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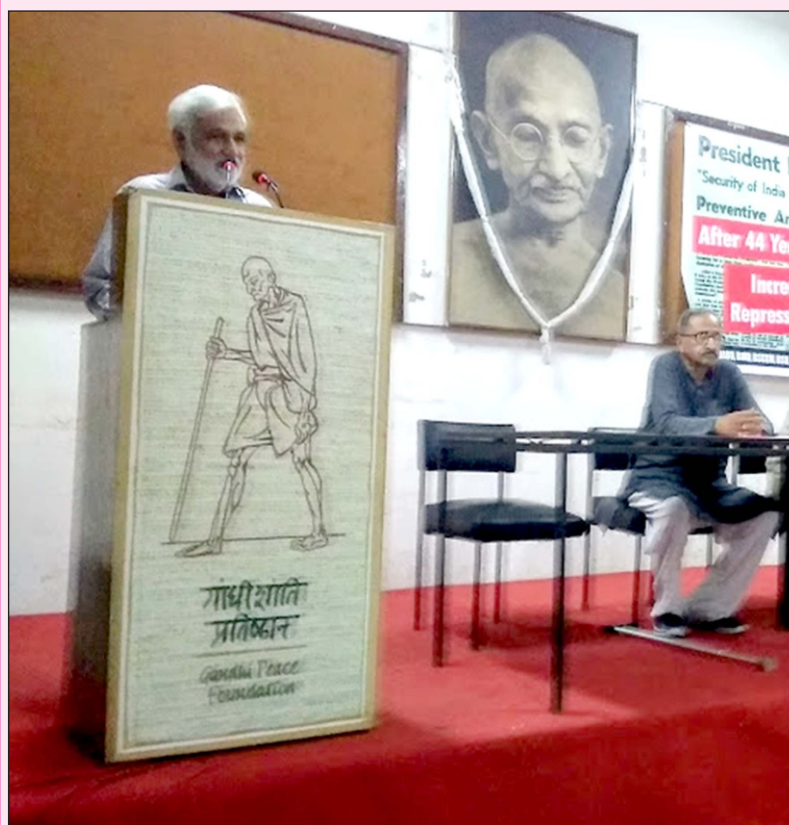
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Jai Shri Ram a License to Kill?: #IndiaAgainstLynchTerror Trends

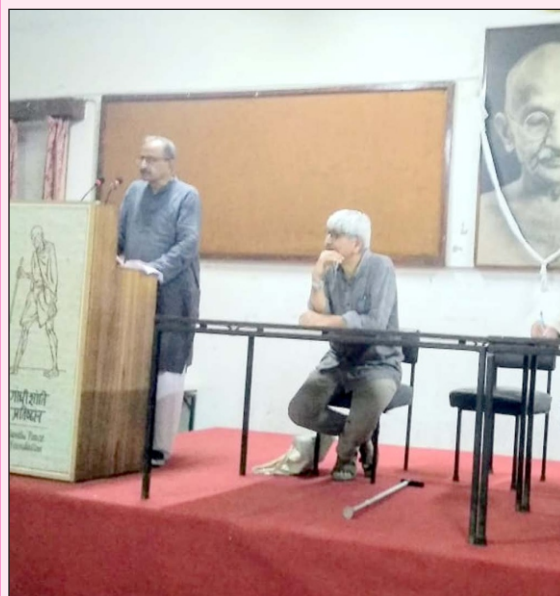


24-year-old Muslim man Tabrez Ansari lynched by a mob in Jharkhand

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**Famous
journalist
Mr. Urmillesh
addressing the
anti-emergency
day meeting at
Gandhi Peace
Foundation,
New Delhi on
26th June 2019
organised jointly
by PUCL Delhi
and
Janhastakshep**



**Mr. Ravi Kiran Jain,
National President, PUCL
addressing the meeting**



**Audience
attending
the meeting**

THE RADICAL HUMANIST

Vol.83 Number 5, August 2019

Monthly journal of the Indian Renaissance Institute
Devoted to the development of the Renaissance
Movement and to the promotion of human
rights, scientific temper, rational thinking and
a humanist view of life.

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entertained here if the need is felt to debate and
discuss them.

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Sh. Narottam Vyas is no more



(1932-2019)

On behalf of the Indian Renaissance Institute and The Radical Humanist, I pay our tributes to Sh. Narottam Vyas who breathed his last in the morning on 4th July 2019 at Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Hospital, Rohini, Delhi. He was diagnosed to be suffering from blood cancer and was admitted to the hospital on 24th June 2019.

Sh. Vyas was an active member and a life trustee of the IRI. All of us send our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members of Mr. Vyas and share their sense of loss and grief at his sudden and sad demise.

Mahi Pal Singh,
Secretary, IRI & Editor, The Radical Humanist

Condolence Messages:

6TH July 2019

MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE ON BEHALF OF IRI

Indian Renaissance Institute (IRI) is deeply grieved over the sad demise of Shri Narottam Vyas at the age of 88 years and who was one of its life trustees. After completing an illustrious career in the Employees' State Insurance Corporation whereof he retired as its Financial Commissioner in or around 1990, he had joined IRI and devoted whole-heartedly to its objectives and programmes towards promoting the renaissance movement and rationalist outlook in the country. Mr. Vyas attended almost all the meetings, conferences, seminars and discussions organized by the IRI whenever and wherever the same took place in various parts of India and made fruitful contributions to its deliberations and programmes. Eventually he became one of its life trustees. He also became its treasurer on which post he functioned for more than a decade and placed IRI on a sound financial footing. He had deep faith in the precepts of the radical humanism - the humanist philosophy propounded by M.N. Roy and his life was a living example as to what a true humanist should be. He was a pillar of strength to the IRI and his demise is a great loss to the humanist movement in general and to the IRI in particular. Indian Renaissance Institute pays its humble homage to his memory and conveys its deep condolences to the bereaved family.

Ramesh Awasthi
Chairperson

N.D. Pancholi
Vice-Chairperson

Satish Chandra Varma
Treasurer

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE INSTITUTE

Sad demise of Sh. Narottam Vyas, a senior radical humanist and a very pleasant and amicable human being, is a great loss to the RH movement. We'll greatly miss him in the RH/ IRI meetings. Our sincere condolences to the bereaved family and friends.

Dr. Ramesh Awasthi,
Chairman, IRI

So sorry to hear this sad news. It's a great loss to the humanist movement in India. My heart pours out for him and his family. My deepest condolences.

Veeranna Gumma

So so much sad for this unexpected death news. I talked with him as he was in his usual cheerful mood in our last Delhi Meet! Really we can't know "where is our beginning and where our end!"

Anjali Chakroborty

The death of Narottam Vyas is very sad and of course it is great loss to the humanist movement. He was doing yeoman service to the renaissance institute.

Dr. Narisetti Innaiah

This comes as a great shock. We have just met 3 months back and exchanged pleasantries. I recall Shri Vyas ji attending practically all IRI conferences, even if they are away from Delhi and he kept bringing out suggestions that were very relevant for betterment of IRI. He carried a smiling face persona and the movement would miss his presence.

Kiran Nanavati

I am shocked to hear the news of the sad demise of Shri Narottam Vyas ji. He was very encouraging and active member of IRI. I pay my humble tribute to him.

Vidya Bhushan Rawat

“Selections from The Radical Humanist” on the website

‘Selections from The Radical Humanist’ Volume I (1970 to 2005) and II (2006 to 2018) containing articles by all-time greats like M.N. Roy, (Justice) V.M. Tarkunde, Prof. Sib Narayan Ray, (Justice) Rajindar Sachar, (Justice) R.A. Jahagirdar, Kuldip Nayar and others on democratic freedoms, radical humanism, human rights, and emancipation of the downtrodden are now available at the website www.lohiatoday.com on the periodicals page where ‘The Radical Humanist’ magazine is put every month. The two volumes are also available at www.academia.edu and have been accessed by more than 500 people from various Indian cities and across the world from more than 35 countries. Readers may download these volumes from there and read whenever they like.

- Mahi Pal Singh

‘Emergency’ Then and Now

Mahi Pal Singh

While addressing the first session of Lok Sabha on 25th June 2019, the anniversary of promulgation of internal ‘Emergency’ on the night of 25th June 1975 by the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi under Article 352 of the Constitution, speaking on the vote of thanks to the President for his address to Parliament a day earlier, the second time elected Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, referred to that and criticised the Congress Party for imposition of the Emergency on the country. It was indeed a black chapter in the history of the country and needs to be criticised by one and all because at that time censorship was imposed on the press, fundamental rights of the people including the right to life were suspended and about one lakh people including leaders of all opposition parties and their workers were arrested under Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) which was a draconian law at that time. Civil liberties of the people were completely undermined. The Congress Party was not guilty only of imposition of the ‘Emergency’ regime and concentration of powers in one person, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, by making other ministers in her ministry mere puppets, but also of undermining the judiciary by appointment of committed judges to the apex court and through the constitutional amendment 42 took away the power of the judiciary to judicial review of the laws passed by the legislature, and also the legislature by extending the tenure of Lok Sabha to extend her own rule, and destruction of many other institutions of democratic governance.

However, a Prime Minister, whose rule is no different from Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s rule has no right to only criticise the Congress Party and get away with it. He has to look at his own way

of ruling also. If he does not, then he cannot get away with it because the people watch his every move as they watched every move of Mrs. Gandhi and punished her by removing her from power when time came. During the 1975 ‘Emergency’, the press was muzzled through imposition of censorship; today the same press and electronic media has been made subservient to him through the influence of money power, or by getting unfriendly journalists removed from their positions, like Punya Prasoona Vajpayee. Only recently Ads in Times Group, ABP Group & The Hindu were frozen by the Modi government for not toeing his line. In Modi regime 2.0, what is it if not press censorship 2.0 after the ‘Emergency’ regime of Mrs. Gandhi?

Through refusal again and again to appoint judges recommended by the Collegium, the government is using its pressure to get committed judges in the top judiciary, committed to its Hindutva ideology and favourable to the present rulers. All other ministers in his ministry, as in his earlier rule 1.0, except Amit Shah, are lame duck ministers and all the powers are concentrated in Mr. Modi who is today no less authoritarian than Mrs. Gandhi in 1975. Thousands of political leaders and workers were arrested and put behind the bars in 1975 under the most draconian law at that time, Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) because Mrs. Gandhi considered them dangerous to her rule. Today, civil society activists, all the leading ones of them, in large numbers, have been arrested and put behind the bars under the equally draconian and archaic law under Section 124-A of IPC, known as ‘sedition’ law, on charges of seditious activities branding them as ‘urban Naxals’ and ‘anti-national’ even against the directions of the

Supreme Court to test whether an activity is seditious or not, and also without any evidence against the accused. They spend several years in jail and are let off after long periods of incarceration because of lack of evidence. Their only fault is that they stand up for the rights of the poor, marginalised people. The ruling dispensation of today considers them as dangerous to the perpetuation of their rule as Mrs. Gandhi considered even ordinary political workers as dangerous to her autocratic rule. Modern democracies today do not need a free speech restriction based on political concepts such as disloyalty and disaffection. This archaic law of sedition was introduced by the British rulers in 1870 to deal with incitement of violence against the government/state to protect its rule in the country. But today we see an alarming rise in sedition charges against people to quell political dissent.

Another disheartening fact is that even the judiciary does not take note of this rampant misuse of sedition law by government agencies and even the trial judges do not apply their mind to see whether the sedition law can really be applied in these cases. So much so that a total of 112 cases of sedition under section 124-A of the IPC have been booked in the country in three years, according to the latest compilation by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Among them are well-known social activists Surendra Gadling, Sudhir Dhawale, Mahesh Raut, Shoma Sen and Rona Wilson who were arrested on 6th June 2018 and are still lodged in Yervada Central Jail while on 28th August 2018 five more activists, namely, advocate Sudha Bhardwaj, Arun Ferreira, Varnan Gonsalves, Gautam Navalakha and Varvara Rao were also arrested on sedition charges under Section 124-A and all of them face persecution for advocating the cause of the poor tribal and other marginalised people.

That is the reason why this sedition law needs to be abrogated at the earliest to protect the democratic rights of the people. All other

institutions of democratic governance are also being subverted today in the same manner as they were subverted by Mrs. Gandhi during the 'Emergency' rule.

One other thing the Prime Minister conveniently forgot, or wantonly avoided, while referring to the 'Emergency' regime of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, is that the then Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief, the Sarsangh Chalak, as they call him, Balasaheb Deoras, wrote a letter to Mrs. Gandhi and told her that his organisation was in no way opposed to the Emergency. He even praised it and assured every help in implementing her 20-point programme and requested her to release RSS workers from jail. Later on he even approached Bhoodan leader, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who had also praised the Emergency as the 'Festival of Discipline', to plead with Mrs. Gandhi to release RSS cadres. Most of them, in fact, came out of jails by submitting '*maafinamas*' and pleading with her to free them. Mr. Modi was a *pracharak* of the RSS for a long time, and continues to be its important member. The RSS is the parent organisation of the then Jan Sangh and today's Bharatiya Janata Party. How does our '*desh bhakt*' Prime Minister forget the role of the RSS in supporting the 'Emergency' while he so vehemently opposed it in the Lok Sabha? Is it not sheer hypocrisy?


On several occasions Mr. Modi has criticised the killing of thousands of innocent Sikhs in Delhi and elsewhere in the country in the wake of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's cold-blooded murder by her body guards who happened to be Sikhs in 1984. It is a known fact that the top leadership of the Congress had actively supported the killing and some of its leaders were actively involved in it. The whole civilized society had condemned the killing of innocent people and remembers it as a black chapter. So does it the pogrom of 2002 Gujarat in which more than a thousand Muslims, including their women and children, were brutally killed and their houses burnt. It is

also a known fact that the top BJP state leadership was behind that carnage. The whole civil society condemned those riots also. But while the top BJP leadership, including the Prime Minister, criticise the killing of Sikhs in 1984, they conveniently avoid referring to the Gujarat carnage of 2002, which is a more recent event. He also forgets that Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the highest leader of the BJP, referring to the Gujarat carnage and his role in it, told him on his face that '*Raj dharm ka palan hona chahiye*' meaning thereby that 'Raj Dharma must be observed', implying thereby that he had failed to observe 'Raj dharma'. It was nothing short of a 'moral indictment' for his acts of omission and commission. Is it not a case of partial amnesia on his part in this case and also in the case of 'Emergency' while the conditions are not much different today than during the 'Emergency'?

In fact, for many people the conditions today are worse than in 1975. In 1975, only political workers were arrested. Today, civil society activists, intellectuals, thinkers and rationalists are being arrested. At least nobody was being killed/lynched on the streets by the workers/supporters of the ruling party. In Modi rule 1.0 cow vigilantes lynched people in the name of and even on suspicion of possession of beef, mostly Muslims of course, today in Modi rule 2.0, they are being thrashed and lynched by Hindutva mobs even for having a Muslim identity like skull-cap or a Muslim name. That difference is clearly brought out by the cases of Akhlaq who was lynched for possession of meat, suspected to be beef, in his refrigerator in Modi rule 1.0 and Tabrez Ansari, a 24-year-old Muslim man who was repeatedly asked to chant 'Jai Shri Ram', beaten mercilessly for 18 hours by a mob in Jharkhand on the suspicion of theft, and who ultimately succumbed to injuries three days later in Modi rule 2.0.

Chanting of 'Jai Shri Ram', which has become a political slogan rather than a greeting to show respect for each other and Ram, and forcing

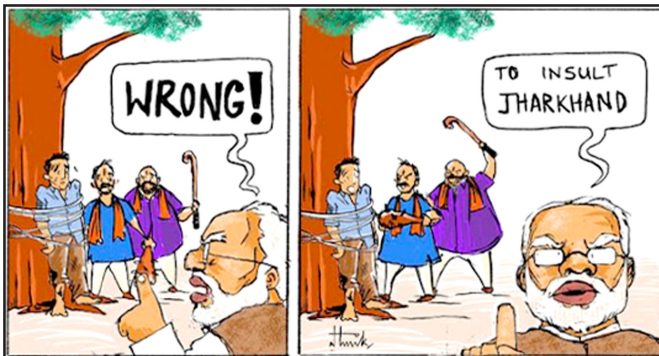
others to do so to undermine their religious identity, and to thrash people who do not show willingness to do so, has become very common for Hindutva gangs. In West Bengal this slogan is used as a political weapon to incite Ms. Mamata Banerjee to take action against them and to use that action to polarize Hindus for gaining their support. It is unfortunate that Ms. Banerjee has been trapped into taking action against them on an occasion or two, instead of ignoring them.

Reports of hate-crimes against Muslims by street goons belonging to the same organisation sponsored and supported by the ruling dispensation appear in the media almost every day. All civilized people feel ashamed on these inhuman acts. But the BJP government and its leaders go into denial mode when reports of UN human rights agencies and other human rights organisations within the country and outside refer to these incidents of religion based biases and hate-crimes and the role of Hindutva organisations in them. They do not understand that such denials in the face of such incidents being shown live on various TV channels day in and day out only result in the loss of credibility of our government and its agencies and leaders and also bring a bad name to the country as a whole. The better thing for them is to take strict and decisive action against the evil-doers, whoever they are, because they adversely affect the image of the nation and also destroy the social fabric of cohesion in our society. Such unscrupulous elements in fact are the real anti-national elements. Mere lip-service in these matters is not enough. What is required is exemplary action. Only that can provide a sense of justice to the victims of the minority community and restore their faith in the rule of law and democracy which means equality for all its citizens irrespective of religion, caste, creed, sex and place of birth and the right to live a dignified life, and a country where, as Rabindranath Tagore put it, 'the mind is without fear' of any kind. 

In Jharkhand, Modi Is Replicating What He Did in Gujarat in 2002

Instead of standing by the families of the killed and injured, the then chief minister of Gujarat had claimed that the state was being vilified.

The prime minister said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that he was saddened by the recent mob lynching, but “we do not have the right to insult the whole of Jharkhand”. When the killing of Tabrez Ansari is discussed, it is not with the intention to insult Jharkhand – for Ansari was also a son of the state. Jharkhand was, in fact, diminished when it lost him to a mob which insulted, brutalised and lynched him.



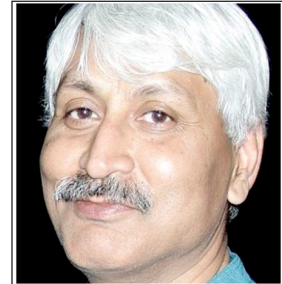
Cartoon courtesy The Hindu, 27 June, 2019

Since 2016, the state has seen a spate of mob lynchings. According to an editorial published in the *Indian Express* on June 27, at least 18 people have been targeted and killed by a mob since then – that is a large number for a small state. Needless to say, most of the victims were Muslims. To not recognise that the state has a problem does not actually help Jharkhand.

It is also a state where Hindus don't get alarmed by the use of their revered God Ram while targeting Muslims. The images of a battered Ansari being forced to chant 'Jai Shri Ram' should shame Hindus and make them angry about the politics which is brutalising the Hindu masses.

One must look back to 2002 to understand

what the prime minister is doing today. When the massacre of Muslims in Gujarat drew condemnation from across the globe, the then chief minister claimed that the state



Apoorvanand

was being

vilified. Instead of standing by the families and kin of the killed and injured and thousands of displaced Muslims, he chose to lead a campaign against insulting Gujarat.

In his Gujarat Gaurav Yatra, instead of condemning the killings, he led the Hindus into a state of denial over the anti-Muslim violence. In his speeches, he wanted his audience to believe and say that it was a canard being spread

by the enemies of Gujarat.

Those killed, maimed and forced out of their habitats were also sons and daughters of Gujarat. But there was not a word of empathy for them from the then chief minister of the state. Instead, he added to their agony when he got relief shelters dismantled, making Muslims roofless once again – that too at a time when it was raining heavily.

Even then, it was not the whole of Gujarat which was involved in the violence against the Muslims of the state. The victims were also Gujaratis. The violence was planned and executed by an organised, majoritarian political force.

A benchmark of insensitivity towards the

Muslims was set in 2002 by the political leadership of Gujarat. It seeped into the masses. By making Hindus believe that they alone were the bearers of the identity of Gujarat, he tried to make them own the majoritarian politics that he practiced. The then chief minister of Gujarat, now the prime minister, is attempting the same thing in Jharkhand.

Ansari's killing was an act of violence, but this violence is more sinister than other acts. When your identity becomes the cause of the violence against you, it affects not only the one being targeted but all those sharing that identity. No wonder, hate crimes are put in a different category across the globe.

One must understand what the prime minister was trying to do when he mentioned the violence of Kerala and Bengal, and called upon the opposition not to differentiate between 'my violence' and 'your violence'. His party and the affiliates of the RSS have been portraying these two as states where Hindus are under attack. So, through a clever speech, the prime minister was making two categories and pleading with the opposition that they should also condemn the violence of their people and not merely target his people.

When the prime minister pontificates about non-partisanship, we should remember that it was *his* party and *his* ministers who facilitated and decorated the accused in cases from Dadri to Ramgarh. These acts have created an atmosphere of impunity and also communicated to the law and order machinery that it is a special, official kind of violence in which the victims are to be made the accused first. Why should one be surprised or shocked that the Jharkhand police didn't provide medical assistance to the dying Ansari, and instead threw him in jail, thus ensuring his death? Or, why criminal cases are filed against the attacked Akhlaq or Pehlu Khan or Alimuddin before the attackers?

In normal circumstances, one would expect the top political leader to express indignation

over the use of 'Jai Shri Ram' by the attackers. By the time the prime minister chose to speak out, other parts of the country, from Assam to Bengal to Delhi had also seen the use of 'Jai Shri Ram' to humiliate Muslims.

From where did the crowds get this weapon of 'Jai Shri Ram'? Who fashioned it and used it against political opponents? Recall the scene of the Lok Sabha where Muslim MPs were verbally assaulted by the same slogan. It was an act of violence – that too hate-violence. Why raise 'Jai Shri Ram' when a Muslim MP is going to take an oath?

Further back, remember the election meetings of the prime minister himself. He repeatedly made the audience raise the slogan of 'Jai Shri Ram' as if it was a political act of asserting their identity. He was creating a warring community. He did it with 'Vande Mataram' as well.

This slogan has nothing to do with religion. It is a hate slogan – to dominate and subjugate minorities. Can my Muslim journalist friend forget that in 1990 he was stopped at the Gandhi Setu on his way to Patna by the members of the Bajrang Dal and forced to chant Jai Shri Ram? It was when the chariot of Lal Krishna Advani was to enter Patna. The air of Patna was trembling with slogans of Jai Shri Ram and cars and bikes were allowed only after the riders chanted it. The present prime minister was then accompanying Advani.

Sudipta Kaviraj, while discussing the use of 'Vande Mataram', wrote:

"All societies, Durkheim argued, must have a language in which they value themselves, since one of the central devices for maintenance of societies is this mechanism for collective self-reverence."

Is 'Jai Shri Ram' – with 'Vande Mataram' – part of a language used by a section of the Indian society which assures it of its value? Why then force the others to chant it? Valuing or revering yourself by violating the dignity of others is an

expression of insecurity. Who created this insecurity in the Hindus?

You don't have to dig deep into the archives. Images of a political leader with clenched fists and raised hands exhorting his audience to chant 'Vande Mataram' and 'Jai Shri Ram' would surface on the screen of your computer. It was

the same man who challenged the chief minister of Bengal to arrest him for raising this slogan. The same person who pleaded for a non-partisan condemnation of violence in the parliament yesterday.

Apoorvanand teaches at Delhi University. Courtesy **The Wire**, 28.6.2019. 🌈

Modi Govt Freezes Ads in Times Group, ABP Group & The Hindu

In what is being seen as a possible attack on press freedom, the Centre has frozen ads in three big newspaper groups with a total monthly readership of 2.6 crore people reported Reuters on Friday, 28 June.

The report also stated that the media houses claimed that they had been deprived of ads worth lakhs of rupees in the run up to the April-May's general elections.

An executive at Bennett, Coleman & Co of the Times Group that puts out *The Times of India* and *The Economic Times* told Reuters that the freeze could be because of unfavourable reports published.

"There is a freeze. Could be (because of) some reports they were unhappy with," the executive said on the condition of anonymity. He also added that 15% of the company's advertising was from the government, mainly in the form of contract tenders and publicising government schemes.

Two company officials from the ABP Group that publishes *The Telegraph* also reported 15%

drop in government ads for six months.

"Once you don't toe the government line in your editorial coverage and you write anything against the government, then obviously the only way they can penalise you (is) to choke your advertising supply," the first ABP official told Reuters. The company has reportedly received no communication from the government and is searching for alternate ways to plug the gap.

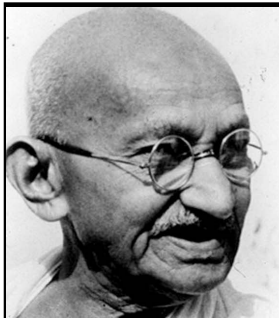
"Press freedom must be maintained and it will be maintained despite these things," an ABP official told Reuters.

The Hindu newspaper group also apparently witnessed a plunge in government advertising after multiple reports on the controversial Rafale deal, an official told Reuters.

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury told Parliament this week that "The undemocratic and megalomaniac style of stopping government advertisement is a message to media from this government to toe its line."

(With inputs from Reuters)

Courtesy **The Quint**, 29.6.2019. 🌈



Carefully watch your thoughts, for they become your words. Manage and watch your words, for they will become your actions, Consider and judge your actions, for they have become your habits. Acknowledge and watch your habits, for they shall become your values. Understand and embrace your values. Understand and embrace your values, for they become your destiny.

- Mahatma Gandhi

On 44th Anniversary of the Emergency in India: How RSS Betrayed the Anti-Emergency Struggle

National Emergency was imposed on the country by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on June 25-26, 1975, and it lasted for 19 months. This period is considered as ‘dark times’ for Indian democratic polity. Indira Gandhi claimed that due to Jaiprakash Narayan’s call to the armed forces to disobey the ‘illegal’ orders of Congress rulers had created a situation of anarchy and there was danger to the existence of Indian Republic so there was no alternative but to impose Emergency under article 352 of the Constitution.

RSS claims that it opposed Emergency promulgated by Indira Gandhi heroically and suffered immensely for resisting Emergency. But there are dozens of contemporary narratives which dispute and decry this claim of the RSS. We will be referring here to such two narratives by a veteran thinker and journalist of India, Prabhash Joshi and TV Rajeswar, former Intelligence Bureau [IB] chief who was the deputy chief of IB when Emergency was imposed. They recounted the days of Emergency (or state terrorism) when RSS surrendered to the repressive regime of Indira Gandhi, assured her and her son, Sanjay Gandhi to enforce faithfully the draconian 20-point programme announced by the Emergency regime. Large number of RSS cadres came out of jails by submitting MAAFINAMAAS (mercy petitions).

Despite all this betrayal thousands of RSS cadres continue to get monthly pension for persecution during Emergency. The BJP ruled states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra decided to award a monthly pension of Rs 10,000 to those who were jailed during the Emergency period for more than a month and Rs 5000 to those who were jailed for less than a month. This rule took care of the financial interest of those RSS cadres who might

have submitted mercy letters completing only one or two months’ jail term. For securing such a fat pension there was no such condition that the beneficiary should have been in jail for the whole period of the Emergency.



Prof. Shamsul Islam

Interestingly, in the case of anti-British freedom struggle there has not been even a single RSS cadre to claim the freedom fighter pension. It may be noted that nobody remembers hundreds of Communist youth, branded as Naxals who were killed in fake encounters during the Emergency. Interestingly, Shiv Sena, the Hindutva co-traveller of the RSS openly supported the Emergency.

The narrative by Prabhash Joshi appeared in the English weekly TEHELKA on the 25th anniversary of the Emergency.¹ According to him even during the Emergency “there was always a lurking sense of suspicion, a distance, a discreet lack of trust” about RSS’ joining the anti-Emergency struggle. He went on to tell that “Balasaheb Deoras, then RSS chief, wrote a letter to Indira Gandhi pledging to help implement the notorious 20-point programme of Sanjay Gandhi. This is the real character of the RSS...You can decipher a line of action, a pattern. Even during the Emergency, many among the RSS and Jana Sangh who came out of the jails, gave mafinamas (apologies). They were the first to apologise. Only their leaders remained in jail: Atal Behari Vajpayee, LK Advani, even Arun Jaitley. But the RSS did not fight the Emergency. So why is the BJP trying to appropriate that memory?”

Prabhash Joshi's conclusion was that "they are not a fighting force and they are never keen to fight. They are basically a compromising lot. They are never genuinely against the government".

TV Rajeswar, who served as Governor of Uttar Pradesh and Sikkim after his retirement from service, in his book, 'India: The Crucial Years' [Harper Collins] corroborated the fact that "Not only they (RSS) were supportive of this [Emergency], they wanted to establish contact apart from Mrs Gandhi, with Sanjay Gandhi also".² Rajeswar in an interview with Karan Thapar disclosed that Deoras "quietly established a link with the PM's house and expressed strong support for several steps taken to enforce order and discipline in the country. Deoras was keen to meet Mrs. Gandhi and Sanjay. But Mrs. Gandhi refused."³

According to Rajeswar's book, "RSS, a right-wing Hindu nationalist organisation, was banned in the wake of the Emergency. But its chief, Balasaheb Deoras, quietly established a link with the PM's house and expressed strong support to several steps taken to enforce order and discipline in the country. Sanjay Gandhi's concerted drive to enforce family planning, particularly among Muslims, had earned Deoras's approbation."⁴

Rajeswar also shared the fact that even after Emergency the "organization (RSS) had specifically conveyed its support to the Congress in the post-emergency elections."⁵ It will be interesting to note that even according to **Subramanian Swamy** in the Emergency period, most of the senior leaders of RSS had betrayed the struggle against the Emergency.⁶

The contemporary documents in the RSS archives prove the narratives of Prabhash Joshi and Rajeswar truthful. The 3rd Supremo of RSS, **Madhukar Dattatraya Deoras** wrote the first letter to Indira Gandhi within two months of the imposition of Emergency. It was the time when state terror was running

amok. In letter dated, August 22, 1975 he began with the following praise of Indira:

"I heard your address to the nation which you delivered on August 15, 1975 from Red Fort on radio in jail [Yervada jail] with attention. your address was timely and balanced so I decided to write to you".⁷

Indira Gandhi did not respond to it. So Deoras wrote another letter to Indira on November 10, 1975. He began his letter with congratulating her on being cleared by the Supreme Court of disqualification which was ordered by the Allahabad High Court, "All the five Justices of the Supreme Court have declared your election constitutional, heartiest greetings for it." It is to be noted that opposition was firmly of the opinion that this judgment was 'managed' by the Congress. In the course of the letter he declared that "RSS has been named in context of Jaiprakash Narayan's movement. The government has also connected RSS with Gujarat movement and Bihar movement without any reason...Sangh has no relation with these movements..."⁸

Since Indira Gandhi did not respond to this letter also, RSS chief got hold of Vinoba Bhave who supported the Emergency religiously and was a favourite of Indira Gandhi. In a letter dated January 12, 1976, he begged that Acharya should suggest the way that ban on RSS was removed.⁹ Since Acharya too did not respond to Deoras letter, the latter in another letter without date wrote in desperation,

"According to press reports respected PM [Indira Gandhi] is going to meet you at Pavnar Ashram on January 24. At that time there will be discussion about the present condition of the country. I beg you to try to remove the wrong assumptions of PM about RSS so that ban on RSS is lifted and RSS members are released from jails. We are

looking forward for the times when RSS and its members are able to contribute to the plans of progress which are being run in all the fields under the leadership of PM.”¹⁰

Riding the juggernaut of the rulers, specially the autocratic ones has been an old practice in RSS. It was the reason that no leader and cadre of RSS participated in the anti-colonial freedom struggle. In fact, the RSS worships brute force and totalitarianism. The most prominent ideologue of the RSS, 2nd boss of the organization, Golwalkar decreed as back as 1940 that “The RSS inspired by one flag, one leader and one ideology is lighting the flame of Hindutva in each and every corner of this great land.”¹¹

The former President of the Indian Republic, Pranab Mukherjee was invited by the RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat as the chief guest in 2018 at the graduation ceremony of its new recruits who would be working over-time to convert India into a Hindu state. Pranab Mukherjee was indicted as one of the top leaders of Congress for Emergency excesses.

June 25, 2019.

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Twitter: @shamsforjustice

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The Establishment Has Sent a Hard Core Message to Dissenters and Critics

The establishment has let it be known that it is in no mood to be tolerant of criticism.

Sidharth Bhatia

In the last month or so – since this government was sworn in – a couple of things have happened: the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed a case against journalist Raghav Bahl for alleged laundering of funds; the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued an order against Radhika Roy and Prannoy Roy, promoters of NDTV, restraining them from accessing the financial markets for two years and stripped them of directorships of their broadcast television channel; an FIR was filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against Anand Grover, well-known lawyer, and an NGO he runs, the Lawyers Collective for violating rules of accepting foreign funds; and police officer Sanjiv Bhatt was sentenced to life imprisonment in a 30-year-old case.

In Uttar Pradesh, the Adityanath government booked rapper Hard Kaur for sedition for social media posts against the chief minister and Mohan Bhagwat, the head of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Earlier, journalist Prashant Kanojia had been arrested for social media posts against the chief minister and is now out on bail. Kaur is based in the UK and thus out of reach, but had she been in India, she would be behind bars today.

In the first three cases, the government is not directly involved in the actions taken by independent authorities and institutions. The ED, SEBI and most of all the judiciary are supposed to be independent of direct government control. So to imply that they were directed to take action in a particular way would be incorrect. Nor would it be tenable to suggest that they should not face charges for any irregularities or crimes they may have committed.

Equally true, however, is the fact that Bahl, the Roys and Bhatt have, in different ways, been critical of Narendra Modi and his government. In the case of Bahl, after being a supporter at one time, he began to sharply criticise the Modi government's policies. NDTV is a fair and balanced channel, and even on occasion has leaned towards giving the right-wing some extra leeway, but is not seen as friendly enough and being part of the 'Lutyens' in-crowd'. As for Bhatt, he has been going for the jugular, raising questions about the culpability of Modi in the 2002 killings in Gujarat.

SEBI and ED have shown remarkable swiftness in coming down on the Roys and Bahl and in Bhatt's case, the Gujarat law enforcement system has shown no such efficiency in 180 other cases that have taken place between 2001-2016 – not a single policeman has been convicted.

Coming to the Hard Kaur case, her posts may be overly critical and even seen as offensive and defamatory, but in no way are they seditious. The Indian constitution has a wide definition of sedition but also provides exceptions – merely being critical of the government cannot be grounds for arrest, otherwise, journalists and many others would be in jail. (Though, given that much of the media is so complimentary about this government, criticism may well one day be seen as an 'anti-national' and seditious act.) There are many provisions that the UP government or indeed Adityanath in his personal capacity could have used to sue Kaur, but his police chose to go with a charge of sedition – which has become the first option of a force wanting to show it is taking action.

The swiftness and the hard line taken by

regulatory bodies, governments and even the courts on crimes or misdemeanours signal that from now on, no quarter can be expected from the system. SEBI must have scores of cases of corporate malfeasance – the newspapers are full of promoters, companies and mutual funds playing fast and loose with public funds – but there has hardly been any punitive action against any of them. The ED has alleged that Bahl illegally bought an apartment in London – for the princely sum of a little over Rs 2 crores, which will barely get a matchbox flat in Mumbai – which his wife says was declared in her tax returns. This could have been a routine tax enquiry and is hardly a big case for the Enforcement Directorate.

But this is not merely about the double standards of agencies – that big guns often get away lightly is a sad fact of life in India, as is government interference in the affairs of bodies that are supposed to be independent – the Supreme Court has called the CBI a ‘caged parrot’, and governments of all hues have used it in the past.

What should concern citizens is that critics of the government now will have to be alert to being singled out for attention and investigation. Politicians are becoming prickly about criticism on Twitter and the BJP is hardly alone in this. But the enthusiasm with which BJP governments use the law of sedition for what is at worst libellous is alarming. In January, the BJP-led government in Assam filed sedition charges against three people, including the eminent writer

Hiren Gohain for their remarks against the controversial Citizenship Bill.

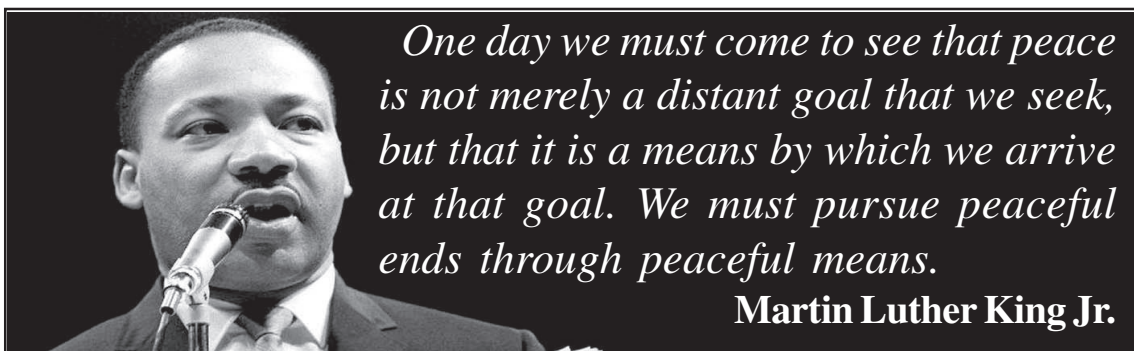
Does this mean that now even criticism of policies can be seen as a cry for revolt against the state? Will academics, activists and journalists who write and speak against the government face arrest, jail or worse, conviction? It is a frightening thought.

These actions are bound to have a chilling effect. There is no need to pass any pre-emptive law to curb freedom of speech and expression – the media has already rolled over and waits to be tickled and powerful public figures tend to be extremely wary of expressing any dissenting opinion. At the ground level, people are being lynched for their beliefs, diets or just for being from a particular religion. And when someone refuses to shut up, the heavy hand of the law falls upon them. Anyone can be picked up by the police for a Facebook post or tweet.

The establishment has let it be known that it is in no mood to be tolerant of criticism. With a second-time majority at the Centre and many state governments under its control, and an opposition numbed by its defeat or busy protecting its own shrinking turf, the BJP is not going to waste any time coming down on dissenters and other malcontents.

Rajnath Singh had warned that a new law on sedition would be enacted that would be more stringent – that was not poll-time rhetoric. There will be no room any more for the argumentative Indian – everyone is expected to fall in line.

Courtesy **The Wire**, 26.6.2019. 🌈



Jai Shri Ram a License to Kill?: #IndiaAgainstLynchTerror Trends

Adila Matra

A 24-year-old Muslim man named Tabrez Ansari was lynched by a mob in Jharkhand on the suspicion of theft, on 18 June. He was beaten for 18 hours straight. Three days later, he succumbed to injuries.

A video of the lynching – now gone viral – shows the attackers forcing him to chant ‘Jai Shri Ram’.

What The Leaders Said

Rahul Gandhi tweeted with the hashtag IndiaAgainstLynchTerror that was trending on Tuesday 25 June. He said that it is a blot on humanity.

Jharkhand minister CP Singh said on 24 June Monday that the trend to politicise such incidents is wrong. “Trends prevalent these days to associate such incidents with BJP, RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal,” the minister was heard saying to a news channel.

He also questioned the ‘authenticity’ of the video in which Ansari is seen being beaten up. “We cannot confirm the date of the video nor can we say if the voices are doctored until we conduct an investigation,” he said.

Ghulam Nabi Azad was one of the first few Opposition leaders who condemned the lynching. He said, “I request you to keep the new India to yourself and give us our old India where there was no hatred, anger or lynching.”

Hemant Soren, former chief minister of Jharkhand called the incident, “Horrific, shameful and cruel”. He also asked the Jharkhand government to take strict action at the earliest.

Can anyone be beaten to death over suspicion of anything? AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi condemned those who use ‘suspicion’ as ‘a ridiculous excuse’ to justify these brutal attacks.

“So much for *sabka vishwas* when we can be killed over mere ‘suspicions’,” he tweeted.

Is This New India?

And Twitterati also had a lot to say about the ‘New India’ that ‘tortures and kills’.

Journalist Rajdeep Sardesai said, “If this will not shake our conscience to the horrors of the communal poisoning of the mind, nothing will.”

Lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan also condemned the incident. “Is this the New India that the govt tomtoms? Mobs given free rein by police to torture & kill at will? No accountability or rule of law? [sic]” he tweeted.

Religious Freedom Report

Many pointed out the irony in India rejecting the US religious freedom report saying religious intolerance in India was growing under its right-wing government.

Congress spokesperson Shama Mohamed asked how BJP government can refute the US government report on minority safety when Muslims and Dalits are being openly lynched every other day.

It Is Communal

“Is Jai Sri Ram a license to kill,” asked one Twitter user.

Another Twitter user also pointed out intimidation using the chant of ‘Jai Shri Ram’ in the country. “I’m sure Government of India will pass strict law against this, once they are done heckling opposition MPs by chanting ‘Jai Shree Ram’ in Parliament,” he tweeted.

A Muslim Man in Jharkhand was made to chant ‘Jai Shri Ram’ and lynched to death.

Journalist Rifat Jawaid tweeted that the local SSP said that there’s no communal angle to Tabrez Ansari’s lynching. “So why was he forced to chant Jai Shri Ram, Jai Hanuman

before being killed?” he asked.

Journalist Sanjukta Basu said that “the Hindutva brigade, Modi bhakt, they enjoy violence against minorities particularly Muslims. Our outrage means nothing, Modi’s fake dialogue of winning trust means nothing.”

#IndiaAgainstLynchTerror

On Tuesday 25 June, #IndiaAgainstLynchTerror began trending on Twitter. Activist Umar Khalid tweeted that Tabrez Ansari’s lynching was the 18th lynching incident in just Jharkhand in the last three years. “BJP has incentivized hate and violence,” he said.

The official Twitter handle of Congress also tweeted, “The government should admit that hate crimes have sky rocketed under their rule and must come up with a plan to put an end to

such barbarianism”.

Twitter users also called for a candle light vigil against lynching and for justice in Tabrez’s case.

The silence is deafening. The apathy is alarming. And excuses like ‘suspicion of theft’ will not fly. The attackers filmed Ansari begging for life while others stood and watched. He was asked to chant ‘Jai Shri Ram’ after the mob realised he was a Muslim.

So, are the talks about inclusion of minorities and ‘*sabka vishwas*’, just lip service? Though FIRs have been filed and one accused has been arrested, it is not enough. It is high time the government acknowledges lynching as a threat and formulate strict laws, rather than brushing it aside as scattered incidents.

Courtesy **The Quint**, 24.6.2019. 

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2019-An Election sans Integrity?

M.G. Devasahayam

Election-2019: The Ground Truths

From the material dug out from various media sources certain ground truths have emerged as to how the Election-2019 was conducted and how people exercised their mandate. First and foremost, the polling itself was organised over 6 weeks, citing security reasons which are never explained. This helped the ruling party, which is also the richest party to easily carry on its campaign while the rest of the parties find their funds being spread thin.

Election Commission of India (ECI) took four weeks to decide on electoral complaints against the Prime Minister and the ruling party president, and 4 to 5 days to decide on almost identical complaints against others. Other politicians were held guilty for the same offences for which the PM and ruling party president were given clean chit, not once but several times.

Large number of names of people from marginalized and minority groups who are unlikely to vote for the ruling party—particularly lower castes, Muslims and Christians—were found to be missing from the voters list. So were the names of millions of women. Number is estimated at 130 million which is 14% and would have made all the difference between victory and defeat.

There was wide-spread practice of electoral bribery—people being given money for not casting their vote, or for voting in favour of the ruling party. Goons were pressed into service to force people to press the button in favour of a particular party. The army of ECI observers and micro-observers did not make any difference.

About 2 million Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were stated to be missing from the election commission. ECI has no explanation

for this. The records of the two public sector companies who manufacture EVMs say that they have been paid Rs 116 crore more than what the ECI says they have been paid according to declared contracts, raising the question of what work this extra payment was for, and who made it.

ECI says the EVMs can be programmed only once, making hacking unlikely. However, there are reports that it can be programmed several times. There are other reports saying that the EVM machine can be manipulated by connecting it to cell phones, blue-tooth devices, replacing parts of it, and other forms of manipulation, apart from physical replacement of it by other EVMs.

After the final vote was cast there were video reports from at least 10 different places of new EVMs being moved into strong rooms. ECI said these were reserve EVMs, but provided no evidence for this, and no explanation for why they need to be moved just before counting rather than at the time of voting, which was, in some cases, weeks later. They also provided no explanation as to why, as required by the EC rules, there were no security officers accompanying these vehicles, and why these vehicles were often un-numbered, unofficial vehicles. Doubt arises as to whether these are part of the 2 million missing EVMs! There have also been reports of irregularities in the counting process.

Another media source says that it had deep-dived into two sets of data shared by the ECI; first, the voter turnout/votes polled data on the EVMs and second, the votes counted data and had found serious discrepancies in the two sets of data in 373 constituencies which went to polls in the first four phases of the election. When this source raised the issue of

discrepancies with the ECI the ticker mentioning “final voter turnout” mysteriously disappeared from the EC’s website (eciresults.nic.in.) When asked why the ticker and the data have been removed from the website, there was no response.

Machine-voting has no Integrity

In India, polling is done with machines (EVM) which is a technology device. The integrity of EVMs has been challenged from the time they were introduced in 1999. It flared up in 2009 soon after UPA’s repeat victory in the Parliamentary elections. The most articulated challenge to EVM’s integrity came from those aligned to BJP. The most active ‘activist’ who had launched a virtual war against EVM was GVL Narasimha Rao, BJP spokesperson turned Rajya Sabha MP. Grounds on which he trashed EVMs were many: the whole world has discarded similar EVMs; use of EVM is unconstitutional and illegal; EVM software and hardware are not safe; EVMs are sitting ducks; insider fraud, storing and counting are concerns; ECI is clueless on technology and there is trust deficit.

Developing these grounds, he published a book titled “Democracy at Risk–Can we trust our EVM?” (2010) for which BJP founder and its senior most leader-LK Advani-wrote an approving foreword! For effect he added: “I personally regard it significant that Germany, technologically, one of the most advanced countries of the world, has become so wary of EVMs as to ban their use altogether.” What is more, he strongly advocated Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) to be introduced immediately. Maverick Subramanian Swamy jumped into the fray and challenged the EVM in the Delhi High Court and then took it to the Supreme Court and got the order to have VVPAT in every EVM vide its judgment dated 08.10.2013. This *ipso facto* meant that EVM should be used for voting and all the printed slips in the VVPAT machine should be counted

before declaring results.

But with BJP victory in 2014 election EVM haters became EVM worshippers. Nevertheless, pursuant to the 8.10.2013 order of the Supreme Court and other directives ECI arranged for all EVMs to be accompanied with VVPAT for the 2019 general elections. Main purpose was to bring in accuracy, verifiability and transparency in the casting and counting of votes. Without counting of VVPAT paper slips in a significant percentage of polling stations in each assembly constituency, the objectives of verifiability and transparency in the democratic process would remain unrealized.

But, in defiance of this basic principle vide its letter dated 13.02.2018 ECI directed state chief electoral officers to mandatorily verify VVPAT paper slips in only one randomly selected polling station in each assembly constituency. This defeated the very object of installing VVPATs in all EVMs which tantamount to non-implementation of Supreme Court Order.

ECI trashes Constitutional Conduct Group

Hence on 10-04-2018 Forum for Electoral Integrity (FEI), of which I am the convener wrote a detailed letter to the ECI explaining the need for a much higher sample for verification so that EVM-voting adheres to basic ‘democratic principles’: (a) All essential steps in the elections should be subject to public examinability; (b) Ordinary citizens should have knowledge to check the essential steps in the election process and (c) There should be transparency in the counting of votes and ascertainment of the results reliably.

FEI therefore, suggested that VVPAT slips must be simultaneously counted for a sample size of at least 25% of the polling stations in an Assembly Constituency with the samples drawn randomly from the different strata and verified with the electronic count. If any

variation was found then the entire VVPAT slips in the constituency should be counted and tallied with the electronic count before declaring the result. This would have brought about substantial degree of integrity in the 2019 Parliament election. But that was not to be!

ECI's reply dated 01-5-2018 signed by Sudeep Jain, Deputy Election Commissioner (DEC) in charge of EVM was typically bureaucratic and only gave technical, administrative, legal and physical security arguments in favour of EVMs. Not a whimper about democracy principles and electoral integrity emphasized upon in FEI's letter. This matter therefore went before the Constitutional Conduct Group (CCG) of retired civil servants many of whom have conducted, monitored and observed elections during their service. This Group held a well-attended Conclave on the subject in Delhi on 8th June 2018 and thereafter submitted a Memorandum on the subject to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). On CEC's advice a brainstorming session on the subject was held on July 21st at IIM, Bangalore.

ECI had taken the interaction seriously and was present in strength led by CEC OP Rawat. Others were Prof. Sahni of IIT, Delhi who is Chairman of EC Technical Expert Committee, Sudeep Jain, DEC, Karnataka CEO and CMD, BEL and a senior representative from ECIL, the last two being manufacturers of EVM and VVPAT.

Sudeep Jain made a detailed presentation on EVM & VVPAT. This was followed by my intervention wherein I contended that the EVMs may be devices of technology excellence. But they do they comply with democracy principles. It was therefore suggested that VVPAT slips be simultaneously counted for a sample size of at least 25% of the polling booths (VVPATs) in an Assembly Constituency with the samples drawn randomly from the different strata and verified

with the electronic count. If any variation was found then the entire VVPAT slips should be counted and tallied with the electronic count before declaring the result.

Prof. Sahni endorsed our suggestion. CEC Rawat was very positive and promised that ECI will work closely with CCG in the compliance of principles of democracy and electoral integrity. But this was not to be, because DEC Sudeep Jain was already on the job of sabotaging the whole thing as part of a pre-set agenda and saw to it that nothing happened till CEC Rawat retired on 1st December, 2018.

While so, an expert opinion on statistical sample size from Dr. SK Nath, former Director General, Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) and an international consultant was sent to ECI. In the meantime, one of CCG members Ashok Vardhan Shetty published a paper on the subject in *The Hindu*. ECI formed an expert committee and nominated Ashok as a member and also invited Dr. Nath. The first meeting of the committee was held on October 4, 2018 at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), New Delhi. Dr. Abhay Bhatt of ISI and Dr. Rajiva Karandikar of Chennai Mathematical Institute (CMI) who attended the meeting said that the sample size needed for India as a whole (10.35 lakh EVMs) was only 479 and that the sample size may be treated as constant as it doesn't vary much with population size. Ashok Shetty dissented and Dr. Nath also didn't agree. But Sudeep Jain ensured that ECI stuck to its one booth per Assembly constituency principle completely oblivious of public confidence and integrity of elections.

ECI perjures in Supreme Court

From the beginning I knew nothing would come out of CCG interaction with ECI. So, myself along with KP Fabian, another member of CCG did lots of research and filed a PIL in the Supreme Court duly supported by Dr. Nath's expert opinion taking Assembly

constituency as population with a 98% confidence level of tamper-free and a bias-free election. Taking average of 240 polling stations per assembly constituency (which is mostly the case) at least 92 polling stations have to be cross-verified by manual counting which works out to be well over 30%.

SC admitted our WP in early January, 2019 and issued Notice to ECI. Faced with irrefutable facts ECI avoided filing a counter and when it did it was all humbug-the same parrot-like narration of the technological and administrative arrangements without even touching upon the democracy principles of examinability, knowledge of the voter and transparency in counting. It was at this stage that 21 political parties under the 'leadership' of Chandrababu Naidu entered the scene by filing a separate PIL seeking 50% VVPAT slip count.

Sudeep Jain filed a common counter affidavit making blatantly false claims. Among other falsehoods, the affidavit claims that there had not been any mismatch in the VVPAT and EVM tallies conducted in the past two years, and that the ECI had only received one complaint about a VVPAT recording an incorrect vote since 2013. Sudeep Jain also made the absurd claim that 50% VVPAT verification would delay the counting process by up to five or six days whereas even under paper ballot system with 100% counting almost all results including large parliament constituencies were declared within 10 to 16 hours of start of counting.

But the 'height of perjury' goes to the false claim of a non-existent report of the ISI in favour of a miniscule sample size. Sudeep Jain's affidavit notes that a three-member committee comprising Abhay G Bhatt of the ISI, Rajeeva Karandikar of the CMI and Onkar Prasad Ghosh of CSO authored the study. The so-called ISI Report, taking election in the entire country as a single event, claimed that tallying of 479 randomly selected booths was

enough to verify the fairness of the elections above 99.99 confidence level. How absurd!

On verification it transpired this "Committee" was set up by Sudeep Jain-by writing a letter, not to the Director of ISI, Kolkata but to Prof. Bhat, the head of its Delhi unit, asking for "associating with the commission and collaborating towards resolving the issues elaborated above...". It did not ask ISI to form an expert committee; it only asked Professor Bhatto collaborate with the ECI in examining the issue. An RTI reply shows that this letter addressed to Prof. Bhat was received but ISI has no further record of any action taken or the formation of a formal "ISI" committee as per the Standard Operating Procedure. The composition of the body seems to be a private decision worked out by Sudeep Jain and Prof. Bhat, without any ISI process and the report therefore is a private one and not that of ISI.

To quote the noted election security expert Bruce Schenier: "Elections serve two purposes. The first, and obvious, purpose is to accurately choose the winner. But the second is equally important: to convince the loser. To the extent that an election system is not transparently and auditably accurate, it fails in that second purpose." Tallying large number of VVPAT slips with electronic count is to convince people of the integrity and fairness of the elections. **Even without any demand ECI should have done this *suo motto*. Not doing so even after widespread public suspicion about EVM and 21 opposition parties as well as civil society asking for it is a clear case of compromised integrity.**

Supreme Court renders Kangaroo justice

Supreme Court had no time for mundane matters like democracy principles, public confidence and electoral integrity. This could be seen from a bare reading of the "Judgment" dated 08-04-2019. Herewith is the operative

portion:

“.....our considered view is that having regard to the totality of the facts of the case and need to generate the greatest degree of satisfaction in all with regard to the full accuracy of the election results, the number of EVMs that would now be subjected to verification so far as VVPAT paper trail is concerned would be 5 per Assembly Constituency or assembly Segments in a Parliamentary Constituency instead of what is provided by Guideline No. 16.6, namely, one machine per Assembly Constituency or Assembly Segment in a Parliamentary Constituency.....”

Five VVPAT machines per Assembly constituency increased the sample size from microscopic 0.5% to miniscule 2% whereas we had asked for reasonable 30% and political parties 50%! If this is not Kangaroo justice what else is? We and the political parties filed Review Petition in the SC with solid evidence of EVM-VVPAT fraud and malfunctioning in the first three phases of Election-2019 as well as perjury committed by DEC Sudeep Jain regarding the “ISI Report.” The Court summarily dismissed it on 07-05-2019 without even listening to the senior advocates who had lined up for argument!

In utter desperation 21 political parties pleaded with ECI to at least manually count the measly 2% VVPAT slips upfront and do the verification before the main electronic count. It would have served some purpose if this had been done front-end as requested. But ECI rudely rejected this very genuine demand and pushed the “verification” to the back-end well past midnight. **In the event, NOT even one VVPAT slip was counted and matched before the entire electronic count was done, results announced and everything including singing and dancing was over.** Mainstream media behaved as mercenaries heralding this farce without even once

questioning the integrity or fairness of the electoral process. Now there are avalanche of reports about mismatch and excess counting in many booths and constituencies and ECI is unable to respond. And the mainstream media continues to be deaf, dumb and mute! Please see a shocking case of excess counting in Madhya Pradesh. [Box]

What is Electoral Integrity?

Election is the essence of democracy. Integrity is described as “uncompromising adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.” Electoral integrity has certain basic ingredients:

- ❖ Impeccable Electoral Roll without leaving out a single eligible voter.

- ❖ Level playing field in terms of availability of funds and enforcement of Rules/Codes. Through deceitful and legally untenable means (Electoral Bonds) ruling party commandeered huge funds for itself while depriving the opposition.

- ❖ Ethical voting i.e. no buying and selling of votes or vote capturing.

- ❖ Polling and counting complying with essential ‘democracy principles.’

Election-2019 did not even have one. What is worse, technology has transformed people’s mandate into a machine-made verdict!

Tailpiece

In his seminal work “The Oak and the Calf” Alexander Solzhenitsyn famously wrote: *“It is infinitely difficult to begin when mere words must move a great block of inert matter. But there is no other way if none of the material strength is on your side. And a shout in the mountains has been known to cause an avalanche.”* I have mere words and no material strength. And there is no hope of any avalanche. Yet, if this expose can facilitate a rapid return to the good-old ballot-paper system that fulfills all ‘democracy principles’ and is prevalent in all genuine democracies in the world that would be reward enough.

From: <snathias@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019, 00:01

Subject: EVM Mismatch- Lok Sabha Constituency Ujjain (MP)

To: <complaints@eci.gov.in>, <ceo_madhyapradesh@eci.gov.in>, <chiefelectoralofficermp@gmail.com>, <dmujjain@mp.gov.in>

Subject: EVM Mismatch in Lok Sabha Constituency Ujjain (22-MP), Legislative Assembly Constituency Badnagar (218), Polling Station No.136

Sir,

1. I am placing the following documents in your kind notice:

i. EVM Count Sheet in respect of Polling Station no 136, signed by the Asstt Returning Officer, Badnagar, Lok Sabha Constituency Ujjain (MP)

ii. Ballot Account sheet of the Presiding officer, Polling Station no. 136,

iii. Electoral Roll of the Polling Station no 136,

2. According to EVM Count Sheet, the no of votes counted by the EVM of Polling Station no 136 is: 841 (BJP: 630, Congress: 186, others: 25). According to the Ballot Account of the Presiding Officer, the no of voters in the polling station is 481 (477 voters registered in the Electoral Roll+ 4 EDC (Election Duty Certificate Voters). I checked the no of voters in the Electoral Roll of the Polling Station no 136, which is available on the internet. According to the Electoral roll, there are 477 registered voters, as the Presiding officer has recorded in his Ballot Account.

3. The fact that EVM recorded 841 votes, when there are only 481 voters who could have cast their votes in this polling station, is prima facie evidence of serious fraud in the election.

4. The Election Commission announced the result, even in the face of this glaring mismatch, without placing in the public domain any clarification on this mismatch. The Election Commission did not place in the public domain whether there was a VVPAT count to match this EVM, and if so, with what result. Election Commission, on the other hand, made a public announcement that VVPAT counts have not revealed any mismatch.

5. As a citizen, I am interested in a free and fair poll, the very foundation of our democracy and the Constitution. I, therefore, most humbly request for a clarification on this serious mismatch,

Yours faithfully,

Surendra Nath

[IAS (Retd), former Secretary to Government of India]

Reply from ECI

From: PGRS Cell, ECI <complaints@eci.gov.in>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019, 11:08

Subject: Re: EVM Mismatch- Lok Sabha Constituency Ujjain (MP)

To: <snathias@gmail.com>


Dear Mr. Surendra Nath,

This is to inform you that we have raised a complaint to the concern officers through our NGS portal; also, we are personally forwarding this Email to Concern officer for quick response.

I would request you to wait for officer reply or complaint Revert.

Thanks & Regards,

Election commission of India

Mr. M.G. Devasahayam is a former I.A.S. Officer. 

Does the Indian Left have a future?

Parliamentary communists have descended from the high of 2004 to the low of 2019

Ramachandra Guha

In the third week of May I found myself in Kerala. The Lok Sabha results were due in a few days; it seemed clear that, for the first time since Independence, the communists would be in single digits in the lower House of Parliament. It thus so happened that I was in India's sole Left-ruled state on the eve of their eclipse as a national force.

I had come to the state to speak at the annual conference of the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad. The KSSP was founded in the early 1960s by a group of teachers and activists. Its slogan is 'Science for Social Revolution'. Over the years, it has done impressive work in disseminating scientific literature to citizens, and in cultivating a rational, evidence-based approach to solving social problems. It has published hundreds of books and pamphlets, and been very active in the environmental and popular health movements. I had long followed their work, and admired what they had done.

I took a flight from Bangalore, and was met at Thiruvananthapuram by three activists of the KSSP. Two were university teachers, in physics and economics respectively; the third worked in the state electricity board. All displayed a keen interest in public affairs and a strong commitment to social justice — this is common among teachers and public servants in Kerala, but rarer in other parts of India. We drove to the town of Pathanamthitta, where the conference was to be held. We stopped *en route* at a wayside Indian Coffee House, which, like all branches of this co-operative organization, had a picture above the till of the legendary communist leader, A.K. Gopalan.

The annual conference of the KSSP is held by rotation in each of the 14 districts of Kerala. The present conference was organized by the Pathanamthitta district branch, and hosted in the premises of a high school named after Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. About a thousand delegates had come, from across Kerala. We ate together in a common dining hall, washing our dishes afterwards.

The KSSP is not a party organization. It has sometimes crossed swords with the state unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) — most famously during the Silent Valley controversy of the 1980s. Many of its members probably vote for the Congress (though few, if any, for the Bharatiya Janata Party). Nonetheless, in its origins and evolution, the KSSP was deeply influenced by the Left movement in Kerala. The egalitarian and inclusive spirit that I saw manifested this influence very clearly.

There is no organization like the KSSP in any other state in India. Not even in West Bengal, where the communists were in power for a far longer stretch. This may be because Bengali Marxism has always been inflected with a *bhadralok* idiom; it is literary and intellectual in nature, whereas Malayali Marxism is more pragmatic and down-to-earth.

If, in electoral terms, 2019 marks the nadir of the communist movement in India, the high point was 2004, when the communist parties had more than 60 seats in Parliament. Bengalis still lament Jyoti Basu not becoming prime minister in 1996. But, in retrospect, a far greater mistake was committed in 2004, when

the CPI (M) and the Communist Party of India did not join the United Progressive Alliance government headed by Manmohan Singh. The United Front government of 1996-98 was in a minority, and even if Jyoti Basu had headed it, it would still have fallen within a couple of years. On the other hand, the UPA government ran for two full terms; had the communists joined the cabinet, and taken charge of such portfolios as education, health, and rural development, they could have helped improve people's lives, while increasing the party's visibility and profile across the country. Tragically, the CPI (M) was bound by Leninist dogma, which did not permit it to take up a supporting role in a 'bourgeois government'.

At the national level, the parliamentary communists have descended from the high of 2004 to the low of 2019. Meanwhile, they are now out of office in Tripura and West Bengal, and are extremely unlikely to regain power in either of these states. Since Kerala usually alternates between the Left and the Congress, when assembly elections are next held the communists should find themselves in Opposition here as well.

In India today, some famous writers and artists think of themselves as being on the Left. So do some established scholars. However, in terms of its influence on politics and public life, the Indian Left has never been in a worse place. Can this change? Or is this political decline irreversible?

As I write this, against the backdrop of their near-rout in the last Lok Sabha elections, it is hard to think of the Left ever regaining the political salience it once had. But history acts in odd and unexpected ways. Who would have imagined that socialism would experience a resurgence in that most capitalist of countries, the United States of America? India remains a land marked by pervasive social inequalities. In theory, if not in practice, it remains fertile ground for the Left.

If the Left in India hopes or wishes to rise up from the ashes, then the first thing it must do is to become more Indian. In 1920, shortly before the Communist Party of India was established, the Mumbai Marxist, S.A. Dange wrote a pamphlet exalting Lenin over Gandhi. Ever since, Indian communists have found their heroes in a country other than India. They have venerated, in turn, the Germans Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the Russians V.I. Lenin and Josef Stalin, Mao Zedong of China, Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam, the Cuban Fidel Castro, and the Venezuelan Hugo Chávez.

The problem with these foreigners is not just that they were foreigners. They were also totalitarians, who believed in a one-party State run by themselves. The likes of Lenin and Mao had no understanding of India or of Indian society; nor an appreciation of the virtues of multiparty democracy either. By worshipping them at the expense of home-grown thinkers such as Gandhi and Ambedkar, the communists found themselves out of sync with Indian realities.

Younger readers may not be aware that, parallel to the growth of communism in the 1920s, an indigenous socialist tradition also took shape in India. Its exemplars included Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Rammanohar Lohia, and Jayaprakash Narayan, all of whom had a more original understanding of Indian society than their communist contemporaries. The thinking of Kamaladevi on gender, of Lohia on class, of JP on political decentralization, was far sharper than of S.A. Dange or E.M.S. Namboodiripad on these subjects. This is because the socialists took their clues from what they observed on the ground, whereas the communists mechanically followed the path laid down by Lenin and Stalin.

Is it too late for Indian communists to learn from the heritage of Indian socialists? They can likewise seek to indigenize themselves,

and perhaps even adopt the 'socialist' label. To the 21st-century mind, the word 'communist' is indelibly associated with tyranny and authoritarianism. On the other hand, the word 'socialist' is more benign. True, it has currently been misappropriated by a family firm run by Yadavs in Uttar Pradesh. But it may be worth the effort to recapture the label, and rework it to more worthy ends.

In the wake of the Lok Sabha elections, there is talk of the need to 'unify' the different communist parties, and bring them under one

platform. Were that to happen, the new, unified, party would need a new name. I suggest it junk the word 'communist', and characterize itself as 'democratic socialist' instead. That might be a modest first step towards a renewal of the Left, opening out for it a future in Indian politics, whereas at present it only has a past.

Sh. Ramachandra Guha is a historian and a leading writer.

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Courtesy **The Telegraph** 

The 'summer' of the Right and the 'fall' of the Left

Dr. A. Raghu Kumar

In the English literary symbolic tradition '*summer*' and '*fall*' represent not only just seasons, but something more. The 'summer' has been symbolized as a child or a woman wearing a crown of corn ears and bearing a sheaf in one hand and a sickle in the other. The symbolic animal of 'summer' is a lion or a dragon. It is the time of romance and infinite potential. The colour of 'summer' is yellow and temperatures move from mild to warm. If spring is the time of birth, then summer is the time of youth where one moves through the world with godlike ease and comfort [Source: www.symbolism.org Copyright© 2001 John Frain]. '*Fall*' is a season where life is a reaped and winding down, middle age and a time to count one's blessings. 'Fall' represents a time for transformations, both personal and environmental, a season drenched in tradition, and it is the perfect time to reflect and embrace change. We leave the summer heat behind and blooming flowers are replaced by crisp leaves. Symbolism is etched in the spiritual fabric of 'fall'. Many traditions have been passed down and modified over the years. As you look back into your heritage you may find that 'fall' means a lot more than

you expected. What is often been seen as a morbid subject, '*fall*' *has given a positive spin to death*. While passing of time and death of a loved one will cause sadness and mourning, 'fall' reminds us that death doesn't always have to leave us sad [From: lzmarieauthor.com, Source: <https://www.thelivingurn.com>].

One day one young friend posed a question to me: 'Sir, I am doing an experiment in the lab for about few months. But I am not getting the intended result. The experiment is giving me anxious moments! What shall I do?' I casually said: 'If the inputs and conditions of experiments are correct according to you, you must accept the result as correct and must discard your hypotheses.' My younger friend stared at me askance and left the scene with a sigh of disbelief, probably finding my answer as incoherent. But that is how I understood the law of hypothesis and thesis. If your hypothesis repeatedly fails in a lab, you cannot discard the result as incorrect, but check the correctness of hypotheses.

Shattered by the electoral verdict of the Indian common man in May 2019, the left is struggling hard to find the answers. Going into

huddle at times and popping out occasionally, they blame the EVMs, the Hindutva forces and the consequent polarization of the electorate. They even blame the Congress and many other actors in the political play but rarely look into themselves. Why don't they examine themselves? Why don't they check the facts of the history for a moment? After all, their thesis was also humanly made! 'Communism', 'socialism' and many such projects promise good and wonderful distant lands. Marx is no doubt a Prometheus or a Moses promising us leading to that El Dorado. Yes, he said: *'The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways: the point however, is to change it,'* [Theses on Feuerbach, Thesis-XI]. But the fact remains that the history of the philosophy of interpreters did not end by then, and in fact it just began!

No idea that enters human experience would be obliterated totally without a trace. 'Secularism' is also one such idea which made its entry into political lexicon in many participative democracies. Marxists have gone a bit further in that direction by constructing their theory and action on the '*scientific*' foundations of dialectical and materialistic approach to history, a sojourn beyond the mere 'secularism'. Here the categories such as 'idea', 'spirituality' and 'religions' are discarded. They upended Hegel, or they thought so. But even after its appearance on the world stage for over a century back, 'dialectical and materialistic' approach did not displace spirituality or religion from human rationality. Moreover, the experience of world citizens for the past decade or two would point to its growing phenomenon. 'Dialectical materialism' did not make a serious dent into human nature. But the thinking that we, the intellectuals, forming the higher layers of the society, got a Midas touch and epiphanous revelation by initiation into Marxism, and that we need to pity the common man for his

poverty of thought had gone deep into the Marxist intellectual sections. They feel they are carrying the burden of saving this poor common folk! There are several challenges before the Marxists or communists. One such is 'religion'. Religion is not just the '*sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions*'! It is much more than '*illusory happiness*' and '*the opium of the people*'! The '*abolition*' of religion is no more in sight and on the contrary the sceptre of religion started haunting the communist world now with much more vigour and intensity. In fact, it re-emerged as a powerful contender for its space challenging the so called enlightenment '*rationality*'.

The other challenge before the Marxist praxis is '*nationalism*', '*an ideology and movement characterized by the promotion of the interests of a particular nation, especially with the aim of gaining over its homeland*' [the definition of nationalism is taken from <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/>]. From the eighteenth century onwards it has grown as a countervailing power and a road-block against onward march of forming universal homogenous groups such as '*class*.' It is true that its radical variants, either on the Left or on the Right had problematic patterns. But the two World Wars in the first half of the twentieth century questioned the universal human rationality beyond return. The freedom struggles of peoples of many nations from the mid of 19th century and through the Indian freedom struggle created serious questions of universalism. The crumbling Soviet Bloc of late 1980s fortified the idea of '*nationalist*' demands. Even those politics that are considered fairly evolved in the democratic process viz., of the British, or the France, or most of the Europe or the US could not grow beyond '*nationalism*' as the current history demonstrates. Whenever the '*nationalist*'

demanded space, universal narratives suffered badly. How do we redefine the appeal for '*working men of all countries unite!*'? How far-cry is it now in the given socio-political reality? '*The spectre of communism*' stopped haunting the Europe long back, now counter-narratives are in fact haunting Communism! Though the world had seen its threatening shades in the Hitler's Germany, nationalism continues to appeal to the people.

'*Globalization*' could be understood more as a missed opportunity for the Left's universal claims. Before globalization could settle down, it was challenged powerfully by regional aspirations. Regional aspirations forcibly entered the space at all international fora, challenging the possible emergence of a universal human being. Contrary to claims of universality, the emerging trend is protecting the regional aspirations – **the local**. With regionalism also emerged the idea of social relativism - cultural, religious etc. '*Glocalization*' joined the social science dictionary without much ado. The Left in fact actively defended the regional rights!

Relocating '*socialism*' or '*communism*', even within the Indian roots, is not so an easy task. Even when, as utopians and dreamers, we endeavour to paint an image of these egalitarian ideas, the internal contradictions are enormous. By conceding the probability of resolving even these contradictions by a higher ideal, the first requirement is that - all these different shades of the Left should be ready to accede some of their territory for others. Given the experience of the Marxist faith in the supremacy of their theory and practice, the future remains uncertain. Primarily, every shade, within the left of the centre, has to come out of the illusion that their '*Guru*' and their '*Book*' is only absolutely correct. Each must be ready to admit the insufficiency of each theory and the merit of others. It becomes a very big challenge to the Marxists, and in fact

to a greater degree, even to Socialists. There must also be material contingency even for such tactical reconciliation. Who is ready for this allowance for others?

Being an ostrich of '*class construction*', the Left ignored the suffocation of the '**second sex**' for a long time. The feminist movement however could make some sense to the Left. But in India, the problem of 'caste' has become a greater challenge. As usual the Indian Left refused to take into cognizance the problem of 'caste' in India for a long time. When it started understanding its significance and tried some allowance to the Ambedkarite narratives in its construction, though not internally convinced, the social dialectics underwent some more twists. Even though Lohia was initially a critic of the Marxist 'socialism' and made great foundational contribution to the localized understanding of it, and during later part of his political career, even wished to work along with Communists and the Ambedkarites, there is no evidence to argue that Lohia's arguments on caste or socialism or history were ever considered seriously by 'the other side'. Lohia, a brilliant and a rare original scholar, died as a disappointed soul with the Left's indifference. And in the meanwhile, the social forces are undergoing a process of advancement and nationalism is overtaking the space. The Left lagged in this process a generation behind. After all, the history cannot stagnate in theory!

Indian communists fought a relatively easier fight, though not a friendly one, with Congress. Most of the higher layers of the Congress obliquely recognized communists as progressive thinkers, except when it comes to dealing with those militant sections of it. Congress in itself had, and continues to have, sufficient left-wing sympathizers. But the post-2000 narratives are not that easy. The left demolished the relatively '*centrist*' political ideologies like Congress etc., over a period of

time, but couldn't occupy the space so evicted by them. Science doesn't permit the existence of vacuum in the nature for longer periods, and some matter always waits for occupying the space. The space created by the Left and the Janata Pariwar, dismantling the 'centrist' positions, without a scheme or means of occupying the same, in the meanwhile, has now been successfully occupied by the Right. Now the struggle would not be as easy as it was during the Congress heyday.

Dear Left, what next? Since my younger days when I read Marx's Theses on Feuerbach, certain doubts always were lingering in me. Marx said: *'The question whether objective truth can be attained by human thinking is not a question of theory but is a **practical** question. It is in **practice** that man must prove the truth, that is, the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or unreality of thinking which is isolated from **practice** is a purely scholastic question'* (Theses on Feuerbach, Thesis-II).

*'Social life is essentially **practical**. All mysteries which lead theory astray into mysticism find their rational solution in human **practice** and in the comprehension of his **practice**.'* [Theses on Feuerbach, Thesis-VIII]. *'The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways: the point however, is to change it,'* [Theses on Feuerbach, Thesis-XI]. We may find the stress on 'practice' or 'change' in these narratives. Post-Marx, not only Marxists, almost all the political philosophies went in a mad rush for practice.

Even when reading 'The Communist Manifesto' I was swarmed by doubts and incredulities. Its doors were opened with a big-bang - *'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.'* I have been baffling with understanding this proposition for over

decades. As a broad categorization, the evolutionary changes of societies may be said to have certain generalizations. But a universal declaration of this nature could not go well within me. 'The middle classes' that have become a significant political force in the mid-20th century does not fit into the descriptions. See the projection - *'... entire sections of the ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or at least threatened in their conditions of existence. ...'* *'Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class.'* But post-Marxist history defied Marxist logic. In nation after nation, the proletariat happily compromised with the bourgeoisie power structures. In some advanced industrial countries, they even refused to recognize the international character of the working class. *'What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.'* The history of American trade union movement makes a different reading; the 'grave-diggers' have actually turned out to be the guardians of the capitalist fort! The continuous migration of faith even among the Indian communists from industrial workforce to agrarian labourers to tribal's deep lands also points its finger to the crisis in theory.

Change! Everything flows! You could not step twice into the same river; for other waters are ever flowing on to you! Heraclitus! Change! Practice! These mantras dominated all the other theories also. But the Newton's laws of force also point towards the inherent nature of '*inertia*' in the phenomenal world. Change and practice are not so easy terms to be accommodated without challenge. In an individual or in a system of thought, a continuous urge for action may not be so healthy. Not only misplaced stress on action

and even the fatigue of meaningless action take over the individuals and the societies! Except for barren adherents, doubts inundate the thinking and experiencing mind.

Understanding the failure is as important as celebrating the success. I have not started writing this as response to Ramachandra Guha's '*Does the Indian Left have a future?*' [22.06.2019 The Telegraph]. I started this contemplative course after about two weeks or so of the people's decisive mandate and after going through the analyses of various intellectuals, right and left. Some celebrated the forward march of the Right through wonderful paeans, and some others scribbled elegies for the Left. Guha writes: '*If the Left in India hopes or wishes to rise up from the ashes, then the first thing it must do is to become more Indian. In 1920, shortly before the Communist Party of India was established, the Mumbai Marxist, S.A. Dange wrote a pamphlet exalting Lenin over Gandhi. Ever since, Indian Communists have found their heroes in a country other than India*'. He further said: '*The problem with these foreigners is not just that they were foreigners. They were also totalitarians*'. There were references to the indigenous socialist tradition, and personalities like Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Rammanohar Lohia, Jayaprakash Narain etc. '*In the wake of the Lok Sabha elections, there is talk of the need to "unify" the different communist parties, and bring them under one platform,*' Guha hopes. The need to move from the position of Communist to Democratic Socialist is contemplated, with a hope that it would be 'a modest first step' towards a renewal.

'*Doubt*' is the foundation of all the growth narratives. If we have no doubts, even while failures are glaring at us, and we repeatedly re-affirm our faith in the theory and blame only the practicing individuals for all failures, secure

'**The Book**' beyond criticism, it is Ahankara. Ahankara refuses the need for reflexive processes. Who needs homilies, more so, in the category of persons who firmly believe that they attained the highest realization? Can an *Advaitin* be convinced about some errors in his thinking? It equally applies to Marxists. A person or community or institution which entertains a *doubt* about the correctness of a practice or theory may venture for introspection. However, if a strong adherent had a strong faith that his theory can never go wrong, it is the end of it. It accepts no criticism or suggestion. Marxists all over the world suffer from this intellectual arrogance. History did not teach them anything. The historical experience of USSR, or of the most of the East Europe or China never caused any such need for introspection in the Left. Instead there are more confirmations, re-assurances and re-affirmations of faith in **the Book**.

Where is the possibility of rethinking? Any system, of theory or practice, has to have either '*an internal critic*' or hear '*the external critic*'. When we refuse the hearing for both, where is the way out? Does the Left need a piece of advice? A group of people who think they had formulated their theory on the basis of historical experience, refuse further inputs of the same historical experience. The left has developed quite a defensive mechanism; if they succeed they claim success to their effort. If they fail, they attribute it to somebody else. Capitalism fails them. Consumerism fails them. Globalization fails them. Congress fails them in India. Any other person except '**I**'!

The idea of reconciling various contradictory theories has always been the intellectual persuasion. Reconciling Marx and Gandhi, Gandhi and Ambedkar, Marx and Ambedkar, and Lohia and Ambedkar etc., are some of these wishful contemplative exercises doing the rounds in the academic world. For the

cadre-level followers, and the commoners, these endeavors may not offer much difficulty. But for those who think they are experts of those theories and consider themselves as serious disciples of their Gurus, it is a tough challenge. The probability of success of these endeavours is also very much suspect. The hitherto history of the idea has not offered any such reasonable success. Though temporarily they appear to have reconciled, in the absence of synthesis arising out of historical experience, they repel with greater vigour and vengeance at times. It is better for each idea to work out its own path at its own cost, succeed or perish or learn lessons.

We may at times, in our Indian context, refer to Jayaprakash Narain's post-emergency political experiment. But the nuances of it need to be examined with higher rigor. The taboo of '*political untouchability*' of the Right (Jan Sangh) had been successfully lifted by that experiment. It also demonstrated another lesson of history i.e., for dismantling Congress, the immediate Frankenstein Monster, many shades of the left refused to cognize the waiting Right, for an opportunity to come out of the miasma of the patricide. The space created


by the eviction of the Congress has been successfully occupied by the Right, leaving the Left fretting and fuming!

The question whether it is the end of the road for the left can definitely be answered in negative. Nothing ends anything. But, certainly there are some ringing warning bells, indicating that the time is ticking away. The left needs to understand or re-appreciate the role of 'religion' or 'spiritual pursuits of man', 'nationalism', 'regionalism' and 'cultural relativity' along with 'caste' – the specific Indian problem. Historical experience shall be the guiding factor, but not the theory alone. A morning message posted by a friend read like this: '*You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending!*'

But time is merciless; it moves on. As Omar Khayyam, philosophically said:

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,

*Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.*

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The Ideology of Radical Humanism has the Potentialities to Emancipate Mankind from Drudgery

The most irritable question that we Indians are facing is how to emancipate Indians from dreadful social and cultural life atmosphere that prevails in India.

To achieve the goal of emancipation of Indians late Roy had founded the Indian Renaissance Institute in 1946. The main aims and objects of the above institute were to come out from the twilight of long period of social and cultural stagnation. The intellectual efforts to rescue the positive contention of thought and learning to inspire great intellectual and cultural resurgence are the crying need of today. These contributions are the heritage of Indian people who have remained in continuous strapped in ignorance and superstition glorified as the spiritual genius of India. The people should come into their heritage if they are to occupy the place in the modern world and contribute to its reconstruction as the home of truly free mankind.

The ancient Indian learning and teachings of savages of antiquity have been come down to us heavily adulterated with spurious matters of subsequent interpretation. These are known to us mostly through tendentious interpretation, the original are almost lost. Several bright chapters of India's past history are practically forgotten. They must be recovered if the intellectual achievements and cultural achievements and cultural tradition of India are to be rescued from the middle ages of theological bigotry and sacerdotal orthodoxy and appalling mass ignorance.

To make positive contribution of thought and learning of ancient India shown in their positive purity so as to inspire greater intellectual efforts and bolder achievements of idea, history will have to be critically studied and scientifically reconstructed. That is tremendous job which can be accomplished by the brotherhood of scholars

imbibed with a spirit of enquiring and learning and qualified to carry on historical research according to modern scientific method.

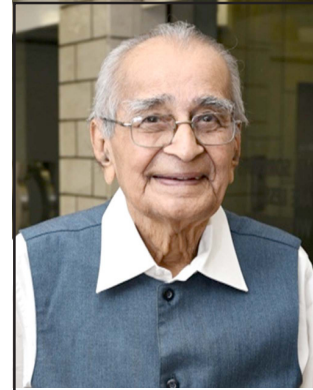
The above dream of late Roy can ever be fulfilled even in 21st century? Late Roy

expired in 1954. Death has silenced him forever and the flame of his dream has vanished to unknown saga. Roy who has vanished cannot fructify his dream. At present we do not find takers on the horizon to carry out the work Roy left behind. Because this needs intellectual scholars imbued with scientific outlook free from outdated dogmas that can pick up thread left behind by late Roy. The dream of Roy will ever fructify? This is a million dollar question. There are at present no takers. Let us leave it to the future. Leave at that and let us return to present all round realities we are experiencing.

Present political, economic and social including cultural conditions present a dismal picture of decay and demoralizing. This is how late Roy described the all-round general atmosphere then prevailing during his life time. He expired in 1954.

However it is most painful that even today in 2019, not only the same above atmosphere prevails, but it is going from bad to worse. None is found on the horizon capable to stop it. Our social, cultural and even intellectual train is running in reverse to obnoxious past adversely affecting wellbeing of man.

Today there is tremendous growth of science and its findings and technology that has helped



Ramesh Korde

man to unfold his creative potential faculties to such a great degree than ever before. This creative energy may not be completely dead, it is lying dormant and therefore ineffective.

Human history tells us that reason and reasoning faculty of man have the capacity to lead humans to emancipation. However at present these faculties among large number of Indians have become docile and lost their effectiveness. This needs to be energized and awakened to liberate people from antiquated orthodoxy and blind faith to energise reasoning faculty to help Indians to enjoy freedom to unfold his innate potentialities that are lying dormant today.

Radical Humanism advocates freedom of individual. However it says this is not enough for emancipation of man in all respects of his life. Man needs to live in a social and cultural atmosphere free from cultural and religious regimentation that is helpful to the development of his intelligence to help him to human innate potentialities to unfold during his lifetime.

Man needs freedom to unfold his innate potentialities and that must be criterion to judge the merits of any social organization. Freedom can be defined as the progressive elimination of all factors that obstruct the unfoldment of innate potentialities of man.

To achieve freedom during one's lifetime needs conscious efforts that can stimulate the innate urge of people for freedom that is lying dormant to make their own destiny. This needs the spirit of free thinking and the will never to be slave of external irrational authority be it religious or any other mystic authority.

In view of the above, the ideology of Radical Humanism advocates to promote rational outlook on all aspects of life of human being and its political objective is to promote democratic freedom so that the effective political power for the people can initiate social emancipation of the debased common man by spreading and making them enlightened to dispel obnoxious in political

and social, cultural life of country by advocating and adopting modernism in every walk of life.

To acquire all these as explained above what is required is that increasing the large number of man conscious of their innate creative power, motivated by the will to remake the world by the adventure of ideas and fired with ideas of free society of free man. This can create the conditions that will make true democracy possible.

The ideology of Radical Humanism propounded by late Roy is need of the day to emancipate; human beings stationed in all part of the earth can live in cooperative commonwealth.

The modern communication technology has brought all people living in different parts of earth close to influence each other. They have become integrated part of planet earth community. Now they can not live in isolation, ignorance of needs and interests of other human beings residing on earth.

To human environment has become global. Man cannot escape from it.

Science of biological evolution had first thinnest of thinnest in the form of *iota* and then subsequently developed into *Homo Sapiens*. This *Homo Sapien* was forced to struggle for his very existence.

It is an historical fact that the acquiring thorough knowledge of natural environment helped *Homo Sapien* that saved him from extinguishing from the earth. This knowledge is acquired by human reasoning faculty of man that helped him to know and undestined experience experienced by man.

The above is amply supported by biologist Darwin who observed that no animal species would have survived in the struggle for existence in the law governed universe unless the species was equipped with rudimental sense of putting cause and effect together.

The above findings of late Darwin are common heritage of all human beings wherever they are

stationed irrespective of religious faith and nationality. In view of this humanists desire and will make efforts to promote international brotherhood among all human beings living on earth.

In view of the above, it can be safely said that urge for freedom is common heritage of all human beings; irrespective of where they live. This urge needs to be energized to make their destiny. This can lead to free thinking and never to submit to any external irrational authority.

Need of the day is to achieve the above movement of Renaissance Humanist movement on the pattern of European Renaissance movement of 15th-16th centuries that had emancipated European people and resulted into democratic way of life based on rationalism, individualism and cosmopolitan outlook.

Indians need to imbibe the above outlook to achieve and realize true genuine democratic way of life that can free the thinking people to free them from present clutches of authoritarianism and obscurantist tendencies. In short and brief revolutionize minds of people and revolution from below and not from above. This can achieve by the will that can lead to establish grassroots democracy. This is the need of the day.

What is required to achieve above is not to ignore the fact of our socially and culture backwardness of large major section of our people that had thwarted our progress towards true freedom and happiness in respect of majority

of Indian people.

We want freedom to march ahead to emancipate from antiquated and outdated ideology of nationalism and religious obscurantism that cannot lead Indians to Renaissance Humanist movement to achieve greater freedom from all reactionary ideologies that is running in reverse to past centuries thwarting our progress towards free and open society.

At present large major number of people are groping in dark because it is not yet found intellectual leadership capable of giving a conscious expression to the urge for social all round progress. We are still to outgrow from ignorance, prejudices and superstitious beliefs that is running counter to freedom and happiness.

Now it is high time, we Indians have to imbibe the spirit of enquiring and not to take things simply for granted.

Human history tells us that social organizations, economic and political institutions are not static. They continuously grow and evolve in the light of new human experience and new discoveries of science.

The above is amply proved from man's growth from savagery to present growth of civilization. Human beings are live and not dead animal that cannot react.

17 June 2019.

Sh. Ramesh Korde is a Radical Humanist of 89 years of age, associated with the Radical Humanist movement since 1950. 🌈

Articles/Reports for The Radical Humanist

Dear Friends,

Please mail your articles/reports for publication in the RH to: **mahipalsinghrh@gmail.com**, or **theradicalhumanist@gmail.com** or post them to: E-21/5-6, Sector- 3, Rohini, Delhi-110085.

Please send your digital passport size photograph and your brief resume if it is being sent for the first time to the RH.

A note whether it has also been published elsewhere or is being sent exclusively for the RH should also be attached with it.

- Mahi Pal Singh, Editor, The Radical Humanist

In Man's Own Image

By Ellen Roy and Sibnarayan Ray

Simplified by Vinod Jain

Man's Place in Nature - I

The philosophy which will be explained in these pages is not a philosophy for people who believe that God has created the world and shaped man in his image, an imperfect imitation. Nor is it for those who believe that the fate of man is predetermined either by his own *karma* or by the will of God. But apart from this statement, there is nothing in it to offend religious minded people. Certainly, if there were such a creator-God, which we deny, and if it were a good God, he ought to be proud of man for having created, on his part, this philosophy.

It is a philosophy for people who believe in the reality of the world. It is for those who do not take the help of the simplified idea of creation by magic in order to understand its beginning. And for those who have the boldness to face the concept of infinity without taking help of divine intervention. It is for those who are satisfied to think of their race not as a work of a wilful God, but as a point of highest development in the process of evolution. Which means from primitive matter to complex matter, from inanimate to animate matter, from the lowest living organisms to the form of the human species. And from early ape-like ancestors of homo-sapiens to man who tamed fire, conquered the elements like heat, cold, winds, drought, floods, lack of water or food, and thereby shaped environments to his desire. From this point man further evolved to the stage when he started thinking in terms of morality. There are those who believe man is moral because God enjoins (instruct or urge to do) him to be so on the threat of his wrath. But those following the idea of evolution realize that man is moral because it suits his nature better to be so (i.e. moral) than otherwise. According to this philosophy man himself is the creator (rather than

the other belief that God is the creator), which means man may shape himself and his world in such a way as will allow him to enjoy freedom.

This is what is meant when we say **Man is the archetype of society**, the content which shapes its form in society. Because, **man is the measure of everything, and quest for freedom and search for truth constitute the basic urge of human progress**. To fulfil this urge, man, as the maker of his world, must shape his society as a suitable environment for the pursuit and attainment of freedom. In order to do that, he must know himself and his place in the universe.

Our philosophy is a philosophy of life, of the life of man. We are concerned with man, and with everything else to the extent that it concerns man's life. That sets no limit to our concern, because there is nothing that did not concern man. This is so in the sense that to know everything is man's instinctive and primary endeavour. Because increasing knowledge brings him greater freedom, and freedom is not only his birth-right, but the original and ultimate end of all his pursuits.

Knowledge is the awareness of things in nature. It is also the understanding of their inter-relations. That includes man himself and his relation to all other things. What is thus known is truth. **Truth is the content of knowledge**. And the freedom which this knowledge confers on man is the freedom to live up to his creative role, to shape his world to his purpose, to develop all that is, consciously or unconsciously, in him. Since the things in nature and their inter-relations are infinite, knowledge of them can be only an approximation to the whole of Truth. And the freedom of man, thus conceived, while not an elusive and fantastic utopia, is an eternal ideal,

which can, however, be increasingly realized by man, for ever and ever.

The pursuit of freedom can be traced, as we shall see, to the earliest endeavours of the first human beings. It can be connected logically with the pursuits of man's pre-human ancestors, on lower levels. This pursuit accelerates with the increase of knowledge. Landmarks in this quest for freedom, in human history, were the earliest tools invented by man. These tools freed him from the necessity to adapt his limbs to the requirements of the struggle for existence. The subsequent discoveries of things in nature and their inter-relations, freed man progressively from the tyranny of the forces of nature. These discoveries were made due to man's instinctive inquisitiveness, his urge to enquire for the Why and How of everything. It further led to his need to explain whatever he sees rationally, and to prove what his brain had postulated (suggest or accept that something is true as a basis for a theory or discussion) as truth. Brain is his capacity for abstract thinking and logical deduction – which means the coordination of several elements of his knowledge. Thus, knowledge has grown, truth has been progressively known, and man became freer to that extent.

Yet who would say now, when knowledge is greater than ever before, that man is free? And why is man not free? Because man has had no clear and satisfactory picture of himself and his place in nature. That is why he could not create such social environments as would allow him to become free. This despite the fact that he himself is the creator of that society in which he has his being. Some of those with incomplete knowledge may suggest that the rest of nature is God's creation. But society is undoubtedly man's own creation. And whatever is wrong with society, is man's own wrong. Only when man has a clear picture of himself, of his place in nature, will he be able to shape his own creation – society – in such a way that it will enable him to fulfil his basic urge for freedom. And for what else should

man create anything at all?

For long, man could not have a clear picture of himself when, in the absence of better knowledge, notions were created about his place in the Universe. These notions might have served as working hypotheses at some time. These should have been discarded when disproved. But these notions were not discarded when disproved. One of these was the hypothesis of the Creator-God. It made of man a play-thing of a higher being, dependent on it and at its mercy for all he did and even thought. and in that state of absolute dependence, man was also bound by the law of *karma* which could neither be stopped nor prevented. So man was not a free agent; he always acted according to the will of God; yet he was bound by the consequences of acts which he did not commit as a free agent. If that was the picture of man, man should not aspire nor desire, nor create – he should commit suicide, because he had a wrong start and no hope of worthwhile salvation. And yet, who, in the face of the world as it is, compared with what it was, would deny man's creative genius, his capacity of doing great things? With this creative gift in him, could man not aspire and desire for great things and great deeds? But he cannot fulfil his striving as long as his picture of himself in the scheme of the Universe is one of a dependent and helpless creature - a creature at the mercy of a higher being, beyond reason or any laws accessible to the mind of man.

Today knowledge is already great enough to visualise the picture of a free man. But that knowledge still remains beyond the reach of most men. Therefore they cannot yet derive from it the measure of freedom attainable even now. That knowledge is conducive to man's freedom is proved by the changed position of man in the picture of the world which modern science provides. It has got rid of any necessity to speculate about a God. It has allowed man to discard the notion of any Creator. It has opened the grand vista of an autonomous physical


Universe governed by laws. These laws are inherent in the properties of the stuff it is made of. It has allowed man to raise his head in pride. And even though deprived of the stern but protective God-Father, man need not be afraid of the cold immensity of the law-governed Universe, because he is part of it, and its laws are working also in him. Its law-governedness functions in him as rationality. He has the advantage over all other parts of the Universe of being endowed with intelligence. It enables him to know those laws and be conscious of his own innate rationality. **Rising out of the background of the law-governed physical nature, the human being is essentially rational.** That is the specific distinction of man. All else derives from this.

It cannot be proved in an exposition of this scope, but it can be proved, that all events in nature and all its phenomena happen and exist due to causes inherent in nature. That is what we call law-governedness. The laws of these happenings have been discovered in the course of man's quest for knowledge and search for truth. This knowledge is continuously expanding and perfecting itself. These laws are functions of the stuff of which the world is made. They too have not been imposed by a super-natural will or being. These laws are functions of matter, to which everything has been reduced. These laws exist everywhere and pervade everything, even where the human eye perceives nothing. When it is known and proved that air is matter and electricity is matter, human intelligence should not shrink at this statement. The Universe being material, and matter having its laws which thus govern the Universe, and man being part of the Universe, the laws of logic and causality operate also in man. We call their operation rationality and say that man is essentially rational, even though he may not always be conscious of the fact, and even though, due to undeveloped intelligence and incomplete knowledge, he may often act in ways which appear to be irrational.

Rationality is law-governedness on the higher human level. While it can thus be traced to the background of physical nature, on the human level it becomes qualitatively different, in a certain sense. Man's consciousness corresponds to the degree of his knowledge. Knowledge began with man and has been slowly losing its limitedness with the maturing of the species. Man, at the start of his career, even when he acted by instinct rationally, was not yet conscious that he did so. As man grows increasingly conscious of his innate rationality, as he learns to know what is rational in any situation, he overcomes the influence of those other factors of life on which he was dependent earlier and which made him act irrationally. It leads to his intellectual realisation of his essential rationality. It enables man to overcome those influences on which he as earlier dependent, and be actually rational. Intelligent will is an expression of essential rationality. The entire Universe is law-governed, in the context of which man has his being and becoming. On a low level of intelligence man's will may lead him to act irrationally. His own acts may lead him away from freedom, cramp his creative potentialities, leading to frustration and psychoses. But being part of the law-governed nature, man can be increasingly conscious of that fact and capable of acting rationally, aided by will and intelligence.

Law-governedness and freedom of the will are thus not mutually exclusive on the human level of consciousness and intelligence. **Reason being a biological property, it is not the anti-thesis of will.**

Reason is a property of the biological being, while law-governedness is a physical state which, as such, embraces the biological world also. Man's consciousness of the law-governedness of nature and of its functioning in himself as rationality, and his ability, based on increasing knowledge, to anticipate and influence events, generates in him the will to exercise this ability and to act on the world – the urge of creation.

To be continued in the next issue... 

Press Release — June 26, 2019 :

1,966 custodial deaths in India during 2018, India urged to ratify UNCAT

New Delhi: The “*Campaign Against Torture in India*” while releasing “*India: Annual Report on Torture 2018*” on the United Nations Day Against Torture stated that during 2018, a total of 1,966 custodial deaths were reported to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) including 147 deaths in police custody and 1,819 deaths in judicial custody. These figures do not reflect the extent and actual incidents of custodial death and torture in the country”, warned the report.

During 2018, police claimed that majority of the custodial deaths took place after the victims suddenly developed medical complications soon after being taken into custody. Police also claimed the detainees suffered injuries while trying to escape and later succumbed to the injuries and further that the victims were beaten by mob/public prior to their arrest/detention. The prison officials also claimed that many victims committed suicide by consuming poison, banging their heads till death, hanging with pieces of cloths, wire, belt, rope, etc.

Debunking the claims of the police and prison officials, “*India: Annual Report on Torture 2018*” cited a number of cases of torture leading to custodial death.

The police made the bizarre claim that Sitrarasu, a junior assistant in the education department and a resident of Chunambedu of Tamil Nadu had hanged himself – using his innerwear on 2 May 2018!

The prison officials claimed that Guddu alias Bhanu Pratap, aged 30 years, an undertrial prisoner, hanged himself with his *gamcha* (towel) inside the toilet of barrack No. 7 in Rae Bareilly District Jail in Uttar Pradesh on 14 October 2018. However, it was reported that the deceased had lost his right hand in an

accident three years ago and therefore, could not have committed suicide by hanging.

“The fact remains many were tortured to death for the failure to pay bribe including in front of the relatives. Victims were also tortured to extract confessions”. – stated Suhas Chakma, Coordinator of the “United NGO Campaign Against Torture”.

Dalits and indigenous peoples remain extremely vulnerable to torture and during 2018, many died in police custody after being arrested in cases related to alleged theft or robbery. Custodial torture of women including rape is reported regularly in India despite various judicial pronouncements for their safety. Majority of the victims of custodial deaths among women belonged to weaker section of the society such as Dalits, tribals and the poor who mostly worked as domestic help or did petty jobs to earn a livelihood.

The non-implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act means that children are often illegally detained at Police Stations and prisons, and subjected to torture. On 13 April 2019, a 17-year-old juvenile died at JJ Hospital in Mumbai in the custody of Government Railway Police (GRP), Wadala, after being apprehended by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) on 3 April on suspicion of theft and handed over to the GRP the next day.

The armed forces deployed in armed conflict situations and border areas also resorted to torture. The Border Security Forces (BSF) personnel were accused of kicking on testicles of the male victims including juveniles. On the night of 21 November 2018, at around 2 AM, Sarif Sekh, a 10th standard student of Fatullapur High School, was reportedly caught by the

BSF when he went to a nearby open field to defecate at Fatullapur under Raghunathgunj Police Station in Murshidabad district of West Bengal. Despite identifying himself as a student, he was allegedly tortured by Subedar Sujoy Singh Rana, Sub Inspector Anil Kumar, and Assistant Sub Inspector C.R Tarki, posted at Bhagirathi Patlatola Border Out Post (BOP) of 1 80th Battalion, BSF, 'F' Company. Apart from hitting with stick and rifle butts, the BSF personnel allegedly kicked on the victim's testicles, due to which he became unconscious.

The insurgent groups also continued to perpetrate torture. The Maoists subjected the people it suspects as government agents to summary executions after trial in so-called "Jan Adalats" (Peoples' Courts) and tortured them before killing to instil fear among the people.

In Jammu and Kashmir, on 8 March 2018, a Class XII student identified as Omais Rashid Bhat, a resident of Qaimoh in South Kashmir's Kulgam district, was allegedly abducted by militants and tortured on the suspicion of being an informer of the security forces. After battling for his life for 14 days, he succumbed to the injuries in a hospital in Srinagar on 22 March 2018.

During 2018, the NHRC alone issued orders for compensation of Rs 8,52,95,000 in cases of torture and custodial deaths. However, these interventions did not have the necessary and desired impact to act as deterrent to torture.

"Impunity and absence of national anti-torture law perpetuate torture. Government officials or members of the armed forces enjoy impunity under Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Section 6 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 and its analogous provision in Jammu and Kashmir.

The fact that Manipur government has refused to give sanctions for prosecutions after the Central Bureau of Investigation filed charge sheets in seven cases of torture and extrajudicial executions in Manipur shows the State support to torture and executions." – further stated Mr Chakma.

The *Campaign Against Torture in India* described the government of India's failure to ratify the UN Convention Against Torture and enact a national law against torture as a disgraceful case of non-implementation of the recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission, assurances given by the Government of India to the Lok Sabha on 3 May 2000; three assurances given to the UN Human Rights Council in 2008, 2012 and 2017; failure to present two Prevention of Torture Bills respectively drafted by the Parliamentary Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha in December 2010 and the Law Commission of India in October 2017 before the Parliament, and false assurance given to the Supreme Court of India during the hearing of the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 738/2016 on 27 November 2017 to act on the Prevention of Torture Bill drafted by the Law Commission of India.

The "*Campaign Against Torture in India*" urged India to take measures to abolish torture in India by ratifying the UN Convention Against Torture, enactment of a national law against torture and end impunity for the perpetrators of torture.


Campaign Against Torture in India

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"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

Walking through EVOLUTION at DARWIN's place

Dr. Narisetti Innaiah

Recently we had useful, purposeful tour to Charles Darwin's Down house, outside London. Down is the name of Darwin's abode where he lived and published *Origin of Species*. This house is away from London. One has to travel by train upto Orpington station and then travel by bus to reach Kent village where the Down house is located.

Though Darwin spent his early life in London, he did not like the busy, noisy polluted life of London. Hence he selected the peaceful area, constructed a house and spent rest of his life there. That is the place where we visited and enjoyed house exhibition, books, all the material he used, his family history, and so on. Darwin also developed a garden and sand path where he spent time to study plants.

All the material used by Darwin was kept intact with detailed explanation. Beagle's voyage of Darwin is special attraction since it was through that ship Darwin collected material from near and far lands, oceans and carefully preserved. He sent the collection to London which again was preserved by his friends.

The Beagle ship journey was historical and memorable.

The Beagle was a small ship 90 feet long and 24 feet wide. It was 242 tons in weight. Compared to the present day ships it is tiny. Darwin travelled in the Beagle from 1831 to 1836. Henslow, the botanist, inspired Darwin to travel in the Beagle keeping company with Captain Robert Fitz Roy. Darwin who returned from Cambridge University jumped at the idea and readily agreed to travel. With much difficulty he convinced his father and started his journey. That was a turning point in his life.

All the material gathered by Darwin was sent home and it is a great wonder that the things

were kept intact. A surprising thing is that all the letters and material sent by Darwin reached safely in those days of poor communication.

One can glimpse the pictures at Darwin's house.

Darwin started the journey on December 27, 1831. That was great for evolution lovers. Twice he travelled and successfully collected material, covered continents, went all the way upto Australia and gathered as much as he could. In that journey the visit to Galapagos Islands was a turning point. Even now that place is visitor's favourite place for evolution lovers. It is in the Pacific Ocean. The maps are exhibited at Darwin's house. It is a three storied building. All the things used by Darwin, bedroom, drawing room, dining hall, etc are preserved. His family members' details are in the pictures.

Darwin returned from the great journey on 2 October 1836 and at once commenced his research work based on the material he had collected. Of course the religious fanatics commenced attacks on the ideas of Darwin. Bishops were very active in attacking Darwin's ideas of evolution. But Darwin had one great friend and defender T.H. Huxley who participated in public debates and supported Darwin. Darwin did not publish his evolutionary theories immediately after his return. He took nearly 30 years to study, contemplate and come to conclusions.

The life of Darwin is vividly exhibited in the Down house, with everything he used. Every floor is full of things and exhibits. Darwin also developed a good lawn and garden with sand path. He used to go round the garden where he studied plants. Now that garden is maintained carefully and it is feast for the eyes of visitors.

While Darwin took a long time to bring out his theory of evolution, another scientist, Wallace was working on similar theme. Both of them were in correspondence. Darwin then decided to bring out his thesis on The Origin of Species. He took many years to bring it out but once it was published the world exploded with uproar. Darwin questioned the belief of creation and proved that evolution is scientifically correct and evidence based. Of course Catholics and Christian bishops attacked Darwin with abuse since they could not disprove Darwin.

Karl Marx was a contemporary of Darwin who also lived in London. He sent his monumental work Das Capital to Darwin which was acknowledged by Darwin. In fact Darwin sent a reply to Marx with compliments saying the research of both might benefit the future generations. That letter was exhibited in Darwin's house. By the time Darwin died, six editions of The Origin of Species came out and shook the world.

Since 1998 Down House, is open for public. We had the great opportunity to visit and spend the whole day at the place, and enjoyed the exhibits. To go round the garden and sand path where Darwin spent his days of research was really great for us. The visitors can enjoy their stay with lunch and snacks at minimum rates. The whole atmosphere is quiet and calm. There is a book shop and some exhibits at the entrance, which are for sale. We found useful books including one title by Richard Dawkins. On the whole we had the great feeling of walking through the evolutionary process, which was revealed by Darwin so vividly.

Note:

During May 2019 we visited Darwin's place outside London and spent the whole day to observe and study. Our batch included: Mr. Kenneth Marselek (humanist from Baltimore, USA), Dr. Naveena Hemanth (daughter of Innaiah), Mr/ Rohit Josh and Mr. Rahul (grandsons of Innaiah). 🌈

Readers' Comments

via Academia.edu

Ranjit V. left a reason for downloading '**Selections from The Radical Humanist Volume I**'

Very good compilation, Sir. Helps me a lot. Thank you. How to subscribe to this magazine? I couldn't find subscription details, Sir, Thank you

Some addition to 'Crony Elitism', June 2019 of The Radical Humanist

Dear Mr. Mahi Pal Singh: Due to oversight while typing the article on my ipad I omitted the following important and fascinating examples in my article on Crony Elitism in the June 2019 issue of the RH. Kindly see if it is possible to add the material in the 'readers write' column in the next issue of the RH. Regards, **P.A.S. Prasad.**

1. Morarji Desai, when he was the P.M., went to Pakistan and received Pakistan's highest civilian award from the then President of Pakistan, Zia-ul-Haq.

2. P.V. Narasimha Rao, when he was the P.M., admitted in a press conference in Singapore about his no problem connection with Nawaz Sharif, then P.M. of Pakistan.

3. It was said that when N.T.R. was the C.M. of A.P. and Rajiv Gandhi was the P.M. it was commonly known that TDP in A.P. and the Congress at the centre were at loggerheads. But surprisingly A.P. was the only state in India where as soon as Rajiv Gandhi landed in A.P. he used to remove his bullet proof vest. He was so certain of his safety and security only in A.P.

There might be many more such instances which the people do not know.



Rohit with Dr. Innaiah at Darwin's House



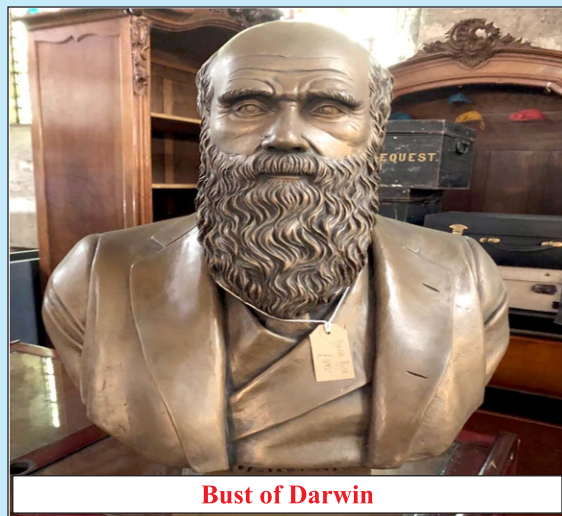
Darwin's Garden



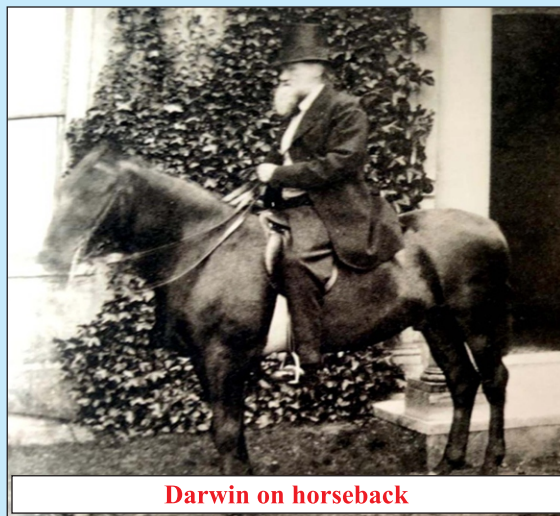
At bust of Darwin in Edinburg



Dr. Narisetti Innaiah at Darwin's Library



Bust of Darwin



Darwin on horseback

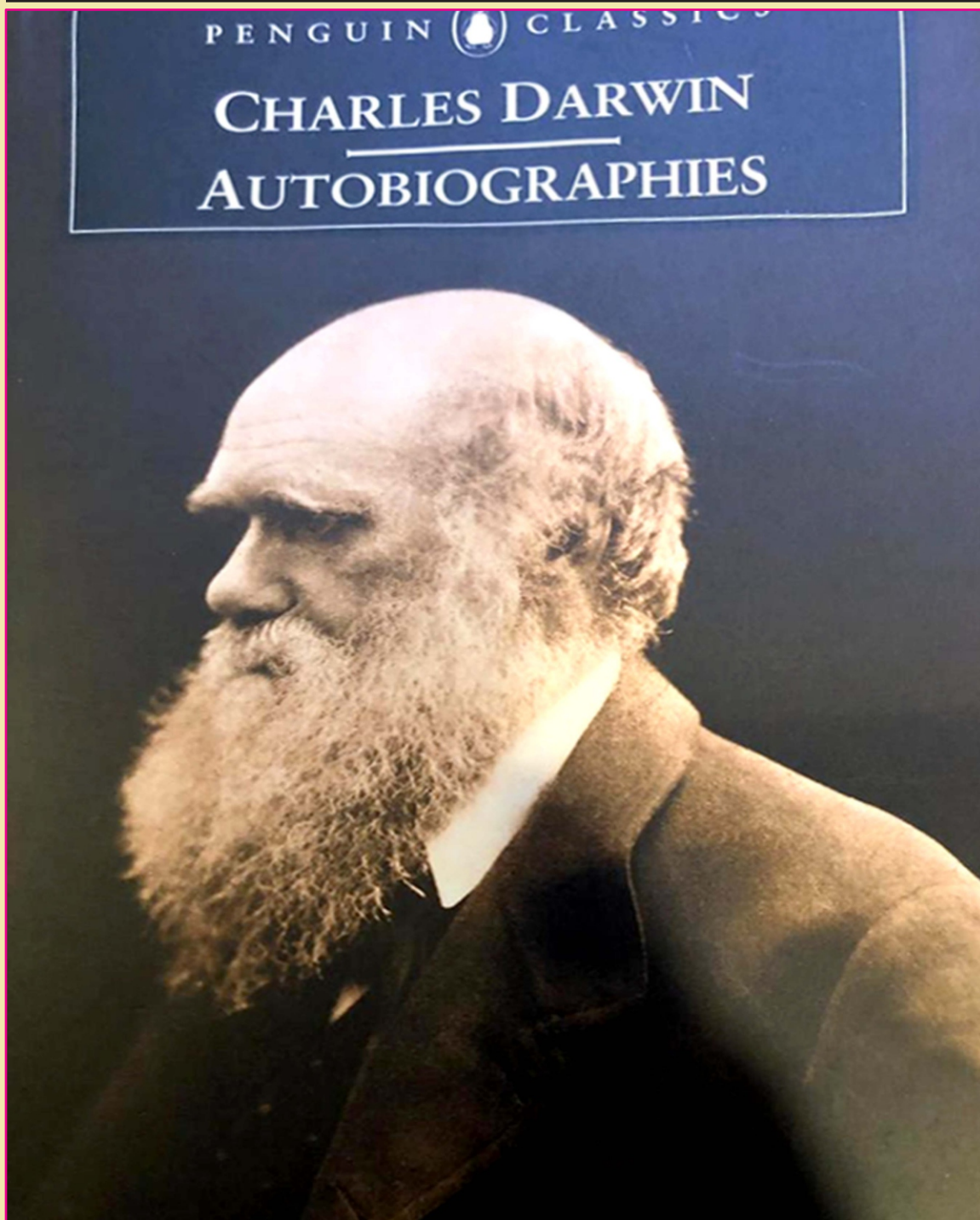
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