

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

'Suo Motu' the Conscience of Governance!

by Dr M. D. Thomas

The first week of October 2021 of the 21st century has invited the ardent attention of the entire country, and even much beyond, towards the district town of 'Lakhimpur Kheri' of Uttar Pradesh. All eyes, ears and minds are deeply focused on the 'eight deaths', especially the four among them that were mowed down by a vehicle.

The disreputable 'vehicle' was part of the convoy of the Union Minister for Home affairs and MP, Ajay Kumar Mishra, of Bharatiya Janta Party, the ruling dispensation in both Uttar Pradesh and the Centre. Evidently, as the news is indeed shocking, so is the instance brutal, fierce and horrible.

It may be recalled that a nearly year-long protest campaign by various bodies of farmers has been in force against the 'unsustainable farm' laws passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Government of India last year. The tragic incident of Lakhimpur Kheri is an aftermath of the sad state of affairs following the laws and the protest, along with the insensitive attitude of the government, highly callously so.

Having observed the confusion around and the delay in taking instant action from the part of the police and governmental quarters, the Supreme Court of India took 'suo motu' cognizance of the 'violence and deaths' in Lakhimpur. The three-judge bench, led by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, flanked by Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, deserves to be appreciated profusely for its instant and timely action.

The significant move of the Supreme Court listed the 'hearing in 24 hours', 'ordered the Uttar Pradesh Government to file a status report identifying the accused in the First Information Report (FIR) registered on the Lakhimpur Kheri violence' and to 'inform the court whether they have been arrested or not'.

Dissatisfied over the status report presented by the Uttar Pradesh government and the ethical discrepancy therein, the apex court accused it saying "your serious-

ness is only in words and not in your action". The State was reminded by Justice Hima Kohli that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating". "It is a case of brutal murder of eight persons; law must take its course against all the accused", Justice Surya Kant reminded

Prior to the above verdict, the Bench of the Supreme Court, led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, had already regrettably observed on 04 October that "when such incidents happen, causing deaths, loss to property and damage, nobody takes responsibility". Attorney General K.K. Venugopal had described the Lakhimpur Kheri violence an "unfortunate incident", as well.

The top court expressed also strong discontent over the improper investigation done by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) appointed by the government of Uttar Pradesh. The court ordered the State to ensure immediate medical care for the mother of one of victims of the incident, who died out of shock. The court cautioned the government that 'such incidents should not take place again', as well.

It may be noted that it is indeed rare that the apex court takes up issues and incidents on its own motion. That refers to the seriousness of the case, in terms of public interest and human rights. Over and above, taking up the case 'suo motu', along with pursuing it on consecutive days, is a proof positive of the awakened conscience and strong sense of ethics displayed by the Supreme Court.

Coming to the phrase 'suo motu', it means 'on its own motion'. It refers to situations where a 'government or court official acts on its own initiative', without being requested or petitioned. 'Cognizance' is 'awareness, realization, knowledge, notice, perception, etc, too. Undertaking cognizance of a certain matter, pronouncing a decision and making those concerned act on the same comprise the process of the 'suo motu' provision of law.

The 'suo motu' stipulation of law is beached in Article

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Matter of survival

When was the last time you have been starved of a meal due to lack of money? When was the last the you have had to wear the same old clothes for a function because you had no money to buy a new outfit? Have you ever had to drop out of school because your parents couldn't afford to pay your fees? The list of questions could go on. **The answer probably would be a No!**

Coming to the question of survival, well, food for the stomach, is one of those things that would sustain us in life. How long can one live without food? Well, we may never have had to face such a situation because we are in a position to provide food for ourselves and for our family. However, do we give a thought to those thousands of people who are unable to get even one square meal a day? Do we understand what it means to suffer the pangs of hunger? We must have seen children rummaging through dustbins on the street to find some food? We must have seen people begging for food?

We must have also come across several videos circulating on the social media, of people struggling for food. One such video shows a man who

comes to a restaurant, sees how customers waste their food, sometimes half the plate is just left away. What does this man do? He collects the leftover food in packets or bowls and goes out into the street. He would do this everyday. **The manager and the staff find it quite strange and one day they decide to follow him. And what do they see? The man distributing the food to the people on the street.** I came across this quote which says, **"Trash bins are full but stomachs are empty."** This good man understood this very clearly and prevented the food from going into the Trash bins.

Well what is your response to this situation? What are we doing about it? Is your heart moved with compassion and pity at such a sight? Do we think we can do something about this situation? Perhaps we will throw a few coins at them. Well, there was this man, Vincent de Paul in France who was moved with pity and compassion. He decided to dedicate himself to the service of the poor. We



have the SVP cell in our parishes doing the work of St. Vincent de Paul, identifying poor families, helping them with rations, education, etc. **They promote community self-sufficiency, enabling people to help themselves. And that is perhaps the right way to help the underprivileged class in society, rather than offering food at random.**

We are in pandemic times and almost all of us are facing difficult times struggling to support the family. There has been loss of employment and savings are depleting. **In the midst of our own limitations, we are called to share the little that we have and to help and support one another. Are we willing to do that? It is said, where there's a will, there's a way. Perhaps there is a Highway!**

Goa tourism at its lowest moral ebb

A recent report by an NGO has revealed that Goa has recorded the highest number of cases of sex trafficking in the country. Accordingly, Calangute has become a sex hub, due to the demand from tourists who frequent the beach. Alcohol, drugs, gambling, sex trafficking, rape, and murder are some of the vices and crimes that have unfortunately destroyed the moral life and culture of the people of Goa and this once beautiful and peaceful land and Paradise. The rot set in with entry of the Hippies in the early '60s, who ushered in the culture of drugs and easy money. Ever since, with the easy availability of drugs, alcohol and women, our beaches have been turned into dens and hotbeds of prostitution, where women are peddled by pimps, and tourists taken to safe havens where they can pick the woman of their choice. However, the bitter irony of it all is that while all these crimes are thriving and easily glossed over by the concerned authorities, our local Goans are prohibited from entering the casinos for fear that they will imbibe the evils of gambling and ruin their lives and of their families. Makes little sense, to say the least.

A. F. Nazareth
Alto Porvorim. Goa.

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131 of the Constitution of India. The provision implies that when a court feels that a matter requires serious and immediate legal intervention and the Executive designated thus is bound to comply with the order. In the above case, the Uttar Pradesh government is shouldered with the execution of the order with immediate effect.

As it is too obvious, the normal procedure of the court is that it pronounces a verdict on a case after having scrutinized it when presented in the court through a petition. Considering the large number of cases coming into the courts, it is next to impossible for the court or courts to undertake 'suo motu' cases on its own initiative. It is quite reasonable and understandable.

The fact that the Supreme Court, on its own motion, took up the case, although in consideration of the gravity of the case, gives enormous credit to it. It is a testimony to the highly awakened status of the 'conscience' of the judges of the court concerned. It is an indication of the deep sense of commitment to the Constitutional ethos the Supreme Court abides by.

It does not require a mention that the

Supreme Court, under the leadership of the Chief Justice N. V. Ramana, has been making significant strides in measuring out justice to the citizens of India, through different verdicts, along with putting the house/s in order with the pending appointments. The current 'suo motu' initiative has to be understood along the lines of the deep sense of responsibility put on show by him and his team towards the 'wellbeing of the citizens', and in meting out law and justice to one and all.



Fr. Dr. M. D. Thomas

Without doubt, the 'suo motu' initiative is oriented to 'governance' and 'good governance' on behalf of the Judiciary. More often than not, governance is understood to be the sole business of the Executive. It is not so. While the ruling dispensation is entrusted with the principal share of governing, the Judiciary as well as the Legislature comprised of all parties, have its respective role to play in it, too. The ultimate responsibility of the Judiciary in striking a balance in the system of governance is beyond dispute, as well.

The current times of our country are characterized by a high dose of party politics and partisan behaviour, along with communal hostility in the areas of politics, religion, caste, ideology, and the like. The notorious triangular blend

of 'power, money and belief' seems to take our country to a major social and national catastrophe. The ruling dispensation many a time becoming an accomplice with the criminal elements, along with ignoring the citizens or failing to safeguard their rights and welfare is a frequent instance.

Given the prickly pickle the country is plunged into, the 'suo motu' initiative of the Supreme Court is vital, in view of delivering justice to the victims and of maintaining justice and good sense in the country, well, in line with the Constitutional provisions of India. The Supreme Court of India deserves to be complimented in lofty words for its 'suo motu' cognizance in the Lakhimpur Kheri case. The 'supreme model' of the Supreme Court, 'court with a conscience for good governance', I am sure, will contribute immensely to maintaining the country on its track towards a brighter future, as well.

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 pursues the above mission through lectures, articles, video messages, conferences, social interactions, views at TV channels, and the like. He could be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.

World Mental Health Day!

by Dr. Trevor Colaso, Bandra

Mental Health and Wellbeing is (Goal -3) of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda adopted by all the United Member States in 2015 – To reduce by one-third the premature mortality from non-communicable diseases like mental morbidity, through prevention, treatment and promotion of its total fitness, physical, mentally, and even spiritual! It was first observed on 10 October 1992.

Theme of World Mental Health Day 2021!

The World Health Organization (WHO) marks this Day with the overall objective to raise awareness about mental health issues, and to mobilize efforts in support of it. With this in view, the Day is marked with a particular theme! This year 2021, the theme is, “Mental Health in an Unequal World”! It focuses on reducing the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’, which is growing wider every day.

It aims to highlight that mental health services remain unequal, with 75% to 90% of people, especially in the low-middle income countries, unable to access proper mental health care. Besides, their families and caregivers continue to experience stigma and discrimination!

Depression!

Depression is the commonest mental health disorder and the leading cause of disability; while suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds, as per WHO.

Depression is a state of ‘low-mood’ and aversion to any form of activity, leading to mental and behavioral complexities. People experiencing depression usually have a feeling of dejection, hopelessness and suicidal thoughts. It could be mild, moderate, or severe, and either of short, medium or long-term duration.

The UK National Institute of Health and Care (NICE) 2009 guidelines indicate that ‘antidepressants’ should not be used for the initial treatment of mild depression, because the risk-benefit ratio is poor! Physical activity in any form could have a crucial protective effect against the emergence of depression. Occupation decreases the depressive symptoms of ‘stress’ through the release of neurotrophic proteins in the brain. Also, ‘yoga’ is a good ancillary remedy with similar mechanisms!

Mental Health in India!

WHO estimates that illnesses due to mental health affects nearly 300 million people worldwide, the majority of them women, young people and the elderly! As per WHO, the average age of depression in India is about 32 years.

Depression is multi-factorial. A family history increases its risks. Besides, psychological stresses like major life events, early marriage, sudden death in family, divorce, loss of job, serious illness, and social isolation are the major precipitating factors!

The burden of mental health problems in India is estimated to be 2,443 DALYs – Disability-Adjusted-Life-Years per 100,000 of population. Two different mega-analysis in 1998 and 2000 reported a psychiatric morbidity of 58 and 73 per 1000 general population.

India also conceded that a total of 296,438 farmers had committed suicide between 1995 and 2015. Besides, the India Armed Forces lose around 100 soldiers every year due to suicides and fratricides (killing among comrades). All the above instances bring utter shame to our great ‘Mere Bharat’!

The Bible has the Answers!

As ‘depression’ becomes more common and more talked about in society,

Christians of all denominations look to Holy Scripture for solutions. In fact Christians have to combat and to respond to all types of ‘Stresses’; especially emotional and spiritual! Below are some New Testament exhortations!

St James advises: “Count it all my brothers (and sisters), that when you meet trials of various kinds, remember that your faith is being tested. But it produces patience, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing!” (1:2-4).

St Paul reveals: “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not drawn to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. // So be not anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication, along with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God – And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9. // Philippians 4:6-7).

Ultimately Jesus Consoles us!

In all our afflictions, Jesus gives us His conquering peace and harmony! This we especially receive most fully at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, through the Eucharist! – And also in the other Sacraments like Baptism, Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick!

“I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly! ... In Me you attain peace in this world full of trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 10:10. // 16:33).

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On making confession a sacrament of joy

The new outlook on the sacrament of penance by Pope Francis during his recent visits to Hungary and Slovakia, sees God as a loving Father who lifts us like children in every sinful situation and forgives our every sin. Therefore, one should not go to confession 'as chastised people who must humble themselves, but as children who run to receive the Father's embrace'. Priests, on the other hand are required to feel in the place of God the Father, who always forgives, embraces and welcomes all sinners. In this way, confession becomes a sacrament of joy, and every time we confess, there is celebration in heaven. I wonder how many of us going to confession have had this soul-lifting experience and joy, going by the high-handed and aggressive behavior of some priests in the confessional. It is unbelievable that a priest in the person of Christ can sometimes be so uncharitable and rude to a repentant sinner. It is sad that while the church encourages and urges us to frequent the confessional and the Holy Eucharist, there are a few priests who think and act differently. Such bitter experiences in the confessional are not uncommon among the faithful, which is why people are afraid and ashamed to approach the confessional. It is time for some corrective steps to be taken by the higher-ups, in order to change the mindset of priests, so that confession, no longer becomes a burden, but transformed into a sacrament of joy.

—A. F. Nazareth,
Alto Porvorim, Goa

Mission Sunday collection by Udipi parish

A fortnight before Mission Sunday, Mother of Sorrows parish in Udipi, put up food stalls by various wards after the Sunday masses. (The stalls will also be functioning on Mission Sunday). The income generated is earmarked for the missions. But what impressed me most was the innovative auction that the parishioners organized, for which the parishioners donated their produce from the fields, including poultry. All very simple and down to earth. Some offered a small hamper of fresh fruit, while others, a bunch of bananas straight from the plantation. As the proceeds



was for a good cause, parishioners were liberal with their bidding. A cock bird went under the hammer for the princely sum of Rs 4,000!

The idea of an auction needs to be expanded. The income is not important, though welcome for a good cause. But the auction can be used to engender a feeling of community. It may be organized for community events like sector masses, or for any association gatherings. It can be a fun thing to do to keep the gathering in good spirits. Personally, I believe it would be a good idea for other parishes to replicate the example of Mother of Sorrows parish.

(Pics and inputs, courtesy Mrs Jennifer Lee, parishioner Mother of Sorrows parish)

— Prof Robert Castellino,
Malad

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The Path of Synodality

by Don Aguiar.

One of the tragedies of contemporary Catholicism is that the Church has become overly politicized.

We're not talking about being political in the elevated sense of the word -- that is, committed to the ecclesial community as well as to the polis. Rather, the Church has become politicized in the sense that political divisions among its own members tend to dominate everything.

They dominate not only the crafting of careful public statements by those who work in and for the Church, but also the very process of forming ideas, worldviews and opinions.

The Church has become politicized in a way that reflects the slogan of Charles Maurras, one of the heroes of the neo-integralist Catholics: "la politique d'abord!"

It's not politics in the sense of day-to-day politics. Its politics in the sense that the political order comes first as key to all other questions: ecclesial, theological and spiritual.

Resulting in the Church creating problems, after realisation the church seeks solutions to the problems that created. It's called Hegelianism.

"The path of synodality is the path that

God expects from the Church of the third millennium," Pope Francis has said. And so it is not surprising that in region after region Catholic bishops are embracing synodality. The Germans have embarked on a synodal path, the Australians a plenary council, the Irish a synod ... and so it goes on and on. This shows remarkable growth in ecclesiology in a matter of three or four years in comparison with the amount of attention that these same conferences of bishops devoted to it -- or to the significance of the Synod of Bishops -- in the first decades after the Second Vatican Council (1962-65).

The theme Pope Francis has chosen for the gathering is "For a synodal church: communion, participation and mission." This Synod will include both an Ordinary general Assembly and local Diocesan synods connected to it and will end in 2023, concluding a two-year synodal process. In doing so, he is seeking to give new impetus to a synodal process that has involved the whole people of God since the very beginning of the Church.

From the earliest days of the Church, people gathered to discern when they were faced with a crisis or at a turning point. Are basic Christian communities the way to achieving synodality?

The idea of a Synod on synodality has been the subject of mockery in recent months, as it seems to refer to an abstract and disembodied concept. But the emphasis is, above all, on the need to consult all Catholics. It is nothing less than imagining a different future for the Church and its institutions, worthy of the mission it has received, as can be read in the prelude to the questionnaire that will soon be submitted to the faithful throughout the world. The risk would be to remain at the stage of ideas.

A synod is typically a group of Bishops who gather to assist the Holy Father in addressing challenges that face the Church. The bishops have been chosen from different regions of the world and meet together at fixed times.

Pope Francis said that the two-year process leading to the 2023 synod on synodality is not about "gathering opinions" but "listening to the Holy Spirit." The pope said that this wasn't simply a "theological opinion" or merely a "personal thought" but rather the blue print for the Church contained in the Acts of the Apostles, which shows early Christian community "walking together."

The Acts of the Apostles tell that when the early Christian communities needed to resolve certain practical problems or pastoral questions, they held an assembly of believers, called on the Holy Spirit and discussed with those in authority.

The pope said, "The theme of Synodality is not a chapter in a treatise on ecclesiology, much less a fad, a slogan, or a new term to use or instrumentalize in our meetings -- No -- Synodality expresses the nature of the Church, its forms, its style, its mission." Some Vatican commentators have described it as the most significant Catholic event since the Second Vatican Council in 1962-65.

The convocation of assemblies is a very old and traditional practice in the Church. It has taken place with more or less intensity according to the period of history.

Conversation of the kind envisaged by Pope Francis requires from all its participants great energy, readiness to change their opinion, and willingness to have their own passionate convictions side-lined in broader conversations. With Synodality and the still "too clerical" Catholic Church. Will there be a readiness to change?

(Contd.. on p. 7)



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Those who enter it must be open to be persuaded by people with whom they disagree, and to require more than majority opinion to validate decisions.

The challenge facing leaders who commend such a strategy is to make people believe in it, whether they be Presidents, Prime Ministers, Bishops, central administrators, priests, or people in congregations.

Leaders need to be able to touch beliefs or commitments that lie deeper than individual interests and command engagement rather than detachment. Only an operative faith in community, democracy, or solidarity can overcome disengagement.

In the Catholic Church such trust depends on the operative belief that the Holy Spirit is active in the life of the Church to make the Gospel come alive, and can make a bonfire out of sodden wood.

Pope Francis clearly has this trust in the power of the Holy Spirit to break through all obstacles, and to make barren soil fertile. Others may be sceptical. But what other than such trust could enable reform in public life or in church?

The Catholic Church in India this weekend, officially begins preparations for the next ordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which will take place in October 2023 in Rome.

The process at the Diocesan level is scheduled from 17th October with inauguration in all Dioceses / Parishes. It will last till April 2022. Diocesan Teams are to be formed and two Contact persons from each Diocese is expected to collaborate with the Synod India Desk.

The two persons from the Diocese are only contact persons with the Synod Desk to get information, etc. the Diocesan contact persons in turn have

to plan the Synod consultation in their respective Dioceses and include all categories of people to get feedback on the ten themes given by means of questionnaires, etc. A time of six months till April 2022 is given for the Diocesan Phase. It is for each Diocese to get a real picture by consulting at the grass root level. This is being done under the aegis of CCBI, so only the Latin Church is included. The other rites have been instructed to follow the process for their churches separately.

What voices will you hear from just two persons per diocese? That is not even replicating the CCI. India is not homogenous and our urban dioceses are culturally complex. Especially in Latin rites. Will Dalit, Adivasi, Youth, Women, Third gender, Poor, Homeless, Working Class, Psychological Stress, Drugs, Alcoholism, Child Abuse, Clericism, Custodial Abuse voices be heard? There are about 180 dioceses. This means there will not be even one person from one third of the dioceses.

Let us hope and pray that this new enthusiasm for synodality will bring a renewal to the Catholic Church, mark an end to the decades of scandal following scandal, and also allow the Church to put behind it the centralist triumphalism that was so attractive in the nineteenth century. In an age of imperialism and colonialism, the Catholic Church took on the contemporary dress. However, it has been slower than many states at changing its fashion. Perhaps we should pay

Why just Bollywood stars and their kids?

Why does the NCB pull out only Bollywood stars and their kids? All the rich and famous in Mumbai are into rave drug parties. But the NCB will never pull out the industrialists because that doesn't make news like the way Bollywood does. Pulling out Bollywood stars and naming and raiding the stars and star kids gives a kind of publicity to the NCB. It is always easy to put Bollywood names in wrong places. I admit that these parties are common not only in Bollywood, but in most of the crème de la crème parties of Mumbai. But the NCB seems to be just obsessed with Bollywood.

A walk down Colaba Causeway where some of the best schools and colleges of Mumbai are located, you can spot and smell young students smoking up in the narrow lanes and bylanes of Maximum city. So why does it become a big news when a Bollywood star or their kid gets involved in a drug racket?

On the other hand, a lot of beggars who sit on the roadside take drugs like cocaine and ganja openly. The NCB should arrest them too.

— Jubel D'Cruz,
Mumbai

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Give us Today our Daily Food

Come 16 October – and the world once again is together as one, to focus on the most basic need for a person’s survival: food! The first ‘World Food Day’ was observed in 194, to mark the launch of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Ever since, the day is marked to highlight the need and importance of food security across the world. The significance is accentuated especially in these difficult times like the COVID-19 pandemic. The theme for 2021 is ‘Safe Food Now for a Healthier Tomorrow’, emphasising on the various immediate and long-term benefits of consuming safe and healthy food.

The FAO today plays a pivotal role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) mandate- ‘to leave no one behind.’ ‘World Food Day’ therefore also serves as a reminder of the necessity of this organization and helps to make the world aware of the requirement for better agriculture policies to be adopted and executed by governments all over the globe to make sure there is enough food available for everyone

Above all, ‘World Food Day’ brings to attention the terrible plight of millions of people everywhere who are struggling with hunger and do not have adequate food to survive. Starvation is a global crisis that needs to be addressed and tackled before it is too late. Sadly enough, we live in a world of ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’; the former, indulge in the finest of delicacies without any thoughts for others and on the other hand, the latter, are those who are desperate for a little food for their survival. Mahatma Gandhi puts it strongly when he says, “our world has enough for everyone’s need but not for anyone’s greed!”



BY FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH SJ

Recently, the annual ‘Global Hunger Index (GHI) was released. The GHI prepared jointly by Irish aid agency ‘Concern Worldwide’ and German organisation ‘Welt Hunger Hilfe’ is a universally accepted document on the reality of hunger all over the world. The introduction to the report states, “Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at global, regional, and national levels. GHI scores are calculated each year to assess progress and setbacks in combating hunger. The GHI is designed to raise awareness and understanding of the struggle against hunger, provide a way to compare levels of hunger between countries and regions, and call

attention to those areas of the world where hunger levels are highest and where the need for additional efforts to eliminate hunger is greatest”. The GHI score is calculated on four indicators: undernourishment; child wasting (the share of children under the age of five who have low weight for

their height, reflecting acute undernutrition); child stunting (children under the age of five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition); child mortality (the mortality rate of children under the age of five).

India has fared extremely badly in this latest report. The country has slipped to the 101st position among 116 countries in the GHI 2021 from its 2020 ranking (94). India is now placed behind Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. There are only fifteen other countries Papua New Guinea (102), Afghanistan (103), Nigeria (103), Congo (105), Mozambique (106), Sierra Leone (106), Timor-Leste (108), Haiti (109), Liberia (110), Madagascar (111), Democratic Republic of Congo (112), Chad (113), Central African Republic (114), Yemen (115) and Somalia (116) who have fared worse than India this year!

Obviously, the Government is not pleased and has gone on a denial mode! In an official rebuttal, a spokesperson says that the report has been published ‘without due diligence.’ A pathetic response when the Government is unable to furnish any scientific empirical evidence to prove the contrary. A few days ago, the Prime Minister lambasted human rights defenders ‘for spoiling the name of the country’ vi-a-vis the human rights situation in India. The PM does not want to be truthful and acknowledge the non-negotiable fact that it is he and his ilk who denigrate the country and in a calculated manner destroy the fundamental rights of the ordinary citizens. The ‘right to food’ should have been sacrosanct and paramount importance should have been given to ensure that. Instead, the crony capitalist friends of the regime are becoming richer everyday to the growing impoverishment of India’s millions. The nation-wide protest of farmers, which will soon complete one year, is a pointer of how those who provide us with our daily bread are being treated in the country! To build a more fair and equitable food systems, one must to listen to the voices of our farmers, to small-scale producers and rural communities.

Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the FAO, in his statement noted that ‘World Food Day’ finds the world at a critical moment; even before COVID-19, hundreds of millions of people worldwide were afflicted by hunger and that number has increased in the last year to 811 million. That’s despite the world producing sufficient food to feed everyone; and that 14 percent of food is lost, and 17 percent is wasted. Alarming statistics indeed! Antonio Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General in his address says, “the way we produce, consume and waste food is taking a heavy toll on our planet. It is putting historic pressure on

(Contd.. on p. 9)

(Contd.. from p. 8)

our natural resources, climate and natural environment --- and costing us trillions of dollars a year; but the power to change is in our hands."

In a pointed message to Qu Dongyu, Pope Francis says *"The annual celebration of World Food Day brings us face to face with one of humanity's greatest challenges: overcoming hunger once and for all is an ambitious goal."* He points to a paradox with regard to food access, noting that while more than three billion people do not have access to a nutritious diet, almost two billion are overweight due to poor diets and a sedentary life style. Stressing the need for all to play a role he says, *"If we do not want to jeopardize the health of our planet and our entire population, we must encourage active participation in change at all levels and reorganize food systems as a whole."* Pope Francis highlights four areas in particular where urgent action is needed: in the field, at sea, at the table, and in reducing food loss and waste. He says, *"although individual lifestyle choices and daily consumption practices influence global and environmental dynamics, we must encourage producers and consumers to make ethical and sustainable choices and raise awareness among the younger generations of the important role they play in making a world without hunger a reality."*

Whether anyone is listening to these world leaders and will actually pay heed to what they are saying – is anyone's guess! In the meantime, given our hypocritical religiosity and flair to abuse God by dividing people in his/her name, let us at least take cognizance of the words of Mahatma Gandhi *"God comes to the hungry in the form of food!"* and help make their prayer *"Give us today our daily food..."* a reality!

*(Fr Cedric Prakash SJ is a human rights, reconciliation and peace activist/writer. Contact: cedricprakash@gmail.com)

Determinism

The theory of Determinism states that we have no control of our lives. A determinist may say that we are predisposed to certain harmful actions because we have inherited our nature from our great grandfathers. The drunkard fools himself into believing that being a drunk is a trait that is genetic and that he can do precious little to throw off this bad habit.

According to the theory of psychic determinism, we owe all those hang ups we have today to our parents who were either too strict with us or too lenient. Perhaps they did not have the means to give us the education that could help us to make a success in our lives. The environmental determinists state that something or someone in our environment is responsible for our sorry state of affairs. Perhaps it is the government. Or it may be the weather. Or may be global warming and pollution.

Theological determinism is a form of determinism where people believe that all events that happen are pre-ordained by God. "God took away my son," moaned a lady whom I know. The reality was that her son got into wrong company, became a drug addict and died of an overdose. "Why am I losing jobs? It's God's will," said a lazy part timer who once used to 'work' for me. How convenient! She had a ready excuse for not being able to retain jobs.

Determinists are fatalists and react negatively to what is happening to them. Is this view point logical? Are we truly puppets on a string moved by forces beyond our control? If this is so, what about the free will God has endowed us with – the enormous power to choose between good and evil, between one course of action or another? It is an insult to God to believe in determinism, for God has created each individual lovingly to have his/her personality and traits.

The drunkard and drug addict referred to above could chosen to be steady, good citizens. The neta who lines his pockets with cash and does nothing for the people has chosen greed over duty. Some jailed convicts improve themselves by studying further whereas others choose to remain hardened criminals.

How do we react when we are afflict-

ed with a serious illness? If we wallow in self pity, we are merely seeking attention. We have a thing or two to learn from some of the saints who bore their illnesses stoically. They praised and thanked God in the midst of their pain.

Helen Keller lived a full life and was a champion of the blind despite being blind and deaf herself. Stephen Hawkins, the great physicist, has never let his disability come in the way of his work. They chose to react to their challenges in a positive, proactive way.

Rita is a senior nurse working in the dialysis unit of Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai. Tragedy struck when her husband had a sudden stroke and was declared brain dead. Rita thought of suffering humanity and magnanimously decided to donate her husband's kidneys, liver and corneas so that five others could live a better life.

The so called 'migrants' trudging wearily to their villages from the cities were victims of circumstances. The pandemic had rendered them jobless and there was no support system for them such as free rations or a shelter over their heads.

They didn't return home out of their own free will. Was this Determinism at work or was it the failure of a callous system where the financially weak are used when there is a need and forgotten during difficult times when the strong do not lend a helping

hand to the weak? Let us not forget that these hapless people worked as masons, carpenters, workers in factories and their wives worked as part time maids in homes. They were enablers who enabled us to lead a better life.

Weather changes have been attributed to the increasing pollution levels. It is a facile excuse to blame circumstances beyond our control. Actually we are to blame for this sorry state of affairs. We have a collective responsibility to use Gods resources frugally and wisely. Instead we let greed take the upper hand. The Amazon, that treasure trove of clean air, is fast losing its green cover. The holy Ganges is filthy. It's undoubtedly stupid but true that we time and again choose to destroy the Good Earth and indirectly, ourselves.



by Monica Fernandes

Roman Synod Or Greek Tragedy?

(A sequel to my Open Letter to the Bishops of India on Synodality)

In my previous piece I wrote about some of the salient features of Synodality, for which Pope Francis began the process in Rome this 10th October. It will culminate, again in Rome, in October 2023. This Roman Synodal process will take two years because it is the biggest ever ecclesial exercise undertaken by the Catholic Church. It begins from the parish and then moves up to the diocesan, national, continental and finally the universal (catholic) level.

Why am I attempting to compare this Roman Synod with a Greek Tragedy? Both need elucidation. Let us begin with the Synod, basing ourselves very specifically on the Vademecum (handbook) that has been prepared for the various steps of the Synod. It is not possible to elaborate on that 60 page document in a short article. Hence I will just identify some of its important features.

The motto of the Synod is "Communion, Participation, Mission". The three words are described as being inter-related. The Vademecum repeatedly stresses the importance of listening, especially to the voiceless or marginalized, the fringe elements. (By definition that includes the vast concourse of the laity). To avoid the dangers of seminars that late Bp Patrick Nair of Meerut described as "All gas, no go", the Vademecum cautions that a Synod is not about debate or discussion. Nor is it meant to produce a morally correct "document". Rather it is an exercise in Discernment, a typically Jesuit term that Pope Francis stamped on the Synod. This is a process of listening to each other, contemplating the Word of God and reading the signs of the times (contextualizing). This can result in the "surprises of the Holy Spirit", a phrase that Pope Francis seems to have borrowed from Pope John XXIII, when he was convening Vatican II. To me it

would seem that Pope Francis is laying the ground for Vatican III, the next universal and ecumenical Council of the Church.

Another crucial word repeatedly used in the Vademecum is "synthesis". In research work it is referred to as the combination of thesis and anti-thesis; for and against a proposition. Note that the Synod is not looking at consensus, where all agree on a common minimum programme, but synthesis that would include possibly divergent points of view.

As per the Vademecum timeline, based on the feedback from the parishes, the diocesan team must prepare a

ten-page synthesis to be submitted at the national level by April 2022. In due course it will reach the universal level at Rome. By any standards this is a Herculean task.

The vital question now is "Who will bell the cat?" Is the Catholic Church in India ready for this?

This process of synodality seeks to break the shackles of clericalism and hierarchical control. Put bluntly, this is a power sharing or empowering exercise. History, sociology and psychology all teach us that those in power will never voluntarily surrender or share it. So where do we go from here? Is this Roman Synod doomed to failure just as the earlier Family Synod (2014) and Amazonian Synod (2019) came to naught? This is why, though I am intrepid optimist, I have a strong foreboding of the synodal process being sabotaged by the powers that be, as is already happening in the USA.

It would then end up as a Greek Tragedy. Before drawing any conclusions I revert to the three key words of this Synod – Communion, Participation and Mission. Though inter-related I

feel that they are incorrectly prioritized. Having served the church in various capacities for 52 years I feel that what is sorely lacking is a participatory system, even though it has been provided for in the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church and Canon Law. The record of the Catholic Church in India, when it comes to participation, transparency and accountability is downright abysmal. Pastoral Councils or Finance Committees, be they at parish or diocesan level, insofar as they do exist, are packed with cronies or those ignorant of church teaching and documents.

Without Participation we can never dream of Communion and are doomed to fail in our Mission. This is why I assert that the first and initial step in the synodal process should be honest, humble and transparent Participation. Equally important is the recording process. Any attempts at stifling dissent and seeking consensus would have to be stoutly resisted. There is a joke among the Communists. They say, we don't mind what happens in the meetings as long as we get to record the Minutes! That is why they have all powerful General Secretaries. Hence the need for eternal vigilance.

Now to link the Roman Synod to a Greek tragedy we need to go back 1000 years to the Great Schism of the East; when the Greek speaking Byzantine churches broke away to form the Orthodox Churches, as against the Rome based Latin Churches. Those wounds have not yet healed. Dispassionate church historians tell us that this schism (separation) had little to do with doctrine and everything to do with power sharing. It was felt that while the East had the brains, the West had the brawn (institutionalized muscle power).

So what exactly is a Greek Tragedy? It was a form of theatre that was prevalent in 500 BC in Greece and Anatolia.

(Contd.. on p. 11)

(Contd.. from p. 10)

Among the better known ones are Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. The common thread in these tragedies was that the main protagonist, though not a villainous character, suffered from a fatal flaw called hamartia. This was a consequence of personal failure, social or psychological circumstances. I sense that the church in India suffers from hamartia. Why?

To understand this I will have resort to four Greek words – Kerygma, Metanoia, Diaconia and Koinonia. Kerygma is the proclamation of the Gospel message. Metanoia is the natural consequence, repentance and penitential conversion that follow exposure to the Kerygma. This leads to the third stage of Diaconia, of serving this group of converts. The word originally meant an establishment near a church building that was used for charitable works. The fourth stage was Koinonia, communion or community building, the avowed goal of the present Synod.

This is where we hit a wall, a concrete one! After the initial proclamation and conversion phases we focussed almost exclusively on services, especially in education and health. Over a period of time these institutions became an end in themselves, even losing sight of their original lofty goals of service, particularly to those most in need. These institutionalised services proliferated with the easy access to foreign funds. The institutional church therefore was not in any way dependent on the laity, the people. A healthy atmosphere of inter-dependence just did not happen. This led to ever higher boundary walls and iron gates, making the hierarchy and clergy an independent “gated” community, leaving the people agitated.

They were of course placated with a plethora of pious practices. The highlight of parish life would be the celebration of the parish feast with a sumptuous lunch thrown in, or a triumphalistic Corpus Christi procession. We have completely failed in community building, Communion or Koinonia.

The 4M progression will help us to understand this phenomenon better. It is - Man, Movement, Machine, Monument. Christianity began with a Man, Jesus. It evolved into a Movement, a Way. For the first three centuries Christians were referred to as the “People of the Way”. With Emperor Constantine in the fourth century came the establishment, the institutional church. In due course it became a Machine, a mechanical juggernaut, both in its liturgy and in its services. We were now going through the motions. As a result, across the western hemisphere erstwhile Christendom has now become a Monument, a lifeless structure, as exemplified by magnificent but empty cathedrals and church buildings.

It was this danger that Pope John XXIII correctly sensed when he convened Vatican II. On paper, like the Indian Constitution, it was a sea change in how the Church saw itself and sought to relate with the outside world. Unfortunately we saw only cosmetic changes, as in the liturgy or clerical dress. The deeper attitudinal changes were not implemented by a deeply entrenched and obdurate hierarchy/clergy. The hopes of a participatory, communitarian church were dashed to the ground. All we got is what Swami Sachidananda calls a church in picnic mode, ever ready for a celebration.

Pope Francis has recognised this regression across the globe resulting in empty churches, seminaries and novitiates. Had the reforms of Vatican II been implemented in letter and spirit there would have been no need for this Synod on Synodality. That is why Pope Francis is insisting on Communion and Mission. He wants us to revert back to the Man Jesus. That will be possible only, and only, if there is a genuinely Participatory Church, as against the existing pyramidal one. Those of us who love Jesus and his Church therefore now want to see a truly Roman Synod, not another Greek Tragedy flawed by hamartia.

• *The writer is the Convenor of the Indian Catholic Forum. These thoughts are elaborated upon in his book The Jerusalem Code.*

Transform Church in India to a Synodal Church: Urges Cardinal Oswald Gracias

Mumbai 17 October 2021 (CCBI): His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, the Archbishop of Bombay, President of the CBCI, and one of the topmost consultants of Pope Francis, appealed to every Catholic faithful to transform the Church



in India to a Synodal Church. He was inaugurating the diocesan phase of the Synod at the Holy Name Cathedral, Mumbai on Sunday 17 October, 2021 and also released a Handbook for the Synod: “For a Synodal Church”.

“To transform the Church to a Synodal Church, we have to walk together in the same path including everybody, we have to encounter Jesus through prayer and adoration and to hear what the Spirit wants to say to the Church. Church should listen to all than hearing.”

Quoting Pope Francis the Cardinal Oswald reiterated that:the Synod is a process of spiritual discernment, of ecclesial discernment, that unfolds in adoration, in prayer and in dialogue with the word of God.”

The Handbook for the Synod is a useful tool for all those involved in the two-year-long ‘Synodal Journey’, which will unfold itself in three phases of consultations, at the diocesan, the continental, and the universal levels, culminating in October 2023, in Rome. The Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) published the book. For copies, kindly contact the CCBI General Secretariat or call Mobile: +91-9886730224.

Online Store: <https://joyofgifting.com/product/for-a-synodal-church-communion-participation-and-mission/>

*Fr. Stephen Alathara
Deputy Secretary General
Conference of Catholic Bishops of
India*

The Awkward Question

An 8-year-old girl went to her dad, who was working in the yard. She asked him: "Daddy, what is s*x?"

The Dad was surprised that she would ask such a question, but decides that if she is old enough to ask the question, then she is old enough to get a straight answer. He proceeded to tell her all about the 'birds and the bees'. When he finished explaining, the little girl was looking at him with her mouth hanging open.

"Why did you ask this question?" Her father asked her:

The little girl replied, "Well mom told me to tell you that dinner would be ready in just a couple of secs."

How to Start a Sentence...

Teacher asks their class of children to come up with a sentence beginning with "I"

After a few children come to the front with predictable statements about having a cat or a certain toy, a child steps up and says

"I is-" and is immediately interrupted by the teacher, "I am!"

She side-eyes the teacher, frowns and ignores her teacher, starting again "I is-" again, the teacher interrupts her, this time a little more snappily "It's I am! Use the proper word!"

The girl turns to look at her this time, eyelids drooped with exasperation. "Fine," she sighs "I AM the ninth letter of the alphabet."

Who Has the Fastest Dad?

Three kids are talking about their fathers and comparing them.

First kid says: "My dad is the fastest. He's a drag racer and can do a quarter mile in 9.6 seconds."

Second kid says: "That's nothing! My dad is a fighter pilot and regularly breaks the speed of sound."

Third kid says: "My dad is faster than both your dads! He's a congressman. He finishes work at 4 o'clock but is always home by lunchtime."



The Ultimate Cure

A pharmacist comes back from his lunch to the pharmacy.

As he approaches, he sees a man outside the pharmacy clutching onto a pole for dear life, barely breathing, not moving, not twitching a muscle, just standing there, frozen.

The pharmacist goes up to his assistant and asks: "What's the matter with that guy? Wasn't he in here earlier?" "Yes he was." Replies the assistant. "He had the most terrible cough and none of my prescriptions seemed to help."

"Well, he seems to be fine now." "Sure he does."

I gave him a box of laxatives. Now he won't dare cough!"

Calling the Doctor

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office.

"Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied:

"I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked 'NO REFILLS.'"

The Best Sleeping Pills

An elderly woman went into the pharmacy. When the pharmacist asked why she was there, she replied, "I'd like to have some birth control pills."

Taken aback, the pharmacist thought for a minute and then said, "Excuse me, Mrs. Smith, but you're 75 years old. What possible use could you have for birth control pills?" The woman responded, "They help me sleep better."

The pharmacist thought some more and continued, "How in the world do

birth control pills help you to sleep?"

The woman said, "I put them in my granddaughter's orange juice and I sleep better at night."

A Cure For Hiccups

A man goes into a drugstore and asks the pharmacist if he can give him something for the hiccups.

The pharmacist promptly reaches out and slaps the man's face.

"What did you do that for?" the man asks, rubbing his aching cheek.

"Well, you don't have the hiccups anymore, do you?" asked the pharmacist with a knowing smile.

"No, but my wife out in the car still does!"

The Programmer's Cycle

Software development cycle:

1. Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free.
2. Product is tested. 20 bugs are found.
3. Programmer fixes 10 of the bugs and explains to the testing department that the other 10 aren't really bugs.
4. Testing department finds that five of the fixes didn't work and discovers 15 new bugs.
5. Repeat three times steps 3 and 4.
6. Due to marketing pressure and an extremely premature product announcement based on overly-optimistic programming schedule, the product is released.
7. Users find 137 new bugs.
8. Original programmer, having cashed his royalty check, is nowhere to be found.
9. Newly-assembled programming team fixes almost all of the 137 bugs, but introduce 456 new ones.
10. Original programmer sends underpaid testing department a postcard from Fiji. Entire testing department quits.
11. Company is bought in a hostile takeover by competitor using profits from their latest release, which had 783 bugs.
12. New CEO is brought in by board of directors. He hires a programmer to redo program from scratch.
13. Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free.

You are Worthy

Even if your skin is not flawless
Even if your stomach is not flat
Even if you do not fit into that little black dress
Even if you do not get a promotion
Even if you do not earn a six-figure salary
Even if you are not able to cook a meal
Even if you fail miserably at driving a vehicle
Even if you are not able to find the right partner
Even if there is none to call you a mom
Even if the weight on the scale keeps rising
Even if that little hair on your head is falling
Even if you do not have a house of your own
Even if all your business ideas are failing
Even if the balance in your bank account is steadily falling
Even if you find no friends to call your own
Even if people do not turn to look at you when you enter
Even if people do not turn to bid adieu when you walk out
Even if you have 200 followers on Instagram
Even if all your posts garner only ten likes.
Even if you do innumerable mistakes.
You are still worthy
Your worth is defined by the one who created you.
You will always remain worthy.



by Sonal Lobo
Bangalore

Here's a recipe to make a healthy beverage that controls cholesterol



Ingredients:

2 cups of apple
1 small cinnamon stick
1 cup curd
1/2 cup of cooking rolled oats
2 tsp of honey
1/4 tsp vanilla essence



by Jubel D'Cruz

Method:

Combine all the ingredients in a mixer and blend until it becomes a smooth paste.

Serve immediately.

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Konkani Catholics originally GSBs

DNA Proof.

Indian media recently highlighted research at 'Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology' (CCMB) Hyderabad and published evidence of DNAs of Konkani Catholics and related folk match Gaud Saraswat Brahmins (GSBs) and they originate from a common Saraswat stock. The published research paper titled "ORIGINAL INVESTIGATION - Dissecting the genetic history of the Roman Catholic populations of West Coast India." Historians and tradition have always maintained this fact, but it had no scientific support proof so far. The well known Mumbai historian and author Dr. Kranti Kiran Farias nee' Alvares, pioneered the research and was supported by CCMB scientific teams. Going further Dr Kranti Kiran Farias, is exploring links that these communities are an 'ethno' group linked to 'Lost Tribes of Israel' and research studies are underway. Dr. Farias has been out of the country and delayed by the pandemic. Ancient tradition spells out that 12 tribes were part of the northern kingdom of Israel, 10 of these became known as "lost tribes of Israel" still a mystery. Secular Citizen, had covered this aspect and the visits, lectures and DNA collection.

'Dissecting the genetic history of the Roman Catholic populations of West Coast India', the study was conducted by scientists from the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) in Lucknow, Mangalore University, Canadian Institute for Jewish Research and Institute of Advanced Materials, Sweden. According to authors of the paper, prompted by Dr Farias, Dr. K Thangaraj project Director CCMB, Dr. Niraj Rai, Dr. Anshuman Mishra, and assistant Mr. Satya Prakash, was published in Human Genetics on Au-



gust 23, 2021; Roman Catholics from three different locations of the West Coast of India—Goa, Kumta and Mangalore were taken for DNA study since 2017.



by **Ivan Saldanha-Shet**

Dr. Kranti Kiran Farias : Mumbai based, Dr. Kranti Kiran Farias is a former President of The Church History Association of India. Her doctoral work, entitled "The Christian Impact in South Kanara" was published in 1999; it is a greatly valued general History of South Kanara. She has published several articles and papers on Indian Nationalism, Indian Christians and Indian Jewish communities in India, Israel and Canada. It may be noted she is the daughter of Cyprian and Alice Alvares of Bombay (Mumbai) and were active in the Indian freedom struggle (It is the reason she has the name 'Kranti' meaning - revolution) hopefully let us look forward that her parents and her self be given recognition in the celebrations of the 75th Indian Independence day 2022. Responding to the call of Civil disobedience movement 1942 - the Quit India movement' against British rule, the Alvares couple were detained in jails, as freedom fighters their lives have been worthwhile. Dr. Kranti was Principal of St. Aloysius Gonzaga High School and Modern Indian School in Mumbai. She lectured at the St. Xavier's College and R. D. National College in History and Political Science and was also a Lecturer-Teacher Educator at the Rizvi College of Education, all in

Mumbai.

Konkani Christians : Konkani speaking communities are well represented in Maharashtra for centuries and so too along the West Coast history confirms are Aryan descent in a Dravidian land and their disbursement from the now unseen River Saraswati a tributary of the River Sind when it became non-existent centuries ago. In the last five hundred years these Konkani speakers known to be Brahman Hindus have evolved into Muslims, Catholics and others. These descendants of ancient Goud Saraswat Brahmins (GSBs) today are spread all over the world intermingling with multi ethnic and linguistic societies. Dr. Farias is working on a book on cultural comparison of the Indian Jewish and Indian Christian Communities. This will be an interesting exposé of two Semitic communities living in harmony in India, knowledgeable about their roots and proud of their heritage. The book is awaited with great expectations. Unfortunately Dr. Farias has been stuck overseas due to the extended Covid pandemic.

A complex project has been under way and one segment of it was to trace the earlier origins of the Konkani diaspora before their sojourn on the banks of river Saraswati. To set a bonafide direction twenty first century scientists and researchers have many new tools presently. The latest genetic and computational technologies to analyze patterns in DNA from samples taken from people on the South West Coast of India are some.

Dr. Kranti Kiran Farias reiterates : " I have been working on a hypothesis of Jewish ancestry in West Coast Catholics from Goa and Mangalore for many years and worked with the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) Hyderabad, to collect DNA

(Contd.. on p. 15)

samples in 2014 and 2017 from these places for the study and again both these cities and from Kumta in 2018 .

This was arranged at different venues and with people through friends and the Church, both Protestant and Catholic in Educational Institutions as St.Aloysius College; Karnataka Theological College; St.Joseph's Seminary and Roshini Nilaya, all in Mangalore . We also collected samples at St. Ann's Friary and then went to historic Monte Mariano (Farangipete - East of Mangalore) before going to Goa and Kumta . I am happy to say that our paper "Dissecting the Genetic History of the Roman Catholic Populations of West Coast India" was just published under exclusive license to Springer-Verlag GmbH Germany.

One of the Paper presenters at the Conference was the Geneticist, Dr. Mini Kariappa teaching in Trivandrum , Kerala who presented a Paper on Syrian Christians (Knayaya Christians) and their affinity to Jews. I was so happy to listen to her presentation and about the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) and their work, that I rushed up to talk to her and share about my interest and work done so far (since 2005) on the Indian Jews with my sincere request to have support for my hypothesis on the Jewishness of the Goa / Mangalore Catholics . Dr. Kariappa saw my passion for the subject, and as she had the CCMB's team present at the Conference. I was the first one to give my blood for DNA testing.

The results of my DNA test classified me under the 'West European' and Haplogroup U1. This was the start of a great and close relationship with CCMB. Over the next few months the CCMB team led by Dr. Niraj Rai and Dr. Anshuman Mishra and assisted by Satyaprakash worked closely with me to plan an extensive outreach, to collect samples from the West Coast of India. Dr. K . Thangaraj, Project Director, gave us the support we needed for the study. We at Mangalore, Kumta

and Goa, held presentations on our hypothesis and proposed work and collected over 100 samples. At my request CCMB also shared the results of each DNA test and the high-level summary of the report with each CCMB participant commences their analysis ready with their findings in early 2021. In February 2021 the team and I wrote a final research paper, which saw publication in 2021.

I will be happier if and when we collect more conclusive evidence to support my search and research of our genetic connection with one or some of the "Lost Tribes of Israel" and not be satisfied with just our present conclusion of being Gaud Saraswat Brahmins (GSBs). I am happy to have associated with the C.I.J.R. for the research

just concluded and to associate with it for the proposed next one, on Jewish roots of the Catholics of Mangalore and Goa. "

In the light of Dr.Kranti Kiran Farias' reiteration above and the current status, it is definitely a worthy direction of the research and study that Dr.Kranti Kiran Farias conceptualised and moved forward to start with in this regard leading and holding a place in the forefront of the efforts. While lauding her work, the Kanara Community along with all concerned looks forward to the further results of the vital research on this matter of interest.

-Compiled : Ivan Saldanha-Shet.
- With : Dr.Kranti Kiran Farias and sources.

Matrimonials

7259. USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1994), Ht. 5' 3", Wt.70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, working. Contact email : sevu.sequeira@gmail.com

7243. NEW ZEALAND : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1996), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Nursing, Profession : Staff Nurse. Ready to settle in New Zealand. Contact email : sales@nomaplastechind.in

7258. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1993), Ht. 5' 5", Wt.58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate, Content Pfofessional in a reputed MNC and freelancing as a copywriter ad social media Professional. Contact email : forheralliance@gmail.com

7244. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Edn. Chartered Accountant and M.Com., Employed in one of the Top reputed companies in Mumbai. Well cultured and good family background. Only Child. Contact email : fionadesouza18@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

7240. PUNE : East Indian Roman Catho-

lic Spinster, (Born in October 1987), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a Finance Executive. Contact email : angelina0134@gmail.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

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

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

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 : rfernandes020@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

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

6585. MUMBAI : Mumbai born and broughtup Roman Catholic Bachelor, Handsome, (Born in June 1988), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. EXTC Engineering, working as a Networking Engineer. Having own accommodation. Contact email : 18.elaine@gmail.com

6713 MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in September 1989), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 67 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Extc) working as a Sales Engineer. Contact email : coelho.helen@yahoo.co.in

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

6664 MUMBAI : Mangalorean R.C. Bachelor (Born in December 1982) Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 68 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., A.C.A., LLB., C.A. by Profession. Contact email: saldanha_ryan@yahoo.com OR 9820670158.

7047. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachaelor, (Born in November 1982), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., C.S. in Process, having family business. Contact email : mail.soj@gmail.com

7226. CANADA : Canadian Citizen Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (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

7112. MUMBAI : Converted Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1970), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 80 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., & Masters in International Journalism (UK). Looking for a bride below the age of 42 years (below 40 - 42 years) who is willing to raise a family. Contact by email : decemberwedding08@yahoo.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

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**

7225. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1994), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. INFT, Profession : Database Developer. Contact email : allan.jones.137@gmail.com

7257. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1991), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 74 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. PGDM Marketing, Occupation : Marketing Professional. Contact email : craig_v@hotmail.com

7249. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Ro-

man Catholic Divorcee, (Born in November 1956), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. S.Y.B.A., Retired and well settled. Contact Mob.: 9221792354 or Email : collinmonteiro58@yahoo.com

7218. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1988), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 68 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Aviation, working as a Commercial Pilot. 1st Officer. Contact email : dcostajess@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

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

7049. CANADA : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1986), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 85 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BE (Computer), working in CANADA in a Non IT Field Seeks a working girl in Canada and holding a PR Visa. Contact email : anniedrz@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

7227. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic 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

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Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - BRIDES

7262. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 55 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. BA., BL/LLB, Profession : Air Hostess with SQ. Contact email :

suzannedsouza@rediffmail.com

7260. POONA : Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee having one child. (Born in May 1975), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 56 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MA, working as a Librarian in reputed school in Poona. Contact email :

hazelnaronha816@gmail.com

7261. BANGALURU : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 53 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MD., MS., MD Pathology completing in May 2022. Contact email :

melpinto59@gmail.com

7145 MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Lecturer by profession. Contact email :

andrea210358@gmail.com

7109 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1986), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a Associate Consulant. Contact email :

helendsz27@gmail.com

7117. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1991), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. in English Literature, Teacher by profession. Contact email :

examiner2019@gmail.com

7246. CANADA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1991), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 71 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Masters in Global Business Management, working as a Social Media Co-ordinator. Contact email :

francispinto15@yahoo.com

7115. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1989), Ht. 5', Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion,

smart and good lookingt, Edn. Vlth Std., Non working, homely. Contact Mob: 7021135272

7111. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5', Wt. 47 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS., working with an MNC. Contact email :

owena.dsouza@gmail.com

7108. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1990), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 58 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc. (Aviation), Ae SI (Part), AME (Aircraft Maintenance Engineer), working as a Aircraft Maintenance Engineer. Contact email :

lucyann.alvares@yahoo.com

7105. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Microbiology, (Pursuing Ph.D.) Assistant Professor. Contact email :

1991divine@gmail.com

7107. MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Brown Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a Commercial Executive. Contact No. 8108216595 email :

jkant74@gmail.com

7103. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee (Separated), (Born in October 1989), Ht. 5', Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a HR. Contact email :

mail2tinafernandes@gmail.com

7106. AHMEDNAGAR : Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in January 1986), Ht. 5' 3", Fair Complexion, Edn. High School, Contact email :

anthonyfernandes9850@gmail.com

7094. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1991), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 52 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, M.Com., working as a Business Analyst. Contact email :

roschelle256@gmail.com

7098. MIRAJ : Protestant Spinster, (Born in November 1983), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 52 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters in Dental Science, Doctor by profession. Contact email :

dprebentisch@yahoo.com

7092. MANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1990), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a Talent Acquisition. Contact email :

vinishadesouza@gmail.com

7095. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com + Import Export Certificate Course, working as a Billing Assistant in Well known Hospital. Contact email :

perpetualdias7@gmail.com

7091. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in March 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 44 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA PGDM, working as an Assistant Manager Presales for a multinational firm. Contact email :

priyaquadrass@gmail.com

7093. MUMBAI : Gujarati Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1982), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working for Private Bank. Contact email :

annie.waghela@gmail.com

7090. QATAR : Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in July 1988), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 54 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., worked for Bank in Mumbai, currently working as a H.R. in International School in Qatar. Contact email : loreta6479@gmail.com

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Another Time, Another Place

Short Story

"If I want him to remain until I come, is that any concern of yours?"

Jn. 21: 22.

The raging fury of the cyclonic storm lashed a bitter path upon the battered island, drowning the wicked, and sweeping the good to safety with an unseen arm into the mountain caves and upon safe ground miles away.

The apostle John was one among thousands who had been saved by divine providence. John was still twenty-nine years old, having lived through two thousand and thirty-three years on earth.

The apostle could clearly recall that day when the other apostles saw a man around dawn standing on the beach. It was Jesus who had returned from the dead. John turned to Peter and said, "It is the Lord!"

Jesus called them to have a morning meal with him. This was the third time the Lord had appeared to them since his resurrection. After they had the bread and fish, Jesus spoke to them, and about the end of their lives. John, the youngest disciple was not mentioned in the Lord's conversation. Peter came forward wanting to know how John would meet his end.

The Lord turned around and said, "If I want him to remain until I come, is that any concern of yours?"

The years and the centuries had flown. John had always been transported from one country to another, after the passage of twenty-one years. He never aged, remained in good health and strength as he had been two-thousand and thirty-three years ago in Jerusalem.

In the Community cave at the rock altar, the apostle John led the people in prayer and meditation. Belief in Christ, he said, rescues man from death and

all the evil forces of nature, which saint Paul referred to as "the flesh". (Rom.7:5,14). John did a reading from the Bible and celebrated Holy Mass.

The early years of the 21st century had been designed to give mankind a time to change their unhappy ideas, greed and wicked ways. It was a chance for God's creatures to repent and appreciate the good life at their front-door.

And then, from Wuhan, China came an evil force of death and destruction which would cover the face of the earth with a virus, the invisible enemy, without mercy, killing tens of millions. Never, in man's known history of the world was their ever a plague or famine worse than the Covid 19 virus.

After the cyclone had blown away, those chosen by divine fate, were now destined to build a new world.

The apostle John sat outside the Community Cave and worked to prepare his next Sunday homily. At that moment an angel of the Lord appeared before John.

"I bring you a message from my Master and your Master. At dawn tomorrow, you will go to the east of this mountain, and a woman will come out of the mist. Welcome her in the name of the Lord. The woman will say, 'I have been sent to be your companion and wife. Do you accept me? My name is Hannah.'

When the time came, John met the young woman and after she spoke to him as the angel said she would, John took her hand in his and looked up to heaven, saying: "Lord, your will is my command to obey. I take Hannah to be my wife and companion!"

The next morning a mysterious calm fell upon the whole land. Not a sound or the chirp of a bird was heard. Men, women and children came out of their cave homes and were witness to the end of time.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Matrimonials

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

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

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

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

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

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Green Wealth In A Coconut Shell!

“Ultimately, the only wealth that can sustain any community, economy or nation is derived from the photosynthetic process – green plants growing on regenerating soil.” – Allan Savory

One sunny morning, a rare sight greeted the regular customers of Samer, a way-side Tender-coconut seller near Liberty Udyan. What was unusual was that the pushcart had two sections, one side displaying tender-coconuts for sale and the other, Tender-coconut shells sprouting saplings to be given away for free! Every customer that patronized Samer’s stall was presented with a free sapling! “Hey! What’s this!?! I mean – how come?” stuttered Rishabh who had noticed that Samer and his push-cart had been missing for some two full days. The next thing Rishabh knew was that he was standing stunned as he listened to Samer’s jaw-dropping narrative.



by Ladislaus Louis D'Souza

Samer said he was taken un-awares when suddenly, as if from nowhere, swooped a municipal van on him and in a jiffy disappeared with the pushcart, coconuts et al, leaving him in tears. He had lost the very source of his income that enabled him to help his poor labourer-parents to feed their brood of four. Not knowing what to do, he squatted on the pavement with his head between his knees, weeping helplessly. Sister Mallika from the nearby convent who would occasionally stop by in the evenings to pick up a “kaula, paniwallah” for an old Sister way back at the convent, was on her way to the railway station for a train to her college at Grant Road. One glance at the hunched figure, and she instinctively knew what had happened and, more im-

portantly, what she had to do. Gently tapping him on his shoulder, she said, “Samer beta, chalo, utho! Aa jao mere saath.”

Abandoning her trip to college for the day, Sister Mallika briskly walked Samer to the convent. Promptly meeting Sister Superior and explaining the situation, she got the still weeping lad some breakfast and then got to work out a plan of action that included using her contacts with those associated with the municipality to somehow try and retrieve at least the pushcart for the boy. In the meanwhile she asked Samer if he’d like to potter around in the garden, helping to clear paths, water the plants, trim the hedges – whatever he felt like doing. Wonder of wonders, the boy seemed to develop a smile on his face just going around the garden. Treating the lad to lunch



later, the Sisters asked him whether he’d like to come regularly to work in the convent garden or would prefer selling Tender Coconuts as he was so used to doing.

Samer was prompt to opt for the latter but asked whether he could come until he was able to find a solution to his dilemma. That is when Sister Mallika had a brainwave! When leaving for home, he was given some packed food for his family to tide over the crisis.

The next morning, giving the boy a sack, Sister Mallika advised him to go and collect whatever empty tender-coconut shells he could find at his sale spot and bring them across, which he swiftly did. Then taking him to the little nursery at the rear of the garden she showed him the saplings and suggested that he try nestling some of those in the empty tender coconut shells with mud and manure

and then, not sell them but to give them gratis to his customers. Samer was overjoyed at the suggestion but it suddenly dawned on him that he had no pushcart, and as he was about to express himself, there was the pushcart being dropped off at the convent gate by the municipal raiding van—complete with a licence-plate affixed to it! Sister Mallika’s contacts had gone the extra mile to licitly return Samer’s source of livelihood to him and to simultaneously reward Sister Mallika’s initiative!

**A real life story, with names changed for reasons of privacy*

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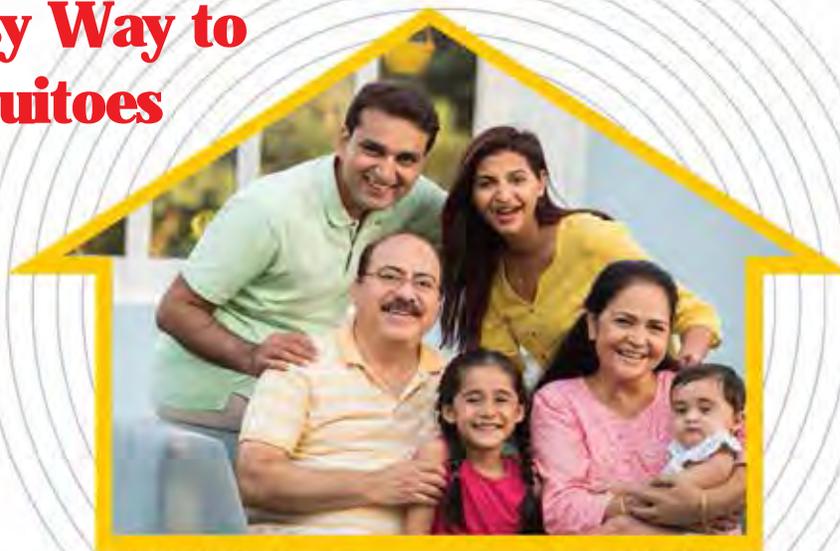
Big Foot at Loutolim, first of its kind open-air museum, encapsulates the essence of being Goan, from descriptions of ethnic costumes to the symbiotic relationship shared between man and nature. A major objective of the project is the propagation of mother nature's well being. All round the year, various drives and awareness campaigns are held at the premises to help protect the environment and educate the public at large as to how to contribute to the cause through active participation. In keeping with the environment campaign medicinal plants were planted and distributed to guests.



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