

# ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE

Patriotism Redefined



**Over promise, under deliver**  
*The story of election manifestos*

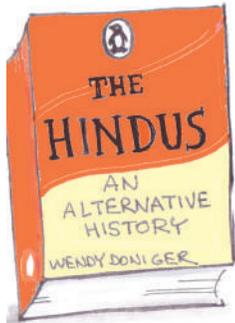
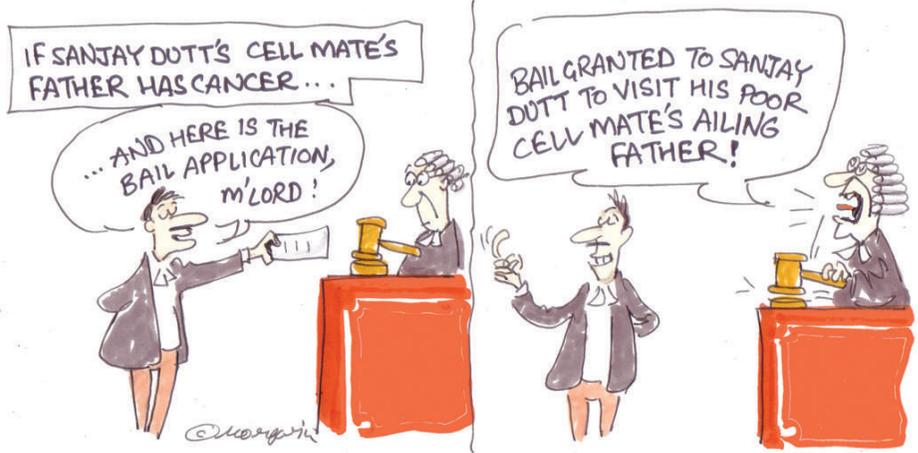
**KNOW INDIA BETTER**

Hampi : The Hidden Jewel of Karnataka

**FACE TO FACE**

Dr S Y Quraishi

**MORPARIA'S PAGE**



**THE PENGUINS**



AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY

**MANMOHAN SINGH VISITS MYANMAR**



I MUST SAY, PC'S BUDGET HAS HAD A DEFINITE POVERTY REDUCING EFFECT ...

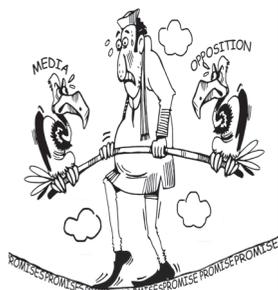


# Contents

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**THEME:  
Manifesto**



6



23



44

Dr. S. Y. Quraishi

<b>Morparia's page</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Manifestoingitis Epidemic</b> <i>V Gangadhar</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>Who reads the manifesto anyway?</b> <i>C. V. Aravind</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>End of the party</b> <i>Dr. B. Ramesh Babu</i>	<b>9</b>
<b>The stamp of NaMo</b> <i>Prakash Bal Joshi</i>	<b>11</b>
<b>AAP's 'Manifest Destiny'</b> <i>Dr. P. M. Kamath</i>	<b>13</b>
<b>Regionalising Democracy</b> <i>Ajay Gudavarthy</i>	<b>15</b>
<b>What does the youth want?</b> <i>Shivani Gupta</i>	<b>17</b>
<b>Youth Voice</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Justice and social equity for all</b> <i>Pooja Parvati</i>	<b>21</b>
<b>Know India Better</b>	
<b>Hampi : The hidden jewel of Karnataka</b> <i>Md. Masarrath Ali Khan</i>	<b>23</b>
<b>Right to dignity and identity</b> <i>Dr. Joseph Marianus Kujur</i>	<b>40</b>
<b>Dalits and elections</b> <i>Anoop Kumar</i>	<b>42</b>
<b>Face to Face: Dr. S. Y. Quraishi</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Features</b>	
<b>A pink revolution in the North</b> <i>Shoma Chatterjee</i>	<b>46</b>
<b>Cultural Kaleidoscope</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Discoverer of Kautilya's Arthashastra</b> <i>B.M.N. Murthy</i>	<b>50</b>
<b>Columnns</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Nature watch: Bittu Sahgal</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Young India</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Great Indians</b>	<b>56</b>



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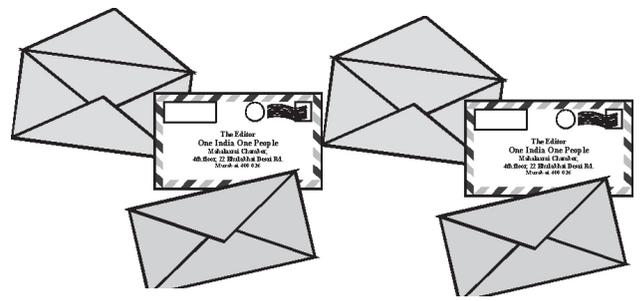
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## Interesting and informative

For the last three years, I have been reading One India One People magazine, and I am really glad to inform you that I have not only gained knowledge from the various topics you have covered, but it has also helped me to pool in ideas for the school where I teach. I particularly like the Great Indians section which profiles the contribution of unsung heroes of our country. It was a delight to read the profiles of V P Menon and Farooque Shaikh in the February issue. Our students do not know much about our soldiers, the hard life they lead and the supreme contributions they make for the country, but through the write ups on Great Indians, children realise and value their contributions. The March issue on Water too is informative as it sensitises the students on this important natural resource. The information on Narara Marine National Park by Akul Tripathi with those lovely photographs was very interesting.

– Uma Chawdhry, Principal,  
Amulakh Amichand School



### R.I.P Mr. Murthy

B.M.N Murthy, who regularly contributed articles on Indian culture for One India One People, passed away after a brief illness on 18 March 2014, at the ripe of age of 84. A Sanskrit enthusiast and lover of English literature, Mr. Murthy used to send weekly nuggets and trivia on a wide range of topics on Indian culture and its heritage, all of which were well researched. He took pride in bringing back the Vedic wisdom and the hoary tradition of Indian culture and sharing his gems of wisdom with our youth. A prolific writer, he had completed 800 articles on his pet topic – ancient Indian culture over a period of 14 uninterrupted years, the last one being posted on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. Murthy will always be remembered for his unflinching contribution in spreading awareness about the lesser known India.

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# The Manifestoingitis Epidemic

**V. Gangadhar** is concerned about the growing menace of manifestoingitis, a dreaded disease which crops up every five years during election time and numbs the brains of the public.

THE awful season is back again," sighed Dr. Pollster as he wiped his face wearily. "Thankfully, most of the time, it comes once in five years but that is hard enough for the likes of us". I nodded sympathetically. "Look at the size of it," pointed out the doctor. "This huge, entire nation is affected. No one, not one area, region can escape its devastation. Mind you, the impact of this dreaded disease Manifestoingitis lasts for full five years." "As if we did not have troubles enough in this country", I pointed out. "What is needed is a worldwide dedicated campaign. If a deadly disease like Polio could be wiped out why not Manifestoingitis?"

The doctor shook his head sadly. "That is the sad part of it. International agencies like the UN, UNESCO or WHO, strangely enough are unwilling to take action and tackle the menace. They argue that Manifestoingitis was needed to preserve democracy. Hence, once in five years or so, different nations at different stages go through this ordeal so that elusive democracy can survive." I was angry and retorted, "Who needs this democracy at this cost?" The doctor looked around apprehensively. "Hush, someone could overhear you and there could be trouble. You see, our nation is hailed because we had allowed this disease to grow and develop without any concern. And now we are cornered." "Can you describe the symptoms of this vile disease? How does one handle it?", I asked. The doctor asked his nurse to bring some coffee for us. Holding the cup in one hand he began, "Let me start from the beginning. You see, Manifestoingitis is the first stage of this disease and it is the most difficult stage. The disease could be carried by paper, any other printed material and these days it is carried by e-mail, films and so on. It spreads very quickly even by word of mouth through many carriers. Almost every day, there is a new virus carrying this disease." "How horrible", I exclaimed. "You can say that again," said the doctor. "There are old viruses and new ones and the number is growing every day. In the good old days, there was just the Congress virus which

had existed for years and years. Then it was challenged by other forms, some more dangerous. The BJP virus and its offshoots suddenly became more menacing and recently there was an outburst of this virus which did not bode well for the nation. The BJP virus was clearly a threat to the Muslim population, it was strong to attack and penetrate anything, even old mosque and masjids. All such mischief started with the Manifestoingitis which spread in millions."

"How does this Manifestoingitis work?" I wanted to know.

The doctor finished his coffee with a long sigh. "First Manifestoingitis numbs the brain," he began. "The brain can no longer distinguish between right and wrong, as it believes whatever is told to it. You know how dangerous that can be. The message is conveyed through political parties which promise the moon, the sky, eternity, riches, heavenly pleasures and the addled human brain begins to believe whatever it is told in this drugged state". "Gosh, this is dangerous!" I exclaimed. "Something like what George Orwell wrote about". The doctor nodded gloomily. "These

viruses are now proliferating. Look at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) virus which is spreading fast through its own brand of Manifestoingitis. It promised false solutions to major problems like corruption, non-governance and advocated these could be solved if people resorted to dharna and disrupting everything. Mind you, this virus has spread rapidly and could wreck the nation in no time."

"How does one tackle it?" I asked



He sighed. "These are like sand storms, they come and go. We can't control them. Let us hope they blow themselves out on their own. If someone could ban manifestos, much of the mischief could be nipped in the bud." ■

The writer is a well-known satirist.

**"These are like sand storms, they come and go. We can't control them. Let us hope they blow themselves out on their own. If someone could ban manifestos, much of the mischief could be nipped in the bud."**



Congress party is its decision to face the election without naming a PM candidate. While speculation was rife that the Gandhi scion Rahul Gandhi who had been designated as party vice president would be the UPA's choice, Gandhi has remained just the *de facto* candidate.

### BJP on a roll

The BJP on the other hand is on a roll. Victories in assembly elections, that too by thumping margins in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh has given its electoral campaign a distinct fillip. But the man who is expected to lead from the front and whose juggernaut it appears brooks no stopping is the Gujarat CM and the party's PM nominee Narendra Modi. Modi who has still been unsuccessful in exorcising the ghosts of the Gujarat riots in 2002 was chosen as the party's PM nominee despite clear objections from party patriarch L K Advani and second rung leaders like Sushma Swaraj and Yashwant Sinha. Today as Modi crisscrosses the country addressing huge rallies in his booming, baritone voice playing up the deficiencies of the opposition, mainly the Congress it appears that the man has seized the moment; though, he had to remain on tenterhooks till his name was cleared for the Varanasi seat from where he will contest the polls to the Lok Sabha for the first time in his political career. Sushma Swaraj was again overruled when she opposed the re-entry of her one time favourite and acolyte of the infamous Reddy brothers of Bellary, Sriramulu with whom she had fallen out after they were indicted in the mining scam into the party. The party also took a controversial decision to take back the former Karnataka CM, B S Yeddyurappa who had left the party after he was made to quit as CM in the wake of a number of cases filed against him by the Lokayukta though it debarred some of his associates.

### AAP - the new entrant

A surprise element in the coming elections is the advent of the Aam Aadmi Party, still a motely crowd of RTI activists, journalists, intellectuals, social activists, tech czars, lawyers etc. In a stunning denouement it captured power with outside support from the Congress and ruled the state for precisely 49 days before Kejriwal called it quits when his government was not permitted to table the Jan Lokpal Bill sans the sanction of the Centre. While Kejriwal utilised the opportunity to provide free water to Delhiites and also waived arrears in electricity bills, some of his ministers, notably his law minister Somnath Bharti earned the wrath of the city's African community with

a midnight raid on their homes. The AAP has now pitched its tent at a much higher altitude and is aiming to contest nearly 400 seats for the Lok Sabha polls. Meanwhile Kejriwal's Mukesh Ambani fixation wherein he never tires of repeating *ad nauseam* that the country is run by the business baron and that he has both Rahul and Modi in his pockets has struck a sour note. His blasting the media and his threat to throw them in jail for being in the pay of the BJP too has not gone well with the fourth estate. It is indeed a pity that he has forgotten that it was the media that was largely responsible for the AAP to get a national presence.

### Regional parties to gain

In the event of a fractured mandate, the regional parties are likely to gain in stature as any alliance, the NDA or the UPA aiming for the magical figure of 272 might have to seek their support. The parties that are expected to fare well are the Trinamool Congress (TMC) in West Bengal, the All India Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Odisha. In UP, the state which sends the maximum number of MPs (80) to the Lok Sabha, the BJP has been able to make inroads into the strongholds of both the ruling Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). The Telangana Rashtriya Samiti (TRS) which spearheaded the movement for a separate Telangana not only reneged on its promise to merge its party with the Congress post the creation of Telangana, but also backed out of an alliance with the party leaving the Congress staring at a big defeat in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The attempt by the Left and the Janata Dal (Secular) and a clutch of parties including the AIADMK, Janata Dal (United) and BJD among others to form the third front was still born, as the front floundered when the Left parties who demanded three seats each for the CPI and the CPM from the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu, were given short shrift as Jayalalithaa was prepared to spare only one seat each. With Mamata Banejee, the West Bengal CM espousing the cause of Jayalalithaa for the post of PM, there is a talk that the two formidable leaders could come together to form a Federal Front with parties like the Telugu Desam which would exclude the Congress, the BJP and the Left parties too. However, the indications are that these fronts might have to wait till after the election results are announced and circumstances warrant such coming together of parties with varying ideologies all led by highly egoistic leaders who seldom yield an inch.

**The country needs good administrators and able ministers in Parliament, which is really no place for rabble rousers and those who disregard norms and rules.**

## Manifestos mainly election gimmicks

Most political parties have now made it a habit to delay their manifestos till the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. Over the last few elections these manifestos which generally promise the voters the moon and also wax eloquent on their intention to turn the country into a land flowing with milk and honey have lost their relevance as the voters whose disillusionment with mainstream parties is an open secret have neither the time nor the inclination to even glance through them leave alone peruse them with interest. The Congress has this time around decided to focus their attention on the youth and the lower middle class, and is all set to target students with education loans sans collaterals, development vouchers for the self employed and in its bid to woo the rural classes it seeks to provide individual crop insurance to farmers. Among the target groups are women whose self-help groups will be given extended interest free loans upto ₹ 5 lakhs. Bringing at least 50 percent of farmers into the ambit of institutional finance, replication of the loan waiver scheme are some of the other priorities listed. As for the other main contender the BJP, the focus is likely to be on the salary earners with an increase in tax exemption limit from ₹ 2 lakhs at present to ₹ 5 lakhs on the cards, doing away with education cess, rationalising service tax etc. Regional parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) will press for the abolition of capital punishment, implementation of the long overdue Sethu Samudram project and will reiterate its opposition to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the retail sector. It is a well established fact that many of these manifestos are mere election gimmicks and the discerning voter can hardly be swayed by the lofty promises many of which will remain only on paper.

Coalitions are the order of the day and there is little doubt that the current election too might throw up a fractured verdict and the combination that can cobble up alliances with regional parties might have a better chance of forming a government. What is vital however is stability as the country is passing through an economic crisis with unchecked inflation, the rise in the current account deficit, the rupee in free fall, dwindling jobs etc. The Maoist threat, uneasy alliances with neighbours too are matters that demand a strong government at the Centre.

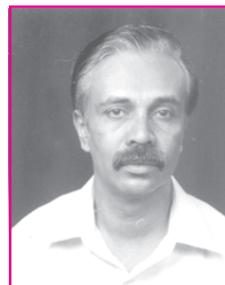
## Towards a better Parliament

The 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha will be constituted in two months from now. Electioneering has reached a fever pitch and parties are going all out to mobilise support from the voters for their

candidates. As always the voter is faced with a Hobson's choice as no political party in the country, not even the AAP deserves to be voted to power. With voter awareness continuing to be low and with illiterate voters being in large numbers, political parties of varied hues will leave no stone unturned to hoodwink the masses and secure their patronage. Thanks to television, atleast the urban electorate would have been able to see firsthand the performance of their elected members of Parliament and could have assessed their worth. It has become a custom for parties to field the same men again and again with hardly any appraisal of their contribution as it is only the winnability factor and caste equations that are in play. The onus is therefore on the voters to select and reject candidates. They have the bounden duty of ensuring that the pristine image of Parliament which has been so badly mauled is restored and for that it is essential to contemplate and think before casting their votes. Voting on caste lines or for parties that promise the moon in their manifestos only to renege on their promises after coming to power has led us to this predicament. It is time to look beyond these narrow considerations and focus more on the capabilities of the candidates in the fray.

Even in the current Lok Sabha there were many sane voices, but these were drowned in the cacophony of the majority. There have been many who have used their Member of Parliament Local Area Development Division (MPLADs) to rehabilitate the poor and for investments that would raise the standard of living of the downtrodden. It is only this segment that deserves a second chance for they are the ones who have the interest of the country and the people at heart. The rest are little more than flotsam and jetsam who deserve to be discarded. The country needs good administrators and able ministers in Parliament, which is really no place for rabble rousers and those who disregard norms and rules. The firm resolve should be to elect only those who can be expected to function effectively, maintain dignity and decorum and

enhance the quality of parliamentary debates. As the world's largest democracy, our Parliament should be a model to all the nations of the world and it is the duty of every Indian to make it so. ■



**The writer is a Bangalore-based freelance journalist.**

(The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)

## Maxim

*Difficulties, opposition, criticism - these things are meant to be overcome, and there is a special joy in facing them and in coming out on top. It is only when there is nothing but praise that life loses its charm and I begin to wonder what I should do about it.*

– Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, sister of Jawaharlal Nehru

# End of the party

*Policy paralysis and spectacular corruption have become by-words for the UPA-2. Against this backdrop, the Congress party has bleak chances of being voted to power, despite a populist agenda and the freebies on offer, writes Dr. B. Ramesh Babu, as he analyses the party's draft manifesto.*

**“Corruption and hypocrisy ought not to be inevitable products of democracy, as they are today.”**

— Mahatma Gandhi

**A**S the prescient observation of the Father of the Nation indicates, “corruption and hypocrisy” are not new ills afflicting the country. However, over the last six decades and the successive elections, the familiar old hypocrisy has scaled Himalayan heights and the ancient legacy of corruption has cascaded on to a cosmic scale.

### Politics of development gaining ground

Before embarking on a critical analysis of the state of the Congress party – its vision for the nation and its 2014 election manifesto, it is necessary not to be carried away by cynicism and be overwhelmed by the current mood of gloom and disillusionment. In reality, the state of our democracy is not as bad as it is made out to be. It is important not to lose the sense of perspective in finding fault with our self-governing institutions. In this context it is appropriate to quote Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan, Founder and President of Lokshata Party, one of the sane voices in the cacophony enveloping us today. “Over the years Indian democracy has certainly stood the test of time. Among the nations liberated after the Second World War, India has a unique record of successive elections and, stable and peaceful democracy.”

Fortunately, a new trend is gaining ground recently. This can be conceived as the “politics of development.” Incumbency is not necessarily an automatic negative “fact of life” in electoral politics any more. Chief Ministers who “performed” and delivered on their promises are being rewarded by the electorate with a second and even a third term. This is where the Congress Party is faced with its biggest challenge today. Failure to perform is writ large on its leadership at the very top. The economy is in doldrums under the captaincy of an expert economist. Sonia-Singh duopoly is seen as dysfunctional – an untenable disjunction between power and responsibility. Policy paralysis and spectacular corruption have become by-words for the UPA-2. Rahul Gandhi, vice president of the party is seen as a “distant drummer” who has to wait for his turn five to ten years from now.

### The Congress manifesto

The manifesto of the party for the 2014 elections is still

in the works and is expected to be released by the party president Sonia Gandhi in the last week of March 2014. The widespread consultations with all stakeholders are underway and the sub-manifestos of the various states are being prepared. However, there is enough material in the public domain by way of statements, declarations of intent, and promises and freebies for us to offer our analysis. In any case, the party's “draft” manifesto is available as on 15 March 2014.

The Congress party has adopted a double edged strategy: improving the business environment and building on the “rights” based architecture set up over the years. The party and the government are painfully aware that the failure on the economic front during the last few years is the foundation of popular disaffection and growing disillusionment across the country. To combat the trend, the top leadership is going all out to assure the nation that a restoration of a business friendly climate is their priority number one. Towards this end they will, for example, bring clarity on taxing foreign firms, rationalise subsidies, stick to fiscal deficit targets, push direct tax reforms, and speed up environmental clearances, and so on. The party has a three-pronged strategy for economic growth: 1) Reform the regulatory mechanisms by making them more autonomous, professional and transparent. 2) Enact goods and services tax. 3) Enable public sector enterprises to invest. These measures, party leaders believe, will boost micro, small, and medium industries, which are country's industrial backbone.

Over the last decade or so, the UPA government has built up a decent record in the social sector through empowerment by passing new laws – Right to Information (RTI), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Right to Education (RTE), Right to Food, and Lokpal. Now the party promises to build on its record by including right to health, housing, water and sanitation as a part of its strategy to accord pride of place to the social sector. Hereafter, focus would be on implementation, which has been a weak link in reaching the targeted beneficiaries.

### The freebies on offer

Now let us turn to the populist side of electoral politics and look at the freebies on offer. Rahul Gandhi promises free health care for all for the next five years, if the party is returned

to power. Free power to the farmers and low income families is another favourite of all parties, without realising that giving free power left and right will end up as no power to anyone. Congress Party plans to enact legislation to mandate a quota for the SCs/STs in the corporate sector, and create 100 million new jobs for the youth by 2020.

When politicians campaign in different parts of the country, they naturally promise something or the other to woo the local voters. While campaigning in Odisha, Rahul Gandhi promised free power to the poor up to 200 units a month, if voted into power in Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation elections. English medium schools for children of slum dwellers were also promised. While campaigning in Mizoram, he promised to create more jobs to the youth of the state; to set up a medical college, to give priority to the development of sports skills of the Mizo youth; and also give special attention to roads linking all villages in the state.

After much dilly dallying, as the elections drew near, the number of subsidised gas cylinders per year was raised from 9 to 12 for all on 30 January 2014. The Congress party once again promised to enact the Women's Reservations Bill, a promise it has failed to keep for decades. A 10 to 100 percent hike in Dearness Allowance (DA) benefitting five million government employees and three million pensioners is on the docket. This is second such increase in six months and is estimated to cost ₹ 20,900 crores to the exchequer. On 3 February 2014, the Petroleum Ministry increased gas supply to Delhi, which brought down the price of CNG and piped natural gas measurably. The HRD (Human Resource Development) ministry launched two education schemes costing ₹ 1,600 crores for Muslim youth living in districts with high concentration of minorities.

Jains were recently accorded the status of minorities. On 3 March 2014, the UPA-2 government granted Other Backward Class (OBC) status to Jats, despite the consistent reports to the contrary by the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC). The expectation is that the Jats will switch to the party *en bloc* and also influence the votes of the castes below them in Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana, and western UP. The Cabinet initiated the process of identifying nomadic and de-notified tribes numbering 500 and 150 respectively. The government has amended the central list of OBCs to include 60 castes and communities in 13 states.

One could go on and on listing the freebies and sundry promises of this kind on election eve. However, voters are not dumb. They know and understand that most of the promises

are not intended to be honoured. A recent survey revealed that over 70 percent of the people don't believe the leaders and do not expect the promises to be kept. In fact, they demand that the Election Commission should take strict action against erring parties and leaders on this count.

### The party seems to be over for the Congress

A quick overview of the 2014 election scene clearly indicates that the Congress party is unlikely to be voted back to power. If the current trends hold and the many surveys are fairly accurate in gauging the mood of the people, the party may not even reach the 100 mark by way of seats in the Lok Sabha. Sonia, Singh, and Rahul are responsible (in that order) for the state of despair and gloom. Visible failure on the economic front, corruption on cosmic scale, and "policy paralysis" are certainly the main causes behind the disarray.

Actually, the party's record is not as bad as it is made out to be by the adversaries. The party leaders and the Congress governments at all levels failed to carry their side of the story with conviction and efficacy. The leadership seems to have lost the nerve, even before the battle lines were drawn. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stands out as a sad, lonely, and helpless figure. On the way back from the latest foreign trip, he refused to hold the customary press meet on board the aircraft. He seems to have finally given up. How long can a sidelined and ignored leader deceive himself and the public?

A five to 10 year *vanvaas* (banishment) will be a good thing for the party and also the country. Congress is out of touch with the pulse of the people and has lost their trust. This period of sanity will make Rahul Gandhi grow into a more mature and clever leader. He has a lot of work to overhaul the party, get rid of the deadwood and tainted leaders and get back to electoral battle with a younger and cleaner team. The task is not easy. Old habits die hard and the old guard is not a spent force. The ominous evidence is on hand. Defeated, tainted Sheila Dikshit has been rehabilitated as a Governor (giving her immunity against corruption charges) and Pawan Bansal has been rewarded with the party ticket for the Lok

Sabha seat from Chandigarh.

It is vital for all the citizens of India to do everything possible to prevent our elections from degenerating into advanced auctions of stolen goods! ■

**The writer is President of the Hyderabad Chapter of the Indian Liberal Group.** (The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)



### Did You Know

*The Baily Bridge is the bridge at the greatest elevation in the world. This bridge is located in the Himalayan mountains, between the Dras River and Suru River, in the Ladakh Valley in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was built in 1982 by the Indian Army.*

# The stamp of NaMo

**Prakash Bal Joshi** spells out the likely manifesto of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), seen as the strongest contender in the 2014 general elections. He says, some contentious issues and promises made in the 2009 manifesto are expected to be repeated in the 2014 manifesto, which will have the NaMo stamp.

**E**VEN in the days of coalition politics, a manifesto by a political party just before the general elections has not lost its importance, as it reflects what way the party wants to take the country ahead in future, what would be its priorities and policies. The document also gives some hope, announces some populist schemes and takes into consideration immediate concerns of the population.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto is eagerly awaited as the party is leading the modified National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in addition with some new allies, while some of the old allies have parted ways during the last five years. Senior BJP leader Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi was at the helm of the drafting committee when the party finalised its manifesto in the year 2009 with L.K. Advani as its prime ministerial candidate and, continues to be in charge of the drafting committee for 2014 general elections with Narendra Modi as its prime ministerial candidate. A manifesto is a public document where the party gives promises and makes some commitments to fulfill if voted to power. Not that all the promises are fulfilled even if voted to power and some of these promises keep on appearing in the next manifesto for the new elections. They also throw light on whether there is any paradigm shift in the perception or ideology of the party or change in its priorities based on a desire to secure solid support base of voters in the elections. As a part of the coalition dharma, each party issues its own agenda and manifesto, but later compromises and boils it down to minimum common programme accepted by the partners of their coalitions.

## A paradigm shift in the ideology?

Narendra Modi has been touring the country and wants to harp on the Gujarat model of development and is seeking vote on the basis of his performance as the Gujarat chief minister with an assurance to replicate a similar model at the national level. Will this over emphasis on development reflect in the 2014 manifesto? Will there be any paradigm shift in the tone and tenor of the BJP manifesto 2014 as compared to the one published in 2009 which failed to evoke the kind of response the party expected? These are some of the questions being discussed in political circles. The Congress has already hit out at Modi for the Gujarat model, saying that its figures are inflated and it fails on human development ground.

With no single party in a position to get the magic number of 272 out of 543 Lok Sabha seats in the coming elections, the party which leads the NDA is all set to assure its poll allies that it will follow “cooperative federalism” to ensure space for regional parties. If voted to power the party is expected to promise that the inter-state council comprising of the prime minister and the chief ministers of other states will decide on major policy issues facing the country during the five year term beginning June 2014.

## Likely promises in the manifesto

The BJP may promise to end the states’ ‘excessive dependence’ on the Centre, which is sometimes exploited to serve the narrow political objectives at the cost of the national interests. During the last 10 years of the UPA rule, the country witnessed many issues leading to the centre-state confrontation. The national body for dealing with extremist threats was also delayed as states were not ready to compromise on its role in maintaining law and order in their respective states. Narendra Modi also has been harping on better state-centre relationship and the need to decentralise and give equal responsibilities to Centre, states, local agencies and institutions. Increased role of citizens in governance is also added to make it more attractive.

It will be interesting to see what kind of fiscal policies the BJP will assure. It has been talking about reducing taxes and making tax regime simpler. The manifesto may promise to simplify all taxes and gradually reduce to a single tax regime, while the complex laws will be done away with simple laws empowering the common man. Commissions will be set up to work out action plans for implementing the promises made in the manifesto. This will help to implement these promises in a tight time frame and will not merely remain on paper.

There have been many contentious issues in the earlier manifesto. Will these continue to remain in the new 2014 manifesto or will they be done away with? The possibility is that the old contentious issues like – the abrogation of Article 370 to end the special status to Jammu and Kashmir and the implementation of a uniform civil code, construction of a grand Ram Mandir at Ayodhya and ban on the cow slaughter, are likely to remain on the list. The party may say that these issues will remain on backburner due to coalition compulsions but would be taken up in future,

if voted to power on its own strength.

### Ram temple, isolation of NE states may feature on the list

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has publicly reminded the BJP that the demand for a Ram temple at Ayodhya must be included in the 2014 manifesto. Another issue it seeks inclusion is on the emotional isolation of North-Eastern states in the national integrity. These two issues are bound to find a place in the BJP manifesto for year 2014.

The manifesto is also likely to attack the power structure evolved by the UPA during its 10-year rule where the nation was burdened with a prime minister who was in office but not in power; and, a government that was in power but not in authority. This was supposed to be a government that would work for the welfare of the *aam aadmi* – the common man through remote control. The BJP has been attacking the UPA for its governance by proxy and creation of two power centers.

The BJP manifesto will attack UPA government for reversal of NDA's policies leading to a mounting sense of insecurity fuelled by repeated terrorist attacks, Maoist insurgency and separatist violence in the country. Death of several Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) *jawans* in Chhattisgarh just before all the political parties were ready to launch their election campaign will also prominently figure as UPA's failure to contain Maoist insurgency in the country despite 10 year rule.

The document will attack the Congress led government for gross mismanagement of the economy which has caused inflation, job losses, lockouts and spiraling rise of essential commodities. It is to be seen, what kind of economic model the party suggests to fight these economic ills. It is also to be seen how it will handle the cases of corruption at high places and misuse of government agencies like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to put political opponents on defensive.

### New initiatives will focus on reviving economy

The BJP had promised few urgent initiatives in 2009 to be launched within 100 days of coming to power. Most of these initiatives are basic and may be repeated with little modification based on latest development. The 2014 manifesto will be more focused and the document may include a few new initiatives in the economic sector which requires urgent attention.

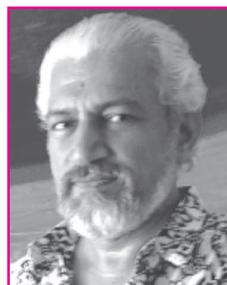
- Revive the anti-terror mechanism that has been dismantled by the Congress; improve upon Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) to ensure it is more effective as an instrument of deterrence and a tool to prosecute offenders without innocent people being harassed; and, strengthen the operational role of the National Investigating Agency.
- Give assent to laws drafted by state governments for dealing with organised crime and terrorism; encourage other state governments to adopt similar laws.
- Launch a massive programme to detect, detain and deport

illegal immigrants.

- Completely revamp the internal and external intelligence agencies and review the existing system of coordination, convergence and dissemination of intelligence inputs. The National Security Council will be made the hub of all sector-related assessments.
- A Digital Security Agency will be set up to deal with cyber warfare, cyber counterterrorism, and cyber security of national digital assets.
- State governments will be provided with all assistance to modernise their respective police forces.
- Border management will be reviewed and improved. Punitive measures will be introduced to block illegal immigration.
- India's vast coastline is virtually unprotected. Coastal security will be strengthened for better patrolling of Indian waters and preventing terrorists from taking the sea route to enter India.
- Special courts will be set up for speedy prosecution of those involved in acts of terrorism. Their trial shall be fair and speedy justice will be done to the victims.
- Coercive measures, including diplomacy, will be used to deal with countries which promote cross-border terrorism.
- The Centre will facilitate better inter-state coordination and real-time intelligence-sharing, apart from helping states to raise anti-insurgency forces, to face the threat posed by Maoists. The 'Chhattisgarh Model' will be used for counter-Maoist operations.
- Any talks with insurgent groups will be conditional and within the framework of the Constitution. The authority of the state, which has been diminished by the Congress in pursuit of vote-bank politics, shall be restored.

On international relations, the manifesto is likely to emphasize that resurgent India must get its rightful place in the comity of nations and international institutions. The BJP also believes in a multi-polar world with no nation having overriding powers over others. The BJP assures that its foreign policy will be based on the principle of enlightened self-interest.

The BJP is going to strengthen the India-US strategic partnership on the principle of equality without compromise on either India's national interest or relations with another friendly country. India's traditional relations with Russia and the Central Asian Republics will be refashioned to keep pace with current realities and derive maximum mutual advantage.



Apart from the regular features, the manifesto 2014 is expected to have NaMo stamp on its overall approach towards ensuring better life for the *aam aadmi*. ■

**The writer is a Mumbai-based journalist and artist.** (The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)

# AAP's 'Manifest Destiny'

*Besides fighting corruption and crony capitalism, some populist measures such as subsidised electricity and free water to consumers, could be a part of the election manifesto of the infant Aam Aadmi Party, says **Dr. P. M. Kamath**.*

**M**ANIFEST Destiny' as a phrase comes to us from 19<sup>th</sup> century American history. It was the belief of then Americans that they were destined to expand their sway in North America from east coast to the west coast. Adapting it to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), one might say AAP was perceived by ordinary people of India as a party born to cleanse 'politics' in India, which Anna Hazare had rightly called 'dirty'.

Now that general elections have been announced by the Election Commission of India for April-May 2014, the best means to determine to what extent the AAP continues to be committed to its original goal of purifying the Indian politics. Largely by restoring power back to the ordinary people not connected with any party, any coloured caps or flags except to the followers of the Indian national flag, is to know policies which it chooses to pursue nationally and in states and the extent to which it is able to achieve them during the five years after the general elections. The best way to know what are the policies a party is going to pursue if it comes to power singly or as a part of a coalition is to refer to its manifesto. Unfortunately, the AAP has not come out with its manifesto so far. The problem of understanding main policies that AAP will follow becomes much more difficult as it is a new party unlike the older parties in the field.

Hence, one can only construct its likely policies and programmes through its (a) commitment to policies prior to Delhi elections and its political behaviour then, (b) utterances of members of its executive committee and (c) occasional statements.

## Populist rule of 49 days in Delhi

When Kejriwal broke from Anna Hazare's movement to form the AAP, it was clear that the group led by him is keen to taste power and not so much to reform the politics in the country. Kejriwal having said that he will maintain equidistance from the Congress and the BJP, had no qualms in taking the support of the Congress in forming the government. After 49 days as the chief minister of Delhi, he resigned because there was a dispute whether the federal government's clearance has to be sought before AAP's favourite 'strong Lokpal' for the state anti corruption bill is introduced in the state assembly or not. In reality, it was an excuse. It is the

considered opinion of a large number of people that Kejriwal was in a hurry to taste power at the federal level as well.

## Planks to begin with

The anti-corruption agenda of Anna Hazare was taken over by AAP by stating that 15 ministers in the Congress-led federal cabinet are corrupt. Corruption is the main issue but it cannot be the monopoly of any one political party, as no party worth its name ever would say that they are in favour of corruption. Hence, after quitting power in Delhi, AAP has moved to attack individuals and highlight particular issues in the vast arena of corruption. Thus, Kejriwal has targeted industrialist Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries for doubling Krishna-Godavari basin gas price with the federal government's concurrence as an issue.

AAP has singled out the issue of gas price doubling for targeting corruption with an intention to create a solid support base amongst the rickshawalas in Delhi, where 1.5 lakh of them depend on CNG-driven autorickshaws. During his agitation, autorickshawalas constituted his main supporters as volunteers. His travelling in an auto in Mumbai could be seen as an effort to expand his constituency of autorickshawalas on a nation-wide basis.

**Second**, even if we assume there is large scale corruption in India, logically Kejriwal ought to have focused on the Congress, as for the last 10 years it is that party which is at the helm of affairs at the federal level. But instead, he has focused on BJP's prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi by linking him to Mukesh Ambani. In his public address to people in Mumbai, Kejriwal said: "If people vote either for Rahul Gandhi or Modi, ultimately the country is run by Mukesh Ambani." He alleged that Modi is using helicopters owned by Ambani. Practically every industrialist in the country has appreciated the steps taken by Modi. Yet by making Ambani a symbol of what is wrong with Indian business and industries, AAP shows that opposition to 'crony capitalism' might prominently figure in its manifesto.

**Third**, Kejriwal wants the country to know that not only he is willing to take on the big and powerful in the industry, but in politics as well. This could also be a plus point to appeal to middle class voters as a party which fights without money power of the big industrial magnates. If this leads to

inclusion of public funding of elections, it could be a welcome feature of the AAP's commitment to certain innovative changes in the manifesto. Perceived as a strong contender for power, AAP could if necessary, join hands with the Congress Party in forming a coalition government. Hence, he has kept options open for a post-Lok Sabha election alliance between the Congress and AAP.

**Fourth**, in Delhi election manifesto, introduction of mohalla committees to devolve powers to the grassroots level was a welcome feature. Huge urban bodies like the municipal corporations need to move closer to the people by having ward-wise committees wherein prominent citizens can participate in local governance along with the elected representatives.

**Fifth**, AAP would, it appears continue to stress on free-or-cheap water and power to the middle class. Fifty percent reduction in the cost of these items could figure in the national manifesto. The party believes that essential services like power or water cannot be measured as business activities. Though his efforts to waive off unpaid power-bills of 24,000 people, who participated, in the AAP-led agitation against inflated power bills, sounds like the 19<sup>th</sup> century American spoils system or resembles the practice of permitting only those who carried party card to ride in government buses during Malawi's dictator, Dr. Hastings Banda's time.

**Sixth**, AAP has been over-emphasising its apparent efforts to be really like common people or the *aam aadmi* of India. Refusing to ride in cars with red beacon light has been overdone though it was the Supreme Court (SC) which first laid down guidelines on its use. Kejriwal rides in Mumbai in public autorickshawals and train. In reality, it is an old gimmick! The message was first enunciated by Pandit Nehru who had said that he be addressed as a servant of the people. Mahatma Gandhi earlier had insisted in travelling third class in trains, which the then governments found far more expensive than his travelling in a special saloon. Travel by public transport symbolically has been followed by Gulzarilal Nanda, Lal Bahadur Shastri, and in present times by Veerappa Moily, Rahul Gandhi and few others.

### Public pronouncements:

Seeing through leaders' utterances, certain policies are likely to find a place in the AAP manifesto. Thus, it is likely that prevention of illegal mining could figure in national/Goa manifesto. AAP supporters are already using it in Goa to attack the BJP government of Manohar Parikkar, though it played a major role under the SC guidance in taking action to prevent illegal mining. Second, it also appears that steps to prevent casino culture could also figure in the manifesto. There are strong indications that the AAP might emphasis preservation of environment and promotion of Information Technology. As

much as it thinks that providing water or power is not a commercial proposition for the government, a similar approach might find a place towards health service and education.

### Foreign policy

What are the main foreign policies the AAP is likely to stress on is very difficult to predict. However, it is likely to oppose Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail; but is open to examine FDI in other sectors on a case by case basis. During the formative years of the AAP as a party from the anti-corruption movement, an influential member of the AAP Prashant Bhushan had said that Kashmiris should be given the right to decide their future. Though now there is no reference, internationally to a plebiscite, he was toying with the idea of a referendum. He also advocated deployment of army in Kashmir also to be decided by consulting the people. Of course his views were contradicted by Kejriwal, but since then it is good for the health of AAP that they do not touch upon foreign policy in the present elections as they are unlikely to be called upon to handle nation's external affairs.

### Conclusions

The AAP is a political party which has yet to find its moorings. It does not seem to have nor trying to have a position in the ideological spectrum; is it a rightist party? When it supports Khap panchayat in Haryana or goes hunting against prostitution dens as a moral police in Delhi, it can be called as a rightist party. But when it speaks for poor or slum dwellers and autorickshawals in Delhi it can be placed on the left. But its support to free enterprise or honesty in business, make it a right of the centre; when it speaks of agriculture, working class within a democratic system it is a left of the centre. But when it speaks of middle class with a typical middle class attitude of wishing to have easy political power but publicly showing it pays scant respect to it, it is a centrist party.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt once likened the manifesto to a railway platform; 'we use it to get into the train to our destination and then of course forget the platform we used to get into the train!' The AAP manifesto is likely to promise something for every segment of the Indian society. In the process, it is likely to manifest its destiny on 16 May 2014 — whether its manifesto will take it to its destination, and whether its leaders know it or leave it as a party into the dustbin of history in general elections of 2014, only time will tell. ■



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# Regionalising Democracy

*It is the failure to come up with an agenda that is distinct from the national parties and common to all regional parties, that the latter have repeatedly failed to forge a stable coalition in the form a third front at the Centre, says **Ajay Gudavarthy**.*

**A**MONG many features of democracy in India, is the growing federalisation with the rise and growth of regional parties. Regional parties that sprung into prominence in India after the collapse of the 'Congress System' in 1967 began to represent regional diversity in terms of economic needs, and cultural aspirations. They were also the representative political forces of regional bourgeoisie that began to take shape from agrarian surplus after the Green Revolution, as against the national and global capital flows. They have steadily played a bigger role in national politics though they repeatedly failed to provide stable governments at the Centre, whenever they attempted to form a 'third front'. The failure to form stable alliances is representative of the federal structure with unitary features, where the regional parties seem to be able to come together in a stable coalition only while rallying around the national parties, either Congress or BJP.

## Reasons for unstable coalition

The question this time around really is will the general elections in 2014 be any different? Will regional parties such as the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Trinamool Congress (TMC), Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), All India Anna Dravida Munnetram Kazhagam (AIADMK) and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) manage a third front? Or would they prefer to join one of the coalitions led by a national party? A major reason why regional parties have repeatedly failed to forge a stable coalition can be traced to the absence of a political agenda that is distinct and different from the national parties and that which is common to the regional parties. While there is undoubtedly a great diversity in terms of the economy and polity of each state, this does not discount the fact that there can be a common programme that reflects common concerns of the states, beginning with centrality of agriculture, education and health.

The third front has failed to strike an alternative social and economic programme that is different from the national parties. This process has become all the more difficult with a near consensus on economic reforms and carrying out 'reforms by stealth', at the national as well as regional levels. This is not to say that there are no competing or conflicting interests that these parties represent but just that they have simply preferred not to represent their constituencies. Perhaps, one of the initial trends in contrast to this near-consensus model

has been the recent protest by various regional parties with regard to the issue of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the retail sector. Most of the regional parties, including the SP, TMC and BSP spoke a different language of protecting the 'small traders' in their states against the giant incursions by multinational brands such as the Walmart.

## Addressing the agrarian crisis

Similarly, regional parties need to represent agriculture. Many of the states in India, including Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, among others are facing acute agrarian crisis, which has resulted in farmer's suicides in the recent past. However, in the changing dynamics, the regional parties began to play a different tune of allowing corporate agriculture, with the introduction of Monsanto seeds, expensive fertilisers, cash crops, introducing insurance, and other such market-oriented moves in order to facilitate the transfer of agricultural sector from local to global. However, for various reasons these have not worked and the crisis grew deeper because regional political formations failed to represent the interests of these sections. In fact, if one observes the trend it is clear that those political parties have been voted back, which have brought agriculture back to the centre stage of policy formulation and political programme. In Andhra Pradesh, for instance, Y. S. Rajsekhar Reddy came back to power in 2004 and then again in 2009 with a series of welfare measures for the farmers and other marginalised sections of the rural hinterlands. These included free electricity, free transportation for the farmers to sell their produce, *Arogyashree*, a health scheme for the rural poor providing housing, among others things. It is a paradox that a regional party like the TDP began to represent global capital, and adopted the economic model presented by the World Bank, while a national party like the Congress came back with an agrarian agenda. This interchange of their historic roles is the result of a super-imposed economic model of growth. It was again Congress that pressed for the recent Land Acquisition Bill (2012), invoking the role of Panchayats in acquiring land for the purpose of industry, while parties such as the Communist Party of India Marxist (CPI) (M) lost power in West Bengal for its forceful acquisition of land, although they had represented the interests of the peasants for the last three decades, including carrying out land reforms in the 1960s. This is again symptomatic of

the role-reversal- from land reforms to land acquisition.

### Emphasis on quality education

Along with agriculture, regional parties must also take up education as their second most important agenda. Most of the government schooling is in a dilapidated condition. Providing quality schooling will propel inter-generational mobility, and also partially address the inequalities across caste, class, gender and the rural-urban divide. Regional parties as part of the 'third front' could take up the issue of 'Common neighbourhood schooling system' along the lines of the United States of America. Under this system, the government should ensure near-similar quality schooling across the state and ensure and, in fact make it mandatory that all those residing in a particular geographical limit need to go to the same school. The recent Right to Education (RTE) Act has provided 25 percent preferential admission in corporate schools to children coming from economically weak backgrounds. Common neighbourhood schooling will also address various anomalies that the system of reservations has presented for higher education in India. This will also help negotiate various cultural prejudices that are rampant in rural India.

### Health, another pressing issue

Access to good healthcare facilities is a pressing need in many parts of India. Regional parties can make this a part of their common agenda as they have a major role to play here. The recent debate on compulsory one-year posting for junior

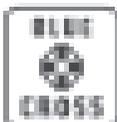
doctors working at government hospitals is a right move in that direction. The discourse on 'Youth' in India has been centered on an urban imagination and the debate around 'demographic dividend' also has urban youth aspiring for global opportunities. The rural youth has been missed out. The recent protest by junior doctors against mandatory rural-postings can be seen as a part of these aspirations. However, it would in fact be pertinent to push a system of mandatory rural posting for many other professions as well, to include college and university teachers, engineers, lawyers, among others. This would work both ways, allowing urban India to learn from and about rural India, and benefit rural India from the skills that these professionals hold. Regional parties could play a proactive role in bridging the age-old gap between 'Bharat' and 'India'.

Wider role for regional parties is by definition healthy for democracy, provided these parties represent the diversity they belong to rather than follow-suit the national and global models of development, overlooking the specificities in each of the states. ■



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# What does the youth want?

*It is very important to harness the energy, creativity, enthusiasm and intellect of the youth to give this nation a more meaningful future and change the regressive and archaic status quo that it is existing in, writes Shivani Gupta, as she presents a youth manifesto.*

**I**N 1965, Lal Bahadur Shastri gave us the famous slogan “*Jai Jawan! Jai Kisan!*.” This slogan came about in the context of India-Pakistan war, but even today the slogan holds true in a country like India which has one of the youngest populations in the world; *jawan* here being the youth, young population of India which needs to be acknowledged. India is considered to be an emerging super power but is it possible to emerge as one and fulfil its prophecy if it continues to keep its youth at bay from issues of decision making? It is very important to harness the energy, creativity, enthusiasm and the intellect of the youth to give this nation a more meaningful future and change the regressive and archaic status quo that it is existing in.

### My space - My unManifesto (mobilising youth)

The archaic status of this country can be seen through the decision of not repealing Article 377 of the IPC by the two government institutions, legislature and judiciary. In both these institutions, the youth is highly under represented. This is only one of the many examples where lack of youth representation has reflected the conservativeness of the Indian society. The current average age of an Indian parliamentarian is between 53-60 years. One can look around and say that Indian parliamentarians are as old as this independent nation itself. The notion that young people are immature and lack knowledge is misleading but this is only one side of the story.

The other story is from the perspective of the youth of India who have been made to believe that politics is a ‘dirty game’ which corrupts an individual absolutely. This idea has been rooted in the minds of young people with the belief that politics is an act performed in the public sphere, whereas the private sphere is devoid of it. The need of the hour is to make the youth understand and experience politics as an act of decision making, responsibility sharing and accountability, which exists in every sphere of life, from simple relationships between friends to very complicated ones between countries. The indifference of youngsters towards politics and the contemptuousness of political leaders towards the youth of the country has created chasms that need to be filled desperately for an overall development of the nation, which is sustainable.



**My Space – My unManifesto exhorts the youth to look and evaluate the nation by examining personal spaces**

The attempt to bridge this gap, to fill this chasm and change society has emerged in the guise of the programme, My Space – My unManifesto. The programme collectivises the youth from different parts of the country, for decision making at a political front through the formulation of a youth manifesto. The motive behind this initiative is to make the youth rethink about the nation and their responsibility towards making this an inclusive country. This programme is an offshoot of a mega concept, to make youth responsible towards themselves and the society, called the 5<sup>th</sup> Space.

It is a sphere which is created by the youth, led and focused by them which promotes learning of the youth from self to society. This journey from self-exploration to bringing social change in the society is a complete one, but this is only possible if the youth are provided with alternative spaces where experience and age don't dictate terms. 5<sup>th</sup> Space is an alternate space which not only engages young people in a journey, but accentuates on learning through the process of self-exploration. This is why the programme exhorts the youth to look and evaluate the nation by examining personal spaces, as politics exist as much in the private spaces of family, friends and fun as it does in Parliament.

### Youth as stakeholders in society

The programme is trying to promote youth as every day politicians where the responsibility towards the nation doesn't end with elections, but continues at an individual level to

constantly voice themselves - on burning issues that need attention like corruption, Article 377, and ones that need to be changed like AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act). The 'un' in the programme name symbolises the *unbirthdays* in Alice in Wonderland, where she is asked to celebrate everyday as her birthday and not one particular day.

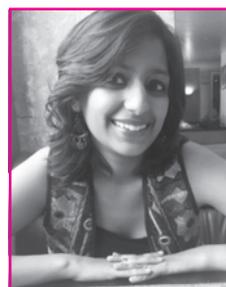
The programme is working on-ground through workshops where young people are made to think of themselves as stake holders in the society, which in turn makes them responsible towards it. From this activity, emerges promises of the youth which later get collated into a manifesto to be presented to the parliamentarians. Similarly, there are online platforms for the programme where the youth directly register their promises. These promises are varied and have been collected through a diverse youth group from different parts of the country. They are both specific to the region and for the nation in general, for the upcoming Lok Sabha 2014 elections. The programme has reached out even to people in remote areas as that of Jharkhand and marginalised communities like sex workers – for empowerment, recognition as citizens, and for stronger welfare policies. These promises are not lopsided and do not have vested interests, but have encompassed those who have been left out of the mainstream politics.

The demands have been in all spheres - a better education system with stronger emphasis on implementation of Right to Education (RTE), demanding safe public spaces for women with greater emphasis on fighting violence against women, voicing the need for good-quality 24 hour hospitals in remote rural areas, the requirement of passing the 33 percent reservation for youth and women in the Parliament, the urgency of passing the Jan Lokpal bill to curb corruption, the dire need of providing unemployment wages to people above the age of 21, and not just demanding legalisation of sex work but also providing sex workers with health benefits and pensions.

Yes, all of these demands have been articulated by young minds of this nation. They have raised these promises for a better future and not just for immediate needs. It would be incorrect to perceive youth demands to be constrained only to issues of education and employment, because when given a chance to speak up, youth perceive themselves in the larger context of society and therefore demand promises that not only change the face of society but also delve into structural causes.

The idea of empowerment, justice, equality and integrity has surfaced through each and every demand presented by the youth of this nation. Sugandha, head of *Priyadarshini*, an organisation that works to empower women at the grassroots level and an unManifesto ambassador, states how young women in the small town of Muzaffarnagar have seen this programme as an opportunity for self-development. The women demanded strict punishment against those who demand and accept dowry. They also wanted a ban on the sale of alcohol in the villages, as it leads to domestic violence. While these issues require immediate action, these are the same issues facing women in large urban societies as well. Similarly, Jenpu Rongmei, who heads *Young's Club*, an organisation that empowers the youth in Nagaland, talked about the struggle of getting students involved in a programme where political disillusionment is at its peak. To overcome this, he suggested that, "in conflict ridden areas one has to appeal to youth in a manner that fits their culture. Therefore, in this situation, with some help of the university students we came up with comic strips, based on real life stories that carried issues that occur in the region. Youth responded to these strips and began to raise demands which were fed into the youth manifesto."

Thus, the problems are not with the youth's understanding of the nation and its problems but the lack of spaces for learning, understanding and articulating their positions. The unManifesto experience shows that if given an opportunity, youth can mobilise and raise issues that are more visionary than the ones that politicians promise, keeping in mind the vote bank. Youth think of the future before thinking of immediate needs and therefore have the potential to make the nation what the forefathers and foremothers of India have been striving to do. As the programme ends with the Lok Sabha elections of 2014, the youth of the nation are becoming active citizens who, in future, will evaluate everyday decision making as a political act having consequences rather as a personal act of interest. ■



**The writer is a media advocate working with Community Media Network in ComMutiny – the Youth Collective (CYC).** (The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)

### Festive Time

*Attuvela Mahotsavam is a water carnival at Elamkavu Bhagavathy Temple at Vadayar, Vaikom in Kottayam. According to legend, it is the welcome ceremony for the Goddess of Kodungalloor, who comes to visit her sister, the Goddess of Elamkavu. During the two-day festival, beautifully illuminated canoes carrying a huge replica of the temple, sail down the waters accompanied by hordes of colourfully decorated small canoes and temple percussion music.*

# Voices of the first time voters

Students tell us what they will look for in a candidate/party before casting their vote.

## “I believe in one man army”



**Raghav Seth (21)**  
Area - Prabhadevi

**Do you feel it is important to vote?**

As a citizen of the largest Democratic Republic in the world, I accept the “Right to vote” as a privilege, where one

is entrusted with the responsibility of deciding the future of one’s own nation.

**How do you decide who to vote for? What are the credentials you will look for?**

In today’s time, it is not strongest of the species who survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

**Will you vote for the party or the candidate?**

I believe in one man army. Candidate is whom I vote for.

**Are you aware that political parties**

**come out with their manifestos pre elections?**

Yes. I believe political manifesto is a public declaration of intent.

**Have you read the manifesto? Or know of anyone who reads it?**

Yes I do read political manifestos. I consider it a pre-requisite in casting my vote.

**Do you think we should know what the manifesto says before casting our vote?**

I believe that these are promises made by the candidates which need to be read before casting one’s vote. A party’s political manifesto defines their vision and interprets their standing in future. ■

## “Not all the promises listed in the manifestos are fulfilled”

**Do you feel it is important to vote?**

Ofcourse, Yes. I certainly feel it is important to vote. Every vote counts and decides the future of the country and it’s people.

the background of the party will affect the candidates ideologies and policies that he might make in the future.

**How do you decide who to vote for? What are the credentials you will look for?**

To decide who to vote for in the present elections is a difficult choice. On one side we have the new emerging party with no political past and very high promises, while on the other hand we have two major parties that have run the nation so far and have hardly fulfilled promises they made earlier.

**Are you aware that political parties come out with their manifestos pre elections?**

I do know that political parties have their manifestos displayed on their websites. But frankly how many of them fulfill all the promises that they make after coming to power?

**Will you vote for the party or the candidate?**

The focus is majorly on the party and its past performance, but the credentials of the candidate also plays an important role while voting. After all,

**Have you read the manifesto? Or know of anyone who reads it?**

This is the first time I will be eligible to vote. I haven’t read the manifesto of any political party as yet, and even if I do read I would hardly ever believe that any of those promises listed would be fulfilled by the party. As it’s rightly said ‘power corrupts a man’, and time and again



**Kulsum Nakadar (19)**  
Area - Mahim

this has been proven by the leaders of our country.

**Do you think we should know what the manifesto says before casting our vote?**

I think all we need is an assurance from the candidate that power would not corrupt him, and that if he could bring about a little change for the betterment of the country and its citizens it would be enough to prove that he/she was deserved to be voted. ■



**Nupur Karam (19)**  
Area - Santacruz (East)

**Do you feel it is important to vote?**

Yes, I feel it is really important to vote. I believe, if as citizens of this country we have assumed it our right to complain about the nation's worsening condition, we must accept that it is our responsibility to elect a worthy person who can handle the reigns of our democracy.

**How do you decide who to vote for? What are the credentials you will look for?**

The one thing I'll definitely not want a potential candidate to do, would

**“It is important to elect a worthy candidate who can handle the reigns of our democracy”**

be to engage in political gimmicks to garner votes, when the elections are around the corner. The credentials that matter are sound political and legal knowledge, a contemporary outlook, good communication skills, sincerity and perseverance.

**Will you vote for the party or the candidate?**

I will vote for the party. In a party if the members who really want to bring about changes in the country join hands, they will emerge powerful, strong enough to suppress the members who are only looking out for personal gains. They can prove to the people that two heads are better than one. If the cooks are right, then the broth will never be spoiled.

**Are you aware that political parties come out with their manifestos pre elections?**

Yes, I am aware about the manifestos.

**Have you read the manifesto? Or know of anyone who reads it?**

No, I have not read any manifesto. But since the upcoming elections will be the first time that I'll be casting my vote, I'll at least glance through the manifestos, before voting for a preferred party. I don't know of anyone who reads a manifesto.

**Do you think we should know what the manifesto says before casting our vote?**

I think it's important that we read manifestos. It not only carries the work plan that the party plans to execute, but also talks about the various problems that exist in our country, that need immediate attention. But, while casting our vote, entirely relying on a manifesto would be wrong. ■

**“It takes just one right person to change the world”**

**Do you feel it is important to vote?**

Yes, it is very important to vote and I feel proud to do so.

**How do you decide who to vote for? What are the credentials you look at?**

I do not follow political news but for the voting period I do feel it is mandatory to at least check on every candidates background and past performance.

**Will you vote for the party or the candidate?**

It will be the candidate. It takes just one right person to change the world.

**Are you aware that political parties**

**come out with their manifestos pre elections?**

Yes, I am aware of it only because it is hung on our housing society board. Although there is a strong need to make these manifestos public and more reachable than now.

**Have you read the manifesto? Or know of anyone who reads it?**

I glance through it, but my parents read.

**Do you think we should know what the manifesto says before casting our vote?**

Although there isn't much of a



**Vidhi Trivedi (21)**  
Area - Tardeo

difference between the promises made by the various political party every five years during elections. I do feel that the manifestos should be read at least once. It is important to know the vision and ideology of each party and then take a call. ■

# Justice and social equity for all

**Pooja Parvati** proposes a people's manifesto based on the millennium development goals.

It's election season in India. Political parties of all hues are out to impress the voters, tom-tomming their achievements, promises and presenting their vision of what challenges confront India today. As a civil society campaign that has been advocating for a more socially-just, equitable and rights-based development frame since 2004, *Wada Na Todo Abhiyan* has been engaged in scrutinising the election manifestos and has recently launched a nation-wide campaign to develop a People's Manifesto, for political formations to take note of.

In this regard, a related advocacy initiative of the *Abhiyan* has been to influence the global development agenda that would succeed the existing eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with effect from 2015. The *Abhiyan* has anchored an advocacy campaign globally to ensure non-state actors, such as Central Statistics Offices (CSOs), parliamentarians, media, and academia from developing countries to shape the contours of the new global development agenda.

To recap, the United Nations (UN) Millennium Declaration in 2000 united heads of states in promising to adopt human development as the key premise grounded on principles of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. It also gave birth to the MDGs - a set of eight international goals applicable globally - that were adopted in 2000 by 193 countries with a promise to attain these goals by 2015. While the MDGs succeeded in unifying the measurement of human development, it had its own set of limitations.

## The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger  
 Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education  
 Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women  
 Goal 4: Reduce child mortality  
 Goal 5: Improve maternal health  
 Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB  
 Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability  
 Goal 8: Develop global partnership for development

With less than two years to the deadline and it becoming clear that many countries have not made significant progress towards attainment of MDGs, a global process of consultations (national, global, thematic and online) was initiated by the UN in 2012 seeking inputs to articulate the new global development agenda, commonly known as the post-2015 agenda.

This exercise has been motivated by the understanding

that the existing MDGs frame was largely guided by the developing North and most of the goals, targets and indicators were set for the developing South with little attention to fixing responsibilities on the North. Of the eight goals, only one goal (Goal 8 on global partnerships) mentions and was directed towards the role of developed countries in attaining the MDGs.

The *Abhiyan* anchored a nation-wide civil society consensus-building process through a series of consultations and arrived at key, non-negotiable principles and recommendations for the new global development agenda. Following 15 recommendations provide a summary of our recommendations; the first six are more in the nature of principles while 7 to 15 are specific recommendations around key thematic areas for the post-2015 agenda.

- **Grounded on a human rights frame:** Monitorable targets to assess progress in human 'well-being' and dignity as opposed to mere human survival. The Constitutional tenets are the most fundamental and need to be referred to. Other references include UN Conventions on rights of child, persons with disabilities, women and elimination of discrimination based work and descent.
- **Ensuring social inclusion of all:** Non-discriminatory monitorable targets focusing on advancing the rights of the most-excluded and the disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Denotified Nomadic Tribes, religious minorities such as Muslims, children, aged, persons with disabilities and youth.
- **Safeguarding gender justice:** Establish gender equality through policy instruments designed to shift away from patriarchal social order, institutions and mindsets. Address and eliminate all forms of violence with a zero-tolerance approach to violence against anyone, be it women, children, aged, person with disability, person discriminated based on caste, class or descent.
- **Addressing poverty and inequality:** Greater investment in irrigation, power, agricultural research and development, and roads in the poorer regions, where the concentration of poverty is increasing. Progressive and redistributive taxation, public spending, especially for foundational investment in human capital, along with reforms in land and forest policies are key to reduce inequalities.
- **Ensuring environmental justice:** More investments in renewable technologies and innovative measures to help poor

people adapt to climate change impacts in agriculture-related sectors and disaster management, and building sustainable cities focusing on accessible public transport policies.

- **Guaranteeing just governance:** Strong accountability mechanisms for better implementation and monitoring of basic services to all including access to speedy justice. For this, greater government spending on critical entitlements such as healthcare and education, decentralising decision making, people-centred planning, citizen-led monitoring and transparent policing institutions are key. Greater transparency and accountability in government spending as also citizen involvement in determining budget priorities and participation in budget monitoring is vital. Ensuring justice-based governance extends to the corporate and multilateral agencies also.
- **Universal quality healthcare:** Equitable access to basic quality public healthcare linking it with access to safe and sustainable water supply and sanitation. Benchmarks for financing health through domestic resources and through ensuring compliance with existing donor targets for aid must be laid down.
- **Universal quality education:** Equitable opportunities for all to participate in transformative quality learning at all levels aiming to provide the knowledge, skills, competencies and values vital to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. Delivery on this would entail adequate financing through a global benchmark for public spending and aid commitments.
- **Ensuring food security to all:** Universal food security focusing on children (including children with disabilities) and other marginalised groups such as migrants, aged, single women and persons with disabilities, including a fair and just procurement and distribution system and with a special focus on the threats of climate change impacts.
- **Livelihood security for all:** Autonomy and sustainability of livelihood in the new economy wherein every person is enabled to avail their full capacity. Consensus on a social protection 'floor of dignity' below which no one should be allowed to fall.
- **Safeguarding peace and conflict resolution:** Measurable targets for creation of gainful employment along with reduction in arms and armed militia in conflict-affected areas with special attention to women and the minorities.
- **Financing for development:** Developing countries to step up domestic resource mobilisation through increased tax-GDP ratios. Both developed and developing countries plug loopholes in tax policies to check illicit financial flows that lead to significant tax loss and tax evasion. Innovative financial mechanisms to be explored as alternative funding options. Transparency in public

spending and greater participation in determining spending priorities is called for.

- **Greater role of developed countries:** The role of developed countries in shaping the post-2015 development agenda must not be limited to making prescriptive policy changes but bringing about substantive course correction in prevalent economic and environmental policy paradigm.
- **Partnership for development:** Clearly monitorable targets for the corporate sector in ensuring accountable, transparent, inclusive and socially and environmentally-just practices and processes. The increasing role of private actors in providing entitlements to all needs to be curtailed.
- **Global cooperation:** Increased policy spaces to foster South cooperation in participating and influencing the post-2015 development agenda.

While the above 15 recommendations might seem more directed to the global development policy setting, it remains relevant for us nationally too. One of the reasons for the inadequate progress towards MDGs in many countries has been the inadequate linkages between the global development agenda and national policymaking. Clearly, there needs to be far greater integration of the national policies to the global commitments that India signs on to.

### The way forward

In terms of global processes to influence the new development agenda, soon the stage will shift to the national capitals where member states (to the UN) will decide to accept or reject key development goals for the next round of MDGs. This will be crucial in determining the national policy agenda as well.

Most of the civil society recommendations mentioned earlier, with the exception of the last three, are relevant for India's national policy agenda as well. Be it the need to address violence against women, universal healthcare, quality education, food security or concerns of peace and conflict resolution, these have figured prominently in many of the political parties' election manifestos as policy commitments.

To conclude, be it the national policies and plans or the global development agenda, critical to both is the need to bring in a more central rights-based frame with the guarantees of justice and social equity for all. ■



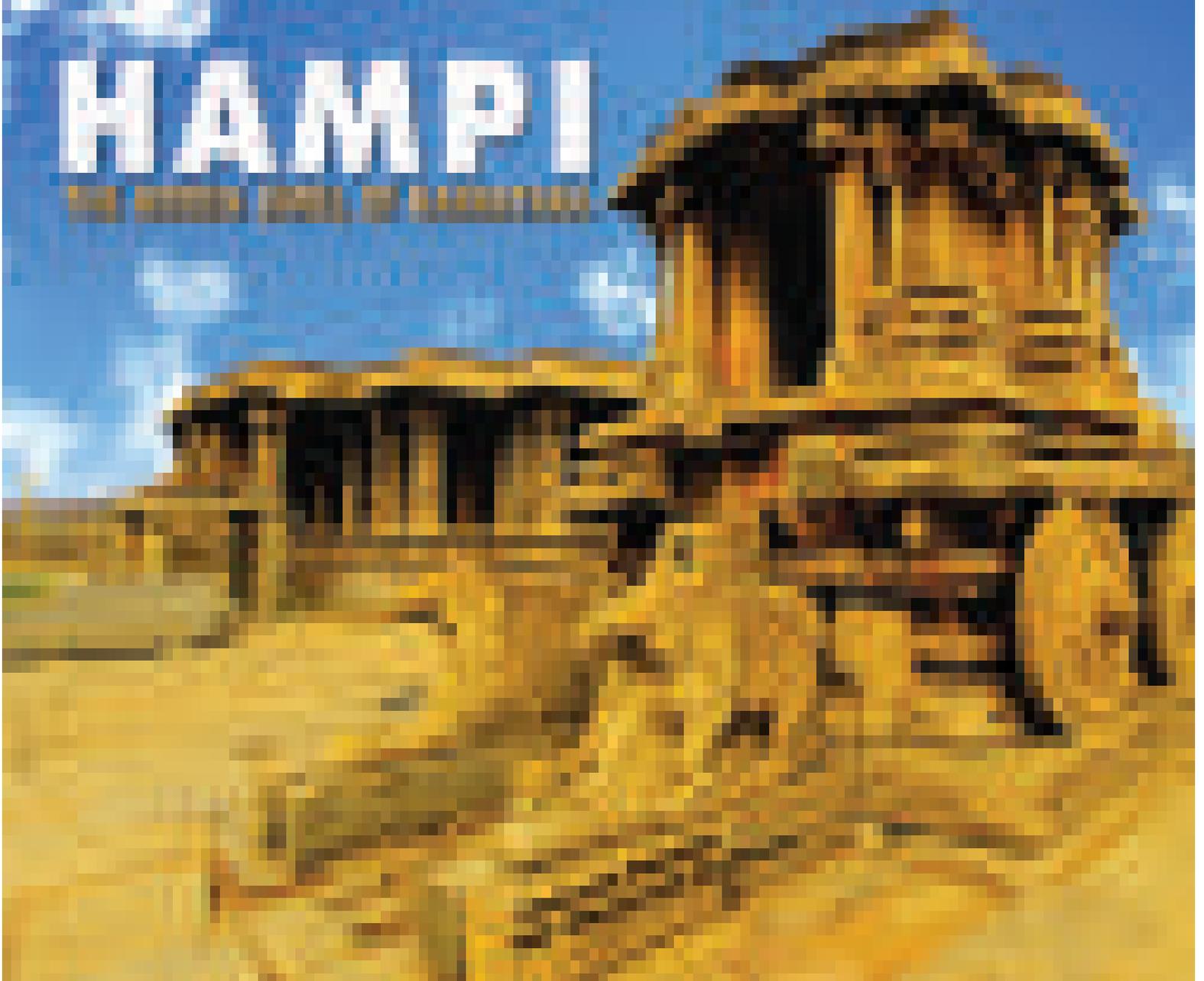
**\*The writer is leading the *Wada Na Todo Abhiyan* (WNTA) campaign on post-2015 development agenda since January 2013. She has over 11 years of experience working on issues of public policy, governance and concerns pertaining to gender and social exclusion.**

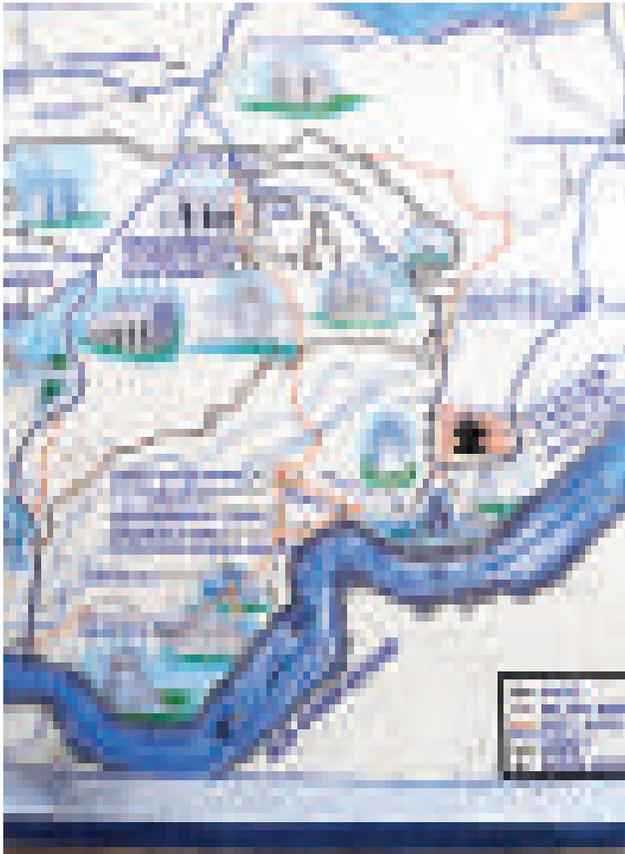
(The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)

KNOW INDIA **BETTER**

*Whispering winds, magnificent ruins, traces and scents of a bygone era still linger fresh at Hampi and virtually transport the visitor to a world of kings, battles and long forgotten marvels.*

HAMPI





The map of Vijayanagara kingdom

*'....in this street live many merchants, and there you will find all sorts of rubies, and diamonds, and emeralds, and pearls, and seed-pearls, and clothes, and every other sort of thing there is on earth that you may wish to buy.'*

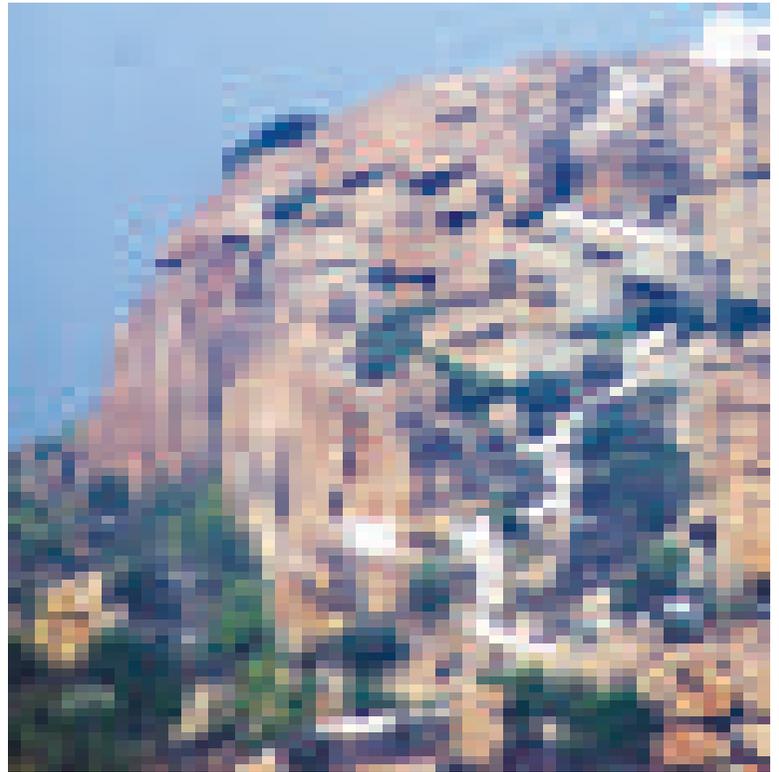
Thus wrote Domingo Paes, a Portuguese traveller who visited Hampi during the reign of Sri Krishnadeva Raya.

**H**AMPI is a small village on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra River in Bellary district of Karnataka. Traditionally known by many names such as Pampa Kshetra, Kishkinda Kshetra, Bhaskara Kshetra, Vidyanagara, Virupakshapura, Hosapattana, Hosa Hampapattana, Hastinavathi, Hampe Hastinavathi and Kunjarakona, the village has been an important pilgrimage centre since ancient times. Pampa is the ancient name of the Tungabhadra River. The word Hampe or Hampi is generally held to be a later Kannada form of Pampa.

Hampi was the capital of the powerful Vijayanagara kingdom from AD 1343 to 1565.

### Mythological links with Ramayana

Hampi and its environs are considered to be holy ground as many of its sites and names are associated with episodes of the Ramayana. Kishkindha Kshetra of the Ramayana is believed to



Anjanagiri Hill with massive boulders that are precariously balanced on the hilltop

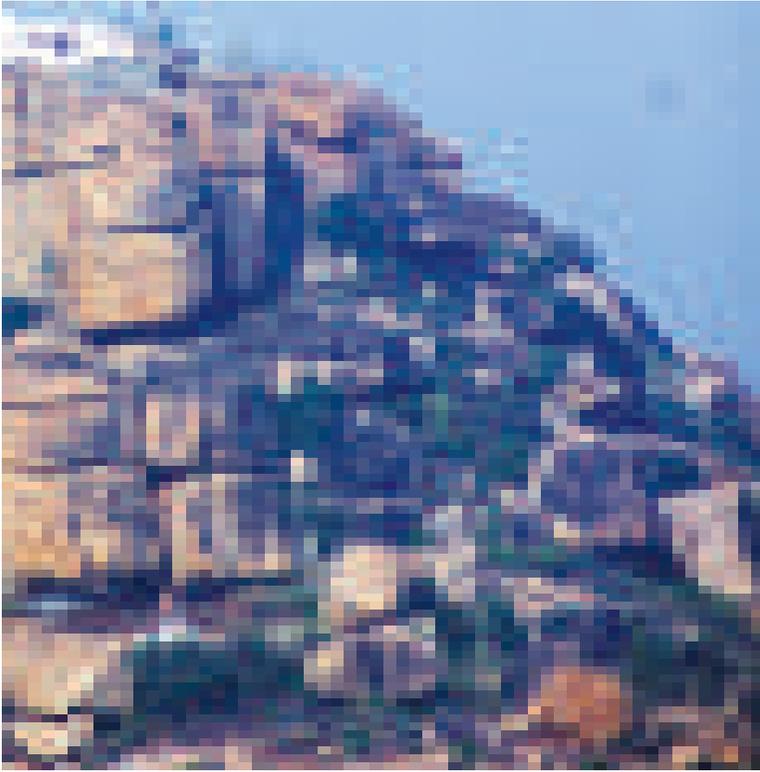
have been situated close to Hampi. According to the epic, the kingdom of Kishkindha was ruled by the monkey chiefs Vali and Sugriva. A quarrel broke out between them and Sugriva, who had been driven out, took refuge on the Matanga Parvata (a steep hill to the east of Hampi), along with his deputy Hanuman.

When the demon king Ravana abducted Sita (wife of Lord Rama) and carried her away to Lanka, Rama and his brother, Lakshmana, came in search of her and met Sugriva and Hanuman. Rama killed Vali and restored Sugriva his kingdom and stayed on the Malyavanta Hill (a hill on the road to Kampili) nearby awaiting Hanuman, who had gone in search of Sita to Lanka.

A huge mound of ash in the adjacent village of Nimbapuram is believed to be the cremated remains of Vali. A cavern on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra is said to be the cave where Sugriva hid Sita's jewels for safety, while certain marks and streaks on the sheet rock near it are pointed out as marks made by Sita's discarded garments. Two other hills, the Anjanagiri and Rishimukha, and the sacred tanks of Pampasaras on the northern bank of the Tungabhadra are also believed to be associated with the Ramayana.

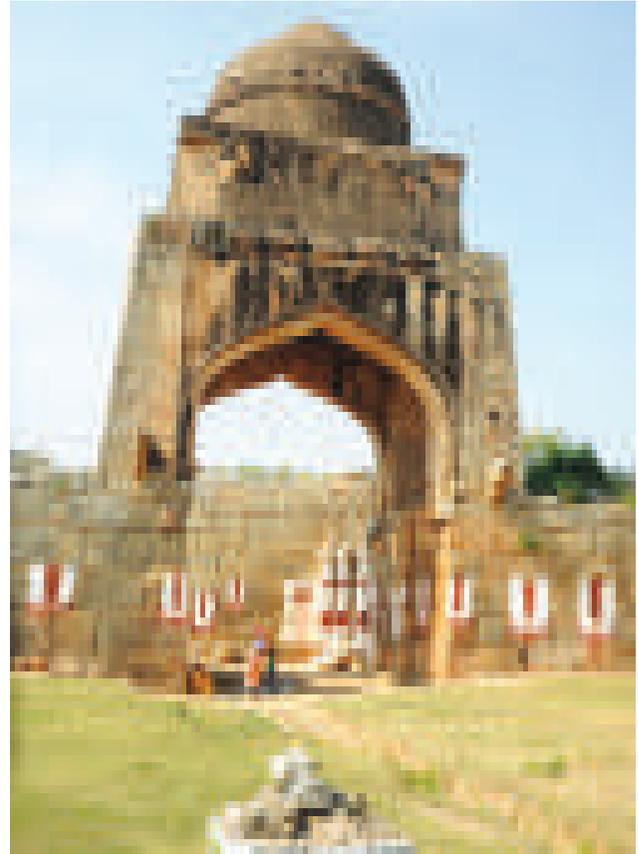
### Dynasties who ruled Hampi

Kings of four different dynasties ruled over the Vijayanagara kingdom. Harihara and Bukka of the Sangam dynasty founded the splendid city of Vidyanagara the capital of their newly established empire in 1336 AD. Sage Vidyaranya of Sringeri



Matha played a significant role in the empire building. The new city lay on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, opposite the older fortress of Anegundi and was completed by 1343. The Vijayanagara kings chose a boar (representing the third incarnation of Vishnu) as their heraldic crest and used the title Virupaksha to signify that they were the deputies of the patron deity Virupaksha.

The empire established on a firm footing during the reign of the Sangama dynasty (1336-1486) but declined in stature during a short period of weak rule of Saluva dynasty 1485-1491 AD. Sri Krishnadeva Raya, whose name is synonymous with the third dynasty (Taluva dynasty, 1491-1570 AD) was crowned the king on 8 August 1509. He proved to be one of the greatest and most brilliant rulers of the Vijayanagara kingdom, so much so that his reign came to be regarded as the golden age of Vijayanagara. He beautified the entire city with a glittering series of monuments. The pomp and glory of Vijayanagara spread far and wide across the globe. Foreign travellers like Domingo Paes, Abdur Razzaq and Nicolo Conti visited Hampi during different periods and left glowing and graphic accounts of the opulent grandeur of the city, its luxurious palaces, imposing temples, bustling bazaars, brilliant jewels and ostentatious festivals. With Krishnadeva Raya's death in 1529 began a period of steady decline. The Rakkasa Tangadi battle took place when the city was in the hands of the fourth dynasty (The Aravidu, 1571-1646 AD) and the capital ceased



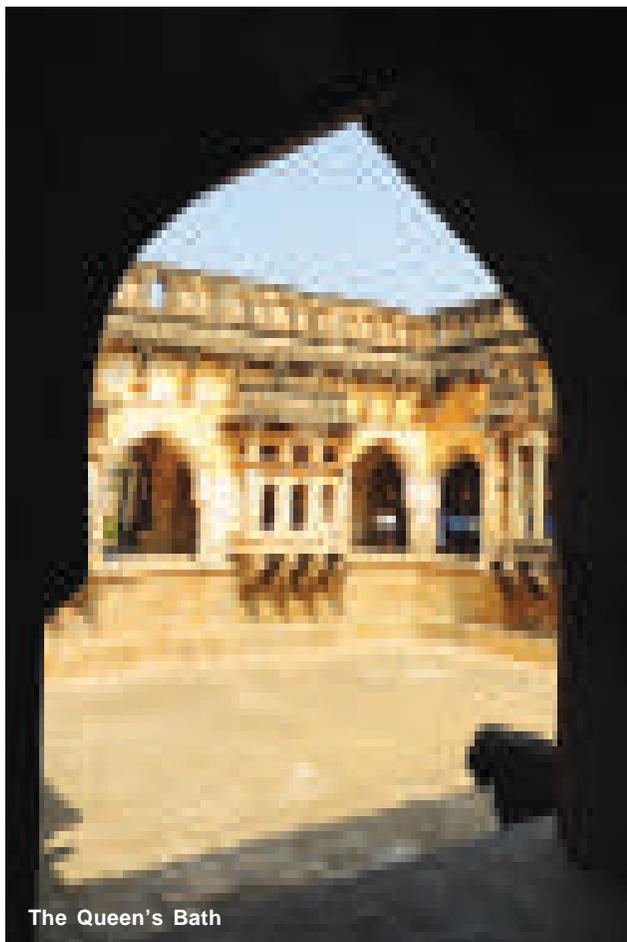
**The 18 m high Domed Gate served as the main entrance to Hampi from east and south**

to exist at Vijayanagara, but the dynasty continued, shifting its capital first to Penukonda, then to Chandragiri and then to Vellore. The Vijayanagara style of architecture (1350-1600 AD) - which evolved from the Chola, Pandyan and later Chalukyan styles - occupies a distinct place in the history of south Indian temple architecture.

### **Nature provided natural defence**

Nature was kind to Hampi and endowed it with a great strategic position. Bounded by the wide Tungabhadra River on one side and blocked by ranges of craggy hills on the other sides, Hampi provided a perfect example of great natural defence system which the Vijayanagara kings used to their best advantage. They encircled the city within seven lines of massive fortification, with the outer line enclosing more than 26 square kilometers. The fortifications had massive walls and strong gateways, built of large blocks of dressed stone without any cementing material, and the gateways were huge enough to allow elephants through them.

Among them, only the innermost (seventh) fortification is best preserved, and the others have gone. The Talarigattu Gate forming the northern entrance to Vijayanagara (while coming from Anegundi) is in good shape. The 18 m high Domed Gate served as the main entrance to Hampi from east and south.



The Queen's Bath

The massive and strongest Bhima's Gate lying between Domed Gate and Ganigitti Jain Temple has a remarkable sculptured slab of Bhima. While coming from Hospet, the passage connected Domed Gate, Bhima's Gate and the southeast gate in the citadel wall, giving access to the east of the city.

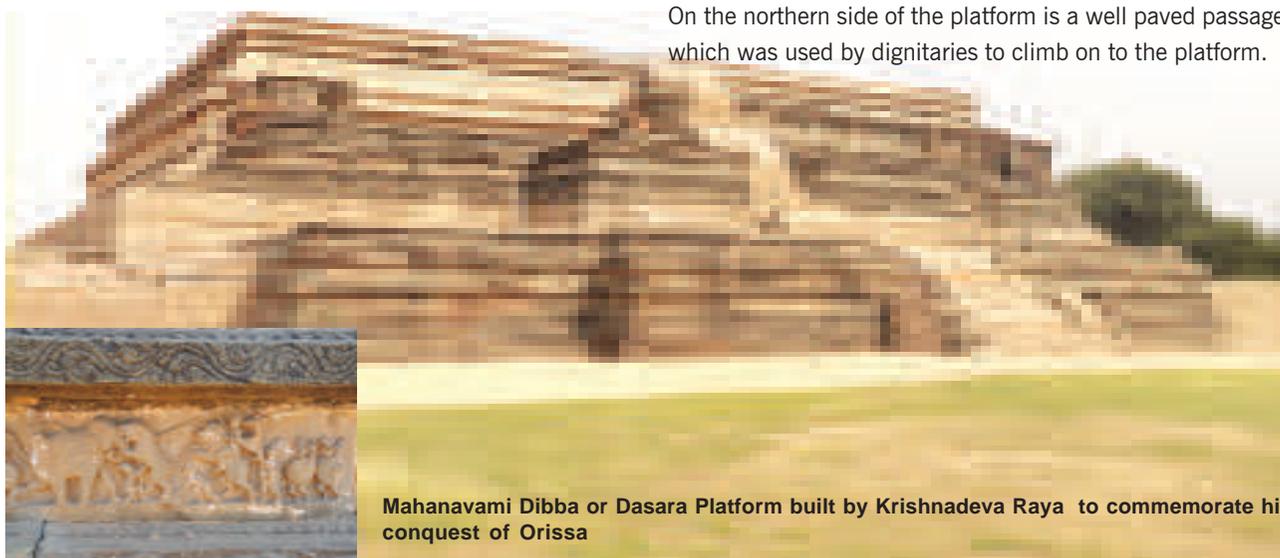
The best way to experience Hampi is to take a leisurely walk through the eloquent ruins. Most important structures and

ruins are located in two areas, generally referred to as the Royal Citadel and the Sacred Centre. The Royal Centre in the southwest part of the village contains structures that might have been palaces, baths, pavilions, royal stables and temples for ceremonial use. The Sacred Centre is situated on the northern edge of the city along the banks of the holy Tungabhadra River.

### Inside the Royal Citadel

Beginning with the Queen's Bath, the tourist comes across a series of monuments in the Royal Citadel area. The Queen's Bath is a beautiful large square building with a plain exterior and an ornate interior. It has a bath (pond), 15m square and 1.8m deep surrounded by decorated corridors and projecting balconies. There is a stone canal for carrying water to the central pond. There are four outlets at the bottom of the pond for the used water to flow out. The pond is said to have been used by women of noble families and occasionally by the king himself.

The Royal Citadel is the nucleus of Hampi city, with three entrances, two in the north and one in the west. Among the semi-ruined structures that exist here, the Mahanavami Dibba or Dasara Platform and Throne Platform are well worth a visit. This massive east facing platform rises to a height of 12 mtrs and is built in three diminishing tiers. The first tier and the one above it measures 40 and 24 square mtrs respectively and are built of well dressed massive granite blocks. Pictures showing foreign ambassadors and Holi celebrations have been carved on its surface. There are panels of sculptures showing elephants, horses, and a lion attacking an elephant, while the lion is being attacked by a horse-rider with a sharp bow. Krishnadeva Raya built this platform to commemorate his conquest of Orissa. According to some sources, this was the place from which he viewed the nine day festivities of Dussehra. By all means, it was a hub of religious ceremonies like Durga Puja and Navaratri. On the northern side of the platform is a well paved passage, which was used by dignitaries to climb on to the platform.



Mahanavami Dibba or Dasara Platform built by Krishnadeva Raya to commemorate his conquest of Orissa



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### Hazara Rama Temple

The other important structure in the royal enclosure is the north facing Durbar Hall often called the King's Audience Hall, built on a huge platform, with a flight of steps to reach it. It was a 100 pillared - hall with 10 rows of wooden pillars, each row containing 10 pillars. Its remains show how grand a palace it would have been during the Vijayanagara times.

The Hazara Rama Temple is a veritable picture gallery and a connoisseur's delight. The name 'Hazara Rama' seems to have been derived from the 'thousand images of Rama' carved on the temple walls. Its outer walls are richly carved in bold bass relief and depict scenes from the Ramayana. Incidents like Dasaratha performing sacrifice to beget sons, the birth of Rama, his exile into the forest, the abduction of Sita, the fight between Rama and Ravana are richly carved in stone-panels. The boldly carved panels are in five horizontal rows, one above



### The beautifully sculpted granite pillars

the other, representing a procession of elephants with riders and attendants, prancing horses with riders and horses led by grooms, wrestlers and soldiers in procession witnessed by a few seated royal figures. This temple also has a variety of sculptures depicting Vishnu in some of his other incarnations. The incarnations of infant Krishna are particularly endearing. Four exquisitely carved and polished pillars of black stone are placed at the centre of the *ardha-mandapa*. These massive cubical pillars have bass reliefs showing Ganesha, Mahishasuramardini, Hanuman and several forms of Vishnu. The Kalki *avatara* is shown here with four arms, astride a horse, holding a *shankha* (conch), *chakra*, (wheel), *sword* and a shield.

The large walled area popularly known as Zenana enclosure comprises Queen's Palace, the Lotus Mahal, the women's guards quarters and a water pavilion, all enclosed within a huge curtain wall. *Svaramelakalanidhi*, (a classic literary work written by Ramayamatya Todarmal, a Vijayanagara poet and architect in 1549), and some recently found inscriptions refer to it as that of king Rama Raya (1542-65). Women guards' quarters is situated in the north-west corner of the Zenana



The 'Pillar of honour' at the Ganigitti Jain Temple



**The Elephant Stables with beautiful arched entrances**

enclosure. There are three watch-towers one each on the north, north-east and south-east.

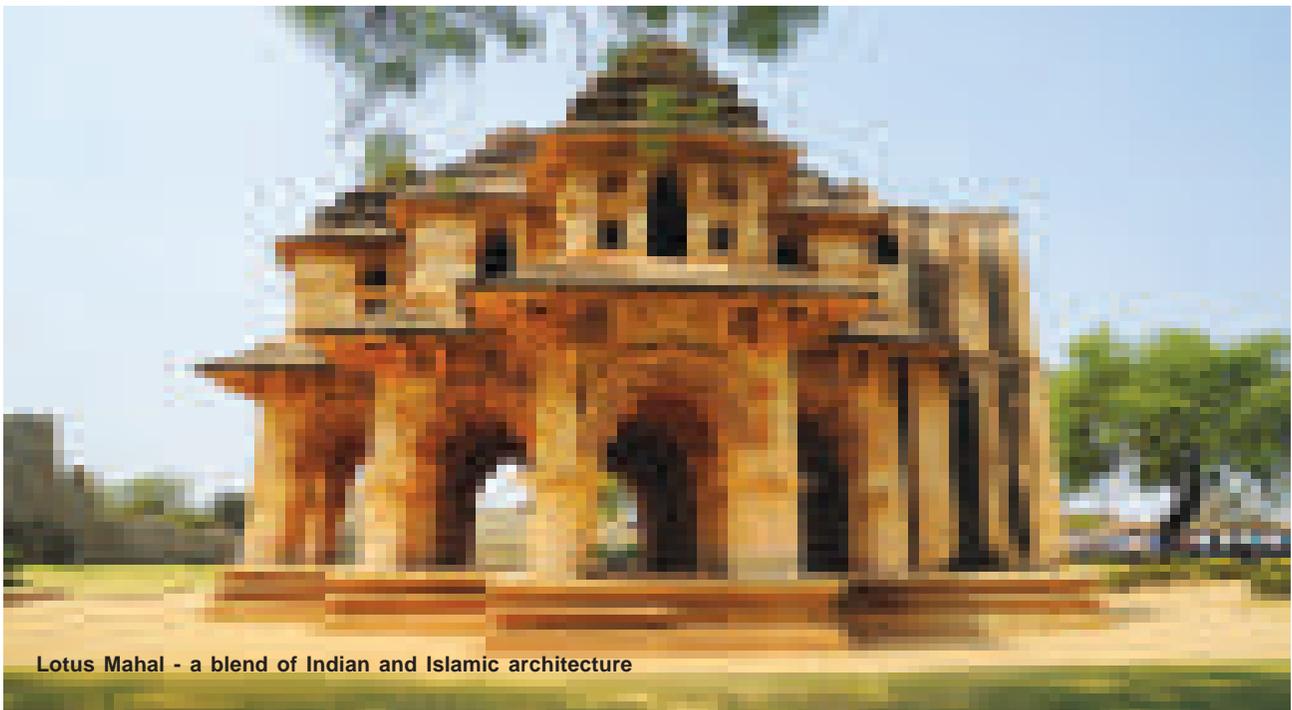
### **Lotus Palace**

The most gorgeous building that draws the tourist's attention here is the Lotus Palace, also known as Chitrangini Mahal. This two-storeyed structure is a blend of Indian and Islamic architectural styles. Its pillars, arches and windows are Islamic in character while the *sikharas* or spires of Hindu order. The ground floor is built on a designed basement consisting of an open pavilion made up of 24 square pillars. The upper floor has a number of balconies with windows and arched openings. The windows were once fitted with wooden shutters and silk curtains.

The centre of the ceiling has a deep clerestory elaborately ornamented with stucco arches, friezes and ledges, *pushpapodigai* corbels and large niches with remnants of seated

figures and culminates in an ornate lotus bud at the top. The superstructure consists of nine pyramidal *sikharas* of varying sizes, the central one being the tallest. While the entire structure is built with fine stucco work, its staircase is severely plain without any ornamentation. *Svaramelakalanidhi* refers to this palace as Ratnakuta, where the king Rama Raya may have spent time with scholars well-versed in literature, music and art.

A long lofty and dignified structure of considerable size is situated in the north of the Zenana enclosure. These are the Elephant Stables which show elements of Indo-Islamic architecture and have 11 large chambers with beautiful arched entrances. Ten of these are crowned by large domes. The domes over the roof are of different types – circular, ribbed ones and vaulted octagonal ones with ribbed *sikharas* – and are arranged systematically on either side of the central



**Lotus Mahal - a blend of Indian and Islamic architecture**

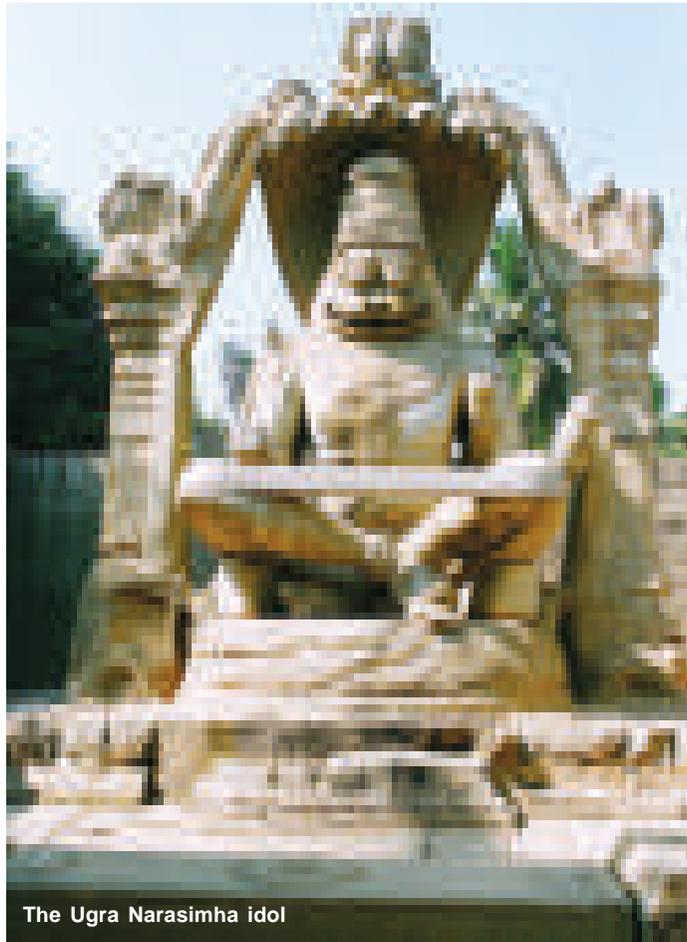
chamber. However the central chamber differs from the rest and it has a square, turret-like super structure over a flat ceiling.

### The Sacred Centre

The Ranganatha Temple and Chandrasekhara Temple are worth visiting. At some distance to the north of the Chandrasekhara Temple is a small rock cut cave temple with an empty sanctum known as *Onti gundina padasala*. To the south of this is the Sarasvati Temple. The Vaishnava motifs carved on its walls and an epigraph dated AD 1554 referring to Tiruvengalanatha suggest that it was originally a Vaishnava shrine.

The beautiful Ganigitti Jain Temple - an early Vijayanagara structure, popularly known as the Oil Woman's temple is a Jaina shrine situated on the Kampili Road, on the way to Bhima's Gate. A lofty *maanastambha* or 'pillar of honour' in front of the portico contains an inscription stating that Iruga, a minister of Bukka II, built the temple in 1385. It was constructed in the reign of Harihara II (1377-1404) and was known as the Chaityalaya of Kunthu Jinanatha, the 17<sup>th</sup> Jaina Tirthankara.

The Pattabhirama Temple situated on the outskirts of



The Ugra Narasimha idol

Vijayanagara, about a kilometer east of Kamalapura, is supposed to have been built by the Vijayanagara ruler Achyuta Raya (1529-42). This east facing temple complex has a large courtyard (163.7m x 93m) which is enclosed by a high (7.6m) *prakara*.

The Sacred Centre abounds in temples and a tourist entering Hampi from Kamalapura side, can see a number of them. One comes across the underground Shiva Temple also known as Prasanna Virupaksha Temple. The temple's floor lies below ground level. The *mandapa* has a large broken slab with an inscription that records a grant to the temple of Prasanna Virupaksha by Krishnadeva Raya on the occasion of his coronation.

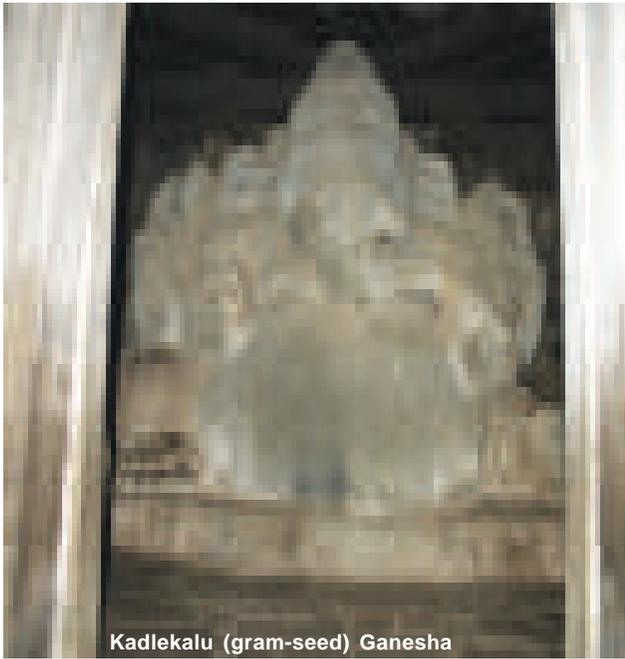
Proceeding further northwards, the visitor meets a gigantic natural arch formed of two huge boulders, leaning on each other. They are called Sister Rocks in local parlance. Further ahead is the Chandikeswara Temple, a typical Vijayanagara structure. It was a Vaishnava temple since the reliefs on the pillars have Vaishnava themes. The sanctum sanctorum is empty and open to the skies and has *pitha* (pedestal) carved with the figure of Garuda in the *anjali* (palms held together, symbolic of devotion) post. The *amman*-shrine is also in the



The underground Shiva Temple



Sister rocks

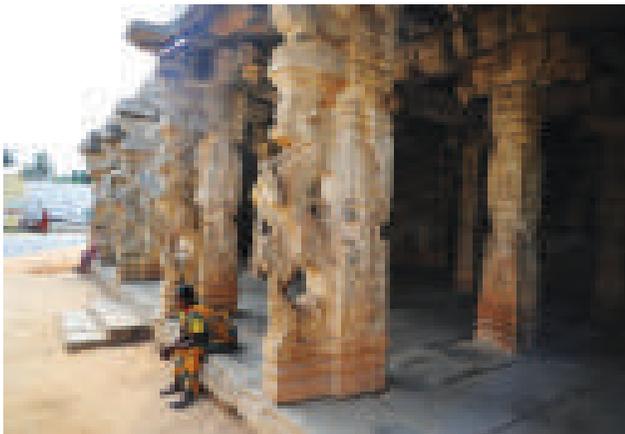


**Kadlekalu (gram-seed) Ganesha**

same style. *The* amman shrine is a separate shrine in Shaiva and Vaishnava temple complex consecrated to the goddess amman as consort of the principal deity. A pillared cloister runs around both the shrines.

A short distance to the west of the road, the visitor can see a huge monolith image of Lakshmi Narasimha known as Ugra Narasimha. The gigantic 6.7 m high image executed in 1528, was one of last additions to Hampi made during the rule of Krishnadeva Raya. It is a four-armed seated figure of Narasimha, but all the arms are broken now. He is shown seated on the coils of a large *naga* (serpent) Adishesha, with seven hoods serving as a canopy. The entire image is set within a *makara-torana* or arch, with a lion-mask above the hoods of Adishesha. To the left of the above image is a monolithic enormous Shivalinga called Badavi Linga. The base of this 3 metre high *linga* is permanently under water.

Krishnadeva Raya built the Krishna Temple in 1513 A.D to



**Chandikeswara Temple**



**Sasivekalu (mustard seed) Ganesha**

commemorate his victory over Prataparudra Gajapati, the ruler of Orissa. During this battle, Krishnadeva Raya seized an image of an infant Krishna, brought it as a war trophy to Hampi and enshrined it in the *maha-mandapa* of this temple in 1515 A.D. A slab on the front of the temple has an inscription describing the conquest and consecration of the temple on 16 February 1515 by Krishnadeva Raya. The superstructure of its east *gopura* is partially damaged, but its west face contains fine stucco figure of warriors with shields, spirited horses and elephants.

The east facing temple is built in the typical Vijayanagara style – it has a sanctum, an *ardha-mandapa*, a circumambulatory passage, a pillared hall with three entrances, among other elements. The sanctum is at present empty. The image of Krishna showing him as an infant, holding butter in his right hand, is now placed in the Government Museum at Chennai.

The inner sides of the entrances are adorned with beautifully sculptured *apsaras*, standing on mythical animals and holding scrolls filled with panels, showing the 10 incarnations of Vishnu. A pillar in the *ardhamandapa* shows all the ten *avatars* of



**Pattabhirama Temple**

Vishnu, including the rare one of Kalki, depicted as a seated figure with a horse's head.

Beyond the Krishna temple, on the slope of the Hemakuta hill are two huge stone images of Ganesha. The one called Sasivekalu (mustard seed) Ganesha is about 2.4m high. The four-armed Ganesha holds 'Ankusha' or goad and 'Pasha' or noose in the upper hands. The lower right hand holds a tusk while the lower (now damaged) once held a sweet ball or *modaka*. The belly is tied with a snake. The image is covered by a large and open *mandapa* with plain rough square pillars. Nearby is another monolith, namely Kadlekalu (gram-seed) Ganesha. The huge seated figure carved out of a massive boulder, is 4.5 m high and enshrined in a large temple with an open pillared *mandapa* in front. The Hemakuta Hill offers a panoramic view of Hampi and is famous for its spectacular views of sunset.

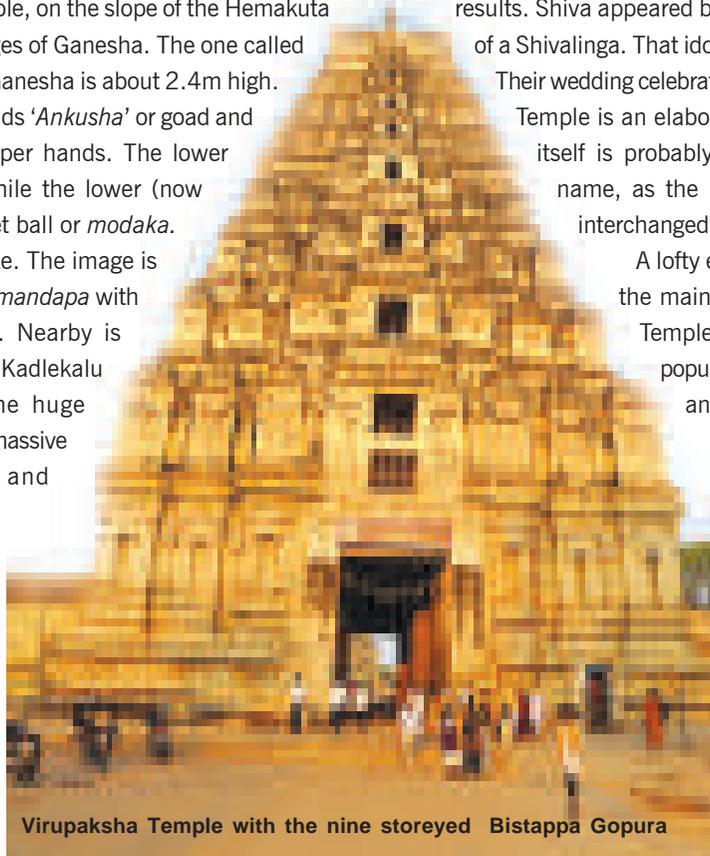
### Virupaksha Temple - the most sacred of them all

Life revolves around Virupaksha Temple in Hampi and the tourist cannot escape the overpowering presence of its watchful high *gopura*. Virupaksha Temple also known as Pampapati Temple is the most sacred and ancient temple at Hampi and parts of the temple are older than the city itself. It is situated on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, immediately to the north of the Hemakuta Hill. A famous legend is associated with it. Pampa is the most ancient deity of the area. According to local *sthala-purana*, Pampa was the daughter of Brahma. She performed

penance (*tapas*) in this holy place, concentrating on Shiva, who was meditating on Hemakuta Hill. Her penance bore results. Shiva appeared before her and took the shape of a Shivalinga. That idol of Shivalinga is Virupaksha. Their wedding celebrated annually in the Virupaksha Temple is an elaborate affair. The name Hampi itself is probably derived from the goddess' name, as the letters 'P' and 'H' are often interchanged in Kannada.

A lofty eastern tower (*gopura*) forms the main entrance to the Virupaksha Temple. Its nine storeyed *gopura* is popularly known as Bistappa Tower and is said to have been built by Proluganti Tippa, a commander of Devaraya II (AD 1422-26). This tower is 50.29 m tall, 45.72 m wide and 36.56 m long. After passing through it, the visitor enters into the first *prakara* (outer courtyard) which is 40 m long and 155.4 m wide. A narrow channel of the Tungabhadra flows along the terrace descends into

the temple kitchen and finally flows out through the outer courtyard. It is covered by flat stones. There are rest-rooms for stay of pilgrims who come from far off places. The left corner has the office room and a big school. On the right side is the *Pooja Mantapa* or *Kalyana Mantapa*.



Virupaksha Temple with the nine storeyed Bistappa Gopura



Virupaksha Temple seen from Hemakuta Hill

A small three storeyed inner tower in the first *prakara* admits the visitor into the second *prakara* (inner courtyard). Krishnadeva Raya got this *gopura* built in 1510 and it is named after him as Raya Tower. In this inner *prakara*, one can see the *dhwaja stambha* and *deepa stambhas*. Pilgrims light up lamps here in the month of Kartika. On the left side are Pathaleswara Temple, Mukti Narasimha Temple and Suryanarayana Temples and on the right are the Lakshmi Narasimha and Mahishasura Mardhini Temple.

The *Ranga Mandapa* consists of 38 pillars decorated with sculptures. These pillars are divided into two vertical sections – the first is cut to resemble a rearing Yali – a mythical lion, standing on a *makara*, while the second section is basically square with small reliefs depicting mostly Shiva themes. The pillars are aesthetically composed.

The ceiling of the large front Ranga Mandapa has a magnificent series of paintings. Here is a great masterpiece showing a large procession with sage Vidyanarya in a palanquin preceded and followed by a large retinue. Other themes include Arjuna shooting the *matsya-yantra* to win the hand of Draupadi, the Dasavataras and Shiva as *Kamadahana-murthi*. The sanctum enshrines the well-known Virupaksha-*linga*.

To the north of the Virupaksha Temple are two temples related to Pampadevi and Bhuvaneshwari devi. Outside the Pampadevi Temple, on the left side are *navagraha* (nine-planet) *idols*. The northern tower is called Kanakagiri Gopura. This

houses the Ratna Garbha Ganapathi and devi idols. As one emerges from the Kanakagiri Gopura, one finds a huge Manmatha Pond, in which Virupaksha's Theppotsava is performed.

There are steps on the rear side of the temple, giving access to a dark room on the right side. The room has a slit in its eastern wall and the light passing through it falls on the western wall creating the inverted shadow of the Bistappa tower. One can only marvel at the genius of the Vijayanagara architect who created such a masterpiece.

After climbing the steps, the visitor finds the Sri Vidyanarya temple to the west. About 15 yards away is the magnificent *matha* of Sri Vidyanarya housing a serene *pooja* room. Further south, a small door gives access to a pond called Lokapavana Teertha.

The wide street extending to the east from the main entrance of the temple is called Royal Street or Hampi Bazaar. The temple's chariot also occupies a place on it. The 10.6m wide and 732 m long street is flanked by double storeyed colonnaded structures and ruined mandapas on both sides.

At the far end of the street, stands the Matanga Parvata (hill) with wide steps leading up. There is a beautiful two storeyed *mantapa* with 12 well-carved and polished black stone pillars, dating back to the time of Chalukyas. Behind the *mantapa* stands a gigantic Nandi idol, facing west. As the Nandi (basava) faces the Shiva idol in the Virupaksha Temple, it is called *Eduru Basavanna* (basava facing Shiva).



Royal Street - The royal street runs from Virupaksha Temple to Matanga Hill

### The beautiful walkways

Hampi is dotted with ancient walkways which have been trod since time immemorial. One such path runs from Krishna Temple to Vijaya Vithala Temple. But the more famous one is Kampa Bhupa Marg. While walking along the Hampi Bazar Street, just before reaching the Matanga Parvata, one finds an ancient stone bridge branching out through the greenery. This was built by Kampa Bhupa, the son of Harihara I in 1383 AD and is known as Kampa Bhupa Marg. This way takes the visitor to Kodandarama Temple, which has a deity in the form of a human figure with 16 hands. This temple is situated opposite the Chakratirtha and is the most sacred bathing ghat on the Tungabhadra. The Yantrudharaka Anjaneya Swamy Temple stands closeby. From here, one can visit the ruins of a famous street, which was once famous as Achyutapete but is now popularly known as Soolai Bazaar (Courtesan's Street). At its southern end is the large Achyuta Raya Temple encircled by two *prakaras*. It was built by Salakaraju Tirumaladeva, an officer of the king Achyuta Raya (1530-42), and is famous for Achyuta Raya Temple, rather than the name of the enshrined deity Tiruvengalanatha. The temple resembles the Krishna Temple in almost all respects, except that it has two enclosures, arranged in a concentric manner, each marked by an entrance gopura. The inner enclosure has the main temple. A pillared cloister runs around the temple (This temple is also reached by climbing the steps next to *Eduru Basavanna*).

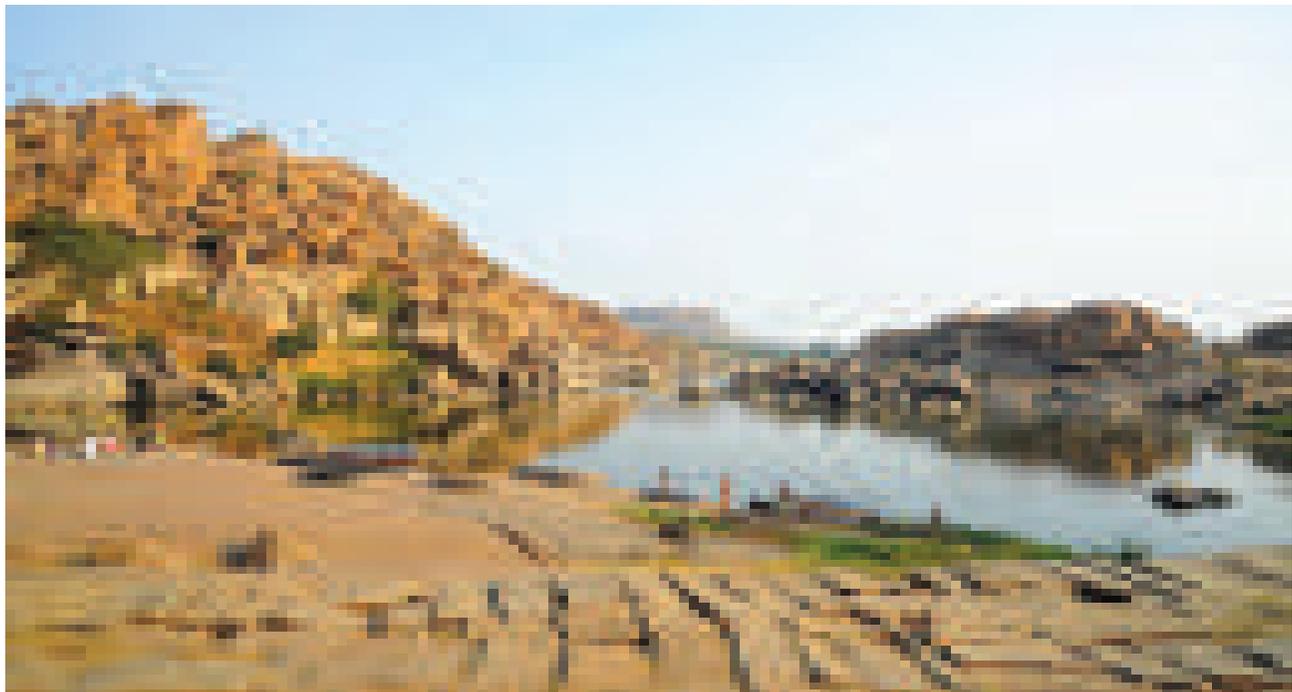
The ruined structures beckon the tourists all around and the Tungabhadra River caresses their feet as one proceeds towards the Vijaya Vithala temple. A variety of birds can be

sighted in the morning along this route. On the way, the Purandaradasa Mantapa makes a magical appearance. Purandaradasa worked for the development of Kannada literature through his songs, and was in Vijayanagara in 1540. Further ahead, one comes across the King's Balance, with two lofty pillars of carved granite, supporting a stone beam provided with three hoops on the underside. One of the pillars has a bas-relief depicting a king and two queens, possibly Krishnadeva Raya and his consorts.

### Musical pillars at Vijaya Vithala Temple

The tourist now finds himself at the internationally famous Vijaya Vithala Temple, the crowning glory of Hampi that represents the culmination of the Vijayanagara style of art and architecture. No other building in Hampi can be compared with it in terms of florid magnificence. Krishnadeva Raya is said to have built a substantial portion of it under his patronage (1509-29). Vithala Temple stands in a large enclosure (164m x 94.5m). All along the enclosure walls on the interior side are pillared colonnades. In front of the main temple is the stone chariot. At the centre of the enclosed courtyard is the sanctum with its axial mandapas. Arranged around the sanctum is the *amman* shrine, the *kalyana-mandapa*, and *utsava-mandapa*, a 100-pillared-mandapa and a stone *ratha* or chariot dedicated to Garuda, the mount of Lord Vishnu. This chariot (with the image of Garuda on it) replaces the Garuda shrine normally seen in Vaishnava temples.

The main temple was dedicated to Vishnu as Vithala. The large *maha-mandapa* has symmetrically recessed sides,



The Tungabhadra River along the Kampa Bhupa Marg



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**The musical pillars at the Vijaya Vittala Temple**

measuring upto 30.5m at its widest and longest points. The *mandapa* contains 56-pillars, each around 3.6 mtrs high, 40 of these are arranged to form an aisle around three sides, while the remaining 16 form a rectangular court in the centre. The pillars have heavy *Pushpapodigai* corbels (curved corbel-bracket on top of pillars terminating in a flower and bud.)

The ceiling of the *mandapa* is divided into sections and carved beautifully with lotus motifs. The central court is now almost roofless. The outermost pillars of *maha-mantapa* are called musical pillars. They emit the seven notes (Sa, Ra, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, and Ni) of the Indian classical music when gently struck. Callous attitude of the tourists has damaged many of these pillars and tapping on them is banned for the sake of preservation. The dilapidated five aisled *ardha-mandapa* leads to a covered *pradakshina-patha* (circumambulatory passage) running around the now empty *garbhagriha* and *antarala*.

The *kalyana mandapa* to the south-east of the courtyard almost surpasses the *maha-mandapa* in its richness of designs. It also has an open pillared *mandapa*, symmetrically planned with deeply recessed sides with usual arrangement of composite pillars, balustrades and a highly ornate ceiling.

The sacred Hemakuta hill is dotted with numerous shrines



**The stone chariot dedicated to Garuda, the mount of Lord Vishnu**

and *mandapas*. Interestingly, all the structures with stepped pyramidal *vimanas* found in and around Hampi are Shaiva shrines. A small structure further east on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra is a Vaishnava shrine and those in the south eastern part of the city are all Jain shrines. The Malyavantha Raghunatha Temple is a Vaishnavite shrine on the Malyavantha Hill that lies to the east of the Talarigattu Road. There is a large, five-storeyed *gopura* on the south, and a smaller three-storeyed one on the east.

The ruins of Hampi are extensive and fascinating enough to sustain the tourist's interest for several days. There is always something new to discover in Hampi. Photography and archeology buffs should plan for a longer stay whereas those in a hurry can complete the tour within two days. Hampi is a

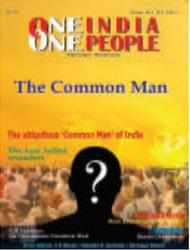
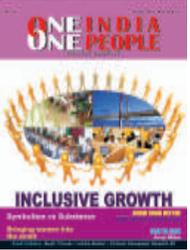
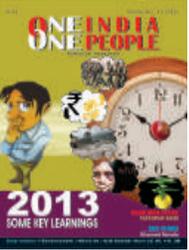
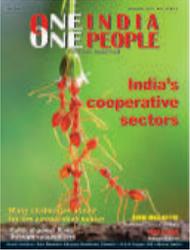
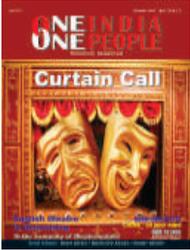


tourist's paradise and a must-visit destination in Karnataka. The Hampi group of monuments was inscribed on the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Monuments on 5 December 1986. ■

**The author is a freelance travel writer.**

## Our Last Six Issues

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### Divine Child High School, Malad (E), Mumbai



Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde, Trustee and Managing Editor, OIOP, presents the OIOP Club membership certificate to Principal Dixit.



Students watching the OIOP video presentation



Mrs. Hegde with school staff and students.

### Shri Vibhuti Narayan High School, Dahisar (E) Mumbai



Principal Bakelal C. Singh addressing the students. Mrs. Hegde, Sonam Saigal (sub editor OIOP), Vaibhav Palkar (OIOP Club In-charge) and Ms. Swati Ratnakar Gaiikwar watch on



A view of the students



Students recite a prayer

### Infant Jesus High School, Dahisar (E) Mumbai



Mrs. Hegde presents the OIOP Club membership certificate to Principal Mrs. Neetal M Coutinho



Students offering their prayers



Students performing a dance on the occasion

# Right to dignity and identity

*Transparency and accountability in governance, social security, guarantee of their rights, preservation of environment and promotion of sustainable development are some of the expectations of the Adivasis, one of the most neglected sections of our society, writes Dr. Joseph Marianus Kujur.*

EVERY five years the worth of the Adivasi voter is realised by the political parties just before the assembly and Lok Sabha elections. These Adivasis, the so-called Scheduled Tribes (STs), who constitute 8.6 percent of India's total population (Census 2011), are not in the consciousness of the nation, with a few exceptions. Their collective histories and contribution to nation building are yet to find space in the education curriculum. The reservation policy or 'positive discrimination' seems more of a liability to the majority than a mechanism for redressing the historic injustice. No wonder, a spokesperson of a national party recently publicly expressed his wish to repeal of the reservation policy. There are ample constitutional provisions and policies for protection and development of Adivasis. It is, however, mystifying that their pace of progress is so slow.

## Adivasis – The neglected lot

The country boasts of Adivasi-friendly laws particularly during the Congress-led regime, such as The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996; The Right to Information Act, 2005; The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013; and The Indian National Food Security Act, 2013. However, neither of these Acts have been implemented fully, nor have they given real power to the Adivasis in planning, implementation and evaluation.

The Indian Constitution enshrines a socialistic nature of economy, which is more amenable to Adivasis. However, rampant corporatisation has virtually left no space for them. The systemic violence against them is manifested in forms of land grabbing, plundering and pillaging of their natural resources, their exclusion, marginalisation, exploitation, oppression, and their treatment as second class citizens.

Irrespective of 66 years of Indian democracy, Adivasis are still asking the meaning of democracy, human rights, citizenship rights and fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution. Their plight presents an alarming situation in terms of illiteracy, unemployment, land alienation, health

hazards, poverty, migration, displacement, militarisation of tribal areas, violation of human rights, etc. This is only a symptomatic of a larger malaise. Thus, the major area of concern for Adivasis is development with dignity and identity.

## Political representation

As the country goes to the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha polls for 543 seats, 40 constituencies (7.36 percent) are reserved for STs as per the 1st schedule to Representation of People Act, 1950. The north-eastern states are predominantly tribal but the numbers of parliamentary seats are very few excepting Assam. While Assam accounts for two (14.28 percent) reserved seats for STs out of total 14, Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura have only two seats each, which are all unreserved. Mizoram and Nagaland have only one unreserved parliamentary seat each. In the rest of India, the highest percentage of ST constituencies is in Chhattisgarh, i.e 36.36 percent (four) out of total 11, followed by Jharkhand's 35.71 percent (five) out of total 14. Similarly, Odisha has 23.80 percent (five) reserved seats for STs of total 21, Madhya Pradesh has 20.65 percent (six) ST seats of total 29, Gujarat has 15.38 percent (four) of 26, and Maharashtra has 8.33 percent (four) of 48 seats. Further, Andhra Pradesh has 7.14 percent (three) seats for STs of 42, and Karnataka has 7.14 percent (two) reserved seats for STs of 28.

Apart from the above ST constituencies, there are Adivasis also in non-scheduled areas, and the following are their demands which needs to be a part of the election manifesto for whichever party that is going to form the next government:

**Economy:** Adivasis want an inclusive development with a humane face. According to Planning Commission, in 2004-05, percentage of ST population Below Poverty Line (BPL) in rural areas was 47.2 percent, while it was 33.3 percent in urban areas.

Adivasis want restoration of their lost land and a total ban on further land alienation whether mortgaged or by sale. They want either scrapping of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act or formulation of policies to regulate them. Adivasis want power to the original land-owners to be inserted in the agreement, so

that the land-owner is a beneficiary from the contract. Scholars like Walter Fernandes suggest that in Orissa 42 percent of the displaced persons (DPs), in Andhra Pradesh 28 percent, and in Jharkhand 60 percent, are tribals. Of the total DPs in India more than 40 percent of the displaced and affected are Adivasis of whom women and children are the worst sufferers.

Irrespective of the new 'Land Act' integrating rehabilitation and resettlement in it, the principles of 'eminent domain', 'public purpose' and 'national interest' continue to haunt the Adivasis like the draconian Land Acquisition Act of 1894 and the Forest Act of 1927, apart from the Special Economic Zone Act of 2005. The new Land Law, rather than protecting Adivasi land, facilitates its smooth transfer. Hence, on the issue of land, it appears as if Adivasis are on one side and all parties irrespective of their ideological differences, on the other. The Indian National Food Security Act, 2013, is fine as a relief measure, but is no replacement for the Adivasis' loss of livelihood due to the so-called development projects. Adivasis want a legislation to effectively implement the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) that has special package for Adivasi development.

**Employment:** Setting up of factories and mines in Adivasi lands does not necessarily create jobs for the local Adivasis. A very high percentage of them is still illiterate and lack skill. Adivasis demand creation of jobs in rural and urban areas suitable for them. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) gives a temporary relief to the rural unemployed, but it is not sustainable. Adivasis want its effective implementation and severe punishment of the corrupt. In the industry sector, Adivasis want their inclusion in terms of services, technology and marketing facilities to artisans, small scale, village, handloom and handicrafts and similar other industries that will facilitate income generation for them.

**Agriculture:** More than 70 percent tribals depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Every year hundreds of farmers commit suicide, primarily due to uncertainty and insecurity. Adivasis demand farmer-friendly agriculture policies.

**Education:** In 2001 the gap between ST and non-ST literacy was 17.7 percent compared to 29.6 percent in 1991. The ST literacy rate has increased to 47.1 percent (Census 2001), but quality education in government schools/colleges is missing where Adivasi children are enrolled. Their number goes on decreasing as they go to higher levels of education. Adivasis demand that the governmental and non-governmental spending on education, primary, secondary and higher education, be earmarked and substantially subsidised for them at the higher level. Central Universities for Adivasis need to focus on quality and tribal environment.

**Health:** Health status of the tribals is very low. Their health seeking behaviour is determined by their culture. They demand promotion of their indigenous knowledge system and health

practices. They want improvement and increase in the Primary Health Centers (PHCs) in rural areas, tribal areas and north-eastern states. They want PHCs to be equipped with modern facilities. They also demand improvement in communication in tribal areas to have easy access to these centres.

**Reservation policy:** Positive discrimination is one of the small steps to address the historic injustice faced by Adivasis. They demand fulfillment of backlogs of the reservation policy in all sectors meant for the STs, i.e., 7.5 percent in the centre and as per the state policy in the states. They demand that officials not implementing the policy be severely punished.

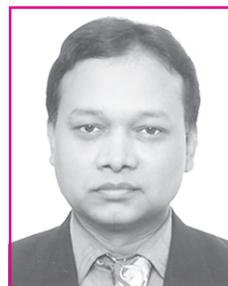
**Basic amenities:** Majority of the Adivasis in rural areas still defecate in the open. There is no safe drinking water. Many villages are malaria prone. There is no electricity. Adivasis demand safe drinking water, a habitat policy for common minimum shelter, and rural electrification. They demand rural roads/rail connectivity in the scheduled areas, tribal areas and the north-eastern states.

**Socio-cultural and political demands:** Adivasis are proud of their identity and would like the government to protect the tribal languages, cultures and tribal political system. They want 'real' self-rule and empowerment of the Gram Sabha in Scheduled areas. They want that customary laws be respected in the north-east.

**Protection from human rights violations:** In the name of tackling the extremist menace, the state is terrorising the local people by projects like Operation Green Hunt, Salva Judum, and Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), 1958. Those who protest against the state terrorism are branded as anti-national. Thousands of Adivasis are languishing in jails for their alleged contacts with the Maoists. Adivasis want protection against all forms of violence against them either by individuals/groups or by the state.

**Adivasi women:** Woman is considered to be a Devi, but only in theory. Adivasi women are molested, raped, attacked, commercialised, and trafficked for domestic work and sex market. Adivasis support the demand for 33 percent reservation of seats in Parliament and state assemblies. However, they also want separate seat allocation for ST women. They want free education for girls up to college level including professional courses.

On the whole, Adivasis demand social security, a guarantee of their rights, transparency and accountability in governance, preservation of environment and promotion of sustainable development. They demand strict implementation of the legislations favourable to them and scrapping up of the unfavourable ones. ■



**The writer is the Head, Department of Tribal Studies at The Indian Social Institute, New Delhi.** (The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)

# Dalits and elections

*Every political group, even those who explicitly abhor identity politics of any kind woos dalits and backward caste voters. Anoop Kumar highlights issues that reflect the aspirations of the community that can play an important role in this election.*

THE 2014 Lok Sabha election is going to be the watershed moment for the Indian democracy for various reasons. The ideological fault lines were never sharpened as before. On one hand there is the debate on the communal-secular divide that gets reflected in the electoral politics; something that has been happening over 30 years now, and has a far wider ramification for the future of the country. Whether the country is going towards a majoritarian state or still has some faith in the much clichéd secular ideals that our founder fathers envisioned. There is an oblivious assertion of what many term as Indian middle class which is mainly interested in setting a certain standard of accountability in governance, reduction in corruption and such issues that denies them the goods as promised by a welfare state. This class which is seen as beyond any identity markers has shown its tremendous potential in even building a very powerful alliance with the poor living in slums and *bastis*, as we all witnessed in the recent Delhi assembly elections that brought the Aam Aadmi party (AAP) to the fore. A lot of civil society activists, who remained peripheral to the electoral dynamics throughout their lives, some by choice, seem to have sensed a chance and have joined the AAP in large numbers. Many even contesting as its candidates. This is a very fascinating scenario for the Indian democracy.

On the other hand, there is another kind of politics that has been present and acknowledged by all — that of social justice; — whose main plank has been justice and representation for the most marginalised section of the people in this country — the dalits, tribals and other backward classes (OBC). There are a number of political parties that represent this politics, primary being the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). This election is a litmus test for such political groups too. Will their politics be sandwiched between two powerful political narratives is the question before us. Is our politics ready to deal with voters who feel that the identities and identity-based oppression and their representation is not that important before the questions of secularism and fight against corruption? We can only make guesses.

However as a Dalit activist, I do feel that beyond such debates there are few questions that need to be put forward even if it is seen as much maligned identity politics. It is

these questions that will keep haunting every political formation despite their denial of existence of caste or any other social/economic markers. Every political group, even those who explicitly abhor identity politics of any kind, leave no stone unturned to woo dalits and backward caste voters. Every candidate they choose to contest is chosen after a careful consideration of caste calculus of that particular constituency. This is something which no one in this country can wish off. So what about the aspirations of dalits and the likes in this election? Which political group has been responsive to these?

## Demands by Dalits

Dalits are not a homogenous group and are as divided as any other community and, most of them also subscribe to local regional identities that impact their voting behaviour as well as their aspirations; but most vocal of them — the educated middle class — is now gravitating to a concrete politics that claim to reflect the aspirations of the entire community. Apart from political formations, dalits now also boast of strong civil society groups that are consistently articulating the demands of the community.

One of the first demands that have been put forward is adequate representation of dalits in every sphere — political, social, cultural, but more importantly economic domain. Reservation in public sector has been historically the only gateway for dalits to not only improve their lot, but also come to terms with their marginal status and create a fighting space to claim a stake in mainstream as well as in country's imagination. But with increasing population and decreasing opportunities in the era of privatisation, public sector and government jobs are shrinking rapidly hence the demand for adequate representation in the private sector.

The UPA government in the past had pledged its commitment to include private sector reservation in its election manifesto; however it has not shown any inclination to even initiate the process of formulating a bill or having any kind of debates around the issue, perhaps due to fear of immense backlash from a section of Indian population and media. Dalits have been witnessing this flip-flop and are going to raise this question in near future if not in this election directly. None of



the political formations despite their public stance of staunch support to reservations for SC/STs are willing to take a stand on this issue and have tried to keep it under the carpet.

### Validating reservations

Directly linked with the issue of representation in private sector is one more contentious issue that has been gathering storm since last two years, and which emanated from a UP high court judgement that questioned the validity of providing reservations in promotions in government jobs. The court had asked the state government to provide adequate data in support of their policy of reservations in promotions, but the government could not do so and hence the court decided to scrap the policy. Now the ball is in the court of GOI and, the dalits have been demanding the UPA government to contest the court decision and provide adequate safeguards by making necessary changes in the reservation policy. However, this has also been stalled by the UPA government despite making promises of immediately putting the bill for discussion in Parliament. For many dalits this constitutes a betrayal by a political party whose fortune depends largely on the dalits and other marginalised groups.

Beyond these policies that reflect concerns of only a very small educated dalit class, there is a far more important issue of implementation of Scheduled Caste Special Component Plan (SCSCP) that has an impact on the entire community across the country. This plan was a brain child of the Planning Commission of India that in late 70s that felt the need of a targeted approach in every government department towards the empowerment of the most marginalised i.e. dalits and tribals. The idea is that a certain amount of budget expenditure

of every government department has to be spent exclusively for the benefit of dalits and tribals according to their percentage in population. However, none of the government departments in last 30 years or so has implemented this policy. They either diverted the funds to other programmes or kept it unspent. Many dalit civil society organisations in the last five years have

taken up this case and have been building pressure on the government to fix this problem and design its policies in a way that all the fixed amount of funds are spent for the benefit of dalits and tribals.

### Access to education

Another issue that concerns every dalit household in the entire country is access to quality education. Even after 66 years of independence getting even primary education in a conducive environment has remained a distant dream for a large number of dalits. Now with increasing assertion, they are able to mobilise themselves and are keen to receive quality education and are aware that this is the only way to be a part of the mainstream.

These are few issues that reflect the aspirations of the community and can play an important role in not only this election but in future too. However, it is very important to see that the community does not live in seclusion and the issues of secularism and fight against corruption also factor in their lives and therefore have a huge role to play in the political choices they make during elections. No one, not even the dalit political formations can now take dalit votes for granted, as seen by the shift of their allegiance to a new political party like AAP in New Delhi elections from their traditional voting choices like Congress and Bahujan Samaj Party. ■

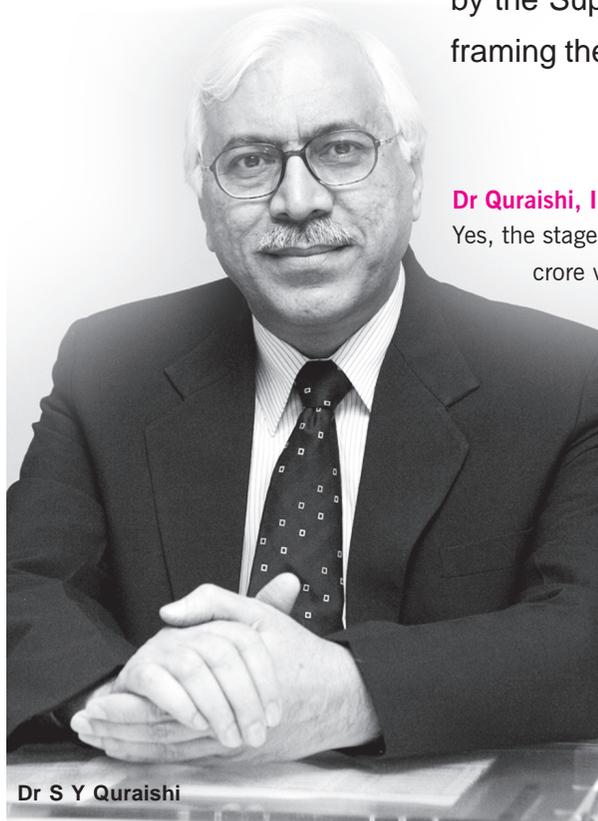


**The writer is a community teacher based in Wardha, Maharashtra and has been a part of Dalit movement since last two decades.** (The views expressed in the article are those of the writer.)

## “Election Manifestos are perfectly legal, even if they promise the moon”

Former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India, **Dr S Y Quraishi** was part of a three-member commission to control, direct and supervise the conduct of elections to the offices of President and Vice-President of India, General Elections to the Lok Sabha – 2009 and the elections to the State assemblies. He was an IAS officer of the 1971 batch from Haryana cadre and has a Ph.D. in Communications and Social marketing. Dr Quraishi is the first Muslim to be the CEC of India. He demitted office on 10 June 2012, and now pursues his interests in academics by teaching and mentoring at Cluster Innovation Centre, University of Delhi in the capacity of Honorary Professor at the centre.

Dr Quraishi has brought a special focus on people’s participation, voters’ education and youth involvement in the electoral process through scientific research and interventions. He has been an ardent proponent for lending strength to the grass root level election functionaries. In an e-mail interview to **Sonam Saigal**, Dr Quraishi talks about the recent guidelines given by the Supreme Court to the Election Commission (EC) on framing the election manifestos.



Dr S Y Quraishi

### Dr Quraishi, India is looking at interesting elections a few days from now?

Yes, the stage is set, India is going to witness the biggest-ever election. With 81 crore voters and 11 million personnel conducting the polls at 9.36 lakh polling stations using 1.4 million electronic voting machines (EVMs). The Indian election is considered the biggest such event in the world.

### Lok Sabha elections are going to flag off soon, but national political parties have not issued their election manifestos as yet. Can the Election Commission do something about it?

Election Commission has recently included some guidelines in the Model Code of Conduct (MCC). But these seem to be only advisory in nature.

### Where is the need to have an election manifesto?

A manifesto is a published declaration of the intentions, motives or views of an individual, group, political party or government whosoever issues it. It is their right and duty towards voters to

make such offers and promises in manifestos in a healthy democratic polity.

**The Supreme Court had asked the Election Commission to frame guidelines that will be followed while making the manifestos. Why was this being done?**

This is done in order to frame various welfare measures for the citizens so that there are no objections to the promises made in the election manifestos. There is no enactment that directly governs the contents of the manifestos, therefore the EC was asked to frame guidelines in consultation with all the recognised political parties for general conduct of the candidates, meetings, processions, polling day, party in power as part of the MCC.

**What do the guidelines state? Do they state the do's and don't's?**

Although, the law is obvious that the promises in the election manifesto cannot be construed as "corrupt practice" under Section 123 of The Representation of the People's Act, but the reality cannot be ruled out that distribution of freebies of any kind, undoubtedly, influences all people. As the Supreme Court says, it shakes the root of free and fair elections to a large degree. So the EC has to ensure level playing field between the contesting parties and candidates in elections and also see that the purity of the election process does not get vitiated. The guidelines state that political parties should avoid making those promises which are likely to vitiate the purity of the process or exert undue influence on the voters in exercising their franchise. In the interest of transparency and credibility of promises, it is expected that manifestos also reflect the rationale for the promises and broadly indicate the ways and means to meet the financial requirements for it. Trust of the voters should be sought only on those promises

which are possible to be fulfilled.

**Did the parties accept the guidelines? What was their reaction?**

During consultations, some political parties supported the issuance of such guidelines; others were of the view that it is their right and duty towards voters to make such offers and promises in manifestos in a healthy democratic polity. While the Commission agrees in principle with the point of view that framing of manifestos is the right of the parties, it cannot overlook the undesirable impact of some of the promises and offers.

**Haven't the manifestos simply come down to offering only sops for elections?**

Well, there are two types of sops, one, pre-election ones announced through subsidies, price cuts and new schemes. These are essentially the domain of the ruling parties. The party is in a rush to make such announcements before the Election Commission becomes a spoiler. Here we see the genuine debate of good politics versus bad economics. Then there are sops through the manifesto that do not attract the model code: the ₹ 2 kg rice, laptops, bicycles, TVs.

**Shouldn't the election commission penalise the ones who promise irrational freebies?**

The EC is inundated with requests to declare these freebies illegal. The fact is that the manifestos are perfectly legal, even if they promise the moon. The EC has no power to question these. Most political parties say it is their democratic 'right and duty' towards voters to make such offers and promises in manifestos.

**Do you think the election manifestos have done any good to the electorate?**

Yes, promises like cheap food grains and free items of utility have done some good.

Starvation deaths don't happen anymore with rice at ₹ 2 per kg. Remember the famous line of Rajiv Gandhi that only 15 paise of a rupee reaches the poor. Now, if a TV is promised, a TV is delivered! Distribution of bicycles has improved enrolment and retention of girls in schools. Employment guarantee schemes have brought visible relief to rural poor.

**Is there a mechanism to hold political parties accountable for not delivering the promises announced in the manifestos?**

My own view is that neither the Election Commission nor the Supreme Court can get involved so long as a manifesto is perfectly legal and a legitimate democratic instrument in a democracy. Even if the promises are absurd or non-feasible, it is for the rival parties to expose the hypocrisy and the common voters to remember that promises were not fulfilled. However, now that the MCC has included the manifestos, it will be interesting to see how it plays out.

**The fact that the Election Commission cannot do anything about the unfulfilled promises, doesn't that make the Election Commission toothless?**

This perception is absolutely flawed. The MCC is the most dreaded weapon in the hands of the election commission. Many citizens, however, feel disappointed that all that the EC does against defaulters is issue warnings, reprimands, condemnation or censure. They probably expect drastic action like the cancellation of elections, de-recognition of the political party concerned or even the registration of criminal cases. The MCC's moral authority is extremely high. Have you seen any hate speech in the last few years? Personal attacks have become a rare occurrence. The abuse of government facilities by the ruling party has been reduced to zero. ■

# A pink revolution in the North

**Shoma A. Chatterji** narrates the story behind the much acclaimed 'Gulabi Gang', a group of pink sari-clad women led by Sampat Pal, through a successful documentary made on the subject.

**B**UNDELKHAND in central India, a region notorious for its rebels-turned-armed bandits, is witnessing a new kind of rebellion with an unusual cast of characters. These are the pink sari-clad women of the Gulabi Gang, who use words as weapons to demand their rights, submitting petitions and haranguing corrupt officials. They travel long distances by cart and tractor, bus and train, to wrest justice for women and Dalits, undeterred by sneering policemen and condescending bureaucrats. Based on this real life story, documentary filmmaker Nishtha Jain has made *Gulabi Gang*, a documentary borrowing the name of the group as her film's title.

"I first heard about Gulabi Gang in 2009. What intrigued me was their location – rural Bundelkhand, one of the most backward areas of our country where women are much oppressed. Majority of the gang members are unlettered and that was also true of their leader Sampat Pal. I found Sampat Pal amazing, she's completely self-taught and had the courage to break away from her in-laws to do the work she's doing now. I thought if these women, despite all their disadvantages can rise against injustice, so can anyone. It would be an inspiring tale to tell. So I decided to go and meet Sampat Pal. Within days of observing her at work, I realised that the reality was more complicated than I thought and that was good for it as it would make for a more nuanced film," says Nishtha whose documentary is bagging awards across the globe.



**The Gulabi Gang leading a protest against oppression of women**

Founded by Sampat Pal Devi, 43, an unlettered mother of five in 2006. Gulabi Gang now has a strength of thousands of rural women in pink saris journeying from one town to another in Bundelkhand district of Uttar Pradesh to create awareness among poor and neglected men and women about their rights and to fight for their rights that have been violated, or try and bring justice to victims who are no more. Sampat Pal was married to an ice-cream vendor when she was 12 and had her first child when she was 15.

Once, in 2006, Sampat Pal saw a man beating up his wife brutally and no one turned a hair because domestic violence was a given in Bundelkhand, and both men and women had internalised it. Sampat Devi appealed to the husband to stop beating his wife. But the man abused her right back. She came back the next morning with five other women armed with

thick sticks and beat up this man till he began to beg for mercy. The news of five women beating up one man spread like wild fire and women from neighbouring villages soon came to her asking for help. She asked most of them to join in and Gulabi Gang was born. "The colour pink does not have any religious nor any political association and is neutral in every way. Therefore, we chose pink and took the colour as part of the name of our ever-expanding group," says Pal.

Gulabi Gang has stopped several child marriages, forced the police to register domestic violence cases and marked out the dowry death of a young woman which the in-laws, with the connivance of the police, passed off as 'suicide.' The families initially did not like their women to become social activists in a real sense but they come around in due course of time. There are a few



**Sampat Pal, leader of Gulabi Gang (on the charpoy) with her fellow members**

exceptions when a woman drops out because a family member is a part of the investigation. The group, which the Indian media portrays positively, was reported to have 20,000 members as of 2008, as well as a chapter in Paris, France.

Bundelkhand is marked among the poorest of the poor in the district of Uttar Pradesh. But that has not deterred Sampat Pal to lead and form this movement though there are instances of some members dropping off for various reasons. It is growing everyday, in strength, in numbers and in its success with most of the issues it takes up a fight for or against. Today, it has a membership of thousands of women who are constantly on the move, investigating the suspicious death of a young woman the family has labelled 'suicide' or, protesting against the land-grab of a poor farmer by local politicians while the police looks the other way. Killing of women is a common reality. They do not get reported because most families choose not to file reports with the police. Some of them do not file reports because they are involved in the killing. Others do not because they

**The best part of this group is that their crusade is not only against atrocities against women and the oppression of women. They also cover injustices heaped on men such as land-grabbing by vested parties from the very poor, who are forced to run from pillar to post for legal solutions they cannot afford.**

know that the police will do nothing and most of them are corrupt. Most cases are usually mutually settled by the families and with the help of the police.

Pal has become a 'history sheeter' in a manner of speaking. There is a long list of criminal charges against her that includes unlawful assembly,

rioting, attaching a government employee and obstructing an officer in discharge of his duties. She was once forced to go underground. But along with her group, she has scored several victories. In 2008, Gulabi Gang ambushed the local electricity office for withholding the supply till the common people gave bribes of sexual favours just to get the supply restored. Wielding sticks, a group stormed the office building and roughed up the staff. The supply was restored an hour later like magic.

Why "gulabi" and why pink? "There were few colours left to choose from", explains Sampat Pal. "Most of the colours are associated with political parties like white is Congress, orange is the BJP, blue is the BSP, green is Islamic, red is communist," she adds. The best part of this group is that their crusade is not only against atrocities against women and the oppression of women. They also cover injustices heaped on men such as land-grabbing by vested parties from the very poor, who are forced to run from pillar to post for legal solutions they cannot afford. Women learn physical skills like lathi-charging to equip themselves for physical fight, if and when called for. ■

**The writer is a freelance journalist, film scholar and author. She has authored 17 published titles and won the National Award for Best Writing on Cinema twice. She won the UNFPA-Laadli Media Award, 2010 for 'commitment to addressing and analysing gender issues' among many awards. She is currently Senior Research Fellow,**



**ICSSR, Delhi researching the politics of presentation of working women in post-colonial Bengali cinema 1950 to 2003.**

# Mohini Attam – dance of the enchantress

*Mohini Attam is a dance that reflects the enchantment that is life, its enjoyment and relish that creates the state of Beautitude, enveloping the spectator in an aura of grace, charm and lyricism, writes Dr. Kanak Rele.*

**M**OHINI Attam, a lyrical and enchanting dance form, became the sole vehicle for feminine interpretation and developed on the lines of the other classical dance styles of India. It is a solo dance of sheer visual beauty, far removed from the ever-vigilant supervision of the temple and the grip of rituals. Devotional fervour is permissible but not mandatory. Religio-philosophical tenets are not allowed to interfere with the central idea of dance-its soul-enchantment. The very name expresses its aesthetics (Maha Vishnu appeared as Mohini the enchantress, and danced the dance of enchantment to cast a spell of his maya on the danava-s). The natural beauty of the Kerala landscape provides ample inspiration for its lyrical and lilting movements. Its rounded body kinetics with the distinctive heave of the torso and the soft walk create the sensation of the verdant paddy fields, the undulating palm fronds and the rippling backwaters of Kerala.

## Enchantment of the highest order

Mohini is an avatara of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Sustainer, who takes an avatara to maintain the cosmic order; Vishnu as Mohini (the enchantress) prevents the danavas from becoming immortal during the episode of churning the milky ocean, *Ksheerasagara*.

The cosmic balance is threatened and so knowledge, the elixir that guides life towards its ideal goal has to be

reinstalled. This knowledge, imbued of unbound power is amrita (nectar) that gives immortality, the endless “reality”. Once this knowledge is re-instilled, the cosmic order can be re-established. This was to be achieved by activating

**The movements of the body and limbs could be compared to the gently undulating palm fronds filling the Kerala skyline. The gait and stepping are reminiscent of a boat bobbing up and down in the gently soaring backwaters of the Kerala landscape.**

the dynamic equilibrium of the opposing spiral forces of the universe.

And so came Vishnu’s maya-shakti or vaishnavi-maya in the most bewitching and enchanting female form - Mohini, the enchantress. She danced her dance of enchantment and created an illusion in the minds of the *danavas*. Mohini personifies the sheer joy and

pleasure of living however momentary and “unreal” that life may be. This lovely illusion intoxicates the beholder by its enchanting beauty.

Mohini Attam is thus the dance that reflects the enchantment that is life, its enjoyment and relish that creates the state of Beautitude. It casts a spell of maya, a mesh net of illusion, on the beholder bathing him in the raga of enchantment, leading him towards knowledge along the path of enchantment, and beauty.

Mohini Attam, a style abounding in beautiful lyrical movements nevertheless, exhibits a conspicuous strength of purpose. The presentation comes out with a deep impact to envelop the spectator in an aura of grace, charm and lyricism with a forceful vivacity. The movements of the body and limbs could be compared to the gently undulating palm fronds filling the Kerala skyline. The gait and stepping are reminiscent of a boat bobbing up and down in the gently soaring backwaters of the Kerala landscape. Though supple and graceful, the palm fronds are not limp, and definitely unlike a clinging creeper. Rather, they have a strong and solid spine attaching them to the trunk of the tree, yet leaving them free to pivot around. And though a boat may bob up and down, yet it is not a wild and uncontrolled movement. The boat is, rather, harmonising with the flow of the stream, in tune with the rhythm and music of nature. And the boat does have

the required force and strength which controls this bobbing with the ultimate purpose of reaching its destination to cross over.

The overall impression created by Mohini Attam is *shringara* which is designed to create enchantment of the highest order that which is caused by the divine influence of Vishnu. Presented in true spirit it must and would shine-out as an epitome of extreme grace, good taste, dignity and above all high cultural values. It is essential to disregard and discard the vulgar absurdities that crept into it.

### Nayanabhinaya

The description of Mohini Attam can never be complete without a special reference to that particular group of bodily movements which gives it a distinctive charm of its own. This is what can definitely be termed collectively as *nayan abhinaya* the movements of eyes, eyelids and eyebrows.

Eyes are supposed to be the mirror of the soul. What one feels is instantly mirrored in the eyes. Before any part of the body can react to a certain mood or emotions it is the eyes which reflect the state of the mind. The widening of eyes in astonishment or horror before the other reactions that follow are the examples of the importance of eyes in the communication of an idea or a mood. And this, mute speech through the eye is not a human prerogative. The liquid eyes of animals speak volumes where speech is denied. In dance also the dancer does not make any use of her speech. Thus her eyes have to be so eloquent as to be able to convey the meaning to the audience. Nature meant eyes to behold and also let others behold. They can prove to be the doors to one's soul.

### Decline and revival

Mohini Attam, which flourished till the end of the 19th century, went into a sad decline. This was the case with



Dr. Kanak Rele performing the Mohini Attam

all the traditional arts and crafts in India which were under the oppressive rule of the British who set about destroying the Indian identity very systematically. Under this oppressive rule there came to enact some very destructive legislations, one of them being the Anti-Nautch Act which prohibited all sort of dancing in the temples terming the practice as 'vulgar'. The traditional performers of all the dance traditions gradually lost patronage with the British annexing the local princely states and zamindars who sustained the dance arts. Thus by the first two or three decades the Mohini Attam performers also lost their livelihood and the numbers of gurus as well as performers declined. Between

1966-1967 the writer who had received acclaim for her rendering of Kathakali came on the scene and thereafter started the re-emergence of Mohini Attam as a full-fledged classical dance idiom. In collaboration with the noted Kerala poet-musicologist Shri. Kavalam Narayana Panikkar, Dr. Kanak Rele has created a fully researched parallel repertoire for Mohini Attam which includes the elements of the tenets of the *Natyashastra* as well as takes into account the long tradition of the Kerala theatrical arts. They have used 'Sopana Sangeetam' which is indigenous to Kerala. Sopana Sangeetam is not a system of classical music as the Carnatic and Hindustani are; it is a very specialised way of vocalisation which has roots in the 'vedocchara' (vedic chants). It does have some ragas which are not found in other systems but, by and large Carnatic ragas are adapted, to the Sopana mode of singing Kerala abounds in an amazing variety of *talas* which are also incorporated in this new repertoire. The items thus created and broadly categorised are:

- |                    |   |                           |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Ganapati           | - | invocation                |
| Ashtapadis         | - | from the Geetagovinda     |
| Padam              | - | nritya or abhinaya items  |
| Pandirari Kattala- | - | nritta or pure dance item |
| Mukhachalam        | - | nritta item               |
| Slokams            | - | nritya items              |
| Jeeva              | - | nritta item               |

In all more than 65 such dance pieces created today the almost dying dance art has a rich repertoire which can equal those of more established dance styles. ■



The writer is Director, Nalanda Dance Research Center and is a recipient of Padmabhushan award, Akademi Ratna (Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi)

# Discoverer of Kautilya's Arthashastra

**BMN Murthy** recounts the birth of Arthashastra through Dr. Rudrapatnam Shamashastry who was titled 'Arthashastra Visharada' by the Maharaja of Mysore.

**T**HERE was a misconception in the western world till about the 20th century that in ancient India everything was moved by other-worldly considerations and that the society was ignorant of statecraft, social affairs and administration. If there was one turning point which removed this misconception, it was the discovery of Kautilya's book 'Arthashastra' in Sanskrit which, though written 2,400 years earlier, was discovered as late as the 20th century. The singular credit for discovering this rare and monumental manuscript goes to Dr. Rudrapatnam Shamashastry of Mysore who not only discovered the manuscript but heralded a new era in Indian administration and statecraft.

Turning the pages of the history of ancient India pertaining to the 4th century B. C., we observe that it was Kautilya, also known as Vishnugupta or as Chanakya, who overthrew the ruling Nanda Dynasty and placed the great Chandragupta Maurya of the Maurya Dynasty on the throne of India. Kautilya was a student of the Taxila University (then called Takshashila and now in Pakistan) which was the very first university to be founded in the world as early as 700 B.C. He later taught in the same university for about four years. It was this Kautilya who wrote the 'Arthashastra' which is a comprehensive treatise on administration and civic affairs. This work, according to research scholars, must have been written sometime between 321-296 B.C. It is a practical guide not only on running governmental organisations but also a work that deals with subjects like duties of kings, ministers, local officials, methods of diplomacy etc., including ways and means of defeating an enemy.

Coverage of its subjects is encyclopedic and many scholars have wondered how it was possible for 'One small head to carry all he knew' (to borrow and use Oliver Goldsmith's expression in his poem 'The Village School Master'). Normally such a treatise involves the united efforts of a syndicate of writers.

Among the several libraries and research institutions in the country which preserve rare palm leaf manuscripts, the Mysore Oriental Library (now called the Oriental Research Institute) is one of the most famous libraries in India. In 1891 the then Maharaja of Mysore State wanted to celebrate the golden jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen Victoria's accession to the British throne in a grand style, and for this purpose got a beautiful building built with a lovely blend of classical architectural styles and named it Victoria Jubilee Institute. This is the same building in which the Oriental Library has been functioning for more than a century. It was here that the manuscript of Kautilya's Arthashastra was first discovered. This library had a librarian by name Rudrapatnam Shamashastry during 1905. Shastry hailed from a place known as Rudrapatnam on the banks of river Kaveri and was born in a Sankethi Brahmin family and in a community known for Vedic learning. This is the same place from where many classical Carnatic music vidwans of Karnataka come from. Even at a young age, Shastry showed a remarkable skill in learning the Vedas, the Upanishads and other sacred lore. Before he was 40, he had mastered most of the Vedas, the Vedangas, classical Sanskrit, German, French and a few more foreign languages. In addition, he had learnt

how to decipher several oriental scripts.

## Rudrapatnam Shamashastry

Rudrapatnam Shastry was a devoted and sincere librarian in the Oriental Library who put his heart and soul to the job. Even though the job of dealing with ancient manuscripts, most of which were in torn conditions and quite dusty, was difficult, risky and monotonous, he was dedicated to his job and took pleasure in doing it. One day, sometime in 1905, he picked up some palm leaf manuscripts and on detailed observation and examination, he was pleasantly surprised to discover that it was the work 'Arthashastra' written by Kautilya. Shastry examined the manuscript very closely, examining it from several angles and was finally convinced that it was the genuine work of Kautilya. In an introduction to the book written by him in 1909, Shastry says that he was convinced beyond doubt that it was a genuine work of Kautilya, a literary wonder of the ancient world. It did not take much for the new discovery to get publicised. Shamashastry became a celebrity. Scholars and academicians all over the world started congratulating him for having ushered in a new era in Indian administration and statecraft by discovering Kautilya's Arthashastra. Eminent educationists and historians of those days literally vied with each other in inviting Shamashastry to their universities, honouring him and getting the benefit of the new discovery. Shastry also met Mahatma Gandhi in 1927 when he was camping at the Nandi Hills and presented him with a copy of 'Arthashastra'. Gandhiji was immensely pleased with his rare contribution to Indian Polity and congratulated him.

Rabindranath Tagore was all praise for the new discovery. The Washington University awarded a Doctorate to Shastry and the Royal Asiatic Society awarded its Fellowship to Shastry. The Government of India gave him the title 'Mahamahopadhyaya', a rare and coveted honour in those days for Oriental scholars.

Dr. Asutosh Mukherji, the greatest educationist of India in the 20th century and five times Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University, invited Shamashastry to Calcutta in 1919 under the auspices of the Calcutta University to deliver a series of 10 lectures. Shastry delivered these lectures on subjects connected with Arthashastra under the title

'Evolution of Indian Polity'. These lectures were subsequently published in Mysore under the title 'Kautilya's Arthashastra', with an introduction by the eminent British Historian J.F.Fleet. In his concluding remarks, Fleet says "We are, and shall always remain, under

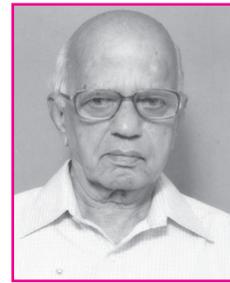
a great obligation to Shamashastry for the most important addition to our means of studying the general history of ancient India".

His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore once visited Germany for delivering a talk at the invitation of a German institution. At the meeting he was introduced as His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore State. After the lecture was over, a German gentleman approached His Highness and asked him "Your Majesty, are you the Maharaja of Mysore where lives Dr. Shamashastry, the discoverer of Arthashastra?" The Maharaja was pleasantly pleased that one of his own subjects was well-known in far off Germany. On his return, he sent for Dr. Shamashastry and said, "In Mysore State we are the Maharaja and you are the subject. But in Germany, you are the Master and people recognise us by your name and fame". The Maharaja awarded him with the

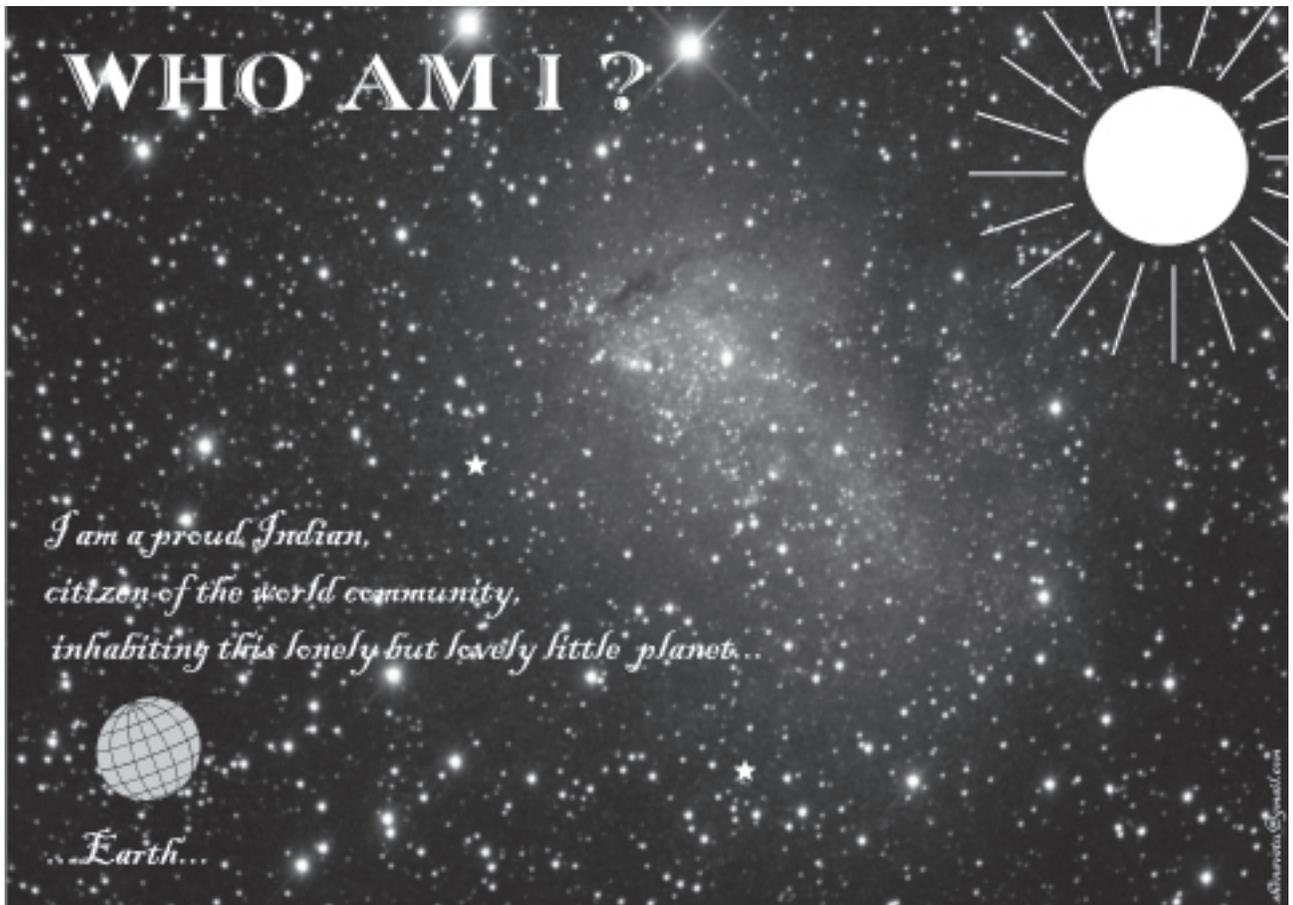
title "Arthashastra Visharada" during the Dasara Celebrations of 1926.

Shastry who passed away in 1944 was an extremely simple man with deep religious habits. Humility was his hallmark and he was always ready to help youngsters to come up in life. Western scholars had always argued that ancient India had learnt the art of administration from the Greeks, ever since they came into contact with Greeks with the invasion of Alexander. But Shamashastry proved them wrong with his discovery of Arthashastra and showed how even the British had adopted some of the features contained in the Arthashastra

for their administration.

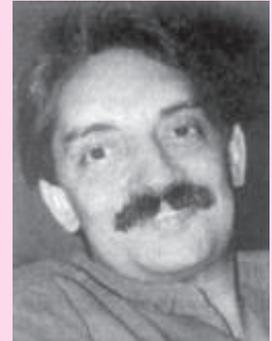


**Late B M N Murthy, regularly wrote on Indian heritage, tradition, vedic wisdom, etc.**



# The Corbett inheritance – protecting the legacy

Corbett, the oldest national park in India is exceedingly special, which makes you feel alive and exudes an indescribable vitality.



**Bittu Sahgal**

Editor, Sanctuary magazine

**A**T first, I thought a vehicle ahead of us had leaked gear oil onto the road. It was a little before noon and we had almost reached the turn off to Gairal on the main tar road that leads from the Dhanghari gate to Dhikala. I stopped the vehicle, wondering how I could mop up the oil when, in the dappled light of the sal forest, the stain that had looked jet-black from a distance took on a distinctly scarlet hue. The large pool of arterial blood I stood over probably came from the throat of an animal that had been choked to death by a tiger, minutes before we arrived.

I got back into the car to watch for the cat, figuring it would be hidden nearby, breathing heavily from its exertion, and staring straight at us. As I have done umpteen times before with well-camouflaged tigers, I drove slowly away for 100 m., turned the ignition off for a couple of minutes and drove right back to the spot where the tiger was now visible, 30 m. to our right in a thicket. The kill was hidden from view, and when the tiger sat down, it too vanished.

After 10 minutes of silence, punctuated by calls of barbets, kingfishers and woodpeckers, we drove to the Old Forest Rest House at Gairal, where an indolent week of birding by the swift-flowing Ramganga River lay ahead of us.

Corbett is exceedingly special. It makes you feel grateful to be alive. The park exudes an indescribable vitality, with or without the kind of drama we witnessed on the main road. Sighting a tiger, leopard, elephant or bear in Corbett would pump as much adrenaline into my system as it would for first-time wildlifers. But the real joy, the real purpose of visiting Corbett is to walk on the same soil and breathe the same air as nature's living works of art.

Like so many others, my love affair with these forests and hills began long before I ever set foot in Kumaon or Garhwal

– through the gripping tales of Edward James (Jim) Corbett.

By the time I was 16, I had read every book Corbett had ever written, and I was more familiar with Kaladhungi, Nainital, the Bangajhala valley, Powalgarh, Rudraprayag, Mokameh, Champawat, Mohan and Kanda than the backstreets of Kolkata where I grew up.

“If you have been as influenced by his books as you say you have and want to start a wildlife magazine, go to the hills around Corbett National Park. Walk his trails.” That was the late R.E. Hawkins, publisher and editor of Jim Corbett's books and representative of the Oxford University Press, on the subject of what he thought it would take to infuse Sanctuary magazine with real quality.

Hawk was never a ‘personal’ friend of Jim Corbett's. In fact, he only got to know him through correspondence and, of course, through the incredible manuscripts, which the famous hunter sent him. Not that Corbett needed any endorsement; his first book sold 2,50,000 copies in the U.S. alone and was subsequently translated around the world.

His warning that India could lose the tiger was resented by hunters who scoffed at him towards the end of his time in this country. But Corbett's voice was too powerful to be ignored and he managed to indelibly etch the imminent demise of the tiger on the psyche of India.

Hawk is not around anymore, nor are those all-time greats – Dr. Salim Ali, Humayun Abdulali, K.S. Dharmakumarsinhji, Kailash Sankhala, M. Krishnan, Deb Roy and S.P. Shahi. Heroes all, they lived to protect India's wildlife and laid the foundation for all the wildlife battles we fight today. To a man, they influenced me deeply and in their own unique ways each extracted a promise from me to take their battles forward. ■

# COOL CHAMP



Try to answer the questions below and send your answers along with your name, address, date of birth, school and photograph to: **“YOUNG INDIA QUIZ”** One India One People Foundation, Mahalaxmi Chambers, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, 22, Bhulabhai Desai Road, Mumbai - 26. You can also log on to our website and answer our quiz online at [www.oneindiaonepeople.com](http://www.oneindiaonepeople.com). We will choose two winners (the Cool Champs) from all the correct entries and publish his/her photograph and name along with the answers in our next issue. **(Last date for entries: April 20, 2014)**

## Quiz No: 123

(Clue: Refer OIOP March 2014)

**1. Which women established a women's rights organisation, Ahmedabad Women's Action Group (AWAG)?**

- a. Mallika Sarabhai
- b. Ila Pathak
- c. Aruna Roy
- d. Medha Patkar

**2. Which Indian classical dance form is from Tamil Nadu?**

- a. Kathak
- b. Kuchipudi
- c. Bharatnatyam
- d. Mayil Attam

**3. Which type of marine animal is Sting Ray?**

- a. Fish
- b. Crab
- c. Oyster
- d. Lobster

**4. Who was the first woman judge of the Bombay High Court?**

- a. Justice Sujata Manohar
- b. Justice M Fathima Beevi
- c. Justice G Rohini
- d. Justice Gyan Sudha Mishra

**5. The Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary is in which city of Gujarat?**

- a. Gujarat
- b. Surat
- c. Rajkot
- d. Jamnagar

## Answers to Quiz # 122

### QUESTION 1

**Answer: (b) Lotika Sarkar**

Lotika Sarkar was a noted Indian feminist, social worker, educator, lawyer. She was the first Indian woman to graduate from Cambridge University, and the first woman to receive a PhD degree in law from the same university.

### QUESTION 2

**Answer: (d) Uttarakhand**

The Satta Tal Lake or Sat Tal means 'seven lakes' in Hindi. It is situated in a town of the Nainital district in Uttarakhand. Sattal is one of the few unspoiled and unpolluted freshwater biomes in India.

### QUESTION 3

**Answer: (d) Seismograph**

Seismometers are instruments that measure motions of the ground like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other seismic sources. Records of seismic waves allow to map the interior of the Earth, and locate and measure the size of these different sources.

### QUESTION 4

**Answer: (c) Buttermilk**

Moru is a south Indian styled spiced up buttermilk. All its ingredients have nutritional value. Plain yogurt has the good

bacteria with probiotics it also provides protein, calcium, vitamin B<sub>2</sub> and B<sub>12</sub>.

### QUESTION 5

**Answer: (a) Raghuram Rajan**

Raghuram Rajan is the current and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Governor of the Reserve Bank of India. Rajan was the chief economic adviser to India's Ministry of Finance during the previous year and chief economist at the International Monetary Fund.



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**Quiz No. 122  
No Winner**



## Vote's the matter!

The elections to the 16th Lok Sabha are round the corner. About 81.4 crore electorates will decide the future course of the world's largest democracy. Here is a peek into India's election process.

- **Who conducts the elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies?**

The Election Commission of India.

- **What can be the maximum number of members in the Lok Sabha?**

552. Not more than 530 members from the states, and not more than 20 members from the Union Territories. The President may also appoint two members from the Anglo Indian community if (s)he thinks that the community is not adequately represented.

- **Does the voting in the entire country take place on a single day?**

No. As India is a large country, elections are held in phases so that adequate security can be provided for free and fair polls. This year the elections will be conducted in nine phases, between

April 7 and May 12. The counting of votes will be held on May 16.

- **How is the government formed?**

After the counting of votes, it becomes clear if any particular party has won a majority in the Lok Sabha.

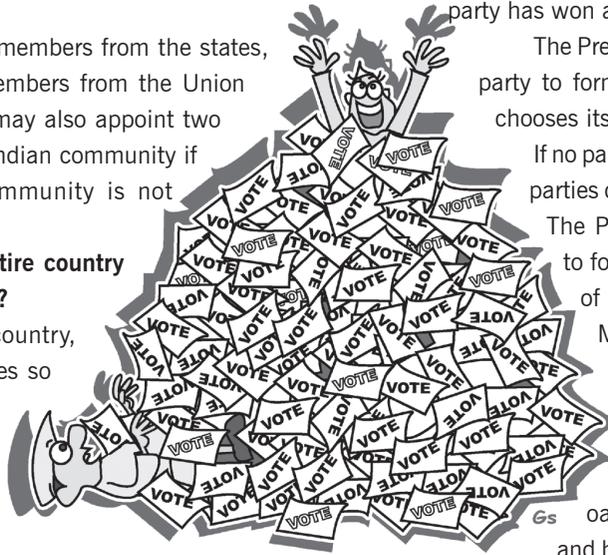
The President then invites the single largest party to form the government. And the party chooses its leader as the Prime Minister.

If no party wins a majority, then like-minded parties come together and form a coalition.

The President then invites the coalition to form the government and the leader of the coalition becomes the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister consults his party colleagues and selects his Cabinet of Ministers.

The President administers the oath of office to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet.



### Amazing Living World

## Remarkable Jumper

The klipspringer is a small African antelope known for its remarkable jumping ability and surefootedness. It is able to escape its enemies on land because of its unique feet, which have cylindrical hooves measuring around 4cm in



diameter. The animal usually stands on the tips of its hooves and can land on its four feet on a piece of cliff that is just about the size of a dollar coin!

The word 'klipspringer' means rock jumper in the Afrikaans language. The antelope is usually found in rocky habitats.

### The Perfect Dice

Jadugar Jaggi has six magical dice. However, only one of them is a perfect die. Spot it out.



**Answer:** Die C. In a perfect die, the opposite sides sum up to seven.



## Art Beat

# Toy Story

**M**ANY a home in India comes to life with toys from Kondapalli, a village near Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. The traditional wooden toys not only entertain children, but also reflect local culture and mythology.

The featherweight toys are carved out of soft white wood, locally known as Tella Poniki. The wood is cut into pieces and heated to make it totally moisture-free. The different parts of

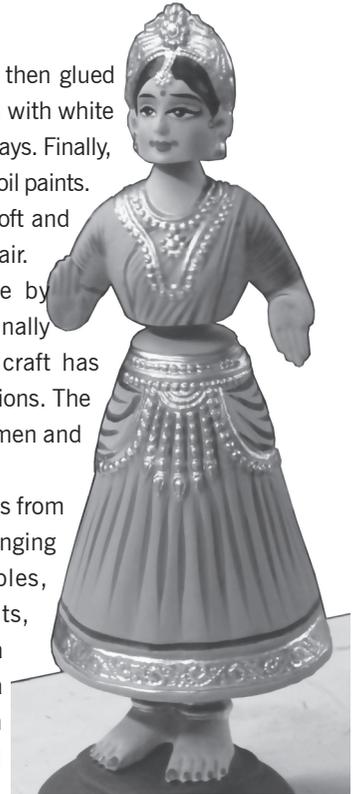


the toy are made separately and then glued together. The toys are then coated with white lime and left to dry for a couple of days. Finally, they are painted in watercolours or oil paints.

The fine details are added with soft and thin paintbrushes made of goat hair.

The Kondapalli toys are made by families who are said to have originally migrated from Rajasthan. The craft has passed down through the generations. The men make the toys while the women and children paint them.

The toys depict fascinating scenes from rural life, palanquin-bearers, swinging dolls, musicians, farmer couples, bullock carts, Ambari elephants, animals, deities etc. Owning a Kondapalli toy is like holding a slice of Indian culture. The art form was granted a GI (Geographical Index) tag in 2007.



## Story

# Contentment

**A** mare and its foal lived in a beautiful meadow, with plenty of sweet grass and fresh water and lots of space to gallop around in. But the foal wasn't happy and kept begging his mother for a change.

"Let's go to another place," he said, tossing his little mane. "I am sure we'll find better grass, clearer water and an even bigger space for stretching our legs!"

His mother would patiently tell him to enjoy what he had, but he wouldn't listen. Finally, tired of the pestering, the mother decided to move.

All day long, they walked. The two horses toiled up steep hills, crossed

baking deserts and trotted through rocks so sharp they tore at the hooves. Finally, the foal was so tired and hungry, he longed to drink cool water and eat fresh grass.

"When are we going to reach that place?" he asked.

The mare told him to be patient. It was night when they reached a beautiful meadow, with sweet grass and crystal clear water. The foal sighed with happiness.

"This is such a good place!" he exclaimed to his mother. "Now aren't you happy you came?"

At dawn, he looked around expectantly and saw that they were in the same meadow where he had been born!



**Moral: Be grateful for and satisfied with what you have.**

## AIR VICE MARSHAL RANJAN DUTT Vr C

The dynamic flying commander (1922- 2013)

**R**ANJAN Dutt was born in 1922 and was educated in the Royal Indian Military College. He learnt flying on his own while at the school and earned his "A" licence at the age of 16. He joined the Air Force and was commissioned on 1 August 1940 into the 4<sup>th</sup> Pilot's Course of the Indian Air Force [IAF]. He had overstated his age by one year to join. He along with 23 other officers were sent to UK for further training and service with the Royal Air Force [RAF]. He took part in the defensive battles over UK and later in offensive operations over France and Netherlands. He worked with ace fighter pilot Douglas Bader. He returned to India in 1942 and was posted to Kohat on watch and ward duties. Later, he served as the first Indian instructor at Officers Training Unit, Risalpur. In 1944, he saw service in Burma. A year later he was detailed on the Day Fighter Leaders Course in UK, which he completed with distinction. An enemy aircraft flight was located in the same station. He took the initiative to fly the German fighter planes Fw 190 and Me 109 located there. He was particularly impressed by Fw 190 and discussed its design details later with Dr Tanks, the HF24 fighter designer at Bangalore.

Shortly before Independence, he drove from Pakistan to India in his open sports car. Perhaps he managed it as the Pakistan Air Force personnel also wore the same uniform. He saw dead bodies all over. He broke through a police barrier and at one place had to shoot his way through a mob. No sooner had he arrived that the Air Force HQ detailed him to go back to Pakistan to escort some air force families to India. He used his school contacts to obtain personal arms for all his men and travelled in the driver's cabin. His personal pistol helped in keeping the hostile driver from any mischief.

During the 1947 - 48 War in Kashmir, he was the Senior Air Staff Officer [SASO] in the Operational Group.

He planned and flew several missions on the Kishanganga Bridge. In the second attack, he flew low and knocked out the enemy gun positions to facilitate the formation to attack. He again led four aircrafts and scored a direct hit on the bridge. The target was heavily defended and his plane received some shots and was heavily damaged. He managed to fly back to Jammu. He also carried out reconnaissance sorties and attacks on Gilgit and Skardu. For his outstanding services, he was decorated with Vir Chakra.

In 1952, he attended the RAF Staff College in UK and served as Director Operations. As usual, he was outspoken and in his thesis on Commonwealth defence criticised the concept as primarily for defence of Australia, New Zealand and Canada in spite of the contribution by India in the World War.

He was promoted as Air Vice-Marshal at the age of 37 and was probably the youngest holder of this rank in the entire commonwealth. In 1961, he took over as MD Hindustan Aircraft Ltd [HAL]. He flew the newly designed fighter aircraft, HF 24. Ranjan supported the project

for enhancing the performance of Fairchild Packet C119G planes by installing an additional engine. He tried the various fighter planes and successfully pushed for selection of MIG-21. Under his leadership, Hindustan Aircraft changed into Hindustan Aeronautics and undertook a project to manufacture 450 MIG-21 planes under licence.

After retirement, he went to UK and returned in 2011. He settled down in Chennai and passed away on 13 August 2013. He was one of the greatest commanders and leaders of the IAF. He was a born aviator and ranks high in aviation combat thinking. ■

– Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd)



# A NAGESWARA RAO

A tri-lingual actor (1924-2014)

**T**HE Telugu film industry lost one of its greatest icons when A Nageswara Rao passed into history on 22 January, 2014. A Padma Vibhushan and Dadasaheb Phalke award winner, Nageswara Rao was an integral part of the film industry for more than seven decades and according to reports had just completed his part in the film 'Manam' where his son Nagarjuna, a superstar in his own right and Nagarjuna's son Naga Chaitanya also matched strides with him.

Born in a poor family, Nageswara Rao had to drop out of school after his third class, but his flair for histrionics led him to theatre where he mostly donned female roles as in the early years women were not allowed to work in theatre or films. A chance encounter with a film maker saw him land a role in the film 'Dharmapatni' at the age of 17. In a career that has seen more ups than downs, the thespian worked in around 256 films including several films in Tamil. He was the man responsible for Telugu cinema shifting from its roots in Tamil Nadu to Hyderabad. He set up his own studio, Annapurna Studio in the city which till today remains one of the main hubs for shooting films and serials.

Nageswara Rao and his illustrious contemporary N T Rama Rao often referred to as ANR and NTR, were the twin pillars of the Telugu film industry for several decades and both of them had a legion of fans supporting them all the way. Many of Nageswara Rao's films turned out to be blockbusters and among them the significant ones were 'Balaraju, Rojulu Maraayi, Samsaram, Aradhana, Ardhaangi, Dasara Bullodu, Illarakam etc. His flair for comedy was to the fore in films like Missamma and Chakrapani. Fifty years after he debuted in cinema, he acted in Sitaramayyagari Manavarulu which had a phenomenal run at the box office. Rao was the first actor in Telugu cinema to play a double role and even acted in nine roles in the remake of the Tamil film Navarathri,

reprising the characters played by Sivaji Ganesan, Tamil cinema's acting genius. Although he was a staunch rationalist, Nageswara Rao never shied away from portraying pivotal roles in mythological films.

Rao earned name and fame as the tragedy king in Telugu cinema and several of his tear jerkers rocked the box office. Most notable was his portrayal of Devdas in

the adaptation of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's novel. His film Premabhishekam directed by veteran Dasari Narayana Rao was a milestone in Nageswara Rao's career and it ran continuously for over 500 days in theatres in Andhra Pradesh. Rao also has the distinction of acting in films made on great personalities like the Sanskrit poet Kalidas, Bhakta Jayadeva who hailed from Odisha, Amarasilpi Jakanna of Karnataka, Vipranarayana of Tamilnadu and Bhaktha Thukaram the famous singer. A whole generation of heroines worked with him in his films right from Savithri, Anjali Devi, Bhanumathi, Jamuna, Saroja Devi, Jayalithaa, Vanisri down to Jayaprada, Jayasudha and Sridevi.

Nageswara Rao was not just an actor par excellence, but also a studio owner and film producer. Widely travelled, Rao was an ambassador of not just Telugu cinema but Indian cinema as well. An affable person who endeared himself to everyone in the industry, a philanthropist who ran a foundation that helped the needy, Nageswara Rao's popularity never waned even when he reduced his commitments with advancing age, though he remained healthy till cancer took a toll on his health. The actor in his last press conference had vowed to fight the disease and live up to a 100, but tragically fate willed otherwise. His films have however earned him a place in the pantheon of all time greats of Indian cinema and he will continue to live on in the hearts of all his fans. ■



– C V Aravind is a Bangalore-based freelance journalist

## ADVOCATE VASUDHA DHAGAMWAR

Legal campaigner for gender justice (1940-2014)

**V**ASUDHA Dhagamwar, legal activist and academician, passed away on 10 February 2014, in Pune due to multiple organ failure. Vasudha's mother Geeta Sane was a well-known Marathi writer and feminist and her father, Advocate Narasimha Dhagamwar was active in the Indian freedom movement. Vasudha studied at the Indian Law Society's Law College in Pune and taught at the Department of Law, University of Pune.

As a young lawyer, she fought a well-known case of a teenage tribal girl Mathura who was gang-raped by two policemen in uniform at the police station in 1972. In this case, the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court acquitted the accused and stated that the sexual intercourse was voluntary, since the onus of proving that the act was one of coercion, rested on the victim. After eight years of legal battle from 1972-1979 when the Supreme Court of India gave misogynist judgment in the year 1979, Vasudha along with three law professors from Delhi University — Prof. Upendra Baxi, Prof. Raghunath Kelkar and Prof. Lotika Sarkar wrote an open letter to the Supreme Court challenging the judgment as well as demanding reopening of Mathura Rape Case and urging the court to bring about a change in the laws related to rape. This sparked nationwide anti rape movement and influenced heated debates and became the rallying point of an active campaign on the issue of gender-based violence. Vasudha was awarded the coveted Ashoka fellowship in 1982 for her courageous and consistent work for the rights of displaced people.

In 1985, she set up the Multiple Action Research Group (MARG) Delhi, which took up the most challenging issues of land acquisition and displacement arising out of the Sardar Sarovar Project in Gujarat. Under her leadership, MARG produced the following valuable publications: *The Law of Resettlement of Project Displaced Persons in Madhya Pradesh*, *Land Acquisition Act and You - A Manual*, *Law, Power and Justice: The Protection of Personal Rights in the Indian Penal Code*, 1993, *Our Laws/ Hamare Kanoon* (a set of 10 manuals in Hindi and English), *Industrial Development*

*and Displacement – The People of Korba*, 2003, *Women and Divorce*, Somaiya Publications, Delhi, 1987, *Reading on Uniform Civil Code and Gender and Child Just Laws*, *Role and Image of Law in India – The Tribal Experience*, 2006, *Criminal Justice or Chaos*, 1997.

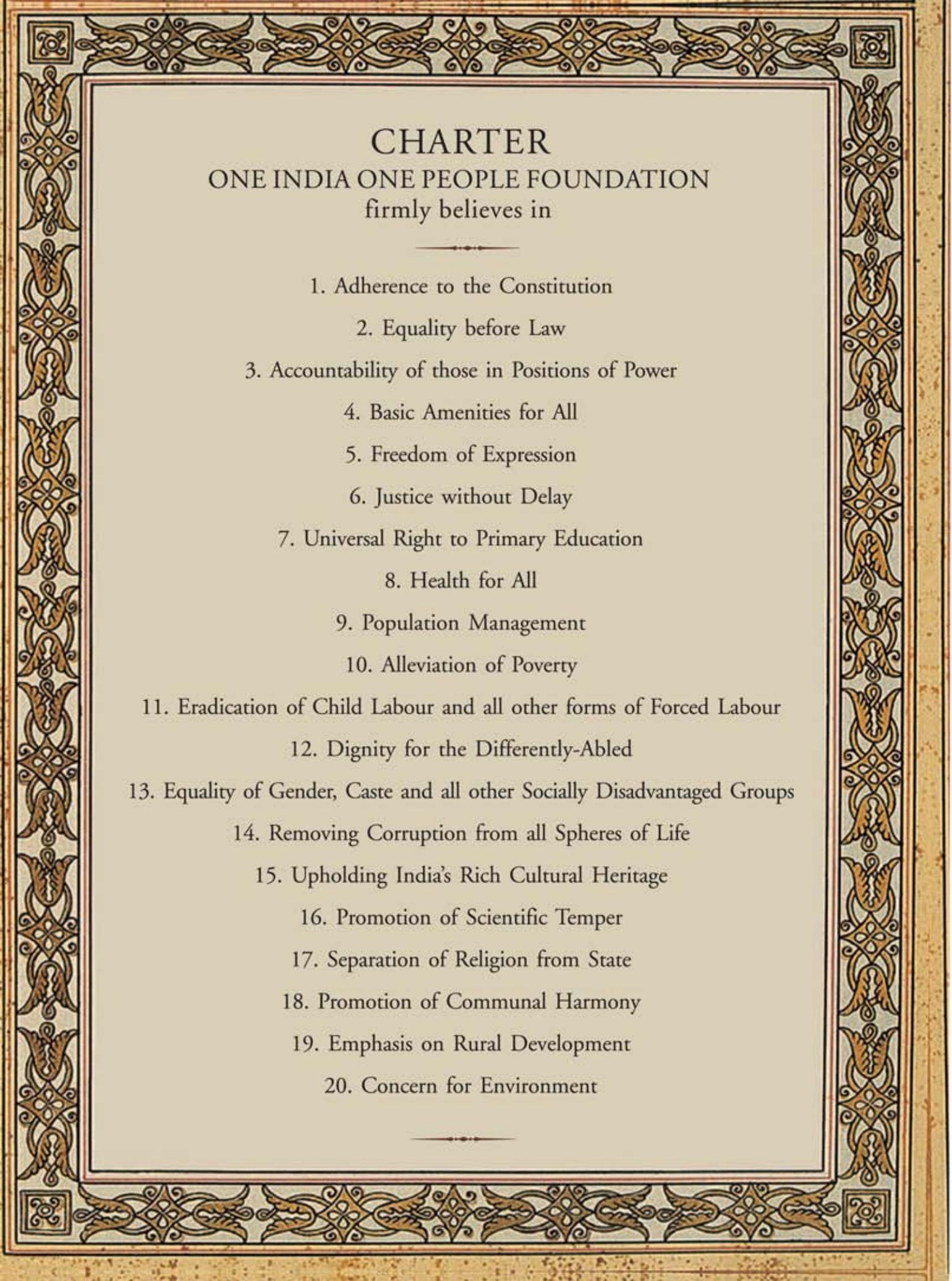
As a legal activist, she influenced two generations of feminists and activists to lead social movements for the marginalised communities. Vasudha's legal activism was tremendous for the Sardar Sarovar Project in Gujarat. She demystified the draconian Land Acquisition Act.

During the last four decades, innumerable legal reforms with respect to women's issues were put in place in India due to pressure from women's movement. Vasudha played an important role in this process through her writings, speeches, training programmes and debates on the laws concerning rape, domestic violence, discriminatory family laws with respect to marriage, divorce, maintenance, alimony, custody and guardianship, land and housing rights of women. Vasudha worked closely with the National Commission of Women as a legal expert. She was also a member of the Executive Body of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Delhi NGO working to protect human rights in the Commonwealth countries.

Her down to earth approach towards legal matters, practical suggestions and solution seeking approach, made Vasudha a sought after legal luminary. She was an excellent communicator, spoke logically and convincingly. Her stand on Muslim personal law and Common Civil Code angered many fellow feminists. But no one doubted her integrity as a defender of women's right to dignified life. From 1980 to 2006, Vasudha worked in Delhi. She moved to Pune in 2007. Vasudha was suffering from cancer. Despite pain and bad health in the last couple of years, she translated the memoirs of her mother, Geeta Sane from Marathi into English. Vasudha was highly respected in Maharashtra. She has left her permanent mark as a sincere, committed, honest and pro people lawyer of our country. ■

– Dr. Vibhuti Patel is Professor and Head, Department of Economics, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai.





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  16. Promotion of Scientific Temper
  17. Separation of Religion from State
  18. Promotion of Communal Harmony
  19. Emphasis on Rural Development
  20. Concern for Environment
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# WHO AM I?

- Am I a Hindu first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a Muslim first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a Christian first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a Buddhist first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a Brahmin first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a Dalit first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a South Indian first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a North Indian first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I the President of India first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I the Prime Minister of India first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I the Commander-in-Chief first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a supporter of any 'ism' first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a white-collar/blue collar worker first or an Indian first?*  
*Am I a youth/senior citizen first or an Indian first?*

*In all cases you are Indian First, Last and Always.  
Be a Proud Indian. Make this country Great, Strong and United.*



Sadanand A. Shetty, Founder Editor

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ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE