

# BULLETIN

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## OF THE CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES (GAYATRI VIDYA PARISHAD)

### PLANET IN PERIL

For an hour on March 29, 2008 lights in thirty million houses all over the world were turned off. There was light in that darkness. It was a thoughtful way of paying obeisance to mother earth. A confession of guilt and an expression of gratitude to the planet for so nobly carrying the unbearable load of dirt and garbage caused by human callousness. There are limits to endurance, human or planetary. Al Gore, the Nobel prize winner, calls it planetary emergency confronting humankind. His documentary *Inconvenient Truth* is a timely eye-opener on global warming with 'irrefutable evidence of the extent of damage to the environment.'

His Nobel lecture, excerpts of which along with R.K.Pachauri's, are carried in the latest issue of *Span*, presents the grim scenario with chilling facts and figures. The millions of tons of global warming pollution we are dumping 'into the thin shell of atmosphere surrounding our planet' cause heat from the sun to be trapped leading to increase in temperatures. "As a result the earth has a fever. And the fever is rising," he warns. Global climate change is indicated by rising sea levels, shrinking glaciers and extinction of plants and animals. Temperatures at the earth's surface, says an expert body, could increase from the 2000 level of 2.5 degrees (F) to 10.4 degrees(F) by 2100.

Environmental damage is increasing alarmingly. On this Al Gore says: " We are recklessly burning and clearing our forests and driving more and more species into extinction. The very web of life on which we depend is being ripped and frayed." If 'nuclear winter' was earlier the perceived threat to human survival, today it is 'carbon summer' that threatens to extinguish life on planet earth. R.K.Pachauri, Chairman of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in his Nobel lecture recalled the Indian concept of " vasudaiva kutumbakam" and called for united global action. He warned that every year of delay means greater climate change in the future. Both Al

Gore and Pachauri call for immediate action. We can avoid 'the worst if we act boldly, decisively and quickly,' says Al Gore.

The silver lining to the dark cloud is the effort being made, even if it is modest, at the local and individual level to fight eco terrorism. Exnora International, the Chennai based organization, has shown the way by bringing about amazing transformation of houses, slums and streets in some areas in Chennai. M.B.Nirmal, its founder-chairman, has devised a multi-pronged approach to tackle the menace of environmental degradation. "Think globally, act locally and do domestically" is his motto. His slogan "All good things begin with me" is the message he gives to the youth wherever he lectures on the subject. His mission is to cool the globe. For that action starts at home, continues in the vehicle and culminates in the workplace (educational institutions in case of students) is his prescription. To cool the globe let us first cool our homes, he says. Growing plants even in concrete jungles is possible through innovative methods. Plants and grass can be grown not only in pots made of clay and mud but in pipes and bamboos. It is all greenery that is grown both horizontally and vertically in and around houses. Every street must be green he says and when houses, streets, towns and cities look green the globe too will turn green saving humankind from the pollution caused by endless emissions. Every drop of water is precious says Nirmal who suggests several methods to make use of water instead of recklessly throwing it into sewerage.

The need of the hour is to initiate bold, decisive and quick action, as Al Gore exhorts, at every level and at the individual and domestic level as Nirmal does. The mission is to save the earth for our sake and for the sake of our children and theirs. It requires a massive movement with missionary zeal to spread the message far and wide. Every human being living on this planet has a duty to perform and in every home begins the first step.

- The Editor

"Some say the world is in fire; some say in ice. Either would suffice." - Robert Frost

## **'POLICE REFORMS NEED OF THE HOUR'**

A serving officer of the rank of Inspector General and a retired officer of the rank of Director General expressed their views on the prevailing situation and the need to have reforms for better functioning of the police at a meeting on Police Reforms organised by the Centre for Policy Studies here on Monday.

Mr. C. Anjaneya Reddy who held some top positions in the Police Department before retiring as Chairman of the AP Tourism Development Corporation quoted extensively from the National Police Commission's reports which are yet to be implemented and said that neutrality is essential for the police to function well and to ensure rule of law for efficient functioning of the democracy. "There should be autonomy and accountability for the police. Police continue to be an extension of the executive and accountable to it but not to the law or people", Mr. Anjaneya Reddy said. There was a lot of interference from the politicians in the functioning of the police which was not so in the early days of independence, thanks to the quality of politicians.

The Police Act in force now was introduced in 1861 and was framed after the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny since the British felt that its colonies could not have a police system similar to Britain's and it should be a subordinate set-up. Mr. Anjaneya Reddy wondered why the same Act should be still in force even 60 years after India became a republic. People must, therefore, discuss police reforms.

### ***Panel recommendations***

The National Police Commission's recommendations included suggestions to redefine the role of police and being accountable to the people, repealing of the old Act, formation of State Security Commissions by each State, ensure independent investigation, transparency in the appointment of officers to the top most post in the State police set-up, etc. Commissioner of Police N. Sambasiva Rao observed that there had been some attempts to make the police to change their attitude, work culture, etc. but the opportunities provided were not taken seriously. In a TADA case confession recorded by an officer of the rank of SP was admissible but the officers did not take it seriously and relegated the work to the subordinates. Inefficiency was also a reason for not being able to perform well.

The police should improve their performance within

the existing set-up, he said and added that not every case could be solved and the reason for the same and the investigation done should be explained without delay.

(Courtesy: The Hindu, April 1st 2008)

## **THE CASE FOR A NEW POLICE ACT**

*(Excerpts from the lecture delivered at Centre for Policy Studies on March 31, 2008)*

- Shri C. Anjaneya Reddy, IPS (Retd)

The basic flaw of the Police organization is the 1861 Police Act. Enacted shortly after the Mutiny of 1857 it was designed to subserve, uphold and promote the interests of the British. The Police was placed under the executive. Reform was due when India became independent and later a republic. As in all democracies, a new role should have been defined for the Police emphasizing its accountability to the law and the people. But status quo was continued. Initially, there were no problems mainly because of the quality of political leadership.

In mid-sixties the political leadership injected the concept of 'commitment' in administration leading to havoc. (Commitment of civil servants?) Officers were selected and given key placements in consideration of their affinity to the ruling party and its political philosophy. Their intrinsic merit and administrative qualifications were given secondary place. All this led to extensive misuse of the Police during the Emergency. Justice Shah who probed into the emergency excesses observed.

"The police was used and allowed themselves to be used for purposes some of which were, to say the least, questionable. Some police officers behaved as though they were not accountable at all to any public authority. The decisions to arrest and release certain persons were entirely on political considerations which were intended to be favorable to the political party in power. The Government must seriously consider the feasibility and the desirability of insulating the police from the politics of the country and employing it scrupulously on duties for which alone it is by law intended. Employing the police to the advantage of any political party is a sure source of subverting the rule of law."

With the decline in the quality of leadership and also the quality of officers, gradually a symbiotic relationship developed between the politicians on one hand and the civil servants, including the Police officers, on the other. NPC commented in its report:

“Functioning under an outmoded system, Police performance has undoubtedly fallen short of public expectation.....the role of the police needs to be redefined The Police as we envisage is no more the coercive arm of the administration. It has a direct accountability to law and has to be freed from day-to-day interference in the discharge of its duties by various pressure groups, constraints and handicaps.....” Reform of the Police is of crucial importance to the protection and promotion of human rights in the country. The present situation which has, too often, permitted extraneous influences to affect police work adversely, must not be allowed to continue if the country is to repose the faith that it should in the Police. The Commission urges the Central and State governments to show the necessary political will to reform the Police as suggested by the Commission....- National Human Rights Commission (Annual Report 2002) stressed the need to redefine the role of Police and stated that it should be autonomous and enabled to function in accordance with law and in the best interests of the people

It should be a public service and not a civil service;

It should be accountable to the people and not to the Govt. of the day

### *How do we achieve this?*

The NPC has suggested bringing in a new Police Act freeing the Police from the control of the Government and bringing it under a statutory body called the State Security Commission.

#### *The commission shall consist of*

- a) the minister in charge of the Police as ex-officio chairman,
- b) two members of the State legislature, one from the ruling party and the other from the opposition, four other members to be nominated by the Chief Minister after the approval of the legislature one each from among the retired high court judges, retired civil servants, social scientists and academicians of public standing.

- The DGP shall be the ex-officio Secretary of the Commission

The superintendence of the Police would still vest with the government but should be exercised through the Commission.

#### *The functions of the Commission shall include matters relating to :*

- Laying down broad policy guidelines and directions

for the performance of preventive tasks and service oriented function by the Police.

- Evaluation of Police performance
- Functioning as a forum of appeal for senior police officers, of and above the rank of SP regarding his being subjected to illegal or irregular orders in the performance of duties.
- Functioning as a forum of appeal for disposing of representations from police officers regarding promotions to the rank of SP and above;
- Generally keeping in review the functioning of the Police

The Govt. to appoint Directors of Inspection to evaluate police performance and report it to the Commission. The Commission may submit an annual report on the performance of the Police in the State and the work done by the Commission. The State government to cause such report to be laid before the Legislature of the State.

### *NPC Recommendations ignored*

- Between 1981 and 1996, the recommendations of the NPC were not acted upon.
- GOI took no initiative and merely referred them to the States on the ground it is a State subject
- It suited the states not to act on the reports
- The Issue was taken to the Supreme Court by Prakash Singh, former DGP of UP
- Ten years later in 2006, the Apex Court decided that four significant recommendations be immediately implemented

### *GOI deflected the Issues to the States once again*

- Every State Govt. went back to the SC asking for time for implementation
- Tamilnadu even tried to tell the SC that it was not possible to implement the recommendations but were rebuffed
- AP Govt. also asked for time and started dragging its feet
- The AP draft of the Police Bill shows total disregard of the NPC recommendations
- There can be no true democracy without the Rule of Law
- There can be no rule of law without autonomy for its principal law enforcement agency, the Police

- For the Police to be effective, it should be independent of the government
- It shall be a public service and not a civil service

### ***Autonomy and Accountability***

- Defining the Police as a public service and not civil service
- Autonomy for the Police to function in accordance with law
- Accountability to the People and not to the government of the day

### ***We must go beyond the NPC***

- The new Police Act shall bring in non-partisan or all-party Councils in every Police district
- Police administration to be responsible to them for efficient functioning
- State Security Commission at the Apex level
- Human Rights Commission to be authorized to take cognizance of all serious complaints against the police instead of magisterial enquiries

### ***Beyond the NPC***

- The new Police Act should ensure transparency of police administration while restraining the councils from interfering with it
- The Act shall also lay down police responsibility to people and safeguards against Police brutality
- The act will build safeguards against victimization of Police Officers and frequent transfers
- Appointment of DGP by clearly defined procedures

### ***Police Neutrality is***

- crucial for the Rule of Law
- crucial to a functioning democracy and is
- the basic requirement of free and fair elections

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## **"GANDHIAN IDEALS STILL RELEVANT" SAYS PROFESSOR PERCZEL**

For those caught between totalitarianism and market economy, Gandhian ideals could be the third alternative, felt a professor of Central European University Istvan Perczel who is making a study of Gandhian ideals. Prof.Perczel made this observation while describing the present developments in the once Communist-ruled Eastern Europe during his talk on "Gandhi's relevance

for contemporary world" at a lecture-meeting organised by the Centre for Policy Studies here on Monday. "Gandhian thought and ideals might not have been realised in India hundred per cent, but people like me who came from outside see that they have been realised," Prof.Perczel said.

The Hungarian professor who came from a Socialist family said the strong movements witnessed even during the communist rule were inspired by the Indian freedom struggle and a protest carried out in 1980 was a Gandhian movement. People expected something new to happen after the fall of communism in 1989. The countries were forced to introduce market values all of a sudden and left without a transition period. The State property had quickly gone into the private hands. At this juncture it was felt that Gandhian ideals could be the alternative, he said. Director of the Centre for Policy Studies A.Prasanna Kumar introduced Prof.Perczel. Chairman B.Swami felicitated the Hungarian professor while K.S.Sastry of Gandhi Centre presented him a memento.

(Courtesy: The Hindu, February 5th 2008)

## **WORLD DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

- Prof. M.N. Sastri

Scientists theorize that the earliest member of the human species evolved from the chimpanzee and appeared about two million years ago in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa. Through several evolutionary stages, this early human species evolved into modern human beings about 40,000 years ago. This transformation also saw the multiplication, migration and dominance of the human race all the world over.

Throughout most of the human history, the world human population remained below and around 250 million (200 million in 1 AD and 260 million in 800 AD) capped by birth rates and death rates and locked in a somewhat permanent equilibrium. The only time when there was a significant decrease in the world population was during 1348-50 when bubonic plague (Black Death) wiped out at least a quarter of the European population, reducing the world population during the following fifty years. Sometime after 1650, the population growth began to show an upward trend and never looked back. The 17th century saw the population reach the half a billion mark. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution and advances in agriculture and medical science, the world population curve showed a sharp rise through the 19th

century passing the one billion mark. This trend continued in the 20th century with the steepest rise occurring during the years after World War II.

Population increase follows an exponential pattern (e.g. compound interest) as against a linear pattern (e.g. simple interest). For the present discussion it is simpler to consider the exponential growth pattern in terms of doubling time or the time it takes a growing quantity to double in size. This is approximately equal to the quotient of 70 divided by the annual percent growth rate. For 99.9 percent of human history, the population doubled every 35,000 year i.e. the annual percent growth rate was 0.002 percent. Beginning 1650, the doubling period began to shrink. Between then and 1750, it was 240 years. Between 1850 and 1900, it fell to 115 years. In 1970, the doubling time shrank to mere 35 years, representing an annual growth rate of 2.1 percent. After this accelerated growth rate for more than two centuries the annual growth rate is showing a declining trend.

Demographers explain this phenomenon through classifying all societies into three stages of demographic transition. During the first stage, which characterizes the premodern society, both birth and death rates are high and the population grows slowly. During the second stage, living conditions improve through increased food production, public health measures such as better sanitation and mass immunization. During this stage, birth rate remains high but death rates fall and longevity rises. As a result there is a fast population growth. In the third stage, there is a desire to reduce the family size due to economic and social constraints. As a result both birth and death rates reach near equilibrium conditions but at much lower level on the path towards stabilization. The world population with a current annual growth rate of 1.14 percent, representing a doubling time of about 61 years, touched 6.6 billion mark in mid-2007. It is projected to stabilize ultimately at about 9 billion by 2050 if the present trend continues.

But there exists considerable diversity in the population growth at country level. By far the highest rates of population growth is found in Western Asia and Africa south of Sahara and South America. The populations of many countries, especially less developed in Africa, Asia and Latin America are projected to increase markedly in the coming decades. The ten countries, which will contribute most to world population in the coming 30 years are, India (1.18 billion), China (962

million), Pakistan (318 million), Nigeria (306 million), Indonesia (239 million), USA (190 million), Brazil (189 million), Bangladesh (176 million) and Iran (153 million). By 2050, India's population will increase to about 1.6 billion, overtaking China. In contrast the population growth in many developed countries (e.g. Japan and European countries) is showing a negative trend.

This diversity in demographic trends of different countries has profound impact on economic, social and political implications. These trends relate to population size and growth, fertility and contraception, international migration, population ageing and urbanization. They will be considered in the articles that follow.

## **"FOCUS ON LOAN WAIVER AT TALK ON BUDGET INFLATION IS LIKELY TO GO UP, SAY EXPERTS"**

*(CPS organised a seminar on the Union Budget on March 10, 2008)*

Experts at a talk on Union budget 2008 held here on Monday dissected the waiver of agriculture loans to an extent of Rs.60,000 proposed by the Finance Minister and found that it was not completely explained, not all that beneficial and likely to be a burden on the banks.

Loan waiver was not the only way to help the farmer but he should be given help in other areas also to increase his income and thereby the country's economy.

"There is no liquidity for the loan waiver. Agriculture continues to get a raw deal. There are many hidden things in the budget. More off-the-budget items will come into force later. There is also a threat of inflation going up. The raising price of crude oil and the impact of the downward trend in the US economy would have their effect on India".

- There is no liquidity for the loan waiver'
- Need to maintain growth rate stressed

These were the common opinions expressed by Union Secretary E.A.S.Sarma, a senior BJP leader and former MLA K.Haribabu and former Head of Economics of Andhra University M.Jagadeeswara Rao while giving their impressions on the budget at the talk organised by the Centre for Policy Studies. Centre Director A.Prasanna Kumar presided. They also pointed out that the base for the waiver was not explained and only 27 per cent of the farmers who took advances from the nationalised banks

*"We cannot replicate the western model of wasteful consumption and environmentally harmful industrialization". - Dr. Manmohan Singh*

would get benefit but again not all of them. Dr. Sarma, who was closely associated with former Union finance Minister Yashwanth Sinha in preparing the then NDA Government's budgets felt Finance Minister P.Chidambaram overestimated the income. There was a hidden time bomb which could trigger inflation, he said. The help to farmers was much less compared to the Defence allotment and the UPA Government failed to keep the promises it made in the Common Minimum Programme regarding education, health, HRD and other important sectors, said Dr.Sarma. Dr. Haribabu said there was need to differentiate between the wet land and dry land regarding loan waiver. He also wanted the Government to understand the fact that India was having the unique advantage of raising crops throughout the year in almost the entire area of the country and concentrate on bio fuel production. Prof. Jagadeeswara Rao said the Finance Minister tried a mix of economic logic and political arithmetic. The need was to maintain the growth rate and to reduce inflation. He also pointed out that the Prof.R.Radhakrishna's Commission on farmers indebtedness suggested many measures but not loan waiver. The loan waiver could also send wrong signals to the defaulters. He also warned that inflationary potential was more. Prof. Prasanna Kumar said the budget addressed the symptoms but not the root cause of the problems.

(Courtesy: The Hindu, March 11, 2008)

## ITYENGAR'S HUMOUR

- Dr.Mrs. Prema Nandakumar

*Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar was born on April 17, 1908. His birth centenary is being celebrated by the Andhra University where he taught for over two decades as Professor of English and was its Vice Chancellor when he retired from service. A renowned authority on English literature and a pioneer in the study of Indo-Anglian literature, Prof. Iyengar was also a prolific writer with over 50 books and hundreds of articles in journals, news papers and magazines, including the highly popular Shankar's Weekly. Worthy daughter of an eminent father and an outstanding scholar and writer with a mastery of at least four languages Dr.Mrs. Prema Nandakumar recalls in the article below her father's sense of humour.*

- Editor

Sri Aurobindo was once asked about humour and he replied: "Humour? Without a sense of humour the

world would have gone to blazes long ago!"

It has been my experience that this angle has been a strong element in the personality of many Aurobindonians. Nirodbaran and Amal Kiran readily come to our mind. Two other Aurobindonians who were full of such divine laughter were Chachaji (Surendranath Jauhar 'Faqir') and my father, K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar. Perhaps this caused the strong bonding between the two who were actually quite different in their everyday life. Chachaji was a builder, a Karma Yogi; father a writer, a Jnana Yogi. But both were subsumed in Bhakti Yoga. Together they made a wonderful pair, as the golden swans foretelling the coming of the Supramental Age.

It was as well they had this fine sense of humour as their lives were not easy at all. They had to work very hard to come up and disappointments were a dime a dozen in their lives. But they triumphed because they could laugh and make others laugh. A portion of Chachaji's wit and humour can be found in his published writings. And so it is with father too.

The earliest of his writings in this genre that has been traceable by me is a story, 'The Shoe Stealers' in **The Citizen of India**. Written in 1930, the footnote says: "Copyright reserved by the author. The characters in the story are entirely imaginary. K.R.S.) To make his writing appear mature, father had tagged "Iyengar" to his K.R.Srinivasan. He was in Ceylon at this time, far from his family and we get an accurate picture of father's life thanks to the omniscient narrator. A friend has come to meet the narrator of the story without advance notice, but still the intrusion was welcome though it disturbs the author who is busy reading D.H. Lawrence: "I was alone there in the sanctuary of my Library, mine own guardian, mine own cook, mine own everybody and everything, I was living apart, a life at times mythical to myself and to others. And now there was Nana, so ill-looking and come all the way from far-off India and appearing suddenly on the scene, not less startling than the rise of a midnight apparition, whiteclad and ominous."

Of course Dr. Nana has come to the author to unravel a haunting mystery about Nana's shoe. It is pure Conan Doyle, especially the 'The Adventure of the Six Napoleons'. The author goes over with Dr. Nana to his place in India and begins his detective work, disguising himself as a prospective buyer of farmlands. The Iyengar humour which would be heavily drunk with academia

*"Oh! Tree, May you develop in a hundred ways. By your grace, we will also progress in a thousand ways". - Rigveda*

in the future is already evident in the descriptions:

“I was closeted for one full hour with the President — an enormous thick-lipped rope of sand, intellectually and physically, who has however been honoured by the chivalrous and indiscreet and liberal Madras University with a B.A., and a B.L. and our talk was quite an informal one.”

The solving of the mystery is child's play for the author who has all the hints and style pre-cooked by Conan Doyle. As Iyengar devoured classics, English style became pliable in his hands quite early in his writing career, as seen in the story-series, **Three Burian Revolutions: A Study in Rural Progressivism**. In making fun of the characteristics of the folk of the Bury village, father was wreaking vengeance upon Ananthakrishnapuram which was richer than its neighbouring village, Kodakanallur (father's village). The conservative Burians looked down upon the Kodakanallurians as incapable of earning or saving a penny. The Kodakanallurians shot back that AKPuramites were woefully henpecked. So the story has a deputation of the wives of Bury to their menfolk demanding changes:

“Mrs. Dwi, who led the deputation put forward three demands, the irreducible minimum as she called them, which after great hesitation I have decided to divulge. The first was that a Burian husband shall thenceforward acknowledge the paramountcy of his wife in all home affairs; in return for which the wife shall show due respect to the husband in all outside activities. The second may strike the reader as curious and so it did me also. It was to the effect that the Burian husband shall thenceforward spend no money in buying shawls, towels and the like separately but shall utilize torn fragments of his wife's garments for these purposes, it being understood however that nothing under this rule shall prevent a husband from buying 2 white cloths each of four-and-a-half yards every year, as the main contribution towards his dress. The third was more audacious and decidedly to the advantage of the wives. The demand aimed at nothing less than an extraction of a promise that every wife shall thenceforward be provided with a pair of Diamond Ear-studs, the cost in no case to be less than Rs. 1000 but to be proportionate thereafter according to the wealth of the husband.”

When Iyengar came to Chennai to study for a post-graduate degree in literature, he had almost an empty

pocket and had to depend upon his journalism to feed him at least two meals a day. He learnt to review even music and dance recitals. There were film reviews too and reviews of cricket. Some of these early writings have survived mainly because of the folio he made of them to take with him when he attended interviews later. His ironic tone and bubbly satire often provoked the VIPs of the day. He described the shining star of classical music of the day, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, as little better than a gramophone record and had to be rescued by his editor from a defamation case. Ramanuja Iyengar was mollified that the review was written by a young man (also an Iyengar!) hardly out of his teens and was eking out a livelihood this way to better his educational qualifications. There is a review of **Sati Savitri** produced by T. Sadasivam (in which M.S.Subbulakshmi appeared as Narada and sang the mellifluous song, ‘Bruhi Mukundeti’) in which poor Satyavan is described as looking like Yama, thanks to the weird imagination of the make-up man!

Many of Iyengar's humorous skits appeared in **Merry Magazine**, where R.K. Narayan also began his career as a writer. Using the nom-de-plume, ‘Rajaram’, he even wrote a novel, having received inspiration from F.E.Anstey's **Vice Versa. Topsy-Turvey: a Fantasy** which was serialised in the paper, takes place in a small-town college in India. Written within two years of his joining the Lingaraj College, Iyengar is able to place a delightful spread before us.

Professor Thurkov, Professor of Chemistry in a college at Modalkar (Belgaum) is taking an evening walk and is joined by his student, Nargun. The garrulous Professor gets into form in his bullying tone:

“Been doing any reading lately? No? Just as I expected: Good-for-nothing fellows you are! No concentration, no application, no ambition! Look here, Nargun, when I was an Inter Science student, things were different. We respected and feared our professors, and the professors bullied us terribly. We read a lot, memorized a lot. The Chemistry, boy; you haven't the brains of a hare, not even of a rabbit. You read Senter's Chemistry now and say it's difficult, but mind you, we read Smith, Mellore, even the big Rosehoe and Schrolmer!”

Nargun thinks Thurkov is a bore but he cannot say it aloud, can he? While he almost envies the Professor's

*"People don't die from carrying a fake handbag or wearing a fake T-Shirt. They can die from taking a counterfeit medicine". - Howard Zucker (WHO)*

lot who need not be “at the mercy of an angry father or an angrier professor” all the time, Thurkov is equally jealous of the college youth who can dive from hill tops and swim in the waters. This is when the Witch of Modalkar appears before them and curses the “meeserable mortals”:

“It is not for ye to wish and aspire, but to accept and obey! You stout booby professor, wouldst thou be pupil indeed? I grant thy wish. And you arrogant chip of youth, wouldst thou aged professor be? I grant thy wish too. Go hence, and enjoy your ill-desired states. Leave me in peace. I’m sovereign bride of Bhima!”

So the new life begins. It is a hilariously bizarre situation, of course for Thurkov is a Tamilian.

“He had gone to Modalkar five years ago from Coimbatore and all these years he had not picked up any knowledge of the local Mahratti. His wife, Mandodhari, and himself, talked Tamil at home, and the children talked a polyglot that was 50% Tamil, and the rest made up of Mahratti, Telugu, English and what not. Nargun’s family talked pure Mahratti at home –though the father and the children, Prema and Madhu, talked both English and misunderstood correct English.”

The two hapless playthings of destiny decide to talk less and think more and go on with their lives. We are in for a sizzly comedy of mistaken identities and the suppressed rage getting bottled up in them as the hours pass by. The following day is the real test: Nargun as the portly professor has to take classes and Thurkov as the lean student has to attend them. Nargun (in the guise of Thurkov) has a brainwave. He calls Thurkov (in the body of Nargun) as his ideal student and invites him to lecture on the Nitrogen group. The class of 75 is dumbfounded when the lean student (who had scored 7 per cent in Chemistry in the last test) lectures blithely on the intricate subject: “everyone thought Nargun’s teaching was better than Thurkov’s!”

Necessarily there are moments of hanging on the edge, looking down at a precipice and the two heroes are at daggers drawn soon enough. At last, Iyengar allows us to breathe easily with the last chapter, “All’s well that ends well”. The Witch of Modalkar is sighted again, she pulls them up and yet is kind enough to allow them get back to their original frames.

Iyengar always toyed with imagination: what would happen to us if we have to reverse our roles? The drama,

**Suniti and her Spouse or Storm in a Tea-Cup** is about the travails of a Professor who has to manage the house with two children while his wife goes to the College to do the teaching. Teaching, college, the quirky ways of professors and the carefree attitudes of students are all welcome to dance in Iyengar’s hilarious style and so we have **The Battle of the Optionals Or, Elsie’s Trump Card** and the very telling names like Potato Prufrock (Potty), Tomato Tiptoft (Tippy) for Professors and Jolly Jowari and Satyanand Sleepappa for students is enough to keep us in stitches. The optionals to choose from are inviting: Expression & Communication, Pity & Pathos, Culinary Science and Fine Arts. The Professors vie with one another to get the best students into their department. The boys would rather choose the one that would be Elsie Excellent’s choice, but she says different things to different people. Poets from Chaucer to Eliot are parodied by Iyengar:

*“Let us go, then, you and I  
And lose our souls the books among ...  
Or away, let’s fly away  
To eating houses cheap and low  
‘tis not tea there you get  
tis only cheap stuff so red,  
And you sit awhile and sip the tea  
And talk and smoke and dream awhile ...  
Away, away, let’s fly away  
From Umlaut Town ...”*

In the ‘fifties and ‘sixties, the **Shankar’s Weekly** published Iyengar’s humourous poems, skits and essays regularly. He signed himself “R.R.” (for Raja Ram) in these contributions. There was a pause when he became the Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University but he took to recording such moods of jollity (with a meaningful turn) after he divested himself of the post three years later.

The **Shankar’s Weekly** writings remain quite contemporaneous. Here is a review of a book imagined by Iyengar. Himself hailed as the father of Indo-Anglian literature, he was surprised at the manner in which Professors from abroad began to dig into the writing of Indians in English and their weird studies. **Indo-Anglian Swearology: A Study of Usage and Abusage in Indian Writing in English.** By Cuthbertson B. Swalinski. University of Middle Panama Press, \$ 7.50. So very realistic!

“Now at last a Daniel from overseas has made

*“The more successful the high tech sector, the more trusted and unhappy the rest of society could become.” - Yossi Vardi*



exhaustive exploration and inquiry and delivered weighty judgment (the memoir weighs about 1 kg.)... One must envy him the possession of so much time, so much cash, so much electronic machinery, so much technical expertise, so much contact-engineering. The results, as might be expected, are truly astonishing, unexpected, illuminating.”

According to our reviewer, Swalinski finds in some American writers swearology as high as 27.9% of the total vocabulary, while the Indians have as low a percentage as .767%. The percentage is certainly higher in little-read magazines like **Speak-Easy**, **Cooum Coouings** and **Ballygunge Ballyhoo**. With phrases like “Naxalite Messalina” and “Navelite nudestar” culled from Indo-English novels by Dr. Swalinski, the “review” is one big guffaw.

Week after week we enjoyed these packets of fun. It could be Sherlock Holmes at Chennai, the inauguration of a college association or advice to an examiner. “How He Got a First”, “The Jambav Tract”, “The Yogi and the Professor”. Never, never a dull moment. Two favourite areas are academia and politics. Iyengar’s University of Nav-Nalanda is a scintillating bed of intrigue, corruption and pseudo-scholarship wrapped up in sparkling English. When the University is hosting a Somnambulists Conference, need anything more be said? The welcome addresses and key-note addresses have been misplaced but somehow things get into order and the Kulapati begins his welcome :

“We have had great traditions of somnambulism in this Campus of ours. I undersand that many of our Faculty go somnambulistically to the wrong classes, or deliver the wrong lectures, or forget to go to their laboratories, and go to the cinemas instead. This is, therefore, not an unideal place for your momentous deliberations.”

As for politics, a sample from “A Minister’s Plaint” would do. How can the Planning Commission ask his ministry to do with a beggarly thirty crores? Iyengar is writing in 1961 and has pointedly noted how the disastrous Five-Year Planning idea of Nehru has spawned a “spending consciousness” in politicians, a sickness that plagues them even today!

“No money!  
Nonsense!  
Prohibition could go  
And the tax on salt return.

Gandhiji, revered Bapuji  
(May his soul rest in peace!)  
Said, of course, no drink, no tax  
On salt and all that  
And fought and fasted;  
But that was in pre-Plan days  
Don’t circumstances alter cases? ...

No money!  
The puerilest of excuses!  
Another printing press,  
Another paper mill,  
Easy, easy, can’t you see!  
Impose another tax,  
The Plan surtax  
With progressive propensities:  
Impose a tax on babies  
And a tax on bachelors too  
And a tax (especially) on life (after fifty)  
And a tax on graduates;  
Let literacy pay  
For illiteracy’s exit.  
Money must be got  
And, besides,  
Have you tried to tap  
Taipeh?”

When the Emergency was imposed by Indira Gandhi, **Shankar’s Weekly** had to cease publication. After all, how could it be countenanced by the authorities when there were writers like Iyengar who could boldly wield a caustic pen? ‘Ministry of Untruth’ brings back all that we had experienced in those days three decades earlier:

“The dissemination of ignorance  
Is achieved with little fuss.  
There’s a haemorrhage of false statistics  
And massive stifling of truth.  
You could be fed with surfeit on nothing,  
And be starved of everything.”

But why blame the so-called Supremo? What else can be done with a pack of servile partymen asking for pig-feed? ‘Circe’s Lament’ is a powerful commentary from the side of the Leader:

“My pretty rabbits have begun to stink,  
My tortoises sleep and snore.  
The motley of birds I’d plumed to my taste  
Can now neither sing nor fly.  
Ah, ‘tis easy to turn men into swine,

But what useless appendage!  
Could I but reverse the operation,  
Turn them into men again!  
There my spells and witchery seem to fail  
And I'm covered with disgrace.”

Perhaps Iyengar's finest contribution in this genre is his "Self-Obituary" which was published in the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, sometime in 1953. It adds to the piquant humour of the situation that I am still trying to trace this beautiful essay! Ah, what a pother it caused back in his village and how he had to promise his mother never to attempt such an essay ever again!

It is curious that Chachaji also had come to Delhi and was living a mythical life of his own of hardwork and little money.

Incidentally father's mother came from Ananthakrishnapuram.

## **ACCESS TO JUSTICE - LEGAL AID - VIS-A-VIS 60 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE-III**

- Smt. Challa Mahalakshmi  
Senior Advocate & International Law Affiliate,  
American Bar Association, Visakhapatnam

However, the fruits of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 have not reached the needy since the Judicial Officers who have been appointed as the heads of the Legal Services Authorities are not sensitive to the needs of the poor and middle class people who are entitled to legal services as expected by the framers of the enactment. The procedure to obtain legal services is made complicated and they expect the poor and illiterate to get the pleadings drafted before they get legal services. Unless and until the legal aid is made available easily without complicated procedures, the downtrodden will be unable to fight illegal litigation that may be initiated against them and they cannot use the law as a means to get social justice. Ultimately, they will try to take law into their own hands and anarchy will prevail. There is an urgent need to make the procedure to approach the Legal Services Authorities and the Permanent Lok Adalats very simple since many of those who approach them are illiterate and financially unsound.

It is surprising that the procedures in respect of laws that should help the weaker sections to get quicker justice, viz. Legal Services Authorities Act, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, Human Rights Act among

others are made more and more cumbersome and inconvenient.

A large number of consumers of justice in our country still feel handicapped in the pursuit of justice on account of poverty, illiteracy, social backwardness, or other disabilities. These faceless millions are not even aware of their basic legal rights and continue to suffer private and state excess in silence. Although our justice delivery institutions do not discriminate between rich and poor, high and low and make every endeavour to dispense even handed justice to all, yet the disadvantageous sections have not so far been able to muster courage and confidence to come forward and claim their legal rights in a big way.

No amount of legislation, legal aid programmes or legal services network can achieve the goals set out under Article 39A of the Constitution of India unless the judiciary as a whole is involved in legal aid programmes and every judicial officer in the country helps to instill in the minds of poor and weak the confidence that our administration of justice is committed to ensure even-handed justice for all. Judicial officers belonging to the District Judiciary who directly deal with many poor litigants should be properly motivated and sensitized to take care of those who appear to be handicapped or at a disadvantageous position in legal battles. Legal services functionaries cannot reach and support every sufferer of injustice, but judicial officers who are face to face with members of this section of the society can do a lot by guiding them to avail of legal aid facilities.

*(Concluded)*

## **MANU - A CRITIQUE**

*'Manu is a great and peerless legislator'*

- Swami Vivekananda

- Sri Challa Siva Sankaram

"Manu is a great and peerless legislator" - Vivekananda Swami. The Indian tradition and the oft used wonderful world heritage together fashioned the eternal ethos of India. India is not a narrow nation-state like the city states of pre-Christian era Athens. India derived her name from river Sindhu. India's source of culture has been her rivers and mountains. So purity and piety go together underscoring the stainless infinitude of India. Imposition of unjust and tyrannical laws on unwilling people were seldom attempted at by any power.

So the life of the citizen was not in want of freedom. Primitive India passed through a halcyon era of democratic communism sustained by liberal camaraderie according to S.A. Dange of the Communist Party of India. Pandit Nehru had a soft corner for the veteran leader of the forward sections of the people emerging as a decisive force in the national balance of power.

The spirit of the ethos of India was never narrow, bridled by national pride, ethnic ego and temperamental exclusiveness. In the subterranean recesses of Indian ethos there shines infinitely Light which dispels the darkness of contraction wherever it exists. India the proverbial seat of universal wisdom produced age after age saints, seers, sages, teachers and legislators. The laws laid by such great souls were broad in vision and wide in scope.

The dharma which was the natural outcome of the Divine life of India was not shut against inflow of waves of fresh thought emanating from the heart of world community. The Chief interest of India had been that her people must grow out of ways integral and ways beyond the pale of suspicion, ominous secrecy, awful tyranny of rules either laid by religion or statecraft. People never were afraid of morrow either for physical security or economic stability. The panorama so formed of its own accord was like the growth of a tree beautiful to look at without the touch of an artist. People enjoyed responsible liberty until the Frankenstein of superstition and emergence of a powerful parasitic class sprung out

of the pool of overwhelming ignorance. This phase in the annals of India proved a blessing in disguise. It created conditions which were impatient of formation of a new order so that people could breathe freely, make democratic laws and live as God's own. At this juncture of history of India there flourished a good number of law givers. To mention a few of the galaxy, Mitakshara, Gautama, Yajnyavalkya, Parasara, Kapila, Apastamba and Manu. Out of the said galaxy of Legislators Manu distinguished himself as the great and peerless legislator. As Swami Vivekananda chose to say the laws constituted by Apastamba, Yajnyavalkya, Parasara and Manu remained in the vogue. In the classification Manu Smriti or Manudharmasastra stood unique and applicable to all ages and all climes. Actually Manu Smriti was meant for practice in Dwapara yuga (Silver age). Parasara Smriti for Kaliyuga. By some strange sleight of circumstances Manu Smriti eclipsed the sister Smritis and came to stay as far as Laws binding on world and family life are concerned. In the Kaliyuga (iron age) Dharma was seen paralysed but for one foot. Hence the need for a powerful and meaningful law. From the evidence at my command we could state that Socrates of Athens and Manu of India were contemporaries. There was a constant traffic in religion and philosophy between the two countries. Plato visited India before he settled in Sicily where his Academy flourished like the midday sunshine and gave the world the renowned scientist - philosopher Aristotle.

*(to be continued)*

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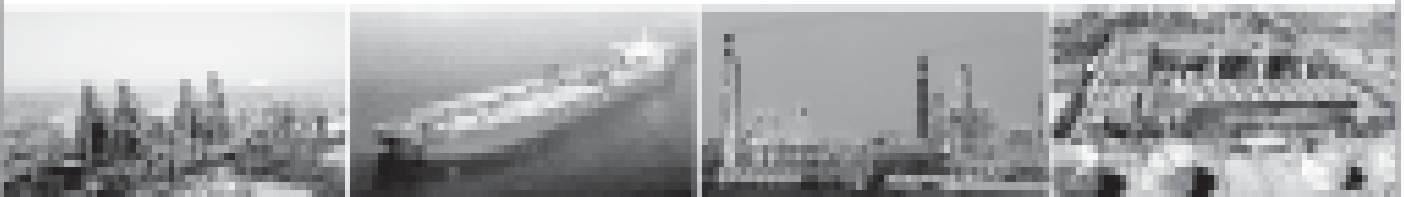
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