

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

Temples versus Human Temples!

Dr M. D. Thomas

Rabindranath Tagore, the first Nobel Laureate of India, has a remarkable poem, with the title 'There is No God in the Temple' (Deeno Daan). The very title may shock the guardians of temples and religionists. But, at a deeper reflection, it would become more than clear that the poem strikes a compelling point and is capable of provoking a revolution in the minds of the humans, in line with the mind of God.

The core of the poem goes thus. A Sage is seated under a tree in the countryside. The King of the area comes to the Sage, apparently with a sharp question for the Sage as to why he was seated there, instead of the temple. The Sage, having rightly sensed the mind of the King, expressed his reservations about the temple the King had got constructed for his people.

The Sage spoke up, even before the King did, "You have built the temple with 'two million gold coins', but it does not have God inside". Severely infuriated, the King told the Sage, "You atheist, how could such a grand temple be empty?" The Sage replied serenely, "It's not empty; it's rather full of the Royal pride. You have bestowed yourself, oh King, not the God of this world!"

"It is wrong to have spent your riches in building a temple, that too in the same year people of your land were horribly struck with calamity and they came to your door begging, but you turned them away squarely", the Sage reminded the King. The Sage proceeded to articulate the mind of God thus, "how could I believe that the King would give me a home in his golden temple, when he could not shelter his homeless subjects? It could be nothing more than the fancy of the King!"

The Sage was too blunt and harsh on the King as well as on the bare reality of the religious-political world then. However, the King of his time, a century back, seems to have been sober enough to take the electric shock from the Sage and sink into a damn silence. But, it is not easy for the kings of the modern times to stomach it, especially for the powerful custodians of the respective religions and temples. But, the telling portrait of contrast between temples and human temples is worth being considered and attended to.

There is no denying the fact that the humans have devised 'temples' as 'abodes of God' on earth. And 'temples or places of worship of all religions' stand for the divine presence of God among human beings, in line with the imagination and tradition of the respective tradition. They are 'symbols' of God on earth for believers of all religions and ideologies. They are great sources of solace, inspiration and strength for the respective believers, as well.

On the other hand, Tagore, in all his out-and-out honesty, could not stand the 'distressing plight of the commons' who were calamity-stricken in various ways and were left to their own fate by the custodians of power and money of this world. His Sage-mind was intensely hurt by the 'misplaced devotion' therein and he had to 'walk out' of the 'golden temple', in order to stand with the disowned and homeless human beings around him, who were no less than the golden temple, if not more.

As a matter of fact, 'human beings are created in the image and likeness of God'. They are the 'real and living temples' of the divine spirit, undeniably so. They are endowed with the divine imprint in their very being. The temples of brick and stone, however holy and real one may consider, are no comparison to the living human temples, which are naturally sacred by

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Grief floods M'lore - Honour for "Uncle Joe's" century

- Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

Just four months for January 1, 2022 and the 100th Birthday of Mr. Joe (Joseph) Gonsalves, much awaited by many around the world for he was a true "World Citizen" - well traveled during his career and after retirement; one foot on home soil and the other trudging all over, his love for his homeland was super. Our many readers were filled with joy to read about "uncle Joe" being 99 early this year 2021 - for he was born on January 1, 1922. To many it was like a thunderbolt on August 29, 2021 to know that dear uncle Joe had decided to leave for eternity, after a virtual battle for he was a fighter of great stature, it brought tears to many and deep sadness to all.

His funeral on August 30, 2021 afternoon was a simple meaningful farewell just like his person, from those who knew him at close quarters. His favourite center of action and focus, that is his final resting place; the Milagres Church in the heart of the city was the focus of all in spite of the inclement weather and rain that was mourning uncle Joe. Tributes of all types poured in, the city's traffic warden troupe he formed and developed from scratch were present and saluted his cortage along with Police officials. After long lines of public paying tribute and filing past the closed casket, amidst the Covid protocol, the Bishop of Mangalore Diocese Rev Dr. Peter Paul Saldanha along with priests from all over blessed the cortege before it was taken to the Milagres cemetery and interred among his distinguished ancestors.

The Bishop in a moving tribute stated, "All of us affectionately knew him simply as 'JOE' and he loved that, he lies in state here surely with a smile as always accepting and choosing that it was time he went on to his Lord. Even to the last day he was at the service of the community and church of which he was a big part. Always conscious, with a sharp civic sense and upright in pro-



moting others interests selflessly. He has rendered the city yeomen services as 'City Chief Traffic Warden' and did much with his team to build traffic law and order. On behalf of the diocese and universal church I fervently thank JOE for his various services over many decades, without any reservations in various capacities and different forms. As a dedicated member of governing boards of various institutions and hospitals was an example of self-giving in the highest spirits of human service".

Cheerful Hero lives forever : A long time resident of Falnir in the city, following his education, young Joe Gonsalves joined the British firm J.L Morison, rising from a management trainee to General Sales Manager. He then served as executive director of an incorporated company. His tenure with the companies took him to the four major cities of India and to the UK, where he honed his marketing skills at the Institute of Marketing, London, of which he is an elected member. Following retirement, he has been on the board of directors of educational institutions and charitable organizations, and was one of the founder-directors of the St Aloysius Alumni Association of North America - a continent which he continued to visit every year till the pandemic struck. As a nonagenarian he ventured on a new profession Co-opted by Karnataka Police - as Chief city traffic warden, Mangalore!

By God's grace in the last decade, at a ripe old age when most lie in bed, he

became Mangaluru city's well known popular chief traffic warden, seen regularly keeping law and order on the busy city roads; traffic hot spots of Hampankatta and the city were his hangouts with a dedicated team. Ramrod straight and in his smart star spangled uniform - he always has a smile and a wave for those who follow traffic rules adequately, and for those who didn't stern but kind suggestions for their own good and saved many bad situations.

Yoga was a big part of his life, he consistently motivated many. He cheerfully drove around as he has done for ages, proving that age is not a barrier for good. In September 2015, Joe was appointed 'chief traffic warden' of the city. Quite interestingly, Joe has over 80 years of experience behind the wheel, driving not only in the city of Mangaluru but also in countries like England, United States and Canada. In Mangalore city one never fails to see his white car emblazoned with red letters "Chief Traffic Warden" cruising in peak traffic, the very presence instilled order for drivers and pedestrians on the roads; fear is not the key, but the concern of this stalwart. He was a role model for all, the young and old, making them aware of social responsibility.

Joe and his wife Irene were one of the few Mangalore couples to jointly live into their 90s. At the time of Irene's death in 2017 they had been married over 67 years. They had four children Cheryl, Lorna, Franco, Michelle, 7 grandchildren and many great grandchildren too. His elder daughter Cheryl and her son Sameer in Mangalore cared for him with 2 dedicated lady caregivers, whom he looked at as family. No amount of words can admire, appreciate and felicitate this 'HERO' of Mangalore who is well loved by those of all ages. At 99 and four months to a century he left to celebrate with his maker in eternity, this void will never be filled, his family and people of Mangalore will miss him and his memory needs to be made a lasting monument, he will remain in spirit with us always.

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divine making. Despite the great symbolic value of temples of all religions, they are no substitute for the human temples, especially those from the poorer and weaker sections, who are certainly dearer to God, the Creator of one and all.

In contrast, from times beyond memory onwards, massive constructions of brick and stone have been mighty symbols of the religious presence of God in the society. They have been monuments of the 'vain glory and pride' of the custodians of religion as well as of their rich sponsors, even to the point of making the black money white. Of late, golden, multi-layered, hi-tech, fashionable and self-imposing temples, churches, gurudwaras, mosques, vihars and ashrams have become projects of even lakhs of crores, ironically and shockingly so.

India is a 'poor country' with a large number of filthy rich billionaires of world renown. Most of them are more known for their wasteful habits as well as for their self-coiled and showy corona of life. Politicians and governments are busy erecting statues,

parliament-assembly houses, stadiums and the like as their memorials. Religious organizations are typically hyperactive propagating and perpetuating their kingdom as well as keeping the believers under their thumb and procuring money from them, in the disguise of gods and goddesses. The poor are the last in the priority of the economic, political and religious rackets.



Fr. Dr. M. D. Thomas

Twenty to twenty five crores of people in India, the second most populated country of the world, are condemned to the fate of being on the roadsides, street corners, under the flyovers and bridges and in the slums, as beggars, below poverty line or as more or less. For decades and centuries, politicians are using them for votes, 'playing gimmicks' with them and are surviving on them for maintaining power. Religious shrines heap up contributions of gold, silver, cash and kind and thrive as huge money banks, too. The poor remain regularly as hapless victims of money, power and religion, for the most part, as a regular feature.

The terrible plight of the 'human temples', tens of crores in number, doesn't seem to bother the large majority of

the citizens who are better off or are suffering from riches. No wonder, Vayalar Ramavarma, a celebrated lyricist in Malayalam, had to write for film 'Agniputri', "kannu thurakkaatta daivangale, karayaanariyaata chiricanariyaatta kalimanpratimakale". 'You gods and goddesses, you don't open your eyes, you cannot cry or laugh; you are mere 'statues of clay'. The sharp-edged 'contradiction between golden temples of brick and stone and human temples in abject poverty' is conspicuously provoking for any human being, who has a 'conscience' within him or her.

Perhaps, the logic of the 'right to temple' could be as simple as this. A temple of brick and stone has the right to be there only when those living around and visiting it with faith have a house, which they could call a 'home'. The 'dignity of the lives of the human temples' should decide the whereabouts of their temple. Only then, the temple will be a worthy place for them, to gather in the name of God, the Creator of one and all, and to celebrate his or her presence. Their sense of belonging to each other, together to a community and to the larger human society, the poor in special, as well as to God will

(Contd.. on p. 4)

The Heart Of A Daughter

A real life story

Kristina Viani Varnilan of Flores Island, Indonesia*, is a youth worthy of emulation. Her father, Siprianus Judin, 45, demonstrated acute signs of mental illness, while her mother, Birgita Gimbul, 40, was already suffering from a mental condition and could hence not work. After graduating from school in 2020, Kristina, all of 20 and the eldest of four children, left her predominantly Catholic village to turn breadwinner for her family by working as a housemaid in Makassar, Indonesia's South Sulawesi Province. Resultantly of course, a 17-year-old brother had to quit school to look after their parents and their two other siblings, aged 13 and 10.

Within months, however, Kristina received an urgent summons from home, asking her to return post haste on account of the worsening health condition of her father. Quitting her 1.2 million rupiah [US \$83] per month salaried job, Kristina returned home to Wuwur village, East Nusa Tenggara Province in June 2020. She learnt from her family of how he would often be absent from home, get very aggressive and behave threateningly towards others in the village.

Soon enough, she was witness to her father, unprovoked, turning violent, striking a neighbour and killing two of his pigs with a machete. She was heartbroken when, as a result, he was shackled hand and foot in the house. Sadly, that is the measure adopted towards the mentally ill in Indonesia when their condition deteriorates to the extent of being dangerous to others. The practice itself stems from acute ignorance of the fact that most mental health issues can either be controlled or cured one way or another. Thereby, those shackled in what appears to be

medieval stocks usually remain so until death, recent efforts at changing the mindset of the people by activists and groups, including the Catholic Church, meeting with limited success.

Forced by circumstances to work in the fields to meet the survival needs of the family, Kristina and her brother take turns at various chores – cooking food, bathing the parents, attending to their younger siblings etc.

Rays of hope flashed bright when the Varnilan family's story was highlighted by a local news website. Donations in



cash, kind and food poured in, local authorities also responding to their plight. In August 2020, the Manggarai district chief, Herybertus Nabit, and his deputy Heribertus Ngabut, visited the family, offering to have Siprianus and Birgita admitted to the Renceng Mose Rehab Centre in Ruteng [managed by the Congregation of the Brothers of Charity] entirely at government expense.

Another ray of hope was the government, with immediate effect, providing a special budget for the treatment of people suffering from mental illnesses in the district. The icing on the cake: a scholarship from Ruteng Diocese's Saint Paul's Foundation that runs the Indonesian Catholic University of Saint Paul, Ruteng, for Kristina to study midwifery at the college! "It is hoped that with this qualification under her belt, she can be in a better position to care for her family in the future," said Father Ledobaldus Roling Mujur, the foundation's head.

The bottomline is the very conscientious response of Kristina Varnilan to the fast unfolding situation in her family. It was the totality of her dedi-

cation to the welfare of her parents and siblings that set her on the path that changed forever her own fortune and that of her ailing parents and her younger siblings.

"I really missed out on going to college when I finished high school last year, but what could I do with my parents in urgent need of help?" Anyway, now "I will make the most of this opportunity," she is reported to have said, convinced that her prayers had been answered.

*Source: Ryan Dagur, Jakarta –
UCAN 25 August 2021

(Contd.. from p. 3)

certify the relevance of the temple they share as a culturing symbol of 'humane civilization'.

The 'moral of the poem' is decidedly realistic, drastic and distinctly relevant. 'God would feel uncomfortable being in temples of brick and stone, when the 'human temples are homeless' and are not cared for'. It is a major anomaly to have the human and living temples deserted, on the one hand, and to invest on enormously on temples of brick and stone and decorate them with even gold, however relevant in the form of a symbol or tradition, on the other. 'God-made human and living temples command priority' before the human-made self-imposing temples. Novel and sustained efforts have to be envisaged, sooner the better, in favour of a realistic and humane culture for the humans. I am sure, the Sage of Tagore will initiate a revolution anew, in line with the divine standards!

The author is Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi, and has been committed to cross-cultural perspectives, interfaith relations, social ethics, constitutional values, national integration and social harmony, for the past over 40 years. He contributes to the above cause through lectures, books, articles, video messages, conferences, social interactions, views at TV channels, and the like. He could be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.



Portable crematorium: an idea whose time has come

A few weeks ago I came across a news item in a periodical on portable crematoriums. The idea of portable crematoriums germinated when parishes began to face difficulties in disposing of covid afflicted dead bodies. Faced with this problem Fr Francis, vicar of St Antony's Church in Ernakulam district, roped in a parishioner who was an engineer, to work on a plan for the construction of a portable crematorium. It took the engineer and his team ten days to manufacture the portable unit. The cost came to around Rs 2,60,000. The unit consumes 2 kgs of LPG per cremation. They have built three units, each weighing 65 kgs which have been given to various churches. These units can be used either inside the cemetery of churches or even outside and can be transported by a mini van. People living in the vicinity will have no reason to complain as the cremation process does not exude any foul smell

In Mumbai, because of acute space crunch portable crematorium is an idea whose time has come. Burial grounds are fast filling up. My own parish in Orlem has shut its cemetery, except for those having "family graves" (I don't think God would approve of this discrimination. There is no reservation policy in heaven). A portable crematorium will address this problem to some extent as the bodies can be cremated within the cemetery, in front of everyone attending the funeral service and the ashes interred in niches. Some of the larger parishes like Mira Road, IC church, Orlem parish will not find it difficult to purchase

one of these portable crematoriums. Moreover, the portable crematoriums can be easily transported to neighbouring parishes for the benefit of more people. (Municipal permission for use of the crematoriums will be needed, which should not be too difficult to obtain.) Portable crematoriums may find favor with other communities too as people have to travel long distances to the nearest crematorium. Moreover, with the third wave threatening, such crematoriums will be just what the doctor ordered.

—*Prof Robert Castellino,
Malad*

LTTE - Letters To The Editor

One must thank Ivan Saldanha-Shet for highlighting the subject issue [Vol 30/Issue 34, 23-29 August 2021, p 4]!

Essentially, writing a Letter to the Editor of any publication is an art that not many take the trouble to master. One of the most prominent and finest practitioners of this art was the late Mr Anthony Parakal. Hailing from Kerala, he was so conscious of the importance of correctness in the expression of his views that he wrote his first LTTE to the Times of India no less only after spending nearly quality time trying to master English (Ref RECALLING THE LTTE FAME OF ANTHONY PARAKAL, TSC Vol 30/Issue 29, 19-25 July 2021) since his arrival from God's Own Country! Not for him the "workable knowledge of English" (whatever that means!).

The purpose of the LTTE is manifold – to draw the attention of the Editor of a given publication to discrepancies in the contents of a given article; to apprise readers of certain developments one may have missed

out in the rush of things; to alert civic/government authorities to important issues of dire urgency facing the common and so on. Salubriously, THE SECULAR CITIZEN [not published/funded by the Church or any NGO as such but singlehandedly by a private individual committed to the cause of journalism] is perhaps the only publication that gives the LTTE the prominence it deserves, freely publishing any and every point of view on various matters.

The sad part is that Editors of certain publications shy away from doing justice to the LTTE for whatever reason. A religious once wrote an LTTE to a leading Catholic publication, correcting an apparent flaw in my article on priestly and religious life, pointing out that priests and religious are never lonely in the quiet of their respective rooms/cells but alone with the One who has called them into His service. I promptly wrote back clarifying that it was some smart Alec in the editorial team of the publication in question that had the temerity to change the word 'aloneness' in my article to 'loneliness'! To cut a long story short, the clarification did not see the light of day!

An LTTE on any given article also indicates that the article concerned has been read. After all, the LTTE column of a publication is meant to be an open forum for the healthy sharing and exchange of views as well. Of course, the editor/publisher does retain the right to edit a given LTTE from the point of view of space.

Would that all publishers of whatever hue reinstated the LTTE Column in their respective publications, giving their editors adequate leeway in publishing a cross-section of views in the interest of the reading public.

— *Ladislaus Louis D'Souza
Malad*

Unaffordable LPG price

Almost every month, domestic consumers of LPG cooking gas have been experiencing a drastic increase

(Contd.. on p. 13)

Descent into Disarray

by Don Aguiar.

There was once a Jewish man. He said that the essence of all wisdom is what you have in your head. His name was Solomon.

Then came another Jewish man. He said that the essence of all wisdom is what you have in your heart. His name was Jesus.

Then came a third Jewish man. He said that the essence of all is what you have in your stomach. His name was Marx.

After him came a fourth Jewish man. He said that the essence of all is what you have between your legs. His name was Freud.

After him came a Jewish man - wiser, perhaps, than all before - called Einstein. He said that everything is relative.

After all those came an Indian man even more wiser, perhaps, than all before, a 'combination' of wisdom, heart, stomach, celibate and relative – Became the Prime Minister, with a sweet tongue, low calibre and shameless. Passed and changed laws without debate to suite his requirement. Brought the country's robust economy in deep decline and then blames others to escape from his failures – His name is Narendra Modi.

India is experiencing the opposite process of this 'combination' which is being vigorously implemented by the Prime Minister who passes laws, without quality debate, in farming, beef ban, triple talaq, love jihad, proposing population control bill & above all, snooping the phones of journalists, opposition, advocates & bureaucrats, and on this Independence Day Prime Minister Modi assures and proclaims to the nation – 'We want such an India

where government doesn't interfere in the lives of citizens.'

India's citizens, except the BJP desh-bhaktis, are surprised at the hypocrisy, shamelessness and insincerity of the Prime Minister which brings memories of the colonial style of governance which **many old timers, who took part in the Independence struggle and are now participating in the farmers protest, have noticed a stark similarity between the colonial British government they had once resisted and the BJP government they resists today.**

The similarity lies in the way Prime Minister Modi authoritarian nature and the way laws are made without consulting those who will be affected. Achieving freedom didn't mean that we should become slaves to the BJP. This government imposes laws on people. Overnight, they make laws, kill livelihoods and don't even consult citizens. Just like the mice that spoil crops when the farmer is not looking. These black laws of BJP governments economic and foreign policies has put the nation into a mess and will only result in a dark future for the country.

Recently Chief Justice of India N.V Ramana vented out his views for calling out the authoritarian nature of BJP Government in enacting the laws - "It was a scary state of affairs as laws are being passed in parliament without quality debates. There is no clarity regarding the laws. We don't know what purpose, a law has been made. This creates a lot of litigation and inconvenience and loss to public life."

The times we live in today are sad days for a country that boasts of being the world's largest democracy. The current attitude of the authorities to the minority groups are worrisome. The rising numbers of protests in the country show how often the govern-

ment passes anti-people laws.

The British had a very clear policy of 'divide and rule'. Is the BJP government any different? They use the same method to instigate communities against each other. The British divided India, BJP is dividing hearts. The India of the 21st century, is destroying Christians, Muslims, Dalits and the economically backward sections of society. This government is crushing the weaker sections of society.

The BJP also uses the same kind of labels the British used to mute questioning voices. Just as the British labelled all dissenters 'rebels' irrespective of their means and cause, this government labels them 'Khalistani', 'aatankwaadi', 'Pakistani', 'anti-social elements' and so on and labelled the students as anti-national, then Farmers as anti-national, now Industry as anti-national. And in the most supreme of ironies, the BJP even uses the same draconian anti-dissent laws made by the British to jail anybody who questions the government.

These laws, both the farm laws and the laws used against protesters, have made clear to us the distinction of 'us' and 'them'. They don't care about us. This farmers' protest reminds the old timers of the 1940s when they sat in dharnas after Gandhi's calls for protest. But this India is not the country they fought for. The BJP government, along with its corporate friends, is more dangerous than the British Empire.

Patriotism, does not mean keeping quiet or blindly following the government. Many old timers have lived through the bifurcation of India into two nations and now lives to see what they call the "partition of hearts."

Choosing to stay secular had taken India to its tryst with destiny. But 21st century India is a grave disservice to those who fought for the country's freedom – Mahatma Gandhi said if

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there is an idiot in power, it means those who elected him are well represented - the nation knows the reality of BJP's deshbhakti!

India is primarily a welfare state where even if a poor man in rural India is buying a bar of soap, then he is as much a tax payer as is Adani or Ambani. But the Prime Minister is constantly telling that poor man: Free vaccine, Free Treatment, Free ration? - Nothing is Free! That poor man has stakes in this society as an indirect tax payer. It is the commitment of a welfare state. They must not demonise or belittle these drives by calling them free. But the **Prime Minister and his Ministers treat the country's citizens as its captives, to be dealt with as arbitrarily as anyone in authority wishes.** From the citizen's perspective, there's been no resolve to change this situation..... But from the Prime Minister side

The national assets which were created since independence by successive INC india governments are put on sale by today's BJP government to overcome the economic and financial mess created in the last 7 years of their misgovernance. To sell national assets when the economy is in deep decline is a sign of mental bankruptcy and desperation. It cannot be a healthy ideological imperative. Modi government cannot deny that CSO data shows that GDP growth declined quarter by quarter, year by year from 2016 and to cover up his failures he is selling the country assets just like this..... If a thief steal your Mobile costing Rs 150,000, he will sell it off even for Rs 1,000, since he didn't buy the mobile with his hard earned money.

Winston Churchill said of India – "Power will go to the hands of rascals, rogues, freebooters; all Indian leaders will be of low calibre & men of straw. They will have sweet tongues and silly hearts. They will fight amongst themselves for power and Indian will be lost in political squabbles".

Matrimonial Proposals

Proposals are invited for

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75 Year Twitch

Married men are supposed to suffer from the 40 year itch when, though hitched, they start looking for greener pastures. A body continues to twitch for some-time as the muscles and nerves relax. Does a nation also itch or twitch in the course of its history?

India Today magazine tried to stitch together this itch or twitch in its 75th Independence Day special, with the headline “The Pathbreakers”. I picked up this special issue hoping to find in it a barometer of the country’s growth or achievements over the last 75 (actually 74) years since Independence in 1947. Here is what I found.

Aroon Purie, the magazine’s editor-in-chief, says that there is much to be grateful for. In 1947 just 18% of the population was literate. Life expectancy was a low 32 years. Not just life, but everything else was short – like food, healthcare, institutions and industries.

Now 75% literacy has been achieved. Life expectancy has doubled; we are self sufficient in food and are the world’s fifth largest economy. I cannot help but wonder at those pseudo desh bhakts who shamelessly parrot that previous governments did nothing for 70 years!

Purie says that the magazine has identified 115 titans who were among the Pathbreakers. Why such an arbitrary number? Had it been limited to 75 it would have made more sense. Purie blunders when he refers to this as our “diamond jubilee”! It is actually our Platinum Jubilee, as Diamond refers to sixty years. So the itch and twitch are visible.

The Pathbreakers are classified under Politics (quite predictable), Business, Science, Defence, Sports, Spirituality, Literature, the Arts, Food and Cinema. I fail to see how the last two can be categorised as Pathbreakers. Perhaps this was to glam up an otherwise staid presentation. But I felt that it only served to dilute the contributions of the real Pathbreakers.

I won’t bore you with a rundown of all the categories or titans. I have chosen a few that caught my attention or interest. Politics has 24 titans, four of whom are from the Nehru dynasty alone (thereby reinforcing their contribution to nation building), and just three women.



by chhotebhai *

First on the list is Mahatma Gandhi, though dubbing him as a politician is a disservice. Raj Chengappa quotes Albert Einstein to say “In our time of utter moral decadence, Gandhi was the only true statesman to stand for a higher human relationship in our political sphere. Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked the earth”.

The Dalai Lama who came to India eight years after Gandhiji’s death, calls him “the model politician, a man who put his belief in altruism above all personal considerations and consistently maintained respect for all great spiritual traditions. Gandhi was perhaps the greatest of our time”.

P.Chidambaram writes about former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who famously said that history would be kinder to him than the present generation. Chidambaram identifies Singh’s three great achievements – attaining a growth rate of over 9% in three years,

quadrupling India’s GDP in constant prices, and lifting 270 million people out of poverty. By 2014, when he demitted office, the Indian economy was a leaping tiger says Chidambaram.

Next on my list is Narendra Modi, who Shivraj Singh Chauhan describes as “The Deliverer”. He calls him a man of ideas. He says “I have seen him transform India into a glorious, prosperous, powerful and dignified nation by taking bold decisions such as surgical strikes against Pakistan, use of technology to end corruption, and demonetization to curb black money....There has been no one like him on India’s political firmament.” He could have added that he held the javelin that won Neeraj a gold medal at the Olympics!

A glaring omission in the magazine’s Pathbreakers is the absence of those who actually hold the levers of power in India – the bureaucrats. Surely there was place for people like P.N.Haskar, T.N. Sheshan and Julio Ribeiro, to name a few.

It is good that industry and business find place in the list of Pathbreakers. There are 19 of them, including two Tatas and two Ambanis. Azim Premji (himself India’s leading philanthropist) focuses on JRD Tata’s contribution to society. “The India Institute of Science, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the National Centre for Performing Arts and the Tata Memorial Hospital are just a few amongst the best known ones”. Inspiring indeed!

Vikram Kirloskar describes Rahul Bajaj as the “Domestic Champ”, the one who made “Hamara Bajaj” synonymous with India. Normally business honchos are reluctant to speak out against the government or its policies. Not so Bajaj. Of him Kirloskar says “I learnt it was important to do the right thing, with continued emphasis on good governance and ethics, and to speak your mind confidently”.

Just one woman features in this section. You guessed right – Kiran Ma-

(Contd.. on p. 9)

(Contd.. from p. 8)

zumdar-Shaw, who T.V. Mohandas Pai describes as a "Role Model". Like Bajaj, "She also speaks her mind – in a constructive way – on matters of policy and social concerns. She bonds easily, with people seeing in her a very honest, upright person devoted to the betterment of society".

We boast of India as the mother of many world religions – Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism and Sikhism. Yet the magazine could identify only two spiritual leaders. Yes, one is Mother Teresa; guess who the other one is - Bhagwan Rajneesh. Does that surprise you? It surprised me too. Navin Chawla, Teresa's biographer, unfortunately adds nothing to what we already know about the Saint of the Gutters. He says that "she was happiest in the meaner streets or slums of the world. In the process she had become the world's conscience keeper".

Ma Anand Sheela calls Osho Rajneesh "The Taboo Breaker". She laments that "I think its a shame that some only regard him as a sex guru. He was a man who understood sex and sexuality, yes, but what he was asking for was the world to give up its taboos". She adds, "Bhagwan's

teaching of love, life, laughter and acceptance – appealed to all of us who were young at the time".

The section on defence has just two, Field Marshal Manekshaw, and General K. Sundarji. Perhaps there could have been place for war heroes who sacrificed their lives for the nation. In an era of rabid majoritarianism, the defence forces could have been held up as a truly secular force. For example, how many of us know that our highest gallantry award, the Paramvir Chakra, went, among others, to those from minority communities like Col Tarapore (a Parsee), Havildar Abdul Hamid (a Muslim) and Lance Naik Albert Ekka (a tribal Christian)?

Post Tokyo 2020 we are gaga about sports, albeit in front of TV screens. But the magazines choice of sports icons is pathetic. Of the 8 chosen, 3 are predictably cricketers, and two "also rans", the fourth place finishers Milkha Singh and P.T. Usha. The legendary Dhyani Chand, after whom the country's highest sports award has just been renamed, finds no mention. Also missing is M.C. Marykom, our best woman sportsperson to date.

I find the category on Cinema obnox-

ious. How can these Bollywood gyrators be classified as Pathbreakers for the nation? I'd rather break by head against a wall. There are other categories like Science & Technology with the usual suspects like Homi Baba, Vikram Sarabhai, Verghese Kurian and Abdul Kalam.

There are two from Literature, including Salman Rushdie, who doesn't even live in India. I'm shaking my head in disbelief. There is a section on art, music and dance and, would you believe it – gourmet cooking. Sadly, there was no space for Pathbreakers in the fields of education, health or the judiciary. Environmentalists like Sundarlal Bahuguna and Medha Patkar were also missing.

While India Today has highlighted what it thought best are the titan Pathbreakers of India, I hope that they will be more judicious and all encompassing by the time we actually get to celebrate the platinum (not diamond) jubilee of our Independence in 2022. Till then I am not bewitched of their 75 year twitch.

• *The writer is the Convenor of the Indian Catholic Forum*

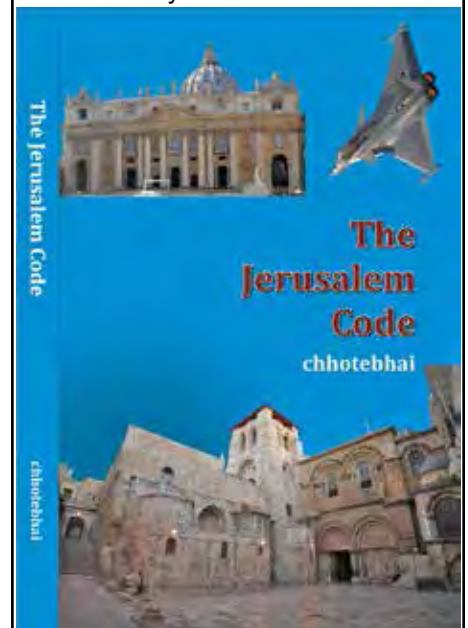
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The Jerusalem Code

by Chhotebhai



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Teachers of the 21st Century

The New Education Policy (NEP) introduced in India in 2019 has four levels in the school system. In general, it aims at universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level. Digital technology has advanced phenomenally. Under these circumstances, teachers of the 21st century need to be a guide, mentor and friend to their students, not the all-knowing sage providing them with tomes of information. With a wide range of varied resources, children today know more than teachers on different topics, and are a step ahead of the technology in use, so teachers need to be effective as facilitators and motivators for learning, to empower their students in turn.

In fact, teachers must be open to handling new ways of teaching and learning alongside their students. The talk, chalk and blackboard need not necessarily become obsolete tools, but may be used differently. The important question educators must ask is: What will students need twenty or thirty years from now? How can we provide them those skills? What can we do to bring about a transformation in the classroom, and later the community at large?

The answer seems simple. The 21st century skills clearly are the ability to think **critically** and enhance **creativity**, to **collaborate** with others, to **communicate** clearly and to **empower**

people to lead happier healthier lives. The point is how can teachers be catalysts in creating these new learning opportunities for the students.

With constant advances in digital technology, the characteristics of 21st century teachers are that **firstly** they must become information, media and technology literate. This will facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity so that students can excel in the global society they live in.

Secondly teachers will have to change their **methodology**. Perhaps design learning experiences, where students might need to apply both knowledge and skills. Encourage students to debate a topical issue preferably in pairs, before holding a larger scale class debate. Organize mock trials, or role play exercises on a civic issue. Problem solving in Mathematics could be done by applying various applications in interesting innovative ways. How about finding historical evidence from a primary source, and then getting students to do the same with oral tradition? What about a comparative study to widen their scope of learning?

The Covid19 scourge has taught humanity the importance of human values namely: Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct and Non-Violence. These are inherent in every human being. The World needs transformation. Teach-

ers **thirdly**, can play a significant role by nurturing societal values in young minds. Human values teach how to respect, be kind, grateful, and relate to various people in our lives, families, friendships, communities and others. Teachers must creatively introduce these life-skills and values within the classroom situation, for growing children to carry it further.

Human values suggest that all people belong to the fraternity of mankind and should live in brotherly love, have empathy, caring and sharing with others. Personal human value- education, helps students to become more responsible, and have concern for others. What about special students? They cannot be left downstream. This is how values will help one understand the perspectives of life better, making people happy and responsible citizens.

In conclusion, teachers of the 21st century must focus - to motivate students with learning, exploring, investigating, discovering and inquiring to making a difference in this world of ours. We live in a global village, and so teachers must teach young people to appreciate and embrace diversity. Be creative, using out of the box approaches, awaken the conscience, and prepare children to use their potential worthily.



by:
**Dr Jeanette
Pinto**

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Teachers' Day

Sweet Memories of Teachers

By Fr. F. M. Britto

The first teacher that I had encountered was my first grade teacher in my village's government school. Those days we never had any modern play schools, nurseries and kindergartens. My father had admitted me in the school one year ahead of my school age, advancing one year of my birth year, not to be a nuisance to my mother who had to look after my younger brother. Since my mental faculties had not yet developed, my learning capacities were poor. It had been always poor anyhow. Later on when I became a priest, at times on the road I saw this teacher, walking fast from his village, in his usual khadi white shirt and folded dhoti. He used to look at me. But presuming that he would not remember me, one stupid among the hundreds of his first grade kids, I never wished him with the usual folded hands.

One day my father astonished me saying that whenever this Hindu teacher met my father, he always enquired about me. I felt then ashamed of my disrespectful attitude towards my teacher who had taught me to read and write the first syllables of my mother tongue. I resolved then that when I meet him next time, I would go and greet him. But on the following year when I went for my home holidays, he was no more. May be he will come to greet me in heaven.

Another primary school teacher I vividly remember is my fourth grade teacher. Nagappa Sir was a terror to us – at least to me - because he taught us mathematics. I always sat next to a boy who was smart in maths and was also generous to me to show his slate/ note book so that I could copy it. In spite of such care, at times he would catch me. With his red face and wide eyes, he would pinch my tender cheeks and screw my bulging stomach. All these chastisements didn't help an inch to get his arithmetic into my stony head. Rather they made

me detest him that I always avoided to greet this monster in the school.

This Hindu teacher, from the neighbouring village, was there attending my priestly ordination, held first time in my village. At the end of the ceremony, he too came along with the crowd, kissed my palms and greeted me with his folded hands. That gesture was more precious than the gift that he had brought along. He had later remarked to my father, "I am very happy that at least one of my students became a (Catholic) priest."

Whenever I went for my home holidays, if this Nagappa Sir happened to see me on the way, he would get up from his place, walk up to me and greet me with his folded hands and smilingly enquire about my whereabouts. I only wished then that he never remembered having called me "Ass" and the canings that he had mercilessly showered on my palms and bottom.

Another time when I went for my home holidays, my mother informed me that my school headmaster was bed-ridden. "Better go and meet him," she suggested.

That evening itself I had collected some village kids and walked to the neighbouring village to visit the ailing teacher, purchasing for him some fruits and biscuits on the way. As soon as Ratnam sir saw me from his bed, his bony, unshaven face gave into a big smile. Though he attempted to get up and sit on his bed or greet me with his folded hands, his feeble body wouldn't obey his commands. He signed me to take my seat on the nearby bench. Since he couldn't answer to any of my enquires, his aged wife and daughter were responding.

During my conversation with them, Ratnam sir was trying to communicate something to his wife, but they couldn't understand his gesture.

"Tea?" his daughter asked him.

That was not what he wanted to say.

After many failed attempts, his wife

asked him, "Pray?"

The Hindu teacher smiled and nodded his head.

I said a small prayer for him and his large family before I left the house. His smiles expressed his appreciation for my prayer and my visit.

A few days after I had left home, my mother wrote to me that teacher expired.

When I was in the fifth grade, a young teacher used to come to our class to take the last period. As he came to the class, he would summon me, quietly thrust some paisa and a steel vessel in my hand. I had to walk to my village canteen, purchase for him two hot vadas and a cup of tea. And then I had to reach back the school, before the last bell went.

When he started using me like this every day, I got fed up. Not only I had been missing my lessons, but I had to walk under the hot sun, up and down two miles extra every day on the stony road, carrying in both my arms the teacher's burning tea and vadas.

One day my companion told me that he was calling me because that new teacher had been told that I was a sincere boy, who would not steal his money, nor eat his refreshments.

On the following evening, when I was returning from the canteen, I pinched a little bit of his vada and sipped once his tea.

That trick relieved me.

On the following year, he started sending another simple boy. Then a new headmistress – a spinster, a Christian, had been appointed. On the first day the slender and tall Miss Mary happened to notice this boy returning to the school, carrying in both his arms the teacher's refreshments. Confronting the boy, she ordered him to keep the things in her office and tell that teacher to meet her after the class.

That was the end of his hot vadas and sweet tea.

After a few days, that strict disciplinarian Miss was packed to some far away school. And I have never seen or heard about her afterwards.

A man goes to the doctor and says, "Doctor, wherever I touch, it hurts."
 The doctor asks, "What do you mean?"
 The man says, "When I touch my shoulder, it really hurts. If I touch my knee – OUCH! When I touch my forehead, it really, really hurts."
 The doctor says, "I know what's wrong with you – you've broken your finger!"

Two boys were arguing when the teacher entered the room.
 The teacher says, "Why are you arguing?"
 One boy answers, "We found a ten dollar bill and decided to give it to whoever tells the biggest lie."
 "You should be ashamed of yourselves," said the teacher, "When I was your age I didn't even know what a lie was."
 The boys gave the ten dollars to the teacher.

Teacher: Suppose, you have offered money and knowledge. You have to take one of them. Which one you should choose?
 Student: Money.
 Teacher: I would have taken knowledge. But why do you take money?
 Student: I have the lack of money that's why. You have the lack of knowledge. That's why

A: Just look at that young person with the short hair and blue jeans. Is it a boy or a girl?
 B: It's a girl. She's my daughter.
 A: Oh, I'm sorry, sir. I didn't know that you were her father.
 B: I'm not. I'm her mother.????

Teacher: "Nick, what is the past participle of the verb to ring?"
 Nick: "What do you think it is, Sir?"
 Teacher: "I don't think, I KNOW!"
 Nick: "I don't think I know either, Sir!"

Two cows are standing in a field. One says to the other "Are you worried about Mad Cow Disease?"
 The other one says "No, It doesn't worry me, I'm a horse!"



Teacher to student: "Make a sentence using the word "I"
 Student: "I is.."
 Teacher: "No that is not correct, you should say I am"
 Student: "Ok. I am the ninth letter in the Alphabet!"

Mother: "Why did you get such a low mark on that test?"
 Junior: "Because of absence."
 Mother: "You mean you were absent on the day of the test?"
 Junior: "No, but the kid who sits next to me was."

Teacher: How old is your dad.
 Student: He is as old as I am.
 Teacher: How is it possible?
 Student: Because he became a dad only after I was born.

Teacher: "Why are you late, Joseph?"
 Joseph: "Because of a sign down the road."
 Teacher: "What does a sign have to do with you being late?"
 Joseph: "The sign said, 'School Ahead, Go Slow!'"

A teacher asked a student to write 55.
 Student asked: How?
 Teacher: Write 5 and beside it another 5!
 The student wrote 5 and stopped.
 teacher: What are you waiting for?
 student: I don't know which side to write the other 5!

The teacher to a student: Conjugate the verb "to walk" in simple present.
 The student: I walk. You walk
 The teacher intruptes him: Quicker please.
 The student: I run. You run ...

Teacher: Why are you late?
 Student: There was a man who lost a hundred dollar bill.

Teacher: That's nice. Were you helping him look for it?
 Student: No. I was standing on it.

Little Sam (on phone): My son is having high fever and he won't be able to come to school today.
 Teacher: Who is this?
 Little Sam: This is my father speaking!

student : Your stupid!
 Girl: Do you know who I am?
 student : No.
 Girl: I'm the principals daughter.
 student : Do you know who I am?
 Girl: No.
 Boy: Good. (walks away)

student receives a phone call from his doctor.
 The doctor says, "I have some good news and some bad news."
 student says, "OK, give me the good news first."

The doctor says, "The good news is, you have 24 hours to live."
 student replies, "Oh no! If that's the good news, then what's the bad news?"

The doctor says, "The bad news is, I forgot to call you yesterday."

Teacher: Which one is closer, Sun or Africa?
 Johnny: Sun
 Teacher: Why?
 Johnny: We can see the sun all the time, but can't see Africa.

Teacher announced that "students, we will have only half a day of school in this morning.
 All the students said "Yeahh"
 Then the teacher said "We will have the other half this afternoon"!????

A black Jewish boy runs home from school one day and asks his father, "Daddy, am I more Jewish or more black?"
 The dad replies, "Why do you want to know, son?" "Because a kid at school is selling a bike for \$50 and I want to know if I should talk him down to \$40 or just steal it!"

(Contd.. from p. 5)

of Rs 25/ for a 14.2 kg cylinder, which has put a heavy burden on the common man. As a result, the price of LPG today is almost Rs 200/ more than what it was 7-8 months back and more than double in the last 7 years. To add to the misery, the earlier subsidy of 12 cylinders for each household has been done away by the Central govt, bringing the domestic price of the gas on par with the market price. Not long back, the Central govt had requested consumers to give up their subsidies to enable the poor families in the rural areas to avail of the LPG facilities. Free LPG connections were also given to lakhs of families in the rural areas by the Modi govt, as part of their welfare schemes. Today, in the present scenario of unaffordable LPG prices, the only alternative for these hapless families is to revert to the traditional ways of cooking, using firewood and charcoal. Their hopes of the promised utopian 'achhe din' have been shattered badly, as much as it is with the rest of the country.

— A. F. Nazareth
Alto Porvorim, Goa.

Our civic and social activists need to unify

Orlem is a vibrant parish and the pandemic has only served to bring out the best in our parishioners. Parishioners have actively involved themselves in various charitable and social activities bringing succour to innumerable people of all communities. The Bombay Catholic Sabha with the blessings of the church has been conducting free vaccination drive every day, subject to vaccine availability, for the last three months, till date. Various church groups are distributing food and aid to the needy while the SSVP and Prayatna, (the social arm of the church) are as usual

Ingredients:

1 cup shredded cabbage
1/2 cup ghee
3 cups milk
1 cup sugar
1 tsp cardamom powder
Chopped nuts

Method:

Take the ghee and shredded cabbage together in a vessel and saute on a medium flame until the raw smell of the cabbage goes away. Add the milk and cook on a high flame by stirring continuously.

Once the milk turns thick and becomes half of the quantity, add in the sugar, ghee and cook on a medium flame until the mixture turns thick. Finally, add the cardamom powder and cook on simmer.

Once the halwa is nicely cooked, put off the gas. Add the chopped nuts, give a stir and serve warm or even cold.



by Jubel D'Cruz

doing commendable work.

Besides, there are youth groups which are actively involved in various civic and social activities. Unfortunately, it is observed that these groups do not see eye to eye with each other. This is very unfortunate. We have a substantial Catholic presence in Orlem. If all civic and social associations and groups unite we can be a force to reckon with. Unfortunately other people leverage the hard work and goodwill of our community to succeed at civic elections. The same is true in some other catholic pocketboroughs. If we unite, we can have our own civic corporators.

—Prof Robert Castellino,
Malad



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Cataclysmic Coronacalamity

(Contd... from last issue)

Another virus that hit headlines in 1976 was the Ebola virus which occurred in a village near the Ebola River, from which the disease takes its name. This virus had a second larger outbreak in 2014–2016 in West Africa.

Closer home was the Nipah virus in 2018 believed to have spread through fruit bats and confined to Kerala. Strict vigilance and active monitoring by the Health authorities nipped the spread of the virus in the bud before it could cause further damage.

What was unique about the coronavirus that struck us in 2019? Virologists have identified a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans and hence it was named as a novel coronavirus or Covid-19. It is clear that the new strain has mutated from the previous coronaviruses that have infected mankind but with a more deadlier and lethal footprint. With all the technological expertise and knowledge at the command of scientists, no one in their wildest imagination could have predicted that seven years since the last major epidemic of SARS, the virus would mutate into the deadly Covid-19?

Part IV: DIRE PREDICTIONS

It was Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and not the 16th-century astrologer Nostradamus, who accurately predicted the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. The billionaire who is one of the foremost philanthropists on the planet, in Ted talk titled 'The next outbreak' delivered in 2015, had warned that a microbe and not war is more likely to kill millions of people around the planet in the next 10 years. Was it just a premonition of impending disaster

or was it based on science?

Nostradamus was a 16th-century seer. He and his prophecies—revered by some, ridiculed by others—are still well known today, centuries after he lived, and continue to be the subject of debate.

Nostradamus's predictions tended to be about general types of events, like natural disasters and conflict-related events that tend to occur regularly as time goes on. Did Nostradamus predict the corona pandemic? The claims include a prophecy written out as follows: *"There will be a twin year (2020) from which will arise a queen (corona) who will come from the east (China) and who will spread a plague (virus) in the darkness of night, on a country with 7 hills (Italy) and will transform the twilight of men into dust (death), to destroy and ruin the*

world. It will be the end of the world economy as you know it." This claim was checked and verified by several sources and has been found to be untrue. But what was spot-on was the prediction made by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, rather than Nostradamus, who accurately predicted the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. The billionaire who is one of the foremost philanthropists on the planet, in a Ted talk titled 'The next outbreak' delivered in 2015, had warned that a microbe and not war is more likely to kill millions of people around the planet in the next 10 years. Was it just a premonition of impending disaster or was it based on science?

"If anything kills over 10 million people in the next few decades it's highly likely to be a highly infectious virus rather than a war. Not missiles, microbes," Gates had said. Gates had cited the Ebola outbreak to point out

that the world had no defence against a global viral outbreak five years ahead of the 2020 pandemic. The video of the Ted talk went viral in 2020 as the pandemic struck but Gates said he didn't feel good about his prediction coming true.

"There's no good feeling that comes with something like this," the billionaire philanthropist recently told Derek Muller while speaking to him for his YouTube channel 'Veritasium'. *"Could I have been more persuasive?"* he rued. Muller then asks Gates about how he was so certain about something like a pandemic half a decade ago.

"There are a number of respiratory viruses and from time to time one will come along. Respiratory diseases are very scary because you're still walking around on a plane, a bus when you're infectious. Unlike some other diseases like ebola where you are mostly in a hospital bed by the time viral load infects other people," Gates responds.

His accurate prediction of the pandemic led to him being the target of many conspiracy theories linking him to the coronavirus' origins. This was mentioned 1.2 million times on television and social media between February and April this year, according to an analysis by the New York Times and media analytics company, Zignal Labs. The fact that he has been quite vocal about the bigger danger a global pandemic could pose for many years ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic has been lapped up by conspiracy theorists with some of them alleging it as proof that Gates appeared to have known beforehand about coronavirus. While some are of the view that he is leading a class of global elites, others believe Gates is at the forefront of efforts to depopulate the world. Thus Bill Gates became the voodoo doll of COVID conspiracies.

Part V: THE WUHAN MYSTERY

The popular theory is that the vi-

(Contd.. on p. 15)



Thomas Lobo

is retired Director-Pfizer Ltd, former Campus Director of St. John Technical & Educational Campus at Palghar and is currently a freelance Management Advisor to Higher Educational Institutions and a Life Coach

(Contd.. from p. 14)

rus was transmitted from bats at the Wuhan animal market sometime in late 2019 but the truth uncovered by a group of investigators called DRAS-TIC is leading the world to believe that it was discovered as early as 2013 in bat faeces drawn from mineshafts. How did this mutate into the deadly strain of virus that has now engulfed the whole world?

Most of us who have visited China are aware of the Chinese' affinity for animal meat and seafood. As the virus first engulfed the city of Wuhan the news was that the virus had spread at Wuhan's popular Huanan seafood market through bats.

In the summer of 2020, two Pune scientists, Monali Rahalkar and husband Rahul Bahulikar, wrote a paper titled "*Lethal Pneumonia Cases in Mo-jiang Miners (2012)*" and theorized a link between Covid-19 and the lethal pneumonia that claimed the lives of three miners in China's Yunnan province and this became a key part of investigations by DRASTIC- a group of scientists and analysts from across the world, looking into the origins of Covid-19. The couple's work gained momentum after a member of this group – known as *The Seeker*– found other vital information that boosted the lab leak theory, Rahalkar has hypothesized that the miners' illness was not transmissible at the time because friends, relatives and others near the mine were not affected. But after their samples reached the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) reports emerged of a fast moving infection.

The Wuhan Institute of Virology was studying faeces drawn from mineshafts. They found a SARS-like beta coronavirus from the same mineshaft where the miners had been sickened after sampling in 2013. The lab has denied any work on SARS-CoV-2 before 2019. But there are high chances of modification of the virus inside the lab. There is a strong likelihood that the modified virus leaked from the lab.

So the virus that causes Covid-19 could have started spreading in China as early as Oct 2019, two months be-

fore the first case was identified in the central city of Wuhan. Researchers from Britain's University of Kent used methods from conservation science to estimate that SARS-CoV-2 first appeared from early Oct to mid-Nov 2019. China's first official Covid-19 case was in Dec 2019 and appears to have been deliberately misreported as being linked to Wuhan's Huanan seafood market. This seems more like a cover-up attempt by the Chinese Govt which is corroborated by the death of a Chinese doctor Li Wenliang who was working in an eye hospital in Wuhan treating coronavirus patients. His death attributed to the virus was suppressed initially by the Chinese Govt. Dr Li had tried to warn fellow medics of a disease that looked like Sars - another deadly coronavirus. But he was told by police to "*stop making false comments*" and was investigated for "*spreading rumours*".

And yet, China's actions raised questions. The government refused to allow international scientists into Wuhan in early 2020 when the outbreak was mushrooming, including experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who were already in the region.

Beijing stonewalled on allowing World Health Organization experts into Wuhan for more than a year, and then provided only limited access. The WHO team's final report, written with and vetted by Chinese researchers, played down the possibility of a lab leak. Instead, it said the virus probably spread via a bat through another animal, and gave some credence to a favored Chinese theory that it could have been transferred via frozen food.

Part VI: THE WORLD ON ITS KNEES

From China, the Virus spread globally in a flash causing countries to go into a lockdown for months and the world came to a standstill with the economy too coming to a grinding halt. An unprecedented medical crisis loomed large. The rampaging virus took a heavy toll of the elderly population all over. Pharma companies scrambled to develop and launch a vaccine before the virus could do

further damage. What did the future hold?

It was a matter of time before the Virus engulfed the whole world, beginning with Europe, US, and a few Asian countries like Iran and eventually India by early March 2020.

However, if there is one country that has suffered the most due to COVID-19 beyond China, it has to be the European country of Italy. But what is the connection between Italy and the novel coronavirus considering the deadly virus is reported to have originated from China? The answer is fashionably simple. The northern part of Italy has been a traditionally prosperous region due to the flourishing fashion and garment industry. Most of the big global brands like Gucci and Prada have their base in this region. With China offering one of the cheapest manufacturing options in the world, it came as little surprise that most of these fashion brands were working with China. A large number of these Italian fashion and garment houses had outsourced their manufacturing to Chinese labour, specifically in Wuhan.

Italy also has direct flights from Wuhan and reports suggest over 100,000 Chinese citizens were working in Italian factories. Chinese made a slow and steady move into Italy and many Italian fashion firms are now owned by them as well. As per a news report, there are more than 300,000 Chinese and over 90% of them work in the Italian garment industry. As per reports, there are thousands of small companies that are active in exports. This region is also very interconnected as well. The Italian authorities were late in waking up to the threat of the novel coronavirus and it had already spread far and wide to the neighbouring countries of Spain, France, Germany, Belgium and the UK by the time safety measures were put in place.

Experts believe the novel coronavirus outbreak has hit Italy on two major counts – first is the high number of casualties. Nearly 60% of the population is aged 40 and over, of which about 23% is over 65 years of age. This put nearly one-fourth of the population at grave risk.

(To be contd...)

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

7237. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1990), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M. Eng., MBA., PGDM., working as an Asst. Engg. Manager. Contact email : dannypinto@gmail.com

7233. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1983), Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 83 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. HSC, IHM, IT., working as a Instrument Tech., working offshore (Rigs). Contact email : bragandacruz@rediffmail.com

7213. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1989), Ht.6', Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc. in Hospitality Studies, working in a reputed organization. Contact email : merwyn1989pinto@gmail.com

7220. MUMBAI : Anglo Indian Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in May 1978), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 76 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA PGDM, working as a HR. Contact email : rodrigsmargaret69@gmail.com

7183. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1991) Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 86 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. PGDM and BMS., working as a Relationship Manager. Contact email : ritadhawan10@gmail.com

7185. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1984) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com. working for Bank. Contact email : shaun.neo00.outlook.com

7188. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Hearing Impaired) (Born in September 1989), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 62 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. HSC., Dip. in Computer Hardware. Working as a Cashier. Contact email : clifford9948@gmail.com OR 9920331773

7212. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman

Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1991), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Bachelor of Arts, B.H.M.S., Luzern, Switzerland, working as a Restaurant Supervisor. Contact email : noellyn_p@hotmail.com

7216. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1988), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, HR speacialization, Profession : Lead Recruiter. Contact email : willujames310@gmail.com

7202. MUMBAI : Keralite Syrian Catholic Bachelor (Born in May 1973), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 73 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., English Literature, Profession : Consultant Administration. Left Hand & Leg is weak due to earlier motor bike accident. Contact Email : josephmullakara1973@gmail.com

7196. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Born in March 1981), Ht. 6', Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., HR Professional. Contact email : denstun@hotmail.com

7236. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1986), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 67 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Edn MBA. PGDM., MBA from NMIMS, working as a Manager in Bank. Contact email : sallysylviana@yahoo.in

7207. CHANDIGARH : Anglo Indian Catholic Divorcee, (Born in April 1972), Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 80 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., MFC, MA English, Teacher by profession. Contact email : vishalsud81@gmail.com

7232. GOA : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1980), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Tan Complexion, Edn. Diploma in Automobile Technology, Self employed. Contact email : darwindsouza28@gmail.com

7226. CANADA : Canadian Citizen Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bach-

elor, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 59 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., in Environmental Science and in Energy Management postgraduate degrees from the University of Toronto. Working for a reputed company as Energy Management Analyst in Totonto. Contact email : francisper@gmail.com

7206. NEW DELHI : Goan RC Bachelor (Born in October 1995), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 43 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. Computer Engineer, working as a Project Manager with Paytm. Contact email : dcosta.ria@gmail.com

7168. USA : US Citizen Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1985) Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 73 kgs, Fair, Edn. M.Sc., working for a Global Pharmaceutical Company. Contact email : lspinto84@gmail.com

7203. MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in October 1985), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. MBA, working for International Company. Contact email : delphinempinto@gmail.com

7227. MUMBAI : Goan RC Bachelor, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 73 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Senior HR. Contact email : baptistadarryl@yahoo.in

7157. PUNE : RC 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

7231. MUMBAI : Goan RC Divorcee, (Born in August 1970), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Diploma Holder, working as a Manager with a Cruise liner based in USA . Work entails 6 months work and 2/3 months vacation. Contact email : raisaraisa1212@yahoo.in

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7223. MUMBAI : Born Again Spinster, (Born in November 1994), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Masters in HR. working as Asst. Manager Learning and Development in Cargo Logistics firm. Seeks suitable match, first preference Born Again or Others. Contact email : bernie_wicket@yahoo.com

7215. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1996), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS, CWM, pursuing CFA Level 2, working as a Operations Analyst in Limited Company. Contact email : rachel.serrao96@gmail.com

7238. AHMEDABAD : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1989), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Sr. Recruitment Consultant. Contact email : fernandeseugenia58@gmail.com

7065. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1989), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 69 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., & Dip. in Clinical Research, working as Business Process Lead in TCS. Contact email : mendonca_luke@yahoo.co.in

7230. MUMBAI : Silm, Smart, Beautiful Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1995), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working in Pharmaceutical Company. Contact email : alex1947@rediffmail.com

7234. MANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBBS, MD (ongoing), Doctor by profession. Contact email : samaddy2013@gmail.com

7214. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1986), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 52 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. CA CFA Ms Finance M.Com., working as a Senior Manager. Contact email : frfernandes020@gmail.com

7210. AURANGABAD : Mangalorean

Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1994), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, good looking, beautiful, Coming from business family, Edn. Chartered Accountant, C.A. by Profession. Contact email : putturaurangabad@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

7199. BANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 53 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Master's in Mass Communications (NTU, Singapore) working as a Senior Manager of Corporate Communications in SINGAPORE. Contact email : mafern.2121@gmail.com

7235. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1991), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 100 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Asst. Professor by profession. Contact email : joelhs18@gmail.com

7182. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., C.A., working as Asst. Manager in TATA Company. Contact : email : matrimonialp27@gmail.com

7229. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1994), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Fair Complexion, Good looking, Smart, Edn. MBA PGDM, working as a HR Marketing and Customer Service in UAE. Contact email : goanmatri7@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

7228. KOLKATA : Anglo Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1988), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Good looking, Smart, Edn. B.A., working as a HR. Contact email : advtresponse85@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

7222. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1984), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as accountant. Contact email : josephppereira@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

7205. NEW DELHI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1996), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 38 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BDS, Bachelor in Dental Surgery, woking as a Dental Doctor in PUNE. Contact email : mariadcosta0505@gmail.com

7204. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster (Born in October 1989), Ht. 4' 11", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, PGD in Broadcast Journalism, working for National News Channel in BANGALORE. Contact email : stacypereira89@gmail.com

7193. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., M.A., B.Ed., working as a Teacher in DUBAI. Contact email : marina.rodrigues1954@gmail.coms

7197. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1995), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate & pursuing MBA in Hotel and Tourism, working as a Travel Executive in Sharp Travel Private Limited. Contact email : joseph.monteiro84@yahoo.com, Mob. : 9869860580.

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Vailankanni: The Virgin Mary's Pastoral

SITE FOR RECONCILIATION

Faith, devotion and trust in Our Lady, the Virgin Mother of God has come down the passage of Christianity's history. In every corner of the globe her name has been a beacon which leads believers and others to seek her intercession.

The apparition of Mother Mary at Vailankanni was the Virgin Mary's desire to have a shrine built in India. The basilica was consecrated in 1962.

From chapels to the grand structures of shrines, basilicas and cathedrals have placed Mary in the fore-front of every Catholic effort to win souls and spread the Word of God.

From Fatima to Lourdes, the Blessed Virgin Mary has been the most privileged creature in all creation to be the Mother of God, and our heavenly Mother.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Our pilgrimage on earth is a dynamic designed to give us the overflowing fullness of faith through Mary to Jesus. The Virgin Mary changes those she comes to guide and blesses them with a new spirit.

All these attributes to "Mary full of grace" is seen in the many Marian shrines across the world. In India, one of the most visited shrines is in a small town at Vailankanni, Tamil Nadu, South India. Thousands of pilgrims visit this town often known as 'sanctuary of Our Lady of Vailankanni'.

The Roman Catholic Latin Rite Basilica to our Lady of Vailankanni is dedicated to Our Lady of Health. The church is a minor basilica.

The majestic architectural design is Gothic in style, and covers a large area of land to accommodate the constant flow of visitors and pilgrims. The Basilica is known as the 'Lourdes of

the East' because of its many medical cures and miracles.

The church of Our Lady of Vailankanni had been consecrated in 1962.

Three miracles are attributed to the history of the shrine at the site around the basilica:

The Shepherd boy

Four hundred years ago a story states that a shepherd boy from Vailankanni would carry milk to a rich man in Nagapatti about ten kilometers away.

One summer afternoon the boy was tired and decided to rest near a pond before going on. He slumbered under a large banyan tree and went into a deep sleep. Suddenly the boy was amazed to see a beautiful lady with a divine looking son in her arms. The lady asked the boy to give her a little milk for her son. The boy was happy to oblige.

A while later the boy stood up, took the half-filled pot of milk and went to the rich man's house. He began with an apology for being late as he narrated the vision to the man and said he had given milk to the woman for her child.

When the rich man opened the pot of milk it was overflowing. People from the nearby village came and witnessed the milk overflowing from the pot without stopping.

The buttermilk boy

A few years later a second miracle took place. A boy who was a cripple would be carried by his mother every morning to a spot near the road to sell the milk to passer-by.

One warm summer's afternoon the

boy saw a woman of great beauty standing before with a child in her arm. The lady asked the boy for a little milk for her child. The boy was prompt to comply. The lady asked the boy to visit a gentleman in Nagapatti close to Vailankanni, and to tell him to build a church at the place where the boy sat every day.

The boy told the lady he was prepared to do her bidding only when his mother would come to carry him back home. "I am a cripple", the boy said. At that moment the lady put her hand over his leg and he was cured. It was the second miracle.

Rescue of the sailors

It was a big and violent storm at sea. The ship was sailing from Macou to Columbia past Bengal. The giant waves made the sailors fear for their lives. The Captain and crew prayed to the Virgin Mary, promising to build a church. Mysteriously, the storm blew away. The sailors were amazed at the miracle. They were all saved from death. They named the church in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Health.

By the middle of the 16th century the shrine became a parish church in 1771. The local people referred to the shrine as the church of Our Lady of Vailankanni, taking the name of the town.

In 1962 by a special order from Pope John XXIII the shrine was granted a special status of a Minor Basilica and merged with the Major Basilica of Mary (Mary Major) in Rome on 3rd November 1962 by Pope John XXIII.

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Making Marriages Work

Drs. John and Julie Gottman are founders of the Gottman Institute, a research based institute and are experts on relationships. They have studied over 3000 couples for several years to analyse which marriages succeed and which will end in divorce within six and eight years with 90% accuracy. What are the ingredients of a successful marriage?

Those with successful, intimate, flourishing and positive relationships are called Masters while those in relationships that are negative with the partners hurting each other's feelings are doomed for divorce and are termed Disasters by the Gottmans. Somewhere in the middle of the scale are those trapped in loveless marriages who stay married either to avoid criticism or for economic reasons.

A Master is kind, compliments his/her partner and is willing to make the relationship work. If perchance he has made a hurtful comment, he should make up with five times more positive outputs (a ratio of 5:1). After making up, the couple are drawn closer. It's a courtship that ends only with death. A Disaster in contrast expresses anger and hostility. With Dr. John Gottman's 'Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse', he is able to predict breakdown of relationships. What are these four horsemen of a failed marriage?

1. Criticism : This suggests that your partner is defective. Let's suppose that the husband comes home tired and keeps on talking about his tough day without asking his wife how her day went. Disaster (the wife) will respond, " Spare a thought about my tough day. I had to" Not exactly words that are likely to foster a relationship. Master (the wife) may say, 'Honey, I do realize that your

day was tough but so was mine with the kids creating a racket and damaging my ear drums. I feel hurt that you didn't ask about my day.' Disaster focuses on attack while Master expresses herself in a matter of fact manner.

2. Defensiveness : When Disaster is tactfully criticized, she tries to ward off what she perceives is an attack either by expressing righteous indignation or acting like the innocent victim and whining. Master in contrast responds, 'Yes you made a good point. The song really didn't suit my voice. The next time I sing at a party I'll try to avoid same mistake. Thanks for your constructive criticism'. He accepts criticism gracefully.



by Monica Fernandes

3. Disrespect and Contempt : Disaster feels superior to her partner. Her response to his talking at length about his tough day could be, 'What a jerk you are. The way you talk one would imagine the Company would collapse without you. You just keep talking about yourself all the time.' Master creates a culture of appreciation by action or words. 'You poor dear', while gently tousling her partner's hair, 'You really had a tough day. Let me make you a cooling drink.'

4. Stonewalling and emotional withdrawal from the conversation : Disaster ignores her partner as though he does not exist. This attitude is very hurtful and the husband comes out with all guns blazing to make an impact on his stone cold partner. He shouts and shakes her but she couldn't care less. This attitude of course is not great for his ego.

What are the alternatives for a successful relationship as suggested by the Gottmans?

A) Enhance your 'Love Maps': Love maps are a person's inner psycho-

logical self, his or her internal world consisting of fears and aspirations. What are his or her stressors, hobbies, dreams. The partner asks open ended questions and thus enhances his or her love maps. 'What is bothering you about your work today? Do share with me.' 'What was life like when your father was posted in a small town?'

B) Inculcate fondness and admiration: Convey your appreciation in small ways. 'Thank you for doing the dishes today.' 'You sang so well at the function today. I am proud of you.' You are thereby increasing your emotional bank balance and that of your partner as well.

C) Make bids for emotional connect : Imagine you are looking out from your balcony and you see a fancy red car parked on the road. You say, 'Jasmine, come and see this fantastic car. It's just come into the market.' But Jasmine continues her work and doesn't bother to share your enthusiasm. In contrast you are watching football on TV. Jasmine is not interested in sports. But she comes and sits by your side, trying to understand the match and share your enthusiasm. She has made a bid for emotional connect. This is a 'positive sentiment override' in contrast to the 'negative sentiment override' of Disaster who is over enthusiastic about putting down her partner.

D) Masters bring repair to a relationship when the going is not good. They don't get defensive when attacked. Instead they step back, allow things to cool down and contritely say, 'I am sorry for what I said. Can we talk about it?' The approach is rational.

We are, after all, social animals. Compliments, small gifts, humour, treating your partner as if he or she was your best friend and love – all these are ingredients for a continuously evolving relationship. This type of relationship sustains, energises and motivates both partners. It is the basis of a happy family.

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