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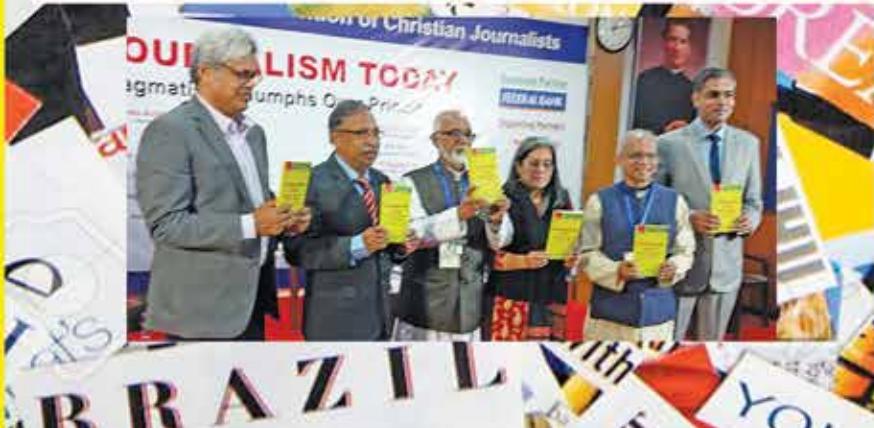
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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

## All India Christian Journalists Meet in Delhi

25th National Convention of Christian Journalists



JOURNALISM TODAY  
Pragmatism Triumphs Over Principles?

H.K. Joshi, Arun Dutt, Dinesh D'Souza

H.K. Joshi, Arun Dutt, Dinesh D'Souza



# All India Christian Journalists Meet in Delhi

Under the aegis of the Indian Catholic Press Association (ICPA), the 25th National Convention of Christian Journalists was held in Don Bosco Provincial House, Okhla, on Feb. 29, 2020.

For the past 25 years, the convention has served as a meeting ground for journalists to discuss the issues, events and trends that affect journalism.

The topic for the silver jubilee edition of the convention was "Journalism Today: Pragmatism Triumphs over Principles." The esteemed guest list included Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto of Delhi; Bishop Salvadore Lobo of Baruipur; Archbishop emeritus Thomas Menamparampil of Guwahati; Rev. Fr. Stanley Kozhichira, president of SIGNIS India; former Supreme Court Judge Justice Kurian Joseph; H.K. Dua, former editor of the Indian Express, Hindustan Times and the Tribune, diplomat and nominated member of the Rajya Sabha; M.K. Venu, founding editor of the Wire; T.K. Rajalakshmi, senior deputy editor with the Frontline; Rohit Wellington, senior editor and anchor with NDTV; and Rev. Fr. Cedric Prakash, writer and human rights activist.

The inaugural session of the day-long convention started off with a prayer dance, lighting of the lamp and a reading from the Holy Bible. The welcome address was rendered by Rev. Fr. Dr. Suresh Mathew, ICPA secretary and chief editor of Indian Currents weekly news magazine, who in his speech quoted famed newspaper publisher Ramnath Goenka and said criticism from the government should be a badge of honour for journalists.

Bishop Lobo set the tone for the discussions of the day by emphasizing on the need to voice the truth in order to lead to justice.

ICPA President Ignatius Gonsalves

began the presidential address by highlighting that the context clarifies and magnifies the content, and that journalists, especially Christian journalists, are precariously placed. He also spoke about "truthophobia" that is becoming increasingly prevalent today in the field of journalism and quoted the hymn "Lead Kindly Light" to put across the point that journalists must anchor themselves in the current media landscape, which he described as "encircling gloom."

In the key note address, Archbishop Couto stressed that media has a prophetic vocation to raise voice against the evils in the society. Speaking about the future of the fourth estate, he cited freedom fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak's Kesari newspaper (founded in 1881) and voiced the need for nurturing more such Kesaris that would speak truth to power.

The subjective nature of truth was brought to the discussion by Fr. Stanley, who in his felicitation address said that when the nature of one's truth is based on the Indian Constitution the weightage is more.

Notably, the guests at the event were welcomed with a copy of the Indian Constitution to highlight the responsibility of journalists to uphold the constitutional values.

After a short break, the guests and the attendees gathered once again for an enlightening panel discussion, moderated by Ms. Rajalakshmi. Joining her on the stage were Mr. Dua, Mr. Venu and Mr. Wellington.

After reflecting at length on the need for objective reality in the functioning of journalists, Ms. Rajalakshmi handed the mike to Mr. Dua. The senior journalist recalled a time when journalists feared going wrong in their reporting and contrasted it with the present where it is the fear of writing the facts that is prevalent among scribes. They are asked to "tone it down," which Mr.

Dua noted is a veiled reference to make the content acceptable or palatable.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Venu of the Wire called for small media organizations across the country and the world to collaborate in order to fight for the rights of the citizens. The million media organizations will lead a "million mutinies" – a nod to V.S. Naipaul's book "India: A Million Mutinies Now," Mr. Venu said. He also called regional media platforms the "redeeming part of the media landscape" as they are reading, writing, analyzing and consuming news.

Mr. Wellington appealed to the mediapersons gathered to turn their gaze inwards and ask a pertinent question – "Are we being the voice of the voiceless we set out to be?" Highlighting that "opinion is cheap, facts are sacred," he posed another thought-provoking question – "Are we challenging the noisy landscape or becoming party to it?"

He also noted that journalism has reduced to compliance and silence, leading to erosion of trust in media. He also listed degeneration of language, collapse of empathy and the forgotten ability to listen as some of the fallouts of the bleak media landscape.

The final panelist, Rev. Fr. Cedric Prakash began his address by announcing that he will be speaking as a priest and a Christian. Drawing attention to the prophetic identity of Christian journalists, Fr. Prakash stressed that the role of a journalist should be like that of a prophet who announces the good news. He also stressed on the importance of commitment, courage, collaboration and conscience.

The session closed with the panelists and the moderator taking questions from the audience.

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## Will Hindus Prove the Depth of Their Own Radicalisation Wrong?

By Don Aguiar

For someone not inclined towards religion and religious practices, - the exception being the epics and numerous mythological stories which all Indians love, many who are born a Hindu follow usual practices and customs - and enjoy the fun and celebration that festivals bring. But they are unlikely to be found queuing up for a darshan of their favourite deity or even light the agarbatti and pray to the Gods in the little alcove at home. They collect idols of lord Ganesha - yet have never prayed to him. Sounds confusing? Never stopped to think. There are many like them. Life goes on. They are Hindus because they are.

You cannot get into or out of Hinduism. You are born Hindu. You don't choose and God doesn't choose you. The connection always exist, and you just discover it.

The questions being raised about the Hindu religion of late prompted me to try to capture the essence of Hinduism and for that one would have to read the scriptures – of which there are scores – in detail, assimilate them, then produce distilled versions of only some relevant portions.

Hinduism has evolved over millennia – to an extent that it may be unrecognizable in its present form to the ancient sages. Hinduism is remarkably resilient and modified itself based on the need of the times. It even incorporated its offshoots Jainism and Buddhism within itself - a point with which some followers of those religions will dislike and dispute.

The lack of dogmas or mandatory requirements is what makes Hinduism different. Hindus may choose any one of many paths in the search for God or truth is quite acceptable. There is no single book, no single God, no single messiah. The Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata are all religious books. The idea of acceptance - rather than just

(Contd.. on p. 4)

(Contd.. from p. 3)

tolerance, which was clearly enunciated by Swami Vivekananda is central to principles of Hinduism. There is no single tenet - whether it is food, clothing, or prayer. Plurality, therefore, lies at the heart of Hinduism.

It gave strength to many Hindus to believe that they can continue to be a bona fide Hindu without praying, fasting, or visiting temples. They just have to be a good human to be a good Hindu.

**However - A growing number of Hindus now speak the insecure and angry language of those willing to discard their own culture, law and the Indian Constitution and succumb to the dark fantasies of Hindu supremacy.** Majoritarian visions, now openly expressed, empowered and normalised as reality, are the armoury from which India's ruling party fashions its arsenal of Hindu supremacist behaviour, from the assaults on India's universities to using a raft of laws, new and old, against Muslims/Minorities.

Caste is most often spoken of as an effective counter to the homogenising impulses of religious polarisation. It is presented as a scheme to preserve diversity. That is a shallow, regressive argument. Diversity needs new imagination.

Only after Modi settled into power did many BJP voters begin to clearly voice their sympathies for Hindutva. These revelations felt sudden and shocking, to the point that you wondered if these voters had silently longed for a pure Hindu nation well before Modi. Relationships ruptured the way they did after Trump's election or the Brexit referendum. Families bickered on WhatsApp groups, and friends fell out. Before 2014, you'd have found a pro-ABVP student and a pro-left student who were friends with each other. After 2014, that was increasingly difficult.

The attempt to attract all geographical variants of Hinduism with univer-

sal Gita, vedas, Sanskrit shlokas and Bollywood music is a 20th century phenomena spearheaded by the Hindutva lobby.

There are more than a billion Hindus in India, and it is not that they are all radicalised, dangerous fanatics. The fundamentalists among the Hindus may not even be a majority. But they are more than they were, and they hold the key to determining the course India will take.

The radicalised, or those they have brow-beaten into submission, now control large swathes of India's unfolding narratives. Hindu-first policies, symbols and feelings are now predominant in politics, in the media, among the judiciary and the police and in public life. The government, now promotes cow shelters, corporate India makes pilgrimages to the bastion of Hindutva in Nagpur and Bollywood crafts movies that demonise Minorities and celebrate – often through fictionalised history – Hindu warriors.

The rest of India has not entirely been levelled by the rising storm of Hindu radicalisation. Indeed, it has sparked a rediscovery and reclamation of the flag, the Indian Constitution and poetry of resistance from the younger, violent days of the republic's birth. That is why beleaguered Minorities, have found their voice. That is why teachers and students – of all religions – defy violent Hindu goons and radicalised police forces who disgrace their uniform, the law of the land and the Constitution they have sworn to uphold. That is why a war for the soul of India rages on the streets, in universities, homes, families and WhatsApp groups.

We now have a spineless, politically expedient government lying prostrate before its own men. The difference in 2019 UP and Delhi is that it is the police who prostrate themselves, willingly, because they are overwhelmingly Hindu and more open to the call of religious radicalisation than ever.

In its 72 years as a free country, India has never faced a more serious crisis. Already its institutions – its courts, much of its media, its investigative agencies and its election commission – have been pressured to fall in line with Modi's policies. The political opposition is withered and infirm. More is in the offing: the idea of Hindutva, in its fullest expression, will ultimately involve undoing the constitution and unravelling the fabric of liberal democracy. It will have to; constitutional niceties aren't compatible with the BJP's blueprint for a country in which people are graded and assessed according to their faith. The ferment gripping India since the passage of the citizenship act – the fever of the protests, the brutality of the police, and the viciousness of the politics – has only reflected how existentially high the stakes have become.

The radicalisation template was, of course, created in Narendra Modi's Gujarat, where a rich Hindu can stop a rich Muslim from buying the house next door by filing a case under a "Disturbed Areas Act", meant to keep the communities apart and relegate Muslims to ghettos. The complicity of government officials, police, politicians and judges in the creation of the Hindu rashtra, the Hindu nation, has now gone national, as we have seen in subjugation of the Constitution and the law in reducing Jammu and Kashmir and clearing the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The RSS got the solution it wanted in Ayodhya as well. Since 1992, a legal battle has raged to determine what should be done with the site of the flattened mosque. In November, the Supreme Court – which appears increasingly pliant to the government's needs – ruled that the mosque had been destroyed illegally, but that the land should nevertheless host a temple. It was as if a burglar, having been dressed down, was then invited to move into the house he'd robbed. The citizenship act was passed in December. Within half a year, with a speed and brazenness that left India

(Contd.. on p. 19)



## **CAA may render Muslims stateless**

More than 25 people have been killed in the Delhi riots that erupted in the capital city during last five days between demonstrators protesting against CAA and NRC and supporters of CAA and NRC. The sheepish silence of Modi government is making things worse. The fascist regime of India has turned the capital city into a battleground where the Muslims are assaulted and killed and their properties are being looted and ransacked, burnt and plundered.

The pseudo world's largest democracy is breaking down swiftly, allowing the demons of Hindutva to come out and overpower every sane person of India. India must revisit its strategy to overcome these riots, lest it will become too late and the country will be engulfed in flames of prejudice and hatred.

Wisdom and sagacity does not appear to prevail in this atmosphere of clash and extinction. Arvind Kejriwal, the CM of Delhi has requested that army may be called in the city to control the situation as life of innocents is at stake. All should take notice of this planned murder of Muslims and stop India from Muslims' genocide.

—**Jubel D'Cruz,  
Mumbai**

## **Kanhaiya Kumar trial?**

I fail to understand AAParty's stand on Shahid Bag, the communal riots in Delhi and on Kanhaiya Kumar's sedition case.

It is true that people have right to

protest and that Kanhaiya should go through legal process and come out clean.

But why unnecessarily? What is really the sedition law? P. Chidambaram says that both Delhi government and the Central Govt. are ill-informed in their understanding of sedition law. He strongly disapproves of the sanction granted to prosecute Mr Kanhaiya Kumar and others for alleged offences under sections 124A and 120B of IPC."

Will some one enlighten the readers on this issue?

— **Fr Michael G, Vasai**

## **Hang them soon**

The four Nirbhaya rapists should be hanged till death at the earliest so that other rapists may learn a lesson from this incident and not treat women like sex objects in order to satisfy their carnal desires. But what about the juvenile who has raped Nirbhaya too. Why was he left with just a light warning? Besides giving him a light warning, why has he been hidden in an isolated place where no one

knows where he is now? Is there an answer to this?

— **Jubel D'Cruz  
Mumbai**

## **Suggestions for AAP**

Melville X. D'Souza's letter: AAP marches on ... in The Secular Citizen dated 2 March, 2020 a very good second line leadership is necessary which can be made possible through brainstorming and hold party unit elections regularly and elections for the party president and deputy president and state party presidents and deputy presidents in a similar manner and also by permitting the older leaders to act as mentor leaders in the elected body and at the party level.

Other useful points are using the good points of the people or the parties merging into the AAP and even converting the bad points into good points and finding a common and useful point when two ideologies clash and using party referendums and grievance polls to identify and solve important problems and issues that need to be solved.

Besides this the AAP must enter into a coalition with like minded secular parties or prominent independents to help it come to power where it does not have much of a foot hold .

These then are the suggestions for AAP

—**Peter Castellino**

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# Exit Clapping From The Liturgy!

The call of the Archbishop of Lingayer-Dagupan in the Philippines to his flock to eschew the practice of clapping during Mass [UCAN 21 February 2020] has come a day not too soon! Indeed what this prelate has found good for his flock is obviously something very good also for every Catholic the world over, most specifically for Catholics in the Archdiocese of Bombay. Indeed, nowhere else in India does one come across the gusto with which clapping takes place in Bombay's churches, particularly at open-air Masses, turning the occasion into a *tamasha* of sorts.

## **Clapping and the Liturgy**

Archbishop Socrates Villegas' Lenten message that prevails upon priests to refrain from encouraging people to clap during Mass comes with a very valid reason: the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass is "a memorial of Calvary.... Who would have clapped at Calvary? Would the Blessed Mother and John the Beloved have clapped?" asks Archbishop Villegas, adding that clapping at Mass "if not nipped early, can rob us of the true meaning of Christian liturgy and worship." Indeed, nothing could be truer or more significant! Villegas who obviously smells of the sheep he pastors, is at pains to remind his flock during the ensuing Season of Lent that by clapping during the Liturgy which "is a commemoration of the violent death that the Lord went through," the community of prayer "becomes just an audience in need of entertainment; liturgical ministers become performers; and preachers become erudite toastmasters." That in essence is implicit of how much celebrant and congregation understand about the Mass.

In innumerable parishes, the Mass itself has become a Media statement



by Ladislaus L  
D'Souza

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of sorts – loud, raucous music, hymns that have no link with the Readings, homilies representing joke narration sessions, visuals projected on the screen merrily diverting attention from the Celebrant, the Altar and the Lectern, floral arrangements sticking out like sore thumbs in the middle of nowhere and so on! Thus, when neither the priest nor the people he is ministering to have understood correctly the Church's sentiment about the Mass being both "the source and summit of Christian worship" (*Lumen gentium*, n 11; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n 1324), what can be expected at any liturgical celebration is anybody's guess!

## **Lent in the city**

Lent is certainly the right time for Indian Catholics in general and those living in cities like Mumbai in particular to give 'clapping' a rethink and conscientiously do away with it. A certain parish priest was once so excited during an Easter night language Mass in the first year of his term that he exhorted the congregation thus: "Come on! Let's give him (the celebrant who was being transferred that year) a huge round of applause!" And, after a few moments, "*No! Don't stop clapping!*" even as he himself clapped like there was to be no tomorrow!

Bombay aka Mumbai per se is known to clap at Mass for just about any and every reason – from the parish team winning a football tournament to someone making her First or Fi-

nal Profession, it is the sports' stadium aura that perforce prevails. Even choirs and homilists at open-air Masses are cheered with a lusty clap, not forgetting the preacher of the 3-Hours' Agony Service "for putting the 'audience' through such a beautiful agony" (sic)!

## **Jokingly yours!**

Interestingly, Archbishop Villegas even has a word of caution for those who make use of the Post-Communion time for cracking jokes and generally turning the announcements into some kind of a variety entertainment programme. His Grace plainly points out that if there is a need for a post-communion message, the naming of particular persons or groups for whom the parish wishes to show appreciation for their work or for donations made to the church be done away with, insisting that the rendition of such appreciation must be done outside the Mass.

The goodly Archbishop's Lenten message underscores the fact that Lent, commencing as it does on Ash Wednesday, has a sombre and calm aura, the altar décor is restrained and the musical instruments, subdued, accentuating the fact that we need to "fast from pleasure and restrain our appetite. Let us add more abstinence to this sober season. Let us abstain from applause in church. **May this abstinence from clapping flow over into the other days of the year,**" which is very wise! Abstinence from clapping cannot conclude with Holy Week but must be maintained through the year, both liturgical and calendar. **Is anyone listening?**

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# **The Sabha Day 2020**

**was held on Sunday 23rd Feb 2020 at St. Pauls Parish grounds, Dadar East.** The celebrations started with the Holy Mass at 5.30pm.

Subsequently, the Sabha day program commenced at 7.00 pm with Mr. Sunil Pinto compering the Show.

The Chief Guest Mr. S Mervin Alexander-Jt. Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy and Guest of Honor Mr. Lancy D'Cunha – President of AICU were welcomed by our President Adv. Raphael D'Souza.

In his welcome address the president welcomed the gathering, which was more than 600 in number and applauded the members for their dedication and focus on taking the Sabha to a different level. He stressed the need to increase our membership to at least 1 lakh life members before 2022. He also thanked our sponsors and well wishers for their continued commitment and support for the programs of the Sabha.

The Secretary General, Mr. Vinod Noronha introduced the Executive Committee of the Sabha. Before presenting his report, He introduced the Jt. Secretary- Ms. Annette D'Cruz and the Jt. Treasurer -Mr. Gordon D'Silva specially commending their dedication and efforts in making this Sabha day a success.

The report gave details of the various programs conducted by the Sabha and its units in the last year, Under the 3 forums of the Sabha namely

1. Socio, Political & Civic led by Convener Vice President -Mr. Robert D'Souza.
2. Environment & Membership led by Convener Vice President- Mr. Benito Lobo.
3. Youth affairs led by Convener Vice President -Mr. Lawrence Fernandes.

Several activities were conducted by the Units namely on RTI, Co-ordination with Local MLA, Police, BMC, Civic Utility Providers. Environmental protection, Civic engagement addressing issues of public concern. Meet your Candidate Program with submission of the Charter of Demands for our Community, Felicitation of elected leaders. Assistance in registration, verification and updating of names on Electoral rolls. Procurement of Government documents i.e. PAN & Aadhar Card, Domicile & Income Certificate etc. Medical Camps, Blood Donation Drives, Medical Talks, Talks on Organ & Stem donation. Seminars on Wills & Succession and Investment & Taxation. Visits to Clergy Homes, Old Age Homes, Orphanages, Homes for Destitute and Hospitals. Academic Awards, Minority Scholarships Schemes, Career Guidance & Civil Services Career Awareness Seminar, Training Programs, Skill Development programs etc. Sports events & Youth participation in BCS FOOTCOM event. Membership drive etc.

The list of service by the Sabha members is endless and was applauded by all present.

A tribute in memory of Late Dr. Alan Saldanha, former President of The Bombay Catholic Sabha was read by former president- Mr. Gordon D'Souza.

The Sabha awards were presented to all the performing units. The Awards winners list is published in The Secular Citizen dated 24th February 2020

The Guest of honor Mr.Lancy DCunha – President AICU in his talk was very appreciative about the work of the Sabha and congratulated all the winners and encouraged them to continue with the good work.

The Chief guest Dr. S. Mervin Alexander- Jt Secretary, Dept. of Atomic  
(Contd.. on p. 12)

# WHETHER THE SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT ECONOMIC CRISIS IS FOR GOI TO GO FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH?

by Eric D'Sa

The Indian economy is going through a severe crisis: a slowdown as well as a structural crisis. In the words of the former Chief Economic Adviser, Arvind Subramanian, it is headed towards the ICU. Almost all sectors of the economy are in decline: the rate of growth of the national GDP has declined to 5.0%, and may go down further or stabilise at this level. The construction sector, one of the fastest growing sectors so far, is growing at 3.3% this year; agriculture is growing at 2.1% while the auto sector is declining continuously in absolute terms.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector too has declined, in turn raising the burden of non-performing assets of the banking sector as well as non-banking financial institutions. Also, exports have been declining in recent years, raising the crisis of current account deficit depending on crude oil prices. Credit from banking and non-banking sectors has been declining in the last few years; the Financial Stability Report of the Reserve Bank of India (2019) says that it is unlikely to increase in the next nine months.

All the above developments are impacting the poor in the country. They have had an adverse impact on the bottom 30%-40% of the population. The incidence of absolute poverty, which has been falling since 1972-73, has reversed and increased to 30% (4% jump). As the Human Development Report (2019) has shown, more than 44% of the Indian population is under the multi-dimensional poverty line. The poorest 50% population at present owns only 4.1% of the national wealth, while the richest 10% people own 73% of the total wealth in India (Suisse Credit 2019).

India has 15.2% population malnourished (women 15%) as against 9.3% in China. And 50% of the malnourished children in the world are in India. India's global hunger rank has gone up to 112 while Brazil is 18, China is 25 and South Africa, 59. In the field of education as per a UN report (2015), overall literacy in India is 74.04% (more than the 25% are totally illiterate) against 94.3% in South Africa, 96.6% in China and 92.6% in Brazil. Almost 40-45% population is either illiterate or has studied up to standard 4. Given the quality of education in India, the overall population is very poorly educated, with the share of 'educated

literate and sick, with poor nutrition and high morbidity. They are incapable of acquiring any meaningful skills or participating actively when new technology is spreading in the rest of the economy. This sub-optimal use of the labour force in the economy is not likely to enable India to achieve optimal growth with proper use of the national resources.

A major solution to the present crisis is to go in for inclusive growth. Here, inclusive growth does not mean only including all sections of the population in the growth process as producers and beneficiaries; it also means "shared prosperity". Since India has already committed to sustainable and inclusive growth at the UN General Assembly, India is definitely obliged to implement inclusive growth. The inclusive growth can occur by reviving aggregate demand and to do so the government has to put money in the hands of people at the bottom of the pyramid and not at the top.

unemployment' rising by leaps and bounds which is a big problem for the government.

However, this crisis needs to be viewed differently: a major reason for the crisis is that the growth process has marginalised the bottom 40-plus% of the population in the sense that they do not get a fair share of the economic growth, and are more or less deprived of productive employment with a decent income. These people have been treated as beneficiaries to whom some cash/kind grants are thrown at, but they have not been used as active participants in the growth process. Their potential has not been promoted with better education and health service..

Though the bottom population depends on the government for basic health and elementary education (and also for access to higher educational opportunities), the government spends just 1.4% of GDP on health (against the norm of 4-6% of GDP) and 3% of GDP on education (against the norm of 6-8% of GDP). As a result, these people are left hardly

further to improve the capabilities of the masses as well as their well-being the need is to expand productive employment opportunities for them. The main steps to expand productive employment for all in the economy should be made up of: a process of inclusion — expanding quality of basic health for all and ensuring quality education to all, which will by itself generate large-scale employment in the government. Having a well-educated and healthy labour force will ensure high employability; such people will be able to participate actively in the development process; having a well-educated labour force will help start-ups and MSMEs, in turn triggering a cycle of more productive employment in the economy. This will also improve the global competitiveness of our production units.

Employment guarantee schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

(Contd.. on p. 22)

YOU THE CITIZENS  
DECIDE:

# George Fernandes memorial in Mangaluru

Compiled : Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

Late George Fernandes hails from Mangaluru and is a revered person all over India for the hallmark integrity he always stood for never compromising highest principles in his personal and public life. There have been many promises from politicos to have memorials in his name, understandably there is nothing to show really. In the meanwhile to honour this son-of-the-soil who was a lofty leaders and union minister and a voice for the voiceless; a memorial on his mortal remains has been erected, according to local church customs, by his home parish church Bejai in Mangaluru city on Sunday, February 23, 2020.

Mangaluru Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha blessed and inaugurated the memorial in the presence of Rev. Wilson Vitus D'Souza parish priest Bijai, Late George's younger brother Micheal Fernandes and several local leaders, religious people and mem-



breadth; he did not neglect his roots, his express wish was fulfilled on February 2, 2019. His brother Michael Fernandes reverently brought from New Delhi/Bangalore a portion of the ashes, to church of St.Francis Xavier's at Bljey near his maternal home. The legendary 'George-the -Giant Killer' was sentimentally interred in the Church cemetery close to his grand

in St Aloysius High School. Imbibing strong Christian values, Fernandes is a unique Christian leader who strove to build a magnificent India. George Fernandes, left Mangaluru just after Indian Independence; this lover of Mangalore never ceased contributing to it's goodness and to it's people in incalculable ways. He along with great leaders A B Vajpayee and Abdul Kalam, were popularly known as 'Amar, Akbar and Anthony'. George Fernandes will be always remembered for his service to the nation and fellowmen everywhere.



bers of the public. An admired personality George Fernandes passed away in January 29, 2019, at the age of 88. The final rites were held in New Delhi and the ashes from the funeral pyre were also interred in Bejai cemetery. A true Canarite and son-of-India, admired all through it's length and

parents graves.

George Matthew Fernandes was born in Bejai March 6,1930, the eldest of six siblings, of John Jos Fernandes and Alice Martha Fernandes. He completed his primary education in St Francis Xavier School, Bejai and high school

During the period of the Emergency, even from prison, this brave warrior from Kanara contested elections from Bihar and won. He was elected nine times as a member of Lok Sabha and once as a member of Rajya Sabha. He was the first son of South Kanara to become the Railway Minister under the leadership of the late Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh. He was also Defense minister apart from several important positions he held. He is named as the father of the Konkan Railway, now providing a good link between Mumbai and Mangalore and down south, lakhs of people make a lively hood from this great service now. The Government of India conferred the Padma Vibhushan Award on him.

# Love Without Frontiers

As a Canossian student & now a Teacher at my Alma Mater...Canossa High School, Mahim,, I have always been impressed by the life & mission of our Mother Foundress, Magdalene of Canossa who was not just a great visionary but a woman who lived a life way ahead of her time. This article is my tribute to a woman who is responsible for the legacy..... Canossa... a name synonymous with quality education & an inordinate love for the poor.

**Ninette D'Souza**

by **Ninette D'Souza**

**U**nbounded love and self-effacing humility are the ingredients that form the alchemy of the persona of St. Magdalene of Canossa, whose life can be summed up in 2 virtues: **Charity in Humility and Humility in Charity.** Hers was a charity that never tired of reaching out to others and sharing the riches of life. Hence of the many titles bestowed on her from those I have come across, the one that appeals to me the most is, 'Weaver of Hope and Life' which completely sums up her persona.

"Live relying on God and were you to lose everything else you would find it all again in Him. These inspiring words were what Magdalene abided by all her life. Born in Verona on March1, 1774, of a noble and wealthy family, Magdalene Gabrielle was the 3rd of 5 children. Losing her father in an unfortunate accident at the tender age of 5 and 2 years later having her mother remarry, leaving all 5 children behind, meant that Magdalene experienced a rather harsh upbringing at the hands of an unforgiving governess. This was a childhood fraught with trials and tribulations both physical and emotional as Magdalene time and again stood up for all that was right in the eyes of God, unmindful of the punishment meted out to her. At the age of 15, she suffered a mysterious crippling illness from which she recovered just as miraculously. Through it all she found in God a fatherly love that never dies, and in Mary, Mother of Sorrows, she found a touch that heals. This time of pain and introspection led to her making a firm decision to offer her life to God as a Religious. Her Faith journey

was very demanding and often painful, yet she never abandoned her hope in God who led her to sanctity step by step. The Virgin Mother accompanied Magdalene on her journey of entrusting herself to God. In Mary she found comfort, support and answers to decisive choices.

Magdalene lived in a society that was dominated by the arrogance of privileges. She used the charisma of her noble upbringing to become the protagonist of a spiritual change. Leaving the luxury of her palace and the trappings of wealth, she set up base in San Zeno, 1 of the poorest districts in Verona. With some likeminded companions whom she affectionately called, 'Daughters of Charity' she engaged in the task of revealing God's love for humanity. This she did by giving of herself without reserve, for the salvation of the many who had been abandoned in their poverty, for those exploited by the egoism of the rich and for those oppressed by the reigning evils of a materialistic society in war torn Italy that was beginning to regroup. Besides her enlightening experiences of communion with God and the crucified Christ, the little joys made up of gestures of goodness and total self-giving to the least and the poorest maximised her potential to be a totally fulfilled 'woman and believer'.

When in refuge in Venice she was rewarded with a vision which paved the way for her Life's mission. She saw the Blessed Mother surrounded by 6 Religious, who were led 2 by 2 to a Church filled with children; youth and adults, then to a hospital and finally to a hall filled with bedraggled children. The women were instructed to attend to all 3 groups, while paying special

attention to the poor. Magdalene responded to the vision with alacrity and founded 2 Congregations of the Sons and Daughters of Charity.

"Perfect love is the bond of unity." opined Magdalene. She was a person of numerous and profound relationships, who was constantly in dialogue with all those who could help her start and consolidate her apostolic works. The goal of every person associated with the Canossian family as I see it, is to put in an extensive effort so that each Christian may become a witness that is capable of responding to the Faith... a zealous, burning Faith that will animate him/ her at all times and everywhere. She has taught her Sons and Daughters by example, and through them teaches us Canossian Educators, to seek dialogue among ourselves and with others. While working together is never easy, 'DIALOGUE' is a precious instrument in the search for the good of everyone, in carrying out God's work. As a Canossian Educator I have been privileged to learn that a simple question, a proposal or advice given in love is worth more than an imposition or judgement given in haste. Such attitudes free people, thus allowing for greater acceptance, even what has to be said, is not what the other person expects to hear.

As a Canossian ex – student and now as a teacher at my Alma Mater, I am filled with an inexplicable sense of pride and joy to have had myriad opportunities to learn and discover a woman who was a visionary beyond her times. Magdalene's perception implied a missionary spirit and her zeal to make Christ known and loved set aflame in 1808, is today manifested in 35 countries of the world. St. Magdalene deemed by then Pope (now St.) John Paul II as 'a prophet of charity' lived a life of truth and love.

Are these not the very qualities desperately needed in this 21st century to heal a bruised and broken world?

# Thalitha Kaum!

*"I believe that God's image in me is dishonored when I am ill-treated, beaten, abused and de-humanized."*

This sentence appears in the 'Women's Creed', recited together by the members of the Women's Commission of the Archdiocese of Bombay, at the start of their meeting. This prayer is to remind us of the divine presence in a woman's body, mind and soul. It also sums up the plight of women at present times. Against the backdrop of increasing atrocities on women in India, these collective voices raised against the ill-treatment of women, need to grow stronger and louder! Public apathy has to be shed to make way for concern for all God's children. Like the little girl in the Bible, we are not dead but sleeping and we need to rise and shoulder the responsibilities. When we hear the Lord's call, " Talitha Kaum!" (Little girl, arise) we need to emerge out of our comfort zones, to take his hand and follow him.

*".....And they laughed at Him. After He had sent them all out, He took the child's father and mother and His own companions, and went in to see the child. Taking her by the hand, Jesus said, " Talitha Kaum" which means "Little girl I say to you, get up!" Immediately, the girl got up and began to walk around. She was twelve years old, and at once they were utterly astounded....' Gospel of St. Mark 5: 40- 42*

So like the little girl we need to get up and start walking around as instruments of our Lord's compassion and mercy, touching people who have been wronged and de-humanized. For which one of us fails to believe *"that God's image in me is dishonored when I am ill-treated, beaten, abused and de-humanized."*?



by Vera Alvares

*ored when I am ill-treated, beaten, abused and de-humanized."?*

De-humanized! In our own country several cases of rape, sexual assault and murder inflicted even upon infants are regularly being reported with alarming frequency! Eve-teasing, kidnapping, abduction, trafficking of girls and honour killings, are rampant in our Patriarchal society. Stripping girls of their clothing in educational and medical institutions has been reported lately. But not one of these heinous crimes creates waves, let alone ripples in the human conscience! The violence and humiliation continues.....

The barbaric deeds remind us that the prevalent culture of trivializing females has prevailed all sections of society which is even now numb and deaf to the cries of de-humanized women. Is it because the social norms and traditions in India play a powerful role in fuelling violence against women?

Outrage at the brutality of the crimes, displayed through country-wide with innumerable candlelight processions and rallies have had little impact, leaving the foundation of this culture untouched. The archaic laws combined with a lack of political will to '**beti padao, beti bachao**' have led to '**justice delayed is justice denied!**'

Patriarchal social norms are upheld by those who benefit from them. Voices raised against crimes against women are muted or silenced by those who uphold the biased attitudes and behavioral norms for their own selfish gains. These vested interests in various garbs adopt ways and means to assure the gullible that ' India's rich cultural heritage which dictates these norms, has to be preserved at all costs' So those who cry themselves hoarse over the injustice of it all, are left to continue their lamenting, like

crying in the wilderness.

Not all of us have the privilege to be visible in this struggle to redefine women's rights or face the consequences meted out to a dissenter. But it is regrettable to see women themselves act to perpetuate the values that degrade women. Numerous advertisements and movies depict women as cheap objects of desire and feature females in provocative attire and with humiliating attitudes. Do they not realize that with this display, they kindle passions that are unleashed on any female unfortunate enough to cross the path of these predators?

On the positive side, due to the efforts of many writers, thinkers and social activists some laws have been tweaked to speed up the legal system. Some Indian States have increased the punitive measures, making it a time-bound exercise. But the corruption in high places and the attitudes and mindset of law enforcing agents have contributed greatly to denied or delayed justice. The low rates of conviction have emboldened criminals who now carry out the dastardly acts with impunity and at an increased frequency.

Despite some well laid out policies and laws to prevent 'Gender Based Violence', India ranks as one of the world's most dangerous countries for women, according to the Annual poll conducted last year by Thomson Reuters Foundation. In December 2019, the United Nations Conference focusing on violence against women urged them, 'Be angry. Ask your government for change.'

Well, the change has to come not only at the highest level, but also at grass-root levels through concerted and combined efforts of society and the administration. School text books should become conducive to liberal thinking, by showcasing the roles of Indians who broadened our narrow perspective and propagated equality among Indians. Policies and programs to support the socio-economic develop-

(Contd.. on p. 15)



### The Managing

(Contd.. from p. 7)

Energy. Mumbai also spoke about the Sabha activities and encouraged sabhaites to carry on.

The President then invited the chief guest and guest of honor on the dais to release the Souvenir.

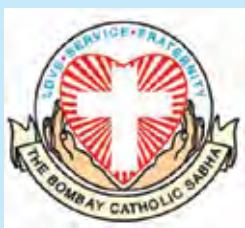
Mr. Gordon D'Silva .Jt. Treasurer proposed the Vote of thanks and the program ended with reading of the Preamble of the constitution and the singing of the Sabha anthem.





Committee

### A few photographs of Award Winning Parish Units



# New Mobile App – KOIN!

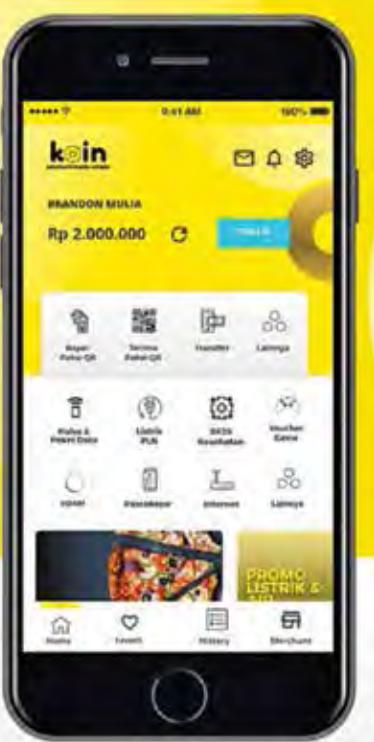
A new mobile app which aims to foster community among Catholic young adults, will launch in the month of March 2020; first in Washington DC, and then in other major metropolitan areas. (I hope such apps could be introduced in our Indian parishes).

The app, called KOIN, is named after the Greek word "Koinonia or Christian Communion"! Once it becomes activated, users will be able to join and create "interest based groups"; and plan events such as hikes, socials, and everything from jogging, embroidery, skydiving, mutual hobbies, and even spiritual talks, Scripture Readings and Eucharistic Adoration! Co-creator, Eric Niehaus told CNA:

"The app's primary focus is Catholic young adults. They are groups in need of community, as most are unmarried and separated from college friends. No one stops after Mass to talk, and very few attend parish events. This unfortunately means that we miss out on relationships, whether romantic or platonic, labor or professional – compare these engagements and activities with Protestants denominations, which keenly and fruitfully pursue them."

"Thus, the goal of creating 'community' amongst young adult Catholics is of vital importance. More than one in ten Catholics leave the Church for some reason or the other. So, I hope that KOIN, by the grace of Lord Jesus, by the love of God Our Father, and through the 'communion' of the Holy Spirit, bring Catholics into sound proactive relationships and contacts; and even prolific thinking and endeavors."

—Dr. Trevor Colaso,  
Bandra (W), Mumbai.



## Ingredients:

4 eggs  
2 onions, chopped finely  
2 tomatoes, chopped finely  
1/4 cup boiled peas  
1/4 cup French beans, chopped finely and boiled  
1/4 cup carrots, chopped finely and boiled  
3 mushrooms, chopped  
1 sprig of spring onion, chopped finely  
3 green chillies chopped finely  
1/2-inch piece of ginger, ground  
2 garlic flakes, ground  
Salt as per taste  
1/4 tsp pepper powder  
1/4 tsp garam masala powder  
3 tbsp butter  
2 tbsp cooking oil  
1 tbsp chopped coriander leaves



## Method:

Beat the eggs till frothy. Add salt and pepper powder to the eggs and mix well.  
Heat oil in a pan.  
Fry onions till golden brown.  
Add tomatoes and simmer for four minutes.  
Add green chillies and ginger-garlic paste.  
Add peas, French beans, carrots, mushrooms and spring onions.  
Simmer for two minutes.  
Add garam masala powder and a pinch of salt.  
Remove from the flame and keep the vegetable mixture aside.  
Heat another pan (preferably flat for the omelette).  
Put butter. Pour the beaten egg and spread like omelette.  
After a minute, turn the omelette.  
Spread the vegetable mixture on half side of the omelette.  
Garnish with coriander leaves.  
Slowly, turn the other half of the omelette to cover the vegetable mixture.  
Let it get cooked till the down part is golden brown.  
Now turn the omelette and let the other side also cook.  
Remove from the flame and serve hot.



# The Engagement Ring

## A Short Story

Valentine's Day, 2020, was over. It would have been a special Day to look back on, to recall the surprised look on her face, the flush on her pale cheeks, her sparkling grey eyes. It was the fifth day after VD and Martha, his beloved, had phoned to say she would be on the last bus returning to Calcutta.

Martha had been to visit her sick aunt at Kharagpur and promised Robin she would be back for Valentine's Day to discuss if she would be engaged to him on that day, or later perhaps.

"I can't commit myself right now, Robin – give me time. I'll let you know my decision when I return. You know I love you."

"Yes. I love you too."

He stood at the Esplanade bus terminal with a racing heart, literally counting the passengers as they stepped out on the dust road. There seemed to be more women and college-going girls, a few with their brothers and some with boy-friends, but no signs of Martha, the love of his life.

Robin reached into his hip-pocket to feel assured the gold Engagement ring was safe. He had planned to put it on her finger at the bus stop. The celebration could be later, whenever she would be ready for it.

He stared at the last bus as it circled the terminus and stopped, empty, a few feet away from him. The time was 10:15 p.m. Dark clouds were rolling across the night sky between flashes of lightning and thunder, blotting out the full moon with puffs of cotton clouds. A cold gust of wind whipped up the force of a cyclonic storm.

Robin rushed inside the bus with the hope of finding her sitting in a corner at the back of the coach as she often did on such short trips. Exhausted, he sat on the chair she would always reserve

for herself. He took out his mobile and dialed her number. The phone went on ringing. "The person you are calling is not picking up the phone. Please call again later", echoed the voice on the phone.

"Sir! The bus is not going anywhere," growled the driver.

"Sorry," snapped Robin getting up to leave when he found a colorful handkerchief on the floor of the bus. He picked it up, looked at it closely and yelled, "It's Martha's!"

Thinking the worst of what might have happened Robin, decided to phone her aunt she had been to visit.

"Robin, how kind of you to call, Yes, Martha visited me and left at noon," said the aunt, adding, "Is something wrong?"

"I'll ring you back, aunty."

In a fit of confusion, not knowing what to do, Robin rushed for an auto-rickshaw. "Ripon Street" he shouted at the man. It took almost fifteen minutes to reach Martha's home. The storm was howling around him as the lashing curtain of rain battered the windows of the auto.

He was dripping wet when he knocked on the front door. It took a while before the door swung open.

"Robin, what's happened? Come in," Martha exclaimed as she pulled him inside the room.

He fell into her arms as his head reeled around all that was before him; Martha, the love of his life, her mother, father, brother and the youngest sister. All he could say was, "Thank God, you are all right!"

After his frayed nerves were calmed, Robin wanted to know her story for not being on the bus, when her aunt said she had boarded it at noon. Martha smiled and took his hand as a sign of reassurance.

"Yes", she began, "I got on the bus and after a few moments later I remembered something very important, rushed out of the moving bus, lost my mobile – but, I got my work done, took a cab and got home! Happy?" Martha smiled.

"Now, let me....." Robin was cut short as he tried to say something.

"Stop!" said Martha, "hear me out first" and her hand went into her kurti pocket, taking out a small red box. It was a box with a gold ring she had made.

Martha put the ring on his finger, saying: "It's our engagement ring – I got off the bus to pick it up from the shop. We can have the party later."

"My dearest, I have an engagement ring also, wanting to surprise you with it at the bus stop. And it was my idea to tell you we could have the party later," he smiled.

"Wow! Great minds think alike. Now, we can both wear on an engagement ring."

The family stood around and clapped.

(Contd.. from p. 11)

ment of girls should be introduced in all spheres of public life. Literacy and proficiency in skills required to hold jobs should be encouraged at an early age. A comprehensive plan to address issues such as the treatment of women as the "weaker sex", in schools or universities, at work, in the family, in the community and in electronic media should be meticulously implemented.

The wake-up call, "Talitha Kaum" is directed at all humans who believe in building a life of dignity for our women. The ex US president Barack Obama has said, "You can judge a nation, and how successful it will be, based on how it treats its women and its girls." So how successful will this country be if half of its population is de-humanized and treated as inferiors? Therefore "We believe.....



BY MELVYN BROWN

**Boss** : We are very keen on cleanliness. Did you wipe your feet on the mat as you can in?

**New Employee** : Yes sir.

**Boss** : We are also keen on truthfulness. There is no mat

\*\*\*\*\*

A Russian while visiting India went for an eye check up. The Dr shows the letters on the board 'CZWXNQATAZ-KY' & asked.

**Doctor** : Can you read this?

**Russain** : Yes, he's my cousin.

\*\*\*\*\*

**A tourist asked a boat guide** : Do you know psychology, geography, geology and criminology?

**Guide** : No.

**Tourist** : Idiot you will die of illiteracy. Suddenly the boat started sinking then the guide asked the tourist: Do you know swinology, escapology away from crocodiology?

**Tourist** : No.

**Guide** : Today you will drowncology, crocodielogy will eat your bodycology and you will dievology because of your bad mouthocology.

\*\*\*\*\*

Earn Rs 1000 right away A man sits in a taxi and sees his wife entering a hotel with another man he asks the

**Driver** : Do you want to earn Rs 1000 right away?

**Driver** : What do I have to do?

**Man** : Bring my wife by the hair out of that hotel, here's a picture of her.

Aster a while the driver is seen dragging a woman by the hair. While kicking and beating her and puts her in the taxi.

**Man** : This is not my wife!

**Driver** : No! This is mine, hold her for me. I am going for yours.

\*\*\*\*\*

### This is height

**She** : Hey hi

**Boy** : Hi, is your father a terrorist? You look like a bomb! Hahahaha because it really works. By the way what is your name?

**She** : Jamema bin Laden

**BLOCKED**



\*\*\*\*\*

An Engineer Having No Child, No Money, No Home, Blind Mother, Prays To God.

God Says He Will Grant Him One Wish!

**Engineer** : I Want My Mother To See My Wife Putting Diamond Bangles On My Child's Hands, In Our New Bungalow

**God** : Damn! I Still Have A Lot To Learn From These Engineers.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Boy** : I hid something from you.

**Girlfriend** : What?

**Boy** : I am already married and have two child.

**Girlfriend** : Ohhh, you scared me! I thought the BMW is not yours.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Father** : Son, success is when your signature turns into an autograph.

**Son** : No dad, success is when my signature turns into Black Label or Chivas Regal.

\*\*\*\*\*

### JERRY IN THE HOUSE

**Girlfriend** : Baby, I am in big trouble.

**Boyfriend** : Why is that?

**Girlfriend** : I saw a mouse in my house.

**Boyfriend** : Oh, well, all you need to do is use a trap.

**Girlfriend** : I don't have a trap.

**Boyfriend** : Well then, buy one.

**Girlfriend** : Can't afford one.

**Boyfriend** : I can give you mine if you want.

**Girlfriend** : That sounds good.

**Boyfriend** : All you need to do is just use some cheese in order to make the mouse come to the trap.

**Girlfriend** : I don't have any cheese.

**Boyfriend** : Okay then, take a piece of bread and put a bit of oil in it and put

it in the trap.

**Girlfriend** : I don't have oil.

**Boyfriend** : Well, then put only a small piece of bread.

**Girlfriend** : I don't have bread.

**Boyfriend** : Then what the hell is the mouse doing at your house?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Teacher** : If I gave you 2 cats, and another 2 cats and another 2, how many will you have?

**Pappu** : Seven Sir

**Teacher** : No, listen carefully. If I gave you 2 cats and another 2 cats and another 2, how many will you have?

**Pappu** : Seven

**Teacher** : Let me put it to you differently. If I gave you 2 apples and another 2 apples and another 2, how many will you have?

**Pappu** : Six.

**Teacher** : Good. Now if I gave you 2 cats and another 2 cats and another 2, how many will you have?

**Pappu** : Seven!

**Very angry teacher** : Where do you get seven from?

**Very angry Pappu** : Because I already have one at home.

\*\*\*\*\*

### A woman went to a psychiatrist



Woman: I don't want to marry. I am educated, self sufficient and satisfied with myself. But my parents are asking me to marry. What should I do?

Psychiatrist: You will not doubt achieve great things in life. But sometimes things won't go your way. Sometimes your plans will fail. Then whom will you blame? Will you blame yourself?

Woman: "NO."

Psychiatrist: "yes.. that's why you need a husband.."

# Inspiration!

## Softening your egocentric edge

*"When ego is lost, limit is lost. You become infinite, kind and beautiful.*

-Yogi Bhajan

**ALL OF US** are a bit egocentric at times but a truly egocentric person does not consider others and is heavily focused on needs and desires of self to the point of not being able to recognise or consider the opinions of others or to empathise. They simply don't consider other people in their decision making. It is important to emotionally take care of yourself if you happen to be around an egocentric person and if you judge yourself as an egocentric person, we bring you few tips to shave down your ego and also the reasons as to why you must do the same

Egocentrism refers to someone's inability to understand that another person's view or opinion may be different than their own. It represents a cognitive bias, in that someone would assume that others share the same perspective as they do, unable to imagine that other people would have a perception of their own. Egocentric people can find it difficult to connect with others or maintain meaningful relationships for a long period of time. The bias toward self can result in an egocentric person struggling at home, at work and within their intimate relationships. The primary reason for these struggles is the lack of ability to empathise or imagine someone's perspective other than their own. As you can imagine, this might negatively impact things like: Trust, closeness, emotional attainment, decision making, collaboration and teamwork.

Since we all have an egocentric slant to some degree we can all benefit from softening our egocentric edge. Being self-focused can be a benefit when we are trying to stick to our values or when

we are feeling disrespected. However, when an egocentric mind-set begins to negatively impact our everyday behaviour it can cause problems. There are helpful tips for becoming less egocentric.

### **Slow down :**

Sometimes we make decisions based out of fear. Fear likes to pressure us and force us to think in a very 'flight or fight' way, even when we are not in the presence of danger. Slowing down can help you clarify what it is that needs to be decided, considering how your decision may impact those around you.

### **Take a chance :**

Sometimes people become more egocentric because they have learned through experience that they cannot trust others to be there for them. As you look around and notice who is standing by you, take a chance to let someone show you what they can do. Not only are you practicing walking through your fears but allowing someone who cares about you to get close.

### **Stay present :**

Just as some egocentric people have learned to not trust others, some have learned to never show vulnerability. Even if you make a decision and someone notices a misstep, keep moving. All of us want to live well and it never feels comfortable when others see our mistakes. Staying present allows you to practice navigating uncomfortable situations, learning that you can move through them and still be okay.

### **Accept all your mistakes :**

A great way to work on all your ego problems is by accepting your mistakes. Do know that everyone at certain times goes wrong and it is very

natural to commit a mistake. But being stubborn and selfish about it is not a good thing. It does not matter if you are a parent or a teacher or the boss, you should be humble enough to admit where you have gone wrong.

### **Stop being afraid of looking silly :**

One of the biggest mistakes egoistic people make is living in fear of looking silly. It is often associated with pride since proud people are always so worried about making a fool out of themselves. And if you have been feeling like this for a while, then stop right away. Don't worry about looking dumb. The more conscious you are, the higher your chance of looking and feeling silly in front of others. So the key way to becoming less egoistic is by being less afraid of such silly feelings.

### **Stop bragging :**

It is great to have very high self-esteem and feel great about all accomplishments but bragging is just foolish and not needed.

It is known for boosting ego. If you really have done something great in life, chances are people will come to know about it and will respect you all the more if they get to know how humble you are about it. So don't constantly talk about how great you were when you went up for that speech or presentation. The lesser you brag about yourself, the more humble and less egoistic you will come across as.

### **10 SURE FIRE SIGNS THAT YOUR EGO IS ON:**

- You feel happy when other's flaws are being raised.
- Playing the blaming game when things don't work as you wish
- Setting up unrealistic goals and hurting self when not able to accomplish them
- Feeling sulked even at small loses
- Having a feel of defeating everything rather than doing best
- Brag about self even before greeting
- Feeling jealous of others best performance
- Comparing yourself to weaker competent
- Do not become over confident
- Winning is the motto even in an argument

# After Taj What?

**Does anybody remember Hina Rabbani Khar?  
You mean Hina Khan the TV actress from Kashmir?  
No I mean Hina Khar the Pakistani politician.**

**P**ublic memory is short indeed. She was Pakistan's Foreign Minister from February 2011 to March 2013. When at the relatively young age of 33 she came India calling the country sat up, at least its male population did. They just couldn't get over how good looking she was, and how elegantly she dressed.

Déjà vu. Now we Indians are breathless about what Melania and Ivanka Trump wore on their 36 hour whirlwind tour of India. We Indians are still enamoured of the white skin, which is why we allowed a motley band of 200 traders to rule over us for over 200 years.

Enough now about the ladies and their apparel. What was so, or not so apparent to the discerning Indian about the Trumps visit? We were reminded that he had travelled 8000 miles one way, just to be with us. So sweet of him! Let us go through the fine print before drawing conclusions.

I made it a point to listen to his entire 30 minute speech at the Motera Stadium in Ahmedabad. The first 15 minutes of it was singularly devoted to expounding the achievements and merits of Prime Minister Modi. It was almost like a PR exercise of Doordarshan or the BJP IT cell. By this time I noticed people were beginning to leave the stadium. So how much of this was stage managed? Earlier the BJP had alleged that protesters at Shaheen Bagh had been paid Rs 500/- each to gather there. The question is now being thrown back at them. How much were these spectators paid for this spectacle?

While saying all the politically correct things about Bollywood and cricket Trump elicited a thunderous response from the fawning crowd (paid or otherwise). But when he referred to his visit to Gandhiji's Sabarmati Ashram and his impending tryst with his Samadhi at Rajghat the next morning, there

was not a murmur from the crowd. Had Gujarat forgotten its most illustrious son? As Jesus had said centuries ago, "No man is a prophet in his own home".

In the second half of his speech Trump got down to trumpeting what he had travelled those 8000 miles for. Like the East Indian Company before him, he had come as a trader. Like the Kabuliwala he too was here to sell his wares, or rather his military hardware. With much fanfare he announced his mega deal of 3 billion US dollars to sell his attack helicopters. Was he doing India a favour by doing so, or just promoting his own country's business interests?

He also said the politically correct things about Islamic terrorism, his Rambo style surgical strikes on Iran and Syria, and his appreciation of our space technology programme. In passing he did also refer to India's high tariffs on American imports, and the need to reduce red tape and bureaucratic delays. Do I recall somebody 6 years ago saying that he would give us more governance and less government? Just the opposite has happened, with India slipping further in the world index of the Ease of Doing Business. Let alone trade and commerce, ask the common man how

many new laws and procedures Modi's government has instituted since he assumed office. Is it any easier to get a ration card or an old widow's pension?

Let's move to the second day, the business sessions in Delhi. It was a damp squib, because there was nothing substantive in the three agreements signed. Was it worth the 8000 mile trip or the crores of rupees that India spent on this high octane visit?

Remember that Howdy Modi in Houston last year was a private event organized by Modi bhakts in America, while the Namaste Trump here was an official event at tax payers' expense.

Now to the sticky parts. Trump reiterated his willingness to be an "honest broker" between India and Pakistan, even though he has been repeatedly told that this was a bilateral issue that brooks no third party intervention. We know that Trump is due for re-election a few months from now. We also know that his predecessor in office, Barak Obama, was rather prematurely awarded the Nobel peace prize for his peace initiatives in Afghanistan that actually came to naught.

Now Trump is negotiating a peaceful withdrawal from Afghanistan with his bête noire the Taliban. The USA hasn't learnt a thing from its Vietnam misadventure. So Trump is eying a huge success like an Indo-Pak peace accord that would automatically get him a Nobel nomination and a second term in the White House. Those 8000 miles would then have been well worth it.

Let's move on. Why does Trump repeatedly refer to the high tariffs on Harley Davidson motorcycles that are but a small fraction of American

(Contd.. on p. 19)

(Contd.. from p. 18)

exports to India? He didn't shed tears when General Motors shut down operations in India. Trump also wanted to push dairy production, walnuts and chicken legs.

Thanks to Padmavibhushan Dr Verghese Kurien, India is the world's largest producer of milk, largely from buffaloes. So why this push? Not so long ago BJP's Bengal head, the vitriolic Dilip Ghosh had declared that only Indian cows were sacred. I have also heard devout Hindus say that they eat beef when they go to America because those cows are not sacred. This begs the question, "What kind of cattle is Trump trying to bring into India?" And what happens after they go dry? Will he hand them over to Yogi Adityanath's gaushalas, or transport them without danger of lynching to Bengal and Kerala where slaughter is permitted? Without answers to these questions I reserve further comment on the cows, be they sacred or profane.

Almonds in India come from California, and our walnuts come from Kashmir. Would import of American walnuts be the last nail in the coffin of Kashmir's economy? If so, I would say an emphatic "No" to them. Now to the chicken legs, not the chick's legs. Westerners prefer white meat, like chicken breast, and discard the legs that are piling up in cold storages. In contrast, we Indians, especially Punjabis, love their tangri. So importing cheap American chicken legs could be a win-win situation.

From body parts to body language. There are both similarities and contrasts in Trump and Modi. For one, they are separated by the letter E. Trump's favourite is HUGE, while Modi's is HUG. Trump has unsmiling eyes and a set jaw. Modi has doting eyes and an open mouth. I would leave readers to interpret the body

language accordingly. Then comes the signature. I have not seen Modi's handwriting, but I do find something odd in Trump's. He seems to use a thick nib, and does not use cursive writing. His signature is very jagged. How would a hand writing expert interpret this? I see him as thick headed, jagged edged and not a well rounded personality.

Lastly, to the title of this piece, "After Taj what?" It is the done thing to take world leaders to visit the Taj, lay a wreath at Rajghat and have a Presidential banquet at Rashtrapati Bhawan. What else does modern India have to showcase? We tom-tom our ancient culture but what unique, world class achievements do we have to showcase? Even Rashtrapati Bhawan and the Taj are vestiges of our now despised British or Mughal rulers.

There are three indigenous areas in which India is a world leader that could verily be showcased to visiting dignitaries. I have already mentioned milk production. Amul is a people's co-operative that has left multi-national corporations gasping. We should showcase our space technology that even Trump referred to. We are doing it at a fraction of the cost of what NASA is doing. Thirdly, we Indians have emerged as world leaders in computer software. Can we not showcase this soft power? Isn't it time that we looked beyond the Taj?

And beyond what Hina, Melania or Ivanka were wearing. Why wear our hearts on our sleeves when we have so much more up our sleeves?

\* The writer is a seasoned political commentator.

(Contd.. from p. 4)

dazed, the government had fulfilled some of the chief items on the RSS wish list.

The protests sweeping India are essentially a fight back, however delayed, against the ongoing process of creating a Hindu nation. Until yesterday, it appeared a foregone conclusion. Today, we are not so sure. The ruling party and its affiliates believe the protests do not have the cachet they appear to have, that half a million people marching on any day are but a fraction of 1.3 billion that almost all Hindu India is with the government. The ruling party and its affiliates believe they can disregard not just the secular consensus and Constitution holding India together but continue the march towards a Hindu nation forged by fear and force.

When a government starts to make the case for some to be considered less Indian than others, subtracting first one identity and then another as if they were Jenga blocks, the structure turns unsteady. Either the union dissolves, or it is kept together only by an iron-fisted, authoritarian regime – the kind that unleashes violence through the police, as in Uttar Pradesh, or through party auxiliaries under police protection, as at JNU. The danger posed by the BJP is that it is both preparing itself to be that regime and guiding India into an instability from which it may never recover.

Institutions of India's liberal democracy need to be strengthened and must assert themselves in defence of the Constitution. Young people have recently reminded the country that freedom is best secured in the custody of enlightened citizens and when it is protected for all. Indeed, the idea of freedom can acquire shape and form in the lives of our people only if they can live as equal citizens under the law.

Somewhere along the line, the institutional response to challenging situations has been found wanting. After all, the cause of human dignity must be our purpose in perpetuity.

The point is, religion is in our faces, either way – we might as well try and resist majoritarian bullying from within. Instead of bending around the BJP and living in fear of this "Hindu voter" who lives to show everyone else their place, non-Hindutva politics and movements can engage deeply with the diversity of religious life and voice progressive values there. It's worth the effort.

Only Hindus can prove this proposition – and the depth of their own radicalisation – wrong. If they do not, we know what awaits.-

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**7076. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1975), 5' 7", Wt. 55 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., MBA., working as a Senior Executive. Contact email : tednvir@gmail.com

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# CORONACARE. LIFE LAUNCHED

An online facility for anyone who is stressed about Corona Virus to talk to someone, was launched at the campus of the Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI) at Hyderabad on 26th February. Responding to the increasing number of persons affected by the disease, the platform coronacare.life was launched by Dr Sr Victoria along with Rev. Dr Mathew Abraham, the President and the Director General of CHAI.

Fear and loneliness are the worst enemies of human being in a moment of crisis. If we have a way to overcome fear and loneliness, human being would most likely overcome crises situations of life. This is the rationale to set up coronacare.life as more and more people across the globe are getting infected or affected by Corona Virus - COVID 19.

What began as a local outbreak of influenza type attack on a group of people reported first on 31st December, 2019 in Wuhan, China, has till today the 27th of February, affected 82,000 people and has taken the lives of 2800+ people, spread across 35 countries. Every day the numbers are on the rise. With every continent, except Antarctica, affected and more cases in Europe and Middle East, World Health Organisation which had declared it a global health emergency is planning to upgrade it to the level of a pandemic. For the first time since its outbreak, there were more cases reported from outside China on the 26th of February, signifying the growing global impact.

While every global agency is working overtime to find a solution to the Corona Virus disaster, there is no single agency or country that has all solutions. The situation calls for creative interventions from various non governmental agencies, having its access to the people, specially in the field of psycho social support. Billion Lives, a tech company with social passions based in Bangalore, India, headed by

Mr John Santhosh, spearheaded the initiative by developing the necessary platform and tech solutions. People can come to the site for live chats, audio and video calls, apart from communicating through mails.

Project Vision, a Claretian social mission, based also in Bangalore coordinated with various national networks in India to bring together the required professionals who were willing to provide voluntary services. Sister Doctors' Forum of India (SDFI) and Kerala Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPS) provided the required expert volunteers. Rajagiri Hospital specialists Dr Jacob and Dr Neethu along with Dr Sally John from MGIMS, Wardha, Maharashtra, trained the volunteers. All this background work was coordinated within ten days time, as Billion Lives worked on developing the platform.

Fr Jojo cmf, working in Claretian Publications in Macau, China, kept inspiring us with the information on the great need for such a forum for the huge numbers who are quarantined within China. Fr Jijo also organised to get volunteers who could speak Chinese, both Mandarin and Cantonese. Project Vision managed to get volunteers who could communicate in German, French, Spanish and Italian, along with most languages in India.

The site [www.coronacare.life](http://www.coronacare.life) is active and accessible. There are about 30 professionals from social work and psychology background ready to take your call. Doctors are ready to answer you medical queries. People might just want to get information or they want to share their worry and concerns or they are affected in some way like being quarantined and so they want to openly speak with someone.

More partners and volunteers are expected to join the group. This platform can also be used for other emergencies if and when required.

—Fr George Kannanathanam

(Contd.. from p. 8)

Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) will also increase employment. The assets generated under MGNREGA will expand capital formation in the rural economy, thereby raising the labour-absorbing capacity of the mainstream economy. Such a strategy has multiple advantages: First, it will raise incomes and the well-being of those who need it most urgently and are at the bottom of the pyramid. Second, it will raise effective demand rapidly, which is so badly needed in the economy today to raise economic growth. Third, growth will be equitable and sustainable.

There was a need for the Union Budget to raise expenditure on health to at least 5% of GDP and expenditure on education to at least 6% of GDP or close to it. There was also a need to push up the rural infrastructural development to enhance capabilities and opportunities of the masses and not just to promote corporate units. There was also an urgent need to promote agriculture by raising investment in agriculture and not just cash transfer to farmers (cash transfer provides relief to them no doubt, and does not raise productivity of agriculture which needs large public investment); and to facilitate credit flow particularly continuous working capital, to labour intensive sectors. Unfortunately, these steps are missing in the recent national Budget.

How the government could have raised or can raise resources to meet the above expenditure is a subject by itself but was doable. This needs a separate article by itself for you the Citizens to decide.

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# Each for Equal

The status of women in India is a sort of a paradox. On one hand she is deified, on the other hand she is mutely victimised, suffering the violence inflicted on her by her own family members and society. In addition patriarchy prejudices against the female and social customs complicate the roadblocks in her struggle for survival. Every individual is unique and no less than any other person. Then why this discrimination on the basis of gender? Is it justified? On International Women's day 2020, let's focus on a special group of women, who have been horribly discriminated, yet have in a small way achieved each for equal. They are the widows of the Archdiocese of Bombay.

The Indian widow is subjected to innumerable miseries not due to her fault but due to ignorance, superstition and social customs deeply rooted in a patriarchal society. Truly they silently suffer a gamut of emotions even now as we live in the 21st century. When an Indian woman loses her husband there are 8 dehumanising customs that choke her existence. Firstly, overnight she becomes a **non-person**, she has to renounce her identity, is stripped of her dignity as well as inheritance rights. Secondly she has to wear white clothing to signify she is to be in a constant state of mourning for the rest of her life. Remarriage is prohibited and in some cases mourning rites are to be observed. Thirdly in some parts of the country Sati or sacrificing her life on her husband's funeral pyre is the unwritten norm. Thanks to the British who passed a prohibitive act on this regressive practice.

Fourthly, overnight a widow is looked upon as a curse and an untouchable. Her presence at a family function is considered unlucky. Fifthly she is

confined to the home to live in solitude. In some parts of the country she often covers her face with *ghoonghat* or purdah before relatives or house guests. Sixthly she is despatched to live in an ashram or eat vegetarian food. Seventh she is forbidden vanity, no enhancing makeup, a close-cropped hairdo, and no bangles or jewellery. Finally some widows are forcibly sent to live in ashrams like in Vrindavan and perhaps even forced into prostitution to eke out a living. All in all they become victims of social hate and violence. Thus widowhood in India has often been described as a definitive and tragic moment in a women's life.



by:  
**Dr. Jeanette  
Pinto**

Strangely the Indian **widower** is not discriminated in any way like the Indian widow; so how are we an equal country or an equal society? Must not everyone have the same rights, opportunities and responsibilities? While widows often speak of feeling abandoned, deserted, or marginalized, widowers express spousal loss as one of "dismemberment," as if they had lost something that kept them organized and whole. Widowers often equate the death of their wives with the loss of their primary source of protection, support, care and comfort. They describe it as: "Being lost without a compass". They may experience ambiguity about their emotions but surely don't widows also feel the same? Are they not human beings?

International Women's Day was started in 1911 supported by a million people. Today more than a century later we are celebrating this day with a focus on - **Equal world is an enabled world**. Women and women's groups have consistently struggled, fought and faced many challenges against a whole range of barbaric injustices. Indeed they gradually but surely have come a long way.



Here is a living witness to and women and community. **Hope and Life** is an Association of Catholic widows who belong to the various parishes in the Archdiocese of Bombay. It started 35 years ago with a motley group of widows at a retreat, who with the help of Bishop Bosco, felt uplifted, were encouraged and strengthened by the Word of God. They discovered that Jesus has a special place in his heart for widows. (Ex. 22:22; Deut.10:18; and several others)

Realisation gradually dawned on them that widowhood is a vocation for a meaningful life. It is not about being rich or highly educated - it is about being real, humane, humble, kind, compassionate, strong and able to share their lives with the lives of others. These widows do not allow in self-pity, nor mourn and whine; rather they share their miseries and woes, and reach out to help, support and enable the other to live a joyful life. They are pro-life in their attitude which helps to empower their sister widows.

Their motto is to 'learn from yesterday, live for today and hope for tomorrow'. They have over the years touched the lives of hundreds of widows in Bombay. Indeed they are witnesses of *Each for Equal to be enabled*. The Hope and Life Association has truly been a community for change, who have helped transform the society they live in. Thirty years ago, these widows were vulnerable victims, today they are 'Each for Equal', truly an inspiration as 'Victors' in the new India we live in.

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