

# **Nandini**

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## ***Voice For The Deprived***

Dedicated to the cause of marginalised and downtrodden

**VOL XVII**

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - Rs. 100/-**

**RS.10/-**

**With so many corrupt  
persons in power,  
public opinion matter  
no more**

## THOUGHTS OF KANCHI PARAMACHARYA

# NO OUTWARD SHOW IS NEEDED IN SOCIAL SERVICE

Every morning a handful of rice (uncooked) must be set apart for the poor. All the families must do this without fail every day.

The rice thus kept must be collected from house to house, from quarter to quarter, cooked and offered to the deity of the local temple as naivedya and then distributed among the poor. With the handful of rice set apart for the poor, keep just one paisa also. The paisa collected from each family would be sufficient to buy salt, chilli powder, etc, to mix with the rice to make it more palatable. It would also serve to buy firewood and to pay the rent for the vessels.

To carry out such a scheme is to do a great service to the poor - and to the Lord. Charity like this should encourage temple going, not to speak of devotion. Since the food is first offered as naivedya, it would mean that the poor will take it as prasada which will impart them inner purity.

Annadan or the gift of food is one kind of service of paropakara. We talk of service to the poor, social service and so on. Today, all this is done with much fanfare and publicity.

In the past, the needy were served naturally, without making any noise.

Service comes under "purta- dharma" and it includes digging wells and ponds for the public, feeding the poor, building temples for the spiritual well being of people, laying out gardens. Excavating wells and ponds has been mentioned first.

The importance of this word may be gauged from such remarks in ordinary conversation: "What's he doing? Digging a well or something?" It is extremely meritorious to excavate pond outside the village to slake the thirst of cattle. All the people in a village must join together without the distinction of poor and rich, high or low - work involving physical effort. It will incidentally contribute to greater social harmony.

With education we purify our intelligence, with meditation we cleanse our mind, with sloka or poetry we clarify our speech. How do we purify our body?

By exerting ourselves in the service of others. As we keep serving people in this way, we will obtain inward purity. When all take part in the work of digging a pond or well, without any differences, without one man feeling superior to another or inferior to him, our ego too will be dug away.



More important than the water swelling up in the pond is the love swelling up from our hearts. No outward show is needed in social service.

### TEN COMMANDMENTS OF PARAMACHARYA

- ◆ One of our duties as human beings is to avail ourselves of every opportunity to do good to others. The poor can serve others by their loyal work to the country and the rich by their wealth to help the poor. Those who are influential can use their influence to better the condition of the lowly.
- ◆ Man by himself cannot create even a blade of grass. We will be guilty of gross ingratitude if we do not offer first to God what we eat or wear – only the best and choicest should be offered to Him.
- ◆ Life without love is a waste. Everyone should cultivate "Prema" or love towards all human beings, bird and beast.
- ◆ Wealth amassed by a person whose heart is closed to charity, is generally dissipated by the inheritors: but the family of philanthropists will always be blessed with happiness.
- ◆ A person who has done a meritorious deed will lose the resulting merit, if he listens to the praise of others or himself boasts of his deeds.
- ◆ It will do no good to grieve over what has happened. If we learn to discriminate between good and evil, that will guard us from falling into the evil again.
- ◆ We should utilize to good purpose, the days of our life-time. We should engage ourselves in acts, which will contribute to the welfare of others rather than to our selfish desires.
- ◆ We should perform duties that have been prescribed for our daily life and also be filled with devotion to God.
- ◆ One attains one's goal by performance of one's duties.
- ◆ Jnana is the only solvent of our troubles and sufferings.

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA SPEAKS WE ARE ALL BEGGERS

One of the greatest lessons I have learnt in my life is to pay as much attention to the means of work as to its end.

Our great defect in life is that we are so much drawn to the ideal, the goal is so much more enchanting, so much more alluring, so much bigger in our mental horizon, that we lose sight of the details altogether.

But whenever failure comes, if we analyse it critically, in ninety nine per cent of cases, we shall find that it was because we did not pay attention to the means. Proper attention to the means is what we need. With the means all right, the end must come.

We forget that it is the cause that produces the effect; the effect cannot come by itself; and unless the causes are exact, proper, and powerful, the effect will not be produced. Once the ideal is chosen and the means determined, we may almost let go the ideal, because we are sure it will be there, when the means are perfected.

When the cause is there, there is no more difficulty about the effect, the effect is bound to come. If we take care of the cause, the effect will take care of itself.

The realization of the ideal is the effect. The means are the cause: attention to the means, therefore, is the great secret of life.

We also read this in the Gita and learn that we have to work, constantly work with all our power; to put our whole mind in the work, whatever it be, that we are doing. At the same time, we must not be attached. That is to say, we must not be drawn away from the work by anything else; still, we must be able to quit the work whenever we like.

With all its failures and successes, with all its joys and sorrows, it can be one succession of sunshine, if only we are not caught.

That is the one cause of misery: we are attached, we are being caught.

Therefore says the Gita: Work constantly; work, but be not attached; be not caught. Reserve unto yourself the power of detaching yourself from everything, however beloved, however much the soul might yearn for it, however great the pangs of misery you feel if you were going to leave it; still, reserve the power of leaving it whenever you want.

The weak have no place here, in this life or in any other life. Weakness leads to slavery. Weakness leads to all kinds of misery, physical and mental. Weakness is death.

There are hundreds of thousands of microbes surrounding us, but they cannot harm us unless we become weak, until the body is ready and predisposed to receive

them. There may be a million microbes of misery, floating about us. Never mind! They dare not approach us, they have no power to get a hold on us, until the mind is weakened. This is the great fact: strength is life, weakness is death. Strength is felicity, life eternal, immortal; weakness is constant strain and misery: weakness is death.

Attachment is the source of all our pleasures now. We are attached to our friends, to our relatives; we are attached to our intellectual and spiritual works; we are attached to external objects, so that we get pleasure from them. What, again, brings misery but this very attachment? We have to detach ourselves to earn joy. If only we have power to detach ourselves at will, there would not be any misery.

That man alone will be able to get the best of nature, who, having the power of attaching himself to a thing with all his energy, has also the power to detach himself when he should do so. The difficulty is that there must be as much power of attachment as that of detachment.

There are men who are never attracted by anything. They can never love, they are hard-hearted and apathetic; they escape most of the miseries of life. But the wall never feels misery, the wall never loves, is never hurt; but it is the wall, after all. Surely it is better to be attached and caught, than to be a wall.

Therefore the man who never loves, who is hard and stony, escaping most of the miseries of life, escapes also its joys. We do not want that. That is weakness, that is death.

The beggar is never happy. The beggar only gets a dole with pity and scorn behind it, at least with the thought behind that the beggar is a low object. He never really enjoys what he gets.

We are all beggars. Whatever we do, we want a return. We are all traders. We are traders in life, we are traders in virtue, we are traders in religion. And alas! we are also traders in love.



# Desperate Calls

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



## Differently abled persons need support for self employment pursuits

Sri S.Sivakumar is a severely differently abled person. He has gained expertise in maintenance of cell phones and he has self employed himself as cell phone instrument technician.

Sri S.Sivakumar looks forward for orders, for carrying out maintenance and repair work in cell phones.

For further details, please contact  
Sri S.Sivakumar  
338, 5th Street, S.A.Colony, Vyasarpadi,  
Chennai-600 039  
Mobile No.9941298634  
\*\*\*\*\*

Sri.R.Gajendran is a severely differently abled person and he has self employed himself by providing computer typing services.

Sri.R.Gajendran needs a printer urgently, which would enable him to improve his income.

For further details, please contact  
Sri.R.Gajendran  
7/32, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Sarma Nagar, Vyasarpadi,  
Chennai-600 039  
Mobile No.7299031355  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Needs support for medical treatment

\* Master Sathiyaperiyar S/o Mr. Jai Shankar, 4 years old, has to undergo cochlear implantation at KKR ENT Hospital, Chennai. Cost of the implantation is Rs.6,88,000/-

\* Master Mohammed Fazil, S/o.Mr.Kaja Mohideen , age 7 years, has to undergo chemotherapy treatment at Apollo Speciality Hospital, Chennai. Cost of the chemotherapy treatment is Rs.10,00,000/-

\* Mr.Kannan, age 34 years, has to undergo kidney transplantation at Kaliappa Renal Centre Pvt. Ltd., Chennai. Cost of the surgery is Rs.4,50,000/-.

\* Master Mohandas Gupta, S/o.Mr.Radha Raman Gupta, age 2 and ½ years, has to undergo chemotherapy treatment at Kanchi Kamakoti Child Trust Hospital, Chennai. Estimated cost of the chemotherapy treatment is Rs. 6 lakhs to 8 lakhs .

The cheque may be drawn in favour of concerned hospital and sent to the following address:

The Secretary,  
Women's Welfare Syndicate  
Flat No.5,Raja Mathangi,  
Old No.14, New No.27, Josier Street,  
Nungambakkam  
Chennai-600 034  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Needs hearing aid

Master P Pushparaj, age 11 years is studying 6<sup>th</sup> std. He is a poor hearing impaired boy.

His father Mr.Poiyathappan requests kind hearted persons for donation of hearing aid for his son..

Contact address:  
Master P Pushparaj, S/o. Mr.Poiyathappan,  
Mariamman Koil Street, Kattalai & Post, Marakkanam,  
Tindivanam Tk, Tamil Nadu  
Cell No.9626196459  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Poor student needs financial help

Sri.M.Dinesh Kumar is studying 3<sup>rd</sup> year B.Sc. Mathematics in The Madura College (Evening college), Madurai.

Sri.M.Dinesh Kumar requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his studies.

Cheque may be drawn in favour of The Madura College, Madurai and sent to the following address:

Sri.M.Dinesh Kumar, 1/148, Middle Street  
Thachampathu, Thiruvudagam, Madurai  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Needs support for medical treatment

Mr.Ayyakad Venkateswaran Hariharan, age 69 years is suffering from chronic renal failure since 2008 and the doctors have advised him to undergo dialysis for rest his life.

He is also a diabetic since last 30 years, is on insulin and has already lost both his eyes. The monthly medical expenses is Rs.22,000/-

The patient's only son and only earning member in the family is Mr.Ayyakad Hariharan Venkatesh, age 38 years and he is unmarried. He is working in a private firm. His salary is Rs.25,000/- per month. They are living in the rented house.

Mr.Ayyakad Hariharan Venkatesh is unable to meet the expenditure with his salary.

He requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his father's medical treatment.

Cheque may be drawn in favour of Vertex Hospital,Mumbai and sent to the following address:

Mr.Ayyakad Hariharan Venkatesh  
B-501, Buildig No.7

Phase I, Laxmi Park, Near Vartak Nagar, Thane (W)  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Needs support for education**

Sri.K.Naveenkumar,age 17 years is studying 1<sup>st</sup> year Mechanical Engineering in Pallavan College of Engineering, Kancheepuram.

Sri.K.Naveenkumar's parents are unskilled labourer

Sri.K.Naveenkumar requests kind hearted persons for financial help for his education.

Cheque may be drawn in favour of Pallavan College of Engineering, Kancheepuram and sent to the following address

Sri.K.Naveenkumar, S/o.Sri.Karthikeyan,  
507, L N P K Street, Vazhaipanthal (Post),  
Arani Vellore Dist (Via), Pin:632 318  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Financial help needed for poor students**

The following poor students studying in Padma Subramaniam Bala Bhavan Matriculation Hr.Sec. School, Mangadu, Chennai request financial help for their education

Name of the student	Class	Fees for the academic year 2011-12
Mr.B.Vasanth Kumar	X	Rs.17,250
S.Mercury	X	Rs.17,250
Mr.N.Sivagiri	VII	Rs.14,450
Ms.N.Srimathi	V	Rs.12,360
Ms.K.Rita	XII	Rs.19,250
Mr.K.Yuvaraj	XI	Rs.18,450
Mr.S.Vijay	VI	Rs.13,450
Mr.J.Surya Vignesh	VII	Rs.14,450
Mr.V.Yokesh	IV	Rs.11,360
Mr.S.Ranjith Kumar	IV	Rs.11,360
Mr.P.B.Naveen	V	Rs.12,360
Ms.B.Mithra	I	Rs.9,560
Mr.S.Hajira	VIII	Rs.15,860

Mr.N.J.Manoj	VIII	Rs.15,860
Mr.S.Lokesh	III	Rs.10,360
Ms.S.Sugapriya	I	Rs.9,560
Mr.R.Bharath	IV	Rs.11,360

Cheque may be drawn in favour of Padma Subramaniam Bala Bhavan Matriculation Hr.Sec. School, Chennai and sent to the following address

Principal,  
Padma Subramaniam Bala Bhavan Matriculation Hr.Sec. School,  
No.13. Bagavathy Road, Sri Chakra Nagar,  
Mangadu,Chennai – 600 122

\*\*\*\*\*

**Needs support for heart surgery**

\* Baby Ayush, 8 months old , is suffering from congenital heart disease. Estimated cost of the open heart surgery is Rs.1,20,000/-

\* Baby Thuin Mondal, age 1 year, is suffering from congenital heart disease. Estimated cost of the open heart surgery is Rs.1,50,000/-

\* Ms.Suparna Pal , age 6 years, is suffering from congenital heart disease. Estimated cost of the open heart surgery is Rs.1,50,000/-

\* Baby Kamlesh, age 13 months old, is suffering from congenital heart disease. Estimated cost of the open heart surgery is Rs.1,50,000/-

Master Sohan, 9 months old , is suffering from congenital heart disease. Estimated cost of the open heart surgery is Rs.1,25,000/-

The cheque may be drawn in favour of 'Needy Heart Foundation' Fortis Hospital, Bangalore and sent to the following address:

Secretary,  
Save Poor Lives  
No.3, Perumal Koil Street, Aminjikarai  
Chennai-600 029  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Differently abled person needs tricycle**

Mr.S.M.Mohammed Ali is a poor and differently abled person.

He requests kind hearted persons for donation of tricycle to move from one place to other place.

Contact address:  
Mr.S.M.Mohammed Ali  
43, Store Lane, (Valli Mahal Sandhu)  
Periyarnagar,Moolakadai,  
Chennai-600 060  
Mobile:9940594329

## DESPERATE CALLS

### **Self employed visually impaired person seeks support for his business activity**

Mr.E.Ramachandran is a poor, visually impaired person.He has borrowed money to set up a brick making facility in his village to self employ himself.

He requests kind hearted persons to place order for the bricks made by him, which are of good quality and are intended for construction purposes.

Contact address:

Mr.E.Ramachandran, S/o.N.Egambaram,  
Pillaiyar Koil Street, Naickaneri Village,  
Munjur Pattu (Post), Vellore Taluk & District,  
Pin-632056

Mobile :9842092357/9688056534

## **GANDHI JAYANTHI DAY COMPETITIONS FOR STUDENTS**

In the context of forth coming Gandhi Jayanthi Day (2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2011) , Nandini Voice For The Deprived is organizing following competitions for students.

### **DEBATE COMPETITION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS ON "HOW TO MAKE LOKPAL BILL EFFECTIVE?"**

### **QUIZ COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS ON "LIFE AND MISSION OF MAHATMA GANDHI"**

### **ESSAY COMPEITION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS ON "IMPACT OF RAPID SPREAD OF LIQUOR HABIT IN TAMIL NADU AND HOW TO RETRIEVE THE SITUATION?"**

There have been overwhelming response from the students all over Tamil Nadu for the above competitions. The prizes will be awarded to the students during a meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 at Chennai.

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# 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.



## Is Anna Hazare over reaching himself?

Dear Sir

Anna Hazare has justifiably received nation wide support for his anti corruption crusade.

Certainly, Anna Hazare has caught the imagination of countrymen. He reflects the mood of the nation, when he says that the battle against the corruption should be fought to the finish.

At the same time, some of the recent utterances of Anna Hazare and the members of the so called civil society make one suspect as to whether they have become over ambitious and are involving themselves in political upmanship.

The repeated threat of Anna Hazare to go on fast can become counter productive. With weak and characterless government at the centre and the credibility of the politicians now remaining so low, even a spark can create a big nationwide conflict and unrest, with millions joining in violent protest. This is not what we need and what the country can afford.

What the country needs is an organized and sustained movement for corruption free society, which can be achieved by a process of persuasion, public campaign and non violent protests without getting involved in main stream politics.

A few months back, Anna Hazare gave an impression that he would be capable of exhibiting such approach.

Kolkata

R.A.Sen

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## All are equal before law

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the doctrine of the Indian jurisprudence, all are equal before law. In other words, no one is above law.No gender discrimination has been made by the Indian constitution too.

Under the circumstances, proposed Lok Pal Bill must be applicable to all irrespective of their status. But no

consensus is taking place between drafting committee comprising UPA Government and members of Civil society..

Present time provides a golden opportunity to prove that all countrymen are equal and no one should be exempted from the proposed Lok Pal Bill.

Thane

Sridhar V Kulkarni

\*\*\*\*\*

## Points to ponder

Dear Sir,

Many of us grudge and grumble at old age and loneliness. It is time for senior citizens to reassess and realize their strength, talents and responsibilities.

Let us take it as a golden gift of God to pray silently and devote the time for promoting ethical values and in eradication of evil habits and corruption, for the welfare of our future generation.

"EKAMTHAM LEADS TO VEDAMTHAM AND PARAMANANDAM"

Chennai

K.R.Krishnan

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## Commotion in Parliament

Dear Sir,

It causes concern that Parliament is not being allowed to function on many days by opposition parties, particularly by BJP.

It is surprising that the top leadership of BJP cannot realize the fact that such negative approach of confrontation only spoil its image and bring down its rating.

As the UPA government is performing badly, there is opportunity for the BJP to step into the vacuum. But the BJP is not showing maturity in its conduct and is thus providing advantage to UPA.

Calicut

A.U. Rahman

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# AVOIDABLE FISHERMEN ISSUES BETWEEN INDIA AND SRILANKA



In recent times, we frequently hear about the fishermen from Tuticorin / Rameswaram region in Tamil Nadu who go for fishing, being arrested by Sri Lankan coast guards. The latest incident, when 23 fishermen from Tamil Nadu were taken into custody by the Sri Lankan government and then released after some time caused considerable concern in Tamil Nadu.

Certainly, such incidents and the consequent strain in relationships between India and Sri Lanka are avoidable, if only the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of India would exhibit qualities of statesmanship and wisdom in the mutual relationships.

As two neighbouring regions, India and Sri Lanka have much to gain by cooperating with each other and maintaining cordial relationships and they have nothing to gain by acrimonious relationships.

Fishermen whether in Tamil Nadu or Sri Lanka, largely belong to lower income group and have to do hard work in difficult terrain conditions to sustain their income and livelihood. When such fishermen, living on hand to mouth existence, are arrested on the sea waters by the Sri Lankan government in the sea, it certainly causes justifiable anger and frustration in Tamil Nadu. This should particularly be kept in view that while fishing in the sea, it would be very difficult for the fishermen to know in precise terms as to which would be Indian waters and which would be the Sri Lankan waters and certainly there would be possibilities of genuine errors.

It would be particularly harsh for either of the government to arrest the fishermen who may cross the waters unknowingly.

Both the governments should realize about the harm done to the relationships by exaggerating such trivial issues and arresting the poor and innocent fishermen and this would do no good for both the countries. There are many things that can be gained by Sri Lanka by co-operating with India rather than resorting to such harsh steps.

It is true that the Sri Lankan government has to protect the interests of its fishermen just as India has to protect the interests of Indian fishermen. But, why not approach the issues with an element of good will and understanding and compassion towards the poor fishermen of both the countries instead of blowing the issues out of proportions and causing counterproductive bad relationships?

Given the present conditions, it would be appropriate for India and Sri Lanka to immediately constitute a committee of good will that would have representatives both from India and Sri Lanka including fishermen and credible persons with impeccable track record and good will.

In the event of such issues concerning the fishermen arising, this committee should immediately spring into action, look into the issues and provide a fair minded solution. Such standing committee would go a long way in avoiding harassment of fishermen in both the countries, who are only making a living by fishing in the sea waters and which is the only profession that they know.



# CONCERN ABOUT SABARMATI ASHRAM

One should be fortunate to visit Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad where Gandhiji stayed for many years. It is gratifying that the photo gallery as well as the living room of Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba Gandhi have been maintained very well.

At the same time, it causes concern that there is practically no security measure in the Ashram. One can see a policeman lazily sitting in front of the Ashram but no visitor is checked and there is not even a visitor's book maintained to know the identify of the visitors. In these turbulent times with the threat of terrorism looming large, it is a calculated risk not to take security measures in such a holy place like Sabarmati Ashram.

A few days before the unfortunate assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhai Patel was reported to have sent a police officer to Mahatma Gandhi to explain the need to provide security to Mahatma Gandhi. However, Mahatma Gandhi declined the offer stating "MY LIFE IS IN THE HANDS OF GOD".

It also causes concern that the water in the river Sabarmati adjacent to the Ashram is stagnant for all practical purposes with considerable accumulation of sludge. Obviously, the river has not been de silted for a



long time and perhaps, the sewage and industry effluent have choked the river water.

Such a holy and historical place like Sabarmati Ashram would look far more pleasant, if the river would be maintained better.

The Government of Gujarat should look into the matter with the great urgency that it deserves and do the needful as early as possible.

We need to ask ourselves the larger question "Why are institutions set up by great men and women in India in such decline?"



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VIEWS ON THE ABOVE ARTICLE

I know something about the difficulties of Sabarmati. Sevagram is not without them. Nor, for that matter, is Santiniketan. I should imagine Rajaji's ashram at Tiruchengodu is not without its share of troubles, financial or managerial.

Each requires strong action.

But beyond that, we need to ask ourselves the larger question : Why are institutions set up by great men and women in India in such decline?

Instructively, the Ramanasramam in Tiruvannamalai is perhaps relatively trouble-free.

GG



Start an agitation. YOU WILL GET MASSIVE SUPPORT to preserve the Ashram

Bhagvanji Raiyani



Are these the only ones in decline ? All our ancient monuments and all our temples are being vandalised. Curiously, HR&CE is the worst offender in the case of temples in Tamil Nadu. Maybe it is because, we do not know the value of anything.

R. Swaminathan



I have also been to Sabarmati Ashram and completely endorse your views. We have very little pride in our heritage and culture. It is sad but must change.

N.L.Rajah



My compliments for raising your concern and voice about the Ashram. I too had the privilege of visiting that tranquil place a couple of times.

While we try to preserve everything around us, our ability and instinct for preservation of common property is questionable. All our rivers are stealthily being turned into sewage pits..What you saw was therefore a sample of our general apathy, I am afraid.

Our motivations are utilitarian and national heroes are of limited use except for their samaadhies, for photo annual opportunities.

The good thing, however, is that more people have taken it upon themselves to speak out and the establishment, only to avoid embarrassment, acts when driven to the wall.

Thomas



How on earth could a person of Gandhi's elevated self think so poorly about God, who he stated was the life giver.

Was he not aware that his poor country was spending millions on security. He should logically, have gone on fast and told the Sardar to disband security system, save funds and let God protect the millions of Indians and their assets.

We need to evaluate Gandhi's convictions without a jaundiced eye; which favours the great man as of now.

Omkar Razdan



I myself have been to Sabarmati Ashram.

What bothered me was not lack of security, but the poor levels of maintenance. I happened to see the public toilets in the Ashram, and they were stinking.

In Gandhiji's time, every member staying in the

b

v v v v

# DUAL LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP - NO SPACE ?

Dr. Susheela Kaushik Email : susheelaka@gmail.com

To many, the current controversy in the media about the relationship between the PM Manmohan Singh and the Congress party president Sonia is not new.

It is a reminder of the old debate which started with Nehru's period and went on even in Mrs Gandhi's period. Different prime ministers had experimented with the method of two different persons operating at the helm –but it never worked – for some reason or other, unless of course, the party president subordinated himself willingly and knowingly.

For that reason they faced ridicule, like D.K. Barooah during the emergency years, with Mrs Indira Gandhi as the PM. U.N. Debar was another one who was in oblivion. The other examples were of Nehru and Purushottam Das Tandon or Nehru and Kripalani. Both these were periods of strain and tension, and were solved only when the Prime Minister emerged supreme and the party presidents resigned or were changed.

There is space for only one on the top – not two.

The present scenario has happened mainly because the person (in this case Sonia) who had emerged as the uncontested winning party leader in 2004, refused to be the Prime Minister and instead installed the not so charismatic but honest Manmohan Singh as the PM. Unlike in the past precedents, the party leader did not fade into oblivion nor chose to play a lesser role. She was convinced she had a manifest destiny and a messiah like role to save the country and decided to stay on at the helm and exercise power of leadership and guide the polity.

The PM on his part, never forgot that he was not the first choice of the party, but owed his post to the sacrifice of the party leader who was presented in the mould of a 'saint'.

Any other Prime Minister would have asserted himself – be it Nehru, Mrs Gandhi, Morarji Desai, or Vajpayee. The latter two headed coalition ministries, but asserted themselves as the PM – the first among equals – whether it was Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram in the first case or against Advani and George Fernandes in the second case.

But Sonia is different. She was the inheritor of the legacy of Nehru family. The party she is heading is very different; the Congress party is an assertive one and still believes it is the inheritor of the National movement. The Bharatiya Janata Party, of which Vajpayee was the leader, neither had this halo nor the majority in the parliament.

While Vajpayee was respected as a senior, experienced and wise leader, he did not have a strong, united and power-conscious party behind him. Torn between RSS and erstwhile socialists, ambitious and position oriented colleagues and his own health, Vajpayee just about managed his reign by counter checking the RSS and using the cabinet colleagues from different hues and colours, to balance each other. But his many ambitions of leaving a legacy or landmark did not come about thanks to his ambitious and scheming colleagues.

Manmohan Singh does not need to do this. He has a party and party president who are too single-minded and power oriented, and managing and providing needed organisational and political support. To expect him to overcome this or balance this, is too much. He is neither made of that timber and temper nor is interested in this.

The media is provoking Manmohan Singh but one doubts if he will oblige them as long as things are going well. After all, the same (or erstwhile) media and political observers had also criticised Nehru, Mrs Gandhi and even Narasimha Rao as being autocratic, subordinating the party presidents and undemocratic within the party.

Every time India experimented with dual leadership at the top, it had failed and resorted sooner or later to the constitutional position of a powerful PM.

The present arrangement is unique and as long as it is working well, it needs to be accepted. All the ills of India like corruption or inefficiency or the exigencies of coalition politics need not be attributed to this. Two heads are better than one, as long as both know their limits and duties.

# IS CORRUPTION IN INDIA A CULTURAL ASPECT ?

This article was sent by an unknown person. In spite of the anonymity of the author, the article is being published, as it would provoke introspection.

Indians are a Hobbesian culture of self-interest. Corruption in India is a cultural aspect.

Indians seem to think nothing peculiar about corruption. It is everywhere.

Indians tolerate corrupt individuals rather than correct them. No race can be congenitally corrupt. But can a race be corrupted by its culture?

To know why Indians are corrupt, look at their patterns and practices .

## **First:**

Religion is transactional in India. Indians give God cash and anticipate an out-of-turn reward. Such a plea acknowledges that favours are needed for the undeserving.

In the world outside the temple walls, such a transaction is named- "bribe".

A wealthy Indian gives not cash to temples, but gold crowns and such baubles.

His gifts can not feed the poor. His pay-off is for God. He thinks it will be wasted if it goes to a needy man.

In June 2009, The Hindu published a report of Karnataka minister G. Janardhan Reddy gifting a crown of gold and diamonds worth Rs 45 crore to Tirupati.

India's temples collect so much that they don't know what to do with it. Billions are gathering dust in temple vaults.

When Europeans came to India they built schools. When Indians go to Europe & USA, they build temples.

Indians believe that if God accepts money for his favours, then nothing is wrong in doing the same thing. This is why Indians are so easily corruptible.

Indian culture accommodates such transactions morally. There is no real stigma. An utterly corrupt politician can make a comeback to power in India, just unthinkable in the West.

## **Second -**

Indian moral ambiguity towards corruption is visible in its history.

Indian history tells of the capture of cities and kingdoms after guards were paid off to open the gates, and commanders paid off to surrender. This is unique to India.

Indians' corrupt nature has meant limited warfare on the subcontinent.

It is striking how little Indians have actually fought compared to ancient Greece and modern Europe.

The Turks' battles with Nadir Shah were vicious and fought to the finish.

In India fighting wasn't needed, bribing was enough to see off armies.

Any invader willing to spend cash could brush aside India's kings, no matter how many tens of thousands soldiers were in their infantry.

Little resistance was given by the Indians at the "Battle" of Plassey.

Clive paid off Mir Jaffar and all of Bengal folded to an army of 3,000.

There was always a financial exchange to taking Indian forts. Golconda was captured in 1687 after the secret back door was left open.

Mughals vanquished Marathas and Rajputs with nothing but bribes.

The Raja of Srinagar gave up Dara Shikoh's son Sulaiman to Aurangzeb after receiving a bribe. There are many cases where Indians participated on a large scale in treason due to bribery.

Question is: Why Indians have a transactional culture while other 'civilized' nations don't?

## **Third -**

Indians do not believe in the theory that they all can rise if each of them behaves morally.

Their caste system separates them. They do not believe that all men are equal.

This resulted in their division and migration to other religions.

Many Hindus started their own faith like Sikh, Jain, Buddha and many converted to Christianity and Islam. The result is that Indians do not trust one another .

There are no Indians in India ,there are Hindus, Christians, Muslims and what not.

Indians forget that 400 years ago they all belonged to one faith.

This division evolved an unhealthy culture. The inequality has resulted in a corrupt society.

In India, every one is thus against everyone else, except God - and even he is bribed.

# WHY ARE WE NOT HIGHLIGHTING OUR POSITIVES?

Today, every Indian citizen is fed day after day with the news about the widespread corruption in the country amongst the politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen. Even teaching community, god men and judges are accused of indulging in corrupt practices. The concerned citizens including the youth, who feel frustrated about such state of affairs, often wonder as to what would be in store for the country in future.

While the problems are, no doubt, manifold the fact is that the country now discusses more about its deficiencies and inadequacies rather than about its achievements and merits.

Any person who has the opportunity to read the writings of Swami Vivekananda can readily appreciate the fact that the essential advocacy of Swami Vivekananda revolved around great pride in mother India and stress on unbending personal courage as well as dedicated work and service towards the cause undertaken. Swami Vivekananda never approved those who weep over the issues and problems and feel overwhelmed by the adverse situation.

Even during Swami Vivekananda's time, there was misery in India and even more worse conditions than at present, like being ruled by the foreign power, abject poverty conditions, caste differences etc. Swami Vivekananda obviously felt that the best way of solving the problem of the country is to have balanced view of things and focus on the positives. He stressed on bringing out the inner energy in individuals and called every one to arise, awake and forge ahead.

Sri.C.Rajagopalachari, the great Indian statesman, said that the best way of sorting out the issues between India and Pakistan would be to highlight positive aspects of the relationships between the two regions and promote trade and cultural exchange programmes and promote the people to people interaction. When goodwill between the people of two countries would be fostered, the war mongerings would become less. With goodwill between people, appropriate climate would be built for reaching amicable settlement even for vexed issues. As both the neighbours have not paid heed to the advice of this great visionary, the problems between them remain unsolved till date.

When the merits and achievements are focused, people's attention would be driven to such positive aspects of life and the negative elements will steadily get weakened.

Today, we seem to be "glorifying" the dishonest and corrupt people by constantly talking about them, instead

of highlighting the achievements made by several sectors and individuals in the country in the field of science, technology, sports, arts etc. The recent achievements of the country in several front whether in the field of science and technology or in sports or arts or spiritual thoughts are too obvious and only we need to remember them.

Today, Indians are competitive globally. Some of the best brains from India are now engaged in carrying critical functions in scientific establishments and in administrative positions in several developed countries and they are receiving great appreciation.

One need to go to Indian colleges and universities and interact with the young students to know their level of maturity, understanding and imaginative capability. There are many NGOs in India, who are doing extraordinary services in extremely tough conditions to help the cause of the deprived and downtrodden. We see patients from developed countries almost standing in queue for treatment in Indian hospitals.

Why are we ignoring all such positives? We need to recognize such achievements and achievers in India and highlight them, so that dishonest and corrupt people look small and would only be viewed with contempt. The print and the visual media can certainly help by publicising the good deeds and achievements of the country men.

The teachings of great personalities like Swami Vivekananda clearly tell us about the need for exhibiting the positive energy in us in a huge way, to achieve spectacular results that we are capable of. We need to adopt original and innovative approach in tune with our culture and heritage and move on with pride at individual and collective level.

No society has progressed by weeping over issues and going through the process of mourning eternally. What we need is cheer and strength and energy, which is inherently available with us adequately but need to be recognized and brought out.

# ROLE AND IMAGE OF NGOs

Non governmental organizations (popularly known as NGOs) have been doing yeoman services for the upliftment of the deprived section of the society and promotion of national welfare.

While there is no doubt about the important role of NGOs in strengthening the path of progress in the country, there have been some question marks about the functioning style of some of the NGOs. There is apprehension in some quarters that vested interests have also intruded into NGOs fold to some extent, thus tarnishing the overall image of the NGOs themselves.

## **Absence of entry barrier**

Today, there is no particular entry barrier for NGOs and therefore there is no system or procedures to filter the organizations or individuals who seek to become NGOs.

Therefore, some suspicions persist such as that some religious outfits form themselves under the garb of NGOs for the purpose of spreading their religion and propagate the principles of religions.

It is also suspected that some business houses pose themselves as NGOs, for promoting educational institutions, which demand exorbitant fees from the students and amass huge income .

There are even suspicions about corporate groups starting NGOs for the purpose of avoiding taxes and diverting the funds.

There is also a view that some overseas organizations use the outfit of NGOs for pumping the funds into India, which may be used for purposes other than charity.

There may be many other similar scenario of individuals or groups starting NGOs with ulterior objectives, which amount to negation of the glorious and worthy concept and philosophy of NGO itself.

## **Funding of NGOs**

Most of the NGOs appear to survive on the basis of government grants, as well as donation from corporates and public.

One rarely come across the instances of the founders and promoters of NGOs using their own money and resources in significant measure, for carrying on NGO activities.

One often hears about methods adopted by NGOs for mobilizing funds, which sometimes appear to be ridiculous methods and are questionable .

There are occasions when charity dinners have been organized in five star hotels in luxurious style for mobilising funds to support the cause of people living below poverty

line such as slum dwellers . In such charity dinners, it happens that some cinema stars or other celebrities are invited to preside over, who participate in the event after getting fat money towards their fees. Many rich persons participate in such dinners and pay high price towards the cost of the dinner and then leave the dinner hall thoroughly drunk. In all such cases , we find that many attendees are not really concerned about the plight of the poor and downtrodden but they often view such dinner as an entertainment activity, when they throw away their money for getting cheap pleasure.

We also come across instances of some sort of middlemen and brokers going around to collect money for NGOs and get commission from NGOs for their services.

NGOs should keep in mind that while mobilizing resources for the activities, the means should justify the ends

## **Image of NGOs**

We frequently come across announcements about Government blacklisting some of the NGOs and making them ineligible for receiving grants from the government. Obviously, the government has been disillusioned with the activities of a few NGOs and have lost the confidence in them.

Such news frequently appearing in the media tarnish the image of NGOs in the country. Many persons, who genuinely want to help the poor people and want to use the services of NGOs for donating their money, have developed suspicions about the functioning style and motives of NGOs.

It is anachronistic scenario to see the NGOs going to the slums in their luxurious cars and then extending the benefits to the poor people. They often organize big meetings with huge publicity with the objective of spreading their image amongst the public and catching media attention. It is often said that in some of such meetings, the expenses incurred in conducting the meeting is much higher than the amount of donation or benefits that are extended to the poor people with high publicity.

The time has come for NGOs to improve their image and stand up to the reputation that NGOs should command.

### **Importance of NGOs**

While it is a fact that NGOs in India are still undergoing the process of evolution and fine tuning of their goals, objectives and methodologies, there is absolutely no doubt that the NGOs have to play large and significant role in shaping the fibre and fabric of the resurgent India.

In view of such critical role of NGOs for the betterment of the country, the NGOs have to necessarily become better focused and appropriately oriented and purposive with Gandhian philosophy as the central theme and service to all becoming the sole motive of their functions.

It is evident that the governments, both at the centre and state, can not by themselves fulfill the expectations of the nation and satisfy the needs of the society.

Unfortunately, in India today, the government machinery is often suspected to be associated with an element of characterlessness, which is becoming increasingly evident at different levels all over India. In view of this, the functioning style and performance standards of the government machinery often remain much below the need of the time and the expectations of the people. With the pattern of electoral process now in vogue and the style of democracy presently prevalent in the country, perhaps, the country has to pay the price and reconcile itself, atleast for some years, for the inadequate standards of performance by government machinery and those in charge of running the administration of the country.

In such circumstances, the NGOs have to necessarily function strongly and adequately to fill the gap and to ensure that the short falls in the performance of the government would not lead to inefficiency in the implementation of welfare measures.

### **Functional style of NGOs**

Considering the nature of responsibility that the NGOs have to shoulder and the tasks that they have to undertake and fulfill, the NGOs have to become highly efficient organizations by adopting the scientific management tools and procedures in the day to day functioning. Like other organizations, NGOs should also have plans with short term and long term objectives.

All the tasks should be fulfilled with sense of detachment and developing mind set that would be without greed or self glory.

Therefore, compared to other institutions, the NGOs should be qualitatively and spiritually better and superior.

With the complexity of today's world with several scientific advancements as well as variety of needs of individuals and societies, the NGOs have to become specialized organizations without thinking that everyone can attend to all sorts of activities.

Particularly considering the fact that the NGOs have to collect lot of money and they should control the expenditure efficiently and also keeping in view that they deal with the lives of the poor people, NGOs should ensure that their standards of performance are optimum.

### **Credible performance**

NGOs have been involved in variety of activities such as education, providing medical benefits and rehabilitation of people etc.

While there may be short comings in the performance of NGOs and there may be some black sheeps amongst them, the overall performance of NGOs in India are highly commendable.

What is particularly gratifying is that several well educated and technologically oriented professionals are showing increasing inclination towards NGOs activities. There have been number of cases when professionals have left lucrative jobs voluntarily and have ventured into NGO activities with service oriented view.

There are also instances of bureaucrats and scientific professionals taking up NGO activities after their super annuation.

The upliftment of society through NGOs is not only possible but is also absolutely necessary, considering the need of our society and extent of poverty and malnutrition prevailing in the country.

The countrymen should recognize the NGOs for their worthy and voluntary efforts and should extend all possible support to them with understanding.

Such support is required to ensure that the NGOs would be enabled to serve the national need of creating the egalitarian society, where there would be no disparity of income and opportunities and where there would be no exploitation of the have nots by the haves.

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