

Sometimes you have to suffer in life, not because you were bad but because you didn't realise where to stop being good.  
—Chanakya

## STORY OF TWO PMs

Much water has flown down the Ganges since the days of India's independence and the era of Jawaharlal Nehru's premiership. In 1950, Nehru got a feeler from the Indian Ambassador in the U.S., mentioning the American desire to remove China from permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and possibly replacing it with India. The reports that Nehru refused to take this suggestion seriously and thus abdicated India's opportunity to become a permanent member of the UNSC has proven to be very detrimental to the national interest. The past nearly seven decades have witnessed how Indian interests were torpedoed by the use of veto mostly by the Beijing. Precisely, seventy years later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi questioned how long India would be kept away from a seat at the high table of the world body. In a pre-recorded video address to the UN General Assembly, Modi referred to India's future role as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, and said the experience of the world's largest democracy will be used for the benefit of the world. "India will always speak in support of peace, security and prosperity. India will not hesitate in raising its voice against the enemies of humanity, human race and human values - terrorism, smuggling of illegal weapons, drugs and money-laundering," he observed. This is reflection of the deep urge of 1.30 billion in India, candidature of which for permanent membership of an expanded and reformed Security Council has been backed by all the current permanent members of the council barring China. India recently called for text-based negotiations within a fixed time-frame for UN reforms that would also ensure proper representation for African nations. Given his clarity on the issues pertaining to the nation, there seems a hope that India will find a permanent seat in the Security Council.

## SILENCE 'LINE OF FIRE'

Pakistan has done it again. Its rogue army resorted to heavy firing with small arms and shelling mortars along the Line of Control. Obviously, Indian Army had to retaliate, which it did in the Nowshera sector of Rajouri district. But how long? How far will Pakistan go to bleed India on borders and also in the hinterland by plunging terrorists? Having fought three wars with India over Kashmir, Pakistan has always been made to lick the dust by valiant Indian soldiers. The humiliation of Bangladesh will continue to haunt every Pakistani and their apologists in this country. India's victory over Pakistan has been due to steadfast political leadership which allowed the valiant forces to have their way in demolishing the enemy. Indian army suffered minimum casualties in 1947. About 6,500 soldiers were martyred in subsequent two wars-3,000 in 1965 and 3,500 in 1971. In the ongoing proxy war and ceasefire violations, the nation has perhaps lost more brave hearts than in the traditional wars. India has all along been remembering the command of frail Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965 and Indira Gandhi in 1971 that made the nation proud. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken forward the pledge to defend the country's borders as well as soil from (Na)Pak Army. However, Islamabad is refusing to learn the lesson. With China showing teeth on Line of Actual Control, Pakistan has got emboldened to continue its skirmishes. Whenever India showed resilience and determination to fight back, the usual international players chipped in to counsel restraint. Restrain from what-Pak sponsored terrorism in the form of Jihad or ceasefire violations, which has become order of the day. Of course, New Delhi has to tread cautiously at this point of time when the Dragon is playing truant in eastern Ladakh. But this should not stop the nation to take head on whosoever may be trying to take the advantage of a volatile situation. India is capable of doing that provided the country's leadership shows the will. Without bothering about international pressure, the nation must go the whole hog against the enemy and Silence the Line of Fire. Narendra Modi should imbibe the spirit of Benjamin Netanyahu, who had aptly said, "The world tells Israel 'wait, there's still time'. And I say, 'Wait for what? Wait until when? Those in the international community who refuse to put red lines before Iran don't have a moral right to place a red light before Israel'".

## OFF 'D' CUFF

Since time immemorial, the Smightly, mystical Himalayas have been a source of inspiration for spiritual truth-seekers. Among them, in the last century, was an extraordinary Russian couple - Nicholas Roerich and his wife Helena Roerich. One, a renowned painter, explorer and peace promoter; the other, evolved in spiritual Sadhana. The pull of the Himalayas brought them to Naggar in Kullu Valley in Himachal Pradesh, which became their Karma Bhoomi and Tapo Bhoomi.

In 1920, Helena Roerich, in partnership with her husband and under the guidance of her Gurus -- including Helena Blavatsky, who founded the Theosophical Society -- started a movement called Agni Yoga, which she called 'The Living Ethics'. She wrote a 14-volume treatise on the subject. Agni, fire, is regarded as sacred in all cultures and faiths around the world because of its power of purification, refinement and illumination. Agni Yoga posits that the ultimate goal of human life - also the path and practice leading to that goal - is 'Mergence with Divine Fire'.

It teaches its practitioners to attain increasingly subtle states of consciousness, and ascend on the path of spiritual evolution from one's self to cosmic Self.

The best way to know Agni Yoga is that it is the Yoga of the Heart, which Helena likens to the temple of humanity'. It regards the human heart - with its cleansing and redemptive power of love and compassion, devotion and prayer - to be a superior enabler of human evolution

## 100 years of Helena Roerich's Agni Yoga

than the intellect. Development of energy of the heart, awakening of Anahata Chakra, requires, first and foremost, ethical self-transformation. Hence, it urges us to get rid of vices like falsity, selfishness, anger, arrogance and violence, which shackle us to a low, gross level of existence. Simultaneously, it exhorts us to cultivate 'luminous qualities' that connect us with 'far-off higher worlds' - truthfulness, faithfulness to God, mercy, control over one's emotions, and joyful service of not only others but also all inter-connected forms of life.

"The hygiene of the heart," Helena writes, "is premised on good deeds for the welfare of humanity. It will act as a trust-worthy timepiece that calls one to care about everyone and everything." Agni Yoga also lays emphasis on creation of beauty, which both Helena and Nicholas described as the "Garment of Truth".

Like in Satsang, which is a community of likeminded truth-seekers, Agni Yoga emphasises that group striving is more helpful than individual effort because it generates both solidarity and a more powerful common psychic energy. It cautions practitioners to be ready to encounter obstacles, both within oneself and from outside. "Blessed are the obstacles - thanks to them we grow," Helena writes. "Those walking with the Forces of Light must know that without a tense battle, there is no victory."

By: Sudheendra Kulkarni



■PROF HARI OM

It's sad. It's unfortunate. It's also utterly unacceptable as it's an affront to the self-respect of the Dogras. The J&K School Education Department (JKSED) has insulted the Dogras of Jammu and Dogri. It's statement of fact. The proposal submitted by the JKSED to the government for the creation of 2,915 (2,225 for Kashmir and only 690 for Jammu) posts of teachers at the Senior Secondary level clearly demonstrates bias against the Dogras and their rich Dogri language and favouring of Kashmir and Kashmiri language. This happened despite the fact that Dogri, like Kashmiri, is included in the 8th Schedule of Indian Constitution; that Dogri is spoken by an overwhelming majority of population in Jammu province; and that it, like Kashmiri, was accorded the status of official language by the Narendra Modi Government through a Parliamentary legislation only the other day. Believe it or term it ridiculous and preposterous but it's a fact that the JKSED has recommended as many as 122 posts of teachers to teach Kashmiri in Kashmir. In contrast, it has

■BRIGADIER DR VIJAY SAGAR DHEMAN

The 21st century has thrown up myriad challenges to humanity. The very character of the human psyche is that of 'one-upmanship'. Everyone wants to outdo the other; to reach the acme of perceived/believed narrative. The present narrative, world over, is zeroed on to prove its economic dominance to others. This concept has an inbuilt requirement of security. Thus the cumulative energies of the entire world are manifesting as 'rat race' for pre-eminence in trade and commerce protected by high-tech security i.e., Defense capability in a variety of spheres. It could be conventional space, internal security, off shore security (sea lines of communications), NBC/CBRN, cyber space or even outer space.

Whereas, the nation states are struggling to boost the trade and defense capabilities legally/illegally, yet the fault lines in this comity of nations are too fragile in terms of religion, race, political beliefs and regional aspirations. This has led to puritanical competition for dominance over others. The worst of these maladies that world suffers today is the religious imperialistic tendencies. This has manifested itself in a conspicuous manner in the present mess, the world is in.

While the nations like China, Pakistan, Turkey or few African countries demonstrate their overt desire to promote their brand of nationalism with religious support, there are others where right wingers are active enough to be taken note of. These right wingers are responsible for putting reasonable pressure on the governments to toe a particular religious line. The passions of gullible masses are used as weapons to change the sociopolitical parities for petty gains while the educated majority remains silent for a variety of reasons. This race to Supremacy forces the political establishment to sacrifice the principles of secularism so vital for the overall prosperity of any pluralistic society which majority of the world is composed of. While few countries in this world have declared themselves as the theocratic states, yet the others christened themselves as secular. Unfortunately, a good number of the ruling dispensations in these so called secular states, misuse the word 'Secular' for their petty political gains.

What exactly is the meaning of secularism? Secularism as per dictionary means, 'Where religion does not interfere with social, political and educational sphere of a society'. This is the true spirit behind the progress and prosperity of pluralistic society that majority of the contemporary humanity is formed of. Despite fully understanding this cliché, yet a lot many attempts are made to misuse it for petty personal and political ambitions. Even in the past in Europe, when religious head used to lead in state governance and many aberrations were noticed and felt, this concept was introduced to ensure that the affairs of the state are devoid of any religious influence. It was ruled that practicing any religion was totally a personal matter of any citizen. Unfortunately today, even small practices of any religion are viewed with extreme passion and fervor which results in gigantic proportions of intolerance. All this without understanding as to what exactly is the reason behind each practice that is followed by a sect and the same is branded as religious

## YOUR COLUMN

### Collusive corruption in Education Department

Dear Editor;

Through the columns of your esteemed paper I would like to highlight the corruption prevailing in the Education Department highlighted by media as 'Transfer Mafia'. The print media has rightly highlighted that a mafia has been active in the Education Department which has fixed rates of transfer and many teachers, masters and lecturers were shifted from one place to another within the city. Many of employees have shown their concern and have stated that many of Principals posted in far flung areas have a stay of more than three years but authorities never consider their genuine cases for transfer whereas those having political back-up, money power and those having big source of income from tuitions manage their posting within specified area. This type of corruption is never reported because both the parties are benefitted and it is a form of 'Collusive Corruption'. The misuse of power by those sitting at the helm of affairs in the department can be established by finding how many teachers have been transferred within a radius of one or two kilometers. The honest findings will lead to exposure that either money or recommendation from political back-up have played the role. Such authorities need to be aware that although

## Dogri insulted, J&K BJP mum

# 122 posts of teachers to teach Kashmiri; only five to teach Dogri

recommended a paltry five posts of teachers to teach Dogri in Jammu province. It should have explained as to why it recommended so many posts of teachers to teach Kashmiri and excluded Dogri for all practical purposes, but it didn't do that for obvious reasons. The most notable reason: it would have failed to justify the proposal by any yardstick or defend the indefensible as it was blatantly irrational and out and out Kashmir-centric.

The JKSED not only humiliated the Dogras and neglected Dogri but it also made it loud and clear that it had no place for the Vedic studies in its scheme of things. One may believe it or overlook it but it's a painful truth that the JKSED has recommended 150 posts of teachers to teach 'Islamic Studies' in Kashmir and 93, including 60 for Kashmir and 33 for Jammu province, to impart instructions in 'Arabic'. Leave aside the fact that it also recommended 11 posts of Urdu - all for Jammu province. Contrast to this, the JKSED recommended only 22 posts of teachers to teach Sanskrit and just one to teach Hindi.

The proposal that 254 posts of teachers to teach Islamic Studies, Arabic and Urdu and only 23 posts of teachers to teach Sanskrit and Hindi

in J&K UT suggested and meant many things. It's hardly necessary to highlight the meaning of the proposal as the people of Jammu province are intelligent enough to understand what certain elements in the Education Department are up to.

It's a matter of grave concern that not one political party in Jammu or one political leader in Jammu, or even one literary society and social organisation took cognizance of what was being done by certain elements in the concerned department. The worst part of the whole situation was that the J&K BJP, which call itself messiah of Jammu province day and night, didn't utter a word on what was being done to Jammu province by certain forces hostile towards Jammu province as well as the nation as a whole.

It's absolutely clear that the J&K BJP leadership has lost its way or it is just unfit to uphold the genuine cause of Jammu province and fight for it. It has turned out to a paper tiger. No wonder then that badly let down people of Jammu province are looking for an opportunity to teach this party of irresponsible individuals a lesson, notwithstanding the fact that they hail and admire PM Narendra Modi and HM Amit Shah.

# Secularism- A bane or boon

practice or belief..

Our ancestors in ancient times had attained a very high levels of intellectualism irrespective of any geographical region where the humanity exogitated. They realised that the universe is made of five elements. Even today, the pluralistic humanity survives in this universe which is composed of five ingredients as its key components i.e. Earth, Sky (Space), Air, Water and Fire. Our ancestors realised their existence and started revering them as some divine supreme power: This reverence and refuge to the divine power gave rise to the concept of God, albeit, with different names or faiths. The underlying fear in the human mind against natural and other calamities was common to all societies. They had negligible communication between the societies or sects/religions and yet their respective intelligentsia arrived at similar conclusions independent of each other as that was the reality of the very existence. The Hindus called it 'Bhagvan'. The Muslims called it 'Alilah'. The Christians called it 'God' and so on and so forth.

'Bhagvan' is composed of 'BH' Bhumi (earth), 'G'Gagan (sky/space), 'W' wayu (air), 'A' Agni (fire) 'N'neer (water). The Muslim God 'Aliah' also is composed of 'A' Aab(neer/water), 'L' Lab(Bhumi/earth), 'T' Illa(Vayu/air), 'A'(Aasmaan/space), 'H'Harank(Agni/fire). The 'God is 'G' generator (Brahama the creator), 'O' operator(Vishnu the director), 'D'(Mahesh the annihilator).

Thus every religion in this universe came across these five elements which make the universe and mostly similar interpretations. Each sect recognised its supreme binding force, started drawing inner strength from it and perceived the supreme lord depending on contemporary geographical location, climatic conditions and ease of praying. We may have named our perceived lords by different names but the basic faith underlying our emotions, research and understanding is same. Then, we started making a beeline to get into the semantics of promoting our religion and that's when we started an avoidable acrimonious debate laced with bloodshed, hatred and disrespect for each other. Least realising that we all pray to same entity and we all believe in the same Supreme element but only in a different form.

Now one may argue that there are some distinct religious practices which make up a particular religion. One must realise that most of the practices were evolved over a period of time in a particular geographical region and other limiting factors. For example, practice of washing hands before prayers (Shudhikaran/Vazu). The procedure is guided by the conditions in which the religion prospered i.e., green lands/deserts. Hindus prospered in green lands and had surplus water in terms of rivers and ponds. They washed hands in a particular way. Muslims prospered in deserts where there is acute shortage of water so they washed hands (Vazu) in a different way to conserve water: Hindus did 'Surya Namaskar' facing East, basically a Yogic way of keeping your body healthy. They promoted this amongst masses as a worship of the Sun God. Same Yogic way with similar benefits was proliferated amongst the Muslims for 'Sajda to Aliah' (prayers/Nimaz) facing West since the 'Kabba', the holy place, is located in Saudi Arabia in West

exchange of money if difficult to establish as a part of 'Collusive Corruption' the misuse of power to confer undue benefit is also defined as corruption and punishable under 'Prevention of Corruption Act'. Non- consideration of due cases of genuine transfer is a created system especially by those claiming themselves to be honest to compel someone to adopt the system of 'Collusive Corruption'. The education department is among the ten top most corrupt departments in J&K (www.jammuvirasat.com). Will new administration in UT look into this aspect?

Mahadeep Singh Jamwal, Udhampur.

## How to improve your memory?

Dear Editor;

We have often heard that many people face loss of memory or are very forgetful in their daily activities. Memory problems could be due to various reasons. We go around asking people and surfing to find better ways to improve memory. What exactly is memory? Memory is basically the ability to store, retain, and retrieve information.

I would like to share some simple procedures and exercises I shall share with you for attaining good memory within a short period of time.

Write down things you are grateful for. This is a great step to take as a beginner and this would enable you to start thinking of the events of the day. During this process, you would find yourself being grateful for certain events that took place.

## Background of Indian reservation system

■DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH

From centuries, India is the homeland of people who are different to each other on basis of language, religion, caste, race and community. The exploitation and deprivation of one section by other is the outcome of strict social division and prejudice. As a result, a large section of Indians has been identified as underprivileged, backward and deprived. Reservation in India is the process of setting aside a certain percentage of seats in government institutions for members of backward and under-represented communities. It is governed by constitutional laws, statutory laws and local rules and regulations. Initially, the system of reservation was put in place by the British over the objection of the nationalist movement, but in time it was embraced by Congress and virtually by all political parties in India. Subsequently, the reservation provision was incorporated into the Indian Constitution along with a constitutional commitment to ensure more adequate representation to deprived, socially and educationally in particular.

From time immemorial, the most common form of discrimination in India is the practice of untouchability. An untouchable person is generally considered 'impure' or a lesser human. Earlier, in Vedic period, the Varna system was used but it was based on the profession one chose rather than on the birth. The system consisted of four ranked varnas. At the time a person's Varna was defined by his or her socio-economic duties, broadly classified into four classes or varnas. These duties were either voluntarily performed or were assigned by the local administrator when one's Varna was initially not defined by one's birth into any particular family. Over the centuries, especially during the 11th century onwards, the system changed. In the 7th century, Huen-tsang found the Sudras constituting the agricultural class. Devala quoted in the Mitaksara that the Sudra should serve the twice-born and may engage in agriculture, rearing cattle, carrying loads, sale of commodities, drawing and painting, dancing, singing and playing on musical instruments. In the tenth century, the Arab traveller Ibn Khurdadha also made a general statement that the Sudras were husbandmen by profession. Al Idrisi too remarked that they were labourers and agriculturists. But inspite of the general trend of improvement in the status of the Sudras in many spheres, the relative bondage of the lower sections of the Sudras may be further noticed in a religious ideology which acquired considerable force during the early medieval period. In this phase gradually, the spirit of exclusiveness and ideas of ritual purity were carried to extremes and many more Sudras became untouchable. In the context further, the Bhakti movement was characterised by the protest of lower-classes against the higher classes besides witnessing rise in number of saints from lower castes. The saints of the time endeavoured to educate and elevate the people through their teachings and also succeeded in creating a space for Sudra class in almost all the spheres of life, religious, social, economic, etc.

In modern-age after coming of the British to uplift the socio-economic conditions of these large sections of people and to end the exploitation from their lives, social reformers and leaders of the country organised several social and legal movements. Although the concept of untouchability was not practised uniformly throughout the country and therefore the identification of oppressed classes was difficult. In general, the practice of segregation and untouchability prevailed more in the southern parts of India in comparison to northern India. Furthermore, certain castes or communities, considered untouchable in one province were not in other provinces. In the North Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule made a demand of free and compulsory education alongwith proportionate representation in government jobs. In 1891, there was a demand for reservation in government jobs with an agitation against the recruitment of non-natives into public service overlooking qualified native people. In 1901, reservations were introduced in Maharashtra, in the Princely State of Kolhapur, by Shahu Maharaj. He introduced reservation in favour of non-Brahmin and backward classes as early as 1902. The Maharaja provided free education to ensure everyone got suitable employment no matter what social class they belonged to the notification of 1902 created 50 per cent reservation in services for backward classes/communities in the State of Kolhapur. This was the first official instance of Government order for providing reservation for depressed classes in India.

Write a paragraph of a positive experience.

The day has many events happening. Before going to bed, make it a habit that you write down at least one small paragraph of a positive experience that you went through the day. Definitely, every day would have some positives for you.

Exercising is also the best way to circulate oxygen in your body and your brain needs good amount of oxygen to stay fresh and healthy.

Food is important by all means for you. Food not only fuels your body but also the contents in the right proportion help your brain cells to be active and energetic. Try having small meals for 5-6 times, rather than the 3 large meals. Paying attention to your surroundings is one good way of improving your memory. It is a pathway to boosting your memory.

A cluttered mind would not be able to recall things. Organise yourself. Following a pattern of maintaining your daily accessories or maintaining a diary, or having reminders or simply maintaining notes, would help you to plan things and help you to stay in order.

Your brain has great powers of imagination and visualising things. When reading a book or listening to anything, visualise them. Pictures leave back greater effects than words.

Try repeating the information for several times, so that sticks to your mind. When you rewind the information, the chances of remembering are more and the tendency of forgetting becomes less.

Vijay Garg, Malout Punjab.