

The Modern
Rationalist
annual
number 2015



Dual Theme : Strengthening Secular Perspective
Reservation - Strategic Dispensation of Social Justice



December 2
SELF-RESPECT
DAY



*Hearty Greetings on 83rd Birthday
of our beloved Leader Dr. K. Veeramani*

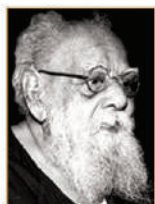


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Acknowledgement with gratitude Social Scientists,
Historians, Intellectuals, Research Scholars - Rationalists,
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SOCIAL JUSTICE : BASIC
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LONG LIVE THE BEACON FOR THE IDEAL ALIGNMENT OF SECULAR AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FORCES



'The Modern Rationalist', the English monthly, founded by Thanthai Periyar (1879-1973) in 1970 with Dr.K.Veeramani as the Editor is being published by Periyar Self-Respect Propaganda Institution. In 2012, the members of the editorial board of *The Modern Rationalist* met its Editor-in-Chief Dr.K.Veeramani and expressed the readiness for the translation of his long cherished dream of publishing Annual Number of The Modern Rationalist. The Annual Number would be published by compiling the articles on the ideological concepts, the current development; the challenges ahead in the Self-Respect and the Rationalist path laid down by Periyar for the cause of humanism. He congratulated for our readiness to bring out the Annual Number but was reluctant on the occasion to publish and release it. Yes; we intended to publish and release the Annual Number on the birthday of our editor and the head of the ideological family brought up by Periyar. December 2nd. the birthday of Dr.K.Veeramani is celebrated as '**Self-Respect Day**' by the cadres of the movement and the lovers of humanity.

In Periyar Movement, celebrations are not meant for jubilation but it is for the promotion of Self-Respect and rationalist ideals. Periyar's birthday (September 17) and Dr.K.Veeramani's are celebrated with this spirit. Besides publishing the Annual Number, our editor felt happy on its publication, of course with a condition : The Annual Number of The Modern Rationalist has to be published every year on a particular theme.

The articles published in the Annual Number must be related to the theme.

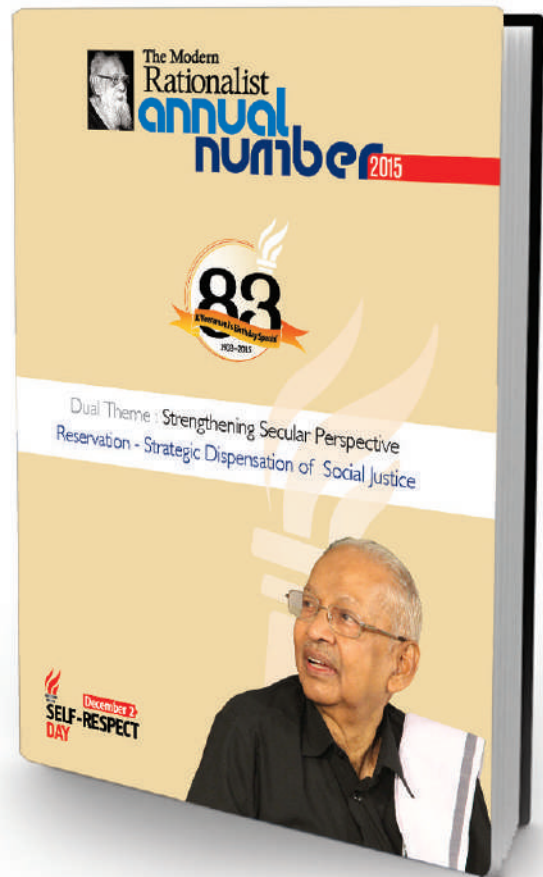
Accordingly, we started publishing the Annual Number. For the year 2013, the theme was '*Eradication of Superstition and Development of Scientific Temper*' and for the year 2014, '*The Menace of Castes and its Abolition*'. For the current year 2015, a dual theme has been proposed: '*Strengthening Secular Perspective – Reservation : Strategic Dispensation of Social Justice*' and the Annual Number 2015 is published and released on 2nd December 2015, the 83rd Birthday of our beloved Editor-in-Chief Dr.K.Veeramani.

In the prevailing Socio-Political environment in the country, the secular perspective is at stake due to the undeclared agenda of the rulers. The religious fundamentalists are more active, wearing the mask of the democrats. Truth needs no adornment. Only untruth requires mask, facelift, and disguised looks. To some extent such sort of organizational behaviour of religious fundamentalists attracts youngsters who are not aware of the historical sufferings of their ancestors in this land and the bloodsheds that took place, under 'divine' subjugation for centuries.

To liberate the vast majority of masses from their servility, many progressive personalities and reformists toiled throughout their lives. To secure social justice for them, constitutional provisions were made in the politically independent India. Reservation system is the enabling mode to secure social justice to the oppressed population which was started as 'communal

representation' in the British India by the visionary founders of Justice Party and Self-Respect Movement which witnesses the Centenary and 90th Anniversary celebration respectively. In Independent India, the constitutional provisions to dispense the social justice are not fully translated into practice both by the rulers and the executive machinery. Besides, consistent efforts to place hurdles and to minimize the speed of dispensation of Social Justice are in the way blocked by the dominant cult with religious background and support. All these efforts are the moves against the expressions in the preamble of Indian Constitution to keep the secular fabric of the country with strength and to dispense the Social Justice along with other categories of Justice.

The Constitutional features are being weakened by the elected representatives who took the oath of their offices to abide by the provisions of the Indian Constitution. All these prevailing trends have to be highlighted to the public and to be made as the subject of deliberation to fortify the features of Indian Constitution more meaningfully and to translate into practice. With this objective the Annual Number 2015 has been compiled on the dual theme: **'Strengthening Secular Perspective – Reservation: Strategic Dispensation of Social Justice'**. Besides the contributions of the indigenous writers, the compilation includes the contributions from the foreign – humanists and the natives, settled abroad. Their articles highlight the global perspective on the dual theme.



We acknowledge and thank all the atheist, rationalist, humanist, secularist, social scientist, social justice stalwarts, social justice activists – contributors for their timely subscription to the objective of The Modern Rationalist Annual Number 2015.

We thank our Editor-in-Chief Dr.K.Veeramani for all the guidance, advice and support in bringing out the Annual Number 2015.

The Editorial Board greets 'A Happy Birthday' to our beloved Editor-in-Chief Dr.K.Veeramani, President of Dravidar Kazhagam who continues to be the beacon for the ideal alignment of secular and social justice forces in the country.

We wish Dr.K.Veeramani 'Long Live' to shoulder the cause, commenced by Periyar and to continue the mission.

Editorial Committee
Dr. S.Rajaratnam
Prof. Dr.A.Ramasamy
Prof. Dr. Palany Arangasamy
Prof. S.F.N.Chelliah
V.Kumaresan

The Modern Rationalist Annual Number 2015

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अध्यक्ष

(पूर्व कार्यकारी मुख्य न्यायाधीश
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(Status of Union Cabinet Minister)



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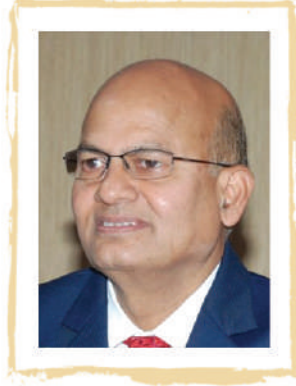
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27th November, 2015



Message of Greetings

We are happy to know that Dr.K.Veeramani commences the 83rd year of journey on December 2, 2015 for the common good.

The services rendered by Dr.K.Veeramani for the cause of social justice are remarkable, leading the fight in the right direction. He is one among the few leaders who are well versed in the nuances involved in dispensing social justice for all the servile classes in the society. Whenever a challenge or threat arises for the proper dispensation of social justice, particularly in the implementation of reservation policy, his ideas, articulations and related efforts and endeavors would be needed very much to overcome them.

His non political leadership is a positive feature for assimilating the views by all who are committed to the cause of social justice, beyond the political boundaries.

By following the exact ideological line of his mentor, Periyar E.V.Ramasamy, Dr.K.Veeramani is leading the public life without any inclination either for power or position. In a democratic country, the political rulers may be changed but it is due to leadership of stalwarts like Dr.K.Veeramani, the continuance in the dispensation of social justice, as enshrined in the preamble of Indian Constitution, is maintained.

We wish Dr.K.Veeramani a long life rendering arduous service, needed for the attainment of social justice to all.

I personally greet him on the occasion of his 83rd birthday for a happy, healthy, wealthy and peaceful life.


(Justice V.ESWARAIAH)

Prof. Ravivarma Kumar

(Former Advocate General - Government of Karnataka) Senior Advocate
3B, Bharat Apartments, Fair Field Layout, Devarajan Urs Road
#09845203090 Bengaluru 560 001



Dr. K.Veeramani - The Doyen of Social Justice

Thank you very much for the invitation to attend the December 2 function to honour Dr K.Veeramani, President, DK and President, Lawyers' Forum for Social Justice. Due to my preoccupation with an important work at Delhi I am personally unable to attend the function. Please convey my birthday greetings to our respected leader and wish him many many happy returns of the day.

It was a hot summer in 1977 at Delhi. I was elated because I was just then elected to the National Executive Committee of the youth wing of Janata Party, the then ruling party at the Center. My organisation - Samajavadi yuvajana Sabha, the youth wing of the Socialist Party had merged with the youth wings of other parties that had merged in the Janata Party. That is when I heard that a delegation was going to meet the PM, Mr. Morarjee Desai to demand the immediate implementation of Kaka Kalelkar Report as promised in the election manifesto of the Janata Party. Morarjee would not even give audience to the delegation, let alone agree to implement the said Report recommending reservation for OBCs in the central services. The said delegation was led by none other than our veteran leader Dr. K.Veeramani. Since then I have always revered him as the leader of the National Movement for Social Justice.

We hear of child prodigies taking to musical instruments or of legendary sports heroes taking to foot-ball or tennis when they were young. It is difficult to expect any body taking to a social movement when he was young. When a young boy of ten years age was introduced to the audience by no less a person than Anna at the provincial conference of the Justice Party at Salem one will realise that here was a genius who would don the mantle of social justice one day. The feather in the cap was when Periyar asked him to stand on the table so that he could be seen by the audience.

Periyar and Anna were prophetic in putting that child social activist to the centre stage. Dr KV has single handedly guided the Dravidian movement to steer clear of all the opposition it has faced after the death of Periyar. His mercurial presence in any thing connected with social justice or rationalism any where in the country is in itself a great inspiration. Socialisation of the judiciary, implementation of Mandal Report, mobilisation of the backward classes and exposing the hoax of miracles of god men have always moved forward under the able guidance of Dr KV.

Even in my personal life Dr KV played a stellar role. He deputed his trusted comrade Prof A.M.Dharmalingam to solemnise my marriage with Sharada on 12.5.1983 - a New Moon Day at *Rahukalam*. My good and noble Senior Late Sri L.G.Havanur and my teacher Prof M.D.Nanjundaswamy would always recollect the contribution of Dr KV while conducting such self respect marriages in Karnataka. Abhi Mandela, Belle, Ghoshal, Sharada and I wish Dr K.Veeramani a long and happy life and the December 2 function a grand success.

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Köln, 27.11.2015

Dear Dr. Veeramani,

I would like to send you heartfelt greetings for your birthday on December 2nd. I still remember the happy moments we shared during your visit to Cologne University in summer 2014.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stefan Grohé".





TAMILNADU CONGRESS COMMITTEE

E.V.K.S. ELANGO VAN

President

28.11.2015



Friends,

Greetigs to you all.

It is really a very good effort to bring out a Souvenir in honour of the 83rd Birth Day of very respectful Dr.K.Veeramani. Right from his College days till this date he has been an unfailing and sincere disciple of Periyar and a faithful servant.

After Periyar, he has been serving as a great stalwart propagating the ideals of Periyar for the benefit of all the people.

I sincerely wish he takes necessary steps to unite all the non -religious forces in Tamil Nadu. His services are very much needed today for the people of the nation.

I wish his services to continue for all the years to come to all of us

MISSION TO BE COMPLETED

Dr.K.VEERAMANI President, Dravidar Kazhagam



The English calendar says that I am 82 years old. Our well-wishers and comrades remind me of my age that I am 82. But there remains my life-long commitment to globalise Thanthai Periyar .– He is not an individual but an institution who put centuries into a capsule and created a new self-respect world of rationalism and humanism. He started it for liberty, equality and fraternity and that too without any gender bias. He infused into me a different consciousness.

I am a simple worker in a great team which is selfless and sacrificing.

I am very happy and cheerful when I realize that I am not hankering for any power or fame.

I have chosen an unparalleled leader and mentor who has shaped my life.

My humble journey is still incomplete and achievement of our goal is yet a dream but the 'social harvests' are very significant and priceless.

“After Periyar what?” was the question. We hope at least a partial achievement is made.

There may be many disappointments but there is no dearth of our sincere commitment, involvement and continuous work along with our comrades .

I take this opportunity to thank all those who guide

me and who participate in our team work - our co-workers.

There is no 'I' in a team work but only "we."

Hence we renew our pledge that until we breathe our last, we will seek to work tirelessly and strive hard to complete the perfect mission of Periyar that remains incomplete.

Birthdays are always the reminder of the inconvenient truth that we are getting older. At times it also indicates we are getting wiser, and we learn through our mistakes and pitfalls thereby gaining more experiences.

For young children, it is a thrill and joy; for the old, it is nothing but worries for they are mentally older. But a rationalist, or a Periyarist is always young and agile. For it is a pleasant opportunity to serve the community at large. Nothing brings more pleasure than service that too reward less service!!

Time and tide wait for none. Birthdays may come and go but what lessons life has taught us is a moot question. How to fulfil our noble mission? Now we see so many miracles in the medical field. Science and technology has transformed human lives and made them live longer than in the olden days. One must feel proud of the marvels of science and technology!

Because of those inventions, our longevity has been tremendously enhanced. Organs are replaced and youth has been replenished – returned.

As a humble student of Thanthai Periyar, I takes this opportunity to salute our great mentor to serving the millions of the depressed and the down-trodden.

Self-respect, Social justice, eradication of caste and untouchability, empowerment of women and developing scientific temper are the committed principles of Periyar's social revolutionary movement. 'The Dravidar Kazhagam' is transparent and meant to transform the society into these principles .

I will continue to be one among the selfless cadres of the movement and to work with our co-fighters of the mission to globalise Periyar.

I thank profusely all those who extend their support in this great team work. Let us victoriously march ahead.

Long Live Periyar!

Fraternally yours
K.Veeramani



WHY SHOULD WE STRIVE FOR COMMUNAL RESERVATION? THE COMMUNAL G.O.

The speech delivered by Periyar E.V.Ramasamy on 12.8.1950 before agitating against the Judgment of Madras High Court, rejecting the Government Order on Communal Reservation.



I have issued a mandate to the students to boycott classes and the merchants to close their shops tomorrow (14.8.1950), as a token of our demand for the reservation on communal basis, and to participate in the processions for this purpose. Including some ministers, many keep saying that my call for the same is wrong and that with this I have got an excuse to agitate. Some Congressmen write and speak in public that this agitation is for political reasons. I am least bothered about it. All that I request you is not to do anything, just because I say, or they say. I only request you to use your discretion and reason to judge what is said.

The demand for communal reservation is not just a recent development. It is being spoken of from 1916-17. Our leaders and thinkers had demanded reservation in education and official jobs, in proportion to their population. All those who made this demand were in Congress Party. Such leaders left the Congress Party after they realized that there was no scope for this demand in Congress Party and that this party was working only in the interest and welfare of a small group. After this, these leaders made their demand very forcefully, for the communal reservation and for the welfare of the oppressed Classes.

The demand for communal reservation was raised in Tamil Nadu in 1916-17. But this demand was raised in North India as early as 1900. The Muslims were



The Brahmins harboured a secret hatred for Muthiah Mudaliar for passing the communal G.O. They considered him a *Ratchasa* (demon). Therefore they focussed on their attention on defeating Muthiah Mudaliar when he contested. He does not bother about it, believing that it was the price he paid for his services.

demanding right from 1900, for the reservation in proportion to their population. Many of us may not know this. Some old people among us may be aware of it. The Congressmen strongly opposed this demand of the Muslims. But their opposition filtered away and the demand of the Muslims was accepted through legislation.

In those days, the Central Government of India was functioning in Calcutta (Present Kolkata). The British could not deny the demand of the Muslims as they were a majority in Calcutta. The British therefore least bothered about the opposition by the Congress and granted the communal reservation for the Muslims.

Therefore in 1902, the Congressmen started the “*Swadesi Movement*”, just to protest against the communal reservation for the Muslims. Our people also believed that we could achieve great things through this *Swadesi Movement*, and participated in it in great numbers. But they were not aware of the evil design of the Congress Party that this was started just to counter the rights accorded to the Muslims. In those days also our people were totally ignorant about the intricacies of the political designs of the Congress, just as we are today also, believing the words of everyone. They believed that *Swadesi Movement*, was a patriotic movement, not realising the evil schemes of the movement. But the Muslims succeeded in achieving their goal, inspite of heavy opposition and hurdles.

Reserved constituency was created for the Muslims in 1910. As they could not reserve constituencies exclusively for the Hindus, they created Muslim constituency and Non-Muslim Constituency. The Congress party faced a big defeat in the creation of reserved constituency for the Muslims. It was really ashamed of openly acknowledging it. They gave a new idea to the British at this juncture. They proposed that

if the Congress would agree to the creation of the reserved constituency for the Muslims, the Britishers should give up bifurcation plan for Bengal. The Congress at once accepted this proposal. Therefore as early as in 1910, the reserved constituency for the Muslims was created mainly owing to their powerful agitations. But the Congress party continued to oppose the Muslims indirectly. Therefore, Muslim League became a powerful opposition party by opposing whatever said by the Congress.

While all the steps taken by the Congress against the Muslims miserably failed, they became stronger and stronger with demonstrated discipline. As a result the Congress surrendered to the Muslims through the intermediary of a powerful political heavy weight Dr. Annie Beasant. I think that is called the Patna Pact. This is the agreement between the Hindus and Muslims. This very same pact has helped the Muslims to form a new nation.

When the truth is this, should we who form 90 per cent of the population, suffer, being deprived of our rights in jobs and power and losing them to the Brahmins who are just 3 per cent? People like Thiagaraya Chettiar and Dr. T.M. Nair thought why we should be backward in all the areas being slaves to the Brahmins. Thiagarayar was a very famous person in Congress. He had been the Secretary of the Congress Conference in Chennai. Till 1916, both Thiagarayar and Nair used to attack each other vehemently, being in the opposition parties. But these very same two who were great enemies, soon realized that due to their fight another group was benefitting by fanning their hatred, they took advantage of it. Only after this, they started a non-Brahmin movement called the “*South Indian Liberal Federation*.” This movement soon earned a good name because of their very just principles. This movement achieved success in the election conducted at that time.



I then and there resigned from the Congress for the sake of the communal reservation. Achariyar and Mudaliyar entreated me again and again. But I walked out. Only 30 or 40 came out along with me. Though many desired to come out, they stayed back unable to muster courage for the same.



By that time I was still in Congress. The Brahmins were very frightened by the growing popularity enjoyed by the *South Indian Liberal Federation* (S.I.L.F). Therefore, in order to destroy the movement, they surrendered to Gandhi.

In those days Annie Beasant was very influential in politics. It was because she was a foreigner and she was working for the Brahmins. The Iyengar Brahmins here did not like her, because she showed preferences to only Iyer Brahmins, leaving out the Iyengars. She showed a lot of preferences to Sadhasiva Iyer, Mani Iyer and S.P.Ramasamy Iyer. This was not to the liking of the Iyengar Brahmins. They were worried that all the advantages would reach the Iyers, and that their lives would lose all the benefits. Therefore in order to survive, they should find a new leader. They decided that only then they would survive. The Iyengar Brahmin Rajagopalachariar was a great intellect. He convinced Gandhi to take up the leadership, who readily accepted. They made a big Mahatma (great soul) of Gandhi, in the joint operation. At that time people like me joined in the movement of Congress. It was because, the plans they proposed were attractive and persuaded us to join Congress.

The proposals which Gandhi made in those days were (1) The Hindu-Muslim unity (2) Eradication of the untouchability (3) The Khadi plan (handspinning) for the upliftment of the poor and (4) the prohibition of alcohol for the welfare of the poor. Many joined the Congress because Gandhi announced that without participating in the Legislative Councils, they would indulge in such social service, which were attractive to many of us. Popularity for Congress began to increase among people. Besides this, the agitations by the Congressmen increased when the Justice Party (*South Indian Liberal Federation* (SIFL) was identified as 'Justice Party' in the name of the English magazine, 'Justice' published by it.) as formed the Ministry. They pretended to be the liberators of the poor, blaming the ministers of the Justice Party for everything they did. The gullible people were easily deceived. Justice Party lost in the polls in 1926.

The Congress formed a ministry in the name of Independent Ministers and included Dr. Subbarayan, Renganatha Mudaliar and Arogyasamy Mudaliar. But it could not last long. The ministers had to resign. Two had resigned except Dr. Subbarayan. Dr. Subbarayan later formed the ministry making the leader Muthiah Mudaliar and Sethurathinam Iyer as ministers. This ministry put into practice several public welfare measures. These ministers boldly continued all the good works done by the ministers of the *Justice Party*. The most important of them all is the Government Order on the Communal representation. Our leader Muthiah Mudaliar passed this G.O. unminding of mounting opposition and criticism.

The Brahmins harboured a secret hatred for Muthiah Mudaliar for passing the communal G.O. They considered him a *Ratchasa* (demon). Therefore they focussed on their attention on defeating Muthiah Mudaliar when he contested. He does not bother about it, believing that it was the price he paid for his services.

He is the one who passed the communal G.O. When the communal G.O. was passed I was in Congress. But still, I had very strong opinion in favour of communal reservation. I continued to be in Congress on the agreement that there ought to be proportionate representation for all the communities in all the departments.

WHY SHOULD WE STRIVE FOR
**COMMUNAL
RESERVATION?**
THE COMMUNAL G.O.



Thiru V.Kaliyanasundara Mudaliar and Dr.Varada Rajulu Naidu used to always oppose communal representations. I was alone in supporting this demand. Achariyar (Rajaji) also agreed to this for my sake. But he said that, instead of in the name of communal representation, there could be reservation for the non-Brahmins. I agreed to this proposal, not bothering about the nomenclature.

We later started a movement called *Madras Presidency Association* and worked against the Justice Party. Kesava Menon was the President for that Association and Govindadoss and myself were the Vice-Presidents. Dr.Varadarajulu Naidu was its Secretary. Even at this stage they had agreed for 50 per cent reservation for the non-Brahmins. This arrangement was totally unagreeable to Kasthuri Ayyangar, Srinivasa Iyengar, Sathiamoorthy Iyer and Rengasamy Iyengar. They staunchly opposed it. They also blamed Achariyar (Rajaji) that he was frightened of me. They tried all kinds of wiles to eradicate him.

Later another movement in the name of '*National Association*' was started. Vijayaraghava Achariyar was its President. Prakasam and myself were Secretaries and Kasthuri Iyengar and V.O.Chidambaram Pillai were vice-Presidents. The Brahmins agreed that we should propagate only nationalism and that 50 per cent share would be allotted to the non-Brahmins. Both Renganatha Iyengar and Sathiamoorthy Iyer were

frightened at the progress of our National Association. Therefore Rengasamy Iyengar in the name of "*Congress job opportunity*" passed a resolution in the Congress Committee for the 50 per cent reservation for the non-Brahmins and published it. Therefore the Congress party had accepted the proposal and communal representation in 1916 itself.

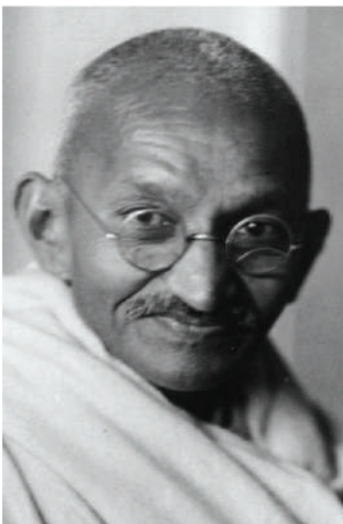
A Congress conference was held in Thiruvannamalai under my Presidentship. In this meeting, the supporters of Rengasamy Iyengar, and Srinivasa Iyengar abused Justice Party and Thiyagaraya Chettiar in a very foul language. This enraged me. Therefore Ramanathan and I attempted to counter it. As I could not speak being the President, Ramanathan began to speak. Now, our Shafi Mohammed abused our Ramanathan very vehemently. At this moment our people Annamalai Pillai and Thanjavur Venkitakrishna Pillai replied adequately opposing Rengasamy Iyengar and Srinivasa Iyengar. I was very embittered in that conference itself.

Soon after, a Congress conference was held in Kanchipuram under the Presidentship of V.Kaliyanasundara Mudaliar. A day prior to this conference, I convened a meeting of the non-Brahmins in Kanchipuram itself. Many non-Brahmin leaders like Muthiah Mudaliar, Ramasamy Mudaliar, Shanmugam Chettiar, Velliangiri Gounder and Ramalingam Chettiar attended this meeting.

We wanted to pass the resolution of communal



Even Ganhiji expressed the following view. When the Brahmins of this country rushed to him to represent that they do not get admitted in colleges, Gandhi told them that they had all been educated already and therefore they should engage themselves in the service of god allowing the illiterate non-Brahmins to be educated. Very soon he was killed...



representation and to place it before the Congress Working Committee. Accordingly I took it to the Congress Working Committee. After receiving it, they started talking that such proposals should not be brought to them. I asked them what the point was now, saying, “we have been saying that the non-Brahmins should support Congress and we have spoken against the Justice Party. Moreover, it has been already agreed that 50 per cent reservation should be given to the non-Brahmins what is the meaning of it?” They informed me that the proposal was rejected, offering some lame excuses. I added “There had not been any need for this action as the Congress had not yet gone to the Legislative Assembly. But today Congress supports a separate organisation with an intention to go to the Legislative Assembly in the name of the organisation called “Swarajya Party” (Party of Self-rule.) The Congress supports it and recognises the party, thus helping this organisation to go to the Assembly. Therefore as you are going to the Legislative Assembly 50 per cent of the reservation for the non-Brahmins must be granted.” Intervening this, Thiru V.Kaliyanasundara Mudaliar said that this proposal could be brought in the general conference.

When it was taken up in the subjects committee of the general conference, both Achariyar (Rajaji) and Srinivasa Iyengar devised a new trick. Thinking that we might not have support, they insisted that we must obtain signatures of at least thirty members to make this proposal. Accepting this condition, we got signature of fifty members instead and submitted it. After receiving this resolution, at the end of the conference, he concluded that as this was against the tenets of the Congress Party, this was not acceptable. I reacted saying, “you asked for 30 signatures, but we got 50 and submitted it to you. Also in the advisory committee, you agreed that this could be brought to the general conference. In what way is it just to reject it today? At this moment some Brahmins shouted at me saying that the President has concluded and no one should say anything after this. I contended that “the issue was between the President and myself. If he asked me not to speak, I shall stop. You keep quiet.” Again the Brahmins shouted at me to sit down. I replied that if they believed in achieving by shouting, they would have to get out, as we had enough strength to shout more.

I then and there resigned from the Congress for the sake of the communal reservation. Achariyar and Mudaliyar entreated me again and again. But I walked out. Only 30 or 40 came out alongwith me. Though many desired to come out, they stayed back unable to muster courage for the same.

The Self-Respect Movement is the one that was started as soon as I quit Congress. I was labouring for the social reformation to remove the social evils. The Ministry of Muthaiah Mudaliyar took over. The Communal G.O. also was passed. I thought we had succeeded and I was very happy.

How popular I would have been had I not quit Congress! Many offices would have come to me. Why did I quit Congress? Is it because I did not have any official post? Or is it because I could become a leader when the communal representation was achieved? Not at all. Therefore, are we not concerned about not losing the right for communal reservation? Don't we have the right to fight for the protection of this right? We did

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not start our agitations only because the Madras High Court declared communal reservation was against the Indian Constitution. If tomorrow the same judgment is delivered in the Supreme Court also, we have to agitate. It is because the communal reservation as it is today is in itself not proportionately correct.

According to the Communal Representation Act that is in practice today, the Christians who form 3 per cent of the population get 7 per cent reservation and the Muslims who form 7 per cent of the population get 7 per cent. We the rest of the population of 87 per cent get only 72 per cent. Can we contend that on this basis, the reservation for us is in right proportion? The Brahmins who form 3 per cent of the population get 14 per cent of reservation. Why should it be so? Why should we who form 87 per cent should get only 72 per cent reservation? How is this just? The Brahmins besides getting 14 per cent reservation, also occupy 40 per cent. 60 per cent. 70 per cent jobs in many offices and in some cases they occupy even 90 per cent of the jobs. In the fields of Electricity Department, Medical Department and Engineering, they occupy 90 per cent of jobs. When this is the reality, can we say that judgment passed today against communal reservation is right? In the prevailing system the law regarding communal reservation is not in proportion to the population strength of the communities. For many years we have been demanding communal reservation to truly reflect the proportionate population strengths of the communities. Therefore even if the Supreme Court admits the G.O. on communal reservation, our task will not be over. We have to agitate for the right proportionate representation.

Another important fact is, the Communal G.O. covers only the Madras Presidency and certainly it does not cover the Central Government. All the jobs of the Central Government Offices are mostly snatched by the Brahmins. Very important office positions are held only by the Brahmins. They seem to enjoy 100 per cent jobs, with the 70 or 80 per cent in the State

Government and a huge number of them in the Central Government. If they have to recruit employees for the Central Government should they be only the Iyengar Brahmins? Should they employ those who were rejected as unfit for this nation?

We can not sufficiently enumerate the atrocities in the Central Government jobs. All those Brahmins here, run fast to snatch the job opportunities there. Jobs are waiting for them as if they have been well reserved already for them.

The crafty process by which a Brahmin from here gets a job in the Central Government is:

An employee already working on a monthly salary of Rs.200, will be asked to go on leave for a month and this person will be temporarily appointed in that post. After this in the same way he will be appointed on a higher position. Repeating this process, he will be finally appointed permanently on a salary of about Rs.500. It is said this is how the atrocities are perpetuated. Take for example the Railway Department. It is a completely Brahminised department. We used to get atleast a few jobs in the Railways during the British rule. Some of us were in high positions there. But today all this has been changed and the entire Railway Department has become the Iyengar Department.

The recruitment office for the Railway which was in Madras has been shifted to Bombay. The selection committee for the Railway Employment consists of only Brahmins. How can we then get jobs there? Most of us employed in the Railways are appointed only as peons. If there are 65,000 peons, only 1800 of them will be the Brahmins and the rest of them will be our people. Generally, Brahmins do not become peon, or police or watchman. We are there in full number for such jobs. In other jobs the Brahmins are in excess. When the truth is like this, what does it mean when they go to the courts that do not get jobs and could not study in colleges? Even in the Education Department, the Brahmins enjoy jobs far above their proportion. If we analyse the statistics, it will become very clear, how



We should allot certain number of jobs for each community. If anyone is employed over and above this number, both the employer and the employee should be legally punished for conspiracy. Only then, all belonging to all communities can attain equality.

much more the Brahmins are occupying and how low we have been pushed down.

According to the population ratio, the Brahmins should get only 3 per cent. But they enjoy 14 per cent reservation besides, getting 90 per cent of seats in colleges and they go to the court pleading insufficiency. In what way is this just? Even Ganhiji expressed the following view. When the Brahmins of this country rushed to him to represent that they do not get admitted in colleges, Gandhi told them that they had all been educated already and therefore they should engage themselves in the service of god allowing the illiterate non-Brahmins to be educated. Very soon he was killed for saying so. People all over the world sympathise with us.

What will be our state, if we allow such conditions to continue? What will be the plight of our generations? Only now we have realized that we are also human beings, with human dignity. We started getting education only after the formation of the *Justice Party* that opened our eyes of reason and brought out the plan for communal representation. Our people also managed to get a few jobs. What was our condition before this? Only the Brahmins were District Judges, Tahsildars, Munsiffs and Sub-Inspectors, before the communal reservation plan. When the *Justice Party* came to power almost cent per cent of us the Dravidians were illiterates. Even after 15 years of rule by the *Justice Party*, and after the rule by the Congress Party after Independence only 10 per cent of us are educated. Does it mean that we are not talented if we are not educated? It only means that we did not have the facility to be educated. Most of the people classified as Sudras, are toilers and labourers. They are paid just a minimum merely for their daily expenses. They are paid on the basis of the cost-index. How can a son of a menial, a cartpuller or a cobbler be educated? Can the son of a police constable or a Sub-Inspector be educated? This is not the case for the Brahmins. Even the son of a Brahmin Purohit, and the son of a Brahmin corpse-bearer, and the waterboy at the Railway platforms can study B.A. He can become a judge. The reason is the great strength of their caste

and the sacred thread. In this way there are facilities for the poor Brahmin to be educated. If our children have to be educated they have to be the sons of rich people and the Zamindars. In spite of enduring all such hardships and crossing over the hurdles to be educated what is the meaning of denied to job opportunities us? Do we ask for admission to persons who can not pass examinations? Not at all. We ask for jobs only for those who have passed the examinations. We cannot sufficiently describe the atrocities in the examinations. About of 68,000 took up the S.S.L.C. (Secondary School Leaving Certificate) examinations and of them 38,000 did not pass. Does it mean that all these 38,000 did not have brains? How much would they have spent to study upto S.S.L.C.? If we consider these failures, it means that their teachers are inefficient or the examination system is defective. When our children pass after all such impediments, they are categorised as unfit for jobs. What will be the mental condition of such children at this? When we ask why we are not employed, they say that they are not fit for employment. If we study in order to qualify they say we are not qualified to study! In what way is this honest?

Is it proper to evaluate a student's talent, only on the basis of the marks scored by him? Can we hold that he is intelligent by merely scoring marks? If we learn things by rote memory, we can score marks. We all know the ways in which a student scores marks. They chase the answer papers sent for correction with a lot of money. Do not the ministers know about this? They themselves may have perhaps passed in this way! If not for themselves, these corrupt methods would have been followed in the case of their children. It is a public secret in our country that marks are obtained for monetary considerations. Moreover, a Brahmin teacher helping a Brahmin is quite natural. Our boys used to go and kneel down in the Ganesha temple after writing examinations. But a Brahmin will kneel before the teacher and the officer and earn more marks! Is it a responsible act, under these circumstances to evaluate a person only on the basis of marks? To vomit what has been learned by rote method cannot indicate a depth of intelligence. Leave alone this. What is the connection between

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scoring marks in the examination and one's honesty, character, good conduct and intelligence? I tell you a truth. Only in our country the examination system that strangles the students is in vogue. In other countries in the well built up nations, there is no such system. In Russia they plan well in advance the period within which a student has to complete his education, and offer the necessary education within that period and send them for employment. Education is nothing but administering the jobs properly. But in our country the torture of examinations keep our students in hardship.

Friends I say. We should allot certain number of jobs for each community. If anyone is employed over and above this number, both the employer and the employee should be legally punished for conspiracy. Only then, all belonging to all communities can attain equality. Otherwise, those who are below will go lower and lower and those who are above will go higher and higher.

With the Independence, only the Brahmins are reaping the benefit after benefit. During the British rule, they had I.C.S. for the sake of administration. This degree course was offered only in London. In those days 50 or 60 of the I.C.S. officers would be Brahmins. Those who are sent from here for that study, will be mostly Brahmins because the government will meet their expenses. Therefore only the Brahmins will seize those opportunities. They will do anything to get them. If a person from another community was insisted upon, then they could include either a Malayalee, or a Christian or a Muslim. They will list them as non-Brahmins. The reason for this is, if they come to power, they may not have the non-Brahmin sentiments. They may stop with the love for their own communities and will not oppose the Brahmins for which there was no need either. But if we Dravidians are in those posts, we may have our communal sentiments and self-respect. Therefore the Brahmins saw to it that our people did not get those positions.

After independence the cadre service has totally become dominated by the Brahmins. They have created

a new course called Indian Administrative Service (I.A.S.) in the place of Indian Civil Service (I.C.S.) and the examinations for the degree are conducted in India. They have recruited many Brahmins for these posts. They have also started Indian Police Service (I.P.S.) for the police department. For this also, majority of the persons selected were Brahmins. What will be the plight of our people if these people come to power in future? These Brahmins will focus their attention only in curtailing our rights and clipping our wings. They may treat us like dogs and torture us. How much we will have to suffer under these people! Are not these jobs that enable us keeping us cowed down? Should the administration of country be like this? Is democratic republic, an apt name for such a state of affairs? The original inhabitants of this land who form 87 per cent are leading a life of misery, slavery and torture. But those who entered our country from elsewhere exploit us through evil designs, being only 3 per cent of the population. Is it fair? Is it just? Should we bear this insult forever? We should be people of liberation by casting away this injustice, and should live a life of self-respect. Is it wrong to ask for these rights? They show great irritation when we ask for this. Recently Mr.Kamarajar has said in a public meeting that they shall take sufficient steps to confirm communal reservation and that they had appealed to the Supreme Court and therefore all concerned should keep quiet. He says that Naicker (me) wants to agitate on this pretext and therefore the students and others should not listen to him. Friends, Kamaraj says that I have started this agitation for my own good. Let him say what my personal interest in this agitation.

For the past 30 years I have been struggling hard in public life in the service to the Dravidians, Panchamas, Sudras and those who were ill treated, as much as possible in my level. Can the Congress Committee President prove that I have done anything for my own good in these thirty years? What I have done for myself is the service I have rendered to my own



For the past 30 years I have been struggling hard in public life in the service to the Dravidians, *Panchamas*, *Sudras* and those who were ill treated, as much as possible in my level... What I have done for myself is the service I have rendered to my own people who are today languishing as *Sudras*, children of prostitutes, lower caste people and ill treated ones.

people who are today languishing as *Sudras*, children of prostitutes, lower caste people and ill treated ones. Only their progress, their welfare, endowed with human dignity self-respectful are my goals in life. I have been serving not only those who are called *Pariahs*, *Sakkaliars*, *Naickers* and children of prostitutes, but also for those including *Kamaraj*, *Kumarasamy Raja* and Minister *Madhava Menon*. If this is selfishness, then I am selfish. What will happen if we give up fighting for the people to be self-respectful and for them to live as honourable citizens. If we had not presented in our services for the past 30 years, and if we had not faced the obstacles and the oppositions hardheartedly, could *Kamaraj* have become the President of Congress today? Can *Kumarasamy Raja* become Prime Minister? Can *Madhava Menon* become a minister? Can I 1 out of 12 ministers be our people?

What was the condition when our movement was not there and when our propaganda had not started? Did anyone know their address? I had been a person of the same standing before I left for *Sanyasam*. I had been President of the Taluk Board, and had been the Chairman. I had been a prosperous and successful merchant. Let them examine their conscience and say what they would have been but for the concerted efforts of our self-respect movement.

They advise people not to listen to me. If they do not listen to me they will have to go to craze the cattle, and drink the water that washed the feet of the Brahmins. I do what I can. I am going to die today or tomorrow. Should not the children studying in the school today go to colleges tomorrow? Should they suffer there? Should we not take immediate and necessary steps to put an end to this? Friends this year I gave a letter for a student to be admitted in Medical College to our friend Mr. Subramaniam and to another person. Nothing happened. Formerly there were people who could implement my requests. I used to give letters to those who approached me. All those whom I recommended used to get admission. Today I don't give any letters. But I gave a letter to only one student. They have rejected even this. That student has passed in

Intermediate Examinations in first class. His name is *Meenakshi Sundaram* who is the son of my friend *Sithappa Chettiar* in *Rasipuram*. This student was very intelligent, belonging to *Devangar Chettiar* community (O.B.C.). This student who was qualified as per their specifications, did not get admission. What a sad news!

Should the education be for a life of a slave? Is it education that enslaves him without giving him ability to think? How much money is spent by every family for the sake of this useless education? In what way is it right to waste so much of money on this useless education? How long can we tolerate this to continue? We cannot. Therefore we have to put an end to this. We have to agitate for this cause. Our next plan will be really tough. We have to suffer. Students and the youth should be ready for the same. When we start agitations, they will not be violent. Attacking others, pouring acids on others, setting things on fire are not our ways of agitation. We shall succeed only by accepting the hardships for ourselves and without giving room for disturbing anyone, and in a peaceful way.

We may succeed in two or three matters by fighting for the communal reservations. In order to achieve great things, we are asking to make small sacrifices. Why should there be a Delhi Government? What is the need? Don't we have enough resources to rule ourselves? Our coast is having 1600 miles long seashores. All the basic needs for the lives of our people are there with us. Our ships can travel to any country in this world. Those in Delhi had to cross 100 miles in order to see a sea. Our railways can travel a length of 1600 miles. All the basic needs for the lives of our people are available with us. Can we not live, if we are separated from them? Can they say that we are unfit to rule ourselves? We all belong to the tradition of the ruling class. If this is so, why should we suffer under the rule of the Aryans (Brahmins)? Should we lie exploited by them who are Prime Ministers and Deputy Prime Ministers? Should we not have our own rule? Let us be ready to achieve our goal of communal reservation. ■

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN INDIA

Justice **S.MOHAN** Former Judge Supreme Court of India

In the beginning of this century when cries of *Vande Matharam* rent the air, Lokmanya Tilak thundered:

“Swaraj is my birth right”

The clap of that thunder was like the beat of a trumpet.

From then on, the freedom’s battle began:

*“Freedom’s battle once begun
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son
Though bagged of this ever won”*

- Byron.

If Tilak turned Swaraj into shape and gave it a local habitation and name, Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest apostle of non-violence, put life and spirit into it. Without arms, without bloodshed, he enabled to win the freedom for our country. One could verily describe him, in the words of Joseph Addison.

*“Unbounded courage and compassion joined
Proclaimed him good and great
And made the man and the hero complete”.*

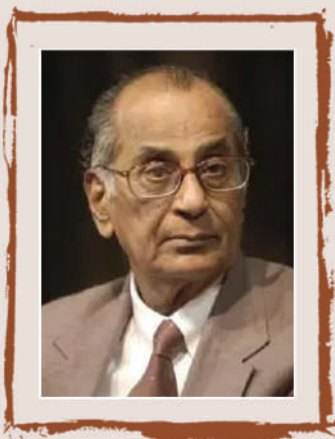
Rightly Jawaharlal Nehru venerated him saying:

*“Where he walked was a hallowed ground
Where he sat was a temple”.*

To the Mahatma, Independence did not mean mere freedom from British rule by breaking the bonds of slavery but it meant more than that. It meant Justice to all citizens of India, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or language” each getting its legitimate due.

It fell to the lot of Jawaharlal Nehru, the light of Asia, to implement these great ideals. He declared:

“I am convinced that the only key to the solution of the world’s problems and of India’s problems lies in socialism, and when I see this world, I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific, and economic sense. It means ultimately a change in our instincts and habits and desires. In short, it means a new civilization,





Social Justice as distinguished from economic justice has a special significance in the context of Indian Society. The Hindu social structure is ridden with castes and communities which create walls and barriers of segregation. Purely on account of birth, which cannot but be accidental, claims of superiority are made.

radically different from the present capitalist order...

Socialism is thus for me not merely an economic doctrine which I favour; it is a vital creed which I hold with all my head and heart. I work for Indian Independence because the nationalism in me cannot tolerate alien domination; I work for it even more because for me it is the inevitable step to social and economic change.

The problem of untouchability and the Harijans "again can be approached in different ways. For a socialist it presents no difficulty, for under socialism there can be no such differentiation or victimization. Speaking on economy of the Harijans, they have constituted the landless proletariat, and their economic uplift removes the social barriers that custom and tradition have raised".

It was in this background the constitution of India came to be adopted and enacted on the 26th day of November, 1949.

"We the people of India having solemnly resolved to constitute"

India into a SOVEREIGN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure all its citizens; JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and To promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation".

By the 42nd Amendment, it was declared that India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic. Socialism denotes economic justice by making the society or the State the owners of the means of production with an obligation to make equitable distribution of wealth.

Democracy's aims and functions:

Thus when India became a democracy, it pledged itself to wage war against Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and

Idleness. All these evils thrive on the fundamental evil of poverty. Therefore, it becomes an imperative necessity for every welfare State to attack the problem of poverty. Unless and until Democracy uses its mighty weapon of law and attempts to restore balance of the economic structure and to remove the causes of economic tension from the body-politic of the community, the problem of poverty cannot be successfully met. Any attempt made by a democratic legislature to meet the challenge of poverty is aimed in the right direction, spreading the gospel of economic justice. Equality of opportunity to all the citizens to develop their individual personalities and to participate in the pleasures and happiness of life is the goal of economic justice.

Social Justice as distinguished from economic justice has a special significance in the context of Indian Society. The Hindu social structure is ridden with castes and communities which create walls and barriers of segregation. Purely on account of birth, which cannot but be accidental, claims of superiority are made. This obnoxious vice of social inequality assumes a particularly reprehensive form in relation to the Backward classes and communities which are treated as untouchables. Hence, the problem of social justice is an urgent and important in India as is the problem of economic justice. In the Indian context, the term 'social justice' must be understood in a comprehensive sense so as to include both economic justice and social justice. The concept of social justice should, therefore, mean the removing every inequality. Social justice must afford equal opportunities to all citizens in social affairs as well as economic activities and in every walk of life. The problem of poverty tied up with the vice of social inequality exists in a gross form in all our villages. Go to any countryside; to any rural part; go to any village. You find our Harijan brethren suffering from dual course of economic and social inequalities. They constitute a large group of landless laborers who are treated as untouchables by the rest of the community, who have no roof over their heads, "no apparel to proclaim". Not enough food to eat. Sometimes, even drinking water is beyond their reach. Look at what Swami Vivekananda says of the unfortunate brethren of ours:

“My heart aches to think of the conditions of the poor, the low in India. They sink lower and lower every day. They feel the blow showered upon them by a cruel society, but they do not know when the blow comes. They have forgotten that they too are men. My heart is too full to express my feeling. So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense pays not “the least heed to them. Our great national sin in is the neglect of the masses and that is the cause of our downfall; no amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for”.

Concept of Social Justice

The concept of social justice in its comprehensive form regards this as a blot on India’s polity and seeks to remove it by legislative process. All steps taken by the Indian Legislature with a view to solving this problem of socio-economic inequality are based on the doctrine of social justice. Let us never forget this: “Our own conception of democracy, no matter how earnestly venerated by ourselves is of little importance to men whose immediate concern is preservation of physical life”. Notions of Individual freedom and liberty are apt to sound as empty words. Hunger might have been the silent enemy of man. Starvation might have been the silent way of death. But it cannot be so for all time. Instead of silence it can mean resounding roar of violence. Hunger makes men impatient and angry. Impatience and anger lead to blindness and all ugly distempers make an orderly life impossible. In their struggle to overcome abysmal poverty, people have hardly time to appreciate the theoretical significant and grandeur of the concept of individual freedom and liberty. To better the lot of those people in the huts and villages across the great sub-continent struggling to break the bonds of miser, social justice must pledge its best efforts to help them, in order to help the common good of humanity.

The concept of social justice is thus a revolutionary concept. It gives meaning and significance to the democratic way of life and makes the rule of law dynamic. It is this concept of social justice which creates in the minds of the masses of this country a sense of participation in the glory of India’s political freedom. In the words of Saul David Alinsky:

*“There can be no democracy unless
It is a dynamic democracy. When
Our people cease to participate
to have a place in the Sun-then
all of us will wither in the*

*darkness of decadence. All of us
will become mute, demoralized
lost solus”.*

For the first time, the Constitution of India guaranteed FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS under Part III of the constitution. One could call this part as dealing with social equality and individual freedom.

Article 14 is a shining star among the fundamental rights. It guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws to all the persons in India. It acknowledges thereby that all men are created equal and are endowed with certain inalienable rights. This article rings a death knell to irrational discriminations.

The doctrine of EQUALITY BEFORE LAW is a necessary correlative to the high concept of rule of law. It includes at least three distinct, though kindred conceptions, according to Dicey.

- i) No man is punishable, except for a distinguished breach of law established in the ordinary legal manner before the ordinary courts of land;
- ii) No man is above the law;
- iii) The law is what the Court declares.

Article 14 constitutes the genus while the species are found in Article 15. It prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of race, religion, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. But, having regard to the long history of India and the social conditions that are prevalent, it makes special provision for women and children and for the advancement of society and economically backward classes or for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under Clause.

Really speaking, it is not a case or bringing about any inequality. It has to be viewed in the context of reality of the situation. The existing inequalities call for unequal treatment so that equality may be achieved ultimately. This is protective discrimination. On this basis, reservations are made in educational institutions etc. in favour of weaker sections of the society.

Likewise, Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunities for all citizens in matters of employment under the State, by prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of only religion, race, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them. Here again, reservations are permitted in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State. This is an exception to Art.29 which prohibits denial of admission to any citizen into any



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educational institution, maintained by the state or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

From this point of view of social justice, the next Article to be noticed is Art. 17. That says:- 'Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden'.

This echoes the great sentiments of the various leaders in India.

Tilak Said:

"If God ordained untouchability I will not recognize that God".

Mahatma Gandhi again said:

"If untouchability is to be regarded as a part of Hinduism I cease to be a Hindu".

Mahatma Gandhi again said:

"It is wrong, it is sinful to consider some people lower than ourselves".

Special provisions have been made under Articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution for the reservation of seats to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House of the people as well as in the Legislative Assemblies of the States. Under Article 334, this reservation is to continue for period of 40 years as per the 45th Amendment to the Constitution. Likewise, for various services and posts, reservations are given under Article 335.

In addition to the fundamental rights, the makers of the constitution incorporated Part IV as well containing Directive Principles. Though they are not enforceable in a Court of Law like the Fundamental rights, yet, it shall be the duty of States to follow the same, both in administration as well as in the making of the laws. They embody the aims and objects of the state under the Republic Constitution, e.g., that it is welfare State and not a mere police State. Therefore, they could be called ideals to be cherished, policies to be pursued and goals to be accomplished.

Social Justice is needed for the betterment of culturally, economically and socially the weakest section of the general community. Article 38 directs the creation of a justifiable social order.

In *Ratlam Municipality V. Vardhichand* (1)

The supreme Court held: (1) A.1980 S.C 1622 (para 14) (2) Criminal procedure code, 1973 (Prentice- hall of India' 1979pp.70et seq.)

"In interpreting and applying S.133 of the Cr.P.C(2) and allied Municipal Laws, Courts should have regard to the Directive in Art.38 to promote welfare of the people and social justice, so that where a Municipality has failed to remove filthy conditions of drains, etc., in slums, the court should make a positive and mandatory order directing and municipality to remove the public nuisance within a given time, irrespective of the financial resources of the Municipality".

Article 46 makes a noble announcement that the State shall promote with special care the educational and the economic interest of the weaker section of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Social justice is the signature tune of the Indian Constitution even as fundamental human rights are the key notes of the charter of the United Nations. Social Justice cries for fulfillment, while all political labels and human rights labels included are yelling for states power or arguing for judicial justice, mindless of the horror of lifing death of fellow humans. The heart of social justice is law with a heart, a humanistic jurisprudence sensitive to the disabled sector, a versatile legal technology rich with substantive rules, operational processes and sympathetic personnel judicature and executive, ready to give relief in the spirit of love and armed with law, as JUSTICE V.R.KRISHNA IYER would say.

Court's Role

Our Constitution declares social justice as one of its central aims. If the high ideals exposed in the preamble are not to remain as mere rhetoric, or high-sounding

hyperboles, but should create life, the courts in India must play a vital role. The judiciary shall not only be the sanctuary of those who have been wronged by the strong but the benign protector of those who are weak and seek refuge against injustice and claim enforcement of human rights. It is with great expectation they come to courts saying in the Biblical language.

“Under the Shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge”.

In this sense, the Constitution looks upon the courts as more than the dispenser of mere legal justice. Whenever an opportunity arises, it must endeavor to secure justice, social, economic and political.

To quote the eloquent words of Justice V.R.Krishna Iyer:

“I regard parts II and IV as seminal provisions, seed bed, as it were, and judges have to raise a harvest of new legal principles-prisoners rights, slum-dwellers equities, disabled people’s benefits, Poverty, law and humane criminal procedures and so on.

The court system is the sword and the shield of the entire people and it is answerable to them. It is an instrument of the Socialist Secular Democratic Republic of India”.

In K.C.VasanthKumar V.State of Karnataka (1) A.I.R 1985 S.C. 1495 at 1507. (1)Chinnappa Reddy,J., speaking for the Bench, observed:

“Ours is a country of great economic, social and cultural diversity. Often we take great pride in the country’s cultural diversity. While cultural diversity add to the splendor of India, the others add to our sorrow and shame. The social and economic disparities and indeed despairingly vast. The scheduled Castes, the scheduled Tribes and the other socially and educationally backward classes, all of whom have been commendably described as the weaker sections of the people” have long journeys to make a complete society. They need aid; they need facility; they need launching; they need propulsion. Their needs are their demands. The demands are matters of right and not of philanthropy. They ask for parity, and not charity. The days of Dronacharya and Ekaluvya are over. They claim their constitutional right to equality of status and of opportunity and economic and social “Justice”. Several bridges have to be erected, so that they may cross the Rubicon. Professional education and employment under the State are thought to be two such bridges. Hence the special provision for advancement and for reservation under Arts.15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution”.

The doctrine of social justice was extended by the Supreme Court in the case of Fertilizer Corporation, Kamagar Union, Sindri V.Union of India (1) A.I.R.1981

S.C.344- (1) where the Supreme Court considered the challenge and legality of the sale of certain plants and equipments of Sindri Fertilizer Factory by union of workmen. It is observed by the Supreme court that they were not too sure if they would have refused relief to the workers if they had found that the sale was unjust, unfair and mala fide. In this judgment it was recognized that workers who have an interest in the industry can bring an action regarding an alleged wrong doing by a Board of Management.

The principle of equal pay for equal work” was deduced from Article 39(d) of the Constitution of India even though it is not expressly declared by the Constitutions to be a fundamental right. Nonetheless, the doctrine, of “equal pay for equal work: for both men and women was held to be a constitutional goal. Reliance was in its place on the preamble to the constitution to mean “equal pay for equal work”. In this case the drivers in the Delhi Police force were held entitled to the same scale of pay as the drivers in the service of Delhi administration in the Central Government as they perform the same functions and duties. This principle was applied in subsequent cases of Nehru Yuvakendra case (1) 1986 1 LLJ 134) -- (1) and Central Public Workers Department employees case(2) W.P. Nos.5690 and 563 to 570 of 1983 judgment dated 17.1.1986(2)

In its zeal to do social justice, the Supreme Court entertained the petition of six prisoners who are blinded when they were under-trial prisoners at Bhagalpur Jail in the State of Bihar. Court deprecated the most inhuman torture to which the under-trial prisoners were subjected to like piercing the eyes with needles and pouring acids into them. The jail doctors were directed to examine the prisoners and submit the report. The prisoners were directed to be brought to Delhi for being examined at Dr.Rajendraprasad Ophthalmic Institute, New Delhi. It was found that the fundamental rights and safeguards provided by Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution of India have been violated. This judgment recognizes that even the under-trial prisoners are entitled to the fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

In conclusion it will be apt to recall the famous words of the great Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru:

“The service of India, means the service of millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and other acute problems faced by millions of the people of India. ■

DRAWING STRENGTH FROM OUR ICONOCLASTS

GOPAL KRISHNA GANDHI Former Governor, West Bengal

One could say, in the same manner and spirit, that as long as there are icons there will be iconoclasts.

The word 'icon' is of Greek and it means an image, a representation on wood with a fair amount of gold in it for worship. Metaphorically 'icon' is taken, to mean a figure, a person, sometimes dead but often living, who is made of such outstanding elements of mind and temper, appearance and attitude, as to be an exemplar, a star.

One is in awe of such a figure, sometimes affectionately, sometimes deferentially, at all times unconditionally. Children are in awe of the 'big' – the big boy, the big girl. Their sense of the big is of course also mixed up with the sense of their parents and teachers being big. They want to become that 'big', quickly, now, because they know that they themselves are yet not big but can and will, one day, be. The awesome 'big' is a goal to be reached.

Worship follows awe. And worship, in turn, can become a following, a discipleship, a bond. If the awe if a writer, a painter or a musician, it can remain a private matter. But very often, one might even say, most often, awe like company, likes the awed to be together, to bond, to become in fact, a band.

And this is where icons also establish or found, often unbeknownst to themselves and also, very often, pretty 'knownst' to themselves, awe-clubs which can become, in sport and the arts like cinema and music, fan-clubs. In social and political movements and in party politics,





...religious assertiveness, bigotry and majoritarianism are the new icons, the liberal Indian will find these leaders - Gandhi, Ambedkar and Periyar - on the same, not opposite pages, within the same not opposed narratives, the same not contrary discourses for India's civilisational evolution in an ambience where sectarianism endangers our pluralism, and bigotry, our secularism.

the awesome and the iconic take clubbism further to cultism. They in themselves become cults.

The icon as a cult threatens other icons and cults.

And we have of course had many more icons who wanted to and loved to be just that.

And we have therefore had iconoclasts.

Some iconoclasts are more suited by aptitude than others to become iconoclasts, for they have enquiring minds, questioning minds, minds that need to be persuaded, not overwhelmed. But all iconoclasts are in the main created not by their own will or aptitude but by the force of circumstances, by the work of their contexts and ambience.

Mahatma Gandhi is not regarded as an iconoclast for the reason he was at the same time also turned into an icon, 'sainted' by his followers, into Mahatmahood. But before he became an icon, he was an iconoclast, campaigning against more icons of belief and custom than anyone since Rajah Rammohun Roy and Swami Vivekananda in his time. *'There is no such thing as Gandhism and I do not want to leave a sect after me'*, he said. But he was called an *avatar*. And *avatars* are worshipped, not heeded. Acharyas are sometimes heeded, not avatars.

And naturally, there arose iconoclasts even in the iconic world of Gandhi, the foremost among the being Babasaheb Ambedkar and Periyar E V Ramasami.

Their example is invaluable both because they show us what iconoclasm means and how valuable it is. But also because even iconoclasts can become in a society like ours, become icons.

There are as many statues if not more to Babasaheb and Periyar as there are to the Mahatma. I find this a felicity for there is no denying the deep and defining differences between the way Gandhi viewed the problem of India's Depressed Classes, and the way Babasaheb and Periyar did. There is no understating the fundamental differences between them on the structure of Indian society.

But when today, religious assertiveness, bigotry and majoritarianism are the new icons, the liberal Indian will find these leaders – Gandhi, Ambedkar and Periyar – on the same, not opposite pages, within the same not opposed narratives, the same not contrary discourses for India's civilisational evolution in an ambience where sectarianism endangers our pluralism, and bigotry, our secularism.

We must draw strength from our iconoclasts, not make new icons of them.

Let us give 'her', Dissent, the chance she needs to speak out and stand up against the dominant icons of our time so that she does not have to become an iconoclast who could, ironically, become a self-destroying icon again. ■

SAFFRON BRIGADE OMINOUS PORTENTS

S. RAJARATNAM Tax Consultant and Prolific Writer

Religion has always been a potent force for dividing people throughout the history of mankind. ISIS is not a new phenomenon. Crusades and jihads are a part of history. *Religion is opium of the masses* said Karl Marx. Lord Melbourne, a former Prime Minister of England bemoaned that things have come to pretty pass, when religion is allowed to invade private homes.

Intolerance is raising its ugly head more openly in recent years. Mohan Bhagawat, the RSS chief, in live relay in Doordarshan made light of “small episodes getting exaggerated” and exhorts on three Hs, Hindu culture, Hindu forefathers and Hindu land. Udhav Thackeray of Shiv Sena distancing himself from RSS, asks people not to peep into their neighbours as to whether they are eating beef and says that Shiv Sena does not believe in “sherdi” (tuft of hair), “janeau” (sacred thread) or the Vedas. It does not want to buy Brahminic vegetarianism but still wants Hindu Rashtra with uniform civil code.

Uniform Civil Code – How uniform?

The special status for Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution was a compromise, which was authored by Jawaharlal Nehru to give assurance to the majority of Kashmir who will be minority in India. Certain provisions in the Constitution applicable to other States are not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. There is ongoing agitation for removal of the Article in the guise of uniform civil code. Some critics are comfortable in lack of uniformity in the special income tax status for Hindus, who can split up their income in more than one hand making a mockery of progressive system of taxation, which requires a person with higher income to pay higher rate of tax. It is dependent on the specious plea, that Hindu joint Family (HUF) is a time-honoured institution, which cannot be allowed to be disintegrated. This abnormal and unjustified concession in law was diluted on the recommendation of Wanchoo Commission presided over by a Judge of the Supreme Court by provision of tax on such joint families with





members having individual taxable income at a higher rate of tax on a lower exemption limit effective from 1974-1975. Even this mild provision was dropped with hardly any explanation or excuse by the Finance Act, 1997 by the then Finance Minister Mr.P.Chidambaram under the Congress Government.

Bad deal for dalits/ Reservation policy

There is an on-going propaganda that the British are to be blamed for all the ills, which India has inherited including untouchability by encouraging harijans and even setting up Ambedkar for this purpose, a theory, which is orchestrated by Arun Shourie in a book on Ambedkar titled "*Worshipping False Gods*" even recommending that the Bharat Ratna award given to him should be withdrawn, on the plea that he was a lackey of the British Government.

Time and again a demand for withdrawal of reservation is made on the ground, that it cannot continue indefinitely, but getting postponed because of the dalit vote banks.

Discrimination persists, though Constitution bars it. A love marriage with a dalit gives rise to "*honour killing*" with some caste-based political parties indirectly supporting it, if not openly conniving at it.

Conversion is case of major trouble though Constitution ensures freedom to profess, practise and propagate religion. Based on the rigid division as between castes/ religion, disruption of peace in villages leading to murders considered sacred for protecting caste and religion is becoming more frequent.

Beef is beefing up

The veneration which Indians have for the cow for its munificent supply of milk treated on par with mother's milk has been exploited by blaming the British and Muslims for Gohatya of Gomatha, which has now loomed to be a major issue asking for a ban on beef eating notwithstanding the fact, that the large number of Hindus belonging to lower castes and even higher castes in Kerala are beef eaters. Hypocrisy of certain political parties is recently highlighted in a Science and Environmental Fortnightly under the title "*BJP's pink mask slips*" in following words:

"The emergence of "vegetarian India" as the world's top beef exporter has spawned many snide commentaries globally, specially since this happened after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of Narendra Modi assumed office. In fact, there has been a 17 per cent increase in beef exports since then, and India accounts for as much as 23.5 per cent of the global meat trade. The irony is that in the run-up to the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, Modi had attacked the previous Congress government for promoting a "pink revolution" or the beef export boom".

The recent incident in Dadri where a Muslim allegedly eating beef was lynched to death. Mr. V.K.Singh, a Minister, has made a remark that the return of awards of Sahitya Akademi by writers is a small incident like Dadri in an interview with CNN-IBN delinking Dadri incident from Kalburgi incident as "a

small matter". In another comment, Mr. V.K.Singh, has referred to the fate of dalits being stoned to death as something which cannot be prevented by the Government as when dogs are killed.

There were orders of the BJP Government of Maharashtra against beef eating with the Supreme Court having to intervene against a general ban on beef eating, an instance of hypocrisy for which Indians are blamed universally for their "holier than thou" attitude. India's capital has not lagged far beyond, when it came heavily on beef being served in Kerala House, an organ of Kerala State in New Delhi.

Prof. Kancha Ilaiah, a prolific writer, has repeatedly pointed that, if the supply of milk by the cow like the mother, makes it holy, it is the buffalo which requires to be worshipped because its supplies are more abundant in quantity with greater contribution to health and giving a source of income to a much larger number of persons.

Freedom of Expression at peril

Drastic steps are to be taken to contain the onslaught of the killing of free thinkers like Dhabolkar, Pansare and Kalburgi with Bhagwan's life threatened with open public warnings. Tamil Nadu is no exception to the prevailing plight of writers like Perumal Murugan, subjected to harassment. A book release by a Pakistani Minister was opposed and Mr. Kulkarni, who was responsible, was tarred with ink with further threats to him for having defied the sentiments of the Hindus. Many books critical of India are continued to be banned till date. There is awakening of writers against the indifference of Sahitya Akademy, in failing to protect writers and to condemn the killing of rationalists. A belated reaction of Sahitya Akademy now is to bemoan the killing of Kalburgi. Motives of awardees returning the awards are lampooned for the delay in the return of awards years after with proposal to probe against their background from the apologists of intolerance.

Treatment of women

Women of this country are claimed to have had a respectable status in Vedic times with female Goddesses like Kali and Durga, but actually they were treated as subordinate to men in every sense. She had no right to property under the Hindu law. She was to be a dependent on her husband during her married life and on her son on husband's death. She had to ascend the funeral pyre of her husband to attain sainthood. Even recently a screaming women was pushed to the fire and forced to commit *sati* in Rajasthan, with prosecution against the perpetrators escaping because all the witnesses turned hostile during trial. To what extent the superstitions can play with a woman's life is unbelievable. Probably a day may come when *sati* which was abolished by the British may be asked to be revived in law for bringing back the Vedic times!



a Minister, has made a remark that the return of awards of Sahitya Akademi by writers is a small incident like Dadri in an interview with CNN-IBN delinking Dadri incident from Kalburgi incident as "a small matter". In another comment, he has referred to the fate of dalits being stoned to death as something which cannot be prevented by the Government as when dogs are killed.

Even the criminal offence of rape is being underplayed by blaming the victim too as responsible allegedly because of her provocative dress or complicity or otherwise. There is an old French classic “*Gargantua and Pantagruel*” scoffing such an idea thousand years ago in the story of a rapist justifying his villainy by canvassing a theory that no rape could occur without consent of the victim with a thread and needle demonstration. The modern day Casanovas do not have a different story. What is more, the support for such obnoxious plea is found in high places in the Government.

Women’s right to property

It was Mr.N.T.Rama Rao of Andhra Pradesh in 1985, who gave the women the right to a share on their father’s interest in the joint family, followed by Mr.Karunanidhi in Tamil Nadu in 1989 and then adopted in Karnataka and Maharashtra in 1994. The result was that on the death of karta of joint family, if there were son and a daughter, karta’s share was 50 per cent along with a son with his share divided between son and daughter, so that daughter would get one-fourth and son three-fourth. Where there is a large number of children, daughters would be given only a small fraction of what their brothers would get. This limited right, which recognised the right of women in the joint family property was still not fair to women as discrimination of girl child as against boys remained.

There was also a criticism of the present law, which would require the wealth left by a childless Hindu widow to go back to her deceased husband’s legal heirs and not to her own brothers/ sisters and their progeny. The recommendation of Law Commission in this regard is in limbo, while fortunately the other recommendation of giving women the equal right was recognised by giving her the same right as a coparcener by the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 with effect from 9.9.2005. Surprisingly, this Amendment Act as

a whole has been dumped along with many other Acts by a Repealing and Amendment Act 2015 effective from 13th May 2015. This retrograde step was explained by the Government counsel during a hearing in a case where this repeal was challenged before the Karnataka High Court in Smt.Lakamani and Others in Appeal No. 58/2014. It was argued that it was an unnecessary enactment(!). There was no reason as to why the repeal was effected. The High Court, no doubt, found repeal to be ineffective in the view that, Section 6 gave her equal right notwithstanding the repeal, because of equality for women under the Constitution. Once the Amendment Act is repealed, will the substituted Section 6 survive? At any rate, what is the urgency, which prompted the repeal?

In absence of any formal assurance of the Government as to the impact of repeal, the hidden agenda, one can guess, is to restore the ancient Hindu law. The interpretation that the repeal was only weeding out a wasteful Act or that the Amendment Act was unnecessary in the light of the Constitution granting equality begs the question. At any rate, some explanation as to the justification of repeal from the law-makers is necessary. Even more surprising is no women’s organisation nor the champions of women’s rights seem to be even aware of the repeal or its effect being totally oblivious to this development. It is time that somebody wakes them up!

Hindutva and after

One hears about Hindutva as the required policy of a Government by the Hindu organisations. What is “Hindutva?”. In the language of George Orwell, it can be said to have been understood by the enthusiasts of Hindutva “*All religions are equal. But Hindus are more equal than others!*”

It is time that the Periyarists and other reformers in the country become alive and active to stop the ominous trends surfacing now and then in every field. It is the need of the hour. ■

SECULARISM THROUGH EDUCATION

Dr. G. VISWANATHAN Founder & Chancellor, VIT University
Former Member of Parliament, Former Minister, Govt. of Tamil Nadu

“Just as it is fair to provide the necessities of food , clothes and shelter to those who are without these , so is it fair to provide education to those who do not have it .” - Periyar.

This article intends to establish the relationship between secularism and education, and attempts to show how the latter can play a significant role in ensuring the former.

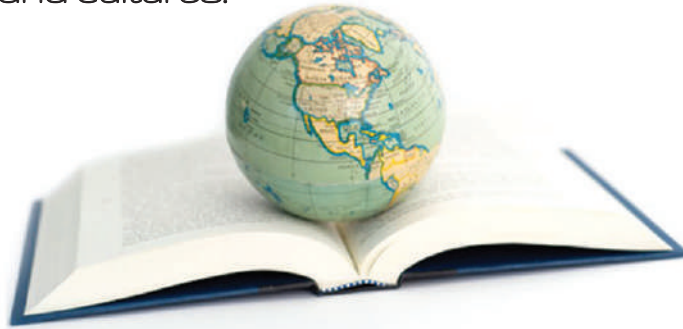
The concept of secularism is an offshoot of rationalistic thinking. We are aware that a secular state is one that treats all its citizens equally, irrespective of religion or creed. The citizens of a secular country have the right to follow a religion of their choice or to not practice any religion if they so desire. Hence, the people of a secular state are empowered to make their own decisions on matters of religion. Therefore, at the core of a secular country is the empowerment offered to its citizens in making personal choices. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines secularism as, *“the belief that religion should not be involved in the organization of society, education, etc.”* Prof. Donald E Smith of Pennsylvania University, in his book , ‘India as a Secular State’ defines a secular state as one that “guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion, nor does it seek to promote or interfere with religion.” The architects of the Indian Constitution envisioned independent India as a secular state, and the result is secularism has been enshrined in our Constitution. India is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious country. It goes without saying that the strength of India lies in ‘unity in diversity.’

Secularism thrives best in those societies where there is tolerance and mutual respect for people of all faiths and cultures. Though secularism in the strict sense of the term deals predominantly with freedom of religion, at a broader level, it denotes the capacity for understanding, patience and tolerance at every level. This leads us to the prime question, ‘how do we guarantee secularism in a country like India that





education has the power to make a meaningful and everlasting impact on the lives of the people and the society. In a diverse society like India, education assumes even greater significance because it can hold the fabric of secularism strong by knitting together people of various hues and cultures.



is geographically vast and culturally diverse?’ I see the role of education as an enabling factor in ensuring secularism in this context.

Education has been defined by several experts in a myriad of ways. While almost all of them agree that knowledge acquisition is the primary objective of education, Periyar EVR goes a step further when he views education as a means “to enable man to live humanely, so that he lives to serve his fellowmen in honour and without causing hardship to others.” In this interesting and insightful definition, two phrases stand out poignantly. They are: ‘to live humanely’ and ‘in honour without causing hardship to others’. How appropriate and relevant are these thoughts in today’s world of increasing complexities in relationship among people and societies! The moment people begin to live humanely, they will begin to trust their fellow human beings and the society. When they strive to live in honour without causing hardship to others, they endeavour to think of establishing their identities and ideals without infringing on the rights and liberties of other men and women. Hence, we can say with conviction that education can be a great enabler in ensuring secularism in a society. It is all the more relevant in a pluralistic society like India.

In his article, *Secularism in India*, Asghar Ali Engineer observes, “the real spirit of secularism in India is all-inclusiveness, religious pluralism and peaceful co-existence.” Against this backdrop, we can understand the significance of education in bringing people closer to each other for mutual benefit. If we can provide education to all our people, it would not only enhance

the prospects of earning their bread and butter, but it would also make sure that people live together and strive for the betterment of the society. For this to happen, every citizen needs to be given access to quality education.

At VIT University, we have made a beginning by founding the Universal Higher Education Trust (UHET), with the objective of providing opportunities for aspiring students who are economically weaker irrespective of their religion and caste to gain access to quality higher education. Various institutions and philanthropists have come together to make this happen. True to the saying, charity begins at home, we have implemented this scheme in Vellore District. So far, 1656 students have benefitted, and we are hopeful that this effort will yield the desired fruit in the days to come. I am mentioning this to illustrate how institutions and individuals can make a difference in society.

When this pervades to all parts of the state, and from there to all regions of the country, the benefits will be enormous. As Bertrand Russel wrote, “*A good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge.*”

I wish to conclude by saying that education has the power to make a meaningful and everlasting impact on the lives of the people and the society. In a diverse society like India, education assumes even greater significance because it can hold the fabric of secularism strong by knitting together people of various hues and cultures. Let us do our little bit to educate and transform our society to a more secular, strong and prosperous one. ■

NIGHTMARE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE TO THE POOR AND THE DOWNTRODEN

Justice Dr. G. Yethirajulu

Former Judge of Andhra Pradesh High Court, Hyderabad

Social justice is “justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society”. Classically, “justice” (especially corrective justice or distributive justice) ensured that individuals both fulfilled their societal roles and received what was their due from society.

“Social justice” was coined by Jesuit priest Luigi Taparelli in the 1840s.

The first modern usage of the specific term “social justice” is typically attributed to Catholic thinkers from the 1840s, including the Jesuit Luigi Taparelli in *Civiltà Cattolica*, based on the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. He argued that rival capitalist and socialist theories, based on subjective Cartesian thinking, undermined the unity of society present in Thomistic metaphysics as neither were sufficiently concerned with moral philosophy. Writing in 1861, the influential British philosopher, politician and economist, John Stuart Mill stated in *Utilitarianism* his view that “*Society should treat all equally well who have deserved equally well of it, that is, who have deserved equally well absolutely. This is the highest abstract standard of social and distributive justice; towards which all institutions, and the efforts of all virtuous citizens, should be made in the utmost degree to converge.*”

In the later 19th and early 20th century, social justice became an important theme in American political and legal philosophy, particularly in the work of John Dewey, Roscoe Pound and Louis Brandeis. One of the prime concerns was the *Lochner* era decisions of the US





The modern social thinking of progressive societies and the judicial approach is to do away with archaic state protection and place the state and the Government at par with any other juristic legal entity. Any water-tight compartmentalization of the functions of the state as 'sovereign' and 'non-sovereign' is not sound.

Supreme Court to strike down legislation passed by state governments and the Federal government for social and economic improvement, such as the eight hour day or the right to join a trade union. After the First World War, the founding document of the International Labour Organization took up the same terminology in its preamble, stating that "*peace can be established only if it is based on social justice*". From this point, the discussion of social justice entered into mainstream legal and academic discourse. In the late 20th century, a number of liberal and conservative thinkers, notably Friedrich von Hayek rejected the concept by stating that it did not mean anything, or meant too many things. However the concept remained highly influential, particularly with its promotion by philosophers such as John Rawls.

Social justice assigns rights and duties in the institutions of society, which enables people to receive the basic benefits and burdens of co-operation. The relevant institutions can include education, health care, social security, labour rights, as well as a broader system of public services, progressive taxation and regulation of markets, to ensure fair distribution of wealth, equal opportunity and equality of outcome.

In a welfare state, the function of the State is not only defence of the country or administration of justice and maintaining law and order but it extends also to regulating and controlling the activities of the people in almost every sphere—educational, commercial, social, economic and political.

The modern social thinking of progressive societies and the judicial approach is to do away with archaic state protection and place the state and the Government at par with any other juristic legal entity. Any water-tight compartmentalization of the functions of the state as 'sovereign' and 'non-sovereign' is not sound. It is contrary to the modern jurisprudential thinking. Needs of the state, duty of its officials and the rights of the citizen are required to be reconciled so

that the rule of law in a welfare state is not shaken.

The doctrine of equality has many facets and it is a dynamic concept. In India the Constituent Assembly being entrusted with the difficult task of carving an egalitarian society from out of a bewildering mass of religions, communities, castes, races, languages, beliefs and practices was alive to the historic injustices and inequalities afflicting the society. They realized the imperative of redressing them by constitutional means. The Supreme Court of India, time and again when confronted with the issue of equality and the reservation interpreted the scope of equality as enshrined in the Constitution.

India is the biggest democratic nation in the world. India is a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic, republic. In the preamble of the Constitution there is a mandate that the nation shall secure to all its citizens: JUSTICE, social, economic, and political, LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, EQUALITY of status and of opportunity, and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation. It is the culmination of various cultures, religions, castes, languages, political parties, and governments.

Political democracy cannot last long unless it lies on the basis of a social democracy. Articles 15 (4) and 16 (4), intend to remove social and economic inequalities to make equal opportunity available in reality. The right to social and economic justice envisaged in the preamble and elongated in the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of the Constitution are to make the quality of life of the poor, disadvantageous and disable citizens of the society, meaningful.

The Supreme Court of India rendered landmark judgments bringing several subjects covered by Directive Principles of State Policy under Chapter IV in to Fundamental Rights under Chapter III of the Constitution. The Central Government as well as State Governments have introduced several welfare



NIGHTMARE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE TO THE POOR AND THE DOWNTRODDEN

measures to achieve the object of Social Justice. Reservations have been provided to the oppressed and suppressed for generations in Educational Institutions and Employment. Several Students who are economically sound are snatching away many seats by producing false income certificates, thereby depriving the deserving poor rural students to enter the portals of Educational Institutions.

In *V. Narayana Rao v. State of AP*, AIR 1987 AP 57, the Full Bench held that the community-cum-means tests and excluding persons of families above the income limit is not only permissible but a highly desirable step which would also serve to reduce the division of society on the caste lines.

Though the Governments are establishing hostels and Residential Schools, they are not taking sufficient steps to provide quality education to rural students to compete the urban students of the same social group, therefore the children of poor agriculturists, coolies, and poor people of other occupations living in rural areas are deprived of the equal opportunity and treatment. The State has to take effective steps to provide facilities in rural areas to enable poor children to have quality education and to get seats in good educational institutions by competing urban and rich students. The State should also take steps to prevent undeserving students to knock away the seats reserved for poor children. Then only the children of the poor and downtrodden will get berths in employment and other occupations/ professions get their economic condition improved.

In the competitive examinations the children of rich, businessmen, top officials of reserved classes are undergoing training in coaching centers by spending lakhs of rupees and getting selection as IAS, IPS and class one posts under reserved quota depriving the children of the poor deprived classes. Officers' children and children of rich people are becoming officers for generations. Whereas poor man's children are remaining as unemployed, or undertaking menial jobs and are struggling for livelihood. Unless the governments take steps to restrict the children of creamy layer people, the object of getting social justice and equal opportunity will be frustrated and distribution of National wealth to all people cannot be achieved for any number of years.

The surveys conducted by the government and private organizations are revealing that many of the rural masses are suffering with various ailments, for want of nutritious food, pure drinking water, hygienic conditions in their surroundings and also lack of medical facilities. There are no sufficient doctors, no sufficient supporting medical staff, no modern equipment and no medicines. Though the governments are claiming that they are spending so much amount for public health, non-availability of such services to rural masses is a ground reality. A citizen has a right to lead comfortable life which is his fundamental right. But on account of ill-health he is unable to lead comfortable life and unable to work for his livelihood. Therefore the governments have to implement a comprehensive scheme to protect the health of every citizen of the country to enable them to enjoy the fruits of democracy.

The governments are floating several schemes like distribution of rice, pensions to old people, widows, handicapped etc. the government is also providing mid day meals to school children, providing food to poor people at subsidized rates. There are allegations that these benefits are being snatched away by undeserving people, depriving the most deserving people, on account of corrupt practices of the government employees, dealers of fair price shops etc. The governments are trying their best to eradicate corruption with the aid of modern technology and the fruits of such measures are likely give results in due course.

Unless the state takes effective steps to implement the directives of the Constitution, it is not possible to extend the benefits of welfare schemes to the deserving poor. Several steps need to be taken to create awareness in the people that they shall strengthen the Governments, to eliminate tax evasion, to eradicate corruption, to prevent malpractices and to co-operate with the governments in distribution of wealth, maintaining health, providing livelihood to every citizen in the process of rendering social justice. Otherwise achieving social justice remains as a nightmare to the poor and downtrodden. Let us wish that future will be bright in the lives of the poor and the downtrodden to live with confidence, to enjoy equal rights, to enjoy national wealth and equal opportunities by getting a satisfaction that they are also extended the social justice. ■

POLICE POWERS OF TAMIL NADU OVER SETHU SAMUTHRAM

Justice **Dr.A.K.Rajan** Former Judge of Madras High Court, Chennai

From time immemorial, the sea between Rameswaram and Sri Lanka was known as “Sethu Samuthram”. But that name was not to be found in the official records. Old maps also do not mention that name. Probably that may be the reason for giving the name as “PALK STRAIT” by the then President of East India Company ROBERT PALK (14.11.1763 to 25.1.1767), when he was in office. The title “Governor” was given later on to the head of the administration. He named the waters East of Rameswaram island, North of Adam’s bridge and South of Kodiakkarai and West of the then Ceylon named as PALK STRAIT. He also named the bay lying between Mandaitheevu and Veravil on the eastern coast of Ceylon as “PALK BAY”.

But, some maps are misleading, where Palk Bay and Palk Strait are interchangeably used. Even the “AGREEMENT” of 1974, signed by Prime minister Indira Gandhi and Prime Minister Sirimao Bandaranayake refers to the Historic Waters north of Rameswaram and Adam’s bridge as ‘Palk Bay’.

In this agreement Article 8 reads thus:-

“This agreement shall be subject to ratification. It shall enter into force on the date of exchange of instruments of ratification which will take place as soon as possible”.

It is said that it has not been ratified by India subsequently. In case such exchange of “instruments of ratification” were not made subsequently, it can be argued that the 1974 agreement had never come into force. The fact whether there were such exchanges of instruments of Ratification, between India and Sri Lanka, is not known. It is likely that the Hon’ble Supreme Court may consider this issue in the cases pending before it.





Sovereignty over the internal waters of India, in Palk Strait, (Sethu Samuthram), as the internal waters are adjacent to coast of Tamil Nadu, is vested with Tamil Nadu. Hence Govt. of Tamil Nadu can exercise police powers over the Indian internal waters in Palk Strait.

The sea south of Rameswaram and Adams Bridge is called Gulf of Mannar. The waters of Sethu Samuthram, [i.e. Palk Strait and Palk Bay,] and Gulf of Mannar were the “HISTORIC WATERS “ over which only India and Ceylon had full control. No other country could enter these waters without the permission of the British Govt.

INTERNAL WATERS HAVE THE STATUS OF LANDED TERRITORY:

The “Historic waters” are classified as “Internal Waters”. Text books on international law state that historic waters are ‘ those waters, including parts of the sea, which are under the full sovereignty of the coastal state. Internal waters include ports, anchorages, bays, internal seas,.....and river mouths.’ It is an accepted principle under international law that “internal waters fall within the full territorial sovereignty of the state in the same manner as its land territory”. That is internal waters have the status of landed territory for all purposes That is the state have all the rights of control, including policing rights, over its Internal waters .

Indian Constitution under Article I read with Schedule I, defines or specifies the territory of INDIA. It does not state anything about the areas over the seas. According to Art.297 of the Constitution “All lands, minerals, and other things of value within the territorial waters or continental shelf and resources of the Exclusive Economic Zone to vest in the Union”. It does not refer to the internal waters. In 1976, Parliament passed a law “The Territorial Waters, Continental shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other maritime Zones Act. [Act 80 of 1976]. This Act also does not take note of the regime of Internal waters as pointed out by the Supreme Court. Waters inward the base line are all internal



POLICE POWERS OF TAMIL NADU OVER SETHU SAMUTHRAM

waters. Article 8 of UNCLOS [U.N. Convention on law of Sea 1982] has also defined internal waters as “.....waters on land side of the base line of the territorial sea form part of internal waters of the State”. Over these internal waters State have complete Sovereignty.

Territorial waters:

Section 3(1) in Act 80 of 1976 declares that Sovereignty of India extends and has always extended, to the territorial waters of India. The Supreme Court in the recent case relating to the marines’ of Italy 2013 (4) S. C.C. 721] relies on this to decide that case. Section 3(2) defines the limit of the territorial waters as waters within 12 nautical miles from the nearest point of the appropriate base line.

Hon’ble Justice Chalmeswar held that Article 297 deals with “maritime territory”. The learned judge also points out that Hans Kelsen in ‘General theory of Law and State’, declared that “territorial waters form part of territory of the littoral State”. Hence sovereignty extends to its territorial waters. Regarding the jurisdiction to try the Italian Marines, by the State of Kerala, the S.C. has held that the incident occurred not within the limits of territorial waters but within the limits of the CONTIGUOUS ZONE, over which only Union Govt. has jurisdiction. Therefore States in India have jurisdiction, over the territorial waters, by virtue of the Sovereignty they have over the adjoining coastal lands.

POLICE POWER OF TAMIL NADU IN PALK STRAIT

The Supreme Court in the Italian Marines ‘case has held in para 10, that “India is entitled both under its domestic law and the Public International Law to exercise rights of sovereignty up to 24 nautical miles(sic 12 nautical miles) from the base line on

the basis of which the width of territorial waters is measured,.....”. The Supreme Court concluded that since the offence took place within the contiguous zone, only the Union of INDIA can prosecute the offenders and State of Kerala or the Kerala Police, has no power either to enquire or to prosecute. That is, Sovereignty of the constituent state, like Tamil Nadu or Kerala, extends up to the limits of the territorial waters. Therefore Sovereignty over the internal waters of India, in Palk Strait, (Sethu Samuthram), as the internal waters are adjacent to coast of Tamil Nadu, is vested with Tamil Nadu. Hence Govt. of Tamil Nadu can exercise police powers over the Indian internal waters in Palk Strait.

NO TERRITORIAL WATERS IN PALK STRAIT

As seen from the official maps of Sri Lanka and India, there are no territorial waters in Palk Strait. But there exists Territorial waters over the Gulf of Mannar, between the two Nations. The HISTORIC WATERS OF Palk Strait is now divided between India and Sri Lanka as their INTERNAL WATERS.

TAMIL NADU CAN EXERCISE POLICE POWERS

Since internal waters in the Palk Strait lie within the BASE LINE of India this area is considered as the extension of land of Tamil Nadu. Hence Tamil Nadu police can exercise police powers over these internal waters. Such police surveillance may be useful for the safety and security of fishermen of Tamil Nadu. That may go a long way in protecting the fishermen. It will also be helpful for the safety of pilgrims, from all religions, who go to worship in the Saint Antony Church in the Kachcha theevu. In fact Tamil Nadu Police do surveillance exercise and police powers over these waters. That needs to be strengthened more so that the daily arrests of Tamil Nadu fishermen by Sri Lankan Army may come to an end. ■

CIVIL SOCIETY



KAKI MADHAVARAO

IAS (Retd) Former Chief Secretary,
Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad

Though I was in the Government service for four decades, I have always been a great believer in the idea of and necessity for Civil Society. (CS) Civil Society can be an organisation or even an individual. Cicero and Plato are the earliest examples of Civil Society. Jesus Christ was the greatest Civil Society before he was Deified. Mahatma Jyothirao Phule, Savithri Bai, Sahu Maharaj, Narayana Guru, Periyar and Babesahab Ambedkar are superb examples of Civil Society in introducing Social Reforms in India where the cursed Hindu religion divided mankind into inferior and superior castes and occupations and prohibiting movement from lower to higher categories. Bill Gates and Warren Buffet in USA and Ajith Premji in India are great examples of Civil Society as they contributed to public good by spreading the message of Philanthropy.

The basic features of Civil Society is Advocacy graduating into protest and sacrifice depending on the degree of commitment and courage of conviction. It can be peaceful or even violent like American, French, Russian, Chinese Revolution or the native Naxalbury movement. The degree of violence depends more on the attitude of the people in power than the mindset of the Civil Society. But Governments conveniently dub every civil society action as anti national, anti regional and anti social. The quality of Civil Society activity is a good measure of Civil Society organizations and the freedom they enjoy is a healthy sign of good Government.

The Fountain head of the legitimacy of Civil Society is the Eternal Principle of Social Contract, meaning that the people occupying positions of power are in their seats by the will of the people expressed through periodical elections to render maximum public service to maximum number of people.

Social contract means good governance, democratic

freedom of persons, organizations, the Media and civil society. At the next level, it is the degree of honoring electoral promises and post election announcements which are countless.

Where a Civil Society advocates the interests of a few people or a section of society to the detriment of General good, it loses its bonafides. This is my personal view as I see organizations and political parties support every demand for more pay and perquisites of any employee unions even though their pay and pension bill is three fourths of the own revenues raised by the State Governments.

It is, thus, not the intensity or duration or number of people or organizations that back up a demand but whether the demand is at the expense of Public at large that truly measures the bonafides. Civil Society is not sanctified by any law or Constitutional provisions. It is evolved by the failure of the rulers to abide by the Social Contract. Thus, the role of Civil Society and Government of the day are inversely related.

The greater degree of failure of governance by rulers, the greater the need for Civil Society activity. Democracy is the best form of Government, but I consciously used the word "rulers" because at the Provincial level, the Cabinet type of Government virtually function like Presidential forms.

At the Union Government level it is slightly better, but only slightly where a single party has absolute majority. In India we find Cabinet system functions like Cabinet system only when a Coalition of parties form the Government. A greater safeguard for better governance is Proportional Representation system of Government in which the share of parties in Legislatures and Lok Sabha and in the cabinet are determined by the per cent of votes a party gets instead of the present system of simple majority rule and First Post Pass System. ■

STRENGTHEN SECULARISM AND STRIVE FOR ATHEIST WAY OF LIFE

Dr. G.VIJAYAM Executive Director, Atheist Centre, Vijayawada

Theism and atheism are the two ways of life. Whatever may be the name of religion, it is god-centred and believes in the so-called supernatural power. On the other hand atheism is human-centred. Atheism is free from god and religion. It is scientific, humanistic and strives for all round development of the individual. The theistic way of life is not able to solve the life's problems. It turns the attention of the people from this world to the imaginary world. It promises salvation after death. The world's problems are relegated into the background.

The revolutions in religion, struggles for social reform, the yawning for social justice and the efforts for building secular India produced a rich harvest of social change of workers who acted as harbingers of change. Thus every social reform was a step further in liberalizing society and in strengthening atheism and humanism. They tried to rejuvenate the society with fresh ideas and progressive thoughts and action.

In 20th century Periyar Ramswami, M N Roy, Gora and A T Kovoov proposed atheism and humanism. Gora and Saraswati Gora founded the world's first known Atheist Centre in 1940 and also organised World Atheist Conferences. Gora and Saraswati Gora championed atheism as a positive way of life. In India we find the conflict has been between religion and social reform. In our country, the rigid social structure leads to structural violence. Religion opposes deviation from its prescribed path. Miracle mind is a bane of progress.

Lopsided Social values

It is distressing to note that in the name of religion and customs, many heinous practices were perpetuated in the society. The position of women was degraded. She was confined to the four walls of the house.



She was deprived of the much-needed social status. Unless the status of the women is improved in the family and in the society, many of the social evils cannot be tackled that easily. Equality demands that not only women should have the opportunity for education, but also equality of status in social and economic relations.

Atheist way of life stresses on a new approach towards upbringing of children. Instead of filling the minds of the young with the fairy tales of gods and ghosts, it imparts liberal and secular education. It promotes rational and scientific outlook. What we need today is not mere separation of religion from the political field, but also separation of religion and education, separation of culture and religion and cleanse of language from the theistic vocabulary. Religion must be a personal matter and public domain must be free from religion.

Atheist and secular values need to be inculcated in the minds of the people. New situations require new solutions in a secular way. It is the duty of all progressive minded people and the secularists to make a common cause to strengthen the secular ramparts we guard. They also should make education secular.

Freedom of the Individual

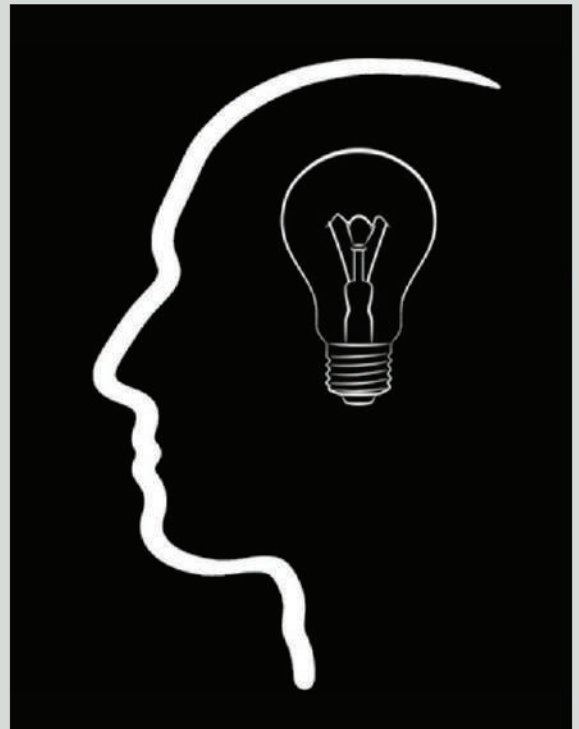
Gora clearly stated that the essence of atheism is freedom of the individual. Freedom releases the immense potentialities of human imagination, initiative and effort that lay suppressed under theistic faith.

Free individuals feel masters of situations. The mood of supplication and complaint, inherent in prayer to god and petitions to government, has no place in the atheistic way of life. Atheists always assert; they never surrender. They take no failure, everything as an experience that improves the method for further attempts. Atheists face facts without fear. "What is to be done?" concerns them more than "Why it is so?"

The recognition of the freedom marks the difference between theism and atheism. While the individual is the basis of all civilizations, he or she fashions aids and systems to facilitate ease and association. The best aid in modern times is the institution of a government. Therefore atheists are political. Indeed, people are masters and governments are servants.

Caste System and Religion

We need a new outlook and approach to tackle the present day problems. Religion is losing its hold on human affairs and it is being irrelevant. Hence, religion is turning into religious fanaticism. It is said that religions preach peace, but now they fell prey to fundamentalist and religious fanatics. In the name of propagation of



Every aspect of life needs scrutiny. Children should be given secular names. Secular festivals must be observed. Atheists are full of life and happiness. Dance, drama, music, sculpture, literature and all forms of fine arts must reflect a new secular approach. Language and customs and traditions must have secular moorings. It is high time that the education system is revamped to suit to the needs of the present day secular society.

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religion, business magnets entered the fray and they are controlling and enjoying all the resources. The people are forced to believe that they achieve their salvation through prayer and obedience to god. With the result the questioning spirit is not developing and they are not challenging the oppressive and outmoded beliefs and customs. Propagation of atheism necessitates building of alternatives to religion.

With the untiring efforts of social reformers, the fight against caste and untouchability has begun in the modern period. Every social reformer is a rebel in his period. He or she challenged the old and heinous customs and tried to make the world a better place to live in.

The caste bonds are loosened in the modern India. But casteism is increasing. Casteism is eating the vitals of the nation. Caste consciousness is growing.

Eradication of untouchability is intricately interconnected with the issue of human rights, human dignity, economic betterment and social justice.

Hence castelessness is the only answer. Inter-caste marriages, casteless marriages and inter-religious marriages pave the way for national and integration. Separation of politics from religion is no longer a mere cherished idea, but of a great practical necessity. The fusion of politics and religion is detrimental to human progress.

Good Society

“Be bold and be human” is the only solution. Theism only created some good individuals but not a good society. The march towards a post-religious society is a must. It is the common cause that unites the people.

The difference between theism and atheism is the difference between faith and truth. Religious understanding stops with faith. Science proceeds to truths through verification. Religion turns into superstition when it clings to falsehoods with fanatical

faith. Faith closes the mind; science opens it. Freedom is the opposite of the slave-mind and so it is the essence of atheism. In positive terms, atheism represents the feeling of freedom and truthfulness.

We want peace on earth in this life, and not in the imaginary afterlife. What we need today is secular social work. In this age of mass communication, it is the example that inspires others. Let us strive to do away with the stronghold of religion. When religious influence is lessened, the people of Asia and in particular South Asia harness human power and human energies for creative and constructive purposes.

Collective Efforts

Each individual is unique. But the beauty lies in the collective effort to achieve the cherished ideals. Atheism recognizes the freedom of the individual and it also equally harps on the collective effort for well being. Freedom and responsibility go together

The distinctions of caste and religion must go. Justice, equality, fraternity, attain greater significance. They are not mere high ideals to be cherished, but to be practised to build the society free of exploitation and injustice.

Atheism is thus not a mere philosophical discussion. Atheism is a positive way of life. Atheism is full of life. Atheism is not for hermits and those who renounce the world like the *sanyasis* and observe celibacy. It is for common people who live in families and who face all the vicissitudes of life. It is easy for a bachelor who has no family to do greater sacrifice. But the ideal person for the ordinary individual is a family man and how he behaves with others in day to day life. In other words, atheism aims at social reforms and it strengthens family bonds, filial affection, and it enhances the dignity of individual.

In society we have many problems. Whether they are theists or atheists, the social problems remain same. But how we tackle them is of paramount importance. It is



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not the so-called fate that determines the future of a person or the hardships. It is the social condition that causes the hardships. Hence, people should develop scientific outlook and scientific temper to understand the social realities. When time comes, people should stand up and strive to achieve their cherished goals. Social justice and Social reform are necessary to bring change in human relations.

Oppose Slave-Mind

Open advocacy of atheism is a must. Without fear or favour, people should declare themselves as atheists. Atheists take responsibility on themselves and try to change the world they live in. Atheism is a moral and psychological revolution.

When we look back in the history, it provides innumerable examples that atheists were known for their moral steadfastness and commitment to the cause they championed. In religious way of life, the attention is divided between god and the social relations. People blame their fate, their stars, and their actions in the previous births for the predicament to which they are subjected here and now. They shift the blame on others, curse their fate and spend their time in prayer. But atheists assert themselves. They take the blame on themselves and try to change the system. We have to change the system by convincing others. Atheism is bringing change in common people as an approach towards life.

When we take atheism as a way of life it requires corresponding changes in outlook and actions. For centuries, religion reined supreme in all aspects of human life with do's and don'ts. How we bring up our children in a secular way is of greater importance. Our educational system indoctrinates children and adults with the theistic beliefs.

Every aspect of life needs scrutiny. Children should be given secular names. Secular festivals must be observed. Atheists are full of life and happiness. Dance, drama, music, sculpture, literature and all forms of fine arts must reflect a new secular approach. Language and customs and traditions must have secular moorings. It is high time that the education system is revamped to suit to the needs of the present day secular society. Education must be creative and

challenging and it should bring to the fore the creative talents of the people.

Social Responsibility

To do good or to be good, the prop of god and religion are not necessary. To help fellow human being is social responsibility. Hence, we have to emphasize on secular social work, which transcends above all sectarian considerations. Secular social work concentrates on empowering the people and to improve their status to become equal partners in progress.

The whole world is slowly but steadily moving towards a post religious society. We cannot expect that religion will wither away immediately. But when the secular alternatives develop, people automatically tend to move away from religion in all aspects of life. Hence, building secular alternatives in every sphere of life is very essential. Economic equality is an integral part of atheism. It is the master key to social action. Atheism is democratic in its approach and egalitarian in its principles. In democracy the process may be slow, but the change that takes place has greater impact on the minds of the people. In the modern world, democracy with all its imperfections is the only available alternative for change. In other words, social change would come only through peaceful means and it will sustain very long. The other name for democracy is persuasion. It is not coercion, but convincing others that makes all the difference. The responsibility of the citizens does not end with mere casting of the votes. There must be constant effort to educate and empower the citizens. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. The old customs and traditions must yield place to the new. The aim of the social progress is to march toward equality in every sphere of life.

Atheism and peace go together. The future of humanity is intertwined with peace within the nations and in the international arena. The day is not far off when the nation states lose their credence when international understanding grows.

Atheism promotes self-respect, human dignity and equality. Atheism is bound to grow and It is a global force. Atheism highlights *Jai Insaan* (Victory to Human). ■



Dr.K.VEERAMANI

SINCERE, HONEST AND SIMPLE TO THE CORE



Prof. K. S. BHAGAVAN

Rationalist Activist, Progressive Writer
Mysore, Karnataka

Ever since the passing away of Father Periyar EVR (1879-1973), Dr. K. Veeramani has carried on the most indefatigable struggle against the oppressing caste system and for social justice. He is in all humility, upholding the cause of his great mentor and father figure Periyar EVR. Dr. Veeramani is a great leader in every sense of the term. He is an incomparable cultural leader of the Dravidar Kazagam, an organization, which has no parallel in any part of the country. Hence he devotes all his time in spreading the message of Periyar and D.K., which are in reality one and the same. Only leaders of culture live forever and not others. It is highly commendable that Dr. K. Veeramani has been leading the DK Movement with the support and involvement of people belonging to all walks of life, who may be rightly called the 'progeny of Periyar'. He has kept the torch of Periyar message glowing bright continuously with far reaching dedication and commitment. He is instilling the ideology of Periyar into the hearts and minds of young boys and girls, so that they live this humanistic and progressive philosophy in all their life and try to eradicate inequality.

Dr. Veeramani is tirelessly doing the job of rousing the masses to make them understand their heinous social, economic and religious conditions to which they are subjected. Mr. Veeramani loves people and the way he moves among them is astonishing and exhortative. He is sincere, honest and simple to the core. And his sympathy

is captivating. And hence his invaluable services are more needed now in an atmosphere surcharged with intolerance than ever before.

I am glad to say that I have always enjoyed his love and affection and he has encouraged me, like an elder brother encourages his younger brother, to continue my social struggle. In my talk I condemned certain portions of the *Bhagavad Githa* which castigate (ch.9, st.32) all women, all non-brahmins and vyshyas as sinners. I said, we are not sinners, Krishna is a sinner as he kept sixteen thousand women and eloped with Radha, married to someone else. (Ambedkar, vol. - 4.) For this, right wing elements threatened to eliminate me. The Government of Karnataka, whose Chief Minister, Mr. Siddaramaiah is secular, wise and understanding, has provided me with security.

Knowing this threat to me, Dr. Veeramani, on behalf of the DK organization, invited me and felicitated me on 20-11-2015 at Periyar Thidal, Chennai, for which I am beholden to him. He said that his desire was to express the solidarity of the entire people of Tamil Nadu with Prof. Bhagavan and he recalled that there were five attempts on his life.

Dr. Veeramani is a powerful writer and has been an influential speaker. He is a well known intellectual. On his 83rd birthday, I wish him many happy returns of the day. Long live Dr. Veeramani to liberate the poor and suppressed people. ■

SOCIAL JUSTICE, PROCURED BY THE DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES AND SECURED BY FUNDEMENTAL RIGHTS

Prof. Dr.P.JAGADEESAN

Former Vice-Chancellor, Bharathidasan University
Vice President, Dravidian Historical Research Centre

Brahmins were the earliest beneficiary of the concept of reservation by a peculiar method. According to which, instead of directly reserving the positions for them, by way of *Varnashrama Dharma*, they disqualified and eliminated all the others from contesting.

By discriminating the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, the Sudras and the Panchamas, the *Varnashrama Dharma* fortified the Brahmins to enjoy exclusively all the powers and to have control of all the positions and offices of the state hence to dominate the Indian society for many centuries. It was then for the first time a sort of Protective Discrimination was imposed on the Indian society, that is for protecting the Brahmin supremacy, all the others were sidelined.

In the Varna oriented Indian Society, the Vaisyas, the Sudras and the Panchamas formed the majority and productive classes but under privileged. Whereas the Brahmins and Kshatriyas were small minorities and unproductive classes but vested with all the privileges and authorities.

The main objective of the Indian National Congress, when it was founded in 1885, was to gain positions for Indians in the government. They argued that it was the right of the natives to occupy more offices in the different branches of the government.

As a result, in about three decades time, the Indians gained considerable amount of positions in the government. But alarmingly those positions made available for the Indians were mostly grabbed by the Brahmins in the pretext of first grade Indians.

In addition to their dominance in Employment front, most of the Brahmin intelligentsia also became active either in politics (Indian National Congress or





The social justice through Protective Discrimination is not a privilege given to some aliens by somebody out of mercy or magnanimity but it is rather the right of those who had not either realised or raised their voices so far but were exploited and deprived off, for many centuries.

the Home Rule Movement) or in Theosophy and have endeavoured to justify the existing Hindu institutions more particularly the casteism with all their orthodoxy and social discrimination.

This was done on the pretext that the Indian Nationalism will be real only by the sustenance and glorification of all that was Hindu (Brahmanic).

The above developments enlightened the non-Brahmin intelligentsia with a fact that the battle the Indian National Congress had hitherto fought with the British was only for the benefit of Brahmins. Hence the *South Indian Liberal Federation (the Justice Party)* was formed in 1916 by Non-Brahmin leaders like T.M. Nair, Pitti Theagarayar and C. Natesan. Accordingly, The 'Non-Brahmin Manifesto' of the Justice Party declared that their main objective was to achieve for the non-Brahmins, the rightful positions in education and government offices.

Way back in 1917, in 'Dravidan', the official Tamil journal of the Justice Party, Sir Pitti Theagarayar wrote an editorial titled as "*The Education of the Working Classes-Will it cause inconvenience to others?*". He also wrote that "the genius of Dravidian civilization does not recognize difference between man and man by birth. The leaders of Dravidian thought, Thiruvalluvar, Avvai, and Kambar do not claim to be born from the brain of the God-head".

This social justice vision of the non-Brahmin leaders can be equated with the saying of Alexander Pope: "*That true self-love and social justice are the same*". Thus, the non-Brahmin Movement had identified the cause for the oppression of the majority and targeted the Brahmins as the historical exploiters of the Indian Society.

A significant innovation was made in the system of reservation by Sahu Maharaj, the ruler of Kohlapur in 1902 which can be marked as a Royal Benevolence to the Sudras. But a systematic policy of reservation was ordered in 1920s by the Justice Party leaders under British Rule in Madras Presidency. To this effect, the popularly elected non-Brahmin outfit, the Justice Party Government had issued the historical communal G.O. reserving jobs for a different communities.

This was widely welcomed for the reason that it was a great beginning - the first decisive victory which launched missiles to shatter the corner stone of the historic social despotism in the Hindu society.

Therefore, a judicious policy of communal reservation based on the concept of Social Protective Discrimination' in a contrast to the age long Brahmanic Protective Discrimination was conceived and delivered as the social justice to counter the caste exploitations of the Hindu India. This represents a broad spectrum of human rights giving sustenance to the Rule of Law and meaning and significance to the ideals of Welfare State. '*A democracy which enslaves the working class, a class which is devoid of education, which devoid means of life, which is devoid of any power of organization, which is devoid of intelligence is no democracy but a mockery of democracy*' - said Dr. Ambedkar.

Therefore a very definite mode of political and administrative reservation policy, on a national level, was evolved and incorporated in the Republican Constitution of India'.

With great wisdom and attitude on the issue, 'Dr. Ambedkar's concerted debate on justice, equality and fraternity reminds about the "Social Justice Trinity" i.e Liberty, Equality and Fraternity embodied in the Preamble of the Constitution of India in particular and concept of Social Justice Trinity enjoined in the Constitution of India in general'.

In order to remove social inequalities and to achieve the goal of social justice the communal reservation was built up in the constitution so as to permit Protective Discrimination in favour of certain castes and classes of persons which were subjected to historical injustice.

The Social justice, as per our Constitution, has twin objective: 1. To usher in a new social order ensuring social justice to all citizens; 2. To protect the liberties of the people from the onslaughts of autocratic and arbitrary powers.

Our Constitution envisages tripartite picturesque of social justice; Justice-social, economic and political is

directed in the Preamble, procured by the Directive Principles of State Policy and secured by Fundamental Rights.

Dr. Ambedkar said, "Because we did not want merely a Parliamentary form of government to be instituted through the various mechanisms provided in the Constitution, without any direction as to what our economic ideal, as to what social order ought to be, we deliberately included Directive Principles in our Constitution.

It is essentially expedient, if Fundamental Rights are to be meaningful for the teeming millions, positive action by the state is necessary in a complex socio-economically organized society like ours with reasoned and efficacious implementation of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

The freedom guaranteed under the Constitution is not an end in itself but the means to achieve social justice by human emancipation. "...any test that serves to perform this task most effectively should be treated as objective social justice".

Social justice, which is the aspiration of our constitution is to meet greater good to a larger number of people without total deprivation of legal rights of anybody or even serious detriment to them.

The social justice through Protective Discrimination is not a privilege given to some aliens by somebody out of mercy or magnanimity but it is rather the right of those who had not either realised or raised their voices so far but were exploited and deprived off, for many centuries.

Therefore, our Constitution does not leave the individual at the mercy of the Law of Nature representative of competitive model of society. The need-based principle is richer in content and a close proximity with social justice and hence, works towards equality while the merit based principle increases inequality.

But to our dismay, many of the measures of the state destined at social justice pursuance of the implementation of the Directive Principles of State Policy were struck down by the Courts from time to time and relegated to the position of inferiority. The bewildering judgments of the Supreme Court right from the days of *Chambakam Dorairajan* in 1951 have embarrassed the state machinery and paralysed the movement of the nation towards an Equalitarian Social Order.

After many centuries of despotic or feudal system of governments, the British introduced democracy and the democratic machineries have come to stay in India. No one with reasonable imagination can dare even to think of doing away with it. The social justice through Protective Discrimination can be marked as the most important social reform activity of modern India which results a sea change in the uplift of under privileged mass of the Indian society. This, naturally, made inroads in the existing domains of the privileged sections of the society. Hence, their reactions were expressed both directly and subtly.

There are also a few critics who wanted to show that they are considerate towards the reservation policy but with some amendments. According to them 'there are some services in which expertise and skill are the essence....In such services or posts there can be no room for reservation of posts; merits alone must be the sole and decisive consideration for appointments'.

The concern of these critics are mainly with regard to the employment



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SOCIAL JUSTICE, PROCURED BY THE DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES AND SECURED BY FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

front. In the educational sector, their problem is mainly with the higher education and very particularly with professional courses like medicine or engineering.

But in both employment and education sectors, the reservation is applied only for the qualified candidates, i.e. the reservation policy demands a special consideration of social justice only for those who are otherwise qualified for the post or positions.

More over, the actual experiences in the recent years have clear evidence that the candidates selected in reserved categories are, though lesser in rank with others, but scored not less than distinction in grade.

Another criticism against Reservation Policy is that in the last 60 years of the implementation of the Communal Reservation, a section of oppressed people became elevated from their brethrens. This section, they called as the Creamy Layer and it continues to enjoy the privileges and has become an obstruction for other underprivileged people.

Hence they argue that 'Protective Discrimination has undergone as development at the upper end and stagnation at the bottom' (Mare Glanter in *Competing Equalities*).

This argument is neither based on reason nor logically presented but completely ignorant of vital statistics. The number of educated oppressed class people have been steadily increasing from hundreds in 1950s to thousands and millions now in colleges and schools as students. So also from hundreds in 1950s to millions in public services in states and union government. This shows clearly that the concept of creamy layer obstruction is with ulterior motive hence fraud.

More over the educated second/third generation of the oppressed, with higher qualifications, are alone equipped to avail some of the high breed courses in education and positions in the administrative sectors and professions. Very importantly they also become a proven example and inspiration for the younger brethren of the oppressed who are still at the entry point. Realistically speaking this is an inevitable course of evolution/ social transformation have to be experienced/endured by almost all the social groups of Indian society-even the privileged classes including the Brahmins .

Therefore, the criticism of Creamy Layer among the oppressed is a veiled move by the critics of the policy of

Communal Reservation with an ulterior motive to divide and intriguing the oppressed people into rivalry.

There were also criticisms from certain quarters of the society openly expressed with regard to the extension and expansion of the Reservation Policy. But compared to what was fifty years ago, the critics and opponents are very much decreased in number and quality mainly because of political consequences, and because of the great success of the Reservation Policy.

Dr. Ambedkar while addressing the "Constituent Assembly of India" has said "On 26th January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics, we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality.....we must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up.

'Making a fair law is not enough. It has to be administered fairly, equally and effectively for the benefit of the righteous community. Then and then alone can a sense of belonging will prevail in different sections of the society. Only effective enforcement of a law is its consummation`.

Thomas Jefferson, the father of American Constitution has said that "Justice is the fundamental law of a society which the members of the society must truly feel their own law. When laws in a society create discrimination or social or economic inequalities among its sections, they are bound to alienate its members of them, resulting in their breakdown".

There will be great danger if things go wrong. People are being moved by new ideologies / beliefs. They may get tired of government by the people. They may be prepared to have government for the people and may become indifferent whether it is government of the people or by the people.

Social Justice by Communal Reservation caused the greatest Social Revolution that started crushing the very foundations of *Varnashrama Dharma* and thousands of years of Brahmin authority in politics, society, economy and culture of Indians. No ruler, no dynasty, no religion have ever made such a contribution of magnitude than the Dravidian Movement. In celebrating the Birthday of our beloved Leader of this great Movement Dr.K.Veeramani, we also celebrate the DAY of SOCIAL JUSTICE. ■

THANTHAI PERIYAR AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

S.K.KHARVENTHAN

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Former Member of Parliament

Tamil Nadu is the land of Periyar and a leading State for Social Justice. Under the guidance of Periyar. Communal Government Order G.O.No. 3437 was issued in Madras Presidency on 21.11.1947 to give equal representation to all castes and communities in admissions and appointments. It replaced the first, communal G.O. No.107111927. Thus for every 14 seats Non-Brahmins Hindus = 6, Backward Hindus =2, Brahmins = 2, Harijans =2, Anglo Indians and Indian Christians =1, Muslims =1. First time the word “Backward” was inducted into this G.O. After implementation of Indian Constitution on 26.1.1950 the above communal G.O. was challenged by two brahmin Students namely Smt. Champakam Dorairajan and Shri. Srinivasan before The High Court of Madras by way of writs (Case No. 970/1951 and case No. 271/1951). Leading Brahmin Lawyer Alladi Krishnasamy Aiyar (Member of the Constituent Assembly and Signatory to Indian Constitution) appeared and argued the case on behalf of Brahmin Students. The Honorable High Court struck down the Communal G.O. on 27.7.1950. The above Judgment was totally against the interest of weaker sections. Periyar E.V.R. started an agitation and appealed to the masses of Tamil Nadu to observe “Hartal” on 14.08.1950 and further he appealed to the students to abstain from classes. The agitation culminated in a grand success. The Government of Madras preferred appeals against the Judgments of Madras High Court before the Supreme Court of India. After hearing the appeals the bench comprising Justice Kania, Niralal (CJ) Bench and others upheld the Judgement of Madras High Court and dismissed the appeals, on 09.04.1951 (1951 AIR 226 and 1951 SCR 525). Those days Periyar E.V.R. and Shri. K.Kamaraj were close friends. Upon the instructions of Periyar, Shri.K.Kamaraj took up this issue with Jawaharlal Nehru the then





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Prime Minister of India. Then the Government of India decided to amend the Constitution. For the proposed amendments a bill was moved by Prime Minister of India on 2.6.1951 and enacted by the Provisional Parliament on 18.6.1951. Through the amended Act Art 15 was amended and included 15(4) to give powers to States to make special provisions to reserve seats for BCs/SCs/STs. The President of India gave assent to the Constitution (First Amendment) Act 1951 on 18.6.1951. This was the first amendment in our Indian Constitution. Throughout the country this was the stepping stone for Social Justice. This was due to our Thanthai Periyar E.V.R. The above Judgment was prior to famous American Case "Oliverly L.Brown (vs) The Board of Education of Topeka". The above Judgment of the American Supreme Court dated 17.5.1954 dismantled the legal basis for racial segregation in schools and other public facilities. This was a landmark Judgement in the United States Supreme Court in which the court declared state laws establishing separate Public schools for black and white students to be unconstitutional. Based on this Judgment 14th amendment was carried out in American Constitution. The American Supreme Court 9 Judge Bench unanimously protected the interests of Black Americans. But our Hon'ble Supreme Court Judgment in the above two cases protected the interests of upper caste Brahmins and deprived the rights of weaker sections. Due to the dedication and hard work of Periyar E.V.R. only, the interests of Backward Communities were protected through the above First Amendment in our Indian Constitution.

Before amending Art 15 there is no mention about the rights of "Socially Educationally Backward class" in our Indian Constitution. Even in Art. 16 (4) it refers "Backward Class" and it includes all weaker sections SCs,STs and BCs. Art 340 deals with the appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of "Socially and Educationally Backward Classes" living in this country. Art 366 — Definition clause also do not whisper about Backward Classes. Due to our Revolutionary Leader Ayya E.V.R. only Indian Constitution was amended first time and the rights of OBCs/SCs/STs began to be protected and provided an equal representation in the field of Education. Hence we are very grateful to Thanthai Periyar EVR. I feel extremely happy to hear my elder Brother Dr. K. Veeramani is celebrating his 83rd Birthday on 2.12.2015. He is a true follower of Ayya and a Saviour of Social Justice.

For the past 50 years he has dedicated his life for the cause of the Tamils living around the world and to protect the interests of SCs/ STs/ OBCs living in this Country.

I wish him a good health and Long Life. ■

RESERVATION POLICY : CONSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY TO EMPOWER THE POWERLESS

Dr. Suresh Mane

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Founder-President of Bahujan Republican Socialist Party (BRSP), Mumbai

In the backdrop of vertical Varna – caste based unequal, unjust, discriminatory and oppressive social order, the reservation policy has evolved one of the tools of empowering the people. The policy has also been an outcome of the social revolts and the struggles by several social activities and leaders of the human rights such as Mahatma Jotiba Phule, Rajshri Shahuji Maharaj from Maharashtra, Krishna Deorao Vodiyar and a few among others from the State of Karnataka, Thanthai Periyar and other leaders of the non-Brahmin movement or the Justice Party in Tamil Nadu and Shri Narayana Guru, Mahatma Ayyankali and Dr. Palpu and the great Malayali poet Mahakavi Kumaran Aasan in Kerala state.

In Northern India the movement for inclusive reservation policy came into existence through the nationwide leadership of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar since 1930 onwards. Under the national leadership of Dr. Ambedkar, the struggle for safeguards to the downtrodden in various fields of life became a reality after the Government of India Act, 1935 although through the Government of India Act, 1909 certain sections of Indian society such as the Muslims, Anglo-Indians and Sikhs were enjoying the separate electorates.

The three Round Table Conferences held in London with the delegates of the untouchables in India, such as, Dr. Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur Srinivasan, laid down the foundation stone for the reservation policy in pre-independent India. In fact the credit for the pioneering of the reservation policy goes to Mahatma Jotiba Phule from Maharashtra who way back in 1848 demanded the reservations





The reservation policy is not only to provide bread or butter to the downtrodden sections but to ensure their participation in bureaucracy and in legislatures also. These groups got themselves deprived of their sufferings due to the evil of caste, untouchability, bonded labour, child labour, and many other inhuman systems.

to the non-Brahmins in the British India which was subsequently followed by the leaders of non-Brahmin movement or the Justice Party in the Madras province. In the history, Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur became the first King to announce and implement 50 per cent reservations to non-Brahmins in his princely state in the year 1902 followed by 75 per cent reservations to Non-Brahmins in Mysore state of Krishna Deorao Vodiyar, in 1924.

The constitutional debates “the record of the constitution making proceedings” is a living historical testimony of the present constitutional reservation policy. The joint wisdom of the constituent assembly, aimed with restructure of the vertically unequal social order, on the liberal values of modern democracy such as liberty, equality, fraternity and justice to all – social, economic and political, accepted the reservation policy as a means of improving the socio-economic progress in the country. The beneficiaries were the Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes, the Other backward classes, women and other marginal sections in the field of education, employment and in political representation.

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The reservation policy is similar to the affirmative action program in United States of America. It has been serving as a powerful weapon in empowering the powerless sections of the Indian society despite bureaucratic, legislative, judicial and casteistic impediments.

In such an atmosphere till 2015, that is in the last 65 years of the constitutional governance a very meagre proportion of the population (less than 5 per cent)

have been able to participate in various national streams through the reservation policy. In addition, in neo-liberal economic model or free market era, when the governmental rate of generating new employment has been considerably low, and when employment exchanges have been turned into merely centres of registration of unemployed, resulting into negligible State employment and hence very meagre or no scope to the reservation policy. The judiciary has also blocked the benefits by putting Creamy Layers, bogey of efficiency, 50 per cent ceiling doctrine, migration issue, conversion, the politics of inclusion and exclusion in caste lists and by beating the drums of efficiency as contemplated in the Article 335 of the Constitution.

The recent past controversy of the reservations to socially dominant castes such as, Patels in Gujarat, Jats in Rajasthan or Hariyana is not only an anti-thesis but mockery of the reservation policy. Because constitutional reservations are meant for the social victims of caste-untouchability sufferers and not to economically poor who treats the lowest with contempt.

Finally, in India there has been a paradoxical situation. On one hand we are claiming India is an emerging superpower with highest GDP growth rate and multi-millionaires and on the other side day by day the claimant castes or groups for reservations policy are increasing where in fact there is not even adequate bread in the reservation plate due to liberalisation, outsourcing and privatisation. But nobody demands the abolition of political reservation to SC and ST. This is because of the fact that it serves the vested interest of higher and ruling classes.

Some cry for put an end to reservation to the oppressed classes. Reason is that such a privilege eats into their share. If they really want to abolish reservation, let them strive for a casteless society. If the society enjoys equality in all respects, let there be no reservation. ■

SOCIAL JUSTICE : A MIRAGE IN TODAY'S DEMOCRACY

B Sudhakar Executive Member, Justice BSA Swamy Memorial Trust

Compared to our forefathers, we apparently seem to have lot of freedom, and we seem to be in a more prosperous world. We have pukka houses to live in, Model/Convent schools to send our children for education, Super specialty hospitals to take care of our health, and there is a variety of jobs to choose from, for our livelihood.

Moreover, thanks to the consumerism, we have malls, multiplexes, and have a variety of consumer goods available through ecommerce websites.

We are hence lulled into believing that "All is well". However some key facts, which we tend to forget, are as below:

1. While we have freedom to buy, the privilege to make, is restricted. In other words there is absolute restriction on who owns the means of production. It is hence easy to buy power from power plant, but if you want to own it, you need to be from the privileged classes and/or be politically well connected

2. You have universal suffrage, and are allowed a chance to vote, but the privilege to contest as MLA's and MP's is again restricted to a few. Even after 68 years of independence we still have most of the communities under represented, and to top it, there are a few communities, who have no representation yet, in the biggest representative democracy in the globe.

3. You not only have access to legal recourse, but may also practice law, but the privilege to decide on justice is again restricted.

4. There is fairly diverse representation in clerical and medium level officer cadres, but the in the upper echelons, the representation is lopsided.

This situation is akin to the story of two brothers, who had to distribute among them, the family property consisting of trees and cattle. The elder brother being the cleverer of the two promised the younger one that every piece of property will be divided evenly. True to his words, the elder one,





The Dravidian land is indeed blessed in that, the ideals of Periyar and the winds of Social Justice continue to prevail, thanks to the untiring effect of the Dravidar Khazagham, under the leadership of Aasriyar, however, the situation in rest of the country by and large seems a lot to be desired. Periyar will continue to be the North Star and Dravidar Khazagham a beacon, for the Social Justice in this country

takes the top half portion of all the trees and leaves the bottom half to the younger one. Similarly the front portion of the cattle is given to the younger one, and the rear half is retained by the elder brother.

As an outcome, of the above apparently equitable distribution, the younger brother ends up doing the labor and the elder brother gets the fruits of labor. Similarly in our society, the distribution of the societal resources has always been lopsided, since time immemorial and will continue to be so, until eternity. More importantly as the have-nots, are hardly having a say in the state's administration, the status quo is maintained.

We tax the salaried people, through income tax and collect their savings through, direct or indirect taxes from every purchase of theirs. We however provide tax holidays, provide vast tracts of lands in name of SEZ's to the Rich Industrialists, but there is hardly any affirmative action from the government, to either prevent outflow of blackmoney, or is there any purposeful audit, on the jobs created thus far from the SEZ's. Growth is indeed desirable, however for long term peace and prosperity of the country, the growth has to be inclusive.

The cleverer sections of the society have managed to corner the cream of the societal opportunities and properties. The oppressed sections being docile & illiterate ended up providing the labor and handing over the fruits in a platter to the privileged sections. It needed a Jyothiba Phule, a Periyar, a Narayan Guru and an Ambedkar to ignite the minds of the downtrodden.

Thanks to Ambedkar, the Indian constitution indeed has incorporated many a checks and balances in it, to usher in social justice across the breadth and width of this country. However the core objectives of Social Justice, Economic Justice and Political Justice as envisaged by the constitution, are by and large confined to paper and hardly implemented.

Sir Isaac Newton, an English physicist, mathematician, astronomer, alchemist, inventor and natural philosopher who is generally regarded as one of the most influential scientists in history, had once famously remarked "If I have seen further, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants". In other words the scientific tenets enunciated and discovered by previous generations were being leveraged by him, and all he was doing was to take it forward with his incremental efforts.

Thus no single individual should ideally claim complete credit for their success, or for that matter, claim to have generated wealth, by their merit alone, as they are recipients of societal resources, services and knowledge either directly or indirectly. All an individual does, is to leverage it appropriately, for generation of wealth. Equitable sharing of societal wealth is hence a necessity, and since Social Justice, and Economic Justice are means of achieving it, they can neither be wished away, nor can the state shy away from its responsibility of implementing them.

The Dravidian land is indeed blessed in that, the ideals of Periyar and the winds of Social Justice continue to prevail, thanks to the untiring effort of the Dravidar Khazagham, under the leadership of Aasriyar, however, the situation in rest of the country by and large seems a lot to be desired. Periyar will continue to be the North Star and Dravidar Khazagham a beacon, for the Social Justice in this country. Many an educated youth are either enamored by the short term gains of consumerism & hence unmindful of the systemic injustice or, feel that they are helpless to correct the system.

While it is true that individual citizens, do not have the required wherewithal, to take on the system, understanding the systemic inadequacies, is indeed the first step, and they could still do their bit, collectively through various NGO's, such as being run under the umbrella of Dravidar Khazagham. ■

UNBELIEF IN INDIA

Dr. Innaiah Narisetti Radical Humanist, Maryland, USA



Unbelief in religion has never been strong in India. In ancient times (approx. third century B.C.E.) materialist thought prevailed for a brief period under the name of CARVAKA. The movement was also known as Lokayata. Religious fundamentalists destroyed most of the Carvaka movement, including its writings. There were periods when Buddhist philosophies held sway (see BUDDHISM, UNBELIEF WITHIN), but these lasted only as long as they enjoyed the favour of local rulers. Eventually Buddhism became almost extinct in India, even as it metamorphosed into a religion which spread to other parts of Asia.

Centuries would pass before further attempts could be made to re-launch the organized unbelief. When the opportunity arose, it would be in consequence of Great Britain's occupation and subsequent rule of India. A small number of Indians who travelled abroad brought back Western ideas about the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, and the scientific world view.

Throughout the nineteenth century, India underwent nearly continual religious reform, but most of these efforts were unsuccessful in bringing about radical or deep-rooted social change. Harmful institutions, including India's strong caste system, untouchability, the practice of burning the widow alive on her husband's pyre, and a demoralizing belief in Karma or fate, were based directly on ancient Hindu scriptures. While some nineteenth century reform movements— including Arya Samaj, Brahma Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, and even THEOSOPHY in its reformist aspects—brought about some social change, but their impact was short lived because none of them questioned the prevailing belief system in a fundamental way. So long as no reform movement dared to confront messages of India's so-called holy scriptures, the social evils opposed



M.N. Roy gave philosophical and scientific outlook to unbelief movements at India level. He organized re-orientation study camps where scientific orientation was promoted for renaissance, scientific study of history and asserting sovereignty of the individual in political field.

by reformers would always endure in some form, enjoying popular support on the false grounds that they embodied India's tradition and heritage.

INDIAN UNBELIEF IN THE EARLY TO MID 20th CENTURY

Only with the beginning of the twentieth century did a more resilient and dynamic form of unbelief emerges. It began in southern India, not surprisingly as this region was then at the forefront of efforts to force drastic changes in India's social structure.

E.V. Ramasami, better known as PERIYAR (1879-1973), launched non-Brahmin movement in what is now the state of Tamil Nadu. Tripuraneni Ramaswami (died 1942) in Andhra Pradesh simultaneously started anti-Brahmin movement and began publishing literature in Tamil and Telugu to spread iconoclastic ideas against oppression of upper caste Brahmins. The movement also questioned the unchallenged supremacy of Sanskrit language, which was used as yet another tool to promote social differentiation, and suggested the replacement of Brahmin priests with non-Brahmins.

Both Periyar and Ramaswami did not mince their words. They applied a strong language to express atheistic ideas and questioning the prevailing rituals, customs, such as child marriages, and taboos of Hindus. Ramasami organized nursing homes, charitable institutions to help the downtrodden people. Both of them challenged the holy scripts of Hindus and organized training camps to educate a small number of middle class people with rational outlook. They officiated inter-caste marriages, which raised eyebrows in early 20th century. Ramasami organized sensational processions against the Hindu God Rama. Ramasami moved the masses with his speeches and rallied large number of people.

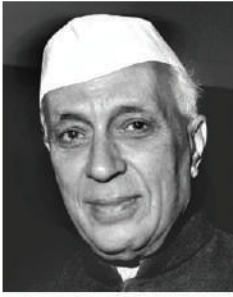
S. Ramanathan, a prominent politician who was

a minister in the state government, showing the deep influence of the movement in the state's intelligentsia, carried Periyar's mantle until the early 1980s. While Periyar's Dravida Khazagam movement attracted charismatic leaders such as Annadurai and Karunanidhi, both of whom were later to become chief ministers of the state, they ended up taking the organization into politics, much against the wishes of Ramasami.

Some followers, such as K.Veeramani tried to continue the "self-respect" movement of Dravidar Kazhagam and would later join India's humanist movement. Others, such as Ravipudi Venkatadri, meanwhile carried the rationalist flame in Andhra.

One of the shining lights of southern India's unbelief movement was Gora (died 1975), or Goparaju Ramachandrarao. He was a Brahmin who stood against the supremacy of Brahmins and hence excommunicated from the caste. He hailed from Andhra Pradesh and was closely associated with M.K. Gandhi in the freedom fight against the British.

Gora never compromised on the principle of atheism and established a hermit in Mudunur village where untouchables were living. His wife Saraswati, who also came from orthodox Brahmin family, was an active participant and together they led the atheist movement. In 1940, Gora established an atheist centre in Vijayawada, a coastal town in Andhra Pradesh and spread the ideas through magazines, literature and meetings. Gora toured many countries of the world and contacted world atheist leaders such as Madalya O'Hair. Gora organized beef and pork dinners, targeting both Hindus and Muslims who considered both products as sacred or unclean. He wanted party less democracy, simple living and the spread of positive atheism, which asserts ethical life. His entire family is still promoting his ideas: his sons Lavanam, Vijayam and



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Samaram, his daughter Chennupati Vidya, his daughter-in-law, Hemalatha, and even his grandson, Vikas Gora.

Gora also officiated several inter-caste and inter-religious marriages and both his son and daughter married spouses who came from the untouchable castes, showing by example what their father preached.

The international atheist centre established by Gora and managed by his family is well known throughout India as well in rationalist circles around the world for its path breaking activity.

Andhra Pradesh's atheist movements spawned several splinter groups, often with their own magazines and literature. Jayagopal, Katti Padmarao, B. Sambasivarao, Ramakrishna, Gutta Radhakrishna Murthy, Saraiah, M. Subbarao, I. Muralidhar, C.L.N. Gandhi, Siddarth Baksh, M. Basavapunnarao, M. Sharif, Pasala Bhimanna, Vikram and others continue to fly the flag of atheism, however small or localized their efforts might be.

Other Southern and Western Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra also saw a splurge in rationalist activity in the early 20th century with skeptical and agnostic ideas. Abraham Kovoov electrified the skeptics movement with his speeches and demonstrations, touring several states in India as well as Sri Lanka to spread the movement. His books—debunking astrologers, godmen—were popular. Another active member of the rationalist movement in Kerala is Govindan, who edits the magazine, Sameeksha. The duo of Joseph and Sanal Edamaruku were also instrumental in challenging god men and exposing fraudulent “miracles,” touring intensively to demonstrate the falsehood of miracles.

Sanal Edamaruku would later shift to Delhi where he started international rationalist organization with a web site, journals, books and an active campaign.

In Maharashtra, a big campaign was organized to convert the Hindus into Buddhists so that they get rid of inequality, untouchability and attain human rights with dignity. B.R. Ambedkar led the movement though

without much success.

Meanwhile, skeptics groups began working in states such as West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Punjab, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. B. Premanand arranged for a Federation of all the groups and conducted several meetings at the national level, personally training several people in magic so that faith healers and god men and women could be easily exposed. State level federation in Andhra Pradesh (FARA) actively fought against fraudulent claims of god men, alternative medicines and supernatural claims under the co-ordinator N. Innaiah.

The Rationalist Association, which started in Bombay during 1930s slowly, picked up the momentum. Abraham Solomon, Lokkiandawala, M.N. Roy, M. Ramamurthy, R. Venkatadri, Avula Gopalakrishna Murthy, Innaiah Narisetti were all active participants and advocates of the movement.

M.N. Roy gave philosophical and scientific outlook to unbelief movements at India level. He organized re orientation study camps where scientific orientation was promoted for renaissance, scientific study of history and asserting sovereignty of the individual in political field. Roy also established Radical Humanist, Renaissance and Rationalist organizations and elevated them at international level, often questioning the prevailing Gandhian spiritual ideology.

UNBELIEF IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

As the first prime minister of an independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru established a secular framework for the country but that too had to compromise on several occasions due to political pressures, including giving up on the idea of a uniform civil code to all Indians. The Congress Party, which is by far the most liberal and secular in its stated outlook, continues to compromise with all religions even as the BJP, a Hindu fundamentalist party that was in power recently, strongly reversed the rationalist trends in public life and educational fields.

Meanwhile, Communist parties won power in three states—West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura—raising hopes that rational and scientific thought will take root. But in all the states, the Communists compromised with the religious sentiments of people and never encouraged the efforts of rationalists, humanists and skeptics.

Communist leaders encourage popular religious festivals such as Durga Puja in West Bengal, Ayyappa festival in Kerala so that they get pilgrims and tourist revenue, not counting votes in elections. The fundamental Marxian principle that “*Religion is opium to the people*” was not implemented during the Communist rule in India.

After the demise of M.N. Roy in 1955, several intellectuals carried the spirit of inquiry through study camps, training classes, publications, seminars, and magazines. They diversified the activities into the fields of Human Rights (V.M. Tarkunde), equality of women (Indumati Parikh, Malladi Subbamma, Gauri Malik), publications (Shib Narayan Ray, Prem Nath Bazaz, Philip Sprat, Ram Singh, R.M. Pal, R.L. Nigam, C.R.M. Rao, Balraj Puri, Professor Niranjana Dhar (Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance), civil liberties (N.D. Pancholi, C.T. Daru, Jayant Patel), international organizations (G.R.R. Babu), secular activity (Avula Gopalakrishna Murthy).

V.B. Karnik and Maniben Kara concentrated their efforts among labour and humanist movement. Prof. A.B. Shah (died 1982) founded the Indian Secular Society and tried to educate Muslims with the help of Hamid Dalwai. He also established Satya Shodak Mandal for bringing the Muslim youth into mainstream of secular society. His book “*Muslim Politics*” provoked much discussion.

A.B. Shah faced the wrath of many Hindus by questioning the ban on killing cows but he vigorously propagated the scientific method as a solution to several problems facing obscurantist India. His book *Scientific Method* made a rare breakthrough in Indian academia when it was prescribed as a textbook in Bangalore University when H. Narasimhaiah was the vice chancellor. Shah started several publications, magazines (Humanist Review, New Quest, The

Secularist) and educational reform campaigns for humanism and secularism.

UNBELIEF IN THE LATE 20th CENTURY

Much of the effort to promote unbelief in India has become a regional effort with pockets of resistance to the continued lack of scientific thinking and fundamentalism within the country.

In West Bengal, for instance, Prafulla Kumar Naik under local humanists and rationalists has questioned the claims of miracles by Mother Theresa. Over in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, focus has been against god men and women who claim to provide miracle cures. Andhra rationalists opposed unscientific alternative medicines (Homeopathy), exposing the bogus claims of Alex Orbito (psychic surgery), the swallowing of live fish for asthma cures, the hugging of Matha Amrithananda Mayi in order to obtain prosperity, Geomancy (Vaastu).

Several books have been published with documentation about fraudulent god men such as Satya Sai Baba (Murders in Sai Baba Ashram by Premanand), Jilh'llamcidi Ainnin (by M.V. Ramamurthy), The Truth about Bible (N.V. Brahman), The Falsehood of Geomancy (R. Venkatadri), Lie Hunting (N. Innaiah), The Unscientific Nature of Astrology (Dr. Narasimhaiah), Why I am Not a Hindu (Ramendra), Be Gone Godmen (Abraham Kovoov). Books exposing the holy scriptures (Critique of Hinduism by Laxman Sastri Joshi, The Truth about the Gita by V.R. Narla, Gita by Premnath Bazaz, Critique on Ramayana by P.H. Gupta, Ochre Robe by Agehananda Bharati, writings of Khushwant Singh also helped spread of skeptical thinking.

Basava Premanand, Sanal Edamaruku, Innaiah Narisetti, and G.R.R. Babu continue to question the authenticity of holy persons and have taken their message to an international level, drawing considerable media attention to what is going on inside India. Charvaka, a Telugu magazine edited by Mr. Thotakura Venkateswarlu from Vijayawada had great impact on youth in early 1970s.

Increasingly, the movement is also getting help from Indians who are now living abroad. Persons such as Aramalla Purnachandra, Nirmal Mishra, Jyothi Sankar (died in 1998) in USA who are providing



Periyar movement in Tamil Nadu played unique role in India which sustained the atheist, rationalist and humanist movements. It is sustained with the efforts of Mr K. Veeramani and his followers.

key intellectual backing to India's small number of humanists, skeptics and rationalists.

Despite their efforts, these miracle cures continue to draw thousands of believers, many of whom are conned into making financial donations in the hope of curing their ills.

UNBELIEF IN THE 21ST CENTURY

India entered the 21st century without much success in achieving a basic scientific society. While groups of people in various states continuously fight traditional and fundamentalist—mostly religious—groups, skeptic, rational, secular, atheist, humanist groups face an uphill task of modernizing Indian society into one that has a scientific outlook. Indian Secular society (V.K. Sinha editor The Secularist), Radical Humanist association (Managing Editor, Saraswati Rekha) Indian Humanist Union (leader Prakash Narain), Bihar Buddhivadi Samaj (leader Dr. Ramendra), Satya Shodhak Sabha in Surat, and Babubhai Desai in Gujarat state, Anti superstition organization (Maharashtra under the leadership of Dhabolkar), Muhonat (leader in Rajasthan humanist group), Rationalist groups (leaders Srini Pattathanam, Oomen), Manavatavadi Viswa Samstha (leader Manavatavadi in Haryana state), Narendra Naik in Mangalore for Indian Sceptic Society (FIRA), Subhankar, Manoj Datta, Ajit Bhattacharjee, humanist group in West Bengal, Civil liberties group and Renaissance association Mr. N.D. Pancholi, Mahipal Singh, Mr. R.B. Rawat, Gauri Malik, B.D. Sarma, Vinod Jain are functioning in their regions.

All these movements have little membership and remain an almost insignificant minority among India's millions. But they continue to express their views and raise their voices, often using local media to try and push back the onslaught of religions and dogmatic thinking.

Centre for Inquiry India started in 2006 with Dr. N. Innaiah and Mr. I. Muralidhar from Hyderabad as directors. Other organisations like Jana Vignana Vedika, Manava, Vikasam, Bharat Nastika Samajam cooperate in agreeable areas.

Over time, the humanist, rationalist, atheist, and

skeptic movements in India established many contacts and connections with international, like-minded organizations, organizing international conferences in India and inviting foreign experts and thinkers to share their experiences.

Rob Tielman, Jim Harrick, Paul Kurtz, Larry Jones, Roy Brown, Madalya O'Hair, Fred Edwards, Matt Cherry, Fenneth Hiogarth, Levi Fragil, Barbara Smoker and Herman Bondi, among others, participated, enriching Indian associations in many ways. At the same time, key Indian leaders began actively participating in overseas conferences and conventions.

Another avenue of helping to spread unbelief in India has been the translation of key books and articles into India's major languages. Books by Paul Kurtz, M.N. Roy, A.B. Shah, R.G. Ingersol, V.R. Narla, Agehanand Bharati, Laxman Sastri Joshi, Premnath Bazaz including titles such as Living without Religion and Courage to Become, Why I am Not a Muslim, The Truth about the Gita, Memoirs of a Cat, Scientific Method are popular in southern Indian languages- such as Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam. Skeptics in India have also benefited greatly from the populist writings of James Randi and have taken advantage of his \$ 1 million challenge to go after India's god men, none of whom are yet to come forward.

International organizations such as the International humanist and Ethical Union, Centre for Scientific Study of Paranormal Claims, Centre for Inquiry, as well as Humanist and Rationalist associations of various Western countries continue to provide help in this important fight,

Periyar movement in Tamil Nadu played unique role in India which sustained the atheist, rationalist and humanist movements. It is sustained with the efforts of Mr K. Veeramani and his followers. They honored Paul Kurtz, the leader from USA as well and published Richard Dawkins' God Delusion which is unique in translation .

(This article is written in honor of Mr K. Veeramani) ■

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS : AN OVERVIEW

Prof. DHANESWAR SAHOO

President, Odisha Rationalist Society, Bhubaneswar
Conferee of 'K.Veeramani Award for Social Justice 2014'



Right from the pre-Christian era to the present time rationalist luminaries and humanists have been striving for a just society. But it is a great irony that in all ages and societies some people are privileged and others are unprivileged, some people enjoy power, prestige and live luxuriously whereas others are deprived of the basic requirements of life and live at a sub-human level. There is great disparity in society between the haves and have-nots, feudals and common citizenry, the privileged and the marginalized folk etc. The caste system of the Hindu society is based on graded inequality. It is a form of blatant social injustice prevailing for millennia. Once upon a time all inequalities, disparities and injustice were given a religious sanction to keep the people docile. In Indian scenario, Sudras and Dalits were given the impression that their social status is the consequence of their bad deeds in their previous birth, for which they are destined to remain low. Their ignoble status can be ameliorated in the life to come if they do good deeds by adhering to the customs of the caste system. So too discrimination against women was very wide-spread in society till the end of the nineteenth century. Discrimination in many areas of social life was prevailing in different forms in different societies in the past.

Gradually there developed the ideology of humanism after the age of renaissance and enlightenment. In the western culture social justice



“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

entered into political and academic discourse. As a result of this any form of slavery, subjugation and social discrimination was treated as unjust and inhuman. Legal protection was ensured to safeguard the freedom of every individual irrespective of nationality, language, religion, ethnicity, social origin etc. Gradually there came the idea of empowerment of women. Great revolutions took place in some countries for economic equality or for the establishment of democracy. The purpose of democratic polity was to ensure political liberty, freedom of thought and expression and equality of all citizens before the law. It became the cherished goal of every democratic government to ensure welfare of all people. Every nation accepted welfare measures for all its citizens. It became the bounden responsibility of the government to provide education, health care and protection to all its citizens besides the basic requirements of the people. Any form of discrimination or social stratification was considered unlawful. Right and liberty of every citizen was covered by the legal and judicial system of every democratic state.

Needless to say, one important dimension of social justice is restoration of human right. But during the world wars there was massive violation of human rights. It was internationally felt that unless there is peace and freedom in the world, justice and human rights would not be there. After the formation of

United Nations in 1945, there was a sincere effort to create awareness to safeguard human rights and to translate it into social and political reality. Passing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN in 1948 was a landmark in human history. It was followed by a number of international covenants and regional conventions on Human Rights specifying civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. Of course these provisions are not formally binding on the nation states; still they are a great step to create social awareness among the people in the world. Each member state is at least aware of these provisions so as not to blatantly violate them.

The basic philosophy behind the notion of social justice or of human rights is to assume every individual's right to life with dignity. The very first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”. To be born free means every individual has right to freedom. But freedom of one is not at the expense of the non-freedom of others. Freedom requires some moral obligation and should never be equated with anarchy. So also to be equal does not mean that all persons are similar or identical in physical or mental capacities or talents. On the contrary every individual is different from



SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS : AN OVERVIEW

any other individual. People of different social groups or even in the same group are likely to be different. But on the basis of difference any discrimination or denigration is undesirable and inhuman. Every person should treat others in a spirit of brotherhood. That is the implication of the idea that all humans are equal in rights and dignity. The idea that every person has a natural right to life with dignity, liberty and security irrespective of caste, race, sex, colour, religion, nationality and social origin is a great civilizational value that has evolved in twentieth century.

In the Indian scenario, it is a regrettable fact that human rights are violated every day in many parts of the country. Caste and communal mind-set have been the primary reason for violation of human rights. The caste system of the Hindu society is rooted in the idea of inequality and discrimination. Even untouchability was very much a social practice in pre-independent India. In the post-independent India though untouchability has been outlawed and its practice is a cognizable offence, still it has not been annihilated in reality nor has it been removed from people's psyche. So too the caste system, however discriminatory it may be, has been a social reality even in today's India. The people who are in the helm of power and position also defend the caste system and give it justification under some pretext or other. But the caste system that vertically divides the society in the hierarchical order has been the cause of disorganization and demoralization of the Hindu Society. The system has been sanctified by religious texts giving noble origin to some castes and ignoble position to other castes. The nobility or ignobility of people in the hierarchical caste system is based on birth. In the past caste had become a sacred institution. In independent India on account of many socio-economic changes and some legal and remedial measures the rigidity of the system has been weakened, though the caste-consciousness has not been wiped out from public psyche. Casteless marriage has not become a regular practice in the society but an exceptional phenomenon. In our society as long as caste system remains, social discrimination cannot fully be annihilated. Needless to say, the sense

of discrimination is a threat to human dignity and a bane of social justice.

Communalism is another hurdle to social justice, for it incites hatred, intolerance and discrimination. Communalism divides society on religious line and creates animosity among people with different religious identities. In a multi-religious society of ours religious emotions loom large in public psyche. Religious orthodoxy can easily motivate people and incite passions to act against other religious communities.

Besides, religious orthodoxy and communal attitude give rise to a sense of intolerance as we notice in the present time. Religious passions guided by communal sentiment have been the reason of intolerance, terrorism and cruelty. They are great threat to civilized values, social amity and human rights. Not only communalism is a threat to peaceful living but also a great danger to human rights and dignity.

Social justice emanates from the concept of justice. No doubt, justice has a broad perspective being associated with law, the ideal element in law, morality and human rights. One important dimension of social justice is human right. Human right signifies right to life with dignity. The caste system and the communal attitude are two major evils which are threat to social justice as they are based on sense of discrimination, mutual hatred and intolerance.

Periyar was one of the great pioneers of social justice movement in India. He incessantly fought for human rights and removal of caste discrimination from Indian society. He was truly secular as he was against religious orthodoxy which was the basis of superstition and dogmatism. If his legacy would be translated into reality, society can tide over the evils which are threat to social justice and human rights. Periyar and his ardent follower Dr. Veeramani are the torch-bearers of social justice and human dignity through the Self-Respect movement which Periyar started and Dr. Veeramani carried forward. Truly the Self-Respect movement is the beacon of a cultural renaissance for a just society. ■

ATHESIM AND HUMANISM AS A WAY OF LIFE - GREETINGS TO THE HUMANIST FRIENDS IN INDIA 2015

Dr. Volker Mueller

Chairman of Humanistischer Freidenkerbund Brandenburg, Germany

By name of our free secular organization in Germany, I send you the best wishes and kindest regards. Our visit in India and our interactions between Indians, Germans are an important strengthening of the worldwide humanist movement. Our German Association wants to extend good friendship and relation to all other free organizations of humanism and peace. Our Humanist Freethinker Organization in the German state Brandenburg wants to develop more and more better communications and co-operations with other humanist organizations in Europe and in the world. Our co-operation and good friendship relations with the Atheist Centre in Andra Pradesh are important. Better we work together as friends and partners with equal rights.

Everybody can learn a lot about neighbours in our global village. Atheism is a positive way of life in a secular world. You can find this way as the realization of the universal human rights and of humanity in tolerance for all human beings. Everybody is afraid of war and destruction, hunger and poverty, inequality, oppressions and dependence. The way of humanism is associated with our activities for self-respect and against cultural, sexual and religious intolerance. We want peace and freedom all over the world, especially now!

Freethinkers, secular humanists and positive atheists search for their own way of life. In Germany the freethinkers and humanists say: we think free, work humanely and develop and ethical life without a god. We are non-confessional people, we do not need religious dogmas and prejudices for our lives and our thinking. We live with ideas of a secular humanism, our opinion is free. We think without taboos, superstitions and spiritual dreams. We like to live in tolerance, humanity and peace with all other people.





In our current multicultural and increasingly secular society in the 21st century we need a new kind of tolerance, of dialogue and conflict-management and of peaceful co-existence. It should be based on freedom, human rights and the ideal of the world citizen. The atheistic, humanistic and free-thought movement has to play an important role in this context

The freethinker-movement in Germany is part of the tradition of the European enlightenment and of its emancipation from theology and dogmatism. The Freethinker-Organizations in Germany started more than 150 years ago. During the barbarian Hitler - and during the World War II all freethinker - and humanist associations were destroyed. Several of our leaders were killed during the fascist time.

We want a separation of church and government and a laissez-faire state. Christian Churches in Germany have a great influence in the political life and on the government. Our demand is to accept the equality for all ethical live stances, for all communities of faith and convictions, also for us as non-religious ethical communities.

Our freethinking associations today stand up for the ideals of freedom, human dignity, equality, brotherhood and solidarity between the people - independent from their political opinion, social and ethical background, sex, age and kinds of sexuality. We work for the protection of nature and for human rights for everybody and for equal rights of women and for the rights of the child. The human rights are universal and indivisible.

In our practical work in Germany we support people with social problems, especially poor and homeless people, refugees and handicapped people. We encourage self-help for instance in self-help-groups. We have educational projects, youth-clubs, youth-travels, meetings and seminars and international exchange programs. so we help children and young people in Germany to find their way of live in self-respect and self-understanding. Our children learn to live together in tolerance in one world!

The popular scientific and educational work is important for the fight against superstition, ignorance and religious fundamentalism and fanaticism and for the educational development of the children into a better social future. We appreciate the campaigns for a better health for everybody and the social work especially for children and women.

Especially for our young freethinker we found a way to

come together and to recognize the membership in the global family. Humanist Youth-Exchange programs are great contributions for a better understanding and we want to continue them. The youth-exchange with the Atheist Centre in Vijayawada is an excellent example for it. Our young humanists can learn together, they can understand the problems in the different parts of our world, they enrich their own lives with the cultures and traditions of friends.

Secular humanism is intimately connected with human dignity and human rights. The battle for the dignity and rights of people is certainly one of the most important goals of free-thought and action.

Our program for a positive atheism, for free-thought, human rights and dogma-free living is modern and good for the future. It is an expression of a New Secular Thinking and a continuation of enlightened thought. Enlightenment thinking is connected to this New Thinking, to our identity as world citizen, to free thought and human rights. All together means: humanism.

In our current multicultural and increasingly secular society in the 21st century we need a new kind of tolerance, of dialogue and conflict-management and of peaceful co-existence. It should be based on freedom, human rights and the ideal of the world citizen. The atheistic, humanistic and free-thought movement has to play an important role in this context, if it takes its demand for freedom of thought, humanity and human rights seriously.

The general social and economic situation in Europe and in the world has changed. Did we recognize the new challenges this change has presented? The globalisation of the past few years put the problem into clear perspective. Global problems can only be solved at the level of global politics - with New Cosmopolitical Thinking.

We all in Europe, in all over the world come together to a powerful international movement of peace, tolerance and secular future. That is real secular humanism.

We are a global family of secular humanism.

BE BOLD, BE HUMAN, MARCH TOWARDS EQUALITY

CHANDANA CHAKRABARTI

Rationalist - Social Activist, Director, Sukriti, Hyderabad

We live in a world that is getting increasingly polarized, especially on religious grounds. Rising religiosity with its frenzied festivals is not only reducing tolerance but also lessening regard for the freedom of people of other faiths and the faithless. Thus loudspeakers blaring azaans from mosques or chants from temples, encroachment of public spaces, a heightened sensitivity to any form of criticism that often gives way to aggression, and violation of private spaces, are only some of the fallouts of a mindless display by organized religion. Immersion of gods and goddesses in natural water bodies demonstrate a complete disregard for the environment, especially since the use of non-biodegradable materials and chemical paints in the making of the idols leach cadmium, mercury and lead in the water, threatening every life-form that depends on it. In the din created by all religions, the voice of reason from the atheists is hardly ever heard.

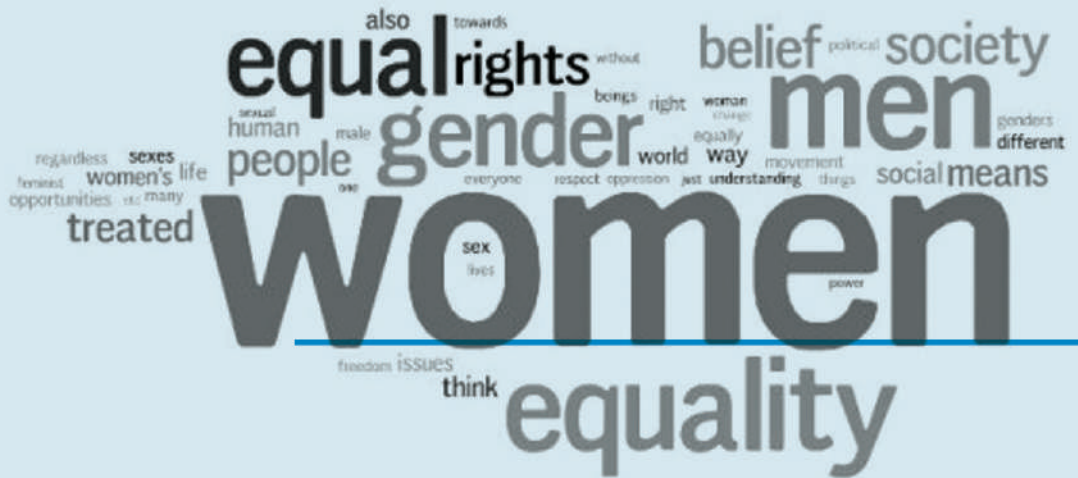
The exhortation “*Be bold, be human, march towards equality*” is precisely to counter irrationality, repression and divisiveness that organized religions promote. What do these words mean? What makes a person bold and human, and strive for equality? Is Indian culture and are our traditions or social circumstances conducive to our being bold, human or equal? What comes in the way of our achieving these three simple qualities? It is fashionable today to romanticize every aspect of Indian culture but if one were to critically evaluate it, we would see how elements of our culture prevent us by and large from being bold, human or equal. Only those who have had the courage to break free from such fetters, have emerged as bold and human and are willing to march towards equality.

Being bold

What are the requirements for being bold? Confidence, knowledge, conviction, a questioning attitude, and the capacity to analyse and understand issues are basic requirements to be bold. But what is the culture in which we are brought up in our country?

First, look at the way we deal with children. Questioning is discouraged among children both at home and in schools. Children who question are labeled as naughty or precocious by both parents and teachers. Curiosity is built in our





genes and that is why even toddlers are curious about everything that surrounds them. We forget that it is curiosity that has taken the human race to where it is today. And it is that curiosity that is nipped in the bud in most homes and schools. In fact, by and large, in our educational institutions, while we are willing to patronize those who do not question, there is virtually no nurturing of independent thinking. It is not just the inconvenience of furnishing logical answers to questions asked but also the reluctance to revisit what is being questioned when logical answers are not available. A strong emphasis on unquestioned acceptance in contemporary society, especially if it comes from any kind of authoritative position, be it age, power or position, has become a bane of our society. It is, therefore not surprising that very few ever ask (if one were a Hindu) as to why one's mother is required to change her whole lifestyle from what she eats to how she dresses or how she interacts socially when one's father passes away. Why is a widow prescribed a code of conduct - ostensibly to keep her carnal desires under check, while a widower is free to bring home another bride soon after he lights the pyre of his dead wife?

Similarly, in every religion, age-old, irrelevant, irrational customs, rituals, and traditional practices not only go unquestioned but are perpetrated from one generation to the next.

Obedience is a quality that is oversold in our culture. Consequently, we learn only to toe the line or blindly follow what is told. It makes one docile and automatically discourages dissent and rebellion of any kind. An undue emphasis on respect for elders often translates into our inability to stand up to age or authority of any kind, be it religious, professional or whatever else.

What do religions do to believers?`

All religions propagate dependence on supernatural

forces which is an antithesis to self-reliance. On the other hand, the basic premise of scientific temper to which all atheists adhere, is that, all problems can and must be faced in terms of one's moral and intellectual resources, while completely negating the existence of supernatural powers that can be ordered to serve humans. The mistaken belief that an omnipresent and omnipotent god is our savior, ever-willing to protect us, takes away the will to be self-reliant or bold.

All religions promote fatalism, by convincing followers that everything in the world is pre-ordained and is a part of a grand design. Our joys, sorrows, trials, tribulations, victories and everything else is decided by God, as all the mushrooming religious television channels spout day in and day out. One is constantly taught that one is not responsible for one's deeds. God is responsible. If "what has to happen will happen", why on earth would anyone even try to do anything at all? Why would one want to take responsibility for oneself if one believes that a so-called power willingly creates problems, provides solutions and everything else and also acts as a guide?

The clergy of every religion propagate that all wisdom and knowledge known to mankind is written in their holy books or ancient scriptures. Religions, therefore, encourage followers to be backward-looking instead of forward-looking. Science, on the other hand, which atheists have no problem in accepting, is forward-looking. Scientific temper implies recognition of the fact that knowledge often progresses by disproving earlier ideas, beliefs, theories and laws. It considers knowledge as open-ended and ever-evolving.

Religions never encourage questioning since any application of logic or rationality would make the entire edifice of religion crumble like a pack of cards. This is contrary to what happens in science. One of the most



We believe that Brahmins have the best genes, dalits have the worst genes. There is absolutely no truth in this belief. Fair-skinned people think they are superior to dark skinned people. The rich believe they are better than the poor. The urban think they deserve more than the rural. We think that fair skin is better and more deserving than dark skin. The whites show tremendous superiority complex for no reason at all.

important attributes of science is the right to question. Knowledge advances and science progresses because people exercise their right to question.

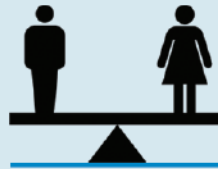
Instilling fear of retribution is a part of every religion. The clergy, irrespective of religion, exploit believers by a self-proclaimed closeness to god and by claiming knowledge of how to appease gods, through which a sinner can escape imminent punishment. That is where bribery comes in. Wrong-doers and those looking for out of turn rewards, begin to bribe gods in anticipation. The rich give god cash or gold and diamond crowns, but not a penny to the needy, since only god can give him favours, which no needy person can give. Pay-offs are meant only for gods, so that the cycle of sinning and being let off can go on. Indians go abroad and build temples only to keep almighty on the right side. Non-resident Indians send money to India for temples, mosques and churches. When did anyone last hear of rich non-resident Indians giving money for educational institutions or hospitals. According to laws of every country, all gods should be in prison as they are the largest recipients of bribe. Indians take it a step further – they believe that if god accepts money for doing favours, there is nothing wrong in their doing it. That is why Indians are so easily corruptible. Our habit of placating god for personal benefits gets naturally extended to placating the rich and the powerful. In a country like India where laws are lax, and justice is delayed and denied, as long as religions continue to hold a sway over people by providing them escape routes through confessions or bathing in holy rivers or other ritualistic appeasements, immoral, unethical and illegal practices will continue to thrive. True character is built not out of fear of god but out of accountability to one's own conscience.

All the above factors work against building confidence and conviction, or increasing one's knowledge, or acquiring a fearless and questioning attitude, or nurturing the capacity and willingness to understand and analyse issues which are essential ingredients for being bold.

Being human

One of the most essential conditions of being human is to recognise another individual as a human – no more, no less - which implies that there be no discrimination whatsoever, be it based on colour, race, religion, caste, creed, language, gender or circumstances of birth. While discrimination of any kind is unacceptable in a civilized society, it is important to know how to make a distinction. All humans are not born equal in terms of abilities and potential, and distinction allows one to differentiate between bad, good, better and best.

Kindness, compassion and altruism are other essentials of being human. All humans are born with these qualities, which have given humans an evolutionary advantage.



BE BOLD, BE HUMAN, MARCH TOWARDS EQUALITY

But it is social conditioning and dictates of religion that very often lead to aberrant behavior. When a mother or a loved one cries, a toddler who still hasn't learnt to stand erect tries its best to assuage him or her, since kindness and compassion is a natural phenomenon. When someone drowns, it is human instinct that pushes another human to endanger one's life and save the other; one does not wait to check the religion of the one who is drowning before attempting to save him or her.

In spite of our natural propensity to such human qualities, what happens in reality is quite the opposite. We live in a society that constantly discriminates based on the colour of our skin, the language we speak, the religion, caste or creed we belong to, not to mention one's gender. Naturally, these are also the basis on which we seek our identity. Discrimination and such identity-seeking makes us all a highly divided lot.

Religion divides people by strengthening narrow identity-seeking behaviours. All major wars through history have been instigated by religion. Believers argue that religions propagate moral values. This is not entirely true as every religion has two aspects to it, the moral and the dogma. All religions preach the same as far as the moral aspect goes, which we have no quarrel with. In fact, religion is not necessary to inculcate the right values. It is the dogma of a religion that forms the backbone of a religion and sets it apart from others by giving it a distinct identity. This is precisely what divides humans along the lines of their belief systems which are not based on logic and reason. Science, the guiding light of atheists, on the other hand, is truly international, uniting people across borders, races and religions. Scientists around the world use the same method, that is, the method of science, employ the same techniques, use the same materials, and publish in the same journals.

Being human requires the inculcation of an attitude that people can live an honest and meaningful life without following a religious creed. It also requires that one recognizes that the need for moral action is for the welfare of humanity and not for fulfilling the will of god.

Equality

We would like to live in a world where there are equal opportunities for all, irrespective of the circumstances of one's birth, where every citizen enjoys equal rights

and is expected to discharge equal responsibilities. While equal rights and responsibilities are enshrined in our Constitution, what happens in reality is far from equal. As far as equal opportunities go, despite 65 years of independence, our country is far from its goal of providing equal opportunities to all its citizens.

The recent Right to Education (RTE) Act, which ostensibly attempts to make quality education accessible to all is touted as one of the major achievements of the government. The RTE bill provides for a certain percentage of seats to be reserved in all private schools for the unprivileged who will be given a voucher by the government. It was a foregone conclusion that this bill will achieve little in universalizing education. As an example of how strongly rooted discrimination is in our society, let's take the example of what happened in a private school in southern India after the RTE was implemented. The school took in such students but insisted on their hair being chopped in a certain way to easily distinguish them from the rest of the regular students who came from a rich background. Other schools have deployed a separate area to keep such discrimination going. If the government truly wishes to make education accessible to the poorest of the poor, the only way it could do so is to make neighbourhood schooling compulsory for all.

Ours is a nation of unequals. Being a feudal society, Indians have made inequality a part of their culture. We are so attuned to inequality that we not only accept it without a whimper, we also no longer strive for equality.

Women accept that they are not equals of men. Men are taught to behave as superiors. We bring up our children accordingly and the idea and practice of equality is perpetrated from generation to generation. A linguistically divided nation, each region considers its language and culture superior to the rest.

We believe that Brahmins have the best genes, dalits have the worst genes. There is absolutely no truth in this belief. Fair-skinned people think they are superior to dark skinned people. The rich believe they are better than the poor. The urban think they deserve more than the rural. We think that fair skin is better and more deserving than dark skin. The whites show tremendous superiority complex for no reason at all.



Except for friends of the same age, our social relations are essentially hierarchical. We don't usually establish equal relationships. The minute one addresses someone as *anna* (elder brother) or *akka* (elder sister) it takes away one's moral right to defy or say anything contrary to the person lest it shows disrespect. Adults talk down to younger people. The young are taught not to talk back to adults. Forging equal relationships across age and gender barriers does not come easily to us.

As regards rights, there are numerous instances of the rich and the powerful who think that they are more equal than the rest. Politicians, celebrities, and VIPs behave as if they have more rights than the common people. Thus a rich youngster in a drunken stupor can run-over pavement dwellers in the dead of night and expect not to be punished, or politicians, bureaucrats and industrialists caught looting the country through an unholy nexus, expect to be treated better than petty thieves and ordinary criminals in jail.

As far as obligations go, it is often among the rich and the powerful that one would find those who assume a freedom from all obligations to the country or society. The poor and the lowly employed would think twice before breaking rules or evading taxes. It is the rich who do that.

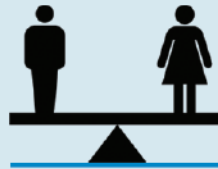
Religion by definition is unequal and therefore cannot ever endorse equality. Each religion claims to be the best. Therefore, Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs and so on believe that no other religion equals them. Their god, their religion, their religious books and their clergy are the best. Thus a Christian is taught to believe that there can be no better human being than a good Christian; those who follow Islam believe that those who don't follow their faith are infidels; and Hindus think theirs is the best religion. Seeds of conflict are sown right there. Besides, there are inequalities within each religion: Hindus have the caste system; Muslims too are divided hierarchically much in the same manner; and the Christians have countless denominations.

As far as women are concerned, they have been at the receiving end of the worst form of discrimination mandated by all religions through the ages. All religious rituals, practices and traditions have been designed to be discriminatory and suppressive. Take, for instance, the tradition of *karvachauth* - a practice in north India of married women fasting for the well-being of their husbands and other similar practices. Apart from there being no logic in this practice, it is important to recognize that it is only women who are expected to follow meaningless rituals in the name of devotion and protection of the husband: the reverse is never mandated. Is there one practice or a ritual or a fast that men keep for the well-being of their wives? A woman is expected to display a mark of marriage, like *sindur* or *mangalsutra*, to signify to the world that she is taken, never a man.

In fact, when it comes to women, religions diligently pay a heavy lip service to women. Devout Hindus argue that their religion confers a special place to women as evidenced by the qualities bestowed on their goddesses, for instance, for wealth they worship Lakshmi; for education they worship Saraswati; for power, Durga; and for rage, Kali. So all the clout seems to be with the goddesses, while the gods are like ministers without portfolio!

Let us see what happens in practice. Women are denied freedom or independence of any kind. According to Manu's diktat (the Hindu progenitor of mankind) which is followed till date, a woman is the property of her father till she is married, a property of the husband after marriage, and then the property of her son after the death of the husband.

Grooms are for sale and it is becoming increasingly difficult to have girls married when there is not enough money for dowry (groom price). Brides are meant to be burnt if they don't bring enough dowry to satiate the greed of the groom and his family. Therefore, a daughter becomes a burden who takes away wealth to her husband's home. Consequently, there is a premium on the



BE BOLD, BE HUMAN, MARCH TOWARDS EQUALITY

male child. The obsession for the male child is driving little girls out of our world, either soon after birth when they are stifled, or right in their mother's womb before they see the world. The bias against the girl child has reached such proportions that in several states in India the ratio of boys to girls in the population is so skewed that there simply aren't enough girls available for marriage. Several states like Punjab and Haryana where female foeticide is rampant, have started 'importing' brides from poorer states like Odisha, Bihar and West Bengal to take care of their home and their hearth and suffer indignity.

Women cannot show anger - that is reserved only for men who are free to express rage at the drop of a hat. Women are meant to be beaten for the most innocuous of reasons like not cooking a tasty meal, or perceived to be neglecting children, or stepping out of the house without permission even if it is to visit her parents or siblings, or speaking to strangers. According to a study, in Andhra Pradesh (AP) 21 per cent married women face domestic violence for the above reasons. What is even more sad is about 80 per cent women in AP agree that husbands are justified in beating their wives. This is because our girls are taught to accept all kinds of subjugation and remain mute, since they are enslaved to the men folk in their lives. Rape is an instrument often unleashed on women who show courage, to teach her a lesson. Where have Kali or Durga gone, may I ask?

Being employed does not automatically bring financial independence for women. Not only are all financial decisions generally taken by the man, he also gets to keep the money. What happened to Lakshmi's portfolio? In India nine out of ten married women have neither freedom of mobility or financial freedom, nor the independence to take any major decision of the household including her own healthcare.

Girls can do without adequate nutrition and education, while boys must be given both. As for purity, chastity and fidelity like Sita, these 'virtues' are meant only for the fairer sex. The men are free to indulge in any amount of promiscuous behavior for in his case it is not at all about purity as it is about virility.

Oppression, insubordination, enslavement, preferential treatment or annihilation are equally detestable, whichever gender, race, religion, caste or creed it is aimed at or rooted in.

The way forward

Traditional culture and religious attitudes clearly come in the way of producing bold and human individuals who wish to march towards equality. Only those who free themselves from the above shackles become truly bold, human or equal, and we have a number of examples of such individuals in our country.

A change in the mindset of men and women is the first requirement. Women themselves will have to be the change they wish to see since they are the ones who would nurture and educate future generations. If women are looking for sympathetic men, let me assure you the numbers are very small. Those kinds of men will have to be created and raised. And only a mother can do this best. Equality, like charity, begins at home. The day we learn to bring up our daughters and sons equally in every respect, we will be firmly on the path to an equal society.

Children must be encouraged to question and to find answers. They are born with curiosity, kindness, compassion, reason and sensitivity. If only we would guard and nurture these qualities without imposing on them any dogmatic belief or even atheism for that matter, the chances are that they would naturally grow up to be rational and humane. Values such as honesty, integrity, courage, free thought, freedom, equality and dignity are best imparted through practice. Imbibing a scientific attitude from a very early age and employing the method of science to answer questions or solving problems will guarantee the foundations on which boldness and the desire to be humane and equal can be built.

We will need to take a re-look at our notions of success, which is becoming increasingly equated with wealth and fame. The end has become important, the means unimportant. We seem to have forgotten that one cannot be happy in isolation that much of our happiness depends on other people's happiness.

Education and knowledge are important tools to empower any individual. It makes us aware of our rights and responsibilities. Science gives us knowledge that hits at the root of irrational beliefs and practices. Technology frees us from needless drudgery, releasing time for creative pursuits. Law gives statutory protection. Hence, education, knowledge, technology and law are the four pillars on which we can empower our future generations. ■



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THEMATIC ESSENCE OF PERFECT LIFE

COL Prof.N.RAMACHANDRAN

Vice-Chancellor, Periyar Maniammai University, Vallam, Thanjavur

Reading and writing are normally the habits of any scholarly person. Many will continue to read and enjoy the intellectual pleasure. But a few will not only read and get refreshed but will share the essence of what they have read with others. Sharing one's own knowledge is the only avocation where the donor is not the loser but the receiver is also the gainer. In this case, this was done by Dr.K.Veeramani, Esteemed Chancellor of Periyar Maniammai University, through a series of articles regularly published in the Tamil rational daily "VIDUTHALAI".

In this noble task of disseminating the best that is culled from different sources, the presently available ten volumes of humanistic essays bear as examples. They prove to be what all Dr.K.Veeramani has read, thought and felt as fit to be shared with others in the six decades of his public service.

These voluminous contributions are the resultant effect of his voracious reading. They silently reflect and react to his scholarly browsing of historical, psychological, moral political, ethical sociological and even medical treatises. These compendiums prove to be almost a practical guide for counselling the learned and gentry, rich and the poor and improving their art of living for leading a happy life with self-respect. Though the books are in Tamil, with the title "Vazhviyal Sinthanaigal" the contents are applicable to all, irrespective of their race, country, or nation. So far the first two volumes have been translated in English under the titles 'Joy of Living' and 'Lovable Life' and published. It will be useful to many if the remaining volumes are also translated in English (and other languages) and published.

In **volume I**, he has advised to be famous but not to be desirous





Dr.K.Veeramani, Chancellor, PMU, with the kids of livestock while on his morning walk



Many leading social leaders and literary stalwarts have praised the contents of these books and given their useful complimentary comments. They may be prescribed as text books in schools and colleges. The materials available in these books offer a good base for further research about the art of perfect and lovable life. In addition to hard copies, these books may be published as soft copies in the form of e-books.

to be famous, to be munificent and charitable and enjoy life by sharing one's possessions. He has enumerated the evils of anger, watching the television indiscriminately, he has stressed the need for sleep, reading habits, self-confidence, honesty and integrity, talking less and hearing more, consoling and encouraging patients, to be smiling, fostering scientific temper, promptness in congratulating, reading books as well as men, continue to learn good habits, following traffic rules, preparedness to meet failures, to promptly recover from failure, to avoid smoking and drinking, to maintain cordial relationship Between husband and wife etc.

In **volume 2**, he has advised to face the problem boldly and solve them and not to avoid them, to avoid smoking and also to get rid of smoking habit and about breeding of Children, achievements by hand work, living with self-respect, many tips for diabetic patients, tips for good conversation etc.

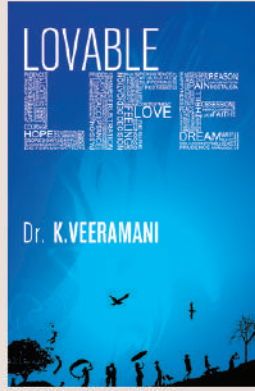
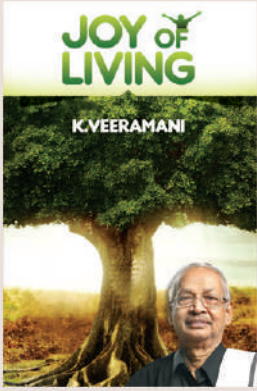
In **volume 3**, he has given details about scientific innovations, blood donation, breeding of children, heart diseases, laughter, benefits drawn from trees, good food habits, physical exercises, avoiding fear of death, optimistic approaches etc.

In **volume 4**, he has described about the methods for prevention of common diseases, usage of antibiotics and curd, to get relief from mental stress, health and medical checkups hunger and health, Cell-phone- a disease, patience, envy, jealousy and suspicion etc.

In **volume 5**, he has described the life without disease, practicing yoga, aiming at perfection, budget planning, cheating through astrology, art of conversation, adolescence, protecting of eye-sight, cholesterol, Fast –food, patience, first aid, reading habits, sleep – a good medicine, Time-management, secrets of long life, laughter – a good medicine, drinking optimum quantity of water, eradicating superstitions and curbing the temptation for suicide, etc.

In **volume 6**, Breeding the children, purpose of earning wealth, dignity of hard work, teacher –student relationship, father – son relationship, avoiding short-cut for success, living with simplicity, reading books for relaxation, safe-guarding the heart, omega-3 tablets for heart, avoiding tension, lessons from trees, precaution in taking medicines, fruits for health, caution about flattery, problems in love marriages, keeping up assurances etc., are elaborately described.

In **volume 7**, he describes about supporting the parents at their old age, leading a rational life, benefits



THEMATIC ESSENCE OF PERFECT LIFE

of walking, solution for worries, anger, revolutions in medical sciences, diabetes, benevolent attitude, perfection of human life, caution about friends, research for ideal life, simplicity, sleep – a good medicine, procrastination, analyzing the root cause for crimes, breeding children, importance of break-fast etc.

In **volume 8**, he has depicted the advice of President Dalai Lama, importance of simplicity and frugality, exercise both physical and mental, supporting parents at their old age, public service, visiting patients in hospital, precautions to avoid heart diseases, evils



Dr.K.Veeramani, visiting piggery unit at PMU campus

of Television, drinking hot water after taking food, habit of reading books, necessity of vitamin D, understanding one's friends, preserving heritage monuments, buildings, students counselling through psychiatrists, hints about Confucius, Socrates and Aristotle, Cell phone – a nuisance, hints to protect the heart, etc.

In **volume 9**, he has described tea and green tea as good beverages, laughter as a good medicine, revolution in preparation and publication of books,

“suffering” is a teacher, how to rise up to great heights, to avoid heart disease, good food to keep a man brisk, necessity for frugality, self-conquering besides providing, hints about Kalaivanar N.S.Krishnan Henrietta Lacks and Manoharan. Also speaks about evils through internet, about forget and forgiving, learning – an everlasting habit, how to win life, anger to be avoided, hints about Periyar, etc.

In **volume 10**, the excellent qualities of humanism and the bad qualities are listed out, good Conversation, solution to manage debates, gratitude, good food – habits, angry one's own energy, Blood and organ donation are highly spoken of.

Many leading social leaders and literary stalwarts have praised the contents of these books and given their useful complimentary comments. They may be prescribed as text books in schools and colleges. The materials available in these books offer a good base for further research about the art of perfect and lovable life. In addition to hard copies, these books may be published as soft copies in the form of e-books.

The above series of books constitute a good collection from wide sources, helping everyone to lead a good life. It is our duty to express our sincere thanks to Dr.K.Veeramani, President of Dravidar Kazhagam for such a noble task and a literary contribution and also to appreciate *The Modern Rationalist* for issuing the Annual number on the 83rd birthday of Dr.K.Veeramani, the beloved and Esteemed Chancellor of Periyar Maniammai University with a good collection of articles. In toto, the entire compendium of informative volumes are eminently readable by young and old alike. ■

THE COMMUNAL WAR FOR SECULAR SPACE

Vidya Bhushan Rawat

Rationalist, Human Rights Activist & Political Analyst, New Delhi

There is a spurt in the 'events' of 'blackening' of faces of 'dissenters' of Hindutva thoughts in India. While the Hindutva protagonists are thumping their chest and becoming louder each passing day, the Hindu 'liberals' have a difficult job to do at the moment protecting 'Hinduism' from the likes of violent and regressive brahmanical organisations and hence they term these 'incidents' as stray and not reflective of the 'tolerant' Hindu Dharma.

The war in religion between the 'liberals' and 'radicals' is growing everywhere in India and both attempt to 'interpret' religion and its 'philosophies' according to their convenience. However in their claim to 'control' religion, it is the 'radicals' who are actually 'winning' the battles particularly in multi-cultural societies and the result is the loss of the democratization of societies and usage of violent methods to curb freedom and dissent. But the ironies world over is that the religious rights too need to masquerade as 'secular' to get their viewpoint legitimized. Hindutva protagonists despite their avowed disinterest in secular discourse are using the 'democratic differences' for their own purposes. It is like General Zia-ul-Haq suggesting that everything in Pakistan was 'unanimous' unlike India where government has to 'respect' political opposition or the opposition voices are getting space at the Parliament or in public places.

India is passing through a very dangerous phase when the Hindutva chest-thumpers under protection from the state powers have taken it on themselves to crush the dissent and violently oppose those who are creating 'obstacles' in their attempt to attain the Hindu Rashtra. The problem is multifaceted because of diverse ranges of prejudices that have





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kept people away from coming together much to the glee of these forces who want to demolish India's republican democratic constitution. In the battle cry of secularism, it needs to be seen how various communities perceive the issue from their own angles. The 'Hindu' liberals who have been wrongly portrayed as 'secular' liberals because of their 'concern' for Muslims are the biggest target of one and all. It is this segments which actually dominate the 'secular' discourse and it is clear that its fight with Hindu radical and hardliner is purely the 'power' battle and not really an 'ideological' one.

For years, the Congress's brahmanical establishment pampered this 'Hindu liberal' seculars who were predominantly upper castes led by Brahmins through various positions in all the 'institutions'. They are the crop who claims that 'Hindutva' and SanghParivar do not represent Hindus and that Hindu dharma was never violent and it is a unique and tolerant religion of the world. This stream of 'writers' are 'influenced' through Gandhian philosophy who feel we have suddenly become 'intolerant' and that India or Hindus had a 'golden' past of 'respecting' 'dissent' and acknowledging 'diversity'.

The Sangh Parivar and its 'writers' who are not in 'large' number feel that this 'darbari' literati do not speak on the violence against Hindus by the Muslim fanatics in Kashmir as well as in Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Sanghis charge this 'secular' brigade is pro Muslim and is offended immediately when we speak of Beef but keep quiet when Muslims eat it. Shouldn't the Muslims 'respect' the 'sentiments' of Hindus, they ask and add that Pakistan is continuously killing our soldiers and innocent people and these writers have no time to condemn the Pakistan sponsored terrorism. Emotional speaker Giriraj Kishore says that can Lalu tell Muslims to eat pork. There are hundreds of other example where the expert 'distortionists' working overtime to polarize the society. One wonders as who is asking any one

including Hindus or Muslims or for that matter any one to eat a particular kind of food. We stand for the rights of Hindus to eat Pork as we are against banning of beef. The problem is how they are trying to create stories to befool the masses. Unfortunately, the Sangh is not alone in its assault on 'seculars' as many 'corporate Muslim seculars' have jumped the Sangh Bandwagon to demonise all those who disagree with the culture of banning. They accuse that we do not speak when Muslims commit mistakes or do wrongs. This breed of corporate Muslim 'intellectuals' who are 'journalists', 'opinion makers' and members of American sponsored Muslim 'think-tanks' who have blamed the 'sickulars' as pampering Muslims in India. Their articles and opinions are being portrayed in all the 'Sanghified' papers where they justify even killings in Gujarat in 2002. Taslima Nasrin said that none of the 'secularists' came in her defense when the West Bengal government banned her book. The 'Muslim' 'intellectuals' even questioned why a paper like *The Indian Express* gave a 'communal' headline 'And they hanged Yaqub'. One commentator questioned this blaming the Express which remain one of the finest newspapers today in India just for its reporting and taking on the Hindu fascists. The other 'intellectual' sitting in Canada regularly abuse Muslims for their faith and suggested to remove the name of all the Mughal kings from the Delhi roads and rename these roads for some 'better' people. On their 'advice' the government of India agreed and renamed Aurangzeb road as APJ Abdul Kalam Road.

As a person devoted to secular thoughts and rationalism, it is well known to me the growing Islamophobia in United States, Canada and Europe. I am well acquainted with the 'intellectual dishonesty' that the 'mainstream' Hindu 'seculars' in India have and their patronage by the Congress Party and various left parties. There is no denial of fact that these caste seculars have rarely raised the issue of the violence on Dalits and shudras in India. Even if



unity of poor people is possible if Mandalisation of Muslims, Christians societies and the leadership comes in the hands of common political people. Politicisation of communities is important to fight battle for dignity and rights.

some of them spoke, most of them kept themselves out of the whole discourse. Hindu Seculars excluded the most marginalized from their discourse and deliberations and therefore Gandhi remained the icons of secularism in India and the Hindu seculars refused to take notes from Ambedkar, Periyar, Phule, Bhagat Singh and Rahul Sankrityayan.

The 'corporate Muslim seculars' have become the biggest 'support' of the Sangh Parivar at the moment when they target the whole concept of 'secularism' in India. The problem with these Muslim seculars is that their 'world' begin and ends with theocratic Islamic countries and Pakistan, a complete replica of the Sangh Parivar's thoughts. These 'seculars' actually blame Indian state for being too soft on Muslims and engaged in appeasing them. One does not know what exactly is appeasement but for them Hindu seculars have not condemned the Bombay blast, don't ask for hanging of the 'terrorists', never support the Uniform Civil Code and never questions as why government provide 'subsidy' for the Haj-Yatris as being accused by these 'Corporate Muslim seculars'. I can say with firm conviction that as a humanist and rationalist we have questioned all kind of fundamentalism including Muslim as well as Christian fundamentalism yet there is a difference between majoritarian communalism and minority communalism. Most of these corporatized seculars blame Muslims for their conditions ignoring the important factor why Muslim Dalits and Pasmada face constitutional discrimination to get a government job. None of them ever bothered to speak for them or write about the issues that Halalkhors, Nuts, Kalandars, Helas and many others like them face because of their caste despite being Muslims. The problem with these high society secularists is that they too consider Muslims a monolith block like the SanghParivar and hence easy to lecture and demonise.

These are interesting points. Some more complaints are that Madrasas breed terrorists, Hinduism is 'tolerant', why India should be secular when none of the 'Islamic' countries are 'seculars', that Muslim

refuses to mix up with the secular society and never believe in 'democratic' values. My problem with the Hindu secular is that they get their 'ideological' strength with the same school and religious scriptures which the Hindutva-wallahs are getting and both interpreting it according to their own convenience very much such as late Asghar Ali Engineer did but found little support from the Muslim intelligentsia. How on earth can any one claim that Hinduism or Brahmanism is a 'tolerant' religion when a majority of India suffers under their discriminatory laws and social practices such as caste system and untouchability. With such a criminal and barbaric culture terming it as tolerant is gross intellectual dishonesty. As far as Madarsas are concern, I can only say they do not create any radical Muslims but deeply religious person unable to fight a political battle for their community.

Interestingly our corporate Muslim seculars friends are very similar to Hindu seculars who have never raised caste class issues with in their own societies. When did these corporate Muslim seculars turn RSS sympathizers ever-raise the issue of Pasmada Muslims in their articles and opinions? How has it never come to their minds that RSS is purely a brahmanical organization representing the interest of the caste Hindus and not Hindu society as a whole? These 'corporate Muslim seculars' never sided with the issue of marginalized in India similarly like the Hindu seculars for not feeling the pains of dalits and aadivasis who face not just physical violence but spiritual violence for years. So secularism becomes a brahmanical dummy wrestling like BJP and the Congress Party. Perhaps the war between these 'self-styled' 'liberals' among Muslims and Hindus reflect the same mindset.

But then one will have to decide which side of the battle you are. Blaming Hindu seculars will do no justice to these corporate Muslim seculars. Their siding with SanghParivar cannot justify their positions how much they wish to abuse Pakistan or Islam. To be candid, I knew some of them who happen to be leading the campaign. Once in London there was an



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accidental meeting with two of them who actually were upset with us for our support to campaign against war on Iraq and Afghanistan. What disturbed me most was their open support to the brutal killings of Muslims in 2002 Gujarat pogrom. 'These Mullah need to be taught a lesson', they said. Now, it is pitiable and painful to see blindfolded 'seculars' sitting in London, Ottawa and Washington decrying the whole western protest against invasion on Iraq and Afghanistan in the name of 'War on terror' ? I witnessed some of these protests there which suggest how people went out against their own regimes and supported human rights of the people. Today, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair is trying to 'apologize' anticipating that a parliamentary committee could castigate him for his role on the issue. How do you think that 'War on Iraq' has tamed 'Islam' as these people would have thoughts? In fact, the American and British regimes are responsible for the growth of hard core Islamic zealots who are a threat to democracy and freedom in Middle East. These fanatics are not a threat to United States or Europe but to their own societies and people. Who can ignore the dark reality that both the IS and Taliban are a product of war on terror and prior to that their war on communism. In their zeal to eliminate communism from middle-east the Americans and Europeans actually flirted with Islamic Jihadis and the outcome is the balkanization of the entire region.

Islamophobia in Europe has helped many of the corporate Muslim secularists to adjust to the power elite in condemning Islam out rightly. While we are well aware of the fact that Islamic zealots and fanatics being supported by the Wahabi groups in Saudi Arabia have definitely created a very disturbing situation for Muslims in societies where they are a minority as they face all kind of discriminations and isolation. Same kind of hysteria related to Muslims is being created here in India by these 'secularist Muslims' who are now openly siding with the Hindutva fanatics. Muslims are victim of theocratic ideas and putting Islam in everything but it is not that they are not changing and voices are not there challenging the dominance of Mullah and religious leadership. My problem with these Muslim secularists is how come they appreciate the Sangh Parivar and its brahmanical dominance over the vast

non Brahmin Hindus? If you reject priestly classes everywhere, you must stick to that ideological ground. We condemn all kind of priestly classes and their control over masses in each sects and religion and call people not to surrender before them.

In their zeal to look more modern they dangerously make 'secularism' and Congress party easily exchangeable terms much to the pleasure of their friends in the Sangh Parivar as well as of the Congress Party. We have not forgotten when Francois Gautier, a French writer based in Delhi in his regular fulminations against Islam and seculars in India got huge publicity in the newspapers. All the crap that he produced got big space in the edit pages of the corporate communalized media which gladden the heart of the Sangh Parivar to use those 'fulminations' as quotable quotes to denigrate the activists fighting against them. Gautier once blamed Buddhism for the decline of India and wanted Hindus to militarise as envisioned by the Sangh parivar. The corporate secular Muslims stand together with the corporate communal Hindus in asking for 'strong' action against 'Mullah' Pakistan and 'Islamic' zealots.

The corporate secular Muslims got irritated When Prof Irfan Habib suggested the 'ideological' 'similarities' between the RSS and IS. They laughed and termed him old jholawallah communists who used to seek vote for communists. What is wrong if Prof Habib questioned the motive of the changing names of the roads named after Mughals? Why is there a road named after Raja Man Singh who actually betrayed Maharana Pratap and joined hand with Akbar, he asked. If Akbar is wrong then how come Man Singh is an honorary person said Prof Habib but then in these times of deep communalization everything is good provided you are a caste Hindu.

IrfanHabib is not being trolled by the Sangh promoted element but decried by these corporate secular Muslims who preach about 'western liberalism' but wont question their misdeeds and imperialism. For them everybody who question west have no right to put his feet in these countries and that we all were just primitive people unless the west came and gave us great ideas. I accept many of the ideas and enlightenment. We definitely got philosophy, freedom, liberalism and socialism from the west but to be very frank not from



THE COMMUNAL WAR FOR SECULAR SPACE

the Americans and Canadians. We refuse to accept them as models as Americans represent the most obscene corporate culture and a majority of them have their mindset very much similar to India's upper castes. Imperialism and exploitation of people was a reality and that west gained from it can't be ignored.

Many of our friends wrote that Hindu seculars are not really seculars. Yes our problem is that we have actually made liberalism and secularism as synonymous terms. The Hindu liberals are worried about Hinduism and hence they have every right to speak against the Sangh Parivar and its nefarious agenda of converting India into a Hindu Talibanised state. The Muslim liberals are unhappy and blame on Hindu seculars that 'seculars' don't speak against Islam. This is the dangerous game to get adjusted in the power circle and edit pages of the Brahmin-Bania media. We have no issues with those who make such compromises with their identity as it sales better and useful in the globalized world. Identity is a burden for the rural poor but a great institution of marketing yourself once you have entered into the drawing rooms of the power elite. Hindu liberalism wants to maintain the status quo and worried about the Sanghparivar's control over Hindus but where have these corporate secular Muslims spoken for the Dalits, Adivasis and Pasmandas? Where have they shown their concern that our natural resources are under the attack from the western corporate and our people are suffering? Tony Blair want to apologise as his lies are now got exposed but our 'liberals' want to support it simply because they feel it will teach 'Islamists' a lesson. Yes, these corporate Muslim seculars were the allies of George Bush who termed the word Islamic Fascism. We want to add that religious thugs will bring catastrophe, death and darkness, which ultimately will lead to fascism everywhere. Pakistan and Islamic societies have destroyed the common men and suppressed their voices for freedom because they allowed the extra constitutional religious thugs masquerading as political leaders who used blasphemy laws to control people. Since in India whatever was the reason, Hindu fundamentalism did not have the fullest support in the past of the masses hence it was difficult for them. For the first time in independent India's history they have a field day and therefore they are coming to their 'normal' self. During the other regime they remain as fringe but today they are roaming free and can target any one.

I am disappointed many of the 'corporate secular Muslims' who feel like any RSS sympathizer as nothing happened in India. Their problem is that they don't feel anything is happening in India unless we turn like the Talibanis or IS. It is our duty to save India from those who were once 'fringe' but today trying to become 'mainstream'. Pakistan and theocratic Islamic nations cannot be our role model and therefore we will have to fight back to protect our constitution and rights of all. It would have been good if these 'secular Muslims' had the strength to condemn the polarization happening in India and siding with secular groups in India. If they hate brahmanical secular, I would ask them to raise the issue of Pasmanda Muslims or all those like us who do not support that religion has to be led by the priestly classes. I would have supported them and their efforts to liberate Islam but that cannot be done through sitting in the West and gladdening the hearts of chitpawan Brahmins of the SanghParivar. A fight for secular ideals will need secular alliances and need secularization of society. To convert Muslims into secularism you need to work among the community and not abuse it sitting with those who have no faith either in constitution or secularism. Long back I wrote that unity of poor people is possible if Mandalisation of Muslims, Christians societies and the leadership comes in the hands of common political people. Politicisation of communities is important to fight battle for dignity and rights. We must understand that Sangh Parivar is not a religious organization but purely political one guiding the current regime at the centre.. Those who feel that Sangh is a Hindu organization are actually denying voice to India's majority Dalit Bahujans who feel the only agenda of the Sangh Parivar is to maintain the status quo strengthening brahmanical system in India and Muslims are just the target but the real agenda is to keep vast Bahujan masses subjugated. Anyone who is supporting one kind of fanaticism to get rid of his brand of fanaticism is only strengthening the regressive forces and we must be careful of it. In the coming days we will have more writings by these 'seculars, who will call all those who want India to remain safe for all and our fight for rule of law and constitutionalism as 'sickulars' but then we can not keep quiet when our rights are trampled with and ideas from Manusmriti are being imposed on us in the name of 'sanskriti' and 'parampara' violating the ethics of our democratic secular republican constitution. ■



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INDIAN RATIONALISTS USE FACE BOOK TO FIGHT INTOLERANCE

From 'Rationalist International'



Sanal Edamaruku

Founder Chairman,
Rationalist International -
Camp Finland

More than 40 Indian writers have returned their literary awards to protest against the “growing intolerance in the country” after a series of incidents, including the killings of writers and rationalists. BBC Monitoring’s **Vikas Pandey** speaks to some Indian activists who are using Facebook to continue educating people about “rational and tolerant” thinking.

Sanal Edamaruku fondly remembers his friend Malleshappa Kalburgi and his work as a rational thinker. Dr Kalburgi, 77, was shot dead in August at his home in the southern state of Karnataka. He was known for his free views which often angered right-wing Hindu activists. Mr Edamaruku says other free thinkers like Govind Pansare and Narendra Dabholkar have also been killed for their thoughts and beliefs in the past three years.

“Dr Kalburgi was a free-spirited thinker and writer. He disagreed with right-wing politicians but that doesn’t mean he deserved to be shot at his home. The incident is so unfortunate and shows the growing intolerance in our country,” he says.

Most of the writers agree with Mr Edamaruku and have cited similar reasons for returning their Sahitya Akademi award - one of the highest honours bestowed on Indian authors. But the rationalist thinker, who now lives in Finland in a self-imposed exile, says social media can be a great equaliser in his fight to promote free thinking and protect freedom of speech in the country. He was charged with blasphemy in 2012 after questioning the “miracles” of a church in Mumbai.

“I received several threats after the incident and decided to leave the country for a while, but I haven’t been able to come back. The



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David Tribe (Australia)
K Veeramani (India)
Bary Williams (Australia),
Richard Wiseman (UK)
Lewis Wolpert (UK)

situation for free thinkers in the country has further deteriorated since 2012,” he says. Mr Edamaruku says there seems to be a pattern in the killing of the rationalists “because all three were shot by strangers”.

“These are tough times, but we can’t afford to be silent. Social media has helped me tremendously in keeping my campaign going from abroad,” he says. Mr Edamaruku runs the Indian Rationalist Association page which has close to 9,000 members. His own public page has more than 17,000 followers.

“Social media helps me stay connected with my fellow thinkers. I don’t know when I can come back, but Facebook helps me not feel too isolated from India,” he says. He urges Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government to take notice of these issues to protect India’s social harmony. Like his fellow rationalists, Mr Edamaruku thinks that India’s society is increasingly becoming intolerant towards non-majoritarian views.

“I used to go to villages in the 90s to bust superstitions and miracles of godmen. I never felt threatened. I continued the same in the next decade. People used to disagree with our views, but nobody threatened to kill us,” he says.

He says that people understood that “our mission was not to challenge religions, but to encourage them in questioning superstitions”. But that seems to have changed. Many writers decided to return their awards after the killing of a man “over what kind of meat he ate” in northern India.

Mohammad Akhlaq, 50, was killed in a mob lynching in late September allegedly over rumours that his family had been storing and consuming beef at home.

Slaughter of cows is a sensitive issue in India as the animal is considered sacred by Hindus, who comprise 80 per cent of the country’s 1.2bn people.

Soorya Sriram is one of the administrators of the Indian Atheists page, which has more than 38,000 followers. It promotes rational thinking and “stands for secular humanism”.

He also acknowledges the growing intolerance in the country.

“Religious extremists have and will continue using violence as their weapon of choice. This is because they do not have reason on their side,” he says. Mr Sriram says he is confident that forums like Facebook will continue to help them air their views to a wider audiences.

“Facebook now holds a significant position in our actions and discussions. Our message is delivered and shared widely via Facebook,” he says. The page is known for its provocative content. He defends the strategy, saying that “our posts seem provocative mainly because they speak the truth”.

“We do not insult beliefs or gods randomly as it serves no inherent purpose. But we openly criticise gods and beliefs that promote various forms of discrimination and oppression, such as the caste system, misogyny, support of murder, etc,” he says. ■



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Dr. VEERAMANI

GIFT GIVEN BY PERIYAR

Dr. Arasu Chellaiah

Professor of Biology, Maryland University, Baltimore, USA
Periyar International, Washington DC Chapter

We from Periyar International Washington DC chapter convey our Happy Birthday wishes to our beloved leader Dr. Veeramani. We join the multitude of rationalists, Periyarists and humanists all over the world in conveying birthday wishes to Dr. Veeramani. We wish him live a very long life with robust health, abundant happiness and high spirits.

This wish comes from myself, my family and several Periyarists in Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia and Washington DC area. He has addressed meetings organized by Periyar International Washington DC chapter several times in the past. Many of us have had the pleasure of meeting him at informal settings and engaging in fruitful conversations with him. We clearly notice that as he ages, he is becoming younger in enthusiasm, tenacity and hard work to champion the causes Periyar advocated.

It is very appropriate to have a special issue of *The Modern Rationalist* on the eve of the birthday of our beloved leader Dr. Veeramani. Sincere appreciation to Mr. Kumaresan for organizing the efforts to have this special issue.

It was my fortune to have met our leader Dr. Veeramani in 1977 to personally hand over an article I wrote to be published in *Viduthalai/Unmai* magazines. Since this first meeting, I continue to seize the opportunities to meet him, listen to or read his speeches as well as learn from his writings. It is such a joy for me to think about the enormous growth of Periyar educational institutions, spread of Periyar's philosophy throughout the world and positive impact to the downtrodden of India under the leadership of Dr. Veeramani.

When I was attending a meeting at Periyar Thidal, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. I heard Poet Erode Thamizhanban's following words. "Periyar gave us three major gifts. 1) Dr. Veeramani 2) Viduthalai 3) Periyar Thidal". Upon hearing this, I felt







All of us who are touched by him, and who love and respect him have to think of the “gifts he is giving every day to the society”. With his enormous intellect, brilliance in so many fields and his speaking/writing skills; he would have become world famous in any field of his choice for personal success and glory.

how true these words are. Usually, during a birthday celebration, friends and family members give gifts to the birthday Celebrity. It is quite the opposite at the birthday celebration of our leader. All of us who are touched by him, and who love and respect him have to think of the “gifts he is giving every day to the society”. With his enormous intellect, brilliance in so many fields and his addressing/writing skills; he would have become world famous in any field of his choice for personal success and glory.

It is such a fortune for us that Thanthai Periyar recognized his amazing talents very early, nurtured him and presented him to the society. It will run to pages if any attempt to describe the accomplishments of Dr. Veeramani. Yet let me state a few at least.

After Periyar, there was a huge question as to who can take over such a prodigious responsibility left vacant. When our leader rallied the Periyarists and all who care for social justice in India in the 70s and 80s; the answer became clear. Not only the Periyarists from Tamil Nadu, but the humanists/rationalists from all over India assembled in Chennai and other major cities of Tamil Nadu multitude of times championing the cause of reservation policy for backward classes and Scheduled castes people.

Prime ministers, Chief Ministers from all over India came to Periyar Thidal. Periyar philosophy began to resonate in all Indian states. Compared to the 70s, there is not one serious politician in India who is not aware of Periyar’s philosophy and accomplishments. It is Dr. Veeramani who is solely responsible for this.

When Periyar Center was opened in Delhi, scores of Periyarists went to Delhi to participate in the ceremony. This kind of large scale Periyarists going to Delhi to attend an event, organized by Dr. Veeramani occurred more than once. This move now has become international. Scores of Periyarists from India and elsewhere in the world are going to attend the Rationalists Conference to be organized in Germany in 2016.

The world has shrunk and rightly being called as

Global Village. Many common issues are currently threatening the entire world such as: religious extremism, atomic weapon threats, global warming, environmental pollution, depletion of natural resources, the widening economic gap between haves and have-nots.

Handling such global issues is an uncharted territory for the world leaders. While so many nations are struggling to handle their own internal issues, the rallying around to solve common global issues becomes extremely challenging. Policy makers, global think tanks, philosophers and politicians all over the world are aware of these problems but struggling to find plausible approaches to solve them. Here is where Periyar shows the way. He not only advocated a philosophy but succeeded in implementing it. Such a bold philosophy and practical approach is what needed to save the world now. That model was inherited by our leader Dr. Veeramani who is making it applicable beyond Tamil Nadu state to all over India and rest of the world.

We are already seeing intellectuals, academicians, humanists and political leaders from all over the world coming to Periyar Thidal to learn about the most successful model of social upliftment by peaceful means. What Dr. Veeramani accomplished after taking over the leadership of Dravidar Kazhagam can be studied from several angles. These unimaginable accomplishments are possible because of the amazing array of his talents. At least one of his talents is his superfast learning of any book or any articles and completely assimilating to his vast repertoire of knowledge. The way in which he simplifies them and writes in a lucid style for the sake of readers of “*Viduthalai, Unmai* and ‘*The Modern Rationalist*’ is unparalleled.

He exemplifies the statement “*Leaders are continuous learners*” The only birthday gift we can give to Dr. Veeramani (the gift from Periyar) is by strengthening his hands in implementing Periyar’s ideals.

Long live our beloved leader Dr. Veeramani. We wish him to celebrate his birthday many, many and many more times! ■



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RATIONALISM AND ATHEISM

Dr. Ramendra

Professor of Philosophy, Patna University, Patna, Bihar

In my book I have tried to bring into focus the philosophical ideas of some rationalist, humanist and atheist thinkers of twentieth century India, namely, Periyar, M.N.Roy, Ambedkar, Gora, Kovoor, A.B.Shah, Narsingh Narain and Ramswaroop Verma.

However, in this introductory chapter, the approach is conceptual, and the concepts of “rationalism”, “humanism” and “atheism” have been discussed in a general way. Let me clarify at the outset that in analyzing these terms it is not my intention to give my own meaning of these terms, or, in other words, to stipulate a meaning from my side. On the contrary, I am interested in finding out the sense or the senses in which the words are actually used in our language. In fact, these words are being used in more than one sense; I will also be indicating the sense in which I will be using them in my book.

Rationalism

The word “rationalism” has been used in more than one sense. For example, it has been used in philosophy to describe the epistemological position of the seventeenth century French philosopher Rene Descartes as well as to characterize the ethical position of the eighteenth century German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Besides, we have the popular sense in which the word has been mainly used in twentieth century. If we look into details, these three meanings are different from one another, but still there is a common thread among them. There is no doubt about the fact that “rationalism” is linked to “reason”. Rationalists emphasize reason in one way or another, either in the sphere of knowledge or in the sphere of ethics.

The popular or the lexical meaning of “rationalism” can be





Rationalism is not a closed set of conclusions, but a method of arriving at conclusions. As a mental attitude, rationalism gives supreme importance to reason for understanding and solving the problems of life. Rationalism rejects faith, intuition, authority and revelation as sources of knowledge

ascertained from popular and standard dictionaries of the English language. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, for instance, defines rationalism as "*the practice of treating reason as the ultimate authority in religion as in other subjects of study*". The same dictionary defines "rationalist" as a "*person who accepts reason as the ultimate authority in religion, ethics, etc.*"

Similarly, Webster's New World Dictionary defines "rationalism" as "*the principle or practice of accepting reason as an only source of knowledge and as the only basis for forming one's opinion, beliefs, or course of action*".

The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, on the other hand, has this to say about rationalism:

The term "rationalism" (from the Latin ratio "reason") has been used to refer to several different outlooks and movements of ideas. By far the most important of these is the philosophical outlook or program which stresses the power of a priori reason to grasp substantial truths about the world and correspondingly tends to regard natural science as a basically a priori enterprise.

Thus, in philosophy, even now, the word "rationalism" is mainly used for the epistemological position of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz. In this sense, "rationalism" treats "a priori reason" or reason independent of sense-experience as the source of knowledge. "Rationalism", in this sense, is often opposed to and contrasted with "empiricism", which regards sense-experience as the main source of knowledge.

However, whether some academic philosophers are aware of this or not; in the popular sense, "rationalism" is not opposed to empiricism, but includes it, or is rather synonymous with it. "Rationalism" in the popular sense regards reason, that is, sense perception and inference, as the ultimate source of knowledge. Rationalists are supporters of logic and scientific method. They reject faith, intuition, revelation, authority and other alleged

extra-rational sources of knowledge. In this book, I am concerned with "rationalism" in the popular and broader sense of the term. From now onwards, I will be using the word "rationalism" in this sense only. There are several organizations and individuals all over the world, including India, which have used "rationalism" in this sense and have given to themselves the label of "rationalist".

For example, the Rationalist Press Association, a London based organization, defined "rationalism" in 1899 as "*the mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of reason and aims at establishing a system of philosophy and ethics verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions or authority.*"

Thus, popular rationalism in twentieth century is not opposed to sense experience and scientific method. It does not regard a priori reason, or reason independent of experience, as a source of knowledge. On the contrary, the rationalists have strongly supported the scientific method, which is based on observation and experimentation. Another feature, which comes out clearly, is that rationalists have been opposed to superstitions, dogma, faith, authority, revelation and mysticism. A rationalist is a "free-thinker" or, in other words, a "person not accepting traditional religious teaching, but basing his ideas on reason"

According to Finneir Hiorth, since nineteenth century the word "rationalist" has served as a synonym of "freethinker", and "since the nineteenth century on most of those who have called themselves 'rationalists' have been atheists."

In short, rationalists are largely non-religious. This is not surprising because the rationalists emphasize reason as a source of knowledge whereas religions mostly emphasize faith, or in other words, strong belief even in the absence of evidence or in spite of the presence of contrary evidence.

In his book *Understanding Rationalism*, Indian philosopher D.D. Bandiste has described himself as a "rationalist". According to Bandiste, *rationalism is*

a philosophy of life based on the human faculty of reasoning. Bandiste regards empirical knowledge as the foundation of rationalism. The central message of rationalism, says Bandiste, is that “we should keep on examining our beliefs in the light of the empirical evidence.”

Bandiste has not given much importance to the conflict between empiricism and rationalism in the European philosophy of 17th and 18th century. He maintains that this antagonism is now a matter of historical interest only. He asserts that the foundation for rationalism is now provided by empiricism. As he says, “The older rationalism was against empiricism. The present rationalism is against irrationalism.”

In my own Buddhivadi Ghoshna-patra (Rationalist Manifesto), I have formulated “rationalism” in the following manner:

Rationalism is not a closed set of conclusions, but a method of arriving at conclusions. As a mental attitude, rationalism gives supreme importance to reason for understanding and solving the problems of life. Rationalism rejects faith, intuition, authority and revelation as sources of knowledge... A rationalist uses reason for testing all conclusions, and accepts only those which are coherent and which correspond with the reality. A rationalist believes in the truth of a conclusion only to the extent of the evidence in support of its truth. If in any sphere of knowledge, sufficient evidence is not available for arriving at any conclusion, a rationalist suspends his or her judgment. In other words, a rationalist uses logic and scientific method for understanding this world. Similarly, a rationalist also rejects the rigid and divisive morality based on blind faith in religious scriptures and on unreasonable and unscientific beliefs like god, heaven, hell and rebirth. He or she uses reasoning in the sphere of ethics as well, and accepts a rational morality based on human desires and needs. In short, the rationalist philosophy of life is based on reason.

I believe that this formulation of “rationalism” is in consonance with the popular meaning of the word.

Atheism

“Atheism” is probably the most unambiguous among the terms being discussed in this chapter. Yet, subtle

distinctions have been made regarding different meanings of the term by some atheist thinkers.

Both the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English and Webster’s New World Dictionary define “atheism” as the “belief that there is no God.”

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English defines “atheist” as a “person who believes that there is no God.”

The Encyclopedia of Philosophy contains an article on “Atheism” by Paul Edwards. Edwards has this to say about the definition of “atheist”:

According to the most usual definition, an “atheist” is a person who maintains that there is no God, that is, that the sentence “God exists” expresses a false proposition. In contrast, an agnostic maintains that it is not known or cannot be known whether there is a God, that is, whether the sentence “God exists” expresses a true proposition. On our definition, an “atheist” is a person who rejects belief in God, regardless of whether or not his reason for the rejection is the claim that “God exists” expresses a false proposition.

In his *Atheism: The Case Against God*, George Smith has explained “atheism” in the following manner:

The prefix ‘a’ means ‘without,’ so the term ‘atheism’ literally means ‘without theism,’ or without belief in a God or Gods. Atheism, therefore, is the absence of theistic belief. One who does not believe in the existence of a God or supernatural being is properly designated as an atheist.

Smith grants that “atheism” is sometimes defined as “the belief that there is no God of any kind,” or the claim that a God cannot exist. However, according to him, while these are categories of atheism, they do not exhaust the meaning of atheism and they are somewhat misleading with respect to the basic nature of atheism. As he says:

Atheism, in its basic form, is not a belief; it is the absence of belief. An atheist is not primarily a person who believes that a God does not exist; rather he does not believe in the existence of a God.

Thus, according to Smith, “theism” and “atheism”



if a person is a consistent rationalist, he or she is bound to be an atheist as well. However, the converse is not true, because rationalism does not follow logically from atheism. The argument “god does not exist, therefore, reason alone is a source of knowledge” or the argument “I do not believe in the existence of god, therefore, reason alone is a source of knowledge” is not a valid argument. Thus, it is logically possible for a person to be an atheist without being a rationalist.

are descriptive terms: they specify the presence or absence of a belief in God. “If a person is designated as a theist, this tells us that he believes in a God, not why he believes. If a person is designated as an atheist, this tells us that he does not believe in a God, not why he does not believe.”

In his Introduction to Atheism, Finngier Hiorth has discussed various concepts of “atheism”, and has made an important distinction between “theoretical atheism” and “non-theism”. The belief “that there is no god” has been called “theoretical atheism” by Hiorth. Hiorth has pointed out that contemporary atheists are not always happy with the concept of theoretical atheism. Some of them prefer to define “atheist” as “a person who is without belief in god or gods”. This latter kind of “atheism” has been called “non-theism” by Hiorth.

It is obvious that in this sense “non-theism” is a wider term than “theoretical atheism”, because a person who denies the existence of god is bound to be without belief in god. However, the converse is not true. A person could be without belief in god owing to several different reasons. One reason, of course, is that he or she may believe, that god does not exist (theoretical atheism). Besides, there could be other reasons as well. For instance, he could be an atheist because he may believe that there are no good reasons for believing in the existence of god. Such an atheist may believe that the burden of proving the existence of god is on the theist, and that it is rational not to believe in existence of god until his (or her?) existence has been proved. Thirdly, he may believe that it is not possible to know whether god exists or not (agnosticism). Alternatively, he may believe that though theoretically it is possible to know about the existence or non-existence of god, but at present, sufficient evidence does not exist to draw a

conclusion either way. Fourthly, an atheist may believe that the term “god” is meaningless and all sentences containing the term “god” are senseless. There could be other reasons, too, for being without belief in god. A person may not have ever encountered the idea of god. (However, opinions differ on whether a person who has not been ever exposed to the idea of god should be called an atheist or not). In any case, in this book I will be using the word “atheism” in the wider sense. In this sense, a person who does not believe in the existence of god is an “atheist”, irrespective of his reasons for not believing.

Rationalism and Atheism

In this section, I wish to explore the logical relationship between rationalism and atheism as opposed to the empirical relationship. In other words, I am not concerned here with the question whether most of those who call themselves “rationalist” are, in fact, atheists or not and vice versa. I am concerned here with the question whether atheism follows logically from rationalism and vice versa.

It appears to me that atheism does follow logically from rationalism. There are no good reasons for believing in the existence of god. Besides, the idea of god as found in the major religions of the world does not square up with the presence of evil in this world. Thus, I maintain that if a person is a consistent rationalist, he or she is bound to be an atheist as well. However, the converse is not true, because rationalism does not follow logically from atheism. The argument “god does not exist, therefore, reason alone is a source of knowledge” or the argument “I do not believe in the existence of god, therefore, reason alone is a source of knowledge” is not a valid argument. Thus, it is logically possible for a person to be an atheist without being a rationalist. ■

Heartly Greetings to our Patron
Dr. K.Veeramani on 83rd Birthday

PERIYAR MATRICULATION SCHOOL



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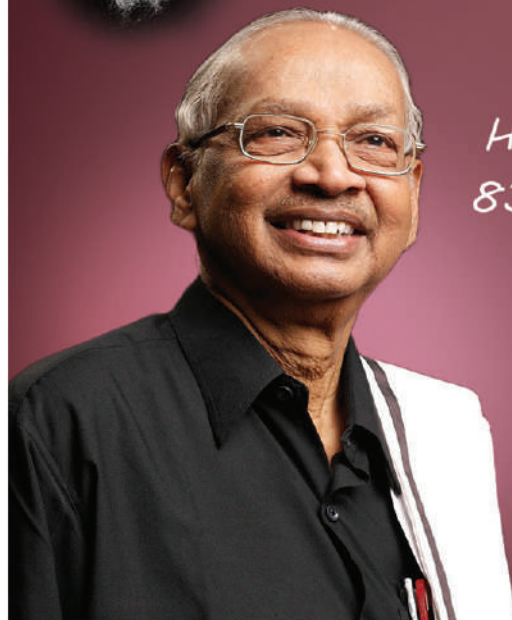


Long Live Periyar!



 **December 2**
**SELF-RESPECT
DAY**

Long Live Asiriyar!



*Happy Greetings on
83rd Birthday of our
Beloved Leader*



Puthuvai
M.N. NATARAJAN

Vice President
The Rationalists' Forum
Tamil Nadu & Pondicherry
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PROFILE OF A PRAGMATIC LEADER

Prof. Dr. Palany Arangasamy

Director, Center of Periyar Thoughts, Periyar Maniammai University

Estimating the personality of an individual warrants a keen observation, a personal contact and an occasional interaction on topical issues that are political, social, legal, economic and historical. But to come across a person of such depth and command in all these areas is very rare or almost next to impossible.

Acquiring such versatility involves a deep study, retentive memory, eloquent expression and above all a sheer common sense. Very few alone can attain that intellectual supremacy and under this very - few category comes Dr.K.Veeramani, the President of Dravidar Kazhagam, a patriarchal apex body for at least half - a - dozen socio - political outfits including DMK, AIADMK, MDMK, etc in Tamil Nadu.

Dravidar Kazhagam celebrates its 90th anniversary of Self-Respect Movement (1925-2015). Its longevity as a well knit non - political social reform organization, its steady growth and its structural solidity wouldn't have been possible but for the unceasing efforts of this single individual. Eminent is his leadership and remarkable is his dynamism in mobilizing the support of the rank and file to sustain the lustrous growth of the time honoured organization. Under his guidance, the Kazhagam steers clear of anything parochial, narrow - minded and religious chauvinism and goes ahead in its onward march of highlighting the merits of a secular and rationalistic society.

Prolific writing and voluminous reading, he has cultivated. Let me recall an incident to exemplify his depth and thoroughness in that habit of his studying books and documents. Left communist leader, late P.Ramamurthi presented his Tamil book on Dravidian Parties (1983) to Dr.Veeramani with a request for a critical review. Never did he dream that his request will boomerang against his inaccuracy in details, factual errors and false statements. What he boastfully said is, in fact a travesty





to see its phenomenal growth, this dynamic leader had to pay a heavy price on three occasions. Jealousy and die - hard opposition in a personal attack in 1982 near Srivilipputur (Mamsapuram - 20.7.1982), twice in 1985 at North Madras (Royapuram - 11.4.1985, Washermanpet - 27.4.1985), and in 1987 near Salem (Thathagampatti - 28.8.1987), and in 2013 at Viruthachalam (28.7.2013).

Notwithstanding such risky episodes, an immunity he has cultivated to be mindful of the lofty principles he has embarked upon.



of truth. Dr. Veeramani not only reviewed the work in three or four lectures but also brought out a sizeable volume (1985) as a rejoinder to Mr. Ramamurthi 's book. The core point here is that Justicists were indicted by the comrade for having been pro – British, conveniently omitting the fact that even that same Justice Party pleaded for the freedom of India. The rejoinder to the comrade not only unmasked his deliberate omission but effectively posed a counter by stating that even Indian National Congress was in fact started by Britishers and even when patriotic Indians headed it, the party ensured its allegiance to Britishers in the AICC conferences. It was made clear that being Pro – British in certain areas need not be an allergic issue. Even in later days, as Periyar has pointed out many congressmen including Bhaktavatsalam were the ideological descendants and supporters of Madam Annie Besant who justified Jalianwalla Bagh Massacre. The comrade must have stomached the blunders among a few more others that were pointed out, with a shock and not a word came out of him thereafter.

Barring a few cases of modern political leadership thrust hierarchically upon the shoulders of the descendants, to be a leader requires not merely a scholarship and intelligence, nor a richness to perpetuate the comraderie of rank and file nor even the backing of moneyed corporates but a presence of mind to manage even sensitive and inimical occasions. Sometime in September 2015, the cohorts of a Hindu outfit shouted against him in a meeting at Coimbatore. Any attitude of confrontation or an inciting gesture or an angry out burst in the public meeting could have aggravated the situation despite police intervention. But avoiding the agitational approach, what he spoke for a few minutes amidst his one – hour talk was historic. Neither a surrender to the agitator's demand nor a blunt opposition to them but so dispassionate an appeal to their senses that even die – hard Hinduistic wards would cross the floor and join with rationalists at one time or other. This could be called one of the occasions that exemplified his leadership quality.

Rarely the world has seen persons capable of, as much extemporaneous as Dr.K.Veeramani in addressing audiences on any topics under the Sun. This does not mean that he speaks verbose. His substantial eloquence is the resultant effect of about six decades of experience in oratorical platforms. Points relevant gently flows out of him sans any hiccup. Euphony or literary elegance, if any is spontaneous, not strained or artificial. Emotional harangue or excited out pouring, the short-cut method of mediocres, have never been the norms of his elocution. But in given circumstances, he would go fully prepared and marshalling out the points in a language neither pedantic nor an empty rhetorical flourish. His is an expert to afford lectures that are eminently sensible, relevantly informative and prospectively thought

PROFILE OF A PRAGMATIC LEADER

provoking. Listening to his lecture is a rich and rewarding experience. Acerbic oratory and caustic speeches are alien to his amicable temperament. A student of Economics he had been, but came far away from this academic base and now he is undoubtedly an encyclopaedic orator. His voracious reading and retentive memory prove to be an effective bulwark to sustain the thematic content of his informative lectures and erudite writings. Roughly fifteen to twenty days a month, he goes around the whole of Tamil Nadu giving lectures and even on occasional trips to neighbouring states not excluding U.P and Delhi.

Five decades of his experience as Editor of *Viduthalai*, a Tamil evening paper and *The Modern Rationalist*, an English monthly speak volumes to his political sagacity and bi – lingual expertise. Amidst administrative, academic, organizational and socio – political monitoring, never he fails in writing editorials. Vigilant eye is his in keenly observing G.Os, Bills and Amendments, be it from the Centre or the State to comment or counsel or to constructively criticize them. Herculean efforts he took in advocating Mandal Commission Report. Sixteen conferences he conducted in the length and breadth of Tamil Nadu and also in Delhi towards its implementation. The whole tribe of Backwards all over the nation owe their deep debt of gratitude to him. But for him, the report would have been clipped off its wings. His political wisdom is explicit when we recall that MGR as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu sought his opinion on various crucial socio – political issues.

Much against medical advice, this octogenarian is still hectically touring on various engagements not excluding propaganda. Thanks to modern electronic gadgets such as e-mail and cell phone, wherever he goes, his articles, editorials, comments and informative tit – bits continue to appear in the official organs of the Kazhagam. Anything valuable news item or information that he goes through in any of the books that he browses through, he disseminates among the multitudinous readers. He is a donor of news and views to his ever – hungry readers. The pen that he wields never dries of its ink. Source it is for a perennial flow of his thoughts and feelings.

Centre of Excellence for Periyar Thought is the branchchild of its Chancellor, Dr.K. Veeramani. Avuncular is his attachment to the centre which he aims to get

it developed as an over – all documentation unit on Thanthai Periyar. Bound to grow it is, with at present a small museum on Periyar and a miniature library. Efforts are on to globalise Periyar through digitalization. Translating Periyar’s writings and speeches into oriental and occidental languages is one of the aims of the Centre of Periyar Thoughts at Periyar Maniammai University. Four researchers have obtained their doctorates through the Centre. A Think – Tank is being formed under the aegis of the Centre. The Chancellor continues to pay his personal attention towards the progress of the centre.

His autobiography is not merely his life-history. It is also a chronicle of the birth and growth of Dravidar Kazhagam. Neither it is farfetched nor hypothetical to say that Dr.Veeramani is a synonym for the Kazhagam and vice versa. As on date, no one excepting himself could authentically speak on Thanthai Periyar and on the development of the Kazhagam in all its ups and downs.

Thanthai Periyar’s meticulous choice of his disciple Veeramani to be the Head of the Kazhagam has paid ample dividends. Just an average socio – political organisation when he undertook the Kazhagam but as on date, four decades after the demise of Periyar, its impact in Andhra, Karnataka, U.P and Delhi is tremendous. No less in SE Asian countries and in the USA. Credit goes to Dr.Veeramani in developing the organization by leaps and bounds. But to see its phenomenal growth, this dynamic leader had to pay a heavy price on three occasions. Jealousy and die – hard opposition in a personal attack in 1982 near Srivilipputur (Mamsapuram - 20.7.1982), twice in 1985 at North Madras (Royapuram - 11.4.1985, Washermanpet - 27.4.1985), and in 1987 near Salem (Thathagampatti - 28.8.1987), and in 2013 at Viruthachalam (28.7.2013). Notwithstanding such risky episodes, an immunity he has cultivated to be mindful of the lofty principles he has embarked upon. It is the rank and file of the Kazhagam, their fealty and love – genuine that enlivens him to go ahead braving wind and weather. Let me have the pleasure of heartily wishing him a cheerful, happy and healthy long – life. ■



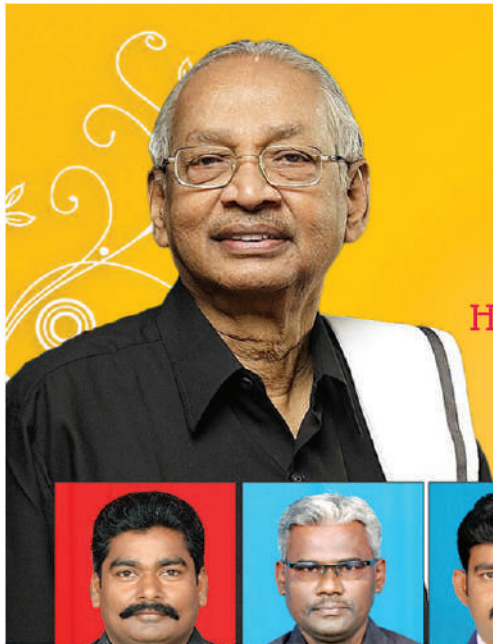
 **December 2**
SELF-RESPECT DAY

Happy Greetings on 83rd Birthday of our Beloved Leader



N. NATARAJAN

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 **December 2**
SELF-RESPECT DAY

Hearty Greetings to our Beloved Leader

Dr. K.VEERAMANI

on 83rd Birthday



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State Vice President,
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Mobile : 94435 10466



Aranga Ravi
Joint Secretary,
Dravidar Kazhagam,
Tirupathur Dist.



R. Palani,
Vice President,
The Rationalists' Forum
Tirupathur Dist.



K. Venkatesan,
Deputy Secretary,
The Rationalists' Forum
Tirupathur Dist.



P. R. Kanagaraj
District Secretary,
The Rationalists' Forum
Thirupathur.



V. Arumugam
Vellore Zonal Youth Wing
Thirupathur.

MANDAL Vs KAMANDAL

G.Karunanidhy General Secretary, AIOBC Federation, Chennai

In the recent Assembly Election of Bihar, people have given a clear mandate decisively and effectively. There is a message and lesson to the people, the government and the political parties.

Just twenty five years ago, on 7th August 1990, then Prime Minister V.P.Singh announced the historic decision to implement one of the recommendations of Mandal Commission, a constitutional body formed by the Government of India. It was to provide 27 per cent reservation to the backward class citizens of India in the jobs of the Central Government. As V.P.Singh said, it is the realization of the dreams of Dr.Ambedkar, Periyar and Lohia.

But the challengers and status quaits do not welcome the decision. They raised a counter action. L.K.Advani, the leader of BJP announced the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya and started *Rath Yatra* on 25th September 1990 to mobilize people. It had fuelled communal tension in the North of India and the *rath yatra* was halted by Lalu Prasad, then Chief Minister of Bihar on 23rd October 1990.

It was RSS-BJP combined game to raise the communal pitch to counter the social justice. To halt the rights of majority deprived sections, these fundamentalists took the Ram issue. To counter Mandal, they brought Kamandal.

Lalu Prasad with his political acumen, nailed them in Bihar. But the fundamentalist forces brought the V.P.Singh government down and the year 1992 saw the demolition of Babri Masjid that led to bloodshed of minorities in various parts of the country. The horror continues even today in different forms and dimensions.

When the entire country was fuming, fretting and boiling on communal tension in the aftermath of Mandal reservation initiated by V.P.Singh and





Just twenty five years ago, on 7th August 1990, then Prime Minister V.P.Singh announced the historic decision to implement one of the recommendations of Mandal Commission, a constitutional body formed by the Government of India. It was to provide 27 per cent reservation to the backward class citizens of India in the jobs of the Central Government. As V.P.Singh said, it is the realization of the dreams of Dr.Ambedkar, Periyar and Lohia.

the Kamandal reaction of L.K.Advani and their parivar, it was in Tamil Nadu that a jubilant welcome was given to V.P.Singh for implementing 27 per cent reservation to OBCs in the jobs of Central Government.

The reception was arranged and organized by our revered leader Dr.K.Veeramani on behalf of Dravidar Kazhagam. V.P.Singh was taken a tour across Tamil Nadu that energized him till his last breath. The rest is history.

The same fundamentalist forces thought that they can prevent the onward march of the deprived sections of the country thro' social justice, not only failed but had to bite the bitter capsule themselves, proclaiming in Bihar that they had already installed a OBC man as Prime Minister and they will project a OBC member as Chief Minister of Bihar.

In 1990, the slogan of Mandal Vs Kamandal coined by our leader Dr.K.Veeramani reverberated in Tamil Nadu and put the agenda of social justice and secularism in the forefront of Indian politics.

Now during the year of 2015, exactly after 25 years of implementation of Mandal recommendation, the battle of Bihar was again fought on justice against fundamentalism. Thanks to Mohan Bhagwat, head of RSS for exposing their anti-reservation mascot. The issue became the central point of debate in election rallies and Lalu – Nitish combine took the slogan of Mandal Vs Kamandal and reached the people. Thankfully, the people of Bihar responded with thumping majority and affirmed their faith in democracy, secularism and social justice.

As told earlier, the results of Bihar election has a clear message : The real danger the country faces today is that of intolerance and fear of getting killed on voicing one's opinion, challenge against secularism and social justice.

The election result in Bihar has a lesson for us all: The aftermath of 1990 that led to the consolidation of fundamentalist forces had to be checked. As in 1990, the forces may come around with some other tricks and manipulations to halt social justice.

But the path shown from the land of Periyar through our leader Dr.K.Veeramani, that of Mandal Vs Kamandal had to be carried to the people of the entire country so that the forces of intolerance are silenced once and for all. ■



திராவிட இயக்கத்தின்
திருஞானசம்பந்தர் என்று
பேரறிஞர் அண்ணாவால்
புகழப்பட்டவரே!



எனது அன்பு இளவல்
என்று கலைஞரால்
வர்ணிக்கப்பட்டவரே!

உனது வாழ்நாள்
ஒவ்வொன்றும்
பகுத்தறிவின் வளர்ச்சி!

வயதில் பெரியாரை விஞ்சி
நூற்றாண்டு காண வாழ்த்துகிறேன்!

ஆதிமாறன்

காஞ்சி வடக்கு மாவட்ட அமைப்பாளர்,
தி.மு.க. கலை இலக்கிய பகுத்தறிவுப் பேரவை



OPPRESSION AND EQUALITY

Dr. Kanimozhi Ilangovan

Psychiatrist, Princeton, USA

I am a psychiatrist at Princeton and see many students as well as individuals from the community. I see my work as not only medicating their psychiatric conditions, but also as helping them in making peace, accepting and loving themselves and the world in which they live, while continuing to work for change. This quote by Carl Rogers expresses the essence of what we do, “*The curious paradox is that when I accept myself exactly as I am, then I can change.*”

As a psychiatrist, I occasionally face opportunities for healing for both the patient and myself. This poem began brewing in me after I met with a child patient who was suspended for telling Indian kids that God made them out of shit.

When I heard about what he had done, I kind of tuned out, as part of me was dealing with the trauma of what he said and did. I remembered the young boys who had done that to me as a child and realized here I am treating someone like the kids who had hurt me. I gathered information and formulated and expressed a treatment plan, but I was not fully present. A part of me was dealing with myself and the feelings his story evoked in me.

When I need help processing something, I often turn to writing and through my poem, I realized I was getting a chance to heal my bullies or to heal the wound that wounded me. I would like to share this poem with you:

*I was the only brown face in a sea of white ones
And acutely aware of it
When we had to draw pictures of our family*





People labeled untouchables still do this work in India. They are forced to under threats of violence, eviction and withheld wages if they attempt to leave the trade. There is still caste prejudice, and my family was in the middle, not the highest, and not the lowest either, so we were both oppressors and oppressed against.

*I would use a peach or light tan crayon
Afraid to highlight my difference
if I used my real color
I remember being proud of my brother
When I saw he used a dark brown crayon
to draw our family
Glad that he didn't share my shame
Sometimes boys would tease me
about being the color of poo
And I would have to answer quickly
at least I'm not bird poo like you
or else expose myself as weak, vulnerable prey
Feign toughness and impassivity
when shame bled bright under my skin
I heard whispers of nigger in the library
and felt fear crawl under my skin
I pretended that I did not hear
while adrenaline shot through my body
Fury, fear and shame became my companions
and I was resigned to my fate
My parents decided to transfer me to a private
school
It did not even occur to me as a possibility
that I could ever leave.
This private school was diverse
I was one among many colored faces
Being Indian was seen as a good quality
and it was assumed that most likely I was smart
For the first time, guys had crushes on me
and I enjoyed the color of my skin
my difference
my heritage
I let go of the adrenaline
fear
shame
fury
And felt free to be
From then on, I saw that I could choose my*

*circumstances
And I chose diverse places to be
And now I'm a psychiatrist
And my patient has received a suspension
For telling Indian kids
That God made them out of shit
What should I tell him?*

My patient came back after another suspension for cursing in class. We talked about the incident and his feelings of anger. We talked about his bullying. I told him that I often see kids who have problems with bullying other kids and that none of them are happy. They are always angry or sad about something. This seemed to resonate with him. I mentioned that many bullies want attention and will settle for any kind of attention, whether it's good or bad. He agreed. We talked about some of the things he was angry and sad about. He mentioned not knowing where his biological mother is, feeling his half brothers are favored over him, and feeling that no one likes him wherever he goes.

I expressed sympathy for the issues he mentioned and told him that after our last session, he had inspired me to write a poem. He looked really surprised and happy. I asked him if he wanted to hear it. He said 'yes'. I started reading it to him, and he was playing with the mancala board next to him. I told him that if he wanted to hear it, he had to stop playing with it and look at me. He put his hands in lap and looked at me with full focus.

I read it to him and he looked absorbed, at certain points embarrassed and uncomfortable, and he smiled with anticipation when I said and "Now I'm a psychiatrist" and laughed happily when I read "And my patient has received a suspension For telling Indian kids That God made them out of shit



I do not forget the people whose backs my family and I have stood upon. And I do not forget the people who stand on the backs of my family and me. I see the imperfection and inequality in this world and strive to do my part to help, knowing that there will be always more to do. I know that I carry the guilt of oppression and prejudice and I am trying to make my small contributions to the world with love.

What should I tell him?"

I smiled at him after reading it, and asked him

"What did you think about it?"

"It's a really good poem."

"How do you think I felt when the boys were teasing me?"

"You felt like dirt."

"Yes, that's a good way to put it. I felt ashamed, angry, sad. Is that how you want to make people feel?"

"No."

He talked about the ways people in his life make him feel like dirt.

We talked about how you get the type of energy, you put out. That if you put out anger and bitterness, that's what you get back. That if you put out love and kindness, that's what you get back.

"What kind of energy do you want to receive?"

"Love and kindness."

"What kind of energy would you have to put out?"

"Love and kindness."

He told me doesn't feel able to do that though, because when he tries to be good at home, his family always doubts his motives, and ask him what he's trying to get. At school, he thinks the kids he has bullied will never forgive him and he feels he has been labeled as a bad kid.

He feels that it is hopeless to change. He talked more in depth about his anger and sadness regarding his relationships.

I invited his stepmom into my office and asked him to step out. I explained his issues to her, gave her some advice on how to handle his disruptive behavior, let her know again that he really needs to be in therapy, talked to her about supporting his positive behavior and not to question his motives, and asked the family to support the expression of love and kindness by having a nightly ritual at dinner where everyone goes around and says one nice thing about everyone at the table (but it has to be a different thing each night). She agreed.

I invited him back in with his stepmom present and I told him that his stepmom and I had spoken and when I mentioned the nightly dinnertime ritual, he smiled a big smile. When I said that if anyone asks him what he's trying to get, to let them know it hurts his feelings and that he needs their support in changing



OPPRESSION AND EQUALITY

his behavior. He smiled widely and looked at his stepmom, who looked somewhat uncomfortable. He left the office more jauntily than usual. We'll see what happens next, but it was a privilege to have this opportunity to extend understanding and compassion, and witness empathy awoken in his young heart and in mine.

I knew I was taking a risk by making this intervention of reading him my poem, and that it could go well or poorly. I didn't want to shut him down. I wanted him to be able to tell me what he needed to tell me. But I thought perhaps it would be useful for him to see and experience what he is doing to his victims. It fortunately worked to open things up versus shutting things down. It was a risk that paid off, and hopefully he could see and feel my authenticity and vulnerability and that encouraged him in turn to be authentic and vulnerable.

I grew up with an awareness of privilege on both ends. In America, I was in the one down position because I was brown. In India, I was in the one up position because I was relatively wealthy and from America. It was confusing and difficult for me to see children who looked just like me living in abject poverty, some even with no clothes, just a string around their waist. Why did I live in such great fortune? Why not them? I could not accept any explanations for this disparity and felt my privilege was unearned. And I still do. And however low on the totem pole I am here, I know that I am high on the totem pole in India, and so I still feel fortunate and guilty.

In India, there has been a caste system for centuries. When my parents grew up, lower caste people had to walk on a different side of the street than upper caste people, and could not enter certain temples, were discriminated against in jobs, education, and housing. Periyar and Veeramani two social reformers my parents knew personally did much to fight against caste and gender discrimination and things have somewhat improved for my generation, but the caste system is still present in India today. A recent study by the India Human Development Survey conducted by

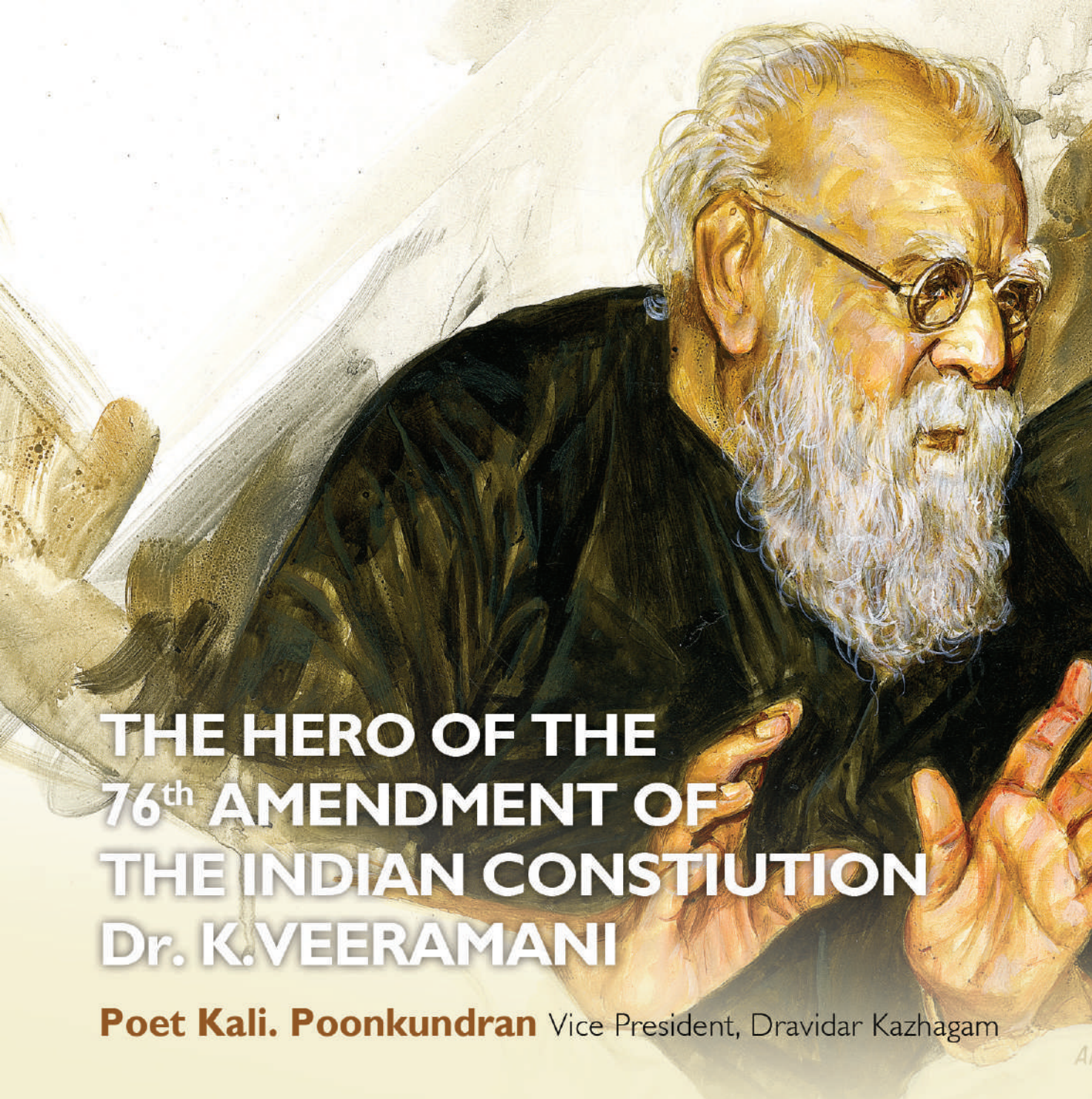
the National Council of Applied Economic Research showed that 40-50 per cent of Indians still practice untouchability. I remember being shocked that my grandmother started screaming when I gave a spoon of macaroni to a lower caste woman and she said we had to wash the spoon. This from my grandmother whom I loved, adored, and respected.

My mother told me when she was a child they had outhouses and a man would come to clear all the human waste from the outhouses in the community. He was an untouchable. He haunted my mind as a child. I would try to imagine him and what he was like, what he thought and felt about his life. I still do. People labeled untouchables still do this work in India. They are forced to under threats of violence, eviction and withheld wages if they attempt to leave the trade. There is still caste prejudice, and my family was in the middle, not the highest, and not the lowest either, so we were both oppressors and oppressed against.

So I do not feel guiltless when it comes to privilege. I carry my privilege on my shoulders like a weighted cloak since I was a child, acutely aware of my good fortune, acutely aware that it is due to the sacrifice and suffering of many people that I am where I am in life.

I am aware that when I do the work I do, I am helping people, but I am also aware that I am helping a very privileged segment of society. I tried working in more impoverished neighborhoods and I became depressed. So I decided to work hard and do good somewhere I could work sustainably without getting depressed and burnt out and I found that for myself here in Princeton.

I do not forget the people whose backs my family and I have stood upon. And I do not forget the people who stand on the backs of my family and me. I see the imperfection and inequality in this world and strive to do my part to help, knowing that there will be always more to do. I know that I carry the guilt of oppression and prejudice and I am trying to make my small contributions to the world with love. ■



THE HERO OF THE 76th AMENDMENT OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION Dr. K. VEERAMANI

Poet Kali. Poonkundran Vice President, Dravidar Kazhagam

Social Justice is the very core of the Dravidian Movement. For this reason, Periyar left the Congress Party; he supported the Justice Party; and he supported Mr. Kamaraj. The Reservation Policy which was in practice in the Justice Party rule in Tamil Nadu faced a serious threat by the Brahmins but this brought out the lion in Periyar and he roared and fought back the Reservation through the first Amendment in the Indian Constitution on 18.6.1951. In this way Tamil Nadu became the beacon for all the

other States in India for Social Justice. Dr. K. Veeramani a university student at this time, participated in the agitation for this purpose.

After the demise of Periyar an unexpected trouble brewed from within against the very base of the Dravidian policy. Mr. M.G. Ramachandran the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu introduced a law that the children of those above Rs. 9000 income per year are not eligible for reservation benefits in education and employment even if they belonged to the



RASU ARTS



backward communities through the Government Rule No. 1156 dated 2.7.1979. As soon as this news appeared in Print media, Dr. Veeramani rose up against it like a thunder. On 03.7.1979 he published a report creating awareness among the public the dangerous and wicked intention of the rule and the consequent downfall of the backward classes in the field of education and the future job opportunities. On 04.7.1979 he gathered all the caste leaders in Periyar Thidal, highlighting the danger caused for Social Justice. In Chennai and Salem conferences were conducted by the Dravidar Kazhagam for all the parties with the same ideologies. The Congress, the D.M.K., the Janata Dal, the Indian



Asiriyar Dr.K.Veeramani
with his wife, Amma Mohana



as long as the First Amendment keeps glorifying the name of Periyar, the 76th Amendment will keep glorifying the name of Dr. K.Veeramai. The highlight of this fete is it was achieved in the hands of three Brahmins Ms. Jayalalitha, Mr. NarasimmaRao and M. Shankar Dayal Sharma.!

Muslim League, the C.P.I. and the other caste parties joined in the protest and made a big impact. They even threatened to send the ashes of the burnt copies of the order. They gave one month's time for the Government to rectify the injustice. They also warned that the wrath of the people would reflect in the ensuing Parliament Elections. True to the warning the AIADMK faced a humiliating defeat losing in thirty seven Constituencies. M.G.R. then realized his wrong move and convened an all party meeting on 21.11.1980. Dr.Veeramani's suggestions were unanimously accepted and the Rule of the Income ceiling for reservation was withdrawn. At the end of the Meeting, M.G.R. admitted that the reason for the defeat were both the D.K. and Dr. K.Veeramani. M.G.R. increased the Reservation from 31 per cent to 50 per cent.

With this great victory achieved from the podium of a non-political platform, Dr K.Veeramani did not make much noise but arranged for meetings in Tamil Nadu to thank M.G.R. for this historic contribution. Singapore 'Tamil Murasu' distinctly proclaimed, "but for the timely efforts of Dr.K.Veeramani the policy of Social Justice would have been buried in a marble cemetery"

SAFETY MEASURES FOR 69 PER CENT RESERVATION

Because of the new Rule by M.G.R., Reservation in Tamil Nadu rose to a new high in the entire country to 69 per cent; 50 per cent for the Backward Classes: 18 per cent for the S.C. and 1 per cent for the S.T.s. In the Parliament Mr.V.P.Singh the then Prime Minister, introduced the recommendations of the Mandal Commission as laws on 7-8-1990. A

THE HERO OF THE 76th AMENDMENT OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION Dr. K.VEERAMANI

case was filed against this in the Supreme Court. There a restriction was imposed unnecessarily on this saying while 27 per cent for the B.C.s is O.K. on 16-11-1992, but the overall reservation put together should not exceed 50 per cent which is not found anywhere in the Constitution. The whole Country was in a state of shock. Dr. K.Veeramani appeared on the scene at this juncture as the saviour of Social Justice. He orally clarified that if the State Assembly introduced a law as per 31C of the Indian Constitution and got it approved by the Parliament and included it in the 9th Schedule, the Supreme Court itself cannot alter it. He also prepared a legal draft to this effect and presented it to the Government. On the request of Dr.K.Veeramani, Ms. Jayalalitha the then C.M. convened an all party meeting and got their approval. Only after this, a resolution was passed in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, the approval of the Parliament was obtained and also of the President. This later became the 76th Amendment on 25.8.1994. No doubt as long as the First Amendment keeps glorifying the name of Periyar, the 76th Amendment will keep glorifying the name of Dr. K.Veeramai. The highlight of this fete is it was achieved in the hands of three Brahmins Ms. Jayalalitha, Mr. Narasimma Rao and M. Shankar Dayal Sharma! The President of India who signed this said, “*Although the quota system might have taken away the posts from the Brahmins, no one can take away the brahmin’s brain*” Such were some of the mean fanatics who occupied the highest office in India! This achievement is one of the greatest contributions to the Tamils.

RECCOMENDATIONS OF THE MANDAL COMMISSION

As per the 340 Section of the Indian Constitution, a Commission was to be created for the welfare of the Backward Classes and Committee was formed to create this Commission by Jawaharlal Nehru on 29-1-1953 under the presidentship of Kaka

Kalelkar which submitted its report on 30-3-1955. But with a clever manipulation it was kept in cold storage for ever. The Second Commission was appointed with the Presidentship of Mr. Bineswari Prasad Mandal the former C.M. of Bihar on 20.12.1978. On 31.12.1980 this Commission submitted its report to the President Mr. Sanjeeva Reddy. Prior to this, a grand reception was accorded to the Committee on 30.6.1979 in the Periyar Thidal, Chennai. In his reply Mr. B.P.Mandal made it extremely clear saying that they would submit the report but the enforcement would solely depend on the efforts of the Dravidar Kazhagam of the birth place of Periyar and the dynamic capabilities of Dr. K.Veeramani. He replied that we shall not allow this report to sleep like the report of Kalelkar nor shall we sleep until we get this achieved. Later the fear of Mr. Mandal came true. This was not tabled on the Parliament. The Dravidar Kazhagam had to agitate even to do this convening conferences. Strong resolutions were made to implement the Mandal Commission recommendations. Altogether, 42 conferences and 16 agitations were conducted from 1.10.1986 to 7.10.1986 when more than 50,000 were arrested. On 9.8.1984 an agitation was held in front of the Residence of Ms. Indira Gandhi in the Boat Club. Dr.Veeramani made his characteristic remark that if she ignored the spirit of the people gathered in the Boat Club, the Vote Club would ignore her later. He was arrested along with the leaders and the D.K. cadres.

The untiring efforts of Dr.Veeramani did not go in vain. After the fall of the Indira Gandhi regime, Mr.V.P.Singh came to power and enforced the 27 per cent reservation to the relief of everyone concerned on 7.8.1990 and proclaimed that the dreams of Periyar, Ambedkar and Ram Manohar Lohia came to be realized. The B.J.P. that was extending an outside support to the Government withdrew its support and consequently the V.P. Singh government fell. The enemies of reservation



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all joined together and moved the Supreme Court against it. Immediately there were several agitations conducted under the leadership of Dr.Veeramani; even a threat was proclaimed that the effigy of the Supreme Court Judge would be burnt on 1.9.1993. If the 27 per cent Reservation in the Central Govt. jobs and education is available, the main source for it is Dr.Veeramani. This facility is available for millions of persons in India today through out the country.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

The Brahmin conspiracy to somehow cut the roots of reservation continued in various devious methods. One of their targets became the Entrance Examinations. This poisonous snake was introduced once again by M.G.R. who was openly hailed as the saviour of the upper castes for this act, on 30.5.1984. After several kinds of agitations and protests by the D.K. and its Students' Wings Dr.Veeramani pointed out that if an Expert's Committee recommended, the Government would accept it. But this suggestion was accepted only when Dr. M.Karunanidhi became the C.M. of Tamil Nadu. The order against the Entrance Examination was passed on 24.5.2006. In spite of an appeal in the Supreme Court the cancellation of the Entrance Examination was upheld. Now the Central Government is trying to introduce All India Entrance Examination for Medical College admissions. In the District headquarters, the D.K. has conducted several agitations against this move. Both Dr.M.Karunanidhi and Dr. Jayalalitha have opposed it. Following list of the 2010 Medical College of Tamil Nadu is a clear proof for the benefit received by the Backward Classes: -

| | |
|--|--------------|
| No. of seats for open competition | : 460 |
| The backward classes | : 300 |
| Scheduled Castes | : 18 |
| Muslims | : 16 |
| Higher castes | : 54 |
| Those who obtained 200/ 200 | : 8 |
| Of these , the B.C. | : 7 |
| M.B.C. | : 1 |

Higher Caste : 0

This is the advantage received by the order of Dr.M.Karunanidhi which the social bigots are now trying to topple.

RESERVATION IN PRIVATE ENTERPRISES

The Dravidar Kazhagam is continuing its agitations for the reservation also in the Private Sectors.

Of the total number of Directors in the Private Sectors

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| the Forward Communities are | 8387- 92.8 % |
| The Brahmins among them are | 4037- 44.6% |
| The Vysyas | 4167- 46% |
| The Kshatriyas | 46 - 0.05% |
| Other B.C.s | 137 - 15% |
| The B.C.s | 346 - 03.8% |
| The SCs & STs | 319 - 3.5% |

Reservation in the Private Sector is the major future plan of the D.K. We are also fighting for the right representation in the appointment of judges of all the courts in India. In this context what Mr. V.P.Singh the Protector of Social Justice said in Tiruchy on 23.12.1992 is worthwhile to recollect, "Whenever I see I get the feelings of Social Justice" Periyar's dictum was not to bother about the next election but to bother about the next generation and we cannot find anyone in the field of public life as sincere and active as Dr.Veeramani in carrying out this dictum .

The principles of the Dravidar Kazhagam on Social Justice are shining throughout India mainly because of the concerted efforts of Party under the dynamic leadership of Dr.Veeramani. The invitation extended by Mr. Mandal the former C.M. of Bihar to the Dravidar Kazhagam to come to Bihar to preach Periyar's principles has been made possible to day as Periyar has entered Bihar in a very meaningful way. If there is one person standing out in the national scene to fight for and preserve the rights of the under privileged and to instantly voice their grievances, the one only person is Dr. K.VEERAMANI and the DRAVIDAR KAZHAGAM which is his being and consciousness.

Translated by Prof. **S.F.N.Chelliah**



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DAY**



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Long Live Asiriyar!

December 2
**SELF-RESPECT
DAY**



Vadaseri V. Ilangovan

Vice President

The Rationalists' Forum, Tamil Nadu

CHANGE THE SOCIAL (DIS)ORDER

S.Arivukkarasu Presidium Chairman, Dravidar Kazhagam

When our Constitution Assembly met on 26.11.1949, it gave constitution to secure all the citizens of India, Social Justice besides economic and political justices. It also promised liberty, equality and fraternity shall prevail in the country.

It means in disguise that social injustice prevailed in this land not to speak of equality and fraternity. The citizen of Bharat (it is one of the names of this country as per the same Constitution) were divided into four Varnas and more than 6000 (castes) jatis. It is said that god created the four Varnas and Hindu shastras gave birth to thousand of castes.

A vast majority of population were subject to the tyranny of minority quite against the nature prevail in the world. Yes, 3 per cent of Brahmins monopolised all the spheres of power, authority and employment by enjoying more than lion's share. This was described as "the brahmin's authority is inherent in himself and it remains infact, no matter that his condition in life may be rich or poor, unfortunate or prosperous, he always goes on the principle engrained in him that he is the most noble, the most excellent and the most perfect of all beings, that all the rest of mankind are infinitively beneath him and that there is nothing in the world so sublime, or so admirable as his customs and practices by Abbe J.A Dubois, the French missionary. The Hindu social set up, the Brahmins virtually sat in dominant positions by their self written Veda, shastras, puranas and ithihasas.

To quote a few to substantiate this, the brahmins enjoyed more than half





The Mandal Commission recommended 27 per cent of jobs to be reserved for BCs and it was accepted by the Union Government headed by V.P.Singh..... The report of the commission was not placed before the Parliament for years together. Dr.K.Veeramani conducted 46 conferences on all the states and organised 16 agitations for the release. But for his tireless efforts, the non brahmins got reservation of 27 per cent in educational institutions

of the places in public services, whereas the 86 per cent of non-brahmins occupied only 17 per cent of public services. Upto the year 1920, all the members of Madras Legislative Council were brahmins only and no non-brahmin members. In public service, the brahmins closed every door to the non brahmins but filled up every vacancy with their kith and kin. For example one senior Tahsildar (D.Krishna Rao) of Cuddappa district (now in Andhra) managed to bring 108 of his close relatives in one department. From the Vembakkam Ayyangar family of Chengalpattu District, one was posted as police head at Madras and he managed to swallow the post of Legislative Council member in 1861. He was the first Indian to be nominated to that position. There were two dewans of native states from this same family. It is needless to say that this family is that of Vembakkam Bashyam Ayyangar. All the members of Madras Provincial Congress Committee were brahmins in 1915 with exception to A.P.Patro of Berhampur (Odisha).

The non-brahmins were not allowed to enter into the hotels run by brahmins to eat. They have to take away meals to their places. Such was the snobbish behaviors of brahmins that created a feeling of contempt among the non brahmins. The dichotomy between brahmin and non brahmin was the logical outcome of the self respect gained by the leaders of non brahmins in 1910s. The Dravidian Hostel established by Dr.C.Natesan and Dravidian Association formed in 1910 made organised efforts to combat the brahmin dominance. The hostile relations between the brahmin and non brahmin leaders developed rapidly and reached its apogee in 1916. On 20th day of November 1916, the non brahmin leaders met at Victoria Public

Hall at Madras and declared a manifesto, known as *Dravidian Manifesto*. It was a declarative modern form of announcing a political intent which was clearly to mobilise non brahmin identity. This declaration concluded with an appeal to the non brahmins “to do everything possible to ensure the general development of their community and to quit their attitude of silence and inaction and definitely assess and press their claims as against the virtual domination of the brahmin caste.”

Sir Pitty Theagarayar, as secretary of the Association released the historic declaration. Dr.T.M.Nair who was very famous in the Congress Party left that brahminical party and joined South Indian Liberal Federation. Dr.Nair declared that “*I will not be a party to leave the large mass of my countrymen behind and join a flying column in advance and march on progress*”. He was the prolific editor of party organ “*JUSTICE*” and the party was called after this organ as the Justice Party.

The Congress Party pretended to be for the uplift of non-brahmins, started Madras Presidency Association for which Kesava Pillai was President and (Periyar)E.V.Ramasami was Vice President. It was started to counterbalance the growing strength of the Justice Party. In a way it reflected intra congress elite non brahmin - brahmin cleavage as pointed out by M.R.Barnet in his book “*The Politics of Cultural Nationalism in South India*”.

Dr.Nair made a forceful plea before Montagu Commission in December 1917 for Communal Representation for the non-brahmins in legislative and in public service. Montagu Commission returned to London without making any decision. So, the Justice Party Conference held on 31.03.1918



A brahmin lawyer who was one among the writers of Indian Constitution (Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar) filed a case challenging the communal G.O. of 1928 as ultravires the Constitution. He filed a case on a false affidavit that a brahmin applicant was denied admission as per the G.O. But the fact was that the litigant has not all applied for admission. As this fact was not brought to the notice of Court by the Government Advocate General who was a brahmin, (V.K.Thiruvengkatachari), the High Court of Madras ordered that the said G.O. is not valid under the Indian Constitution.

at Thanjavur decided to send a delegation under the leadership of Dr.Nair to fight for the cause. According by he reached England in June 1918 and a gag order was served on him to abstain from any political activities.The issue was taken to House of Lords and the gagging order was withdrawn. He addressed a group of parliamentarians of England belonging to both House of Lords and Commons. The report of Montagu Chelmsford was not favourable to non brahmins.After reviews by few more committees, last came Meston Award which gave 28 seats to non brahmins. It was the first triumph of the non brahmins and it was a beginning. (Periyar) E.V.Ramasami in Madras Presidency Association and Congress gave strong pressure to strive for the cause of non brahmins. Having been deceived by Congress brahmins and failed in his attempts to pass a resolution by Congress Party in forever of Communal representation to non-brahmins or at least 50 per cent reservations to them, EVR quitted Congress and started his

own movement under the name and style as Self-Respect Movement as a non political movement on 23.11.1925 at Kancheepuram. He said that this movement will oppose all forms of domination. He explained that the Congress Party is said to be fighting the British, the Justice Party fights against the political domination of brahmins, the Adi Dravida Party fights against the dominance of caste Hindus, and the Workers' Party fights against the domination of capitalists. But the Self-Respect Movement opposes all kinds of domination.As long as different forms of dominations persist in the fields of society, religion, economy and politics, this movement would stay.As such its opponents are many viz., brahmins, the upper castes, the rich, the religions, etc.,

Prior to formation of Self-Respect Movement, there was first general elections in the country as per Mont-ford Reforms in the year 1920.The Justice Party won tremendous victory in the election captioned 63 out of 98 seats. Including 18





CHANGE THE SOCIAL (DIS)ORDER

nominated members, the total strength was 81 in a house of 98. The first non brahmin ministry in Madras Province was headed by an advocate from Cuddalore and assumed office on 15.09.1921. It passed the first communal G.O. on 16.09.1921 and directed the principles stipulated under Board's Standing Order 128(2) for the distribution of appointments among all the community in the area. The officials who were mostly brahmins did not heed to this properly. As such another G.O. was issued on 15.08.1922. This order was also made to be on paper and not put to practice. Finally the third order was passed in the year 1928 adopting the principle of communal rotation in public service. Thanks to the tireless efforts taken by S.Muthiah Mudaliar of Sirkazhi.

The non brahmins enjoyed communal representation in public service and educational opportunities upto 1950 the year in which India became a Republic and a new Constitution was enforced. A brahmin lawyer who was one among the writers of Indian Constitution (Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar) filed a case challenging the communal G.O. of 1928 as ultravires the Constitution. He filed a case on a false affidavit that a brahmin applicant was denied admission as per the G.O. But the fact was that the litigant has not all applied for admission. As this fact was not brought to the notice of Court by the Government Advocate General who was a brahmin, (V.K.Thiruvengkatachari), the High Court of Madras ordered that the said G.O. is not valid under the Indian Constitution. By the fraudulent conduct of the case, the channels of social justice were annulled. One should recollect the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, "Somehow we have forward this magnificent constitution that we have formed was later kidnapped and pulverised by the lawyers.

Periyar virtually attacked the verdict and asked the Indian Government to amend the constitution to suit the needs of the non brahmin and to ensure social justice. He gave a clarion call to the students to boycott schools and colleges for a day on

14.08.1951. The agitations carried out by him by arranging rallies evoked tremendous support from the public.

The Indian Government formed no alternative but to amend the Constitution by introducing a near Art 15(4) to extend social justice to non brahmins in the sphere of education. Such was the famous history of non brahmins to get social justice with the formidable efforts taken by Justice Party and its later period leader Periyar. The Indian Constitution adopted on 29.11.1949 gave reservation to backward classes (non - brahmins) by Art 16(4) but there was no reservation in the sphere of education. Such cunning provision is the handiwork from brahmin members of the drafting committee though Dr.B.R.Ambedkar was the chairman.

As per this amended provision, the non brahmins newly christened as backward classes enjoyed (only 25 per cent plus 15 per cent of depressed classes) totally 40 per cent and the rest was enjoyed by brahmins in the guise of open competition. 40 per cent is very meagre considering the population of 97 per cent. We are compelled to compare the privilege the non brahmins enjoyed from 1928 (i.e.) 84 per cent. The brahmins enjoyed only 16 per cent though they were 3 per cent in population. This might have happened due to the fact that "the Constitution was a wonderful temple we built for the gods, but before they could be installed the devils have taken possession." (as said by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar in 1955).

Periyar was of the view that the British also followed Manu Darma to a considerable degree. He cited the opposition by brahmins nationalists to social reforms such as Devadasi Abolition Act, the Child Marriages Restraint Act, the Hindu Religious Endowment Act and in order to continue British rule for ever, they were reluctant to condemn the brahmins on these anti social efforts. So, it is pertinent to note that Periyar was keenly interested in social justice and fought for it tooth and nail and went on to the extent of criticising British Raj.



Rettaimalai Srinivasan



Muthaiah Mudaliar



Pattukottai Azhagiri



W.P.A.Soundarapandian



Puratchi Kavingar



Sir.A.T.Panneer Selvam



CHANGE THE SOCIAL (DIS)ORDER

There was no reservation - communal representation - social justice in the Union Government since no such provision found place in Indian Constitution. But Art 340 of the same statute book provides the appointment of commission to identify backward classes and to suggest ways and means for their uplift. The Mandal Commission recommended 27 per cent of jobs to be reserved for BCs and it was accepted by the Union Government headed by V.P.Singh. The appointment of the Commission was due to the efforts of Dr.K.Veeramani. The report of the Commission was not placed before the Parliament for years together. Dr.K.Veeramani conducted 46 conferences on all the states and organised 16 agitations for the release. But for his tireless efforts, the backward classes got reservation of 27 per cent. These achievements were possible by a movement which has no representation in either State Legislative of Parliament. On the tract laid out by Periyar, his trusted follower Dr.K.Veeramani created public opinion and the law followed it.

Periyar fought for social justice to make the Dravidian Society equal to other advanced races of the world in all aspects of educational, cultural, industrial spheres including gender equality. We have to go too far to attain Periyar's goals in full. He has left Dravidar Kazhagam as a well knit and powerful organisation and an able leader to strive hard for the achievement of social justice to one and all. We have make Indian Constitution to assure all opportunities to all castes proportionate to their strength. We may need a constitution afresh like Thomas Jaffereson believed that unless every generation had the right to create a new constitution for itself, the earth would belong to the dead and not the living. We require communal representation in private sector enterprises, in higher judiciary, in scientific and research organisations and in all places where reservation is not available for the bulk of backward people.

Let us march forward! ■

Periyar propagated for the emancipation of women and urged to allot equal share in properties to daughters like that of sons. This was accepted legally in 1989 after 60 years of the passing resolution in the conference of Self Respect Movement. The putative conceit of brahminic shastras and practices in creating women's subjugation were also exposed by him. In a nutshell, Periyar remarked that Hinduism is a fake fortress built upon the false principle of granting heaven to a Hindu after death. We may remember the words of Ambedkar: *"To leave inequality between class and class, between sex and sex which is the soul of Hindu society and to go on passing legislation relating to economic problems is to make a farce of own Constitution and to build a palace on dung heap."*

Periyar condemned both Poonool and Manu nool because they are enemies of social justice.

Now the reservation rose up to 69 per cent and the relevant legislation has been included in IX Schedule of the Indian Constitution which provides protection from the judicial review! This special arrangement was advised through a model bill from Periyar Thidal under the guidance of Dr.K.Veeramani, the ardent follower of Periyar philosophy. He is committed very much for the transformation of the ideology of Periyar into reality.



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VISITING THE ROOTS OF CENTURION – DRAVIDIAN MOVEMENT

V.Anburaj General Secretary, Dravidar Kazhagam

Centurion – Dravidian Movement is significant with its evolutionary process starting with the formation of Dravidian Association (1912), South Indian Liberal Federation, later identified as Justice Party (1916), Self-Respect Movement (1925), Dravidar Kazhagam (1944), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (1949). The organizational transformation is not a strict departing from one to another but an overlapping of one with the others due to the binding noble principles for the liberation of the people who were enslaved socially for so many centuries. This evolutionary and service rendering is devoid of any violence mode and means in accomplishing the ideals. It is through the democratic process on the side of its political offshoots and the sustained propaganda for enlightening the enslaved masses on the side of the non political core stream under the pivotal leadership of Thanthai Periyar for its transformation into a mass movement. The organizational ethics founded by Periyar and the functional approach adopted by him was unique by distancing the direct participation in the political process but possessing firm opinion and propagandist – directive for the political process on who have to be the political rulers of the land. The political offshoots who assumed their role during the one century span of Dravidian Movement made their mighty contributions through the governance of the State for the cause of uplift and progress of the majority toiling masses enslaved in the name of god and religion.

The successful journey for a century and the remarkable progress and development took place on the basis of the democratic and rationalist organizational behaviour and functioning. It was possible due to the selfless sacrifice made by the historic stalwarts of the great social movement. At the time, pivotal constituent of Dravidian Movement i.e. Dravidar Kazhagam started to celebrate the centenary of Justice Party (1916-2015) and the 90th Anniversary of Self-Respect Movement (1925 – 2015), it is nostalgic as well as to equip ourselves ideologically to visit the roots like pioneers of Dravidian Movement.

The Trio founders of Justice Party:

Dr.C.Natesan (1875 - 1937) was a pioneer in facilitating Dravidian Association and the establishment of Dravidian Home in 1912 for the comfortable stay and higher study of Non-Brahmin students in Madras (presently Chennai).



Sir.PittyTheagarayar (1852-1925) was a commercial trader by profession but took active part in public life for the long innings as Council Member of Madras Municipal Corporation. He proposed others when position and power were offered to him by the British Rulers.

Dr.T.M.Nair (1868 -1919) was a medical professional and an atheist who played a crucial role by serving as Council Member of Madras Municipal Corporation. He was instrumental in presenting the miserable social conditions of the majority indigenous masses to the British Rulers and at the same time enlightening the enslaved masses to liberate themselves through his direct participation in public life.

Thanthai Periyar (1879 – 1973) was the pivotal icon of Dravidian Movement and the founder of Self-Respect Movement who is responsible for the crystallisation of humanist Dravidian ideology, which cherished the heritage of earlier pioneers. He shouldered the arduous responsibility of directing the organizational journey into a mass movement with multitudes of discipleship and followership to his legacy and action on it.

Rettaimalai Srinivasan (1859–1945) is affectionately called '*Thatha*' (grandfather). He was the close associate of Mahatma Gandhi during his days in South Africa. He has got the honour of teaching Tamil to a small extent to Mahatma Gandhi during that period. He contributed very much to the significant identity of the socially enslaved masses as 'Dravidians'.

Panagal Raja (1866–1928) was the second Chief Minister of Justice Party regime. He was instrumental for the legislation of many of the reform measures like allowing free access to the drinking water sources to all the communities (including the untouchable brethren) and creation of Hindu Religious Endowment Board that brought the administration of Hindu temples under control from the monopoly of religious cult.

W.P.A.Soundarapandian (1893–1953) served as the President of District Administrative Board and was instrumental for the equal treatment of Adi Dravidars (scheduled castes) to travel as co-passenger in public transport. The licensees of public transport operators who were not ready for such equal treatment in their concern were terminated by him.

R.K.Shanmugam Chettyar (1892–1953) was an expert in economics and financial management. He served as Diwan of Princely State of Cochin. He was the first Union Finance Minister of Independent India in the cabinet led by Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister. He was forceful in patronising the indigenous arts and culture of the land especially 'Tamil Music' and its development in a period wherein alien arts and culture dominated the scenario.

Sir.A.T.Panneerselvam (1888–1940) was the Chief Lieutenant of Periyar; when Periyar was invited to assume the Presidentship of Justice Party in 1939. He served as Home and Finance minister in the state cabinet of Madras Presidency during the British Rule. While he was on the way to London to assume the responsibility as Secretary to Minister of State for India in the British Cabinet, he died in plane crash.

Aringar Anna (1909–1969), endearing form of C.N.Annaduarai who founded Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam(DMK), the political offshoot of the Dravidian Movement, which was elected to the political power of the State in 1967. He proudly claimed the heritage of the Justice Party for the electoral success. He dedicated the DMK Ministry to Thanthai Periyar and proclaimed Periyar as the only leader whom he followed in his life. As the political ruler of the State, he accomplished three vital governance-tasks of historic importance viz. changing the name of Madras Presidency as Tamil Nadu, legalizing the Self- Respect Marriage by making amendment to the Hindu Marriages Act and formulation of two language policy - Tamil and English for its follow up by the academic study of the State.

The visit to the roots of Dravidian Movement is not complete. A complete visit would be an exhaustive one. The services and the contributions of the pioneer leaders of the Dravidian Movement were recalled and recognized on the occasion of the celebration of Centenary of Justice Party and 90th Anniversary of Self-Respect Movement on 20th November 2015 at Periyar Thidal, Chennai.

The descendants of the pioneer leaders of Justice Party and Self-Respect Movement were invited on the occasion of the 100 year and 90 year celebration of the Movement and honored by Dr.K.Veeramani, President, Dravidar Kazhagam. The descendants who were honored are : Dr.Manimegalai Kannan (Ki.Aa.Pe.Viswanatham) Dr.Nirmala Prakash (Rettaimalai Srinivasan), C.Ramanatha Nayagam (C.D.Nayagam), V.Rajasekaran (Muthiah Mudaliar), Dr.P.Thiagarajan (P.T.Rajan), Maga Pandian (Pitty Theagarayar), M.S.V.Apparao (Panagal Raja), Janaki Chakravarthi (Munusamy Naidu), Dr.P.Rajadurai (K.A.Punnaimuthu), Sa.Ganesan, former Mayor of Chennai City, Poet Kavikondal M.Senguttuvan and Self Respectful V.Elangovan whose family has conducted 105 Self Respect marriages so far.

Most of the descendants have not seen their forefathers or even born when they were alive. They felt immense pleasure with the memories their forefathers and felt pride in remaining with the family of Dravidian Movement, cherishing its great historical heritage. ■



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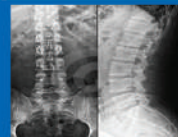
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WHITHER RESERVATION?

G.Olivannan Vice President, The Rationalists' Forum

Other day after a talk show in a popular TV, I was spending time with youngsters who had participated with me in that show; some of them were students and others seemed to be job-seekers. They bombarded me with volley of questions such as 'Aren't we compromising on merit and quality by providing reservation to people who have scored fewer marks?' and 'also, are we not depriving merit students an opportunity which they richly deserve for their accomplishment?'. Also went on to state that 'The ideal way to help the under privileged is to provide them free coaching and additional classes. On one hand, we talk of abolition of castes and on the other we instil in young minds the concept of caste by saying that you belong to this particular caste so you are backward and some others belong to another caste, hence they are classified as forward. One of the persons asked 'won't it be appropriate to wither reservation to strive for casteless society?' Ironically, except one all of them appeared to be backward or most backward castes, the beneficiaries of the affirmative action.



Before proceeding further on this, we have to painfully acknowledge the fact that the oppressive or the dominant castes have cunningly played their cards and the result is people for whom the reservation was intended today make such disparaging comments. To achieve this state of condition, the anti-reservationists have been constantly propagating that the reservation system compromised on the merit and denied opportunity for one section of society. In the beginning only Brahmins were opposing it as it prevented their monopoly in education and government jobs. Over the years, the benefits of reservation percolated to layer after layer in the social order. As it went trickled down to next bottom layer, people who hitherto enjoyed the benefits joined hands with others in their layer and also in the upper layers to criticise the system. This can be explained in a simple example.



WHITHER RESERVATION?

Think you are at a railway station to board the train. The compartment is locked inside. Through the window you find a set of people occupying all the seats. Some of them were sitting; few of them were lying on the seats which are not meant for that. When you shout at them to open the door they refuse to open and retard that you are not competent to travel with them because of your lower birth. This was the situation prevailing in our society in the beginning of the last century. Just three percent of the total population, Brahmin community enjoyed more than two thirds of the key positions. For the non-Brahmin community only trivial jobs were offered. Like a passenger at the platform the non-Brahmin community pleaded, but no doors were open. Only when Justice Party came into power, the doors were forcibly opened because of legislative strictures. Imagine the situation that the train doors have been opened and people boarded the train. People who were all along stretching and lying on the seats were made to sit properly so as to accommodate the new entrants. The seats were shared by everyone. Now at the next station another set of people were waiting to board. Thanks to the reservation they enter in. The passengers inside the compartment when asked to share the seats with people who have just boarded the train, all the passengers including the ones who boarded in the last station were not prepared to give their seats. Like this at every station a new set of people get in and the people who have been occupying the seats already refuses to give up. And now they start criticising the system. The society is also like a train. It should be inclusive and accommodate everyone. What if the waiting passengers were not allowed to board the train and only few garner the seats in the train, the deprived ones would restore to agitation and would stop the train from moving. Isn't it? That is what precisely would happen to the society too. Any progressive and healthy society would provide space for everyone. The concept of equality is applicable only among equals. Would it be fair to ask a person who cannot even walk to compete with a professional runner?

I remember a famous and inspiring story read sometime back received in an email shared by a friend. Though it claims to be a true story, I am not sure about

its authenticity, yet it conveys a powerful message.

A few years ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically disabled or mentally retarded assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the shooting of the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with relish to run the race to the finish and win.

All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry.

They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back ... every one of them. One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes. People who were there are still telling the story.

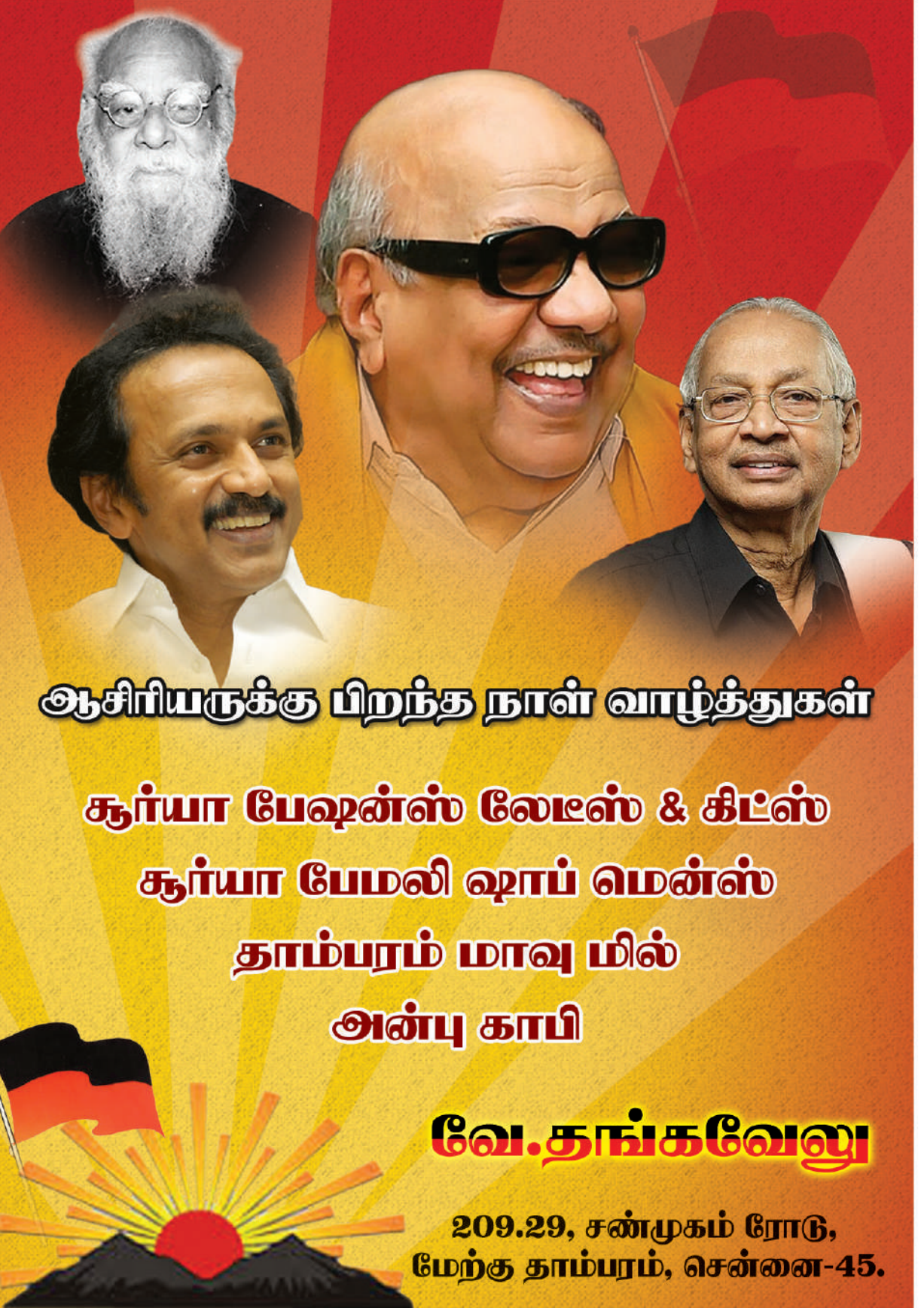
What did they teach to this world by their united action?

Teamwork?, Humanity?, Equality among all?

Successful people help others who are slow in learning so that they are not left far behind. This is really a great message... spread it!

The story simply conveys a very powerful message that in life, winning alone is not important; more than that the compassion and concern for the fellow human being is essential. Apparently it may appear to be true that because of reservation system, people with lesser marks benefit and bring down the quality. *If we look at the cut-off marks for various professional courses admission, the difference between the open competition and other categories were very insignificant; hardly few marks less. What differences these few marks are going to make in terms of the so called merit, nothing.* It is a myth and the upper caste people were wilfully propagating this.

But we should understand that reservation is not something given to them out of pity. It is their fundamental right. Every species in this world has a right to live and the world is meant for everyone. These are some of the little sacrifices we make to make our society egalitarian and a better place to live. ■



ஆசிரியருக்கு பிறந்த நாள் வாழ்த்துகள்

சூர்யா பேஷன்ஸ் லேடர்ஸ் & கிட்ஸ்

சூர்யா பேமலி ஷாப் மென்ஸ்

தாம்பரம் மாவு மில்

அன்பு காபி

வே.தங்கவேலு

**209.29, சண்முகம் ரோடு,
மேற்கு தாம்பரம், சென்னை-45.**



டிசம்பர் 2

சீயமரிபாஸ்து
நாள்



**எங்கள் குடும்பத் தலைவருக்கு
பிறந்தநாள் வாழ்த்துகள்!**

ப.முத்தையன்

மாவட்டத் தலைவர், திராவிடர் கழகம்

தாம்பரம்

மற்றும் குடும்பத்தினர்

RESERVATION - OUR BIRTH RIGHT

Thamilchelvi Jayaraman

General Secretary, The Rationalists' Forum, Dharmapuri

"Liberty is my birth right" had been the famous slogan by Balagangathara thilagar. Contrary to his own slogan Balagangathara Thilagar did not admit the liberty of lower castes of his own religion and nation.

But south India gave birth to a great leader Thanthai Periyar, from whom the greatest humanistic slogans,

"Forget God, Think of Human"

"Self respect is more than anything is the world"

"Communal Reservation is the Birth right of the depressed and the suppressed"

came out as social gift.

Thanthai Periyar fought for communal reservation, on the very fact that lower caste masses were denied education, social status, and Government jobs only because they are lower castes.

The great leader of Justice Party, Dr.T.M.Nair explained the caste system of India as *"The social relationship of various sections of India conditioned for more than 2000 years by birth based hierarchical caste system, with a graded inequality, sanctified by Hindu religion"*.

The struggle for communal reservation, have a history more than 100 years,

If we go through the history we can very well observe that Thanthai Periyar never supported any government which opposed communal reservation and never fail to support a government which supported communal reservation.

Today we are enjoying 69 per cent reservation in studies in Tamil Nadu. The historical achievement we got through the great struggles our Dravidian leaders fought. Their sweat and blood only, yielded us this great right, which we are enjoying now.

Quite surprisingly, even before the voice for communal representation started gaining after the rule of Justice Party and Thanthai Periyar's





“politically it is not to the advantage of the government that every question connected with the progress, of the country should be viewed through the medium of Brahmin spectacles; The true policy of the State would be to limit their numbers in official positions and to encourage a large proportion of Non-Brahmin Hindus and Muslims to enter official service so as to allow no special prominence (or) preponderance of a particular caste”.

- W.R.Garnish, Census superintendent, British India

struggle within congress, the then British government raised it's voice advocating communal representation. A British officer, Census superintendent W.R.Garnish wrote in his report, “politically it is not to the advantage of the government that every question connected with the progress, of the country should be viewed through the medium of Brahmin spectacles;The true policy of the State would be to limit their numbers in official positions and to encourage a large proportion

of Non-Brahmin Hindus and Muslims to enter official service so as to allow no special prominence (or) preponderance of a particular caste”.

The Braminical domination had been to such extent that even a British officer could not tolerate.

If we take the case of D.Krishnarao,the then Hauser Srasdhar of Kadappa District, we can easily understand the monopoly of Brahmins, Using his official power, D.Krishnarao helped 116 of his relatives to get govt

RESERVATION - OUR BIRTH RIGHT

jobs in Kadappa district and 108 of his relatives to get govt jobs in Ananthapur District.

In the history of struggle for communal reservation, the role of Justice Party and the great leaders Sir. P.T.Thiagarayar, Dr.T.M.Nair and C.Nadesa Mudaliar of the party should never be forgotten by the depressed classes.

Justice Party leaders moved some historical resolutions in the Madras Provincial Legislature.

1912 : In the memorandum given by Dr.Natesa Mudaliar, (the then M.L.A of Madras legislature) to Royal Commission on public services,Dr.Natesa Mudaliar mentioned that "In order to bring down the Brahmin monopoly in Government jobs, some sort of communal reservation should be awarded to Non-Brahmins"

1916 : Non-Brahmin manifesto-prepared.

1919 : In the Congress Party Thanthai Periar had started his struggle for communal reservation. In the Congress conference held at Trichy,it was decided that the Communal representation demand by Madras State Union should be insisted.

1920 : In the Thirunelveli Congress conference the Communal reservation resolution was proposed by Thanthai Periyar, It was rejected by the President Srinivasa Ayyangar.

1921 : Justice Party leaders moved some historical social justice resolutions in the Madras Provincial Legislature.

Dr.C.Natesanar recommended that all appointment of all grades and departments in future should be given only to non-Brahmins till the proportionate communal representation is reached.

B.Munusamy Naidu proposed that the appointing authority should give preference to a non -Brahmin candidate provided he possessed the requisite qualification.

The Justice Party gave a memorandum to Mantague, Reforms committee, strongly insisting the need for communal reservation,

In the Madras Legislature,Thiru O.Thanikachalam Chettiar moved a resolution that "standing order should be issued immediately so that Government jobs may be shared by all including Non-Brahmin and Adi-Dravidar.If the representation was denied,No tax to Government". Such bold resolutions was passed in favor of communal reservation during 1921 itself by the ruling justice party.

One more resolution was passed by Thiru. O.Thanigachalam Chettiar that "Appointments to all the officers in the Secretariat [except I.C.S] should be made only to the Non-Brahmins,

Government Order to the effect of the above resolution,16-9-1921,G.O.No.613 public services.

As per the above G.O., If there are 12 posts it should be allotted as per the ratio, Non-Brahmin- 5, Brahmin - 2, Muslims- 2,Christans including Anglo Indians – 2, Adi-Dravidar 1.

1923 : Thanthai Periyar moved a resolution in the congress conference held at Trippur that Nadar Community people should be allowed temple entry. This was also defeated due to the hues and cries of Brahmin leaders like Sathyamoorthy Aiyar.

In the congress conferences of Madurai and Ramnathapuram, the resolutions pertaining to communal reservation was deferred to next conference cunningly by Rajagopalachariar.

In the Congress conference held at Salem,when the communal reservation resolution was moved in the subject committee,by Thandapani Pillai,it was rejected by Rajagopalchariyar stating that, the intensity of Non-cooperation will get diluted,if the resolution was allowed.

1924 : In the Belgam Congress held in the year 1924,communal representation was discussed,and put forth to Mahatma Gandhi.

1925 : In the Congress conferences held at Kanjipuram.though the President post was given to Thiru V.Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, by way of the great struggles made by Thanthai Periyar through out the states,the communal reservation resolution was rejected to bring it as an agenda in the conference,



If we take the case of D.Krishnarao, the then Hauser srasdhar of Kadappa District, We can easily understand the monopoly of Brahmins, Using his official power, D.Krishnarao helped 116 of his relatives to get govt jobs in Kadappa district and 108 of his relatives to get govt jobs in Ananthapur District.

and as well as defeated in the subject committee, Thiru. Vi.Ka did not act genuinely as expected by Thanthai Periyar. Thanthai Periyar quits Congress once for all.

1928 : The Communal G.O which was passed in 1921, and was freezing inactive, was implemented, first time in the history, by our great leader Muthaiah Mudaliar. Thanthai Periyar was so much impressed and praised to that extent that he declared as “*name your future babies, as Muthaiah*”.

Government discontinued the grants to the schools that refused to admit Adi-Dravida students. Transport companies are warned cancelling of licenses if they did not allow adi-dravidas.

1929 : Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar moved a resolution that priests in Temples should not be appointed merely they are born in priestly classes.

1950 : Supreme Court declared the communal reservation of the then Madras government as nul and void as per Constitution. Thanthai periar organized a great struggle involving depressed masses against this verdict and made the then Nehru government to make the historical first amendment, to the constitution which emphasis Governments should take special provision for upliftment of socially and educationally backward classes including the scheduled castes. Dr.Ambedkar joined hands with Thanthai Periar in this mission.

1980 : M.G.R government introduced the creamy layer and economic ceiling Rs.9000 in reservation policy during 1979. Under the leadership of Thamilar Thalaivar Self Respectful K.Veeramani, a vigorous propaganda tour was undertaken and the ashes of the order copies were sent to the government. This massive agitation paved way to the defeat of A.I.A.D.M.K party in 1980 parliament elections. Realizing the mandate, M.G.R. had listened to counsel of Thamilar Thalaivar. Subsequently he cancelled the Rs. 9000 economic ceiling G.O and increased the quota for BCs from 31 to 50 per cent.

1990 : Saviour of Social Justice V.P.Singh the then Prime Minister, implemented the 27 per cent reservation

for OBCs in Central Government jobs. The dual activating forces for this achievement were Dr. Kalaignar and Thamilar Thalaivar. For the above successful implementation of mandal commission our thamilar thalaivar launched 16 agitations and 42 conferences of Dravidar kazhagam.

1994 : Supreme Court reference of 50 per cent ceiling to reservation came as heavy blow to 69 per cent reservation in Tamil Nadu state. During this legal crisis Thamilar Thalaivar putforth a special enactment under article 31-c. Then Jeyalalitha Government Passed in the legislature and subsequently the act was included by a constitutional amendment in the 9th schedule ,and was well protected from the judicial review.

2010 : Centre was ruled by Congress Party. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, implemented 27 per cent reservation for OBC, in central educational institutions.

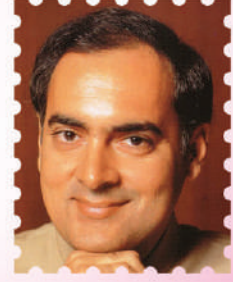
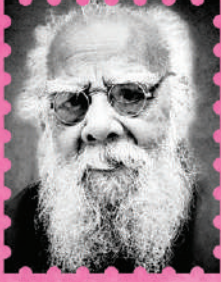
Presently we are enjoying the rights of reservation as, In central govt jobs and educational institutions,

| | |
|--|-------|
| OBCs | 27% |
| Scheduled castes | 15-5% |
| Scheduled tribes | 7% |
| In state government jobs and education | |
| Backward Classes | 30% |
| Most backward classe | 20% |
| Scheduled castes | 18% |
| Scheduled Tribes | 1% |

[Inner reservation for muslim students 3.5%]

Apart from the above 30 per cent reservation for women, in govt jobs and reservation for the intercaste married persons in Government jobs are the unique reservation history in Tamil Nadu.

Let us hail this Social Justice flag under the dynamic leadership of our Thamilar Thalaivar K.Veeramani, the true Crusader of Social Justice as like our Thanthai Periyar. ■



தந்தை வெளியாரின்
 தலைமைத் தொண்டே!
 தன்மான இயக்கத்தால்
 மன்றதைக் காக்கும் மாணவியே!
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 சந்தனைச் சூழியே!
 சிந்தைக்கும் உம்சனும்!
 உன்கு பல்லாண்டே!



தமிழ்நாடு காங்கிரஸ் தமிழ்

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BASIC TENET IS PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE GOVERNANCE

V.Kumaresan

Secretary – External Relations, Dravidar Kazhagam



Discrimination is perceived as a negative perspective. The opportunities available to anyone should not to be discriminated from that of the others. When general perception, acceptable to all is like this, is it not inequitable to discriminate people in the name of reservation to get admission in educational institution and deployment in employment? It may not appear to be reasonable. If analysed in depth, the equity involved in reservation policy with its origin from communal representation could be traced and understood in proper perspective. Discrimination is not necessary in an egalitarian society. But the Indian society is an unequal society, wherein people have been socially graded as upper, lower, below that and beyond that etc. How did such graded inequalities become the core base of the society? What sort of strategic tactics had been adopted to perpetuate the social hierarchy and made to be believed as 'divinely ordained'? How had the entire servile class - segregated masses been brain tuned to glorify and enjoy such a social slavery despite the severity in meting out disrespect and hardships? It is comparatively easier to enlighten the masses who are in deep slumber and are ignorant of their slavery; but it is very difficult and arduous to awaken the socially enslaved masses, who are aware of their slavery but enjoying it over many centuries. Many progressive personalities and reformers whom the history had witnessed, viewed the peculiar social slavery prevailing in this land, condemned it with their eminent scholarship, analysis and articulation but did not carry out the task, desired to rectify and find a remedy to this deadly social malady. Even if some progressive thinkers had ventured into this task to even out



There is nothing specific on the ceiling on the total quantum of reservation. There is no mentioning of any ceiling for reservation in the Indian Constitution, except the mentioning of 'adequate representation.' But higher judiciary has pronounced a passing reference (obiter dicta) on the ceiling of quantum of reservation 50 per cent which is not valid constitutionally.

the social inequalities, they focussed on it superficially without any inclination to reach the core concept viz. divine god in whose name the social hierarchy was advocated.

Thanthai Periyar was the original thinker, possessing a total concept, analytical skill and strategic, positive tactics to overcome the social inequalities with the missionary approach with an iron intent to establish an egalitarian society. Secular Tamil literature Thirukkural says

நோய்நாடி நோய்முதல்நாடி அது தணிக்கும்
வாய்நாடி வாய்ப்பச் சொல்

It means "Let disease and its cause be diagnosed and let remedy be applied conformably"

Periyar accurately evaluated the dimensions of the social inequalities, caused due to the man made discriminations. It permanently prevailed upon the main strength of being advocated in the name of god and religion. How could the omnipotent god remain a mute spectator on this inhuman social slavery of the 'holy' land without destroying the evil design? No equitable power idolized as 'god' should exist and the non-existing so called 'divine power' had to be blown out. This alone could lead to permanent solution eliminating the divinely sanctioned social slavery. Periyar viewed and strategized his social mission in an atheist way. It was not a mere preaching and propaganda on the denial of god. He concentrated on the constructive efforts to overcome the social slavery. Periyar firmly believed that involving the enslaved masses in all the social and political processes beyond the divine prescription and the traditionally assigned duties would only bring equality among all in the longer run.

Social discrimination is the perpetual disease of the indigenous society. Proper medical cure has to be invented to erase the disease. 'Poison' is an essential ingredient in many drugs despite its fatal feature. The poison-like discrimination has to be an ingredient of the drug to cure the disease of social slavery. Discrimination

as drug viz. reservation policy is to overcome the pre existing discrimination. The discrimination prevailing in the disease of social slavery is original. The discrimination, prescribed through reservation is compensatory. The discrimination advocated in reservation policy is protective discrimination to liberate the persecuted masses. The accumulated disabilities owing to the original discrimination among the social communities which were branded as castes, for over so many centuries have to be rectified through the same mode of discrimination but of compensatory nature. Periyar's perspective to attain equality among the discriminated masses was possible and ideal only through discrimination i.e. reservation system. Reservation system is the drug to cure the menace of caste system. Periyar started this as the demand for communal representation in the political organization i.e. Congress Party with which he was associated initially. Since the demand for communal representation was denied by the cunning cult in the Congress Party, Periyar quit it in the year 1925.

When drug is a must to cure the disease, what is the prescribed dose of the drug? The dose of the drug is proportional representation of the persecuted communities according to the numerical strength of respective population. In respect of communal representation, the journey of social justice has crossed many hurdles but the ultimate destination of proportional representation is yet to be reached. But before reaching the destination, vested interests in favour of dominant communal sects try to create public opinion that reservation policy has to be reviewed and reconsidered; deadline for the reservation policy has to be fixed. People who benefitted through reservation policy are also supporting the views of the vested interests without being aware of the lengthy journey to be tread in the path of social justice.

In respect of reservation policy – the proper understanding of the concept and acquiring the awareness and developing the outlook among the social



December 2

SELF-RESPECT DAY

*Hearty Greetings
on 83rd Birthday
of the Humanist Leader
Dr.K.Veeramani*

*generating values
for generations*

HOMELAND

P R O M O T E R S P V T . L T D .



R.Tamilselvan

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96770 11415



SOCIAL JUSTICE BASIC TENET IS PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE GOVERNANCE



When many social justice activists and organizations opposed the reservation demand of Patel community without analysing it, Dr.K.Veeramani, President, Dravidar Kazhagam provided the proper perspective in this regard, which would enjoin all the marginalized masses under one umbrella to fight for social justice. To exceed the 50% ceiling, Tamil Nadu model may be followed and it is in the move in many states, Andhra, Maharashtra and Rajasthan etc.,

justice activists and organizations on the approach to be adopted would only minimize the distance and time space of the journey of social justice. Dravidar Kazhagam, the parental organization of Periyar Movement, founded by Periyar continues to lead in the righteous direction in the path of social justice. Periyar who was a valiant fighter for communal representation was instrumental for the first amendment to Indian Constitution in 1950 through the insertion of Article 15(4) ensuring the continuance of reservation for the oppressed classes in education which suffered a span of eclipse through the pronouncement of higher judiciary of the country. Later the ardent disciple of Periyar, Dr. K. Veeramani, President of Dravidar Kazhagam initiated with the ideological advice for the enactment of exclusive legislation for

reservation of 69 percent (first of its kind in the whole of India) both in education and employment in Tamil Nadu and providing immunity to the legislation from the judicial review which was ensured by the 76th Amendment of Indian Constitution.

In the journey of dispensation of social justice to all, not only ideological equipment for the cause, but righteous attitudinal and adoptable approach is required. A proper perspective of viewing the current development for the cause of social justice, forecasting and facing the challenges in the path are required for any activist or organization.

The core feature of reservation policy is proportional representation of socially and educationally persecuted communities. There is nothing specific on the ceiling on the total quantum of reservation. There is no mentioning of any ceiling for reservation in the Indian Constitution, except the mentioning of 'adequate representation'. But higher judiciary has pronounced a passing reference (obiter dicta) on the ceiling of quantum of reservation 50 per cent which is not valid constitutionally. Mindsets of masses, especially the beneficiaries of reservation both present and prospective have to be tuned against the non Constitutional ceiling on reservation. Apart from that, for the implementation of reservation in education and employment there is no time limit. In Indian Constitution, there is no such mention of time limit. Under such circumstances, by favouring the time limit a lot of public opinion is being created and is made debatable. It is like cessation of feast, immediately after serving the food items but prior to consuming them .

Let us analyze the current trend, prevailing in the battle field of social justice, the comments made on them.



SOCIAL JUSTICE BASIC TENET IS PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE GOVERNANCE

The same community (Patel) in 1985 joined hands with saffron outfits in opposing the reservation system; now they are demanding for reservation.



Agitating Patel community, demanding for reservation in Gujarat

For instance, in Gujarat the patidar (patel) community is demanding reservation in education and employment by mobilising their community people massively. Patel community is wealthy and many of their people are the elected representatives and some of them are occupying the ministerial berth in the State Cabinet. In short, Patel community is economically forward and politically strong. Basically they are business communities. The share of them in the executive machinery of the State is not adequate for the reason – their community people are not well-educated to be recruited and deployed in the executive machinery. The same community in 1985 joined hands with saffron outfits in opposing the reservation system; now they are demanding for reservation.

The demand of Patel community has made many communities apprehend who are availing reservation benefits presently under the pretext that the new demand may minimize their share within the overall ceiling of 50 per cent. Their apprehension is untenable. The ceiling of 50 per cent reservation has to be removed. In case the demand of reservation by Patel community is reasonable; there is nothing wrong in extending the reservation benefits to them also. Each community may try to modify/enhance their share of reservation if the total ceiling of 50 per cent is removed. The share of reservation for the underprivileged people must be decided in proportion to the population. In this

process, there might be slight increase in the share by the already availing communities.

Social and educational backwardness as explicitly mentioned in the Constitution should be the yardstick to extend the reservation benefits to the communities demanding them for the first time. Proportional representation is the ultimate yardstick for total reservation. When many social justice activists and organizations opposed the reservation demand of Patel community without analysing it, Dr.K.Veeramani, President, Dravidar Kazhagam provided the proper perspective in this regard, which would enjoin all the marginalized masses under one umbrella to fight for social justice. To exceed the 50 per cent ceiling, Tamil Nadu model may be followed and it is in the move in many States - Andhra, Maharashtra and Rajasthan etc.,

Dividing the marginalized masses still further is the tactical approach of dominant hegemony. To oppose the common dominant cult, all the marginalized population must get integrated. Proportional representation is the ideal weapon in the battle to dispense social justice to all, which would result in the establishment of egalitarian society. To lead the under privileged in the right direction and to integrate the segregated masses, Dravidar Kazhagam and its leader Dr.K.Veeramani remain as beacon for the alignment of all the forces for the cause of social justice. ■

RESERVATION - OUR BIRTH RIGHT

jobs in Kadappa district and 108 of his relatives to get govt jobs in Ananthapur District.

In the history of struggle for communal reservation, the role of Justice Party and the great leaders Sir. P.T.Thiagarayar, Dr.T.M.Nair and C.Nadesa Mudaliar of the party should never be forgotten by the depressed classes.

Justice Party leaders moved some historical resolutions in the Madras Provincial Legislature.

1912 : In the memorandum given by Dr.Natesa Mudaliar, (the then M.L.A of Madras legislature) to Royal Commission on public services,Dr.Natesa Mudaliar mentioned that "In order to bring down the Brahmin monopoly in Government jobs, some sort of communal reservation should be awarded to Non-Brahmins"

1916 : Non-Brahmin manifesto-prepared.

1919 : In the Congress Party Thanthai Periar had started his struggle for communal reservation. In the Congress conference held at Trichy,it was decided that the Communal representation demand by Madras State Union should be insisted.

1920 : In the Thirunelveli Congress conference the Communal reservation resolution was proposed by Thanthai Periyar, It was rejected by the President Srinivasa Aiyangar.

1921 : Justice Party leaders moved some historical social justice resolutions in the Madras Provincial Legislature.

Dr.C.Natesanar recommended that all appointment of all grades and departments in future should be given only to non-Brahmins till the proportionate communal representation is reached.

B.Munusamy Naidu proposed that the appointing authority should give preference to a non -Brahmin candidate provided he possessed the requisite qualification.

The Justice Party gave a memorandum to Mantague, Reforms committee, strongly insisting the need for communal reservation,

In the Madras Legislature,Thiru O.Thanikachalam Chettiar moved a resolution that "standing order should be issued immediately so that Government jobs may be shared by all including Non-Brahmin and Adi-Dravidar.If the representation was denied,No tax to Government". Such bold resolutions was passed in favor of communal reservation during 1921 itself by the ruling justice party.

One more resolution was passed by Thiru. O.Thanigachalam Chettiar that "Appointments to all the officers in the Secretariat [except I.C.S] should be made only to the Non-Brahmins,

Government Order to the effect of the above resolution,16-9-1921,G.O.No.613 public services.

As per the above G.O., If there are 12 posts it should be allotted as per the ratio, Non-Brahmin- 5, Brahmin - 2, Muslims- 2,Christans including Anglo Indians – 2, Adi-Dravidar 1.

1923 : Thanthai Periyar moved a resolution in the congress conference held at Trippur that Nadar Community people should be allowed temple entry. This was also defeated due to the hues and cries of Brahmin leaders like Sathyamoorthy Aiyar.

In the congress conferences of Madurai and Ramnathapuram, the resolutions pertaining to communal reservation was deferred to next conference cunningly by Rajagopalachariar.

In the Congress conference held at Salem,when the communal reservation resolution was moved in the subject committee, by Thandapani Pillai,it was rejected by Rajagopalchariyar stating that, the intensity of Non-cooperation will get diluted,if the resolution was allowed.

1924 : In the Belgam Congress held in the year 1924,communal representation was discussed,and put forth to Mahatma Gandhi.

1925 : In the Congress conferences held at Kanjipuram.though the President post was given to Thiru V.Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, by way of the great struggles made by Thanthai Periyar through out the states,the communal reservation resolution was rejected to bring it as an agenda in the conference,



If we take the case of D.Krishnarao, the then Hauser srasdhar of Kadappa District, We can easily understand the monopoly of Brahmins, Using his official power, D.Krishnarao helped 116 of his relatives to get govt jobs in Kadappa district and 108 of his relatives to get govt jobs in Ananthapur District.

and as well as defeated in the subject committee, Thiru. Vi.Ka did not act genuinely as expected by Thanthai Periyar. Thanthai Periyar quits Congress once for all.

1928 : The Communal G.O which was passed in 1921, and was freezing inactive, was implemented, first time in the history, by our great leader Muthaiah Mudaliar. Thanthai Periyar was so much impressed and praised to that extent that he declared as “*name your future babies, as Muthaiah*”.

Government discontinued the grants to the schools that refused to admit Adi-Dravida students. Transport companies are warned cancelling of licenses if they did not allow adi-dravidas.

1929 : Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar moved a resolution that priests in Temples should not be appointed merely they are born in priestly classes.

1950 : Supreme Court declared the communal reservation of the then Madras government as nul and void as per Constitution. Thanthai periar organized a great struggle involving depressed masses against this verdict and made the then Nehru government to make the historical first amendment, to the constitution which emphasis Governments should take special provision for upliftment of socially and educationally backward classes including the scheduled castes. Dr.Ambedkar joined hands with Thanthai Periar in this mission.

1980 : M.G.R government introduced the creamy layer and economic ceiling Rs.9000 in reservation policy during 1979. Under the leadership of Thamilar Thalaivar Self Respectful K.Veeramani, a vigorous propaganda tour was undertaken and the ashes of the order copies were sent to the government. This massive agitation paved way to the defeat of A.I.A.D.M.K party in 1980 parliament elections. Realizing the mandate, M.G.R. had listened to counsel of Thamilar Thalaivar. Subsequently he cancelled the Rs. 9000 economic ceiling G.O and increased the quota for BCs from 31 to 50 per cent.

1990 : Saviour of Social Justice V.P.Singh the then Prime Minister, implemented the 27 per cent reservation

for OBCs in Central Government jobs. The dual activating forces for this achievement were Dr. Kalaignar and Thamilar Thalaivar. For the above successful implementation of mandal commission our thamilar thalaivar launched 16 agitations and 42 conferences of Dravidar kazhagam.

1994 : Supreme Court reference of 50 per cent ceiling to reservation came as heavy blow to 69 per cent reservation in Tamil Nadu state. During this legal crisis Thamilar Thalaivar putforth a special enactment under article 31-c. Then Jeyalalitha Government Passed in the legislature and subsequently the act was included by a constitutional amendment in the 9th schedule ,and was well protected from the judicial review.

2010 : Centre was ruled by Congress Party. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, implemented 27 per cent reservation for OBC, in central educational institutions.

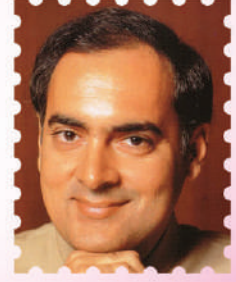
Presently we are enjoying the rights of reservation as, In central govt jobs and educational institutions,

| | |
|--|-------|
| OBCs | 27% |
| Scheduled castes | 15-5% |
| Scheduled tribes | 7% |
| In state government jobs and education | |
| Backward Classes | 30% |
| Most backward classe | 20% |
| Scheduled castes | 18% |
| Scheduled Tribes | 1% |

[Inner reservation for muslim students 3.5%]

Apart from the above 30 per cent reservation for women, in govt jobs and reservation for the intercaste married persons in Government jobs are the unique reservation history in Tamil Nadu.

Let us hail this Social Justice flag under the dynamic leadership of our Thamilar Thalaivar K.Veeramani, the true Crusader of Social Justice as like our Thanthai Periyar. ■



தந்தை வெளியாரின்
 தலைமைத் தொண்டே!
 தன்மான இயக்கத்தால்
 மன்றதைக் காக்கும் மாண்பாளே!
 சிந்தனைப் பல புரிந்து
 சிந்தனைப் பல புரிந்து
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தமிழ்நாடு காங்கிரஸ் தமிழ்

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BASIC TENET IS PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE GOVERNANCE

V.Kumaresan

Secretary – External Relations, Dravidar Kazhagam



Discrimination is perceived as a negative perspective. The opportunities available to anyone should not to be discriminated from that of the others. When general perception, acceptable to all is like this, is it not inequitable to discriminate people in the name of reservation to get admission in educational institution and deployment in employment? It may not appear to be reasonable. If analysed in depth, the equity involved in reservation policy with its origin from communal representation could be traced and understood in proper perspective. Discrimination is not necessary in an egalitarian society. But the Indian society is an unequal society, wherein people have been socially graded as upper, lower, below that and beyond that etc. How did such graded inequalities become the core base of the society? What sort of strategic tactics had been adopted to perpetuate the social hierarchy and made to be believed as 'divinely ordained'? How had the entire servile class - segregated masses been brain tuned to glorify and enjoy such a social slavery despite the severity in meting out disrespect and hardships? It is comparatively easier to enlighten the masses who are in deep slumber and are ignorant of their slavery; but it is very difficult and arduous to awaken the socially enslaved masses, who are aware of their slavery but enjoying it over many centuries. Many progressive personalities and reformers whom the history had witnessed, viewed the peculiar social slavery prevailing in this land, condemned it with their eminent scholarship, analysis and articulation but did not carry out the task, desired to rectify and find a remedy to this deadly social malady. Even if some progressive thinkers had ventured into this task to even out



There is nothing specific on the ceiling on the total quantum of reservation. There is no mentioning of any ceiling for reservation in the Indian Constitution, except the mentioning of 'adequate representation.' But higher judiciary has pronounced a passing reference (obiter dicta) on the ceiling of quantum of reservation 50 per cent which is not valid constitutionally.

the social inequalities, they focussed on it superficially without any inclination to reach the core concept viz. divine god in whose name the social hierarchy was advocated.

Thanthai Periyar was the original thinker, possessing a total concept, analytical skill and strategic, positive tactics to overcome the social inequalities with the missionary approach with an iron intent to establish an egalitarian society. Secular Tamil literature Thirukkural says

நோய்நாடி நோய்முதல்நாடி அது தணிக்கும்
வாய்நாடி வாய்ப்பச் சொல்

It means "Let disease and its cause be diagnosed and let remedy be applied conformably"

Periyar accurately evaluated the dimensions of the social inequalities, caused due to the man made discriminations. It permanently prevailed upon the main strength of being advocated in the name of god and religion. How could the omnipotent god remain a mute spectator on this inhuman social slavery of the 'holy' land without destroying the evil design? No equitable power idolized as 'god' should exist and the non-existing so called 'divine power' had to be blown out. This alone could lead to permanent solution eliminating the divinely sanctioned social slavery. Periyar viewed and strategized his social mission in an atheist way. It was not a mere preaching and propaganda on the denial of god. He concentrated on the constructive efforts to overcome the social slavery. Periyar firmly believed that involving the enslaved masses in all the social and political processes beyond the divine prescription and the traditionally assigned duties would only bring equality among all in the longer run.

Social discrimination is the perpetual disease of the indigenous society. Proper medical cure has to be invented to erase the disease. 'Poison' is an essential ingredient in many drugs despite its fatal feature. The poison-like discrimination has to be an ingredient of the drug to cure the disease of social slavery. Discrimination

as drug viz. reservation policy is to overcome the pre existing discrimination. The discrimination prevailing in the disease of social slavery is original. The discrimination, prescribed through reservation is compensatory. The discrimination advocated in reservation policy is protective discrimination to liberate the persecuted masses. The accumulated disabilities owing to the original discrimination among the social communities which were branded as castes, for over so many centuries have to be rectified through the same mode of discrimination but of compensatory nature. Periyar's perspective to attain equality among the discriminated masses was possible and ideal only through discrimination i.e. reservation system. Reservation system is the drug to cure the menace of caste system. Periyar started this as the demand for communal representation in the political organization i.e. Congress Party with which he was associated initially. Since the demand for communal representation was denied by the cunning cult in the Congress Party, Periyar quit it in the year 1925.

When drug is a must to cure the disease, what is the prescribed dose of the drug? The dose of the drug is proportional representation of the persecuted communities according to the numerical strength of respective population. In respect of communal representation, the journey of social justice has crossed many hurdles but the ultimate destination of proportional representation is yet to be reached. But before reaching the destination, vested interests in favour of dominant communal sects try to create public opinion that reservation policy has to be reviewed and reconsidered; deadline for the reservation policy has to be fixed. People who benefitted through reservation policy are also supporting the views of the vested interests without being aware of the lengthy journey to be tread in the path of social justice.

In respect of reservation policy – the proper understanding of the concept and acquiring the awareness and developing the outlook among the social



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Dr.K.Veeramani*

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SOCIAL JUSTICE BASIC TENET IS PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE GOVERNANCE



When many social justice activists and organizations opposed the reservation demand of Patel community without analysing it, Dr.K.Veeramani, President, Dravidar Kazhagam provided the proper perspective in this regard, which would enjoin all the marginalized masses under one umbrella to fight for social justice. To exceed the 50% ceiling, Tamil Nadu model may be followed and it is in the move in many states, Andhra, Maharashtra and Rajasthan etc.,

justice activists and organizations on the approach to be adopted would only minimize the distance and time space of the journey of social justice. Dravidar Kazhagam, the parental organization of Periyar Movement, founded by Periyar continues to lead in the righteous direction in the path of social justice. Periyar who was a valiant fighter for communal representation was instrumental for the first amendment to Indian Constitution in 1950 through the insertion of Article 15(4) ensuring the continuance of reservation for the oppressed classes in education which suffered a span of eclipse through the pronouncement of higher judiciary of the country. Later the ardent disciple of Periyar, Dr. K. Veeramani, President of Dravidar Kazhagam initiated with the ideological advice for the enactment of exclusive legislation for

reservation of 69 percent (first of its kind in the whole of India) both in education and employment in Tamil Nadu and providing immunity to the legislation from the judicial review which was ensured by the 76th Amendment of Indian Constitution.

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For instance, in Gujarat the patidar (patel) community is demanding reservation in education and employment by mobilising their community people massively. Patel community is wealthy and many of their people are the elected representatives and some of them are occupying the ministerial berth in the State Cabinet. In short, Patel community is economically forward and politically strong. Basically they are business communities. The share of them in the executive machinery of the State is not adequate for the reason – their community people are not well-educated to be recruited and deployed in the executive machinery. The same community in 1985 joined hands with saffron outfits in opposing the reservation system; now they are demanding for reservation.

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Dividing the marginalized masses still further is the tactical approach of dominant hegemony. To oppose the common dominant cult, all the marginalized population must get integrated. Proportional representation is the ideal weapon in the battle to dispense social justice to all, which would result in the establishment of egalitarian society. To lead the under privileged in the right direction and to integrate the segregated masses, Dravidar Kazhagam and its leader Dr.K.Veeramani remain as beacon for the alignment of all the forces for the cause of social justice. ■



PERIYAR INTERNATIONAL



Periyar International has been formed in different countries as per their rules and regulations to propagate Periyar Humanism.

As per the rules of the country trusts, corporations or non profit organizations can be formed under the Patronship of President, Dravidar Kazhagam, Chennai.

We have Chapters of Periyar International in countries like USA, UK, Singapore, Malaysia, Myanmar, Kuwait, Dubai, South Africa, Nigeria, Germany and serving in other countries.

Our first International Conference is scheduled in Cologne, Germany on July 28, 29 and 30, 2016.

Please make arrangements to attend with family and friends.



Periyar International, USA

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