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**"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! SHUT IT ALL DOWN.
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR,
NOT ANOTHER WEAPON FOR ISRAEL."**

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU AGREE WITH BERNIE SANDERS

Dr. Manzar Ali

Bernie Sanders has issued a forceful and unambiguous call to end all support, urging an immediate halt to funding and military aid to Israel. In a passionate statement, he argued that the time for hesitation has passed, insisting that continued involvement only deepens the conflict and that current policies must be reassessed.

His position is fueling a heated debate. Supporters see it as a bold push for accountability and change, while critics warn about the wider consequences of such a shift. As global tensions continue to rise, voices like Sanders' are reshaping the conversation around U.S. foreign policy and its role on the world stage.

Now the focus turns to the public: do you agree with this call for change, or do you see it differently? The debate is only growing louder.

Dr. Manzar Ali is Prof. & Head of Department of Surgery at Multan Medical and Dental College, Pakistan.

Obituary: Shri Suresh Chand Jain is no more

"I am very sorry to inform that our friend and colleague and a life member of the IRI and also a former Vice-Chairman of the IRI, **Shri Suresh Chand Jain**, breathed his last on 29th March 2026 evening at Jaipur, as he could not survive the cardiac arrest he suffered. As per his desire and will his body was handed over for medical research on the morning of 30th March by his family members. His passing away is a big loss for his friends and colleagues. On behalf of the Radical Humanist community I convey our heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family and friends."

- Mahi Pal Singh, Secretary IRI

THE RADICAL HUMANIST

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CONTENTS :

Page No.

Articles and Features :

- "It is this obsession to 'purge' the electoral roll that
has brought the ECI dangerously close to the sin of
democide." the Sycophancy of "Godi Media"
The Jamia Times 4
- An Open Letter Questioning the Election
Commission's Conduct in Bengal Elections in India**
Dr. Suresh Khairnar 5
- The Pulse of Bengal: A Logical Analysis of Record
Voting from a Political-Social Perspective**
Pratap Saharan 7
- Secularism – Contemporary Politics** 10
K. Srinivasa Chary
- A new tool to increase Hate Politics: 'Pigs as Pets'** 13
Ram Puniyani
- National Song Bande Mataram at Crossroads
of Patriotism and Secularism** 15
Bimal Chatterjee
- Constitutional Morality in India: An Ambedkarite
Essay on Its Concept and Violations Since
Independence** 17
S.R. Darapuri
- Legal Article: University Cannot Curb Peaceful
Protests Or Expression Of Ideas: Delhi HC** 20
Sanjeev Sirohi
- The Self-Imposed Cocoon** 23
He Wan
- Resolution to defend the nation adopted at the
National Conference held at Rajendra Bhavan
by the Employment–Social Rights Campaign** 27
Rahul Das
- Becoming Allies: Civil Liberties Activism** 29
Ankita Pandey
- POLITICS WITHOUT POWER*** 30
M.N. Roy
- The Humanist Frame:
New Horizons For Under-Developed Peoples** 32
Sudhir Sen
- CEC Gyanesh Kumar Has Formal Power But Has
Lost Moral Authority, Which is Constitutional Sacrilege** 36
M.G. Devasahayam
- A Reader's Review of :** 39
Essays on Indian Philosophical Streams and Culture
By: DR. GUMMA VEERANNA
Praphulla Chandra

Articles and Features :

"It is this obsession to 'purge' the electoral roll that has brought the ECI dangerously close to the sin of democide."

The Jamia Times



ASHOK LAVASA

**Former
Election Commissioner**

Former Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa has called on the Supreme Court to safeguard public trust in India's democratic institutions, warning that large-scale deletions from electoral rolls risk undermining citizens' constitutional right to vote.

In an opinion article, Lavasa criticised the Election Commission of India's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process, arguing that the exercise created "hurdles that many found impossible to cross" and left millions of voters in a state of uncertainty. He said the responsibility now lies with the Supreme Court to intervene and ensure

that electoral procedures remain fair and inclusive.

Lavasa also cautioned that democracy suffers when citizens lose faith in institutions meant to protect their rights. He stressed that voting is not merely a public service but a constitutional guarantee that must be accessible to all eligible citizens without undue barriers.

He added that the court still has an opportunity to restore confidence by addressing grievances arising from the revision process and reaffirming the principle that no genuine voter should be left behind.

#SupremeCourt #ElectionCommission #VotingRights #IndianDemocracy #AshokLaval

An Open Letter Questioning the Election Commission's Conduct in Bengal Elections in India

Dr. Suresh Khairnar



Central Reserve Police Force personnel patrol amid heightened security ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections, at Hariyakuri village in Malda, Thursday, April 9, 2026./PTI

Seeing this news on the front page of today's *Dainik Bhaskar* in Nagpur makes me realise that while the deployment of the army during elections is a familiar sight in Kashmir, it is a first in our country's parliamentary history for such a move elsewhere. I have seen this happen dozens of times in Kashmir. However, in Bengal, even during the 1970s—the birth of the Naxalite movement, when Calcutta echoed daily with bomb blasts and gunfire—such arrangements were never seen.

Senior Bengali journalist and author Gaur Kishore Ghosh used to write a regular column titled *Amake Bolte Dao* (Let Me Speak) in the Bengali daily *Ananda Bazar Patrika* based on these events. Even during that era of Naxalite violence, as documented in the English translation *Let Me Speak*, such measures were not witnessed in Bengal's elections. I am seeing this kind of arrangement for the first time in 56 years of West Bengal's electoral history. Since 1977, I have followed Bengal's politics more closely than even Maharashtra's, having moved

there at age 30 and returned at 45. I continue to maintain a strong bond with Bengal as a social activist. Therefore, what is the reason for deploying 240,000 army personnel, in armoured vehicles and on foot, across the 152 seats of Kolkata and surrounding regions? Is it in response to the "Amit Shah–Narendra Modi Go Back" slogans raised by genuine Bengali-speaking voters angered by the removal of 91 lakh voters?

This time, the contest is not as direct as in 2021. Is the deployment of central security forces in armoured vehicles on the streets intended merely to intimidate Bengal's voters? In 2021, Mamata Banerjee had a lead of over 70 lakh votes over the BJP. Seeing that lead, were 91 lakh voters (70 lakh plus another 21 lakh) removed under the guise of "SIR" with your assistance? Videos circulating across Bengal show angry voters lining Amit Shah's roadshow routes, holding shoes and slippers and chanting, "Amit Shah Tumi Phire Jao" (Amit Shah, go back).

Perhaps in response to this mood among Bengali voters, you suddenly rushed to Delhi to call a one-day special session of Parliament. Why was the Women’s Reservation Bill—already passed in 2023 and scheduled for implementation after the 2026 census, according to Prime Minister Narendra Modi—suddenly advanced without a census? This occurred while assembly elections are underway in crucial states such as Tamil Nadu, Bengal, Assam, Puducherry, and Kerala. By ignoring its potential influence on “Nari Shakti Vandana” (women) voters, and while the Election Commission was acting as a vigilant watchdog in Bengal by arresting 800 Trinamool Congress leaders and workers, did you not observe a violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in the ruling party’s use of Parliament for election campaigning?

Furthermore, when Narendra Modi used the pretext of an “Address to the Nation” on government television and radio to threaten opposition parties—speaking more as a BJP leader than as the Prime Minister—why did you not take cognisance of this as an attack on the opposition by a constitutional authority? From the very first day in Bengal, you removed almost all relevant police and administrative officers under the MCC and handed over election responsibilities to your “trusted” administration. Meanwhile, numerous examples of BJP leaders’ speeches clearly flouting the MCC have been widely reported in the media, including internationally. These speeches include promises of money and other inducements.

Regarding “infiltrators,” Home Minister Amit Shah (who is responsible for the nation’s law and order) and Prime Minister Modi have often described their past legal troubles as “political vendetta” by the then government. Yet, is the Election Commission’s decision to arrest over 800 Trinamool Congress leaders under the same “Goonda Act”—a move recently stayed by the court—not also influenced by political vendetta? Had the court not intervened, would you have

been fulfilling your duty to conduct a fair election, or violating it?

Reports in this very newspaper mention Home Minister Amit Shah threatening Trinamool Congress workers while deploying the army in rural areas under the guise of “strict vigil.” Addressing a public meeting in Sonarpur, he reportedly said, “Hey, listen, Didi’s goons—do not step out of your houses on the 29th; otherwise, we will straighten you out on May 4th.” Since the Trinamool Congress is the only party with workers at every booth across the 152 constituencies, Amit Shah is using such language ahead of the second phase of voting on April 29. Is this not a violation of the MCC? Why has no action been taken?

In the 1990s, then Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan established a standard of impartiality that led many countries to seek guidance from former Indian election officials. However, since you took charge in 2023, your credibility has come under serious question. For the first time in history, all opposition parties have taken to the streets to protest against the Election Commission. Even if the Lok Sabha Speaker did not accept the impeachment motion against you, a significant question mark remains over your role.

After the 2023 bill granted you lifelong security cover even after retirement, you should have been able to perform your duties with greater independence and courage. You need not feel burdened by any “favour” from the ruling party that introduced this bill. There is a growing suspicion among opposition parties and observers like myself—who have watched national and international developments for over half a century—that instead of fulfilling your constitutional responsibilities, you are functioning as an election unit for the BJP, centred in the capital.

“Long Live the Indian Constitution”

Bottom of Form

Dr. Suresh Khairnar is the ex-president of Rashtra Seva Dal 

The Pulse of Bengal: A Logical Analysis of Record Voting from a Political-Social Perspective

Pratap Saharan

The soil of Bengal has always been fertile ground for political consciousness. Voters here do not merely cast ballots, they write history. What happened on April 23, 2026, in the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly elections is not just an electoral statistic, it is the roar of a collective mandate. A record-breaking 91.78% turnout was recorded in the first phase, the highest voting percentage in the country since independence. This time, after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR?) of the electoral roll, out of a total of 34.4 million voters, around 31.1 million exercised their franchise, expressing deep commitment to democracy.

To uncover the layers behind this historic voting, we must take a comprehensive look at Bengal's political journey over the past two decades.

The Decline of the Left and the Unexpected Rise of the BJP

Numbers speak the clearest language in understanding Bengal's political trajectory. In 2006, when the Left Front won 176 seats with over 50% of the vote, the BJP secured only about 2% votes and not a single seat. In 2011, the wave led by Mamata Banerjee dismantled this seemingly invincible Left fortress. The TMC won 184 seats, yet the BJP remained confined to just 4%. In 2016, the BJP reached 10%, and by 2021, with a 38% vote share, it won 77 seats, emerging as the principal opposition force in Bengal.

This rise is as surprising as it is intriguing. How did the working-class population of Bengal, which had long supported Left ideology, come to stand behind the BJP, a party representing capitalism? The answer lies in a stubborn political instinct within the Bengali psyche that may be described as "making the enemy of one's enemy

a friend." When Mamata Banerjee displaced the Left from power, a section of its traditional working-class supporters turned toward the BJP in opposition to her, aligning with a party that was ideologically their natural adversary.

However, this working-class voter base is inherently humanistic, justice-oriented, and self-respecting. At decisive moments, it cannot consistently align against its own class interests with its natural ideological opponent, and this truth has manifested in the record voting of 2026.

SIR Conspiracy: An Attack on Voting Rights

The most controversial chapter of this election is the process of Special Intensive Revision (SIR). After a record 9.083 million names were deleted from the voter list, the total electorate in West Bengal dropped from 76.6 million to 67.7 million.

Of the 9.082 million voters removed, nearly 57% belong to 10 districts bordering Bangladesh, and about 70% of them are Muslims. This statistic raises a serious question in itself: has a constitutional process become a tool to exclude specific communities from the electoral process?

In Nandigram as well, 95% of those whose names were removed are Muslims. An ASHA worker, Jilloo Nahar Mollah, whose name was present in the voter list in 2002, also found her name deleted. She described it as severe harassment for herself and her family. There are countless such faces bearing the brunt of this process.

Serious questions are being raised over the decision to exclude more than 2.7 million voters. These are not individuals who were removed due to death, migration, or unavailability. They had the right to appeal for inclusion, but in the haste, this right remained unfulfilled.

This seemingly unconstitutional process created a simmering unease among Bengal's working-class and minority voters. That very unease surfaced as the massive crowds seen at polling booths on April 23.

The Humayun Kabir Sting: The Game Exposed

In a controversial video, a prominent Bengal BJP leader, Humayun Kabir, was allegedly heard discussing bargaining with the BJP. The exposure of this alleged attempt to divide Muslim votes triggered a political storm across Bengal.

Analyst Maidul Islam says that minority voters are not standing behind the TMC out of enthusiasm, but out of "fear." They believe that if the vote gets divided, it will directly benefit the BJP. According to Imam Maulana Mohammad Shafiq Qasmi, Muslim voters would not want to "waste" their votes on smaller parties that cannot directly challenge communal forces.

This political awareness became the source of a wave of unity that created new history in the first phase of polling.

Three Lakh Personnel: Security or Occupation?

This time, the security arrangement in West Bengal reached an unprecedented scale. On the instructions of the Election Commission, around 3,000 companies, approximately 300,000 personnel, were deployed, far more than in previous elections.

For comparison, around 100,000 central forces were deployed in last year's Bihar Assembly elections. Even in a sensitive region like Jammu and Kashmir, such large-scale deployment is not usually seen.

The TMC alleges that the heavy deployment of central forces and their mode of operation differ from normal electoral processes. According to the party, the level of security has turned the state into something resembling a "military zone."

Some observers also believe that the stance of the Chief Election Commissioner appears

more like that of a political entity than the head of a constitutional institution.

Even the Election Commission's orders reflected a class bias. In all 152 assembly constituencies of the first phase, the use of motorcycles or scooters was prohibited between 6 PM and 6 AM, and even during the day, pillion riding was not allowed. This contradiction, where two-wheelers, the primary mode of transport for the working class, were restricted while four-wheelers were allowed, did not go unnoticed by the people of Bengal.

The working-class population of Bengal interpreted this unprecedented security deployment as a forced attempt to assert control over the state, and this very interpretation drove millions of voters to polling stations.

Mamata's Real Weapon: Ground-Level Booth Management

Against such vast and multi-layered forces, the biggest strength of the TMC is its booth-level organization, similar to what the BJP possesses in North Indian states. In rural Bengal, schemes like "Lakshmi Bhandar," under which financial assistance is being directly provided to 22.1 million women in the state, are proving to be major game-changers.

From early morning, a unique enthusiasm was visible among voters. Despite the intense heat, long queues were seen at polling booths. Within the first two hours itself, 18.76% voting had already taken place. Birbhum district topped the state with 92.8% turnout, while districts like Cooch Behar and Jhargram also crossed 92%.

This turnout is not just a number, it is evidence of the mass awakening that arises when a society feels that its rights are under threat.

A Public Verdict in an Unequal Battle

Mamata Banerjee succeeded in conveying to her voters that this time their contest is not with an ordinary opposition party, but with a massive force comprising the central government, the entire machinery of the Election Commission, and the support of the judiciary. Political experts

view this record voting as a sign of increasing polarization and active public participation in the state. The ruling TMC sees it as a result of public anger generated against the SIR, while the opposition BJP considers it an indication of impending political change.

Bengal's electoral history shows that sometimes record voting leads to the fall of governments, and at other times it increases the seat share of the ruling party. Therefore, it would be premature to conclude whom higher voting favors. However, what is certain is that the people of Bengal have demonstrated extraordinary political awareness this time.

Conclusion: The Soul of Bengal Speaks

The record voting in the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly elections 2026 is not merely an electoral event. It is an expression of a consciousness that awakens when a historically and politically aware society feels that its

constitutional rights, identity, and autonomy are under attack from multiple directions.

Attempts to remove millions of valid voters through SIR, the exposed conspiracy to divide Muslim votes, the deployment of 300,000 paramilitary personnel, selective restrictions on two-wheelers, all these together shook Bengal's working-class population. And when people are shaken in such a manner, they stand in long queues at polling booths, in scorching heat, waiting for hours, to protect their democratic rights.

The soil of Bengal has once again proven that its people can be intimidated, but not silenced. On May 4, when the results are declared, it will become clear in which direction this mandate flows. But this record turnout has already ensured one thing: the soul of Bengal is alive, and it is still fighting.

The second phase of polling in Bengal will take place on April 29, and the counting of votes will be held on May 4, 2026. 🇮🇳

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Secularism – Contemporary Politics

The term “Secularism,” which we call LaukikaVaadam in Telugu, can be said to be one of the most misunderstood concepts. Across the world, people define secularism in ways that suit their own groups and perspectives. It is a concept that should be widely applied and practiced across all aspects of human life—social, economic, political, and cultural. Yet, it is strange that it has been confined largely to the political sphere.

The word “Secularism” originates from the Latin word saeculum, meaning “present age,” “generation,” or “temporal”—that is, something related to this world. Thus, secularism is a philosophical outlook that concerns itself with worldly matters. It emerged prominently during the 18th century, especially in the context of the French Revolution. Thinkers like Holyoake and Charles Bradlaugh defined secularism as the study of material, natural reality, having no connection with religion. Bradlaugh further stated that secularism does not accept religions that lack evidence.

Modern rationalist- humanist philosopher RavipudiVenkataadri explained that secularism deals with this world alone. The idea of another world, living for it, or striving to reach it is considered meaningless in secular thought. In contrast, religions fundamentally focus on the otherworldly and the metaphysical, making them non-secular.

The term “Secularism” was first coined in 1840 by Holyoake, a British atheist, to express the extension of free thought into ethics. Interestingly, the term “Science” also came into common use around the same time. The aim of science is to study the material world and liberate humans from natural forces through knowledge. Similarly, secularism advocates living a free, happy life in this world based on scientific truths. Both science and secularism ultimately focus on ensuring a joyful and free human life in this world.

The Renaissance in Europe, which followed the Dark Ages in the 16th century, profoundly influenced human life. As Ravipudi stated, “The emergence of modern science introduced a secular outlook into human



K. Srinivasa Chary

life.” This implies that as science grows, secular thinking should also expand. However, our experience shows that this has not fully happened.

Human beings are rational by nature; hence they become moral. Because they are moral, they seek freedom. Morality arises only when more than one person exists. When individuals with similar traits live together in a defined space and time with shared goals, they form groups. Within groups, norms and rules emerge to regulate interactions—this is where morality originates. Sociology explains that while society controls individuals, the human desire for freedom pushes them to act independently. The conflict between control and freedom leads to the formation of structured norms, traditions, and eventually religions.

Religions, which evolved from social group structures, have grown significantly over time. However, the human desire for freedom is innate—it is like psychological breath. As humans overcame natural challenges, their sense of freedom strengthened. That is why M. N. Roy described human history as a “history of struggles for freedom.”

Various thinkers have defined secularism differently. Holyoake described it as a system of duty based on human considerations in this life. Nehru stated that secularism does not mean

irreligion but equal respect for all religions. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar emphasized that the state should not recognize any religion as its official religion. Political scientist Donald Smith defined a secular state as one that guarantees freedom of religion to individuals and groups. M. N. Roy viewed secularism as rooted in humanism—placing human values above religion. Einstein believed that ethics should be based on human needs, not religious doctrines.

From all these definitions, it is clear that secularism is not merely the separation of religion from the state, but a humanist system ensuring equality, freedom, and dignity for all. It rejects discrimination and concentration of power based on religion.

In contemporary politics, secularism faces serious challenges. In a diverse country like India, it is essential for coexistence. The Constitution, shaped by Ambedkar, guarantees religious freedom while keeping the state separate from religion. It promotes equality, freedom, and social justice.

However, today politics is increasingly intertwined with religion. Religion has become a vote bank. Political parties exploit religious sentiments to divide people and gain power. As a result, essential issues like employment, education, healthcare, and infrastructure are neglected. People themselves are drawn toward religious identity rather than human values, which is a worrying trend.

Globally too, secularism is under threat. Political forces use identity politics—“us vs them”—to divide societies. Religious superiority narratives are being promoted openly. Social media amplifies hatred and misinformation, further deepening divisions.

History is being distorted to suit religious narratives, and religion is increasingly commercialized.

Institutions meant to control extremism often fail due to internal and external pressures. Today, politics and religion operate together,

confusing people and expanding their influence.

Many even question the need for secularism, arguing for religious states. But without secularism, democracy weakens. True democracy requires equal citizenship beyond religious identity.

Nehru envisioned India as a scientific, secular, progressive nation. While some progress was made, the vision remains incomplete. As secularism grows, humanism strengthens, leading to cooperation, equality, and protection of human rights.

To protect secularism, education must promote scientific and rational thinking. Media must provide accurate and unbiased information. Laws against hate speech must be enforced strictly. Most importantly, public awareness must increase, prioritizing humanity over religion.

Secularism is not just a political idea—it is the foundation of equality, freedom, and human dignity. While it faces challenges today, its importance has only increased. Religion can divide humanity, but secularism unites people across boundaries.

Ambedkar said that democracy requires people to decide who governs. M. N. Roy added that power must ultimately return to the people. Like a fountain that draws water and returns it to its source, democracy must function by empowering citizens.

Secularism is often misunderstood as equal respect for all religions, but true secularism is beyond religion altogether. It emphasizes freedom of thought and human-centered living.

Globally, secularism faces two major challenges:

- (A) The rise of religion-based politics and nationalism.
- (B) Excessive state control in the name of secularism, limiting religious freedom.

In India, while the Constitution still protects secularism, challenges are growing. Majority religious politics is rising rapidly. Policies like

the Citizenship Amendment Act have raised concerns about religious bias. Reports indicate increasing discrimination and violence against minorities.

Technology and social media are being misused to spread hate and misinformation. Even voices supporting secularism are sometimes suppressed. Human Rights organizations observe that secularism is increasingly being redefined as appeasement or “equal respect for all religions,” diluting its original meaning.

The situation is not entirely bleak, but tensions exist. India’s constitutional framework remains strong, yet the spirit of secularism is weakening.

Ultimately, secularism is not threatened by systems alone but by people’s attitudes. If people think rationally and live humanistically, secularism will thrive. If religion dominates politics, secularism will remain only on paper.

Throughout history, many who advocated rationalism and secularism faced persecution. Socrates was executed, Bruno was burned, and Galileo was imprisoned. In modern times, Salman Rushdie faced assassination attempts, Taslima Nasrin was exiled, and several Indian rationalists like Narendra Dabholkar, Govind Pansare, Kalburgi, and Gauri Lankesh were killed.

These attacks arise from intolerance toward

questioning and the politicization of religion. Yet, ideas cannot be killed—they grow stronger.

Globally, many thinkers and activists have promoted secularism, rationalism, and humanism. Among them are John Locke, Voltaire, Thomas Paine, Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Carl Sagan, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and Christopher Hitchens. In India, leaders like Ambedkar, Nehru, Periyar, and Ravigudi Venkataadri contributed significantly.

Organizations like Humanists International, Center for Inquiry, and Freedom From Religion Foundation continue this work worldwide.

Finally, secularism is not sustained by individuals alone. It is a collective consciousness. Our shared goal must be: Religion should remain personal; the state must remain equal for all.

(Date: April 14, 2026 — Full text of the speech delivered by K. Srinivasa Chary, President of the Telangana Rationalist Association, Psychology lecturer, and assistant editor of “Hetuvadi,” as part of the Ravigudi Venkataadri Memorial Speech-2 at the Radical Humanist Center, Inkollu, on the occasion of the 20th death anniversary of the land donor Late Ravi Subbarao.) 🇮🇳

K. Srinivasa Chary President,
Telangana Rationalist Association
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Articles/Reports for The Radical Humanist

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- Mahi Pal Singh,
Editor, The Radical Humanist

A new tool to increase Hate Politics: ‘Pigs as Pets’

“In Delhi’s Tri Nagar, some Hindu families appear to have embraced a new form of devotion and a way to deter Muslim neighbours — pigs. The animals are kept in cages at homes, while the walls display posters of a powerful, pig-faced deity adorned in jewellery, much like other gods. “ This is happening in the locality near the Muslim locality. The Pigs in the cage are named Abdul or Rahman or some such name and when any Muslim passes by these words are shouted loudly. Parallel to this is the well decorated, adorned with armaments picture of Lord Varaha, supposed to be the third reincarnation of Lord Vishnu. While some claim that this trend has started from a year ago, others hold that this is just a few months old phenomenon. The dislike of Muslims for pigs is well known and this is a method to provoke Muslims in some way. Such techniques are usually applied as a prelude to creating the walls of hatred amongst the communities.

One does not know whose fertile and hateful imagination has started this trend, one does not know whether this is restricted to only one locality in Delhi, but surely the danger of that this, one more divisive tool will be picked up in more places adding to the armamentarium of those who benefit from spreading hate and thereby violence. Interestingly, Islamophobia has become a dominant global phenomenon after 9/11, propagated by the US media by coining the phrase Islamic terrorism. So, it was eye opening and interesting to find that a similar thing took place in New York, in front of the House of its mayor Zohran Mamdani. “Last month, MAGA supporters in New York organised a pig roast in front of Muslim mayor Zohran Mamdani’s office. But the funniest part about such incidents remains that they’re based on a misunderstanding rooted in

ignorance.

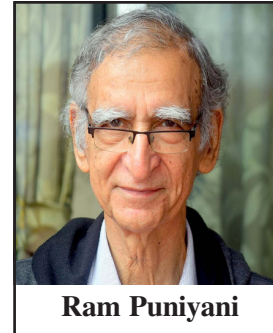
Hindus and Christians can eat all the pork they want and keep pigs as pets—that does not bother Muslims.”

In the last few years pig was not much of a pretext, it

was cow which dominated the scene. The pig was used as an instrument for communal politics during the freedom struggle by the communal forces. That time pig and cow both were in the forefront as the pretext of instigating violence. One recalls the outstanding mini serial ‘Tamas’ by Govind Nihalani, based on the award-winning book by Bhishm Shaani. In this story Nathu, an outcaste is given some money by the Muslim politician to kill a pig and put it in the mosque. The communal politician is very clear that this will lead to the violence, increasing his social -political stature.

In recent times there have been scattered incidents in which beef was kept in the temples to instigate the violence. In most of the cases it was Bajrang Dal activists who had kept the beef. “Four people including Moradabad district president of Bajrang Dal Monu Bishnoi have been arrested by the Uttar Pradesh Police for slaughtering a cow and trying to implicate a Muslim man in a false case. They have also been accused of conspiring against the police.” Lot of cases of vigilante groups have been arrested for attacking those carrying cattle. There is a big chain of such vigilante groups making merry in the name of opposing cow slaughter.

As such the cow related violence has led to the emergence of a phenomenon of lynching. There are horrific cases and over



Ram Puniyani

100 lynching has taken place during last 10 years. Starting from Pehlu Khan in Dadri the intensity of lynching has been reaching very horrific proportions. All these cases are heart wrenching. One of Junaid is particularly very disturbing. “16-year-old boy Junaid Khan along with his brother was riding on a train. He was asked to provide a seat by an elderly man which he immediately did. But subsequently a crowd of 25 men surrounded him and began chanting “beefeaters” and “Pakistani”.⁹ Junaid was stabbed and died.”

What one is disturbed about is how the communal forces devise new mechanisms to create hatred after which violence follows. A lot has been written on Hate speech by those indulging in communal politics. While right from P.M. downwards new hate slogans are floated and passed downward, the foot soldiers of these tendencies take it further down and make the life of Hindus and Muslim communities more miserable as after this they cannot live in the neighbourhood. They are more troubled after such incidents. The famous one from PM like ‘Hum do, Hamare do’ (we two ours two), to they can be recognised by their clothes. From Adityanath’s batenge to Katenge (If we (Hindus) are divided) we will be killed) are supplemented by equally dangerous one’s from the likes of Akbaruddin Owaisi, who had said that if police is withdrawn

for even 15 minutes the Muslims will show their real might. “In a highly controversial speech delivered in Adilabad in December 2012, AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi remarked that if the police were removed for 15 minutes, his community (referring to “25 crore Muslims”) would demonstrate their strength against “100 crore” Hindus.”

The most disturbing aspect of present introduction of Pig (Varaha) in the political battle ground of communalism is the capacity of the divisive forces to introduce newer mechanisms into their politics. The intercommunity closeness which was hallmark of our culture of Ganga jamunitehzeeb (Syncretic culture) is going down for a toss. This pig element will ensure that Hindus and Muslims can’t even live in the neighbourhood. Already Muslims are being forced into living in ghettos; with the pig elements coming in; being introduced by this new social engineering now the partitions between the communities (Hindus-Muslims) will become wider unless we nip it in the bud, unless we ensure that the artificially introduced adoption of pigs by Hindus is not discouraged. People are free to choose their pets and Gods so far, they don’t cross the limits to humiliate the other community. Just a reminder Lord Varaha had come as a saviour, the adoption of pigs in the present manner will have negative implications. 🇮🇳

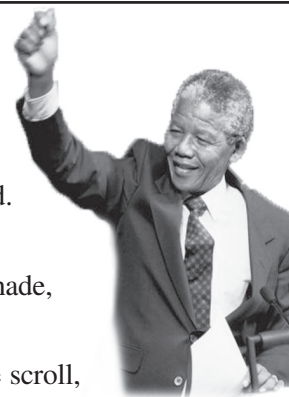
I am the Captain fo my Soul

Out of the night that covers me, Black as the from pole to pole,
I think whatever gods my be, for my unconquerable soul.

In the Fell clutch of circumstance, I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance, My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears, Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years, Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate, How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate : I am the captain of my soul.



- : Nelson Mandela

National Song Bande Mataram at Crossroads of Patriotism and Secularism

Bimal Chatterjee

Taking 1876 as the year of writing of the song 'Vande Mataram' on the occasion of said to be its 150th anniversary on 28th January, 2026 the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a directive made effective from 11th February, 2026 that in all official functions all the six stanzas of the song must first be sung and thereafter the National Anthem 'Jana Gana Mana'. No possible reason has been assigned to why National song has to be sung first instead of the national anthem. It is to be noted that the directive is said to have been issued under Part IV-A, Article 51A(a) of the Constitution i.e., under the chapter on Fundamental Duties. At the same time it is also to be noted that as against fundamental rights under Chapter-III of the Constitution which are enforceable by writ, Fundamental Duties like Directive Principles of our Constitution are not enforceable by writ. They can only be promoted by the Constitutional method.

The directive has invited criticism in general and more particularly from Muslim organisations, namely, Jamait Ulama-i-Hind and All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on a number of grounds including that the directive is (i) a blanket attack on freedom of religion guaranteed by the constitution, (ii) against secular values, and (iii) in conflict with the religious belief of Muslims. Muslims strengthened their objections by adding that Muslims do not prevent anyone singing or playing the song but its last two stanzas are based on Hindu religious beliefs which depict the homeland as 'deities' contradicting the fundamental belief of monotheistic religions and since Muslims worship only one Allah forcing them to sing the song is a clear violation of constitutional rights protected under Article 25 of the Constitution. The directive is therefore

unacceptable to Muslims as being directly in conflict with their religious faith. Very recently people belonging to other minority communities residing in the north-eastern states have also raised objections on similar grounds.

In respect of the 'directive' a few factual corrections demand our attention. First, nobody really knows when the song was in fact written but from the contemporaneous circumstances inferentially it can be deduced that it was written sometime in 1874 or 1875 but not in 1876. Professor Amitrasudan Bhattacharya who is an acclaimed authority on life and works of the author of the said song i.e. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in his authentic book 'Bankimchandra Jiboni' has said that from a writing of Sri Aurobindo one could know that the song was written sometime in 1874 or in 1875 although no exact date could be fixed. Thus we came to know that it was certainly not written in 1876. It is not revealed to us how and wherefrom the concerned Ministry could find 11th February, 1876 to be the date of writing of the song. The source of the Ministry's declared knowledge not being disclosed the fixation of date by the ministry is shrouded in misty. The opposition parties sniff vote politics behind the directive. It is also to be noted that Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay was out and out a Bengali born and brought-up in Bengal. He was an outstanding Bengali litterateur who had also good knowledge of Sanskrit. He spent all his life in Bengal. It is further to be noted that Bengalees never pronounce or spell 'Bande' (meaning: I worship) as 'Vande'. In the directive also the mistake has been repeated by spelling Bande as Vande. Lastly, in contrast with the past practice at official functions instead of all six stanzas only the first two stanzas of the song

used to be sung. No reason has been assigned for the change. Singing of six stanzas needs longer time. Singing of six stanzas instead of two does not and cannot indicate any degree or grade of love for and devotion to homeland. On 24th January 1950 in the Constituent Assembly in charge of drafting of the constitution the President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad announced that 'Jana Gana Mana' (written by Rabindra Nath Tagore) would be the 'National Anthem' of India and the song 'Vande Mataram' would be honoured equally with national anthem and shall have equal status. At the end of the said sitting first the national anthem and thereafter the national song were sung by all led respectively by Smt. Purnima Banerjee and Sri Laxmikanta Maitra.

'Bande Mataram' is evidently written in sanskritised Bengali language. It is a patriotic song. It means 'I worship thee, Mother' or 'I bow to thee, Mother'. Who is his mother? The mother is his homeland, the country or place of his birth. How depicting homeland as an object of worship affect any religion however could not be appreciated. The song has in all six stanzas. From the tenor of the objections it seems that the first four stanzas are less unacceptable to the objectors but the last two stanzas which resort to imagining the place of birth as Hindu goddesses Durga, Laxmi and Saraswati are more unacceptable to them. Naming of Hindu Goddesses are all imageries. Hindu Goddess Durga is worshipped as annihilator of evils, Laxmi as the Goddess of wealth and prosperity, and Saraswati as the Goddess of learning. All these three imagery superpowers and others seem to have been rolled into one in Allah or God so far as objectors are concerned. Its seems that to them there is an apparent division between less unacceptable stanzas and more unacceptable stanzas of the song. If the directive is accordingly modified limited to singing of first four stanzas only instead of singing all the six, the modified directive willy nilly may be acceptable to them.

The Congress leader Shashi Tharoor advises "don't force 'Bande Mataram'. Nationalism must include dissenter and also the quiet observer. ... Patriotism is a sentiment of the heart; ... it cannot be legislated on the tongue." He being a leader a political party his advice for resolution of the controversy may seem to some to be appeasement of Muslims. There is no gainsaying that there cannot be any dissenter in 'patriotism' although there may be dissenter in nationalism. Patriotism also does not admit of any divisibility although nationalism may.

A fundamental question legitimately begs an answer at this stage. Which of the two between homeland and religion should have ideally first loyalty of an individual? The homeland, the country where he is born, brought up and domiciled or his religious faith acquired after his birth? To which he owes his debt and allegiance first? Is it to his homeland or to his religion? The answer seems to be 'homeland'. Is there any contradiction between patriotism and religious faith? There is no contradiction between patriotism and religious faith. Patriotism does not also have any contradiction with nationalism. Although both may have their origin in spontaneous feeling of an individual. Patriotism has no religion.

A child born to a Hindu family is automatically a Hindu and no ceremony religious or any other is necessary for him to be a Hindu. Except in Hindu religion almost in all other religions one is required to undergo a religious ceremony to belong to a particular religion. In other words he needs to be baptised or affiliated in that religion in a religious ceremony to belong to the said religion. Therefore until he is so baptised he does not belong to any religion but that does not prevent him from belonging to his homeland since his birth. In point of time even his nationality comes later than his patriotic feeling and only thereafter his faith or religion, if any. Until his baptism he has no faith, no religion.

(To be Contd....on Page -35)

Constitutional Morality in India: An Ambedkarite Essay on Its Concept and Violations Since Independence

S.R. Darapuri

The idea of constitutional morality occupies a central place in the democratic vision of B. R. Ambedkar, who regarded it as indispensable for the successful functioning of a constitutional democracy in India. For Ambedkar, the Constitution was not merely a legal document but a moral and political framework that required a corresponding ethical culture among both rulers and citizens. Constitutional morality, therefore, goes beyond formal adherence to laws; it demands a deep respect for democratic values, institutional integrity, and the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable. However, the trajectory of post-independence India reveals a persistent gap between constitutional ideals and political practice, raising important questions about the viability of constitutional morality in a deeply hierarchical society.

Ambedkar borrowed the term “constitutional morality” from George Grote, who used it to describe adherence to constitutional forms and procedures in ancient Greek democracies (Grote 1862). Yet Ambedkar significantly expanded the concept to suit the Indian context. For him, constitutional morality was not limited to procedural fidelity but encompassed a broader commitment to justice, equality, liberty, and fraternity. It required those in power to exercise restraint, respect institutional boundaries, and act in accordance with the spirit rather than merely the letter of the Constitution. Ambedkar emphasized that such morality is not innate but must be cultivated through education and practice, warning that without it, even the best-designed Constitution could fail (Ambedkar 1948).

At the core of Ambedkar’s conception lies the principle of the supremacy of the

Constitution. In a society historically governed by religious texts and caste norms, this principle was revolutionary. It implied that all social practices, however deeply entrenched, must yield to constitutional values. This was closely linked to his insistence on institutional integrity. Ambedkar envisioned a system of checks and balances in which the legislature, executive, and judiciary would function within clearly defined limits. Any encroachment by one organ upon another would undermine the constitutional order and lead to arbitrariness (Austin 1966).

Equally significant was Ambedkar’s concern with minority rights and the dangers of majoritarianism. In a caste-based society, numerical majority could easily translate into social domination. Constitutional morality, therefore, required robust safeguards to protect minorities from the tyranny of the majority. This concern was rooted in his broader commitment to the rule of law, which demands equality before law and the absence of arbitrary power (Dicey 1959). However, Ambedkar went beyond liberal constitutionalism by emphasizing fraternity as a necessary moral foundation. Without a sense of social solidarity, he argued, liberty and equality would remain fragile and superficial. The persistence of caste hierarchy, which denies basic human dignity to large sections of society, posed a fundamental challenge to the realization of constitutional morality (Omvedt 1994).

Ambedkar’s warning to the Constituent Assembly on the eve of the Constitution’s adoption remains one of the most prescient critiques of Indian democracy. He cautioned that political democracy could not endure without

social democracy and described Indian society as “essentially undemocratic.” He also warned against hero-worship in politics, which he believed could lead to dictatorship (Ambedkar 1949). These concerns have proved remarkably relevant in the decades since independence, as India has witnessed repeated violations of constitutional morality.

One of the most striking examples was the period of Emergency declared by Indira Gandhi in India. During this time, fundamental rights were suspended, political opposition was suppressed, and press freedom was severely curtailed. Although these actions were carried out within a formal legal framework, they represented a profound violation of constitutional morality, demonstrating how constitutional provisions can be manipulated to undermine democratic principles (Austin 1999). The Emergency highlighted the fragility of democratic institutions and the dangers of concentrating power in the executive. Even the present Modi rule is said to be an undeclared emergency.

Another significant area of concern has been the misuse of Article 356, which allows for the dismissal of state governments. While constitutionally sanctioned, its frequent use for political purposes undermined federalism and violated the spirit of the Constitution (Arora 1995). Similarly, the rise of majoritarian politics has posed a serious challenge to constitutional morality. The increasing influence of religious nationalism in public life has affected minority rights and weakened the principle of secularism. From an Ambedkarite perspective, such developments represent a fundamental departure from the egalitarian vision of the Constitution and reinforce existing social hierarchies (Jaffrelot 2003).

The persistence of caste inequality further underscores the limitations of constitutional morality in practice. Despite constitutional guarantees, caste-based discrimination and

violence continue to affect Dalits and other marginalized communities. This reflects a deep contradiction between political democracy and social reality. As scholars have argued, the Constitution operates within a society that often resists its transformative goals (Guru 2009). Ambedkar himself recognized this tension and insisted that social reform was essential for the success of political democracy.

Institutional erosion has also contributed to the weakening of constitutional morality. Concerns about judicial independence, the declining quality of legislative deliberation, and the politicization of executive agencies have raised questions about the functioning of democratic institutions. These developments undermine the system of checks and balances that is central to constitutional governance (Mehta 2003). Electoral distortions, including the influence of money and the criminalization of politics, further weaken democratic accountability (Chhibber and Nooruddin 2004).

The curtailment of civil liberties represents another area where constitutional morality has been compromised. Restrictions on dissent, including the use of sedition and anti-terror laws, have raised concerns about the protection of fundamental rights. Ambedkar viewed dissent as an essential component of democracy, and its suppression contradicts the spirit of constitutional morality (Baxi 1982).

Despite these challenges, there have been instances where constitutional morality has been upheld, particularly through judicial intervention. The Supreme Court of India has invoked the concept in several landmark judgments, emphasizing the primacy of constitutional values over social norms. These decisions reflect an ongoing struggle to realize Ambedkar’s vision in a complex and evolving society.


From an Ambedkarite perspective, the persistent violations of constitutional morality are not merely the result of individual failures but are rooted in structural conditions. The continued

dominance of caste hierarchy, the absence of social and economic democracy, and the concentration of power in elite groups all contribute to the erosion of constitutional values. Moreover, the lack of widespread constitutional awareness among citizens limits the capacity for democratic accountability.

The restoration of constitutional morality, therefore, requires more than institutional reform. It demands a fundamental transformation of society. Ambedkar's call for the annihilation of caste remains central to this project. Without addressing the structural inequalities that shape social relations, constitutional values cannot be fully realized. At the same time, efforts to promote constitutional education and civic awareness are essential for cultivating a democratic culture. Strengthening institutions, protecting dissent, and promoting ethical political leadership are equally important.

In conclusion, constitutional morality remains one of Ambedkar's most profound contributions to democratic thought. It highlights the ethical foundations of constitutional governance and underscores the importance of social transformation for the success of democracy. The experience of independent India reveals a persistent gap between constitutional ideals and social realities, reflecting the challenges of implementing a transformative Constitution in a deeply hierarchical society. Ambedkar's warning about the fragility of democracy continues to resonate, reminding us that the survival of constitutional governance depends not only on legal structures but on the moral commitment of society.

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The Radical Humanist on Website

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

– Mahi Pal Singh

Legal Article :

University Cannot Curb Peaceful Protests Or Expression Of Ideas: Delhi HC

Sanjeev Sirohi

It is definitely in the fitness of things that while upholding the right to peaceful protests or expression of ideas, the Delhi High Court in a most learned, laudable, landmark, logical and latest judgment titled *Nadia vs Dr BR Ambedkar University* in W.P. (C) 12636/2025 & CM APPL. 12470/2026 that was pronounced just recently on 13.03.2026 has minced absolutely just no words to hold in no uncertain terms that a university cannot curb peaceful protests or the expression of ideas merely because the views voiced by students do not align with the ideology of the management. It must be noted that the Single Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Mr Justice Jasmeet Singh made the observation while setting aside a disciplinary action taken by Dr BR Ambedkar University in Delhi against a student who was accused of participating in a campus protest. We thus see that the Delhi High Court allowed the student's petition challenging two university orders issued in June and August 2025 that had led to her expulsion from the institution. It held indubitably that the punishment imposed by the university was "highly disproportionate" and could not be sustained in law.

At the very outset, this brief, brilliant, bold and balanced judgment authored by the Single Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Mr Justice Jasmeet Singh sets the ball in motion by first and foremost putting forth in para 1 that, "This is a writ petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking the following prayers:

"a. Issue a Writ of Certiorari or any other appropriate Writ/Direction/Order quashing the Impugned Order dated 27.06.2025 passed by

the Respondent University; AND

b. Issue a Writ of Certiorari or any other appropriate Writ/Direction/Order quashing the Impugned Order dated 11.08.2025 passed by the Respondent University;

c. Pass such further orders as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit in the facts and circumstances of the captioned Petition;".

To put things in perspective, the Bench envisages in para 2 that, "The brief facts of the case are that the petitioner is a student in the respondent University. The present controversy arises from serious allegations by a student enrolled in Global Studies at the respondent University, being subjected to severe ragging, bullying including derogatory, vicious and gender insensitive remarks, which had driven the student to self-harm. The petitioner lodged complaints and protests which led to the suspension of the petitioner."

Be it noted, the Bench notes in para 4 that, "Thereafter, as per the respondent the petitioner participated in another campus wide boycott led by AUDSC as a result of which the respondent issued a show cause notice dated 27.05.2025, wherein the petitioner was put to notice as to the participation in a protest in violation of the order dated 15.04.2025 of this Court. Hence, a breach of student code of discipline. The petitioner duly replied to the said notice on 03.06.2025, wherein the petitioner explained that the petitioner holds the highest regard for the orders passed by this Court and did not participate in any protest and she was merely present at the protest site to meet a friend during which a photograph of her had been clicked by the security."

Most remarkably, the Bench points out in para 7 holding that, “The petitioner has been expelled as a disciplinary measure for participating in a sit down protest. In the present case the act of the respondent University, i.e. penalisation of a sit down protest is wholly untenable in law. It strikes at the very heart of spirit of democracy and freedom of speech and right of peacefully assembly protected under the Article 19 (1) (a) and (b) of the Constitution of India.”

While citing relevant case law, the Bench points out in para 8 that, “In Ramlila Maidan Incident, In Re (2012) 5 SCC 1 the Hon’ble Supreme Court reiterated the right of peaceful protest and the relevant paragraph read as under:

“295. The right to peacefully and lawfully assemble together and to freely express oneself coupled with the right to know about such expression is guaranteed under Article 19 of the Constitution of India. Such a right is inherent and is also coupled with the right to freedom and liberty which have been conferred under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.””

While citing yet another relevant case law, the Bench observes in para 9 that, “In Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan v. Union of India, (2018) 17 SCC 324 the Hon’ble Supreme Court reiterated that right to protest is a fundamental right under Constitution of India and is a crucial pillar of democracy. The relevant observations reads as under:

“54. The right to protest is, thus, recognised as a fundamental right under the Constitution. This right is crucial in a democracy which rests on participation of an informed citizenry in governance. This right is also crucial since it strengthens representative democracy by enabling direct participation in public affairs where individuals and groups are able to express dissent and grievances, expose the flaws in governance and demand accountability from the State authorities as well as powerful entities.

This right is crucial in a vibrant democracy like India but more so in the Indian context to aid in the assertion of the rights of the marginalised and poorly represented minorities.”

Most rationally, the Bench propounds in para 10 holding that, “A school/university is an instrumentality of the State and carries out an indispensable public function, that is, shaping the makers of tomorrow. The University cannot restrict speech and peaceful expression of ideas, merely because the views expressed by a group of students do not align with the ideology of the management.”

Most significantly and so also most commendably, the Bench encapsulates in para 11 what constitutes the cornerstone of this notable judgment postulating precisely that, “A university is not just a place where students just attend classes and complete courses. It is also a space where students are expected to learn and inculcate independent thought processes, ability to ask questions, and engage in critical thinking. For this reason, a university must create an atmosphere where students feel free to express their views and participate in discussions on academic or public issues. Peaceful protest and non-violent dissent are a natural part of such an environment. When students express disagreement in a peaceful and orderly manner, without violence or serious disruption, such conduct cannot be treated as something outside the scope of holistic development. On the contrary, it reflects the very spirit of freedom to engage in discourse and discussions that a university is expected to encourage.”

Most forthrightly, the Bench points out in para 12 holding precisely that, “A university that accepts only obedience and discourages protests and criticism would fail in its broader educational role. The role of the university is not to suppress every form of dissent, but to ensure that such expression is answered and catered to.”

It is worth noting that the Bench notes in para 13 that, “In this backdrop, in the present case the respondents contend that the petitioner was taking part in a sit-down protest and the same has been denied by the petitioner. Even assuming that the petitioner was taking part in the peaceful sit-down protest against withdrawal of arbitrary show cause notices, revocation of suspensions, restoration of timing, and expulsion of the petitioner from university for participation in a peaceful protest is a highly disproportionate disciplinary action.”

It would be instructive to note that the Bench hastens to add in para 14 noting that, “The order impugned is also predicated on the fact that the petitioner has violated the Court order dated 15.04.2025. The punishment for violating a Court order does not lie with the respondent University but only with this Court. It is expected that the University would not suppress a peaceful protests, as long as it does not interfere in the functioning of the University and academic pursuits of the other students.”

It would be worthwhile to note that the Bench notes in para 15 that, “In the present case, there are no allegations that the so-called peaceful protest by the petitioner resulted in interfering with the functioning of the respondent University or academic pursuits of other students. The action has been taken for violation of the order dated 16.04.2025 of the respondent

University which, in turn, was based on the order dated 15.04.2025 by this Court, which for the reasons stated above, is not proper.”

As a corollary, the Bench then directs and holds in para 16 that, “Hence, I am of the view that the punishment imposed on the petitioner is highly disproportionate to her alleged actions and cannot be sustained. Hence, the petition is allowed.”

Finally, the Bench then concludes by directing and holding in para 17 that, “However, the petitioner has already missed one year of her academic career and the clock cannot be turned back. Treating the said period as a punishment, it is directed that the petitioner shall be permitted to resume studies from 3rd Semester in July, 2026.”

In a nutshell, we thus see that the Delhi High Court has made it indubitably clear that universities cannot curb peaceful protests over ideological differences. It was also made crystal clear that the University cannot restrict speech and peaceful expression of ideas merely because the views expressed by a group of students do not align with the ideology of the management. While holding clearly that the penalty imposed was disproportionate to the alleged conduct, the Delhi High Court set aside the earlier orders and allowed the petition. Very rightly so!

Sanjeev Sirohi is an Advocate. 🌈

What is Humanism

Humanism is a philosophy and a mental attitude which gives primacy to the human individual and recognises his or her right to live in freedom and with dignity. It believes that “the human individual is the measure of all things”. Humanism opposes the sacrifice of individuals at the altar of any imaginary collective ego like a nation or class. Historically as well as logically, humanism is the philosophy of democracy.

(From the Preamble to the **Constitution of Indian Radical Humanist Association**)

The Self-Imposed Cocoon

(.....continued from the last issue)

He Wan

Indeed, the practical path forward is now crystal clear. As the current cradle of revolution, India's numerous radical groups and revolutionary activists can quickly put this new theory into practice and make it a reality. This process is unlikely to encounter significant resistance—even India's conservative factions will likely adopt a wait-and-see attitude, much like their counterparts in the West. Therefore, the initial results of this practice will be the key to success. If the early outcomes are promising, the subsequent development will be unstoppable. Within a decade, the basic framework of a new social model will be established. With this success as a foundation, the global promotion and realization of this model will take only another ten years. But where does my confidence in this grand vision come from? It stems from the unprecedented correctness and comprehensiveness of my theory. There is no doubt that throughout history, all so-called "successful revolutions"—without the guidance of a correct theory—were achieved through brutal, violent struggle. And after their victory, they inevitably degenerated into the very systems they sought to overthrow, becoming the target of future revolutions. Why does this inevitable phenomenon occur? Because the validity of a revolutionary theory is self-evident. The ruling elite may not know what the ultimate truth is, but they certainly have the ability to recognize whether a theory is fundamentally flawed. A truly universal truth will not harm their interests, nor will it incite class conflict. Instead, it will use human-made fair laws to unleash the potential and energy of every individual—ensuring that both the elite and the masses can achieve the greatest possible good: a happy, eternal home for humanity!

Given the current situation and development

status, what we need to do now, to be specific, is merely to deepen, upgrade and reform Locke's theory and its corresponding social model. This can be primarily achieved by addressing the major theoretical flaw in his framework through ontology—a fundamental issue that no philosopher has yet resolved, namely, faith. In this way, the social model will naturally undergo a fundamental transformation. With a thorough spiritual transformation, people will develop a strong sense of self-awareness, and above all, eradicate the biggest obstacle: fraud and deception. Only then can the existing social structure be optimized to its fullest potential. Only when cognition, ideology and standards are unified can the legitimacy of elections be guaranteed, rather than being a mere decision by majority vote. The subject of elections will also shift from political parties to individuals, rendering factionalism unnecessary. At the same time, this unification can ensure that rules serve all people, not just a privileged minority. Through mutual assistance, collaboration and long-term planning, we can optimize social relations and maximize overall efficiency. It is evident from this that the cornerstone of the capitalist social system established by Locke—that property shall not be publicly owned, and rights shall not be privately appropriated—remains intact. This indicates that its underlying logic is absolutely correct; what needs to be changed are only the aimless forms, unregulated methods and short-sighted approaches. In other words, by converting natural laws into humanistic laws through real knowledge, we can attain the optimal social state. In any case, the core tenets of this theory have now been elaborated. As long as there is no significant deviation in practice, success will be achieved rapidly. Truly,

all is in place; what we need now is nothing but practice.

If we further elaborate this practical process, I have already laid out a concrete path and plan in my article “Two Fundamental Criteria: Man and Reason”, which can also be regarded as the general program of the practical theory. Here, I aim to clarify the entire practical process, promote the early implementation of the theory by simplifying the complex, and plan to basically achieve the overall goal within 30 years.

The first step is to make this theory accessible to every Indian and identify like-minded individuals. Participants are distinguished neither by class nor social status, but only by ideological alignment.

The second step is to connect and organize these like-minded people, establish the Community, and secure an independent sphere of development. The core feature of this model is the construction of an independent internal self-circulating system, which minimizes external interference and enables rapid, stable progress. This is its greatest departure from all previous models: past revolutions typically sought to gather as many people as possible to benefit the success of revolutionary leaders. By contrast, this project is parallel and ultimate-oriented: first, it ensures that every member succeeds — your success is inherently my success; second, in the early stage, priority goes to maintaining the purity of the group, focusing on a capable, committed core rather than sheer numbers, so as to form a solid foundation; third, only after achieving tangible results will we gradually guide and influence those who have not yet caught up, in a step-by-step manner. There is therefore no need to develop alongside those with conflicting aspirations and incompatible ideas. This approach avoids internal friction; and since there is no intention to exploit anyone, there is simply no need for those who cannot yet understand this vision.

The third step is to establish and perfect the

Community’s full operational system. While directional theoretical guidance is already in place, actual operation requires detailed organizational structures and rules, supported by specialized knowledge across various fields. This independently functioning system will encompass religion, politics, economy, culture, healthcare, scientific research, and education, forming a comprehensive social mechanism. Of course, this community is not confined to a single geographical area; its members may be widely dispersed. They only need to uphold the same system, abide by the same rules, and enjoy the corresponding internal benefits. At the same time, the community cannot exist in complete isolation from society at large. Thus, on the basis of the internal self-circulating system, separate rules and plans must be developed for connecting and interacting constructively with the external social system.

The fourth step is to gradually replicate and expand this mature, self-sufficient system to the whole of society, ultimately fulfilling the goal: enabling every individual to realize the highest meaning and value of life — that is, supreme well-being and happiness. Humanity ultimately faces the monumental task of conquering the universe and building an eternal home. Without this, all else is empty rhetoric. Achieving it demands the strength and wisdom of all humanity. Humanity must therefore unify, unite, create together, and advance together. Only within a symbiotic structure of mutual inclusion can we attain the ultimate purpose, meaning, and happiness.

Ultimately, it is perhaps best to put it this way: the role and function of religion are something that science can never replace. Essentially, one is the software of spiritual order, charting the course for human progress; the other is the hardware of material tools, forging the vessels of advancement. To put it another way, one is the designer, and the other is the builder. The gravest practical problem, however,

is that this path has never been clearly defined—indeed, it has been utterly misdirected. Consequently, no matter how powerful our tools become, the world is doomed to chaos, suffering, futility, and above all, greater peril. This means that technology can be both the finest ally in the service of humanity and the deadliest weapon for the forces of evil. In reality, science has undoubtedly made immense positive contributions in the field of medicine, yet it has exerted a profoundly detrimental impact on global peace. Precisely because technology first rose to prominence in Western countries, it became their greatest leverage to launch aggressive wars at will, finally spiraling into world wars that ravaged the globe in unspeakable horror. As such, even if science has wrought those so-called miracles, they have been rendered meaningless and completely negated—mere calamities for humanity, especially for those who perished in the wars, with no one to cry out to for justice. But then again, if technology had first flourished in Eastern countries, they would have acted in the very same way as the West, and Japan stands as the perfect testament to this. In the final analysis, this is not a problem of nations, but of rules. Simply put, as long as the law of the jungle—the survival of the fittest—prevails, it is only natural for powerful nations to bully the weak; there is no such thing as a “good” or “evil” country. And so the core issue emerges: what matters most is transforming the rules, not blaming individual nations. But who can bring about this transformation? Science? Political science? Or theology? Clearly, none of these can be trusted. Theology, in particular, is a complete aberration—only philosophy is the true and unshakable path forward.

As the embodiment of religion, theology serves as a guide for the human spirit, with its conception of God elevated to the status of

supreme faith. From a philosophical standpoint, the question of what God is has a definitive answer: it is merely a deceptive ruse. Though theology has endured countless ups and downs, it has stood firm for millennia and still entralls multitudes to this day. This alone attests to its profound cunning and shrewdness. The so-called “wisdom” it embodies is no less profound than that of science; it is the culmination of an entirely different mode of thinking. Theology can be regarded as a profound study of the human heart and mind, while science is merely an inquiry into the laws of nature. The human spirit and material nature are two utterly distinct realms of inquiry. In other words, even the most intellectually brilliant scientist is clueless when it comes to human relations, condemned to be a highly skilled pawn of theologians and politicians, never society’s master or ruler. This, in essence, is a master-servant dynamic—science is nothing more than an advanced tool. Whether it be the Industrial Revolution, the Information Revolution, or the AI Revolution, science can never alter its inherent role or destiny. In the end, the ultimate cause of humanity’s chaos and calamities stems from the spiritual domain. And within this domain, beside theology, there stands another ancient discipline that rivals it in stature: philosophy. Through its own vicissitudes, philosophy has indeed wrought certain changes to society, and above all, it has paved the way for the advancement of science. Yet philosophy remains inherently incomplete. It has never pierced the profound mysteries crafted by theology, nor can it discern the hidden laws and underlying logic of social operation that lie beneath them. To put it plainly, this world is actually just a farce. The time has come to uncover the truth.

Once humanity gained rationality, it did not seek to alter the narrow and primitive law of nature—the survival of the fittest. Instead, it merely adopted a more covert and efficient

approach: replacing brute force with deception. This shift proved catastrophic, reducing the common people to lambs waiting to be slaughtered. As the adage goes: “In prosperous times, they are beasts of burden; in turbulent times, they are cannon fodder. In peace, their labor is exploited; in war, their lives are sacrificed.” What, then, is the ultimate consequence of this approach? It is nothing less than self-deception and the deception of others, harming both the perpetrator and the victim, and plunging humanity into an even greater vicious cycle of double suffering—one from which there is no escape, no way out. This cycle unfolds as follows: under a system that vests faith in God (and all illusory things), society is doomed to ignorance, backwardness, and oppression. Even if the common people succeed in their rebellion, they merely replace one ruler or regime with another; the rules of the game remain unchanged, and the fate of the people remains the same. Thus, humanity has been trapped in an endless cycle of conflict and chaos, with no one living in true happiness. In every regime change—whether it be the slave-owning class of slave society, the landlord class of feudal society, or the capitalist class of capitalist society—the new ruling power quickly aligns itself with religious theology after seizing power, continuing to deceive the people to serve its own vested interests. Most lamentably of all, capitalist society, which loudly proclaims democracy, freedom, and rationality, has in the end followed the very same old path. Is this not all the more hypocritical and cunning? The result is a self-inflicted backlash, and the formation of a new vicious cycle. To persist in deception means that the profit model of the ruling class is inherently corrupt and unrestrained—and such a model will inevitably face resistance and revolution. At such times, the common people become pawns and playthings for dictators to seize power and fulfill their ambitions. They

may seem to gain some trivial benefits at first, yet they are quickly reduced to cannon fodder in the aggressive wars waged by these dictators—and Hitler stands as the most classic example of this. Thus, the common people escape the wolf’s den only to walk straight into the tiger’s lair. No matter how they struggle, they cannot break free from this net. And this phenomenon will repeat itself as contradictions intensify once more—and we stand at this very juncture today. If we fail to thoroughly expose the underlying logic and rewrite the rules of the game, a second Hitler is inevitable. And with the advent of AI—the Pandora’s box of our age—humanity will not be so fortunate as it was before. In truth, what we need to do now is simple: unify our thinking, cultivate a sense of long-term vision, and liberate the masses from the cage of deception.

The time has come for today’s capitalists to act with honesty and integrity, to work with genuine dedication. They must not allow the greatest catastrophe in human history to repeat itself for the sake of narrow, short-term gains—they must embrace a long-term vision. Judging from the current political structure, the initiative still lies entirely in their hands. Simply by shifting from a theocentric to a human-centric approach, the deception will be completely shattered. For the rest of the social structure, we may continue to follow Locke’s framework—with one crucial change: as truth prevails, principle shall replace law. In short, what is needed is a process of deepening, upgrading, and transformation. Of course, for the common people, the imperative is to study philosophy, master real knowledge, see the rules clearly, and forge a tacit understanding. This is the only path to safeguarding their greatest interests and finding a true way out. When this happens, humanity will surely unite as one, stand side by side, and forge ahead together. We will become the ultimate, perfect, and eternal telic god of the universe! 🌈

Resolution to defend the nation adopted at the National Conference held at Rajendra Bhavan by the Employment–Social Rights Campaign

Rahul Das

At the national conference held today at Rajendra Bhavan on India's foreign and trade policy and the energy–agriculture–food crisis, a resolution was adopted strongly condemning

unanimously resolved to launch a nationwide campaign to inform the public about how the central government's current policies—especially foreign and trade policies—are



the illegal and unprovoked attack by the US–Israel alliance on the sovereign nation of Iran, stating that it has increased global instability and human suffering. The conference demanded that the Government of India take a clear, independent, and principled stand against this attack to safeguard national sovereignty. The conference underlined that even after the war ends, the energy and fertilizer crisis will continue, adversely affecting agriculture, deepening the food crisis, and increasing inflation, price rise, and unemployment. Therefore, the conference

worsening this crisis and weakening the country's economic sovereignty.

The Employment–Social Rights Campaign will make this issue an integral part of its broader movement linking war, economic crisis, and the rights of workers, farmers, and marginalized communities.

Delivering the welcome address, Akhilendra Pratap Singh, founding member of the All India People's Front, said that the Modi government has become deeply alienated from the people and has failed on every front. Farmers, workers,

women, SCs, STs, extremely backward classes, Pasmanda Muslims, and even small and medium traders are facing devastation and crisis due to the government's policies. He emphasized that the significance of today's conference lies in the presence of both eminent economists and intellectuals alongside grassroots activists fighting on social and class issues. This conference is building a national praxis and aims to bring all democratic forces of the country onto one platform to create a people's political force against the government.

Supreme Court advocate Prashant Bhushan described the conference as important and said that employment, foreign and trade policy, and SIR are three issues on which a major movement must be built by civil society. He said that Modi has bowed before US President Trump and has even failed to respond appropriately to statements that insult India, thereby damaging the country's prestige.


Renowned economist Professor Arun Kumar said the world is passing through a deep crisis. The involvement of major powers in wars related to Ukraine and Iran has intensified global instability. These conflicts are not isolated events but the result of deepening neo-colonial tendencies, where powerful nations seek to control resources and strategic regions. In this context, Iran's resilience under pressure holds great significance for nations of the Global South, especially India.

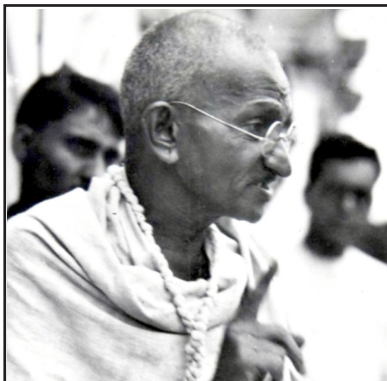
Economist Jaya Mehta said the war has

created an energy and fertilizer crisis in India, affecting agriculture and leading to a food crisis, along with shortages of essential commodities. Inflation, unemployment, and livelihood crises are rapidly deepening, with the greatest impact on workers, farmers, and marginalized communities. She added that the central government's current policies are weakening the country's economic sovereignty.

The conference was dedicated to Bhagwan Das Ji, associate of Dr. Ambedkar and former Supreme Court advocate. It was also addressed by scientist Dinesh Abrol; Baburam Pal, National President of Rashtr Uday Party; P.C. Tiwari of Uttarakhand Parivartan Party; Akshay Bhai, Coordinator of Navnirman Krishak Sangathan (Odisha); Dr. Rahul Das, National General Secretary of AIPF; K.V.G.R. Naragoni of State Adhikar Party; Har Mohan Singh Mongia, Delhi President of Indian Praja Congress; Advocate Ashok Kumar, Vice President of Bahujan Dravid Party; Vijay Singh, Convener of Jharkhand Navnirman Dal; Rajesh Sachan of Rozgar Adhikar Abhiyan; Advocate Nitin Mishra, former President of Congress Legal Cell Uttar Pradesh; and Kripashankar Panika of Adivasi Vanvasi Mahasabha.

The conference was conducted by Shekhar Dixit, President of the National Farmers' Forum, and Naseem Khan, Vice President of AIPF.

Rahul Das, National General Secretary
All India People's Front (9810030126) 



You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles, but today it means getting along with people.

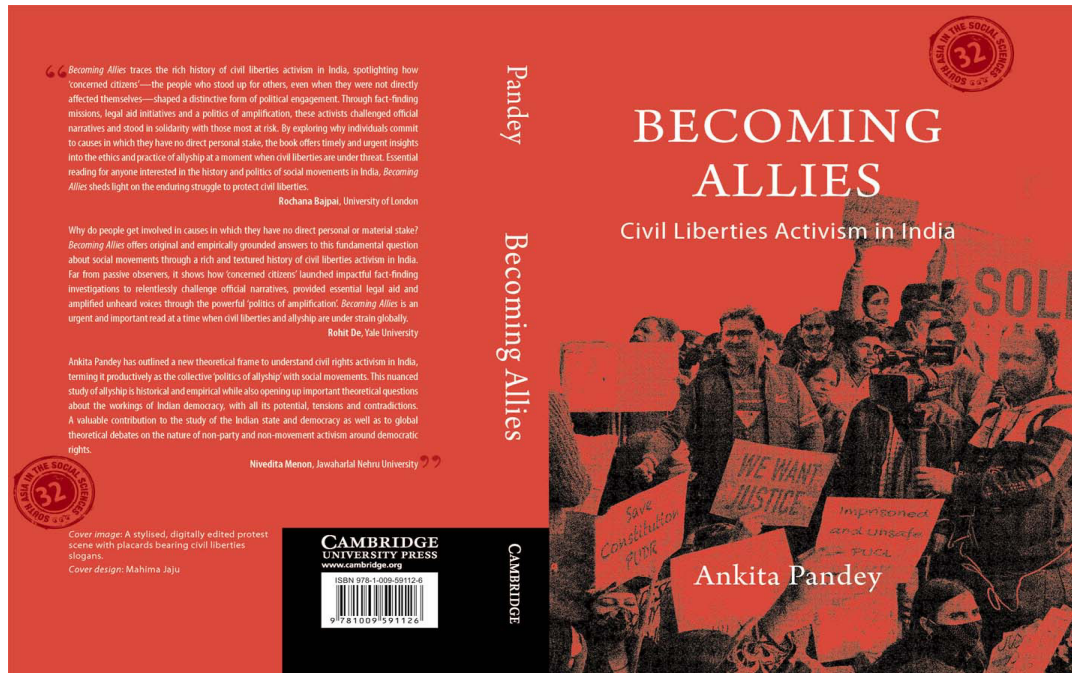
The weak can never forgive for givenness is the attribute of the strong.

An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.

- : Mahatma Gandhi

Becoming Allies: Civil Liberties Activism

Ankita Pandey



My monograph examines civil liberties groups in Indian politics, between the 1960s and 1980s, as a distinct form of collective action. It departs from the conventional view that sees these groups as human rights organisations or as a standalone social movement in their own right, arguing that both framings obscure their core features and political logic. Civil liberties groups are better understood as movement allies i.e. actors who are not directly part of movements but work alongside it to support and amplify its claims. This shift in perspective also opens up a field of analysis. Rather than seeing social movement politics as a two-party conflict between a movement and the state, the monograph approaches it as a field containing a constellation of actors, such as sympathisers, pro bono lawyers, journalists, and alternative media platforms. These actors play a crucial role, which has often been overlooked in accounts of India's civil society politics.

Building on this, the monograph introduces the idea of the politics of amplification - a form of action through which claims are carried across domains. Such practices constitute an underlying infrastructure of democracy, enabling the circulation of political demands beyond the sites at which they were first articulated. In this sense, the book reorients the question of democratic deepening beyond participation, foregrounding the sustenance of democracy through the connective infrastructures the allies construct.

Amazon link:

https://www.amazon.in/dp/1009591126?ref=ppx_yo2ov_dt_b_fed_asin_title
Cambridge Core link: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/becoming-allies/5C76CFB5F0D7C13767B68F0DD572C154>

POLITICS WITHOUT POWER*

M.N. Roy

The very term power-politics suggests that there might be other kinds of politics, that politics need not necessarily be associated with power. But it has come to be taken for granted so widely that few can conceive of the possibility of politics without power. In consequence, politics throughout the world has degenerated into a scramble for power. All realise the dangerous consequences of that practice, but doubt whether politics without power is possible.

In the modern world, politics has become associated with parties as the instruments of democratic politics. All politics is practised by parties. Political parties are organised with different programmes, and the system of one party replacing another in the government of a country has come to be considered as the essence of parliamentary democracy. But if democracy is government of the people and by the people, then the party system has led to the result of defeating the object of democratic politics. Because any party government is at best government for 'the people, the party system contradicts the former two and most essential terms in the definition of democracy. It cannot establish a government of the people and by the people. Today the party rules a country for the people, and tomorrow other does so also with the same pretention. There is little essential difference between this kind of democratic government and those of predemocratic times. Indeed, there has never been any system of government which did not claim to rule for the welfare of the people. Absolute monarchies of the past and dictatorships of the present alike have claimed to be the custodians of popular welfare. If government for the people was democratic government, then benevolent despotism should be considered as the highest form of democracy. For these considerations, party governments of our time cannot claim to be essentially different from governments of the pre-

democratic age. The only difference is that the people did not elect the kings, whereas today parties are placed in power by popular suffrage. In fact, in the olden days, even kingship was an elective office. But while education for democracy is universally neglected, elections are no guarantee for Democracy.

At the close of the Middle-Ages in Europe, the revolt against feudal absolutism was inspired by the doctrine that sovereignty belongs to the people. Democratic governments were born of that revolt. Largely from the ancient Stoic tradition, inherited by early Christianity, it was deduced that man was a moral entity and as such naturally sovereign. The belief in the sovereignty of the individual thus was the foundation of modern democratic theory. By way of corollary, it was believed that the people of a particular State, being composed of sovereign individuals, possessed a collective sovereignty. Therefore, it was maintained, a democratic government could alone be the instrument for a fair and just administration of public affairs, because it obtained authority from the sovereign people. That original conception of a democratic government was certainly progressive and liberating. A truly democratic government was to be a good government. But the government was an entity separate and remote from the people, and the gulf has increasingly widened as the functions of government became more complex and centralised in the hands of experts.

With the course of time, democratic practice deviated more and more from the principles of democracy. That was not a deliberate fraud on the part of politicians; it resulted from the inability to solve the problem of practising democracy in large modern States with numerous populations. In the eighteenth century, the advocates of democracy in Europe had in their mind the pattern of direct democracy of the City States of ancient

'Greece. But it was evident that the entire people of France could not possibly gather in one place and elect their government directly. The solution of the problem was found in the doctrine of representative government, of the delegation of power by the citizens. Thus, from its very birth modern democratic governments in reality came to be governments for the people. Between the government and the electorate there grew a series of intermediary institutions depriving the people of all possibility to control the governments which claimed to rule on their behalf and derived authority from the sovereignty of the people. Governments for the people in reality became rulers of the people. The sovereign was degraded to the position of the ruled. But sovereignty cannot be transferred, because it is an inalienable right. Therefore, a representative government represents only the party which controls it, and the membership even of the largest party is only a small fraction of the people. In other words representative party government is rule of a minority. The degeneration of democracy resulted from the inability to devise ways and means for the practice of direct democracy in modern States. To be real, democracy must be direct; government must be under the direct control of the people. Is that possible? That is the problem before the political thinkers of our time. Its solution is to raise political practice above the scramble for power carried on by parties in the name of democracy. In so far as democracy is not government of the people and by the people, it is not democracy. With the rise of the party system, the idea of popular sovereignty became a constitutional fiction. The party system resulted from the difficulty of practising direct democracy in large modern States with large numerous populations. And with the rise of the party system, politics became a scramble for power. So, the possibility of politics without power presupposes elimination of parties from the central position in democratic practice, as is bound to happen in an educated mature Democracy.

Those who identify democracy with the party system overlook the fact that political parties are relatively recent institutions. At the time of the French Revolution, there were no parties as they exist today. Neither the Jacobins nor the Girondists filled the role. In England, there were parties even in the seventeenth century; but they were not political parties, but rather religious factions and Court cliques. Political parties as we know them of today are a development only of the nineteenth century, when the doctrine of representative government replaced the earlier idea of democracy. Parliamentary, based on the theory of the delegation of power to elected representatives, made of democracy a mere formality.

It is said that at the time of elections the people can exercise their sovereign right to choose men whom they trust. Given a sufficiently high standard of education on the part of the electorate,, that might be the case, provided that parties did not interfere. It is so partially in England even today, because there parliamentary developed before the rise of the party system. Not until late in the nineteenth century did political parties compete for the suffrage of the people; previously individual candidates who might be associated with this or that party, appealed to their respective constituencies, and the latter voted for individual candidates, not for impersonal party machines. The candidates could not entirely rely upon their party affiliation, but had to win the confidence of the electorate as individuals of proved moral integrity with a clean record of public service.

But under different circumstances, for instance under the system of proportional representation, the people are called upon, to vote for this or that party not even knowing the men who would rule on their authority and in their behalf. Even where the system of proportional representation is not introduced, as for instance in Britain, impersonal party machines have eclipsed individual candidates; the choice is between parties. (To be Contd....on Page -42)

The Humanist Frame

New Horizons For Under-Developed Peoples

Sudhir Sen

(Summarized by : Vinod Jain)

1

In its long Evolutionary process mankind has been moving towards a higher pattern of values. The progress has been neither smooth nor uniform; there have been many setbacks, and some cruel lapses; but the general trend is unmistakable — on balance, man's humanity to man has been on the increase, and, in very recent years, thanks to a unique combination of social and historical forces, it has received an unprecedented impetus.

Since the dawn of history every age has been marked by exploitation and persecution, at the hands of tribal chiefs, feudal lords, monarchs, dictators, capitalists, and churches. In the most flourishing ancient civilizations large-scale exploitation was taken for granted. The pyramids provides a massive proof of the skill and workmanship developed in Egypt five thousand years ago, but also of the forced labour extracted from the people on a staggering scale.

Post-Aryan India, with all its transcendental philosophy, found it necessary to justify and uphold a cruel caste system. The Greek cities, which did so much to enrich and beautify life, were constantly waging ruthless wars among themselves, and relied heavily on the institution of slavery. And we need hardly recall the Mongol invasions under Jenghiz Khan and Timur, with their orgies of devastation, slaughter and wanton destruction which caused a permanent setback to civilization in the Middle East.

2

With the discovery of the new world and of a new route to the orient, the era of modern colonialism began. In the wake of exploration came exploitation. Many tragedies were enacted,

including the slave trade and the destruction of the remarkable civilizations of the Incas, the Aztecs and the Mayas.

The colonial policies pursued by the European colonial powers showed differences in political administration, but economically they had an identical core. Colonies were valued for their precious metals, rare spices and raw materials, for their man-power and markets or their strategic value; they were treated as possessions whose sole business was to promote the greatness of the mother-country....

Exploitation continued as the keynote of colonialism until very recently. Yet the colonialist record was by no means uniformly dark. Thus a major impulse behind British power in Africa was humanitarian — to abolish the slave trade. The Western colonial authority curbed inter-tribal rivalry, unified small tribes or princely states, and created more viable units capable of developing into independent nations. Western democratic institutions were often introduced, and became the basis for government after independence....

British rule in India stands out as an example of complex a à motivation. Adventure, empire-building, power politics, economic exploitation, all these were assuredly involved; but inextricably mingled with them was the urge to establish peace on the sub-continent; to foster trade and improve communications; to introduce democratic institutions with an independent judiciary....

3

Before the Second World War, about one third of the world's population and its land area was under some kind of colonial rule. Since then no less than thirty-nine new states have been

born, with a total population of over 800 millions....

Freedom for almost a billion colonial people within two decades is something unique in human history....

The dynamism of our times has been heightened, but also distorted, by the explosive growth of population....

The continuing revolution in transport and communication is penetrating all corners of the earth, spreading new hopes among the under-developed peoples....

It is, above all, in medicine and health that the under- developed peoples have tasted the fruits of scientific progress.

4

It is sometimes argued that the first task before an under- developed country is population control and that, without this, economic development would be fruitless.

Concentration on population control to the neglect of economic development is certainly not the answer: but neither is concentration on economic development to the neglect of population control. The right balance between population and resources can be achieved only if a bold population policy is integrated with an equally bold policy for economic development.

5

What is the magnitude of the effort needed to stage such an economic blitz? Let us take a brief look at the effort being made by the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies for promoting economic development. Judged by magnitude of capital investment, the World Bank takes pride of place. By the end of 1960 it had made 270 loans to 53 countries for a total of \$5,454 million. The authorised capital of the Bank was raised last year from \$10,000 million to 21,000 million.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) was established in 1956, primarily for financing industries in under-developed countries.

The International Monetary Fund plays an

important role in this context. Its task is to promote exchange stability as a basis for the growth of world trade. By October 31, 1960, the Fund had made available a total of \$3,871 million for these purposes.

The provision of long-term development loans from the World Bank and its affiliates is paralleled by the provision of technical assistance through the United Nations and eight of its Specialized Agencies — ILO, UNESCO, FAO, WHO, ICAO, ITU, WMO, and IAEA.

Finally, there is the Special Fund, established in 1959. The Special Fund swung into action with remarkable speed. Within two years it approved 115 projects costing \$227 million.

During the last decade the idea of assisting the under- developed peoples has struck firm root in the world's conscience and in its economic systems. The main ideological battle has been won.

6

The volume of assistance currently provided to the under-developed countries is estimated at around \$2,400 million a year.

Many under-developed countries still lack the rudiments of a rational development policy. The development policy of most under developed countries needs greater emphasis on production, coupled with stricter screening of projects.

7

In judging the question of how much at what cost, it is essential to consider not only the money cost, but also the resource cost. The emphasis must be shifted from exploitation of resources for immediate profit accompanied by a reckless disregard of the future, to their rational development, conservation and utilization.

In nature, water, air, and soil minerals work in continuous harmony to support plant and animal life on earth. In spite of all the technical miracles achieved by science, man must respect this basic ecological balance. Yet in many parts of the world, man has been working at cross-purposes with nature. He abuses land by burning

forests, excessive lumbering, ploughing up grasslands, mining the soil's fertility. The result is accelerated erosion, often with irreparable loss of the top soil. Erosion leads to poorer crops, poorer cattle and poorer men on the one hand, and faster run-off, silted-up river-beds and aggravated floods on the other. This spiral of waste must be halted and reversed.

A rational resources policy should aim at increasing wealth and income, employment and enjoyment. It has two important implications. First, exhaustible natural resources such as coal, oil and other minerals, and also slowly renewable resources, like forests, must be husbanded. Secondly, it points to the needs for rapid industrial development.

Industries must be established to process mineral wealth and the produce of the land.

Scientific resource use is often complicated by sociological factors, as is well seen in India. The first principle in dealing with soil is that it should have a protective and productive cover of vegetation.

Family planning is also needed for India's cattle population, which is estimated at over 200 million, or one-fourth of the world's total. Cattle like men, live on the land and consume the same minerals and organic matter, so that in many cases the choice is clear-cut: man or cow? The appalling practice of using cattle-dung as fuel, and so burning up soil fertility, has to be stopped. Yet to stop it, some cheap alternative fuel will have to be found.

Food habits are also involved. As Arnold Toynbee had stressed, the diet of most people 'is determined by ancient habits fortified by prejudice'. Millions of people will have to be persuaded to change their habits 'in order to bring their diet into conformity with the progressive findings of science'.

In the past, the march of industrial civilization has been frequently accompanied by thoughtless destruction of culture; there has been a rapid erosion of values as well as of soil. Material

progress, to be meaningful, must go hand in hand with a wide range of cultural pursuits. As the forces of industrial revolution are let loose in the under-developed countries the need for the conservation and revitalization of culture acquires a new urgency.

8

As late-comers to industrialization, they can also count on some advantages: they can profit from the experience of other countries. They have at their disposal the findings of modern science and learning. And they have the possibility of obtaining large-scale development finance from the industrialized countries.

The Western countries which pioneered modern industrial development had to build their infrastructure with the surplus capital accruing from a growing economy, a process that took a good many generations. The Soviet Union followed a different line — a policy of belt-tightening and forced saving to accelerate capital formation.

9

The advance of knowledge and the march of events in a shrinking world are forcing us towards a truly Humanist pattern of thought and system of ideas — global and evolutionary — directed towards increased fulfilment and focused on improvement through fuller realization of possibilities. It is in the light of this new Humanism that must seek guidance for policy.

The march of science which has given mankind the tools to create abundance for all has yielded a remarkable by-product: it has made exploitation obsolete, of the week by the strong, both at home and abroad. It is no longer necessary for the former colonial powers to exploit the less developed countries in order to build, or maintain, their greatness. The rulers and the ruled of yesterday have moved tantalizingly close to this truth, but they have yet to grasp it fully and firmly.

Some thinkers, like Dr Blackham in his chapter in the present volume, believe that

present economic and political trends, under the mounting pressure of Humanist ideas, will culminate in a truly comprehensive and unitary programme of world development under the guidance of a world organization, under which all the various projects of technical aid and assistance would be co-ordinated or combined.

The Western countries now accept as commonplace that national economic prosperity depends not on the privilege of the few, but on the welfare of all. This could be no less true of world economy. Capital properly channelled into the under-developed countries can in the end more than pay for itself, both in terms of widening production and trade and of an increasing fund of international goodwill. Humanist investment is good world business.

Further, as Millikan and Rostow put it, ‘ American society is at its best when we are wrestling with the positive problems of building

a better world’. These words have validity also for other industrially advanced countries. ‘Affluence’, Walter Lipmann reminds us, ‘is not greatness’. One may go farther and add that unless affluence is harnessed to creative objectives, it likely to erode moral and spiritual values and, in the end, real happiness in life.

In the last analysis, have the developed Western countries any real choice in the matter? Probably not. To bring the fruits of science and technology to the depressed or backward areas of the world has all the lure of a great adventure; the Western countries cannot by-pass it without being untrue to themselves. The challenge is also an opportunity — higher living standards for the poverty-stricken half of humanity will raise world economy to higher levels of prosperity. This is a Humanist challenge which neither the West nor the world can ignore. 🌈

(To be continued.....)

National Song Bande Mataram at...

Contd. from page - (16)

A religious person of any faith may also at a later point of time choose to abandon or lose his faith in his religion wholly and may become an atheist or agnostic. He may also convert himself to another religion, another faith, but he remains what he was at his birth and that cannot be changed or substituted later.

Loyalty is therefore first to one’s own place of birth or homeland then may be to his religion or faith if he is not an atheist or agnostic. All people are not religious although they may believe in some kind of superpower. But all people born take birth in some or other geographical area otherwise known as his homeland or country. This belonging is not also subject to any belief or faith. It is a real fact, a reality, and an invariable truth. And this truth is a universal truth. It applies to all born in this beautiful world. So excepting Hindus, as aforesaid, for all others religion is a post birth adoption or event. A child born to a non-Hindu religious community in India unless and until he is baptised, as aforesaid, he is neither a Muslim, nor a Christian but each of them is a priori an Indian. Patriotism is inborn and has no religion, no religious faith. One does not need any religion to be patriotic. Patriotism is characterised by absolute and undivided love and devotion to one’s own homeland, his country of origin. It is indivisible. Patriotism also does not admit of any degree or gradation.

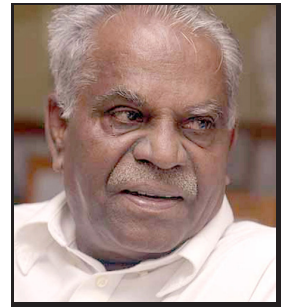
‘Bande Mataram’, a single hymn, imagining homeland enriched with all power, strength and wealth of superpowers was written to invigorate all people of homeland irrespective of any religious following in patriotism with the object of freeing homeland from foreign subjugation.

Bimal Chatterjee

Barrister-at-Law, Sr. Advocate & Former Advocate General of State of West Bengal 🌈

CEC Gyanesh Kumar Has Formal Power But Has Lost Moral Authority, Which is Constitutional Sacrilege

It looks as if Gyanesh Kumar has taken cover under the 'formal' immunity provided by his political masters and feels that he owes no moral responsibility for his actions and is not answerable to the people of India and the basic structure of its Constitution.



M.G. Devasahayam

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, facing Impeachment motion by 193 Members from across both Houses of Parliament, is not only sticking to his chair, wielding formal authority but also is indulging in 'revenge strike' against the political party that initiated the motion. This raises a deeply distressing question as to whether moral authority in India is dead and buried!

The chargesheet seeking Kumar's removal originated from West Bengal and is signed by 130 Lok Sabha MPs and 63 members of the Rajya Sabha. The charges include "partisan and discriminatory" conduct, "mass disenfranchisement" through the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, "proven misbehaviour", actions that "undermine public confidence", "partisan exercise" of Constitutional functions in favour of one party, and "deliberate obstruction" of investigations into complaints of "electoral fraud". Kumar is the first CEC in India's history against whom such a notice has been formally submitted. The move came after a series of confrontations between the poll body and non-BJP parties, and it represents the strongest expression yet of their mistrust in

his ability to conduct free and fair elections.

Taken together, Gyanesh Kumar's actions represent serious infringement of constitutional functioning and morality:

- Article 324, the duties of the election commission, has been distorted into an instrument of control rather than neutrality
- Article 14, the right to equality, was violated through arbitrariness and selective enforcement
- Article 19(1)(a), freedom of speech and expression, is undermined by placing suspicion on the voter and denying the right to constitutional expression of the vote.
- Basic structure principles have been weakened by institutional bias

Gyanesh Kumar is not guilty of mere administrative excess. He has been a constitutional fiasco. Symbolically, the impeachment motion, though not yet admitted, indicated that the ECI and its chief have lost the confidence of two-third of "We, The People." He should not have stayed in office even for one minute and should have recused himself from conducting the ongoing elections

to four state Assemblies and one Union Territory, mostly ruled by opposition parties MPs of which have moved the impeachment motion. His not doing so raises the critical question as to whether a person who has lost moral authority can exercise formal power over the public.

A recent Newsland group investigative piece is titled thus: "*Gyanesh Kumar: The making of India's divisive chief election commissioner – He was the quiet executor of Article 370 and architect of the Ram Temple trust. Now, as Chief Election Commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar has deleted crores of voters from the rolls – and is about to face what no CEC ever has: an impeachment motion.*" The article brings out the fact that throughout his career in the elite civil service he has been the agenda-man of the powers-that-be doing the bidding of his political masters without demur. It looks as if he has sold-out his soul long ago and his ruling masters found him ideal to capture the ECI essential to grab and retain political power.

The question now rises. Can a person holding such a high constitutional position and swearing allegiance to it continue to wield formal authority vested in that position after losing the moral authority to hold it? To elaborate further there are essentially two kinds of authority: formal authority and moral authority. While formal authority is something you're born or elected into, moral authority is something you have to continue to earn by how you behave, by how you build trust with your people. Every time you exercise formal authority you deplete it. Every time you exercise moral authority, leading by example, treating people with respect, you strengthen it. Formal authority is bestowed by virtue of job role, rank, position, contract. It is expected by right, even demanded, rather than given freely. Moral authority has no rank or position, or power to demand anything. Yet when freely

given has arguably far more power to move people and achieve goals than any amount of formal authority. Rather than demanding, it leads by example. Rather than sacrificing others, it sacrifices itself.

The power of moral authority is felt in every mind. I have a litmus test. Mention the names of two contemporary leaders of India and ask any adult who does he/she 'respects' more-Mohandas Gandhi or Jawaharlal Nehru; Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) or Morarji Desai; Mother Teresa or Indira Gandhi. Invariably the answer would be Gandhi, JP and Mother Teresa. And as we know while the other three wielded vast formal authority as prime ministers these three gained hearts through immense moral authority!

This is because formal authority is a bestowed, top-down power defined by hierarchy, rules, and compliance. Conversely, moral authority is earned through integrity, trust, and leading by example. While formal authority creates structure and efficiency, moral authority fosters loyalty and sustainable performance by engaging people, not just managing tasks.

Formal authority comes from titles, elections, or legal-rational structures (e.g., an Election Commissioner). Moral authority stems from personal character, trustworthiness, and ethical conduct. Formal authority uses command-and-control, policies, and sanctions. Moral authority uses influence, inspiration, and credibility. Formal authority ensures consistent, standardised action. Moral authority drives innovation, commitment, and healthy culture. Effective governance requires both: formal authority establishes necessary order, but moral authority makes leadership sustainable.

Though Gyanesh Kumar has the former, he has none of the latter and therefore is unfit to head the ECI. This is because the Commission's primary mandate under Article

324 of the Constitution is to perform the basic democratic task of "superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State." In a democracy, which India is, formal authority is derived from legal frameworks and electoral mandates, while moral authority stems from the perceived legitimacy and fairness of those in power, often linked to upholding human rights and the will of the people.

Formal authority ensures stability through laws, whereas moral authority grants the ethical right to govern. Free and fair elections are the epicentre of democracy and the authority that 'superintendents, directs and controls' it should have moral authority of the highest calibre.

Wielding of formal authority by Kumar has crossed all limits

Let alone democracy, even for normal governance this is essential. For instance, if there was a similar chargesheet during his career in the IAS, Kumar would have faced a formal disciplinary inquiry (Rule 9) under the All-India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969. He would have been liable for major penalties including dismissal, removal or compulsory retirement. Pending inquiry, he would have been placed under suspension so that he could not wield any authority or interfere in the inquiry. Does becoming the head of the Election Commission puts him on a high pedestal and give him a brazen licence to break all canons of morality and ethics?

Combine this with Section 16 of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, granting the CEC absolute immunity from legal action for actions/statements made during official duties, without any safeguards. This immunity potentially shields malicious or

arbitrary actions from scrutiny. By placing the CEC above criminal laws for actions taken while in office, it hinders his/her accountability for electoral misconduct. This immunity is a threat to maintaining fairness in elections, as it limits the ability to challenge, or prosecute, officials for actions that affect election integrity.

To boot, wielding of formal authority by Kumar has crossed all limits. As of March 2026, ahead of the assembly polls, under the direction of Kumar, ECI has undertaken a major administrative overhaul in West Bengal, resulting in the transfer and suspension of several officials. The ECI has transferred Officers-in-Charge and Inspectors-in-Charge of 173 police stations across West Bengal. Over 21 top IAS and IPS officers, including the chief secretary, home secretary, director general of police (DGP) and the Kolkata police commissioner, were transferred to ensure a "free and fair poll". The ECI suspended four West Bengal officials (EROs and AEROs) for alleged involvement in voter list tampering (SIR).

Additionally, 7 officials were suspended for alleged misconduct and dereliction of duty. Jawhar Sircar, former chief electoral officer, West Bengal and Member, Rajya Sabha termed this wielding of excessive authority by Kumar as 'pre-meditated slaughter'!

It looks as if Gyanesh Kumar has taken cover under the 'formal' immunity provided by his political masters and feels that he owes no moral responsibility for his actions and is not answerable to the people of India and the basic structure of its Constitution. In the event his remaining in office and wielding formal authority would be constitutional sacrilege that could sink India's electoral democracy!

M.G. Devasahayam, formerly of the IAS, is coordinator, Citizens Commission on Elections.

Courtesy **The Wire**, 2 April 2026. 

A Reader's Review of *Essays on Indian Philosophical Streams and Culture*

By: DR. GUMMA VEERANNA

Revisiting Indian Philosophical Traditions through the Lens of Rationalism

Praphulla Chandra

The *Rigveda* is a compilation of prayer hymns that is considered the most ancient in the world. Its scope allows nature to be viewed from different angles. Indian tradition has examined it from both religious and philosophical perspectives. In reality, the Vedic seers did not view it philosophically; that was a later development. In the Indian philosophical tradition, any branch of thought is referred to as a *daræana*, which in English corresponds to perception or experience. Consequently, every branch inevitably contains a religious perspective. In general, Indian philosophical literature refers to the Vedas and the Vedangas.

Indian philosophical literature evolved through two streams: one spiritual and the other materialistic. Based on Vedic literature, extensive writings have been produced not only in Sanskrit, which is not our mother tongue, but also in foreign languages such as German, French, and English, as well as in various Indian languages. Much of this literature is marked by sophistry and complexity, varied interpretations, making it difficult for readers to grasp easily. As a result, readers cannot readily understand how Indian philosophical inquiry evolved, what its truths are, or the deeper meanings underlying them.

Moreover, many works written from the materialist perspective were destroyed by their religious opponents. Because of this, independent writings representing the materialist viewpoint are rarely available today. There is therefore a need to reconstruct materialist thought largely from the criticisms found in the writings of spiritualist thinkers. At the same time, we need to critically

review the cultural transformations that have occurred within our tradition.

In the present sense, philosophy means the scientific examination of the fundamental questions concerning the universe and human life. Taking this principle as his foundation, Dr Veeranna has brought out the present work titled *Essays on Indian Philosophical Streams and Culture*. This is a translated work. The original Telugu version, titled *Bharatiya Samskruti-Tatvam*, was first published in 2008 by the Sri Potti Sriramulu Telugu University in Hyderabad. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, has now published the English translation. Dr Veeranna, President of the Rationalist Association of India (RAI), has written this book against the backdrop of rationalism, humanism, and modern science. He has authored more than twenty books and hundreds of essays on these three themes and has earned the appreciation of readers.

Let us now take a bird's-eye view of the present book. The author begins by explaining the origin and evolution of the universe, the emergence of life, and the evolutionary process from early hominids to modern humans, illustrating these developments with examples.

The author then discusses ancient civilisations, particularly the Indus Valley Civilisation- its development, influence, and eventual decline. In that context, he also describes the arrival of the Aryans into India, the origin and evolution of the Vedas, their classification, the [ks and prayer hymns in Vedic literature, and the deities worshipped in the Vedic age. He concludes that although Vedic literature is ancient, it contains

no philosophical concepts.

Philosophical literature, like any other field, experiences phases of rise and decline. In Indian philosophical tradition, the Upanishadic period and the age of the darśanas are generally considered the pinnacle. According to the history of Indian philosophy, during the Upanishadic period, human curiosity reached a lofty level in its quest for truth. Dr Veeranna agrees with this view as well. Yet another perspective on this matter. For example, the noted editor, rationalist, and humanist V. R. Narla writes in his work *Essays on Upanishads*:

They denounce the body, they denounce the senses, they denounce the mind, they denounce the empirical knowledge, they denounce the world, and they denounce much else in the most revolting language. They hurl vilest abuse at women. They praise dreamless sleep; they praise the death even more. They give licence to murder to those who are supposed to have attained true knowledge of Purusha. Irrational, incoherent and inconsistent, they are a mountain of nonsense and only a mole hill of sense.

Differences of opinion are natural.

Dr Veeranna also closely examines materialist philosophies, since they too form part of Indian philosophical literature. Indeed, this is the principal aim of his work. In this context, he analyses the Charvaka school, describing it as a form of naturalism and the earliest form of materialism. He briefly explains the prominent Charvakas associated with this school of thought. He also discusses Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, outlining its doctrines, including the principle of non-violence and its theory of knowledge. The author further describes how Jainism gradually faded in the face of the brilliance of Buddhist philosophy.

Turning next to Buddhism, the author examines almost every aspect of it. He explains the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, and the Three Refuges. He describes how the

Buddhist doctrine gradually evolved into a religion, and elaborates on its various sects. He also discusses the role Buddhism played in Indian intellectual history and concludes the chapter by explaining how Buddhism gradually lost its influence in India and spread to other countries.

In the following chapter, the author examines the philosophical systems of Sâṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, and the two Mīmāṃsā- Pūrva and Uttara. He discusses their founders and principal doctrines, and evaluates how far their explanations of nature, the universe, and human tendencies remain relevant, illustrating his arguments with examples. The author's emphasis on the darśana traditions is clearly visible in this section.

He then turns to the Bhagavad Gita, which forms part of the Prasthanas-trayi. While discussing it, the author argues that, although it preaches nishkama karma (action without desire for personal gain), it suppresses both individual and social freedom and lays the foundations for servitude.

The next section deals with the three great Acharyas- Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhvacharya. The author describes how their philosophical doctrines- Advaita, Vishishtadvaita, and Dvaita contributed to the revival of Vedanta (Hinduism). He holds that, for the past five hundred years, Hinduism has stood firmly on the foundations laid by this trio of teachers.

He also discusses the Bhakti movements of the medieval period- both Vaishnavite and Shaivite traditions, their various branches, their influence on the masses, and their impact on social life. According to the author, these developments ultimately led to an age of intellectual darkness.

From this "dark age," the author leads us toward the modern era. He discusses materialism, the search for truth, the essence of knowledge, equality, and secularism. He further explains how the emergence of new ideas in

Greece, along with the discoveries and research of philosophers and scientists of the time, paved the way for the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment, thereby laying the foundations for materialism and the modern age.

The author makes a special reference to the Renaissance that blossomed in Europe during that period. He observes that such a movement has not yet taken place in India. Dr Veeranna stresses the necessity of emerging. He concludes that, in the generations that followed, rationalist and humanist ideas gradually gained strength. These ideas prepared sections of society to confront social inequalities, evil customs, and superstitions, and to challenge the entrenched caste prejudices, untouchability, child marriages, and practices such as sati that had become deeply rooted in Hindu society.

In this context, I would like to quote V. R. Narla once again. In his lecture-essay *Poverty of Intellectualism in India*, Narla says:

At this point, looking back over 3000 years, our intellectual history took a wrong turn when Yagnyavalkya was preferred over Uddalaka as our national philosopher. Yagnyavalkya was arrogant, dogmatic, and secretive. Uddalaka had an open mind, was always ready to experiment, and was ready to debate. Uddalaka was our scientific-minded, world- and life-affirming, and optimistic philosopher. If only we had followed him rather than Yagnavalkya, how meaningful, how triumphant, how resplendent our intellectual history would have been!

Furthermore, Narla says elsewhere in the same book:

At the beginning of the modern period in our history, we made the wrong choice again. Had we really wanted to take a firm and gigantic step into the modern age, we should have preferred Henry Louis Vivian Derozio to Raja Rama Mohan Roy.

In other words, our choices seem mistaken.

In the remaining portions of the book, Dr Veeranna presents brief life sketches of poets, artists, social reformers, freedom fighters, and distinguished personalities from many fields who opened new paths for the construction of a new India. He describes their remarkable contributions to their respective spheres and discusses their strengths and limitations with equal balance. Among those introduced are Vemana, Raja Rammohan Roy, Derozio, SamineniMuddu Narasimham, Jyotirao Phule, Dayananda Saraswati, Kandukuri Veeresalingam, Narayana Guru, Gurajada Apparao, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Aurobindo, Tripuraneni Ramaswamy, M. N. Roy, Ambedkar, Periyar, and Lohia.

Finally, the author has devoted a chapter to RavipudiVenkataadri of Andhra Pradesh - an eminent rationalist and humanist leader, a prolific writer, a guiding inspiration to the author, and a distinguished intellectual- and has dedicated the original work to him. For this gesture, the author certainly deserves appreciation.

Throughout the book, the author consistently carries forward the rationalist and humanist ideals he believes in, practices, and has worked for many years to advance, integrating them with the illuminating insights of modern science. These themes remain clearly visible throughout the entire work.

For this, the author deserves commendation. The book's printing and production are attractive. There is little doubt that this work will serve as valuable introductory reading for those curious about Indian philosophical literature. The English translation will also enable readers from other Indian states to translate it into their own languages and benefit from it.

I must say a word about the translator's effort. The translation reads lucidly and accessibly, with elegant English expression, making it easily understandable even to the general reader. Moreover, the translator's quotations at the beginning of each chapter add

further readability and charm to the book. Indeed, the translation is so well done that one can hardly believe it is a translated work at all. The translator's effort deserves lasting appreciation.

Dr Veeranna's analytical work is especially welcome at a time when religion, religious dogmatism, fundamentalism, fanaticism, and revivalism are gaining strength, and when the dominance of majoritarian religious bigotry in the country is creating a sense of insecurity among

minority communities. In this context, Dr Veeranna's book is a timely and welcome contribution. It can also serve as a highly useful resource for rationalist and humanist movements.

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POLITICS WITHOUT POWER*

Contd. from page - (31)

In this situation, practical considerations must prevail. A very good man may belong to a small party; there is little chance of its ever coming to power. Therefore, his chance of being elected is nil. Under such circumstances, the sovereignty of the individual becomes meaningless; democracy demands that the sovereign-individual must merge himself in a party, be a subservient part of an impersonal party machine. In an atmosphere of political backwardness and general ignorance, this system can be abused; people of questionable character can occupy positions of public trust by virtue of belonging to a particular party. A party gives priority and prominence to people not so much for their intellectual merit or moral integrity, but to those who can be of the greatest help for it to capture power. The result is that parties often serve the purpose of promoting the ambition of individuals either thirsting for power for the sake of power or for material gains.

But the people are nowhere in the picture of this scramble for power to which political practice has been debased by the party system. Until now, there has been no case of a party capturing power on behalf of the people, administering it actually under the control of the people. Consequently, under the parliamentary system, we have party dictatorships, and no democratic constitution creates a foolproof guarantee against the rise of such dictatorships.

Any majority party can establish a dictatorial regime. The only guarantee is its moral sense. But an impersonal machine can have no sense of morality. Therefore, formal parliamentarism is no guarantee against dictatorship. That curious situation is created by the degeneration of democracy into party politics, into the scramble of parties for power. Contemporary history records cases of dictatorships established democratically in the formalist sense, dictatorships claiming the sanction of parliamentary support. A more than ninety per cent majority of the German people voted for Hitler, and in many other countries dictatorial regimes were established constitutionally.

Because of all these defects of formal democracy, efforts have been made to make it more real. But no effort, however earnest and sincere, will bear fruit unless it is borne in mind that an educated electorate is the precondition for democracy, education not in the technical sense, but a sufficiently high general cultural level, so that the people can think for themselves, cannot be swayed by demagogic appeals to emotions, and, therefore are capable of exercising their intelligent judgment. In a country where this precondition exists at least to some extent, democracy may have a chance; but even there it is destroyed by the party system, which thrives best in the atmosphere of cultural backwardness and popular ignorance. 

(To be continued.....)

Essay on Indian Philosophical Streams and Culture

In this book, Dr. G. Veeranna presents a bold and comprehensive chronicle of Indian thought from cosmic evolution and the birth of life to the rise of rational critique in modern times. Originally written in Telugu and now translated into English lucidly, this book traces the philosophical undercurrents that shaped India's civilisation and cultural heritage.

Dr. Veeranna meticulously examines the currents of materialism, idealism, and spiritualism as they emerged in diverse schools of Indian philosophy from the Charvakas and Buddhists to the Vedantic triumvirate of Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva. Alongside these systems, the work engages with the Bhakti movements, the rationalist voices of Vemana, Phule, Periyar, and Ambedkar, MN Roy and the intellectual revolutions that challenged orthodoxy and caste.

This book is not a reverential retelling but a reasoned critique that questions the ideological foundations of tradition. With clarity and courage, Veeranna distinguishes between progressive inquiry and obscurantist revivalism, exposing the philosophical stagnation often masquerading as spiritual truth. His commitment to rationalism, humanism, and scientific thought radiates through every page. Bhaskar Sur's sharp and thoughtful foreword adds further depth, making this work compelling for scholars, reformers and anyone with a questioning mind. It is an accessible introduction to India's rich intellectual past and a call for a new philosophical revolution grounded in reason, equality, and freedom.

This is a timely and indispensable work that compels us to rethink what it means to philosophise in and about India.

DR. GUMMA VEERANNA has authored more than 20 books in Telugu on rationalism and humanism. For the past five decades, he has been actively working in the humanist movement, striving for an ideological revolution in society.



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