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Judiciary Embarrassed

Rajindar Sachar

The Supreme Court Collegium while taking understandable self-pride for its open functioning when it put its Resolution dated, 8th October, 2017 on the website to the effect amongst other, "THAT the decisions henceforth taken by the Collegium indicating the reasons shall be put on the website of the Supreme Court, when the recommendations is/are sent to the government of India, with regard to the cases relating to...elevation to the post of Chief Justice of High Court..." would have still enhanced its worth had it at the same time given the reasons for not appointing Justice Jayant Patel the senior most judge of Karnataka High Court as its permanent Chief Justice. To me this action of the Collegium has, with respect, embarrassed the judiciary and reminds me of Urdu couplet: "The house got burnt with its own house lantern" is a loose colloquial translation of "*Ghar Ko Aag Lag Gai , Ghar ke Chirag Se*", which shockingly hit me when I read of resignation of Justice Jayant Patel of Karnataka High Court.

Justice Jayant Patel, while he was the acting Chief Justice in the Gujarat

High Court, directed CBI investigation in to Ishrat Jahan fake encounter case, which involved the name of Amit Shah, who was then the Home Minister of Gujarat and who is now the President of BJP. All of a sudden Justice Jayant Patel was transferred to High Court of Karnataka in February 2016.

The present Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court was due to retire on 09.10.2017. In usual course Justice Patel should have been made a permanent Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court. But suddenly the Supreme Court Collegium orders his transfer to Mumbai High Court (where he would be 3rd in seniority). Hardly had this news made to the public, Collegiums changed orders for his transfer to Allahabad High Court where he would be no 2.

One can appreciate Justice Patel's anguish and even more his resentment at this unexplained action of the Collegiums. He sent in his resignation to the President. Both Karnataka High Court and Gujarat High Court Bar Associations held protest and boycotted the courts for a day.

In order to justify the cancellation of transfer of Justice Patel to Mumbai High Court and then transfer to Allahabad High Court immediately thereafter, a feeble explanation was got published in the newspapers that in Allahabad he would rank higher than he would have been in Mumbai High Court, (as if the injustice of being denied rightful claim to be the Chief Justice could in any way be lessened).

Justice Patel lived up to the reputation of sitting judges when notwithstanding this grave provocation he refused to answer questions as to the reason for his resignation, citing “institutional discipline”.

We should be all praise for Justice Patel’s dignified response. But this question touches the serious issue of independence of the judiciary and the functioning of the Collegium system. Therefore, uncomfortable questions must be asked by the legal fraternity, and those with all respect, must be answered by the Collegium in detail because it is well established that the Bench and Bar are the two wheels of same chariot, and any deformity in either of them can only spell the ruin of administration and independence of the Judiciary. More so now that the Collegium has decided to swing the pendulum to the other extreme of recording reasons why it has declined to promote the senior most judge to the office of Chief Justice and sharing it with the public.

May I in this case make a wild guess – could it be that the executive which was bent on harming Justice Patel felt that (in case of Justice Patel agreeing to go to Mumbai) he will at least be in more familiar surroundings, as there is a strong link

between Mumbai and Ahmadabad. But as the viciousness of Modi government was determined to keep Justice Patel isolated, which he would be if he were to be sent to Allahabad, a place probably where he may not have gone throughout his life. I feel sad that Executive could have been able to use such an influence on the Collegium – may be I am mistaken. If so, a greater reason for the Collegium to make those reasons known to public, especially to the Supreme Court Bar Association and other Bar Associations, (especially Karnataka High Court Bar Association.) and Bar Council of India.

This is not in any way provocation for confrontation with the Collegium. It is only in recognition of the fact that this incident has shaken the whole Bar in India and all aspects of this case should be publically disclosed and discussed.

I would therefore suggest that Supreme Court Bar Association and Bar Council of India take the lead and jointly discuss out this matter with the Supreme Court Collegium to prevent patent arbitrariness, which will make the Executive decision supreme thus harming irretrievably the independence of judiciary.

I hope the Collegium does not take offence and make it a matter of undue superiority and take the stand that this matter, notwithstanding that it has disturbed the whole Bar of India, it will not discuss it with the Bar because it is its sole privilege. May I in all humility submit that this assumption proceeds on the belief that the judges are immune to human frailties even while making non-judicial decisions (such as appointments and transfers). This self-glorification is not accepted even

by members of the judiciary itself vide expostulation of Justice Frankfurter of the US Supreme Court that “all power is of an encroaching nature. Judicial power is not immune to this human weakness. It must also be on guard against encroaching beyond its proper bounds and not the less so since the only restraint upon it is self-restraint”.

The former Chief Justice A S Anand, reminded the judges that though “our function is divine, the problem begins when we start thinking that we have become divine”.

If I sound a bit harsh, I can only invoke the caveat of Justice Holmes of the U.S. Supreme Court, who said, “I trust that no one will understand me to be speaking with disrespect of the law because I criticize it so freely.....But one may criticize even what one reveres.....And I should show less than devotion, if I did not do what in me lies to improve it. “

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Lessen for Journalists

Kuldip Nayar

It was a disappointing memorial gathering a few days ago. I thought that the meeting held to attract wide attention towards the murder of Kannada journalist Gauri Lankesh at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, would draw many journalists, particularly the senior ones, to the venue. But it turned out to be a gathering of no more than 30-35 people, very few among them being journalists.

It has become a habit with senior journalists to stay indoors and not mix with the ordinary scribes. I can understand that editors are too busy, planning and editing the paper. But what about those who are a peg lower? They behave as if they are equally busy and have no time for such meetings, even if it relates to the fraternity.

But all these journalists, after retirement, come down to the earth because their utility is very limited. They are among many who are trying to get space in the paper, writing columns. Not many make it because the readers are interested in those who have fought on principles. Those who gave their all, refusing to be cowed down, are very few.

Gauri Lankesh was one of them. She has been a loud dissenting voice against the excesses committed in the society. The ideals Gauri stood for as a journalist and social activist—she edited a Kannada weekly *Gauri Lankesh Patrike*—are unlikely to be forgotten even if she is no more in

our midst. Gauri had been getting threatening messages every now and then but she was never afraid. Apparently, she was ready for any kind of sacrifice, including putting her life under threat.

An outspoken critic of the Hindutva politics, Gauri was gunned down by unidentified assailants at the entrance of her residence in Bengaluru. Of course, there were initial protests all over, including the Press Club of India condemning the killing, saying, “A fearless and independent journalist who gave voice to many causes and always stood up for justice has been shot dead in the most brutal manner in order to silence her voice.”

But this is not the first time that such attacks have taken place. In a democracy, the rule of law should prevail but, unfortunately, what we see today is mob lynching and harassment in the country. Incidents like Alwar, Dadri and Udampur should serve as an eye-opener. In addition, there have been attacks on cultural, academic and historical institutions, universities, especially Nalanda University and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Gauri's murder is being compared to the August 2015 assassination of Kannada journalist M. M. Kalburgi, who was similarly gunned down at his home. She had, during one of her speeches, mentioned Kalburgi, pointing out how a Bajrang Dal leader had remarked after his killing, saying

“Mock Hinduism and die a dog's death.” She, too, met the same fate.

She was also critical of the politics in her own state. She had a few years ago warned that Karnataka's trajectory from a progressive, secular state to a communal state has been a very interesting and crippling one, when the BJP was ruling the state. Karnataka, she said, was witnessing an increase of attacks in the name of Hindutva and faced the prospect of falling under a “communal, casteist, and corrupt BJP government.” Gauri also vehemently opposed the RSS, the BJP, and the Hindutva forces and her killing is the silencing of that voice against hate politics.

Kalburgi's murder remains unsolved after two years. These attacks are growing at a shocking rate, and as we remember the September 1995 murder of human rights defender, Jaswant Singh Khalra, we are reminded that ‘my way or the bullet’ has become a pattern in India. As a journalist, Lankesh knew her outspoken nature earned her a share of enemies. As a citizen of India, she opposed the BJP's fascist and communal politics. In her interviews to a few journals, she said: “I oppose its misinterpretation of ‘Hindu Dharma’ ideals. I oppose the caste system of the ‘Hindu Dharma,’ which is unfair, unjust and gender-biased.”

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Whether Alarm Bells will Stop Economy Caught up with Falling Growth

Mrinal K. Biswas

There is no more any gainsaying that the Indian economy is caught up with falling growth, failing business and stalled employment generation. Discontent is brewing and government appears clueless as to how it can address the problems but claims nonetheless that there is nothing much to worry about.

Of the two schools of thought, that one which sounds alarm over the present state of affairs is weighing heavily over that of the other that holds out bright prospects of the Indian economy not very far off. The issues are primarily the fall-out of demonitization of high value currencies suddenly imposed in November last and goods and services tax (GST) introduced country-wide in July this calendar.

The most scathing criticism of these measures was indeed an inside job, in the sense that a former finance minister belonging to the ruling party, Jashwant Sinha, cried hoarse alleging that private investment has shrunk as never before in two decades, industrial production has all but collapsed, agriculture is in distress, the big employer construction industry is in doldrums, highly potential services sector has slowed in the backdrop of oncoming disruption technology, exports have dwindled. "Sector after sector of the economy is in distress," Jashwant Sinha said. Similar views abounded in across the political economists' circles and broad spectrum of the society is worried.

Modi government's junior minister Jayant Sinha demurred but is not prepared to take on the gauntlet thrown down by his father Jashwant Sinha. He says demonitization, GST and digital payments are "game-changing" socio-economic scenario of the country. These will raise tax revenue, reduce friction in the economy and make it easier for people to prove their creditworthiness. More loans and servicing will be digitized and available for inspection. Replacing political favours, coal mining licenses, telecommunication spectrum allocations and passenger flight routes have been allocated through auctions, defaulting borrowers will be taken to bankruptcy courts. In his long list also comes government handouts (money given as subsidy to targeted sections of people) that are now going straight into beneficiaries' accounts. On the positive side Jayant Sinha points out to the government investments in the rural power supply, highways, rural roads, housing and air transport leading all these to all-round cost reduction.

The warning of the growth fall came immediately after demonitization measures with its dire consequences predicted by former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh who said the gross domestic product (GDP), measured as total production of a country in a particular year construed in terms of money, would fall by about 2 per cent because of "organised loot and

legalised plunder" effected through demonitization of high value currencies. Indeed, GDP fell dramatically in January-March 2017 to 6.1 per cent after suffering the demonitization trauma in November 2016 giving the total GDP figure at 7.1 per cent for the financial year of 2016-17. The fall became clear as GDP had reached 8 per cent in the previous fiscal 2015-17. The falling curve continues unabated as evident in the current (2017-18) fiscal's April-June GDP touches the lowest mark at 5.7 per cent.

In the backdrop, Modi government's objective of quelling black money, counterfeits and terror funding fell flat as almost all the currency demonitized in November found its way into banking system. Reserve Bank of India in a cautious tenor says "subject to future corrections based on verification process when completed, the estimated value of specified bank notes (500,1000 rupee notes) received as on June 30, 2017, is Rs 15.28 lakh crore." This is against Rs 15.44 lakh crore of such notes in circulation till November last. This pitiful amount of Rs 16,000 crore gain for the government fell far short of its expectation of Rs 4-5 lakh crore coming back. So black money people escaped the net to the discomfiture of the government. However, the high-finance operator like Kotak Mahindra Bank vice-chairman Uday Kotak said India should look beyond these numbers and pointed to demonitization in intangible benefits – providing trail

for investigative agencies to follow and hunt down tax evaders besides boosting digital payments that can be better tracked, making it virtually impossible to evade tax.

In the midst of all these, demonetization hit hard the great majority of the people. About 90 per cent of them belong to the informal sector and 55 per cent of our workers in agricultural sector reeled under distress while cooperative banking system practically became non-functional. Most of them were, and still are, used to and comfortable with, cash transactions only. The economy came to a standstill which is still to come out of the trauma.

GST is another blow though it was perceived as a good thing by the knowledgeable people in public finance. It has been shaped after long negotiations with state governments. Anxiety-prone small and medium business down line fears gripped soon after introduction of new tax regime as few of them could understand the nitty-gritty of GST particularly because of digital payment system. For the millions of people cash has worked well and digitization could be an abstract practicer. This mindset cannot go easily. Things have become complicated because of various glitches coming up and threshold framing not to the liking of business communities. Consumers generally feel GST-infused price rise, too. To remove the charge of GST implementation as a mess and to give the business some relief government has made some concession in the form of duty cuts on 27 items and in the procedures for filing tax returns. Still the business feels these are at best ad hoc measures. There is a fear that

GST instilling a sense of uncertainty the trade and business will suffer grievously resulting in further stress on the economy in crisis.

The only good thing could be the government has seen the letters on the wall which negate their

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Attacking directly the BJP-led massacres of Muslims and other minorities, she declared, "I oppose Advani's Ram Mandir Yatra and Narendra Modi's genocide of 2002." In a 2016 interview, she also expressed how her journalism exposed her to "the rabid hate the Hindutva brigade and Modi *Bhakt*s have for its critics and naysayers."

Gauri knew her life was in danger. Yet, she brushed aside all threats and continued to defy the establishment and plugged the same line as an activist. In the last article she wrote for her weekly, *Gauri Lankesh Patrike*, she challenged the archaic forces in her own inimitable way. The Hindutva forces never forgave her.

As a parting shot, she wrote: "I know very well that you are all devastated. I am also unhappy that I left suddenly without a word. But tell me, what else could I do? Tell me what was my fault in this final separation? This Tuesday also began just like the hundreds of other Tuesdays of my life. But I did not even have a hint that it would end with me being permanently taken away from all of you. Till that moment when the assassin's bullet split my chest and made me roll down to the earth, my mind kept thinking about the next day's issue of the paper. I am starting this last

continuous tall claims on the economic health of the country. The Narendra Modi government has in the face of falling growth and scathing criticisms appointed an economic advisory council to help stem the domestic economic downturns.

conversation with all of you with the belief that you will understand this critical situation..."

True, Gauri had a premonition, witnessing her own death and describing it exactly the way it happened. She doesn't falter even in the face of death. This is a lesson for journalists. At times, they have to face even the gravest situations. They cannot their eyes shut to the realities. This is what the profession expects from them.

Gauri was a rare species of journalists. She said in the article that she was willing to pay the price for what she stood up in rebellion for her India and had no regrets. "I have a sense of fulfillment," is what she said. Such words are rare.

Madhu Dandavate

By

B. Vivekanandan

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India and EU Growing Partnership?

D. K. Giri

The India-European Union 14th Summit meeting in New Delhi on 6th October focused on closer cooperation on counter terrorism actions. Importantly, the joint declaration named Hafeez, Saeed, Dawood Ibrahim, Zakir-Ur Rehman, LeT and JeM et al as those perpetrating terror.

In fact, terrorism has become a common focus and gained currency as Europe has been subjected to repeated terrorist attacks recently even though India has been in the throes of cross-border terrorism for long.

Besides this, trade was another key issue as there has been a clear mismatch both in India's and EU's external relations. Notwithstanding, the EU has been functioning internally and in foreign relations as a trading bloc.

Undoubtedly, while New Delhi's external ties were politics and security driven at the cost of its vital economic relations, EU emphasized more on trade and economy ignoring its political objectives like promotion of democracy, protection of human rights, rule of law, etc. The EU's heavy trade relations with China at the cost of its international political objectives, is a case in point.

Alas, the Summit meetings and a plethora of bilateral meetings including the important strategic partnership have failed to correct this imbalance. Significantly, India is one among 10 select countries with whom

EU has strategic partnership, launched in 2004.

Tracing the relationship between the two, India was the first developing country to make diplomatic contact in 1962 with the EU, then known as the European Economic Community (EEC). Today they are celebrating 55 years of diplomatic contact, even as not much of this festivity is seen or felt in the public domain.

In fact, there is not much awareness of the role and functions of EU in India. In most Summit or bilateral meetings, there is repeated reference to the shared core values of democracy, pluralism, human rights, etc. Whereby the European Commission's President Jean-Claude Juncker wrote in the India press, "India and EU are natural partners, the bond is built on shared beliefs and the strength of law outweighs the law of the strong."

This is an oblique reference to China's belligerent territorial aggression in the South China Sea. Echoing this perspective, the European Council President Donald Tusk added, "EU wants to build with India a strong strategic partnership on the foundations of common values of freedom, democracy and credible rule based global order."

Prime Minister Modi was equally effusive about relations. Said he at the Summit, "India values her multifaceted partnership with EU and we attach high importance to our strategic partnership as the world's

largest democracies we are natural partners and our close relations are based on shared common values."

Undeniably, these statements are political rhetoric and diplomatic niceties. Actually, the strategic partnership is under-performing. An instance: The Free Trade Agreement, one of its kind supposedly to promote India's growth and development and for which negotiations started in 2007 is stuck.

Indian negotiators feel that the Europeans are less flexible and patronizing whereas Europeans think that India is not open to lifting trade barriers, giving market access, making geographical indications and straightening public procurement. In addition, there is concern about intellectual property rights (IPR). Whatever be the bottlenecks, the unending and stalled negotiations do not behave a strategic partnership.

Certainly, India and EU relations have a strong potential to prosper into a strong partnership as the EU is New Delhi's largest trading partner accounting for 13.7 per cent ahead of China's 11 per cent and US's 9 per cent. And EU is India's 9th largest trading partner with exports amounting to 37.8 billion euros in 2016 and the total value of trade was 77 billion euros in 2016.

Also, about 24 per cent of total FDI flows from EU to India and around six thousand European

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All India Socialist Women's Conference, Pune, 2017

Dear Friends,

The Modi Government ever since it came to power in 2014 is implementing the policies of globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation at an accelerating pace. It has pushed the country into a deep external and internal crisis. Simultaneously, the BJP and its parent organisation, the RSS, are also implementing a very regressive fascist social agenda. They are attacking the fundamental pillars of the Indian Constitution—democracy, secularism and equality. They want to transform secular India into a Hindu Rashtra; they have also launched a vicious offensive to attack all ideologies and progressive forces that can challenge their fascist ideology, in the name of a false nationalism.

To build a political and economic alternative to this fascist threat hanging over the country, we, the democratic socialists, who are active in various fields, have come together and formed a platform named as “**We the Socialist Institutions**”, that has organised several successful programs over the past two years.

The ideology of the BJP-RSS is based on the Manusmriti, that sanctions oppression of the Dalits and women. Ever since BJP came to power, it has been seeking to roll-back all the rights won by women since independence. It wants them to go back to the four walls of the home, and confine themselves to looking after their families and doing housework. It wants to dictate what women should wear, what they should do, whom should they marry, how many children they should have, and so on. BJP workers have taken out rallies defending Sati; their Chief Ministers have lauded Khap Panchayats for doing good work, despite their lynching couples marrying outside their caste; their leaders have denied the existence of marital rape.

And therefore, at a meeting of “We the Socialist Institutions” held in March 2017, it was decided to host an **All-India Socialist Women's Conference in Pune on December 2 - 3, 2017 (Saturday-Sunday)**. Janata Trust, Yusuf Meherally Centre, SM Joshi Socialist Foundation and Socialist Mahila Sabha / Lokayat's women's wing, Abhivyakti, have been given the responsibility of organising this conference. The aim of this conference is:

- to give a boost to the all India women's movement;
- help various socialist and progressive groups build-up their women's wings;
- deepen the understanding of the various women activists associated with the socialist and progressive movement with regards to the issues facing the women's movement as well as the challenges facing the country due to the fascist onslaught;
- help build solidarity among the women activists and women's groups associated with the socialist and progressive movement in the country.

We invite democratic and socialist and left women organisations from across the country to send their representatives to attend this two-day conference. Individual women activists with an inclination towards socialism but who are not yet active with any group are also welcome to attend.

Do forward this invitation to other progressive women's groups or activists in your contact, and invite them to this conference on our behalf, and also kindly send us their emails to that we can directly send them this invitation.

This is only an initial mail, so that you can block your dates and book your tickets. The schedule of the conference and other details will be sent in due course.

Do reply back to this mail, confirming your willingness to attend this conference.

Please send your replies to:

Guddi (Janata Trust): 07738082170; email : kgaswadesi1947@gmail.com

Sayali S.P. (Abhivyakti): 09503489676; email : joshisayali48@gmail.com

Looking forward to having many of you for this two-day conference,
in solidarity

Guddi Janata Trust

Manisha Gupte SM Joshi Socialist Foundation

Vijaya Chauhan Yusuf Meherally Centre

Alka Joshi Socialist Mahila Sabha / Abhivyakti (Women's wing of Lokayat)

Growing up in

Sunil Tambe

“Aruna Asaf Ali hoisted the Indian tricolour at this very spot, and within a few minutes she disappeared in the crowd,” my father told me while narrating the story of the Quit India resolution.

“Where were you?” I asked with excitement.

“I was just 15 years old then, and had come here to witness the historical moment,” he replied.

It was 9th August and we were on my father’s annual pilgrimage to Mumbai’s Gowalia Tank Maidan (now August Kranti Maidan. I don’t remember the year but it must be the late 60s, maybe 1968. The Socialist Party had organized a rally that followed by a *satyagraha* protest at Gowalia Tank playground, where the historic AICC session was held in 1942. V. N. Okey, a noted artist and close associate of socialist leader Yusuf Meherally, who had coined the slogans like “Go Back Simon”, “Quit India” had prepared a replica of the proposed August Kranti Memorial. A group of Socialist Party activists led by Nath Pai was to install it in a corner of the playground as a tribute to the martyrs of the August Revolution of 1942 and that was what the *satyagraha* was all about. But police arrested them and they were taken to the Gamdevi police station. I remember wondering what was wrong with the demand and why did the police arrest them. The Congress that had adopted the Quit India resolution was in power then. Except for the socialists and a few

Gandhians no political party or outfit was backing this demand.

Every year, on August 9, my father would visit the August Kranti Maidan to pay his tributes. This was his last year of annual pilgrimage as he passed away on September 24. For him August Kranti Din was some sort of a national festival. After paying tributes, his fellow socialists and other activists would come to our small home – a tiny one room-kitchen tenement dwelling – for tea and snacks. The number of old socialists was dwindling and, one day, veteran socialist leader Mrinal Gore suggested my parents to put a halt to this annual program as, she reasoned: “both of you have crossed 70s”. At the same time, the number of old Socialist comrades was also dwindling and by the first decade of the 21st century there were none but Dr. G. G. Parikh who had memories of 1942.

My father, Ram Tambe, was born in a poor Brahmin family in Ratnagiri district of Konkan on 11th December 1927. He had four brothers and a sister. He had his primary education in Konkan and later moved to what then was Bombay for higher education. He was living with his elder brothers in Girgaon. His eldest brother, Manohar, was working in a tailoring shop. Manohar was known as ‘Dada’ in the family. He was an avid reader and a regular at Mumbai Marathi Granth Sangrahalay. He was involved in several social activities as well. He used to organize study circles of Communist leaders. His fiancée, Mangala, was

a card holder of the Communist Party. Mukunda aka Anna, another elder brother, was active in Rashtra Seva Dal (RSD) and the Sarvodaya movement. At a very young age, Anna took up Khadi and never gave it up. His wife was also an active RSD worker. It was at his behest that the celebrated writer Sane Guruji once visited their cramped rented place in a Girgaon chawl.

Chandu Sathe, Ram Tambe’s classmate once told me that Ram was a leader in the school. “He was in RSD while we were in RSS, but even so we were close friends,” he said. This group of friends mainly comprised Brahmins while Ram Tambe’s Socialist circle was mostly non-Brahmin. Arjun Dalvi, Damu Patkar, Diwakar Parkar, Baburao Jadhav, Mohmmad Khadas, Shoshanna Mazgaonkar and others were as close as family. In those days, individuality had little scope in the family. The entire family – often extended joint families – used to live in a small room and therefore strong bonds were quite common, not just with relatives but also with neighbours and friends. It was all about sharing, not just space but also life.

Ram Tambe was active in organizing various socio-cultural and political activities in Thakurdwar-Girgaon, the hub of the Marathi lower middle class in the island city. The Socialist Party office and Mumbai Marathi Granth Sangrahalaya were located in the

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a Socialist Family

Sadhana Khavnekar

On 3rd October there was a condolence meeting on my Baba's, Ram Tambe's, demise at Tardeo's "Janata Kendra". We were driving with my Aai to the programme. On reaching the venue I remembered that Baba had once asked us to take the car in Yusuf Meherally Vidyalaya's compound near the gate to enter Janata Kendra. We parked the car accordingly and Aai could easily walk into Janata Kendra. At that moment I realized the significance of his absence in my life and also that from now on my journey in life will always be with such memories of Baba.

Baba, lived his life the way he wanted, independently and believing and following Socialist ideals. I was really lucky to have such an energetic, pleasant and positive father always around for such a long time in my life. All these thoughts help me to overcome sorrow of his loss.

My journey with Baba started from my birth. I can actually recollect loads of fond childhood memories but find it difficult to put in words. However what I remember vividly at the moment is my mother Sudha-Aai getting up early in the morning, preparing breakfast, tiffins for all of us and rushing to school for her job. Baba would iron all our clothes for the day (including my hair ribbon). He would then leave at 8 a.m for the party office at Thakurdwar or to help Dalvi kaka with his printing press before going to his own work place. Evenings he would drop in again at

the party office and then would return home. Dinner was always freshly cooked and by rule to be eaten together.

I also remember that during the Emergency when, he was in the jail at Yerwada-Pune, the things we used to carry for him on our visits always had more items for his jail friends as per his request. I also recollect when he travelled to Iraq for his job, he used to write letters to all the relatives and friends regularly, and had got small gifts for each and every one.

I honestly do not know how many children Aai-Baba helped in studies or were guardians for those who came to Mumbai. For us siblings anyone who came home was always family.

Reading through newspapers, social media or through others about Baba's demise lots of friends took time off from busy schedules to meet or call us. It was touching as people shared memories of Baba and wished us, specially my Aai, all the best to survive now only with Baba's memories.

Baba never believed in God or religion. As in case of most Samajwadi families, I and my two elder brothers, Sanjeev and Sunil, had registered marriages, without any grand function. Baba always avoided spending money on weddings or parties. He believed in spending money only on necessary things for ourselves and using available fund for others in need.

However, a few months back we celebrated Aai-Baba's 61 years of married life by inviting close relatives and friends. Our idea was to give Aai-Baba a chance to meet all their loved ones which otherwise has become really difficult these days. As expected all of us enjoyed, especially both of them were very happy. But we never thought this happiness will end so soon.

Looking back I feel happy for my fantastic journey with Baba. He showed us and helped us see the world around. He not only allowed us to travel as per our wishes, in fact also encouraged, supported and guided, when necessary.

In this journey through life, we as individuals and as family had our ups and downs, however, it was Aai-Baba's help that we all passed through bad patches, making our family larger and stronger. In this journey he inculcated love for travelling in me which later became my career too.

Baba loved reading books, magazines, newspapers and seeing places. His job and party work gave him opportunity to travel a lot. His great stock of information, travel memories and friends were always of help to us.

Kokan – Ratnagiri-Sindhudurga region - always had very special place in Baba's heart. He was born there and then he was closely associated with the work of Madhu Dandavate so love for Konkan continued. Later he also did lot of

work at “Matrumandir” in Deorukh as Secretary and Vice-chairman. Nowadays “Sane Guruji Rashtriya Smarak” at Mangaon was yet another place he loved. Whenever we used to talk about travelling in Konkan we used to bank on finding a dear friend/relative of Baba in each and every village of the region. Whenever we travelled to any place it was for sure he knew a social organization or person doing some noble work in the area. Our fun tours became always meaningful because of Baba’s vision. On many such tours we visited places like “Yusuf Meherally Centre” at Tara, “Matrumandir” of Dearukh, project at Oni in Sindhudurga, “Nath Pai Sevangan” at Malwan, Ashok Saswadkar’s “Nirmiti”, “Kustharog Nivaran Samiti” at Nere, “Sahaj Shikshan Parivar” at Maswan near Palghar and of course Baba Amte’s Anandvan. He took us around Dapoli’s agricultural college too. We came to know about Sagarputra at Dabhol, school at Naldurga and got to know many such organizations and people at and around Chiplun, Ratnagiri, Kelshi, Jawhar and so on because of Baba.

Baba was actively involved in Rashtra Seva Ddal, Socialist Party’s work. He had taken part in Samyukta Maharashtra movement and fight against Emergency. Later he supported and appreciated work done by Medha Patkar, Surekha Dalvi and other such activists and tried his best to help them as much as possible till the end.

Baba taught me to enjoy travelling. He taught us to plan tour by collecting information, maps and also things to carry including food to make the tour an enjoyable activity. I remember a very very old memory of one trip. We friends had planned

a Konkan trip. Baba had drawn a map from Mumbai to Rajapur marking places; with add on of where to take halts/breaks including special Konkan items to be enjoyed at the place. He had also given information on friends’ contact to be used in case of emergency. After that my friends visiting Konkan would always take his advice. He noticed and showed us cow eating fish on Harne beach near Dapoli and guided us finding “right” place to seat and enjoy on Marine Drive in Mumbai. I remember energetic Baba preparing tea, food for all at Seva Dal’s monsoon picnics when I was a kid. Also, preparing bhel for all at Maswan on our unplanned visit and getting emotional with warmth and respect given by girls of Maswan. My friends always recollect Mumbai’s special vada pav Baba prepared with everyone’s help and served by Baba to all with love is the best vada pav they ever had.

Many years back at around 26th January I and my husband had planned a trip to Tithal beach near Balsad in Gujarat. Promptly Baba contacted Dr. B. M. Dhabuwala who used to do lot of social work in the area. Dr. Dhabuwala immediately invited us for a school function and also informed that he had made arrangement for our stay at Dr. Amul Desai’s place. Baba enquired about number of students in school and gave us “Tilgul” for all as it was Sankranti festival time. During that trip we got a chance to meet Dr. Amul Desai. I still remember his saying “our country is surviving because of people like Medha Patkar who selflessly works for wellbeing of others and all and not because of the politicians.” I always experienced the truth of it every time I met such famous or many such people away from publicity. In our

house Nanasaheb Goray, S. M. Joshi, Madhu Dandawate, G. P. Pradhan, Kishore Pawar, Dr. G. G. Parikh are respected as elders of the family. Waman Bhide, Arjun Dalvi, Diwakar Parkar, Damu Patkar, Mohammed Khadas are our real uncles as are Baba’s brothers - Manohar, Mukund, Shripad and Waman - or my maternal uncles - Manohar and Suhas. Aai-Baba’s friends from Girgaon’s Samajwadi and Seva Dal group like Baburao Jadhav, Karalkar, Bane, Laxmibai Tambakhu, Shubhangi Joshi, Jawahar-Pushpa, Sudhakar-Smita became our friends too. Baba’s office friends Dharap, Doshi, Kumar are special for us too.

Baba’s skill of planning and organizing was excellent. He was very particular and disciplined in his thinking and working. Almost everyone he came in contact with has experienced his anger and scolding because his nature; however; each one also enjoyed Kadhi/Aamti made by him too. He loved reading and on reading something nice used to share and make others read it too. He always used to suggest his friends to help various organizations. He gifted subscription of “Sadhana” weekly to friends. In the memory of his elder brother he had started award for best reader in Mumbai Marathi Grnathsangrahalaya. He used to buy regularly old books and magazines and send to small village libraries. Baba and Aai always took active part in various projects like helping in flood/earthquake relief programmes and arranging tea or anything for any activity.

He was atheist yet he actively helped his son-in-law for “Pooja” at

(Continued on Page 12)

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same building. Thanks to my uncles and aunts and, of course, the library, we had read not just Sane Guruji's books at an early age but also got exposure to Dr. Rammanohar Lohia's writings. Besides the progressive literature in Marathi, I remember titles such as *God That Failed*, *The New Class*, *Asian Drama*, and Sanskrit classics like *Shakuntal*, *Mudrarakshas*, etc., stashed in our book shelves.

The world was a tiny place then. Although we were living in a corner of India's financial capital, Girgaon resembled a village. All our relatives lived in the vicinity, in a one-kilometre radius. The anonymity of urban life was still to steal over us. In Girgaon, almost every shopkeeper knew one or the other Tambe as three of the five brothers were socially and politically active. While Ram Tambe was active in the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement, he had also taken the initiative in organizing farewell programs for *satyagrahis* who were leaving to join the Goa liberation struggle. Organizing meals for hundreds of activists was an easy task for him. Each household or family would contribute in whatever way possible to the cause, be it money, *chappatis* or voluntary labour. He had amazing organizational skills and was meticulous in his planning. He was involved in Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav events and other cultural programmes like competitions for Rangoli, Diwali lamps (Aakashdive), etc. He had organized *kirtans* of Gadge Baba, a legendary rationalist reformer saint, who was illiterate and yet mesmerised the audience with his down-to-earth teachings that called for simple living and doing

away with caste barriers and untouchability. Ram Tambe was an avowed adherent and advocate of this kind of religiosity and hence was close to people from all walks of life.

Shoshanna Mazgaonkar (Padhye) used to leave her children in the care of my mother Sudha, and then would proceed to attend the rallies of the Socialist Party. Our small home used to be packed with relatives, activists and others all the time. Ram Tambe would be engaged in heated discussions with his party colleagues, Waman Bhide and others, till late in the evening while we (I, my elder brother and younger sister) would be dozing off in a corner of our cramped one-room home.

Those were the days of license-permit raj or mixed economy also known as the Nehruvian Model of Socialism. Every electric pole had posters of Hindi movies. Almost all outdoor advertisement space was captured by Hindi movie posters. Occasionally, one would spot hoardings promoting toothpastes or soaps. There were very few fine dining restaurants. I don't remember visiting any. Tea, breakfast, snacks, and meals were always home-cooked. Very few could afford even tea and snacks at restaurants. Hawkers too had very little business in those days. Early every morning, mother would prepare our lunch-boxes and then leave for work. Dinner though was sacred. Every evening, my parents would cook and we would eat together with family and friends. I learned early to clean and cut vegetables at home. Household chores were mandatory for all of us.

During summer vacations, our parents would take us to visit relatives in Konkan. Ram Tambe

was a keen student of the flora and fauna of Konkan and would enjoy showing us various plants and flowers. He was an ardent follower of Nath Pai and, later, Madhu Dandavate. Every Lok Sabha election, he would be in Rajapur Lok Sabha constituency. In Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts, he would say with pride that he had friends and relatives in hundreds of villages. He never stayed in a hotel or circuit house in Konkan.

Every year, in the month of Shraavan (normally, August), there would be an all-night family function. One day, late in the evening, Vasant Helekar, a close associate of George Fernandes, showed up and sought a private meeting with Ram Tambe. In a few minutes, the two of them left for some unknown place. My father was missing for three days. We had no clue as to where he had gone. There was no message, postcard or phone call from him. George Fernandes was then president of Workers Union of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRT) and had given a strike call. As the union leaders were arrested, George requested Ram Tambe to undertake a tour of Konkan to boost the morale of the workers so that the strike would continue. Ram Tambe successfully carried out the operation in complete secrecy and later resumed his duties with Hindustan Construction.

During the Emergency unleashed by Indira Gandhi in 1975, Ram Tambe was a joint secretary of the Socialist Party, Mumbai. He and Mohammad Khadas would cyclostyle the anti-Emergency bulletins at the residence of my uncle, Manohar Tambe. Neither his neighbours nor even his children had the slightest idea that, after the family

had left for the day, their small house would turn into a revolutionary printing press. Sometime later, Ram Tambe was arrested under Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and was jailed in Yeravada Central Prison. After the Emergency was over and he was released, he shared his jail diaries with all of us. Those diaries had notes of all the study circles that were held in jail. He also had come in contact with “hard-core” criminals – some of whom were serving life terms – in jail and counseled them. Later, after their release, many of them would come to meet him to seek his guidance and help.

After his retirement from Hindustan Construction, he took up the responsibility of Matru Mandir in Ratnagiri district. Matru Mandir was established by Waman Bhide, a socialist activist. As secretary of Matru Mandir, Ram Tambe not only raised funds but also undertook various initiatives like watershed development, orphanage and ladies hostel in the small town of Devrukh. He involved the National Union of Sea Farers of India and such other labour unions in the activities of Matru Mandir. At the age of 70, he used to travel from Mumbai to Konkan by state transport buses.

Our one room-kitchen home was barely 350 square feet but it always had room for our parents’ friends and relatives. Many came to Mumbai for major or minor surgeries or health problems. Some would bring their kids for some entrance exam or the other. Most of them could not afford to stay in hotels. My parents would not only welcome them but also take good care of them. Sometime after his 87th birthday, Ram Tambe started writing his will. This rented place should continue to be a home for

social activists, he decreed. He had also made a list of the institutions and organizations with various amounts to be donated after his passing.

On going through the list, I grinned: “But you don’t have this much money in your bank accounts.” “Then you (we three children) should pitch in,” he said, without batting an eyelid. “Is it your will or ours,” I asked with a chuckle. “It’s the same damn thing,” he said.

(Continued from Page 10)

home with just one feeling - respect and love for others..

Baba till the end believed in and lived with his Socialist principles. His wish to donate body could not be accomplished. However, after the condolence meeting my Aai said “Baba would have been moved to by hearing all that

This conversation flashed on my mind when my sister, Sadhana, called me from the ICCU of Karuna Hospital in Borivali a few days ago. “Baba’s condition has deteriorated,” was all she could say before handing over the phone to the doctor. “We tried our best, but his heart is not responding. Please rush to the hospital,” the doctor said. By the time we reached the hospital, he had breathed his last. Ram Tambe was 90 years young.

was said today”. However I feel he would have been more pleased if we, his three children, had arranged tea for all in the meeting.

As per his wish we will always keep his home “Open” for all family and friends and add to his work as per our ability.

**Acharya Javadekar
A Satyagrahi Socialist**



G. P. Pradhan

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Published by Rajkamal Prakashan, 2a Netaji Subhash Road, New Delhi 11002

3. **Vartaman Rajneeti ki Jwalant Chunautiyan.** Price 400 rupees.
4. **Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia ki Neetiyon:** (This booklet was published late last year.) Price 25 rupees.

Published by Anamika Publishers and Distributors. Ansari Road, New Delhi 110002

50th death anniversary

October 12, 2017

Dr. Rammanohar Lohia

Chandra Bhal Tripathi

The dynamic socialist leader, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, was a brilliant and original thinker as well as a man of action. The Congress Socialist Party had been founded at Patna in May 1934 under the chairmanship of Acharya Narendra Deva, when Lohia returned to India with a doctorate on Salt Taxation in India from Frederick William University of Berlin (now known as Humboldt University). In 1936 the Congress President Jawaharlal Nehru appointed this young man of 26 years as Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Department of the AICC. That launched him not only in the national politics but also secured him a prominent place in the socialist movement. Soon he was recognised as a member of the Socialist Triumverate, the other two being Acharya Narendra Deva and JP.

The British imprisoned Lohia from June 1940 to the end of 1941. He became a hero of the Quit India movement, along with Usha Mehta ran the underground Azad Hind Radio and could be arrested only on April 11, 1944. He was a co-prisoner and tortured along with Jayaprakash Narayan in Lahore Central Jail. Both the heroes of the August Revolution were released on April 11, 1946. The charismatic personality of JP made him the darling of the masses as I witnessed at the Meerut session of the Congress in November 1946. Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan, Aruna Asaf Ali also became very popular.

The socialist rank and file were overawed by the deep learning and ideological clarity of the Acharya (Narendra Deva) and the lessons in socialism given by JP in the schoolmasterly fashion (I had the same feeling when I attended a two-hour political class by the great Indonesian socialist leader Soetan Sjahrir at Djakarta in 1956). But the youth and student leaders, specially in UP, found in Lohia a lovable senior dude. I recall being closeted with Dr. Lohia when I was just 16 plus at Royal Hotel in the Civil Lines, Allahabad, along with MA final students Dharmavir Bharati and Vijaydeo Narayan Sahi, listening in rapt attention to Lohia's tale of torture of himself and JP in Lahore Central Jail, the two budding writers enquiring about the secret of the socialist leader unearthing significant facts and making startling statements and the doctor advising them to study more and more.

I am personally grateful to Dr. Lohia for encouraging me in my formative years. I was President of Lucknow University Union in 1952-53 and as Chairman of the UP Students' Action Committee led a successful big student movement for the autonomy of student unions in a non-violent democratic manner. In an article captioned *The Lucknow Revolt* published in the National Herald in November 1953 he wrote a paragraph on me appreciating my role. As the General Secretary of the PSP he included me as the student and youth representative in a six-

member Sub-Committee of the National Executive of the PSP on Educational and Youth Affairs, in the august company of Acharya Narendra Deva, Acharya JB Kripalani, Prof. KK Bhattacharya, Dr. Atin Bose and Madhu Limaye. While I led an Indian student delegation to the Indo-Burmese Students' Cultural Festival at Rangoon in the summer of 1954 Dr. Lohia asked three of us to accompany him to the meeting of the Anti-Colonial Bureau of the Asian Socialist Conference at Imphakhon in the Eastern Shan States.

I left active politics and joined a research project in Jaunsar-Bawar in July 1955, but I continued to dabble in the affairs of the NUSI (I chaired the UP Branch of the national student organisation) and the Samajwadi Yuwak Sabha for three years until I was appointed Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Lucknow University. I had to join Government service on January 1, 1959. While I worked as Assistant Commissioner for SC&ST at Jaipur he visited Jaipur sometime in 1961, sent for me and told me: "Government service has already made you 'nikammaa' partially, there is still time to leave it and join me." At Chandigarh too he called me to the residence of Shri Rajinder Sachar, Secretary of his party at Chandigarh, in 1963.

I respected Dr. Lohia but was a bit disillusioned over his hobnobbing with the Jan Sangh and his sharing the election platform with Deen

Dayal Upadhyaya at Farrukhabad. His anti-Nehruism blinded him to the danger of embracing a rabid communal organisation. A similar, rather more dangerous event took place two decades later by JP embracing the Jan Sangh-RSS. Madhu Limaye's opposition to the RSS led to the break-up of the Janata Party but the damage had been done.

Possessing sparkling intellect and a down to earth leader, Lohia mixed with the youth, student leaders, women workers and illiterate peasants with equal felicity. This diminutive, brown, stocky, bespectacled bachelor with a charming and sometimes mischievous smile held a special fascination for women.

Dr. Lohia's contributions are rich and diverse. He astounded people by his deep thoughts on issues like caste, gender equality, culture, etc. Some found deficit of 'shaaleenataa' in his politics. Lohia was undoubtedly an acknowledged pan-India leader who was also popular among the socialist parties of Asia, Africa and Europe.

(Continued from Page 6)

companies are operating in India. Bilateral trade in commercial services has nearly tripled over the past decade increasing from 10.5 billion euros in 2005 to 28.4 billion euros in 2016.

The European Investment Bank has opened an office in New Delhi and has committed 1.5 billion euros for the current year. The Lucknow and Bengaluru metro projects and many solar ventures are supported by the Bank. Further, India, is the leading the International Solar mission.

True, investment would come. But is the Indian market ready to absorb such investment flow? The Alcatel chief profoundly remarked, "Indians are wonderful people, but India is a terrible market". How much has it changed?

On political front, EU has recognized India's regional role in international politics. It has taken serious note of SAARC as a regional body and jotted New Delhi's role and interest in Africa. Pertinently, it has invited her to participate as an observer at the next EU-African Union Summit.

Both held discussions on regional and international issues which included the Muslims Rohingya crisis,

their radicalization in particular, Iran's nuclear programme, North Korea's missile adventurism, civil war in Syria as also rebuilding of Afghanistan. Both "committed to a sustainable, democratic, prosperous and peaceful Afghanistan".

It also wanted the responsibility for abetting and aiding DPRK's nuclearisation to be fixed. Obviously fingers were pointed towards China wherein both EU and India sought to send a clear message that Beijing should follow the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for resolving all maritime territorial disputes.

Furthermore, the apprehension that India, following Britain's exit from EU, might lose interest in EU relations is misplaced, asserted the European Commission's Vice President and High Representative on EU Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. On the contrary, India's deep and growing relations with major countries like Germany and France are likely to deepen.

Recall, after the 1994 Cooperation and Development Agreement relations were expected to cover people-to-people contact and a multi-faceted collaboration. This was followed by the EU-India Strategic

Partnership in 2004 and a Joint-Action Plan in 2005 updated in 2008.

The Strategic Partnership Treaty recognized India as a "regional and global leader engaging increasingly on equal terms with other world powers. However, despite these institutional growths in India-EU bilateralism relations between Brussels and New Delhi have failed to live up to their potential, remarked German Ambassador to India, Martin Ney. He singled out the joint -failure on resumption of talks to FTA and investment.

Evidently, there has been progress by EU and India. From a common market, EU now has a common currency and has evolved from a Community to a Union. India has also progressed economically following the financial restructuring post-1990s.

There was change of guard in Indian leadership in April 2014 and in EU in November 2014. However, there has been no visible swift progress.

Clearly, India and EU have to do some serious re-thinking on their relations. They need to re-orient their respective bureaucracies to be more visionary, open and accommodative. Therein lies the future of the mutuality of India and the EU.

Memorandum

2 October 2017

His Excellency Shri Ramnath Kovind Ji

President

Republic of India

Most Respected Sir

Be it travel or freight transport, Indian Railways is the socio-economic lifeline of the country. Among the largest rail services in the world, Indian Railways is also the biggest public sector enterprise in the country. The British used the Railways very astutely to exploit the country in order to consolidate their empire. The railway services were built and expanded in free India with the view to strengthen communication/commutation networks, economy and defense networks. Invaluable resources and labour of crores of Indian people went into building the Indian Railways.

The total length of rail tracks is about 120,000 km. Out of this 28 thousand kilometers are used for the yards. On the remaining 92,000 kilometers tracks run trains. Total operational length of Indian Railways is 66,687 route kilometers. Out of this about 55,000 route kilometers was made by the British in pre-independence times. Thus, only 11,000 route kilometers has been expanded in 70 years of independence, which is negligible according to need. Out of 66 thousand route kilometers, 60 thousand route kilometers are broad-gauge lines. The remaining are narrow and meter-gauge lines. The task of changing narrow and broad-gauge lines into broad-gauge is not yet completed. Similarly, the work of doubling and tripling of tracks is also running very slow. However, the work of electrification of the railways has been relatively fast. In 1950-51, 7.5% of the total railway lines were electrified, which is now almost 36%.

So far the qualitative improvement of Indian Railways is concerned, the question of security comes to the fore. With every budget, the number of trains, freight and passenger traffic increases. Along with this there are decisions to increase the speed of trains. A decision to run bullet trains has also been taken by the government. But security, punctuality and facilities have not improved. The journey of trains has become a journey of accidents. Every year, on an average, 100 small and major accidents happen. In the year 2017, eight major rail accidents have occurred till date. Apart from train accidents, many people die in stampedes which happen on crowded platforms and bridges. The recent incident in Mumbai's Elphinstone railway station is a recent example. The government promptly passed the project of a bullet train costing 1.20 thousand crore for the distance of 550 kms., but did not provide money for the construction of a new bridge in place of the old one built by the British in 1911 citing the excuse of lack of funds.

A safe, convenient and time-bound rail service is the first condition for the progress of the country. This is the government's job to fill the lakhs of vacant positions, to lay new tracks as needed, to repair worn out tracks and to install proper technology in order to ensure safety, convenience and punctuality. But the government instead of fulfilling its responsibilities, is busy handing over the Railways to the capitalists. By the decision of merging the Railway Budget with the General Budget, and by the decision to sell railway stations/railway lines to private bidders in the garb of public-private partnership (PPP), the BJP has made a solid beginning of privatizing Railways.

The privatisation of Indian Railways is different from the privatisation of any other public sector undertaking. The Indian Railways is intrinsically connected with rural and urban economy, composite culture, education and internal security of the country. Therefore, any decision of privatization of Indian Railways in any form is anti-constitutional and anti-public. The Socialist Party has launched a nation-wide awareness campaign against the government's decision to privatise Indian Railways. This campaign was inaugurated by a 'Save Indian Railways' march from Mandi House to Jantar-Mantar in Delhi on 22 June 2017. In that series a 'Save Indian Railways Dharna' was held today (2 October 2017) at Jantar-Mantar. We submit this Memorandum to you at the end of the dharna.

Being the custodian of the Constitution, we request you to repeal the decision of privatization of Indian Railways in any form. We are hopeful that you will take prompt and decisive action on this subject.

With utmost regards

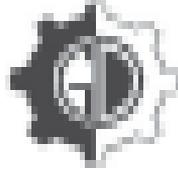
Yours faithfully

Dr. Prem Singh

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