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# GRI - February 2010

## Cover Reports

### **TOWARDS A UNIVERSAL SOCIETY : by the high dedicated non-violent activist and visionary thinker T. N. Purwar**

#### **(1) THE CRISIS**

Human society has been experiencing a suffocating and depressing situation in community living the world over. The conflict between nationalities and ideologies is sapping our creative energies in various spheres of life. In the name of human progress and prosperity all sorts of atrocities are being committed by people of affluence and authority. In the name of national integrity people are being butchered and massacred. In the name of political liberties and freedom of expression, man is being subjected to economic exploitation. In the name of economic equality, people are being deprived of their political liberty and freedom of expression **\*1\***.

#### **MAN'S NATURE**

We had been thinking as to what could be the way out of these frustrations and inhuman situation. We feel that wrong assessment of human nature has been a major factor in perpetuating this state of affairs. In order to reach the desired goal, we should have a proper understanding of human nature vis-a-vis the rest of creation. At the instinctive level of preservation and propagation of the species, all living creatures are qualitatively similar, though quantitatively different **\*2\***. But the vegetable and animal worlds have one difference in quality: members of animal world can move, while members of the vegetable world cannot move. Movement being common, the qualitative difference between man's world and the animal's world lies in the inquisitiveness of men, which can better be defined as quest for knowledge or reality.

This quest for knowledge or reality is the mainspring of man's evolution towards a higher level of life; it is also the main drive in hid progress in the realms of religion, philosophy, science, technology and other spheres of life. Thus any political, social or economic system which throttles the quest of man in any sphere of life in the name of national or ideological unity would perpetuate tensions and conflicts between man and man between different social and political groups.

#### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

We feel that if we could shape the structure of our socio-economic institutions on the basis of rationality, radically different from the existing ones of nationality and ideology, we can create a universal system. Before we proceed further, let us analyse stages of social development. It began as a tribal society. In this form of society blood provides the bond of relationship between man and man. The people of the same tribe are accepted as fellow beings and equals. The members of stronger tribes are taken as demi-gods. The weaker tribes are considered to be sub-human, to be subjugated and used as slaves or for inferior work.

Subsequently, as the human mind developed philosophically, man felt that all human beings were qualitatively equal. Due to lack of communication all races of man could not contact one another. Hence people living in different territories where communication was easy, formed themselves into different national groups and developed their friendly or inimical attitudes towards other national groups.

This could not satisfy higher urges of man and thus began the search for a uniform formula which could translate qualitative equality men into socio-economic and political institutions. Prophets, thinkers and reformers put forward different ideologies to achieve this end. Consequently societies based on different ideologies were formed **\*3\***. Tension and conflicts developed. These tensions and conflicts have become endemic in many parts of the world.

In this part of the world, we inherited a society whose rationality was based on universal values. Different ideologies about the universe, cosmos and future of man were accepted as subjective and dimensional expressions of a multi-dimensional reality. Thus even conflicting ideologies become complimentary to each other at a higher plane as different dimensions of the same reality. However, in spite of the rationality of universal values and the conceptual equality of man, equality in socio-economic spheres could not be achieved. The growth of specialisation in occupations and methods of production led to social inequalities and economic disparities. These were perpetuated by the oral system of preservation and communication of knowledge; primitive sources of energy were also responsible for continuation of these disparities and inequalities **\*4\***.

#### **NEW DIRECTION**

Now, however, new technology, based on new sources of energy, the printing press and mass media of education and communication have given powerful weapons in hand of man to build an egalitarian socio-economic system on a universal basis so we can evolve and ideal universal system. To begin with, instead of small national and warring ideological states, we will form bigger regional units, comprising such areas and people whose sensibilities and medium of expression are similar and common to a great extent. The

underlying rationality of these regional units will be universal values. These regions could be the Himalayan Subcontinent consisting of India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Ceylon, Nepal and Burma; the Arabic speaking states; Western Europe; the U.S.A and Canada; Latin America; the Balkan States and so on.

For bringing this regional unity into existence, the first step would be free movement, without passports and visas, within such regions where the sensibilities and the medium of expression are common and similar. Secondly, a single economic community based on equality will be evolved. Thirdly, a political unit will be established. The political forms of regions will be decided by consensus of different people who will group together. Gradually these regions will merge into a common universal society based on universal values and evolving norms, basis being compassion and love.

## **FUTURE SOCIETY**

The rationality of the new human society will be universal values, such as (i) seeking a reality which is multi-dimensional and expresses itself in newer and newer forms, (ii) equality of man in every sphere of life.

In such a society men will be bound with one another through love and harmony unlike today's society where fear of a common enemy huddles us together. Means of production will be community-owned and wealth produced will be common property to all. Modern forms of governments whose main business is defence, external affairs and internal administration will have very little role to play in such a society. Corporate elected bodies will be evolved to coordinate and manage various spheres of human activity.

We know that those who have vested interests in the existing scheme of things and are controlling the levers of power directly and indirectly will oppose us to the utmost with their organised ability. We fully understand their capacity to create mischief and terror but we will face in a non-violent manner all that may confront us in our struggle for a new future for mankind. As we have faith in the inherent goodness of man (evil is a by-product of circumstances and is born out of ignorance), we accept the humane weapon of non-violence and non-cooperation as our only means to achieve our ends. This weapon will have to be evolved in a scientific way through constant struggles so that it may be used in future for settling all human disputes replacing the present mode of violent conflicts.

## **(2) THE SUBCONTINENT**

A world-wide non-violent movement has to be created for the regional re-organisation of human society but as people belonging to the region of the Himalayan subcontinent, we have, primarily, to undertake the task of organising this region. Before we proceed further, let us analyse the social situation, political and administrative complexities as they exist today. In the major portion of the subcontinent in India and Pakistan, the Hindu-Muslim confrontation persists in various spheres of life. It receives its nourishment from the existing administrative and political arrangements known by the name of the Indian Government and Pakistan Government. The British were forced to give up colonial possession of the Indian subcontinent under the pressure of the Independence movement and the aftermath of the Second World War, which made the Empire economically unsustainable.

However, they contrived the transfer of power in a manner which enabled them to control the political strings while transferring to the people only administrative power. Our leaders, in their eagerness to control the administrative structure, fumbled during negotiations for the transfer of powers. Their short-sightedness led the people into trap laid by the British imperialists. And to this day both Indian and Pakistan, because of their confrontation in various spheres, wait on other nations, big or small, for favours in their family disputes thus eroding their political strength. Except for playing minor roles as brokers in the political arena of the world, they have not been able to contribute politically towards world's peace and prosperity, in spite of their numerical strength, geographical situation, cultural tradition and economic potential.

Our leaders blamed each other for the cruel vivisection of the area. Congress leadership lays the blame on the leadership of the Muslim League for its communal outlook; but mockery of accusation is apparent by the fact that when it was a question of Muslims living in Hindu-majority India, they opposed division, but when it became a question of Hindus living in Muslim majority areas of Punjab and Bengal, they demanded vivisection of the provinces of Punjab and Bengal. The vivisection of Punjab and Bengal had disastrous aftermath in terms of killing and up-rooting millions of innocent people in these areas.

The present crisis in Bengal is more connected with the unnatural division of Bengal and Punjab than the partition of the subcontinent. After the eventual withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Bangladesh, Punjabi Muslims will face a horrible situation of isolation in their truncated homeland of West Punjab, which is neither economically viable nor has any outlet to the outside world. This fear of impending isolation blunts the finer sensibility of their leadership and human suffering does not touch them. It is a pursuit of their parochial vested interest which has led to the genocide in Bangladesh in the name of Islam. In the long run, however, the Punjabi forces will have to withdraw from Bengal under the pressure of continuing non-cooperation of the Bengali population and increasing guerrilla activities of Bengali patriot. If we want to quicken the pace of withdrawal of Pakistani forces and to mitigate sufferings of the people of Bangladesh, as well as to remove the impending isolation and frustrations of Punjabi Muslims, we should convince the latter that through Punjabis on the other side of the frontier, i.e. in India, they are bound in brotherhood and have common economic and cultural interest with the other people in the subcontinent. We should undertake activities which will promote this conviction and transform it into a reality.

After the Hindu-Muslim confrontation is resolved in the Indo-Pak area, we could renew age-old ties with our Afghan brethren. The geopolitics and cultural traditions of India and Afghanistan were always bound in one thread, which the Britishers distorted and snapped for their political game. They had two motives behind it; the first to have a buffer between the Indian Empire and the Russian Empire, and secondly to cripple the Indians from carrying their war of independence from Afghan territory. The printing press and modern form of communications became their hand maiden in propagating fabricated and perverted lies, on a mass scale.

In older political tradition of the subcontinent, if Prithvi Raj was not foreign invader in Kannauj and Kalinjar, then how could Mohammad Ghori be branded as a foreign invader in Lahore and Delhi? The venom of hatred created in minds of the people in the name of religion is result of ignorance and has been perpetuated with sinister motive of dividing people. We resolve to remove this venom of hatred and sublimate it to creative purposes.

In spite of common cultural background and similar sensibility, difficulties of communication created by geographical barriers between Nepal, Ceylon, (Burma) and the other parts of the area contributed to the social and political isolation of these units. Modern means of communication should now be used to break isolation of these areas and to bring people nearer to each other. For this we should strive for free movement without passport and visas between these units.

Thus, through persuasion and enlightenment we can develop a common social economic and political system based on aforesaid universal values for whole of the Himalayan subcontinent. For this end if and when needed we may have to resort to non-violent struggles also.

(\*1\* - *Apart from physical, social, emotional and spiritual aspect, the price that we have to pay in economic affairs of man for such conflicts and confrontations is staggering. Every year billions and billions of rupees and substantial proportion of human energy are being wasted in producing destructive weapons of war, which become junk after a couple of years. If these resources and energies could be put to creative and productive purposes, human society could enjoy unimaginable affluence and freedom.*

\*2\* - *The different patterns and techniques in method of preservation and propagation of species come under quantitative difference.*

\*3\* - *Islam and Christianity, like Marxism, partake of the nature of ideology*

\*4\* - *Due to oral knowledge and employment of human beings and animals as prime source of energy for the sake of efficiency and better production, occupation became hereditary and functional groups developed into social groups gradually assuming the form of castes. New technology broke the backbone of caste system; its' economic aspect has become totally redundant and it is losing its effectiveness and utility as a social group also.)*

**Article By:**

***Triloki Nath Purwar***

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**Stop a nuclear disaster :: Suggested questionnaire/homework before taking a stand on the Nuclear Liability Bill**

*India*

Since the content of the very few newspaper articles on the Nuclear Liability Bill are full of omissions and contradictions, here are a few suggested questions before taking a stand on this very important issue.

***Note: The answers are all on public sources on the internet. The list of references given at the end has only a few of the sources of information available. Things remain secret only as long as our lack of interest allows them to be so!***

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1. Who is afraid of nuclear energy?
2. Who declared, "Those who are shouting against nuclear power should listen to what scientists have to say"?
3. Who declared, "A nuclear reactor once started needs to be looked after to keep its safety functions going, whether it generates electricity or not. This management commitment has to last all the way up to the end of decommissioning process and also until all spent fuel is reprocessed and waste properly disposed off."?
4. Who prevented journalists and observers to enter the conference hall when the Soviet delegation submitted their report to the IAEA in August 1986 at the special conference convened to discuss the Chernobyl accident? The Annex 7 of that report did not appear in the published report, and the existence of that Annex was never mentioned. What was in that Annex 7?
5. Who told lies to Western and Eastern European people after 1986 about the health consequences of the Chernobyl accident? Who dismissed the scientific findings of the Belarus and Ukrainian Academies of Science in favour of the opinions of 3 (yes, three) hand-picked foreign experts? What was there to fear for the Western nuclear industry?
6. Who put in jail the senior scientists who collected the data and studied the consequences of Chernobyl accident, and closed their departments and institutes?
7. Who invented the concept of "mental health related to atomic energy", and when? Who invented the concept of "radiophobia", and when?
8. Who, with what credentials, initially said the total casualty figure of the Chernobyl accident was 23, and now reluctantly admits it may reach 4,000?
9. Who, with what credentials, said it will be 1,000,000?
10. Why has the world-wide nuclear industry always been insisting for a "nuclear liability bill", a "Price-Anderson Act", a "Paris Convention on Nuclear Third Party Liability", a "Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage", and

similar pieces of legislation? Would the richest corporations in the world really need such unlimited government-backed insurance covers, if their liability could not possibly extend to more than a few thousand families?

11. After 50 years of commercial nuclear industry, are the world's biggest nuclear corporations in a position to clean obsolete nuclear facilities for a fixed price, calculated in advance?
12. Has any private or government organisation, anywhere, ever successfully dismantled and cleaned a nuclear facility like a power plant or a plutonium production plant?
13. Does anyone know what to do with nuclear waste?
14. Anyway, who says nuclear power is safe?
15. What are the only 3 risks that the Lloyds of London can't insure?
16. Who has the courage to actually own a nuclear power plant today, under the conditions quoted in the above question No 3?
17. Who is owner of the nuclear waste?
18. Why can't the huge nuclear corporations like Areva, Bechtel, etc. be "rational" and "fearless" enough to take full responsibility for the consequences of their operations?
19. Who says they can't develop nuclear energy in India without a free, unlimited, and comprehensive government insurance, covering any possible event, beyond a token amount of \$450 millions?
20. Could these people fear an accident?
21. Are they "afraid"?
22. Why?

... And, what about the hundreds of thousands of young volunteers from the entire Soviet Union who sacrificed their health and life to reduce the consequences of the Chernobyl accident for the rest of the world?

Where they "afraid"?

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### The answers:

1. Who is afraid of nuclear energy?  
-- Investors and Insurance Companies.
2. Who declared, "Those who are shouting against nuclear power should listen to what scientists have to say"?  
-- The Chief Minister of West Bengal Mr. Buddhadeb Bhattacharya.
3. Who declared, "A nuclear reactor once started needs to be looked after to keep its safety functions going, whether it generates electricity or not. This management commitment has to last all the way up to the end of decommissioning process and also until all spent fuel is reprocessed and waste properly disposed off"?  
-- Dr. Anil Kakodkar, when he was chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). [1]  
(Remember this sentence: it will be used 4 or 5 times thereafter!)
4. Who prevented journalists and observers to enter the conference hall when the Soviet delegation submitted their report to the IAEA in August 1986 at the special conference convened to discuss the Chernobyl accident? The Annex 7 of that report did not appear in the published report, and the existence of that Annex was never mentioned. What was in that Annex 7?  
-- The Soviet delegation headed by Valery Legassov, after presenting their comprehensive, 370-page report, followed by a 3 hours question-answers session, received a standing ovation for their efforts. [2]

But the content of their report triggered an outcry, and the IAEA opposed its public release. Particularly, the estimated casualties that were calculated using extensive measured data and following the admitted norms of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP), was considered much too high, and the next 2 days were spent in negotiating with the Soviet delegation a figure that would be more "presentable". It was ultimately scaled down from 30,000 – 40,000 deaths to 5,100 – 10,000. It is the IAEA, a UN body funded by public money, which decided to shield these heated discussions from public scrutiny and to hold the conference behind closed doors. [3]

-- The annex 7 explains the methodology used for evaluating the health consequences of the accident. [3, 4] Its disappearance in pure old Soviet style, indicates that the IAEA was quite unable to digest the "Glasnost" and the "Perestroika" which had started in the Soviet Union. But, one wonders if it could now?

5. Who told lies to Western and Eastern European people after 1986 about the health consequences of the Chernobyl accident? Who dismissed the scientific findings of the Belarus and Ukrainian Academies of Science in favour of the opinions of 3 (yes, three) hand-picked foreign experts? What was there to fear for the Western nuclear industry?

-- The IAEA, the French government and many other European governments, the governments of the former Soviet Union told lies deliberately. They even had the gall to defend their lies, as an attempt to avoid "panic" in the public, which could have had, according to some French officials, "far worse consequences than the radioactivity itself". [5]

-- In 1988 the government of USSR decided that the dose-limit for evacuation of the population was "35 rem in 70 years". The Academy of Science of Belarus contested this value and recommended 7 rem in 70 years, or 0.1 rem/year, which was the ICPR norm at the time, and the Ukrainian Academy of Science recommended 10 rem in 70 years [3]. In 1989 the WHO sent an ad-hoc mission to Belarus composed of 3 experts: M. Waight, secretary of the WHO, Dan Beninson,

president of the ICRP and the most vociferous opponent of the 1986 Soviet report, and Pierre Pellerin, director since 1956 of the French Central Service of Protection from Ionising Radiation, who became famous in 1986 for insisting the French territory had been totally spared by radioactive fallout when the rest of Europe was taking sanitary measures, and is now facing deception charges in his country [5, 6]. These three experts declared that 35 rem in 70 years was a “conservative figure, consistent with international norms” (without stating which norm), that “by their own opinion, they would choose a value 2 or 3 times higher”, and that “experts not well-versed in radioactive effects assign all health problems to radioactivity”, when factors like “stress” and “psychological” problems also play a role [7]. It is to be noted that Pierre Pellerin was then a full-time functionary of the French ministry of Health, and that the value of “35 rem in 70 years” was in complete contradiction with the French norms. (It is also interesting that, 20 years later, his line of defense against the charge of “aggravated deception” he is facing, is that he was “under enormous political pressure”). After the ad-hoc mission of the three WHO experts, the Belarus and Ukrainian governments utilised this opportunity to deride their own scientists and to dismiss the recommendations of their respective Academies of Science [3].

6. Who put in jail the senior scientists who collected the data and studied the consequences of Chernobyl accident, and closed their departments and institutes?

-- Professor Yury Bandazhevsky was the director of the Gomel Medical Institute. In 2001 the research activities of his institute on the health consequences of Chernobyl accident were stopped, his institute re-organised, and he was sentenced to 8 years of jail. He has been released on parole in 2005 [8].

-- Professor Vassili Borissovitch Nesterenko, was director of the Institute of Nuclear Energy at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus since 1977. He was one of the volunteers who threw liquid azote from helicopters in the open reactor No 4, and the only survivor of a team of 4 other “liquidators”. In 1986 he oriented the efforts of his institute towards the mitigation of the Chernobyl accident, until 1987 when his laboratory was dismantled, his institute re-organised, his job cancelled. He was also threatened of internment in a psychiatric asylum [9].

7. Who invented the concept of “mental health related to atomic energy”, and when? Who invented the concept of “radiophobia”, and when?

-- The WHO in 1958 published its report No. 151, titled “Mental health aspects of the peaceful uses of atomic energy” in which this UN body recommends to keep the information about nuclear energy under tight control, because “mental” problems induced by atomic energy in the population, could harm the development of this technology. [10]

-- L. A. Ilyin and O. A. Pavlovskij in the report to the IAEA, “Radiological consequences of the Chernobyl accident in the Soviet Union and measures taken to mitigate their impact”, IAEA Bulletin 4/1987, mentioned for the first time “radiophobia” as a mental disease responsible for the adverse health effects of the Chernobyl accident. [3]

This “concept” of no scientific value has since been much utilised by the IAEA and the nuclear industry.

8. Who, with what credentials, initially said the total casualty figure of the Chernobyl accident was 23, and now reluctantly admits it may reach 4,000?

-- The IAEA [11]

9. Who, with what credentials, said it will be 1,000,000?

-- Professor John Gofman, former group co-leader of the Plutonium Project (for the Manhattan Project), former co-director of Lawrence Livermore Laboratories, Founder and first Director of the Biomedical Research Division of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, and responsible with Dr. Arthur Tamplin of the report that eventually forced in 1971 the American nuclear operators to reduce their normal radioactive emissions by 90%. (He was fired shortly after that, and he became a university professor) [12]

10. Why has the world-wide nuclear industry always been insisting for a “nuclear liability bill”, a “Price-Anderson Act”, a “Paris Convention on Nuclear Third Party Liability”, a “Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage”, and similar pieces of legislation? Would the richest corporations in the world really need such unlimited government-backed insurance covers, if their liability could not possibly extend to more than a few thousand families?

-- The nuclear companies claim for “immortality”, they say they have to survive economically any nuclear disaster of any magnitude, anyway and at any cost. One of their arguments is, we will need their expertise even more after a disaster than before, so society can’t afford to dismantle their organisations. But the Chernobyl experience has shown that what really help in disasters are competent and courageous individuals who can make things work, including against the inertia of their organisations when necessary. Also, many nuclear companies and research institutes were restructured in the 5-6 years following the Chernobyl accident, in the former USSR and in Europe, although none of these organisations were made to pay a penny as compensation. So dismantling does happen anyway after a major event and is not related to the payment of penalties. To dismantle an organisation doesn’t always mean to lose its competence, and to re-organise its capable people in a different manner may be necessary if the previous organisation has failed to take its responsibility. So, the claim that nuclear corporations should survive a nuclear accident has no validity in the light of events.

11. After 50 years of commercial nuclear industry, are the world's biggest nuclear corporations in a position to clean obsolete nuclear facilities for a fixed price, calculated in advance?  
-- The only case of commercial nuclear cleaning operation is the one presently done by AREVA for the British government at Sellafield-Windscale, on terms that are similar to popular software agreements: No guarantee of results and no liability (even in case of proven error). [13, 14]
12. Has any private or government organisation, anywhere, ever successfully dismantled and cleaned a nuclear facility like a power plant or a plutonium production plant?  
-- Only a handful of small research reactors have been fully decommissioned, in conditions that are not well documented. Presently, all the atomic bomb and plutonium production facilities (Hanford in USA, Marcoule in France, Cheliabinsk in former USSR, etc.) have cleaning programs going on since the last 30 years, and are being turned into permanent research centres on the "back-end of nuclear cycle" (read: radioactive waste), thus delaying decommissioning forever!
13. Does anyone know what to do with nuclear waste?  
-- All that the scientists can do at present is packaging, sub-packaging, over-packaging, and re-packaging... and all the administrations can do is dumping, more or less discreetly, in the hope that when the radioactivity will be detected it will be too late to trace its origin! For how many generations we will be able to maintain scientific interest in nuclear garbage maintenance and monitoring, along with the necessary resources, is anybody's guess.
14. Anyway, who says nuclear power is safe?  
-- People who don't own the radioactive waste: Nuclear corporations.
15. What are the only 3 risks that the Lloyds of London can't insure?  
-- a) Gambling, b) War, and c) Nuclear activities.
16. Who has the courage to actually own a nuclear power plant today, under the conditions quoted in the above question No 3?  
-- Only governments. However, the concept of ownership for hundreds of thousands of years is a non-sense abstraction.
17. Who is owner of the nuclear waste?  
-- Always governments (American companies have managed to "sell" their waste to their government).
18. Why can't the huge nuclear corporations like Areva, Bechtel, etc. be "rational" and "fearless" enough to take full responsibility for the consequences of their operations?  
  
-- The apparent contradiction comes from the incomplete information given to the public. The nuclear corporations quote scientists saying everything "can be" brought under control and the risk "can be" brought down to an arbitrarily low level, but at the same time, their extraordinary liability cap demand show that they themselves don't believe it can be brought down to a level comfortable for their money.  
  
If, by their own assessment the AREVA, ROSATOM, BECHTEL, TATA, etc. say their technology is SAFE ENOUGH for our lives, then we HAVE TO consider it is also safe enough FOR THEIR MONEY, and no Nuclear Liability Bill is needed!  
  
(However, their very demand should awaken us and we should consider if a huge bank guarantee should not be demanded from nuclear companies!)
19. Who says they can't develop nuclear energy in India without a free, unlimited, and comprehensive government insurance, covering any possible event, beyond a token amount of \$450 millions?  
-- Investors.
20. Could these people fear an accident?  
-- The key is they want to survive financially to all accidents in the future, at any cost.
21. Are they "afraid"?  
-- They are afraid for their investment.
22. Why?  
-- The key to surviving the nuclear era is to maintain the nuclear industry alive enough to be able to look after the nuclear facilities and nuclear waste, for ever. (Again, see quote in question No 3). This is already a big economic burden for heavily nuclearised countries, and could become a political problem also, when people will ask why they should pay for facilities that don't produce electricity anymore.

A strategy is to spread the burden over a larger population, so that at least they won't be alone in this trouble, and a huge and very densely populated country like India is the best target for this type of strategy. It is assumed that nuclear-free people and countries will not spontaneously come forward to help the nuclearised ones when they are in need. (If the international help for the Belarus and Ukrainian people after the Chernobyl accident is anything to go by, the assumption is not wrong: Denying and dismissing were the main focus of the IAEA and nuclear governments).  
Therefore fear and coercion are the driving forces of present undercover nuclear policies.

... And, what about the hundreds of thousands of young volunteers from the entire Soviet Union who sacrificed their health and life to reduce the consequences of the Chernobyl accident for the rest of the world?

Where they “afraid”?

-- All witnesses (officials, scientists, journalists, etc.) were astonished to see that none of the nuclear workers had deserted their post or taken a leave after the accident, and were continuing to discharge their duties at the reactors No 1, 2 and 3, just besides the open reactor No. 4, in terrible radioactivity conditions, thus preventing the disaster to spread to the other units. Similarly, no soldier had deserted, and volunteers were found easily and immediately, for any life-threatening or “suicide” work. Liquidators learned to “count lives”: For many difficult decisions taken during cleaning operations, the number of lives it would “cost” was calculated. It is estimated that the majority of the 600,000 “liquidators”, most of them in their early twenties in 1986, are dead now.

It is evident fear and coercion were not factors for them!

#### **Sources and references:**

[1] Address by Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, at the Indo-French Nuclear Industry Business Meet in Mumbai on 15th October 2007

<http://www.dae.gov.in/press/chmnindofr.htm>

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#### **About the Article:**

Information compiled and comments added by

**Laurent Fournier**

(Father of three, Kolkata)

*Replies and contributions appreciated!*

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## **Ten Attacks on Activists in 2010 already ... and a Wild Idea to fight back**

### **# 1. Most recent: Murderous attack on Environmentalists Sumaira Abdulali & Naseer Jalal, and TOI Journalists. Maharashtra, March 16.**

On March 16, the sand-mining mafia which is choking Bankot Creek – a rich mangrove habitat for migratory birds, crocodiles and marine life in Maharashtra's Raigad district -- attacked environmental activists Sumaira Abdulali and Naseer Jalal, and a team of journalists from The Times of India, when they visited the creek on Tuesday afternoon to report on the rampant illegal activities.

After a 10 km high-speed chase on a twisting ghat road, Sumaira's vehicle was rammed by an LCV as it entered the highway, and immediately surrounded by three other vehicles. In the presence of a traffic cop, 15 to 20 people smashed the vehicle's rear window, the side mirror and side window. They then tried to snatch the camera from the TOI photographer but failed. The mob threatened to kill local activist Jalal who was in the vehicle and asked Abdulali not to visit the area again... or else.

Cops reached the spot after being phoned by the TOI office, but the attackers continued to threaten and abuse the team of journalists and environmentalists; they had spent Rs 28 crore "buying the creek" and nobody could stop sand-dredging there, the mob said.

Cops then escorted the team to the Mahad police station, four kilometres away, where police officials filed an FIR and booked the accused for attempt to murder, criminal intimidation and rioting. The Mahad police registered a case of attempt to murder, criminal intimidation and rioting. Shockingly, they did not arrest the accused who were present at the police station from 3 pm to 9 pm. One of the accused, present in the mob, was the local MLA's son. At 9 pm, Sumaira and her colleagues were hurriedly ushered out of the police station as the MLA came in. The accused are now said to be "absconding".

### **# 2. Police raid on the house of Journalist Dandapani Mohapatra. Orissa, March 11.**

On 11th March, while Mr Mohapatra was away in some meeting, violating all procedures, the police raided his house for nearly six hours ransacking all his belongings and not even allowing his ailing wife and children to take their food. The police had not given a copy of any search warrant to his family members, nor stated any reason for the raid. As per Mr Mohapatra the police took away a number of old journals such as Ghadaghadi, Inquilab and Marga O Chinta – none of which is proscribed by the government – without giving a seizure list, which is mandatory. Strangely, the police took the signatures of Mr Mohapatra's son and that of the local Sarpanch on a number of plain sheets of paper. After raiding the house, the SDPO Chhatrapur threatened him on the same day in the evening asking him to come to the Police station by 15th of March or face the dire consequences. No criminal case is said to be pending against him under any allegation.

It is believed that the intention of the police in raiding the house of Mr Mohapatra was to terrorize him and suppress his dissent, which he has been expressing through his writings continuously for many years. He is the General Secretary of Dakhshina Odisha Sahitya Sammelani, a literary organization. He was publishing a satirical magazine called Ghadaghadi between 1984 to 1990. Currently, he has been writing for a weekly tabloid called 'Sahanamela'.

The police seem to have told the media that the raid was undertaken due to suspected Maoist links.

### **#3: FIR on Journalist Dr E Rati Rao. Karnataka, March 5.**

Dr E Rati Rao, Vice-President of PUCL-Karnataka and Vice President of the All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA), a senior scientist and activist with many decades of standing in the women's movement, the civil liberties movement, and campaigns against communal violence and caste atrocities, has been charged with sedition by the Karnataka police. The FIR against her implies that in Karnataka, defending secularism, opposing atrocities against dalits and minorities or fake encounters, and organising marginalised communities for struggle amounts to 'sedition.'

Dr. Rati Rao was Editor of an in-house PUCL-Karnataka Kannada language bulletin (called PUCL Varthapatra)– and it is this bulletin (last published in 2007) that is the supposed basis for the charges of 'sedition'. The FIR against Dr. Rati Rao accuses her of publishing the PUCL bulletin that is "favoring naxals and Muslims and is propagating that the police are killing innocent people in the name of encounter"; that "calls upon dalits, women, minorities, farmers and adivasis to build organizations in order to fight for their rights"; that "accuses the Sangh Parivar in Karavali (coastal Karnataka) of indulging in false propaganda and fueling communal disharmony" and "calls upon the secular forces to raise their voice against such spread of communal hate"; and "by raising such issues incite and spread intolerance, disbelief, discontent amongst the public"; that "in the name of doing good to the dalits, women, minorities, & adivasis the said bulletin is spreading false information against the casteist & communal Government...It is propagating intolerance, disbelief, and discontent amongst the Government officials." The sections under which Dr. Rati Rao has been booked are Section 124 A (Sedition), Section 505 (False statement, rumour, etc., circulated with intent to cause mutiny or cause communal discord) and sections of the Press Act that relate to knowingly spreading false information.

The PUCL Bulletin in question had discussed the attacks on the Christian community in Karnataka and had indicted the Government for failing to do enough to protect the minority community.

**# 4: Murderous mob attack on Muzaffar Bhat & eight others, followed by FIR & arrest. Jammu & Kashmir, February 27**

Dr Muzaffar Bhat, Convener of J&K Right to Information Movement and 8 other colleagues who had organized an RTI awareness programme in Branwar had all the tyres of their vehicle punctured during their overnight stay in that town. After they had their tyres repaired in nearby Chadoora market, they were murderously assaulted by a mob of 20 persons, and rescued in the nick of time by CRP and police personnel.

However, when the activists complained to the police, the police booked them instead, based on motivated charges leveled by Rashida Begum w/o Chaudhury Saifuddin of Branwar, who is also Halqa President and affiliated with the National Conference in the area. The activists were booked for rioting and house trespass, assault and theft (stealing gold ornaments) in FIR No. 42 of 2010 registered at Chadoora Police Station. Five activists were arrested and detained in custody over the weekend, namely Mushtaque Ahmed Mir, Abdul Rehman Bhat, Bashir Ahmed Lone, Nazir Ahmed Ganai and Mohammed Sadiq. Muzaffar, Dr. Sheikh Ghulam Rasool, Latif Ahmed and Ashik Ahmed applied for anticipatory bail. Thus, victims of the attack are being further victimized by the police, while those guilty of the attack are at large.

Detailed story: <http://blog.jkrmovement.org/?p=1732>

Contact: [muzaffar@jkrmovement.org](mailto:muzaffar@jkrmovement.org), 94195.62190

**#5: Murder of Shashidhar Mishra. Bihar, February 14**

On Feb. 14 in Bihar, well-known RTI activist Shashidhar Mishra was shot dead by unidentified gunmen on motorcycles at the entrance of his home. He had been working to expose local welfare schemes.

**# 6. Murder of Vishram Laxman Dodiya. Gujarat, February 11.**

Vishram Laxman Dodiya of Ahmedabad had filed an application under RTI to get details about the illegal electricity connection by Torrent Power. He could not get any information. On February 11, 2010 he was found murdered, shortly after meeting with the company officials. Three people were arrested in the case. His son is yet to receive the information under RTI.

Contact: Harinesh Pandya, Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP) [magpgujarat@gmail.com](mailto:magpgujarat@gmail.com) 079-26821553/0719

**#7: Murderous assault on Ajay Kumar & colleague, followed by false FIR. New Delhi, January 12.**

When Ajay Kumar asked New Delhi authorities later in 2009 why Municipal councillor Satbir Sharma had authorized the construction of private houses and shops on public land, he didn't imagine the question would land him in the hospital with a fractured nose.

Mr Kumar was stonewalled by the public information officer at the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, so he appealed to the Central Information Commission, which directed the MCD together with the police to jointly inspect the property. However, only two persons were allowed to come and inspect. Accordingly, Mr Kumar, who is General Secretary of an NGO, Public Grievance and Welfare Society, Kishan Ganj, went with his colleague Manmohan Gupta on January 12... only to find themselves surrounded by a mob.

"Neither the police nor the MCD officials helped us," says Mr Kumar, who was beaten in the head repeatedly by an iron rod, leaving him unconscious and bleeding profusely. Society president Surinder Puri said, "The police registered an FIR on January 18, after we took up the matter with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate. But to our horror, we found that on January 12, they had filed a false FIR against us in connection with a weapon – a loaded katta (countrymade gun) supposedly found in our car."

**#8: Priyanka Borpujari & other Mumbai journalists assaulted, followed by FIR. Chhatisgarh, January 6**

Priyanka Borpujari, a journalist from Mumbai, and her colleagues, were physically assaulted by locals and by police in Dantewada, Chattisgarh. Her camera was forcibly snatched away, they were detained overnight and a motivated FIR was lodged against them with charges of dacoity etc. More details at <http://priyanka-borpujari.blogspot.com/2010/01/from-detention-drama-to-dacoit.html>  
For details, contact: Priyanka Borpujari [aa.priyanka@gmail.com](mailto:aa.priyanka@gmail.com) 9820741992

**#9: Murder of Satish Shetty. Maharashtra, January 13**

Social activist Satish Shetty (39), who had blown the whistle on a series of land scams in and around Talegaon, Lonavala and Pimpri-Chinchwad near here, was brutally murdered near his residence at Talegaon-Dabhade. Shetty was on his morning walk around 7am when he was attacked with swords and sharp weapons. An anti-corruption crusader for the last 15 years, Shetty had used the RTI Act to expose the irregularities in government offices. He had exposed many land scams in and around Talegaon, besides the setting up of restaurants and marriage halls in residential zones, selling in the black market of kerosene meant for distribution through ration shops, etc. Shetty's murder is a major embarrassment for the police as he had demanded police protection after having received threats to his life.

For details, contact: Sandeep Shetty 99603 86681 or Vijay Kumbhar 99232 99199

**#10: Firing outside Nayana Kathpalia's house. Mumbai, January 8.**

Two assailants barged into the Swastik building opposite Oval Maidan in Churchgate at 6.45am and fired a round with a country-made revolver outside Nayana Kathpalia's first-floor residence. The 65-year-old co-convenor of the NGO Citispace, who has been fighting for open spaces in the city, escaped unhurt. "The two men entered the building to kill Kathpalia. In the absence of a watchman, one stood near the gate while the other went to her house and opened fire after Kathpalia's domestic help Soma China, 28, opened the grilled security door. The panicked assailant fled immediately," said an officer from the Marine Drive police station. "While an additional bullet was found outside the house, the gun lay abandoned under a tree outside the building. The police have registered a case under section 307 of the IPC and under various sections of the Indian Arms Act." The officer said that the dog squad, deployed after the incident, led the police to a restaurant next to the sessions court opposite the Maidan.

The NGO has been targeted for its relentless protests against Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) scheme being implemented on open spaces and their opposition to hawkers.

THE NUMBERS WILL CONTINUE TO MOUNT. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THIS? Are we going to be content with signing online petitions? Or are we capable of ramping up our actions? Please remember, by doing so, we will not be acting altruistically, we will be acting in enlightened self-interest.

Let us go beyond just signing online petitions, sending letters of support and holding meetings. Let us organize at least a one-day protest this Sunday in support of all such people, who have been under attack from both anti-social elements and the police / administration.

**What kind of protest? Let us think hatke. Also, think nationwide.**

**Here is one idea:** On Sunday, for 24 hours (say 8 am to 8 am), we walk up and down the streets of our own cities wearing black clothes, handcuffs and mouth-coverings of the sort that Jain monks wear. We carry placards that says, "Citizens who seek Truth are under attack by goons and police in all states of India."

Wherever we feel tired, we sit down and rest -- even if it is on a footpath. If the police asks us to move, we move. In the evening, we ask aam janta / supporters to give us candles, which we light at various places -- walls, street corners, gates etc. and we go around all night till 8 am.

And we distribute pamphlets, give people copies of letters to the Chief Ministers of these states, along with postage stamps and envelopes (for which we charge money to meet costs). We ask people to sign, seal and post these letters. Alternatively, we can post them. Hopefully, we can get such letters signed and sent in the hundreds.

Can we all do this in various cities, this Sunday, next Sunday... and maybe the next? In this way, we can try to build public opinion and media glare on the entire issue of oppression of RTI activists. Please let us discuss.

**Column By:**

**Krishnaraj Rao**

## **Proposed Changes towards Democracy in Governance Systems of India**

- Indian Administration Services should be renamed as the Indian Public Facilitation Services or Indian Public Services. *(It was called as Indian Civil Services, ICS, and after Independence it was changed to Indian Administration Services, IAS. The term "Civil" is a democratic word and was used by the British Empire in pre-Independent-India. The term "Administration" is an undemocratic word and is used by the Indian Governments in independent India. The British Empire ruled India, but used a democratic word for a undemocratic ruling. But in Independent and democratic India, the people do not enjoy a democratic ruling because they are being ruled with similar characteristics, rules and attitudes of undemocratic rulings as during the British Empire. And the situations are worse today, because in Independent India the people have lost a democratic word for public services. In a valued democracy, governments and their structures are for public facilitations, not to rule on them.)*

- Any government employee, from chief secretary to village guard, who gets any salary or facility from the government, should be directly addressed as SERVANT (SEVAK) in place of Officer. It should be compulsory in all name plates, all documents and in all types of conversations.

*(It is contradictory that people take oath as public servants, but they behave as masters of the people of India and are called Officers and Lords. For example, in some states, District Collectors are being termed as JILADHISH, which means owner of district. It is undemocratic and violation of fundamental values of a Democratic Constitution.)*

- There is a demand in India for 'Right to Recall' for public representatives from Parliament, Assemblies, Pachayats etc. even though these representatives face elections each 5 years. They have to face the people of India to prove accountability to the people, but there is no concern for unaccountability of government officers, even though they are public servants. There must be another high priority demand for Public Rights on government officers. Public should have direct and open rights to monitor any government employee and should have direct and open rights to dismiss or suspend or punish or remark in character-service book to any direct or indirect government employee or department or structure. The Public of India must also have rights for social audit of any government department or structure.

*(In a democracy, Government means representatives of the people. Because large numbers of people cannot sit to make decisions for each thing and for routine things, thus systems of representations were evolved in history of human society leading to democratic systems. Representations does not mean ownership or mastership. Representatives make policies for the betterment of people and people provide them assets and money collectively (known as taxes). Government employees can never be masters or owners or superior to the people in a democracy, because they are employed by the people, to serve the people. Thus if there should be rights for calling back public representatives, there must be rights for monitoring/suspending/dismising/others on government employees. In India, there are too many black-holes in execution and policy making systems that violate Democratic Values, for example Government officers behave superior to the Public & Public Representatives.)*

- All National/Regional/Local policies including Judiciary, Education, Health, Development, Commerce & Finance and Others should be strictly verified by the people of India as the final and last authority. Local Public Representative Bodies should be the final authority to form policy for themselves and government machineries should work for to execute those policies.

*(If governments have not capacities/abilities to arrange direct & open systems for verifications then they should not have rights of formations, executions and implementations of policies. India is a country of social and geometric diversities and cannot be understood by reading a few lines of text books to qualify in the examinations to become Administrator and Policy Maker of the public of India. Governments represent common people, thus they cannot act as rulers and masters of the People of India. Because governments make policies and work for the welfare of the People of India, the People of India should have the final rights of verifications of policies. It is commonly said that common people do not know how to improve their welfare and are incapable of understanding. Parliament and Assemblies are the highest authorities for policy makings and representatives are elected by the common people. But if common people can decide their representatives, then they should also have rights of verifications of the works of their representatives. People should have fundamental rights to verify policies, decisions and rules which are being made for them and on behalf of them.)*

- National/State Budgets are finalized by closed & centralized powers, without being verified by Local Societies. How can big financial groups, high level secretaries and centralized political powers be accountable for larger society, without having ground understandings of Local Communities/Societies? How can these very small groups decide for millions without any verification or concern? These nonsocial, non-accountable and non-democratic processes should be changed in public accountable systems. Budget should be verified by Local Social Systems and government machineries should execute the decisions of Local Social Systems.

*(In many decades after Independence, it has been understood that there are big black-holes in the governance systems of India. Things are becoming worse and moving towards greater unaccountability. Policies should be verified by the people of India. An open and easy verification structure/system should be formed to get active participations of the people of India to empower Democracy and to stop violations of the fundamental values of Democracy.)*

- All governance systems i.e.- Parliament, Assemblies, Panchayats, Execution Systems and Judiciary Systems should be converted into direct-open-public-facility-management systems from centralized-closed controlled-administrative ruling systems and should be made direct accountable to the People of India.

**Article By-**

***Vivek Umrao Glendinning MCIJ***

First Draft was written in 2006

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## **International**

### **PIMRIS Portal, the one stop website for all Pacific marine fisheries information**

*Fiji*

By the end of this week it will take as much effort as pushing a button for you to have access to a wealth of quality marine and fisheries information from the Pacific. Gone are the days of having to trawl through different websites and constant library visits as you search for information on Pacific marine fisheries and environment.

With thanks to the cooperation and contribution of all regional agencies who work in this area, the soon to be launched Pacific Islands Marine Portal (<http://www.pimrisportal.org>) has brought everything together in the one website, making life a lot easier when it comes to seeking out information on Pacific marine environment and fisheries.

PIMRIS, the Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System is a Pacific network consisting of agencies from the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP), it has been in operation for the past two decades focusing on building capacity in knowledge management in fisheries departments throughout the Pacific region.

Taking it a step further, PIMRIS has engaged in a new project in partnership with the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange Programme (IODE) of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO to provide an online gateway to all information available to the marine resource sector in the Pacific.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was instrumental in developing the portal structure and identifying resources and content to populate the portal and will continue to work in partnership with University of the South Pacific, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission and Forum Fisheries Agency to further develop the portal in 2010.

The success of this project relies heavily upon the input and ownership of the CROP agencies and partners. It calls upon the ongoing collaboration between regional agencies and national fisheries departments and will continue to do so in the future to ensure the information remains current and the portal is active.

"PIMRIS is a collaborative effort that is supported by all the Pacific Islands and their regional organisations. It is a testament to the value and strength of cooperation and partnership where the sum of the collective work is more than the sum of its individual parts," said Dr Joeli Veitayaki, Head of the Division of Marine Studies, USP.

In 2008 and 2009, funding was provided by IODE to allow for several meetings in which the CROP agencies and partners involved could come together to discuss how this was going to work, and to develop the portal. The portal is hosted by the Project Office for IODE in Oostende, Belgium.

The portal has been designed so that it is user friendly and will be helpful to a wide range of people. Policy makers will be able to visit it for data and information at regional level; school children will be able to visit it to for information for schools and those in the community will find it a useful access point for generic information. It contains information from the Pacific region and is available for use by all.

Our Pacific marine environment faces great threats right now and the Year of Biodiversity has raised once again important facts which we must face. The International Union for Conservation of Nature notes that 6 marine turtles out of 7 are all threatened with extinction, 75% of the world's fisheries are fully or over exploited and one third of reef-building corals around the world are threatened with extinction.

"We need to act fast to secure and provide our people with the resources and development activities that will allow them to have dignified and successful lives while protecting the integrity and health of the natural systems that support our lives," said Dr Joeli Veitayaki.

"The best way to do that is to learn the lessons from the past and then use our best science and technology to formulate and implement sustainable development activities and resource management arrangements for use in all of our communities and countries. For that challenge, we need to have access to the best information we can get, which is what the PIMRIS Portal offers."

Not only will there be a launch of the PIMRIS portal in Fiji this week, but the acknowledgement of another information project under this portal. The PIMRIS regional repository is about ensuring Pacific islands countries and territories will be able to provide preservation in digital format and better access to their country documents. The Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati and Samoa are involved in a pilot project developing the capacity of each of the country fisheries departments to manage their fisheries documents and to allow each country to be able to upload national documents in digital format to the regional repository.

The launch of the Pacific Islands Marine Portal will take place in Marine Lecture Theatre at USP, Suva, Fiji, from 2.00-3.00pm on Thursday, 25th of March 2010.

**Notes:** The University of the South Pacific (USP) through a partnership between the Library and the Division of Marine Studies coordinates PIMRIS activities. The PIMRIS Steering Committee consisting of representatives of all CROP agencies and national fisheries & marine resources departments serves as an advisory body on protocols for these activities.

**Source:**  
***PIMRIS***

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## **Marching Forward on the Way to Peace in South Asia**

*South Asia*

In 2009, the 16th year of its existence, the Association for Communal Harmony in Asia (ACHA) has continued to make slow, but steady progress in the pursuit of its mission of promoting peace in South Asia and harmony among South Asians everywhere. ACHA still is one of the oldest, best organized, most active, and most transparent South Asian peace organizations. Below is a brief report.

### **Peace-building**

In view of the fact that currently India and Pakistan face a far more serious threat to their integrity, security and prosperity from what is happening within their own borders, than from each other, ACHA has realized the importance of building a culture of peace and harmony within India as well as Pakistan. Peace WITHIN each of them would make it much easier to accomplish peace BETWEEN them.

For this reason, the following ACHA Pledge of Peace and Harmony, which had served as the theme for its “2008 Peace Pilgrimage to India and Pakistan” ([http://groups.google.com/group/peace--harmony-news-from-south-asia/browse\\_thread/thread/b93b387c490b2d39](http://groups.google.com/group/peace--harmony-news-from-south-asia/browse_thread/thread/b93b387c490b2d39)), was adopted also as the core project for its 2009 India-Pakistan Peace Day campaign (<http://indiapakistanpeace.org/>):

### **I Pledge:**

I will not intentionally use my hands or my words to harm anyone;  
I will treat my sisters and daughters with at least as much love and respect as I treat my brothers and sons; and  
I will treat all my neighbors as deserving of my respect, regardless of their class, caste, sect or religion.

Now deriving inspiration from the work of a couple of American peace psychologists and in consultation with some South Asian peace activists, ACHA has embarked on a plan to help build a culture of peace and harmony among the youth and children of India and Pakistan.

The objective is to develop a program that would help youth and children in learning skills in independent thinking, empathetic listening, cooperative problem-solving and nonviolent conflict-resolution. It should help them to inculcate the noble values of kindness, compassion and tolerance. It should assist them in adopting ways of living in peace and harmony with others, especially with those who differ from them in social status, religious beliefs, and national origin. Finally, it should enable them to become more decent human beings and better members of their family, neighborhood, nation and the global village.

In this connection, in September-October, 2010, ACHA plans to organize, at a few places in India and Pakistan experiential workshops to train volunteer peace and harmony teachers. The volunteers will be selected by local peace activists, as individuals who have committed themselves to conduct peace camps for youth and children in their own areas.

### **Alliances**

While maintaining and strengthening old ones, ACHA has made several new alliances with South Asian peace activists and organizations, thus improving its ability to initiate and implement projects in South Asia, particularly in India and Pakistan in cooperation with them.

### **Asiapeace: Electronic Discussion Forum**

Thanks to its volunteer-moderator, Dr. Omar Ali, Asiapeace, ACHA's electronic forum, continues to be a popular site for a civilized discussion of South Asian issues, every day. It has 547 subscribers. Posts to this forum, along with Dr. Ali's incisive and insightful comments on them can be viewed at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/asiapeace/>.

### **Electronic publications**

Except for some interruptions caused by their editor's 5-month ordeal due to his three eye surgeries, he has continued to bring out ACHA's three electronic publications.

The hope for peace was kept alive through the daily publication Peace and Harmony News from South Asia (<http://groups.google.com/group/peace--harmony-news-from-south-asia>). Every day, it reaches 2,163 individuals and organizations.

ACHA Peace Bulletin (<http://www.asiapeace.org/acha/achamain.htm>), a monthly compendium of peace and harmony events and educational/training opportunities, books, and updates from and about South Asia. It has 1,014 subscribers.

Kashmir News (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/KashmirSolutionsForum/>) is ACHA's daily digest of views about and news from the various parts of the former princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. It has 180 subscribers.

### **Websites**

For the last several years Dr. Ingrid Shaffer has been donating her time, as well as domain space, to design, update and maintain our two website [www.asiapeace.org](http://www.asiapeace.org) & [www.indiapakistanpeace.org](http://www.indiapakistanpeace.org). Also she sets up, and maintains ACHA's electronic petitions.

### **Members**

ACHA has maintained dues-free membership. In 2009, sixteen new members joined ACHA family, four more than last year. There are now 84 members, who come from a dozen different countries, and three continents.

### **Income & Expenses**

ACHA does not have any paid staff. The office space and utilities, including phone (except calls to Pakistan) are provided free of cost. The travel, food, and lodging expenses related to its peace missions to India and Pakistan are borne by the participants. Hence ACHA is a very frugal organization.

Every quarter a statement of its income and expenses is emailed to ACHA members, and is posted on its website. The statement for the last quarter can be viewed at [http://www.asiapeace.org/income\\_expenses.pdf](http://www.asiapeace.org/income_expenses.pdf).

During 2009, ACHA spent a total of \$1004.72, and had income of \$1,710.77. Almost all of the income was from donations made by 18 individuals. The donations ranged between \$25 and \$435, with an average of \$94.

### **Future**

ACHA is one of the best South Asian peace organizations, but still far from where it can and should be. But with the support of its members and well-wishers, it will continue to make progress towards its mission of peace and harmony in South Asia and among all South Asians. Support for ACHA can be rendered in any or all of the following ways:

Tax-deductible donations. Checks/drafts/money orders should be made out to ACHA, and mailed to ACHA, 4410 Verda Lane NE, Keizer, Oregon 97303, USA. Formal receipts will be sent to all donors, for their tax records.

Membership of ACHA, which is dues-free.

Subscription to the electronic discussion forum Asiapeace and/or electronic publications namely, Peace & Harmony News from South Asia, and Kashmir News & Views. Subscription to each is free.

Support for another South Asian peace, human rights, women & children's welfare organization. ACHA can help you locate a suitable organization, if you need help it. Please send your request to [asiapeace@comcast.net](mailto:asiapeace@comcast.net)

Report By:

Pritam Rohila,

Executive Director

Association for Communal Harmony in Asia (ACHA)

<http://www.asiapeace.org> &

<http://www.indiapakistanpeace.org>

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## **NGO to Tongan PM : "culture is no excuse"**

*Tonga,*

The Women and Children Crisis Centre (WCCC) is appalled with the final remark in the Tongan Prime Minister's statement at the Independent Commission of Inquiry into the Ashika Tragedy last week. The Prime Minister stated: "finally, counsel assisting the Commission, you may be an excellent counsel in Australia, but when you are in the Kingdom of Tonga, please try to understand our constitution and show some respect for our monarch, for our government, our people and our culture."

The Nuku'alofa based Crisis Centre (WCCC) believes that the government is using culture as an excuse to side step justice, accountability and transparency.

Coordinator of the WCCC 'Ofakilevuka Guttenbeil-Likiliki says "This is our problem. As soon as a national crisis hits, leaders are quick to uphold culture and tradition by vigorously seeking public support - reminding the Tongan people of the core principles of Tongan culture; (fe'apa'apa'aki) mutual respect (feveitokai'aki) sharing and cooperating and fulfillment of mutual obligations (lototoo) humility and generosity and (tauhi vaha'a) loyalty and commitment – distracting any attempt of individuals, groups, communities and the nation as a whole to seek justice, accountability and transparency"

The WCCC believes that using culture in this sense is creating barriers to social justice and prevents citizens of Tonga who have constitutional rights to seek justice. The Ashika tragedy is a classic example of this, where many (including women and children, who represent the most vulnerable group in our society) lost their lives.

Justice Warwick, the chairman of the Commission of Inquiry into the sinking of the MV Princess Ashika, took the first opportunity after the PM's appearance to label Sevele's concluding comments as "inappropriate".

"The Prime Minister took the opportunity given to him to make a personal attack on counsel assisting. The attack was inappropriate...Questions will continue to be asked which some may not like. That is the nature of an inquiry of this sort." said Justice Warwick.

The WCCC continues to support the establishment of the Independent Commission of Inquiry into the Ashika Tragedy. "This gave and continues to give many people the hope for justice to be done – it's as simple as that. For the Prime Minister to make such a remark at the end of his statement is a discouragement to those hoping for accountability and transparency on the part of the government of Tonga" said Guttenbeil Likiliki.

The Crisis Centre believes that Tongan cultural values are not in conflict with the nature of the inquiry, and that the Government should stop using culture as an excuse to obstruct justice.

"Mutual respect, cooperation, humility and generosity, loyalty and commitment are great values to have, and are no doubt the cornerstone of Tongan characteristics – but this should not be in any way or form be used as an obstruction to justice " said Guttenbeil Likiliki, adding "These principles rather should be upheld simultaneously with human rights, social justice, accountability and transparency. It can be done and it should be the way we aim to live as responsible citizens in Tonga."

**Source:**

***The Women and Children Crisis Centre (WCCC)***

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## Reports

### Travelling with Gandhi

*Delhi, India*

The program “ Travelling with Gandhi” jointly held in collaboration with the Gandhi Peace Foundation ,( GPF) New Delhi, Schumacher Centre, New Delhi and the Peace Studies Dept of the Post Graduate Diploma in Peace Studies ( PGDPS) , Martin Luther Christian University, MLCU, Shillong , from the 20th till the 25th March 2010, at the Gandhi Peace Foundation concluded successfully.

On the inaugural day on the 20th March, the speakers were Surendra Kumar , Secretary of the Gandhi Peace Foundation,( GPF) New Delhi and Dr. D. K Giri of the Schumacher Centre, New Delhi, who also came along with his team consisting of Susan Cherian, Christy and Indu Ratra. Dr Toshi Naro from Nagaland and Dr Leban Serto of the Martin Luther Christian University also shared and moderated on the days programme . There was self introduction of the part of the participants, altogether 12 participants were present from the North East India and Martin Luther Christian University and some other students and participants also joined for the inaugural day. Surendra Kumar shared the dreams and ideals of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and also of the GPF. Dr Giri , shared about the Schumacher Centre and the close association of the ideals with Gandhian values and principles. The travel of the participants was made possible with the support from the Schumacher Centre, New Delhi.

On the following days , there were many others who participated such as the Chancellor , Dr Shyam Prasad, Rev Edwin Kharkongor, Registrar, Martin Luther Christian University( MLCU) Shillong, Sushri Radha Bhatt, Chairperson of Gandhi Peace Foundation, (GPF) Dr Subba Rao, Shravan Garg, Trilokinath Purwar, Dr. Achan Mungleng, Khamchinpou Zou Ravindra Bharati and Vivek Umrao and Clair Glendening.

The student participants also made presentation of their work and activities they had done throughout the year. The program also included visit to the Raj Ghat, Gandhi Literature Centre and Gandhi Smriti . They also visited the United Nations Information Centre( UNIC) and Habitat Centre , New Delhi.

The participants also attended the J. P Narayan memorial lecture held on the 23rd March at the Auditorium Hall.

The participants experienced first hand from the eminent Gandhians of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, the hospitality, simplicity, the sharing of narratives, the dreams and ideals of non-violence and also made a lasting impression on each one present as was expressed during the recap reflection and feedback exercise.

This program was made possible due to the support of the Gandhi Peace Foundation in the person of Surendra Kumar, the Secretary and Chairperson Sushri Radha Bhatt.

**Please click: For Photos**

**Report By:**

***Dr. Leban Serto***

Co-ordinator, Peace Studies Dept.

Martin Luther Christian University, MLCU, Shillong

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## **Right to Information Act 2005 :: Leaked letter of DOPT betrays hidden agenda of 31st March consultation meeting**

Somebody at DoPT goofed up very badly yesterday. While emailing an invitation to Activist Bimal Khemani of Aligarh, UP, an official unwittingly attached an entire word file containing many other letters pertaining to RTI. A couple of these letters clearly show the intent of the meeting being convened on 31st March. A draft of a letter from DoPT Secretary Shantanu Consul addressed to PM's Principal Secretary T K A Nair states, "The proposal for making some essential amendments in the Act are still under consideration and as per the Minister's directions the Department will hold consultation with the civil society to allay apprehensions they may harbour that amendments would tinker with the efficacy of the RTI Act." (Blue highlight in the first, second and last letter: <http://www.box.net/shared/13njd0m9jh>)

Nested between the three differently dated drafts of this revealing letter was the draft of invitation (yellow highlight) for the meeting being held at Civil Services Officers Institute, New Delhi on 31st March. The invitees are prominent NGOs all over the country (Green highlight at bottom of invitation letters.)

And as if the above confession were not sufficient, another letter from Shantanu Consul to Nair candidly states, "there are some amendments which need to be carried out in the Act to remove ambiguities in its effective implementation. Rules also need to be framed to smoothen the procedures to ensure easier access to information. Proposals in the above regard are already with the Prime Minister's Office." (Blue highlight in this letter: <http://www.box.net/shared/pkcr49dqmh>)

Fellow Activists, now that we have been forewarned of why such meetings are being held, let us respond forcefully, and speak out in one voice: DON'T AMEND, IMPLEMENT! Please print one of the below drafts and send them to DoPT, PMO and Sonia Gandhi.

· Demands for RTI Implementation ENGLISH: <http://www.box.net/shared/rimilh5iul>

· Demands in HINDI with English Subtext: <http://www.box.net/shared/vocm8vc0cu>

These demands have been drafted after consultation with many activists around the country, so we hope that you will not find them lacking in any way.

**Column by:**

**Krishnaraj Rao**  
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## **police torture upon muslim minors - denial of JJ Act**

*West Bengal, India*

### **Case Details**

**Name of the Victim :-** (1) Abu Hassan, Male, Age – 16 years, (2) Abdus Salam, Male, Age – 15 years; both son of Mr. Abu Bakkar Mondal, Religion – Islam, resident of Village + Post Office – Harekrishnapur, Police Station – Jalangi, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal, India.

**Name of the Perpetrators:-** (1) Mr. Debasis Sarkar, Sub-Inspector, Officer-in-charge of Jalangi Police Station (2) Mr. Bimal Mondal, Sub-Inspector of Jalangi Police Station, and (3) other police constables of Jalangi Police Station, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal, and (4) Superintendent of Police, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal, India.

**Place of Incident:-** At the house of the victim, i.e. at Village + Post Office – Harekrishnapur, Police Station – Jalangi, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal.

**Date of Incident:- 27-02-2010 at around 9 AM.**

**Detail of Incident:-**

Following events were revealed during our fact finding. It was on 26-02-2010 at around 4 PM Mr. Fajal Mondal, son of Late Yusuf Mondal and 12 accomplices trespassed into the agricultural field of Mr. Abu Bakkar and his family with a bullock cart. Consequently, a violent altercation took place between the two families and Mr. Bakkar got injured. Then in the evening, Mr. Bakkar's family member, Mr. Hamidul Seikh went to the Jalangi Police Station (PS) with a written complaint. But the police personnel of Jalangi PS refused to acknowledge the complaint.

As the other party became aware of this initiative, they planned an act of vengeance. Next morning, on 27-02-2010, Mr. Rajab Mollah, Mr. Fajal Mondal and 11 other accomplices attacked Mr. Bakkar's residence armed with sticks, swords, firearms etc. However, in the same morning these assailants lodged a complaint against seven members of Mr. Bakkar's family at Jalangi PS reportedly before the attack. It is alleged that both the family members got injured in the violent incident. But, it was at around 9 AM that Officer-in-Charge of Jalangi PS, Mr. Debashish Sarkar with his force arrived at the place of occurrence and arrested (1) Mr. Abu Bakkar, (2) Abu

Hassan, (3) Abdus Salam, (4) Mr. Nur Selim (all three are sons of Mr. Abu Bakkar and are examinees of current year Madhyamik (Xth Standard) board examination, and (5) Ms. Selina Bibi. The lady was arrested in absence of any female police person. It was revealed that a case was registered in Jalangi PS on the abovementioned complaint by Mr. Fajal Mondal (Jalangi PS case No. 133/10, dated 27-02-2010, under sections 341/325/326/307/34 of Indian Penal Code) only at 11.45 AM, i.e. after arresting those above-named persons. It is to be noted that, while number of violent clashes took place between the abovementioned two parties, and both the parties complained on the matter, the Jalangi PS personnel acted in a prejudiced manner and arrested only Mr. Bakkar's family members, while completely refusing to acknowledge the other party's (Mr. Bakkar's family's) complaint. Moreover, Abu Hassan and Abdus Salam are minors, which is evident from their examination admit card. But, they were also taken into police custody alike other adult arrested persons and police personnel showed them as adults in the police documents prepared, which they forwarded to the regular court at the time of their production. While arresting these people, no 'Memo of Arrest' was issued. Though family members as well as neighbours urged repeatedly to spare the victims as they were minors and board examinees, the policemen gave a damn. The minor victims were also explicitly abused physically and mentally during the arrest and throughout their detention in custody.

While these minor victims were produced in Chief Judicial Magistrate's court, Murshidabad on the next day, they were granted interim bail as they were Madhyamik examinee. Till date the case is in vogue, whereas no complaint was registered against Mr. Rajab Mollah and his allies in spite of definite complaint of cognizable offences against them. Upon refusal of Jalangi PS to accept the complaint, a written complaint depicting the whole incidence was submitted to the Superintendent of Police, district – Murshidabad on 03-03-2010 by Mr. Safiruddin Mondal, a family member of Mr. Bakkar. However, till date no case is being registered against those assailants.

**Report By:**

***Kirity Roy***

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**One Scheduled Caste person was inhumanly tortured by BSF, police inaction, denial of livelihood**

*West Bengal, India*

**Case Details:**

**Name of the Victim:-** Mr. Biredra Nath Mondal, son of Late Kushai Mondal, Male – 56 Years, Religion – Hindu, Scheduled Caste of Village – Char Rajanagar, Post Office – Char Rajapur, Police Station – Raninagar, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal, India.

**Name of the Perpetrators:-** (1) One Border Security Force (BSF) constable, (2) One Sub-Inspector of BSF, both of Char Mairashi BSF Border Out Post (BOP) Camp under Battalion No. -191 'E' Company; (3) Company Commander of Rajanagar BSF Company Headquarter (HQ) under 191 BSF Battalion 'F' Company; (4) Sub-Inspector Mohanganj BSF BOP under Kaharpara Company HQ (5) Company Commander of Kaharpara BSF Company Headquarter under 191 Battalion BSF; (6) Officer-in Charge of Raninagar police station, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal.

**Place of Incident:-** Char Moirashi BSF BOP camp at Char Nabipur Mouja under jurisdiction of Raninagar Police Station, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal, India.

**Date of Incident:-** 01 March 2010, at 12 Noon

**Detail of Incident:-**

The victim and his family consisting of nine other members are one among the thousands of sufferers of erosion of Padma river. They have lost their agricultural land, the traditional source of their livelihood. Till date they are denied all entitlements under Below Poverty Line (BPL) Scheme, Antodaya Annapurna Scheme and other related prerogatives deserved by such poor people. While two of his sons are working as migrated workers in different states, Mr. Birendra Nath Mondal, though an old and sickly person, worked as a casual agrarian labour to meet the end. At this juncture, torturous act by Border Security Force (BSF) personnel and subsequent police inaction inflicts severe blow to his existing misery.

It was on 19/02/2010 at around 12 AM, as Mr. Birendra Nath was carrying out surveillance over the agricultural field of Katlamari Mauja, he witnessed 15-20 people trespassed from Khidirpur village under Rajshahi district of Bangladesh in the same field with at least 70 cattle. The victim narrates, "As I protested their entry so as to protect the crops, those trespassers attacked me. In order to save me as well as crops, I immediately contacted nearest BSF camp and appealed for assistance. However, BSF personnel remained indifferent to my complaint. Consequently, with assistance from some fellow farmers I could stop the nuisance and seized those cattle in order to hand over to the BSF/Police. In the mean time, two BSF personnel of No. 4 outpost under BSF Company Headquarter, Company Commander Mr. Bijay Kumar Chaudhury along with some other BSF personnel who came in a Maruti car took those seized cattle to their custody. Surprisingly, without taking any action against those Bangladeshi nationals, they handed over all those cattle to them in return of some bribe. We are quite frustrated by this kind of regular corrupt practice by BSF personnel."

Torture by BSF personnel on innocent villagers is quite prevalent in this area. Being very upset over the abovementioned incident, the victim and other fellow villagers approached Raninagar police station on 19-02-2010 with a definite complaint. As they were turned down by Raninagar police station officials without registering any complaint against BSF personnel, they took forward their complaint to the Superintendent of Police, Murshidabad district on 20-02-2010.

In the mean time, Banglar Manabadhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM) scheduled a village level awareness meeting against BSF atrocities on 25-02-2010. The victim was instrumental in organising and publicity of the programme. The victim had to face BSF ordeal in return. He recounts, "On 01-03-2010 at around 12 AM one BSF jawan called me up to the Char Moirashi BSF camp to discuss 'problems related to Indo-Bangladesh border' and also informed that other members and head of the Panchayat (pradhan) were also present in the camp. As I reached there, I found some fellow villagers but neither any member nor the head (pradhan) of Panchayat was present there. Mr. Bijay Kumar Chaudhury, the Camp Commander and another Camp Commander of Kaharpara BSF BOP Company Headquarter were present among other BSF personnel. The Company Commander wanted to see my voter identity card and I obliged. But, after checking the card, he never returned it. Rather they scornfully asked me, "Oh, so you want to become a leader?" Immediately after that they pulled me into their vehicle and started to whack me left and right and continuously abused using most filthy words. As I started bleeding, I pleaded to stop the beating. Subsequently, they tied my gamchha (indigenous towel) around my mouth and continued thrashing. I almost fell unconscious to their merciless torture. But they did not care a damn about my deteriorating condition. Continuing the torture they took me first to Mohanganj BSF camp and then to Kaharpara BSF camp on a BSF vehicle and detained me at the latter place. The Camp Commander of that camp arrived at around 5 PM and forcibly took my signature in two blank pages. At last, after detaining me for almost eight hours, they released me at around 8 PM issuing a threat to kill in border area by implicating in false case. Even while releasing they kicked me all over the body quite a few times. As I went to the Raninagar Police Station on next morning (i.e. on 02-03-2010) to lodge a complaint against the torturous BSF personnel, they refused to oblige." It is to be noted that neither the police officials started a case nor made even an informational entry in their General Diary Entry book. Subsequently, the victim had sent a written complaint to the Superintendent of Police, Murshidabad district on 04-03-2010. However, any criminal case against the perpetrators is yet to set out.

The victim suffered severe injuries on different parts of his body (lips, shoulder, arms, knee, legs and feet). There happens to be no Primary Health Centre around that place and he could not obtain any medical treatment from private medical centres due to his utter poverty. It is only on our intervention that he could be taken to Behrampur New General Hospital on 04-03-2010 and as per advice of the attending doctors he remained admitted as indoor patient and was treated there from that day to 11th Feb 2010. As even in the hospital there was not enough provision of medicine, we had arranged medicine as per the prescription of Hospital's doctor. However, the treatment at the hospital was too little to the blows he suffered. As on date, his hearing ability of left ear remains damaged. He is still suffering from multiple traumatic disorders which has terribly affected his daily living. He is yet to recover completely to get back to his daily work. Consequently, the poor family is facing more economic hardship than ever before. The old man is ravaged by the sheer humiliation and barbaric torture in addition to inaction of police force.

Later, on 12-03-2010, as our activist contacted the Officer-in-Charge of Raninagar Police Station Mr. Maskur Rahman and enquired about the above mentioned incidence, he said, "I do not know anything about the incidence." On enquiring further he retorted, "You have no right to disturb me asking this kind of question." When our activist contacted the said police station again after few hours, a Home Guard attended the call and informed that no other official was present at the police station. On another attempt the same Home Guard told that though Sub-Inspector Bibhas Mondal was present in the police station, he was too busy to attend the call.

It is quite evident that instead of protecting the Indian National, BSF personnel's torturous act emerges to be a surmounting threat to poor villagers. In addition to that, the police inaction comes as a jolt to the victim's faith in justice.

**Report By:**

**Kirity Roy**  
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## **"Clean Ganga, Prosperous India" foot march by Acharya Neeraj from Gomukh to Gangasagar (6th May 2010 to 2nd October 2010)**

*Uttar Pradesh, India*

Acharya Neeraj is going to do a foot march from Gomukh to Gangasagar, almost 3000 kms long, covering 4 states and more than 30 districts. The Foot March will start on 6th May 2010 and finish on 2nd October 2010.

Acharya Neeraj was a student leader in Lucknow University and wanted to become a MP in the Indian Parliament. However Neeraj says that with time, he realized that India needs basic changes for social transformation. He spent time in the Himalaya to understand the Vedant Teachings.

Neeraj spoke with GRI and said that he wants to do this foot march for peace, brotherhood and to save the Ganga mata (the Ganga Mother). He said that if the Ganga will be clean and not interfered with by humans, then India will become a prosperous nation.

During the foot march, around 50 people from various social organizations have promised to walk with him. Villagers will be motivated to plant and grow five holy Trees, PEEPAL, PAKAR, BARGAD, GULAR and AAM.

GRI will try to cover this foot march as it progresses in the coming editions of GRI monthly.

**Report By:**  
**GRI reporter**

## **Banglar Manabdhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM) organized a People's Tribunal on Torture (PTT)**

*West Bengal, India*

Banglar Manabdhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM) organized a People's Tribunal on Torture (PTT) at Moulali, Kolkata on 9th and 10th of June, 2008 a programme as part of the project, 'National Project on Preventing Torture in India (NPPTI)', which was supported by European Union & FNS. MASUM was responsible for implementing the project's programme in West Bengal. Nearly 1200 victims and their families were present in the public tribunal. As many as 82 victims of torture narrated their plight before the panel members consisting of illustrious persons of national repute.

Mr. Henri Tiphagne, National Director of NPPTI, & Ms. Sunila Singh, NPO of NPPTI remained present in the tribunal with their active participation. The panelists were :

1. Ms. Pamela Philipose, Executive Director, Women Feature Service
2. Mr. Ashok Chakravarti, Former Senior Director, NHRC
3. Dr. Satyajit Ash, M.D., Psychiatrist, MON Foundation
4. Dr. Sreemantee Chaudhuri, Psychiatrist
5. Prof. (Dr.) A. K. Gupta, Head of Forensic Medicine, Calcutta Medical College
6. Justice Malay Sengupta, Ex. Chief Justice Sikkim High Court
7. Dr. Mohini Giri, Former Chairperson, National Commission for Women. (Padma Bhushan)
8. (Prof.) Dr. Tapas Bhattacharjya
9. Dr. Hiralal Konar
10. Prof. Ruchira Goswami, NUJS
11. Mr. Ashutosh Mukherjee, ex-District & Sessions Judge

The controversy of conducting an open public tribunal on torture was started rolling as the police from Detective Department, Kolkata visited the office of MASUM before the tribunal on 7.6.2008. The Kolkata Police asked about the legality of conducting such a tribunal but refused to accept our written answer on their queries.

Incidentally, useless controversy on the legality of the tribunal went on at the instigation of Kolkata police and a police case had been registered at the behest of the Detective Department of Police, Kolkata at Taltolla Police Station (Taltala Police Station case no. 134/2008 dated 9.6.2008) under sections 170 (Personating a public officer)/179 (refusing to answer public servant authorized to question)/ 229 (Personation of a juror or assessor) and 120B (Criminal Conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code, against Mr. Kirity Roy and others of MASUM.

It is to be mentioned here that the Kolkata Police supported the activities of the tribunal by sending pilot cars for few members of the panel.

We challenged the constitutional validity of initiation of the said criminal proceeding and prayed for quashing the criminal proceeding by filing a writ petition (Kirty Roy versus State of West Bengal & others vide WP No. 25022(W) of 2008) in the High Court, Calcutta. On 26th of August, 2009 Justice Sanjib Banerjee, High Court, Calcutta heard the Writ Petition and dismissed the petition on the ground that police investigation is necessary to find out whether the petitioner(Kirty Roy) wishes to organize a parallel judiciary or not.

Being aggrieved and dissatisfied with the aforesaid order, we filed an appeal (MAT 1219/2009) along with a Stay Application (C.A.N. 10511/2009) in the Division Bench of Chief Justice Mohit Ranjan Shah and Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghosh.

On 10.3.2010, the matter was fixed for hearing before the said Division Bench as Item no.2. Mr. Sadhan Roy Chowdhury, advocate of the High Court, Calcutta pleaded on behalf of the petitioner (Kirty Roy). He was assisted by Mr. Somnath Roy Chowdhury, and Mr. Debashish Banerjee, practicing advocates of the High Court, Calcutta. The Respondent/State also presented its case in the court. After an extensive hearing the Division Bench passed necessary orders. Though we yet to receive the certified copy of the order but we have been informed by our advocates Mr. Sadhan Roy Chowdhury, Mr. Somnath Roy Chowdhury and Mr. Debashish Banerjee, the gist of the order passed in the appeal is mentioned herein below:-

“This is to inform you that the above application for stay in the above appeal was taken up on 10/03/2010 by the Hon’ble Division Bench comprised of the Hon’ble Chief Justice sitting with the Hon’ble Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose.

After hearing the Learned Advocates at length Their Lordships have been pleased to pass an order staying operation of the judgement and order under appeal till the disposal of the appeal. Their Lordships have further been pleased to pass necessary orders for expeditious disposal of the Criminal Case initiated against the Appellant, initiation of which is the subject matter of the writ Petition, and directing the State Respondents to file a report in this regard within a month.” Their Lordships were further been pleased to pass an order fixing the final hearing of the Appeal on 08/04/2010”.

On 11th March, some of the newspapers carried misleading report on the order passed by the High Court on the subject. However, it is evident from the above facts that nothing has yet been finalised. Hence, we are sending this update on the matter so as to clear up the propagated delusion.

**Report By:**

**Kirty Roy**

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## **Throttling of Freedom of Thought and Expression (Orissa, India)**

*Orissa, India*

We express our concern on the police raid of the house of Sri Dandapani Mohapatra, a writer and journalist. On 11th March 2010, while Sri Mohapatra was away in some meeting, violating all procedures, the police raided his house for nearly six hours ransacking all his belongings and not even allowing his ailing wife and children to take their food. The police had not given a copy of any search warrant to his family members, nor stated any reason for the raid. As per Sri Mohapatra the police took away a number of old journals such as Ghadaghadi, Inquilab and Marga O Chinta – none of which is proscribed by the government – without giving a seizure list, which is mandatory. In a democratic set up of government to possess such materials is within the purview of freedom of thought and expression. Strangely, the police have taken the signatures of Sri Mohapatra’s son and that of the local Sarpanch on a number of plain sheets of paper. We learnt from Sri Mohapatra that after raiding the house, the SDPO Chhatrapur had threatened him on the same day in the evening asking him to come to the Police station by 15th of March or face the dire consequences. It is ascertained from Sri Mohapatra that no criminal case is pending against him under any allegation. This is outright police highhandedness and gross misuse of power.

After talking to Sri Mohapatra and on perusal of some of his writings we have reasons to believe that the only intention of the police in raiding the house of Sri Mohapatra could be to suppress his dissent opinion – which he has been expressing through his writings continuously for the last many years – simply by terrorizing. It needs to be noted that Sri Dandapani Mohapatra is the General Secretary of Dakshina Odisha Sahitya Sammelani, a literary organization of south Orissa, and has been associated with writing and publishing for a long time. He was publishing a satirical magazine called Ghadaghadi between 1984 to 1990. He has published a few books of his poems. Currently, he has been writing for a weekly tabloid called ‘Sahanamela’.

It is a matter of concern that the police, without following the due process of law, have disclosed to a section of media that the raid was undertaken due to suspected Maoist links.

We condemn the police action as it violates the fundamental rights of personal liberty as well as freedom of speech and expression. The police highhandedness is not only directed against the expression of dissent of Sri Mahapatra, it also gives a red signal to all such persons who express their dissent fearlessly. We urge upon the government to stop this undemocratic practice in general and to conduct a high level inquiry into the incident. We also appeal to all the freedom loving people to condemn such undemocratic activities.

**Press Release by:**

***Pramodini Pradhan***

Convenor, PUCL –Bhubaneswar

Biswapriya Kanungo, Advocate and Human Rights Activist

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**Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma, Human Rights Defender, again under attack**

*West Bengal, India*

Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma, son of late Mr. Gopal Chandra Sharma, Village – Dayarampur, Police Station – Jalangi, District – Murshidabad, West Bengal, India has been an active defender in different parts of Murshidabad district for last six years. There had been multiple attempts by police in connivance with others to frame him in false accusations. The following is the recent addition to series of harassment on him.

It is in 2007 that one Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar, son of Late Rajani Kanto Mazumdar (Address :- 7/1880 Gayeshpur, Police Station – Kalyani, District – Nadia, West Bengal), claimed to be an industrialist under Central Commercial Industry of India along with his deputed District Manager Mr. Prashanta Goswami, son of Late Pran Krishna Goswami approached one of relative of Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma; Mr. Sunil Sharma, son of Late Gour Chandra Sharma, a retired army personnel of village – Kantabari, police station – Jalangi, with an offer to depute Sunil Sharma as Block Manager of their project that would in turn generate income to lots of unemployed youth of that area. As the area falls under prey of Padma erosion every other year, economic condition of the village is awful. At this juncture, the abovementioned offer appeared to be a very substantial way out. Though, Mr. Sunil Sharma was initially reluctant to take up the project, his philanthropic attitude towards the unemployed fellow-villagers motivated him to do otherwise. In addition to Mr. Jahar Lal's flaunting economic status, lots of governmental documents that he had was enough to aspire the poor villagers.

Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar made it mandatory to deposit five lakh rupees (5,00,000 INR) by Mr. Sunil Sharma as security deposit before starting the job, which he adhered to with fare contribution from those interested unemployed youths. However, within few days as some difficulties cropped up, Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar and other staffs of Central Commercial Industry were found nowhere. On enquiring it was established that the complete gang earned a huge amount by this sort of forgery. At this juncture Mr. Sunil Sharma approached Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma; the HRD to help him out of this situation.

Mr. Sunil Sharma lodged a complaint against Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar and others at Jalangi police station on 23 January 2009. Subsequently a case was initiated against them (case no. 26/09) under sections 468/471/409/420/311 of Indian Penal Code. Incidentally, once his aide, Mr. Prashanta Goswami, also being cheated by Mr. Jahar Lal filed a complaint against him to the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court of Behrampur, Murshidabad district, West Bengal. After being bailed out of those cases, vengeful Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar filed a false criminal case at Kalyani police station against Mr. Sunil Sharma and also against Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma in order to prevent him from providing assistance to Mr. Sunil (case no. 0665 dated 09 December 2009, under sections 420/406/307/311 of Indian Penal Code) and other poor villagers cheated with Jahar's fraudulent act.

It is to be mentioned that Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar filed a complaint against Mr. Sunil Sharma and Mr. Prashanta Goswami to Assistant Chief Judicial Magistrate of Kalyani, District – Nadia, West Bengal (case no. 438c/08), which was found false and dismissed after thorough investigation carried out by Mr. Pintu Saha, Sub-Inspector of Kalyani police station. Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma came to know from some reliable source that a new complaint has been filed by Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar (case no. 0665/09) to falsely implicate him.

While Mr. Jahar Lal Mazumdar's act of cheating is a blow to poor villagers of Kantabari village, his attempt to falsely implicate Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma as well comes as his trick to restrict him from his concerns for human rights activity in general and police torture in specific. It is also to be noted that, though Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma was nowhere involved in the abovementioned project, inclusion of his name in Mr. Jahar Lal's complaint along with M/s Sunil Sharma and Prashanta Goswami is a clear tactic to falsely intimidate him so as to keep him out of his act of forgery and vengeance.

The similar attempt against Mr. Gopen Sharma have been initiated time and again by connivance with police and other law enforcing agencies. It began in February 2005 when a case was filed against him at Jalangi Police Station (Case no. 25/2005) under sections 498A /307/34 of Indian Penal Code. He was acquitted from the case by the Sessions court on 6th September 2007. The next attempt to harass him was another case filed at Raninagar Police Station (case no. 21/2007 dated 8/2/2007) under sections 468/471/420 of

the Indian Penal Code. The police already filed charge sheet against him in the case and the same is pending for trial in the court of Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Lalbagh. Then again in August 2007 another case was registered against him at Jalangi Police Station (case no. 155/2007 dated 13/8/2007), under section 420 of Indian Penal Code.

It is important to note that on 11.4.2006, one complaint was lodged to West Bengal Human Rights Commission in presence of our organization and the Commission passed a specific order on 12.4.2005 asking the District Magistrate of Murshidabad district to enquire and to report within four weeks, but till date no such report was sent by the DM and the West Bengal Human Rights Commission also took no further step.

Many international human rights body also took up the cases of Mr. Gopen Sharma, like OMCT, AHRC, FIDH, Frontline Defenders and many other organisations.

Hence, I am requesting NHRC to take appropriate action in the matter immediately ensuring the protection of human rights defender as mentioned in international declaration on human rights defender. I demand immediate withdrawal of the said criminal case against Mr. Gopen Chandra Sharma. A stern action should be taken against the person tried to implicate Mr. Sharma.

**Report By:**

***Kirity Roy***

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## **The efforts of a common youth to change the future of his villages**

*Tamilnadu, India*

**Chandru**, a 24 years old and a Second Year Post Graduate Student of English Literature, was born on 16.09.1985 at Thanneer Palli a small village of Tamilnadu. He belongs to a poor family. His father was farmer died because of illness caused by habit of alcohol, when Chandru was 12 years child. Later on Chandru could not continue his higher education but with time and God's Grace, his mother and friends supported him for higher education. He did his schooling in government school of Tamil Medium. He did Bachelor of Arts at Trichy during the year 2004-2007. Also he completed his Bachelor of Education during the year of 2007-2008. Presently he has been doing my post graduate degree since 2008. At the beginning the year 2009, he formed Trinity Trust for my rural people to expand his activities for village empowerment. He has been supporting several rural students who were/are not able to continue their studies. He says he feels a commitment for social work for our rural people because he also suffered to get education, when he was 12 years boy. Later he registered a trust, Trinity Trust.

### **Ongoing Activities:**

#### **EVENING EDUCATION CENTER:**

Trinity Trust conducts Evening Education Centres at four different villages, Name of the villages Kutta Patty, Karungala Palli, Kadiyur, Seegam Patty. Trust provides good education to rural students. There are more than 200 students are being benefited by Trust.

#### **SPOKEN ENGLISH CENTER:**

Trinity Trust has been conducting Spoken English Centre at Kandiyur. The Rural students hesitate to use English Language even though the English language is an international language. The rural students are motivated to know this language by Trinity Trust and the Trust gives training for students to improve English language. Chandru conducts these trainings and classes.

#### **TAILORING CENTER:**

Trinity Trust runs Tailoring Center at Puthupalayam, This Centre was started for the empowerment of the women. Trust provides the opportunities to improve their economic status.

#### **LIBRARY FOR VILLAGE PEOPLE:**

Trinity Trust runs Library for Rural Students at Kandiyur village. The Trust arranges Tamil and English Newspapers, Magazines, Employment Newspapers, Short Story Books in this library. Around this village there are many graduate-students, but they didn't have library facility, so Chandru started this library for these students also for the people of this area. Mr. N. Elangovan is the librarian.

The story will be continued to encourage youth like Chandru who are making efforts for a better.....

**Report By:**

GRI Reporter  
Tamilnadu

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## **West Bengal:: Abduction & trafficking of a woman & police inaction**

*West Bengal, India*

### **Case Details :-**

**Name of the Victims:-** (1) Ms. Fatima Bewa (name changed), Female, 45 years, Religion – Islam; (2) Ms. Mumtaz (name changed), Female, 21 years, residing at Village & Post Office – Kazi Para, No.4 Gate, Police Station – Barasat, District – North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India

**Name of the Perpetrators:-** (1) Mr. Rakesh Chatterjee, Sub-Inspector of Barasat Police Station, District – North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India; (2) Ms. Anwara Biwi, daughter of Mr. Aptar Ali Baid of Lebutala, Barasat, District – North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India.

**Place of Incident:-** Barasat Police Station, North 24 Parganas

**Date of Incident:-** On 01st February 2010, 11th February 2010, 13th February 2010 and 19th February 2010

### **Detail of Incident:-**

It was on 11th February 2010 that Ms. Fatima Bewa (name changed) filed a complaint to Barasat Police Station against forcible abduction of her daughter Ms. Mumtaz (name changed). Instead of registering a criminal case merely an informational entry was being made in General Diary Entry (GDE) book vide GDE No 1369/10. Later she came to know that Ms. Anwara Biwi abducted her daughter alluring with a job offer was in fact a woman trafficker. Subsequently, on 13th February 2010 at around morning 9 AM, she along with her son-in-law went to the same police station to lodge a fresh criminal case against Ms. Anwara Biwi for abduction and trafficking of her daughter. The police officials of the said police station did not pay heed to their agony and neither did register a case. It was only after intervention of our organisation i.e. when we reported the incidence of inaction to Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) and requested him to intervene, victims were attended to at 3 PM (i.e. after insulting six hours) and subsequently an First Information Report (FIR) was lodged (Barasat Police Station Case/FIR No. 347/10 dated 13-02-2010 under sections 363/367/368 of Indian Penal Code). However, despite repeated requests to the police officials of the said police station, a copy of the same FIR is not been handed over to the complainant till date.

Since then the poor widow mother went to Barasat police station time and again. But every time the concerned Investigating Officer (IO) of Barasat Police Station, Mr. Rakesh Chatterjee, Sub-Inspector refused to attend her plea showing different lame excuses. As we came to know about the IO's inaction from the victim, we contacted the IO on his mobile, he replied with laxity, "I am looking into the matter and have contacted an NGO." Being shocked to his answer as we re-enquired, he reaffirmed, "Yes, an NGO. The NGO would take some money as they deal with this kind of incidents and in return would rescue the woman."

Incidentally, a Bengali daily published a news of rescuing few Bengali women from a brothel at Pune on 18th February 2010. One of them was resident of Kankra Mirja Nagar village, Basirhaat, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. This woman was also known to victim's family and was accompanying Ms. Mumtaz while they left their house for a job. Immediately after getting the information Ms. Fatima contacted the rescued woman and came to know that her daughter is also under the clutch of same trafficking gang. Soon after she went to the abovementioned IO and informed the same. It is to be reiterated that, on that day too the victim had to wait for a long time and had to plead repeatedly before getting a hearing. However, this revealing information did not earn an iota of response and initiation towards rescuing the abducted woman by the IO. He asked as many as 15 copies of photograph of the abducted woman, which the complainant immediately adhered to.

Later, on contacting the rescued woman again, a very important piece of information was obtained by Ms. Fatima regarding the trafficking gang. The IO did not pay heed to the information about the lady trafficker, a member of same trafficking gang who was arrested and is presently under custody of Pune police. Instead of taking any step so far on the issue, the IO suggested the victim to approach some NGO to rescue the trafficked woman. The IO also reacted exasperatingly, "First you send your daughter for earning easy money, and now you are unnecessarily troubling us." A written complaint against the act of inaction by the IO has been submitted to the Superintendent of Police of North 24 Parganas on 01 March 2010. However, her complaint has neither been acknowledged nor any effective action has been initiated. It seems even that fell on deaf ears.

As on date the same story of indifference and inaction continues in spite of repeated appeals to the police station. It is on 13 March 2010, after one month of initiation of the case, the IO, Mr. Rakesh Chatterjee replied to our enquiry on status of the said case, "I am yet to contact the rescued woman and gather information as I am too busy in other jobs. But I have sent a letter to Pune (could not mention exactly to whom it was sent)."

### **Report By:**

[Kirty Roy](#)

## **Dr Arvind Kumar will urge the UN Agencies and world governments to accord priority to water sector which was ignored by the Copenhagen Summit**

*New Delhi*

The World Water Day is being celebrated 20 March 2010 at UNEP's Headquarters at Nairobi in Kenya. This year's global celebration is jointly hosted by UNEP, UN-Habitat, the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB) and the Government of Kenya. This event brings together policy-makers, scientists and eminent personalities throughout the globe at a single platform to discuss how to address the challenges of degraded water quality around the world.

World Water Day is an international day held annually on 22 March to bring attention to the importance of water and advocating for its sustainable management. The theme for this year's World Water Day is -- Water Quality, under the slogan "Clean Water for a Healthy World", which casts focus on the ever-increasing challenges posed by water pollution, and the threat it poses on the already scarce freshwater resources as well as to other ecosystems and biodiversity. This is particularly important as we mark the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) in 2010.

Among the world leaders likely to address this conference include: H.E. Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, Minister of Water Resources, India; H.E. Joaquim Chissano, Former President of Mozambique; Hon. Charity Ngilu, Minister of Water and Irrigation, Kenya; Mr. Poul Nielson, UNSGAB member and Former EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid and Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark; Mr. Eng. Maurice Bernard, Head of Water and Sanitation Department, Agence Française de Développement/French Development Agency (AFD); Mr. Mamadou DIA, Chief Executive Officer of Sénégalaise des Eaux and President of the African Water Association; etc. Dr. Arvind Kumar, President of India Water Foundation, New Delhi, has also been invited to this Conference by the UNEP. Dr Arvind Kumar will urge the UN Agencies and world governments to accord priority to water sector which was ignored by the recently-held Copenhagen Summit. According to Dr. Arvind, water should constitute an integral part of the climate agenda. He hopes that the forthcoming climate summit to be held in Mexico by the end of 2010 will accord due priority to water sector in its overall agenda.

India Water Foundation, a New Delhi-based civil society under the guidance of Dr Arvind Kumar, is engaged in generating public awareness among the people about conservation of water, keeping surface and underground water resources free from pollution, rainwater harvesting and other water-related issues.

### **Source:**

***India Water Foundation***

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## **Mumbai RTI Activist files complaint with Election Commission based on DoPT reply**

*Mumbai, Maharashtra*

Armed with documentary evidence received in several installments from DoPT, Mumbai RTI Activist Girish Mittal filed a formal complaint with Chief Central Election Commissioner Navin Kumar for breach of Model Code of Conduct during the Lok Sabha Elections held in 2009. The complaint, which was dispatched on Friday along with supporting documents, alleges that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, former Union Law Minister H R Bhardwaj, Minister of State Prithviraj Chauhan and many others knowingly carried out the entire process of proposing, selecting, appointing and swearing-in Ms Omida Paul as Information Commissioner at the time when the Code of Conduct was in force.

And it wasn't only the politicians. "Many highly placed officials belonging to PMO, DoPT, Law Ministry and Rashtrapati Bhavan facilitated the above wrongdoing on an ongoing basis during the period of the Code of Conduct," alleges Mittal.

Magsaysay-award winner Arvind Kejriwal inspected the files at DoPT on 25th January 2010 and unearthed many documents that were denied to Mittal. The complaint to the election commissioner is based on both these sets of RTI documents, meticulously collected over a 6-month period.

### **Report By:**

***Krishnaraj Rao***

Full text of complaint letter: <http://www.box.net/shared/13lfm7il7h>

Supporting documents sent: <http://www.box.net/shared/nt0n6p0vif>

Girish Mittal's Mobile: 9323462428

Email: mittalgirish @ gmail.com

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## **illegal arrest, torture upon the villagers - predominantly on Scheduled caste & tribe people**

*West Bengal, India*

### **Name of the Victims:-**

1. Mr. Samir Mondal, son of Mr. Sanatan Mondal, aged about- 32 years, Caste-Scheduled Caste, faith-Hindu, occupation-Farmer
  2. Mr. Kanai Dolui s/o Mr. Manmath Dalui and
  3. Mr. Nikhil Sarkar s/o Mr. Nimai Sarkar, all three residing at village-Chhotomollakhali School Para, Post Office- Chhotomollakhali, Police Station- Sunderban Coastal, District - South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India
  4. Ms. Namita Bhuiyan, wife of Niranjan Bhuiyan,
  5. Mr. Samir Bhuiyan, s/o Biren Bhuiyan,
  6. Mr. Gobinda Gharami, s/o Mr. Binod Bihari,
  7. Mr. Manoranjan Gharami, s/o Mr. Santosh Gharami,
  8. Ms. Kamala Gharami, wife of Mr. Santosh Gharami,
  9. Ms. Gita Mondal, wife of Mr. Bishnupada,
  10. Ms. Surekha Patra, wife of Mr. Abanti Patra, all of Pujjali village under jurisdiction of Sunderban Coastal police station;
  11. Mr. Dipak Mondal, s/o Mr. Anil Mondal of Amtali village; and
  12. Mr. Malay Gayen
  13. Mr. Rajan Mondal
  14. Mr. Deben Mridha
  15. Mr. Ashok Mondal
  16. Mr. Mohitosh Gayen
  17. Mr. Anirban Mondal
  18. Ms. Sachi Mondal
  19. Mr. Gourchandra Gayen
  20. Mr. Kartik Mridha
  21. Mr. Rabindranath Mondal
  22. Mr. Torun Patra
  23. Mr. Sanata Bhuiyan
  24. Mr. Tushar Mondal
  25. Mr. Ashish Das
  26. Mr. Ganesh Mridha
  27. Mr. Satya Gayen
  28. Mr. Arabindo Mondal
  29. Mr. Tapan Boiragi
  30. Mr. Chanchal Patra
  31. Mr. Sanjay Patra
  32. Mr. Bhupen Patra
  33. Mr. Bharat Chandra Patra
  34. Mr. Gopal Majhi
  35. Mr. Soumen Patra
  36. Mr. Rakhil Mondal
  37. Mr. Samir Mondal
  38. Mr. Nikhil Sarkar
- and five others.

**Name of the Perpetrators:-** (1) Mr. Koushik Kundu, Officer-in-Charge and other personnel of Sunderban Coastal Police Station, (2) On duty Medical Officer of Chhotomollakhali Primary Health Centre.

**Place of Incident:-** At Chhotomollakhali village under Sunderban Coastal Police Station.

**Date of Incident:-** On 31 January 2010 at about 11:20 PM

### **Detail of Incident:-**

It was on 10 February 2010 that we got information about the police atrocities occurred at some villages under Sunderban Coastal subsequent to the physical assault by some villagers reportedly members of a political party [Trina-Mool Congress (TMC)] on the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Sunderban Coastal police station. After the incident Mr. Koushik Kundu, the OC inflicted mass torturous act as vengeance on villagers of Chhotomollakhali, Pujjali and Aamtoli villages in South 24 Parganas. Mithu, a class-VIII student of Chhotomollakhali recounted, "On 05 February 2010, some police personnel of Sunderban Coastal police station forcibly entered and searched our house at midnight in my father's absence. My mother and I were physically ill-treated by those policemen and none among them was female." However, due to the terror of police personnel, none of the tortured villagers could gather courage to initiate a case against police atrocities.

It is only on 24th February 2010, that a victim of that mass torture, Mr Samir Mondal stepped forward. Earlier he voiced his anxiety over telephone, "I wanted to contact you, but I hardly had any opportunity as I was under judicial custody till 04 February 2010 and after that I was summoned to the police station everyday on subsequent five days." It was evident that he was under constant angst of further police torture. On the same day after meeting us at our office he narrated the incident of torture vividly.

On 31 January 2010, at around 11:30 PM as the victim woke up after listening a commotion in neighbourhood, he came out of his house. He saw that Mr. Koushik Kundu, OC of Coastal police station along with some armed police personnel was taking away two fellow villagers (1) Mr. Kanai Dolui s/o Mr. Manmath Dalui and (2) Mr. Nikhil Sarkar s/o Mr. Nimai Sarkar mercilessly beating them. As he was entering back to his house, the OC came up to him and ordered, "You have to go to the police station." On asking the reason he said, "You are to be interrogated in relation to the case of rampage on Coastal police station." As the victim told him about his ignorance of the details of that incident, and also assured the OC that he would visit the police station anytime in the day if they still wish him to do so, policemen started to take him away forcibly.

The victim recounted, "I understood, they would take me away forcibly. It was too cold on that night. I wanted to take some winter clothes. They didn't allow me to do so. Then I pleaded to at least allow me to inform my mother. But they denied me that privilege too. I asked him whether he had any warrant or not. In reply he abused me with filthiest of words. I asked him, why are you abusing me, I am just asking things which are my rights. The officer immediately started to thrash me profusely with sticks. The injury still persists." Neither the victim's friend nor relative was informed about his arrest nor any 'memo of arrest' was issued at the time and place of arrest. Then all these three arrested victims were taken to the launch and continuously kicked with boots all over the body. It was around upto night 3:30 AM that the police personnel continued to raid different places and arrested (3) Ms. Namita Bhuiyan, w/o Niranjana, (4) Mr. Samir Bhuiyan, s/o Biren, (5) Mr. Gobinda Gharami, son of Mr. Binod Bihari, (6) Mr. Manoranjan Gharami, son of Mr. Santosh Gharami, (7) Ms. Kamala Gharami, wife of Mr. Santosh Gharami, (8) Ms. Gita Mondal, wife of Mr. Bishnupada, (9) Ms. Surekha Patra, wife of Mr. Abanti Patra, all of Pujali village under jurisdiction of Sunderban Coastal police station. They also arrested (10) Mr. Dipak Mondal, s/o Mr. Anil Mondal of Amtali village. After bringing all of them on the same launch, the OC abused the elderly female victims (7-9) with filthiest unutterable words and continuously kicked them all over the body. Though numbers of female were arrested, that too in the midnight, none among the policemen was a female. Experiencing the whole incidence resulted to the victim to acute post traumatic stress disorder. After this traumatic experience, the final blow came from the on-duty doctor of Chhotomollakhali Primary Health Centre (PHC). He issued injury report to the police without personally examining even a single arrestee under instruction of police.

It is only after getting bail, few of the victims went back to the Chhotomollakhali PHC on 05-02-2010 to get their injury examined. The doctor detected assault upon examination and noted the same in the medical report (attached herewith). They are yet to recover completely and continues to be under treatment till date.

It is reported that as many as 43 persons including Mr. Sunil Mondal were arrested by the OC with several charges brought under sections 147/148/149/447/427/332/333/326/307/186/353/506/224/ 225/379 of Indian Penal Code and section 25/27 of Arms Act in Sunderban Coastal Police Station Case no. 7(1). They spent the chilly night on the launch itself and were taken to Badkhali and only in the next morning were brought to the Chhotomollakhali primary health centre. None of them were properly checked or treated there. Subsequently, they were brought to the Alipur court by police van from there. They were kept under judicial custody from 01-02-2010 to 03-02-2010. Though they were released on bail on 04th February, they were ordered to report to the police station everyday for next five days. As our activist contacted Mr. Koushik Kundu, the OC of Sunderban Coastal police station on 26-02-2010, he said, "Some people were arrested in connection with the incident happened on 26-10-2009. But, I won't say anything about how they were arrested. If you want to know anything more about it, contact the Superintendent of Police."

**Report By:**

**Kirity Roy**

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**meeting of visually impaired women**

*Tamilnadu, India*

30 visually impaired women from different economic background, age group and educational level from all over Tamil Nadu participated in the round table discussion. The discussion was organised by Nandini Voice For The Deprived.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS**

Highlights of the views expressed by the visually impaired women on different problems and their aspirations are given below.

**Pension scheme of the government :**

Ms. Asha Mary of Chennai and Ms. Indirani of Dindigul said that they were not getting any pension from the government, inspite of the fact that they have applied more than three years back.

30% of the visually impaired women who participated in the discussions confirmed that they were yet to get the pension from the Government. This was viewed as a serious lapse on the part of the government that it could not ensure that the pension would be extended to all the visually impaired women in the state. All the participants confirmed that the pension is sent only once in three or four months and for some months the pension is not sent at all.

The officials often give the explanation that funds have not been provided for a particular area . The participants wondered as to how the fund could be allotted for one area and not for another area under the same scheme.

Further, it was said that the post men often take upto Rs.20 for themselves, while disbursing the pension money order.

### **Unemployment scenario:**

Several visually impaired women pointed out that they have not got single interview call even after fifteen years of registration with employment exchange.

In one case, job was offered to a visually impaired woman in a ration shop where she has to measure the commodity supplied which she cannot do by herself since she has no vision. When she expressed her inability to take up this job, she was unofficially advised to take up the help of a person with vision and share her income with the person !

Ms. Mini said that the government is giving jobs mostly only for visually impaired B.Ed. graduates as school teachers and in the case of less qualified or qualified in some other fields, the government's support to provide them jobs is at negligible level for all practical purposes.

The private sector rarely give jobs to visually impaired women. Even if they do so in some very few cases, visually impaired women are often paid less salary for the similar job done by persons with vision.

It was said that the Government does not monitor such conditions at all and the unemployment scenario amongst the visually impaired women is extremely severe and with no indication that the conditions would improve in the immediate future. The government's schemes in this regard is conspicuous by its absence.

### **Self employment pursuits :**

To keep themselves above poverty conditions, visually impaired women desperately try to self employ themselves. They face problems such as in skill acquisition, finding investment money and marketing the products.

Ms. G. Vanitha said that it has become extremely difficult to get loans from the banks though the government talks about liberal loan assistance programme for the disabled persons. Getting loans depends on the whims and fancies of the bank manager who often do not even care to discuss the details. It was said that there is great need to sensitise the bank staff, so that the government's policies can be implemented in letter and spirit.

Even in the case of self help group schemes, the visually impaired women are driven from pillar to post and several whimsical conditions are put and in one case insisting that all the visually impaired women in the self help group should come from the same locality.

Marketing their products have become an herculean task for the visually impaired women. It was suggested that the government should open several shops in various places to exclusively sell the products made by visually impaired women similar to Khadi Gramodyog Bhavan schemes.

The visually impaired women trying to sell in running trains, bus stops and platforms and other public places are often harassed by the rowdy elements and driven out by the police men.

### **Personal safety issues:**

All the participants pointed out that they feel extremely unsafe to move around and often face instances of molestation, misbehaviour and assaults by drunken men . It was suggested that Karate should be taught to every visually impaired woman by the government and NGOs to protect themselves.

Ms. Rukmini said that many visually impaired women are virtually made to go out of their house after the death of their parents and they face desperate conditions without proper protected place to stay. It is extremely important that the government should build atleast two exclusive hostels for visually impaired women in every town.

Some hostels are now being run by NGOs and the conditions remain inadequate. The government is not monitoring such institutions at all.

Perhaps, the government can also think of encouraging NGOs to run such hostels under stringent conditions and with some financial support.

### **Transport :**

Several visually impaired women including Ms. G.Vanitha, Ms. Thilakam pointed out several problems in moving from one place to another. In one case, when eleven of them sought to get into a transport bus, the driver refused entry saying that only two persons can get in at a time, as it would be difficult for him "to handle many visually impaired women" at the same time.

Ms. Karpagam said that she gets an impression that the bus crew hate the visually impaired people getting into the bus and often would stop at a distance from the bus stop, if they would see three or four visually impaired women waiting to get into the bus. The

reserved seat in the bus is often occupied by normal people and the bus conductor rarely ask them to vacate to give place to the disabled people.

In the case of trains, the handicapped coach is no more serving the purpose, since it is insisted that the disabled persons can get into the coach only with prior reservation. Further, there is no separate queue in the reservation counter for the visually impaired persons which make it very difficult for them.

The reserved coach in the train is attached anywhere and there appear to be no standing rule in this regard, sometimes in the middle , or first or last. These are all simple matters that can be easily sorted out with proper application of mind by the officials.

In crossing the roads, the traffic police men should be given firm instructions that it is their duty to help the visually impaired women to cross the roads safely. At present, while a few police men help, many do not do so.

**Marriage:**

Ms. Kalyani said that normal people rarely marry visually impaired woman. Even in the case of visually impaired man marrying a visually impaired woman, the breakages in the marriage have become frequent.

Visually impaired mothers living alone have a tortuous existence as they have to support themselves and their children with their meager income. Educational support for such children in quality schools would greatly help them.

Unfortunately, the quality of the free education provided by the government in government owned and government aided schools particularly in rural areas are very poor and in many cases the children of the visually impaired woman often become undisciplined , creating more problem for them.

Such social issues are yet to be taken for detailed analysis by the government and the society.

**Others :**

It was acknowledged by Ms. Rukmini and Ms. Kalyani who are visually impaired women and with their meager income , now run a trust to help the visually impaired people , that there are several kind hearted persons in the society who readily come forward to help the visually impaired women.

But, such efforts by the individuals and NGOs cannot be substitute for the efforts of the government.

While the government announces number of schemes for the disabled and visually impaired from time to time and necessary machinery has been created to implement such measures, in actual practice, the quality of implementation of the government schemes are far less than the desirable level. Obviously, the government's words are not matched by actions.

If one were to live as a visually impaired woman and that too at below poverty level, there cannot be a more severe condition. The government should realize that it has great responsibility and such responsibility can be adequately discharged only by sensitive, committed and responsible officials and ministers.

Today's conditions of visually impaired women indicate that the government's response no where match the expectations of the affected and unfortunate lot of visually impaired women.

**Report By:**

[N. S. Venkataraman](#)  
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## **Protest Demonstration against Police Violence!**

*Uttar Pradesh, India*

CPI(ML)-New Democracy condemns Mayawati Govt's pro-feudal malevolent police violence against landless and poor peasantry. 'Special' targets of Mayawati's police: Women and minor girls.

On 4th March 2010 the CPI(ML) New Democracy held a demonstration at Jantar Mantar from 12 noon onwards against the brutal police -PAC assault ordered by Mayawati Govt against landless and small peasantry (Passi and Mallaha) and sand workers organized under AIKMS (All India Kisan Mazdoor Sabha) and our party in Distt Kousambi (U.P.) near Allahabad. Since the morning of 28thFeb an orgy of state violence is on in villages Ujjaini, Nanda ka pura and Kewatpura (1st March onwards) in this dist. and still continuing. On 28th March, declaring a "Red Alert" in Nanda Ka Pura and Kewatpura, a 500 strong police party (where they had been camping since the earlier evening) indulged in mass arrests, beating of women and children, breaking boats and also set fire to three houses of AIKMS leaders.

Speaking at the demonstration, Delhi Committee Secretary Com. Aparna and other party leaders said that the sand workers (Mallahas) have been fighting against introduction of illegal machines by politicians linked to ruling parties with the blessings of Mayawati Govt. Landless and poor peasantry have been struggling for distribution of govt. and gram sabha land along the banks of the Yamuna river which is being illegally cultivated by feudal. Since Nov 2008 Ujjaini women took over 9 acres of gram sabha land and cultivated the same. Now that the harvest is ready, the feudal with goons and police are coming to harvest the crop-but the women have defended their crop. Thus, open activity of AIKMS and CPI(ML) New Democracy has been banned in Koshambi dist.; 17 leaders of AIKMS have been declared "gangsters" and the area has been declared "Naxal-infested". Thus Mayawati govt. has shown its true colors as a friend of the feudal against the poor and landless. CPI(ML)New Democracy reminds that Mandal Commission underlined that land reforms was the first step for caste eradication. It is also clear that continual attack of Mayawati govt against this area since late last year is part of the Manmohan-Chidambaram crackdown on people's struggles in the name of "War on Naxals".

Ms. Poonam Kaushik (Gen Secy. Pragatisheel Mahila Sanghatan) said a special feature of the repression was targeting of women and children. Women were badly beaten up at Ujjaini on 28th Feb and 12 women were arrested -three are 12 year old girls (Parmeena, Pushpa and Vanita) and one is 14 years old. All have been booked u/s 307!! On 2nd March ASP Verma CO Chail Rajesh Singh, CO S. Chaturvedi and SO S.A.Chandrashekhar simply beat up women in Nand ka pura. PMS has lodged a complaint with NCW at Delhi on the 2nd March evening.

Protestors raised slogans demanding immediate withdrawal of police from the area, release of all arrested, especially four minor girls who have already spent 4 nights in Naini jail and implementation of land reforms. They condemned police violence on the peaceful people's movement and raised slogans reminding that Mayawati was upholding feudal against poor peasantry.

### **Press Release By:**

**APARNA**

Secretary, Delhi Committee  
CPI(ML)-NEW DEMOCRACY

## **Are police in West Bengal empowered to arrest, torture & release anyone whimsically ???**

*West Bengal, India*

**Name of the victims:-** (1) Ms. Sahida Bibi wife of Mr. Nesar Gazi aged about-35 years, by faith-Muslim, occupation-rag picker; (2) Master Abdul Alim Gazi son of Mr. Nesar Gazi, aged about-15 years, both residing at 4A Basanti Colony, Police Station-Ultadanga, District-Kolkata, West Bengal, India.

**Name of the perpetrators:-** (1) Three involved police personnel of Belghoria Police Station; (2) Mr. Subrata Bhowmick, the Inspector-in-Charge of Belghoria Police Station.

**Place of incident:-** Near Dunlop Bridge, Boranagar, Police Station-Belghoria, District-North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India

**Date & time of incident:-** On 3.3.2010 at about 1 pm.

### **Case Details:-**

On 3.3.2010 in the afternoon we received information that the victim Master Abdul Alim Gazi, a minor only aged about 15 years was arrested by the police personnel of Belghoria Police Station from the area located under Dunlop Bridge, Boranagar. He was with his mother and aunt at the time of incident. The mother of the victim repeatedly pleaded before the police personnel to release her son but the police personnel did not ear to her cries and even verbally and physically humiliated and assaulted her. Then the police personnel forcibly took the victim in police jeep and went away. The police allegedly did not disclose any reason for apprehending the victim neither to his mother or any other local person.

Our fact finding team soon getting the aforesaid information as well as that the victim was taken away to Belghoria Police Station reached at the place of incident and talked with the following persons and gathered their statements.

The statement of Ms. Sahida Bibi, mother of Master Abdul Alim Gazi -“ In the morning on 3.3.2010 I along with my minor son and my sister were roaming near Dunlop Bridge for the purpose picking rags. I heard from local people that last night fire broke out on a shop. Some GRP members even told us that we could pick up rags from the place. Then we started to fill up our bags with rags found from the place. I was working and my son was standing little distance away from me. Then at about 1 pm I saw that some police personnel from Belghoria Police Station reached at the site and started driving away people from there. I saw from little distance that one of the police personnel was holding collar of the T-shirt of my son Abdul Alim Gazi. Then I rushed to my son and pleaded before the police personnel that my son was innocent. The police personnel told that they would take him to police station. I repeatedly pleaded before them to release my son but they did not pay any heed and one of the police personnel forcibly thrashed me on the ground. But I desperately tried to convince the police personnel even touching their feet that my son was minor by age and totally innocent but one police man kicked me by his boot and forcibly took my son in the police jeep and left the place.”

Ms. Jahanara Khatoon, aunt of Abdul Alim Gazi stated as,” I was present on the place of incident at about 1 pm when police from Belghoria Police Station reached. The police personnel were driving away people from the site. But Master Abdul Alim Gazi could not flee from the spot and police nabbed him by his collar. I saw that one of the police personnel slapped on his face. I also saw that his mother rushed to her son and crying before the police personnel touching their feet to release her son but police personnel did not pay any heed and one police person thrashed her on the ground and even kicked his mother by boot. Then the police personnel took away her son in police jeep”.

Ms. Farida Bibi, wife of Mr. Kader Sardar residing at 4A Basanti Colony who was present at the place of incident at the place of incident also narrated the same in similar way like the victim’s mother and the aunt before our fact finding team. Then our fact finding team reached at Belghoria Police Station at about 7.45pm and first met with the Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police Mr. Sukalyan Singh Roy of Belghoria Police Station and revealed the incident. But the said police Inspector asked our team to talk with the Inspector-in-Charge who was not present at that time in the police station. Our team tried to contact with the Inspector-in-Charge on his mobile phone but no response was made. Our team saw that the victim was detained in police lock-up.

Our team also contacted with the Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Belghoria Mr. Arnab Ghosh on his mobile phone in the evening and he was made aware of the incident. We sought for his proper intervention which he assured to do so.

Master Abdul Alim Gazi was released from Belghoria Police Station on 4.3.2010 in the morning without any charge against him. He recounting the incident before our fact finding team told, “I accompanied with my mother Ms. Sahida Bibi and Ms. Jahanara Khatoon who were roaming near Dunlop Bridge for purpose of rag picking. My mother was picking rags from there. Suddenly at about 1 pm three police personnel in a police jeep arrived on that place and started driving away people from the spot. Like other people I tried to run away from the place but one policeman caught hold of my collar and slapped me on my face using filthy languages. My mother repeatedly pleaded before them to release me but they did not pay any heed and forcibly thrashed my mother on the ground and one police person even kicked my mother. Then the police personnel forcibly took me away in the police jeep. The police did not disclose any reason of my apprehension though my mother repeatedly asked for the same. Even in the police jeep the police personnel threatened me with dire consequences using filthy languages. Then I was brought at police station where one police Inspector noted down my particulars. Then the police put me in a room having iron grill gate under lock and key. I was detained in the said room along with other four people and later in the night another 6 persons were detained in the said room. Then in the next morning one police man opened the lock of the grilled iron gate of the said room and brought me outside and I was handed over me to my uncle Mr. Sabur Holdar Gazi.”

**Report By:**

**Kirity Roy**

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## **Dr Arun Gadre wins this year's Human Dignity Award**

*Maharashtra*

Dr Arun Gadre, of Pune, Maharashtra is the winner of this year's Maanav Adhikaar Paaritaushik (Human Dignity Award) of Rupees One Lakh in memory of Professor M. M. Gupta.

### **The citation reads:**

"Dr Gadre worked for some 20 years in a rural part of Maharashtra as a gynecologist: instead of working in a major city where he would have received a reasonable income and a comfortable quality of life, he chose rather to invest the best years of his life to helping rural women. As the only MD within a radius of 50 km, in a draught prone and poor area, with much more irregular electricity than in our cities, with scarcity of water, paucity of trained assistants, no blood transfusion facilities, and no one to assist, he conducted around 5500 deliveries as well as other major surgeries.

"In spite of his heavy duties in the challenging environment, Dr Gadre somehow found time to exercise his gift for writing, to produce in fact many different books. Two of them are due to be published soon, one on ante-natal care and one on HIV/ AIDS counseling. However, he has 14 books which are already published - three for semi-literate people on medical subjects, two medical textbooks, one on premarital counseling, one is a work of philosophy, one is autobiographical, and six are novels.

"Many of the books have won awards. His philosophical work, BHAVA PESHI, won the Shenolikar Puraskar for the best book of the year in philosophy from the Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad Pune, as well as the Marathwada Sahitya Mandal Puraskar. His novel, EK HOTA FENGADYA, won the Shankar Patil Puraskar for the best novel of the year, from the Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad, Pune. His novel GHATACHAKRA won the H. N. Apte Puraskar from Maharashtra State as well as the VS Khandekar Puraskar for the best novel of the year from the Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad Pune. His latest novel, VADHASTAMBH, won the Vikhe Patil Puraskar, as well as the Vaman Malhar Joshi Puraskar for the best novel of the year from Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad Pune. His latest book, a biography of the (now practically unknown) founder of modern India, William Carey, has just been published under the title: "Ase Hote William Carey" (Rajhans Prakashan, Pune).

"We probably have many people in our country who have put in decades of medical work in poverty-stricken, resource-poor and ill-connected rural areas, but there are hardly any who have combined that with outstanding literary work— and all of Dr. Gadre's works, whether philosophical, biographical, fictional or medical, provide evidence of a deep commitment to humane values which seem to be under threat in our world. We hope that the award will inspire many people to follow Dr Gadre's example of self-sacrifice, and of the triumph of the human spirit over adverse circumstances, and that it will therefore inspire even more people to serve our rural areas with distinction".

Dr Gadre, a doctor also a writer, is the second winner of the Maanav Adhikaar Paaritaushik (Human Dignity Award). The first winner was Dr John Dayal, a Member of the Indian National Commission for Minorities.

### **Source:**

***Prabhu Gupta***

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## Columns

### **A plan to clean and stop pollution in Yamuna within 7 months.**

*Delhi, India*

I, Gopi Dutt, want to draw your attention to problem that Delhi has been facing since as long as 10 yrs now. I am talking about the pollution in Yamuna caused by devotional material, Polybags, Flowers etc. Our govt., different NGOs and now Maharaja Sri Sri Ravi Shankar have put their best efforts to clean up the river. We all have been trying to clean it up for the past 10 yrs but it hasn't stopped yet. Does anyone have a plan to stop this that here is no further need to clean n re-clean the river? The problem is that we only create awareness that people should not pollute the river but there are no measures taken to stop this pollution.

Very soon Delhi is conducting the Common Wealth Games and people from all over the globe are going to travel the city. They talk about Indian Culture which fascinates them, but what are they going to think when they see the flowers used in worshipping God 10 minutes back are in the garbage can or in the river polluting it? What message are we delivering to them? We have to stop this pollution before other nationals start noticing.

I have researched about the whole polluting issues for the past 7 years; have also noticed it in 22 different states. I have found the cause and the Solution of the problem. During my research I have met CM's of different states and 162 MP's and have brought their attention to the issue. I have also met the religious heads of different religions and they have all agreed upon the solution I have now. According to the time limits and need of the hour. They have found my solution to be the best possible way as there is no other option that stops pollution in as soon as 7 months after being implemented.

In 2006, I met the President APJ Abdul Kalam and the Vice President B.S. Shekhawat and discussed the whole plan with them. The President initiated the project and promised to keep it running believing that this is the only way to save Yamuna.

I have run the plan in small yet different places to check if what I had researched and concluded can be done practically. Thankfully, it was successful everywhere it was implemented. Now I want to implement the whole plan in the region of Delhi so that we can clean Yamuna and stop it from polluting further in future.

**So if you don't have a plan I have it.**

**I need your support in the cause and hope you will contribute.**

**The following people have assured us for help :**

1. C.M. of Delhi, assured in helping with providing Trucks for transporting the garbage from the river Yamuna or the other items like gloves, tools etc.
2. Mr. Arya (M.C.D. Assembly Leader), assured in helping with providing Trucks for transporting the garbage for 12 zones of M.C.D.
3. Mr. Mahendera Singh Tokas, assured in helping with providing Trucks and drivers for transporting garbage from one place to another.
4. Mr. Sunil Kumar Yadav for providing land for dumping of garbage.

**Request By:**

***Gopi Dutt Akash***

President – Youth Fraternity Foundation

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## **Government of India continuous its policy of neglect towards Senior Citizens**

Silver Inning Foundation has been writing to the ministry for more than month now for more clarification on new Review Committee fro NPOP(National Poicy of Older Person) and have also filed and RTI. But it's sad a National ministry is not bothered. They dont even reply to email - no time I suppose.

MOSJE (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) is continuing is neglected to Senior Citizens of Indian and major organization. For the 11 years they just sat on NPOP and did nothing. Sr.Ctz. Maintenance Bill 2007 bill will go same way as many state have either not adopted/implemented/not understood.

NPOP was supposed to be best policy in the world. Yes now in 2010 there are some changes required, especially for young old, old old and very old. But WHY NPOP is not yet adopted and not implemented.

What was the HURRY to appoint only 3/4 member committee for 90 million people, they have purposely ignored many important organization, gerontologist, geriatrics. The process was not transparent. They have not consulted The Parliamentary standing committee & The National council for Older Person ignored. They have not asked the views of common man though newspaper and website.

**For 19th March meeting they did sent invite on 15th March and also not send Invite to many people listed in the list of invites. Invite not sent to following – its insult to people like Prop.Ramamurthi and Prof Siva Raju:**

Prof.Ramamurti  
Prof Siva Raju  
Tina Ambani  
Sailesh Mishra

**In the list of Expert Invited some important people are omitted:**

Dr.Jacob Roy  
Dr. Radha Murthy  
Dr. Abha Choudhary  
Dr.A.B.Dey  
Dr.K.L.Shrama  
Dr.O.P.Sharma  
Mr.Sugan Bhatia  
Prof. Indira Jai Prakash

We once again insist and demand expansion of Review committee and a action plan. We should not in any way hurry to make a National policy again and not implement it for again next 14 years.

Firsts lets find out the gaps in policy, why it was not adopted, why it was not implemented, why no other intra ministry supports or is not aware of NPOP and what are the difficulties of the states.

Also its seen MOSJE is not capable of handling this EXTRA load of ‘ Senior Citizens’ , the dept handling Ageing is loaded with number of ‘important work’ and Seniors are just not in the radar. MOSJE has been neglecting and abusing our elderly for long. Proposal sanctioned under ‘ Integrated Programme for older Person’ are in trouble as its learnt MOSJE has now canceled all earlier sanction.

It's enough. We need to have Separate Ministry or State minister or National Commission (online of Women commission and many others).

Let's not fall in trap of MOSJE policy of Divide & Rule, ministry is just playing with the sentiments and life of our elderly. There is 100% lack of political will and social commitment for elderly, as elderly don't form ‘their’ VOTE bank.

Let's UNITE and fight for the right of Elderly. Let's set aside our personal agenda and work together for welfare of our elderly.

Why not we as civil society make a policy and give to government, why not first implement the original policy with some changes.

Why not have a National and State Forums of people working with Elderly.

Do we have to depend on Government? Can't we have united programmes , action plan.

Let's lobby and do advocacy for the welfare of our Senior Citizens. Let's bring justice to our Elderly.

Can all organization write a letter to 700 MP'S in India, lets flood them. Lets write to UN and WHO about India government attitude and policy of neglect towards elderly.

Government of India has fooled UN Assembly about its statement on Ageing and it dares all UN body and Senior Citizens towards its policy of neglect and abuse of Senior Citizens.

Let's not ignored important organization and departments:

**Some of Important NGO's /Organization which have been ignored from Review Committee are:**

AISCCON - All India Senior Citizens Confederation  
Association of Gerontology (India) (AGI)  
INDIAN GERONTOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
Society for Serving Seniors  
Alzheimer's and Related Disorder Society of India (ARDSI)  
Harmony For Silvers Foundation  
International Longevity Center - India ( ILC-I)  
Nightingale Medical Trust  
Silver Inning Foundation  
Center for Research on Ageing, Dept of Psychology, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati  
GERIATRIC SOCIETY OF India  
The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse , India (INPEA)  
Indian Association of Geriatric Mental Health (IAGMH)  
University of Third Age , U3A India  
The All India Central Government Pensioners Association  
Bharat Pensioners' Samaj  
All India Central Confederation of Pensioner Association  
Agewell Foundation  
Anugraha India  
Indian Academy of Geriatrics  
Development, Welfare and Research Foundation (DWRF)  
Indian Association of Geriatric Mental Health (IAGMH)  
The Family Welfare Agency  
All India State Government Social Welfare Dept / Senior Citizens Dept  
S & T ministry

**Some Professional Organisation ignored like:**

Indian Medical Association (IMA)  
Financial expert  
Legal expert  
WHO  
UN  
Nursing Council  
IGNOU  
Indian Council of Social Science Research  
IIPS  
TISS (Tata Institute of Social Science)  
Medical Council of India  
Indian Medical Association  
NIMHANS  
Important Universities

Its shame that since last 11 years MOSJE does not knows about this important organization or they just behave ignorance, we can provide contact details of all the above if they require.

**Article By and Source:**

**Sailesh Mishra**

Founder President - Silver Inning Foundation  
Founder – ARDSI Greater Mumbai Chapter

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## **WOMEN/GIRLS SAFETY LIES IN ISLAMIC CLAD**

European and western writers have often made a heinous effort to tarnish the image of Islam by expressing something contemptible & negative views & reviews about Islam, particularly in context of women education and their rights in society. They opine that Islam suppresses the rights of women not allowing women to be progressive in modern societies on educational ground. Is it right? In this article, I would like to express the facts of Islam how it has brought the women-society to the level of progress through education. For finding out the facts over this issue, we will have to observe the situations before the advent of the last prophet of Islam, Prophet Mohammad (Pbuh).

The last apostle of Islam was born in 571 A.D. and before his period, the women were neglected, ignored, not allowed to make life-styles like men, and at some places women were cremated alive to death. In Arab, people hated females so much that if a baby-girl was born to them, she was buried alive in fear of expenses. There was no room for a girl to be paralleled with men on the earth.

But thanks to the most merciful, the most kind God who purified His religion Islam with final attachment by revealing His book, the Glorious Quran to the last messenger Prophet Mohammad (Pbuh), for the guidance of Mankind. The world-historians have written that before the advent of the prophet, the world, particularly the Arab world was mingled with dusts of darkness and the situations of women were disordered. What to say about education, the women were also tortured in other fields and they were not compared positively like the men in that period. But then in the glow of Islam, natural realities came to light, and the people separating women from their real rights started understanding the values of girls & women in their societies.

Islam gives equal rights to women like men for passing happy or progressive lives on the earth. It also emphasizes the education of girls positively on equal grounds like boys. And not only this much, Islam also blesses the guardians who have baby-girls in their homes. If a guardian of three daughters nourishes his daughters in a perfect way providing them value based educations under Islamic canopy, Allah will enter him into paradise on the day of resurrection.

Today women / girls find themselves free to make better progress for better career, and from east to west we find girls achieving education participating in positively progressive activities like boys, but for all such progressive aptitudes, the credit goes to Islam only. Western societies have also derived some relevant progressive ideology from Islam but have not taken in full because of which western culture finds itself unsuccessful in giving security to the women or the girls going to universities. In other words, if Islamic culture is followed well, there will be security for women lives. For instance, Islam opposes nakedness; narrow uniforms for women, sexuality or doing evils with opposite sexes etc.

but whether you believe or not, today unfortunately these contemptible evils appear in western culture because of not following the principles of Islam in full.

In a nut shell, Islam provides full freedom to women with safety, which is not observed in other cultures than Islam. Today why numerous women swimming in oceans of other cultures are embracing Islam? The answer is that they find their full safety in Islamic customs. They decorate the ornaments of chastity in a secured way with Islamic values. Some times such news appears that a girl is allegedly raped while going to college, but you can't hear such news about a woman being protected under Islamic canopy. Islam instructs women to achieve the goals along with value based education but under the perspective what Islam selects for them. In Arab world as well as other places where girls or women follow Islamic ideology, the society becomes healthy and people save themselves from the evils which we find in other societies than Islam. The girls/or women going to colleges or universities keep their chastity safe feeling satisfaction in veils and the men observing respected women in Islamic clad regard them with respective eyes.

However in my opinion, if Islam protects women societies encouraging them to come to the verge of success, it would not be recalled as a new thing because it carries out the laws of nature. Its purpose is to guide men and women towards realities, and the reality is that the women are equal to men and a valuable asset for human-life.

Without a woman the life of a man is incomplete and without a man the life of a woman is incomplete. Islam never discards a woman; she has got the equal right what her opposite sex (a man) has got from the chamber of the world creator, Allah.

In brief, Islam emphasizes: an equal status quo of a woman//girl like a man//boy.

Today, if our western countries like France, America and United Kingdom wish a better and safer atmosphere for women or the girls going to universities, they should take guidance from the Islamic culture which the book of Allah, the Glorious Quran has revealed for healthy society. And if it is not done accordingly, it will mean such mentioned countries are having cruel attitudes towards their women. They do not wish their country-women to be progressive in their lives, and they want to pollute human societies by selling their women/girls to markets' corrupted people. In brief, the people allowing their women/daughters to be naked in the society can never be the friends of female-community, and this is why they oppose Islam because Islam is only the religion that fights sincerely for the actual rights of a woman or a girl breathing on the earth.

### **Article By:**

***Tariq Sohrab Ghazipuri***

Jamia Millia Islamia, Jamia Nagar,  
New Delhi- 110025.

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## Holistic Wellness

Wellness is an important aspect from childhood to death. Without wellness the individual doesn't see much in life. The purpose of education, training, property, planning, social intercourse etc, are meant for getting wellness on a sustained basis through out life. Holistic wellness comprises all aspects of wellness namely materialist, spiritualist and lateral.

Holistic wellness comprises of-- holistic wellness at individual level and holistic wellness at societal level which are interconnected.

Holistic wellness at individual level covers such subjects as the general well being, happiness and fulfillment in life. Most individuals are trained from childhood through education by acquiring required knowledge and skills in various aspects of life. They include basic education, professional education, professional fulfillment, marriage, children, family , upbringing of family,sleep.rest.recreation and hobbies. During the course of life every individual encounters materialist issues such as proper and hygienic food, sanitation, health care and so on. Here issues such as unadulterated and hygienic food, impact of environment, herbs for healthcare, herbs for beauty care, medicines for beauty care & medicines for health care, hospital care, naturopathy etc. are involved leading to fulfilling holistic materialist wellness.

Holistic wellness at spiritualist level involves proper orientation in thinking, harmony from within and outside, peace from within and outside, prayer or surrender to god and/ equanimous bent of mind. Each culture has its own methods to address these issues. However yoga, meditation, lateral thinking, out of box thinking and laughing at oneself, will help the individual himself to adapt within and outside for harmonious holistic wellness at spiritual and societal level. At societal level,holistic wellness involves all the above aspects of the individual level applying at family level, community level, state level, national level and global level. All education imparting knowledge and skills in various faculties, national planning, production of goods and services indicated by GDP and per-capita income, local security, national security and global security are for Holistic Wellness at societal level from materialist angle, spiritualist angle and lateral angle.

The present day world is addressing holistic wellness more in the materialist angle. There is substantial need to address issues at spiritualist level. Though spiritualism is an old subject, there is muddling confusion between symbolisms .There is a need to understand soft/ spiritual angle leading to harmony and peace from within and outside for individuals and groups including at national level. This involves mental hygiene at individual level, family level, national level and global level on an aggregate. Issues of prayer, surrendering before God or equanimity of mind / thought or spiritual innovation- need to be addressed at all levels for achieving synergy, peace, harmony, justice and development every where. Holistic wellness is an all comprehensive concept, impacting everybody individually and severally. By addressing the issue of holistic wellness, all issues at individual and societal level in all spheres namely economic, business, political, governance, justice, cultural, science, spiritual etc, will be addressed.We need to have a re- look at ourselves from the past prism, present prism, and the innovated prism for achieving holistic wellness of all. So, holistic wellness is a huge business for ever.

Materialist Spiritualist Mission Trust has been addressing the above issues and sufficient research has already been done. Please visit [www.materialistspiritualist.org](http://www.materialistspiritualist.org).

### Article By:

**C.Venkataramanaiah**

BE(Gold Medallist), MBA(IIM-B,74-76)

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## **WILL THE DEMOCRACIES GO THE SAME WAY AS COMMUNIST COUNTRIES?**

There was a time when there was sort of cold war in the world between two blocks, with one representing the so called free world and the other representing the communist countries , which were supposed to be serving the cause of the downtrodden and protecting them from the so called oppression of the capitalists.

The communist governments failed due to their inner contradictions and because they went under the control of the coterie of communist leaders who themselves became the power mongers and exploiters, in the garb of representing the working class. In the course of time, the communist governments inevitably collapsed as people rose against the oppressive communist leaders. China, which claims that it has Communist Government is really no more a communist country now and it remains communist only in name, as it has adopted capitalist methods for all practical purposes. It is actually evolving some sort of system where the free economy is allowed to be practiced with all it's faults and at the same time restricting the political freedom of the citizens to a large extent. It appears to be a case of communist methods being adopted to facilitate capitalistic goals!.

The system in China is still evolving and perhaps this too may collapse in due course, as people would start revolting, demanding greater freedom and protesting against the style of functioning of the `comrades' controlling the show. Those who now control the government in China do not even have the claims of those in power in erstwhile communist countries who claimed that they represented proletariat.

While one can say without fear of contradiction that communist philosophy espoused by Marx, Lenin and Mao have failed when put to test, the question is whether the other philosophy of "free world" has succeeded. Though the proponents of communist philosophy still argue that there is nothing wrong with the philosophy but only with the comrades, who happened to control the communist governments.

A careful consideration of the recent developments in the so called democratic countries, particularly in Asia, Latin America and Africa clearly signal that the democratic system has also not met the expectations. It is showing signs of failure and it could be a question of time when the people would revolt against it, in the same way as they revolted against the communist countries.

Virtually, the democracies have gone under the control of the ambitious and self centered politicians in these countries and the democratic scene is now one of unending conflict between various politicians representing different political groups . These political groups have no objectives other than capturing power and holding on to the captured power at any cost and as long as possible, which is sought to be done under the camouflage of serving the people. While periodical elections do take place in these democracies, the elections have become very deceptive and are no more held under acceptable conditions . The politicians create obnoxious conditions during the elections by entering into fraudulent deals, by bribing the voters , indulging in violence and even rigging the polls. As a result, free and unprejudiced will of the electorate could not be registered during the polls. By indulging in malpractices and unethical ways, the most corrupt people and even murderers have managed to get elected and even become ministers. In these conditions, the democracies have become coloured and are increasingly being viewed as one of oppression by politicians.

In these developing countries, where the democratic system are supposed to be prevailing, large segment of the population are illiterate or semi literate and they are steeped in poverty and they are desperately looking for aids and support from any quarter. The politicians exploit the vulnerable conditions and the plight of the poor population by extending them freebies (free gifts, subsidies and concessions) and exploiting their religious and caste differences, not only at the time of elections but even during other times to buy peace with them and ensure that they would not become restive. The freebies are being extended by the government, which are controlled by the self centered politicians, diverting the government funds which should normally go for implementing development projects that would contribute to the growth of the economy and ultimately alleviation of poverty. In this scenario, the economy is left to suffer with no hopes for the poor people to improve their living conditions in their life time. After deceiving such poor people with false promises of hope and extending freebies, the politicians manage to remain rich and comfortable, leaving the poor people high and dry.

The ruling politicians in all democratic countries including even the developed countries seem to strongly believe that extending concessions, gifts and other benefits in one form or the other can always tempt the people and they would enable them to buy the loyalty of the people so that they can continue to stay on in power. Even in developed democratic countries like USA, the government is trying to buy peace and gaining popularity with the citizens by extending all sorts of concessions like loans with zero interest etc. that make no economic sense for the country but have virtually contributed to the near collapse of the economy.

Such conditions in developing countries will only ultimately lead to more sufferings for poor people and leading to unrest, similar to what happened in the erstwhile communist countries, which resulted in the collapse of communist movement in Eastern Europe.

It is unfortunate that the politicians in these countries have failed to learn right lessons from the collapse of the communist governments.

**Column By:**

**[N S Venkataraman](#)**

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## **WRIT PETITION ON PADMA AWARDS DISCRIMINATION :: Prof. Dr. Leo Rebello**

*Maharashtra, India*

### **WRIT PETITION ON PADMA AWARDS DISCRIMINATION FOR URGENT SUO MOTU CONSIDERATION**

Moved under articles 226, 12, 13 and 14 and also under article 51A of the Constitution of India and appropriate rules framed thereunder.

**Dr. Leo Rebello**, The Petitioner-in-Person

Residing at: 28/552 Samata Nagar, Kandivali East, Mumbai 400101.

**Versus**

**The Union of India**, through the offices of

The Prime Minister and The Union Home Minister .. The Respondents

### **THE PETITIONER UNDERSIGNED SHEWETH**

The undersigned being aggrieved, since 1991, that his name is not being considered for the Padma Bhushan continuously for so many years, inspite of several recommendations and having received no replies to various notices sent Re: irregularities, arbitrariness and/or corruption, is moving this Writ Petition under article 226 of the Constitution of India, urging the Chief Justice and other Judges of this High Court, to take suo motu action on this important issue, in public interest, as this is not a solitary instance of discrimination as further reading will prove.

Justification for considering this Writ Petition as suo motu: When grave irregularities take place, it is not necessary for the Hon'ble High Courts or the Supreme Court of India, to wait for conscientious citizens to knock at their doors or when approached, as in this case, to stand on technicalities. May it be noted that the time is very short and the process may be put in motion. Later on, if required, the Petitioner may be asked to file a regular Writ Petition, which direction he undertakes to obey.

### **Brief Introduction of the Petitioner:**

Dr. Leo Rebello is one of the seniormost qualified Naturopaths in India. He has trained and treated thousands since 1978, delivered over 10,000 lectures in 63 countries, including at WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNEP, UNYO, IAEWP WONM, UN-Habitat and Medicina Alternativa conferences. He has been interviewed by the world media and received several prestigious awards. His original tome on "AIDS and Alternative Medicine" (which has gone into 4 editions) and now translated in Hindi has reached out to masses with the profound message "From AIDS Scare to AIDS Care". Besides, he has written 39 other books on Nature Cure, Yoga, Holistic Healing, Tropical Diseases, Panacea for Pain, Cancer, Muscular Dystrophies etc. many of which have gone into multiple editions and his Nature Cure and Yoga Therapy book, 3rd revised and enlarged edition, has been translated and published in Turkish language (10,000 copies). His "Revised Oath for Doctors" and "Health Reforms" or scholarly articles "War on Your Health" are being circulated widely and have been translated into various world languages and read on the Radios, Televisions, in universities and at various conferences. He also has 31 years of experience in the field of social work, human rights, education (both formal and informal) and is associated with several NGOs in responsible capacities. He was the Special Executive Magistrate for 18 years and served on the Indian Film Censor Board for two years. Since 2004, he is also the World Peace Envoy and his recent inspiring book WORLD WITHOUT WARS has been nominated for Peace Nobel.

Locus: The petitioner's rights have been affected since 1991, when he was first selected for Padma Award, notified to that effect, and then his name was removed. As such, he has been discriminated time and again, impinging on his fundamental right under article 14. And he is not the only one to be discriminated thus. In essence, this is a pro bono publico petition.

**Whether Notices served on the Respondents?:** Yes. Four telling notices served are reproduced below for ready reference, with some public comments received. No response from the Respondents has been received till date. That further proves scant respect of corrupt authorities to law and justice. Selling awards is a big business in Delhi, both in the Govt. as also by 'letter-head organizations'.

**Brief Background of Padma Awards:** The Government of India instituted on 2nd January 1954 four Civilian awards known as Padma Awards, namely, Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri for exemplary contribution in the fields of Art, Literature, Medicine, Education, Social Work, Civil Service and Public Affairs.

The names of the Padma awardees are declared on Republic Day and the awards are conferred in second or third week of March at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, Delhi by the President of India. Till that time, technically, the names of the Award winners can be withdrawn or included, if grave error has been noticed.

The petitioner's name was recommended by several eminent persons for Padma Bhushan under Medicine category, for his monumental contribution to Nature Cure, which is one of the seven recognised systems of medicines in India and Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, Morarji Desai and several others have stood by it. Dr. Leo Rebello has taken on the mantle to spread this safer, cheaper, effective, reliable and ageold system of health care, and has served the nation well since 1978. He pioneered the first distance learning course in Naturopathy in 1978. More details can be found on his popular website: [www.healthwisdom.org](http://www.healthwisdom.org)

Infact, the Petitioner NOT only deserves the Award for the outstanding contribution and original research in the Traditional and Natural Medicine, in which he is renowned all over the world as the Guru of Holistic Healing, but he could have been also considered for Literature (40 books, hundreds of articles, poems, reports and letters to editors written) and for Social Work, having dedicated

himself to it for the last 31 years and helped thousands in all these years. Infact, under section 32 of the Advocates Act, the undersigned as a Human Rights Activist has helped so many, that his name was shortlisted as the Member of Maharashtra Human Rights Commission, but again, corruption being what it is, Shri Subhash Lalla, an Ex IAS, who was then working as the Principal Secretary to the then Chief Minister Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh was selected for vacancy reserved for eminent social worker.

The fact that such an eminent person is not selected on Merit, and the fact that so far no one has got the Padma Award for outstanding contribution to Naturopathy (category Medicine), itself proves how the selection process is faulty. Corruption even in Awards or for selection to appointments of MPs under eminent persons category (for which too his name has gone several times) itself proves how corrupt and discriminatory is the Govt. machinery.

## **GROUNDS**

**1..** Dr. Leo Rebello fulfills all the basic criteria laid down for the Padma Bhushan Award. On Merit he should have got the Award long ago. But the fact that his name was first selected in 1991, he was notified of it on 23.01.1991 and then it disappeared from the list, and year after year he is being discriminated, itself proves mischief, incompetence or corruption in Awards selection. Infact, it is openly said that one can get the name included in the Padma Awards list for amounts ranging from Rs.10 lakhs to Rs.1 crore and the petitioner knows how certain persons have got these awards by paying or through influence.

**2..** The Hon'ble Judges will surely be conscious of the facts how the Chief Minister of Maharashtra is now pushing the name of cricketer Sachin Tendulkar for Bharat Ratna, on the specious ground that "he is an eminent Maharashtrian Cricketer and even the Maharashtrian President being his fan will not have any objection to it". What an abomination, inspite of public ire about the 2010 Padma Awards list itself. This further proves how the authorities show scant respect to principles of natural justice or contempt for even the Supreme Court Order.

**3..** Through RTI applications moved by activists, through print and electronic media, and through the four explicit annexures reproduced below it is prima facie proved that there is corruption in Padma Awards list, and this Hon'ble Court has to intervene in timely manner by issuing appropriate writs in larger public interest and for probity.

## **URGENT PRAYERS**

Pending final disposal of this WP on Merit, the faulty list declared on 26th January 2010 be stayed and no award ceremony should be held in March this year to confer the said awards, until further scrutiny by this august court. Otherwise, it will amount to condoning the continuing corruption and discrimination.

OR

Three tainted persons, namely, NRI hotelier Sant Singh Chatwal, Dr. Prakash Reddy of the Apollo Hospital, and actor Saif Ali Khan should be removed. Instead the name of Dr. Leo Rebello included in the Padma Bhushan list. This should not be difficult, as in the past, the names of Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak and Shri Kishorebhai Ratilal Zaveri were released on January 30, 1991. [Ref. Decision dated 10.08.2009 delivered by the Central Information Commission in Mr. S.C.Agrawal's RTI appeal].

Similarly, the name of octogenarian Acharya Janki Ballabh Shastri, who has rightly turned down the Padma Shri shaming the Govt. for choosing his juniors much before him, may also be considered for Padma Bhushan on merit. If this is taken care of, the Govt. can save its face, but also the message will be driven home that in future such aberrations will not be tolerated by the guardians of law.

OR

The Hon'ble Court may hold the Padma Awards list 2010 in abeyance and direct the Govt of India to constitute a committee under the Chairmanship of the Vice President of India with Cabinet Secretary as the ex officio secretary, the opposition leader and 5 eminent citizens of India, and the undersigned being the petitioner and who has studied the gaphla in the Padma awards selection since 1991, as members. This committee of 9 persons, within 15 days, should make an objective assessment and report-whether discrimination is practiced while conferring these national awards and to check if undeserving people have received these national awards or not. This Hon'ble court may then pass final orders on the basis of Report of the constituted committee referred to in this para. This will be swift, just and proper remedy, for which this Petition is submitted.

## **FINAL SAY**

This Hon'ble Court is within its rights, jurisdiction and duty-bound to intervene to protect probity in public life and save the nation's highest awards being given or sold to the undeserving, inspite of Supreme Court judgment of 15.12.1995. If this is not contempt, pray what is?

When the issue of Hotelier Sant Singh Chatwal's name was questioned, as to how he could be given Padma Bhushan inspite of the CBI cases etc., it was expected that the govt of India will come out by listing exceptional and outstanding contributions made by him to the Indian society. But the GOI instead maintained the veil of secrecy by declining to disclose as to how the said individual's name crept into the selection list, whereas, the said "award selectee" revealed the nexus when he adamantly and unwisely blared that he will personally come to receive the award since he is Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's man and worked on his behalf in the USA. Need we say more?

The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court of India had issued appropriate directions on 15.12.1995. Justice Kuldeep Singh, who was part of that Bench, had observed: "the Padma awards have been conferred on businessmen and industrialists who have multiplied their own wealth and have hardly helped the growth of national interest". These words aptly suit NRI Hotelier Sant Singh Chhatwal, as also Dr. Pratap Reddy of the Apollo Hospital, or Actor Saif Ali Khan. But even Justice Kuldeep Singh had not envisioned the crimes that would be part of the grow-rich process.

May it kindly be noted that these prestigious civilian awards are conferred for exceptional and outstanding contribution to the Indian society, not because someone is a director of some big industry or a Multi National Corporation, like Ms Indira Nooyi, serving as CEO of PepsiCo, who was selected, last year. She may be the highest paid NRI in bankrupt USA, but what is her contribution to India? On the contrary, Pepsi and Coca Cola has not only ruined our businesses, but also the health of the younger generation.

The paramount consideration in preparing Padma Awards List is the person's "exceptional and outstanding contribution" to the nation. The contribution here should be taken as positive and proven contribution to the welfare of the people of India and not as personal record breaking performance, like in the case of shooter Abhinav Bindra or cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, because for the field of Sport there are other awards. Like one person cannot be held guilty twice, one person should not get two awards for the same feat.

"The Indian experience with regard to the Executive, Judicative and Legislative instrumentalities over six decades has been one of exploitation darkening into misgiving, misgiving deepening into despair and despair exploding into violence. The categorical imperative for stability in democracy is, therefore, to see that every instrumentality is functionally kept on course and any deviance or misconduct, abuse or aberration, corruption or delinquency is duly monitored and disciplinary measures taken promptly to make unprofitable for the delinquents to depart from the code of conduct and to make it possible for people, social activists, professional leaderships and other duly appointed agencies to enforce punitive therapeutics when robed culprits violate moral-legal norms." Opined Justice Krishna Iyer about two decades ago.

Under article 51A of the Constitution of India, every citizen (that includes the petitioner and the Hon'ble Judges of this Court) has to perform 10 fundamental duties. Hence, this petition, which this Petitioner firmly believes will be considered with due attention. Suffice it to say that the Petitioner is NOT the only person discriminated by the corrupt regime and this petition may be turned into a PIL and the Hon'ble Court may appoint an amicus curiae to guide itself on finer points so that the society marches ahead by putting into effect Zero Tolerance to Corruption slogan.

**I, Dr. Leo Rebello**, age 60, proud Indian citizen, hereby solemnly affirm on 3rd March, 2010, that whatever stated in this petition as also the annexures are studied facts and submit this important petition for kind and urgent consideration of this Hon'ble Court, to prevent the law breakers from escaping the long arm of the law.

Dr. Leo Rebello  
The Petitioner in Person  
3rd March 2010

**Column By:**

**[Dr. Leo Rebello](#)**

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## **Whither democracy in developing countries ??**

Almost every developing country in the world except a few countries like Myanmar and North Korea claim that theirs is a democratic governance. Obviously, democracy as a concept is viewed as the most desirable form of governance and people of every country would like to jump into this band wagon. However, in actual practice, in many developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the process of democracy is marked by bitter animosity and quarrel between the different political parties, giving an impression as if these countries are in constant turmoil all the time with one group trying to defeat another group to seize power. Large segment of the population of these countries who are not part of the political groups, remain as mere spectators in this so called democratic process and often feel frustrated and helpless. Such people who are not part of any political group many times wonder whether this sort of democracy has done any overall good to the country at all.

What the discerning common people note is that the difference between the political parties in these countries are not due to any fundamental difference in policies and programmes but only due to the personal ambition of the leaders of the political groups.

Of course, elections do take place in these developing countries at periodical intervals, where ruling group can be dislodged in a smooth manner if desired by the people. But, the problem is that these elections are being contested by different political groups who are bitterly opposed to each other and they conduct themselves during the electioneering and thereafter as if they are in the midst of a warfare. They give an impression that they are sworn personal enemies exhibiting sort of hatred towards each other and may go to any extent to destroy each other in their bid to capture power and enjoy the benefits of power thereafter.

In recent times, there have been even more deterioration in the quality of democracy practiced in the developing countries, in that several political groups (political parties) are now controlled by families of the political leaders that would inevitably lead to family rule and sort of feudalism. In the process, the political groups become outfits sans any ideology, with the party cadre pledging loyalty to one political family or the other.

With the family members getting stranglehold of the political parties to achieve their ambitions of seizing power, the philosophy, principles and ideology do not have any significant place any more. What becomes priority to the politicians is only the upliftment of their family members and achievement of their ambitions to seize power and for this they “skillfully” work out schemes to outdo others. In the process, a few political groups (political families) align between themselves to outdo another aligned force and this is what is now known as coalition politics.

Each political group in its anxiety to defeat the other often even go to the extent of maintaining thugs and rowdies in their groups to indulge in violence, settle scores with the opponents, indulge in malpractices in election including bribing the voters etc. Due to this approach, the law and order machinery virtually collapses.

When personal ambitions of the political leaders and the needs of their families become the most important factors, the progress of the country inevitably suffers and the democracy becomes a counter productive movement. Several developing countries seem to be rapidly moving towards this condition.

In such scenario, the democracy loses its purpose and significance and people become disillusioned. The people may then probably think that the rule by a dictator and his family could be even less harmful than this sort of several political groups and their family members spread all over the country and ruling the nation.

After the ethnic war, when Sri Lanka went for presidential elections, it caught the worldwide attention and even admiration to some extent as a vibrant democracy. But all these became anti climax when the political groups and presidential candidates fought the elections, bitterly abusing each other as if they are sworn enemies.

After the poll, the opponent presidential candidate was arrested and is now facing trials, confirming the suspicions of many that the political parties and their leaders have no bigger target than outdoing one another, unconcerned about the consequences to the national welfare and progress.

It appears that the process of democracy is only a tool for these politicians to climb to power and to control the government and the country and enjoy power and authority for the families and the followers.

On the other hand, the votaries of democracy expect that these political groups should contest the elections on the basis of policies and programmes and should really be competing with each other to provide greater service and benefits to the people and country at large.

In such situation, democracy as a concept appear to have failed in many developing countries. This is certainly a very unfortunate condition since the developing countries have millions of citizens living below poverty line and they desperately need meaningful and progressive programmes of the government. Such expectations of the people will not be met by ambitious and self serving politicians who have emerged in the democratic system that are now being practiced in the developing countries.

**Column By:**

***N.S.Venkataraman***

## **How to use Magistrate's Powers for Registering Criminal Complaint**

*Maharashtra, India*

In my earlier article on the importance of exercising our right to have FIR registered, I extensively discussed approaching the police, but only cursorily mentioned approaching Magistrates.

(In case you haven't read it, visit: <http://www.groundreportindia.com/2010/02/citizen-power-to-get-fir-registered.html>)

Some better-informed friends immediately wrote back, asking me to correct ambiguities and inaccuracies in this respect.

First, let me recap: We generally approach the police station first and try to get an FIR registered under Section Sec 154(1) of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC). If the Senior Inspector in charge of the police station refuses to do so, then we have the option of approaching the Superintendent of Police u/s Sec 154(3) of CrPC. Also, we have other options, as below.

We may approach Magistrate for the below Reasons & Remedies:

The police have refused to register FIR, or they dilly-dally with pointless correspondence etc. Therefore we want the Magistrate to direct the police to do so u/s 156(3) of CrPC.

OR

Even without approaching the police, we want the Magistrate to direct the police to register an FIR and investigate a crime u/s 156(3). We want to use this method to hold the police accountable for investigating.

OR

We want the Magistrate to directly take cognizance of a criminal offence under his powers u/s 190(1)(a) or 190(1)(c), and commence the process of trial by summoning the accused and witnesses. In this case, we – the complainant – have the responsibility of leading evidence in the trial (which otherwise the police would have done).

If necessary, we may also approach the Chief Judicial Magistrate and invoke Sec 190(2) to empower a Magistrate of the Second Class to take cognizance of a criminal offence.

### **IMPORTANT Ifs-and-Buts:**

Section 156(3) of CrPC empowers the Magistrate to direct police to conduct investigations. Actually, Magistrate will direct the police to register FIR, which mandates the police to conduct investigations. Then the police is expected to report their findings to the Magistrate.

Normally, Magistrate expects the citizen to exhaust their remedy of attempting to get an FIR lodged with the police u/s 154(1) before approaching Magistrate u/s 156(3).

Section 190 empowers the Magistrate to issue process, i.e. summon the accused to remain present before the court and face the trial. The Magistrate can issue process under three situations, namely on a "private complaint" by a citizen, on an Investigation Report (i.e. charge-sheet) of the police, or on coming to know that an offence has happened in his jurisdiction (i.e. suo moto).

Read CrPC Sections 200 to 205 to understand what the Magistrate will do next: <http://www.box.net/shared/7o8l133pp0>

There are numerous Magistrates' courts in every city and district. You can find many of them through a google search. Mumbai activists may find these links useful for locating a Magistrate and getting an advocate for legal assistance:

[http://yellowpages.sulekha.com/mumbai/advocate-magistrate-court\\_mumbai\\_contacts.htm](http://yellowpages.sulekha.com/mumbai/advocate-magistrate-court_mumbai_contacts.htm)

[http://mumbai.justdial.com/lawyers-for-magistrate-court\\_Mumbai.html](http://mumbai.justdial.com/lawyers-for-magistrate-court_Mumbai.html)

<http://www.vakilbabu.com/Associates/Advocate/Maharashtra/Mumbai/MumbaiAdvocates.htm>

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

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**Column By:**

***Krishnaraj Rao***

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## **VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN INDIA: CAUSES AND CURE**

This writer was part of a fact-finding team that inquired into the "attack" on the Holy Family Church, Hinkal, in Mysore in February 2002. The team had found out, among other things, that the incident was a minor one - a minor scuffle in the church premises and a broken window-pane. The incident should have been localised and contained. But, it was blown out of proportion and internationalized by the media and the self-styled leaders and spokesmen of the minority communities. It was a classic example of vested interests making a mountain out of a molehill and spreading distress and divisions among neighbours of different faiths and provoke religious sentiments and fan the flames of hatred". (Report attached).

I was again part of another fact-finding team that visited Managalore and Udupi following violent incidents there in September 2008. The report\* of this team too is attached for your ready reference. Yes, no civil society can condone violence. But mere condemnation is not a method to avert the repetition of violence. We have to find out if the violence is deliberate and unprovoked, or due to provocation. If it is the former, then there is one set of solutions, which mostly involve applying the law and severely punishing the perpetrators of the violence. However, if there is provocation, then we have to study the issue in greater detail. We have to understand why there has been a provocation for the violence, and who are the persons or organisations behind the provocation.

The real source of danger to the Indian Christian community is not the handful of Hindu extremists. Most of the violent incidents have been due to aggressive evangelization and faith-marketing. Other than this there have been few attacks on Christians. Finally the sensitive and sensible Christians must realize that acts of certain "born-again", cultic and splinter groups among them who denigrate Hindu gods and abuse Hindu rituals as "barbaric" are the root cause of tension between Christian and Hindu communities. Christian leaders known for their erudition, equipoise and empathy should come out in the open to disown such acts of intolerance.

It is worth recalling at this juncture what Fr. Adolf Washington, media coordinator, Archdiocese of Bangalore, wrote in Deccan Herald some time ago: "There are several groups of people doing the rounds in Bangalore adopting persuasive techniques not just to convert people but also to spread animosity against mainstream Christian denominations. They hurl invectives against the teachings of Christian denominations and even induce people to tender a written "resignation" to the pastor or priest. Since some of these groups do not even accept the divinity of Christ, in effect, their conversion should not be understood as conversion to Christianity but to their organisation. Mainstream Christian denominations do not go on a conversion spree, only splinter groups and cultic groups do so probably for some self-gain."

Terms such as "evangelistic campaign", "missionary strategy", "campus crusade", "occupying non-Christian areas", a "blitzkrieg" of missionaries, and sending "reinforcements" sound more appropriate to military enterprises than to Christian witness to God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. The statistical approach implied in the words "the unreached millions" is derogatory to neighbours of other faiths. "Unreached" by whom? When Indian Christians themselves use these phrases, which have originated outside the country, to describe their neighbours living next door to them in the community, Christians should not be surprised if the neighbours are offended. (Courage for Dialogue- Dr Stanley Samartha).

Call it the irrational Hindu anger at being cheated of destiny. Call it the Hindu backlash at the growing fanaticism in other communities. Call it the end of the tether for Hindu patience and tolerance. India's cycles of violence continue because it is only seldom that we have allowed healing to take place. It is imperative that our ears be made sensitive to the heartbeat of the 'other' community or caste. And we must all assist and permit a true healing. Stop spreading hatred, against any particular community, Hindu or Muslim, or those who are branded as our enemies, like butter on hot bread. And stop being merchants of hate. We must learn to overcome hatred by love.

All of us would be doing a great service to the cause of communal and religious amity and peace in this country if we learn to show a little humility and a little diffidence about the correctness of our views. We should not seek to satisfy our thirst for ego and vanity by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred and jealousy. We have to teach ourselves that consideration for others is nobler than muscling our way to the front.

About 250 leaders from 11 Churches and denominations who met recently in Bangalore resolved not to condemn or denigrate deities of other religions, or the traditions that other religious believers hold as sacred. They also have decided to "work positively to build a harmonious relationship with people of all religions and cultures."

I have written these lines at the risk of being branded as anti-Christian, anti-Church and 'the blue-eyed boy' of RSS. But, I muster courage from the following a couplet from the famous Urdu poet, Faiz Ahmed Faiz:

Speak: your lips are free  
Speak: your tongue is still yours  
Speak: this lissome body is yours  
Speak: this life is yours

Speak: so that the truth can prevail ....

(Bol ke lab azaad hain tere Bol Zabaan ab tak teri hain Bol yeh sutwan jism hai tera Bol ke jaan ab tak teri hai Bol ke sach zinda hai ab tak ....)

**Column By:**

***P. N. Benjamin***

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## **India's New IMF Economics (and it will kill millions of poor)**

I'm not a trained economist. But I sort of understand it from a grassroots, human rights pov. I hope you have time to read my little column. Feedback and circulation welcome. For more articles on this very important subject, look up [www.outlookindia.com](http://www.outlookindia.com) . opinion (Outlook India, March 15, 2010)

The Khaas Aadmi Budget: It's time people got—or took—direct charge of budget-making By Partha Banerjee  
<http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?264559>

[Note: I used some info from online articles and blogs.]

In a euphoric moment, when the country was celebrating Sachin Tendulkar's double century in ODIs, Pranab Mukherjee, finance minister and International Monetary Fund's governor-designate for India, presented his budget. And we might say, "It's not cricket!"

In a non-election, no-risk year, he announced the following important news for his fellow countrymen. (1) Rich Indians will get Rs 26,000 crore of tax break in 2010-11; (2) food subsidy for the poor will be decreased by Rs 424 crore; (3) fertiliser subsidy for low-income farmers will be pared by Rs 3,000 crore; and (4) real estate magnates and hotel owners will get huge tax concessions. Then, he announced even more important news. In an already high-inflation situation, petrol and diesel prices will be increased. Everyone knows what that would do to the urban/rural poor and lower middle class.

Major corporate media, following a new-found, 'successful' US model, praised the budget. They said that following the announcements, India's stockmarkets jumped. "The market lapped it up and the Bombay Stock Exchange benchmark Sensex boomed," a Financial Times article said. Big NRI businessmen too made positive statements.

But wait a minute. I'm an NRI too, living in the US for 25 years. I teach blue-collar American labourers coming back to get a college education. I see how corporations here are laying off these workers in thousands and yet getting themselves millions of dollars in bonuses using the Obama government's bailout money. I see how American media is completely bypassing the suffering poor workers. And now I see how a section of Indian media houses is following the footsteps of their American mentors, and suppressing the real stories around this major, extremely skewed budget. I find it unbelievable that nobody is questioning and challenging the so-called democratic government of Pranab babu, Manmohan Singh and the Gandhi dynasty on how the 80 per cent poor—rural and urban—would now be able to find food or kerosene for their families, pay rent, or get healthcare for ageing parents. Does anybody really care?

Let's look at the history of Indian budgets since the so-called post-Soviet, post-non-alignment, liberalisation days. Since then, the series of policy measures launched by the Indian government are part of the so-called structural adjustment programmes (SAP). Indian governments have since taken up the following IMF-World Bank-dictated measures to implement SAP: (a) Massive devaluation of rupee; (b) new industrial policy allowing more foreign investments, thereby destroying traditional Indian businesses; (c) rampant disinvestment of government equity in profitable public sector enterprises; (d) 'reforms' of the financial sector by allowing in private banks; (e) cuts in social spending to reduce fiscal deficit; (f) market-friendly approach and less government intervention; and (g) liberalisation of the banking system.

Twenty years ago, the World Bank secretly submitted the above SAP elements to the government; we now know that the group of senior officials in the finance ministry—all ex-World Bank/IMF employees—who were involved with this memorandum did not disclose it to the then PM, Chandra Shekhar. Have we heard about this from Pranab babu or his predecessors P. Chidambaram or Manmohan Singh?

Clearly, the focus of the new budget is to provide more help to the corporate sector and the rich, with an illusion that the new growth would percolate down to the downtrodden—what is called "trickle-down economics" in the US. It has now crashed the US economy, and it's going to crash India and its vast middle class in the coming days.

If Indian leaders were not so indebted to Western institutions, they'd have come up with a people's budget following the successful model of Brazil's Lula De Silva: a transparent economic blueprint where ordinary people have open access to create and modify it based on their own national, regional or local needs.

In a truly democratic, transparent, people's budget that India should have developed over the recurrent, five-year plans, we'd see serious investment in small-scale industry, agriculture, education, healthcare, land/water reform, training for unskilled workers, incentive for poor women's entrepreneurial efforts and 'Grameen'-type banking, development of a sustainable environment and sports for young Indians with tangible goals. On that list, we'd now definitely add disaster preparedness and evacuation strategies, given what we've just seen in Haiti and Chile. I shudder even to think of the extent of possible destruction in the event of a large earthquake in Calcutta, Delhi, Mumbai or Bangalore.

Pranab babu's IMF budget has no clue on any of the above. Who can answer correctly? Soniaji, or maybe, the next media-predicted prime minister—Rahul Gandhi?

### **Source:**

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भारत के लोग, जो कि ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया के जन्मदाता हैं। मानवीय अधिकारों/मूल्यों, लोकतंत्र और अभिव्यक्ति के स्वातंत्र्य में गहरा विश्वास करते हैं। ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया भारत के लोगों की वह आवाज है जो कि जमीनी यथार्थ, विचार, जमीनी गतिविधियां तथा अभिव्यक्ति के स्वातंत्र्य के लिये है। मीडिया, लोगों के सशक्तिकरण के लिये सबसे बड़े औजारों में से है, और इस बात पर निर्भर करता है कि इस औजार का प्रयोग कैसे किया जाये। इसलिये ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया का आग्रह है कि इसका प्रयोग किसी व्यक्ति विशेष या संस्था विशेष के लाभों के लिये ना किया जाये।

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विश्व का कोई भी मनुष्य ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया में लिखने का अधिकार रखता है। आर्टिकल या रिपोर्ट अक्षर या आवाज या चलचित्र या इनके मिलेजुले किसी भी रूप में भेजा जा सकता है। भेजते समय निम्न बिंदुओं में प्रोत्साहन अपेक्षित है।

- आपका प्रोत्साहन अपेक्षित है, यदि ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया सामाजिक मुद्दों और अराजनैतिक आर्टिकल की अपेक्षा रखती है।
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- आपका प्रोत्साहन अपेक्षित है, यदि आर्टिकल के मौलिक होने की अपेक्षा की जाती है।
- यदि ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया किसी आर्टिकल या रिपोर्ट को प्रकाशित कर पाने में असमर्थता व्यक्त करती है तो कृपया आप ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया की असमर्थता को अन्यथा नहीं लें। प्रकाशित ना हो पाने के कारणों की चर्चा का स्वागत ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया सदैव करती है।
- आपका प्रोत्साहन अपेक्षित है, यदि ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया किसी ऐसे आर्टिकल या रिपोर्ट को प्रकाशित कर पाने में असमर्थता व्यक्त करती है जिसका आधार केवल किसी व्यक्ति विशेष या संस्था विशेष को लाभ पहुंचाना हो।
- आपका प्रोत्साहन अपेक्षित है, कापीराइट्स के अधिकारों को मानने।
- आपका प्रोत्साहन अपेक्षित है, यदि ग्राउंड रिपोर्ट इंडिया अपेक्षा करती है कि यदि किसी कारणवश किसी और का आर्टिकल प्रकाशन के लिये दिया गया है तो आर्टिकल के जन्मदाता या मूल अधिकार रखने वाले का आभार व्यक्त किया जाये।

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