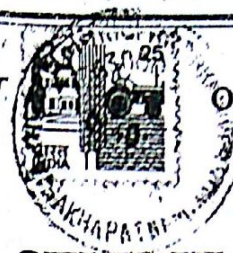


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BULLETIN

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OF THE
CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES
(SANKAR FOUNDATION)



"THE GREATEST TREASURE"

"I have a sense of utter shame both as an individual and as the head of the Government of India that we should have failed to protect the greatest treasure that we possessed," said Jawaharlal Nehru in the Constituent Assembly two days after Mahatma Gandhi was slain. In that moving speech Pandit Nehru also described Gandhiji as 'the greatest symbol of the India of the past and of the India of the future.'

History tells us that darkness cannot tolerate the light in the great. It happened in Athens in 399 B.C. when Socrates was put to death. It happened again in 32 A.D. when in Golgotha Jesus Christ was nailed to the Cross. It was reenacted in Delhi on January 30, 1948 when 'the Father of the Nation', lovingly called Bapu, was killed by his own people 'for whose redemption he lived and died.' What the dark forces extinguished then was only the body of Gandhiji. As Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan put it : "We have killed his body but the spirit in him which is a light from above will penetrate for into space and time and inspire countless generations for nobler living."

It is that spirit that India must recover and that light that India must seek with renewed vigour and determination in the golden jubilee year of Independence. It was no ordinary spirit and light. The whole world found in Gandhiji a new hope for humankind battered, within a space of thirty years, by two terrible wars. Scholars and scientists, statesmen and seers, poets and philosophers and millions of ordinary people too realised the power of love and non-violence.

Our leaders at the time of Independence, though shaken by the sudden and tragic exit of the Mahatma, stuck to the daunting task of nation-building, drawing inspiration from Gandhiji's life and message. The value system underlying the new policy was largely nurtured by him. And it is a solid and durable value system. Non-violence is the only panacea for the ills of humankind. If it was Hindu-Muslim unity then, it is communal harmony or national integration now. If it was Harijan emancipa-

tion that Gandhiji crusaded for, it is social justice today meaning emancipation of not only the Dalits, but of all oppressed classes and women in general. No political party of government can question the essence of the value system that Gandhiji so steadfastly nurtured. Only by reaffirming our faith in the Gandhian approach and by renewing our pledge to pursue those goals, can we hope to free the Indian society from the malaise of apathy, corruption and greed for pelf and power.

Gandhiji is India's greatest gift to the modern world. That is why October 2nd is an important day not only in India's calendar but for the World at large. The treasure he bequeathed to us is inexhaustible. It is not confined to India alone. It belongs to all those who believe in the uniqueness of the human spirit—all those who accept that love is greater than brute force and that man is more valuable than both machine and money.

Necessary for us to remind ourselves that Gandhiji was not opposed either to the use of machine or the growth of industry so long as it did not deprive the poor and the downtrodden of their livelihood. He knew, better than others, about the difficulties and hurdles that come in the way of the emancipation of the poor. Someone quipped that 'the meek shall inherit the earth but not its mineral rights.' It was for the poor and the meek that Gandhiji lived and died. Their number has not decreased. Probably it never will. To them all in particular October 2nd is a day to remember.

—The Editor

"The self-sacrifice of one innocent man is a million times stronger than the self-sacrifice of millions of men who die in the act of killing others."

—Gandhiji

"He has left as his heritage a spiritual force that must in God's good time prevail over arms and armaments and dark doctrines of violence."

—New York Times

SEMINAR ON 'INDUSTRIAL HAZARDS AND MANAGEMENT OF DISASTERS IN VISAKHAPATNAM'

Organised by the Centre for Policy studies on September 24, 1997. Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao, former Vice Chancellor Nagarjuna University, presided and Professors T. Shivaji Rao and M.V. Venkata Rao were the main speakers.

Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao :

Hi-tech Industries, Chemical and Petro-chemical Industries substantiate GDP but can be a serious threat to environment, people and society. He recalled the study on hazardous Industrial activities in Visakhapatnam conducted by Prof. Shivaji Rao and Prof. M.N. Sastri, 10 years ago that warned against the heavy concentration of Industries on an extent of 20 square miles in the Malkapuram area. As of now there were 41 major industries that have the potential to cause minor and serious damage. 14 of them are major hazardous industries with 12 more in the pipeline. The concentration of industries in a narrow piece of land described as 'fatal zone' is prone to chemical, fire, toxic acids, pollution hazards etc. as they involve in production, storage, processing and transportation of inflammable chemicals and gases causing public exposure that may prove to be very devastating. He stated that there is no such heavy concentration of industries in any part of the country. The available Action Plan for preventing disasters is based on limited experience on minor accidents. It is necessary to study how disasters can be anticipated and how damage can be minimized. Action Plan should be based on major accidents and potential threat. Stating that the developmental activity often forgets that human dimension, he said that the greatest tragedy is that we are still in a primitive stage of rational social and political development.

Prof. T. Shivaji Rao :

The HPCL disaster is an eye-opener for the people of Visakhapatnam to realise the precarious situation in which they are living. He appealed to the people to organise themselves into a society for the protection of human lives of the present and the future so that the level of dehumanisation that has crept into our industrial culture is raised to that of humanism. It is time the people of the city assert their statutory prerogative to lead a vigorous and healthy life in the face of constant threat to them from the "callous management" of the hazardous industries. The citizens could take recourse to Art. 51 A(g) under fundamental duties - "to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures." The concentration of DDT in the blood of Indians was high due to air and water pollution caused by various industries where no safety measures are taken. He pointed out that most of the industries did not spend

more than 10 percent of their profits for incorporating fail-safe mechanism in their plants. Most of the industries in the Malkapuram industrial belt had not cared to create the buffer zone or green belt around their hazardous raw material product storages, though the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) had suggested it in its risk impact analysis reports. Another serious lapse is the failure to develop a second line of defence against accidents and publicise the possible accident scenario. Stating that experts reports do not have social responsibility he appealed that people should demand the right to information.

Prof. M.V. Venkata Rao :

The HPCL disaster occurred because of the defective LPG and other product pipeline systems. The refinery had no instruments to detect hydrocarbon pollution and this had resulted in people on duty remaining ignorant of the vapour cloud formation. In accidents of this nature "the biggest hazard is stampede" of the people fleeing the scene. "The location of the industries in Malkapuram zone is such that the gas leak would always be on the south-north wind direction. The best way for the people to get out of its impact is to move in a perpendicular direction, that is east-west. But in Vizag, we have the bay of Bengal on the east and the hills on the West, leaving only the south-north corridor for them to run. Hence the disaster potential is huge. The mode of recruitment, degree of co-relation, lack of authentic list of people on duty are all lapses. The HPCL spacing of tanks is in violation to the norms. He also spoke of the lapses in designing of building - "cascading failures" as in hazardous places structures should be designed keeping safety in mind. He lamented that the "lapse of human failure is becoming a national characteristic". Public investigations are necessary to avoid recurrence. But unfortunately committees are only protecting elites.

Dr. K. Ramana Rao, a meteorologist from Maryland suggested the use of computer technology, both hardware and software in preventing and managing industrial accidents.

WHAT INDIA'S FREEDOM MEANS TO ME

—Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao

India's Freedom Struggle, if we understand it in its broad sense and its thrust and scope, was a multi-dimensional struggle not only for liberation of the country from colonial bondage and transfer of political power from the British hands to Indian hands, but also for making the Indian people masters of their own destiny with a view to build a new socio-economic order. It was a struggle carried on by both the elite groups in the society and by the masses on a large scale in a non-violent and peaceful way under the dynamic, enlightened and humanist leaders, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and

others. It was a unique event in the history of national struggles against colonialism during the last and the present centuries, as it emphasised non-violence and non-cooperation with the rulers and the upholding of the ethical dimensions of both the ends and means of the freedom struggle.

It is worth recalling in this context what Pt. Nehru said on 14th August, 1947 in his celebrated speech on India's Tryst with Destiny. "At the stroke of the midnight (August 15th 1947) when the world sleeps India will awake to life and freedom. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the larger cause of humanity." And India did awake to take up the responsibilities and challenges of Independence to build a new society based on the universally accepted principles of life sustenance, basic liberties and human dignity. These principles are basically ethical in nature which implied a strong normative approach to the issues of economic and social development, and purposeful use of modern technologies and organisational methods and other social arrangements. Nehru was clear in his mind and emphasized that the responsibilities and challenges following Independence would be extraordinary as they had to be designed "to bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India, to fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease, to build up a prosperous democratic and Progressive nation to create social economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman." On the same day, Nehru also observed that "the ambition of the greatest man of our generation, Mahatma Gandhi has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us but as long as there are tears and sufferings so long our work will not be over."

The concept and perception, and the philosophy of freedom we subscribed to at the dawn of Freedom are thus rooted in fundamental ethical approach and human values. And the dawn of Independence in August, 1947, only meant a vital change in the nature and process of the Freedom struggle. The struggle will have to continue as Nehru said, as long as there are tears and sufferings.

Much of the thinking about the challenges and responsibilities of Freedom was incorporated in a bold and significant manner in our Constitution which is somewhat unique in the history of constitution making anywhere in the world in the past. The Indian Constitution visualised responsible governance of the country by the Central and State Governments, as elected representative bodies, within the framework of political democracy and within the parameters of the constitution. The constitution also visualised central and state government will uphold and protect the Fundamental Rights, the Rule of Law and Equality before Law, establishing formally the principle of human dignity (the abolition of untouchability is a great indicator in particular) and the Directive Prin-

ciples which emphasised priority of meeting the basic needs of the illiterate, hungry masses and of the poor, the weak and the disadvantaged in society.

The concept and perception and the philosophy of Freedom have thus become the basis for a new Development ideology embodying the principles of freedom and democracy, and justice and equality.

The new Development ideology has been clearly and powerfully expressed by Denis Goulet in his book *The Cruel Choice*, which is worth reproducing here

"freedom must be included, along with life-sustenance and esteem, as a universalizable component of the good life.

Development is a particular constellation of means for obtaining a better life. Irrespective of possible other purposes, development has for all groups at least the following objectives :

- to provide more and better life-sustaining goods to members of societies;
- to create or improve material conditions of life related in some way to a perceived need for esteem; and
- to free men from servitudes (to nature, to ignorance, to other men, to institutions, to beliefs) considered oppressive. The aim here may be to release men from the bondage of these servitudes and/or to heighten their opportunities for self-actualization, however conceived."

For about three decades after Independence Indian polity apparently moved, broadly speaking, in the right direction under the guidance of Pt. Nehru and other great founders of our nation. The strategies and programmes of development of the various sectors of the economy, both traditional and modern, education, and health, international relations, etc., were all no doubt much more influenced by Nehru's thinking and his ideas about the relevance and utility of the socialist type of economic organisation in the prevailing stage of development, the role of Science and Technology as instruments of modernising the economy and society, and for efficient use of resources,—than on the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. It will be improper and unwarranted however to exaggerate the difference in approach between Nehru and Gandhi. Nehru was a great liberal and humanist and was concerned equally with Mahatma Gandhi about preserving the great values of India's cultural heritage and transmitting them to future generations. After making ecstatic references to the rivers Ganga and Yamuna, Nehru wrote in his Will and Testament as follows:

"Although I have discarded much of past tradition and custom and I am anxious that India should rid herself of all shackles that bind and constrain her and divide her people, and suppress vast numbers of them and prevent the free development of the body and spirit;

though I seek all this, yet I do not wish to cut myself off from the past completely. I am proud of that great inheritance that has been and is ours, and conscious that I too, like all of us, am a link in that unbroken chain which goes back to the dawn of history in the immemorial past of India. The chain I would not break for I treasure it and seek inspiration from it."

India's achievements in various sectors of economic and social life during these years broadly speaking developed on the right lines, and India appeared to become a good model of social and economic transformation within the framework of a stable democracy.

In the later stages particularly in the late 70's and the 80's, things started moving in a different way, because a new generation of political leaders took charge of the destinies of the country, and they are not inspired by the values of sacrifice, suffering and service as the leaders of the older generation. A new crop of bureaucrats, professionals and technocrats also emerged who are influenced by the successes of societies both in the West and in the East working within the capitalist and market-oriented frame work. For them accumulation of wealth and power came to be the strong motivating factors and there developed a nexus between them and the new generation of political leaders.

There has been also a large increase in the numbers of middle classes engaged in a variety of traditional as well as new occupations in the expanding public and private sectors, with a strong consumerist orientation and who are too willing to compromise on corrupt practices which virtually became a normal component of "work ethic." The inward-looking, highly regimented regulated command-economy model followed by India led to intolerable inefficiencies and corruption in all sectors of life, undermining the confidence of the people in the capacity of the democratic political structures to meet the challenges of Freedom as envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru. The national goals and objectives relating to the human aspects of Development appeared to become extremely difficult to achieve within a reasonable period of time. Concern and compassion for the poor, often expressed by the new generation-political leaders and even intellectuals appeared as mere rhetoric and hypocritical. The policies of economic liberalisation coupled with the strategies for globalisation of the economy adopted in 1990's (a model of open economy) brought in its wake some advantages no doubt and corrected the limitations of the previous model to some extent. But its promise and capacity to solve the human problem are open to serious doubt. The change of policy giving up the model of a strong interventionist State does not appear to be so easy or even desirable in the Indian context. The State has to continue to play its crucial role as a powerful facilitator and regulatory agency for the economic and social processes in order to secure positive rights or freedoms for the people.

The distinction made between Negative rights (freedoms) and Positive right (freedoms) is extremely significant, the latter referring to such rights or entitlements as right to work, to living wage, to education, to decent conditions of work, etc., which are part of the Directive Principles. The recent emergence of Public Interest Litigation taken up by the Judiciary in defence of these rights is no doubt a most significant development in the society. But no effective solution to this issue will emerge unless these rights are elevated as Fundamental Rights. And further, whatever changes come about in the constitutional provision and Judicial process, the vigilance of the people, particularly the poor and deprived sections, and their struggle for securing positive freedoms will have to continue for many more years.

WHEN GREED AND SPEED EXCEED

—Prof. M.V. Venkata Rao
Director, Environmental Division

When greed and speed exceed, they breed a homicidal/ suicidal technology. This refers to industries and transportation systems. An industry wants to expand in national interests, as professed through undeniable (pseudo ?) logic. Speed is important to avoid escalation of project costs with delay, due to the persistent inflation of unpredictable kinetics. The safe and approved paths of progress are too slow. Dare devil short cuts and back door entries are the only means of ensuring the speed. Unproductive intellects can bark at the back door. Barking dogs scare the sheep that may jump over the fence. Democratic norms make it difficult to contain the sheep within their fence. Hence the greedy-speedy-industrialist should be cautious in his moves. Secrecy is a main component of his caution. The industrial entrepreneur has to get environmental clearance as a statutory requirement. An environmental impact analysis report (EIA) needs to be submitted to convince a nominated appraisal committee, that the proposed industry is ecofriendly and safe. Getting convinced on environmental issues is subject to subjectivity. Greedy experts with ethical slackness have to come to the rescue of the industrialist to offer package deals of preparing some report and 'getting it approved' by the appraisal committee. Veil of secrecy has to keep off the barkers, who any way cannot bite. Rapid EIA, convenient like instant foods, can serve the need. Long range health impacts can wait for attention. Political and bureaucratic support is always available for a price which can get incorporated into the product price.

Algorithms of industrial expansions on the above lines may tend to be explosive some day. Till a mishap occurs it is luck that saves but not adequate caution. Skeptics, who undermine the role of luck, may scrutinise the details of tenders and contract awards, recruitment procedures for workers, calibre of designers and supervisors, the attitudes of labour unions and the role of politi-

cians in industrial expansion. The faith in luck or a kind-god will get a boost.

Biological species seem to imbibe a suicidal/homicidal tendency with occasional manifestations. Millions of dragon flies go every morning into the sea and get drowned. Lemmings are animals that commit mass suicide by drowning. Rats are experimentally shown to go berserk and kill their own members under excessive crowding conditions. Stags develop horns that enmesh and trap them in bushes, making them easy prey to their predators. Frogs, which can easily run away from a crocodile, sit docile in fright for a leisurely meal of the crocodile. In human species, communal riots, religious and political killings, dare devil sports, apathy to sanitation etc., could be the homicidal/suicidal manifestations. Growth in science and technology has created greed, speed, pseudo logics, corruption and apathy to the quality of industrial and professional technocrats, to keep up the natural urge for suicide/homicide lurking underneath the biodynamics.

Risk may be inevitable with industrial progress. The fault of the progressive civilized killers is in exposing innocent X to risk, for the profit of Y.

FELICITATIONS TO SRI IYALA SOMAYAJULA NARASIMHA SARMA AND SRI I.V.L. SASTRY

12th August 1997

Vedic scholar Sri Iyala Somayajula Narasimha Sarma and Sangeetha Vidwan Sri I.V.L. Sastry were felicitated by Sankar Foundation on 12th August 1997.

Vedanta Desika Sri Iyala Somayajula Narasimha Sarma is a doyen among the scholars whose literary pursuits have not been dimmed by advancing years. A nephew of the renowned scholar, the late Sri Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni, who was affectionately called 'Nayana' by Bhagawan Ramana, Sri Narasimha Sarma obtained the 'Ubhaya bhasha praveena' degree from the Andhra University in 1932. For four years, he studied Agama and Vedanta under the guidance of his famous uncle and guru Sri Ganapathi Muni and was at Ramana ashram for a year. Later he worked as a Telugu pandit and Sanskrit lecturer. He has published numerous books and articles in Telugu and Sanskrit. Widely respected, the 85 years old Narasimha Sarma is at ease in both traditional and modern literature. That he was in 1949 the Secretary of the Progressive Writers Association and worked in the company of Sri Sri and Devulapalli shows how tradition and modernity are harmoniously blended in him.

He worked as Telugu pandit at Vizianagaram for 18 years and as Sanskrit lecturer in Proddutur Oriental College for 20 years and did research on the famous drama 'Kanyasulkam' of Gurajada. The titles 'Sarvatantra Svatantra' and 'Vedanta Desika' were conferred on him.

Sangeetha Janakulam evokes instant attention and admiration in North Andhra in general and Visakhapatnam in particular and Sri I.V.L. Sastry, its founder and moving (singing) spirit has a huge following of disciples and admirers. Born in a family of musicians, Sri Indrakant Venkata Lakshmana Sastry received his first lessons in music from his father Sri I. Lakshminarayan and was later trained by well known musicians of Pithapuram and East Godavari. His wife Smt. Sila and all the four daughters and son are also trained in music and performing artises. His grand daughter Baby Lahari is being hailed as a musical prodigy. Sri Sastry has successfully extended his sway beyond the family and by establishing 'Sangeetha Janakulam' he has provided excellent institutional facilities for the promotion of music and propagation of its message.

Sriman Srihashyam Appalacharyulu garu, Chief Guest felicitated the Vidwans. Sri D.V. Subba Rao former Mayor and Vice-Chairman of the Foundation presided over the function. Prof. Ramalinga Sastry and Sri Perala Bharatha Sarma introduced the scholars to the gathering. Smt and Sri A. Sankar Rao, Trustees presented new clothes and honoured the scholars and felicitated Sriman Srihashyam Appalacharyulu garu.

SANKAR FOUNDATION'S HEALTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

—Dr. G. Prabhakar,

Co-ordinator Health and Projects

"All the world over, the question is being asked whether the man purpose of medicine is to keep a few terminal cases alive, or to enable the many to live healthy and well adjusted lives. Medicine must have its triumph. The Health strategy of India must be imbued with the democratic spirit and concentrate on preventing diseases that afflict the larger numbers" said Late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi during her address at Lady Harding Medical College, New Delhi during March, 1980.

Inadequacy of overall resources availability has been a problem with Health sector and hence the main direction of efforts and services should be more towards preventive programmes rather than curative programmes. Sankar Foundation is emphasising the importance of developing effective mechanisms to ensure prevention and control of threatening diseases like

HONOUR TO SRI K. PARVATI KUMAR

Sri K. Parvati Kumar, Chairman, Sankar Foundation and International President, World Teacher Trust was conferred the Honorary D.Litt. degree by the Andhra University at its 66th Convocation on August 27, 1997. Sankar Foundation and Centre for Policy Studies offer their warm felicitations to Sri Parvati Kumar

Tuberculosis, with the active participation of voluntary organizations both in urban and rural areas.

The Foundation is conducting regular TB-Detection Camps and registering all sputum positive cases for treatment. The patients are receiving full course of treatment at the T.B. Clinic at Visakhapatnam and at the nodal TB Centre at Anakapalle. The Foundation is planning to start another T.B. Clinic at Narsipatnam shortly. At present, 245 sputum positive cases are receiving treatment and I am happy to inform that 71 patients have completed their full course of treatment regularly and have been released from the control programme.

Sankar Foundation's Eye Hospital is conducting screening camps for Cataract regularly in rural areas and out-patient services at the Hospital daily. The details of the camps conducted recently are as follows :

11th August at Paravada with Sadhana, local NGO. 105 patients were screened and 35 selected for surgery.

18th August at Narasannapeta with Swamy Babu and Vajramma Charitable Trust, local NGO. With this Eye Camp, Sankar Foundation has extended its services to Srikakulam district also. 52 patients were selected for surgery.

8th September at Ravikamatham with the help of Mahila Vikasa Samastha. 38 patients were selected for surgery.

22nd September at Munagapaka with Mahila Vikasa Samstha. 87 cases were screened and 22 were selected for surgery.

The Foundation's vehicle goes to the villages to bring the selected patients to the Eye Hospital and drops them back at their doorsteps, after completion of surgeries. The patients are very happy about the provision of transport service, which has been a major problem for the rural poor.

I am very happy to inform that the Foundation's Eye Hospital has completed 100 surgeries with IOL implan-

tations by 20th September 1997. The details of the patients are as follows :

At Foundation's Eye Hospital :

Number of patients seen at Out patient Department	:	1033
Number of patients selected for surgery	:	107

At rural camps :

Number of patients seen	:	901
Number of patients selected for surgeries	:	248

The Foundation's joint programmes, the Service Centre for Epilepsy patients, with Indian Epilepsy Association, Vizag Chapter and the Service Centre for Spastic children with Ramakrishna Mission, are providing services to the needy and poor patients regularly.

Sankar Foundation, in a humble way, is taking active steps to improve the health status of poor people, so as to achieve the goal of Health for all by 2000 A.D. which is admittedly an uphill task.

HIROSHIMA DAY

Gandhian and former Orissa Minister Sri Banka Behari Das stressed the need to uphold Gandhian ideals and exhorted the people to strive for a non-violent and weapon-free world. Speaking at a seminar organised jointly by Gandhi Centre and Centre for Policy Studies on August 6, 1997, the veteran leader recalled the spell cast by the Mahatma on all sections of the society and how Gandhian values continue to be relevant not only to the people of India but to humankind at large. He cited the example of Nelson Mandela in fighting the powerful racist regime of South Africa. Sri K.S. Sastry, President, Gandhi Centre explained how Gandhi Centre organises every year a meeting to impress upon the younger generation the significance of peace and non-violence. Prof. R. Venkata Rao of the University Law College, called upon the people to be active instead of getting radio active.

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