


KERALA CALLING

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 /Kerala Calling

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**NOT OF AN AGE
BUT FOR ALL TIME**

In the contemporary scenario, Gandhi is felt mightier than ever before across the globe.





Documenting the **P**resent the **P**ast and the **F**uture
of Kerala



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THE WAY THAT NEVER FAILS

While we are observing the concluding ceremonies of Mahatma Gandhi's sesquicentennial birth anniversary, a silent yet mighty protest is on the go across the globe. As thousands of children and youth leave classrooms holding placards and raising slogans demanding concrete action to address critical climate change issues that could well endanger their future, everyone stands stunned by such en masse solidarity. Though peaceful, it makes the environmental destroyers tremble with fear. These protesters prove beyond doubt that Gandhi and his mode of resistance are more powerful than ever before in the contemporary scenario.

Gandhi had a vision on everything whether it was trivial or serious. He influenced a generation and they gained strength from that mighty soul. This eventually uprooted an empire. In his *Discovery of India*, Jawaharlal Nehru paints with words the entry of Gandhi into the Indian political scenario. After the First World War, the sufferings of the downtrodden and the middle class in India got intensified. A pall of gloom descended over the minds of millions of the country. Everyone was in despair. *And then Gandhi Came. He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths; like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes; like a whirlwind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds.* (Discovery of India p. 392)

Many had thought that Gandhi and his ideals would vanish as time passes by but they have gone wrong. Gandhian values have withstood the tides of time and the spirit is passing through generation after generation.

The October issue of *Kerala Calling* is fashioned with articles and features galore on Gandhi penned by eminent scribes both from India and abroad. Gandhian scholars like Dinoo Anna Mathew, Douglas Allan, Dr C K Thomas Chungath, Dr N Radhakrishnan etc. have much to say about Gandhian vision and its contemporary relevance.

It is not apt to conclude without remembering Albert Einstein's famous quote on Gandhi. He said, "Generations to come, it may well be, will scarce believe that such a man as this one ever in flesh and blood walked upon this Earth." He said this out of immense respect for the Mahatma. The young generation stand in 'awe' before Gandhi and they are following his mighty footprints! He influenced one generation and has been influencing since then. And, he will influence the world in future as well.

The present generation is living proof of that fact.

U V Jose IAS
Editor-in-Chief

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'HUDDLE KERALA' TO FOCUS ON THE EMERGING AND FUTURE TECHNOLOGY SECTORS

'Huddle Kerala', one of Asia's largest start-up ecosystem congregations, was held at Kovalam ,Thiruvananthapuram as part of the event organised by the Kerala Start-up Mission (KSUM) in association with Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). Twelve investors, 40 start-ups from outside Kerala and 120 mentors were participated in the conclave. The two-day event also attracted some high net worth individuals (HNIs), who showed their keenness to tap the potential of Kerala's start-up ecosystem.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES ISSUE STAMPS IN MEMORY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The Government of Uzbekistan, France, Russia and UAE has issued a special stamp in memory of M.K Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary. As a gesture of respect and love between the countries, these countries celebrated 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi with a series of events. Along with them, Turkey, Palestine, and Monaco also released postage stamp to mark the day. As part of the event, the Embassy of India in collaboration with the Leo Tolstoy Museum and Estate and the Institute of Oriental Studies organized a day-long exhibition and academic conference dedicated to the deep friendship between Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy.





SECOND EDITION OF LOKA KERALA SABHA

The second edition of Loka Kerala Sabha is scheduled to be conducted on January 2 & 3, 2020 at the Legislature Complex. It has been decided to conduct Overseas Employers Conference and Job fair as part of the event. This is scheduled to be held at Kochi on December 7. As a prelude to the second edition, there will be open forums, seminars, art programmes, workshops etc. will be conducted.

INDIAN COFFEE HOUSE OPENS DOORS TO WOMEN STAFF

For the first time, Indian Coffee Board Workers Cooperative Society appointed women waiters at Indian Coffee House chain of restaurants. Ever since it was established in 1958, women have not been appointed to any section of the Indian Coffee House. This tradition was broken when Sreekutty R.S, hailing from Kottukal, and Sheena L. from Karakulam were appointed to the MLA Quarters branch of the Indian Coffee House in Trivandrum. As part of this, seven women across different districts entered the portals of the coffee house as staff.



182 BUTTERFLIES AND 132 BIRDS SPOTTED IN IDUKKI

A four-day joint survey done by Idukki State Forests Department and Travancore Nature History Society (TNHS) at Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary spotted 182 varieties of butterflies and 132 species of birds. The survey finds that IWW is a haven for winged wonders.

The last survey had only 76 species of butterflies and the number rose to 182 this time.



Another Feather in the Cap of Kerala

Kerala has emerged on top among 20 large states in terms of quality of school education, followed by Rajasthan and Karnataka, during 2016-17, according to the report released by Niti Aayog.

The report, titled 'The Success of Our Schools-School Education Quality Index' (SEQI) and jointly released by the Niti Aayog, Ministry of Human Resource Development and the World Bank, alongside sectoral experts, is based on indexing of states and Union Territories on the learning outcomes for school-going children.

Niti Aayog already found that Kerala had moved to top position in health and social security. Along with that, adding a 'golden feather', now the State has appeared on top among 20 large states in terms of quality of school education provided to children. It was found that Kerala was able to provide a paradigm shift in many factors that helped the State to leap forward in education

sector. The factors such as rate of attendance of students, better quality of teachers, transparency in appointment of teachers and development of basic infrastructure facilities were the highlights for securing top position as far as Kerala is concerned.

The report emphasizes the efforts of schools to increase the learning ability of students. SEQI aims to drive policy reforms that will improve the quality of school education. The index seeks to institutionalise a focus on enhancing education outcomes by driving improvements in learning levels, access, equity, infrastructure and governance processes. The index recognises that school education is a subject on the Concurrent List and that State-level

leadership is crucial for improving outcomes in a cost-effective manner. The index will serve as a regular and transparent review of the status of school education quality across the States and UTs. According to the report, five small States have shown an improvement in their overall performance score between 2015-16 and 2016-17, with the average improvement being around nine percentage points. All seven UTs have shown an improvement in their overall performance scores also.

The index, prepared on the basis of 30 indicators, was divided into two broad categories - outcomes that consisted of learning, access, infrastructure & facilities, and equity outcomes; and governance processes aiding outcomes.



School Education Quality Index

(SEQI)

Top and bottom performing States and UTs

States/UTs	Overall Performance Ranking (2016-17)	
Large States	1. Kerala 2. Rajasthan 3. Karnataka	18. Punjab 19. Jammu & Kashmir 20. Uttar Pradesh
Small States	1. Manipur 2. Tripura 3. Goa	6. Sikkim 7. Meghalaya 8. Arunachal Pradesh
Union Territories	1. Chandigarh 2. Dadra and Nagar Haveli 3. Delhi	4. Daman & Diu 5. Andaman & Nicobar Islands 6. Lakshadweep

“ The index, prepared on the basis of 30 indicators, was divided into two broad categories - outcomes that consisted of learning, access, infrastructure & facilities, and equity outcomes; and governance processes aiding outcomes.

Kerala has showed biggest hike in ranking many factors while the most-populous Uttar Pradesh was ranked at the bottom position. Niti Aayog aims to provide the states and UTs a raised surface level to highlight their strength and sound performance. By understanding the level of performance they can make requisite corrections and administrative changes for the better education. The rankings – based on parameters like the number of schools with the largest number of toilets for girl children, the

average score of students in mathematics and language in classes III, V, and VIII, the transition rate of students from primary to upper primary levels and also from upper primary levels to secondary level – show that Kerala and Tamil Nadu continue to grab top slots among the big states. As Per the report, Kerala has the highest overall performance score of 76.6% while Uttar Pradesh was last among large states, with an overall performance score of 36.4%. [KC](#)

Running Memoirs of A Bygone Era

Old-timers may have a lot of stories to share about 'Anchal' offices and the 'Anchal' runners. In those days, when cycles and motor vehicles had not yet made their appearance, 'Anchal' peons used to run from place to place, carrying letters and other royal documents on their heads and shaking bells to announce their presence.

By MALAYINKEEZH GOPALAKRISHNAN
(Senior Journalist)

Even in this age of computers, the postman – in his khaki uniform, replete with a cap and the official insignia sown into his shirt – continues to be a carrier of people's messages. The services offered by the post office and the postman are indispensable even in these times of computers, mobile phones, internet and Whatsapp. The postal system boasts of a hoary past. It is said that postal service began during the reign of Emperor Cyrus of Persia in 6 BCE, and was imitated by several nations in course of time. There are historical records to prove that a special postal service had been introduced by Maharaja Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma (1729-58) in Venad (Travancore) in south India much before the British began the Indian Postal Service. It was called the "Anchal Office". In due course, the princely state of Cochin under the reign of Shaktan Thampuran (1790-1805) also adopted the system. For some time after our gaining independence, post offices under the Post and Telegraph Department and 'Anchal' offices of Travancore and Cochin continued to exist and operate side by side. It was on 1 April 1951 that the Anchal offices of Travancore and Cochin were merged with the Indian Postal department. Even today, it is possible to see ramshackle 'Anchal' offices and 'Anchal' boxes in many parts of Travancore [south Kerala] that speak of a bygone culture.

Old-timers may have a lot of stories to share about 'Anchal' offices and the 'Anchal' runners. In those days, when cycles and motor vehicles had not yet

An anchal postbox

MASSEY & CO
MADRAS

made their appearance, 'Anchal' peons used to run from place to place, carrying letters and other royal documents on their heads and shaking bells to announce their presence. Considered very important people, they held a special kind of kerosene lamp while travelling at night, and a special type of umbrella during rainy seasons. While in the line of duty, 'Anchal' peons were given the permission to move through any crowd, even royal processions, and the sound of their bells would warn gatherings to make way for them.

The older generations may still cherish vivid memories of how superior officers and royal authorities used to test them. One method was to pose as a prominent citizen or a policeman, and buttonhole the 'Anchal' peon for a matchbox. If he stopped to oblige, he faced the prospect of punishment the next day. It seems there was an 'Anchal' Superintendent named Udarashiromani Padmanabha Rao who disguised himself differently in order to test the 'Anchal' runners. Such stories are a legion! There is even a place named 'Anchal' in Kerala. Even today people recall the 'Anchal' officers of olden times as well as their families by the official status they enjoyed in the past.

A SYSTEM TO TRANSPORT FLOWERS AND OFFICIAL RECORDS

It is said that a system instituted by the Maharaja of Travancore Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma to ensure a steady supply of flowers at the Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple, various materials including vegetables at the palace, and government documents as well as orders at specific places, was what led to the establishment of a strong postal system in the region. In those paperless days, letters and royal orders were inscribed using stylus on palm leaves. The palm leaves were folded in a particular fashion before they were transported from one point to another by the 'Anchal' peons. The Department of Archives, Government of Kerala, has in its collection an order issued by Anizham Thirunal in 1755 which specified the places and times of delivery of materials. The 'Anchal' system expanded during the time of Maharaja Karthika Thirunal Rama Varma (1758-98). It was the responsibility of the 'Anchal' master of each and every region to collect information about the important incidents in his locality, and inform the




Thiruvananthapuram
General Post Office

“ It is said that a system instituted by the Maharaja of Travancore Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma to ensure a steady supply of flowers at the Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple, various materials including vegetables at the palace, and government documents as well as orders at specific places, was what led to the establishment of a strong postal system in the region.

king at the earliest. The 'Anchal' system underwent more reformatory changes during the reign of Maharaja Swathi Thirunal (1829-46) and employed the services of one Divisional Officer, two 'Anchal' officers, 47 Accountants and 170 'Anchal' runners. The average distance the 'Anchal' runner was expected to cover was two miles per hour. During 1938-49, government employees could send petitions through the 'Anchal' system.

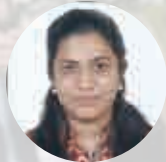
In 1861, private individuals could send letters on payment of one chakram [an old copper coin]. In two years' time, they could pay four chakrams extra and avail of "express" service for urgent missives. More reforms were introduced during the time of Maharaja Vishakham Thirunal (1880-85) when British-style

changes were introduced into the postal system. Better facilities came with the implementation of 'Anchal' Regulations. 'Anchal' cards and stamps made their entry in 1888, and with that letter boxes were put up in important parts of the country. With these reforms, all facilities offered by the British Post were in place. At the same time, letters and money orders sent under Travancore and Cochin 'Anchal' systems were confined to those princely states. People had to depend on the British Post to send letters and money orders to other parts of India, including Malabar. Efforts were made to merge the 'Anchal' systems of Travancore and Cochin with the British Post but they had to be abandoned due to protests. The merger completed in 1952. Today, the 'Anchal' system is reduced to a distant memory. 



More Relevant in Today's World

Gandhian Values and mode of struggle assume greater importance at this juncture across the world.



By **DINOO ANNA MATHEW**
(Gender and Development Consultant, New Delhi)



Students protest against climate change in Europe


As thousands of children and youth storm power bastions of ruling establishments across countries of the world holding placards and raising slogans demanding concrete action to address critical climate change issues that could well endanger their future, leaders, politicians, bureaucrats and policy makers stand stunned by such en masse solidarity. There are similar protests and struggles taking place all over the world at one time or the other. While some gets its share of reportage and spotlight, a few trudge along silently, unnoticed and a few fall by the wayside and perish. To fight for people's basic rights and equality, for freedom from oppression against brute regimes, even those that have been elected to power through a democratic process, countering tyranny, despots and dictatorial behemoths, and the art of speaking truth to power using non-violence as a weapon, was spear-headed by India's most iconic figure: Mahatma Gandhi. But as we remember him on his 150th birth anniversary, do we in India still hold his ideals and principles as dear as it is being deployed albeit with middling success in other countries? Or are we content with just a few gratuitous salutations and the use

of his imagery as mere public service tools that go on to symbolize our inherent failure to comprehend the fuller meaning of his life.

As we introspect, it is clear that the spark of non-violent struggle and resistance that Gandhi had ignited continues unabated touching millions of lives and torching the mighty establishments that continue to trample upon the human spirit that yearns to be free from the reins of poverty, destruction and war. It is interesting to note that Gandhi began his crusade of peaceful resistance not in his own country but in South Africa where he rallied against a foreign government against its racial outlook that targeted people of color especially the poor and deprived. As thousands of immigrants and natives joined him, it was the start of a remarkable journey that traipsed across all corners of the globe resonating with the power of dialogue, calls for civil disobedience, and above all showcasing the might of truth to challenge the infirmities of power. The transformative power of persuasion and peace was the bedrock on which Gandhi based his life principles and that ultimately formed his worldview. From opposing the demon of untouch-

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ability, to fighting for workers rights, to leading the opposition to temple-entry bans driven by upper castes against the scheduled castes, Gandhi fervently stoked the instrumentality of negotiation, engagement and peaceful discourse to traverse many an uncharted path to confront all the challenging problems and concerns he and the country was faced with. He preferred the long route to a lasting resolution than swift, temporary achievements that went against the grain of his principles or thought. Naturally there were unprecedented setbacks and failures, but Gandhi came back stronger and his innate ability to weather the opposition with calm measured peaceable tactics gained him huge followers both in his own country and outside. Gandhi was charged and imprisoned many a times for breaking the law with his peaceful intonations of non-violence and non-cooperation that chagrined the colonial power whose lame response was to frequently lock him up.

If Mahatma Gandhi were amongst us today, he would be uncomfortable with all the glory and exult that we have accorded him, usually reducing his life to an ism that is often appropriated for matters of convenience. However Gandhi would have nodded approvingly at the fledgling mass of humanity that assembled together in different parts of the world this past fortnight, embracing the platforms of peaceful protests and resistance as they reached out for that tender clutch of his fingers, as did millions in India when he led them to freedom; a freedom of infinite possibilities. 



Gandhi A Cosmopolitan; an Eco Warrior

The contemporary relevance of Father of the Nation is his stress on love in politics



By **ULLEKH NP**
(Executive Editor, Open magazine)

Celebrating Gandhi's birthdays and death anniversaries is one way of keeping his memories alive. But what is in order to understand Gandhi in-depth – not only as a politician but also as a philosopher and a man with a larger mission to improve people's life conditions – is to promote research on his interests beyond mere politics.

True, Gandhi was a stunningly astute politician and one proof of it is the fact that he still evokes, mostly, extreme reactions, in India and elsewhere. Most of us have failed to carry forward his values because he had set high standards in

his commitment to truth and environment. Besides other attributes to his greatness, he was also an eco-warrior in his time, long before the idea became a politically sensitive and divisive subject. As historian Vinay Lal points out, Gandhi had never written any ecological treatises, but he displayed his inviolable affinity for nature throughout his life, from his vegetarian habits to insistence on cleanliness to his nurturing of earth-friendly practices. He also inspired future grassroots movements to preserve nature.

He insisted that others didn't have to alter their food habits to make him hap-

py, engaged with people who disagreed with him, and only rarely did he foist his opinions on others outside of politics. It is this aspect of Gandhi that has not attracted adequate research although as a political figure, he has been analysed threadbare with the help of his own writings and disclosures. It is, without doubt, his transparency was his biggest virtue.

Those obsessed with his politics alone do not often realise that for Gandhi his politics was key only as a combination of his value system and that he had a bigger project for India in multiple aspects, social, cultural, ecological,



economic and so on. He wanted Indians to be role models for the world. His politics, therefore, cannot be seen in isolation. For him capitulation of values to achieve even the loftiest of goals was a mark of a failure. Which was possibly why he called off the Non-Cooperation Movement in the early 1920s after 22 policemen were killed in violent clashes in Chauri Chaura. But radical politicians of the time and later never forgave

“ Like Jesus Christ and various other prophets, he understood the role of love in society. Which is what makes him forever relevant for humanity. Which is why his relevance cannot be constrained into any particular period or geography.

him for snatching away what they assumed was their moment of political opportunity to throw out the colonial British rulers. Later, he immersed himself in fighting untouchability.

It was after his masterstroke of a political campaign, Salt Satyagraha that he began to fight untouchability with renewed focus. He also started to travel and live amidst the Dalits. It is no surprise that it was around then that the right-wing forces found him to be the greatest impediment to their hegemony. They were determined to eliminate him and, after a series of attempts, they did.

At a time when there is tremendous display of fake adulation for Gandhi, it is easy to see why he makes many groups uneasy and still dominates the Indian political scene so much that even mud-slingers are compelled to feign ritualistic respect for him as a collective entity notwithstanding deep antagonism within.

Gandhi as a cosmopolitan is another area that needs to be studied. He

absorbed values from all over the world and allowed himself to be inspired. In fact, his sense of esoteric concepts, including morality and suffering, are shaped by thinkers and religious thoughts from outside of India. Like Jesus Christ and various other prophets, he understood the role of love in society. Which is what makes him forever relevant for humanity. Which is why his relevance cannot be constrained into any particular period or geography.

We say that the twenty-first century is the century of the common man, then we see that Gandhism has even more relevance in this age, and Gandhi will inspire generations of individuals fighting for goodness of the society. If today we find that Gandhism is in severe test in countries like India, it is not because there is certain inherent weakness in Gandhism, but it is because we have not seen in India strong leaders with the required courage and conviction to fight the evils in society. We may borrow Gandhi's own words on Ahimsa, and say that Gandhism is only for the courageous people. **KG**

He Stood for an Unbreakable Heart-Unity

Gandhiji conceived and introduced a constructive programme for the holistic development of the nation. The first item of this 18-point programme is communal unity. Beyond political unity, it means an unbreakable heart-unity.

By DR C K THOMAS CHUNKATH

(Engaged in communication of Gandhian ideology for 35 years)

The freedom movement of India for independence was not conceived in terms merely with the transfer of political power. It envisaged an all-round transformation and healthy development of Indian society. It could be considered as a sociological movement, designed to change the moral, spiritual, religious, political, economic and social set-up in our country.

Gandhiji wanted to transform both the individual and society. Thus the free-

dom movement was a secular synthetic revolution conceived by Gandhiji and accepted by the common people in our country. The political, economic and social life of the nation was synthesized on moral principles of Truth and Non-violence. This is the essence of all religions in the world. Hence, secularism can be considered as the spinal cord of the Indian freedom struggle.

Gandhiji conceived and introduced a constructive programme for the holistic

development of the nation. The first item of this 18-point programme is communal unity. Beyond political unity, it means an unbreakable heart-unity. The most essential factor for achieving such unity is for every person whatever his religion may be, to represent in his/her person to accept other religions. He has to feel his identity with every one of the millions of the inhabitants of India. To realize this, Gandhiji wanted everyone to cultivate personal friendship with persons representing faith other than his



For Gandhi
communal harmony
meant an unbreakable
heart-unity

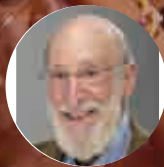
“ The political economic and social life of the nation was synthesized on the moral principles of Truth and Non-violence. This is the essence of all religions in the world. Hence, secularism can be considered as the spinal cord of the Indian freedom struggle.

own. One should have the same regard for the other faiths as one has one's own. Unfortunately, in many pockets of the country remains “Hindu water”, “Muslim water” or “Hindu tea” and “Muslim tea”, which Gandhiji wanted to eliminate along with the achievement of freedom. He stated that there would be no separate rooms, pots for Hindus and non-Hindus in schools and colleges, no communal schools, colleges and hospitals. The beginning of such a revolution has to be made by every responsible person without any political motive. Real political unity will be the natural fruit of secularism.

India is a proud nation energized by its secular soul. It has welcomed almost all prominent religions in this world. Most of the prominent historians have praised India for its character of tolerance. India believed in the unity of religions and their Gods. Max Muller called it, Kathenotheism. In the first page of Rigveda, we see the famous sloka, *Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*. Though each seems to be different, all are one. It is very sad to state that India's 'spirit of comprehension' is getting decreased day by day. Unless and until all the noble citizens of India make an earnest attempt to relive that secular spirit, even the political unity will be in danger. The secular thought should be cultivated right from the level of basic education. Gandhiji called it Nai Talim. Every child should study the essence of different religions and their spiritual contributions. Gandhiji wanted to combine learning with scientific outlook, productive activity, social commitment and love for all different dharmas or religions. Rather than customs, he wanted everyone to concentrate on the spiritual contribution of every religion.

Only the secular approach can bring healthy development in the society and nation. Everyone should be able to love the other citizen devoid of his religion, language and politics of course! Gandhiji is the 'Father of the Nation' because he could conceive a united nation beyond the religious, linguistic and communal barriers. Even if God appears before the starving masses, he said, it should be in the form of bread. It was his secular thought which united this nation of multiplicity as a secular democracy. Today, when the secular character is shaken it affects the very existence of this vast country which is a multitude of religions, languages, political parties and cultural diversity. Let us turn back to Gandhiji and hold onto secularism to strengthen the unity in diversity. **KG**

Gandhi and Women's Freedom



By DOUGLAS ALLEN

Douglas Allen is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Maine, USA. Author of 4 Gandhi-informed books. A peace and justice activist, Douglas Allen has been deeply involved in the Gandhi-influenced Civil Rights Movement in the South, the Vietnam Anti-war Movement, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and other struggles involving class exploitation, racism, sexism, human rights, and environmental destruction.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was the most admired and influential person in India during his lifetime and remains so today. Nevertheless, he was very controversial during his lifetime and even more controversial today. This is true of incredible strengths and strong controversies in Gandhi's approach to women's freedom related to Gandhi's personality, values, actions, and how we interpret his philosophy and practice in Gandhi 150.

In my view, Gandhi's most enlightened insights and actions concerning women's freedom are invaluable, revolutionary, and far beyond what we find in 2019 in dominant status quo India, as well as the United States and elsewhere. However, this is only true if we selectively read, interpret, and apply Gandhi-informed formulations on gender-related issues and women's freedom. This includes rejecting what is sexist and reactionary, appropriating what is liberating from patriarchal

domination, and reformulating in new creative ways that address the contextual situations of the oppression of women and others today.

One could write an entire book on how self-critical Gandhi learned from his earlier patriarchal attitudes and actions and then become an exceptional proponent of women's freedom. More adequate Gandhi-informed formulations must reject the weaknesses in these earlier positions on women, men,



With Women workers of Lancashire Cotton mill

“ Even in the family, the husband and the wife are equal partners. Women and men must have equal freedom to develop their human potentials.

approach to women’s freedom. Instead, in relating to and recontextualizing and reapplying Gandhi for Gandhi 150 and the future, we must acknowledge how Gandhi is insightful and invaluable as a disturbing catalyst in challenging us to rethink our assumptions, principles, attitudes, and actions concerning women’s freedom today.

Surprisingly, some critics of Gandhi, in the past and continuing today, share some of the characteristics of many Gandhi admirers who elevate him and his legacy to a larger-than-life pedestal. Critics place Gandhi, with his supposed claims to having the perfect solution for all problems regarding women’s freedom, on a larger-than-life pedestal, but this is a fake pedestal which can then easily be demolished along with Gandhi’s blatantly imperfect and irrelevant solution for women’s freedom today. Once again, such an approach does not do justice to what remains truly insightful and exceptional in Gandhi’s approach to women’s freedom for Gandhi 150.

In conclusion, Gandhi’s approach to women’s freedom, selectively appropriated and reformulated, remains revolutionary and invaluable today. There are also non-Gandhian approaches to women’s freedom which in various ways are more insightful than was Gandhi. For example, over the decades, I have experienced strong women’s movements in Kerala that had non-Gandhian roots, analyses, and actions. When Gandhi-informed contributions, selectively contextualized, are brought into a dynamic relation with some non-Gandhi-informed contributions, also selectively contextualized, new values, meanings, and action-oriented positions emerge invaluable for addressing issues of women and freedom for Gandhi 150 and the future. [tc](#)

and complex gendered relations, just as Gandhiji often did. This is illustrated by his difficult evolving relations with his wife Kasturba, from the time they married at age 13 until she died in prison and he proclaimed that she had been his main teacher of ahimsa.

As consistent with so much of Gandhi’s evolving views on women’s freedom and with his title of “Experiments with Truth” for his Autobiography, Gandhi usually learned from his failed experiments, revising and often rejecting earlier inadequate positions. Gandhi now rejected some of his earlier inadequate assertions about rape, female purity, and honour. More appropriate for Gandhi-informed philosophy and practices, as in sarvodaya and the imperative to work for the well-being of all and especially the most disadvantaged suffering the most, Gandhi’s approach to the battered women was exemplary, compassionate, with the need to embrace them and serve their needs. This is an urgently needed Gandhi 150 lesson today.

Instructive is the Gandhi-inspired and supported role millions of Indian women played in the Freedom Movement for Independence from British colonial domination. Indian women felt that Gandhi empathized and identified with them and that his nonthreatening nonviolence was in oppositional contrast with the patriarchal violence of their daily lives. Millions courageously expressed their freedom in defying caste, class, religious, economic, and other male-dominated violence of their

traditional lives. Once again, there is much to be learned from Gandhi about women’s freedom for our contemporary world.

Gandhi is a radical egalitarian, and he increasingly offered numerous assertions on how men and women are equal. Even in the family, the husband and the wife are equal partners. Women and men must have equal freedom to develop their human potentials. As with many of Gandhi’s formulations, his views on women’s freedom are indebted to much in traditional Hindu and other Indian culture, are influenced by many Western sources, and are at the same time a radical critique of traditional India and the modern West. Unlike modern Western formulations of women’s freedom as individual ego-defined rights, rights must always be ground in the social and ethical duties of dharma.

Unlike claims of many Gandhi followers during his lifetime and today, Gandhi, in my view, does not have the perfect blueprint, the perfect solution for all problems involving women’s lack of freedom. As he repeatedly expressed during his lifetime, Gandhi as part of Gandhi 150, would reject how he is being celebrated and worshipped as the larger-than-life Mahatma too good for this world. Gandhi was an incredible human being, but, as he often acknowledged, he was human and had many limitations in responding to these issues.

When in celebratory Gandhi 150 we idealize and ritually pay homage to Gandhi, we often do not do justice to what is truly exceptional in Gandhi’s



The Sun When the Water Wreaked Havoc

Climate change becomes one of the biggest challenges of Kerala, however, the climate change literacy among common people, farmers, youth and students is at its infancy.

Kerala is categorised as a multi-hazard prone state because of many continuous and unexpected natural disasters.

By ANAND S

The destructive flood claimed thousands of lives, animals and birds, and caused severe damage to the crops and property in Kerala. Most of the areas in the erstwhile Travancore and Cochin states, parts of Malabar region were submerged under the floodwater. Karinthiri Mala was washed away. A new road from Ernakulam to Munnar became necessary, as that also was ravaged. The great flood of '99 hit Kerala as the Periyar broke its boundaries in the month of July in 1924, which translates to the year of 1099 ME in terms of the Malayalam Calendar (Kollam Era).

The misery was so incomparable, that the Mahatma himself referred to it as 'unimaginable'. Gandhi, had urged all the countrymen to contribute generously towards the relief of the disaster-hit state, through his publications Young

India and Navajivan. 'Malabar's misery is unimaginable', said he in an article titled 'Relief Work in Malabar'. The response to his appeal, however, was so prompt, that the Mahatma himself said that it went beyond his expectations.

Men, women, children, and everyone contributed, with what they could; gold jewels and ornaments to meager savings. Some skipped a meal; some gave up on milk, just so that they could save up the money for the cause, as per his journals. Many funds had been formed, for collecting money for the relief activities. "A sister has donated her four bracelets and a chain of pure gold. Another sister has given her heavy necklace. A child has parted with his gold trinket and a sister with her silver anklets. One person has given two toe-rings. A girl had offered voluntarily the ornaments worn on her feet. A young

man had handed over his gold cuff-links," said the Mahatma in an article in Navajivan dated August 17, 1924.

"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver."

Gandhi on coming to know of the floods, asked the leaders of the state to assist and help the affected people, and said that his only thought was about the people with no food, clothes, and shelter. Actions speak louder than words, and the man got to collecting money and clothes for the affected soon enough.

Today, as we rebuild Kerala, we should realize that funds from across the globe has reached us for our aid. Let Gandhi's lessons of love, harmony, tolerance, and compassion, prevail not only at the wake of a calamity, but in each passing moment of reality. **CC**

Two Visionaries Having Immense Altruism

Two great leaders of two different countries. But in many aspects, Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh shared similar visions. Of these, their immense faith in humanism and simplicity are predominant.



By **M A BABY**
(Former Minister for Education, Kerala)

In one of the last thoughts left behind by Mahatma Gandhi before his dastardly assassination by communal terrorism of the worst form, in 1948, the following idea was expressed: *I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man (woman) whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him (her). Will s/he gain anything by it? Will it restore his/her to control him/her own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj (freedom) for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away?*

I think the words and deeds of both Mahatma Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh converge on these lines. There are certain interesting coincidences in the lives of the two great thinker revolutionaries of India and Vietnam; apart from their reputation as Father of the Nation. 21 years separate their birth as well as death. (Mahatma Gandhi 1869-1948); Ho Chi Minh 1890-1969) both lived for 79 years; and both lives in the minds of the people of their countries as well as peace and freedom-loving humanity, forever. The 150 birth anniversary for 'Bappuji' is also the 50th birth anniversary of 'Uncle Ho'. Imperialist lackeys tried many times to assassinate Ho Chi Minh but in vain. Mahatma Gandhiji

“ Mahatmaji first started his political experience and experiments not in his own country, but, in South Africa. Ho Chi Minh started his anti-colonial struggles while being in France, which was the colonial power dominating Indo China in those days which included Vietnam.

was imprisoned by colonial rulers for 2338 days but did not directly manhandle him. However, the communal divide that imperialist engineered and encouraged led to his assassination by religious and communal terrorists. The same forces are strangely thriving within our society today in various forms.

Mahatmaji first started his political experience and experiments not in his own country, but, in South Africa. Ho Chi Minh started his anti-colonial struggles while being in France, which was the colonial power dominating Indo China in those days which included Vietnam. Mahatmaji first formed Natal Indian Congress in South Africa, before coming to India in 1915 to join Indian National Congress. Ho Chi Minh participated in the formation and activities of the French Communist Party after

which he went to Vietnam to form the Vietnam Workers Party, before which he organized democratic youth movement also.

Approach towards religion is a very complex issue in any human society as it is a powerful factor influencing large sections of people in their day to day socio-cultural-political life. It is very interesting to note that both Mahatmaji and Ho Chi Minh evolved their unique approach towards using religion for political goals.

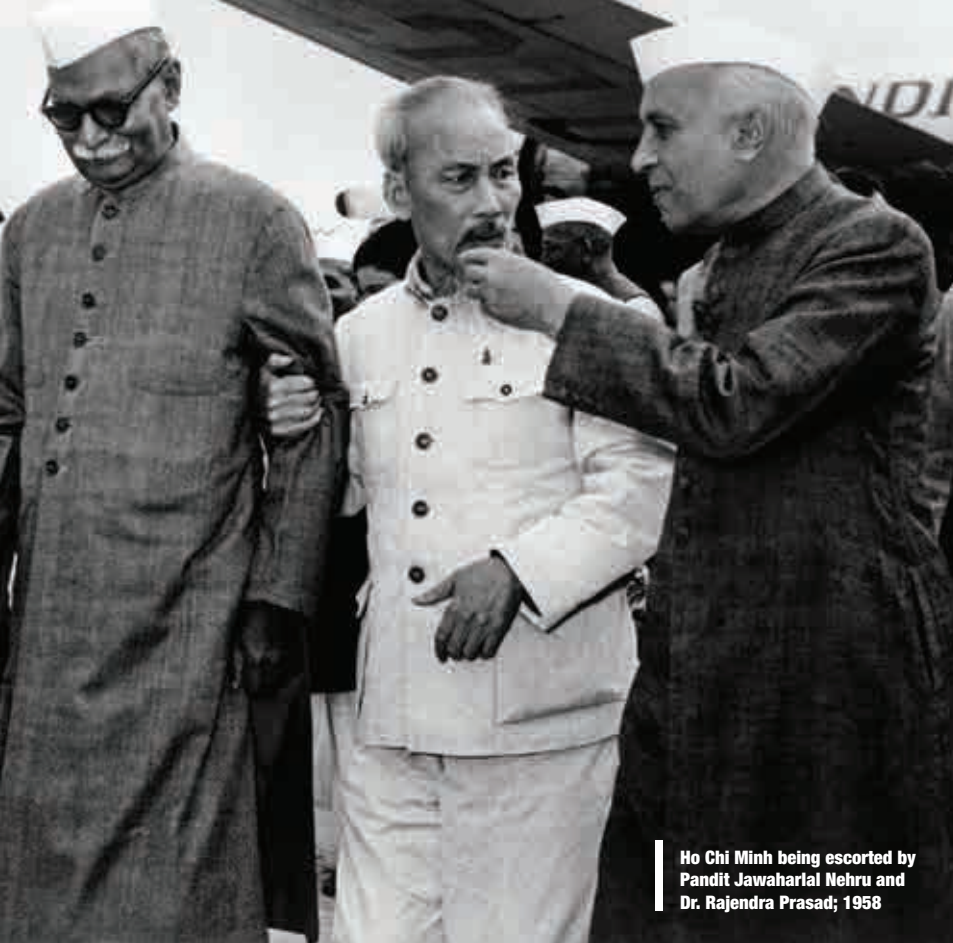
India is a country with a deep influence of religion and tradition of religious tolerance as well as clashes. Mahatmaji firmly stood for 'Sarva Dharma Samabhavana'. He declared that he is Sanatana Hindu'. Then, he added immediately, that he had equally firm faith in Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Bolshevism! As we know, Bappuji was assassinated by Communal fanatics, who could not tolerate the strong stand of Hindu-Muslim unity which Mahatmaji constantly upheld.

Ho Chi Minh mobilized religious-minded people along with communists in the national liberation struggle and communist revolutionary movement in a systematic manner. When the US imperialist dropped lethal and poisonous weapons of mass destruction Ho Chi Minh famously said; "these bombs are dropped by our enemies on the body of Budha!" That evoked massive exasperation among all sections of people in different parts of Vietnam against colonialists.

The success of both Mahatma Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh in developing extraordinary emotional influence among common people and remarkable ability to move them to action is well known.



Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum



Ho Chi Minh being escorted by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad; 1958

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ed that the Palacial bungalow used by the French Governor-General would be used for the accommodation of the new Head of State, Com. Ho Chi Minh. When this was placed before Ho Chi Minh; he objected and chose the small quarters of the plumber in the complex for his residence! Innumerable such instances demonstrate the spontaneous simplicity of both Mahatmaji and Ho Chi Minh; which needs no elaboration.

The willingness of both to engage in creative discussion and criticism by colleagues and adversaries needs special mention in these times of intolerance. This characteristic is the basis for democratic approach; fast disappearing in our world.

Great scientist Albert Einstein said this:

Gandhiji is unique in political history. He has invented an entirely new and humane technique for the liberation struggle of an oppressed people and carried it out with the greatest energy and devotion. The moral influence which he has exercised upon thinking people through the civilised world may be far more durable than would appear likely in our present age, with its exaggeration of brute force. For the work of statesmen is permanent only in so far as they arouse and consolidate the moral forces of their peoples through their personal example and educating influence. We are fortunate and should be grateful that fate has bestowed upon us so luminous a contemporary- a beacon to the generations to come.

Einstein concludes thus; “Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth”. To a great extent, the words of Einstein about Mahatmaji would be equally meaningful in the case of Ho Chi Minh as well. **KC**

How both of them were able to connect with the people through their deep religious belief also would have played a role in the miracle apart from other things. In an interview of Ho Chi Minh with K.Damodaran; an ideologue and a founder member of the first Communist Party unit in Kerala along with Com. P. Krishna Pillai, E.M.S and N.C. Sekhar; one point came out. Ho Chi Minh, while referring to the success of Communists in Vietnam had stated that in Vietnam the role and task of Gandhiji was also undertaken by a Communist- that is Ho Chi Minh! In India, Gandhiji and Communists were in different paths!

Gandhiji had his view of Socialism and Communism. In one famous writing, Mahatmaji made very engaging views on the topic.

I must confess that I have not yet been able to fully understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non- possession in the realm of economics and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it through peaceful persuasion, there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism, it not only does not preclude the use of force, freely sanctions it for the expropriation

of private property and maintaining the Collective State ownership of the same. And if that is so, I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence.

But, be that as it may be, there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain; the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned forever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes. (YL, 15-11-1928, p. 381)

There is no point in analysing the perception of Mahatmaji regarding Bolshevism as argued above. However, his ‘dialectical’ approach based on his ‘Utopian communist’ understanding expresses his anxieties as well as hopes about the revolutionary movement led by ‘such master spirits as Lenin’.

Simplicity is another common reputation of both Bappuji and Uncle Ho. After the liberation of the Northern part of Vietnam, the Revolutionary Govt led by Ho Chi Minh assumed the office. Party committee in charge of allotment of office and residency met and decid-



Gandhian Vision for the Future

Gandhian way guarantees the uplift of everyone, the welfare of all - for the human dignity and the human rights as well as the ecology and the future of mankind.



By **CHRISTIAN BARTOLF**
(President, Gandhi-Information-Zentrum, Berlin)

“Run come and look out; look out and see. Run come see the sun ! If you love to sing harmony, rehearse this song for your next solar energy demonstration. This is the message the famous songwriter Pete Seeger has left for us, an authentic pioneer of ecology whose efforts to clean the Hudson River succeeded. Pete Seeger included Mahatma Gandhi’s favorite bhajan (devotional song) Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram (sometimes called Ram Dhun) on his album “Strangers and Cousins” (1964) and performed it in Episode 10 of his television series “Rainbow Quest” and during his world tours:

All names of God refer to the same Supreme Being, including Ishvara and Allah.

O Lord, please give peace and brotherhood to everyone,

as we are all your children.

We all request that this eternal wisdom of humankind prevail.

In these critical times of man-made climate change and the rise of renewable energy technologies such as solar energy, wind energy, biofuels, geothermal energy, wave power, tidal power and others, we gradually come to terms with our responsibility to care for energy efficiency and 17 Sustainable Development Goals according to the United Nations General Assembly's "universal, integrated and transformative" 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The broad based and interdependent Sustainable Development Goals are:

Zero Hunger

Good Health and Well-being

Quality Education

Gender Equality

Clean Water and Sanitation

Affordable and Clean Energy

Decent Work and Economic Growth

Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

Reducing Inequality

Sustainable Cities and Communities

Responsible Consumption and Production

Climate Action

Life Below Water

Life On Land

Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Partnerships for the Goals

150 years after the birth of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (on 2nd October, 1869), we should face the truth of his core principles: *sarvodaya - satyagraha - swaraj - swadeshi*. These elements of nonviolent emancipation from colonialism, imperialism, militarism and racism are essential to guarantee the uplift of everyone, the welfare of all - for the human dignity and the human rights as well as the ecology and the future of mankind. That is why we should apply the ethical religion of the golden rule ("Do not treat others

“ 150 years after the birth of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (on 2nd October, 1869), we should face the truth of his core principles: *sarvodaya - satyagraha - swaraj - swadeshi*. These elements of nonviolent emancipation from colonialism, imperialism, militarism and racism are essential to guarantee the uplift of everyone, the welfare of all - for the human dignity and the human rights as well as the ecology and the future of mankind.


in ways that you would not like to be treated.”) with respect to all species. Animal Rights, the respect for life in general, as the moral basis of Vegetarianism become the universal program for a decent way of life, in the spheres of production and consumption. While Gandhi learned from his friend Henry Stephens Salt (acclaimed as “an English writer and campaigner for social reform in the fields of prisons, schools, economic institutions, and the treatment of animals”, “a noted ethical vegetarian, anti- vivisectionist, socialist, and pacifist, well known as a literary critic, biographer, classical scholar and naturalist”), we should learn from the history of Gandhi as a renowned member of the London Vegetarian Society (since 1847). The International Vegetarian Union (IVU) was founded in 1908 in Dresden, Germany and is an international non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote vegetarianism.

Let us listen to Mahatma Gandhi in his own words (India's Case for Swaraj, Edition 1932, pp. 402, in: M. K. Gandhi: The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism):

I do feel that spiritual progress demand at some stage that we should cease to kill our fellow creatures for the satisfaction of our bodily wants.

The beautiful lines of Goldsmith occurs to me as I tell you of my vegetarian fad:

*No flocks that range the valley free
To slaughter I condemn:
Taught by the Power that pities me
I learn to pity them.”*

We should now join efforts to transform our societies according to the three principles of the “deep ecology”, i.e. wilderness and biodiversity preservation, population planning (by abstinence and contraceptives and family planning), simple living.”planning), simple living.”



With Charlie Chaplin at Dr. Katial's residence at Canning Town, September 22, 1931



Final footprints of Gandhi at Gandhi Smriti, Birla House, New Delhi

Moments Immortalis



With French writer & poet Romain Rolland at latter's home Villa Oglia, Villeneuve, Switzerland, December 1931. (The two men met like old friends & treated one another with tenderness of mutual respect. Gandhi asked Rolland to play Beethoven for him.)

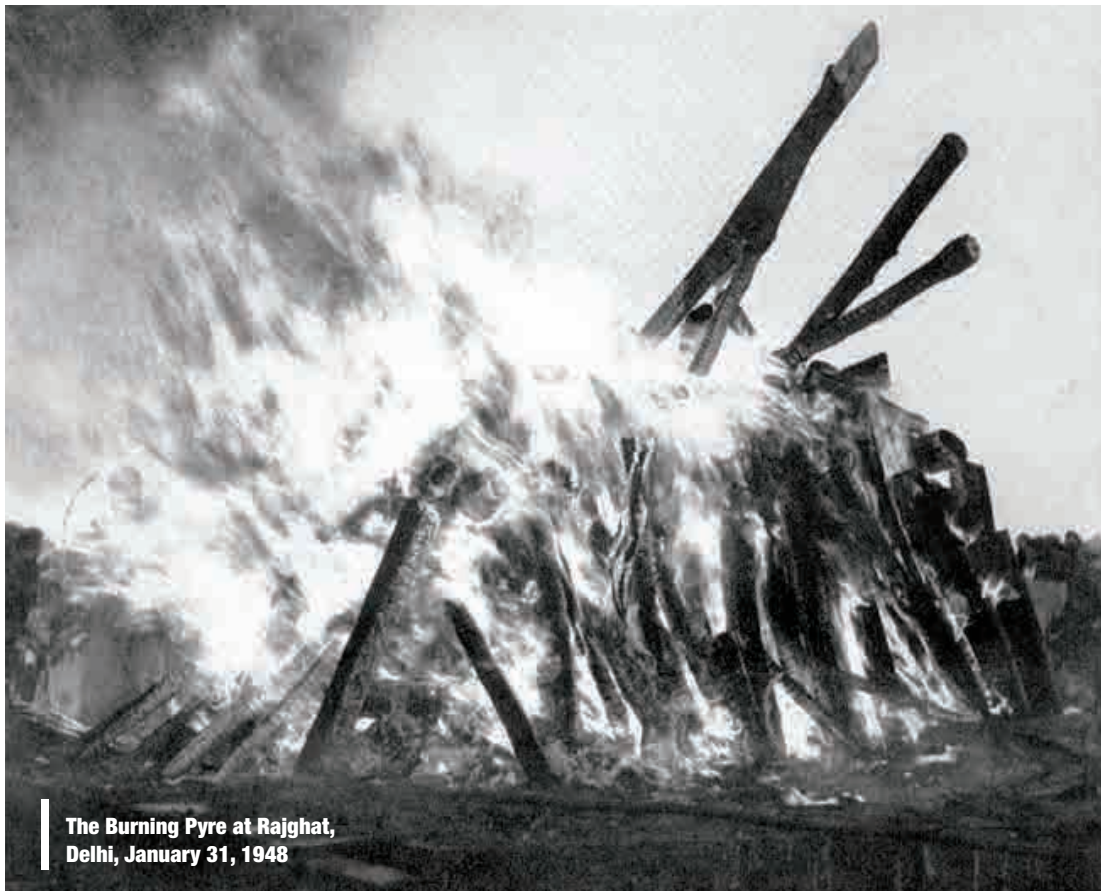


Gandhi greeting the crowd from a railway compartment, on the way to Allahbad, November 1939



Gandhi at the spinning wheel, Sabarmati Ashram, 1925

sed...



The Burning Pyre at Rajghat, Delhi, January 31, 1948



The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

By Dr A. S. K. NAIR (Disaster Management Expert)




The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) gave a call to its member Nations in 1989 to observe 2nd Wednesday of October as the “The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction” (IDDRR), to promote a Global Culture of Risk-awareness and Disaster Reduction. The IDDRR of every year celebrates how People and Communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face. The themes of international days are always linked to the main fields of action of the United Nations, namely the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of sustainable development, the protection of human rights, and the guarantee of international law and humanitarian action. Each International Day offers many actors the opportunity to organize activities related to the “Theme” of the day.

It is important to learn and understand how the UNGA took effort Internationally/Nationally and Region-wise, during the last 30 years to formulate Bodies, Institutions and Programs related to Disaster Risk Reduction since its first call from 1989, by incorporating its different Nations. In 1994 First World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held at Yokohama where the mid-term review of IDNDR was held resulting “Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World” - Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action was adopted. Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in 2005 at Kobe, Hyogo, Japan where the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 was adopted : Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters”, which is currently serving as the guiding document in strengthening and building international cooperation to ensure that disaster risk reduction is used as a foundation for sound national and international development agendas. In 2014, the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) adopted the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. The SAMOA Pathway recognizes that SIDS continue to grapple with the effects of disasters, some of which have increased in intensity and some of which have been exacerbated by climate change, which impede their progress towards sustainable development.

“ The IDDRR of every year celebrates how People and Communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Sendai, Japan on March 2015 and the Conference adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) as the first major agreement of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It is a 15-year non-binding agreement which recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders. It aims for the following outcome: “The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.”

The Theme for 2019 is “Reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services”. Given the high death tolls and resource loss, notably in Earthquakes, Tsunamis and Floods, utmost care must be taken to ensure that Schools and Hospitals are built to last by ensuring that location and hazard-appropriate planning regulations and building codes are enforced. IDDRR is celebrated remarkably in India by holding meetings, discussions and rallies explaining the aftermath of different disasters and their impact on the larger section of the society. Kerala, under the auspicious of various Governmental bodies and NGOs, organises various programs in the different district headquarters and major cities, based on the theme of the year, with the participation of schoolchildren, university students and a large section of Citizens. 

A Gandhian Approach to Ecological Protection



By **Prof. N. RADHAKRISHNAN**
(Non-Violence Activist and Educator)

From the Himalayan heights of enjoying materialistic pleasures and comforts, we are descending into the abyss of suffering the consequences of environmental pollution, ecological devastation, ozone depletion and green house effect – this is a realization that has shocked the thinkers of the world to the core.

Oriental traditions have been credited with establishing norms that determine humans' relationship with Nature and natural resources. The Indian concept of living in peace and harmony with the environment is reflected in a famous hymn in Yajurveda [one of the four scriptures of ancient India]:

*May there be peace in the Universe
May there be peace in the Sky
May peace reign on the Earth
May the waters bring peace
May the herbs bring peace
May the plants be source of peace to all.*

In Rigveda [another scripture of ancient India], the Sky is referred to as the Father and the Earth, the Mother. This belief is reiterated in ancient literary works such as the other Vedas and the Hindu epics. It symbolizes humans' relationship with all elements of Nature and establishes a concept of a Universal Family constituting all animals and plants where our existence is based on interdependence and mutual respect. Therefore everything in Nature requires protection.

But this message got diluted later and led to the exploitation and utter neglect of Nature. The symbiotic relationship between humans and Nature can be sustained only by sincerely adopting holistic measures to arrest the rampant and frightening ecological devastation around. Humanity should move from making theoretical formulations and assertions to conducting a realistic re-appraisal.

What humans have learnt in their long and often disappointing, yet enthusiastic, search for identity is how everything in Nature is interdependent. This wisdom forms the foundation of the ancient way of living. Today, thanks to numerous initiatives introduced, the problem of environmental degradation has captured the society's attention to a great degree. This is a welcome change.

HOW DID THE FOCUS SHIFT?

While scoffing at the ancient way of living, describing it as barbaric or wild, the votaries of modernism seem to have forgotten that they are decrying the worth of the very system that gave them a platform to stand. The problem with modern humans is that they now see themselves as conquerors of the Universe. This proprietary attitude appears to be guiding them in most of their endeavours.

“ The problem with modern humans is that they now see themselves as conquerors of the Universe. This proprietary attitude appears to be guiding them in most of their endeavours.

The self-centred philosophy and the systems developed on the basis of this outlook – the hallmark of which is the belief that Nature has unlimited resources – govern the functioning style of modern humans. All those who were lulled into this way of thinking are being rudely awakened now by alarm bells ringing all around.

A ‘NON-VIOLENT’ STANCE

The importance given to the ecosystem in maintaining human life, often at the cost of other species, has become a thing of past. Ancient India had a sustainable ecosystem rooted in non-violence. Thus a ‘non-violent’ ecology thrived – a society which was economically and socially just, ecologically sustainable, anti-murder and compassionate to all life forms in the environment.

Many people argue that since violence is a part of life, it is not something to

worry about. They find violence to be an inherent and pervasive phenomenon in Nature, and a part of human nature as well. Violence is also a relative, rather than an absolute concept. Some areas are prone to the action of violent forces of Nature, such as hurricanes and earthquakes, whereas in certain other regions such violent forces seldom act.

ECO-CENTRIC APPROACH FOR THE PROTECTION OF ECOLOGY

Buddhism takes an eco-centric view of life rather than anthropocentric one since it views humans as part of Nature. It focuses on how the mind views and approaches Nature in three ways – through direct knowledge, discriminating awareness and deep compassion.

While following these three practices, actions affecting the environment are taken by giving due respect to the principles of interdependency and inter-

connectedness, rather than by adopting a dualistic subject-object world view. Through this approach, humans’ relationship with Nature is fundamentally altered – from thinking of themselves as a dominant species to being a member of a community.

While environmentalism emphasizes that natural resources are limited, Buddhism encourages individuals to limit their consumption of resources in such a way that the four basic necessities of food, clothing, shelter and medicine are satisfied optimally. This makes the sustenance of ecology a very concrete and personal matter.

Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated this truth convincingly through his life and conveyed the importance of living in harmony with Nature. [kg](#)



Malayalam at Crossroads

In the age of localisation of language, nobody can ban or stall the growth of any regional language. Localisation of language is a major evolving business area which benefits the IT hardware and software industries in a big way.

By MANOJ K. PUTHIYAVILA

In the age of localisation of language, nobody can ban or stall the growth of any regional language. Localisation of language is a major evolving business area which benefits the IT hardware and software industries in a big way. The recent boom of computer and smartphone industries was not possible without the language localisation which was mooted by these companies. Think of the days when sending even SMS in Malayalam was not possible. At that time, there was no need for smartphones for the majority of Malayalis. The primitive cell phones were used only for making calls. In the case of people in other language States having educational backwardness, the situation was more severe.

But, when the phones began displaying Indian languages, the situation was changed dramatically. Then came

the WhatsApp, cell phone versions of e-mail, Facebook and other communication and social media speaking these regional languages. The same was the case of computers. If computers were incapable to process Indian languages, how many of them would have sold in our country? Will there exist any DTP centre here? Imagine how the market was expanded due to the language localisation of computers and phones. It involves billions of dollars of business. So, the business world which has a large influence over governments in various countries will never allow anybody to impose restrictions on any regional language in any country. Localisation of language is a process that includes the cultural adaptation and translation of software and various types of contents. It comprises the translation of websites, apps, texts, products like videos, voiceover, graphics

including infographics, other multimedia contents, video games etc. If a dialogue box of an app or the commands or link icon on a website display Malayalam, it is translated and embedded by the manufacturer of the product, either hardware or software. They get it done with the help of the local community itself. If your Google displays the word 'തെരച്ചുക' instead of 'search' and searches for Malayalam text using Malayalam words, it is the result of localisation. Google has now opened new avenues like bringing back handwriting, along with typing, in our language.

This localisation, which led to the recent worldwide blossoming of regional languages, is global. The popular and mass movements from the Jasmine Revolution to the recent Hong Kong protests were bolstered by this. The proclaimed cashless India can also be realised only

if the mobile money transfer apps are localised. All these point to the reality that the importance and applications of regional languages are growing irresistibly. The reason; the global giants like Microsoft, Intel, IBM, Apple, Samsung, Nokia, Google, Yahoo, Facebook etc. who govern the world are investing billions and billions of dollars in language localisation.

The real force behind this local language revolution is nothing but the Unicode. Unicode is a universal code or unified code of characters of all languages in the world which enables some special capabilities like mechanical translation, transliteration, conversion to audio and braille, ability to search and sort, display on any e-platform and online etc. It was developed by the Unicode Consortium formed by all the major hardware and software corporates in the world. They have their language experts for various languages including Malayalam. Major companies like Google, Yahoo, Facebook etc. also engage linguists in research and development of solutions and applications. User communities and usage of local languages are also growing exponentially in tandem with these

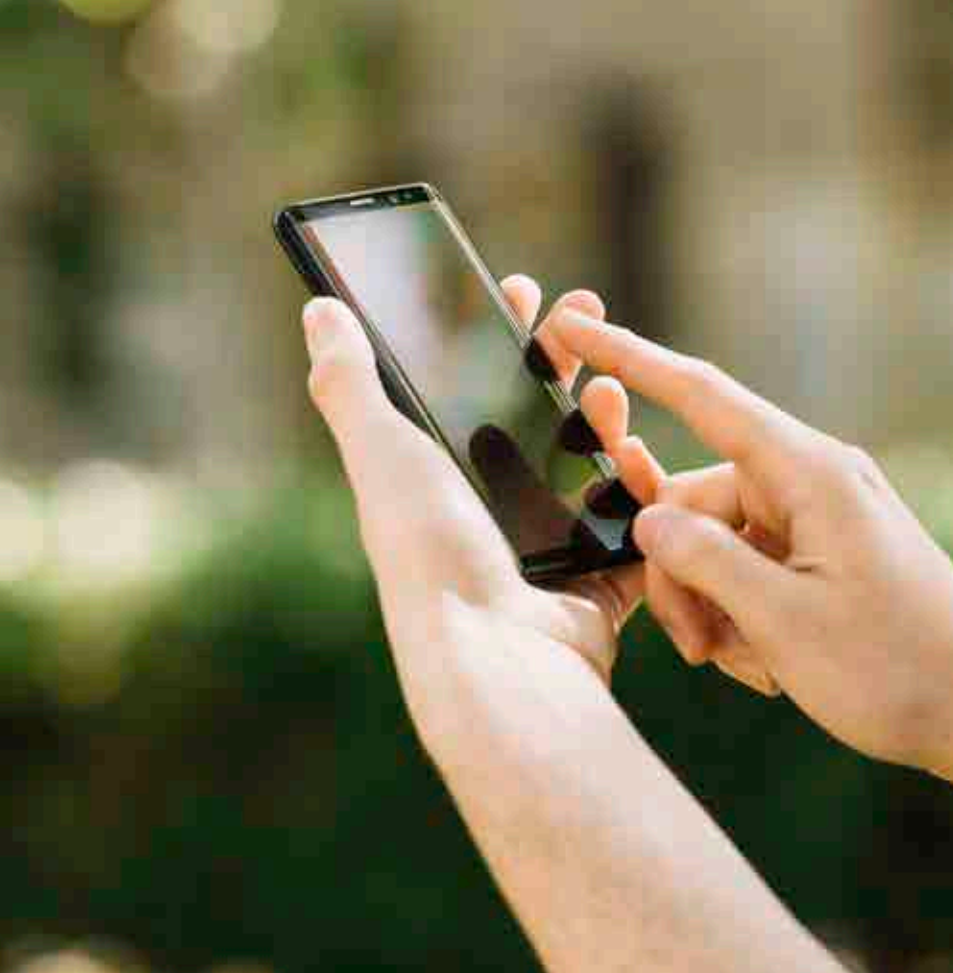
developments. Malayalam is one of the major beneficiaries among them.

Malayalam is growing outside the cyber world also. The cyber Malayalam itself contributes in a big way in this growth. The freedom and opportunities that the social media provide, have nurtured the creativity and social engagement of ordinary people, even the deprived sections. Many new, especially young, creative talents including poets, storytellers, essay writers, documentary makers, commentators, analysts, consultants etc. have emerged in the last decade. They came out of the virtual world to the real and made their stamp in print publications, documentary/short film festivals, poetry events etc.

Localisation of Wiki has made Malayalam one among the top few languages when the volume of the digital content is considered. The State Government is also promoting Malayalam by implementing it in more departments as the official language and even conducting PSC examinations for the technical posts in Malayalam. The decision of KPSC has led to another development – preparation of a glossary of scientific

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“ Localisation of language is a process that includes the cultural adaptation and translation of software and various types of contents. It comprises the translation of websites, apps, texts, products like videos, voiceover, graphics including infographics, other multimedia contents, video games etc.

and technical terms in Malayalam, a reasonable dictionary. A proper mechanism has also been suggested for this. The recent nation-wide discussion on the language policy of our country also turned in to another major instance of serious discussions on the importance of regional languages and mother tongues in the public domain in the eve of this year's Malayalam Day. In this favourable context, nobody can kill Malayalam except us.


Even now, all our newspapers except the largest four are creating their enormous content in ASCII format which has become obsolete since the birth of Unicode. Content created in any form other than Unicode is inappropriate for archival and other digital purposes. Most of the publishers of books and periodicals are also turning a blind eye towards this technology that enables the growth and sustainability of languages. The major apprehension of the publishers is the lack of affordable software with Unicode compatibility for pagination (page making). Propriety software is there, but costly. The best way out is a free software solution and there is one in the free domain – the Scribus. It

works in Unix, Linux, BSD, Mac OS X, Haiku and Microsoft Windows operating systems and supports TIFF, JPEG, Adobe Photoshop, eps and SVG. But the software first developed in 2003 was not fully capable of handling complex text layout (CTL) like Malayalam. Even then three progressive organisations (KSSP, DAKF and KSEBOA) had been using the old version of Scribus to layout their publications, two monthly magazines and a fortnightly newsletter, for the last few years, only because of their strong stand against propriety software.

Fortunately, most of the limitations were resolved by a recent initiative supported by the Government of Oman. They made the Scribus more user-friendly and compatible with Arabic. This new version can easily be customised for Malayalam and other Indic languages. Much awaited developments like hyphenation for Malayalam also occurred in the meantime.

A laudable effort in customisation for Malayalam has been taken by the management of Janayugam daily, one of our leading second-level newspapers.

They adapted a customised version of Scribus, produced three new Malayalam Unicode fonts, conducted a series of training for their entire staff in the new software and are bringing out their newspaper with a new and beautiful face.

Now the remaining newspapers, periodicals, book publishers, printing presses, the designer community and proprietors of DTP centres can follow this path which is essential for their survival. It is a bit expensive affair but can easily be tackled through crowd funding by forming a consortium. It will be easy for this consortium to mobilise a sufficient amount for this purpose. If it happens, it will be a quantum jump in the current upsurge of our mother tongue. It will be path-breaking not only in pagination or publishing but also in proper archiving of the enormous data they generate every day and in all other language computing activities which can make Malayalam richer, more powerful and advanced. 

Gandhi in Poetry & Poetry in Gandhi

Malayalam is a language that lends itself excellently to the painting of portraits,
and Gandhi is an ideal subject for such an artistic treatment.

By P N GOPIKRISHNAN
(Poet and Writer)

For that reason, there is no dearth of ‘Gandhi poetry’ in Malayalam literature. Val-lathol’s poem, “Ente Gurunadhan” [My Teacher], has become the background score for countless commemorative programmes on Gandhi. P. Kunhiraman Nair has written many poems on Gandhi, in one of which he even predicted the assassination of the Mahatma.

From the time of his return to India in 1920, after his South African mission, right upto his falling to an assassin’s bullet in 1948, Gandhi was a pervasive presence in Indian history, a feat that no other leader has accomplished anywhere in the world, either before or since. His charisma had seeped into the Indian culture to that extent. Like Ramapuris and Sitapuris, reminiscent of the Ramayana, Mahatma Gandhi Roads and Gandhi Nagars came into being in almost every city in India. It was only natural that Gandhi’s life influenced the literary works of those times, directly or indirectly.

However, following Independence and Gandhi’s assassination, Gandhi’s relevance in the world of poetry slowly started dwindling. Even when he reappeared in poems later on, it felt nothing like the Gandhi of “Ente Gurunadhan” or other similar works. When the dreams of a post-Independence era lost their lustre, so too did Gandhi’s image. The picture of Gandhi standing in a

“ It was when the world was going through times of various hardships that Gandhi reappeared in Malayalam poetry. Let us call this the ‘Rebel Gandhi’. He is a person who is deeply concerned about the environment, looks at modernization with a critical eye, and is martyred by communal forces solely for upholding the message of secularism.

queue in front of a ration shop to buy rice while Godse goes speeding by in an imported car appeared in N. V. Krishna Warriar’s poem. This helped present the devaluation of moral principles also. Through N. V.’s poem, Gandhi’s image had come a full circle in Malayalam literature. In poetry, the Gandhian cap began to be seen as a symbol of deception.

In the 1970s, Gandhi was obliterated, rejected or scorned in Malayalam verses. The youth started pulling down Gandhi images in anger. On a similar note, the renewal of Malayalam poetry took place with the toppling of the old Gandhi-image. This is happening all over India too. In reality, this was not an attempt to depose Gandhism. Rather, it was a rejection of the orthodox image of Gandhi that the Indian Government tried to present.

Ashis Nandy states in his article that there are four types of ‘Gandhis’ today. The first among them is the ‘Gandhi of the Indian State’. The angry youth could not accept that orthodoxy. At the same time, they could not see the uneasy Gandhi who stayed away from power, and questioned himself as well as others around him.

It was when the world was going through times of various hardships that Gandhi reappeared in Malayalam poetry. Let us call this the ‘Rebel Gandhi’. He is a person who is deeply concerned about the environment, looks at modernization with a critical eye, and is martyred by communal forces solely for upholding the message of secularism. Rather than a world leader, he is a man who is exhausted from engaging with a hopeless world, and walks amidst warring people reciting the mantra of peace.

This Gandhi has not been studied seriously. He is less romantic but a deeper personality than the Gandhi of “Ente Gurunadhan”. He is also more modern. This may be either because Gandhi was portrayed against the backdrop of the modern era or because the modern elements in him were freshly discovered. Take for example the poem “Gandhiyum Kavithayum” [Gandhi and Poetry] written by Satchidanandan. It simultaneously conveys memories


about Gandhi and the perspective of poetry in the modern times. While it is a poem on Gandhi, it is also a poem about poetry itself. In other words, while the poem speaks principally about the village-centric perspective of Gandhi, it is also a humble quest for the poetics of that vision. The poem presents Gandhi’s simplicity through the use of an unembellished style. Gandhi asks the poem:

*Have you ever spun a yarn?
Lugged a scavenger’s cart?
Breathed kitchen smoke from dawn?
Or ever suffered and starved?*

Clearly visible through these questions is not just a Gandhian vision emphasizing the dignity of labour and the spirit of self-dependence, but also a picture of Indian Dalits, kitchen-bound women and labourers. Gandhi is asking poetry to transcend the communal barriers. He is indirectly also expressing his fears that even literature is prone to such biases. Through this, Gandhi is pointing to the areas where Marxist intervention is essential in the Indian context. The poem replies:

*I was born in the woods
in the mouth of a hunter.
grew in a fisherwoman’s hut.
...
I sang for a long while,
living in palaces.
Was fair and plump then,
but am on the streets today, half-starved.*

In his own way, the poet is showing us how poetry had a way of aligning itself with certain groups throughout history. Poetry is now seen to be withdrawing itself from spheres of power and discarding its flab in a bid to reclaim its nomadic orphanhood. At the same time, it also marks a new homecoming in the evolution of poetry. But Gandhi is paying attention to life. He urges poetry to go to the fields and listen to the farmers. The poem ends with poetry becoming seeds in the field, lying in wait for the farmers.

The points where art and life meet are complex. But among them, the easiest intersection to reach is ‘Gandhi’. Like the Vachanas of medieval times and like Kabir, ‘Gandhi’ combines new vision and the strength of ancient wisdom. 

Atmosphere Breakdown Causes of Worst Flood and Havoc...!

Atmosphere breakdown is the reason for the extreme climate we experience in this part of the world. Since 2018 beginning we are experiencing extreme weather on the coastal states of India that includes Kerala.

By **AJIITH LAWRENCE**
(Associated Press Correspondent, Specialisation-Science, Environment,
Disaster Migration and Sociology)

In the early months of 2018, Extreme Heat Wave, Extreme Rain Fall - Worst-Flood and Extreme Cold, and again repeat this pattern of weather in Kerala particularly. This phenomenon of extreme climate we experienced in just nine months. Scientists say, this is a symptom of desertification that is happening in this part of the country, and should seriously see this atmosphere change and atmosphere break down as warning!

Last March- April months, in the place 32 degree Celsius heat we had 40 degree Celsius and above. Then came the worst flooding rainfall and again the heat-wave and by the end of the October onwards, the weather was getting better in the sense a sort of heat mitigation naturally and that weather progressed and by December it was cold enough that we enjoyed the chill till by the 2nd week of February.

So from 2018, the normal Monsoon rain started from August- September. Now it's time we have to rewrite the calendar of Monsoon from August to September. As we experience in reality now. This phenomenon is happening because global warming has serious impact on the Atmosphere.

Normally the Monsoon rain clouds are of one metre in size (height), that rains like a thin slanted silver-line. And that sort of cloud clusters give us chilly weather and there is in between a short break for the next cloud cluster one queue to shower. That was so beautiful and spectacular a season so everybody enjoyed it. That good old days are over and now that the thickness of monsoon rain clouds are as long as a 13-metre mountain. And such mountainous rain clusters shower so heavily that the earth cannot withstand the flood and precipitating precarious flow.

The surface temperature of the Arabian Ocean influences the summer and Monsoon rains in Kerala. Highest temperature is found in Arabian Ocean during the months of March and April. Some times the surface temperature of the Ocean goes above 30 degree. This is known as Arabian Sea Mini Warm Pool Phenomenon. This phenomenon influences the summer and Monsoon rains. The variation in this phenomenon controls the monsoon rains always.



Evaporation is more in the Arabian Sea when compared to the Bay of Bengal. Moreover, hot air from the mountains of East Africa also results in dry wind over the Arabian Ocean. The salinity of Arabian Ocean is more when compared to Bay of Bengal. This is due to the fact the evaporation is more in the Arabian Ocean. Water flowing from big rivers like Ganga and Brahmaputra to the Bay of Bengal causes reduction in salinity of the Bay of Bengal. Water flow named West India Coastal Current causes structural change in the water of Arabian Ocean. Even a small variation in the surface temperature of the Ocean changes the climate and environment conditions particularly the atmosphere along the Arabian Ocean.

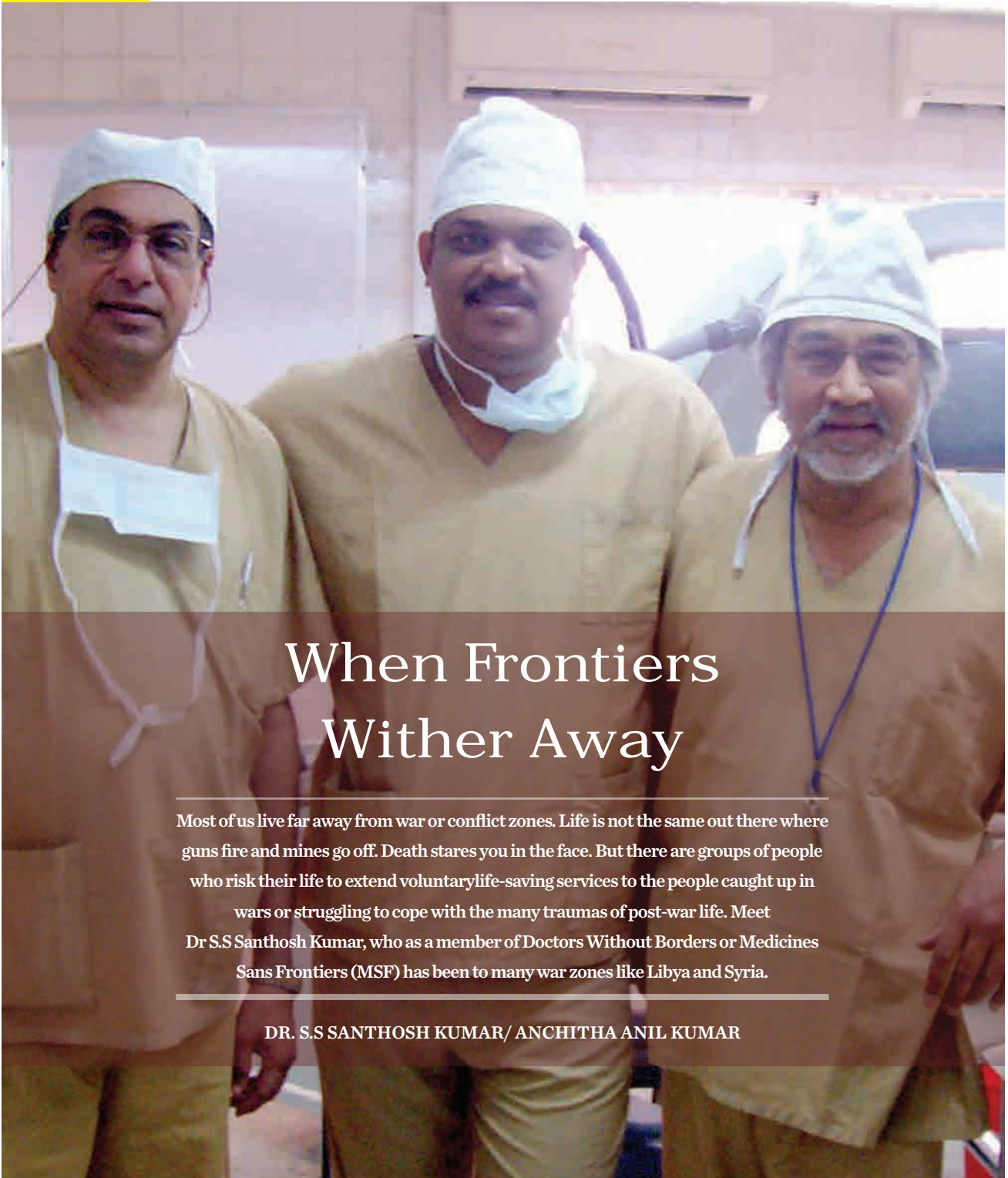
This is the reason behind the rise in atmospheric temperature that we currently experience in Kerala. Increase in evaporation causes a relative increase in moisture in the atmosphere. Hot air causes an increase in moisture. As a result, there is more amount of moisture-holding on to hot air. This is what

happening now and even after that Monsoon.

How does the overuse of electricity resulting in the spread of Nitrous Oxide lead to Global Warming or Atmosphere warming? Nitrous Oxide is heavily emitted with the use of electric instruments. Nitrous Oxide is three hundred times more capable in causing global atmosphere warming up than black carbon and carbon di Oxide.

This is the atmospheric Phenomenon, that showers hundreds of times higher than on a normal Monsoon, so unprecedentedly, we have to take very seriously. And the surface structure and fabric of land is lost and the present land surface is loosened or rather shaken that land-slide and land-slips happen.

*“ Fire Eats Amazon’s green heart, Water stokes fire in Kerala’s guilty self. Two sides of Global and Atmospheric fear factor. **KG***



When Frontiers Wither Away

Most of us live far away from war or conflict zones. Life is not the same out there where guns fire and mines go off. Death stares you in the face. But there are groups of people who risk their life to extend voluntary life-saving services to the people caught up in wars or struggling to cope with the many traumas of post-war life. Meet Dr S.S Santhosh Kumar, who as a member of Doctors Without Borders or Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) has been to many war zones like Libya and Syria.

DR. S.S SANTHOSH KUMAR/ ANCHITHA ANIL KUMAR

Dr. S.S santhosh Kumar is the Deputy Suptd. of Thiruvananthapuram Medical College and is the pride of Kerala. Anchitha Anil Kumar, Asst. Information Officer, I&PRD have a tete e tete with the Doctor of Distinction. In the interview, he describes in detail his experiences in war torn countries.

What made you to enter this field? What was your influence and on what ground you took the work of DWB/MSF?

It all happened accidentally. In 1992, there was an earthquake at Latur. At that time I was the Secretary of National Service Scheme, and had gone for the voluntary activities there. MSF was searching for team members in the region. There I came to realise that there were many techniques like inflated tents, containers that mould into hospitals and all. The MSF had many projects in Bijapur, Andhra Pradesh, Mumbai and Kashmir, and I had worked with them for three months. After completing the post-graduation, I went abroad to extend the services.

Can you please explain the aims and practices of Doctors Without Borders?

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), also known as Doctors Without Borders (DWB) is an organisation encompassing doctors and journalists formed in France in 1971. Red Cross was in the forefront for the voluntary activities but they were funded by governments, hence they were often forced to take a biased stand. Since the DWB is funded by individuals it can uphold the values and morals of being impartial at the warfront. Around eight million people are funding the DWB. At a time around 2 lakh people from their own and other countries are taking part in the voluntary activities. The organisation has its presence in 81 countries including Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Bangladesh. The members, including professionals, work with the organisation during their free time, offering their expertise. 'Centralised operation centres' including the fundraising departments, communication department, HR wing and administrative department are there to coordinate the many activities of organisation. The board members are elected in the general assembly. They control the activities of the organisation.

The way to treat a patient in a limited circumstance is crucial as well as challenging. As you said, it is very difficult to facilitate the treatment where there is no essential systems. Can you



please explain some sorts of new innovative techniques used for the treatment of casualties in warfront?

There are many innovations in health-care system even though the systems are broken down in war stricken areas. There are inflated hospitals which can be used as real hospitals. There is 'point of care' to get the total results of the blood, ESR, HB tests with the help of strips. New medicines are introduced to treat Malaria, TB, Hepatitis and many others. In 1999 MSF was given the Nobel prize for its invention of medicine. MSF is treating many AIDS patients in Africa.

Have you ever come across incidents of post-war traumas of people?

Issues and problems don't end even when the war ceases. I have been in Syria many times. During the time of war many people tried to flee the country. The middle class or those who were not able to escape were trapped in these war zones. Aleppo, one of the oldest cities in Syria, also was a war zone. Doctors and nurses in the city had escaped, and the situation forced us to teach ambulance drivers primary medical treatments, including minor surgeries and C- Section deliveries. One

“ Many people died not from gunshots but due to lack of proper treatments for even common diseases. A war leaves a city's basic systems in tatters. Many people die because of malnutrition, epidemics, infection and bleeding during childbirth.

of the main projects was to teach basic treatments and 20 procedures to handle the cases of trauma.

Have you ever experienced any crucial circumstances and how do you see these extra ordinary situations?

The war in Bengehazi, Libiya, was severe. Many people died not from gunshots but due to lack of proper treatments for even common diseases. A war leaves a city's basic systems in tatters. Many people die because of malnutrition, epidemics, infection and bleeding during childbirth.

We usually try to adopt and function in abandoned hospitals. We have certain protocols that determine what to do or not which sometimes restricts our freedom for movement. To re-function a hospital first needs proper water facility,



electricity and other basic things including the services of nurses. We used to collect fuel and water from local people, and had to wait for long for nursing services. Sometimes, the protocols themselves become a burden for us.

Once in Libya, we were travelling in an ambulance. The road was strewn with deadbodies. Our driver had to get out of the ambulance to remove them and clear the way. Suddenly, a rocket blasted off near us. We all had a providential escape.

You have worked in many war zone and conflict regions. Can you please share some of the memorial experiences?

It is very difficult to single out an incident. My experiences in Libya were hard to forget. I was in Libya from the beginning to end of the war in 2011. Libya was a country which had good infrastructure facilities including roads, educational

institutions and offices. The autocratic rule in Libya paved way for many uprisings but these were crushed with iron fists. Once, a citizen raised his voice against the authority as he didn't get an official certificate to meet an urgent need. The very next day that man was found missing from his province. This was a common scenario where many who raised their voice against the authority were found missing. The war changed the rich city into a ghostcity. It is difficult to forget what I had experience in Libya for many reasons.

What was the reaction of your family when you went abroad for the work of DWB/MSF?

For the first time, I went for voluntary activities in Indonesia. But I told my family that I was going to Dubai. Everybody thinks that when a person goes to a warfront, he is certain to die. The rate of accidents in the warfront is less

than that of accidents in our society. But what makes the difference is that the availability and functioning of systems. In a war zone, we should obey the protocols to safeguard ourselves. There were situations where we had to lie on the roads at the time of cross-firing. When I reached back home safely they were all happy, and astonished.

As a person who has had several experience in giving medical aid in war zones and witnessed the terrible emotional and physical experiences of the affected people, what message you would like to convey to the society?

There are many lessons to learn from wars and post-war scenarios. Many people say that they had no clue about how a war happened in their place. Anything can happen to a place that we think is stable. Nobody is thinking about the consequences and efforts to rebuild a city or a country. They lack critical thinking, and thus are forced to face the traumas of war. Societies will develop after the war. Japan, Europe, Africa are some of the regions which had succeeded in rebuilding post-conflict. Doctors represent only 30% in such organisations, and many more volunteers are needed to coordinate other activities. The stories of the nurses, who work in the warfront, are not heard enough. We need to spread these messages which will help learn about experiences in the warfront. [K.C.](#)

Fasting for a Faster Healing

Can someone survive 21 days without food?

Gandhiji did! Time magazine reported on the 73-year-old Mahatma's 21-day fast against the British raj that only a body and a will that has survived a lifetime of fasts and jailing kept Gandhi alive.



By DR SREEJITH N KUMAR
(Consultant Diabetes, Medicine
National Convener, IMA food Safety Initiative IFSI)

Fasting came easy to Gandhi. He went on protest or 'purification' fasts 17 times in his life. The tradition started with his first famous fast from March 15 to 18, 1918, which made Ahmedabad mill owners agree for a settlement with the striking workers whom Gandhi led. This short and successful fast, ironically, was provoked by the locked-out mill workers reproaching Gandhi for not understanding how it was like to go hungry.

Even when he was not fasting, the Mahatma ate a meagre meal. He had once said about food, "Experience has taught me that it was wrong to have dwelt upon the relish of food. One should eat not to please the palate, but to keep the body going."

However civilised we are today, let us not forget that man was born in the forest as a hunter, gatherer. That means he used to feed himself by gathering what was available around him, mostly fruits, berries and roots and also by hunting small animals or catching fish. However, for the ancient man, there was no guarantee of food and he would have to go without food for days. Fat, the internal energy reserve which got mobilised, ensured his survival. Today, when food and the reasons to eat have become abundant, the fat stores are rarely used and hence got swelled up leading to the epidemic of lifestyle diseases.

Should we go back to the ancient man and starve ourselves in this era of abundance? Well, that's what seems

“ Today, science has proven that fasting is good for many reasons. First, it is living life naturally. Nature did not want us to eat regularly and frequently. Fasting hence is more physiological than regular eating. Fasting has been shown to have many health benefits.

physiological. Human body probably is not programmed to receive abundant food at frequent intervals. It is designed to suit the 'hunter-gatherer' and not the 'shopper - eater' way of living. In simple words, it means that occasional fasting is what the human body is designed for. Nobody knew it as well as our father of Nation, who rightfully can be called as father of fasting too. And even when he was not fasting he ate a meagre diet.

'Freedom at midnight' talks about his meagre eating pattern. In My Experiments With Truth, Gandhiji narrates on why and how he came to this technique. It was partly due to the art of renunciation he practised, but more importantly, was from his thorough knowledge of nutrition. Gandhi spent his 78 years studying one personal passion: nutrition. According to Nico Slate, author of the book Gandhi's Search for a Perfect Diet, healthy eating was always part of Gandhi's life.

Though his views on a pure vegetarian diet may be arguable, his general views on diet can never be overlooked. He famously said, "Food should be taken as a matter of duty-even as a medicine-to sustain the body, never for the satisfaction of the palate." Centuries ago, Hippocrates, the father of Medicine too told the same thing: "Let food be thy medicine." Gandhiji said "Fasts are a part of my being. I can as well do without my eyes, for instance, as I can without fasts. What the eyes are for the outer world, fasts are for the inner." Today, science has proven that fasting is good for many reasons. First, it is living life naturally. Nature did not want us to eat regularly and frequently. Fasting hence is more physiological than regular eating. Fasting has been shown to have many health benefits. Fasting improves blood sugar control, which could be especially useful for those at risk of Diabetes. When we fast, body mobilises energy from the fat deposits leading to depletion of the fat stores, which is today recognised as the primary reason for lifestyle diseases. Fat depletion decreases insulin resistance and thereby prevent Diabetes. Fasting also enhance Heart health by improving Blood Pressure, Triglycerides and Cholesterol Levels. Fasting is a quick and easy way for weight reduction, which again is accompanied by control of Diabetes, Blood pressure,

“ Though research is mostly limited to animal research, several studies have found that fasting could have a powerful effect on brain health and prevent neurodegenerative disorders. In particular, studies in animals suggest that fasting may protect against and improve outcomes for conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's.

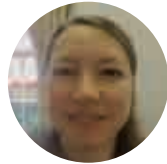
Cholesterol and its complications. However, it preserves muscle mass and improves muscle strength by increasing growth hormone levels. Some studies have found that fasting can help decrease levels of inflammation and prevent the development of chronic conditions, such as heart disease, cancer and rheumatoid arthritis.

Though research is mostly limited to animal research, several studies have found that fasting could have a powerful effect on brain health and prevent neurodegenerative disorders. In particular, studies in animals suggest that fasting may protect against and improve outcomes for conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's.

A detoxification process also occurs, because any toxins stored in the body's fat are dissolved and removed from the body. After a few days of fasting, higher levels of endorphins - "feel-good" hormones - are produced in the blood, which can have a positive impact on mental well-being. Prolonged fasting may also be effective for regenerating immune cells.

Several animal studies have found promising results on the potential lifespan-extending effects of fasting. Some animal and test-tube studies also suggest that fasting could block tumour development and increase the effectiveness of chemotherapy. [CC](#)

Shakespeare in Malayalam



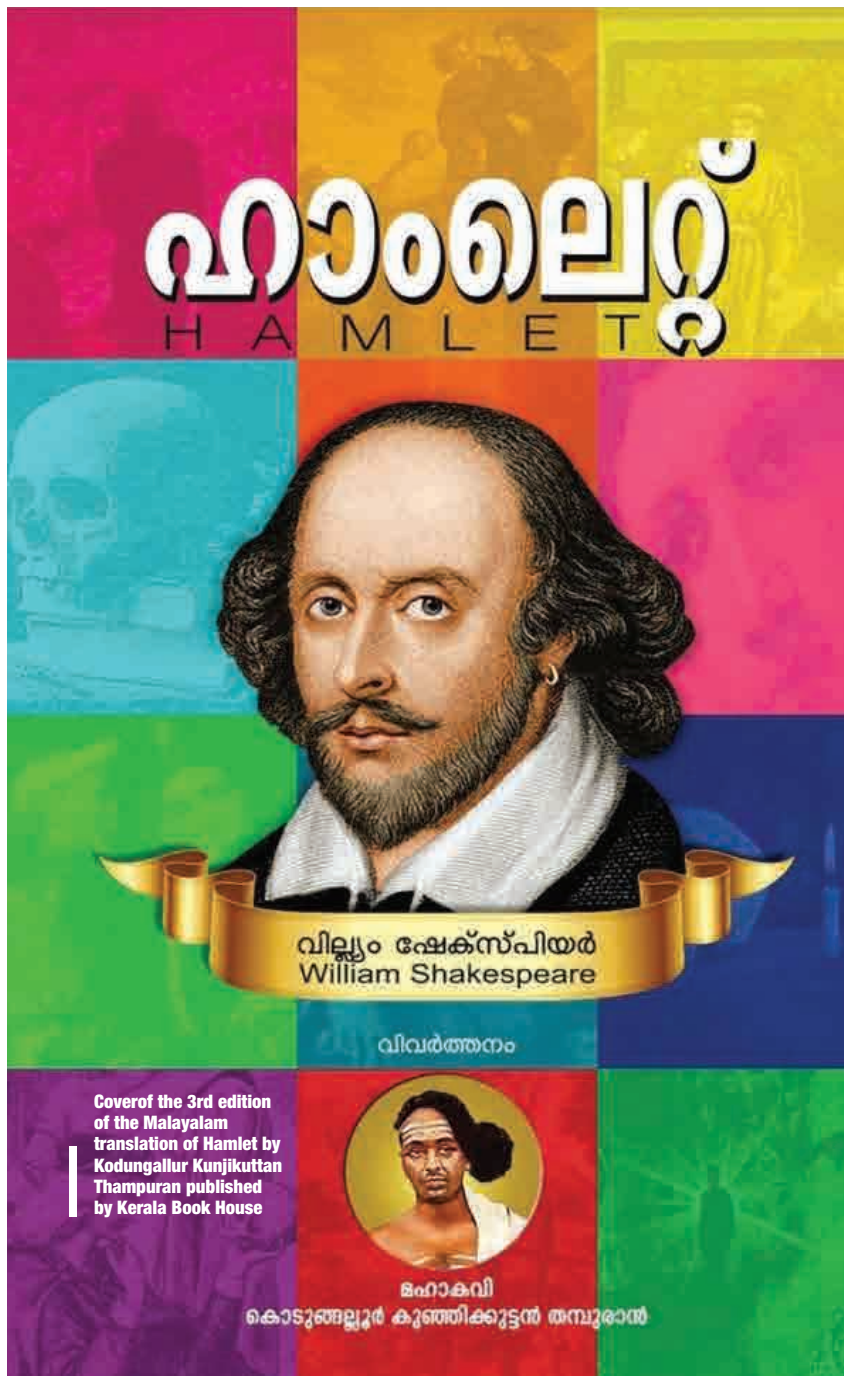
By **THEA BUCKLEY**
(Research Fellow, Queen's University, Belfast)



For how long have Shakespeare's works been translated in Kerala? That is the question! Kerala was never fully occupied by the British, who introduced the playwright to the subcontinent. His works were added to the Indian Civil Services Examination syllabus by 1855. The region's early assimilation of Shakespeare reflects a lasting familiar enjoyment of the author, as evident from the Malayalam translations of his works, preceding India's Independence in 1947 and continuing till today.

The repeated reprints and high sales of Malayalam versions of Shakespeare's works in Kerala, from the series of slim Paico Classics comics translated by R. Gopalakrishnan, to the hefty volume Shakespeare Natakangal [Dramas of Shakespeare] (2000) edited by noted Malayalam playwright and translator K. AyyappaPanicker, are indicative of a popular local reception. Panicker's collection, which sold over 5,000 copies in the first three months since its publication, comprises thirteen translations by various reputed authors like Kavalam Narayana Panicker: Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, The Tempest, and Henry VIII.

The earliest known translations of Shakespeare in Malayalam date back to the colonial era, with roughly twenty documented versions. The first of these was Almarattam [Substitution] (1866), KallorOommenPhilippose's adaptation of A Comedy of Errors. The Merchant of Venice was translated as Porsyaa Svayamvaram [Portia's Wedding-Choice] (1888), and Venisile Vyapari [The Merchant of Venice] (1902), and The Taming of the Shrew became Kalahinidamanakam (Kandathil Varghese Mappilai, 1893). In 1897, Kodungalloor Kunjikuttan Thampuran brought out Hamlet, and A. Govinda Pillai translated, directed and acted in Brittanile Rajavu Lear [King Lear of Britain]; it was staged in Trivandrum and



Cover of the 3rd edition of the Malayalam translation of Hamlet by Kodungalloor Kunjikuttan Thampuran published by Kerala Book House



Othello in Kathakali attire

noted novelist and playwright C. V. Raman Pillai played Lear. The first Malayalam Macbeth was published anonymously in 1903 in the magazine Bhashaposhini. Macbeth was later translated by K. Chidambara Vadhyar in the daily Nasrani Deepika in 1929, then reprinted in 1933 as a novel, Prataparudreeyam athava Streesahasam [The Story of Prataparudram, or, the Woman's Escapade]. The most popular early Shakespeare translation was a musical adaptation, A Midsummer Night's Dream (1909), which pleased the local audience tremendously.

Malayali translators adopted individual strategies to lend more local appeal to Shakespeare's works. Some copied Sanskrit plays, with their nandisloka or

prefatory invocation, and mix of prose and slokas. For Lear's blank verse, A. Govinda Pillai used Sanskrit upajati, while K. M. Panikkar in 1959 used local keka. A. J. Varkki's 1923 Hamlet retains Shakespearean names and translates the text 'word for word' into Malayalam prose, keeping poetry for Hamlet's love rhyme and Ophelia's songs. Varkki's preface observes that most Malayalis know Shakespeare already through English dramas enacted by college students and through Charles and Mary Lamb's Tales of Shakespeare. The Lambs' book compiled family-friendly versions of twenty Shakespearean plays in a simple prose edition. The book was popular nationwide with students preparing for the Civil Services exam, as well as with translators.

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Many colonial-era translators preferred to 'nativise' Shakespeare through the strategic relocation of names and places to more familiar Malayalam-language equivalents. In 1891, P. Velu, local head revenue clerk for the Nilgiris and Malabar area, used the Lambs' version to translate Shakespeare's *Pericles* into *Paraklēsārājāvinte Katha* [The Tale of King Pericles]. Velu's translation holds themes familiar to a South Indian readership: sea voyages and fishermen; the adventures of a royal warrior in exile; a kidnapped princess; the blessing of a deity. Velu re-words the language so that Pericles' queen Thaisa becomes 'Dayesha', or the 'kind lady'; the princess Marina is 'Samudrika', or 'maiden of the sea'; and the city of Tyre alters to 'Tharapuram', or 'city of the stars'. Thaisa's surprise reunion with her husband, where she exclaims 'You are, you are—O royal Pericles!' here becomes, 'AllayoParaklesharajave! Ningalthanneyanu—ningalthanneyanu—' [Oh, King Pericles! You are indeed...you are indeed...] ennithrayum paranyappozhekku mohalasyappettu veenupoyi [speaking thus, she fainted dead away].

In Kerala, since Independence, translators have continued to nativise Shakespearean names and imagery with local metaphors. One such poet was V. Sambasivan, exponent of the Hindu kathaprasangam [story-declamation] art that evolved from *keerthana* [hymns] and *harikatha* [stories of Vishnu]. Sambasivan introduced world classics through *kathaprasangam* as part of the 1950's Marxist Literacy Movement, presenting over decades, Malayalam 'Shakespeare for the masses' before thousands of people at temples, church festivals, colleges, clubs, and parties in one-hour long recital adaptations including Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*. He added colourful and descriptive flourishes—the Capulet and Montague families are described as 'poisonous snakes waiting to bite each other' while the lovers' hearts are *swathanthra*, or 'free and boundless'. *Romeo* opens *Juliet's* tomb as 'skulls and bones laugh at him', and 'trees shed tears of dewdrops'; the forefathers' 'bones and joints' and 'eyeless skulls' become the rhyming *talayodukalum tudayellukalum* [skull and thigh bone]. In Sambasivan's *Othello*, the Moorish hero becomes a 'moonless night' or 'amavasi' made bright with 'the full moon' or



'purnima' of his fair lady Desdemona. The prostitute Bianca is similarly embellished by being compared to the lovelorn courtesan Vasavadatta, heroine of the work by Kerala poet Kumaran Asan.

Sambasivan also translates Shakespearean poetry faithfully into songs—in his *Romeo and Juliet*, the opening scene's description of love as 'a smoke raised with the fume of sighs...a sea nourished with loving tears...a madness' becomes a song with lyrics including 'neduvirrpinniraviyal...nilapukayanu premam...kannir kadalanu premam...bhrantham premam'. Similarly, the lovers' sonnet on meeting in 'If I profane with my unworthiest hand

This holy shrine...' becomes a love song, 'Vimohaname vishudhayame vilolame karavallikalil onnu thodan oru chumbanam ekan / ninnu thudikkum adharangal tirthatakanayi thrusan-nidhiyil prarthippu nyan punyavati...' [Oh beautiful, pure, soft, hands...to kiss them...as a pilgrim in the holy sanctum, with trembling lips, I pray, oh blessed lady]. Sambasivan's translations were influential: film director Jayaraj Nair cites *kathaprasangam* as inspiration for his 1997 Malayalam-language film adaptation *Kaliyattam* [Othello], stating, 'I encountered Othello in my childhood through this art form'.

Today, Shakespeare remains India's most popularly translated non-native playwright. The number of Malayalam translations of Shakespeare's works increased sharply after the 1950s, indicating that in promoting Malayalam Shakespeares, the Kerala Communist literary drive proved even more successful than the former colonial imposition. C. C. Mehta's *Bibliography of Stageable Plays in Indian Languages* (1963) contains nearly two thousand Indian-language versions of Shakespeare's works. Keralites may have become acquainted with Shakespeare, on the big screen or theatre stage, at the railway bookstall or examination hall, local library or the home bookshelf. However, one thing is clear: this visitor from across the seas is here to stay, particularly when he can speak to us about shared human concerns in our own, musical tongue. [KC](https://www.kerala.gov.in/publication/keralacalling)

This article can also be read at ala.keralascholars.org



Experiments with Self

The first volume of the diaries of Manu Gandhi, personal attendant to M K Gandhi, the life of Gandhi in his most turbulent years

By ADARSH ONNATT

After the death of Mahatma Gandhi, Manu (Mridula) (1927-1969) Gandhi lived a life away from the public. But before the death, she was a support to Mahatma Gandhi as well as his wife Kasturba. She stood by him and took notes of whatever he said. These notes are in fact now become a door to the personal relationship between Manu and Gandhi.

The diaries of Manu that have been dormant in the Private Archives of the National Archives of India have come in the form of a new book. The Diary of Manu Gandhi; edited and translated from Gujarathi by Gandhian scholar

Tridip Suhrud will help us to know how it was the relationship between Gandhi and Manu Gandhi evolved and helped them.

This first volume of the diaries vastly chronicles Manu in her formative years with Mahatma; her mother.

Manu regarded Gandhi as her mother. In one of the entries, she says "Bapu is Bapu and also a mother. After my mother's death many would say to me, "Behn, mother is after all a mother, can father ever take place of the mother?" But after having lived with Bapu, this proved to be wrong. Bapu knows well

how to do all that a mother does'.

Manu Gandhi had come to Gandhiji's life as a young girl of 14. It was on May 1942 that her father Jaisukhlal brought Manu to live at Sevagram. She had lost her mother. She was a naïve girl and a sudden loss of her had made her gloomy and little depressed. She was uneducated and has not got any formal education then. Manu's training began at Sevagram.

She was an obedient student. Gandhi told Rajkumari Amrit Kaur that there are no complaints against her. She is quite good in her studies too. I see that she is happy. She comes very evening



Gandhiji with Abha and Manu. Whom he jokingly called his "Walking Sticks"

“ In four years of rigorous diary keeping, Manu went from being a naïve girl to a prolific writer.

who walked with him on the Salt march. He kept a diary himself, although with the passage of years his reliance upon the diary as a mode of self-examination lessened. He never gave up that practice.

In four years of rigorous diary keeping, Manu went from being a naïve girl to a prolific writer. She submitted Gandhi her diaries for correction every day. Gandhi made it a practice to read, sign and a times comment on Manu's diary. The original diaries bear the marks of Gandhi's corrections, comments and are signed the name 'Bapu' on it. The first volume of the book tells the formation of Manu as matured girl. However, the hints from the early writing say that she had a gloomy and unhappy life. Meanwhile, that is too a contentious as how you read the book. The diaries chronicle the death of Mahadev and Kasturba. The events upto the death of Kasturba Gandhi were told in detail by Manu.

Such vignettes of Gandhi's personal behavior are detailed in the diaries. Moreover, the intimacy Gandhi had with Manu makes the chore of the diaries. While at the end of the first volume of diary, we could find Manu as a more matured, resilient woman.

However, the second volume of her diaries will tell more about the personal and political life of these two and Gandhi's experiment with the truth. [KC](#)



to massage my legs. Of course she also accompanies me in my walks. There is no need for you to worry about her. However, the Quit India movement of 1942 led Gandhi getting arrested. Gandhi along with Kasturba, Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal, Dr Sushila Nayyar, Sarojini Naid and Mirabehn were held in detention at the Agha Khan Palace at Pune. With Gandhi, Kasutarba, and others in prison, the women at the Sevagram Ashram decided to join the protest. At 14, Manu has become one of the youngest prisoners of India's freedom struggle. On 31 August of 1942 she wore a sari for the first time and became a Satyagrahi. She became a prisoner that

day and was kept at Wardha jail and transferred to Nagpur Central Jail on 2 September 1942. With Gandhi going for a 21-day-long fast at Aga Khan Palace and the health of Kasturba deteriorating, Manu was shifted to Pune. She stayed with Gandhi and others for a year in prison at Aga Khan Palace.

Here that she started writing diary. Gandhi insisted all the Ashramites and Satyagrahis to keep a diary and enter it daily. He though it was an essential duty for all those engaged in pursuit of truth and is obligatory. He believed a daily diary was a mode of self-examination and self-purification; he made it an obligatory observance for all those

From Greta To Gandhi - Sprouting Gandhism of the 21st Century

By VANI KRISHNA, YEDHU J PRAKASH, ABHIJITH K GOPI

Fighting for fundamental rights has always been man's first priority. Many legendary leaders all through the history of mankind founded the pillars of success through non-violent movements and speeches powerful enough to awake the people. Raising the voice of the voiceless using non-violent civil disobedience has always been the road to triumph. The torch of non violence has passed down from one generation to the next.

Mahatma Gandhi had paved the path of non-violence to his fellow beings; he coined it as 'Satyagraha', meaning devotion to truth. His life was the very discovery of the course of pursuit of truth. It illuminated the darkest corners of the earth; many from around the globe took inspiration from it. Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Irom Chanu Sharmila, Anna Hazare – the list goes on. To get something done, there is no point in spreading violence and shedding blood; rather non-violence is the key to embrace ultimate victory, being harmless to self and others through

peaceful ways. The Mahatma's life is a lesson to all.

Spreading the roots of Gandhian ways of thinking, Greta Thunberg a 16-year-old Swedish climate activist is the living proof that even today's young generation, is giving voice to their insecurities by using the principles of non-violence. Greta and her protests are a lot similar to the peaceful non-violent movements and civil disobedience led by the great Mahatma.

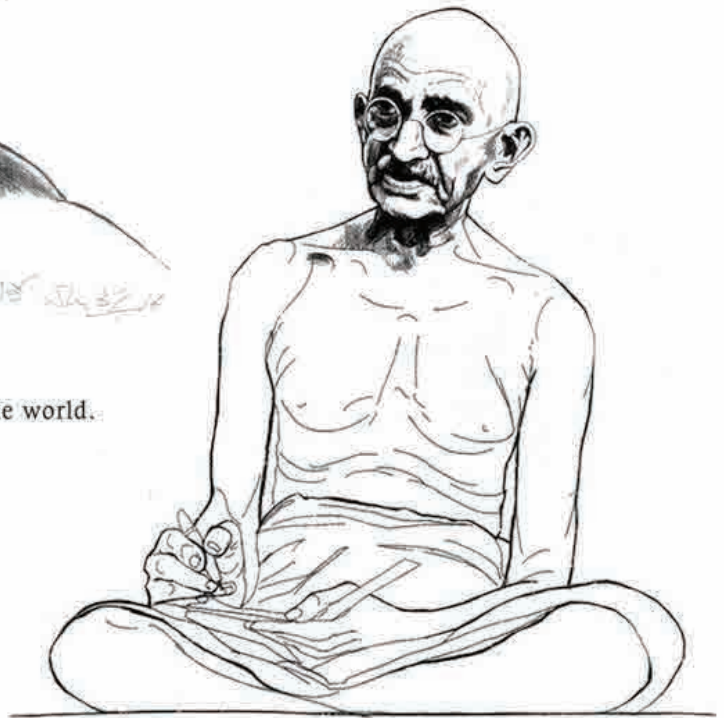
Emerging as one of the next generation leaders, Greta Thunberg is definitely one of the most significant activists of the day. Approximately about one year ago, she had started her strike in front of the Swedish Parliament demanding the political leaders to take up the climate issue seriously. By using this same Gandhian principle, Greta addressed one of the burning issues faced by the planet - the constant negligence towards the effects of climate change. The image of an ordinary girl, standing still with a board that says "Skolstrejk For Klimatet" (the school strike for cli-

mate), is not one that you see every day. Transforming a single-person protest into a social movement, today her protest has risen into a dynamic global movement for climate change. She urged her fellow companions to cut off schools, popularly known as #fridays-forfuture (FFF) campaign to come down on the streets to raise their voices. As part of her protest, Greta crossed the Giant Atlantic Ocean in a racing yacht to join the protests in the US and take part in the United Nations Summit. The sailing boat was fitted with solar panels and underwater turbines, making the journey zero-carbon.

"We are the first generation to experience climate change and the last who could do something about it", said former US president Barak Obama. Greta has been able to bring international attention to the problem, which has always been underestimated and under-discussed, though man realizes the gravity of the issue. Years past his time, the Gandhian principles live on in these wars for a better world – a war with no violence and murder. **CC**



Be the change that you want to see in the world.



Ahimsa is the Supreme Dharma



Mahatma Gandhi Sketches by Dr M S Murthy

A man is the product of his thoughts, what
he thinks he becomes

അറിവിന്റെ ആധികാരികത



ഇൻഫർമേഷൻ
പബ്ലിക് റിലേഷൻസ് വകുപ്പ്
കേരള സർക്കാർ

ഇപ്പോൾ
കൂടുതൽ
മിഴിവോടെ
സമകാലിക
ജനപഥം

വാർഷിക
വരിസംഖ്യ
120 രൂപ
ഒറ്റപ്രതി
12 രൂപ

വരിക്കാരാകാൻ

ജില്ലാ ഇൻഫർമേഷൻ ഓഫീസുകളിലോ വിതരണസമ്പന്ന പ്രദേശ ക്ലബിന് സമീപത്തെ ഇൻഫർമേഷൻ സെന്ററിലോ ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടതായ കാര്യം അറിയാതെ വിലാസത്തിലേക്ക് മണിമാർഫർ അയക്കാം.

ഡയറക്ടർ

ഇൻഫർമേഷൻ പബ്ലിക് റിലേഷൻസ് വകുപ്പ്
എഡിറ്റോറിയൽ വിഭാഗം
ഒന്നാം നില, സെന്ററിയർ അനൺസ്
വിതരണസമ്പന്നം-1



The way that never fails