

Nandini

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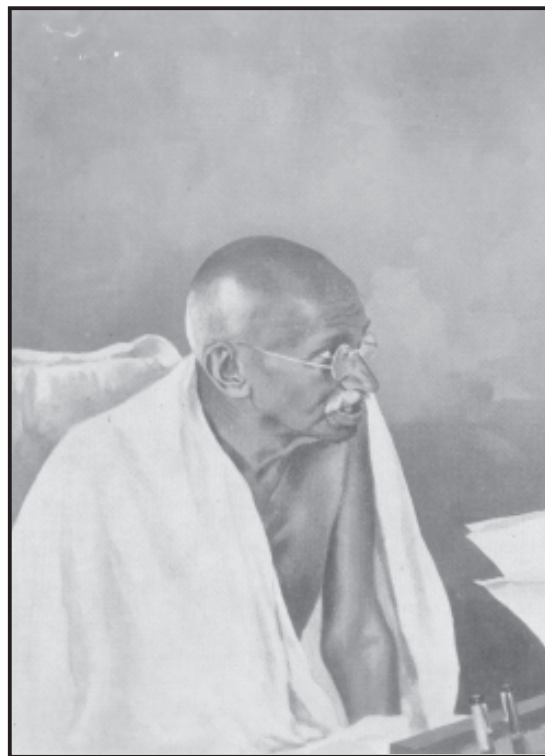
Voice For The Deprived

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

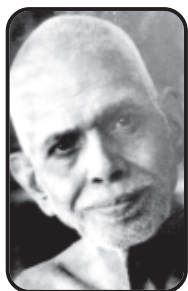
VOL XI

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**Why should
politicians garland Gandhiji's statue
on 2nd October
when they no more implement his ideals?**



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 Tamilnadu with the kind permission of the Sarvadhikari, Sri Niranjananda

Swami.

The seeker took it upon himself to note down, as occasions arose, the sweet, refreshing and enlightening words of the Master. 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.

Shortly after, the Sarvadhikari officially took possession of the writings over to the Asramam. These notes cover the period 1935-39

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

Recorder, Sri.Ramanasramam, 1st January, 1955

4th February, 1939

Devotee: A devotee asked Sri Bhagavan: With every thought the subject and the object appear and disappear. Does not the 'I' disappear when the subject disappears thus? If that be, so how can the quest of the 'I' proceed?

Maharishi: The subject (knower) is only a mode of mind. Though the mode (vritti) passes, the reality behind it does not cease. The background of the mode is the 'I' in which the mind modes arise and sink.

D.: After describing the Self as srota (hearer) manta (thinker), vijnata (knower), etc., it is again described as asrata, amanta, avijnata, non-hearer, non-thinker, non-knower. Is it so?

M.: Just so. The common man is aware of himself only when modifications arise in the intellect (vijanamaya kosa); These modifications are transient; they arise and set.

Hence the vijanamaya (intellect) is called a kosa or sheath. When pure awareness is left over, it is itself the Chit (Self) or the Supreme. To be in one's natural state on the subsidence of thoughts is bliss; if that bliss be transient - arising and setting - then it is only the sheath of bliss (Anandamaya kosa), not the pure Self. What is needed is to fix the attention on the pure 'I' after the subsidence of all thoughts and not to lose hold of it. This has to be described as an extremely subtle thought; else it cannot be spoken of at all, since it is no other than the Real Self. Who is to speak of it, to whom and how?

This is well explained in the Kaivalyam and the Vivek Chudamani. Thus though in sleep, the awareness of the Self is not lost, the ignorance of the jiva is not affected by it. For this ignorance to be destroyed, this subtle state of mind (vrittijnanam) is necessary; in the sunshine cotton does not burn; but if the cotton be placed under a lens it catches fire and is consumed by the rays of the Sun passing through the lens.

So too, though the awareness of the Self is present at all times, it is not inimical to ignorance. If by meditation the subtle state of thought is won, then ignorance is destroyed. Also says Viveka Chudamani: "atva sukshmam paramatma tattvam na sthoola drishtya (the exceedingly subtle Supreme Self cannot be seen by the gross eye) and esha svayam jyotirasesha sakshi (this is Self-shining and witnesses all)".

This subtle mental state is not a modification of mind called vritti. Because the mental states are of two kinds. One is the natural state and the other is the transformation into forms of objects. When the latter perishes, the former will remain over.

The means for this end is meditation. Though this is with the triad of distinction (tripuri), it will finally end in pure awareness (jnanam). Meditation needs effort; jnanam is effortless. Meditation can be done, or not done, or wrongly done, jnanam is not so. Meditation is described as kartru-tantra (as doer's own), jnanam as vastu-tantra (the Supreme's own).

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.

Widow Needs Educational Support For Disabled Son



Mrs.V.Nagaratnam is a widow and she is an unskilled labourer.

Her handicapped son Sri.V. Paramasivam is studying Xth std. in St.Susaiappar Higher Secondary School, Dindigul.

Mrs.V.Nagaratnam requests kind hearted persons for financial help for a sum of Rs.950/- towards educational expenses, uniform, notebooks etc.

The Cheque may be drawn in favour of St.Susaiappar Higher Secondary School, Dindigul and sent to the following address:

Mrs.V.Nagaratnam
33, R.M.S. Road, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu.

v v v

Disabled Engineer needs Job

Sri.E.Subramanian is a disabled man and he has obtained degree in Bachelor of Technology (Information Technology) from Government College of Technology, Coimbatore.

Sri.E.Subramanian requests for a suitable job.

Contact address: Sri.E.Subramanian
S/o.Sri.V.Eahambaram,
128, G.H.Muniasami Koil Street,
Near V.V.D.Watertank,
Tuticorin-628 002, Tamil Nadu
Mobile: 9843026583

v v v

Disabled Girl needs support for Education



Ms.A.Tamilarasi is a poor disabled girl and she has passed +2 examination.

Ms.A.Tamilarasi has joined I year B.com course in Government Arts College, Thiruvannamalai.

Ms.Tamilarasi requests financial help of Rs.2,000/-towards college fees, text books,note books, etc.

Ms.A.Tamilarasi,
Ulagalam Poondi,
Kottiyam Poondi (P.O.)
Villupuram Taluk, Tamil Nadu

Kidney Patient needs help

Mr.Ignatius Saldanha, age 42 years is suffering from end stage renal disease and is undergoing treatment at Madras Medical Mission, Chennai.

At present he is on regular maintenance of hemodialysis and is waiting for renal transplant. The cost of renal transplant operation and post transplant care would be more than Rs.2,00,000/- .

Mr.Ignatius Saldanha's family is not able to afford the cost of his treatment.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Madras Medical Mission, Chennai and sent to the following address:

Mr.Ignatius Saldanha (UHID NO.20060604862)
Madras Medical Mission,
4-A, Dr.J.Jayalalitha Nagar, Mogappair
Chennai-600 037

v v v

Disabled person needs support for Self Employment

Sri.Alaghumalai is a poor and married disabled man with children.

He requests kind hearted persons for financial help to purchase a cattle.

Visually impaired girl needs support for Education



Ms.Lakshmi is a poor visually impaired girl. She has passed +2 examination.

Ms.Lakshmi requests help to continue her education in Chennai.

For further details about Sri.Alaghumalai and Ms.Lakshmi, please contact:

Ms.M.Vellaiammal
D/o.Sri.K.Marodharaj,
Thottanampatti (P.O.)
Vedasandur (Tk)
Dindigul Dist, Pin:624 005

v v v

Poor Boy needs financial support for education

Sri.R.Rajesh,age 18 years has secured good marks in +2 examinations and has been selected for B.E.(Mechanical Engineering course) in Mepco Schlenk Engineering College, Virudhunagar.

Sri.Rajesh's father Sri.R.Rajendran is a worker in a printing press.His income is just enough to support the family at minimum level.

Sri.Rajendran requests financial help for his son's education.

Cheque may be drawn in favour of Mepco Schlenk Engineering College, Virudhunagar and sent to the following address

Sri.R.Rajesh,
S/o.Sri.R.Rajendran
No.30, Mothilal IInd Street,
Madurai-625 016

v v v

Cancer patient needs support

Mr.Damodaran Karoth, age 52 years, is suffering from non hodgkin's lymphoma (a form of cancer). He has been advised to undergo treatment for Immuno therapy and Chemotherapy. The first cycle of treatment has been started at Jaslok Hospital Mumbai.The estimated cost of one cycle of chemotherapy is Rs.1.1 lakh. A minimum of six cycles are advised.

He has already spent most of his life savings for the treatment.He is the only bread winner in his family.

Mr.Damodaran Kroth requests financial help for his treatment.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre, Mumbai and sent to the following address:

Jaslok Hospital & Research Centre
Patient:Mr.Damodaran Karoth,
H.No.612456; IP. 303548, 15,
Dr.G.Deshmukh Marg,
Mumbai-400 026

v v v

Poor boy needs support for Heart surgery

Master Gokulakrishnan, 9 years old is suffering from heart ailment. Open heart surgery is required at the earliest. Estimated cost of surgery is around Rs.1,35,000/-.

The cheque may be drawn in favour Sri Ramachandra Hospital, Chennai A/c. Master Gokulakrishnan and sent to the following address:

Women's Welfare Syndicate
8/2, Avenue Road,
Nungambakkam, Chennai-600 034

v v v

Boy needs to undergo Heart surgery

Master Naveen Golla, 18 years old is suffering from congenital heart defect called atrail septal defect.He has

to undergo open heart surgery at the earliest. The estimated cost of the surgery is around Rs.98,000/-at Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Heart Centre, Bangalore.

The cheque may be drawn in favour Heart Care Foundation, Bangalore A/c Master Naveen Golla and sent to the following address:

Women's Welfare Syndicate
8/2, Avenue Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai-600 034

v v v

Visually imparied person needs support

Sri.M.Muthu, age 25 years is a visually impaired person . He did not have the opportunity to go to school. He belongs to poor family and is living in rural area.

To make his living, Sri.Muthu desires to set up a petty shop. He needs a sum of Rs.3,000/- for the same. Kindly help him.

Sri.M.Muthu
Annaputhoor Village,
Omanthoor P.O. Thindivanam Taluk,
Pin:604102, Tamil Nadu

v v v

Disabled boy needs support for Education

Sri.U.Karthick is a disabled boy and he hails from poor family.He has obtained B.A. degree in Political Science.

Sri.U.Karthick requests financial help to continue his higher education for MBA course.

Further details can be obtained from
Sri.U.Karthick
S/o.S.Udayanan,
1/266, Middle Street,
Vandiyur Post, Madurai-625 020

v v v

Disabled girl needs support for Education

Ms. J.Meenakshi is a disabled girl and she hails from poor family.

Ms. Meenakshi has joined in July'06 in Tamil Nadu Pre-Primary Educational Trust for two years training course for Diploma in Pre-Primary Teacher .

Ms. Meenakshi requests financial help of sum of Rs.500/-towards monthly fees till her course completion.

The cheque may be drawn in favour of Tamil Nadu Pre-Primary Educational Trust,Anna Nagar West Extn. Chennai-101 and sent to the following address:

Sri.Mustafa
The Secretary,
Welfare Society for Disabled
12/A, Indira Nagar, Perambalur-621 212.

LAW ABIDING CITIZENS FEEL UNSAFE

In recent times, there have been number of press reports about the mis behaviour and corrupt dealings of policemen at various levels. One report said that a police officer slapped a sub inspector in front of other officers. Another report said that two police men exchanged blows inside the police station quarrelling over the sharing of bribe money.

Another report said that the daughter of a retired policeman was raped by a person who was given all the support by several police personnel. There are many more similar nauseating and highly disturbing news about the behaviour of these "law enforcers"

With corruption sweeping this country from one end to the other, we hear stories that the police men in lower ranks pay bribe money to their superiors to get favours or promotion. In such conditions, the thieves and corrupt people have become bold.

One reason for the steep increase in dishonest dealings, evasion of law and corrupt practices is that the corrupt persons in the Government and the law breakers feel that laws and regulations will not be enforced and one can easily get away after doing misdeeds due to their contacts and by paying bribe amount.

There are several instances of buildings being constructed without approvals and in violation of the regulations. But, the Government comes out with a move to regularize such construction by levying a nominal penalty. The violators of law have the last laugh.

It has become almost impossible to get a property registered without paying bribe money. These are all done in a very open and organized manner with nobody daring to protest and everybody submitting themselves to the well entrenched corrupt system.

We occasionally hear of the corrupt people being caught by the vigilance department. In most of such cases, it is the incident of the sufferer reporting to the vigilance department and then the vigilance personnel hiding themselves to see the corrupt money being exchanged and pounce on the corrupt people. In such case, the person who makes the complaint may have to suffer the wrath of the corrupt persons, without getting any sort of protection from any law enforcing agency. Reporting such corrupt incidents has become a matter of calculated risk for personal safety for those who make the complaint.

In view of the numerous such incidents taking place every day, such news do not any more shock the citizens but they seem to be reconciling themselves that such incidents are the order of the day. Those in charge of the Government and particularly the Governor, Chief Minister and other ministers of the state and top bureaucrats are expected to put down such violations of law with heavy hand. But, considering the fact that they seem to practically do nothing to set right the matter, one gets a doubt as to whether they are interested in providing good governance and fair administration at all.

In such situations where the law makers and law enforcers themselves are the law breakers and the Government does not govern, the worst sufferers are the honest and law abiding citizens, who look forward to the Government to protect them and enable them to live in peace and harmony.

It is pathetic to see the common men who would like to live peacefully, living with sense of fear as they have nobody to support them. The plight of the women particularly in the lower income group in such lawless state is very severe.

One wonders as to who will save this country in such conditions.

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INCREASING NUMBER OF LIQUOR ADDICTS AND REJOICING GOVERNMENT

There can be no greater proof that the country has forgotten Mahatma Gandhi and has given up the Gandhian philosophy than the fact that prohibition has been given up practically in the entire country.

In states like Tamil Nadu, the Government itself has taken up the responsibility for marketing the liquor and are shamelessly boasting that the income of the government due to sale of liquor has gone up manifold.

No doubt the politicians and the bureaucrats would go and garland the statue of Mahatma Gandhi on the forthcoming 2nd October and would ensure that their photographs are published in the newspapers everywhere and the TV media would also cover this event. While garlanding the statue of Gandhiji, they would not be looking at the statue but would be looking at the camera which is more important for them. Can there be a greater insult to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi than these politicians garlanding his statue while ignoring his philosophy and teachings ?

The liquor habit amongst the people are rapidly spreading, particularly amongst the lower income group. At this rate of growth of the consumption of liquor, it would not be long before the majority of the menfolk in the country would take to drinking habit as part time or full time drinkers. One only hopes that the traditional Indian value systems would ensure that women also would not take up to this evil habit in a big way. If that would happen, the government would be doubly happy because it would boost the income of the government further more considerably.

Apart from eroding the earnings of the poor families and disrupting their peace and harmony, the heavy drinking is causing severe damage to the health conditions of the drunkards. As a result, many of them become physical wrecks even as they attain the age of 40 to 45 and are unable to take up any sustained work any longer. Such men add further burden to the women folk in the families, who have to take care of their health expenses also.

Can there be a more irresponsible act of a Government than encouraging the people to take to drinking habit without any sort of restrictions ? What sort of people are sitting in the government who think that drinking is not an evil and who argue that laws against drinking is unenforceable ?

In the immediate post independent years when the memory of Gandhiji was fresh in the minds of everyone and the disciples of Gandhiji were in power, the prohibition was effectively enforced in the country and a new generation was brought up who have not been exposed to the evil of drinking.

The sale of liquor by the government clearly indicates that the welfare of the citizens is not the priority for those in power. Their only objective is to earn income at any cost and spend it on various so called welfare measures for the poor, which enable them to buy the votes and stay on in power.

When the people are encouraged to take to drinking in such a big way, they lose the will to fight for their rights and privileges and this is an ideal condition for the government, as their misdeeds and inefficiencies will not be questioned and they would eliminate the feasibility of mass unrest and social revolution that can take place due to the growing disparities in income and opportunities.

The least that the politicians in power and bureaucrats should do is that they should refrain from going to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd October. Let them leave this place of sanctity to true Gandhian followers.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIQUOR

With the objective of sensitising the youth about the problems created due to rapidly increasing liquor consumption in Tamil Nadu and to encourage the students to think about the evil of liquor, Nandini Voice For The Deprived is conducting an Essay Competition for the college students in Tamil Nadu and oratorical competition for the school students in the government owned and government aided schools in Tamil Nadu.

The last date for sending the entries is 30th August 2006.

The interested students can contact Editor, Nandini Voice For The Deprived for further details.

CONVERSION ISSUES – THE GROUND REALITIES

The so called secular parties in the country have been opposing the anti conversion laws. They seem to be arguing that the anti conversion laws are anti democratic and would interfere with the freedom of religion in the country. The latest to join the protest against the anti conversion laws is the Congress President Sonia Gandhi.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi has reiterated her party's opposition to anti conversion laws in a letter to the All India Christian Council (AICC).

In a statement issued, the Council said Mrs. Gandhi had informed it in a letter that "These (anti conversion laws) are enactments passed by State legislatures where the Congress is in opposition". Mrs. Gandhi's letter to AICC was in response to a memorandum articulating the concern within "the civil society and minority communities" over the manner in which many a state was enacting anti conversion laws.

Whatever the motivated politicians and the theoreticians of political science may say, it is a well known fact that the conversions are being done almost entirely amongst the poor and deprived sections of the society, who lack education and are living in extremely stressful conditions due to social and financial problems.

It is also a fact that highly organized religious groups with overseas financial and motivational support are leaving no stone unturned to convert the gullible masses to their religions for the sake of increasing their numerical strength. It is also a well known fact that most of the conversions in India are being done amongst the Hindus and the Hindu religion is the biggest loser due to the practice of other religious groups seeking to convert the people to their religion.

One cannot find fault if somebody would convert himself to another religion due to understanding of philosophy of the particular religion by hard study and realization. However, when conversions are done by extending financial allurements and exploiting the weakness of the poor people facing economic and social stress, it is immoral, unethical and unjustified practice. In such conditions, the conversions should not be confused with the concept of democracy and freedom.

The NGOs who have the opportunity to work with deprived people would readily know that the orphans are the primary target for conversions. Then, the people belonging to the lower income group particularly living in the rural areas are targeted by extending to them financial support when they need it most and by providing educational support to the children and giving essential items like rice etc. at regular intervals. The poor people are thus bought by money for being converted to other religions. Thousands of such people have been converted predominantly from Hindu religion in the last few decades. There are cases of poor people who have been converted by being provided as little as Rs.500/-.

Enormous scientific approach and management skill are being used to effect such conversions and subtle methods and NGO outfits are floated to achieve the task. What is religious about such conversions?

Most of the poor people who get converted are so innocent and poorly informed that they do not know that they have been converted at all. They often keep the original name along with the suffix belonging to the converted religion and continue to visit the religious institutions of both the religions and adopt the practices of both the religions partly. Their real conversion takes place in the second generation when they are fully converted.

In such circumstances, the anti conversion laws cannot be branded as undemocratic but should be viewed as a pro democratic act where the deprived are protected from being deceived and exploited with ulterior motives.

The anti conversion laws in the country deserve more knowledgeable discussions instead of being dominated by the vote catching objectives of the so called secular parties.

"LIFE AFTER DEATH"!

A man believed to be dead created a scare by suddenly opening his eyes and speaking to his wife and relatives while being taken in an ambulance to his village for burial.

Mandaiveeran (45) is a lorry driver from Karuppayoorani employed in a transport firm in Namakkal in TamilNadu.

He sustained a back injury in an accident in Namakkal and returned to Madurai. He was admitted to the government hospital in Madurai where a scan showed that there was a blood clot in the vein leading to the spinal cord.

He was in a state of coma and was taken to a private hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The shocked relatives and his wife Suppammal informed the people of his village to make arrangements for his burial. An ambulance was arranged to take the "body" to the village for last rites. On the way, the ambulance hit a speedbreaker, rocking the people within.

Suddenly, Mandaiveeran opened his eyes and began speaking. He asked his shocked wife and relatives where they were taking him. He was then taken to another private hospital where he is said to be recovering, much to the joy of his wife.

WELCOME THE ACT AGAINST DOMESTIC CHILD LABOUR

The Government of India deserves compliment for enacting the Act, under the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 imposing ban on the employment of children as domestic labour.

Those violating the law would get punishment to the tune of three months to two years and the employers could be fined Rs.10,000 to Rs.20,000.

We often hear the stories about the educated persons including top bureaucrats and businessmen employing the children in their homes for doing all sorts of work, depriving the children educational opportunities and happiness in the formative stage of their life. In the past, lack of government action against child labour have caused enormous misery to the children.

For example, Mary, a young girl who was hardly 14 years of age, committed suicide, unable to bear the tensions of working under the pressure of her employers. No action could be taken and the issue was closed by saying that it was an "unnatural death."

Krishnaveni, who was hardly 11 years of age, was beaten brutally by her employers. No longer able to take the violence, she escaped. Her employers did not inform her parents or the police that she was missing. Later, she was accidentally found in a home by a TV network covering a story.

In Hyderabad city alone, there are 40,000 children working as domestic servants. It is true of all cities and towns in the country. Millions of children work in apartment complexes or in houses. While some stay with their families and go for work, several of them are trafficked from their villages to work on a full-time, 24 hours basis. These children are recruited through family members, friends or other contacts. Sometimes, even agents arrange their work.

Several of them work against the advances taken by the parent. Such children lead a lonely and friendless life, labouring every moment for someone else to benefit at the cost of their self-development.

On top of this, their living conditions are usually inhuman. Some children sleep under the staircase or on the balcony, regardless of the weather. Most of them don't get enough sleep. The food they are given are mostly leftovers which lead to malnutrition.

There is a generally held myth among the middle income and upper income group that they are doing these children a favour by providing them with food, clothing and shelter.

Thus, a notion of benevolence and charity masks the hidden exploitation and the long term harm of such children and their lives. It is not true that children are benefiting as domestic child labour because they earn an income and get food and shelter, good clothes and so on. The reality is, these children are being exploited as they are a source of cheap labour who will work long hours without any question.

It is also necessary to keep in mind that children are forced to go for employment as domestic labour because of the extreme poverty conditions. The government has taken positive steps in recent times towards making education compulsory and providing noon meals to the children in the government aided schools.

While such positive steps have been taken, the country still has a long way to go to eradicate the evil of child labour.

CHILD LABOUR HAS TO DECLINE BY 0.7 MILLION ANNUALLY IS IT POSSIBLE?

The number of children in the labour force has to decline by 0.7 million annually if child labour were to be eliminated in India by 2015.

According to a study by the Centre for Development Economics, the current pace of decline in the number of children in the labour force is 0.5 million per annum. If school participation rates increase as in the past, India, which has the highest number of children as labourers, could be virtually free of child labour by 2015.

There has been a steady decline in the number of children (age group 0-14) in the labour force in the past two decades. The number of children in the labour force declined from a little over 22 million in 1983, to under 11 million in 1999-2000. Rural India accounted for 93% of the decline.

The decline in the number of rural children in the labour force in the 1990s has been noteworthy for the fact that this happened despite a rise in the share of the 10-14 age-group in the total population between 1991 and 2001 for both rural males and rural females.

The reduction in labour force participation rates for both rural males and rural females in the 10-14 age group is the desirable side of a significant and beneficial rise in school participation rates by children in this age-group, the study said.

In the past two decades, school participation rates increased by 34 points per 1,000 for rural males and 89 points per 1,000 for rural females.

POLICE MISBEHAVIOUR WITH WOMEN

The Police Force in the country are increasingly becoming oppressive particularly in dealing with the poor and deprived persons.

We frequently hear shocking story of corruption in the Police Force all over the country and how nexus between the politicians and the policemen are causing havoc.

It is sad that the governments are increasingly relying upon the tough methods of police to govern the state.

This story on Police Misbehaviour With Women is only one of many such stories occurring in the country almost everyday. The citizens look on helplessly as if there is nobody to protect them.

Courtesy: PUCL Bulletin, July 2006

In the context of misbehaviour and severe beating of ladies by sub-inspector Satish Kumar Sinha of Sitaramdera Thana, Jamshedpur, one written petition was filed in office of Peoples Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL), Jamshedpur. On basis of this complaint, the team of PUCL led by Subrato Bhattacharjee, President, PUCL, went to the place of incident to investigate and find out the related facts.

Incident: On 4th February 2006 at 10 pm, a scuffle took place in between brother of the complainant, Umesh Pradesh and resident of same locality Rajendra Singh, which was settled immediately. But after that incident, Rajendra Singh lodged a FIR in Sitaramdera Thana, Jamshedpur, in this context.

As per the registered complaint of Rajendra Singh against Umesh Prasad, sub-inspector Satish Kumar Sinha of Sitaramdera Thana reached at Umesh Prasad's residence at Devnagar, Baradwari on 5th February 2006 at 1 pm for further action. He was accompanied with subordinate policemen. On arrival, all policemen started shouting in front of Umesh Prasad's house using slang and abusive languages. All of them started to enter Umesh Prasad's house by trying to break the entrance door. Umesh Prasad's mother was frightened and when she opened the door, Sub-inspector Satish Kumar Sinha pushed her aside.

As Geeta Devi's residence is nearby to her mother's residence, she came out after hearing her mother's shouting for help and opposed the behaviour of sub-inspector. Then out of anger, the SI started beating Geeta Devi. Not only this; he started beating her with his lathi

and took her out of the house by dragging her on the ground. He also beat her up in front of all neighbours. Husband of Geeta Devi, Ajay Prasad opposed this act of police but in spite of this, police continued beating Geeta Devi in front of him.

Sub inspector Satish Kumar Sinha also threatened Geeta Devi to molest her. Geeta Devi, who was badly injured, was admitted to MGM Hospital, Jamshedpur. Policemen also misbehaved with Preeti, Rimpa Devi and Neetu Devi who are family members of Geeta Devi.

On the spot, policemen threatened Geeta Devi's Husband Ajay Prasad, Brother Rajesh and Aarti. Geeta Devi's neighbours R C Singh, Suvna Devi, Usha Devi, Aarti Devi, Rani Devi and Vikas Singh are eye witness of this whole incident. Police left the place of incident when people gathered in large numbers from locality and especially ladies.

When PUCL team asked the Officer in Charge in the Police Station that does police have the right to enter anyone's house without permission, especially when there is no female police persons accompanying them and it has been informed to them that there is no male member present in the house. After that, officer in charge managed to have a telephonic conversation between S.I. Satish Kumar Sinha and members of the PUCL team. Sinha assured that he will be meeting the PUCL team shortly but he didn't.

Based on the information about the incident that took place and specially the police torture meted out to Geeta Devi, the team of PUCL has come to conclusion that it's a clear cut case of human rights violation.

COP ARRESTED FOR SLAPPING WOMAN

A 45-year old head constable Christudas attached to the Anna Nagar Police Station in Chennai was arrested by the Greater Chennai police for allegedly slapping a woman at Pulianthope.

According to the police, the policeman Christudas was allegedly teasing a teenaged girl in a MTC bus on route

48A, which was objected to by Varadhamma (53), a co-passenger. Later when Varadhamma alighted at Pulianthope, the policeman allegedly slapped her. The victim ran to the Pulianthope police station crying for help when the personnel there nabbed the head constable, who was in an inebriated condition.

THE SICKENING LEVEL OF CORRUPTION

CORRUPTION IN ENGLAND

Several pledged admirers of western countries would be horrified to find that the British Prime Minister himself is actively involved in getting money to provide honour to the aspirants.

Such conditions are not far different in India. Obviously, the corruption has become a global phenomena. But in countries like India, the intensity of corruption is much more deep rooted and many think that every third Indian could be involved in corrupt dealings in one way or other, either as a giver or taker .

Britain's Labour Party has sold honours for as little as Pound 50,000, according to a study which has been sent to Scotland Yard detectives probing the cash for honours scandal.

Labour donors are 1,657 times more likely to receive an honour than those who have not given money to the party, 7,000 times more likely to get a peerage and 10,000 times more likely to get a knighthood than any other member of the public.

The report by the think tank the Bow Group found that anyone giving Pound 50,000 to Labour had a better than 50-50 chance of receiving an MBE, OBE, CBE, Knighthood or peerage. The report found that peerages are for sale for around Pound 1 million a piece. It accuses Prime Minister Tony Blair and his chief henchmen of a 'blatant abuse' of the honours system that is 'debasement' politics.

The study of Labour donations since 2001 shows that one in ten major Labour donors has received a peerage, one in four a knighthood and one in seven a CBE. More

damning is a clear correlation between the size of the donation given and the importance of the honour. Most donors awarded or nominated for peerages over the past five years gave between Pound 1 million and Pound 2 million. The Bow Group study found that a knighthood 'cost' Pound 750,000 and a CBE Pound 675,000 , while the average for a peerage was Pound 1,065,000.

The results suggest that Tony Blair is charging half as much for a peerage as David Lloyd George, the former Liberal Prime Minister who notoriously had a price list for the sale honours. Adjusted for inflation, he sold peerages for Pound 1.9 million. His bag man Maundy Gregory is the only person convicted under the 1925 Act outlawing the sale of honours, under which Prime Minister Tony Blair is expected to face questions. His chief fund raiser Lord Levy has already been arrested by Scotland Yard detectives probing how four millionaires who made secret loans to the Labour Party were then nominated for peerages shortly afterwards.

LALU PRASAD'S DAUGHTER'S WEDDING COST RS.21 LAKHS

WHERE DO THEY GET THE MONEY FROM?

The Supreme Court directed the petitioners, who have sought an inquiry by the Chairman, Direct Taxes, to the original documents in connection with the alleged cash payment of Rs.21 lakh by Union Railway Minister Lalu Prasad for his daughter's marriage in Ashok Hotel, New Delhi.

According to the petitioners - Ashok Hotel Mazdoor Janata Union and S.S.Upadhyay, President of the Union - around 5,000 guests including Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Cabinet Ministers, MPs and bureaucrats attended the function on April 30,2006.

Party room number 479, entire Darbar restaurant, full convention hall, entire swimming pool area besides room number 1123, 1124, 1125 and 1126 in Ashok Hotel were booked by Minister of State for Company Affairs Prem Chand Gupta.

The existing rates of the menu which is Rs.900 were reduced to Rs.600 per head and cocktails generally served at Rs.90 was reduced to Rs.60 per head.

According to the hotel rules, the entire amount has to be deposited at least two days in advance but in the case of Lalu Prasad, nothing was paid before hand.

On the petitioners' complaint on May 4, the hotel raised a bill of Rs.21 lakh distributing the same in the names of several 'assumed persons' which was paid in cash.

No PAN number of depositors was taken and the identities of the persons who paid the cash were not maintained.

The petitioners have also filed an application to implead the Chief Vigilance Commissioner.

PROFILE OF DEPRIVED SRI.G.BALAKRISHNAN

There do not seem to be many persons in the middle and the upper income group who are aware of the intensity of the problems faced by the deprived people. Most of those in the middle and upper income group level pre occupy themselves with the business of making money and have little time or inclination to think about the downtrodden living around them.

There are many persons in the lower income group who have shown extraordinary qualities of resilience and character to overcome the adverse conditions and lead a life with dignity. Nandini Voice For The Deprived would publish the profile of such deprived persons in every issue.

Nandini voice For The Deprived has pleasure in publishing the profile of Sri. G. Balakrishnan, a disabled and poor artist with extraordinary quality of mind that several affluent people cannot match.



Sri. G. Balakrishnan with an admirer

Sri. G. Balakrishnan age 35 years is a disabled person who cannot walk. Like many other disabled persons, he is also poor and leads a hand to mouth existence, probably not eating adequately on many days due to want of resources.

He earns his living by making paintings, for which he has the instinctive talent and further mastered by hard practice and sustained efforts. Like many other poor persons, his talent largely remains unknown to the society, as he has no contacts or money power that could help

him publicise his capabilities. He sells his paintings whenever possible but since he could not walk, he has to only wait for his buyers and he cannot reach them on his own.

He has a friend and companion Michael who can walk with difficulty and cannot speak. Both Michael and Balakrishnan compliment each other for their physical deficiency. Michael has no formal education but has great admiration for Balakrishnan and looks after him like a father, mother and a friend. Both Balakrishnan and Michael have no parents and they live in a small tenement. It is a miracle that both these people somehow live without entirely starving.

Balakrishnan's talent was recognized by South India Educational Society, Mumbai which organized a special exhibition of his paintings for a fortnight in Mumbai. The South India Educational Society continue to support him in a limited way.

When one sees the talent and the problem of Balakrishnan and Michael, any sensitive person cannot but feel angry and frustrated that the government and the society ignore such persons and leave them alone to live with their problems helplessly. The paintings made by Balakrishnan are of extraordinary quality and can well decorate the houses and commercial establishments. He sells them at very nominal price of Rs.200/- and even less per piece.

Nandini Voice For the Deprived has published the photograph of Balakrishnan and his paintings in the website www.nandinivoice.org. The paintings of Balakrishnan are also promoted for sale by Nandini Voice for Deprived and the sale proceeds are entirely given to Balakrishnan.

Contact address of Balakrishnan
Sri. G. Balakrishnan,
No.161, E Block, TNHB,
Dr. Rajarathinam Nagar,
Kodungaiyur, Chennai-600181

SHOULD QUALITY EDUCATION BE ONLY FOR THE AFFLUENT ?

Even as feverish and animated discussions are taking place amongst the political parties about introducing reservation on caste basis in elite institutions in the country, we also hear frequent news about the shoddy manner in which the government run educational institutions catering to the need of the poor and deprived are being managed.

There are stories of government schools for girl students which do not have proper toilet facilities . There are government schools where students are being taught in open air as the class rooms do not have roofs. What kind of education can be imparted to the poor students in such dismal conditions?

The poor students start their education with all the disadvantages from the first standard onwards. While the government schools are not supposed to collect any fees from poor students, the school administration collect fees under various pretext for which no proper receipts are given. The poor students face the problems of corruption and bribery at the age of five when they enter into the educational institutions.

While several of the poor students have the acumen and thirst for knowledge, if they are not provided proper environment and educational input , what can they do? It is not the fault of the poor students or their families but that of the government who are in charge of the government run educational institutions catering to the requirements of poor and downtrodden. The characterlessness of the government departments reflect on the quality of the government run schools.

In such scenario, we find conditions where quality education are largely provided only by the private schools which charge exhorbitant fees. Obviously, the quality education particularly at the primary and secondary level which lay the foundation for the capacity building of the students, are now available only to the affluent sections of the society who have the money power. In such scenario, there is no feasibility for the large number of poor students and their families to come out of the desperate conditions at all.

DEPRIVED PEOPLE AGE FASTER

Scientists have uncovered evidence of accelerated ageing among working class volunteers, leaving them biologically older than those higher up in the economic social ladder.

Genetic tests revealed that being working class could add the equivalent of seven years to a person's age.

Researchers led by Tim Spector at St.Thomas' Hospital in London studied the impact of differences in income, smoking, body weight and exercise between the individuals and concluded that the stress of being at the bottom of the social pile increases cellular damage which speeds up ageing.

The findings may explain the large disparity in death rates between different social classes, not all of which can be explained by lifestyle.

The researchers used genetic tests to examine chromosomes in cells from 1,552 women. They focused on microscopic caps called telomeres that cover the ends of chromosomes and protect them from damage.

Telomeres are believed to be linked to age because each time a cell divides, they shorten, until eventually the cell dies.

When the women were divided into social classes, the researchers found that working class women had shorter telomeres, equivalent on average to being seven years older.

"A seven-year difference is obviously a large one. It equates with the epidemiological data showing that if you look at death rates of different classes of people, those in social class four and five die several years before those in one and two," said Prof Spector.

They also compared telomeres from 17 female twins who started life on the same social rung but later split as one moved up or down, usually as a result of marriage. In 12 cases a move down was equivalent to nine years of ageing.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT NGOS IN INDIA

Number of NGOs in India: 1998- 5 lakh, 2006 - 10 lakh

NGOs that receive foreign funds: 2003-2004: 17145 (1.7% of the total number of NGOs)

Total foreign funds received by the above in the year - 2003-2004:Rs.5105.46 Crore

The Ministry of Human Affairs banned 8673 NGOs for FCRA violations in October 2005

Narayan Sewa Sanstha - Serving the Deprived

Unable to bear with pains caused by the pathetic scene, due to poverty - when Krishna Ji Bheel - a patient in the hospital ward at Udaipur, was seen hiding 2-3 breads from the food served to him for his son and brother who had nothing to eat as the money borrowed by them for treatment had been spent, and had burst into tears when asked the reasons for hiding the breads - Sadhu Kailash 'Manav' resolved to collect one firstful of flour from the houses of obliging friends and fellow citizens and started feeding attendants of poor patients by baking breads from thus collected flour. This small and humble effort, started on Oct. 23, 1985 on the occasion of Dashahara, was described as Narayan Sewa.

Over the past 21 years, Narayan Sewa Sansthan has grown into a unique and well known organization committed to totally free service of the disabled people, particularly the polio patients, by offering them free treatment at its own 300 bed Polio Hospital equipped with all necessary modern facilities. The free services include diagnosis, tests,

operations, plastering, medicines, therapy and food for the patient and one attending companion. The Sansthan has a network of 320 branches in India and over 80 branches abroad including a dedicated team of over 300 Sadhakas.

Polio Patients cursed to crawl like animals on fours are restored to normal rehabilitation after free and necessary reconstructive surgical intervention. Over 44000 free polio operations have been performed till date. Aids appliances and artificial limbs are fabricated at the work shop for free supply and fittings to polio patients.

Children born to mothers addicted to alcohol and smoking suffer from Cerebral Palsy (CP), mental retardation and autism. The Sansthan treats, teaches and trains such children the basic skills at its Relief Institute.

For further details please contact
Narayan Sewa Sansthan
Sewadham, Sewa Nagar, Sect.4,
Udaipur - 313002 (Raj.) India

SAFETY RISK

WALKING ON THE PAVEMENT IN MYLAPORE, CHENNAI

A 60 year old man went to visit his 90 year old uncle who is half his age in spirit and health and who lives in Luz Church Road, Mylapore, Chennai.

He describes his experience as he walked back from Mylapore to his residence in Besant Nagar in Chennai.

After enjoying the company of my uncle and feeling younger, I left his house to return to my residence at Besant Nagar by 6.30 p.m. The return trip to Besant Nagar was revealing and looked like safety risk on many occasions

First, I came to bus stop near Luz corner and waited for the bus to Adyar enroute to Besant Nagar for around 20 minutes. No bus looked like coming. Feeling impatient, I decided to walk up to Mylapore Tank to catch the bus.

As I started walking, I realised that for walking on the road and crossing without being hit by a vehicle, one should be specially blessed.

Practically there is no space in the platform to walk which is almost fully occupied by the vendors. As I crossed the bridge near the Mylai railway station, the nauseating smell from the canal is something that requires either an inert nose or extreme level of tolerance to pollution. With great difficulty, I managed to reach the Mylapore Tank and waited for the bus. Here the buses came but one would not know as to where it would stop. Finally, when I reached the entrance of the bus, I found that it was so crowded that it was impossible to get in, though however, younger persons managed to jump inside. Having wasted another half hour, I thought that it would be more prudent to walk further.

Then walking through the RK Mutt road, Mandaveli Bus stand and beyond towards Adyar, I thought I could have been hit atleast five or six times by passing vehicles.

One or two times, I had to rub shoulders with other passers by due to want of space. The worst thing was that the small platform is so uneven, I slipped in the darkness and managed not to fall as I was extremely cautious. Or was it God's grace

Finally, I came to Andhra Mahila Sabha bus stop. It was no better. By the time I reached this place, I became extremely tired physically and mentally it was exhausting. The worst possible near hit was when I had to cross the road near the Andhra Mahila Sabha when I had to wait for atleast for a few minutes and no passing vehicle cared for me to slow down. The police man tried to help me but told me that I was too slow to cross the road. Finally, he walked along with me to give me confidence to enable me to cross the road which was truly an adventure.

Coming to Andhra Mahila Sabha bus stand, which was heavily crowded, I could not get into any bus.

So, I decided to engage an autorickshaw to Besant Nagar. Rs.30 was the charge demanded and after doing a little argument and talking about the need for ethics to the auto driver, I agreed to pay Rs30/-. Finally, when he brought me to my residence in Besant Nagar, the driver demanded Rs.40/- stating that the house was farther than what I described to him earlier, which was not true. When I refused, he started abusing me.

To buy peace and save my honour, I paid him Rs. 40/- and then stepped into my house to rest in peace.

IS THE COUNTRY AS BAD AS IT IS MADE TO LOOK ?

No doubt, there is widespread corruption in the government machinery and the business establishments all over the country. It is also true that the media in the country is always not honest and has largely gone into the hands of business men. The educational institutions are no more started by philanthropists but by those who see business opportunity in the educational enterprises. Even the judiciary is often viewed with a level of suspicion on several occasions. These are all disturbing trends in the national scenario, which make several people think that the country is likely to remain in a state of unrest and in disharmony for long time to come.

While this is the national picture, when one would speak to individuals at cross section of society, there are several opinions expressed about the need for probity in public life, the importance of fighting against corruption and dishonesty at all levels and helping the downtrodden to find their feet.

Most of the country men have religious bend of mind as seen by the crowded temples, churches and mosques and the large gathering that attend the religious congregations and discourses on religion.

What is happening in this country and why is so much of bleak picture about the future when large number of individuals at different levels want a honest country developing on the basis of good value system ?

A careful analysis would readily indicate the fact that the concerned citizens largely do not do anything other than expressing their views and then choosing to live within the circle of their friends and families. A fire in them to act in positive manner for the cause of the overall society is conspicuous by its absence. It is obvious that most of them are mere armchair critics and are not willing to fight and suffer for any worthwhile cause. The most active of them often do not do anything beyond writing letters to the newspapers.

What the country needs today is determined individuals who do their jobs and also fight for the national cause at their own level. It is a simple solution

for the nation's complex problems. A small group of individuals at different places in the country at different levels standing by truth and fighting for just cause by defying the corrupt systems would go a long way in setting the right tone for the country. The country badly needs such role models at village, taluk and town levels.

A big leadership is not necessary, though it would be desirable.

Motivated individuals should use the existing rules and regulations in the country to defy the corrupt systems. For example, if a police man unjustifiably harasses an individual or a sub registrar demands bribe money for registering the document or an educational institution demands money in cash without giving proper receipt, the appropriate course for the citizen is to refuse to submit himself to such demands. In the process, he is bound to suffer and this suffering has to be necessarily undergone cheerfully for the sake of setting the nation on the right track. Not content with mere refusing to pay the bribe, one more step should be taken of reporting the matter to the concerned authorities.

In the type of climate prevailing in the country today, it is quite possible that the government machinery and even the media would ignore such positive struggle for the sake of larger good of the society. But, certainly the people in the near around area of activity would come to know about it and the message would spread setting a chain reaction.

In the type of democratic system and the election procedures now prevalent in the country, it is unlikely that the quality political leadership would emerge by voting out the dishonest people and electing the honest people. This is unlikely to happen in the near future. Under the circumstance, the only way is to start a resistance movement by the honest individuals which would force the leadership and administrative machinery to improve and change for the better.

The strong public opinion and the resultant public wrath alone can save this country.

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.



God's compassion and concern for the Poor and Needy

Dear Sir,

In Biblical times, Jehovah God had compassion and concern for the poor and needy and wished they should not earn their livelihood by begging in the streets.

He ordered that when farmer reaped the fruits of his field, the poor and the needy should be allowed to collect what harvest workers left behind. Farmers were not to reap the edges of their fields completely nor were they to gather the left over grapes and olives. Sheaves of grain inadvertently left in the fields should not be retrieved. This was a loving arrangement on behalf of the poor, the alien residents, the orphans and the widows.

The principle behind the law on gleaning has not changed, but how many are following this law?

G.E.M.Manoharan, Coimbatore

v v v

Exhibition sale of products made by Disabled persons

Dear Sir,

I came to know from the magazine Kudimakkal Murasu that you are conducting Exhibition Sale of Products Made By Disabled Persons. I convey my thanks for your efforts. Please allow me to submit the following suggestion

The products are made by the manufacturers for consumers. If the product should reach the consumers, the producer should approach the consumers with their products. It is not correct to think that the consumers should approach the producers.

Director, Annai Joy Kruba Trust, Madurai

v v v

Whither National Leadership?

Dear Sir,

Apropos the write up on Dr. Manmohan Singh's leadership (NVD Aug. '06) one wonders whether he leads at all or is being led by different persons around him.

He gives an impression that he is a toy in the hands of his high command and allied parties as well as supporting parties who dictate terms in every issue. But there is no use in criticising him for his non-assertive ways knowing that he was made to occupy the position though a quirk of

circumstances and as a compromise candidate to lead a coalition government.

Admittedly, Dr. Singh is highly erudite and an expert in economics, honest and incorruptible but these qualities alone cannot make him a leader.

Knowledge apart, money and muscle power and clever politicking opportunism and other corrupt qualities have become a must weapons in the hands of those who aspire for leadership.

In the present vitiated political atmosphere, undeserving person can become a Prime Minister and Chief Minister. At least for sometime to come, the country has to bear with 'make' leaders.

M.R.Pillai, Chennai

v v v

Shameful theft

Dear Sir,

A very shocking and a shameful news appeared about Air India's VVIP plane, when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Germany in April this year. Liquor bottles were stolen from the aircraft and the Air India's vigilance Department conducted an enquiry.

Mahatma Gandhi's breath and spirit was always prohibition; How dare they carry liquor bottles with them in Prime Minister's aircraft, like office files when they go on official visit to other countries. It seems, wherever they go, they go with liquor bottles. Shame.

D.Vedamuthu, Chennai

v v v

Handing over/Taking over

Dear Sir,

There is a system called handing over/taking over when a new person assumes office. It eloquently applies in case of a new Chief Minister taking over charge from the old Chief Minister who lays down his/her office. A list of pending items and files is normally kept ready and both the parties after a scrutiny sign it, retaining a copy by each of them.

Obviously, such a cautious procedure was not followed when Karunanidhi took over charge in Tamil Nadu as Chief Minister recently. Obviously, this is because the present and former Chief Ministers do not see eye to eye and are not on talking terms. Such attitude is not good for democracy and good governance.

K.N.Narayanapillai, Chennai

SHOULD QUALITY EDUCATION BE ONLY FOR THE AFFLUENT ?



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Chief Editor

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