

Nandini

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Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

VOL XII

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**The nation needs grass root
workers fighting for the cause
and not mere arm chair critics
and platform speakers**

VOICE OF RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

BE SATISFIED WITH WHAT COMES ON IT'S OWN ACCORD

"Actually, very few of us believe in God all the time. How do we know this? Because we allow anxieties and fears to arise in our minds."



Lust and greed constitute worldly life. Many people think of money as though it were the blood in the body! But if you try too hard for it, you can perhaps one day lose it altogether.

They who make the right use of money, that is, spend it on the service of the deities, of sadhus and devotees and give it away in charity, succeed. Only they really achieve their goal.

You do need money in worldly life, but you must not be anxious and worry too much about it. You must be content with whatever comes of its own accord — this is very good. Don't worry too much about saving for the future. Those who surrender their mind and soul to God, those who are His devotees and have taken refuge in Him, don't worry too much about saving.

As they earn, so they spend -from one side it comes and out the other it is spent. This is what is called accepting what comes of its own accord. It is mentioned in the Gita.

When a person attains deep dispassion, the world appears like a deep well and that person does not calculate.

WORK WITHOUT ATTACHMENT

That attachment to worldly work is only to be found in the West is not true. It is all over the world. Even so, do you know what it is? Karmakanda is a mark of the earliest stages of life. Without the sattvaguna (devotion, discrimination, dispassion, kindness and so on) one cannot attain the Lord. In the rajoguna, work occupies the chief place. So it brings tamoguna with it. Too much work makes one forget the Lord, leading to added attachment to 'woman and gold'.

"However, it is not possible to give up work all of a sudden. Your nature will lead you on to it, whether you want it or not. So, the instruction is: Work without attachment. Work without attachment means work without the expectation of any reward. For example, you take to

worship, japa (recitation of the Name) and religious austerities not for name and fame or for earning merit.

"Working unattached in this way is called Karma Yoga. But it is very difficult. On the one hand, you are in Kali Yuga - attachment creeps in so easily. You may resolve to work without attachment, but attachment enters from somewhere. You do not even come to know of it. Say, you have celebrated a big holy feast, or served a number of poor and paupers. You may have thought, 'I am doing all this without any attachment.' Yet the desire for name and fame enters from somewhere and you do not even come to know of it. Thus it is possible to be completely unattached only for those who have had the vision of the Lord."

Desperate Calls

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

Visually impaired person needs support



Sri. Polimati Easwarudu, age 45 years lost his sight in both the eyes, due to glaucoma disease.

Sri. Polimati Easwarudu obtained B.A. degree and also got Rural Medical Health Association Certificate in the year 1997. From that time onwards, he was doing medical practice. Due to his blindness, he lost the opportunity to do medical practice and earn for his family.

Sri. Polimati Easwarudu's family consist of 80 years old mother and two children and wife.

Sri. Polimati Easwarudu requests kind hearted persons for financial help.

Contact address:

Sri. Polimati Easwarudu
D.No.3-11-80/2, Kalara Pakalu,
New Maridamma Temple, Recherlapeta
Kakinada-533 003. E.G.Dt. Andhra Pradesh

Disabled ladies need sewing machines

Ms.R.Ananthi, Ms.B.Parimala and Ms.S.Parvathi are poor disabled ladies. They have undergone tailoring course.

The above three disabled ladies request kind hearted persons for donation of sewing machines.



For further details, please contact :

Ms. Devi Appaji, Joy Chips,
9/5, Anna Salai, Kodungaiyur,
Chennai-600 118

Needs financial support for medical treatment

Sri. J. Azhakendran lost his both hands and legs, when he lost his balance and fell down in slippery soil fourteen years back, when he was carrying 50 kgs of weight on his head. His spinal cord was injured. From that day onwards, he is bed ridden. Widowed mother is looking after him.

Now a days, he is able to move his hands and legs. But he is not able to do anything without help.

Village siddha doctors advised Sri. J. Azhakendran to undergo siddha treatment.

Sri. J. Azhakendran requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his medical treatment.



Contact address:

Sri. J. Azhakendran, S/o. Sri. Jayaraman (Late)
Annamputhoor Village, Omanthoor Post
Tindivanam, Tamil Nadu

Poor boy needs help for education

Sri. L. Thanigaivel is studying 7th std. in Tirupathur.

Sri. L. Thanigaivel's father Sri. N. Lakshmanan lost his both eye sight recently. His mother is doing tailoring work. The family is running with her meagre income.

Ms. L. Santhanalakshmi (mother) requests kind hearted persons for financial help for her son's education.

Contact address:

Ms. L. Santhanalakshmi, W/o. Sri. N. Lakshmanan,
Dr.No.10/8 A Devankar Street,
Thirupathur P.O, Vellore. Pin:635 601

Heart patient needs support

Sri. V. Jaganathan is a poor, unemployed, recently married man and he has studied upto 12th std.

In the year 1999, Sri. V. Jaganathan underwent heart operation in Stanley Hospital and as per doctor's advise, he is taking the medicine regularly. The cost of the medicines is around Rs.500/- per month.

At present, Sri. V. Jaganathan's wife is pregnant.

Sri. V. Jaganathan's father is an unskilled labour and the family is running with his meagre income.

Sri. V. Jaganathan requests kind hearted persons for support.

Contact address:

Sri. V. Jaganathan, S/o. Sri. Venketu Chetty,
Periyampatti (Post), Palakodu, Dharmapuri. Pin:635 205

Visually impaired girl student desperately needs support

Ms. V. Gowri is a visually impaired girl and belongs to a very poor family and her father is an unskilled agricultural worker in a remote village near Villupuram in Tamil Nadu.

She completed her B.A course and could not get any job for around two years. Then she joined a B.Ed. Course in a private self financing college, as she could not get admission in any government college in Tamil Nadu. The fees in the private college for B.Ed course is exorbitant and is in the region of Rs.50,000/-

Ms. Gowri managed to secure educational loan of Rs.50,000 from nationalized bank which said that she should start paying the interest immediately. Her father is paying an interest of Rs.250/- per month to the bank with great difficulty. Ms. Gowri hopes that after completing the course successfully, she would get teacher's job and then can pay back the loan to the bank.

Having already collected Rs.50,000/- the college now insists that she should pay another Rs.7000/- under the pretext of some project work, excursion etc. She does not know how much more money they would ask and when. She needs around Rs.7000/- immediately to continue the course. Please help this visually impaired girl.

Contact address

Ms. V. Gowri

Veeramur P.O., Villupuram Dist. Tamil Nadu

Poor lady needs sewing machine

Ms. Girija is a poor lady and her husband is an unskilled worker. She has undergone training in tailoring work and she needs a sewing machine for self employment. Please help her.

Contact address :

Ms. Girija, C/O Sri. P. Ravi

1/105, Ezhumalai Salai, 1st Cross Street,
Nanmangalam, Chennai-600117

Child suffering from hearing loss



Ms. Shravani, aged 3 years is suffering from hearing loss.

The doctors advised the child to undergo operation called cochlear implant. The estimated cost of the surgery is Rs.11 lakhs.

The father Mr.M.Munendra Babu is working in Canara Bank. But he is unable to meet the huge amount.

Cheque may be drawn in favour of Sagar Apollo Hospital, Bangalore and sent to the following address:

Mr.M.Munendra Babu,

Canara Bank, Mahadevapura,
Whitefield Road, Bangalore

Disabled girl needs tricycle

Ms.M.Sabena, daughter of Sri.Mohamed Aziz is a disabled girl from a poor family and she needs a tricycle. At present, she can move only in a sitting posture.

Please help her.

Contact address: Ms.M.Sabena

Mambazhapattu Road, Villupuram-605 651 Tamil Nadu

**A WHOPPING RS.44 CRORE FOR A CHIEF MINISTER'S SECURITY
WHAT ABOUT COMMON MAN?**

Rs.44.16 crore a year to protect an individual? Yes, that's to protect an individual. Yes, that's the sum that the Andhra Pradesh state exchequer is going to cough up for protecting Chief Minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy. About 338 personnel would guard the Chief Minister now onwards and it would cost the state exchequer Rs.3.68 crore per month.

The state cabinet enhanced the security of the Chief Minister by adding about 80 personnel to the existing strength ranging from constables to ASPs.

With the increased security cover, the Chief Minister would now have two additional SPs, 13 DSPs, 21 reserve inspectors, 25 AP state police constables, 40 drivers and 244 constables.

Is Chief Minister's life in any way more important than that of common man?

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.



Commercial doctors

Dear Sir,

I felt sad to read the article in your August issue on commercial doctors and their lack of concern for patients.

I had a shocking experience in June'07 when I took my three and a half year old son to a well known pediatrician in Mandaveli in Chennai, who owns a nursing home. The boy was born in that hospital and had taken all the immunisations/vaccinations as per the schedule given by them in their health card - which included typhoid vaccine also.

The boy was running 103 deg.temp and was crying . Even though prior appointment was fixed for 6.00 p.m. till 7.40, the doctor was not available and his assistant was examining the patients. Finally by 7.45, I caught up with the doctor elsewhere and pleaded to come and examine the child. He diagnosed as typhoid (why give a typhoid vaccine to a child then?) and asked his Assistant to take a blood sample and administer an injection. That lady walked to the next room. When I pleaded that the child is small and is having fever and the parents generally hold the child - when injections are given, she rudely told us both to go out or she would go out - and walked away. I had to run behind her and the senior doctor asked me to apologise to her for no fault of mine. I said sorry to her when the doctor said if I would not apologise, she would not treat the child.

Subsequently, the lady kept both of us out and the nurse then gave the injection and she was incompetent. The boy vomited and swooned and we had to rush him to another doctor. I was disgusted with the treatment meted out to us after charging Rs.150/- as consultant fee.

The high profile doctors have no human values.They are 'commercial doctors' who treat medicine as a business.

M.Fazal, Chennai-64

Temple as handmaid of politician

Dear Sir,

As I was coming out after worship in Tirupathi temple, earnest devotees hotly discussed the topic reported by Press and indicated below. Some devotees seemed deeply

upset, as could be gleaned from the harsh tone of their statements. The press had reported:

"UPA Chair-person Sonia Gandhi offered prayers at Sri Venkateswara temple on Saturday. The priests received her with traditional temple honours. The Chief Priest applied tilak on her forehead. The Chief Priest presented her with Sesha Vastram."

The point of their distress was not about offering prayers or even providing honours, but it veered around the fact of the Chief Priest applying tilak on her forehead particularly in the specific context of her spouse Rajiv Gandhiji being lamentably not alive.

Will the Chief Priest apply tilak with such reverence to other ladies without legal spouses?

The crux of the objections were: Whether temples should be handmaids of politicians of the day who play havoc with the sacredness of administration and ordained rituals in the temples.

Let all devotees come and pray and let them be given all facilities. But unwanted, unseemly extra-spiritual gestures should be avoided.

Garland N Rajagopalan, I.A.S.Retd., Chennai

Nuclear deal

Dear Sir,

This whole deal is quite confusing, with different people interpreting it differently.

Americans are claiming victory and we are as well on different points.

I certainly agree that we need to look internally and do a lot better with what we have. Our productivity and efficiencies even in the existing power plants are appalling. Such mundane topics like efficiencies do not seem to be an interesting topic to discuss or debate for the political parties. It is really sad that our politicians are willing to compromise so easily on national security issues.

I think the quality of politicians we elect is already beginning to show up with such a poor quality of debate on vital national strategic issue such as this one. There is no clarity either amongst the politicians or the press as to what the deal represents to our country in the longer term.

V.Swaminathan, London

60th independence day

Dear Sir,

The 60th anniversary of our nation's freedom was celebrated on August 15th with the usual statements and speeches of politicians, processions, meetings and garlanding statues of Gandhiji all over India. The rituals will be reenacted on October 2nd birth day of Mahatmaji also.

Such celebrations will have some meaning, only if we had utilised the precious six decades of independence in making our country a powerful and self sufficient nation as well as observing Gandhian principles of sathyam (truth) ahimsa (non violence) and khadi (use of home made products).

How far have we moved in the above directions remains a moot question.

About 300 millions still live below poverty line without the prime necessities of food, clothing and shelter. Many starvation deaths have been reported. Above all, corruption has reared its ugly hand in all spheres and we have entrusted the fate of the nation to be decided by a person, who is not of Indian origin.

To sum up, we have become a characterless nation thanks to the unpatriotic power mongering and highly corrupt politicians in power.

M.R.Pillai, Chennai

Role models for students

Dear Sir,

The back cover of Sept.'07 issue of Nandini contains an apt remark that role models for searching youths do exist even today in our country but they are invisible.

The reason for this position are the confused mind set of the present day youth and their incapability for evaluating the greatness of personalities whose examples they can emulate. Media is also guilty of not projecting those who deserve to be role models for the youth.

M.R.Pillai, Chennai

Empty shows

Dear Sir,

Instead of tackling burning problems, Tamil Nadu government is shelling out crores of rupees for providing free TV sets, gas stoves etc.

Will such empty shows eradicate poverty and disease?

We are witnessing a dangerous democracy, where the government is of the family, for the family and by the family.

K.N.Narayana Pillai, Chennai

Sponsored space for money in media

Dear Sir,

I feel disgusted to repeatedly hear about the fact that several newspapers and TV network accept the so called sponsored programme, which only mean that individuals and companies advertise their views or services or business activities by buying space at high cost. I do not mind if the media accept such sponsored programmes declaring them as advertisements prominently but they carry out the details as if they are news items or those details investigated and reported by the media.

This is an unethical activity as far as journalism is concerned. The reader does not know what is true and what is motivated or advertised material. I am told that this practice is rapidly spreading in the country, as media has gone into the hands of business men and political personalities.

Recently, one leading business news paper carried out a long article and an interview with an astrologer on the recent transit of saturn.

While it looked like a genuine reporting, it was later on learnt that it was a sponsored programme by a temple and an astrologer obviously with business motive.

I was surprised to read the news item recently in a Chennai based leading newspaper, regarding the resignation from service of an Additional Director General Of Police who is going for another job abroad. He was praised as an outstanding officer. I wonder as to why this news paper has gone to the extent of calling him as an outstanding officer when it does not have any mechanism to evaluate the merits of a police officer. Reproducing the awards given by another organisation is legitimate in the newspaper. But, can the newspaper itself call a government officer as an outstanding person and without carrying out any acceptable study on him?

Obviously, section of media does not observe the ethics of the profession anymore. If the country would lose faith in the media also, then it would be a tragic situation.

Name withheld on request

THIS NUCLEAR DEAL WILL DRIVE INDIA BACKWARD

The nuclear deal of Manmohan Singh government is being discussed as if it is only about Indo American relationship or dependability of USA as a long term partner. The more important issue is as to whether it is necessary to bind India to international controls, in spite of India's resources and technological strength. If India can do without such long term nuclear deal, then India should opt out of it. What we need to examine is as to whether India can do without this nuclear deal, without suffering loss of growth opportunities.

We also need to keep in mind at this stage as to what would be the level of investment required for buying several fuel re processing reactors and other equipment from abroad, the cost of acquiring technology, the recurring cost of inputs and the cost of spare parts. Having signed a binding agreement, India may not have much room for negotiating the price. The cost of nuclear power may ultimately become unacceptably high creating serious problems for the overall national economy.

A careful examination of various aspects would clearly indicate that India can do without this nuclear deal and would not suffer in its absence.

Indian nuclear power scenario

The power generating capacity in India as on January 2007 was 1,28,435 MW comprising hydrothermal (coal, gas and oil based), nuclear and renewable sources.

Generating capacity:

Sector	Unit (MW)	Percent
Hydro	34,110	26.56
Thermal	84,234	65.58
Nuclear	3,900	3.04
Renewable	6,191	4.82
Total	1,28,435	100

It can be seen from the above data that the present Indian nuclear power capacity represents only 3 percent of the total power capacity in the country.

Even globally, nuclear power contributes only about 17 percent to the electricity demand of the world.

If the target of the proposed nuclear deal were to step up the share of nuclear power in India to as high as 17% in the next decade as per the prevailing global trend, it should be noted that equivalent quantity of power can be generated even without resorting to the nuclear deal, by exploiting the alternate sources of power that are potentially available to the country.

Enough fuel for Nuclear Power

For the production of nuclear power, the fuel (fissile material) required can be uranium-233 or uranium -235 or plutonium-239. Besides, there are other fissionable material which can be converted to a fissile material, such as uranium-238 (which generates plutonium-239). The above fuel are produced from natural uranium and at the

present use rate, there are 50 years worth of low cost known uranium reserves remaining in the country.

In advanced countries, the fuel used in nuclear power plants is reprocessed, so that it can be reused that would provide inexhaustible source of fuel for the nuclear power projects for all time to come. India does not have the facility for reprocessing nor commercially proven technology to set up reprocessing facilities at present. Obviously, Manmohan Singh thinks that if India can have this reprocessing facility, then it would pave way for setting up the nuclear power generating capacity in a big way in the country.

At present, Indian demand for natural uranium is 540 tonnes per annum and the present production of natural uranium in the country is only 280 tonnes per annum. As a result of this, nuclear power projects are presently operating at low capacity utilisation level, which is a matter of concern.

To overcome the shortage of uranium, the Department of Atomic Energy is working on plans to set up new uranium processing plants in Banduhurang in Singhbhum district of Jharkand, Seripally in Nalgonda district and Tummalapalle in Cudappah district of Andhra Pradesh, Mawthabah in the West Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya and at Chatrapur in Ganjam district of Orissa.

The Government of India has very recently approved the proposal for setting up uranium mining and processing plant at Tummalapally in Cudappah district in Andhra Pradesh at the cost of Rs. 1106.29 crores. The setting up of this mine will meet the uranium fuel requirement of the nuclear power programme. The mine is likely to be commissioned within thirty months and the processing plant

in 36 months. The government of India also has a proposal to set up a facility at Paradeep in coastal Orissa to extract uranium from waste material generated by two fertilizer units in the vicinity.

Therefore, it can be seen that India is unlikely to run out of uranium for the next fifty years, even without the reprocessing facility to be acquired through the nuclear deal.

Thorium as alternate fuel

India has large reserves of thorium which is a source of alternate nuclear fuel for power generation. Thorium 232 generates uranium 233 which can be used as fuel for nuclear power.

India is on the verge of setting up the world's first Advanced Heavy Water Reactor, which uses thorium as fuel. India has the design and technology to install a 300 MW thorium based reactor immediately. This would be a major technological achievement for the country, as thorium based reactors would see the completion of India's nuclear cycle. The Director of Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre, Kalpakkam said recently that the project would be taken up in the eleventh plan and would be completed within seven years.

With the use of Thorium as fuel, India's dependence on uranium will become considerably less and India can comfortably do without the fuel reprocessing facility that Manmohan Singh seeks to bring to India through the nuclear deal.

Manmohan Singh cannot but have heard Dr. Abdul Kalam speaking on several occasions about the potentials for India using thorium as fuel.

Is it that Manmohan Singh lacks confidence in the capability of Indian technologists and atomic scientists?

Renewable sources of energy

All over the world, it is very well accepted that renewable energy is the best source of power from the environmental and long term view point. India has excellent credentials in this regard.

Wind power is one of the most viable renewable energy sources for power generation in India. India has installed wind power capacity of 5340.6 MW and ranks fourth in the world after Germany, USA and Spain. As far as wind resource potential is concerned, the wind energy potential in India has been assessed at 45,000 MW, assuming 3 percent land availability for setting up wind farms.

Exploiting this wind power resource would enable India to do away with the nuclear deal, as wind energy can

provide the power that Manmohan Singh wants to generate through nuclear deal in the next decade.

India also has considerable hydro electric power potentials still untapped.

Very recently, new hydel power projects have been announced in Arunachal Pradesh to produce 25000 MW, that would be set up in the next eight years. This would be much more than what the nuclear power is presently providing to the country. With the involvement of private sector in the hydro electric power projects of Arunachal Pradesh, things are moving fast now and generation of 2710 MW of power by end of eleventh plan is expected.

There are other exciting possibilities like generation of power from urban and industrial wastes. As on 31st March, 2006, the cumulative installed capacity of power generation based on energy recovery from urban and industrial wastes is 45.78 MW. The estimated potential of energy recovery from municipal solid waste is expected to grow along with the growth of economy and may reach 5000 MW of installed capacity by 2017. Similarly, the estimated potential for recovery from industrial waste is around 1000 MW of power at present and it is expected to increase to about 2000 MW by 2017.

There are no technological constraints in stepping up power generation from wind energy and based on municipal and industrial wastes.

There are of course other possibilities like solar power, ocean wave etc. where India has enormous naturally bestowed strength.

What we need is pride and confidence

When India and France parted ways after India's nuclear test in 1974, India lost the supply of enriched uranium from France and other countries. But, Indian scientists overcame the constraints to a large extent by developing technology to use mixed uranium and plutonium carbide fuel. This speaks enormously about the capability and confidence levels of the Indian scientists.

Manmohan Singh should not reduce India and Indian scientists to the level of mere recipients of technology but provide them the opportunity to generate the technology themselves and supply to other countries in the world.

If the nuclear deal would be entered, this would be a great disservice to the Indian scientists and technologists and set back to India's nuclear technological efforts. India would be driven backward. Then, we will be mere buyers and traders.

DEPRIVED DRIVEN TO DESPAIR DUE TO COST OF EDUCATION

More than 300 million country men constituting around 30 to 35% percent of the national population are living below poverty line. The best way of uplifting these lower income group is by providing quality education to them. By being empowered with education and knowledge, the deprived citizens can improve their employability and earnings and contribute to the larger development of the society.

Realising the importance of providing education to the poorer section of the society, the governments both at the



centre and the states have created many schemes and are allotting crores of rupees in the annual budget year after year.

While the government provides free education and extend several other benefits such as free noon meal, books, free bus pass etc. at school level in the government owned and government aided schools which cater to the needs of the poor students, unfortunately, it is unable to ensure quality education in these schools at the requisite standards. Further, several of the schools, both government owned and government aided collect arbitrary fees from the students under various pretext such as parent teacher association, building funds, note books excursion etc., unmindful of the government rules, regulations and directives. Such collection of fees by these schools result in defeating the noble objective of the government in extending free education or low cost education to the deprived section of the society.

Several students from poor families studying in these schools find it a burden even to buy the uniform which is now compulsory in all schools and for which the government provides no support. In such circumstances, how can they pay "the extra fees" demanded by the schools? After the press reports on the arbitrary collection of fees by the schools, the Government of Tamil Nadu was reported to have raided a few schools in Chennai city on 16th August, 2007. But, one would not know as to what would be the ultimate outcome.

As the government could extend only limited support for the education of the poor students, which by itself is not adequate to cover the entire lower income group in the country, the government is encouraging the private sector to enter the education field in a big way. While this approach can be considered as an acceptable practice, it has resulted in the concept of profit becoming the central theme of education in the private sector educational institutions in the country. As a result, the cost of education has gone up by leaps and bounds in the private educational institutions which are not supported by the government.

While the qualitative level of education in such private institutions are by and large better than those offered in the government owned and government aided institutions, they have become unreachable for the lower income group. The poor people aspire to get into these private institutions, as the qualitative aspects in the government owned and government aided schools are lower and the intake capacity in the government owned and aided schools are not adequate to meet the requirement of the lower income group.

The net result of the situation is that most of the students belonging to lower income group find that they are denied quality education even at the school level.

The lack of quality education in the government owned and government aided institutions and collection of unauthorized fees in these government owned institutions and high level of fees in the private sector institutions have now driven the deprived to despair.

The only way out is for the government to become more efficient and more committed to its responsibility towards providing quality education to the deprived sections of the society. The lack of quality governance in the educational sphere is costing the poor dearly and they are suffering helplessly. They seem to be too weak even to protest and therefore, are silently putting up with the frustration and disappointment.

NIMBLE FINGERS AT WORK



New Indian Express has done a great service to the cause of poor and deprived children by publishing the photographs of 11 year old Vinayagam carrying out manual work to clear the area for the death anniversary function of late G K. Moopananar on 31.8.2007.

The photographs speak volume about the pitiable condition in which lakhs of deprived children live in our country.

It is very sad that the country is unable to provide educational opportunities to the poor and deprived children, which would enable them to improve their economic and social conditions in the long run. The lack of educational opportunities is the prime reason for these children being pushed into child labour.

While the government is supposed to be providing free or low cost education to the children in the lower income group in government owned or government aided schools, this is not happening in practice. Several government owned and government aided schools collect substantial



money from the poor students under various pretexts, in total violation of the regulations of the government.

Many children from the lower income group have dropped from schools in recent times, since they are unable to pay the "fees" demanded by the government owned and government aided schools. As a result, we have boys like Vinayagam who are forced to do manual work to earn for their living.

It is not true that the poor families send their children to work to make them earn for families. The fact is that most of the poor families are unable to send their children to the schools due to high cost of education and therefore the parents send their children for job as an alternative method of keeping the children occupied. There is tremendous desire on the part of poor parents particularly mothers, to provide educational opportunities to their sons and daughters to the best of their capability. Unfortunately, they are not able to do so.

The New Indian Express deserve compliments for highlighting the deplorable condition of the poor young boy Vinayagam by publishing these very revealing photographs.

IAS OFFICER FALLS AT THE FEET OF CRIMINAL

While many in the IAS are known to crawl when they are asked to bend, it's not very often that they are seen touching the feet of a politician. However, this is precisely what happened when the deputy commissioner of Bokaro 'dived' at the feet of JMM supremo Shibu Soren who is just out of jail.

Soren was on his way to Jamshedpur to canvass for a party candidate for the parliamentary by-election and stopped by at the Steel City, when the 35-five-year-old Prawin Kumar Toppo, an IAS officer of 2003 batch, was seen touching his feet, in the presence of camera persons and other political heavyweights including state Chief Minister.

PROFILE OF A VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENT

How can we leave him alone?



Sri. D. Prabhakar is a visually impaired boy from birth and is presently studying in first year degree course in Loyola college in Chennai. He belongs to a very poor family and both his father and mother are visually impaired. His brother Sri. D. Saravanan is also visually impaired. His father makes a living by operating a PCO with a meager income.

Prabhakar age 18, completed his school education studying in a government owned school for visually impaired students at Chennai. In spite of his poverty and visual impairment, he is not getting any free education in the college at present and has managed to join the course only with the help of a kind hearted person who paid fees for the first semester. Prabhakar does not know as to who will pay his second semester fees and continues his studies in such anxious conditions.

When Nandini Voice spoke to Prabhakar, he expressed his views on various aspects of his life and surroundings with clarity and level of maturity that is amazing, particularly considering the conditions in which he lives.

When asked as to why he has joined the degree course and what he would get out of this, Prabhakar said that a visually impaired person like him has very little choice. He joined the course with the idea of completing the degree

and then doing B.Ed course to get a teacher's job. When he was told that many visually impaired persons who have completed such B.Ed. course in the past still remain unemployed for several years, Prabhakar said that he can live only with hopes.

He works hard and after attending the classes every day, he has to go to "Reading sessions", where some kind hearted persons would read the lessons for him and help him do the home work.

When he was asked as to whether he is annoyed at being visually impaired, he said that sometimes he feels sad but often reconciles himself thinking that only his eyes are dysfunctional but other parts of the body and brain remain in good condition. He further sympathized with mentally ill persons and spastic children and philosophically said that God must have some reason for making him visually impaired.

When asked whether he has any ambitions he said with a sense of detachment that how can a visually impaired person can have any ambition. When asked about the responsibility of the government and society towards him, Prabhakar said they have been kind to him, though this is a fact that as on today he does not know as to who would pay the next semester fees of around Rs. 6000/- .

Prabhakar can be contacted at the following address

Sri. D.Prabhakar
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SELECTION FOR AWARD OF PRIZES

TO FIVE SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM LOWER INCOME GROUP ON GANDHI JAYANTHI DAY

As a fitting tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, Nandini Voice For The Deprived would organize a meeting on the forthcoming Gandhi Jayanthi Day on 2nd October, 2007 in Chennai to discuss about the problems faced by the students belonging to lower income group in getting quality education at affordable cost.

Around 400 persons from lower income group would attend the meeting and listen to the speakers as to how to overcome this problem.

Five number of students from lower income group studying in government owned, government aided, corporation /municipal/ panchayat owned schools would be selected and would be given awards during the meeting. The students would be selected on the basis of their background, overall performance and accomplishments and recommendation of the head of the institution. The family income of the award winning students should be less than Rs.4000/- per month and they should be studying in classes between 6th and 12th standard.

Students from all over Tamil Nadu are eligible for the award.

THE LEADERSHIP NOT FROM POLITICIANS ALONE

Contributed by Dr.Susheela Kaushik
Former Professor & Head of the Department, Delhi University

Most issues in the country seem to centre around only one issue namely corruption and one target group the politicians.

We are still stuck with the thinking of 1950s, such as the state control and state initiative. Politicians derive their power and the leadership image from this state centric notion of welfare, state initiated development and governance.

Enormous role of the state not only made possible the advancement especially in the creation of big investment oriented infrastructure, but also correspondingly generated much power to the politicians and bureaucracy. Not all of them emerged as leaders with vision or commitment.

In the past two decades, India has moved far away from this obsession with state initiatives. Governance has acquired a wider definition and larger notion of activity. With the private sector acquiring a more politicality legitimate and ideologically credible image, the role of leadership and governance has become more distributed. State is just one institution holding power, however important it may be; Industries, intellectual and scientific institutions, intelligentsia, press and electronic media, religious institutions etc. are playing much more influential roles today than they did after Independence or even in fifties to seventies

It is hence wrong to identify politicians (and that includes the inevitable and inseparable bureaucrats) as the leaders.

The responsibility for governance and the role of leadership need to be shared by other centres of activity; It is already happening, though the media by over playing politics and politicians does not recognise others.

Over politicisation, for which India has redoubtable reputation, is good for a vocal democracy, but can shift the focus from the objectives of overall development .

The media, one does not know for what reason, is over playing this type of politics. Consequently, many ordinary (or less then ordinary) mortals are getting undue limelight and influence. The intelligentsia needs to thus share the blame for elevation of these low level politicians and the unsavoury politics.

We need to pause and redefine the concepts of leadership and governance. They do not mean merely the absence of corruption. They do not even mean, merely honesty, commitment and accountability. They mean more positively speaking, a vision, initiative and consistent steering towards the vision. It means single mindedness, sacrifice and confrontation of challenges with a will.

Leadership also means monitoring, identifying, encouraging the talents and capacities among others as a part of its role. Otherwise, it will end up as enlightened dictatorship and benevolent authoritarianism. It is a concept and a phenomenon and not the role of one individual or group of individuals. It needs to be democratic so as to bring out more leaders from the society.

Such leadership can be found at all levels from the grass roots to the national level in every unit of the country, in schools, colleges and universities, in companies and corporate world and R & D Institutions, in media and among artists, apart from among committed social activists.

It is not that India lacks such people. They need not all be old, weather beaten men and women. Even young men and women can take the initiative. It is they who should be recognised as leaders.

LET NOT THE NATION DRIFT

Having survived innumerable invasions, struggled to preserve its cultural inheritances and identities and succeeded in it to some extent, India is smug with confidence that it would continue in the same way. Crisis and challenges will go the way they came, says our ancient philosophy which believes in continuity, evolution and eternity.

Supremely confident that we will over come in the same way as we had done for the past so many centuries, Indians are struggling, surviving and drifting with out governing and regulating.

Whatever may be the reasons, India is at the cross roads. Mere drifting will not do anymore. It's cost in terms of human lives, nation's property and above all the national advancement is mounting high.

It is time that India sits up and sorts out things. Time has come to reassess our politics and their results and rectify them. We have done it before. We have reassessed our economic policies and state sponsored public sector, our suspicious view of private sector and privatisation, our insecurity and fear of foreigners and globalisation. Let us do such rethinking once again.

Developed and Developing Systems - Impressions of an NRI

Concern for the deprived in the developed countries

Sri.N.S.Sankararaman, a recent migrant to Canada, makes a comparative evaluation of the merits and demerits of the systems as they prevail in India and the so called developed countries such as Canada.

He is writing a series of articles on his impressions and thoughts from the last issue.

Sri N.S.Sankararaman can be contacted at ns_sankara@yahoo.co.in

One of the factors to determine proper development of a nation is the concern demonstrated and alleviating measures institutionalised by the system in favour of the disadvantaged, marginalised and deprived sections of the society.

The great Tamil Patriot Poet Bharathiyar said the following powerfully immortal words.

THANIYORU MANITHANUKKU UNAVILLAIYENIL
JAGATHINAI AZHITHIDUVOM

meaning that we resolve to destroy that world where a situation exists that even a single individual citizen is deprived of his food.

The crux is in the emphasis placed on the all important need to take care of the disadvantaged member of the society.

But unfortunately, as in so many other instances, the Indian system over the years, have continued to talk and talk loudly without an iota of earnestness to demonstrate the spirit, so badly required to follow up with concrete measures and action plan to serve the cause of the unfortunate deprived Indian.

Talking of spirit, it must be acknowledged that the systems in the advanced countries, even without a Bharathiyar to goad them into, have acted admirably on this front. The overwhelming concern transparently demonstrated by the Governments of the advanced countries to secure the interests of the disadvantaged, naturally or otherwise, is truly amazing. The Governments in these countries have the maturity and farsightedness to see the perils of keeping a particular section of society discontented, as this is bound to lead to a cleavage developing between the haves and have-nots, which obviously would not be in the interest of any society, as it would lead to potentially self destructive conflicts in the long run.

As a matter of fact, the welfare of the disadvantaged is one of the most important values deeply cherished by the individual citizen in these societies, such that any individual who displays an insensitivity to such values is so naturally and spontaneously despised and looked down upon by others. The attention continuously paid and

constantly reviewed and improvised by the system to the minutest detail relating to the needs and requirements of the disadvantaged sections of the society is to be seen to be believed.

Protection is extended to all those, who do not have the advantage of having appropriate strength in a given condition or situation. For example, contrary to the constant misinformation campaign that the so called socialists in the developing countries have sought to paint the capitalist systems with, the administration in the advanced countries in the Western world have always gone out of their way to protect the interests of the low rung workers in the most imaginative and pragmatic manner possible in various ways.

The life long Disability Allowance of around 1000 dollars per month for all those mentally or physically disabled members who simply cannot work and the retirement pension of around 750 dollars per month to all the retirees above the age of 65 are all truly praiseworthy initiatives of these systems.

While what is mentioned here is with particular reference to the Canadian practices, the approach in most of the developed countries to the issues concerning the disadvantaged sections of the society is very similar, though the quantum of monetary support may differ. The measures mentioned here are not exhaustive and there are numerous instances of similar support extended to the lower strata of society.

Now the big question is whether at all it is possible for such measures to be introduced in the Indian conditions. Cynics would, as always, argue against it and cite any number of reasons for the impracticability of such measures to be carried out effectively in India.

Let us not get into arguments one way or other in this regard at the moment. Suffice to realise that such a benevolent approach towards the disadvantaged is even more crucially important in the Indian conditions.

Make no mistake; Without such an approach, the possibility of the boiling cauldron erupting anytime in the Indian conditions is very real.

THE REAL NUMBERS ABOUT INDIA

Contributed by Sri.N.Ramesh who can be reached at nramesh@hotmail.com

Statistically speaking, much less than one crore of people in India can be classified as 'Active Investors' in the Indian Stock Market, in a total population of over 100 crores.

Figure wise, there are hardly a few million assesses in India who come within the tax net amongst over 1000 million Indians.

All the above lines go on to prove a simple fact and establish a brazen truth that not many people are sharing the overall wealth of India, which is vested with a small percentage of them!

It is to be repeated for the sake of better clarity and impact that much of the wealth in India is held (if not cornered) by an abysmally small percentage of the population of Independent India!

That is to say, except for a small segment of the Indians, others are not at all doing well and they are in doldrums and languishing in utter poverty and living in abject, impoverished conditions!

This clearly means a vast majority of the Indian population are in a precarious situation and are likely to

have for more trouble in future, thanks to spiraling costs and overheated economic conditions!

Indeed, the overall economic environment is undergoing a drastic change with India literally becoming a high cost economy; to say the least with most of its own people not prepared for it!

Yes, India is bracing towards a New World Economic Order by virtue of its hurried globalisation policies and integrating itself with the global economy with its subjects almost ignorant about it!

To put it differently, India is not at all shining; except for a small percentage of the population who are really fortunate enough to absorb fully the goodness of globalisation policies in India!

Except a small percentage of Indians, who are all the direct beneficiaries of the New Economic Regime, no one else agrees that India is really shining and all of us are living in 'falsehood'!

That ultimately means and reflects the fact that we all are living in an illusory turf and believing in illusion all the time, as if India is doing very well and fast becoming a Global Super Power!

HOW MUCH FEES THAT A SCHOOL STUDENT SHOULD PAY ?

Responding to a letter under Right To Information Act ,Government of Tamil Nadu provided details regarding stipulated fees per year that can be collected by government owned and government aided schools in Tamil Nadu.

Details are given below:

Item	6th std to 8th std Rs.	9th std to 10th std Rs.	11th std to 12th std. Rs.			
Admission fees	0.50	0.50	1.00	Laboratory fees (for science students)	---	30.00
Facilities	5.00	5.00	10.00	Workshop fees (for the students studying technical course)	—	20.00
Library	0.50	1.00	5.00	Special fees:		
Literary Association	0.50	1.00	3.00	6th std to 8th std	Rs.	32.50
Excursion	—	0.50	—	9th std to 10th std	Rs.	47.50
Sports	10.00	20.00	30.00	11th std to 12th std.		
Scout	1.00	1.00	1.00	Science students	Rs.	103.00
Medical check up	1.00	1.00	1.00	Technical course students	Rs.	93.00
Audio,video education	10.00	10.00	10.00	Arts students	Rs.	73.00
Recreation and handicraft	0.50	0.50	—	Parent teacher Association	Rs.1 to Rs.25/-	
Stationary	1.50	2.00	8.00	Additional tuition fees for the English medium students		
Youth Red Cross Society	2.00	4.00	4.00	6th std to 8th std	Rs.	200.00
				9th std to 10th std	Rs.	250.00
				11th std to 12th std.	Rs.	500.00

GAAR Advt.



**Farmers committing suicide
due to poverty is the fact of life
in India today.**

**The suicides continue and
when will it end?**

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