

THE RADICAL HUMANIST



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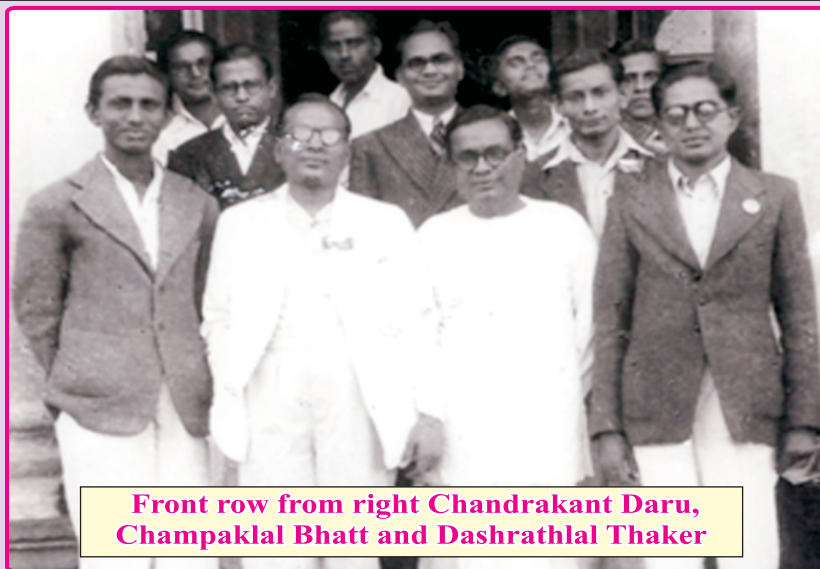
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Front row from right Chandrakant Daru,
Champaklal Bhatt and Dashrathlal Thaker

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THE RADICAL HUMANIST

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Founder Editor:

M.N.Roy

Advisors:

Dr. Nariseti Innaiah

Editor:

Mahi Pal Singh

Editorial Board:

Ramesh Awasthi, Dr. Deepavali Sen,
Vidya Bhushan Rawat, Qurban Ali,
N.D. Pancholi (Ex-officio Member)

Publisher and Printer:

N.D. Pancholi

Send articles and reports to:

Mahi Pal Singh at Flat No.F-6, Plot No. 625,
Shalimar Garden Extension I, Sahibabad,
Ghaziabad-201005. (U.P.) Ph. 09312206414

or E-mail them to:

theradicalhumanist@gmail.com or
mahipalsinghrh@gmail.com

Please send Subscription/Donation Cheques in favour of

THE RADICAL HUMANIST to:

N.D. Pancholi, Administrative Office, Flat No.F-6,
Plot No. 625, Shalimar Garden Extension I,
Sahibabad, Ghaziabad-201005. (U.P.)
Ph. 0120-2648691, (M) 9811099532.
Email ID: ndpancholi44@gmail.com

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The BJP is at it again- Communalise, Divide and Polarise

Mahi Pal Singh

In the run up to the Legislative Assembly elections for Uttar Pradesh due in 2017 the BJP is back at its old game – communalise, divide and polarize the people and win the elections – as it has been doing in the past. It all started when Hukum Singh, the BJP MP from Kairana, a small town in western UP, came out with a list of 346 families which he claimed had ‘fled’ the town due to persecution from a particular community, Muslims, to be specific. He went on to add that Kairana had become like ‘Kashmir of the 1980s’ as ‘threats from a particular community’ were forcing Hindu families to flee. He was referring to the mass migration of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir valley about 25 years ago when they migrated to other parts of the country under threats and actual attacks on them by separatist militants and Pakistan supported terrorists. Within a few days he took a u-turn and said that the ‘exodus’ was not communal but a law and order issue. But by that time the mischief had played its role and many in the BJP who were perhaps waiting for it to happen, started making statements. The party discussed it at the national level and the UP BJP immediately rushed a seven member team headed by Shahjahanpur MLA Suresh Khanna and set up by Keshav Prasad Maurya, the UP BJP chief, to examine ‘facts’. After the visit of the team to the area, the team head, Suresh Khanna said: “The situation is too bad to be imagined. The state government is fully responsible for this. Those criminals belong to a ‘specific’ community and are given shelter inside and outside the jail by the administration as well as those who are in power.” Although the attack was on the Samajwadi government in UP, which in any case has never been known for good law and order, the focus still did not shift away from ‘a specific community’ mentioned in Hukum Singh’s

statement.

Immediately after Hukum Singh’s claim of an ‘exodus’ from Kairana, the BJP MLA from Sardhana, who is a prime accused in the Muzaffarnagar riots case, Sangeet Som, came out with another list of 10 Kairana residents who had left the town ‘out of fear’. He also announced a ‘Nirbhaya Yatra’ from Sardhana to Kairana to “tell all those trying to create a ‘Pakistan-like situation in Hindustan’ that BJP will not allow to happen.” He further added, “I’m referring to Pakistan because only one community is moving out of Kairana.” Within two further days, Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the two organizations connected with the RSS/BJP, issued a fresh list of 40 Hindu families that have supposedly fled from Deoband in Saharanpur. As per VHP’s regional vice president, Sunil Parashar, about 1,000 Hindu families have migrated in the past decade from 12 localities in Lohamandi area of Agra. These are not the last lists and many such lists will appear in the next few days and weeks.

On 16th June, the UP government released what it called the “final report” on the issue of Hindu migration from Kairana after an extensive door-to-door survey which claimed that only three families have left the town and that too citing crime as a reason. Giving details, Shamli district magistrate Sujeet Kumar said that 16 people in the list of Hukum Singh have long died and the families of the three are still in Kairana. He further added: “of the 346 families, a total of 27 are still in Kairana; 67 families in the list left in 2006 or earlier. A few of them even left 20 years ago. Some 179 families left 4-5 years ago and 73 left over the last two years. However, when we enquired the reasons for their departure, we found it was for better business, health

facilities and education. There is no communal tension in Kairana and it would be inaccurate to compare this to the situation in Kashmir.”

The fact is that people have been migrating from rural areas and small towns from all over the country to big cities in search of jobs or for education and there is nothing new about Kairana migration. It is not correct to say that only Hindu families have gone elsewhere from there. A fact-finding team consisting of journalists and social workers constituted by Milli Gazette stated in its report: “It is not the case of Hindus alone, 150 Muslim families, according to local police sources, too have migrated to other places in the hope of a better life for them and their children.

“After this “Hindu list of exodus”, local Muslims too have issued a list of Muslims who left the town showing that the migration was mainly for earning a better livelihood outside,” adding further, “The ruling classes in Delhi and Lucknow are not listening to such voices (for better employment, education and healthcare facilities). They didn’t pay attention for the uplift of the town and now they are playing the polarisation game. They promise development but deliver hate and fear instead, trying to divide society which easily gets influenced due to illiteracy and lack of trust manufactured by the right-wing extremist groups which spread rumours to garner votes and grasp power.”

Even a team of Hindu seers visited Kairana and at the end of the visit Swami Chakrapani, President of Akhil Bharatiya Sant Mahasabha, one of the five seers who visited the area, slammed the BJP for playing the ‘communal card’. He said, “It is wrong to claim that there is any religious angle to the problem in Kairana. BJP and its MP Hukum Singh are playing the communal card. It seems their only agenda is to win elections by striking fear in the hearts of Hindus in the region. We strongly condemn the

politics of hate and fear-mongering.”

A party which is running the central government and its Members of Parliament and MLAs are supposed to be responsible people. They are not supposed to make such irresponsible remarks on such sensitive issues which can be highly detrimental to the society at large. But for the wisdom, sagacity and restraint shown by the people, the Kashmir remark made by Hukum Singh and repeated by some others could have been the cause of eruption of communal riots in the country resulting into untold suffering to a numberless people, and national and international repercussions for the country’s reputation as a secular state, which already stands dented after Modi took over as the Prime Minister of the BJP led government in the country. But the trouble is that the BJP has no track record of development either at the centre or in the states where it has had its governments or of pursuing pro-people policies and has to revert back again and again to the emotive issues like the Ram temple at Ayodhya, the supposed glorious Hindu past, repeal of Article 370 (on special status of Kashmir) from the Constitution and the hatred against the Muslims in one form or the other in the name of nationalism to win an election.

When migration from the rural areas and small towns in search of better education, healthcare and job opportunities has been taking place for a long time, there is another reason why the BJP has chosen to take up this baseless issue at this time – to divert attention once again from the steep rise in the prices of vegetables and pulses within the last fortnight or so, putting not only the poor but also the middle class people into great difficulty. About a year ago also there was an unprecedented rise in the prices of essential commodities and the common man had to face severe hardships in countering it. These two years of Modi rule have seen the highest price rise of essential commodities compared to any

time in the past and going into the elections with this record would have ruined the BJP. Therefore it was necessary to keep the minds of the people busy in the Hindu-Muslim game away from price rise, unemployment, reduced funds for education, healthcare, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme,

drought situation in large parts of the country, including UP, forcing farmers into committing suicides etc. etc. It may be a good poll strategy from the point of view of the BJP but it is the worst kind of politics.

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Daru as an Ideal Humanist

Gautam Thaker

Chandrakant Daru was born in a middle class family on 23rd June, 1916 in the tribal area of Gujarat. His father expired in his middle age and Mr. Daru being a brilliant student got Scholarship from the native State and graduated in Science from Baroda. Thereafter, he worked as a Teacher in Ahmedabad based High School and graduated in law. During this period, he was attracted by the thoughts of **M. N. Roy**. Roy had, on commencement of the 2nd World War, predicted that the war was between Fascism and Democracy and the History. On the other side, victory of democratic forces will lead not only to independence of India but independence of all the Colonies (Decolonization Theory). Mr. Daru whole-heartedly supported the war efforts of the British Government. He left his services and started a daily, 'Swatantra Bharat' by becoming its Editor. He and his colleagues, Dashrathlal Thaker, Champaklal Bhatt, Raojibhai Patel and others were treated as traitors, but being rationalist, he acted according to his conviction by taking up most unpopular cause. The Communist had, only after Germany attacked Russia, declared the slogan, "From Imperialist War to Peoples' War".

After getting out of the National Congress, Roy had organized Radical Democratic Party, but within a short period, he was convinced that it was not possible to educate and organize the people for true democracy, by the medium of political parties. He dissolved the party in 1948 and commenced Radical Humanist Movement to educate and organize the people in 'People's Committee', as foundation of basic democracy. Daru actively participated in this activity and by taking the advantage of the new Industrial Relations Act in the State, he organized industrial workers in Gujarat and secured permanent benefits for them so that he became most popular as 'Daru Saheb' in labour areas. He

was recognized as most brilliant advocate of labour in the industrial circles and his contribution to keep Gujarat free from extremist labour leaders was fully recognized. The basis of his Trade Union work was education, and not agitation, and that the Unions should be independent of the Government, employer and political parties. As the stakes in labour disputes were high, Daru had to face eminent advocates from Bombay, engaged by the industrialists. This helped him to establish his legal career on highest level of advocacy.

On bifurcation of Bombay State in 1960, Daru started his practice in Gujarat High Court. At that time, Gujarat Government, under the pressure of Mr. Morarji Desai had taken fanatical anti-English decision not to teach in English language, in the Secondary Schools from Std. V, as it was decided in Maharashtra but to continue to teach from Std. VIII. Over and above this, the Gujarat University moved a proposal to abolish English medium from all the branches and in all the years, at once. By organizing Parents' Association, Daru successfully challenged the Government and the University in the Gujarat High Court. Daru became by this historical 'medium' case, one of the ablest Constitutional Advocates. The State and the University lost appeal in the Supreme Court and decision became effective all over the India that no State or University can abolish English as one of the media of instruction. Nani Palkhiwala had appeared in the Supreme Court for the English Medium case and had said, 'it is not a case, but a cause'.

Daru, from the very beginning of his youthful career, firmly believed and fought for the liberty of individual as the basis of democracy and development of the individual. He was criticized for appearing on behalf of the smugglers. His reply was that no individual can

be detained in jail without giving him opportunity to defend, and if you tolerate such lawless law, it will be used against us. Assault on liberty, even if it is slight, should be resisted; otherwise, a trickle becomes a torrent. Daru's prediction was confirmed during Emergency. Daru also opposed Prohibition Law, as an assault on individual freedom.

It was during the emergency of 1975-1977, that Daru's complete dedication to the cause of freedom, democracy and humanism found its finest expression. During those critical days, Daru became a symbol of resistance to authoritarianism and all forms of repression. During Emergency, Daru had appealed to the editors of 'Daily' papers and periodicals, to write boldly and assured of his legal help. His view was that if the writing was not permitted by the censor officer, the paper had to go to the Court and the writing may be useless due to delay when permitted by the Court. If paper publishes without permission of the Censor, the Government has to go to the Court. He had complete confidence in the judiciary and his ability to successfully defend the freedom of the press. Until he was detained, he helped papers and periodicals, to publish boldly, and secured a historical decision in 'Bhoomi-Putra' case. Navjivan Press, one of the biggest publications in Gujarat, and founded by Gandhiji, was forfeited for printing a judgement and the Judge was transferred and the publisher was detained under MISA. During the Emergency, there was Janata Morcha Government in Gujarat. By taking benefit of this freedom, Daru had organized two historical, All India Conferences in Ahmedabad, viz., "Civil Liberty" conference and "Save the Constitution" conference, to resist against dictatorial 'Draft Constitution'. Historical inaugural speech of late Mr. M.C. Chagla in the 'Civil Liberty' conference was published and its copies were distributed in the Common Wealth Conference,

in Delhi. 'Bhumi-Putra' was prosecuted for publishing that speech. Daru had, during Emergency also, actively participated in organizing 'All India Radical Humanist Conference, which was attended by Prof. Paul Kurt from U.S.A. and Gujarat Lawyers' Conference in Ahmedabad. Foreign authors have recognized Daru's contribution in the fight for freedom, in their books on Emergency, but not the Indian authors. Mr. V.M. Tarkunde had said in his speech at Ahmedabad that between him and Mr. Daru, he was selected on the ground of seniority for the International Humanist Award. In Jail, Daru had written one Gujarati and one English book 'Democracy and Indian Constitution', printed and published from Delhi, during the Emergency.

In May 1976, the Citizens for Democracy decided to launch a cyclostyled Newsletter in order to publish truthful news which, on account of press censorship, was not being published in the periodical press. Daru was in charge of this project. His attempt to bring out the Newsletter led to this arrest under MISA in June 1976. He remained in jail till declaration of the general Lok Sabha election in January 1977. Even in jail, Daru conducted several study classes of youthful political prisoners.

Daru was a stalwart in the Radical Humanist Movement. He was elected General Secretary of the Indian Radical Humanist Association, was a Trustee of the Indian Renaissance Institute.

Daru firmly believed that by education, all-round development of the people is possible and, therefore, he had confidence in the educationists. Only a few from the teaching profession had opposed 'Emergency', yet he was satisfied with them. He had fought to improve their conditions and preserved the autonomy of the education. In his last days, he was interested in improving the method of education. Among his intellectual circle there was considerable number of

educationists.

In spite of his reputation as an outstanding lawyer, labour leader and Radical Humanist, Daru was essentially a modest, kind-hearted and equable person. His numerous friends do not remember a single occasion when he lost his patience or uttered a harsh word.

His last public activity was drafting of the Nathwani Commission Report. He was Honorary Secretary of the Commission, which

was appointed to inquire into alleged infringement of human rights of reformist members of the Dawoodi Bohras, in the name of the High Priest. He worked to the last day on this report before he left Bombay for U.S.A. for treatment of the lung cancer. Daru passed away on 15-05-1979 in U.S.A.

15th August, 2015

(The author is President of Indian Radical Humanist Association)

V.B. Rawat conferred with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Award 2016

On behalf of the Radical Humanists I congratulate V.B. Rawat on being conferred with Dr. Ambedkar International Award 2016 instituted by Ambedkar Association of North America. He got selected through people's choice. The award is an acknowledgement of his work for human rights of underprivileged, particularly Dalits and Adivasis of India and espousing the cause of humanism and human rights particularly related to the issues of social justice.

Vidya Bhushan Rawat is a political commentator, radical humanist, Human Rights activist with over 20 years of work with various social movements and communities all over the country. Rawat's ideological shape was constructed under prominent Ambedkarite Shri Bhagwan Das and later renowned humanist Justice V.M. Tarkunde.

He was one of the members of solidarity committee on right to food in India which spearheaded the campaign for Food Security Bill in India and other entitlements. In fact, it is the campaign due to which the government brought National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

He was founding member of Campaign for Electoral Reforms in India.

He worked with Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN International) and was instrumental in the formation of FIAN in UP and Delhi in 1995 and raised the issue of hunger and malnutrition in India. In fact those were the years when the national human rights organizations in India were not interested in raising these issues.

Mahi Pal Singh

Two years of Modi government

IF I were to award marks to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his two-year governance, I would give him four out of 10. I wouldn't fail him because he did not officially pursue the Hindutva programme and yet allowed the RSS and Bajrang Dal, both extremist organisations, to have the run of the field.

I know that RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat was allowed to use Akashvani to purvey his parochial and extremist views. In the same manner other government-owned institutions, such as the Nehru Library, were asked to follow the words coming from the RSS headquarters at Nagpur, or Jhandewalan in New Delhi. Heads of different educational institutes with Nehruvian leanings were dismissed.

The process is not yet complete. Even the central institutions in the Congress-run states are being systematically saffronised. Modi doesn't have to give day-to-day instructions. The message has reached that the entire set-up will have to—willy-nilly—follow the Hindutva line of thinking, no matter how ante deluvian.

Take the case of murder at Dadri, only 50 kilometres from Delhi. One Muslim was killed by fanatics simply because his family was suspected to have eaten beef. The extremists were not content with the killing of one person but wanted action against the whole family. They did not even raise their voice in protest. What kind of message must this have sent to the world about a nation which is capable of sending a man to the moon, when it is steeped in the ante-deluvian ideas that consider beef-eating as a sin?

What saddens one is the silence of those who claim to be secularists. Will these same chest-beating secularists also remain silent if Modi tomorrow permits his foreign minister to break ties with Japan because the Japanese are famous for producing their famous Kobe beef, which is

considered one of the world's greatest delicacies?

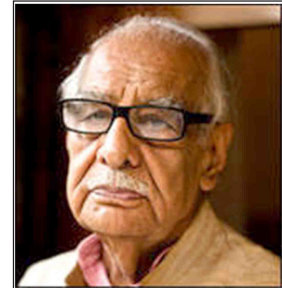
Unfortunately, the Hindutva crowd does not realize that India is ruled by the constitution and it is not a Hindu rashtra. The constitution gives equal rights to Hindus who are 80 per cent and the minorities who make up the remaining 20 per cent of the population. Together they constitute the republic.

Modi was right when he raised the slogan, sabka saath, sabka vikas, meaning thereby that we shall be all together and advance further hand in hand. But subsequently he and his party BJP appear to have lost way and today, whether they like it or not, their government has come to represent a particular way of thinking—an intolerant India—which has the overtones of Hindutva.

Probably, their party's think-tank has come to believe that they can win more votes by dividing the society. With assembly elections due in UP early next year, the Bajrang Dal has begun vitiating the atmosphere. They are holding more and more exercises in different cities where lathis and other weapons are used.

This is a kind of parallel police force and even UP, where the non-BJP government is currently in power, there are morning and evening parades of extremists to instruct the young recruits in the use of lathis. The same fear of Islamic domination that is being exploited by right wing parties in the West is being cunningly manipulated in India by the BJP and its allies.

We forget that in the democratic structure we have, everyone is free to eat whatever he or she likes. Nothing can be enforced. In a vast



Kuldeep Nayar

country like India where food and dress change every 50 kilometres, diversity is inevitable. Indeed, this is India's strength. Respecting diversity keeps our different units together in a federal structure which we follow.

The BJP hardliners who believe they have come to power because of a fundamental shift in national values should think again. There is more than a grain of truth in the argument that voters gave them a chance because they had lost faith in the Congress and were looking for an alternative.

The Congress will be failing them if it persists with dynastic politics. The party must realize — if it has not done so far—that Rahul Gandhi does not sell. Sonia Gandhi herself will be a far better bet than the other leaders so far available in the party. The disadvantage of being an Italian has disappeared over the years and she is considered as much an Indian as anyone by birth.

But problem is that she has very little chance to head the country because the Congress has lost its shine. No doubt, the BJP has Hinduised politics but that is the dominant thinking which has caught the imagination at present, thanks to Modi's leadership. This thinking may not last long since the Indian nation is basically pluralistic. The BJP itself seems to be conscious of

this because there is some evidence that it is moving from the right of the centre to the centre.

The predicament that plagues the party is that its cadre comes from the RSS. Maybe, that is the reason that there is no scam in the government. However one may dislike the RSS ideology, its emphasis on integrity cannot be doubted. Yet, there should be no misgiving on its interference in the governance. Even top bureaucrats are judged on their proximity to the Hindutva philosophy.

Modi himself was an RSS parcharak (preacher). Even now he is a regular visitor to Nagpur where he interacts with the RSS leadership. Some of the ideas he gathers from there are reflected in the policy which his government frames. This has torn asunder the fabric of nation's secular temperament in the country and given rise to extremist groups in different regions.

I only hope that it is a passing phase. But as long as it lasts the preference for sons of the soil will be casting a shadow on the idea of India. This is unfortunate. I hope that the Prime Minister will rethink his policies so that the basic structure of the constitution is no way affected.

The Radical Humanist on Website

February 2015 onwards 'The Radical Humanist' is available at <http://www.lohiatoday.com/> on Periodicals page, thanks to Manohar Ravela who administers the site on Ram Manohar Lohia, the great socialist leader of India.

Now the books by M.N. Roy are available at this website under the section 'Socialist Movement' and subsection 'Other Prominent Contributors'. They may be downloaded from there and read.

Mahi Pal Singh

The judiciary, too, is responsible...

Rajindar Sachar



There is a shortfall of 458 High Court Judges. In a similar situation in the executive, the legal fraternity would have shouted about the lack of sensitivity. The judiciary must work out a quick solution to avoid disappointing litigants by delays

After it was decided that judges will appoint judges, the collegiums for the purpose should have started filling the vacancies, but still further to show that it is open to suggestions from the Bar and public as to the methodology of not only selecting judges but also the process of making the process more transparent. It was expected that after further court hearings, it will come out with a Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for selection.

Surprisingly after weeks of court hearing, it decided to avoid its responsibility and asked the government to frame the Memorandum of Procedure. I have still not understood the logic of this decision which was bound to be self defeating. It naturally gave an opening which had been closed permanently by the Bench holding earlier that the last word in the selection of judges is that of the collegiums.

So the government having got this golden opportunity, unabashedly prepared a MoP (including the objectionable and illegal suggestion considered in the light of the decision of the Constitution Bench) that if the name of the Judge is not approved by the Executive he will not be appointed.

Another obnoxious suggestion by the Govern-

ment Memo is that the Attorney General and Advocate Generals should along with the judiciary be on the selection of judges. This suggestion is so horrendous and openly objectionable that it has not found place even in the Judges Act which was passed by the legislature and has been held to be unconstitutional. Are we then in a dark alley with no opening? No doubt this situation is greatly worrisome, but a quick solution has to be worked out.

I am, in this context suggesting that it is the duty of the former Chief Justices and even the judges of the Supreme Court to involve themselves in this deadlock by openly coming out with their views.

It is not a strange suggestion. When a five-judge Bench invited suggestions from the public about the Memorandum of Procedure, some of the retired Supreme Court Judges and retired Chief Justices of High Courts sent a memo openly during the hearing giving their views on the matter. They had no embarrassment at sending suggestions which may have been rejected by the Bench, considering that some of the present judges may, at some point in the past, might have been their juniors. At time like these, notions of undue delicacy and aloofness should be given up because at stake is the indepen-

dence of the Judiciary – one of the sheet anchors of our Constitution. The old lot needs to jump in the fight, not as partisans but as a sobering effect on the stubborn stand being taken by the Executive which is openly saying that it will not relent on its stand of not appointing a judge whom the Executive disapproves – outrageously unconstitutional, but there it is.

Long ago Montesquieu, saw this predicament and opined “that there can be no liberty if the power of judging be not separate from the legislative and executive powers”.

This conflict between Executive and Judiciary has not been settled and will always remain a matter of debate. But it is well to remind the Executive of certain postulates which are unalterable.

Thus even 400 years after the Magna Carta was signed, King James I of England felt unhappy when prerogative courts set up by him came in conflict with old courts applying the common law. King James I summoned the Chief Justice Sir Edward Coke to stop interfering with the prerogative courts. The king’s will, James asserted, ‘was supreme’. Sir Edward Coke the Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, responded that the judges must follow the common law, to which King answered wrathfully,

“then I am to be under the law – which it is treason to affirm.” Coke replied by quoting Brocton, a medieval scholar monk, “Rex non debet esse sub homine sed sub deo et lege.” – “The King ought not to be under any man, but under God and the law.” The story of this exchange has echoed down through the centuries.

In India similarly we have had the established principle that King, though an absolute sovereign must yet function within Dharma – which is another way of proclaiming the principle of the supremacy of law.

Wherever there is a written Constitution, the supreme law is the law of the Constitution. Parliament should accept that limiting of its powers by the written Constitution does not in any manner derogate from its sovereignty. It should accept that its sovereignty like the sovereignty of the executive and the judiciary is limited by the written Constitution.

Can one hope the Executive to act with grace and accept that it is not the modern Henry VIII of England fame, because of settled principle that the sovereignty vests in the people as expressed in our Constitution?

(The writer is a former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court and a former National President, PUCL)

FROM THE WRITINGS OF M.N.ROY (1887-1954)

The spirit of Freedom and Revolt

When, as a schoolboy of fourteen, I began my political life, which may end in nothing, I wanted to be free. Independence, complete and absolute, is a new-fangled idea. The old-fashioned revolutionaries thought in terms of freedom. In those days, we had not read Marx. We did not know about the existence of the proletariat. Still, many spent their lives in jail and went to the gallows. There was no proletariat to propel them. They were not conscious of class struggle. They did not have the dream of Communism. But they had the human urge to revolt against the intolerable conditions of life. They did not know exactly how those conditions could be changed. But they tried to change them, anyhow. I began my political life with that spirit, and I still draw my inspiration rather from that spirit than from the three Volume of Capital or three hundred volumes by Marx.

Threat to Judiciary's Independence is a Threat to our Life, Liberty and Freedoms

Prabhakar Sinha

Since 1970s, the executive (governments) has been trying to bring the judiciary under its thumb. Indira Gandhi gave an open call for a 'committed judiciary', i.e., a judiciary not loyal to the constitution but to the government. She superseded three senior judges and appointed the fourth person (Justice A. N. Ray) as the Chief Justice of India because the three had rejected Indira Government's contention in a case (Kesavanand Bharati, 1973) that Parliament had the absolute power to amend the constitution as it pleased. It had the power even to change India into a monarchy from a democracy. She also superseded Justice H. R. Khanna and did not appoint him the Chief Justice of India because he rejected her government's contention that during the emergency the government could kill, maim torture and do worse to a person but the court could not intervene (the majority of the judges accepted her contention).

When Modi government came to power, they amended the constitution to set up the National Judicial Appointments Commission with the Law Minister as one of the members and other provisions to ensure appointment of committed judges. The amendment has been declared unconstitutional by the apex court. Now, they want to achieve their goal by introducing unconstitutional rules under the existing law. In addition, the Central Ministers led by Arun Jaitley have launched an attack on the judiciary. Jaitley declared the apex court's judgment 'the tyranny

of the unelected.' He has been repeatedly attacking the judiciary in the Parliament. Nitin Gadkari publicly attacked the judiciary which was nothing short of contempt of court. The most recent is the attack by the Defence Minister Parrikar. No effort is being spared to demoralise and scare the judiciary to compel it to toe the line of the government. The whole political class is with Modi in making the judiciary impotent. Since dishonesty, corruption and crime are their way of life, they all have a common interest in making the judiciary subservient to the executive.

The loss of judiciary's independence would be the end of our fundamental rights. Independent India has enacted far more draconian laws than the colonial rulers. Today, even the most innocent may be put behind the bars for years, and the worst of criminals may be let off if they have the patronage of the government. The latest is the withdrawal of charges against the accused of the Malegaon and Samjhauta Express terror attacks because they belong to Modi/Sangh Parivar. It is true that judiciary has not proved equal to the task of protecting our life, personal liberty and freedoms, but still it has done a lot because it was independent. It would be suicidal if we remain silent against the planned move to make it subservient because we may have some complaints against it on one count or the other. Silence on the sinister move on account of some grievance would be like throwing the baby out with the bath water.

Khattar Kaka

The second episode of 'Khattar Kaka' will appear in the August 2016 issue of *The Radical Humanist*. – Editor

RSS Pracharak Sunil Joshi was “100%” Involved in Samjhauta Blasts: Former SIT Chief Rai

Seema Mustafa

NEW DELHI: “We had confirmed the involvement of the Sunil Joshi group in the Samjhauta explosion and the fact that no one from SIMI was involved,” was the categorical response of then Special Investigation Team chief, Vikash Narain Rai, an upright police officer who had been entrusted with the enquiry of the train explosion in 2007.

In an exclusive interview to The Citizen Rai --former Director General of Police (Law and Order), Haryana---spoke of the painstaking investigation, the non cooperation of agencies, and the fact that he and his team had zeroed in on Joshi and his group for planting the explosive that set the Samjhauta on fire. Joshi was a RSS pracharak and was killed in the winter of 2007 after the blasts by two men who are still absconding.

Rai who was contacted by News X for his views yesterday found that a 25 minute interview where he had stated the facts was not telecast by the channel that instead as clearly part of its official policy, targeted another police officer on the show (more on this tomorrow in Part 2 of this report) to take forward the claim that Muslim and not Hindu groups were involved in this case. “It was totally insane, unbelievable,” he said.

“I have been a police officer for 35 years,” said Rai still surprised at the levels to which the media has sunk now, “and this decision to black out my interview was clearly manipulated, either for money or under political pressure.” Or, although he did not say it, perhaps for both.

Rai speaks of a meticulous, step by step investigation. The explosives that had been put together to ensure that the fire would expand in a moving train, and not subside with the one burst, were planted in suitcases. All of these had been

destroyed but as Rai recalls, “we were very lucky to find one such suitcase intact.”

The make of the suitcase took the investigators to Indore, to a Raghunandan attache shop.

Rai pointed out that Indore immediately run bells of SiMI terror as this was a strong base for the Muslim group, but by then reports of Hindu extremist groups operating out of the city were also known. The shop was owned by a Bora Muslim and had two young employees, a Hindu and a Muslim.

The two boys were questioned intensively and recalled that two young men had come to their store to purchase the suitcase. And that they had returned later in the day to take away the suitcase in a loose cloth cover as they did not want to be seen with it. Rai said that the investigating team found that all the components that went into the explosives were also purchased in the radius of one kilometre from this shop.

He said that the first alarm bells went off for him when the two shop employees, interrogated separately, said that the two men appeared to be Hindus, spoke in a local Indori accent, and were clearly from the city itself.

Various names started surfacing during the course of the investigation but a major lead, Rai said, came from the murder of a local businessman Sunil Joshi. He was reported to be close to Pragya Thakur. He was killed by two men who have still not been traced. Rai said it could not be confirmed at the time whether the two men, identified at the time, had been killed as well or had fled the country to Nepal or elsewhere. The name of Swami Asemanand also emerged in the course of the investigation.

The investigating team had by this time established two facts as Rai put it: one, the Samjhauta case involved Sunil Joshi and his men; and two, there was no SIMI or Pakistan hand in this.

The investigation was unable to proceed further, Rai said, by complete non-cooperation from Madhya Pradesh and more specifically from Indore. He said that at one point he stationed himself for several days in Indore but was unable to get the police to cooperate. He said that several policemen told him privately that while he was on the right track there was little they would or could do to help.

Rai said that in meetings held by the Ministry of Home Affairs at the time the Investigating Officers of Malegaon, Ajmer and other such terror attacks would exchange notes pointing towards the involvement of Hindu groups. In Mecca Masjid, several Muslim youth were falsely accused by the investigators of that case, and were subsequently acquitted by the courts. Rai confirms this with, "The investigators of Mecca masjid case had arrested wrong people even though the signatures of their case were exactly the same as Samjhauta case. We did not believe them and subsequently the NIA got those arrested persons discharged/released."

Interestingly Rai recalls a long conversation he had with the then Maharashtra ATS chief Hemant Karkare. He said that Karkare, investigating the Malegaon blasts, also said that

he had considerable evidence that the Hindu extremists were involved in this case as well. He told Rai that he was putting the evidence together and would get back to him with more details as soon as he had stitched the loose ends. Rai said that this did not happen as Karkare was murdered soon after in the Mumbai terror attack.

The lack of cooperation from the Madhya Pradesh government brought Rai's investigation to a "dead end" and later it was passed on to the newly set up NIA along with some of the other cases. Even here he recalls, this was done not immediately and only after the second NIA chief had taken over.

The NIA had chargesheeted RSS pracharak Sunil Joshi with the Samjhauta Express train blast. He was considered an important link to the alleged acts of Hindu terror across the country at the time. He was shot dead on December 29, 2007 when he was walking back to his hideout in Chuna Khadan locality in Dewas, Madhya Pradesh. As Rai now said, the two assailants identified at the time are still absconding.

Instead the Sunil Joshi murder case that he was at the heart of the Samjhauta Express and other investigations, has been quietly shifted back to Madhya Pradesh with the NIA under the current government claiming it has found no evidence of a terror angle.

Courtesy **The Citizen**, Saturday, June 04, 2016.

Respecting others' view-point

I have repeatedly observed that no school of thought can claim a monopoly of right judgement. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgements. In a vast country like this, there must be room for all schools of honest thought. And the least, therefore, that we owe to

ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponent's view-point and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we expect him to respect ours..

-Mahatma Gandhi

A Tale of Two Vehicles: Sadhvi's Motorcycle and Rubina's Car

Ram Puniyani

Can there be two type of Justice delivery system in the same country? This question came to one's mind with the U turn taken by NIA in the cases related to terror acts in which many Hindu names were involved. Now the NIA in a fresh charge sheet (May 13, 2016) has dropped the charges against Pragya Singh Thakur, has lightened the ones against Col Purohit and others. Along with this new line of NIA is that Hemant Karkare's investigation in these cases was flawed and that it was ATS which had got the RDX planted in Purohit's residence to implicate him in this case. The implication is that all this was being done at the behest of previous UPA Government.

A brief recap is in order. Maharashtra in particular and many other places in the country were witness to acts of terror. The first major attention to this phenomenon took place when two Bajrang Dal activists were killed while making the bombs in the house of one RSS worker Rajkondawar (May 2006). There was a saffron flag flying atop the house and a board of Bajrang Dal was put up in front of the house. At the site of bomb explosion fake moustaches, beard and pajama-Kurta were also found. This was followed by many other blasts, Parbhani, Jalna, Thane, and Panvel etc. In most of these case police investigated on the lines in which generally Muslims were blamed for such acts. After every act of blast few Muslims young men were arrested who were later; after long grueling court cases; were released as no evidence was found against them.

The Malegaon blast in which Sadhvi's role came to surface; took place in 2008. In the blasts those returning from Namaj (prayers) were killed and many injured. Following this the usual sus-

pects, Muslims, were arrested. Then while investigating the cases the Maharashtra ATS Chief Hemant Karkare found that the motorcycle used for the blast belonged to Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, ex- ABVP worker. The trail of investigation led to Swami Dayanad Pande, Retd. Major Upadhyay, Ramji Klasnagra, Swami Aseemanand amongst others. They all belonged to the Hindu right wing politics. There was lots of evidence in the material recovered. One of the helpful evidence came in the form of the legally valid confession of Swami Aseemanand. This confession was made in judicial custody in presence of a Magistrate.

In the confession Swami spilled the beans and said that after the Sankat Mochan blast of 2002, they had decided that bomb will be replied by bomb. He was then looking after the VHP work in Dangs. He gave the detailed narrative of the whole process in which all the people were investigated and became part of the charge sheet of NIA.

When Karakare was investigating the case and many of Hindu names started coming under the shadow Bal Thackeray wrote in Saamna that 'we spit on the face of Karakare'. Narendra Modi; then CM of Gujarat; called him Deshdrohi (Anti National). Advani also reprimanded Karkare. Feeling the heat of this pressure from Hindutva political outfits Karkare went to meet his professional peer Julio Rebeiro. Rebeiro has a record of high level of professional integrity. Rebeiro appreciated his painstaking work. Karkare asked that what should be the stand of a person like him when facing such a heat from politicians. The senior officer told him to honestly do the work and ignore these insinuations.

Meanwhile the global terror phenomenon hit Mumbai. On 26/11 ten terrorists, armed to the teeth attacked Mumbai. On this occasion Karakare got killed. There is a strong controversy about this killing also. The then minority affairs Minister A. R. Antulay said that there is terrorism plus something else which is behind the killing of Karakare. Narendra Modi who had earlier called Karkare as Deshdrohi landed up in Mumbai and wanted to give a cheque of Rs. one Crore to widow of Karkare, she refused to accept the amount.

After Karkare's death the investigations continued on the lines laid down by him. The charge sheet was ready and all the involved were to be tried for acts of terror. Meanwhile Government changed at the center and the NIA adopted the line which has led to the present situation where the efforts to release Sathvi are marching with intimidating speed. The change in the line got reflected in the statement of Public Prosecutor, Rohini Salian. She stated that she was told to go soft on these cases. As she refused to toe this, she was sacked.

One recalls that in Mumbai 92-93 violence over one thousand people died. This carnage was followed by the bomb blasts in which over two hundred people died. As far as the communal carnage is concerned not many got severe

punishments, no death penalty- no life imprisonment. In the cases of bomb blasts many have been given death penalty and many more life imprisonment. One of the people undergoing life imprisonment is Rubina Memon. Her crime, she owned the car which was used to ferry the explosives. She never drove the car with explosives.

Sadhvi owned the motor cycle used for Malegaon blasts; she will be out from the prison soon. Rubina owned the car; she will be in prison all her life. In Mumbai carnage so many died. No severe punishment to anybody. So many severe punishments in bomb blast case!

So where does our democracy stand at the end of all this? It seems two type of justice delivery systems are out there in the open. While shrill debates on TV will defend Sathvi and blame Karkare for faulty investigation, the people in Malegaon are protesting furiously and planning to go to the court against the change in the stance of NIA. Two political parties seem to be preparing to save the honor of Karakare and press for sincere examination of the evidence collected by him.

One hopes the guilty will be punished and innocents will be protected. But this seems a bit too much to expect in current scenario!

“I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.”

– Nelson Mandela

The Infiltration of Pseudo -Science in Science Through Myths and Miracles

Amitabha Basu

NEW DELHI: The Sangh Parivar has always tried to project a revival of the 'glorious ancient Hindu past' as the way forward for our country.

For them, to wax eloquent about Hindu India's past scientific achievements is the hallmark of true nationalism. At the same time, they talk about development and economic growth, aided by modern science and technology, for India to become a great and powerful nation. "The most crucial components of a modern worldview – rationality and the practice of critique – are ignored and rejected in favour of blind faith in Sanatana Dharma and a revival of a supposedly Vedic past."

The ball was set rolling in late 2014 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself who declared at the opening ceremony of a hospital in Mumbai that modern medical achievements – plastic surgery, cloning and in-vitro fertilisation – were all practised in India's ancient past, that Lord Ganesha's elephant head is proof that advanced transplant surgery existed, and that the way Kunti conceived in the Mahabharata was evidence of the practice of in-vitro fertilisation.

His Sangh Parivar colleagues followed with a slew of similar claims about ancient Indian science.

The Indian Science Congress held in early 2015 saw several such instances: An IAS officer started his presentation by blowing a conch shell for 2 minutes and claimed that the sound could cure many human disorders.

- An invited lecture sought to project Lord Shiva as the 'greatest environmentalist in the world'.

At the symposium on Ancient Sciences through Sanskrit, 'evidence' was laid out

that sophisticated flying vehicles existed in Vedic times : as large as modern-day jumbo jets, with radar and advanced guidance and tracking systems; their pilots wore magic suits and they were capable of interplanetary travel. The authors claimed that their work is based on the Maharshi Bhardwaj Vaimanika Sastra, a text they say was written around 400 BC. But scholars at the IISc in Bangalore say it was actually written between 1900 and 1922.

It is therefore not surprising that 2009 Chemistry Nobel laureate V Ramakrishnan described the Congress as a 'circus' and vowed never to attend one again.

Noted biologist P M Bhargava, founder of CCMB, Hyderabad, also exasperatedly said that the event had deteriorated over the years and was now 'an absolute waste of money'.

The claims of interplanetary spaceships so incensed Dr. R P Gandhiraman, a NASA scientist, that he collected hundreds of signatures from other scientists around the world on a petition demanding that the session be cancelled. "We as a scientific community should be seriously concerned about the infiltration of pseudo-science in science curricula with the backing of influential political parties ... Giving a scientific platform for a pseudo-science talk is worse than a systematic attack that has been carried out by politically powerful pseudo-science propagandists in the recent past. If we scientists remain passive, we are betraying not only the science, but also our children."

An exhibit was inaugurated by the Minister of Culture, Mahesh Sharma, in Delhi's Rabindra Bhavan, entitled Cultural Continuity from Rig

Veda to Robotics.

Here was a display of plastic placards decorated with calendar art and tele-serial imaginings of the Mahabharata, coupled with crude info-graphics informing us that by correlating references to the planets and stars in the Sanskrit epics with astronomy software, the historicity of Lord Ram, and the narratives of the Ramayana and Mahabharata had now been firmly established. To wit: the “fall of Duryodhan in mace battle” occurred at 06:50 on November 14, 3139 BC. Ram himself was born on January 10, 5014 BC. “Around 12 to 1 noontime.”

We do not by any means wish to imply that glorifying the scientific achievements of ancient India is simply communal Hindu propaganda, to be disdainfully dismissed. On the contrary, we should be proud of our ancient scientific heritage.

However, we have to carefully sift genuine and legitimate science from mythology and imaginative speculation. “There is no doubt that an ancient tradition of excellence in science existed in India. Scholars believe that the Indus Valley Civilisation, that flourished 2,500 years before the Christian era, used a system of weights and measures based on an awareness of the decimal system. It is clear too that the cities of this civilisation could not have been built without knowledge of simple geometry....”

“There is a conflation of myth and superstition with the scientific advances of the past; and then a spurious equivalence is sought to be created between ancient myths and modern science. The technological products of the Enlightenment are eagerly sought, while the critical methods of science, which lead us to question every assumption and belief, are firmly shut out. Science as a vehicle for rationality and as an expression of reason is something that Hindutva strongly opposes, even as it seeks the

credibility of science for its myths. This explains why the Hindu nationalists ruling India today celebrate technology while constantly seeking to undermine scientific methods.”

Why did the great scientific achievements of ancient India not advance further through succeeding centuries? The cheerleaders of Hindutva give a simplistic and historically wrong argument is that invasions by Muslims and later the British wiped out these glorious achievements, and they have now set forth to revive them.

Historian Romila Thapar has argued that early achievements in ancient and medieval science, such as astronomy and mathematics, were never consolidated in India because of opposition from religious orthodoxy; and philosophers who believed in reason and science had to encounter opposition from dominant religious authorities. “It is an irony that the upholders of a monistic version of Brahminical Hinduism are today claiming the achievements in ancient Indian science for a political project whose lineage can only be linked to those who opposed that very scientific endeavour.”

The Modi government has shown scant regard for the development of a scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform [Article 51A(h) of the constitution].

Appointment of saffronised but otherwise incompetent persons to key posts of scientific and educational institutions, rewriting of school textbooks to inculcate unscientific, irrational and historically inaccurate knowledge in our younger generation, the ‘unsolved’ murders of rationalists Dabholkar, Pansare and Kalburgi ... the list grows longer with each passing day.

Yoga has been promoted by Narendra Modi, and endorsed by his pet godmen Ramdev and Ravishankar, as the greatest gift of ancient India to humanity and the cure for the ills afflicting humankind. In his speech to the United Nations

General Assembly, PM Modi had even suggested that climate change can be mitigated by the practice of yoga. International Yoga Day is coming soon and will be observed with enormous pomp and show. Yoga is being forced upon all religious and minority groups as a token of their 'deshbhakti'.

Nobody says that Yoga is not beneficial. But there are many millions engaged in walking, running, cycling and weight training than those practising yoga and reaping equal or better benefits. But there is no brand that unifies them as yoga does, and there is no allure of spirituality and "5000 years" of heritage behind what they do.

A comprehensive study by a Karnataka-based researcher-consultant, Dr Srinivas Kakkilaya, has said that "all the available evidence as of now, and the systematic reviews and meta-analyses, indicate clearly that yoga does not cure or prevent, or significantly alleviate, any ailment, that affects humans."

The study refutes the claim that yoga is the oldest contribution to the world from India, that it is the greatest contribution from Hinduism, that it has helped Indians with health and vitality for millennia.

Pointing out that yoga was "never a part of Indian systems of medicine", Kakkilaya says, "Indian medical texts such as Charaka Samhita or Ashtanga Hrudaya do not mention yoga as a method of prevention or treatment of any disease", adding, "The credit for entwining the so called yoga with health and fitness must go to Manibhai Haribhai Desai, also known as Shri Yogendra (1897-1989), and Jagannath Ganesh Gune, also known as Swami Kuvalayananda (1883-1966)."

Based on an analysis of more than 3000 papers over the last 100 years, the study concludes, "The proponents of yoga therapy have failed to find any conclusive evidence for the efficacy

of yoga in treating any illness. They have not even been successful in standardizing the so called yoga therapy."

Apprehensions have been raised that yoga being foisted upon the armed forces, with the chiefs meekly following the Modi government's directives, may well lead to politicisation of the military.

How have the scientists of India reacted to this trend of growing irrationality and unscientific claims? Sadly, by and large the 'leaders' of the scientific and technological establishments in India have a very poor record of rational and scientific thinking and attitude.

Take ISRO, perhaps the most successful Indian establishment in terms of its track record of raising Indian space science and technology to international levels.

For several decades, before any space launch from Sriharikotta the ISRO chief has taken a replica of the space launch vehicle to Sri Venkateshwara temple in Tirupati to seek divine blessings for the success of the mission. Do they have more faith in divine guidance than in the scientific and technological prowess of their own scientists and engineers? It appears so.

As someone sarcastically asked the ISRO chief: "Have you ever considered blaming your gods (and claiming damage recovery from the temple trust authorities) when some of the earlier Indian rockets failed?" Dr. Radhakrishnan, the then chief of ISRO, carried out the same exercise in the case of the hugely successful Mangalyaan.

Dr. Madhavan Nair, former ISRO chief, has joined the 'glorious ancient Indian science' bandwagon. Some of his statements:

- sholkas in one of the Vedas say that there is water on the moon but no one believed it. Through our Chandrayaan mission, we could establish that and we

were the first ones to find that out," Nair said, adding that everything in Vedas could not be understood as they were in chaste Sanskrit.

- "We are really proud that Aryabhatta and Bhaskara have done extensive work on planetary work and exploration of outer planets....Even for Chandrayaan, the equation of Aryabhatta was used. Even the (knowledge of) gravitational field... Newton found it some 1500 years later... The knowledge existing (in our scriptures)."

- "The Vedas had a lot of information in the field of space and atomic energy. We were fine until 600 BC. Then came the time of invasions till the independence. Since then we are growing. We deciphered the atoms for peaceful use."

DRDO, which has the responsibility of developing state-of-the-art arms and ammunition systems for the Indian armed forces, has not been far behind. The director of the Research and Development Establishment, Pune, has allegedly spent over Rs 5 crores of its funds and energies in developing a pure silver hi-tech chariot and 'donated' it to Alandi Temple in June after a bullock was killed during the 21-day annual palki yatra to Pandharpur.

A senior scientist, who rebelled against this 'absurd' venture and filed a complaint with the Central Vigilance Commission, had to pay for it. The DRDO not only stripped him off his ongoing projects, but also transferred him out of the Pune centre to a post where he was left to waste.

We all know about the Narendra Modi government's order to DRDO to collaborate and assist the Patanjali Yogpeeth enterprise of Baba Ramdev, for manufacturing and marketing some of the herbal supplements and food products developed by DRDO. The defence minister,

army chief and DRDO chief endorsed this collaboration. It is common knowledge that most of Ramdev's products have not been certified by the national food safety authorities and their purity and efficacy are suspect.

India may be close to entering a phase of ideology-driven science. "Most important is creation of atmosphere in which rational scientists are being projected as agents of the West out to undermine the glory of ancient Indian past," said Mayank Vahia, an astrophysicist at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Eminent scientist P M Bhargava, agrees, "There is no doubt that with the present government at the centre which is the political front of the RSS, fringe elements have started squeezing Indian science including mainline science and science policies.

This is clear from the appointments made to crucial scientific posts." Vahia says, "Rationalist Indian scientists are willing to study past achievements based on principles of logic and evidence, but the fringe nationalistic groups ... try to forcefully occupy the mainstream dialogue on India's past and are not willing to accept limitations imposed by logic. The great seers of the past were supposed to be all-seeing and all-knowing, period."

The consequence of such approach could be disastrous. "The rationalist scientists will find their own work space squeezed as they deal with a government that is influenced by parochial considerations. Pure excellence will give way to committed excellence ... Most mainstream scientists get overwhelmed by the beauty and elegance of nature in a few years and a fair fraction of them have strongly religious backgrounds ... they become convinced about the gods as entities who supervise our lives and give up the rationalist approach to life and existence. These scientists then become supporters of irrationality".

Vahia wants rationalist scientists to take on fringe elements by educating people about real achievements of the past. "Scientists will have to arm themselves with a better understanding of the true achievements of the past, and then step forward and take on the fringe groups who are well-organised, well-funded, shrill and increasingly tolerated, if not encouraged, by the powers that be ... The battle is for the soul of the nation, no more, no less. A battle is not far, and it will be brutal, hard and long." However, given the fact that most Indian scientists are "career-conscious" and depend on government grants for research, it is doubtful if many would join Vahia in his campaign.

In conclusion, it is imperative for all democratic-minded, rational-thinking and freedom-loving people to close their ranks, irrespective of their political or ideological beliefs and inclinations, and oppose the increasing attempts of the saffron brigade to impose its narrow, communal and bigoted Hindutva agenda on the people of our country in the name of 'nationalism'.

Courtesy **The Citizen**, Saturday, June 11, 2016

(Dr. Amitabha Basu is scientist, having worked with the Space Applications Centre (ISRO) and the National Physical Laboratory (CSIR))

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Tuesday, July 28, 2015

Shirdi Sai Baba – Myth and Business: newly created god

Prabhakar K. Nanawaty

(Shankaracharya Swaroopanand Saraswati of Dwarka Peeth, a senior Hindu religious leader, raised a controversy when commenting on the worship of Sai Baba of Shirdi he said that it is wrong to worship him like a god and that he was not even a Hindu. The devotees of Sai Baba, and more than them those who flourish on the Sai cult, expressed their anger and condemned the statement of the Shankaracharya. Like almost all religious places Shirdi is also a business place preying on innocent believers. On my request Prabhakar K. Nanawaty conducted research into the whole matter and wrote the following article. I have translated it into Telugu and the same has been published in several journals. – Narisetti Innaiah)

There is a climax shot in popular Hindi film ‘Amar, Akbar, Anthony’ of erstwhile era. Akbar is singing at the top of his voice in front of Saibaba’s giant statue. Two bright and colourful rays emerge out of the eyes of the statue and enter the eyes of Akbar’s blind mother. Mother shouts: “I can see now! God blessed me!” All the spectators in the cinema hall are excited.

“Saibaba is a GOD’ ‘What a wonderful thing to happen’.... Saibaba of Shiridi has become a symbol of money-spinner for film industry people. Without his blessing neither film shooting will start nor a completed film will be released in the cinema halls. While travelling to Shirdi, a place regularly visited by the film industry people and thousands of devotees from all over India, we hear dialogues like “We are devotees of Baba for the last twenty years’. His blessings saved me many times. “The Great Saibaba!” There is no point in arguing with devotees since all of them have immersed in Sai miracle. The impact of this strong belief will not allow one to think rationally or think at all. While travelling one can observe many people reading loudly ‘Sai Charit’. Late Govind Raghunath Dabholkar has written this book. This book is mostly about the miracles performed by Saibaba. The followers vow that

they have read the book 20-30 times. The contents have been impregnated in their brains permanently. If you just glance through the pages you will find miracles like Saibaba taking out his intestine, drying it in the air and again pushing it inside the abdomen.

One will get nausea while reading such miracles. But the book has been reprinted more than 20 times in the last 50 years selling thousands of copies. Saibaba Trust officially publishes this book and Dadasaheb Khaparde’s son had swelling on his skin and was in severe pain. His mother rushed to Saibaba. Saibaba told “Don’t worry, it will rain.” Saibaba started taking out his clothes and mother saw the swelling on Saibaba’s body. Saibaba said that he suffers all the pains of his followers. The author, Govind Dabholkar was a magistrate and he confirmed that all these events have happened in reality and no one should doubt about them. One co-passenger started babbling: “My daughter-in-law had some problem while delivering. I took holy ash from the Sai temple and pasted on her stomach and within five minutes she delivered a healthy baby.”

As soon as we enter Shirdi town, handouts and cards start passing through the windows.

“Sai Shankar Flower Merchants: All items required for Pooja and Abhishek are available at reasonable prices”. However there is one more precautionary sentence for the benefit of devotees: Beware of thieves. Meantime a few people practically try to drag you saying In the year 1838, a Phakeer (Muslim priest) lands here. For want of any other name the local goldsmith calls him Saibaba. Shirdi was a small village consisting of dilapidated houses.

Villagers had great fun to see such a stranger in their village. Most of them were farmers.

Nowadays farming has been set aside and everyone is engaged in only one industry.... Sai Baba Sai is business for this town. Enter any shop. By paying Rs.25 one gets all the essential items of Abhishek. Talkative shop owners murmur; Saibaba blesses you. ‘How to get Darshan?’ Innocent question but difficult to answer. Abhishek is performed at 9 ‘O’clock in the morning. For this you should stand in queue right from early morning at 5 ‘O’ clock. Satyanarayana Pooja is at noon 12 ‘O’ Clock. In the evening there is Aarati at 10 pm. A shopkeeper listed the timetable. ‘Will it be possible to avoid standing in?’ ‘You need right contacts at highest level. Or you should be political bigwig like MP, MLA, Minister or Govt. Bureaucrat from secretariat. Permission is granted to enter the main temple to these influential persons only. But if one is ready to pay huge donation, say Rs.50,000, that will open the gates of main Mandir immediately. Money has more miraculous powers than Sai.

A board is displayed in the office of Sai trust about the special category for Darshan. Some are more equal than others even here. Whom do you complain? The trust has built a big hall for devotees anxious for Sai Darshan. Marble benches have been provided to take rest. Close circuit TV has been installed to view the Pooja performed in the main temple by other devotees.

Most in the waiting are fully satisfied with this virtual reality. All the walls in the hall have been painted with the scenes showing Saibaba’s miracles.

Miracle 1. When the villages were infected by cholera, Saibaba put jowar flour around the

village and cured cholera affected people.

Miracle 2. Chandbhai who brought Saibaba to Shiridi, wanted to smoke Chilum (sort of handmade pipe). He couldn’t find fire anywhere nearby. Phakeer touched the green grass and fire lit!

3. A river started from the toe of the feet of Saibaba.

4. Thousands of lamps got lit on the surface of water while Saibaba stood on the shore.

If someone stands in a queue surrounded by such scenes, one will certainly start believing anything. Mind will be conditioned to accept anything without thinking. The books like Sai Charit or Sai Leelamrit are continuously glorifying the miraculous power of Saibaba. The glorification of anything has become a core theme of Indian society. The believer becomes helpless and intellectually weak and starts losing confidence in himself and his efforts. Anything good that is happening in his life will be attributed to God, Guru or somebody except himself. Anything determined will be the result of his fate. No one wants to go into the details of these miracles that have been described and no one bothers to give any references and historical evidence. Perhaps there may not be any base. Everything is just for these miracles. Everything is just imagination to make money. Even the photographs displayed are fake or created by Imaging. On enquiry at the trust office, the concerned official said that there is no original photograph of Saibaba anywhere. One starts wondering how the cult is being built around

such imaginary things and the market force to flood the photographs of Saibaba. In one of the books published in 1914, there is a reference that district collector Desai has taken a snap shot. But the reference does not have any credibility. Trust released a photograph in 1922. But the trust also took the miracle route.

The serpentine queue was moving at a snail's speed. The devotees were mostly from Gujarat.

Every 10-15 minutes you would hear the shouting in unison: *Bolo Sainath Maharaj ki Jai, Jor se bolo Sai bolo*. Everyone was holding a plate with flowers and other items of worship. A saffron scarf was used as headgear. Queue was moving slowly. Even the toilets have been provided for nature's call for devotees. If some miscreant tries to jump queue, people express their anger by shouting the slogan with higher pitch. Someone said "Sai will punish the intruder".

Meanwhile, someone started selling *Laddu* for Rs. two. The devotees are expected to put *Laddu* at the feet of Sai's idol at main Mandir and eat as *Prasadam*, which is blessed by Sai to wash away the sins committed by devotee knowingly or unknowingly. On an average four thousand devotees visit the temple every day. On Thursdays this figure rises to sixty thousand. So you can imagine the turnover in a place like Shirdi. Satyanarain pooja costs twenty five rupees. The Pooja itself must be fetching straight away more than 20 lakh per week. At the basement 15-18 huge sealed steel boxes are kept to receive the donations. No receipts are demanded for the donations deposited by the devotees. Sometimes the total collection goes upto Rs. fifty lakh per week. In this money collecting game, one day Shirdi Saibaba will surpass Tirupati Balaji.

After going through all the hassles, battering by the security guards and the anxiety, at last

one enters into the main Mandir where the devotees can physically touch the Sai idol. Suddenly a few in the queue roll on the floor and beat their head as though possessed by some invisible thing.

Devotees hand over the plate. The priest touches the plate at the idol's feet in a flash and hands it over back to the devotee. Devotee is not satisfied. He wants to be kept it there for a longer time. Everything needs to be charged by the Sai power. The priests start protesting. However, some one pacifies both the parties. Queue has to move. There are 24 priests who work in two shifts. These priests are middlemen between God Sai and the devotees. The total staff consists of 45 persons who are attending Sai round the clock. Out of 24 priests, 9 hold diploma certificate from Tryambakeshwar School of Veda, which conducts regular courses of 3 years duration on priesthood. This includes idol worship, offering flowers, Satyanarayan Pooja and various Mantras to be chanted at various occasions etc. Even the priests have to go through the shifts to earn their livelihood like any industrial worker though all of them are so near to Saibaba and everyday see him in person. Sai idol is made of Italian marble. There is a throne embedded with designed carved in silver and gold plates. The idol has been dressed in red and saffron coloured garments.

A pearl necklace is around the neck. Like in any other temple, there is no mound of coconuts near the idol but heap of dry flowers occupy the major portion of floor space.

Dabholkar, Deshpande and Saagasrabuddhe trio initially started the flourishing business of

Saibaba idol worship a hundred years ago. If one critically tries to analyze the stories and myths propagated, one will start doubting whether such a person was really alive or was it a figment of imagination of a few gangsters

to rob the gullible public. A Phakeer comes to remotest village, stays in a sort of mosque, and takes names of Allah. It means the person was never a Hindu. In fact the person had a very abnormal pattern of behaviour. He was a smoker of chillum (a sort of pipe). He wandered all around the place, on river banks and hill tops, always wearing torn clothes. Most of the time he stared at the sky without blinking the eyes. Villagers called him a mad *phakeer*. Beggars stole his food. Bayajabai cooked food for him. But he was never regular for his meals and got irritated very quickly. Sometimes he used to dance on the streets. Once he put his hands into the fire. He used obscene language whenever women approached him. No one was able to make sense of what he said in the undertone. All these details are available in the biographies published by the trust. While going through his biography one gets convinced that there is a deliberate attempt by Dabholkar, Despande, Dasganoo etc. to project Saibaba as Hindu saint. In fact Saibaba stayed all his life in a dilapidated mosque and prayed Allah in Muslim style. But most of the Hindu Traditionalists imagined him as incarnation of their favourite god or saint. Some worship him as Swami Ramdas of 16th century era. Some say he was a Avataar of Shankar. Some vouch that he was incarnation of Dattatreya. Some went to the extent that he was an incarnation of Akkalkot Maharaj of 18th century. There is neither logic nor consistency in these biographies. Sai baba's famous slogan is *Allah Malik Hai*. But in spite of all these supporting evidences that he was not a Hindu, every devotee assumes that he was an ardent Hindu but behaved a bit abnormally. The prestigious gang, who elevated Sai to God's status to fulfil their vested interests, have given him a new dimension of Hinduism. Chandorkar went to the extent of saying that he had assisted Saibaba during his bath and confirmed that Sai's ears were punctured like

in Hindu tradition. Thus, an aura of Hinduism was built around Sai. In fact Saibaba had nothing to do with Ram Navami festival. This was started by the trio to make money. The tomb built on his dead body was also in Hindu tradition.

SAI BABA SECULARISM IS FRAUD

If one goes through the historical details of Saibaba's life there was not even a single Muslim devotee. As per Muslim religion worshipping an idol is banned. As such the secularism attached to Saibaba or to his place is an outright fraud. No Muslim visits this place. No Muslim priest performs prayer. Even then media advertises this temple as a symbol of secularism. Secularism in the world of faith is a complex concept. Both Hindus and Muslims have to come to an agreement to evolve a methodology without hurting the religious feelings. However, vested interests have dominated. One will realize the extent of exploitation while coming out of the temple and look around it.

Gullible Hindu devotees have contributed whole-heartedly to build mansions and high rise buildings, now owned by the Trust. The property may be 7-8 crore Rupees worth. The building projects are still continuing and everyone except the devotees is benefitted.

A *Neem* tree with thatched roof stands nearby. The legend says that the leaves of this *Neem* tree are very sweet. However, you can't confirm the same since one is not allowed to pluck the leaves from the tree for eating. However, Hindu religion has a solution for any Catch 22 situation! You can eat the leaves fallen on the ground. If they are not sweet, it means you are not a pious person. God is not blessing you. One of the trust officials announced that a German scientist was not able to explore the secret of sweetness. After asking for the report,

he expressed his inability to produce the same. There is a very small lane passing through this place. The lane is crowded with the beggars. At least 800 beggars might have been there out of which 50-60 are women. If you just wait for a while, a bread seller will pop up with 4-5 loaves of bread and request you to distribute bread to beggars. Each loaf will cost Rs.20 or more. Like him 5-10 bread sellers are standing among beggars to give an opportunity to feed the beggars. The beggars are earning at least 400 Rupees per day; most of them are bank account holders. In this economically liberated era everything has become 'instant': instant beggars, instant food in the form of bread chunks. Instant sellers. Everyone wants to make a fast buck.

Across the road there is a place presumed to be where Sai baba distributed the holy ash.

The place is popularly known as Chandorkar Chavadi. Inside, there is nicely carved wooden plank; above which a notice board is hung indicating Baba's sleeping place. If you keenly observe, the plank might have been carved 5-6 years ago. There is also a notice board, which warns that no woman is allowed inside. In fact as per Saibaba's biography, Bayajabai took care of him throughout his life.

But no one could explain why such a ban or discrimination towards women in these days. It appears even in 21st century someone wants to follow the dictates of age old Manusmriti.

Saibaba's contemporary, Abdul Baba's house is very near to this place. An old man sells photographs that look exactly like the portraits of Saibaba. He pointed to holy book and other items and told that all these belong to Abdul baba. Devotees are coming inside and Rahimbaba blesses them. They put a few coins in return.

"Have you seen Saibaba?"

"I don't lie and I don't want to talk on this issue. Everything is commercialized nowadays. Who is bothered about Saibaba and his whereabouts?" He vented his sorrow. "Is there any original snapshot?"

"You see, Abdulbaba was his contemporary and we have his genuine photographs. I don't know about anything else. No place for the truth, Sir."

There is one more place known as Dwarakamai's Mosque. The items, like wheat bag, bath stone, Chulha etc. have been displayed in this place like in a historical museum and people come to this place with all the reverence. The wheat bag has fresh look as though purchased very recently and certainly not 100 years old. The Chulla is painted in various colours. The fireplace is still burning.

All devotees bow in front of each item very piously expecting blessings from Saibaba. No one seems to have any doubts in their minds about whether these artifacts are genuine or fake. No one displays inquisitiveness while looking at these almost fake items. Thinking power, rationality, spirit of enquiry are totally absent. The manipulators of religious values have made everyone slave. Baba has all the remedies for any problems. He can cure all the diseases. Ashes given by him (or his cronies) is an ultimate medicine for diseases ranging from common cold to severe type of cancer. Tatyasheb Noolkar recovered from blindness. Padmanabh Swamy was able to hear clearly, through he was deaf right from the birth, since he had received blessings of Baba. Balasaheb Shimpi recovered from Malaria fully just feeding the food to dog by Baba. Shrimant recovered. Like these, there may be thousands of myths percolating every generation and at every place. No one dares to doubt Baba's glory, his super power and his compassion. Mahadevrao Deshpande was cured of his piles by eating peanuts given by Saibaba. Just by

exhaling, Baba cured the snake and scorpion bites. Swallowing the holy ash cured Dattopant's stomachache. Though the whole village was suffering from plague, Chandorkar's friend was saved because she had put holy ash on her face. TB patient of Malegaon could recover by just applying the holy ash all over the body. All these miracles printed in Sai Leelamrit, are told, retold, modified, glorified and improved so that no one will have an iota of doubt about its truthfulness. Everything is described as though the narrator was invisibly present all the while and at all the places till the end. Mind is conditioned and devotees are addicted to listen to such trash. If the diseases can be cured by Darshan or by applying the holy ash, why has the trust built an ultra modern hospital? The hospital incurs Rs. 25 lakh loss every year since it subsidizes the medical bills of 'poor' devotees. Why is Saibaba not able to prevent any diseases? Why is he not able to cure poor without any medical assistance if the place and person are so powerful? Why do you need diagnostic centres, operation theatres, surgical facilities, ICUs, trained medical staff, experienced surgeons? Shamdas Foundation owned by a devotee of Saibaba had built an ultra modern hospital at Hong Kong. Hundreds of medical experts from all over the world are attending this Hospital one or other capacity. In spite of all these modern facilities and blessings received from Saibaba, the recovery rates are at par with any other hospitals of the same caliber. Saibaba did not make any difference, in spite of all these statistical probabilities, realities and apparent evidences. The Trust still publishes various types of miracles in its monthly bulletin Sai Leela. One can understand the illiterate devotees may not be aware of the process of spread/origin of diseases or may not know the nuances of diagnostics, immunization, recovery process, or healing methods. However, one thing is clear

that anything good that is happening in the life is attributed to Saibaba. This mindset is playing a major role in the spread of curing power of Saibaba. Nowadays the patients suffering from polio, cancer, and heart ailments are visiting in large numbers. Couples come here very often to be blessed with a child. Offerings are made at the spur of the moment. Enormous amount is promised if the wish is granted without taking into consideration the financial conditions. To fulfil the vow one has to be in the clutches of pawnbrokers. However, main beneficiary is the Trust which is hoarding a large sum donated by the gullible devotees. The stories of miraculous curing power of Saibaba plays greater role in amassing wealth. Trust goes on printing and reprinting the books, magazines and other materials depicting the miraculous power of Saibaba, just changing names here and there. All stories read alike.

Sometime back KS Pathak, an IAS officer was nominated as receiving officer of the Trust. He found misappropriation of large fund by the local trustees. They were looting the public. The golden and silver ornaments, belonging to the Trust, were found in the houses of the trustees.

When police raided their houses, they threw the ornaments in the nearby fields. Charity commissioner imposed inquiries. CID officials investigated the frauds. Trustees tried their best to put political pressure on the receiving officer and charity commissioner to stall further investigations. A few of the trustees were punished and put into jail.

In spite of these headlines in the media, the devotees are determined to visit. 'Saibaba is great! He will take care of our sins.' That is the attitude of the devotees. Political leaders come here to enhance their 'power'. But sometimes they too suffer badly. Ex-President Shankar Dayal Sharma paid a visit with all its pomposity: within a few days after the visit he

was suffering with severe ailments. Sharad Pawar visited the temple while he was experimenting with like-minded parties. Three months after the visit his experiment utterly failed. Shankarrao Chavan and Vasantdada Patil also suffered very badly. P.V. Narasimha Rao came to this place as Prime Minister, but by the time he returned to Delhi he was no more a minister! This may also be a miracle of Saibaba! Even if we keep aside the devotees and their problems, the trustees and local population are at daggers head. Each party wants its share of flesh in this money game. One of the trustees was arguing that villagers don't know what they are missing since too much familiarity breeds contempt.

Villagers argue that Trust has turned whole villages into five star hotel with money flowing like water. High-rise buildings, asphalt roads, even airport but local population is still deprived to basic necessities... The Trustees want that local people should cooperate (in looting) with the trust so that they too can get benefitted. Villagers erected shanty shops all around the temple and started earning their livelihood by selling the goods required by the devotees. This irritated the trustees. They wanted these ugly structures to be removed immediately. For years together this confrontation is continuing and sometimes the situation is turns violent. If Saibaba cannot solve these problems amicably how can one expect him to take up problems of some individuals? Nowadays devotees have to take care of their belongings, cash etc. since Saibaba is favouring pick pockets and thieves too. Even while one is inside the main temple bags, purses etc. are stolen. While devotees are gathering on auspicious days like Ram Navami, Guru Purnima, Dussehra it becomes very easy for thieves to do their own business! But ardent belief in Saibaba gives the devotees the mind to absolve them. To overcome the

minor problems the trust has started 'Sai Darshan' on internet. The prominent message on the internet is, "If you look at me, I will look at you." Devotees from distant places can have instant Darshan and get blessed by Saibaba. A few foreigners' e-mails pasted on the website make very interesting reading. Varah Appikatla is an NRI staying in US. He took 'Darshanam' of Saibaba and managed to secure top position in IBM. Now he is ready to send huge donation to the trust. The assistance of advanced science and technology is sought to strengthen their superstitions. Saibaba cult is a sort of contagious disease and is not restricted to only Maharashtra region. In the south Puttaparthi Saibaba has surpassed the original Saibaba in all respects. Dharma Sai Seva Trust has already spread its tentacles asking for huge donations to feed the children of downtrodden and marginalized poor people and to construct Hindu nationality and people from all over India come to Shiridi. All of them are emotionally choking while they visit this place. Each one's story is quite unique. But if one probes deeper, the devotees have lost their self-confidence and are afraid of everything – the wealth, luxuries, people around them, the place where they stay, family members etc. They are not in a position to trust anybody. A sort of mental disease has taken over these devotees. From outside they all look normal human beings but still believe all these legends, miracles and power of blessings and artefacts like amulets and charms.

While returning from a place like this, even a rational human being will start doubting whether this society is normal enough to realize in what trap it is caught.

Once again you are amidst: "Saibaba Bolo ... Saibaba Bolo..."

*(The author is an active Rationalist and Humanist and Editor of **Thought and Action** web magazine and resides in Pune)*

Continuing Social Inequality in Indian Society: Any Remedy?

K. Pratap Reddy

It cannot be denied that MALADY of social-inequality and the consequential Social injustice still exist in Indian society (Particularly in Hindu Society). This phenomenon in Indian (Hindu) Society is as old as the history of India i.e., at least for more than two thousand years.

It is, no doubt, true that various movements over centuries, right from the ancient ages of Buddha and Mahaveera and various movements in the middle ages by Kabir, Basaveshwara, Guru Nanak and Swami Dayananda Saraswathi and in the later years by Narayana Guru, Mahatma Poole, Sane Guru, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Gurajada Appa Rao, Unnava Lakshmi Narayana and many others, were led to remove the malady of said inequality and social injustice from the Indian society, but the malady has survived and is still surviving even today affecting the Socio-Economic growth of the Nation.

The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, along with his MASS MOVEMENT FOR Indian independence, had also tried his level best to redeem the Indian Society (Hindu Society) from the shameful phenomenon of “untouchability” and for removal of caste barriers, which he considered to be the barriers in the process of maintaining the unity and integrity of the Nation. It may not be an exaggeration to say that Bapu sometimes gave much more importance to the removal of the bane of “untouchability” than the struggle for independence. Many a time he even resorted to his “FAST UNTO DEATH” campaign to Abolish the Abominable Bane of “UNTOUCHABILITY” from the Hindu Society.

Bapu viewed that the bane of “untouchability”

can be removed from the Hindu Society only by a process of social change. His first campaign for the removal of untouchability was “The Temple Entry of Untouchables”. When the Maharaja of Travancore invited Bapu to the State of Travancore, Bapu refused Maharaja’s invitation until the Maharaja accepted the condition to allow the “untouchables” enter into one of the most sacred temples of India, namely, Padmanabha swami temple in Trivendram.

At the same time one of the greatest intellectuals of modern India, namely, Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar, who was born in the community of untouchables, also led the movement for abolition of “untouchability” from the Indian society. It is not necessary to go into the early life of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and his social sufferings, which have now become part of our social History:- though shameful. But, at the same time, we must accept, without any doubt, that the campaign of Dr. Ambedkar to abolish the abominable bane of “untouchability” from the Indian Society, was not in any way less than the commitment of Mahatma Gandhi; nay it may be even greater. While the remedies suggested by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar to abolish the abominable phenomenon of “untouchability” may be different, but their commitment in that regard remained equal. While, Bapu was trying to change the minds of people of the higher castes in the Indian society, Dr. Ambedkar was campaigning for Statutory or Legal measures for abolishing the bane of “untouchability”.

The fact remains that both the great leaders, i.e., Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar were admirers of each other, which lead to an

agreement between them, which is known as “The Poona Pact”. Bapu, ultimately agreed with Ambedkar that along with social campaign for removing “untouchability”, Legal remedies may also be provided for abolition of the abominable bane of “untouchability”.

The result of the above agreement led to the introduction of the system of “RESERVATION” for the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes in Part XVI of Constitution of India. It may be noted that the system of “RESERVATION” was initially limited for only 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, but it is now extended for a period of seventy years (i.e., up to 2020) by the “Constitution (95th Amendment) Act, 2009”.

Apart from the “RESERVATION” provided for in Part XVI of the Constitution, provisions were made in PART III (FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS) and PART IV (DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES) of the Constitution. While, Article 17 in Part III of the Constitution proclaims abolition of the abominable bane of “untouchability”, making any practice of “untouchability” an offence punishable under law, Articles 38, 39, 39A and 46 in Part IV provide MANDATES to improve the Socio-Economic and Educational facilities of the Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes in order to build up Social Equality and bring them on par with upper classes of the society.

The question now remains, whether the abominable bane of “untouchability” has been removed from the Indian society and whether the principle of social justice and social equality flamboyantly declared in the PREAMBLE of the Constitution of India, and whether the GUARANTEES of Part III and MANDATES of Part IV of the Constitution have really worked to remove the bane of “untouchability” and whether the concept of “Social Justice” has been achieved. The ONLY AND EMPHATIC

ANSWER IS NO.

It is unfortunate that in spite of the Social Campaign of Bapu, accompanied by “FAST UNTO DEATH” and the Constitutional Remedy of RESERVATION provided in the Constitution with the efforts of Baba Saheb, the MALADY still subsists.

While at the commencement of the Constitution, the Schedule Castes population was 14% and the Schedule Tribes population was 5%, that is about one fifth of the total population, the position remains almost the same now. The undeniable reasons and factors for such position is REPETITION of RESERVATIONS for the same families, who have been enjoying benefits of the RESERVATION. In spite of repeated requests from social activists, culminating in the Judicial pronouncement of the APEX COURT that the Benefit of RESERVATION MUST NOT be extended to the members of the Family which had once enjoyed such benefit, the same abominable Socio-Economic inequality as it existed at the date of commencement of the Constitution, still subsists.

My humble request to the law enforcing authorities of the Nation, namely, Legislature, Executive and the Judiciary is to take all possible measures, including an amendment to the Constitution, for STRICTLY applying the principle of “CREAMY LAYER” as mandated by the Apex Court, and see that the persons and families who had once enjoyed the benefits of RESERVATION, shall not be allowed to claim the benefit of RESERVATION again. This would automatically result in the percolation of the benefit of RESERVATION to the other Families of Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The law enforcing authorities must also evolve a policy that any person from SC’s and ST’s, who has an annual income of a “Prescribed Limit”, should also not be given benefits of the RESERVATION.

These suggestions made by me may appear to be unpleasant to certain persons or Families, but it must be realized that every Remedy to cure a malady would always appear to be unpleasant, but would result in the ultimate benevolence for society at large.

Now, coming to other aspects which are perpetuating the social injustice and Social inequality, I submit without any fear of contradiction that unfortunately the political parties continue to divide the society on the basis of caste and using the existing caste system for political advantage. Nobody can deny that the “Body-Politic” as it exists in India today is depending on the division of the Society on Caste and Class basis.

While, it is no doubt, true that in law of elections, using the names of Caste and Class is prohibited, but those provisions are observed more in their breach than in their implementation. The result is the Socio-economic system as it existed seven decades earlier has remained the same.

I wish to emphasize the fact that while the measures of “SOCIAL CHANGE” proposed by Bapu have been exploited by ALL the political parties perpetuating the Socio-Economic division of the society, the statutory measure suggested by Baba Saheb are being exploited by few families of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes calling them by a new NOMENCLATURE of “DALITS”.

It is, thus, obvious that the perpetual campaign of Bapu and the life long struggle of Baba Saheb are thrown into oblivion by different sections of Hindu Society perpetuating the bane of castes and classes in the Indian society (particularly Hindu society), for achieving Political, Economic and Employment advantages as described above. The only HOMAGE being attempted to be paid to the great leaders by our political classes (parties and leaders) is erection of

STATUES of Bapu and Baba Saheb. In the case of Baba Saheb, each and every political party and social activists are vying and competing with each other to erect higher and higher statues of Baba Saheb. It is, indeed, a matter of ridiculous tragedy that the 125th birth day of Baba Saheb is being celebrated by erecting a 125 feet high statue of his and erecting other memorial buildings in different parts of the country; but are refusing to follow his teachings of bringing Socio-Economic equality in Hindu society by abolishing the castes and classes.

At the same time, it is very interesting (though very sorrowful), that the two great Religions Viz., Christianity and Islam, which had come to India with their Auspicious messages of “HUMAN EQUALITY” in the name of their Respective prophets, namely, Jesus and Mohammad and had, in fact, in the beginning given the HINDU UNTOUCHABLES, AN EQUAL STATUS, but are now unfortunately ADOPTING the same nefarious practice of the earlier existing bane in Hinduism and now calling them “DALIT CHRISTIANS” or “DALIT MUSLIMS” in order to exploit the benefit of RESERVATION, thereby keeping the erstwhile Hindu DALITS Far Away from the benefit of RESERVATION.

I very humbly appeal to the leaders (priests or mullas) of these two Religions, (Christianity and Islam) to desist from using this nefarious practice of calling their own BRETHERN as “DALITS” (either Christian Dalits or Muslim Dalits) both in the interest of the improving the Social Status of the remaining Hindu Dalits and also in the interest of keeping up the good messages of their respective Prophets. I would like to draw the attention of our Social Activists and our Law enforcing authorities that in two Religions, Christianity and Islam, which have now become integral part of

our SOCIETY AND NATION, there is no custom of making the Priests or Mullahs only from the UPPER CASTES, since there are NO UPPER CASTES in those two Religions. The same practice must be evolved in the Hindu Religion, if necessary by statutory measures, viz., by amending the respective Endowments Act, which subject is in the “Concurrent List” of Schedule VII of our Constitution. This measure, though may be appearing to be unpleasant to our Traditionalists and Fundamentalists, but would go a long way in Abolition of “UNTOUCHABILITY”.

I am having the strong opinion that this matter will not in any way contravene the Provisions of Article 25 and 26 of the Constitution, inasmuch as, both the Provisions are declared to be “subject to Public Order, Morality and Health” and to the other Provisions of PART III, which necessarily includes the Provisions under Article 17 of the Constitution, and the constitutional goal enshrined therein.

It cannot be gainsaid that this measure would never be called as an “immoral measure” by any SANE person in Hindu Religion. In fact, this measure would bring Hindu Society or for that matter, the Hindu Religion itself on par with the other great Religions of the world, viz., Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Jain Religions, which are spread out in almost ALL the countries of the world: India being a part of the world, where Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism exist without any bane of castes and much less “UNTOUCHABILITY”. The above measures, though appear to be

controversial would certainly result in bringing the desired “SOCIAL REVOLUTION” in the country.

The following are the other two measures which would, in my opinion; result in building up on “EGALITARIAN SOCIETY” as enshrined in the Constitution.

I appeal to the members of the society and more particularly, our law enforcing agencies, to introduce the neighborhood school concept, wherein, the children of Ministers, Judges, High Beaucrats, Millionaires and Higher Caste Hindus will study in the same school along with the 4th class employees of the Government and the children of down trodden DALITS.

Along with the above measures, measures must be taken, both social and statutory, to see that the Ministers, Judges, high Bureaucrats and the employees under them including 4th class employees are treated in the same hospitals with the same facilities. Our politicians, Government employees in higher posts and Judges must make themselves bold enough to get their treatment in the same hospitals along with “ALL” employees working with them. None of them should claim the benefits of the odious system of getting them admitted in Super Specialty Hospitals and claim “Reimbursement” from the Government.

The Government must make itself bold enough to scratch this morally malicious practice existing in the educational and medical fields in order to realize the concept of a “WELFARE SOCIETY”.

Martin Luther King, Jr. noted: “Lamentably, it is a historical fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily.”

Let us in an upper caste-dominated society, acknowledge the vast underserved space we occupy. Let us cede what has to be ceded.

Focus on Future India

P. Arangasamy

Former President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was dreaming of India emerging as a super power among the nations of the world in about a decade. It is a progressive imagination born of emotions and unbridled ambitions. Mere statement devoid of sequential or remedial actions wouldn't serve the purpose. Hence a dispassionate thinking at present has become imperative to notionally envisage a bright future for India. An action plan is equally important to make that dream a reality. The setback or the limitations that obstruct the country from going up into reality have to be analysed at the outset before considering the plans.

Ever growing population in India has to be checked at one stage or other. Unwieldy population is a major constraint on the progress of a nation. It is no longer a joke of a demographer that one and a half child is born at every one minute in India. Truly speaking, as *The Economist* (August, 15, 2015) SAYS THAT India from its present 120 crores will overtake China as the world's most populous country. Quoting U.N. sources, the weekly says further that India's population will surpass that of China in the year 2022 rather than in 2028 as it was thought two years ago. Will it be possible to feed these millions of mouths unless there is a check somewhere in the middle? In allowing the status quo of growth of population, poor India will become poorer.

One-child policy has been strictly followed in China for the past two decades and more. But India has been merely discussing the policy in Parliament ever since the implementation of birth control measures. Strictly speaking, birth control should be applied to every family in India. Restricting children to a parenthood of one religion and allowing others to go unrestricted may create inter-religious friction at one stage.

Let us not forget that even now there is a hue and cry that India's Muslim population has grown substantially quicker than the majority Hindus. Recently it was pointed out that according to the Census of 2011 the Hindu population grew by 16.76 percent while Muslims by 24.6 percent, feeding the people is an economic measure. Every Indian irrespective of religion should abide by the rules and regulations governing the control of population. To enforce the relevant legislation and to have economically a Planned Parenthood, religion should have no place and hence common civil code has to be implemented with no further delay.

Next is a matter of concern that revolves around new colonies and real estate conglomerates that proliferate around three-tier cities and even panchayat towns. Lands that are cultivable and fertile are swallowed by house-builders. Conversion of cultivable lands into houses on the one hand and proliferating population on the other will render the nation miserably dependent on imports. Real Estate Agents blissfully forget that these encroachments in millions of acres all over the country prevent that much of food production. That is why Builders' Associations have made it clear that instead of spacious separate houses, apartment culture has to be inculcated among the Indian public. Awareness Campaign on the sheer necessity of multi-storied complexes must be conducted. Instead of grabbing cultivable lands for houses and preventing essential production of grains and cereals, what must be inculcated among the public is to make them satisfy with vertical growth of habitations rather than horizontal. If suitable legislation and statutory obligation is not made, dry tanks and poromboke lands will also be swallowed by the

land mafia along with cultivable lands.

What is worse than all these setbacks is the perennial menace of corruption which proves to be a canker-worm in the body politic. Global Organisations such as *Transparency International* make it clear that India is one of the worst countries notorious for corruption. If it is scarcely found, the nation can withstand; but if corruption has become a way of life, no nation can survive. The politicians who frame the rules and govern the country should be exceptionally honest and trustworthy. But the present reality in Indian politics is topsy-turvy. Rarely do we come across politicians who are honest in word and deed. Who can say that Johnson was wrong when he said that politics is the last resort of the scoundrels?

Even chief ministers in various States of India are steeped in corruption and go shamelessly into jails. This gives an immoral courage to the entire downward hierarchy and everywhere it is a corruption galore governance. What they do in China is that any individual of proven corruption is given life sentence if not capital punishment. Because India doesn't administer a deterrent punishment to the deliberate offenders in body politic, dishonesty, corruption and exploitation have become pervasive and potentially rotten in every walk of life. What more to say when the job of a Vice Chancellor is bargained for a few crores and those of academicians is pegged at lakhs? Such being the case of enabling the mediocre, misfits and unfits to get into the intellectual and academic jobs, what and how to speak of stand of education and how to arrive at it? How to establish global-level universities which are being dreamt of?

In awarding contracts, permits, license and in permitting local and NRI investors and in purchasing all and sundry at a huge level, corruption and kickbacks proliferate. Freebies

strewn at the gullible public by politicians is to perpetuate them into power. Not prompted by a genuine desire to help the public but to safeguard the party they belong. Not without significance Gandhiji once wanted to dissolve the Congress party and pleaded for a party-less democracy. One is at a loss to rectify the damages done by the politicians who occupy the *gaddi*. Former Supreme Court Judge Santosh Hegde, in a recently held *Palkivala Memorial Lecture*, said that the politicians' dominance on officialdom goes unchallenged. To get a cushy posting, government servants go behind politicians and this breeds corruption. Transferring officials therefore should not be the prerogative of political bosses. Thanthai Periyar, a great social reformer, is perfectly right when he rejected politics as a profession. His premonition that entry into it will culminate in corruption is found to be an excellent forethought, if not a warning.

No less is the evil of black money. Every government at the Centre never fulfills the promise of unearthing black money stashed in foreign banks. Former National Vigilance Commissioner Mr. Vitthal had once declared that he would publish the names of the black-moneyed persons on internet unless they account for their wealth, which was estimated to be about Rs. 900 crores then. Nobody seems to have realized that clandestinely carry ill-gotten wealth to alien countries is not only illegal and criminal but unpatriotic also. Action that is stringent and serious has to be taken against those black-moneyed bigwigs. Does the government have the backbone to act wisely and bravely against these illegal money-launderers?

In drafting a blueprint for a powerful nation, an economic wellbeing alone is not enough. Equally essential is the societal progress which is achievable if only casts and religions are done

away with. It may be recalled that Thanthai Periyar gave precedence to socio-economic freedom rather than to the political freedom on the eve of Indian independence.

Casteism eats into the vitals of Indian society, as tribal warfare does in African society. Periyar not mere preached against religions and castes as theoretical social reformers like Saint Thiru Moolar, and Saint Ramalingar but did a field work in eradicating casteism. What sacrifices did Periyar make and sufferings he underwent in counseling for abolishing caste may be adversely commented on, by a few upstarts and quacks in the present socio-political forums but the fact remains that he did a spade-work undeniably. Periyar's championing of the scheduled castes and advocacy of their progress cannot be forgotten. Inter-caste marriages must be encouraged with incentives and if the

government is sincere in eradicating caste, it can offer some concessions also for mixed couples. Because Casteism is found rooted in the Indian society since time immemorial, it may require a long time to get annulled. The rigidity of casteism nowadays is getting eroded due to the elevated economic status of the lower classes and also because of widespread education. A time is bound to come to see an ideal egalitarian society and that will give a boost to India becoming a solid and strong nation sustainable to withstand wind and weather.

Dr. P. Arangasamy is the Director, Centre for Periyar Thought, Periyar Maniammai University, Vallam Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. He is also Honorary Associate Editor of **Modern Rationalist** published from Periyar Thidal, Chennai and author of more than 30 books in English and Tamil.

Anti-fascism and a free society

We stand for a thorough reconstruction of the national life. Our political objective is the establishment of democratic freedom which will mean effective political power for the people. We strive not only for national freedom, but also for the social emancipation of the toiling masses. Our task is to spread enlightenment which will dispel obscurantism in the political and the spiritual life of the country. We advocate modernism in every walk of life against revivalism. We want the disinherited to come to their own and enjoy the richness and fullness of life on this earth. We want man to be the master of the world and the maker of his destiny.

This is why we radicals favour India's active participation in the war against Fascism. Fascism stands for the destruction of the political, social and cultural ideals of democracy...The war against Fascism can be won only by rousing in the people their urge for freer and fuller life. The supreme task of our movement is to develop that urge, and thus while defeating Fascism, to lay securely the foundations of a free society which is not only free of foreign rule, but also free of native tyranny, exploitation and injustice. - M.N. Roy

(The above statement was issued during the Second World War 1939-1945)

Our future as a movement begins right now

IHEU President Andrew Copson



Over 100 Member Organization representatives gather in Malta for the IHEU General Assembly 2016

This month the IHEU went to Malta, alongside our sister organization the European Humanist Federation, and our youth section IHEYO.

Hosted by the Malta Humanist Association, we took part in a **conference on “Migration and Integration”**. The conference had excellent speakers who discussed global

migration events with authority and experience.

Some of the IHEU staff and board were also able to visit a part of Malta where hundreds of refugees are living. They met dozens of young men, most having fled parts of Somalia under Al Shabaab control. **Our delegation discussed with the refugees** many issues

around their treatment in Europe. We learned how many are in effect “trapped” and unable either to go home or move on with their lives. And we learned about the specific practical and policy problems they face. We will be taking further action to lobby Malta on some of the specific concerns raised.

I was delighted to be able to present our Past-President Sonja Eggerickx with the **Distinguished Services to Humanism Award 2016** - and you can [read my full citation for her at iheu.org](#).

More than 100 Member Organization representatives came together for the IHEU General Assembly. We debated, strategized and socialized. And we made decisions on several proposed reforms to our democratic structure. Most notably, the Member Organizations of the IHEU approved to expand our board by three places. There is now **dedicated funding to support IHEU board members from under-represented regions.** My hope is that this will break down some of the barriers to participation in our movement.

And already, we now have two new board members elected, from countries that have never before been represented on our board. Uttam Niraula was nominated by Society for

Humanism (SOCH) Nepal. Kato Mukasa was nominated by Humanist Association for Leadership, Equality and Accountability (HALEA), Uganda. Both Uttam and Kato have considerable experience running active humanist organizations at national level. And both also have been active in our youth section, IHEYO, over the years. **A huge welcome to them as the newest members of our humanist leadership!** All the meetings in Malta shed new light on the issues we are facing around the world. **Internationally we’ve been able to talk about the growth of our movement,** but also the real terrors and violence befalling many of our humanist allies. We held a special strategic session on the Bangladesh blogger murders, out of which some new ways of working are being developed. **We are committed to continuing to work on this issue,** to draw international attention, to call for justice, and to support individuals at risk. **I am honored that IHEU members voted to return me as President** on a three year term. I will continue to work to develop the IHEU as a unique and vital organization. We will expand our membership and our advocacy reach. And we will focus on human rights, and other issues of deep humanist concern. I greatly look forward to working with you.

Martin Luther King, Jr. noted: “Lamentably, it is a historical fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily.”

Let us in an upper caste-dominated society, acknowledge the vast undeserved space we occupy. Let us cede what has to be ceded.

Human Rights Section:

Acquitted in Babri anniversary train blasts case, Nisar was among 3 who walked free this month.

Muzamil Jaleel

After 23 years in jail, I am free but what you see now is a living corpse, says Nisar

He could not walk, he could not sleep. That's what 23 years in prison had done when they came to an end 17 days ago, in a Jaipur prison late in the evening.

Nisar-ud-din Ahmad says when he stepped out, he saw his brother, two years older than him, Zaheer-ud-din Ahmad, waiting. "I felt a terrible heaviness in my legs. I froze. For a moment, I had forgotten I was free," said Nisar.

Nisar was among three men who walked out from Jaipur jail after the Supreme Court acquitted them of all charges, setting aside their life sentence and ordering their immediate release on May 11. They were booked for five blasts onboard trains — on the first anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition — that killed two passengers and injured eight.

By the time they were acquitted, their families had been left shattered by the fight to prove their innocence.

"I have clocked 8,150 days of the prime of my life inside the jail. For me, life is over. What you are seeing is a living corpse."

"I was yet to be 20 years old when they threw me in jail. I am 43 today. My younger sister was 12 when I saw her last. Her daughter is 12 now. My niece was a year old. She is already married. My cousin was two years younger than me, she is now a grandmother. A generation has completely skipped from my life."

Nisar spent his first night of freedom in a hotel in Jaipur. "I couldn't sleep, there was a bed in

the room. All these years, I have slept on the floor on a thin blanket," he said.

Nisar says he remembers January 15, 1994, when he was picked up by police near his home in Gulbarga, Karnataka. He was a second-year student in Pharmacy. "I had an exam in 15 days, I was on my way to college. A police vehicle was waiting. A man showed me his revolver and forced me to get in. The Karnataka Police had no idea about my arrest. This team had come from Hyderabad. They took me to Hyderabad," he said.

Records show he was produced before a court on February 28, 1994. That's how his family got to know where he was, he says. His older brother Zaheer-ud-din — Nisar has two brothers, two sisters — who was working in Mumbai as a civil engineer, was picked up that April.

"Our father Noor-ud-din Ahmad left everything to fight a lonely battle to prove our innocence. He didn't see any hope until he died in 2006. Now there is nothing left."

"Nobody can imagine what it means to a family whose two young sons are jailed," said Nisar's brother Zaheer. Like Nisar, Zaheer, too, was sentenced to life imprisonment but was released on bail on May 9, 2008 by the Supreme Court on health grounds — he was diagnosed with lung cancer in jail.

Zaheer says he could fight the cancer because that was the only way to get his brother out of

jail. "I followed the case with singular focus. I kept on making applications to court saying how we have been wronged. Finally, the Supreme Court gave a verdict exonerating both of us and two others."

Police records link the two to five separate bomb blasts in trains at Kota, Hyderabad, Surat, Kanpur and Mumbai in the intervening night of December 5-6, 1993. The bomb on the Bangalore Kurla Express, while the train was near Karjat Railway Station, was detected by a passenger who threw it out.

The Hyderabad Police picked up Nisar, later his brother Zaheer and their neighbour in Gulbarga, Mohammad Yusuf, a car mechanic. Initially, police booked them for a bomb blast that had taken place in October 1993 in a Muslim educational institute in Hyderabad. This case was registered in Abid Road Police station.

They were also booked in few unsolved bomb blasts that had taken place in August and September that year. Subsequently, they were booked in the serial train blasts.

The only evidence police produced was their alleged custodial confessions — the provisions of Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) were later invoked to make these admissible.

These alleged confessions of Nisar, Zaheer and Yusuf, as per court records, were taken by Hyderabad Police officers at Abid Road Police station.

In his alleged confession, police claimed that Nisar "accepted his role in planting of Bomb in the compartment of A.P. Express on 06.12.1993 and that he was also having two other bombs which were meant for use in K.K. Express on the same day but because of his ill health he could not use them".

Similarly, the others too had allegedly confessed their role in the train bombings.

In these alleged confessions, however, there was no mention of the case in which Nisar, Zaheer and others from Gulbarga were first arrested and brought to Hyderabad.

While different state police forces had registered cases in each of these blasts, the government handed over the investigation to CBI.

Apart from these three from Gulbarga, the CBI filed charges against 13 more, including Jalees Ansari of Mumbai who was dubbed as the mastermind of the blasts ostensibly carried out to avenge the demolition of Babri Masjid.

On May 21, 1996, the Metropolitan Sessions Judge, Hyderabad, revoked the provisions of TADA from the case. The Andhra government challenged this order before Supreme Court, which said the use of TADA was "very casual" and issued notice to the Police Commissioner, Hyderabad, to show cause why "adverse remarks against him be not made".

On July 17, 2001, the AP government sought withdrawal of its appeals. Thus the invocation of TADA became invalid in the case where the alleged confession of Nisar, Zaheer and Yusuf was recorded, making the confessions inadmissible.

Nisar's alleged confession recorded by DCP K V Reddy on March 11, 1994, was a verbatim copy of another alleged confession of his, taken by police Inspector B Shyama Rao on February 27, 1994 which wasn't even signed.

"It was fabricated and I kept on raising it," Nisar said. The trial court in Hyderabad acquitted all accused in 2007.

"While the alleged confessions were not accepted in Hyderabad after TADA was dropped, the same confessions were used to charge us in Ajmer," said Nisar.

One of the accused went absconding after he was released on parole in 1999. On February

28, 2004, the designated TADA Court at Ajmer convicted the other 15 accused, including Nisar, his brother Zaheer and Yusuf, and sentenced them to life imprisonment. One among them, a juvenile, was later released by Supreme Court in 2012.

They approached Supreme Court and challenged the TADA Court's order. Justice Fakkir Mohamed Ibrahim Kalifulla and Justice Uday Umesh Lalit observed that the confessions of the four accused, including Zaheer, Nisar and Yusuf, were "without any legal sanction and cannot be relied upon".

According to the judgment, Nisar's "role is neither referred to in the confessions.. nor is there any material other than the confession of (Nisar) himself on record. The conviction and sentence of (Nisar) is therefore completely unsustainable".

Regarding his brother Zaheer, the judgment said: "In the absence of any other material on

record to lend any semblance of corroboration to the confession (of the co-accused), we find it extremely difficult to sustain the conviction and sentence of (Zaheer) simply on the basis of confession of (the co-accused)."

"We were framed. It took almost 12 years and finally Supreme Court acquitted us of all charges," said Nisar. "I am thankful to Supreme Court to give my freedom back. But who will give my life back?"

Advocate Nitya Ramakrishnan, who represented five among the accused, including Nisar and Zaheer in the apex court, says that their alleged "confession in police custody is the beginning and end of the case".

The Supreme Court upheld the conviction of ten others, including one who is now 85, another is 79 and a third is a 74-year-old. "They are going to die inside jail," said Nisar.

Courtesy **The Indian Express**, 30 May 2016

M.N. Roy on Superstition

Superstition is rooted in the ignorance of the primitive man. In course of time, man outgrows the blissful state of ignorance, Nevertheless, he is haunted by superstitions haloed by tradition, and often raised to the dignity of the expression of revealed wisdom. Eventually, scientific knowledge gives him the power to break the spiritual bondage. The history of the development

of science coincides with the history of a bitter struggle against superstition. In our country, the struggle is still to begin. Whatever little of modern scientific knowledge is now there, is very largely superficial, and is often utilised with the purpose of reinforcing superstitions. That is an abuse of science.

June 15th, 1950.

Dehradun

M. N. Roy

From: Preface of the second revised edition of 1950,

'Fragments of a Prisoner's Diary: INDIA'S MESSAGE'

Readers' Comments

Dear Mahipal ji

Thanks for the June issue of RH. Good articles and information. Anjali ji contributed very valuable material. I had some correspondence with Samaren Roy If I trace I will send.

My only suggestion is: page relief should be worked out instead of solid material throughout the page. Of course that needs much effort, I am aware.

Your article is quite instructive. - **Narisetti Innaiah**

[illegible]

Dear Mahipal ji

I received the print edition of RH, May 2016. You have done great service in this issue. I like the idea of third cover with Epilogue information which is quite attractive.

The picture with your article ‘... Civilized Society’ is telling. - **Narisetti Innaiah**

[illegible]

Dear Mahipalji,

Thank you for sending this ('RSS Pracharak Sunil Joshi was "100%" Involved in Samjhauta Bombs: Former SIT Chief Rai' by SEEMA MUSTAFA). I am in Paris. Arrived here on May 25 after a week in Israel. Will be here till August 2. I have brought with me April RH and read all the disturbing articles about what is happening there. Thank you for the excellent editorial job and also your own editorials. I have to wait till August for May and June issues. - All the best,
Kamesh

[illegible]

Dear Mahi Pal Singh

I strongly feel that if Radical Humanist could be published in Hindi also, its reach will be wider among the people whose issues it represents. English no doubt connects people and provides a common platform but with a very limited reach. Leaving politics on one side, Hindi has the maximum reach from spoken angle. People may not know Hindi reading and writing but majority of Indians understand spoken Hindi. Anybody can read it out for most of the people and they very easily can understand and grasp the thought of Radical Humanist, but same is not the case with English. Very few people will understand if even it is being read out.

This is my personal feeling not binding on anybody. - With regards, **J P Sharma**

M.N. Roy



The following books by M.N. Roy are now available at <http://www.lohiatoday.com> and may be accessed by first going to 'Socialist Movement' and then under the heading 'Other Prominent Contributors':

1. Beyond Communism
2. Cultural Requisites of Freedom
3. From Savagery to Civilisation
4. Historical Role of Islam
5. Fragments of a Prisoner's Diary: India's Message
6. Materialism: An Outline of the History of Scientific Thought
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