

Nandini

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Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

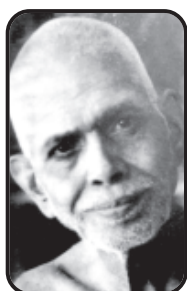
VOL XI

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**Let us remind ourselves
about our duty
Towards millions of deprived in India
on Gandhi Jayanthi Day**



Thoughts of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi

Note by the Recorder

In a very critical and distressing period of his life, a humble devotee sought the guidance of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi for his own peace of mind and lived in the Asramam in Thiruvannamalai in Tamil Nadu.

The seeker took it upon himself to note down, as occasions arose, the sweet, refreshing and enlightening words of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi. This self-imposed task was undertaken for the purification of his own mind and better understanding of the subtle and profound words of Sri Bhagavan.

These notes cover the period 1935-39.

The first part and second part of this article was published in the August and September 2006 issue

Courtesy : Recorder, Sri Ramanasramam

7th November, 1935

A visitor said: Some say that one should practice meditation on gross objects only: it may be disastrous if one constantly seeks to kill the mind.

Maharishi.: For whom is it disastrous? Can there be disaster apart from the Self?

Unbroken 'I - I' is the ocean infinite; the ego, 'I' - thought, remains only a bubble on it and is called jiva, i.e., individual soul. The bubble too is water; when it bursts it only mixes in the ocean. When it remains a bubble it is still a part of the ocean. Ignorant of this simple truth, innumerable methods under different denominations, such as yoga, bhakti, karma, each again with many modifications, are being taught with great skill and in intricate detail only to entice the seekers and confuse their minds. So also are the religions and sects and dogmas. What are they all for? Only for knowing the Self. They are aids and practices required for knowing the Self.

Objects perceived by the senses are spoken of as immediate knowledge (pratyaksha). Can anything be as direct as the Self - always experienced without the aid of the senses? Sense-perceptions can only be indirect knowledge and not direct knowledge. Only one's own awareness is direct knowledge, as is the common experience of one and all. No aids are needed to know one's own Self, i.e., to be aware.

The one Infinite Unbroken Whole (plenum) becomes aware of itself as 'I'. This is its original name. All other names, e.g., OM, are later growths. Liberation is only to remain aware of the Self. The mahavakya "I am Brahman" is its authority. Though the 'I' is always experienced, yet one's attention has to be drawn to it. Then only knowledge

dawns. Thus the need for the instruction of the Upanishads and of wise sages.

18th June, 1936

Mr. Cohen had been introspecting on the nature of the Heart, if the 'spiritual heart' beats; if so, how; if it does not beat, then how is it to be felt?

Maharishi.: This heart is different from the physical heart; beating is the function of the latter. The former is the seat of spiritual experience. That is all that can be said of it.

Just as a dynamo supplies motive power to whole systems of lights, fans, etc, so the original Primal Force supplies energy to the beating of the heart, respiration, etc.

Devotee : How is the 'I' - 'I' consciousness felt?

Maharishi: As an unbroken awareness of 'I'. It is simply consciousness.

Devotee : Can we know it when it dawns?

Maharishi : Yes, as consciousness. You are that even now. There will be no mistaking it when it is pure.

Devotee : Why do we have such a place as the 'Heart' for meditation?

Maharishi : Because you seek consciousness. Where can you find it? Can you reach it externally? You have to find it internally. Therefore you are directed inward. Again the 'Heart' is only the seat of consciousness or the consciousness itself.

Devotee : On what should we meditate?

Maharishi : Who is the meditator? Ask the question first. Remain as the meditator. There is no need to meditate.

Desperate Calls

Limitless is the scope offered by nature and conditions in an impoverished society to attain immortality by means of one's own philanthropic actions and charitable disposition . In simple terms, to help those in distress is a glorious opportunity to make one's own existence meaningful.

Elderly person needs support for Medical Treatment

Mr. Joseph Bernard Satur, age 68 years had a stroke in December 1998 which left him disabled.

He also suffered fracture of neck and underwent surgery.

He still cannot speak well and walks with support. He continues to receive treatment in Sundaram Medical Foundation Dr. Rangarajan Memorial Hospital, Anna Nagar, Chennai

Mr. Joseph Bernard Satur requests financial help for his medical treatment.

Contact address: Mr. Joseph Bernard Satur,
13/1, Chakravarthy Nagar, Ayanavaram, Chennai-600 023

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Children suffering from Cancer

Baby Kiran Mohanty, age 2 years and Baby Sidhita R. Orpe age 6 years are suffering from acute lymphoblastic leukemia (a type of blood cancer). The estimated cost of the treatment for Baby Kiran Mohanty is Rs.3 lakhs and Rs.1,40,258/- for Baby Sidhita R. Orpe.

The cheque may be drawn in favour Cancer Aid & Research Foundation, Mumbai and sent to the following address, mentioning the name of the children in the covering letter.

Cancer Aid & Research Foundation,
Byculla Municipal School Building,
Ground Floor, Room No.15-18, N.M. Joshi Marg,
Near 'S' Bridge, Byculla (West), Mumbai-400 011

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Student needs support for Education

Ms. S. Kavitha is studying B.Sc., III year Computer Science in Vidyasagar Educational Trust, Udamalpet.

Ms. Kavitha's father Sri. R. Shanmughasundaram requests kind hearted persons for financial help for a sum of Rs.3000/- towards college fees (balance payment) for his daughter to continue her studies.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Vidyasagar Educational Trust, Udamalpet and sent to the following address:

Ms. S. Kavitha, D/o. Sri. R. Shanmughasundaram
No.15/F Manickam Veethi, Udamalpet-642 126
Tamil Nadu

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Needs Sewing Machine

Ms. K. Parveen Bee is speech and hearing impaired girl. She hails from poor family.

Ms. K. Parveen Bee requests for donation of sewing machine to earn and support her family

Contact address: Ms. K. Parveen Bee
No.37, Kattapooman Street, Chennai-600 073

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At present Mrs. B. Shanthi is living with her brother along with her daughter because her husband married another lady.

Mrs. Shanthi requests for donation of sewing machine to earn and support her family.

Contact address: Mrs. B. Shanthi,
W/o. Sri. Balasubramanian,
2/2, Kizhakallukara Theruvu, Adatheru, Palakarai,
Tiruchi-1

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Mrs. Unnamalai is a disabled lady. She has studied upto 8th std. She also knows tailoring work.

Mrs. Unnamalai requests for donation of sewing machine to earn and support her family.

Contact address: Mrs. Unnamalai, W/o. Sri. P. Ayyanar,
No.289, Thoguppu Veedu Theruvu,
V. Agaram, (Village & Post) Villupuram (Tk) & Dist.
Pin:605 105C Tamil Nadu

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Needs Iron box for Self-Employment

Mrs. A. Jaya Mary is a poor disabled lady and widow.

Mrs. A. Jaya Mary requests for donation of iron box to earn for her livelihood. The cost of the iron box is around Rs.3000/-

Contact address: Mrs. A. Jaya Mary,
3/39C, Bharatha Nagar, C. Pallavaram, Chennai-60 043

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Rehabilitation Trust needs support

Karunai Disabled Rd Rehabilitation Trust is a voluntary service organisation for the disabled.

The trust needs exercise equipments for the disabled children:

Contact address: Chairman
Karunai Disabled Rehabilitation Trust
No.25, Kattabomman Street, Periyathachur & Post,
Tindivanam Tk., Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu,
Pin:605 651 Cell:9443905983 (O) 954147-241323

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Boy suffering from Cancer

Master Jatin Modh, 6 years old is suffering from acute lymphoblastic leukemia (a type of blood cancer). He is advised chemotherapy treatment for a period of three years in L.T.M.G. Hospital, Mumbai. The total cost of the treatment is around Rs.99,414/-

The father of the boy is unskilled village labour in Bhopal.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of ICI Poor Patient Fund A/C No.976 and sent to Mr. M. H. Aalam, Chief Functionary (Medical Wing), ICI Poor Patient Guidance Centre, Islamic Council of India, D/E Sector, Near Star English High School, Opp. Sunni Islamia Masjid, Cheeta Camp, Trombay, Bombay 400 088 (Phone: No.25550306/25554678). Please state the name of the patient in the covering letter.

Help for Kidney Transplantation

Mrs.Kavitha S.Wagle, age 48 years has been admitted in Bangalore Kidney Foundation Hospital for treatment since her both kidneys have failed.She is now under regular dialysis. The doctors advised her to undergo kidney transplantation. Estimated cost of the surgery is Rs. 3 lakhs

Mr.S.N.Wagle, age 54 years, her husband has resigned his job to look after his wife. All the savings are exhausted and there is no way for earnings.

Mr.Wagle requests financial help for the treatment of his wife.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Bangalore Kidney Foundation Hospital (NU Trust, BKF Chande Nephro-Urology Centre) and sent to the following address:

Mrs.Kavitha S.Wagle W/o. Mr.S N Wagle,
C/o. A/6, Sunder Garden, Bhelke Nagar,
Kothrud, Pune-411038

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Visually impaired person needs support

Sri.Kanniappan, age 40 years is a married, visually impaired man.He has one daughter.

He is selling incense sticks and with that meagre income he is running his family with great financial difficulties.

Sri.Kanniappan requests kind hearted persons for financial help to set up a petty shop.

Contact address: Sri.K.Kanniappan, S/o.Sri.Kannan,
Palla Theru, Vembi(P.O.), Villupuram, Tamil Nadu

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Following disabled persons request for tri-cycles

- * Ms.V.Buvaneshwari, D/o.Sri.Vadamalai,
Nannattam Pallayam, Pannampattu (PO)
Villupuram (Tk), Tamil Nadu
- * Ms.S.Arockiammall D/o.Sri.Samban
Sagayamadha Colony, Araiyoor (Village) & (Post)
Ullundoorpet (Tk), Villupuram Dist, Tamil Nadu

- * Sri.S.Muthu,
8, Mettu Theru, Poonthottam, Villupuram
Tamil Nadu
- * Sri.R.Balamurugan, S/o.Sri.Rajavelu,
East Street, Marangiyur,
Thirukoviloor (Tk) Tamil Nadu
- * Sri.P.Ayyanar, S/o.Sri.Pandurangan,
Ulagalampoondi (Vill) Kotiampoondi (Post)
Villupuram Tamil Nadu
- * Ms.M.Sangeetha D/o.Sri.Murugaiyan,
No.169, Mettu Theru, Ponnangkuppam,
Aasur(PO), Villupuram (Tk), Tamil Nadu
- * Sri.R.Suresh S/o.Sri.M.Raji
Perumal Koil Street, Pannampattu (Post)
Villupuram Taluk & District, Pin:605 103
Tamil Nadu

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Person with impaired vision suffering from Cancer

Mr. K.R. Venkatraman is almost blind and totally dependent on his two elder brothers. Since he is not able to go for work, he has no income at all.

In early 2006, Mr. Venkatraman was operated for cancer on the pelvic colon region. After the operation the patient has been advised 12 cycles of chemotherapy once every 15 days for the next 6 months. Only one cycle of chemotherapy is over and the family is under very severe financial strain.

Donations by cheque/DD can be favoured in the name of Mr. K.R. Venkatraman and sent to No.2, Vasudeo Niketan, Dindayal Road, Dombivli (West) 421 202, Thane District, Maharashtra. Their Phone No. is 98692 00031.

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STUDY ON THE EXTENT OF REACH OF GOVERNMENT'S SCHEMES TO THE DISABLED PERSONS IN TAMILNADU

In recent times, Nandini Voice for The Deprived has been hearing several disabled persons expressing disappointment that the Government schemes to help the disabled persons, though announced with much fanfare, do not reach them adequately. The disability allowance extended by the government are not being provided to several of them. Same is the case with regard to educational allowance and other schemes also.

No doubt, government is taking earnest steps to help the disabled persons and a strong government machinery at district level have been built up to support the cause of the disabled persons.

In the light of the above situation, to find the extent of reach of the government schemes amongst the disabled persons, Nandini Voice For The Deprived conducted a study amongst the disabled persons all over Tamil Nadu.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The disabled persons contacted during the study include the orthopaedically disabled, visually/hearing /speech impaired and mentally ill persons.

A questionnaire was prepared to enable the disabled persons to state their views clearly. The questionnaires were distributed to the disabled persons through the district level associations of disabled persons and local NGOs. In addition, Nandini Voice also directly contacted the disabled persons and conducted personal discussions with many of them.

The number of disabled persons who responded to the questionnaires :-	1,180
Number of disabled persons with whom personal discussions were carried out :-	120
Number of office bearers of disabled associations & NGOs with whom discussions were carried out :-	12
Total number of contacts made for the survey :-	1312
Of the number of contacts made, percentage of men contacted :-	58%
Of the number of contacts made, percentage of women contacted :-	42%

No government officials were contacted during the survey, since the objective was only to find the extent of reach of the government schemes amongst the disabled persons..

HIGHLIGHTS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH A FEW DISABLED PERSONS

Mr. A. Mani, Nagercoil

Mr. A. Mani age 45 years is a severely disabled person who cannot walk. He can move only in a wheel chair. He could study only upto second standard. He is married and has two daughters studying in a government school in Nagercoil. Sri. Mani makes his living by making wooden toys in a small way. He leads hand to mouth existence.

Sri. Mani says that he does not get disability allowance of Rs.200/- from the government though he has applied around five years back and has approached the government department several times in the past. Sri. Mani is not clear as to why he has not been given the allowance as he has not received any communication from the government about the rejection of his application. He remembers that one junior level official of the District



Disability Department told him that he could not be given the allowance, as he is "self employed". Mani has not applied for any bus pass concession since he cannot get into the bus in any case by himself. He gets railway pass if he would be accompanied by a normal person.

Mani is highly frustrated person though he has enormous talent and makes excellent wooden toys. In view of his immobility, he has tremendous difficulty in selling the products.

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Mrs. K. Dorothy, Chennai

Mrs. K. Dorothy has a daughter named Ms. Esther who is 19 years of age.

Ms. Esther cannot hear or speak or walk and is all the time in lying posture for the last nineteen years ever since her birth.

Mrs. Dorothy works as a domestic maid servant with paltry income. Her husband is sick and is not in position to go for job.

Ms. Dorothy says that her daughter does not get any disability allowance. She has applied two years back and there has not been any decision from the government so far. As all her efforts have failed, Ms. Dorothy submitted her representation to the Chief Justice of Madras High court. Her representation was forwarded to the state government and then one official came to her house and enquired. She was told to come to his office and when she went to the office at the stipulated time, the person was not in the office.

Mrs. Dorothy says that every time she has to go to the government office, it costs her Rs.120/- for an autorickshaw as her daughter cannot walk and has to be physically carried. Rs. 120/- is a big sum for Mrs. Dorothy.

Mrs. Gowri Arumugam, Thiruninravur, Thiruvallur district

Mrs. Gowri Arumugam is a visually impaired lady and her husband Sri. Arumugam is unable to go to work anymore due to his poor health conditions.

Mrs. Gowri Arumugam applied for the disability allowance around three years back when she was told about the government scheme. She gave the doctor certificate etc. for which she had to pay to the doctor Rs.300. She received an acknowledgement but

nothing else has happened. She says she has gone to the government department several times but nobody even talks to her properly. She says that she is tired and she has no hope of getting any allowance or support.

Mr. M. Syed Mustafa, Secretary, District Handicapped Association, Perambalur

Sri. Mustafa says that only a few disabled persons have been given the allowance. The problem is that the government has put a condition that the income of the disabled person should not exceed Rs.12,000/- per annum for getting any allowance or bus pass concession. On the other hand, in the case of the scheduled caste persons, the income ceiling is Rs.50,000/- per annum for getting the allowance such as for education etc.

He says in today's conditions, even a beggar would earn Rs.12,000/- per annum in towns and cities, as this is the minimum income required for survival. The disability allowance are refused in case of a disabled person having a small land or a small house or even a small job.

Even in the case of widows, government gives an amount of Rs.15,000/- as one time payment and several such allowances are extended on many other schemes. This obviously indicates that income of Rs.12,000/ per annum stipulated for the eligibility of the disabled persons to get allowance is very meagre. Further, several disabled persons are told that the allotted fund is limited and therefore no allowance can be provided to them.

Sri. S. Annamalai, Villupuram

Sri. Annamalai is a partly visually impaired person and aged 30 years. He has passed ITI course and remains without job for the last five years.

He makes his income by doing some small business and is also involved in social service for disabled persons. He gets disability allowance of Rs. 200 per month from the government. He says that he submitted the application around three years back and somehow got it. At that time, possibly, it was not insisted that the maximum income level for the disabled person for eligibility for the allowance as Rs.12,000/- per annum.

Sri. Annamalai suspects that nowadays, the village officers inevitably write the income as Rs.13,000/- and more which prevent the disabled persons from getting allowance. He is not sure as to why such practices are adopted by the village officers. There might be cases of persons getting certified for lower income by adopting dubious practices.

Sri. K. Nagaraj, , Besant Nagar, Chennai

Sri. K. Nagaraj, age 25 is a severely disabled person and he can move only in a sitting posture as he is paralysed below his waist from his birth. He has no formal education. He makes his living by selling the products made by disabled persons sitting on the platform before telephone exchange in Adyar.

He does not get any allowance or support from the government. He does not even have a ration card, in spite of repeated efforts. Sri. Nagaraj says that a local politician promised to get him the government disability allowance but wanted some money to be given to him. Since Sri. Nagaraj has no resources, he cannot give that money. When asked as to why he has not made any representation to the concerned authorities in the government rehabilitation department,

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Sri. Nagaraj says that he cannot even get entry into the rooms of the officers in view of his physical conditions. Sri. Nagaraj says that he has only seen the officers and ministers addressing the gathering of the disabled persons, making promises.

Ms. Velliammal, Thottanampatti Post Vendasandur Tk. Dindigul Dist.

Ms. Velliammal, age 30 is a disabled person and walks with difficulty. She is a graduate and also has typing and computer qualifications. But, she could not get any job as she lives in a remote village where there are no job opportunities. In view of her physical conditions, poverty level and lack of contacts, nobody could help her to get a job. She makes her living by doing some tailoring work. She also helps the disabled persons in the village by taking classes for them etc. She does not get any allowance from the government and her applications have not received any positive reply. She is not aware of the reasons for her not getting the allowance.

Ms. Masila, Kannagi Nagar, Thoraippakkam, Chennai

Ms. Masila, 18 years is a severely disabled girl from a very poor family. She cannot walk. She had to discontinue her education, as her family was not interested in her continuing her studies. However, Ms. Masila was very keen to study and finally rejoined a local Panchayat School. Though she is eighteen year old now, she is studying in 8th standard and stands first in her class. She wants to qualify herself adequately but does not know as to how it would happen.

In spite of her very severe disabled condition and belonging to a very poor family, she is not getting any disability

allowance from the government. Ms. Masila says that she knows about the scheme but has not applied so far. This is because she does not know as to how to apply and where to apply and there is nobody to help her in filing the application form either from the government department or from any NGO. In view of her severe disability condition, she is not in a position to go anywhere on her own.

Ms. Devi Appaji, Kodungaiyur, Chennai

Mrs. Devi Appaji, age 35 is a severely disabled lady and cannot walk. She has studied only upto sixth standard and her husband is also a severely disabled person who can walk and speak with difficulty. They have no children. Ms. Devi Appaji makes her living by preparing snacks which her husband sells in nearby areas. The couple lead a hand to mouth existence.

Both Ms. Devi Appaji and her husband have been getting the disability allowance from the government for the past six years. Ms. Devi Appaji says that she got the allowance sanctioned as she was recommended by a local politician. She says only a very few people are getting the allowance and she knows only five other persons in her area who receive the allowance, though there are large number of disabled persons in the area.

She says that she and her husband get the allowance by money order during the first week of every month and it comes regularly without any problem. She and her husband pay Rs.10/- each to the postman for delivering the money order amount.

Sri. G. Dharmaraj, Perambalur

Sri. Dharmaraj, age 30 is a partly disabled person and is a graduate. He

works as a teacher in a computer school, getting salary of Rs. 3000/- per month. He is not getting any disability allowance from the government.

Sri. Dharmaraj says that the disability allowance is given by the government only to severely disabled persons with the disability rating of 75% and above. His original disability rating was 45% certified by a doctor. Later on, he went to another doctor and got the disability rating increased to 65%. Recently, he got it further enhanced to 75% by going to another doctor during a camp for the disabled persons conducted by the government in his village.

Sri. Dharmaraj says that to get the marriage allowance from the government for the disabled persons, the disability rating should be above 75% and therefore he got it enhanced.

Sri. M Murthy, Kasimedu, Chennai

Sri. K. Murthy, age 35 years has studied only upto eighth standard and is orthopaedically disabled with doctor certifying 80% disability. He is working as office boy. Sri. Murthy is not getting any disability allowance but only bus pass. Sri. Murthy says that he has submitted applications two times to the Thasildar office but was told that he would not be eligible since he is able to walk though with great difficulty. After going to office several times, he gave up the efforts. He got only tricycle.

Sri. R. Udaikumar, Ramapuram, Chennai

Sri. R. Udaikumar is 30 years of age and is suffering from muscular dystrophy. He is all the time in lying position. He makes excellent

**STUDY ON THE EXTENT OF REACH OF GOVERNMENT'S SCHEMES
TO THE DISABLED PERSONS IN TAMILNADU**

paintings. He is not getting any disability allowance from the government, though he is severely disabled, cannot walk or sit and can speak only with great difficulty. His

mother is a government servant at clerical level.

Sri. Udaikumar is told that he can not be given the allowance since the family income is more than Rs.12,000

per annum. Sri. Udaikumar is 25 years of age and he wonders as to why his mother's employment in government should be the reason for not entertaining his application for the disability allowance.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SURVEY

Awareness level of the government schemes	Totally not aware15%	Partly aware75%	Fully aware10%
Awareness level of the procedures for availing the government schemes	50% of persons	40% of persons	10% of persons
Disabled persons who have been successful in getting benefits	Successful persons in getting all the benefits10%	Successful persons in getting the benefits partly (like bus pass alone)30%	Persons who have not been getting any benefits 60%
Disabled persons dissatisfied with the way government schemes are implemented	Fully Satisfied - Nil	Partly satisfied - 10%	Totally dissatisfied - 90%
Reasons attributed by the disabled persons for the poor quality of implementation of the programme			
Efficiency of the govt. dept.	Very poor - 90%	Not so poor - 10%	Good - Nil
Who is responsible for the poor performance	Senior officers – 50%	Ministers – 10%	Lower level staff-40%
Level of corruption leading to poor quality of implementation	High - 50%	Not so high - 40%	No corruption-10%
Of the successful persons getting the allowance, the number of persons getting the allowance without paying bribe money or using influence	No bribe money paid – 40%	Bribe money paid to get certificates of income etc.-60%	

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY :

Of the thousands of disabled persons living in Tamil Nadu, the government scheme of providing disability allowance etc. reach only 10 to 15% of the disabled population

The disabled persons strongly think that the government should increase the minimum annual income for providing disability allowance and other allowances for the disabled from the present ceiling level of Rs.12,000/- to Rs. 50,000/- per annum as in the case of scheduled caste persons.

Government's claim that it would help the disabled persons by increasing the disability allowance from Rs.200/-

to Rs.400/- would not make much difference, since very large percentage of disabled persons are presently not covered by the scheme.

The disabled persons have to get certified by the doctors about the extent of disability and the doctors demand money from these persons, ninety percent of whom belong to lower income group. Several persons pay money to the doctors or influence them to get their disability rating increased, so that they would get the benefits from the government without difficulty.

Several disabled persons do not know the procedures for applying for disability allowance or other benefits under various government schemes.

The officials in the government rehabilitation department rarely help them in filling up the application or explaining the procedures. The Association of the disabled persons at various district levels sometimes help them.

Most of the disabled persons think that without recommendation and without paying bribe money, it would not be possible to get the allowances sanctioned. Therefore, they often approach the local "contact persons" and politicians to help them out who inevitably demand bribe to be paid.

A large number of disabled persons have been waiting for several years now after submitting the applications without any results.

WASTE LANDS TO THE NEEDY

N. RAJAGOPALAN, I.A.S. (RTD.)

Waste lands! Why should they be wasted? They may have use for political reasons, if not primarily economic! That idea, it is great; that promise, it is born of a noble heart; action to be taken at jet speed to realize it, good if it is fair; and the intended bonafide beneficiaries are worth the help. But, the issue is burdened and infested with problems that it might not admit of instant realization.

All wastelands are not with Government. A owner leaves a land waste only when it lacks facility for irrigation and adequate yield, due to barrenness of the land and many other reasons such as he could not get economic results.

Acquisition of all those lands under the Land Acquisition Act and distribution is statutorily a long-drawn procedure. Surely the Government cannot appropriate such owned lands by routine writs.. The law of the land still struggles to prevail. Further, the land is likely to lie fallow notwithstanding the change of owners. None would knock his head against rock!

Much of the waste lands is left waste only because it could not be cultivated and any attempt to do so might deprive the poor man lose his hard-earned money. The regular ayacut in river belts and tank irrigated lands are left waste by hardworking agriculturists, only when he is totally helpless. To acquire and hand it over to a fresh set of persons is politically grand in conception and give food for media but economically could be bereft of results.

Every village community needs some wastelands for use as grazing grounds, cattle lands, storing, drying, threshing crops and many other community activities including disposal of dead stock. The poor man too needs six feet of open land to stretch his tired limbs now and then since all are not blessed with bungalows or houses. One can see them even on the roads and roadsides in thousands in the metropolitan Chennai even as the

'protected cars' and the security vehicles breeze through them.

The government's waste land could only remain a waste barring just one or two per cent of isolated bits. Thus, the beneficiary can boast of two acres but he would ever be on search for one, who would exchange it for just a few rupees since it would command no economic value as such.

Thus, ultimately, rich and wealthy businessmen elements would go round with bundles of rupee and buy these lands hoping for profits in the next century. The shine of a note would attract the poor, enchant him and lure him to part with the useless, barren land that has bleak prospects of any gain and that would break his weak heart over his newly conferred 'landlord status'.

This process indicated above would gain greater impact in suburban lands. Greedy eyes would spot out lands with gold mines not for agriculture but for other uses, appoint probable benami beneficiaries and grab the lands. This shall happen. There is no Election commission in this realm to intercede. In the course of a decade, in the place of 100 grantees, there would be just 5 or 10 who would garner them all just for a pittance or just a promise to pay! They would become 'Lords of all lands that eyes could survey', a repetition of zamindari.

It is said that 90 or 95 percent of wealth is enjoyed by 5% of the population and it shall get extended to lands too in due course.

PRESIDENT HAS DISAPPOINTED THE COUNTRY

President Abdul Kalam has disappointed many persons who thought that he would not sign the Bill on office of profit, which would have effectively reminded the Members of Parliament about their role and responsibilities and not about perks and profits. But, it appears that by signing the document, the President has only reminded them about the perks and profits, as the members of the Parliament have sanctioned themselves another hefty pay hike.

President Abdul Kalam has let go a glorious opportunity and the lost cause is the probity in public life.

When President Abdul Kalam takes so much of pain to teach innocent children about their national responsibility, one wonders as to why he would not do this to members of Parliament.

Perhaps, it is because that Members of Parliament are not so innocent to listen to him like the school children.

Appeal to buy the products made by disabled persons on the eve of forthcoming Navarathri festival

Nandini Voice for The Deprived, has organised a network of disabled persons from all parts of Tamil Nadu, who self employ themselves by making products such as paintings on wood material, batik paintings and crafts, modern art paintings, acrylic painting in canvas board, wooden toys, readymade garments, baskets made of plastic wire, candles, agarbathis, decorative pieces, snack food items etc.

There are reported to be around 1.7 million disabled persons in Tamil Nadu alone, consisting of orthopaedically disabled, hearing/speech/visually impaired and mentally ill persons. More than 90% of these disabled persons belong to lower income group, deprived of educational and organised job opportunities.

A recent survey carried out by Nandini voice for The Deprived has brought out the fact that various schemes offered by the government for the benefit of disabled persons such as disability allowance etc. are yet to touch even 10% of the disabled people. The problems of the disabled persons, particularly living in rural areas and more so of women, are very severe. It appears that the only way out for many of the disabled persons is to self employ themselves.

The responsible society should come to the aid of the disabled persons and encourage them by buying their products.

Nandini Voice for the Deprived is providing marketing support for the products made by disabled persons from all over Tamil Nadu. It has availed services of a few disabled persons to sell the products, who are paid salary by Nandini Voice For the Deprived from its own resources. The entire service for promotional sale of the products made by disabled persons is provided by Nandini voice for the Deprived totally free of charge.

On the eve of the forthcoming Navarathri and Deepavali festivals, here is a great opportunity for everyone to help the disabled persons by buying their products and encouraging them in their self employment endeavour.

The details of some of the products made by disabled persons are available in the website www.nandinivoice.org

Those interested can contact Nandini Voice For the Deprived at the following address for details of the products made by disabled persons and price details.

Nandini Voice For The Deprived
M 60/1, 4th Cross Street,
Besant Nagar,
Chennai-600090 India
Tel:- 24916037
Fax:- 24916037
E mail:- nsvenkat@md4.vsnl.net.in

NGOs FORMING PARTY TO CONTEST ELECTIONS!

It is surprising to know that a group of around 200 NGO organisations would form an alliance, with the objective of getting atleast one thousand panchayat presidents elected from its alliance during the forthcoming local polls in Tamil Nadu

The net effect of this move would be that group of NGOs would become yet another political party issuing manifesto, having presidents and army of office bearers and holding meetings and distributing pamphlets.

Ultimately, it would be no different from the existing political parties.

One thing that we need to keep in mind is that all NGOs are not angels. Recently, Government of India cancelled registration and approval for several NGOs all over the country, since they were suspected to indulge in mal practices.

The objective of NGOs is to effectively function as conscience keepers of the society and serve the downtrodden and deprived, outside the government sponsored systems and schemes.

NGOs should remain with distinct identity and clear cut objectives without developing ambition to become substitute for the politicians.

A person who makes others happy and provides livelihood to the needy, lives the real life. Otherwise, everyone lives for himself.

DISABLED MANI – ARTIST EXTRAORDINARY

Nandini Voice For the Deprived has come across a large number of poor or disabled persons with extraordinary capabilities and high level of maturity. The problem for these persons is that having been born in poor families, they are denied the benefits of education and the opportunity to improve their knowledge and capability levels. Many of these poor persons would have occupied very high positions in life if only they would have been given the quality education which are available for the young boys and girls in the middle and upper income group. The government and society are considerably responsible for not helping these poor boys and girls adequately in getting the facilities for education and skill acquisition.

In the last issue, Nandini Voice for the Deprived published the profile of Sri. G. Balakrishnan, an artist with great skill but who has no formal education and is presently living in distress conditions.

Sri. A. Mani, who lives in Nagercoil in TamilNadu has legs that have no strength. He can move only in a sitting posture and the scene of this man struggling to move from one place to another by pulling himself on the floor should break anybody's heart. What is great about Sri. Mani is his cheerful disposition in spite of the extremely adverse conditions that he faces. Read the story of this extraordinary artist.

Sri. A. Mani is around 40 years age . He could study only upto 2nd standard both due to his severe physical disability condition and the poverty level of his family. He grew up as a "human structure" with nobody taking him seriously and living all by himself.

As the time inevitably passed and Mani attained the age of 16, he went to work in a photo framing shop in Nagercoil. All he could do was to sit in a place where he would be lifted and kept and do the work given to him. Possibly, his employer took him for the job either out of compassion or to get a person who would do the small time job without "running away". Whatever may be that, Mani used this opportunity to the best of his ability and learnt the job. Gradually, with his inherent talent and intelligence, he mastered the art doing the work with speed and perfection. His employer then found him an asset and Mani identified a place for himself in the world.

After sometime, with an aging employer and falling business revenues due to competition, the photo framing shop closed the operation leaving Mani without a job but with confidence.

Mani then started making some wooden toys in a small way but nothing big could happen to him.

Being a man, though disabled and with little income, his parents could find a bride for him and Mani got married. The marriage was a turning point in his life as he found a person with him who would live with him, care for him, help him and also work for him if necessary. Mani continued his life living in a small place with his wife and two daughters when he came in contact with Nandini Voice For the Deprived. Mani came to Nandini Voice since he was asked to vacate his place of stay by the owner who imposed a condition that either he should pay an advance of Rs.8000/- and give increased rent or vacate the place. Nandini Voice

responded to his need , raised the resources and enabled Mani to stay in the place.

Mani participated in a number of exhibitions conducted by Nandini Voice at Chennai when his talent was brought to the notice of the outside world.

With such recognition, however little, Mani started making new type of toys including beautiful animals like elephant, fish, horse, crane etc. Mani used to take these articles to places like Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli which are at a distance of 40 to 50 kilometres from his place of stay and sell the products to tourists and sell in specific tourist seasons. However, Mani found profit margin was negligible,. since the transportation cost by autorickshaw to different places is prohibitive and the buyers often negotiate and beat down the price. Then Mani felt that he could not pursue his business anymore and gave it up. For the survival of the family, his wife took up some small job.

Seeing his plight and the distressing condition of great talent being wasted, Nandini Voice encouraged Mani to resume making the toys and gave the necessary fund support. Mani is back on the rails now. With renewed confidence, Mani has started making toy elephants and horses which are very pleasing to the eyes and should impress anybody in any part of the world. Mani makes the toys out of rubber wood and he says that the margin is very small, since the cost of production is high due to wastages of wood material in case the pieces would become defective or not adequately meeting his expectations. Nandini Voice is now extending marketing support for Mani's products.

Contact Address:- Sri. A. Mani
119/AB, Melakkalingadi, S.Thangammal compound,
C.B.H Road, Nagercoil, Kanyakumari dist.TamilNadu.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF FAST SPREADING LIQUOR HABIT

HIGHLIGHTS OF ESSAY COMPETITION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS IN TAMILNADU

In order to sensitise the youth about the social implications of the problems due to fast spreading liquor habit and to know their views, Nandini Voice for The Deprived organized an essay competition for the college students in Tamil Nadu on the subject.

149 entries were received from the college students, written either in English or Tamil.

None of the students have approved the prevailing conditions, where the practice of liquor consumption is spreading fast in Tamil Nadu.

While analyzing the consequences and the adverse impact of the liquor consumption, large number of students have expressed concern about the attitude and approach of the Government of Tamil Nadu on the issue. It was overwhelmingly pointed out that the Government itself marketing the liquor and making huge money in the process has contributed to remove the social stigma that was there on the liquor habit of the individuals. Several students further said that obviously the Government of Tamil Nadu is not concerned about the health of the citizens and economic misery that happen particularly to the poor families due to widespread sale of liquor in the state. A few students went to the extent of stating that the Government of Tamil Nadu is irresponsible as far as its liquor policy is concerned.

It was also pointed out that the statutory warning exhibited in the liquor shops that taking liquor will harm the health and spoil the harmony in the family is a mockery and fraud, as the liquor addicts would not even notice such announcements. If the government thinks that liquor taking is bad, then how can it sell it? The college students are aghast about such methods of the government and the politicians and one student asked as to how can such government machinery command any respect and credibility at all.

Of the participants in the essay competition, more than 70% were women students and they hail from

small towns and rural areas. Many of them expressed deep concern that even school students take to liquor habit, following the examples set up by the elders.

The suffering of the women, disharmony in the family and the way that the education of children being affected and the poor being driven to more desperate conditions due to the liquor habit have been elaborately discussed by most of the students. Several of them have said that if they happen to come to power on any day, they would not hesitate to impose prohibition whatever may be the consequences.

Several of them do not buy the argument that prohibition is unenforceable and illicit liquor will thrive if prohibition were to be imposed. They said that it is a flimsy excuse given by those in power who lack the will to introduce prohibition and perhaps several of them are drink addicts themselves.

Number of students have pointed out to the views of Periyar E.V.Ramaswamy on the need to avoid liquor consumption and about his destroying several palm trees from where toddy is tapped. One girl student said that the followers of Periyar follow his principles selectively and conveniently.

It is gratifying that so many students have expressed their disgust about the fast spreading liquor consumption in Tamil Nadu, disproving the general view that prohibition has lost the battle in the state. Students said that the media and cinema are spreading a false image that most of the youth and several women take



Gandhiji said "If I were the dictator for one hour, I will close all liquor shops without paying compensation"

liquor which is not true. Media has a great responsibility in projecting the right picture and giving a lead. On the other hand, media goes after sensation which possibly is one additional reason for the fast spreading liquor consumption in Tamil Nadu.

It was also pointed out that several cinemas while depicting scenes of liquor consumption put a small sub title that liquor consumption is bad for health. This amount to only fooling the public.

Nandini Voice appreciates and thanks all the students who have participated in the essay competition. The name of ten students who would be given cash prizes would be announced shortly. All participating students would be given participation certificate.

Srinivasa Ramanujan Academy of Maths Talent, Chennai Provides awards to students

Srinivasa Ramanujan Academy of Maths Talent is a Chennai based organization devoted to the identification of new talent in Mathematics. It is doing yeomen service by encouraging the Maths talent specially amongst students and recognizing the teachers of Mathematics.

For the award for the year 2006, 39 students from 25 Chennai based schools participated in the competition. The standards for the competition was high and the methodology for selection for the award was scientific and elaborate.

The following three students were awarded the prizes



Rank 1

Sri. P.N. Bhargav X11 standard
D.A.V. Boys Sr. Sec. School,
Chennai-600086



Rank 2

Sri. N.J. Ajay X11 Standard
Modern Sr. Sec. School
Chennai-600061



Rank 3

Sri. C.K. Naveen Karthik X11 standard
Vidya Mandir Sr. Sec. School
Chennai-600004

For the year 2006, Sri. Ramanujan Best Teacher Award has been given to the following two teachers

1. Mrs. S. Gomathy -Hindu Sr. Sec. School, Chennai-600020
2. Mrs. Radha Venkatesh - Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan, Chennai – 600078

Nandini Voice for the Deprived has pleasure in complimenting the above award winners and wish the talented persons all success in their future endeavours.

NANDINI COMPUTER SCHOOLS - SATISFYING EXPERIENCE

Nandini Voice For The Deprived is presently operating Six Number of Free Computer Schools at the following centres in Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ **Perungudi, Chennai**
- ❖ **Korattur, Chennai**
- ❖ **Tiruvottiyur, Chennai**
- ❖ **Dindigul, Tamil Nadu**
- ❖ **Perambalur, Tamil Nadu**
- ❖ **Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu**

The Computer Schools have been functioning for the last 8 years and during this period, around 2300 boys and girls from lower income group have successfully completed the computer course of 6 months duration. Most of the students have been placed in jobs.

Nandini Computer Schools provide free computer education to the boys and girls who have passed +2 examination and whose family income is less than Rs.3,000/- per month. Placement services are also provided.

Knowledge of computer promotes employability of the person considerably.

During the last two decades, the computer education in the country have been largely dominated by the private sector institutions, who have been charging exorbitant fees. As a result, students belonging to lower income group did not have the privilege of computer education, which became largely restricted to the persons belonging to middle and upper income group.

With the denial of computer education, several job opportunities were lost to the lower income group students.

Nandini Voice For The Deprived in its own limited way, established the fact that computer education can be provided free to the poor students, who armed with computer knowledge can compete with others for the job opportunities.

It is satisfying to see that over 2300 boys and girls from lower income group have enthusiastically studied the computer course offered free by Nandini Voice For The Deprived and have passed the examination and are now occupying reasonably good positions.

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.



Beggars

Dear Sir,

Who is a beggar? Why he begs? Is begging a joyful profession? The beggars live a life of stray animals. They collect their food along with dogs and pigs in street dustbins.

The beggars need food to eat and so they beg for food only to live. Those who are reluctant to beg have no alternative but to commit suicide about which we read often in the newspapers.

God made men and women only; not beggars. The society, the country, the rulers, the authorities and the various political groups are the makers of beggars.

Government is elected by the poor and government works for the rich.

D.Vedamuthu, Chennai



Vande Mataram

Dear Sir,

Apropos a news media report The Centre under HRD Ministry has directed all educational institutions to recite "Vande Mataram" on Sept. 7 coinciding with National Song Centenary as a mark of respect to the freedom fighters and Martyrs.

However, the Government of India diluted the instruction which was mandatory earlier as voluntary, when it faced resistance from minority organisations.

We do not know as to what extent the political parties in the country will surrender the Nation's Liberty and Rights just to remain in power. It would not be surprising, it may be our National Anthem and even our National flag next.

S.Sivaraman, Chennai



Misconception among Minorities

Dear Sir,

The objection to the singing of Vande Mataram in public and government functions raised by a section is unjustifiable.

This national song has a vibrant force to unite all communities to rise as One Man to fight against the colonial rule and has been sung with passion for over a century. It must be understood that the song is invocation of motherland and not any Hindu goddess.

M.R.Pillai, Chennai

Living Long - Is it a blessing or curse?

Dear Sir,

This has reference to the article "Living long, a blessing or a curse"? in August 2006 issue of Nandini Voice for the Deprived. The article brings to the fore as to how elderly are treated by their own kith and kin.

I read in Watch Tower magazine dated June 1, 2006 that an elderly couple leaped from the window of their eighth floor apartment and ended their lives. As shocking as this suicide was, their motive was even more jarring. A note found in the husband's pant pocket stated "We are ending our lives because of constant abuses and harassment from our son and daughter in law".

The details of this story may be unusual but the underlying issue is disturbingly common. Indeed mistreatment of the elderly exists virtually in every part of the globe.

G.E.M. Manoharan, Coimbatore



Our President

Dear Sir,

Today crorepathis get elected as MLAs and MPs. Some of them become Ministers.

Once vote goes in favour of a person of character coupled with patriotism, our country's future will be safe, secure and sublime.

It is in our own interests that our patriotic youth should awake, snatch power to serve our mother land selflessly to uphold its glory and destiny.

When dark clouds of insecurity, poverty, backwardness, erosion of values and virtues are looming large in the horizon, the only silver-lining is our President, although he too succumbs to political pressure. We want lakhs of Abdul Kalams across our country wedded to humility, nobility, serenity and divinity.

K.N.Narayana Pillai, Chennai



Quite disgusting

Dear Sir,

It is quite disgusting to the educated and enlightened public to see the way in which the Parliament of India is functioning.

We are reminded of the days of G.G. Mavlankar and M. Ananthasayana Iyengar when affairs of the Parliament was conducted with perfect discipline. The two presiding

officers maintained the House with firmness and fairness and enjoyed the confidence of the members.

To quote an example, Ananthasayana Iyengar asked Nehru to be seated when he angrily objected to the remarks of Shyam Prasad Mukherjee. Nehru quietly resumed his seat.

P. Jagadeesan, Chennai.

❖ ❖ ❖
Role of police

Dear Sir,

It is distressing to note that lawlessness, atrocity, impartiality, bribery and indiscipline are increasing day by day among our police personnel.

The police being the custodian of law and order is under the control of the State Govt. Hence politicians of the state especially the Ministers and ruling partymen at the state level have several chances to interfere in the day today affairs of the police and dictate terms to police officers. Unless we make the entire police department an autonomous body and encourage honest and good officers to function as per the Rule of Law without fear or favour, we can not have a credible police system in our country.

The unholy nexus between the police and politicians on one hand and anti-social elements on the other hand is the root cause for all troubles and it has to be broken. Real Swaraj lies in the safety and safeguard of common law-abiding citizens. So long as we fail to achieve this goal, our Independence and Democracy are meaningless!!

V.R. Chandran, Chennai

❖ ❖ ❖
Medical Profession - Then and Now

Dear Sir,

Alas, gone are the days when medical profession was regarded as the noblest one and all doctors qualified in any of the medical systems like Allopathy, Ayurvedha, Siddha,

Unani or Homeopathy were held in high respect. They cared more for correct diagnosis and treatment of ailments in quick time than for the income derived out of the profession.

Here I shall narrate my own experience. A few days back on a hot evening I felt giddy and fell down unconscious. My family members immediately admitted me in a nursing home. The doctor gave me some first aid like injection, administration of glucose drips etc.

The next day they subjected me to all tests (I do not know whether tests for HIV and Chickungunya were included). All tests showed normal condition and then I was discharged. The bill claimed a mind-boggling Rs.800 + Break up figures - Medical attendance Rs.1500, Nursing Rs.900/-, Room Rent Rs.800/-, Investigation (tests) Rs.5000/-

Can any senior citizen, a poor pensioner like me afford such a huge amount for treating giddiness?

M.R.Pillai, Chennai

❖ ❖ ❖
Stinking Chennai

Dear Sir,

Several civic problems are projected in media in varying degrees to be sorted out at various levels. The ward councillors or panchayat members or area MLAs can easily analyse them under their purview and tackle them tactfully, thus nipping in its very bud any problem.

Let us take Chennai for a case study. With open toilets, the pedestrians are unable to walk through the pavements and streets that stink by bad odour stemming from human effluents, discharged at every nook and corner.

Instead of free TVs and gas connection, if closed toilets are provided at strategic sites, the citizens will have a sigh of relief. If the scheme is extended to villages, it will be a blessing to our women folk.

K.N.Narayana Pillai, Chennai

The Abusing Policeman

Sir,

I was waiting at the signal near old Mahabalipuram road in Chennai at around 5.30 p.m., when the traffic was very heavy as usual.

A gentleman on a two wheeler with helmet and decently dressed was also waiting at the signal by my side. Possibly, he has been waiting on his two wheeler beyond the stipulated area which is not correct. The policeman on duty found out this and started abusing him using vulgar language. The decently dressed young man on the two wheeler did not reply and simply looked on at the police man. The police man appeared to be losing his temper and went on abusing him, leaving the traffic to manage all by itself. Finding the two wheeler rider not replying, he demanded the licence which was immediately produced. Finding nothing unusual in the licence, the police man

asked him to wait on the side line while the traffic moved on and I left the scene.

I do not know what happened to the two wheeler rider later on and how he bought peace with the police man. But, I feel highly disturbed that a police man could use such abusive language and remain unchallenged. The scene was witnessed by several persons including myself and none of us interfered. When the signal was on, all of us were in a hurry to move on leaving the helpless two wheeler rider all to himself.

Obviously, there is tremendous sense of fear amongst the citizens particularly while dealing with the police man and the police personnel seem to take law into their own hands and think that they can humiliate anyone at their will. The police need sensitization about their role responsibility and image.

Name withheld on request



This child should bleed
nation's heart.
But, does it?

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Thanks

N.S. VENKATARAMAN
Chief Editor

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