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ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY

The only surprise in the elections in May 2001 to some state assemblies is the margin of victory achieved by the political parties/coalitions voted to power, certainly not the results as such. But what causes concern, if not shock, to many is that forces inimical to democracy such as crime, corruption and dynasty are seeking legitimacy through the election process. That is ominous for our beleaguered democracy.

The decline of Indian democracy, after a decade of exemplary record, has been marked by three distinct phases. The first phase witnessed a gross violation of established democratic norms and parliamentary conventions. Customs and conventions, the 'unwritten maxims' of a Constitution, reflect the value system and the political maturity of the people. The strength of great modern democracies like America and Great Britain, lies to a large extent in the respect people have for customs and conventions. Till Franklin Roosevelt's re-election for a fourth term, it was only a convention that the President should not seek the office for more than two terms, that kept away any Presidential ambition for a third term of office. In Britain the role of customs and conventions makes fascinating reading and constitutes a glorious chapter of British Constitutional history. In India such customs and conventions came to be set aside from the mid-sixties onwards and today they lie buried deep under political morass.

In the second phase began the process of deinstitutionalization. Political leadership, both at the national and state levels, struck lethal blows at institutions raised and nurtured with care and vision after India became independent. The functioning of Parliament, the state legislatures, civil service and judiciary, besides that of numerous other institutions, has ceased to evoke public admiration and respect. Nobody ventures to talk today of institutional autonomy and professional pride. The nexus between the politician and the criminal has drained the system of moral strength. That political parties and leaders have injected the criminal element into the body politic through Parliament and state assemblies needs no special mention now.

Indian democracy seems to have entered the third phase of its decline when law and the Constitu-

tion take a severe beating at the hands of political parties and leaders. Electoral success can override even law and the Constitution. Success in lottery, wrote Walter Bagehot, is no argument for lottery. It is not to stretch the argument against election process and electoral success. It is certainly a plea against subverting the process for personal aggrandizement.

A lively political discourse has been initiated by eminent theorists on democracy and constitutional liberalism. The point is forcefully made that the democracy without constitutional liberalism is dangerous. Constitutional liberalism, writes a scholar, has led to democracy but democracy does not seem to bring constitutional liberalism. And constitutional liberalism means respect for rule of law, protection of basic liberties and decentralization of power which are as important as free and fair elections. Democracies are being classified as electoral democracies, workable democracies, liberal democracies and illiberal democracies. An African political scientist has added a new category called 'choiceless democracies' that are indebted to and dependent on international financial institutions for their survival with very little decision making power over their goods, services and economy. Market economy, argue the champions of globalization, does not cramp the democratic process. On the other hand most democracies seem unable to tackle the forces unleashed by globalization. Economic stamina is vital for political stability. Democracy is not an end in itself. It is a means by which people seek to realize their individual and collective goals. Good governance is the hallmark of a stable and successful democracy.

Fifty years after free India's Constitution came into force we continue to ask some basic questions. Is India a mere electoral democracy? Or has India matured into a workable democracy? Has it ceased to be a 'functioning anarchy'? Elections of the recent past and the events that followed have not made us any wiser. Our only hope is that politics of the present and the elections of the future will not at least make us sadder.

- The Editor

If men were angels no governments would be necessary.

- James Madison.

ENOUGH OF THIS FIXATION

Shri K.V.V. Subrahmanyam IPS, (Retd)

Formen Home Secretary Govt. of A.P

The issue of match fixing has been hogging the media limelight for the last some months. Not a day passes without a comment, report, retort, threat or disclosure of the proven or unproven misdeeds of the cricketing fraternity. It started with Manoj Prabhakar, then on to Mohd. Azharuddin, It is threatening to engulf a good number of cricketing idols past and present. Enquiries by the Delhi police, the C.B.I., the special inquiry officer of the board of control for cricket in India and the world body-a 1a the Boffors enquiry. Very little chances of reaching the end of the tunnel. The grave diggers are promising to unearth any number of skeletons. Juicy stuff for the morning reading. Disquieting for those in the centre of controversies and those near and dear to them. It would seem that the fixing business is in cricket only and not in other games and sports and other walks of life. We are inclined to take a jaundiced view of the cricketing fraternity. For every match fixing in cricket, there are equal if not more fixings in other fields of activity. It will be good for society to take notice of this and not wallop cricketers alone. After all let us not forget if Azhar made ten thousand runs in one day and very high performance level in the other forms of the game, it could not have been by mere fixing. More than two decades of toil to reach the highest level of the game and to retain his position. All the time facing bouncers, beamers on the field and then face the inquisition for the dropped catch, the run out, bad field setting and bad captaincy etc.etc. This applies not only to Azhar but to many others too.

The point at issue is if the players indulged in unfair practices and amassed huge fortunes, are there not enough institutional checks in the financial and administrative systems, to take exemplary action under the I.T.laws, foreign exchange laws. Somewhat broadening the issue, what about fixing that is going on in other fields, the J.M.M. that resulted in an ex P.M. facing the music as such, whether he alone is guilty are all matters sub judice. This is only the tip of the iceberg. It may not exactly be cynical asperity if one goes further and says that we should not limit the fixing business to cricketers, politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen. It will be unjust if we exclude the robed judicial dignitaries from the public gaze. It is widely rumoured in legal circles, not exactly without basis, elevation to the bench is not beyond the pale of fixing. A relatively junior member of the profession, not exactly scintillating with the legal erudition, has been suddenly pitchforked to the high pedestal, making some eyebrows deferentially raised. Political clout of the highest order was reported to have been brought to bear.

Governments' surrender to big business is the deadliest threat facing democracy today ... Globalization may deliver liberty, but not fraternity or equality ... Corporations are not society's custodians: they are commercial entities that act in the pursuit of profit. They are morally ambivalent.

- Noreena Hertz (Guardian weekly May 10-16, 2001)

It is hoped that all this is baseless and this august institution is unsullied with a high degree of immaculacy.

It is therefore necessary that we take a balanced view of all these. The argument is not to condone the miscreants but not to assume the malpractices in other fields are of lower magnitude or importance. So let us get over this fixation and get on with the game and allow the players to prove their mettle be it cricket or any other game or walk of life. Quick fix solutions, K.B.C. type of acquisition of wealth are not only misleading but giving an entirely wrong orientation to the young and impressionable. Firm and ruthless administration of the law of the land, a sense of time-frame in police investigation and judicial processes is long overdue. The public is fast losing faith in our systems, if not already lost. There needs to be a lot of heart searching all round, instead of finding alibis for nonperformance and passing the buck from one institution to another.

NEW HORIZONS

SHRI S.K. PATTANAYAK,
SPORTS OFFICER

Sr. DAO, S.E. Railway, Waltair.

"TIME AND TIDE WAITS FOR NONE". This adage aptly sums up the Indian sports scene. While we dream of sending the best contingent to the Olympics with hopes of bringing laurels to our country, we end up with a damp squib. Our performance had always been abysmal and we end up returning empty handed. In the last Sydney Olympics, however, we had discovered the shining star in **Karanam Malleswari** who retrieved the lost ground with her brilliant performance in **weight lifting**. The question that has been asked by every sports lover of this country is why is India not able to compete in the Olympics in the same scale as countries like South Korea and other minnow nations. The answer is not far to seek. World over, nations vied with each other for supremacy in the sports arena. In the cold war days, the then U.S.S.R. ruled the roost with its sportsmen dominating every field. Its adversary, the U.S.A., had to content with the second place. It is another story that international sports events preceded with propaganda wars and both the sides used these arena to settle scores. With the disintegration of the U.S.S.R., the independent states have to compete with one another. In the meantime, China has built up an enviable record as the emerging super power and

with that status they are competing in the Olympics and their performances justify that status.

Where exactly will India fit in? While we cannot deny that state's patronage is a must for our country to progress, in reality, the funding and creation of infrastructure comes least in the priorities the governments have. This predicament is understandable because India has to utilize its scarce resources for achieving economic and social growth. With such constraints, the real issues like development of sports are relegated to back stage and dealt with as a peripheral activity. The excellent performance notched up by Pullela Gopichand in the All England Badminton Championship again brings under sharp focus the need for having a policy that looks into the core issues.

As a first step in analyzing the situation, we should try to prioritize the activities that would yield dividends in the immediate future. We should not rest content with our successes in the field of cricket, which no doubt is the *numero uno*, but look beyond to find out our strengths. The policy that talented boys and girls should be recognized and nurtured throughout comes for praise. We have seen many a youngster's career coming to naught due to lack of patronage. The need of the hour, therefore, is that the policy should not only aim at nurturing the young talents, but also see that they are educated and their financial needs are met. Once a sportsman has been assured of a career, he would be able to concentrate and give his best.

The second important issue is absence of sports infrastructure. While cities and urban areas can boast of good sports stadia and other facilities, the rural areas have to remain content with whatever they have. In this connection, one would remember Limba Ram, the ace archer, whose roots are in rural Rajasthan or Baichung Bhutia the football star from the hilly state of Sikkim who rose to the position of captain.

Thirdly, mere putting up stadia is not enough. There should be efficient coaches to train the talented sportsmen. This particular aspect has been engaging the attention of policy makers for quite some time. While not all disciplines can afford to have coaches of international repute, the dearth of good coaches is felt in many fields, particularly so in athletics and aquatic sports where India can really put up a good challenge.

Fourthly, availability of equipment to train the sportsmen is an area that requires attention. The situation earlier was that our sportsmen had to train with ill equipped stadia. With the awareness generated by the new breed of sportsmen, many international sports goods manufactures are evincing interest in India as a country with potential. All this augurs well for the sports.

We can overcome all the stumbling blocks if we put in concerted efforts to realize the true potential and prove that we are second to none. The saying therefore goes: 'BETTER LATE THAN NEVER'.

PROFESSOR C. MAHADEVAN A GEOLOGIST OF VISION AND ZEAL

Prof. T. RAMAMOHANA RAO

Department of Geology, Andhra University,
Visakhapatnam

Prof. C. Mahadevan was a person endowed with a high calibre of scientific investigation, tremendous capacity for hard work, great abilities at organisation and abundant dynamism to enthuse others to conduct research in newer fields of earth sciences. His services and contributions particularly at Andhra University earned him the encomium as a geologist of vision and zeal. The birth centenary of Prof. C. Mahadevan falls on 6th May, 2001 and it is appropriate to recapitulate his life and career, and his scientific contributions and achievements.

Nuclear Geology

The vision and zeal of Prof. Mahadevan were manifested more profoundly when he initiated pioneering research studies first of its kind in India in marine geology and also in nuclear geology. At his invitation Prof. E.C. La Fond of the U.S. Navy Electronics Laboratory at San Diego, California, came to Andhra University as a Visiting Professor during 1952-53 and again during 1955-56 and established at A.U. multi-disciplinary oceanographic studies which included physical oceanography, marine geology, marine biology etc. With the help of the mine sweepers of the Indian Navy, INS Rajaputana, Bengal, Madras, Konkan and Rohilkhand, fifty four cruises each lasting from one day to one week were made covering the continental shelf and beyond from the mouth of the Gangetic delta in the north to Madras in the south and studied ocean bottom morphology, ocean currents, marine fauna and sediments.

Recognition at International and National Levels

The UNESCO recognised Prof. C. Mahadevan as a Geological expert and invited him to advise the Government of Brazil. During 1955-56, Prof. Mahadevan spent one year in Brazil and did pioneering work in Amazon basin and was responsible for locating large deposits of cassiterite (tin ore) in the upper reaches of Amazon river in the Rio Negro Valley above Manaus of Brazil bordering Bolivia. The Government of India appreciated the services of Prof. Mahadevan in the cause of scientific research in India and nominated him as a Member of the Indian Delegation to several International conferences. He thus attended the twentieth

session of the International Geological Congress held in Mexico City D.F. in 1956 and presented two important technical papers coauthored with his colleagues on the faculty. Prof. Mahadevan visited the scientific and technology institutions in the then USSR at the invitation of the USSR Academy of Sciences. He also represented India at the annual assembly of UNESCO held in Paris.

Prof. Mahadevan was one of the 65 founder Fellows of the Indian Academy of Sciences (FASc) of Bangalore. He was also a Fellow of the National Institute of Sciences (FNI) later renamed as Indian National Science Academy of New Delhi. He was the President of the Section on Geology and Geography of the 36th Session of the Indian Science Congress held in 1949 at Allahabad. Prof. Mahadevan was the Vice-President for the year 1954-55 and the President for the year 1959-60 of the Geological Mining and Metallurgical Society of India at Calcutta.

Prof. Mahadevan was member of the several committees on earth sciences of the National organisations and bodies including DAE, CSIR, TCM scholarships etc. He helped many bright teachers and researchers of A.U. to go for higher studies to USA, USSR and other countries. Prof. Mahadevan attended several National Seminars and was the convener of two symposia organised by the National Institute of Sciences in 1957 and 1958.

Prof. Mahadevan was the best known among the teachers of Geology within India and was well known to the directors of geological organisations in India. He had an excellent rapport with his contemporary professors of other universities and senior officers and directors etc. of service organisations related to geological studies which was ably utilised in the placement of the bright postgraduates turned out by A.U. Geology Department.

GURUDEV

SRI RABINDRANATH TAGORE - I

- Sri Challa Sivasankaram.

According to the biographer of Rabindranath Tagore Mr. Krishna Kripalani, the poet was born on May 7th, 1861 (Vaisakha 25th 1783, midday- Monday). According to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and P.C. Mahalanobis Tagore was born on May 6th, 1861. Pandit Nehru mentions in his autobiography that his father Motilal Nehru and Gurdev Tagore were born on one and the same day-May 6th, 1861.

It is in the fitness of things to recall the life of Tagore in May the month of his birth. One hundred and forty years elapsed since Tagore was born. His

name and his handsome personality are green in memory as the foliage of an exuberant plant just moistened by morning dew. His memory acquired legitimate right to be forever green and scintillating. The National Anthem, the Rabindra Sangeet like Thyagaraja Keerthans are not limited to a clime and a country. Bangla Desh takes pride in having his Rabindra Sangeet settled as national legacy and one which if departs from the country makes the country absorbed in the lively theme of life.

Born as he was 3 years after the crushing of first war of Independence and Queen Victoria proclaimed Magna Carta and became the sovereign queen of the British empire in him were the seeds of patriotism and frustrations were sown for loss of freedom for a country that has a past without a parallel and a country on whose wealth an Empire wherein sun does not set was built. He was like the colossus in the dominion of literature, art and poetry and education and nationalism standing astride on nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Mahatma Gandhi called him the Great Sentinel. There is a story rampant in the land to the effect that Mahatma Gandhi addressed Tagore as Gurudev and the Gurudev addressed Gandhi as Mahatma. This story disproves the heresy that Annei Besant first called Gandhiji the Mahatma at Benaras. Gandhi and Tagore represent two worlds yet both have common ground that both were patriotic. Tagore's views were radical both in poetry and patriotism. Tagore unlike Gandhi relied on reason rather than on emotion.

Gurdev Tagore's 'Viswabharati' represents India where she has her wealth of mind which is for all. Viswabharati acknowledges India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best. Romain Rolland the famous French Savant and Tagore the unacknowledged legislator of human conscience were great friends. Romain Rolland invited Gurudev to sign the declaration of human rights (1920-21). Tagore was already an international figure of undisputed integrity and nobility. He was recognized as world citizen as the world's best cultures enriched his heart and intellect.

On 13th March, 1913 on Gurudev Tagore was conferred the world's most coveted prize. It was the Nobel Prize. He was the first non-white literateur who won the prize. The West recognized Tagore as symbol of Asia's neglected humanity and its potential resurgence. The Christian World took pride to know him as more Christian than the Christians. The Gurudev even after he discarded the sacred thread, the mark of twice-born, continued to seek continuous bliss in performing the prayer of *Gayatri* mantra. This Vedic chant of

Gayatri (combination of verses from the three Vedas) had a magic influence on Tagore. Its splendid cadence and intonation appealed to him and recitation of the chant became a part of his pious life. The *Gayatri* remained his lifelong companion and he continued to experience celestial joy. It reflected superbly on his beautiful winsome face as he ripened in age. The glow on his face was not that of the glow-worm but that of the Brahman the supreme source of constant and undwindling light. To chant *Gayatri* means-May we attain that excellent glory of Savitar the God that he may stimulate our thoughts. Man's journey is from darkness to light. For the realization of the light the *Gayatri* is held as the unquestioned and indispensable means.

The Gurudev in his thought provoking and soul-stirring speech on Nationalism in India says that beauty and her twin brother truth require liesure and self control for their growth. His sense of nationalism had been the natural culmination of his awareness as the son of India, the Upanishadic India whose strength was the strength of sublime fortitude and broadminded hospitality where no question of caste and creed prevails. It was this sense of internationalized nationalism of Tagore that led to the successful formation of Viswabharati, the Goddess of universal learning. It was a triumphant and brave experiment of its kind ever since the prehistoric *vedic* form of teachings.

We call the Gurudev as our national bard. He was poet extraordinary breaking the borders of narrow nationalism, spreading the ideal of divine universalism to the extent of influencing the highest quarters of aesthetic arts of the whole universe. The spirit of his poesy compelled the minds of the men of many sided genius to look upon the world not from the angle of national ego but deal it with the expanded sense of oneness of humanity following the saying of *Rig- Veda*-*'Ekaiva Manushi Jatih'* Tagore taught the world to believe in harmony in thought, use of concord as against discord for the peace and progress of mankind not to make room for the spread of hatred and enmity. It may not be prejudicial to say that his human dharma took its sap from the principles of 'Sarva Dharma Samanvaya'. Gurudev like Mahatma and Pandit Nehru was fond of children. The Gurudev believed in the spirit of reconciliation of our culture, spiritual humanism that over leaps frontiers, softens rivalries, bridges discordant nations and conduces to formation of a state where harmonious human fellowship healthily blossoms performing and perfecting the human animal. The Gurudev lived as the sound continuum of the Veda. His works such as *Gitanjali*, *Stray Birds*, *Red Oleanders*, *Post Office*, *Home and the World* etc., are clear proof of his ancient spirit justly linked to the abiding inner core of Vedic culture and literature. His poem "The

Sunset of the Century (19th)" concludes with the following lines which are wisdom's eternal fruit Build God's throne daily upon the ample bareness of your poverty.

And know that what is huge is not great and pride is not ever lasting". This shows the ascetic limited to a life of simplicity unmarred by baseness seated securely in the lotus heart of Gurudev. Wearied of the futility of the messages conveyed by God by his Messiahs age followed in age, the Gurudev made bold to ask God "Are you yourself O Lord! Able to forgive and to love these creatures of yours who have poisoned your air, and darkened your light". The Gurudev put this question to God in his seventies. The questioner was the famous author of Nobel Prize winner, *Gitanjali*-an offering to God and a grand collection of mystic poetry containing the exquisites esoteric beauty of Upanishadic message. Tagore felt depressed by the plight of man inspite of the philosophy that preaches universal oneness of mankind.

(To be continued)

THE INTERFACES OF HUMAN RIGHTS & HUMANITARIAN LAW-I

Prof. R. Venkata Rao

"There is something essentially disturbing in the undoubted truth that man is the only animal which engages in the systematic destruction of its own species. The most benign account of world history could scarcely avoid referring to the countless wars which have plagued mankind since the very beginning of recorded time. Is there any lesson to be drawn from this blood-smeared past? Or is war an inevitable part of human existence...?"

The subject of war and war crimes takes us straight to the heart of the mystery that baffles every jurist - why is man, alone of all creatures, the only one who systematically murders his own kind? For nearly 2000 years Western man has accepted the answer given by the Christian Churchman is a fallen creature, and one result of the fall was the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. But some zoologists and students of animal behaviour have suggested an altogether more revolutionary theory, that man achieved his present position as the world's most dominant species because he is the descendant of a killer ape. Killing, according to this theory, is so much a part of man's basic personality that he will never be able to throw off the habit. The gloomy conclusion seems to be that civilization will never "tame" man. In fact the more highly evolved it becomes, the more man's basic aggression will struggle to burst out."

International humanitarian Law - also called the law of armed conflict and previously known as a law of

war - is a special branch of law governing situations of armed conflict in a word, war. International humanitarian law seeks to mitigate the effects of war, first in that it limited the choice of means and methods of conducting military operations, and secondly in that it obliges the belligerents to spare persons who do not or no longer participate in hostile action.

To mitigate the sufferings or effects of war, a new branch of law called International Humanitarian Law emerged.

Fundamental Rules of Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts:

1. Persons hors de combat and those who do not take a direct part in hostilities are entitled to respect their lives and physical and moral integrity. There shall in all circumstances be protected and treated humanely without any adverse distinction.

2. It is forbidden to kill or injure an enemy who surrenders or who is *hors de combat*.

3. The wounded and sick shall be collected and cared for by the party to conflict which has them in its power. Protection also covers medical personnel, establishments, transports and material. The emblem of the red cross (red crescent, red lion and sun) is the sign of such protection and must be respected.

4. Captured combatants and civilians under the authority of an adverse party are entitled to respect for their lives, dignity, personal rights and convictions. They shall be protected against all acts of violence and reprisals. They shall have right to correspond with their families and to receive relief.

5. Everyone shall be entitled to benefit from fundamental judicial guarantees. No one shall be held responsible for an act he had not committed. No one shall be subjected to physical or mental torture, corporal punishment or cruel or degrading treatment.

6. Parties to a conflict and members of their armed forces do not have an unlimited choice of methods and means of warfare. It is prohibited to employ weapons or methods of warfare of a nature to cause unnecessary losses or excessive suffering.

7. Parties to a conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants in order to spare the civilian population and property. Neither the civilian population nor civilian person shall be the object of attack. Attacks shall be directed solely against military objectives.

To make life the best possible and suffering the least possible is the objective of both Human Rights law as well as Humanitarian Law. Though purists state that human rights *stricto sensu* will be applicable in

times of peace, and humanitarian law in times of armed conflict, both these laws tend to converge at number of points.

Like human rights law, humanitarian law is based on the premise that the protection accorded to victims of war must be without any discrimination. This is such a fundamental rule of human rights that it is specified not only in the United Nations Charter but also in all human rights treaties. One of many examples in humanitarian law is Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949:

"... all protected persons shall be treated with the same consideration by the Party to the conflict in whose power they are, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, religion or political opinion."

Given the obvious risk to life in armed conflict, a great deal of humanitarian law is devoted to its protection, thus having a direct beneficial effect on the right to life. First and foremost, victims of war, i.e., those persons directly in the power of the enemy, are not to be murdered as this amounts to an unnecessary act of cruelty. These persons are mainly protected by the 1949 Geneva Conventions, with some extension of this protection in 1977 Additional protocol I. As far as the protection of life during hostilities is concerned, it is obvious that the lives of combatants cannot be protected whilst they are still fighting. However, humanitarian law is not totally silent even here, for the rule that prohibits the use of weapons of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering is partly aimed at outlawing those weapons that cause an excessively high death rate among soldiers. With regard to civilians, the customary law of the nineteenth century required that they be spared as much as possible. Military tactics at the time made this possible, and civilians were less affected by the direct attacks than by starvation during sieges, or shortages due to the use of their resources by occupying troops. However, military developments in the twentieth century, in particular the introduction of bombardment or missiles, seriously jeopardized this customary rule.

(To be continued)

R.K. NARAYAN- A HOMAGE

Prof : M.S. Rama Murthy

It is unfortunate that India has lost one of its leading practitioners of fiction in the passing away of R.K. Narayan, yet again it is fortunate that this country should have produced one of the literary luminaries of Twentieth Century fiction, who has captured the quintessence of the Indian spirit and made it come through his fiction.

A common factor among the three leading practitioners of fiction from India, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, is their firm roots in Indian tradition and their seriousness of purpose; adapting the fictional form to suit their purpose. Where Anand is concerned with socio-economic problems, and Raja Rao in probing the Indian psyche steeped in myth, R.K. Narayan portrays the ordinary middle-class society which reflects subtly the tradition and culture derived from the philosophy of the Vedas, Puranas and epics of India. As Narayan observed:

"The impact of life, the material and substance of our thought are the same everywhere, in any state. Traditionally, India is the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and The Puranas. The values remain the same in every village, Town or city." (The Illustrated Weekly of India, June 23, 1963, p.43)

One of the distinct features of R.K. Narayan's fiction when considered in toto is that its characters represent the various asramas in life. According to Manu, the great lawgiver, the asramas are Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Moksha. Swami and Friends and The Bachelor of Arts depict Brahmacharya, The English Teacher and The Financial Expert the stage of Grihastha, The Guide and Vendor of Sweets that of Vanaprastha, while A Tiger for Malgudi the ultimate, that is, Moksha.

The Manu sashtra also says down that though there are four stages that lead to the final, an individual need not necessarily go through all of them. One's life is meaningful if the dharma and artha of each stage is fulfilled. A philosophy later interpreted as the pursuit of excellence in one's own limited status. Swami and Chandran, Krishna and Margayya, Raju and Jagan and finally The Tiger, all of them fulfill the Dharma and Artha of their stage of the Asrama. This is perhaps the reason why we do not come across failures or villains, but a sense of acceptance of the contract that life offers. All the characters are acceptors and celebrators of life within their own ken. This positive and humanist attitude to life is what makes Narayan's fiction so delightful to read and at the same time thought-provoking.

R.K. Narayan by his uncanny humour and zest for life has given pleasure to millions of readers, both young and old. He has come full cycle for The Tiger in Tiger and Malgudi in a way welcomes captivity observing

Men, women and children, particularly children, hundreds of them will come to see you. You will make them happy.

(R.K. Narayan, A Tiger for Malgudi, Indian Thought Publications, p. 145)

As the Mahatma had said 'Service to man is service to God' - and R.K. Narayan has fulfilled this greatest prom-

ise by the pleasure he has given to millions of people all over the globe.

(Talk delivered at a meeting held at CPS to pay homage to R.K. Narayan on 22-5-2001)

SANKAR FOUNDATION

Visakhapatnam

Performance Highlights/Major Events of Sankar Foundation, Visakhapatnam for the period from 28.03.2001 to 29.05.2001.

D. Kishore, Manager - Resources

27.03.2001 : Shri Dhananjay Rajore has given a Donation of Rs.10,000/- for organizing CME Programme.

28.03.2001 : **FREE MEGA EYE CAMP** :

A Free Mega Eye Camp was conducted at Vizianagaram. The Eye Camp was sponsored by State Bank of India, of their 6 Branches i.e., Vizianagaram Main Branch, Cantonment Bazar, Fort, Lakkidam & S.S. Korukonda and conducted by Sankar Foundation, Visakhapatnam. 152 patients were screened out of which 25 patients were selected for Cataract Surgery.

Dr. Suparna Ghantasala, M.B.B.S., D.O., Resident Ophthalmic Medical Officer screened the patients at the above eye camp.

Shri D.Kishore, Manager - Resource and Shri D.D.Prasada Rao, Administrative Officer accompanied the Medical Team & were present at the camp. Shri Ch. Srinivasa Rao, Field Officer has coordinated the camp.

31.03.2001 : **STEEL CITY SECURITIES GESTURE:**

M/s. Steel City Securities Ltd, Visakhapatnam has donated an amount of Rs.2,00,000/-.

05.04.2001 : **ROTARY CLUB, VISAKHAPATNAM's GESTURE** : Rtn. President Shri G.V. Rama Rao has given a Donation of Rs. 88,000/- on behalf of his club for conducting 89 IOL Operations. Sankar Foundation has arranged an Eye Camp at their Base Hospital, and successfully conducted the operations.

14.04.2001 : **HELPAge INDIA's GESTURE** :

M/s. Helpage India, New Delhi has donated an amount of Rs. 3.00 Lakhs for the 2nd installment of the Eye Care Project 2000-2001. A function was arranged at Hyderabad on the occasion of the Cheque presentation.

24.04.2001 : Shri M.V.N. Setty Memorial Foundation has donated an amount of Rs. 1,00,000/- to Sankar Foundation.

25.04.2001 : Rtn. President Mrs.Jeeja Valsaraj has visited Sankar Foundation's Eye Hospital during the period from 23.04.2001 to 26.04.2001, the Eye Camp was sponsored by Rotary Club, Vizag Hill View. The President has handedover a Cheque for Rs.58,080/- to Dr.R.Suryanarayana Raju, M.S., D.O., Hony. Con-

sultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Dr. Raju has explained the services of our Sankar Foundation to the President of the club in detail. All the members accompanied Rtn. President appreciated the services.

29.04.2001 : NEURO SURGICAL CAMP AT R.R.VENKATAPURAM VILLAGE: A Free Neurosurgical Camp was conducted at R.R. Venkatapuram Village. The camp was sponsored by L.G. Polymers (I) Pvt. Ltd, organised by Rotary Club, Visakhapatnam. The Medical & Paramedical Team headed by Dr. Mahalakshmi of Sankar Foundation has attended the camp and screened Gynaec patients.

The Rotary Club Visakhapatnam has also donated some samples of paediatric drops to the Sankar Foundation's Woman & Child Hospital on the same day.

30.04.2001 : VIJAY NIRMAN COMPANIES GESTURE: Shri S. Gokul Chandra and Shri S. Rahul Chandra, Sons of Shri Vijaya Kumar of M/s. Vijay Nirman Company, Vidyanagar, Visakhapatnam have donated an amount of Rs.1,00,000/- each to Sankar Foundation.

VIP's VISIT : Lion Dr. Umamaheswara Rao, Dist. Governor, Lions Club International has visited our Foundation's Hospitals. He has appreciated the services being rendered by the Foundation.

01.05.2001 : WELCOME : Dr. N.V. Bhaskara Rao, M.D., D.C.H. Former Professor of Paediatric, Andhra Medical College, Former Deputy Superintendent & Paediatrician, King George Hospital, Visakhapatnam has joined the Sankar Foundation's Woman & Child Hospital as Consultant Paediatrician.

Dr. Bhaskara Rao attended various workshops and conferences. He was National Executive Member of Indian Academy of Paediatrics, President of the Local and State Chapters of the same Academy.

He was having vast experience in the fields of teaching as well as administration in medical & Health Department.

FAREWELL : Dr. N.V. Ramana Murthy, M.D.D.C.H.,

Consultant Paediatrician of our Woman & Child Hospital has left the Institution for personal reasons.

14.05.2001 : ROTARY CLUB - VIZAG HILL VIEW's GESTURE : The Rtn. President of Rotary Club - Vizag Hill View has presented a Cheque for Rs.29,040/- to Mr. D.Kishore, Manager - Resources for the 2nd phase of IOL Operations conducted at Sankar Foundation's Eye Hospital for the Eye Camp arranged for 2 days on 14.05.2001 & 15.05.2001.

15.05.2001 : Shri M.R.Sripada Rao has given a Donation of Rs.6,150/- for providing food for inpatients and their escorts from 14.05.2001 to 26.05.2002. Sweets were distributed to patients and their attendants.

RETINA OPERATIONS SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTED

Retinal detachment is a condition where the Retina of the eye is separated from its underlying tissue. In this condition reattachment of the Retina should be done at the earliest, by means of putting a band around the eye. This procedure is called scleral buckling procedure. This was done successfully for two cases in the month of May'2001 and one in the month of February'2001.

The above operations have been conducted by Dr. Ajay Sharma, M.S., FIVRS Specially trained in Retinal Surgery at Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai.

Memorial for Dr Kuppachi Krishnamurthy

Elders of the city and eminent citizens of Visakhapatnam have, at a meeting held last month to mourn Dr Kuppachi Krishnamurthy, former Superintendent of the King George Hospital and Additional Director of Medical Services, resolved to request the Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation to name a road leading to the KGH after Dr Krishnamurthy for his outstanding services to the city and the state. The eminent doctor who passed away last month has done research on a viral disease and on malaria in north Andhra. He was widely respected for his work and philanthropy.

CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

(Soudamini, 10-50-19, Siripuram, Visakhapatnam - 530 003)

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Shri K. Sivananda Murty
Dr. M. Gopalakrishna Reddy
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