

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

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Haven't We Taken the Worst Aspects of Democracy & Western Culture

by Don Aguiar.

India is mired down with caste system, over-population and has assimilated the worst stupidities of the democratic system. It's hard to get anything done in India. And the bribes are just awful. It's not going to be easy for India's Modi whose aim is to follow the example of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew. Indians are just as talented, but the system and the poverty and the corruption and the crazy democratic thing where you let anybody who screams stop all progress mires India with problems that Lee Kuan Yew didn't have. And these problems are always not easy to fix.

An example.

The Korean steel company, POSCO, invented a new way of creating steel out of lousy iron ore and lousy coal. And there's some province in India that has lots of lousy iron ore and lot of lousy coal. Which is there's not much use for. And this one process would take their lousy iron ore and the coal and make a lot of steel. And they got a lot of cheap labour. So POSCO and India were made for each other. And they made a deal with the province to get together and use the POSCO know how and the India lousy iron ore and lousy coal. And 8 or 9 or 10 years later with everybody screaming and objecting and farmers lying down on the road, or whatever's going on, they cancelled the whole thing. Lee Kuan Yew would have done it in (Singapore).

India is grossly defective because they've taken the worst aspects of their culture, allowing a whole bunch of activists and protestors to scream and stop everything. And so they have taken the worst aspects of democracy and they forged their own chains and put them on themselves.

A lot of educated Indians lap up everything the media sells to them, because they have been weaned on a largely dominated English education system which makes them a deracinated lot who are tourists in their own country. They go and blindly copy everything that the west does (interestingly, the good they copy pales in comparison to the bad they copy), even take pride in learning their own identity from the west and agree with the clichéd narratives the west has about us, but somehow become very aggressive when someone in the west makes a genuine criticism because it is beneath their dignity to take it well, but at the same time they want the white man's validation all the time and pride themselves for speaking his language. How very convenient.

Hasn't India adopted the worst aspects of western culture? Crass consumerism, extreme individualism, hedonism, drugs, troubled marital life, selfishness in interpersonal relationships, promiscuity. But Indians have never adopted their discipline, their work culture, largely corruption Free State of affairs in public and private life, their passion for research and innovation, punctuality, traffic sense etc. Because inculcating positives into yourself requires effort, negative does not. Indians are awesome when it comes to taking the easy way out.

Hasn't Indians taken the worst aspects of democracy? They have reduced democracy to be something for the sole purpose of conducting elections, and buying of MLAs, MPs and Co-operators post elections, stalling parliaments, useless protests, "off the people, for the people, buy the people" remains our motto.

The vote bank managers get elected by promising the impossible to their

voters, and then bankrupting the state treasury to give freebies to them in order to be re-elected and stay in power. Or the civil servants, who have put the entire country in the straight-jacket of regulations and permits and red tape, and bleed the country dry with their inefficiency and corruption. Or the paid activists, who will try to scuttle any development project, be it a dam or an industry or nuclear plant, under the garb of environmental norms. Or a huge part of the general public whose recommendation of everything is "government should do this, government should do that".

Socialism is the state's control on the means of production via licensing, regulation, permits and inspection. It is a vampire that has slowly drained India's blood and has left it an emaciated and rotten country for much of its seventy years of post-independence existence. This cancer gives rise to starvation, unemployment, corruption and poverty. After independence, India adopted a license and inspection controlled socialist economy, where production was tightly controlled, crony capitalism was the norm and shortages and long queues for everything was a part of daily life. Till 1991, Pakistan had a higher standard of living than India, a fact that is not mentioned very much. **That's what socialism does, makes you poorer than even your incompetent neighbour whose main income was and even today is, foreign aid.**

No one wanted to touch China with a ten foot pole in Maoist times, but after it began its reforms in 1980, the rest they say, is history. It was only after India opened up its economy in 1991 under PV Narasimha Rao that India shrugged of years of misery and set forth to the journey of becoming the

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THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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Reviewing private sector banks

A couple of days back, the newspapers carried a report which says, the Reserve Bank of India's internal working group (IWG) reviewing corporate structure of private sector banks, has suggested sweeping changes in bank ownership. **One of the suggestions was, permitting large corporate and industrial houses to promote banks.**

Giving licences to non-banking houses to operate banks may be a welcome step. Over the years, several new banks have also opened up and doing good business for themselves. **But, are we missing the point? How is it going to benefit the customer?**

Basically, all banks are operating with public money. **It is the people who lend money to the bank to enable them to run their business.** How is the people's money going to be protected? In the recent past, we have seen how banks have gone bust, either on account of mounting NPAs or the promoters have been involved in some scam. **These rogue banks rather many other banks as well, have come to believe that the money parked by the public in their banks, belongs to them, and they can do whatever they feel like with that money.**

Banking business is not like any other business enterprise which is subject to uncertainties of the market. Banks

are not to be like corporate Houses listed on the Stock Exchange, subject to market fluctuations. Banks need to understand that people are entrusting their Life's savings with the bank and expect their money back when they need it. **This is where the Reserve Bank & the government need to step in.**

Increasing the security cover to Five lakhs is not the answer. They need to protect hundred percent of the money the people have deposited in the banks, including interest whether on savings or Term deposits or whatever. They need to understand their lives are at stake, as we have seen in the recent case with the PMC Bank, among others. **People have deposited their Life's savings in banks like PMC Bank in the hope of getting that little bit of extra interest.** And, ultimately end up losing their entire savings in to the bargain, leading to some dying of heart attacks, some committing suicide while others struggling to make ends meet. **So, where do we go from here? People are gradually losing faith in the banking system, but do they have a choice? Human lives are too precious to be lost in such a manner.**

—Melville X. D'Souza
Malad West - Mumbai

(Contd.. from p. 2)

fifth largest economy in the world.

Educated economic illiterates endorsing the Nehruvian and presently Modi mind-set failed to comprehend a few simple facts:-

*It's the businesses that create employment, and not degrees. Scores of colleges can't make any change unless there are businesses to employ the graduates coming out of them, failing which they will be forced to work for a pittance. Too much government regulations and controls kills the economy and makes the country barren for any sort of real business activity. **Mere job creation without any business activity is a sham designed to fool everyone, and will end up bleeding the economy as the remuneration will be paid from the exchequers pocket.**

* A country becomes economically strong by its manufacturing power, may it be USA, Germany or China. In absence of industrialisation, the educated working age population is reduced to a horde of unemployed degree holders, who have to beg, borrow, and steal their way to finding greener pastures. India's economy is largely driven by its service sector, and till it improves its manufacturing potential, it cannot join the ranks of the greats. **And if Indians naively think that they become great by exporting software engineers, construction workers and nurses**

to other countries, India needs a lesson in reality. But then, India is a country of educated fools who thinks that a child's success in life is determined by his board exam score.

* You cannot tax a country to prosperity. You cannot make the poor rich by making the rich poor. Wealth cannot be distributed without creating it first, because the biggest problem of socialism is that you soon run out of other people's money.

* Service sector cannot accommodate every graduate churned out by the numerous colleges and institutes. Degrees matter, but skills matter more.

* Government cannot create money/wealth, it can only allocate it. We indeed have converted democracy into mobocracy where 51% quash the rights of the remaining 49%, where their elected candidate appropriates all the state's benefits to them, keeping the others miserable. **In India, democracy has become secondary to elections and vote banks. If this is not the worst aspect of democracy that we have adopted, what is?**

* Means of production in the hands of the state leads to inefficiency, unemployment, stagnation and corruption. India even today is a power deficient country because power generation is solely in the hands of the state. In license permit raj, production control resulted in shortages, shoddy consumer goods being available. The buying power of the middle class remained limited and that of the lower middle class and that of the poor, non-existent.

* Government intervention in the market should be to promote businesses, not curtail them. In India, local wines can never dream of competing abroad because they are taxed heavily, making them exorbitant even in the eyes of the domestic consumers.

* The huge percentage of doctors, engineers etc. in US of Indian origin that a lot of Indians quote with pride, is not a matter of pride, **it's a matter of shame. If our best and brightest cannot reach their highest potential and have to migrate** to start all over again, something is wrong with our society and not the people who migrate. They have burnt their blood becoming what they are and they deserve the full right to go where they want to achieve the highest for themselves. Referring to this as "brain drain" is stupidity. The real drain is our polity and public administration, which does not even have the competency of building decent schools or public toilets. **Sundar Pichai, Vinod Dham, Sa-beer Bhatia etc. are a slap on our face, because they could never have been what they are had they stayed back, because the civil servant and the political masters have perfected the art of aborting dream children, via reservations, quotas and regulations.**

The leftists and the neta babu kleptocracy has kept India poor by preventing its industrialisation, which has ensured that rural India remains on the brink, employment opportunities remain minimum, a farmer can be destroyed by just one bad harvest, and then has to migrate with thousands like him to a city which can be halfway across the country, to spend the rest of his life in a slum working menial jobs. **This is the progress brought to this country by "pro poor" leaders and their voters who sell their country's future for the next five years for a few thousand rupees and some booze and biryani.**

India will continue to languish as long as our policymakers are filled with thugs and vote bank managers and our voting public is full of daru chicken crowd. **No amount of "make in India" or "digital India" will change the scenario as long as India doesn't abandon socialism and promotes meritocracy.**

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‘Advent’

The season of preparing for Christmas is called ‘Advent’ and begins on a Sunday four weeks before Christmas. The Christmas season ends on January 6.

As Christians celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the story of how this happened is told in parts of the Holy Bible known as the gospels. There are four gospels telling the life of Jesus Christ. The gospel of St. Luke tells us the most about his birth, and the gospel of St. Matthew tells another part of the story. The gospel of St. John tells us that Jesus Christ came from God to bring His Word or message to all people.

—*Jubel D’Cruz,
Dombivili, Mumbai*

Release Fr. Stan Swamy

Fr. Stan Swamy’s arrest on the night of October 8, 2020, has caused a stir among many people in India, where he has spent more than 70 years of his life relentlessly fighting for the rights and values of the people. His arrest is a violation of human rights and the case against him is totally fake and fabricated. Fr. Stan Swamy whose full name is Fr. Stanislaus Lourdasamy, is a veteran tribal rights activist who has worked for over fifty years in Jharkhand fighting for the rights of the Adivasi community. He was vocal on the discrimination against the tribal and Dalit communities in the state. The false charges against this 83-year-old ailing priest aim to discredit intellectuals, legal professionals and social activists who raise their voices for the rights of the poorest of the poor people. It is nothing

but a complete concoction and absolute falsehood that is being propagated against him.

Fr. Stan Swamy is not a terrorist as the country has pictured him. His arrest is not fair and he should be released under any circumstances.

—*Jubel D’Cruz,
Dombivili, Mumbai*

World Toilet Day : a failed mission

World Toilet Day, November 19, is a United Nations international observance day, to create awareness of the abysmal sanitary conditions of 4.2 billion people and the open defecation of around 673 million people worldwide. The situation in our country is no better, where millions continue to defecate in the open, despite the tall claims of the Central govt of having constructed over a crore toilets in rural areas. In Goa too, around 72,00 bio -toilets were to expected to be constructed in 2018, to make Goa Open Defecation Free (ODF) under the ‘Swachh Bharat’ cleanliness drive, but what we see around is a different story altogether. Tourists in the Calangute –Candolim beach belt were recently seen defecating in the open, because the contractor in charge of the public toilets was overcharging them. The toilets are also in a deplorable condition with broken doors, poor maintenance and left in a stinking condition, despite a whopping Rs 2 crore spent for the construction of each toilet under the Swadeshi Darshan scheme of the central govt. This is the sad state of affairs in a state officially declared to be Open Defecation Free (ODF).

—*A. F. Nazareth,
Alto Porvorim, Goa*

Joe Biden’s Mumbai Ties!

We all know the ancestry (Chennai-India) of vice president Kamala Harris! But what about president elect Joe Biden connections!

When Joe Biden, then US vice president was in Mumbai in 2013, he revealed that at an event there, that some of his distant relatives reside in India’s financial capital! Also at another gathering in Washington DC in 2015, Biden had expressed after becoming a senator in 1972, that he had received a letter from one Biden in India. And learned that his great, great, great, great grandfather, George Biden was a captain, and had worked in the East India Company! After retirement he decided to settle in India, and married an Indian woman!

The letter was written by one Nagpur-based Leslie Biden, whose grandchildren still stay there since 1873. Biden also said that someone provided him with some details, including the phone numbers of the Bidens in Mumbai. Besides, Leslie’s granddaughter, Sonia Biden Francis, a Nagpur psychologist told PTI that Bidens in Nagpur, Mumbai and everywhere were elated with Joe Biden’s victory. She also stated that Leslie Biden was the manager of Bharat Lodge and Hostel, and of Bharat Café in the ‘orange city’ (Nagpur), before he died in 1983. Also, while reading the Illustrated Weekly of India, of March 28-04 April, 1981, Leslie had come across an article about the US senator Joe Biden.

And if I may add regarding family intimacies: “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from Whom every family in Heaven and on Earth is named” (Ephesians 3:14-15).

—*Dr. Hazel Colaso,
Memphis, TN. USA.*

Jesus Christ, Priest-Prophet-King

Everybody loves a baby! A baby warms the cockles of one's heart like nothing else can! A baby may be helpless in that it is totally dependent on its mother for its sustenance. And yet there's no gain-saying the fact that a baby has everyone concerned around its little finger, either hanging on to each little sound or gurgle that escapes its cherubic mouth or being kept on their toes with its wailing, earning itself the title 'prince of wails! And all this accompanied with thoughts like 'what will this li'l angel one day be?' 'after whom will this bundle of joy take, I wonder?' 'will our baby become someone important some day?' This may have been the case also with the holy babe of Bethlehem, Jesus, whose coming at Christmas time every year [and then at the end-times!] is eagerly awaited! Little might those who saw him in the manger have realized that the Second Person of the Godhead



by Ladislaus L D'Souza

whom they were beholding with their earthly eyes was born to be priest, prophet, prince of peace, and king of kings, bringing to mind us as it does one of the most significant Christmas carols heard, viz., "What Child Is This...?" which is based on a poem titled "The Manger Throne" written by an ailing Englishman named William Chatterton Dix in 1865. At one sweep Dix takes us through the purpose for which the Christ-child came to birth: to be king over fallen humankind and to save it by means of his very death. Scripture however is very clear about the fact that Jesus' role as Saviour-king is intertwined with the priestly and prophetic dimension of God's plan of Salvation for His human creation, thus giving Christmas an aura of incomparable significance that can be experienced only in the measure in which we understand the Solemnity of Christ The King. A Feast of tremendous significance, its solemn observance brings to a close the Church's

Liturgical Year, paving the way for the commencement of a New Liturgical Year with the observance of the First Sunday of Advent.

Christ's Threefold office has deep Scriptural Roots as we shall see below - *prophet*: Deuteronomy 18:14-22; *priest*: Psalm 110:1-4; *king*: Psalm 2.

Essentially known as the 'hypostatic union', there are but two natures in Christ, i.e. *divine* and *human*. Further, his triple role in our redemption, known in Latin as *munus triplex*, isn't a figment of human imagination but held as hardcore Christian doctrine rooted in both the Old and New Testaments by most mainline churches including the Presbyterian and the Lutheran. This triple function of Jesus manifests itself in ways and means unique in itself, not least significantly in Jesus' own words: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Jn 14:6). As 'priest' he is *the Life*, as 'prophet' he is *the Truth* and, lastly, as 'king' he is *the Way*.

The Word (Logos in Greek) is Light. As the true Light (Jn 1:1-18), the *prophet* Christ enlightens humankind - "*If thou wilt be perfect...come follow me*" (Mt 19:21). Thus the term 'messiah', meaning "anointed one", is closely linked with the concept of the threefold office. While the office of king is the most commonly associated with the Messiah, his role as *priest* is also prominent in the New Testament, being most fully explained in Hebrews [ch 7 to 10].

Foundational element

If Easter is the *raison d'être* of the Christian Faith and Christmas its foundation, the roots of both run deep in the Kingship of Christ. The Solemnity of Christ the King was introduced by Pope Pius XI on 11 December 1925 to combat the disturbing growth of the secular, atheistic ideology that had the



world's rulers and the wealthy dangerously fall prey to the notion that we humans could do without God. In the given circumstances, our observance of this feast makes us aware of the freeing power of Christ that is working among us for the uplift of the poor and the needy, bringing a breath of hope into a world of misery caused by human greed on the one hand and the Corona Virus that has brought the world to its knees.

Says Pius XI: "If to Christ our Lord is given all power in Heaven and on Earth; if all men, purchased by his precious blood, are by a new right subjected to his dominion; if this power embraces all men, it must be clear that not one of our faculties is exempt from his empire. He must reign in our minds, which should assent with perfect submission and firm belief to revealed truths and to the doctrines of Christ. He must reign in our wills, which should obey the laws and precepts of God. He must reign in our hearts, which should spurn natural desires and love God above all things, and cleave to him alone. He must reign in our bodies and in our members which should serve as instruments for the interior sanctification of our souls, or to use the words of the Apostle Paul, as instruments of justice



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unto God" [*Quas primas, n 33*].

In the Incarnation, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became man precisely so that he'd sanctify us in his Life, thus restoring the link between divinity and humanity broken since Eden; envelop us in the mystery of the Truth that he is from all time and proclaims it, even dying for it; and be the Way by which he'd lead us back to himself - which brings us to the significance of our baptism. Baptism is a sacrament that enjoins on us the responsibility to give flesh in and by our own lives to both the Incarnation and the Resurrection amidst the reality of one's personal situation vis-à-vis the situation of the world around us. This involves the Alberionean principle of the Pauline charism, viz. to live and give to the world, Jesus Master, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Catholic theology looks at Baptism not so much as a symbolic sign of being a believer but an essential means by which a person is incorporated into Christ thereby becoming not merely a member of Christ's mystical body the Church but, with the Lord's own grace, an alter Christus – another Christ, in virtually the same way and measure as Christ himself became man at the Nativity in Bethlehem. Significantly, it was Pope Pius XI who hailed Francis d'Assisi as alter Christus! Poor by virtue of his choice of vocation, he was rich in the Christian life in that he gave flesh to the Gospel in and through his own life to the point of sharing first in the stigmata of his crucified king and lord and then in his nakedness in death, insisting that he be laid bare on bare earth, his baptismal mission—encapsulated in his mandate to his friars: "Go preach the Gospel, if necessary use words"—fully accomplished. With and to Jesus Francis could justifiably say: "I have glorified you on earth: I have finished the work you entrusted to me" (Jn 17:4) à la Paul who declared: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith! From now on there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge,

will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but to all who crave His appearing...." (2 Tim 4:7-8).

Perfection, a Christian ideal

The parallel between Baptism and biblical anointing is striking. At baptism we are anointed with oil, just as in the Old Testament, priests, prophets, and kings were anointed with oil when assuming office. The ancient Romans considered the priest as 'pontifex', i.e. bridge-builder, a link between the Creator and His human creation. What Christmas celebrates in the incarnation is the fact of human entry into God's divinity made possible by Jesus as confirmed by the mandate he gives us in the Gospel: "Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 4:58). The Solemnity of Christ's kingship thus comes through as the feast of a striving for godly perfection on the part of man, with God Himself going the whole hog of coming to earth for our sake as man. Can anything match that!

Fully human and fully divine, Christ surmounted the snares of human temptation, demonstrating unequivocally that in him, human nature was merely assumed, not absorbed. Hebrews puts it most succinctly: "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin" (4:15). Thus Christ the *priest* fully understands human nature and is therefore able to empathize with us, even as he serves as *pontifex* between falling, failing humankind and its Maker. The Church teaches that "the Son of God....worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin" (CCC 470).

Christ's Kingship, the focus of Christmas

The key to the renewal of human society as a whole is the recovery of the deepest meaning of Baptism: to become a *priestly, prophetic, and kingly* people. One could dare say that in the

perfection related assertion of Jesus is evident the compelling presence of the *prophet* and *king* elements as well. While Jesus responded with alacrity to the call of his baptism to be *prophet*, *priest* and *king*, what is our response as baptized Christians to Peter's reminder: "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light" (1 Pet 2:9)? Perhaps we might shy away from being referred to as *prophet*, imagining that a prophet is someone insane, unhinged! Or as *priest* or *king*, arguing that we lack the holy-holy royal-priestly trait!

Further, Jesus himself could sound like a prophet of doom when he says: "Do you think I have come to bring peace to earth? No, I tell you, but division" (Lk 12:51). Insane man, this Prophet Jesus! And yet, the discerning will see in this statement a challenge of sorts: peace is to be earned, not taken for granted. G.K. Chesterton says that in an upside-down world such as ours, the prophet is one who stands on his head so that he might see things aright! Indeed, even as Jesus says that his kingdom is not of this world, he makes a concession in terms of giving us peace on our earthly sojourn thus: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give to you" (Jn 14:27). Indeed, wasn't it peace the angels sang about when they heralded the news of Jesus' virgin birth that holy, silent night—Emmanuel: *God-with-us* born to be king over all, his dominion extending from the perfection of the heavenly realm to the imperfection of a world dominated by imperfect man, the peace emanating from his reign being nothing like what the world can ever give (cf Jn 14:27)!

May the wondrous love of Christ the Lord of light and life, the Prince of peace eternal and the King of Kings illumine our minds and hearts during the ensuing Season of Advent and Christmas!

Inching Towards The Direction Of International Students Day

International Students Day will remind the responsibilities of all the students in the world to raise their voice with regards to education and student allied issues. This special day is an opportunity for every student to draw attention to the society about student activism. Students are the future. These are the people and the minds that are going to take our countries forward. No matter their background or their field of study, we should always celebrate those who want to further their knowledge, with a lot of students going to great lengths to do so.

Students across the world specifically in the best student destination countries such as the United States might have witnessed the International Education Week, which is an integral part of celebrating the International Students Day. The day is celebrated to ensure education is available and accessible to all students. In some countries whereby living costs and wages are low, it can be a huge challenge for students to then adapt financially to a new country where it may be more expensive. All of this can put extra strain on the student's shoulders, which is the last thing that you need when you are trying to achieve good grades. When you take all of this into account, it is not difficult to see why we should celebrate all students, especially those who have gone to great lengths in order to attain further education.

Every year, students from every part



Jayanthi Subramaniam

of the world celebrate November 17 as the International Students Day and thousands of students show a lot of enthusiasm to participate in the organized events. On this special day, how many of you know the importance of International Students Day. World's Students' Day is the perfect opportunity for us to pay honor to the students of the world. From all corners of the globe, students are working hard to achieve their career goals and make a difference. Some students leave their families and travel far and wide to have a place in a university that will help them to have a better life and provide for their loved ones. This is something that we should definitely honor and celebrate.

While student life is difficult for everyone, there is no denying that international students face a number of challenges. This includes homesickness, cultural differences, currency differences, financial troubles, and language barriers. Whereas a lot of lo-

cal students are able to fully concentrate on their studies and making new friends, international students have plenty of other barriers that they need to overcome as well. When most students are able to go home to see their family and friends, students from overseas do not have this luxury. Also, a lot of home students get financial aid in the form of loans and grants, which is not always available to those that have come from abroad.

Students display and celebrate their acts of social responsibility and have gatherings on campus to showcase the causes they volunteer for, take part in gleeful competitions, indulge in student food, gossip about the student unions and complain about their student fees. Although decidedly not as elevated or as relevant to mankind as the activities of the forefathers of World Students' Day, these gatherings attract a good deal of involvement, donations and attention for organizations and charities.

If you have a student at home, or if you yourself are among those who were privileged to be selected by universities to pay a fortune for courses which will most likely never be applicable to the career path you will ultimately choose, then spend this day thinking about student life, with its ups and downs, and about how you would like future generations to experience these few life-defining years.

There are a number of different ways that you can celebrate World Student Day if you are a student yourself. You



(Contd.. from p. 8)

can spend some time with other students and lift one and other up. Make sure you let them know that you have noticed how much work that they have put in! It is always good to be there to support one and other. After all, you know better than anyone else the struggles that they may be going through in terms of their revision and their exam preparation. If you know any international students, it would be lovely to make an effort to make them feel at home. You could decide to put a hamper together with traditional gifts and treats from their home country. This could include different sweet treats, local drinks, and even a local magazine. Anything that you can get your hands on!

You could get in touch with their home friends and family members and ask them to put together a letter that you can put into the hamper as well. Of course, making this contact depends on how well you know the person. If you don't know them very well and they are private, they may feel like you are prodding around in their personal life, so make sure you

judge the situation appropriately. If you are a teacher, university professor, or you work with students in any way, you can use this day as the celebration that it should be. Make sure that your students feel special, and also look for ways to encourage them to be the best that they can be.

You may want to look into different ways that you can help international students. For example, you could decide to be a host family? This is a family that essentially takes in a student as a member of their family for the duration of their studies. You will give them shelter, food to place, and somewhere to call their own. This can make a massive difference. Not only does it help the student in question to get established in a new environment, but it also makes the settling in process a lot more comfortable for them. When they get home after university, they aren't going to be alone. They will have people to turn to. You can also help the student with their English and understand the nuances of the way of life in the place that you live.

There are disabilities and learning

struggles, yet there are also cases whereby people do not have access to education or their family life prevents them from reaching their full potential. You could spend World Students' Day looking into the different ways that we can help these people so that they are able to get the education that they have always dreamt about. There are charities out there and volunteering your time, money, or both will be a massive help.

We would also recommend that you spend a few minutes from your day raising awareness about World Students' Day. You can take to social media and share some interesting information, facts, and figures with your friends, followers, and family members so that they can get on board with this critical day. After all, if everyone simply posts one message or does one thing to raise awareness, students around the world will feel appreciated and we will be able to do more for those who need it most.

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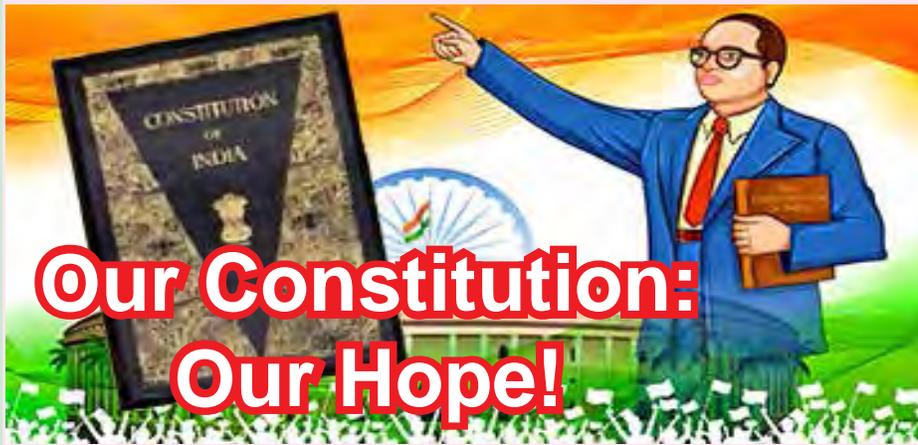
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Our Constitution: Our Hope!

On November 25, 1949, in a passionate speech to the Constituent Assembly, the visionary Dr B.R. Ambedkar, the father of our Constitution, gave three unambiguous warnings: the need to give up the grammar of anarchy, to avoid hero-worship, and to work towards a social – not just a political – democracy! Ambedkar was, at that time, perhaps visioning what India 2020 would be like and of how these three aspects could not only destroy all that was sacred in the Constitution, but could also mean the dismantling of the democratic framework which a new surgent India was just born into and had committed herself to preserving.



BY FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH
SJ

In that famous speech Ambedkar said, “If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what must we do? **The first thing in my judgement we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives.... where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for (..) unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but the Grammar of Anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned, the better for us. The second thing we must do is to observe the caution which John Stuart Mill has given to all who are interested in the maintenance of democracy, namely, not “to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with power which enable him to subvert their institutions” in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship**

is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship. The third thing we must do is not to be content with mere political democracy. We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it, social democracy”.

On the following day, 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution of India – which is one of the most forward-looking and all-embracing ones in the world, thanks to the excellent and diverse women and men who comprised the Constituent Assembly. The Constitution besides being sacrosanct to every citizen of the country is the bulwark of fundamental rights and directive principles, which are a prerequisite for any healthy democracy. The Preamble, with its emphasis on justice, liberty, equality and fraternity; and its commitment to India being and remaining a “sovereign socialist secular democratic republic” spells out the vision and the intrinsic character of the Constitution which with its minute details, is undoubtedly a unique one.

Unfortunately, in these past few years, the nation has witnessed, several efforts to not merely to tamper with the Constitution but to negate its essence and even to destroy some of its key dimensions. The current BJP/RSS combine, including some of their ministers have gone on record saying, they will be changing the Constitution; already on Friday 20 November the hashtag #HinduRashtra (with the equivalent in Hindi) was trending on twitter with clear demands including bringing in a pan-India “anti-conversion” law. There are con-

stant statements for the establishment of a ‘Hindu State’ by 2025(the centenary of the RSS); the annihilation of the minorities particularly the Muslims and Christians. There is talk to abolish the words ‘socialist’ and ‘secular’ from the Constitution; to have a ‘Common Civil Code’ and that the rights of the minorities guaranteed in the Constitution should be scrapped immediately!

The Judiciary has the fundamental responsibility to safeguard the Constitution. There have certainly been some landmark judgements. In January 2018, four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court (including Justice Ranjan Gogoi, who later became the Chief Justice of India) held an unprecedented Press Conference asserting that unless things are set in order and that the Government stops interfering in the judiciary, “*democracy will not survive in the country!*”

Some of the recent judgements on matters of national importance make every thinking and patriotic citizen to not merely wince, but to hang one’s head down in shame. The judgments include the two verdicts on the Babri Masjid-Ram Mandir issue which are blatantly communal and on all counts go against the secular fabric of the country; the one on the Raffaele jets corruption scandal which defies all logic, despite hard evidence; the contempt of court one foisted on Prashant Bhushan for his two tweets, one against the current Chief Justice and the other against some of the former CJIs and of course the ridiculous ‘token’ punishment meted out to him; the blatantly one-sided judgements given to crony capitalists even as they continue to destroy the nation for their own profits. Then there are the whole range of contentious issues which need urgent verdicts, but for obvious reasons are just postponed; these include the abrogation of article 370 and 35A in Kashmir; the plight of the migrant workers; the draconian ‘Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act - UAPA 2019 (Amendment Act)’ and several others. Then the Apex Court can always do a suo motu on issues ranging from speech and expression to blatantly anti-Constitutional policies of the Madhya Pradesh Government like ‘love jihad’ and ‘Cow Cabinet’.

(To be contd...)

150 years Echo of 'Apostolic Carmel' in Mangalore

-Compiled: Ivan Saldanha Shet.

The Apostolic Carmel (AC), a pioneer order of nuns in India, with Mangalore as its early base, celebrated 150 years echoing joy. Well known in Mumbai and other centers of India, the AC echoes all around the globe. November 19, 2020 was the red letter day marking the community's arrival in India at St Ann's Convent, Near the old sea port of Mangalore, the cradle of the Apostolic Carmel here. It was on November 19, 1870 when the flame of "Carmel for the Missions" was passed on by Foundress Venerable Mother Veronica of the Passion to burn brightly on the Indian soil. Rosario Cathedral in Mangalore is the historic spot of ancient times.

On 19 November 1870, it was that three pioneering Apostolic Carmel Sisters along with three Cloistered Carmel sisters arrived by boat from Calicut and set foot on the soil at Mangalore, India, embarking on their mission of the empowerment of girl children through education which even in these times of a critical pandemic continues to grow. It is noteworthy of the three Cloistered Carmelites, one of these, Sr Mariam Baouardy has been canonized by Pope Francis on May 17th, 2015 as St Mary of Jesus Crucified.

The historic day, dawned with an intonation of ancient 'Te Deum' a song of Thanks giving, sung in every community for the Morning Prayer. A Thanks-giving Mass at the Cathedral offered

by Mangalore Bishop Most Rev. Peter Paul Saldana along with 60 other priests added joy and festivity to the event.



The cultural extravaganza opened with a chorus followed by a traditional welcome dance. The Provincial Superior Sr Shamita welcomed the dignitaries and the gathering. A befitting felicitation was accorded to Rev. Fr Pius James D'souza OCD, Fr Melwyn Pinto SJ, Rector of St Aloysius College, Fr Alfred Pinto, Rector Rosario Cathedral for their unstinted support for the Congregation. Sr Maria Nirmalini, Superior General; Sr Agatha Mary, former Superior General and Sr Jacintha OCD too were honoured on this occasion. Bishop Most Rev. Peter Paul Saldhana was also felicitated for his pastoral care. These recognitions were a token of gratitude to all their predecessors.

To commemorate this historical day, the previous day, 18th November, the founding mothers and the members of the congregation who are enjoying their eternal joy were fondly remembered with a requiem Mass. Thereafter, a Prayer Service was conducted in the cemetery during which Sister Nirmalini, the Superior General, Sister Ag-

atha Mary the former Superior General, Sister Maria Karuna and Sister Shamita the Provincial Superiors of Southern and Karnataka Province laid wreaths on the graves of Superiors General.

The Superior General of the Apostolic Carmel Sr Nirmalini in her message urged the sisters to go down memory lane of 150 years in gratitude to the Almighty and to leap into the future with a commitment to the least, the last and the lost. Bishop most Rev. Peter Paul Saldana in his message applauded the noble work of the Apostolic Carmel Congregation, with a special mention of how their mission of educating girls in India has worthily contributed towards the upliftment of the society.

The cultural programme had in it, 'an



Echo of the Yester Years' which was enacted powerfully and sentimentally through a musical drama. The dances portrayed culture and traditions of the places touched by the pioneering sisters who spread the Carmel Mission. Sr Linet DSouza proposed the vote of thanks. The jubilee anthem composed by Sr Clarice A.C and sung by the choir at the end was another beginning to the next milestone of Carmel Mission which has spread the great light in the region and taken to all corners of the world from the flame lit here, leading towards new hope, new light and new direction for the future world.



Celebrating To Pollute

The anti-track doubling agitation seems to have given a fresh ray of hope to many political stalwarts and their protégés who view these protests as a timely break for them to claw their way back into recognition in the state's politics.

If ferrying a sea of humanity to the protest site is to be seen as that prerequisite for making a political comeback, well, they certainly have made a point!

Hence it comes as no surprise that 'supporters' of these aspirants largely outnumbered the agitators who were more conspicuous by the genuine concerns they nurtured for Goa, and Goans at large.

For those who continue to find themselves in a state of political hibernation, the revival of their political fortunes depend on how well they exploit such situations.

Chandor witnessed such a 'vain parade' of political support last Sunday!



by Pachu Menon

But it was indeed a welcome relief to have the protestors refusing the political leaders present at ground zero the 'honour' of taking centre stage amidst the standoff with the local authorities and railway officials over rail double-tracking.

Meanwhile, the new wave of protests that have rocked Goa has certainly unsettled the government which has all along maintained that people here have this uncanny habit of opposing developmental works no sooner than they are announced.

But if the sheer enormity of these demonstrations is a true indicator of the public anger against government projects which, it claims, will not only

endanger the unique bio-diversity of the region but will also displace the local inhabitants; Goans are perfectly justified in raising their voices against such proposals which will destroy their beautiful land.

For that matter, Goans settled in other parts of the country and abroad have in no way lost their right to identify with the land of their ancestors and express fears over its destruction that the CM has to blame the proverbial 'foreign hand' for the protests.

It is the new generation of Goans who are raising the banner of revolt against the government and its dismissive ways.

Gone are the mute and submissive ways which characterized public oppositions to various insensitive proposals of the government in the state in the past.

Today the people are more 'enlightened' and have woken up to the fact that public resistance is the only way the government can be persuaded to make a re-think on such unpopular projects.

The deferment of work at the Davorlim railway level-crossing by the railway authorities as a consequence of the anti-coal stir for instance!



However it is the steadfastness shown by the agitators in the face of some stern counter measures adopted by the government against the stir that merits a special mention.

Moreover it is alleged that by stifling the voice of the public the government is only imperiling all democratic norms in the state.

A feeling that the activists are robbing the state of economic advancement by their act of resistance against all developmental projects envisaged needs to be dispelled at the earliest. The people are not against development. On the contrary, proposals that aim to boost the economy of the state will always be welcomed by the populace.

It is the fast disappearing forest land and the destruction of natural habitats, the flora and fauna of the region, in the wake of the earlier projects that make the locals question the veracity of the new ones envisioned.

With many of the states banning the use of firecrackers this Diwali citing twin problems of COVID-19 and air pollution, it is expected that the festival this year would be sans its customary glitter and the staccato of the bursting crackers.

The imposition of the ban on the sale



(Contd.. from p. 12)

or use of all kinds of firecrackers by the National Green Tribunal between November 10 and November 30 in all cities and towns across the country where the average ambient air quality in November was 'poor' or 'worse' ensures a 'silent' Diwali this year.

Although none of the towns or cities from Goa figure in the list of the 122 cities put out by the NGT, a fair amount of skepticism over people in the state going all out to celebrate the 'omission' during this Diwali cannot be ruled out either!

But the bursting of firecrackers is not just restricted to Diwali. They find extensive use in all festivals celebrated by various communities across the country. Even birthdays, marriages and other events are incomplete without the staccato of exploding crackers announcing the occasion.

Why, for that matter, even victories in any election necessarily calls for the bursting of crackers!

It is more than evident that the edict by the Supreme Court to ban or restrict the use of firecrackers is primarily to reduce air pollution and the health related issues associated with it.

However, for a state that has been garnering attention for the spate of agitations aimed at saving the region from wanton destruction of its natural resources leading to environmental degradation, it is indeed ironical that its citizens are extremely distressed when restrictions are imposed on festival gaieties and are quick to blame the government for its insensitiveness to traditions.

The green campaigners should have been upping the ante against the obstinacy of sections of the society for whom forgoing any celebration tantamounts to a cardinal sin. These obnoxious habits were more than obvious even when the nation gradually came out of the lockdown but did not ease restrictions completely.

Is it just not the inconsistencies and incongruities by the government which should be inviting the wrath of the populace!

How justified is the demand by the public for the government to change its stance on a number of projects deemed anti-environmental by the populace when a majority of them pressing for the changes are conspicuous themselves by their blatant disregard for the tenets that govern environmental conservancy!

Besides, with the pandemic at its peak, do we really have a cause to celebrate!

..***.

Church in India bids farewell to outgoing Apostolic Nuncio

Bangalore 20 November, 2020 (CCBI): The Church in India paid a moving tribute to the outgoing Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Giambattista Diquattro, on Tuesday, 17 November, 2020, through a virtual session, attended by 120 Bishops from this country. After almost four years of diplomatic and pastoral service in India, Archbishop Di-quattro will be shortly taking up his new apostolic mission in Brazil.

Presiding over the online meeting, Most Rev. Filipe Neri Ferrão, the President of the CCBI and Archbishop of Goa and Daman, recalled the meritorious services of the Nuncio to the Church in India. "The CCBI is grateful to His Excellency for the excellent services rendered to the Church in India and to the CCBI," remarked Archbishop Filipe Neri.

His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, the Archbishop of Bombay, who felicitated the Dignitary, recalled his personal and brotherly relationship with him.

In his words of reply, the outgoing Vatican Ambassador expressed his thanks to the Bishops in India. "I had the grace to live useful and fruitful moments of dialogue, discernment and communion with the Bishops of India. Thanks to your dedicated, generous, competent support and collaboration," said Archbishop Giambattista.

Most Rev. George Antonysamy, the Vice President of the CCBI and Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore, welcomed the gathering. Most Rev. Anil Couto, the Secretary General of the CCBI and Archbishop of Delhi, gave a vote of thanks. Most Rev. Prakash Mallavarapu, Archbishop of Vizhakkattanam, led the virtual gathering into an initial prayer and Most Rev. Thomas D'Souza, Archbishop of Calcutta, said the concluding prayer.

On behalf of the Bishops of India, the President felicitated the outgoing Diplomat with a 'virtual' garland and bouquet. The online gathering concluded with the final Apostolic Blessing imparted by the outgoing Nuncio.

Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro had been holding the post of Apostolic Nuncio in India and Nepal since January, 21, 2017. Before coming to India, he had been a Nuncio in Panama (2005-2008) and in Bolivia (2009-2017).

Rev. Dr. Stephen Alathara
Deputy Secretary General
Conference of Catholic Bishops of India

Air Pollution: towards an Ethical Way Out

by Dr M. D. Thomas

We are passing through difficult and trying times of the human history. There has already been a lot of suffering due to climate change and environmental pollution. Now, there is a respiratory virus 'corona', covid 19, around that has put the entire world almost upside down. The world in general and India in particular is feeling the terrible pinch of the same, in diverse ways. It is true that several laudable attempts across the globe are on for evolving an effective vaccine against it. But, all possible curative and preventive measures have to keep going on war footing till this menace, along with other connected ones, come under a clear control, obviously so.

Well, the creator has given us a beautiful creation to live in. This very same creation is the environment for us to have our being. As rational beings, we humans are supposed to be taking good care of the nature around us. But, by and large, we have not been rational enough in our behavior towards the environment. May be, we are too intelligent for ourselves and foolish for others, the country and the society as well as for the nature and the environment. No wonder, we are paying a heavy price for the same, to the point of being helpless victims of the environment, tragically so.

We know too well that air is one of the basic components of life. We are also aware that without air life is not possible and without clean air a healthy life is next to impossible, too. All the same, we are too much in the habit of

polluting the environment and the air, by throwing dirty, harmful and poisonous things in to the open. We seem to feel so much at ease in spitting and doing away with other types of waste in the public space, anywhere and everywhere, very much like animals. We celebrate our festivals in such a way that we leave our neighbourhoods, roads, market places and parks filthy and stinking.

If this is the way we humans behave, it



is not surprising that we find air quality in India much above the danger level, as Air Quality Index indicates. As a result, polluted air is the fifth major killer in India. The capital city Delhi has become the 'capital of foul air' and appears to be bent on breaking its own records as well as of the entire world. According to the survey, living in Delhi is understood to be reducing the span of life by 10 years, if not more, too. I think, it is high time we humans realized that many of our habits are not sustainable, at all. A lot of our behaviour and tendencies do not really suit human beings in any way either.

The logic is simple that 'if we pollute the air, the air will pollute us' in return, will make us sick and suffer very badly and even kill us. Therefore, as good caretakers of the environment, we

have to 'handle the air with care'. But, unfortunately, as of now, it does not seem that this good sense is coming to us very easily, just like common sense is not very common. Obviously, such a sorry state of affairs is not only idiotic but is an insult to the dignity of the human life as well as of the creator, who is the owner of that life.

We Indians are never tired of boasting that India is a religious country. It is true that almost all the major and minor religious traditions of the world are present in India. All these traditions put together, we have at our disposal a very high volume of beliefs. The amount of time and money we spend in pious instructions, devotions, observances and pilgrimages are really beyond measure, too. But, all these ceremonies and performances do not seem to produce much result for life. It appears that religion in India is more part of the problem than of the solution.

To say the least, religion and religions in India do not seem to have equipped us with the basic good sense required for keeping the atmosphere clean and healthy. I think, this is a major setback for our country and is a matter of serious concern. No doubt, it requires being attended to, on a priority basis.

I think, the way we have understood religion and the way we engage with it require being revised, from the angle of the concerns of our collective living. Religion is not a mere passport to go to heaven. Religion has to produce a vibrant faith that is capable of making 'good human and social beings'. Faith has to motivate the humans towards behaving in an ethical and responsible manner, in the public space in special. Faith has to be understood



(Contd.. from p. 14)

on realistic terms. It has to necessarily contribute to the quality of life and its surroundings. In other words, faith has to build up in human beings good values that have the power of sustaining the health, wellbeing and wellness of human and other forms of life on earth.

A 'good, enlightened and responsible conscience' is the need of the hour. Faith is not all about heaven and life after death. Faith has to be situated 'here and now', in life on earth, in the creation, in the environment and in the good air. Faith has to be in oneself, in others, in the country, in the society and in the creator, too. Such an applied and reasonable faith would develop positive thinking and awaken a sense of duty towards life. Manifestly, only clean thoughts can make a clean environment with good air possible. 'Spiritual awakening' is the most substantial measure in combating the menace of environmental pollution. Only self-motivated persons are capable of behaving in a responsible manner. Only accountable behavior can contribute to sustainable living. A strong 'ethical fibre' is required for mending the unclean habits that have become part of our lives.

'Cleanliness is next to Godliness'. The sacred is not compatible with anything that is unclean. Our search for God will never reach its intended destination in unclean premises and surroundings. We have to live our faith here on earth, in the given environment, in such a manner that we are able to spontaneously think for

the good health and wellbeing of others, of the country, of the larger society and of the entire creation. We have also to learn to collaborate with people of good faith in all communities, in view of making the social living clean, healthy, harmonious and happy. Well, polluted air is the wakeup call for the leaders and believers of all faiths in India, religious and not religious, to stand up on their feet and act in favour of the wellbeing of one and all.

Only such a larger and down-to-earth faith can keep us 'ethically, spiritually and humanly fit' and make it possible for the environment and the air around us to be clean and dignifying. Only a religion, a faith and a spiritual awakening that is grounded in an empowered conscience, along with its ethical fibre, can ensure the sustainable living of the humans in the creation and in the environment. Good air and environment has to take the shape of a major campaign with the application of all possible means for arriving at the intended effect. That would amount to state that we humans are called upon to commit ourselves to building a better tomorrow for our country and beyond, by mending our foul ways today, in terms of the environmental and air pollution that is the burning the lives of the humans as well as is the burning concern of our times.

The author is Founder Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi, and can be viewed at 'www.mdthomas.in' and 'www.ihpsindia.org' and can be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.

Dr. Vivek Murthy!!



Dr. Vivek Murthy, 43, an American-Indian Physician was named Co-Chair of President elect Joe Biden's new COVID-19 Task Force! He had served as Surgeon General under Barak Obama. This Harvard and Yale alumnus was born in the UK, but his family hailed from Karnataka, India. Here are brief extracts of his speech:

"If life would be governed by probability, I would be growing rice, tamarind and coconuts in a poor farming village in South India. Like many of you, my very own journey was a pretty unlikely one. I would be barely scraping together the resources to feed my family and to clothe them. But my father in the midst of bracing poverty found himself dreaming of a brighter future in America!"

"Nearly forty years ago my parents managed to come to America with little money and few connections; but with high hopes for a brighter life for themselves and for their children, my sister and me. They raised us up to believe that America was the place where your ideas, and your willingness to work hard mattered more than the color of your skin. They inspired me to become a Doctor!"

"So I stand before you fully aware, that in no other country in the world, could a grandson of a poor farmer from India be asked by the President to look after the health of an entire nation; and I shall be ever grateful!"

And if I may add, Vivek means Discretion or Discernment! And Murthy is an Image of a Deity, an Embodiment of Values!

—Dr. Hazel Colaso,
Memphis, TN. USA

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Law of Queue:

If you change queues, the one you have left will start to move faster than the one you were in.

Law of Telephone:

When you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy tone.

Law of Mechanical Repair:

After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch.

Law of the Workshop:

Any tool, when dropped, will roll to the least accessible corner.

Bath Theorem:

When the body is immersed in water, the telephone rings.

Law of Encounters:

The probability of meeting someone you know increases when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.

Law of the Result:

When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, it will.

Law of Bio mechanics:

The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.

Theatre Rule:

People with the seats at the farthest from the entry arrive last.

Law of Coffee:

As soon as you sit down for a cup of hot coffee, your boss will ask you to do something which will last until the coffee is cold.

Law of Proposal :

After you accept a proposal, you will get a better one...



Law of getting late:

When you reach early for something, it will never start on time

Law of exam:

If you didn't read a page which is of least importance, first question will be from that page only.

The Right Diagnosis

A man tells his doctor that he's incapable of doing all the things around the house that he used to do. When the examination is over, he says, "Okay, Doctor. In plain English—what's wrong with me?"

"Well, in plain English," says the doctor, "you're just lazy."

The man nods. "Now give me the medical term so I can tell my wife."

What's That Smell?

For a romantic touch, I washed our sheets with lavender-scented detergent. When my husband got into bed, he sniffed. "What's this?" he asked.

"Guess," I said coyly.

"I have no idea," he said. "It smells like the stuff you use to line the hamster's cage."

True Love

It may have been the most romantic statement ever uttered in our courthouse. In between hearings, a wedding was performed. As the newlyweds left the courtroom, the bride nestled up to the groom and cooed, "Isn't it nice to be here when we're not being convicted of something?"

Suspicious

After Adam stayed out late a few nights, Eve became suspicious.

"You're running around with another woman— admit it!" she demanded. "What other woman?" Adam shot back. "You're it!"

That night, Adam was fast asleep when he was awakened by Eve poking him in the chest.

"What are you doing?"

"Counting your ribs."

The Birthday Present

On his birthday, my husband was stuck driving our six rambunctious children around. As usual, they were yelling, punching, and annoying one another. Joel finally had had enough. "Kids," he said over the din, "if you would behave and be kind to each other, that would be a very nice birthday present for me."

Our six-year-old shot back: "Too late, I already got you another present."

Hearing Loss

I'd noticed that my 60-year-old father seemed to be losing his hearing, so I mentioned it to my mother.

"Things haven't changed that much," she said. "Only difference is, before, he didn't listen. Now, he can't."

A Real Gut-Buster

A woman noticed her husband standing on the bathroom scale, sucking in his stomach. "Ha! That's not going to help," she said.

"Sure, it does," he said. "It's the only way I can see the numbers."



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Tamarind Rice

Tamarind rice is a simple rice based dish from South India with tamarind water, peanuts and some simple spices. Perfect for lunch boxes and picnics.

Ingredients:

1 lemon-sized ball of tamarind
3 tbsp sesame oil
1/4 tsp mustard seeds
1 tbsp chana dal
1 tsp urad dal
1/4 tsp fenugreek (methi) seeds
1/4 tsp red chili powder
1/4 tsp turmeric powder
2 tbsp raw, unsalted peanuts
A few curry leaves
3 dry red chillies, torn into pieces
1 cup finely chopped onions
1/2 tsp hing (asafoetida)
1/2 tsp jaggery
4 cups cooked rice
Salt to taste



Method:

Soak the tamarind in 1 cup warm water for 30 minutes and then extract the juice from it with the fingers and discard the seeds and pulp that remains.

Heat the oil in a wide pan and add the mustard seeds, chana dal, urad dal, methi seeds and peanuts to it.

Let the mustard seeds pop and the peanuts and dals roast to a light golden brown colour.

Then add the curry leaves, red chillies, hing and onions.

Let these ingredients roast for 2-3 minutes or until the onions are cooked to a soft pink

Add the tamarind extract and bring it to a boil.

Add salt, chilli powder, turmeric powder and jaggery and let the mixture boil until it thickens a bit.

Add the cooked rice and mix well.

Let the rice sit for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Goes well with curd and papad or red chilli coconut chutney.



Amit Rane,
Pune

How to Put Things In Order After The Burglar Has Left Us? Religion Has to Respond to The Challenges Posed by The Present Times. We Are Beginning the Advent Season; He Is Coming To Put Things In Order with our cooperation.

Covid 19 The Burglar!

When Remis came to his senses the sun rays were just falling on his face. He could not open his eyes. He gradually realised that he had fallen under a tree near his house on the main road. Slowly he remembered that previous night his house was raided by burglars. When they were running away with all the valuables, he took his gun and rushed after them. And after that he fell unconscious over there! With great difficulty he tried to get up. His hand was broken. The gun was no more to be seen. Somehow he gathered strength to stand up and walk home. There was weeping and shouting at home. Neighbours had gathered around. He entered the house. Horrible scene! His old mother was no more! Wife had a big wound on her head. His daughter was crying bitterly and son was missing! He felt giddy. Supported by someone he just sat down there in a chair. He realised that he had to put everything in order and start anew!



Fr. Michael G. Vasai

fective against COVID-19. It has rapidly spread around the world, posing enormous health, economic, environmental and social challenges to the entire human population. The coronavirus outbreak is severely disrupting the global economy. Almost all the nations are struggling to slow down the transmission of the disease by testing & treating patients, quarantining suspected persons through contact tracing, restricting large gatherings, maintaining complete or partial lock down etc. People are affected at Personal, social, economic, cultural, national, religious all levels! The whole nation nay, the world is topsy-turvy! All has to be put back into its order! No one knows how to order it. How much will the original order be restored and how much will remain beyond our powers? No one knows. But we have to start reorganising and that needs a lot of courage!

HE IS COMING!

Religion has to respond to the challenges posed by the present times. Has the Christianity a solution to the corona-crippled humanity? We are beginning the Advent season; He is coming to put things in order. Precisely at the first coming of his in Jerusalem looking at the situation, He declared as his manifesto: (Lk 4.16-19) *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."*

That task is not yet fulfilled. Corona has spoilt a lot more. We cannot sim-

ply pray and hope that all will be done on 25th December miraculously. That is our task –of course together with Jesus Christ. Am I preaching pious platitudes? No! I mean that we have to co-operate with Jesus and bring the good news to the corona-infected world around us with our inner strength.

INNER STRENGTH

Has the burglar left us? No. Have we invented a vaccine? Not yet. Yet we are opening the churches; restarting life as usual. How to achieve it? Jesus shows us the way in the Gospel passage. It is not a miraculous way. Watch Jesus cleansing the temple (Lk 19.45-48). *Then Jesus entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; and he said, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer'; but you have made it a den of robbers." Every day he was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept looking for a way to kill him; but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were spellbound by what they heard.*

Luke 19:45-48

We must realise the challenge Jesus was facing at the event. The chief priests, the scribes and the leading citizens of the day were perpetuating the 'den of robbers', counter to the purpose of the temple. No one had the guts to take them head on except Jesus. Aristocracy, religious power, money power, muscle power and political power were on one side and yet Jesus who had only the Goodwill of the common folk challenged them all for transgressing the scriptures. How could it be? Jesus was both man and

(Contd.. on p. 22)

The Saint Behind The Legend Of Father Christmas

Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (AD 325)

The respected bishops of Lycia had come together to elect a new bishop for the town of Myra as the former bishop had passed away. They prayed, meditated and spoke of the serious matter at hand, but they were not able to make the right choice.

On the third day of the discussion the oldest among the bishops made a decision to wait for another day. That night, around 2 a.m. the old bishop heard a loud voice telling him to ask all the other bishops to keep a watch at the front door of the church in the morning. The voice went on to instruct the bishop that the first person who comes for the morning service with the name 'Nicholas' will be the next bishop.

The old bishop shared his experience with the others, requesting them to pray as they waited. The hour for the morning prayers had arrived and the bell in the tower chimed.

Across the cobbled street was a young man, son of a rich citizen in the town, walking towards the church. The oldest among the bishops greeted the youth with the question, "What is your name, young man?"

Startled by this query he promptly replied with a smile on his face, "My name is 'Nicholas'."

The bishop turned to the other bishops and saw them nod their heads. "Nicholas, servant and friend of God, for your holiness you shall be the bishop of Myra."

Nicholas was taken by surprise, never imagining he would be given this honor. He felt the post was beyond his years and learning. All the bishops present said, it was the will of God

that he should be the new bishop

Nicholas was led to the high altar of the church to the chair reserved for a bishop. He was consecrated and Nicholas promised to speak of Christ to the people and to defend the faith.

Thereafter, Nicholas worked with dedication to serve God and to protect the poor, the sick, the helpless, children and above all to be defender of the Christian faith.

Emperor Constantine, in A.D. 325 convened the first Council of Nicaea. It was the first ecumenical council.

Over 300 bishops attended from across the Christian world to discuss the Holy Trinity.

Arius, a speaker on religion came from Egypt, where he preached that Jesus true Son was not equal to God the heavenly Father. All the bishops listened to him with respect. Nicholas, would have none of it, in rage he crossed the room and slapped Arius on the face. All the bishops present were shocked, how could a bishop lose his temper.

The Emperor refused to take the matter of punishment on his authority, and requested the bishops to deal with whatever they felt would be deserving of his position. The bishops took away Nicholas' garments, the ring and all that gave him the authority of a bishop. They put him in chains and led him to the prison jail.

On the night of his imprisonment, Jesus and his Mother, Mary appeared to Nicholas. Jesus asked him, "Why are you in prison?"

Nicholas replied, "Because of my love for you."



The Lord gave him the book of the Gospels and Mary presented him an omophorion (a full bishop's outfit). The next morning the Emperor heard of the miracle and reinstated Nicholas, Bishop of Myra.

The feast of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker is observed on the 11th of

August in the Julian calendar.

Bishop Nicholas of Myra became popular and much loved by his town people and beyond his country. His love and dedication for the sick, children, poor and the weak, spread across the land.

One day, he heard of a poor man who had three daughters of an age to be married, and the man had no money for a dowry to give the bridegrooms.

In the still of the night, Nicholas dressed like a beggar, took a pouch of gold and went to the cottage where the man and his daughters lived. Nicholas threw the pouch of gold into the room and quietly moved away. He did this a second time the next night.

The poor man was very happy and decided to stay awake to confront his benefactor and thank him.

"Your holiness, it is you!" the man exclaimed in awe.

"Please, don't tell anyone." Pleaded Nicholas, the Bishop, hoping the poor man would oblige.

This would be the start to the legend of Father Christmas or Santa Claus as some people call him. This is a true story and not a make believe tale. Parents keep up the tradition of giving gifts to their children, started by bishop Nicholas of Myra. This pious man has been accepted as a saint in the Catholic Church.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

7097. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 97 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as Sr. Account Recievable in private company. Contact email : dsouzadonald11@gmail.com

7040. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.C.A., MBA Pursuing, working as a GIS Analyst in MNC. Contact email :

ronaldpereira1210@gmail.com

7025. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1992), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (IT), working as a Software Developer. Contact email : kevin92ster@gmail.com

7061. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1989), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 90 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 12th, working for Central Railway Mec. Ftr II, Contact email :

pkevindsouza@gmail.com

7052. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1977), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., Retail Management, working as a General Manager. Contact email : albert.pinto2006@gmail.com

6707 MUMBAI : Goan RC bachelor, (Born in June 1975), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., having own business. Seeks a Family oriented girl. Contact email : \maxabreo@yahoo.com

7050. LONAVLA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1985), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA., working. Contact email : dsouza_adrian@yahoo.co.in

6250. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in January 1974), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 76 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Manager. **Contact email : cardoz.clint@gmail.com OR 9833563182**

6573. VALSAD : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1986), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 68 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. Mechanical, working as a project engineer in **SAUDI ARABIA** seeks a well quified girl from a good family background. Contact email :

ian.roshan.dsouza@gmail.com

6841 MUMBAI : Anglo Indian / Keralite Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1991), Ht. 170 cms, Wt. 78 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a Sales Executive. Contact email : mrsannieroy@yahoo.co.in

7157. PUNE : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1990) Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA (Marketing) & M.Com., working as a Senior Executive, Sales and Development. Contact email :

amlahenry11@gmail.com

6986. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1990), Ht. 160 cms, Wt. 66 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, working for MNC. Contact email : alwyn90lewis@yahoo.com

6862. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1983), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 72 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., well settled working in Mumbai. Contact email :

keith_peter1983@yahoo.co.in

7135. U.S.A. : Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in June 1990) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. in Electronics & Telecommunication (EXTC), working as a Senior

Software Engineer. Contact email : ryandcunha01@gmail.com

7041. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1985), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 10th Std., working as a Plant Operater. Contact email : ronnydsouza075@gmail.com

7040. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.C.A., MBA Pursuing, working as a GIS Analyst in MNC. Contact email :

ronaldpereira1210@gmail.com

6968. DUBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1991), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate in Commerce. Working in Dubai since 2014 in Indian Consulate Office. Designation Senior Customer Executive. Contact Email : shalenedsouza4@gmail.com

7039. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, Handicap - slight Scoliosis - taking treatment, spine slightly curved. (Born in September 1976), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 45 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A. Computer Prog. / Hair Designer, Having own business. Contact email : reginarodrigues634@gmail.com

5996. MUMBAI : RC Bachelor (Born in November 1974) / 5'8", B.E., working in Senior position reputed IT firm. Seeks alliance from R.C. spinster educated good family background Pl. reply with photograph and details to keithcardozo@hotmail.com OR 9820338755

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Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - BRIDES

6741. MANGALORE : Mangalorean RC spinster, 26 years, 5' 3", Doctor, Qualification : MD. Very fair and beautiful. Belongings to an affluent business family. Email : sona68500@gmail.com

7128. MUMBAI : Affluent business family R.C. East Indian Spinster, (Born in 12-04-1988), Ht. 5' 2", very beautiful and pretty. Edn. MS General Surgeon, Doctor by profession. Contact email : drvd2019@gmail.com

7158 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1986), Ht. 5'1", Wt. 64 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Patient Care Manager. Contact email : ceciliacookie@gmail.com

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

7156 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5'1", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA., working in an IT Company as an Executive Assistant. Contact email : mumbai.lavi@gmail.com

7056. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1988), Ht. 4' 11", Wt. 51 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA in HR, working HR Field. Contact email : nancyfernandes9@gmail.com

7160. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1988), Ht. 5' 7", Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS, working as a Senior Merchandiser in a Global Retail Company in Dubai. Contact email : prislobo10@gmail.com

7055. U.K. : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1988), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., working as a Staff Nurse in UK. Contact email : o365acc@gmail.com

7126. U.S.A. : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1992) from Mumbai, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Computers) from Mumbai, M.S. (Information Systems) from US. Possesses H1B visa and is working as a Technical Analyst with an MNC in USA. Contact email : wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91 9970172527

7053. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1987), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 63 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Home Science, working as a Jr. Officer in Bank. Contact email : ayesha18j@gmail.com

7066. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1987), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 78 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E., (EXTC) M.S. (International Business Management), working as a Consulting Manager. Contact email : l2018anselm@yahoo.com

7037. MUMBAI : Gujarati Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1979), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 63 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. T.Y.B.A., Mumbai University, working as a Frant Office. Contact email : lisamacwan3@gmail.com

7051. NEWZEALAND : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. LLB., Mumbai University, studing and working towards Newzealand Lowyer Registration. Contact email : mjbnewzealand18@gmail.com

7082. MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1985), Ht. 5', Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 12th std., working as a sales girl in Big Store. Contact email : susanmoses1385@gmail.com

7074. MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in January 1985), 5' 2", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.D.S., (Mumbai), Self Practising.

Seeks a well settled qualified Or Professional bachelor. Contact : email : dabfern@yahoo.co.in

6033 ABU-DHABI : Goan RC Spinster, (Born in May 1979), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. Eng., Literature, working as a Copy Editor. **Contact email : barretto.lorraine@gmail.com OR 9730454857**

7073. MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in January 1982), 5' 3", Wt. 64 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M. Pharm, Ph.D., Seeks a well settled qualified bachelor. Contact : email : apoline_ubi@yahoo.co.in

6497. POONA : Tamilian RC Spinster, (Born in January 1982), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a Sr. Manager. Contact email : harryanthony.7@gmail.com

7070. MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in March 1992), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 48 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., CS., working as a Company Secretary in Private Firm. Contact email :

smile9920@outlook.com
6690. MUMBAI : East Indian RC Spinster, (Born in December 1986), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, good looking, smart, intelligent, Edn. CS., LL.B., working as a Asst. Company Secretary. Seeks a suitable educated and well settled bachelor. Caste no bar. Contact email : joylinafaroz@gmail.com

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(Contd.. from p. 18)

God. His spiritual power flowed from the awareness of his identity as the son of God.

We too are the children of God and have the same power when united with Jesus. We receive this power by becoming aware of our union with the spirit within us. Through meditation we need to enter within; become aware of our body, mind and soul. When all three are united the inner power flows. That will allow us to fulfil the mandate to bring about the kingdom of God in our midst. We have the mandate to speak out against practices unworthy of God's kingdom. In order to have this moral authority to take on the temporal powers we need to be grounded in our identity as children of God and live flawlessly as his children. How ready are we?

WITH ME YOU CAN DO
WONDERS!

East Indian Marathi singing competition

Amid the pandemic, celebrate your Christmas with Hazel Parikh's (D'Souza before marriage) online singing competition of East Indian Marathi songs on December 25, 2020 from 8.30 pm onwards. Hazel was the first person along with Polly D'Mello to come out with an East Indian Marathi audio cassette of original East Indian Marathi songs in the year, 1982.

Since it was the first East Indian Marathi cassette, it sold like hot cakes within the community. And like Zeenat Aman after doing 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna' with Dev Anand, Hazel rose to fame overnight.

As of today, Hazel has sung a lot of Marathi songs in East Indian Marathi



dialect, all original, on stage and on TV. She also has a lot of audio cassettes and CDs to her credit.

Hope you will see her live on December 25, 2020 singing all her original East Indian Marathi songs.

Those who want to take part, can also join her in the competition.

— Jubel D'Cruz, Mumbai

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East Indians and the 'Nav Vari Lugra'

Traditions

Since the East Indians are the original inhabitants of Mumbai, the bride-to-be on the day of her wedding should keep up the tradition of wearing the 'nav vari lugra' in red colour during the nuptials in church and also in the hall during the reception, instead of wearing the white gown, which is not Indian. The bride-to-be, when I was a little boy, wore the traditional East Indian saree, known as the 'nav vari lugra' for her nuptials in church, instead of a white gown. The wedding was also celebrated outside the houses in the open space by putting up a pandal. It was celebrated for eight days -- from Sunday to Sunday. The 'Umbracha Pani' on the night before the wedding was fun. We would go dancing on the streets and bylanes at 12 midnight playing the East Indian band and singing East Indian Marathi songs on the ghumat. After that, we would all have our dinner and the women of the house would wake up at 4 in the morning to prepare chitiaps and fugiyas (which were kept for fermenting the previous night) for all the guests who were invited for their morning tea. Those days were fun unlike the East Indian weddings that are celebrated today. We would also go to the groom's house in a bullock cart on the next day of the wedding, which is known as the 'paspatni' in East Indian Marathi dialect where we were all given slices of cakes, patties, wafers, cold drinks and other delicious things to eat.

The traditional dress of the East Indian women is called a 'lugade' or a 'lugra'. The 'lugra' (or the 'lugade') is a nine yard hand woven cotton sari with faintly visible checks from afar. Draping the lugra is an art which has to be mastered and only women belonging to the East Indian community know it. The lugra has two length-wise borders of a pattern in a different colour. The colours of the lugras are red, navy blue



and green. Brides wear the colour red to show that they are newly married. While widows wear the lugras of the navy blue colour to signify that their husbands are dead as a sign of mourning. The green coloured lugra basically does not have any particular connotation. Green was initially worn by women from the Agri and/or the Bhandari community. But now-a-days, green is just another colour worn as it appears pleasant to some women of the community.

The red coloured lugra is also worn by women whose husbands are still alive as a sign of love for them.

The lugra (or the East Indian saree as it is known as) is a novelty item within the East Indian Catholic community of 'Aapli Mobai'.

The Marathi the East Indians speak is a mixture of pure Marathi, Portuguese and English.

One of my favourite East Indian Marathi song is 'Sakalche Para'. The other songs worth mentioning which are also my favourite are 'Ambyachi Dangli Var Baisli Mor' and 'Galyan Sakli Sonyachi'.

The hand breads, wedding pickle, wedding papads, vindaloo and the sorpotel pre-

pared by the East Indians are also delicious to eat.

The East Indians are famous for their Bottle Masala, which is put in ev-



ery dish. The bottle masala is born of many spices, all sun-dried, roasted, pounded and stored in beer bottles. Hence the name.

I belong to the East Indian community and I am proud to belong to it.

Kaka Joseph Bapista who fought for India's Independence along with Lokmanya Tilak belonged to the East Indian community of Mumbai. The community has only Catholics in it.



by Jubel D'Cruz

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