent times have certainly put fears in the minds of common men and particularly law abiding citizens, who now feel insecure.

The foremost reason for such incidents is the prevalence of gang of rowdies who appear to be increasing in number, who are paid murderers and arsonists and who execute the task for a fee.

Such rowdies have no fear of law as many of them have political connections and are often freely used by the political parties including the ruling party to settle scores between themselves.

The political interference in the police administration have become so high that police men are afraid of politicians whether they belong to ruling party or opposition parties, fearing transfer and punishments. Many policemen often function at the behest of the politicians, big or small.

These are all ground realities and the net result is that criminals are becoming bold and murders are becoming unlimited.

The matured politicians in power, IAS and IPS officers who are particularly trained to provide quality administration, should know that such deteriorating conditions are too grave to be ignored.

CORRUPTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

All those interested in the quality higher education would feel grateful to Dr. M. Anandkrishnan, the former Vice chancellor of Anna University for speaking out about the deteriorating educational standards, with deemed universities becoming family business outlets and the level of corruption in the appointment of Vice Chancellors and admission of students to professional colleges reaching new high.

Whatever Dr. Anandkrishnan has said is true and the only regret is that he has taken so much of time to say this.

In a healthy society with alert citizens, Dr. Anandkrishnan's statement would have raised a big debate and those who are running the higher education would have been put to shame but this is unlikely to happen in India today.

ARREST OF NEWS EDITOR IN TAMIL NADU

The arrest of the news editor of Dinamalar by the Tamil Nadu police due to complaint by film personalities reminds us of the national emergency days.

Even if the newspaper has made a wrong publication, the appropriate course of action for the film artists would be to go to the judiciary with their grievance.

The arrest of the news editor is a case of the Government taking law into its own hands, which would only put fear in the minds of the press and the citizens about the high handedness of the government machinery. This would cost the democratic process dearly.

NAXAL PROBLEM

GOVERNMENT SHOULD FIND SOLUTION WITHIN ITSELF

With the escalation of the naxal violence to Maharashtra that killed several police men, the naxalite movement has now become an all India problem. The government says that it is working on a policy to put down the naxals and it would deploy huge para military force to achieve its objective. While there can be no difference of opinion about the need to put down the naxal movement as soon as possible, one wonders whether the naxal movement can be defeated by the police men alone.

Obviously, such movement cannot develop and expand in the absence of popular support at least to some extent.

It is high time that the Government of India recognizes that the widespread dissatisfaction in the country amongst the common men, particularly in the lower income group about the level of corruption and nepotism amongst the politicians, the bureaucrats and the government machinery at various levels have made substantial segment of population in the lower income group lose faith in the government itself.

The rape of innocent women, arbitrary arrests, harassment and corruption in administration are no more uncommon. It is a sad truth that the police department the most visible arm of the Government, is being increasingly viewed with suspicion and fear.

The atrocities by the local politicians, some of whom are not much different from thugs and their unholy collusion with some police and with the government officials have made life difficult and unsafe for the people in the lower income group in rural areas, particularly in states like Bihar and Chattisgarh. In such states, the law and order situation are not in good shape and the victims of such lawless conditions are inevitably the poor people and more so the women in the poor families.

There must be hundreds of such poor families who have been the victims of atrocities and the nefarious methods of the local politicians and thugs. Such poor families must be seething in anger in helpless manner. There must be many youth in such families, who must be looking for ways to protect their honour and take revenge on those who have humiliated and harmed them. When such naxal movement crop up, the suffering

people may even unwittingly feel that such movement could be one hope for them to protect themselves against the corrupt and ruthless conditions.

Instead of viewing such problems with care and understanding that they deserve, if the government would merely use its force to put down such violent naxals, this could be misconstrued, as an act of force being used against the poor and downtrodden people. There is no way for the government to ultimately solve the naxal problem, without improving the character of the politicians and government officials in various levels including that of the police men. The government has to search for solution within itself.

While there is no doubt that the government has to stand up to the naxals and fight against them on the terrain, it has to do much more to win the confidence of the people. Otherwise, the fight against naxals will become an unending affair with the naxals cropping at another place when they would be put down in one place.

In today's conditions, it is extremely difficult for the government to generate confidence amongst the common men, particularly in rural area about fairness of the administration, since the politicians and the government officials are themselves the cause of the problems. Finding solutions to the problem would call for removal of the corrupt and dishonest politicians and officials, which could prove to be difficult since mostly they are the people in charge. Is it not an utopian expectation that corrupt politicians will remove themselves from the scene for the sake of fighting corruption?

The ultimate solution for the naxal problem is that people's movement should start that would force the government to improve its character, so that the naxal movement would become unattractive for the suffering poor people.

If the government would wage war against naxals just as it would wage a war against external enemy, this could prove counter productive.

The situation calls for leadership of integrity and character and it is conspicuous by absence.

GMR ADVT.

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