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Medha and industry

Medha Patkar should be seen as a friend of this process. A reformer we can trust to tells us unpalatable facts.

Chas. A. A. A.

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Will the PM keep his promise to Bhopal victims?

Civil Society News
New Delhi

THEIR faces broke into smiles as they heard the good news. On April 17, the government accepted four demands of the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy. Since March 25, victims and campaigners for justice to Bhopal had made the dusty pavement outside Jantar Mantar their home. Braving the heat, they had campaigned relentlessly. They were determined not to move till Prime Minister Manmohan Singh heard them out. Six activists had gone on a hunger strike.

Earlier in the day on April 17, a 10-member delegation of victims and supporters met the Prime Minister. The government agreed to their demands for supply of drinking water, cleaning of Union Carbide's toxic waste, the setting up of a national commission to provide medical and economic rehabilitation to victims and the creation of a memorial to remember the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of December 3, 1984, the worst industrial disaster in history.

There was some disappointment that demands to bring Union Carbide or its owner Dow Chemical to book and to boycott the company's products had not been conceded. Bhopal campaigners say the Prime Minister said he was powerless to take any extra-legal measures to hold Union Carbide or its owner, Dow Chemical, accountable. "I don't prom-

ise to prosecute. We have to do business. India has to survive despite these tragedies," he is reported to have said. But the PM also said he would explore whatever options existed within the law to hold the company accountable.

The Bhopal campaigners have resolved to take direct and legal action against Dow and Union Carbide's businesses, nationally and internationally, on their own.

But at least the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy won't return home empty handed. They are keen that things should be implemented in a time-bound manner "We are tired of broken promises,"

said Champa Devi Shukla, a gas victim and recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize. She is secretary of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmachari Sangh and lives half a kilometre from the Union Carbide factory.

Despite her frail health Champa Devi had walked from Bhopal to Delhi. Altogether 39 victims of Union Carbide's poisons, and eight survivors had trekked 800 km in 33 days to arrive in New Delhi on 25 March. "Villagers looked after us on the way. They brought us food and sympathised with our movement," she says.



Champa Devi



Satinath Sarangi

The need for clean piped drinking water from the Kolar reservoir near Bhopal cannot be overstated. "Twenty-two years after the gas tragedy, the number of people affected has only increased. People are drinking contaminated water, inhaling toxic dust. The younger generation is suffering the effects of our toxic environment. Girls have reproductive problems and deformed babies continue to be born," says Champa Devi.

The abandoned Union Carbide factory has piles of toxic waste stored above and below the ground. Its wastewater evaporation ponds leach toxins into soil and water. Sacks of pesticides lie around in crumbling warehouses. The monsoon helps these poisons seep into the ground. The geological slant of the water table carries toxins in the groundwater to communities north of the plant. This poisonous water has travelled three km from the factory. Sixteen wards with an estimated population of 20,000 are being forced to drink toxic water from wells.

"We were provided with tankers but they could meet barely 15 percent of our needs," says Champa Devi. The state's minister for gas relief, Babulal Gaur has now announced Rs 17 crores for drinking water.

"But we need to see concrete plans and a timeline that ensures water is delivered before summer sets in," said Shehazadi Bee, a resident of Blue Moon Colony, one of the worst affected areas.

Unless Union Carbide's toxic waste is removed there will be no improvement in health. "The settlement made with the company did not include contamination, leakage of gas and dumping of toxic waste," says Satinath Sarangi of the Bhopal Group for Information and Action.

The site needs an independent assessment of technologies for removal and containment of hazardous waste. Both landfill and incineration are harmful. Bhopal campaigners want Dow Chemical to clean up. The waste must be packaged and Dow Chemical should take it back to the US and dispose of it there, they say.

"Satwant Reddy, secretary to the ministry of chemicals, said they had discussed this with Dow but the company said it would not take legal liabil-





Photographs by LAKSHMAN ANAND

Bishnois pledge to bring back Salman, punish him

Purba Kalita
Jodhpur

It is April 10 and all the country's media seemed to be focused on a district court in Rajasthan. Actor Salman Khan has just been sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs 25,000 for killing a chinkara on September 28, 1998, at Ghoda farm, some 40 km from Jodhpur.

With the court's order coinciding with a long weekend, Salman spends three days and nights in the district jail with a murderer for company in his cell. Then, having got bail, he walks out dressed in white vest and jeans, muscles rippling, and drives away with the lovely Katrina Kaif in a red SUV.

This is the stuff movies are made of. But if Mumbai has Salman, Rajasthan has its real life heroes in the Bishnoi community, who are nature worshippers and fought this case with rare dedication. They are now pledged not to rest till Salman is back in his cell.

The chinkara or black buck is an endangered species and Salman had no business hunting it.

Advocate Mahipal Bishnoi of the Jodhpur High court, who has been representing this community in the court of law, is pleased with the outcome as it also sends out a strong message to all.

"I have always reiterated that since Salman is a star he should be held all the more responsible. There are people trying out everything he does or wears. And had he got away in this case, his fans would have definitely got a wrong signal," avers Mahipal.

From coping with reluctant officers not willing to take up the case against the Bollywood star to witnesses turning hostile, the judgment, coming at the end of almost eight years, is a sharp critique of people making a mockery of the legal system. "A first information report against Salman was lodged on October 2, 1998. The forest department was lax and took no action. It was only after we went on an agitation demanding a probe that things started to move."

Mahipal is thankful to investigating officer (IO) Lalit Vora who went the extra mile to dig up information, thus taking the case to its logical conclusion. The case further gained ground when Mahipal and his associates were able to get key witness Harish Dulani to reveal the truth. This 24-year-old drove Salman and the other accused as they went about poaching between September 26 and October 1 in 1998.

"Harish took us to all the spots where this endangered species was mercilessly hunted down. We looked for blood stains, hair, tyre marks of Salman's Gypsy and the place where the killed animal was slaughtered to be cooked and eaten," says Mahipal.

Harish's description discredits all the brouhaha about Salman being innocent. "Salman was game to everyone's call for shooting the gazelle with a single shot. He did so and then got down from the Gypsy and slit open the animal's throat," goes one such gory account in Harish's confession to the IO.

Though the court sentenced Govardhan Singh, the watchman at Ghoda farm accused of skinning the killed antelope and cooking its meat, to one year in prison, some biggies accused in the above

case have got away scot-free.

"Tulaji Angre and Pratap Singh's names also featured in Harish's confession dated October 7, 1998, but when it came to naming them in the court of the chief judicial magistrate (CJM), he simply turned hostile," rues Mahipal.

Passions soar high in the Bishnoi heartland of Jodhpur. "We will fight this till the end", says Rampal Bhawad, President, Bishnoi Tiger Force, the youth wing of Akhil Bharatiya Bishnoi Mahasabha (ABBM).

"Had we caught Salman, he would not have been able to hunt again," adds another member. Pacifying his anger, Maangilal Bishnoi, editor and publisher Jamb Jyoti says, "In the past, offenders used to be beaten up badly, ostracised from society and fined heavily, but now of course the law takes its own course."

Hailing the judgment, ex-MLA and chairman ABBM, Hiralal Bishnoi, says it reinforces the commitment of a 520-year-old community given completely to nature protection. "Wildlife has always been more important to us than our own lives and therefore the joy is evident," says Hiralal. He is also on the Government of India committee that decides on an annual award to those engaged in the welfare of environment, in the name of a Bishnoi woman, Amrita Devi, who reportedly got butchered when she clung on to a tree to save it from being felled. Such is the history of their community, says Hiralal. They live by 29 rules (Bish meaning 20, Noi, 9) that also embrace their pledge to protect wildlife.

Earlier this year, Salman Khan was convicted and sentenced to one year in prison in connection with the killing of two chinkaras in Bhawat village near Jodhpur on September 26, 1998, but he sought a sentence suspension to be able to appeal to a higher court. This time round it has definitely been more severe for more reasons than one. Explains Mahipal, "Since Salman's sentence was less than three years in the Bhawat case, he could be granted bail by the CJM where his case was tried. But, in the Ghoda farm case, where the sentence was five years, it was not in the CJM's capacity to accept an application of sentence suspension and Salman had to spend two days in jail while his lawyers readied his appeal papers for a suspension of the order in the sessions' court."

However, Mahipal hopes the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 will be further amended to incorporate more stringent laws leaving no escape routes for habitual poachers. A warrant trial, instead of the existing summon trial, for instance, he feels will cut the flab from tortuous judicial procedures, making it possible to lodge an FIR immediately. Secondly, he recommends a non-bailable warrant, like in the case of the Narcotics Act, for an accused convicted for a second time as in the Salman case.

But community members want an amendment, leading to no less than a murder trial. All this speculation goes around as Salman faces yet another poaching charge dating back to October 1, 1998 in Kaakani, some 35 km from Jodhpur. But, one message goes out loud and clear – No one dare mess around with nature, especially in the Bishnoi heartland.

ity for cleaning up because that would create a global precedent. But she indicated that Dow could agree to clean up as a humanitarian gesture," says Sarangi, hopefully.

The government has also agreed to set up a national commission on Bhopal to provide medical and economic rehabilitation. Campaigners would like it to have funds and authority to oversee health care, medical research, social support and economic rehabilitation of victims and their children for the next 30 years. NGOs, scientists, doctors and representatives of survivors' organisations should be involved.

Research on the long-term effects of the deadly methyl isocyanate gas was abandoned by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) years ago. There is no research on the effects of toxic water on health either. A system of treatment for gas patients has not been worked out. The Bhopal Memorial Trust Hospital (BMTH) set up for victims provides symptomatic treatment.

"People are suffering from cancer, TB, anaemia, dizziness, joint pains," says Champa Devi. "We take Combiflam tablets all the time. Hospitals are useless. We stand in long queues. The doctor does a cursory examination and prescribes pills. The number of people going to hospitals has increased four fold."

A study by the Sambhavana Trust, run by Sarangi's group, found that most drugs given were useless or harmful. Community based health systems and alternative therapies like yoga, ayurveda and unani were found to be better. Campaigners feel the government should focus on healing and improving the quality of life of victims.

There needs to be a focus on the younger generation. An estimated 50,000 people are in need of alternative employment. The government has spent Rs 8.19 crores building an industrial area but only 243 gas affected people found employment. Job opportunities started for women have been closed down. Compensation claims are bogged down by a humiliating, corrupt, long-winded process.

No memorial has been built for the survivors. A modest museum is being jointly run by a collation of survivors. Bhopal campaigners would like this to be developed into a full-fledged memorial and 3 December made a day of commemoration.

Villagers hold on to their land, set a trend

Rakesh Agrawal
Darma (UP)

WHEN the forest department took away land from 470 households in Darma village, Sonbhadra district, UP, they did not reckon that the villagers would put up a fight. The people went to the Supreme Court. When the forest department ignored the court's orders, the people wrested part of their land from the forest department, braving police brutality.

Villagers in this region have been cultivating small plots of land for centuries under the princely state of Vijaygarh. Land reformation laws like the UP Zamindari Land Reform Act, 1950 were not implemented here. There was confusion over the legal ownership of about 4,000 ha spread in 433 villages between the forest department and the revenue department. Taking advantage of the Indian Forest Act (IFA) 1927, the forest department notified this land as forest land under Section 4 of the Act in 1968.

People living here have been displaced many times by mega projects. But the villagers of Darma did not take the appropriation of their lands lightly. They approached the Supreme Court. In 1986 the court passed an order directing that the land be restored to the people after a survey. But the forest department ignored the order and declared these lands as reserve forest.

The people united and launched a direct struggle. Regular sit-ins, demonstrations and submis-

sion of memos followed. The administration lost no time in quelling protests even using the menacing Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA). Forty Dalits and adivasis were booked under the act and four of them shot dead in a fake encounter.

"This re-enforced our determination to fight for our rights and we unitedly went ahead to take what has been ours," says Shanta Bhattacharya, chairperson, Dala Cement Factory Workers' Union, Roberts Ganj.

Women took the lead. A platform for collective action, called the Kaimur Kshetra Kisan Mahila Sangharsh Samiti (KKKMSS), was formed. They recaptured 500 *bighas* (about 100 ha) of cultivable land that used to be common land meant for grazing. It never had a single tree. On paper, the forest department had declared the land to be reserve forest.

The forest department was taken aback and began holding discussions with the people. But the people refused to budge. Then, the Forest Settlement Officer (FSO) promised to solve the matter on 27 July 2004.

But five days before the scheduled meeting, forest officials arrived with a massive police force to a place where people were holding a peaceful protest. They were fired upon without warning. About 40 persons, mostly women and children, were injured. Fake cases were lodged against as many as 300 people. Some 38 cases were lodged against Buddhi Narayan, a local villager.

People remained unperturbed by this harass-

ment. "Men can go and do forced labour if they wish. But we'll do farming on this land that is ours," said a determined Daula Devi. "We'll die, but we will not give up this land," said Parvati.

Clearly, their fight is also against the prevailing feudal system that forces them to do forced labour or work at very low wages. "We'll work on our own land or at full minimum daily wages," resolves 26-year-old Kamala Devi.

In 2004, they grew about six tonnes of *arhar*, an important pulse. This year, although it rained very little, about seven tonnes of *arhar* and four tonnes of maize have been grown. People are keeping a part of the crop for their own consumption. The remainder is sold to raise money for the struggle. Every year, especially before the monsoon, people recapture a little more land from the forest department.

KKKMSS is also building minor irrigation schemes by constructing check-dams and small bunds. A dispensary is being planned to supply medicines free of cost to people. A small primary school is functional. "Then, a warehouse to keep our produce will be ready by the end of this farming season," informs Vimala.

Caught between extremists like the Naxalites and a brutal police force, people said a firm no when the extremists offered to help. "We told them that we are capable of fighting our own fight," says 34-year-old Krishna Karati.

The idea of recapturing land illegally taken away by the forest department has spread. Today, people in about 40 villages in the region are seriously contemplating following the Darma example.

The National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers (NFFPFW), which fights for the rights of forest-dependant people played a key role. Women and young people in the village were thinking about launching a struggle when the forest department ignored the Supreme Court's order. NFFPFW gave them the confidence to start. "We were just a catalyst who gave people a push to go ahead," says Roma, a NFFPFW worker.

Janhit says Meerut's tomatoes are deadly

Civil Society News
New Delhi

THE Janhit Foundation, a voluntary organisation based in Meerut, is launching a campaign to educate people about the harmful effects of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) on people's health and environment.

Vegetables, groundwater and soil in Meerut, Muzaffarnagar and Ghaziabad districts of western Uttar Pradesh are heavily laden with POPs, according to a study initiated by Janhit.

POPs are a group of 12 pesticides banned worldwide. But local farmers are liberally using these perhaps unaware of the deadly effects such chemicals have on health and ecology.

Janhit found that vegetables used for daily consumption like tomato, brinjal, cauliflower, potato and cabbage have alarming levels of POPs.

"Such a detailed study has been conducted for the first time in this area. We will now create awareness among urban and rural communities by highlighting these results and informing people about the adverse effects of such pesticides on human health and ecology. We are launching a campaign by organ-



ising a workshop and distributing posters free of cost," said Anil Rana, director of Janhit.

Janhit Foundation sent samples of soil, water and vegetables to the People's Science Institute, Dehradun, for analysis.

The results were alarming. Agricultural soil samples collected from Lawad, Hapur Bypass and Lohia Nagar Mandi showed the presence of Heptachlor, Endrin Aldehyde, Heptachlor Epoxide, Endosulfan-II, Dieldrin and DDT. Fipronil was detected in all

ten samples lifted from Meerut district.

The analysis of vegetable samples confirmed the presence of POPs. Heptachlor, Dieldrin and Endosulfan were found in cauliflower, tomato, brinjal, radish and potato. In one sample of ladyfinger four POPs were detected.

Even drinking water in the Doab area, located between the Ganga and the Yamuna, is full of POPs. Heptachlor Epoxide, Fipronil, Eldrin, Heptachlor etc were detected in drinking water and irrigation water. This clearly shows that POPs have leached down to ground water level.

About half a dozen POPs were detected in a water sample taken from the Kali river. Vegetables grown along the banks of the river are sold in Muzaffarnagar.

Soil samples from district Muzaffarnagar confirmed the presence of POPs. In one soil sample lifted from Jansath, a town near a sugarcane growing area, five POPs were confirmed during analysis.

"The growing number of villagers suffering from cancer and neurological disorders is directly linked to these deadly pesticides present in soil, water and vegetables," says the Janhit Foundation.

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Boys map Kolkata's biodiversity

PRASANTA BISWAS

Rina Mukherji
Kolkata

ONCE a week Nilanjan Bhattacharya, environmentalist and documentary filmmaker, shops for fish at his local market. On one such trip he made friends with Mithun Dhara, a teenager who earned a living cutting fish sold by vendors to their buyers. Mithun lived in Kalikapur, a rural outpost in east Kolkata. As he described his village, Nilanjan was most struck by the boy's vast knowledge of Kalikapur's biodiversity.

Mithun introduced Nilanjan to his pals, Shanu Maity, Raju Das, Sanjoy Mondol, Bhola Baidya and Sushanta Gharai from Kalikapur. These young lads could recognise each and every fish species found in the Kalikapur Canal, which drains Kolkata's sewage into the wetlands. They could identify birds that thronged the area. They could spot all the edible fruit, vegetables and medicinal plants that grew in Kalikapur.

Nilanjan started exploring Kalikapur with his new friends. He realised that he had stumbled on a part of rural Kolkata that had survived the onslaught of urbanisation. Species that had disappeared from the city were thriving in Kalikapur.

There were flocks of *bulbuls*, parakeets, weaverbirds, drongos and *munias*. The birds built nests on Kalikapur's numerous banyan, palm and coconut trees. Collecting twigs and leaves for fuel was a common practice. But none of Kalikapur's residents ever hacked a neem, banyan or *bel* tree. There was no formal health system in Kalikapur. Plants like *kulakheda* were used to treat anaemia, and snakebite was treated with *shankhachur*.

A keen environmentalist disturbed by the mindless urbanisation of Kolkata, Nilanjan decided to map the biodiversity of Kalikapur for posterity. His knowledge bank was these six teenage boys. He conceived his project as part of a larger work on the "Changing Urban Landscape of Kolkata."

Nilanjan's academician-ecologist brother, Dr Shilanjana Bhattacharya, drew up a framework for the study. He too was most impressed by Kalikapur's botanical treasure trove. After a preliminary survey of the area, a map was sketched and six spots marked for intensive exploration.

Nilanjan was keen that the boys map the area themselves. He got another friend of his, software engineer and Linux expert Indranil Dasgupta, to help with the project. Indranil and his Calcutta Linux User Group (Cal-LUG) were proponents of using ICTs for development. Since 1999 they had been working hard at breaking language barriers to bring computers closer to the people. This informal user group had grown into a virtual network comprising 1450 members, and had created the *Ankur Bangla* project in 2000. Indranil, and his



Nilanjan Bhattacharya (in yellow T-shirt) with his team of young boys.

software technologists invented Bengali software on an internationally accepted UNICODE platform using Linux.

The ecological mapping of Kalikapur was Indranil's first project for a new company he had just started called L2C2 (Localised Low Cost Computing Technologies).

"Once you develop something, it is time to put it to some positive use," says Indranil. "Nilanjan's

A keen environmentalist disturbed by the mindless urbanisation of Kolkata, Nilanjan decided to map the biodiversity of Kalikapur for posterity. His knowledge bank was six teenage boys who knew every species.

ecological mapping project using these youngsters from Kalikapur seemed just the right thing for us since we had ambitious plans of deploying ICTs for development."

Nilanjan and the boys now started field visits to Kalikapur. The group would leave every morning and return by afternoon. Every visit was a learning experience for Nilanjan, who discovered new birds, fish, fruit, trees and plants.

"I also discovered how harmoniously these people live with nature," he says. "Every single person in Kalikapur used twigs and biomass for fuel. Yet, nobody would ever fell a tree. They ate ripe, nutritious *babla* fruit and wild figs, which we city-dwellers do not even know of. The unripe fruit

would be scooped out to make long-lasting oil lamps." He says meeting Sushanta Gharai's paternal uncle was a most humbling experience. Sushanta's family members are experts in folk medicine. His uncle, Shibu Gharai, knew every natural cure for different diseases afflicting people.

Apart from Shanu, who had attended a missionary school in Santoshpur and Sushanta, who had dropped out of school in Class 6, none of the boys were literate. Getting them to learn how to read and write seemed a daunting task. "We hence got them to play games on the computer. This was something they enjoyed," explains Indranil. At the same time the boys started drawing what they saw on their field visits. This helped them to express themselves better.

Two months into the project, Nilanjan Bhattacharya was awarded a Sarai fellowship for his project. 'The Ecological Mapping of Kalikapur'.

"This helped us tremendously," he recalls. The project took the team one year to complete. They finally discovered that Kalikapur had not just bulbuls, drongos, barbets, *babui*, martins, but even fast-disappearing species like vultures. There were medicinal plants, fruit trees, several varieties of vegetables and swarms of fish that communities could thrive on.

Sixteen species of birds visited Kalikapur, including coppersmiths, paddy field pipits, and four different varieties of kingfisher. The team identified 142 varieties of plants. A significant number were edible, while many had medicinal properties. Besides, there was a vast array of fish in the water bodies.

Nilanjan now plans to map similar habitats along the eastern fringes of Kolkata for the reference of urban planners. "It is high time our planners realised the value of such virgin vegetation and the need to preserve these unique ecosystems. Clearing all vegetation and then planting trees to bring in greenery is hypocritical. Habitats like Kalikapur are models that we ought to preserve, study and learn from," he points out.

Can Anjali turn Pavlov around?

Shuktara Lal
Kolkata

AS you walk down the corridors of the Pavlov Hospital, one of Kolkata's three mental hospitals, each scene is more horrific than the next.

Large rooms are lined with metallic beds. Most have no mattresses, sheets or pillows. There are patients, many emaciated, lying on these beds. Two are naked. One is relieving himself in a corner of the room.

"How can one sleep at night if one is constantly being bitten by bed-bugs?" asks Saumyak Ganguli, a patient. The hospital is filthy. Patients are covered with lice and the cure prescribed is jarring. "For the hospital staff, the solution to lice is shaving the patient's head," says Saumyak.

Food, when it is served, is inadequate. "There is a 14-hour gap between breakfast and dinner," says Siddhartha Shankar Ghosh, another patient.

After 10 pm, if anyone falls ill, it is difficult to contact the nurses. The wards are locked from outside and the nurses are on a separate floor. "We feel like prisoners here," says Siddhartha, summing up the feelings of the patients.

Anjali, a human rights organisation that works to make mental health care more humane, has entered Pavlov Hospital's bleak world. This group works with the government and mental health care providers to sensitise them to the needs and rights of the mentally ill. Anjali rehabilitates mentally ill patients and takes responsibility for reinstating them with their families and communities.

Ratnaboli Ray, a clinical psychologist, founded Anjali in 1999. Anjali was the name of the first person the organisation successfully rehabilitated and restored to her family. Ray was awarded an Ashoka fellowship for 1999-2000.

Anjali has been working with the state government's department of health and family welfare at two government-run mental hospitals in the city - Pavlov and Lumbini Park. In these hospitals, members of Anjali concentrate on patients who are referred to them by doctors. The doctors participate

in Anjali's programme. As the patient's health improves, the doctors assess his or her progress. They might change or reduce the prescribed medication.

Alongside, members of Anjali visit the patient's family and counsel relatives, so that the patient can be accepted back. "The stigma attached to mentally ill people is extremely deep-rooted. We try to make family members understand that a mental illness is

however, hesitates to describe these activities as forms of therapy. She observes: "During a dance session, one of the participants had remarked, 'when you dance, you simply call it a dance. But when we dance, it is labelled as dance therapy.'"

Anjali trains doctors and nurses to be sensitive to the emotional needs of patients. Rama Banerjee, Anjali's programme manager at Pavlov, points out: "Doctors treat the patients from a purely medical standpoint and ignore the human element." The social reasons for mental illness cannot be ignored. Seventy percent of mentally ill women that Anjali has worked with have a history of abuse.

"In a standard mental health hospital, all decisions regarding the patients - whether relating to medicine or lifestyle - are made for them by doctors or nurses. There is a very definite power equation between doctors and their patients with the former exerting complete control over the latter. But we treat participants in the Anjali programme as equals," explains Ray.

Working with the government has not been a bed of roses. When Anjali tried to expose unethical practices in hospitals, the authorities began to consider them a

threat. Their office was broken into and lights were damaged. Ray feels that Anjali is ultimately grappling with a politically loaded issue: "Both the government and our society dictates who is productive and who is not. A person who is mentally ill is deemed to be non-productive. This stems from the general belief in the dictum, 'once mad, always mad'." Policies rarely benefit the mentally ill since the government tends to dismiss them as unproductive. During the annual budget session, funds will be allocated to upgrade general hospitals, but not to improve mental care hospitals.

Anjali is having a positive impact on patients from Pavlov. They are no longer afraid to speak their minds. Says Siddhartha: "Anjali has made me feel more independent." Adds Bibhash Chandra Ghosh, another patient: "After I joined the Anjali programme, I've become more articulate." By participating in Anjali's programme, people with mental illnesses emerge empowered and self-assertive.



Ratnaboli Ray, founder and head of Anjali.

no different from any other kind of sickness. Once they realise this, they become more tolerant," explains Ray.

When the patient and family are ready to live with each other, Anjali oversees the reintegration. Medication doses are explained in detail to the patient and family. Anjali members visit them regularly to monitor the patient's health. Anjali also tries to provide job opportunities to the mentally ill.

Anjali's programme comprises cognitive and psychotherapy as well as creative therapies. The patients are counselled to confront their disabilities and realise that they can keep their handicap under control. This assuages their feelings of being ostracised. Participants take classes in art, singing and dancing. Theatre exercises are very popular. The patients also learn sewing, block painting and gardening - skills that they can use for earn a living. Ray,

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Laila Majhi with her brand new cycle

Finally, Laila gets a cycle

Biswajit Padhi
Khariar (Orissa)

PEOPLE lined up on both sides of the road in Khariar town, Nuapada district to welcome 18-year-old Laila Majhi, a Bhunjia tribal girl. She finally rolled in on a bicycle wearing a pair of *chappals*. A young girl on a cycle would not normally cause such a sensation. But Laila is the first girl from her community to own a cycle and wear a pair of *chappals*.

Laila lives inside the Sunabeda wildlife sanctuary,

located 900 metres above sea level in Nuapada district. The Bhunjias, who live here, forbid their folk from wearing *chappals*. "We are not supposed to tread on the sacred earth where the deity Sunadei stays," explained Bhujbal Majhi, a Bhunjia. But he couldn't explain why rules were waived for the men.

Laila is going to appear for her Class 10 exams this year. The road, so far, has not been easy. The government school she attended in Sunabeda provided education only up to Class 7. The high school is located 30 km downhill and since travelling everyday was impossible, Laila dropped out. Then, three years ago,

a Gurukul Ashram started a high school for girls like her. But Laila and her friends were asked to wear a two-piece dress as uniform.

This posed a problem. Bhunjia women are permitted to wear only a sari. The village elders of Gatibeda in Sunabeda called a meeting. Finally, Laila and her friends won. As a special concession, the elders gave them permission to wear a dress to school so that they could continue their studies.

But a price had to be paid. Girls are considered Bhunjia women after the *kandbiha* ceremony where a girl is married to an arrow till she marries at a later date. This ritual is performed after they attain puberty. Restrictions on women start from then. Laila and her friends faced ostracism. They are not allowed to enter the kitchen in their homes.

A Bhunjia considers his kitchen to be sacred. He can even burn it down if an outsider enters it. Girls, once they are married, are not allowed to enter the kitchen in their parents' home when they come to live with their families.

There is a remedy, though. "We have to sacrifice a goat during her marriage after which she will be taken back into the community," says her father Bhujbal. Laila has got a job as a community health worker with the Banjari Askam Seva Kendra, an NGO in Tarbod. The state government has asked the Kendra to pitch in with its RCH-II, (Reproductive and Child Health) programme. The NGO, along with Srushti, a local NGO, will be providing reproductive health services to underserved villages in Sunabeda.

"Villages and hamlets in Sunabeda are very scattered. With my new bicycle I will be able to reach many more pregnant women and young mothers and offer them my services," beamed Laila.

The cycle was presented to Laila by Dr GR Padhy, CDMO, Nuapada, at a function in Khariar. The Nuapada chapter of the White Ribbon Alliance, an international network on safe motherhood, gifted her the bicycle.

Houseboat owners resist relocation

Jehangir Rashid
Srinagar

Owners of houseboats on the Dal Lake are angry about LAWDA's (Lakes and Waterways Development Authority) plans to shift them out of the Dal Lake area to Rakhi Arath in Budgam. LAWDA is keen to decongest the water body and has embarked on plans to move houseboat owners out of the Lake area and shift their houseboats closer to the shore.

"If we are shifted to Rakhi Arath we will not be able to meet the requirements of tourists staying in our houseboats. We are not against the beautification of this world famous water body but it should not be done at the cost of snatching the bread and butter of houseboat owners", said Mohammad Azim Tuman, chairman, House Boat Owners Association (HBOA).

Most houseboats are used for tourists. Their owners live in and around the Lake. According to the government, 6,000 families living inside the Dal Lake are likely to be shifted to Rakhi Arath. About 1,200 families have already been relocated to the new place.

The houseboat owners say the previous government led by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed had identified land at Chandapora-Harwan for them to set-

tle. Since this area is not far from the Dal Lake, houseboat owners say it would have suited them better. They could have looked after tourists living in their houseboats.

LAWDA had asked the houseboat owners to realign their houseboats in three rows. The houseboat owners did not agree. They told the government that they should be allowed to arrange their houseboats in two rows. LAWDA finally agreed to their proposal.

"In order to give a refreshing look to the Dal Lake we have decided to shift the houseboats 50 feet back. They will then be arranged in a geometrical manner," said Tanveer Jehan, vice-chairperson, LAWDA.

There are about 1,200 houseboats in the Dal Lake apart from numerous small boats. Walkways and jetties have also come up marring the beauty of the lake. Dongas and small boats will be accommodated in the extreme end of the Dal Lake, said Jehan.

"We have already started the process of removing walkways and jetties," he said. "We are planning to buy some more machines so that dredging is done in a proper manner. Once dredging is completed we will remove the landmass at the mooring sites. It is our proposal to introduce floating septic tanks so that the Dal is free from all wastes and all this depends on the flow of money."

But the houseboat owners believe the government should use the services of an expert technical agency to clean up the Lake. They are nervous about the re-alignment of their houseboats and skeptical about LAWDA's plans.

"We want the whole process to be monitored. Any agency, other than LAWDA, should be entrusted with the responsibility. The process should be carried out in a gradual manner. If it is done at one go it will seriously affect our business as the tourism season has already set in. It is our hope that the government will look into these parameters so that the houseboat, which is an inseparable entity of Kashmir's tourism, does not vanish," said Abdul Rashid, general secretary, HBOA.



ABDUL QAYOOM



Medha Patkar leaving a press conference at the Gandhi Peace Foundation after her hunger-strike.

Photographs by LAKSHMAN ANAND

WHEN THE GOVT WANTS YOUR HOUSE

The Sardar Sarovar Dam is the tip of the iceberg, displacement is a national crisis

Umesh Anand
New Delhi

MOST businessmen bristle at the mention of her name. Some journalists do likewise. Among NGOs you may occasionally hear her ridiculed for being too shrill. Politicians and bureaucrats can't stand her because she has a way of stripping them of their self-importance.

But for all the negative vibes that Medha Patkar attracts she is probably the best thing that could have happened to a country caught up in the complex processes of economic and social reform. By camping on hunger-strike at Jantar Mantar in the heart of Delhi to get justice for the people being thrown out of their homes and lands in Madhya Pradesh for the Sardar Sarovar Dam she has

forced the country to face the problems of eviction and rehabilitation, which could finally undermine economic progress.

So, for all the vehemence with which Medha opposes liberalisation and privatisation, she has done the reforms process a good turn by making its more fickle champions look at issues they have insisted on ignoring. If those who want the economy to grow faster are truly serious about their mission, they will listen to Medha and people like her. And then perhaps reforms can be saved from tunnel vision and the tyranny of an influential few.

There are 35,000 families who will be pushed out by raising the height of the Sardar Sarovar Dam. As things stand, they will get nothing even though the Supreme Court had decreed that work on the dam could only proceed if people were rehabilitated. The Congress-led UPA government has not done anything to

implement this order. The Prime Minister himself has tried to ignore the report by a team of Central ministers – Saifuddin Soz, Prithviraj Chauhan and Meira Kumar – who said that people had not been resettled.

On paper, people have been rehabilitated. But in reality the Madhya Pradesh government's claims are fake and have been incorrectly endorsed by the Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA). The ministerial team was sent after Medha's fast. But Prime Minister Manmohan Singh chose to keep the team's report under wraps. The government was more interested in the votes it would get in Gujarat.

So secretive was Manmohan Singh's office that Aruna Roy of the MKSS had to file a right to information petition asking for the report to be made public. Similarly, respected environmentalist Anupam Mishra of the Gandhi Peace Foundation and others wrote to the Prime Minister wanting to know why he was sitting on the report.

Medha's strident campaign and her fast unto death at Jantar Mantar under the UPA government's nose brought national attention to the Sardar Sarovar Dam and the true lies of official records.

But the dam is just the tip of the problem. India is seeking rapid economic growth with investments in manufacturing, power, housing, roads and so on. Industry's appetite for land is going to keep growing. With it will come eviction and the need for rehabilitation on a scale which dwarfs the experience in the Narmada Valley.

Industry is seeking tens of thousands of acres and is expecting to get the land in a rush. There are steel, cement and automobile plants coming up. Mining projects are taking companies into forests. Airports, roads and power plants have to be built. Reliance's special economic zones (SEZs) have made headlines in business papers. Mahindra and Mahindra is not far behind. Software companies want to expand their campuses.

Much of this investment is long over due. It is needed to broaden and deepen the economy. However, the question is at whose cost. If it leads to widespread alienation from the land without commensurate benefits will this model of growth cause instability and tumult? Will it undermine the very progress being sought to be achieved?

Acquisition of land is merely part of the story. Environmental damage is the rest of it. Indian industry's record in this department has been indifferent. Indian businessmen have been slow in learning from the global experience.

Organisations like CII and FICCI show little newness in approach. They have become forums in which industry talks to industry and hears what it wants to hear. Much like NGOs who want to confirm the obvious to each other without trying to listen to the other side. CII and FICCI have come to be known for their lunches, dinners, junkets. There is scant evidence of a national perspective, of a sense of mission in which industry can take the country forward.

Little time seems to get spent on how industry can be more inclusive, on how it can be a catalyst for prosperity through employment, skill-building and education. Resettlement of people evicted for projects, be they in the countryside or the cities, doesn't figure at all.

An important reason for the problem is the absence of governance. Public institutions don't have credibility. Industry knows how to cynically use them. The popular perception, therefore, is that when politicians and businessmen come together, it is only to get richer, rip the common man off a little more. There is little faith in the system. The dam height being raised despite the Supreme Court's earlier directives on rehabilitation and the Prime Minister's unwillingness to act is cited as further proof of this breakdown.

So far development and investment across sectors has resulted in surges in the numbers of the homeless. The evidence is there in all our cities.

Invariably people in rural areas have been affected and left to fend for themselves. Among them there have been those who have been reasonably well off. But the really big numbers are made up by the poor, particularly tribals and scheduled castes.

If the migration to cities, as seen in the multiplicity of slums, is not evidence enough, perhaps the growing Naxalite movement in a swathe of territory across the country should be cause for concern. Alienation from the land and the absence of a working criminal justice system are reasons for the Naxalite influence. The government has all but lost the right to administer this territory, which could account for as much as 20 per cent of the Indian landmass. The Naxal movement itself is getting more complex with it being controlled by gun-runners, drug-smugglers and other varieties of brigands.

But even as these alarm bells toll, industry and the government withdraw to

Industry's appetite for land is going to keep growing. With it will come eviction on a scale which dwarfs the experience in the Narmada Valley.

'We need a fairness paradigm'

NASSER Munjee is Chairman of Development Credit Bank (DCB). He has been Executive Director of Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) and Managing Director and CEO of the Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC). He sits on the boards of some 13 major companies.

Munjee has a keen interest in issues of development and rehabilitation. He believes that the loss of land is one of the most destabilising factors in a society. Munjee spoke to *Civil Society*.

How much attention is paid to rehabilitation by banks and financial institutions at the time of funding projects?

My experience in IDFC is that environmental issues have been looked upon as externalities. They have not occupied centre-stage. In IDFC we had a very strong environmental group and we ensured that risks were mitigated. But companies are happy to be merely compliant. We used to want them to genuinely address environment issues and tell them that it is in their best interest.

But what you are talking about is environment control. It can be achieved through the use of technologies and so. The EIA has no sanctity. What about rehabilitation, which is much more tricky and requires greater application?

This is assuming great importance because of the land industry is seeking to acquire, be it for steel plants or SEZs or housing projects. But quite honestly, funders look at the dynamics of the project. If you take the position of being holier than thou, somebody else is going to take the project away and you lose business. Banks, for instance, are major funders and won't go through detailed scrutiny.

The question is who cares. The only people who do are those who are being dispossessed, the people on the other side. And they don't know how to engage with the system and get a fair deal. Unless there is strong government compulsion, it is not going to happen.

So what you need is a governance paradigm.

Yes, you need a governance paradigm. You have to look at a paradigm in which the poor when they give up their land are adequately compensated for it. If you buy land for next to nothing and then sell it for a much higher price, why shouldn't the poor have a share in that revenue? Or if projects make huge gains over time, why shouldn't people who gave up all they had for the general good benefit proportionately? Why can't the poor be allowed to participate in the process like everyone else. After all, the benefits from these projects are huge. In the Narmada valley tribals who are giving up their land should be compensated properly. No one is saying that the dam should not be built. But the beneficiaries should pay, otherwise why should the people give up their land?

What are the ways in which people can be compensated? What can industry do when, for instance, alternative land is not available or when because of advanced technologies an adequate number of jobs are not generated by a project?

Alternative land and employment are some of the ways. But there is a lot else that can be done. The problem is that we don't want to pay. We want to extract every penny. Companies have no difficulty in telling employees to go these days. VRS has been hugely successful. You have the polluter pays principle. Work these models into rehabilitation. The beneficiary should pay and there should be fair compensation.

Should there be an independent authority to monitor rehabilitation and compensation?



Nasser Munjee

(Continued on page 12)

'Industry must find solutions that are acceptable to society at large'



Arun Maira

ARUN Maira is the Chairman of the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in India. He spoke to Civil Society on the importance of dealing justly and honestly with people who lose their lands to development projects.

As major economic expansion is envisaged what do you see as the rehabilitation challenges facing industry?

The construction of a flyover in Mumbai that would benefit the public by easing flow of traffic is stalled because a prominent citizen feels it will diminish her quality of life by blocking the view from her apartment. The trade-off between the larger good of society and the pain to those who have to give up something for the sake of the rest is at the heart of issues of 'rehabilitation'.

In the case of tribals who have to give up land and livelihoods, however meagre these may be, for the sake of the industrialisation and economic growth of the country by which many thousands of others may get jobs, the loss is much more than that of the prominent citizen of Mumbai.

I think the first 'rehabilitation' that is required is in the minds of those promoting industry and growth. They should not make their case in abstract terms—of 'national growth', 'increasing the size of the overall pie', etc. and not characterise the potentially displaced as 'obstacles' and 'backward'. For what do these abstract, larger benefits to society matter to the poor, hopeless people who lose their toe-holds of livelihood? Their needs have to be understood in their simple terms and dealt with directly and fairly.

Would you say that dealing with rehabilitation is at the core of the success and long-term viability of these investments in economic growth?

Industrialists whose plans will disrupt the lives of people have to deal with issues of rehabilitation fairly, even generously — and they must be seen to be doing so. Even a few who fail to do this, while others may be, will destroy society's confidence in industrialists generally and make it more difficult and more costly for industry to get its projects going, thus affecting their viability. Therefore, it behoves industry to find fair solutions for those displaced and establish norms that are acceptable to society at large.

Obviously, the more any individual unit must take upon itself to do by way of rehabilitation, the less competitive and viable it may be. Therefore the costs of rehabilitation should be fairly shared by society at large that will be the over-

all beneficiary of the 'development'. However, I hasten to add again that in the present situation globally — not merely in India — where civil society sees industrialists as relentlessly pursuing profits for their shareholders, it would be very wise for industrialists to be seen as taking upon themselves directly more than a fair share of the costs of rehabilitation required by their projects.

What role do you think the government should play?

This brings me to the role of government. Ultimately the principal justification for the existence of the state, particularly the democratic state in a free market,

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is that it builds and ensures a level playing field and equity. Those who give up for the larger good must be compensated fairly. Since government leaders are democratically chosen by society, unlike industrialists, government leaders have to ensure this equity. Government has two roles here. The inescapable role is to establish the processes by which the norms of 'fairness' are established and 'standards' and systems of rehabilitation operate. The second role for government may be to operate some of these compensation and rehabilitation processes itself provided it can do so more efficiently than other agencies.

Do you think there is the need for an independent authority to serve as a referee and monitor rehabilitation?

Ultimately it is a matter of trust. A society, and nation, must have confidence in its institutions, not only in their efficiency but also in their fairness. As some economists now point out, societies with high levels of trust in their institutions have lower transaction costs within themselves. Independent regulators who are trusted by society to ensure equity and a level playing field can be as effective.

In a situation in which industry may not be fully trusted nor government seen as trustworthy and effective, independent regulators could be considered.

'We need a fairness paradigm'

Perhaps that is a solution. The credibility of public institutions is very low. Whatever you do through government institutions no one is willing to believe unless there is a third party involved. People would rather give money to HDFC than to the chief minister's fund. If government is involved no one is willing to believe they will get their due unless they get paid upfront.

The country needs to accept a philosophical paradigm of fairness. Dispossession of land is one of the most critical issues and its effects go from generation to generation. The decisions taken now to boost the economy could lead to alienation and a lot of violence such as the Naxalism we are witnessing.

No entitlement works for the poor. Unless you have an NGO to fight for you there is very little chance of getting your entitlement. The system is designed to leak and not to help. If we turned around the system, just tweaked the system, it could deliver results.

The government delivers only when civil society demands it whether it is water, justice — even airports. Unless you scream you can't get it. In the case of water the Tatas can say we can do it and share revenue with the municipality. But the problem is there are vested interests in running tanker services. In the end it's a governance issue.

Do you think that the absence of proper rehabilitation will finally push up transaction costs and make projects less viable in the long term, though these concerns may be swept under the carpet now to push projects through?

This is what we used to say to our clients at IDFC. The disruption and delays, not to speak of the larger anger and breaking down of trust, come with a cost. It should also be understood that in an increasingly globalised world the environmental and social expectations from businesses are going to get tougher. The world market will not buy from polluting industries or those who use child labour etc. It makes good business sense to deal with rehabilitation instead of running away from it.

an enclave of their own. A separate world, so to speak, which lives in denial of realities that may require the rewriting of some business plans.

As people protested on the streets in Delhi against the illegalities of the Narmada project and survivors of the Bhopal gas disaster at the Union Carbide plant sought justice after all of 20 years, CII held a two-day meeting on development and sustainability at the Taj Palace. Here industry spoke to industry. Industry patted industry on the back. The Prime Minister found the time to make an inaugural address. He spoke of rehabilitation and affirmative action in the manner of an academic pondering on some remote problems.

The fact is that Medha Patkar's agitation and life-threatening fast had brought the problem of rehabilitation to the door of the Prime Minister's Office in Delhi. It had to be so because the government had not found out the facts on the ground in the Narmada Valley. And when it sent three ministers there it did not want to hear what they had to say.

By hiding the report of its own ministerial team, the PMO was doing what governments have always done on the question of rehabilitation: tried to seal it in official files. Worse still, work on raising the dam height was undertaken after the Narmada Valley Development Authority's sub-committee certified that the rehabilitation had been done. Was the sub-committee lying? Or did it compose its report without visiting the affected areas to check the claims of the Madhya Pradesh government.

The Supreme Court now needs to ask the sub-committee on rehabilitation on what basis it said that people had been compensated and resettled. It perhaps needs to investigate the entire system of supervision at the Sardar Sarovar Dam.

For years now the environment sub-committee of the NVDA has never visited the areas it has reported on. Each time Shekhar Singh, the only independent member of the sub-committee, has put up notes of dissent. On one occasion, the minutes were drafted even before the meeting had been held and Singh had to protest.

It would be simplistic to point to corruption or the inefficiency of the system. Anupam Mishra of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, one of the earliest campaigners against the Sardar Sarovar Dam, makes the point, "The same state has no problems



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constructing dams with the required efficiency. And it is not as if there is not ample scope for corruption in the course of such construction. The problem is more basic: the state lacks sensitivity to the problems of its people."

The controversy at Kalinga Nagar in Orissa, where the largely tribal displaced population has launched an agitation, illustrates the problem. The state awarded land for projects, in much the same way as land is being given in Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand, but it again failed to handle the rehabilitation responsibilities in an adequate manner.

Interestingly, in Kalinga Nagar, the Tatas, known to be serious about social commitments and with sound rehabilitation work done in Gopalpur, have been caught in a crossfire that is not of their making.

"No one is saying the dam should not be built. But people must be compensated if they are being asked to give up their land," says Nasser Munjee, an experienced funder of big ticket projects. He is now Chairman of DCB and used to head the Infrastructure Development and Finance Company (IDFC).

Munjee worries about the impact of taking land away. "When people are evicted from their land it results in instability which lasts over generations. The impact of evictions should not be underestimated."

Says Arun Maira, Chairman of the Boston Consulting Group: "I think the first 'rehabilitation' that is required is in the minds of those promoting industry and growth. They should not make their case in abstract terms--of 'national growth', 'increasing the size of the overall pie', etc. What do these abstract, larger benefits to society matter to the poor, hopeless people who lose their toe-holds of livelihood? Their needs have to be understood in their simple terms and dealt with directly and fairly."

Maira adds: "Industrialists whose plans will disrupt the lives of people have to deal with issues of rehabilitation fairly, even generously--and they must be seen to be doing so. Even a few who fail to do this, will destroy society's

confidence in industrialists generally and make it more difficult and more costly for industry to get its projects going, thus affecting their viability."

Many of the big projects such as steel plants will be based in the largely tribal areas of the country because of the availability of raw material. This work will go hand in hand with an increase in mining activity, further contributing to large-scale displacement. Quite apart from the question of justice, even from a pragmatic viewpoint, both government and industry need to realise that if rehabilitation is not better handled the very economic growth they aim to foster and benefit from will come into question.

Both in Kalinga Nagar and in the case of the Sardar Sarovar Dam this is one aspect that is overlooked. The delay and disruption in such projects because of inadequate rehabilitation only serves to add to cost overruns that call into question the very economic feasibility of such projects. Clearly then, a sane and efficient rehabilitation policy is in the interests not just of the displaced or the NGOs espousing their cause but also of industry and a government that seeks faster economic growth.



Unfortunately no such policy exists. The reason why separate procedures have to be put in place for every major project is because there are no policy guidelines. In many of the dam projects after Independence, the land to be

submerged was simply acquired from the owners under the Land Acquisition Act of 1894. Leave alone the merits of giving cash for land, the Act itself was created by a colonial state to ensure it ran into no trouble in acquiring land for its needs. It is heavily weighted in favour of the State. Legal challenges in the courts have brought a level of equity to the cost compensation but a land acquisition act can hardly be the basis for a fair relief and rehabilitation policy.

While the Prime Minister mentioned rehabilitation to his audience at CII, what he did not tell industry was that his office has with it a draft of policy for rehabilitation. This has been put together after national consultation among public spirited groups with an experience of dealing with displacement. Sadly the government has initiated no discussion on the policy and continues to treat it like some kind of incendiary device which has unfortunately reached its door.

The draft policy was first brought to the National Advisory Council, till recently chaired by Congress President Sonia Gandhi. It went from there to the PMO.

The Draft National Development, Displacement and Rehabilitation Policy (See civilsocietyonline.com for draft policy) is based on a few key premises - 1) Displacement must be considered as a last alternative. 2) The displaced must be better off after displacement than they were earlier. 3) There must be consensus among those about to be displaced, a clear majority (the draft says 75 per cent) of those who are to be displaced must agree to the displacement. 4) There has to be a clear monitoring principle and perhaps a national authority that monitors such projects.

A rehabilitation policy is far too important an issue to be left in abeyance. Not only will this avoid the ad hoc responses which have marked the entire Sardar Sarovar controversy from the very beginning, such a policy is in fact a necessity as private industry steps into key infrastructural areas.

It is to Medha Patkar that the credit must go for bringing the need for rehabilitation into sharp national focus. Her agitation is the best tonic for reforms. What we now need are the reformers who can see that.



from taking a final decision?

It's clear he succumbed to the chauvinistic belligerence of Narendra Modi, who organised the Gujarat carnage in the name of religion. If his own ministerial team gave a scathing report indicting the rehabilitation process, what stopped him from following the Supreme Court guidelines - of no construction before full and proper rehabilitation six months prior to the raising of the dam height?

This is a betrayal of the *aam admi*, of the 35,000 families who will lose everything if the dam height is increased. I am shocked at the manner this government succumbed to Modi, when the facts stare them in the face.

And how can they do rehabilitation before August or before June, in three months, as they claim, when their own report says it can't be done even in one year? How can the Prime Minister trash his own government's report, how can he deny the truth? The Supreme Court has thrown the ball back in his court - let him fulfil his constitutional and executive responsibilities now, let him take a decision which is truly on the side of justice.

But people need water in Kutch and Saurashtra. They need water, but are they getting it really? Is Narendra Modi not taking the people for a ride? Only a small section of farmers are getting it, while the bigger promise has been betrayed. Besides, finally, the powerful intermediary castes in mid-Gujarat will alone benefit from

MEDHA Patkar, leader of the Narmada Bachao Andolan, spoke to Civil Society as she prepared to leave for Madhya Pradesh to continue with the agitation for relief and rehabilitation for families losing their land to the Sardar Sarovar Project.

Do you feel betrayed by the UPA regime, which claims to stand for the common man?

Yes, obviously. I expected the Prime Minister to take a decision, which was his constitutional responsibility. But he abdicated his responsibility. If he didn't want to take a decision then why did he send his ministerial team to the valley for an on the spot report? Why did the cabinet committee on political affairs call for a meeting of the Narmada Control Authority Review Committee? And if the UPA-BJP stand-off was expected in that meeting, why did he then back off

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this project, and big business.

This time we were only trying to expose the entire scam and farce which they call relief and rehabilitation. The Grievance Redressal Authority has not even visited the affected villages. The resettled sites have no civic amenities. This is a scam. And it is inhuman, the way they treat farmers, adivasis and dalits. I mean, can you treat people like this in a democracy?

And this is relentless, from Plachimada to Kalinga Nagar to the Narmada

Valley, thousands of people are being pushed out of their ancestral habitats and land, and for what benefits? This is developmental genocide. Let them show us the true picture of this huge benefit which they claim.

Is Narendra Modi or Shivraj Singh Chauhan (chief minister of Madhya Pradesh) telling the full truth? I have invited Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi to visit the valley, come and see for yourself the ground reality, the brutalisation and the suffering, the arrogance and corruption of the official machinery.

What is your future course of action?

This week, I will organise rallies and meetings in Bhopal and Indore and concentrate on Madhya Pradesh. People of Nimar are calling me so I will rush to Nimar and then go for a Pol Khol Yatra across the valley in the next two weeks. I want the National Alliance of People's Movement to unite and forge a massive struggle against globalisation and corporatisation which is hitting tens of thousands of people across the country, including slum-dwellers and the poor of the nation. This mass brutality and displacement must stop. There is no option but to unite and fight.



'The government is quick to build, slow to settle'

Civil Society News
New Delhi

ANUPAM Mishra of the Gandhi Peace Foundation was one of the earliest campaigners against the Sardar Sarovar Dam in the Narmada valley. His work predates the inception of the Narmada Bachao Andolan. Talking to *Civil Society* he describes how the concerns that were raised then remain valid today.

What were the main issues of concern when you first went to the Narmada Valley?

There is no aspect of the dam that we did not take up at that point of time. We brought out a series of booklets, now out of print, that take up almost every important issue, ranging from rehabilitation to the illusion of the purported benefits that have been promised to the farmers of Gujarat. Even then we had suggested that

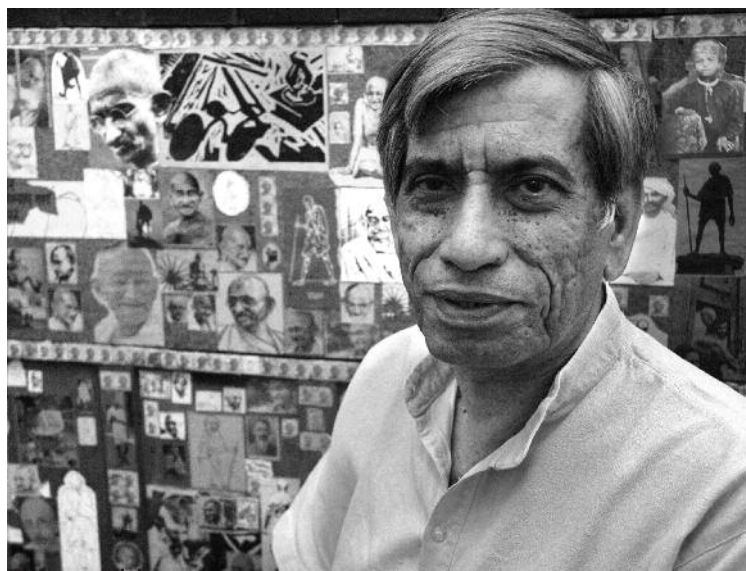
the Indian's state's experience of rehabilitating people displaced by such projects was abysmal. In fact, we suggested that before the Narmada Valley Development Authority contemplates such large-scale displacement it should be sent to Himachal to look after the people displaced by the Bhakra Nangal dam. Out of 30,000 affected, the vast majority have still not been rehabilitated. At the very least the NVDA officials could have done with some practise before this very real test. Even in MP the TAWA project is a perfect example of this failure. Indira Gandhi had termed it as a rehearsal for the Narmada project. If the rehearsal was so abysmal what hope was there in this case?

Why is the Indian state so incapable of rehabilitating displaced citizens?

The government is quick to build but slow to settle. Even Modi's own state of Gujarat has a dismal record of resettling the displaced from the Ukai project. The reasons for this failure are a combination of corruption, the lack of a sense of duty and the lack of sensitivity towards people. You must realise that this sensitivity is not needed when you construct dams. We must learn to deal with our own people. I don't know why people don't understand a simple fact. One of the most important activities in the political sphere is the transfer durbars organised by each politician. Every government servant is keen to stop their transfer, citing difficulties to their children, their families and so on. The same people lack sensitivity when it comes to the displaced. They can't shift from one place to another when their accommodation is secure, their salary safe, their families provided for and they still can't understand the trauma of displacement. Isn't that strange?

What would your approach have been to tackling controversies that have arisen in the course of the struggle for the displaced?

I think there is a need to ensure that this is not seen as a Madhya Pradesh vs Gujarat issue. Delegations from Gujarat should be invited to see the state of those about to be displaced for themselves. Information also has to be given to those in Gujarat that the benefits of the dam are not as has been claimed. There are a number of problems. The delivery of water will always be less than claimed. Moreover the black cotton soil in the command area in Gujarat is bound to suffer from water-logging. TAWA is an apt example. MP is paying the price for the dam now. The people in Gujarat will pay the price two generations from now.



Anupam Mishra

'The reasons for this failure are a combination of corruption, the lack of a sense of duty and the lack of sensitivity towards people. You must realise that this sensitivity is not needed when you construct dams.'

SPEAKING OUT

HIMANSHU THAKKAR

'So, it seems, there is no rule of law'



THE events of the last five weeks around the Sardar Sarovar Project have given a clear message to the poor and struggling people of the Narmada Valley that the rule of law does not matter. People can go to hell. The construction of the dam will not stop.

Look at the facts: The Narmada Tribunal Award and the Supreme Court orders of October 2000 and of March 2005 stipulated that at each stage, the height of the dam can only be raised when all project affected families have been given at least two hectares of cultivable and irrigated land a year in advance of submergence and when full rehabilitation as per norms has been completed at least six months before submergence.

There is no provision in the norms for cash compensation. The chief minister of Madhya Pradesh (MP) said in January this year that if the height of the dam is increased from 110.64 m to 121.92 m, as proposed, then an additional 24,500 families would be displaced. The MP government has refused to provide land to the displaced as legally required.

When the Narmada Bachao Andolan pointed out that the permission given on March 8 this year by the Narmada Control Authority to increase the height of the dam to 121.92 m is illegal and inhuman, the concerned authorities were least bit bothered.

Ultimately, after launching an indefinite protest on March 17 and an indefinite fast by three NBA activists on March 29, and after a lot of effort by activists, a group of Union ministers visited the Narmada Valley and submitted a report, called a Review Committee meeting, passing the buck to the Prime Minister and the Supreme Court. All the state governments have shown rehabilitation on paper when the ground reality reveals how wrong their claims are.

The Prime Minister, depicting the weak, irresponsible and inhuman face of the Union government, bent before the fascist acts of the BJP. The promise of the Union govt to the Supreme Court that rehabilitation will be done in three months is a violation of every legal norm.

Moreover, when the Madhya Pradesh government has not been able to give land for two decades, from where will they produce land for thousands of project affected people in three months? The Supreme Court, refusing to see the evidence of the total breakdown of the machinery for rehabilitation, including the Grievance Redressal Authorities appointed by itself, and refusing to ensure the implementation of its own orders, decided not to stop construction of the dam. There is absolutely no reason to increase the height of the dam. Gujarat has been unable to utilise even 10 percent of the water available at the current height. The message could not have been clearer.

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Farce of a committee

*Shekhar Singh has been the independent member on the environmental central sub-committee for over a decade. He describes to **Civil Society** the working of the committee:*

For several years there has been no independent verification of the claims put forth by the respective states before this committee. There is a tendency to believe that there is no need to raise questions or ask for independent verification because senior IAS officers in the states are responsible for compiling the data. The committee itself comprises of senior bureaucrats who bristle at the idea that the word of



Shekhar Singh at Jantar Mantar in Delhi

an IAS officer can be questioned.

One has to guard against such pressures. Almost always, before every meeting of the sub-committee, the bureaucrats meet on their own and decide what conclusions they need to reach during the meeting. Invariably, I find myself ranged against the rest of the committee. In the end matters come to a vote and I just have to be content with noting my dissent, but even this has been important because the dissents have been cited as evidence in legal battles.

In one meeting after a protracted set of arguments the secretary, who heads the committee, actually brought out a piece of paper and started reading out the minutes for that very meeting. When I asked him when he had time to do so because he had been involved in the entire discussion, he just said he had the minutes prepared prior to the meeting!

The rehabilitation sub-committee functions in much the same manner and there has been no attempt to question the claims made by the states. This is reflected in the fact that this committee gave clearance for raising the height but the group of ministers that went and independently verified the claims found things were very different on the ground. It seems to me that things cannot end here. Either the ministers are wrong, in which case they should be taken to task, or the subcommittee and the bureaucrats in the state have been falsifying facts and action should be taken down the chain.

I always say the tyranny of the committee is worse than the tyranny of the individual. Every individual can take shelter in the collective. The secretary who heads the committee has veto powers and virtually controls whatever conclusion the committee reaches. Individual responsibility must begin with the head of each committee.

—As told to Hartosh Singh Bal

HARTOSH SINGH BAL REPORTS

No file, no official

THE waters of the Narmada gleaming in the distance add an air of impending tragedy to the simplest of agrarian routines in the tribal village of Morkatta. In the still harsh light of the setting sun, a man drives a pair of bullocks through his fields. His fields are the few unlikely to be submerged this year, but for the rest of the village the survey being carried out by a team from the Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA) is a far more pressing concern.

They are marking the inhabited houses likely to be submerged if the dam height goes up from 110 m to 121 m. In the next few hours they mark out almost the entire village. This, after the NVDA has told the central government that no such house exists and the relief and rehabilitation (R&R) work for all those likely to be affected by this increase has already been completed.

This trip from the district headquarter of Barwani to the edge of the Narmada at Morkatta, a distance of barely 15 kilometres, is all that is required of anyone interested in finding out the truth about the government's relief and rehabilitation (R&R) claims for those affected by the Sardar Sarovar Dam. Lying just off the path are the villages of Bhilkera, Jamda, Pendra, Picchodhi and Awalda, most of which have been already partially affected even at the dam height of 110 m. The trip to Morkatta and back, with ample time spent at each village, takes less than a day so it remains a mystery that media space is being wasted on sterile ideological debates when the facts speak so clearly.

A dirt track leads from this road to the first village on the way – Bhilkera. It conveniently passes by the rehabilitation site for the village. Of all the villages named above, this is the only one where some families have actually moved to the rehabilitation site. This bears repeating, all these villages will be severely impacted if the dam height is raised and are included in the NVDA claim that R&R work in all the villages likely to be

affected is over, or will be over by May 30.

Consider the fact that these are among the more easily accessed of the 30 villages to be so affected in Barwani tehsil, and the magnitude of the government's failure is clear. And for those naïve enough to suggest that speeding up R&R will allow the work to proceed without disturbance, it is worth noting that work first started in these villages over four years back. To suggest such an alternative is to believe that work which is not even half-done over four years can be completed over the next month. The magnitude of what remains to be done is simply too huge.

Nearly 70 project-affected families have moved to the Bhilkhera R&R site over the years. Sameer Bhil is among those who moved here three years earlier. He labours for daily wages, as do the other men from the families settled here. "I moved here with all the adivasi families who were living in the low-lying areas of the village. But none of the kisan (farmer) families have shifted so we have to go back to the village to work on their fields," he says.

He adds that the reason the kisan families have not shifted is simple. Most have not been given plots at the rehabilitation site, or they have been offered plots in low-lying areas that get flooded by the city sewer during the monsoon. The only farmer in the process of moving here is Raju Kissan who has begun construction of a house. "I was only given the plot a month back. My land came under water over five years earlier. My house is under threat of submergence and I was awarded compensation three years ago."

This disconnect between submergence, compensation and the allotment of a plot is a story that is repeated over and over again when we reach Bhilkhera village. Most in the village have got compensation for their houses but no plots where they can build another. And it explains why the primary health centre remains just a building at the rehabilitation site and the



NBA activist Madan Chheya at Picchodi

SOME HARD FACTS FROM THE NARMADA VALLEY

ever visited, no compensation



Clumsy attempts at mapping sites

police continue to occupy the building meant for the village middle school.

The lack of transparency in the procedure is so apparent that the panchayat secretary of Bhilkhera, Shraavan Awasya, says he has no idea of why there is a delay, or why plots have not been awarded. In a state where the gram panchayat is supposed to be completely involved in the R&R process, the man who keeps the panchayat records, says, "We have never been shown the file, we have never been told what is going on, we really don't even know what is happening or what is being debated in Delhi. Not one official has ever come to our village to talk to us."

At the village *chaupal* at Bhilkhera the complaints pour out. And for sceptics it is important to note that most of these farmers have nothing to do with the NBA. More than 25 per cent of the land that 60-year-old Ram Singh owns is under submergence. The exact figures, 15 of his 21 acres are submerged. According to the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal Award, the final word on compensation, he should be allotted 15 acres of irrigated land, instead he has got cash, "I have been given Rs 5.69 lakh for my house and the same amount for my land. This is no compensation for what I have lost but even this has been disbursed in bits and pieces. Can one buy land to farm in bits and pieces?"

Ram Singh has not been given a plot at the relocation site because the NVDA has decided that only those losing less than 25 per cent of their holdings or those losing only their houses were to be settled here. This is again a violation of the award but even those given the plots are unhappy. Sumer Singh is a small farmer allotted a plot at the R&R site, except that it lies by the city drain, "I have seen the area flooded with my own eyes, why do you think I will build a house there?"

But it is just not the selective or improper

The reason the farmer families have not shifted is simple. Most have not been given plots at the rehabilitation site, or they have been offered plots in low-lying areas that get flooded by the city sewer during the monsoon.

implementation of R&R that is the problem. Corruption makes it worse. In the low-lying area inhabited by tribals who have moved to the relocation site, a few families cling on, among them Laxmi and her four children. Her husband Santosh died five years ago after he failed to get the compensation for his house. Laxmi says a cousin of his in collusion with the officials took the cheque due to her husband. Some in the village says Santosh committed suicide. The death has left Laxmi with no money to relocate and children to bring up.

Past Bhilkhera lies the relocation sites for Jamda and Pendra. No one has moved in to these ghost sites. The electric poles stand stripped, even the wires have been stolen. The buildings lie in shambles. As far back as 2000, the Grievance Redressal Authority set up the state had told the Supreme Court, "the services of watchmen... have been terminated in view of the economy measures by the state. If such a state of affairs continues for quite some time, it is doubtful

whether the amenities now provided at those sites would remain functional as and when PAFs occupy the sites for residence."

At Picchodi, NBA activist Madan Chheya has obtained a copy of the official letter sent to each sarpanch listing the survey work to be carried out by the NVDA in each of these villages during the month of April, the same survey we encounter later at Morkatta. This letter is itself admission that the NVDA has been lying about R&R. Madan who joined the NBA seven years ago, says, "I have not been allotted a plot at the relocation site. Two of my five acres of land are under submergence. In fact, only 62 plots are marked out for the entire village. I had gone to Delhi for Medha tai's dharna. It cost us 50 paise for water, a rupee for a piss, three rupees for a shit, and five rupees to wash our clothes. Here, thanks to the Narmada, everything is free for everyone. Where do you think they will relocate us?"

Awalda is the biggest village on the way. It is the only one in this stretch to be visited by the team of central ministers who noted that "by any standards, the entire population of the village lived below the poverty line... people said that they had not been given land for land and they had been pressurised to accept cash." The report is substantially factual but some sections of the media have chosen to dismiss this as observances from an NBA stronghold. It is not clear how being an NBA stronghold changes the facts on the ground. And in fact the ministers were being partial to the NVDA. Villages like Morkatta in this stretch are far worse off than Awalda.

Finally at Morkatta, by the backed up waters of the Narmada, which would recede every year but now remain a perennial presence thanks to the dam, we catch up with an NVDA survey team headed by sub-engineer JK Jain. First, the levels are measured and then houses which are likely to be affected by submergence, either directly or due to the backwaters, are marked. He admits, "It is very complicated. At times even we do not understand what we are doing. We need to keep going back to the charts."

It is little wonder that no one in the village has a clear idea of what is unfolding around them. They are appalled to learn that the NVDA claims R&R work has been completed. Sensing their resentment Jain turns to us, "Yes there are shortcomings. There are problems in handing out compensation, problems at the relocation sites. Actually it would be fair to say some relief has been provided but no rehabilitation has been carried out." And yet the central committee now set up will take three months to report on R&R while work on the dam carries on. No one it seems will then be accountable for what may unfold in villages such as Morkatta when the monsoon arrives. It is difficult to understand what will actually convince the central government about the utter failure of R&R along the river, but the day-trip to Morkatta might help. It is worth the trouble for those interested in the truth.

Young France rules from the street

THE great economic war that has been in the making for a long while is finally seeing its first major skirmishes in Europe; ironically, without the soldiers involved being fully aware of its real significance. The emotionally charged revolt against the CPE, or the Contrat Premier Embauche in France (roughly translated as the First Employment Contract, offering employers the right to fire any employee under the age of 26, without any liabilities, during the first two years of employment) is but a symbol, the first whiff of steam being released from the boiling liquid that has just begun crossing the threshold of stability.

Complex human societies are no less subject to universal laws than is water when it is treated to a combination of temperature and pressure changes, or atoms when they are bombarded with protons to create a completely new state of matter. Alas, it has been easier for scientists to decipher the natural laws of physics and biology than for politicians and community leaders to understand the workings of the most complex of entities – human society.

The contradictions embedded in our modern-day life are finally coming to a head and beginning a tectonic collision that is sure to shake up our complacency in the coming days. The contradictions are between the democratic super-structure that feigns the positioning of power (with the majority) and the economic structure where power lies largely with the smallest of minorities. Over the years that both democracies and modern post-industrial economies have been in the making, this principal contradiction (with its contradictory goals) has spawned myriad other contradictions.

And this simple analysis does not even take into account the many other aspects of the complex human being i.e. his spiritual, moral and emotional states and their respective needs. Nor have we added to the volatile mix the physical universe in which he exists with its limitations and its dictates. No, we have become oriented to categorising life into convenient little boxes that can smugly explain away with reductionist logic and a lot of statistics, which today's functional education excels in teaching us.

The French students and their widespread supporters realised that they had become pawns, the sacrificial lamb for the French government, battling to retain its competitiveness in the face of globalisation that has ruthlessly created layoff after layoff in the manufacturing sectors. Such layoffs are now creeping up the food chain and currently wasting engineers and other professionals in the service sectors.

Having forfeited their true calling of running the State, politicians and administrators today are scrambling to facilitate big business in the naïve and myopic hope of stemming the tide. Political orientation has become irrelevant. Blair (Labour) is now referred to as Thatcher's heir, Jospin's (Socialist) policies and practises during his time in office can hardly be described as socialist. Schroeder refused to cross a certain line in keeping with his own socialist beginnings and was thus made redundant and irrelevant. It was a wave sweeping across the planet. France was possibly the only hope, the last flicker of the wick before the lights went out. And once again France has stood up to its reputation of ruling from the street.

Unlike in the USA, the masses in France are edu-

LETTER FROM EUROPE



Riaz Quadir in Versailles

cated, intelligent and relatively far-sighted because of the country's long intellectual history and perhaps its closeness to nature (it still has the largest agricultural population in Europe). They refused to allow the government (which, because of the anomalies in the French electoral process, was elected with less than 33 percent support) to impose a radical decision without public debate. Currently, even its non Anglo-Saxon neighbours, Spain and Italy, have something akin to the proposed CPE (with varying probation periods).

One only hopes that with the revoking of the CPE in France, further revelations will follow, showing the people of France

(and hopefully the rest of Europe) that all the bogeymen that have been flouted around by the pushers of globalisation are spurious and based on an economic logic that has been solely created and operated by them. The major problems are still imbalance in distribution, both nationally and globally. The so-called "hard choices" constantly offered by globalists are euphemisms for giving more power to the multinationals and furthering the imbalance in their favour. It parallels the surreal logic offered by current governments demanding decrease in the civil rights of citizens in exchange for "security". Its success is inversely proportionate to the enlightened nature of the masses. It sold very well in the immediate aftermath of the Twin-Tower bombing in the USA, when The Patriot Act was passed, but with the passing of time the masses there too are waking up.

The other side of the same contradiction which historically saw the rise of human rights and civil society in the western nations, and paradoxically, their governments' support (often direct creation) of dictatorships and monarchies in the third world to ensure the continued control and supply of resources and cheap prices, must surely begin to stir questions in the minds of the awakening masses. Again, such contradictions are hard to sustain on a long-term basis and are bound to come to head at some point of time – and that time seems to be at hand. Without resolving the gross unfairness that exist in the global financial and trade systems the only winners will be the multinationals sitting atop the global pyramid. Even governments of powerful nations have become subservient to these ruthless profiteers and the system and structure that has resulted from their practices.

In Italy too it seems that the wake-up call was heeded to, though there, thanks to Berlusconi, the nuptials between government and big business were blatant enough even for the deaf and the dumb to ignore. In such a climate of contradictions when the lies that we are living daily are beginning to become so self evident that the birth of a global civil society is taking place - almost miraculously. One that possibly spans the political, cultural and social spectrum, now that the politicians have abandoned political ideology for expediency. This trend can only grow.

The rejection of the post-colonial hegemony is well under way in Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Bolivia...) and only a matter of time before it catches on in Africa and Western Asia. If Europe hasn't realigned itself to this new reality by then, it will find itself on the side of an increasingly irrelevant global minority. Like the ever-worsening daily predictions on climate change, that could happen faster than has been previously envisioned.

The so-called "hard choices" offered by globalists are euphemisms for giving more power to the multinationals and furthering imbalance in their favour. It parallels the surreal logic offered by current governments demanding decrease in the civil rights of citizens in exchange for "security".

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Perspectives

CATCHING TRENDS

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express an
honest opinion
in these pages.**

Taking on the supermarket bully

RAM GIDOOMAL



Through NR Eyes

Kingdom as we were joined by thousands of fellow East African Asians who were expelled by the notorious Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in 1972. The result was that most neighbourhoods in the UK were served by local shops run by the predominantly Asian community - mainly NRIs! A reputation that has become part of British folklore!

But the local shops in the UK are under threat and the demise of the Asian corner shop has been predicted by countless research reports. The problem is that the factors which accounted for their success - their ability to stay open for all hours for example - are being emulated by the larger supermarket giants and the small shops are just not able to compete with the superior buying power and negotiating muscle of the big four supermarkets

The big four supermarkets between them control 75 percent of the grocery market in the UK. Hundreds of thousands of farmers and food producers in the UK, and all over the world, sell their groceries to tens of millions of British shoppers. But the growing, processing, distribution and sale of all that food is controlled by just four companies - a dangerously unhealthy situation which effectively means that our food culture in the UK is shaped and controlled by these four companies.

WHEN we arrived in the UK as almost penniless refugees, after being expelled from East Africa in 1967, our family depended on its survival by doing what we knew best - buying and selling goods. With the limited money we were able to bring out with us, we bought a local confectioner, tobacconist and news agent shop. The shop had four bedrooms above it. Fifteen of us lived above the shop and were just about to survive thanks to the trade through this local shop. The local community supported the shop and we in turn provided the local community with a personal service. A deserted and run down local neighbourhood was built up and the local neighbourhood and community experienced a mini financial revival! This local regeneration phenomenon was repeated throughout the United

I was therefore concerned to read news reports that India is looking to welcome with open arms not only Tesco, Britain's largest supermarket chain, but also the likes of Marks & Spencer, Wal-Mart and other retail giants. Attention must be paid by local citizens and activists to the threat to local communities that such retail giants pose. Indeed everything possible must be done to ensure that locally elected politicians and officials carry out full impact assessments on all aspects of local communities (especially the needs of the vulnerable) before granting planning permission.

We have witnessed the tescopolisation of Britain in the past 30 years. The ever increasing pace of globalisation means that this is a phenomenon seen not just in Britain but right across mainland Europe, the USA and most (if not all) western economies. Retail giants like Tesco and Wal Mart are also steadily making inroads into Africa and the Far East. During a recent visit to Thailand, I was surprised to see how rapidly Tesco Lotus - the name by which the Thai operation is known - had grown. With 112 stores in Thailand and more being planned, a similar story is repeating itself in Shanghai where Tesco has already opened 14 stores. The rapid growth of Tesco Lotus and other overseas stores no doubt make a significant contribution to Tesco's £1 billion global sales figures.

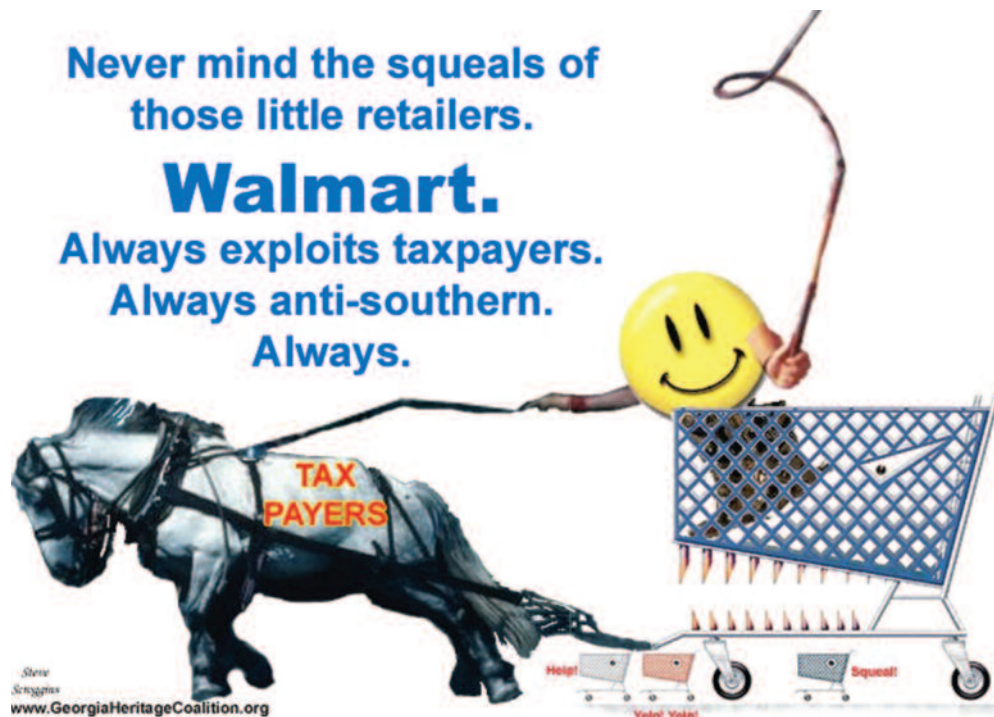
It is fairly obvious why people would want to shop at Tesco. The goods are incredibly cheap. It operates the usual strategy that most retail outlets follow - sell loss leader to attract customers and use this pulling power to negotiate steep discounts from suppliers. This may be brilliant retail policy but how does it square with social or global responsibility?

The impact on local neighbourhoods has become more and more evident on the high streets of Britain. Neighbourhoods have been damaged. These hypermarkets and retail giants have damaged neighbourhoods, killed off local and

part-time jobs and gutted the sense of local community loyalty from small villages and inner-city shopping streets. Is this trend inevitable? The answer is - not necessarily. Local activists in certain parts of London have successfully lobbied and won campaigns to drive away Starbucks, for example.

Over 200 local anti-supermarket campaigns are gearing up for the struggle. The architectural press is also stepping in to oppose the relentless tescopolisation of the landscape. Some have asked whether Tesco will try to sue the Tescopoly activists. Who can now predict the impact of the new Wal-Mart film 'The High Cost of Low Price'? Will

(Continued on page 21)



Making the city livable

MN ASHISH GANJU



Urban Spaces

THE national capital city of Delhi that we inhabit today is the ninth city in this location. The eight earlier cities, going back in time to a period before recorded history, were grand capitals of several empires, and all of these have perished much earlier than anticipated by the rulers who established them.

The Delhi of today is also under threat of collapse, on several accounts:

- Whereas the population of Delhi is growing a little over the national average, its slum population is growing at twice the rate of growth of the city population as a whole; already a majority of the city's population is living in slums and unauthorised developments.
- Although the planned expenditure by the State for provision of urban services and infrastructure

is far greater for Delhi than for other cities in India, Delhi faces a chronic shortage of water supply, electric power supply, sewage and solid waste disposal, public transport, as well as housing and attendant social and institutional/commercial facilities.

- In spite of the fact that Delhi was the first city in the country to make a comprehensive Master Plan for urban development more than four decades ago, and set up a special urban development authority for regulation and control of the Master Plan, there has been rampant unauthorised development in the city; and today the whole nation is witnessing the extraordinary spectacle of not only the High Court of Delhi, but also the Supreme Court of India, having to pass orders for demolition and sealing of illegal commercial developments throughout the city, leading to public (and sometimes violent) protests by not only the trader community but also elected political representatives from the opposition as well as the ruling party.

To an ordinary citizen of this historic city it appears as if the very fabric of civilised society is being torn apart; and to reinforce the feeling of being a participant in a theatre of the absurd, the media are vociferous in proclaiming that Delhi is well on its way to becoming a world class city to prepare for the hosting of the Commonwealth Games four years hence. To this end huge expenditure of public funds is sanctioned for the construction of scores of flyovers to upgrade the road network, and for the building of a most expensive mass transit system in the form of an underground- cum- over ground railway network cutting through this historic city, with minimum time devoted to planning and evaluation of the consequences to the urban morphology, and equally little effort in ensuring adequate public participation in the decision-making process.

The ordinary citizen has grown up in the belief that the country is governed by the Constitution, which lays down the responsibilities of the three pillars of State - the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary (with a fourth extra-constitutional prop provided by the media) - and the functions of each are clearly defined. If, as is happening today, the Judiciary has to regulate the field-level functions of the Executive, it is clear that there is serious instability in the structure of the State. It is sad to note that orders of the courts are not likely, in themselves, to restore the structural order of the State.

The most significant point of weakness in the system perhaps lies in the kind of technical expertise being provided to the Executive regarding town planning norms and the strategies available for regulating the dynamics of urban development. When the first exercise to prepare a Master Plan for Delhi's urban development was initiated in the late 1950's, the team of experts was dominated by consultants from the west sponsored by international aid agencies like the Ford Foundation. The power of the dollar overwhelmed intellectual clarity and obscured the complex reality of a city with such a hoary past.

Thus at the very beginning of the modern urban planning process a serious misfit developed between the ideals and norms guiding the technical experts and the reality of peoples lives on the ground. This misfit only increased with time in the revisions made to the Master Plan. The city was growing at a rate

not anticipated by the planners, and the social profile of the expanding population was not adequately researched and understood. The entire planning process became skewed towards the lifestyle and aspirations of the rich and the middle class.

However hopeless the present situation may appear, there could be the possibility of addressing the problems of urban development more realistically by setting in motion a careful process of urban renewal. The Government of India has launched last year a national mission for urban renewal called the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). This mission could begin to redefine the methods and techniques which can restructure the approach to urban development and align technical strategies to contemporary realities of the living patterns of the citizenry. Major cities around the world are engaged in such exercises to ensure that urban life becomes more civilised and the built environment is structured for ecological sustainability.

In our country, urban renewal requires an approach which is different from the tried-out methodologies and techniques which dominate current town planning practices. A fresh approach for urban renewal could, in the first



Present town planning practices do not make adequate provision for participation of citizens in the ordering and maintenance of the built environment. This is a fundamental weakness.

instance, ensure improved social equity to make our cities more livable for all inhabitants. Present town planning practices do not make adequate provision for participation of citizens in the ordering and maintenance of the built environment. This is a fundamental weakness. The citizenry cannot be expected to participate responsibly in the development of their neighbourhoods and cities unless the entire process of decision making is made transparent.

Any realistic analysis of urban morphology requires the processing of a very large amount of information. It is only in recent years that information technology has evolved sufficiently to enable even urban planners to develop tools for regulating the dynamics of urban systems in a rational and transparent manner. It is important to note that new tools need to be developed for this task. The JNNURM offers the possibility of undertaking this task with necessary seriousness. However it has to be recognised that the primary task of urban renewal should be to restore the livability of cities, so that they become civilised and humane places for their inhabitants.

Displacing people creates Naxals

ARVIND KEJRIWAL



The Right To Know

THE Prime Minister of India is worried at the increasing Naxalite activities in different parts of the country. The Naxalites are believed to be "well equipped to fight security forces and strike at will anywhere in as many as 170 districts across 14 states using sophisticated weapons," according to a media report. Naxalite activities have acquired considerable strength in terms of their geographical reach and intensity to strike in the last few years. The Prime Minister recently convened a meeting of the chief ministers of Naxalite affected states to discuss the problem and form strategies to deal with it.

I am not an expert on the issue of Naxalism. But even as a layman, I don't think it is difficult to see the reasons for increased Naxalite activity. Some newspapers reported recently that thousands of

farmers of village Maan near Pune battled with the police, opposing acquisition of over 464 hectares of their farmland for the Rajiv Gandhi IT Park Phase IV. The land was being acquired at confiscatory rates. Two villagers were admitted to hospital with police bullet wounds, and many hurt in the lathi charge. Protests continue. The adjoining hills and 587 hectares of agricultural land from villages Hinjewadi, Marunji, Wasve Bhoirwadi and a part of Maan had already been acquired by the state government for Phases II and III.

This is not an isolated incident. In the name of development, the houses and livelihoods of lakhs and crores of poor people all across the country are being "officially plundered" either for making roads, or building malls, or constructing dams, or making IT parks etc. In the above case, who decided and how did he decide that the land in these villages was the most appropriate to make the Rajiv Gandhi IT park? Why wasn't land acquired at, say Nariman Point or Juhu in Mumbai?

I am sure that it is the people living in these areas who would benefit most from this IT park. So, logically, the people living in places like Juhu or Nariman Point should pay the price for it. Let the government acquire land at these places and ask all the people living in these areas to shift to different areas for a "better future" and for the "development of India". I am not saying this for rhetoric. There is a strong logic. A farmer, when uprooted from his farmland, finds it extremely difficult to start a new life at another place. But the companies, who have their offices at Nariman Point, could build their offices anywhere in the country in no time. Also, the land being snatched from farmers is fertile land and should not be put to any use other than agriculture. Who decides and how is it decided what is in better "public interest" – to do agriculture on fertile land or to make an IT park there?

What would you have done if one day, the government simply acquired all your

property, including your house, and destroyed the source of your livelihood, saying that they were doing so because they wanted to start a project, which would benefit the country in the long run? First, you would try to stop the government from taking over your house. But when you found that was not possible, you might try to fight for an adequate compensation. And when you do that, the government turns around and says that they neither have adequate land nor adequate money to compensate you for your acquired property. You would be told that this was an inevitable cost of development. And if you protested, you would be termed "anti-development". You have lost everything - your property, your livelihood. There is not even hope for a better future. Obviously, you would nurture a strong antagonism against those who brought you to this state - those within the government and maybe others associated with that project. You have nothing at stake. What would you do? Take revenge? Kill someone? Take to arms? Take to terrorism? Join Naxalites? Or simply take to some crime to build a "better future" for yourself in the shortest possible time?

In the name of development, lakhs of people are being turned into refugees. The tragedy of partition is being played everyday in one or another part of independent India. In fact, the situation of these people is much worse than that of refugees in 1947. During partition, the refugees came from Pakistan losing everything that they had. But when they reached India, they were greeted not only by the people of this country but also by the Government of India who made many arrangements for them and implemented special schemes for their rehabilitation. So, they were not alone. There was a whole country with them, which showered love and affection on them. They had hope for a better future. But the modern refugees have nowhere to go. Losing everything in their villages, when they reach cities, desperate to find employment and start a new life, they are hounded out by the police and assumed to be criminals. Their jhuggis are again destroyed by the state in the name of development. Their very existence on earth is illegal. No one wants them.

I agree that solutions cannot be found through violence. But I have often wondered what would I have done, if I were put in some such situation. It is one thing to sermonise that one should not take to violence. It is another thing to live that life every day. I am surprised that Naxalism has spread to just 170 districts so far. Almost every city, town, village in our country has fertile soil for Naxalites. The manner in which jhuggis are being broken mercilessly by the governments of Delhi and Mumbai, I won't be surprised if these two cities became the next hotbed for Naxalites.

So, Naxalism is the cost of modern day development. Together, all of us would need to decide whether we are willing to pay that cost. The Prime Minister mentioned lack of development as one of the reasons for Naxalism. The malaise is much beyond just "lack of development". Unfortunately, the Prime Minister's meeting ended by treating Naxalism as a serious internal security issue, to be dealt with by the security forces. But the Prime Minister does not realise that this solution will create many more Naxalites in future.

Taking on the supermarket bully

(Continued from page 19)

this ultimately help to deflate and disarm another mighty corporate bully?

But only when customers begin to vote with their feet will there be any hope of reaching the true tipping point. Consumers exercising their choice by buying only fairly traded, clearly labelled, environmentally friendly products are already making a difference – remember the consumer boycott of South African products in the battle against apartheid? We must change the way we shop.

Britain's clear backlash against McDonalds shows that nothing is impossible. The recent campaign for healthy food has begun to see the might of McDonalds being challenged to the point that it is actually declining.

As recently as 2002 four new McDonalds restaurants were opening every day on the planet. They had seemed unstoppable. Two recent movies – 'Super Size Me' (made by Morgan Spurlock) and the 'McLibel trial' (Helen Steel and Dave Morris) have no doubt played a significant role in exposing McDonalds as a horrendous corporate bully, and a peddler of nutritionally bankrupt junk. But it could be that recent campaigns to encourage healthy eating are actually getting through and causing parents to steer their children away from the Golden Arches. The evidence is encouraging. Profit margins have declined and a recent

headline confirmed that 25 McDonald's stores were to close.

A recent survey revealed that just one percent of 13- to 15- year olds said that McDonalds was their favourite meal, down 7 percent a year ago. The message is devastatingly clear – McDonalds is becoming seriously uncool amongst teenagers.

But can small independent shops survive against the might of the retail super giants? With a little bit of creativity and innovation some are demonstrating how to work smarter. Ugandan Asians who took over local pharmacies on high streets across the country have started offering basic medical check-ups, using freelance qualified nurses. They take basic readings, administer prescriptions and offer a personalised, tailor-made and individualised service that the retail giants cannot match. As a result these local shops have not only retained market share but grown.

Local fishmongers are learning to add fresh and exotic fish on their menus – attracting custom and loyalty.

What local communities need to be aware of is the fact that they can influence the outcome of planning applications by ensuring that local politicians conduct proper impact assessments, so that local community life is not jeopardised.

(Ram Gidoomal CBE, Chairman South Asian Development Partnership)

How should we govern our forests?

MILINDO CHAKRABARTI



Reforms Report

TWO very significant reports were published recently that looked into the vital issue of "forest governance" in India. The first report, prepared by the National Forest Commission, was made public in late March. Then on April 5 in New Delhi, the World Bank released its document entitled, "Unlocking Opportunities for Forest-Dependent People in India".

Interestingly, the reports provide diverging, if not diametrically opposite solutions, to our quest for an institutional mechanism that could pave the way for efficient governance of forests in India. The issue of governance becomes more relevant in view of the revelations of the State of Forest Report, 2003, published by the Forest Survey of India in June 2005. It states that though

there has been a marginal quantitative improvement in terms of an increase in the area under forest cover between 2001 and 2003, there was also considerable qualitative deterioration. The area under dense forests shrank by more than 26 thousand square kilometres during the same time.

The report by the National Forest Commission attaches topmost priority to the role of forests in ensuring ecological security even, at times, at the expense of ignoring the livelihood security of people living in and around them. It recommends that 'powers of summary eviction of encroachment may be vested with the local Divisional Forest Officer' (Chapter 4, 6f) and underscores the need for greater control over unsustainable biotic pressure especially over grazing and *tendu* leaves, *sal* seed and fuel wood extraction (Chapter 4, 6e).

The report is not totally unconcerned about the livelihood needs of forest dependent people. But the Commission is committed to allowing communities to collect forest resources for consumption purposes only. They are to be prevented through more regulatory and centralised measures from collecting any surplus beyond their consumptive requirements. In order to make regulatory measures more effective, the Commission unhesitatingly argues in favour of strengthening the hands of Forest Departments across the states with more resources and powers, without, unfortunately, a dispassionate examination of the efficiency of the existing regulatory structure of the State-led model of forest management.

In its over enthusiasm to portray the State-led model as a captive of circumstances or lack of political will, to be specific, the Commission notes:

"After the merger of the princely States in the Indian Union and vesting of intermediary tenures in the States following land reform legislations in post-independent India, especially during the 1950s, the extent of forestlands under the management control of the Forest Department suddenly grew manifold (Table 11.1). The sudden increase caused enormous pressure on the forestry establishment then, as the level of resources required for demarcation, consolidation and drawing of management plans for the new forests, both in terms of human and financial resources, far outstripped the capacity available to forest departments during the 1950s." (Chapter 11, paragraph 11.1.1)

But a look at the information provided in Table 11.1, in support of the argument, reveals that the recorded forest area (defined as 'geographical areas recorded as forests in government records,' in State of Forests Report, 2003, page 124) in fact declined between 1951 and 1961! No data has been given for earlier years so that one may be convinced that such an enormous increase indeed took place during the fifties.

As a matter of fact, (as is evident from the Table referred to above) recorded forest area increased only by about seven percent during the last 50 years. It actually declined between 1991 and 2001 by about 1.6 lakh hectares! A document of national importance cannot afford the luxury of a gross contradiction between a statement and the figures quoted to substantiate it. One feels tempted to argue that probably we have reached a defining point in the history of forest management, when the contributions of the Forest Department should be assessed in a very dispassionate manner. The point of focus should not be merely the quantity of resources provided to manage forests. The quality of utilisation of resources

made available to the Forest Department also requires thorough scrutiny - an issue never debated seriously in India.

The World Bank study, on the other hand, centres its arguments around the issue of livelihood security of communities, with ecological security emerging as an important outcome. It proposes wide-ranging and carefully phased reform measures at national and state levels that would help communities benefit from the untapped potential of forests. The suggested measures are:

- Stronger forest rights and responsibilities for forest communities.
- More effective management systems targeted at communities involved with forestry and improved access to more efficient market systems for major and minor products.
- More effective and flexible institutions and capacities.

It further argues that programmes need an increased development focus to broaden livelihood opportunities. In this process, states the report, the focal attention of forest departments should be to provide technical service delivery, facilitate partnerships with communities and the private sector and forest monitoring. It points out that:

- Forestry is the second largest land use in India after agriculture.
- Around 41 percent of India's forest cover has been degraded during the past several decades.
- The current JFM model is weighed in favour of forest department control.
- The potential benefits from improvements in forest productivity, coupled with further reforms around community-based forestry are massive.

The report explicitly calls for decentralisation in governance of forestry resources in India.

The arguments for decentralisation of forest management are not altogether new. An estimated 60 countries like Indonesia, Nepal, Bolivia, Uganda, Ghana, Canada, Scotland and the USA are currently engaged in processes towards decentralisation of their forestry sector. The number has been gradually increasing. However, as the report mentions, decentralisation cannot be accomplished very easily. Recent studies on the impact of decentralisation on communities do not paint a very rosy picture. "For Better or for Worse? Local Impacts from the Decentralisation of Indonesia's Forest Sector", a study by Stefanie Engel and Charles Palmer provides such evidence. They surveyed 65 communities and 687 households in Malinau, Bulungan, and West Kutai districts in East Kalimantan in 2003-4. Despite some positive effects of decentralisation with increased scope for participation from the private sector enterprises in a so-called market-friendly environment, it is revealed that companies frequently paid late or didn't pay or failed to provide promised benefits or to replant. However, most villages didn't take that lying down. They demonstrated, blocked roads, and confiscated equipment and timber, often successfully.

A million dollar question emerges. Are our communities capable of mustering the necessary bargaining power to confront the might of private enterprises? Perhaps not. One may note that Indonesia is placed much higher than India in terms of literacy rate, combined gross enrolment ratio, per capita income and life expectancy. Indonesia's HDI has been increasing at a much faster rate than India. The incidence of poverty is also considerably lower. One must not forget that forest-dependent communities in India are the poorest among their countrymen.

The tools suggested to empower forest-based communities probably would be counter-productive unless they are empowered with access and controlling rights on all relevant productive resources necessary for creating livelihood opportunities. Partial reforms in the forestry sector, in the absence of land reforms, reforms in the credit market, provision of educational and health service support, insurance back up against production and marketing failures and even in the structure of the existing Panchayati Raj or cooperative systems will add to the growing process of disempowerment of this already disadvantaged section of society made easy through 'liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation'.

Neither the recommendations of the National Forest Commission, nor the proposals by the World Bank can lead us to the right direction. Both have the inherent potential of being recipes for disaster. We look forward to an intense debate in the days to come to develop an alternative that empowers forest-dependent communities not only to improve the quality of their lives but also to protect forests on our behalf.

A million dollar question emerges. Are our communities capable of mustering the necessary bargaining power to confront the might of private enterprises? Perhaps not.

Glocal India needs governance

RAJIV KUMAR

THIS is a welcome volume for more than one reason. Most importantly it tells a good story about Indian industry's emerging success in achieving global competitiveness. This will strengthen corporate confidence and raise animal spirits, essential ingredients for sustaining the virtuous growth cycle. Secondly, the successful corporate stories in the volume will further strengthen hope and optimism of fledgling small and medium entrepreneurs who will find in these stories further reaffirmation of their belief that in present day India one can make it from rags to riches in one generation. For this reason the volume should be translated into Hindi and Bengali, which covers the BIMARU states where entrepreneurial spirits need a stronger reinforcement. And thirdly, it is welcome because it contributes to the discussion on measures required for India's transition to mass manufacturing, which alone will consolidate the incipient global competitiveness discussed in the volume.

There are two central themes in the volume, both of which represent the core issues faced by Indian industry and policy makers. The first thematic thread is captured by the statement that "... a lot can be done by individual initiatives without waiting for policy to change." (p. 198). This sentiment, liberally strewn through the book and reflected in sector and corporate case studies, is about the dynamism, innovativeness and 'take on the world spirit' of the Indian corporate sector and individual entrepreneur.

I can confirm this from my own multifaceted interaction with Indian business, as a young researcher at Oxford, then as a professional academic teaching competitive strategy based on my research on the Indian industry; then again as a government economist during the reform period of 1991-95 and finally as CII's chief economist that permitted a most useful learning from the inside.

The one unambiguous and over-riding sentiment that has left the deepest impression on me is the 'never say die' and 'we will overcome' attitude of Indian entrepreneurs and managers. This perhaps saved India during the 1970s and 1980s, which was a period of all pervasive and dysfunctional government controls and licences. The same sentiment is now powering the industrial surge that is seeing the emergence of Indian multinationals and of Indian firms successfully fighting, more successfully than in the past for higher market shares both in domestic and global markets. This is surely the primary ingredient of the unfolding good India story.

The same spirit results in process and product innovations that are suited to prevailing conditions and is so beautifully captured in *jugaad*, a word that crosses linguistic boundaries. This, in my view, will make Indian industrial and economic growth in the coming years relatively less capital intensive, less dependent on export demand and instead based on broad-based domestic consumer demand. This will be tapped by specially designed and low-cost products that will still capture the essential characteristics of that product class. The 'simputer', cheap

generic drugs, no-frills light commercial vehicles and motorcycles and scooters that have double the normal load bearing capacity and at the same time achieve higher fuel economies are all examples of products designed by Indian firms in their quest for capturing larger shares in the domestic market characterised by relatively low purchasing power and a demand for more rugged products.

This innovative and managerial strength will soon make Indian firms formidable competitors in global markets. This perhaps also explains why foreign direct investment is not as forthcoming because they find the manufacturing space a strongly contested one unlike in China where they had a relatively

clean slate with domestic entrepreneurs largely absent. Successful foreign direct investors will be those that can partner domestic corporates and entrepreneurs in this innovative journey and produce specially for the Indian market. Let us not forget that the upturn in McDonald's fortunes in India came only after they gave up their long-standing policy of serving universally standard fare and started marketing McVegburgers. Try and find it in any other country!

The significant question that will hopefully be taken up by the author in the next volume is: how can policy nurture and reinforce this entrepreneurial spirit and spread it also in the public corporate sector which is and in my reckoning will remain a significant presence in the Indian economy.

This issue of the need for policy support to sustain growth is closely and intrinsically related to the second theme in the volume. This is the story of the infrastructure deficit that has afflicted Indian industry. It is reflected in the statement, made often as a rather self-fulfilling boast, that "the Indian industry will grow despite the government." So far this has perhaps been true. And examples given in the book and otherwise known are well known. Nearly 68 percent of Indian companies have their own power back-up; most of them depend on private courier services and not the government postal system; Reliance estab-

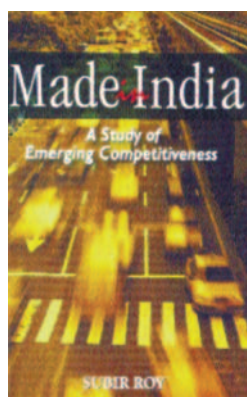
lished its own captive oil landing terminal and related facilities, training centre and even a K-12 school in Jamnagar as none of these public services were available and neither expected to happen; nearly all companies have their own water supply, sanitation and health systems.

Can the private sector continue to make up the public infrastructure deficit and yet remain internationally competitive? Perhaps even more important, can we achieve inclusive growth that is spread across all the geographic regions in the country and generates employment for educated, skilled and unskilled workers without improving the delivery of public goods and services? And will not private solutions for delivery of public goods and services result in much greater ecological damage and make it all unsustainable far ahead of any significant improvement in the living standards of the middle class, let alone the poor?

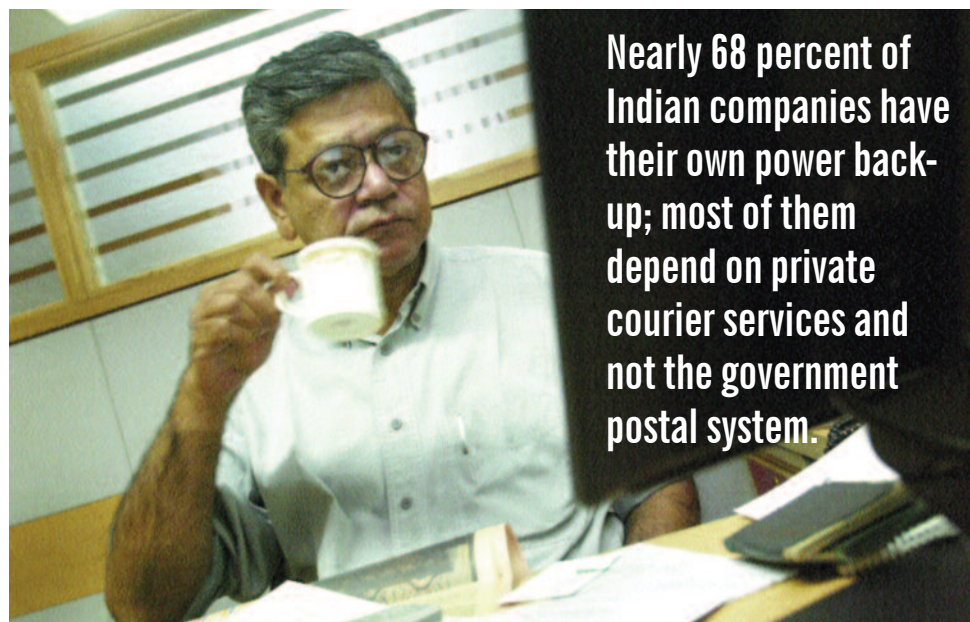
Subir's clear answer based on his case studies of sectors and companies is that policy support is essential, critical and urgently needed. "What is undeniable is that a policy is needed to pursue global competitiveness in manufacturing. Only a comprehensive policy can simultaneously address such diverse areas as cost of capital, energy and logistics, not to speak of systemic issues such as bureaucratic procedures... and corruption... But whatever be its scope, policy is not dead." (Page 188). This is an important message both for Central and State governments. They have to realise that private solutions for securing necessary supplies of public goods and services are neither desirable nor feasible.

The need for policy reforms: at all levels of education to sustain expansion of knowledge based industries and generate skills for the manufacturing sector; that will facilitate the use of India's strength in software to establish a new generation of electronic component industry; to change the environment in which only those industries will grow that can "escape the baleful eye of the government"; and for reforms that will create a true public private partnership for generating innovations for successful transition to mass manufacturing cannot be over emphasised. I am confident that these will be covered in greater detail in the next volume that the author has indicated is in the making. We should read the current volume and look forward to the next one.

(Rajiv Kumar is director and chief executive of ICRIER)



Title: Made in India: A Study of Emerging Competitiveness
Author: Subir Roy
Publisher: Tata Mcgraw Hill
Price: Rs 350



Nearly 68 percent of Indian companies have their own power back-up; most of them depend on private courier services and not the government postal system.

Subir Roy, the author

For sinusitis try gooseberry juice

Dr G G GANGADHARAN



SINUSITIS is the inflammation of the sinus membrane that internally separates the nasal orifice from other parts. It can get infected because of internal or external reasons.

The internal reasons are regular consumption of cold

foods especially when the climate is cold or at a cold place and lack of body immunity to withstand any infection or allergy. A person with *Kapha prakruthi* or *Kapha-Pitha prakruthi* or *Pitha prakruthi* is more vulnerable to sinusitis.

External reasons for sinusitis include dust particles and other polluting agents in the atmosphere, a cold shower for a longer duration than normal, lack of oil application on the scalp before a bath or a head massage with a cold potency oil like Neelibringadi done regularly.

It can also happen due to slight deviation of the septal part of the nose.

The following advice is very helpful to keep the sinus dry and functional:

- A male with a history of sinusitis should always cut his hair very short so that there is no possibility of the scalp sweating.
- While travelling at night, cover the head, ears and throat with a warm cloth.
- Always drink boiled and warm water. Add a pinch of jeera to the water while it is being boiled.
- Have a bath only in warm water either in the late morning (after 7.30 am) or in the afternoon.
- Do not take curds, ice creams, or deep fried items. All these increase Kapha in the body and can cause sinusitis.
- Always apply oil before a bath. The oil should be prepared with pepper, jeera, a small onion and a piece of dry ginger. Or you can buy 'Marichadi thailam' from the market.



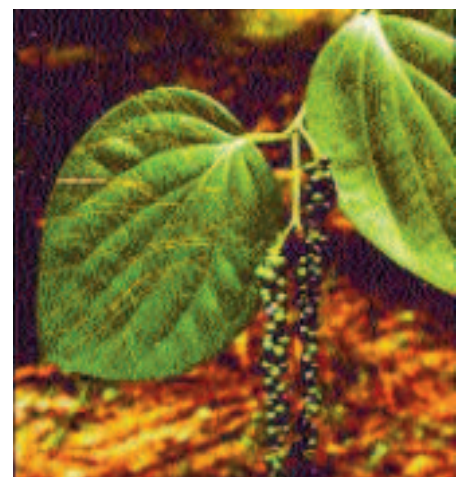
Phyllanthus emblica



Ginger



Jeera



Piper nigrum

- Use of preparations from 'Uzhundu dal' should be reduced and whenever it is consumed it should be taken with pepper.
 - Try and keep regular hours, which means don't keep awake at night and do not sleep during the day.
- The following simple preparations which can easily be made at home can be used to eliminate problems due to sinusitis.
- Make a '*kanji*' (liquid gruel) of split wheat and add a little ghee to it. Take it in the morning as breakfast.
 - Curd on its own is not good. But one hour before

lunch, take one cup of curd, add half teaspoon of pepper powder and one tablespoon full of powdered jaggery. Mix well and consume it.

- Get fresh juice of gooseberry and do *Nasyam* for 14 days. The season for gooseberries is from September to February. Instill three drops of gooseberry juice in each nostril in the morning before the sun gets very hot.
- Take '*Vyoshadi vatakam*' (available in Ayurvedic shops). You can take one teaspoon mixed with honey at bedtime and also after breakfast.

(vaidya.ganga@frrlht.org.in)

RAGI / MANDUA ROTI

Ingredients:

- Mandua / ragi atta - 50gm
- Wheat flour - 15gm
- Water - as required

Method:

- Mix mandua/ragi flour and wheat flour well.
- Add water and prepare a stiff dough
- Divide into even sized balls and roll out into chapattis.
- Cook on hot griddle or tawa on slow flame from both sides.
- Serve hot applying little ghee (optional).



RAGI IDLI

Ingredients:

- Ragi Seed - 500 g
- Black gram dhal - 250 g
- Fenugreek seeds - 2 tsp
- Salt to taste

Method:

- Clean ragi properly and soak overnight.
- Soak dal and fenugreek seeds overnight.
- In the morning, grind both of them separately and then mix.
- Add salt and keep for 5-6 hours for fermentation.
- Then steam small portions (four) of the mixture in an idli mould till set and cooked. (Do not put on the cooker whistle)



Recipes by:



Recipes for diabetics

Manda Kalpana

Spiced porridge made of rice

Ingredients:

- Rice: 1 cup
- Water: 14 cups
- Dried ginger powder: a pinch
- Saindhava (rock salt): as per taste

Method:

Wash the rice thoroughly and put in a vessel. Add water and cook over moderate flame until the rice becomes soft. Remove from flame and filter through a muslin cloth. Now add ginger powder and salt to the liquid portion.

Benefits: It enhances appetite, aids digestion, relieves flatulence, is very easy to digest and hence usually advised during convalescence. It is also very good for children's health.

Reference: Sharangadhara Samhita, Madhyama khandha, Pathya Kalpana

Yusha

Green gram soup

Ingredients:

- Green gram: 1 cup
- Water: 16 cups
- Pepper chopped: ½ tsp
- Salt: to taste

Method:

Wash green gram properly. Add pepper powder, ginger (finely chopped) and salt to it. Mix well. Now add water and cook over moderate flame. Cook until the total quantity is reduced to half. Remove from flame and filter it through a muslin cloth.

Benefits: It is tasty and cleanses the mouth and throat. It is recommended for patients suffering from fever and those who are in convalescence. It is also very good for children's health.

Reference: Bhaishajya Kalpana, Pathya Kalpana.

Calcium rich ragi is food for all

FINGER millet, also known as *ragi*, *mandua* or *madua* in local languages, is an annual robust grass that reaches to a height of 40-100 cms. It's mainly grown as a grain cereal in semi-arid tropics and sub tropics of the world under rain fed conditions. The straw can be used as fodder and *ragi* fields are often grazed after harvesting.

Being a hardy and water prudent plant, finger millet is a staple food crop in most drought prone areas of the world. Given its very high nutrition profile, it is considered an important crop for food security strategies.

Finger millet is an excellent performer in many ways. It is an ideal food for infants and for the elderly. *Ragi* contains liberal amounts of calcium. It has approximately three times more calcium than milk. Therefore it is good for cases of lactose intolerance and for children who don't like milk. Due to its high calcium content and easy digestibility, in south India it is a regular practice to wean babies from mother's milk with a *ragi* malt preparation. From the therapeutic point of view, *ragi* is an especially suitable food for diabetic patients because it contains fiber, which helps to lower blood glucose levels. The fiber content of *ragi* also helps to reduce blood pressure and cholesterol. It even supports weight loss.

Ragi has antioxidant properties that prevent cancer and heart disease. It is also useful in managing or preventing obesity, osteoporosis and ulcers. So make sure you are getting enough *ragi* in your diet. You can get *ragi* and *ragi* flour from Navdanya's outlets in Stall No. 18, Dilli Haat and D-26, Hauz Khas, New Delhi. Phone: 2653 2460/ 2653 2124.

In traditional cuisines, there are many tasty ways of preparing *ragi*. In the Deccan, *dosas*, *upmas* and gruel are prepared from it. In Jharkhand, delicious pancakes, both sweet and savoury are made with *ragi* flour. The Garhwalis make wholesome rotis with it as well as savoury crepes, called *chilla*. As its nutritive properties are getting better known, *ragi* is being used in breads, biscuits and other confectioneries.

Savour the aroma of Tamil Nadu

Purba Kalita
Jodhpur

THE aroma of sizzling curry leaves and brewing coffee is the hallmark of cuisine from Tamil Nadu. A gastronomic journey through this southern-most state includes munchy *murukku*, wholesome *idli*, appetising *sambar*, crispy *dosa* and much more.

Rice is consumed at almost every meal. But there are also vegetables, lentils, legumes and yoghurt. Coconut oil is the preferred medium of cooking. The lingering taste comes from special seasoning. Curry leaves, asafoetida, tamarind, coconut, coriander, cumin and sesame seeds, *urad dal*, ginger, fresh coriander, chillies - red and green, all go into a cuisine that has established its place on the culinary map of the world.

A Tamilian breakfast may include *dosas* or golden fried pancakes and *idlis* or steamed cakes, both made from a fermented batter of rice and *urad dal*. Other favourites are *vada* or deep fried doughnuts made of *urad dal*, *upma* made of semolina or *pongal*, a dish of rice and lentils cooked together and seasoned with ghee, cashew nuts, pepper and cumin seeds.

All these can be savoured either plain or with coconut chutney, *sambar* and *mulaga*

podu, a mixture of roasted and ground coriander seeds, sesame, red chillies, *urad dal*, *chana dal*, nicely blended with oil.

Chettinad cuisine is another offer from this land. In contrast to the above mentioned cuisine, Chettinad food uses liberal amounts of oil and spices. Some traditional preparations are *mandi* or mixed vegetables, *idi appam* made of vermicelli, dishes made of banana flowers and stems and a variety of pickles. This cuisine offers some of the best known non-vegetarian delicacies.

Thayir sadam

Ingredients

- Rice: 1 cup
- Curd: ½ cup
- Milk: 1 cup
- Green chillies: 2, slit
- Curry leaves: 10-12
- Ginger: 1cm, finely diced
- Chopped coriander: 1 tbsp
- Urad dal: ½ tsp
- Mustard seeds: ½ tsp
- Oil or ghee: 1 tbsp
- Pinch of asafoetida

Method: Boil rice and drain excess water when very soft. Let it cool. Heat oil and urad dal, mustard seeds, chillies, curry leaves and asafoetida. When they splutter, pour it on the rice. Add curd, milk,

ginger and fresh coriander. Mix well and serve at room temperature.

Vatral kuzhambu

Ingredients

- Dried vegetables: 100 gm (You can include garlic and onions)
- Sesame oil: 1 tbsp
- Tamarind extract: ¼ cup
- Sambar powder: 2 tbsp
- Rice flour: 1 tsp
- Salt, jaggery to taste
- For seasoning: Mustard seeds: ¼ tsp
- Pinch of asafoetida powder
- Fenugreek: ½ tsp
- Red chillies: 2, broken
- Urad dal: 1 ½ tsp

Method: Heat oil. Add seasonings. Add vegetables and fry till brown. Add sambar powder. Add tamarind extract and salt. Bring to boil. Mix rice flour in water and add to boiling gravy. Boil till gravy becomes thick. Add jaggery. Garnish with curry leaves.

Pumpkin Curry

Ingredients

- Thin slice of pumpkin
- Jaggery: ¼ cup powdered
- Grated coconut: 2 tsp
- Mustard seeds: 1/4 tsp
- Chana dal: 1/4 tsp

- Urad dal: 1/4 tsp
- Dry red chilli: 1
- Rice flour: 1/2 tsp
- Pinch of salt

Method: Cut pumpkin into large pieces and cook in some water with salt. Drain excess water. Heat oil. Add mustard seeds, chilli and dals. Add jaggery and let it melt. Add cooked pumpkin and mix well. Cook on full flame for a few minutes. Add coconut and rice flour. Remove after a while.

Pongal

Ingredients:

- Rice: 1½ cups
- Condensed milk: ½ tin
- Jaggery: 50-75 gm
- Cloves: 3, powdered
- Cardamoms: 3, powdered
- Ghee or butter: 2 tbsp
- Chopped cashew nuts: 1 tbsp
- Chopped almonds: 1 tbsp
- Chopped raisins: 1 tbsp

Method: Fry cashew, almonds and raisins in ghee till light brown. Keep aside. Cook rice in water until soft. Drain excess water. Add jaggery and condensed milk to rice. Cook on low flame while constantly stirring until dry. Add cardamom and clove powder. Mix well. Garnish with fried nuts and raisins.



Chakachak's heroes are children who come together as children mostly do in middle-class neighbourhoods to play and drift in and out of each others homes. It is one particular Gang of Eight that we track as they discover their environment rapidly deteriorating. Playgrounds are filthy, water polluted, the air full of poisons.



Sai hates dirt, decides to go Chakachak for kids

Civil Society News
New Delhi

SAI Paranjpye couldn't step out of her house without getting into spats with complete strangers. Either she would catch someone spitting or carelessly throwing away an empty paper bag or leaving behind remnants of a snack on the beach. There was no end to the litter that she would discover.

But hectoring people devoid of civic sense didn't seem to do much good. Mumbai is a crowded filthy city and you could spend a lifetime angrily trying to get people to keep it clean without much to show for your efforts. Going out with her had also become a bit of a headache. Family members had to wait patiently while she completed her tirades.

"You can't go on like this," was the affectionate advice given to her, no doubt with concern for her advancing years and the toll such random encounters would naturally take on a person's health. "But what can I do? I can't stand filth," would invariably be her reply. She was a compulsive dirt buster and couldn't hold herself back.

But complex as that condition might seem, the therapy in her case was really quite simple. Instead of livid outbursts, she could, as a leading film-maker, make a film on garbage and the need for keeping our cities clean. Perhaps a little controlled creative intervention would make her more effective.

As is her wont, Sai set about making a film by putting pen to paper and getting a story down first. *Chakachak* was born. It is an adventure for children and is intended to teach them the importance of cleanliness in their daily lives without preaching to them. So, it is a plot full of surprises, lots of fun and a good many *badmash* big men who need to be taught a lesson or two.

Chakachak's heroes are children who come together as children mostly do in middle-class neighbourhoods to play and drift in and out of each others homes. It is one particular Gang of Eight that we track as they discover their environment rapidly deteriorating. Playgrounds are filthy, water polluted, the air full of poisons. The fun of kicking a football around is ruined by the slushy garbage in which it goes and lands. Naturally, no one wants to pick it up. But in getting that ball back and the muck off there is a lesson that no one can escape from. Our world will be as clean as we can keep it. Dirt is finally everyone's problem. Run from it and it will find you – in the park, as you play, in the food on your plate, in the water in your glass.

Sai uses the adventure mode to keep interest alive in her social message. The children find themselves pitted against Gundappan and his associates, Kawwa, Tawwa and Chiwwa.

They are the source of much evil including the forging of currency notes. The children place themselves in great danger by trying to uncover what Gundappan is all about. But they also have a mysterious saviour in Zadu Baba, who prevails, as Good must over Evil.

The cast has got exuberant children: Barkha Singh, Darshan Shah, Yakub Sheikh, Abhishek Kuberan, Sharmishta Bhattacharjee, Muntazir Rizvi, Shliwahan Kulkarni and Abeer Abhyankar. Naturally, you have never heard of them, but you will in future, of that we have no doubt.

Parikshit Sahni plays Gundappan and Sai is particularly happy with the protruding front tooth she has given him. Asrani, Javed Khan and Paintal are the other baddies. Zadu Baba is played by Madhu.

The film opened in Pune and is said to have brought schools and the civic authorities together in a cleanliness effort. Sai is now on a mission to show the film in as many schools as she can across the country. She believes if the young worry about garbage, the world will finally be a *chakachak* place.

But getting into schools may not be as easy as it may seem. Most governments are so thick in the hide that it is impossible to get them to sit up and take a look at the film, let alone screen it in a big way.

The Union environment ministry sat on the DVD for months and then the chief IAS Babu there returned it without even seeing it. But then what else can you expect from our IAS Babus?

If you would like to screen the film at a school, you could get in touch with Sai at saiparanjpye@hotmail.com or you could contact us at Civil Society.

Give women the work men do

Civil Society News
New Delhi

WHAT is the key to equality for women? Is it in better laws? Or is it in social policing of male dominance? Or is it in better education and health? It is all these but perhaps nothing is more effective than giving women the work that men do. That is real equality, especially if it comes with the same money.

Women who earn like men acquire a different status in their families. They aren't merely packed off in marriage, they aren't forced to abort female foetuses, they don't end up the hapless victims of violence and abuse.

No, money brings empowerment. In addition, a woman who becomes the driver of a taxi or an auto rickshaw, a welder, barber and so on becomes an emblem of wider change. She can do what a man would normally be doing. She can also do it differently, perhaps even better and she can certainly do the job with results across a bigger range of possibilities.

For instance, women auto rickshaw and taxi drivers make it easier for women to use such forms of public transport at odd hours. The more women there are out on the street, the safer do streets become for women in general. Similarly, when women become barbers at Tirupati, it is easier for women with their garments clinging to them after a holy dip to have their heads shaved.

Poojita Chowdhury has gone out and made a short film, *Gender Bender*, on women performing such functions successfully. It is a documentary that takes you to women who are welders, drivers of heavy vehicles at Tata Steel, pilots for ferries, plumbers and so on. There is a ten-year-old girl who gives men a shave to help her family make some money.

Poojita's hope is that if more such stories are told women doing men's jobs will become role models. They will inspire not only other women, but also employers who may want to deepen the process of change.

Gender Bender has been made for the Snapshots of Change series of the Broadcasting for Change Network. Project Smita, an Indian NGO, is a member of the Broadcasting for Change Network.

The Network consists of film makers and broadcasters from 40 countries with as many five minute films being made and then telecast on BBC. *Gender Bender's* longer version is for telecast in India.

Poojita's first documentary, *Sand in My Nostrils*, on female foeticide, was also made for the Broadcasting for Change Network.

Poojita is a film maker who functions like a reporter with a camera. She seeks out stories and tells them with honesty. It is hard work, but more importantly it requires an ability to probe the world around us.

Don't watch *Gender Bender* for great craftsmanship. Poojita seems to be still exploring the medium. But do see it for its larger message.

LAKSHMAN ANAND



Poojita Chowdhury

Women who earn like men acquire a different status in their families. They aren't merely packed off in marriage.

So, what's your PPM class?

Dr MRITUNJAY CHAUBEY

Know Your Water

GROUND water plays a crucial role as a decentralised source of drinking water for millions of rural and urban people in India. It accounts for nearly 80 percent of rural domestic water needs and 50 percent of urban water needs. The National Water Policy of India states that water is a prime natural resource, basic human need, and precious national asset. It gives special attention to drinking water for both humans and animals over its other uses. The policy calls for controls on the exploitation of groundwater through regulation and an integrated and coordinated development of surface and groundwater. The central government has identified strategies for meeting drinking water needs and micro-watershed management and has conducted pilot projects in different regions in the country. Even so, India is facing a drinking water crisis.

As far as the quality of groundwater is concerned, total dissolved salts (TDS) and hardness are two very important parameters. The water containing TDS and hardness below 250 ppm is considered to be potable water, suitable

for drinking. The water containing TDS in the range of 250 ppm to 1500 ppm and hardness in the range of 250 ppm to 500 ppm is considered to be moderately brackish hard water, not preferred for drinking applications. The water containing TDS above 1500 ppm and hardness above 500 ppm is considered to be brackish hard water, unfit for drinking applications. The top 15 "poor quality" water cities of India are Chennai, Ahmedabad, Faridabad, Salem, Kolkata, Agra, Delhi, Bhubaneswar, Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Ambala, Bhatinda, Coimbatore, Trivandrum, Trichy.

For brackish and hard water, Reverse Osmosis (RO) seems to be the best water purifying technology to purify the water for drinking water applications. Under RO-systems, water is made to pass through a membrane having a pore size of 0.0001 micron under high pressure. Only 5-10 per cent of the dissolved salts are able to slip across the membrane, which is well within acceptable levels as per all standards including WHO, BIS, etc. RO systems are suitable for removing several toxic substances present in water in dissolved form, including fluoride, fertilisers, pesticide residues, and heavy metals.

E mail: mchaubey@pentairwater.com

The top "poor quality" water cities of India are Chennai, Ahmedabad, Faridabad, Salem, Kolkata, Agra, Delhi, Bhubaneswar, Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Ambala, Bhatinda...

A correction: Due to a computer error, a graphic published in Civil Society's April issue was wrongly printed. In the article, 'As time runs out, save, spend wisely,' by Dr Mritunjay Chaubey, water consumption in India was shown as 80 percent by agriculture, eight percent by industry and four percent by domestic consumers. The graphic should have shown water consumption as 90 percent by agriculture, six percent by industry and four percent by domestic consumers. The error is regretted.
—Editor.



You vs Mind vs Body vs Mind vs Body

I fell in love with running a year ago when I was preparing for the half marathon. During my preparations for the 21 km run, I experienced the profound effects of running on my mind, body and lifestyle. You must be wondering - how can a person fall in love with a simple activity like running and then how can that activity change the way he perceives life?

I usually get up at 5:30 am and run about three or four km every day. On weekends I run 10 km. When I run I feel as if life pulsates in my blood, life breathes into me and life is my very being. Every morning when I run, millions of cells in my body start vibrating with verve and tell me that we are alive.

During running, I am able to push my body to the limit where it is ready to go any distance I want. I am able to win over the resistance of my mind. It stops fooling me and starts obeying me. Then I feel as if everything is in my control and

nothing is beyond my reach. I then treat my life similarly. I play with my life. I know many times life pushes me, stretches me and checks how strong I am. Running breaks my pattern of thoughts and connects me with the present. Its an excellent meditation technique which I do every morning.

Besides this, running has profoundly altered my lifestyle. My approach towards life has changed from being reactive to proactive. I've become more disciplined in my work and daily life. Earlier, I used to do work for the sake of doing it but now I own my work and do it without any compulsion. My eating habits have changed drastically. Earlier it didn't matter to me what I was eating - whether it was fried or junk food. But now I am very particular about the constitution of my diet and how much fat, protein and carbohydrates I am taking.

It's not as if everything is the direct result of running but, yes, running has improved my consciousness and awareness about life. There is an inner difference. Before, I was doing everything in my sleep, but now I do everything consciously. That's the difference.

My activities are the same but I am no longer the same. And because I am no

longer the same, for me the world is also no longer the same. As awareness grew in me, I started feeling many things I had never felt before. First, I got rid of bodily tensions and pain. Second, I become proactive and started owning things rather than reacting to life situations.

I have found from my experience with running that it increases awareness and brings discipline in life. These two virtues make life much more simple and easy to live. For me the inner journey has just started and still has many miles to go. Every day I feel as if I am running towards my destination and one day I'll reach there.

RUN WITH ME

DEEPAK MALIK

My approach towards life has changed from being reactive to proactive. I've become more disciplined in my work and daily life. Earlier, I used to do work for the sake of doing it but now I own my work and do it without any compulsion.



Neel Arora, flying away to freedom on the motorised vehicle provided by GAIL.



For all that you never did...

You never thought of giving up

You never let your smile disappear

You never walked behind out of fear

You never let adversity win

On 'World Disability Day, 2005'

GAIL salutes you for epitomising the spirit of determination!

At GAIL, caring for and touching the lives of the physically challenged is a way of life. GAIL fulfills its social responsibility through a part of its CSR budget towards empowering them. And donating motorised vehicles is just one of the ways. GAIL has also instituted the 'Achievements in Adversity' Trophy. GAIL is promoting the use of plastic for manufacturing of artificial limbs. As a corporate, GAIL has pledged to meet the 3% statutory requirement of employing physically challenged persons by early 2006 and welcoming them into the GAIL family.



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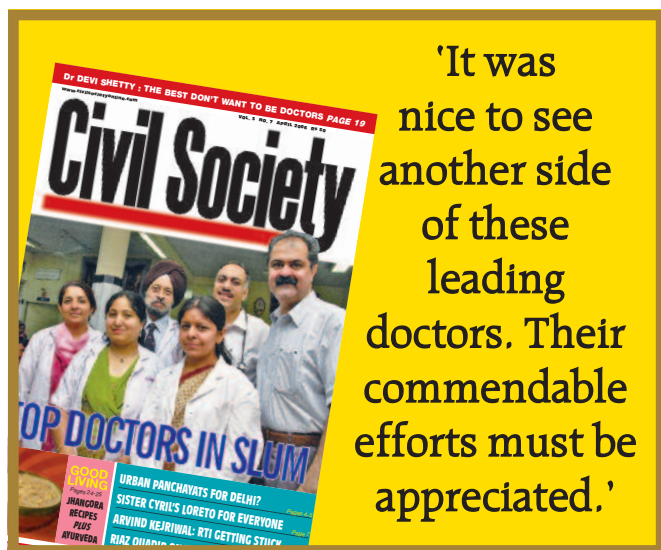
Arpana's good work

Congratulations for the excellent article on the Arpana Trust. I was delighted to read about the good work being done by doctors at Molarband. It was nice to see another side of these leading doctors. Their commendable efforts must be appreciated and disseminated for others to follow. I have, in the past, attended a sale organised by Arpana to help market products made by women in villages around Karnal. Another laudable effort. Please let readers know the contact details of the Arpana Trust and whether they accept donations/support for their activities. At last, a genuine NGO.

Ashwajit Singh

Make RWAs independent

The article 'Enough of bhagidari. RWAs want power to decide' made for an interesting read. The ideas delineated to make RWAs more than just toothless tigers sound good and well thought out. Just a word of caution-- it is extremely crucial to maintain the independence of RWAs. But at the same time, it is



important that certain curbs are in place to check the powers of RWAs. Let's remember that unbridled power corrupts.

Sania Duggal

Media abstinence

The Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah seems to be spending very little time in his office hearing complaints considering the number of seminars, discussions, public hearings and award ceremonies he has attended since the time he was sworn into office. I am sure by now he must have given a sound byte to every media

'It was nice to see another side of these leading doctors. Their commendable efforts must be appreciated.'

organisation in this country. I strongly feel that if he is serious about his job he should take an oath of 'media abstinence'.

Rina Paul

Integration

I want to congratulate Special Olympics for the work that they are doing in trying to integrate the mentally challenged into mainstream society. Having said that, I think, for a country like India to really embrace these people it will take more than just participation in organised sports. Sports participation might be doing wonders for the intellectually challenged

by boosting their confidence but this programme needs the impetus of another programme which will specifically look at integration.

Aditya Agarwal

No way to fight stress

This is in relation to the article entitled, 'Fighting stress inside the classroom'. The intentions of the organisation SERVE are all very good but they fail miserably to come up with plausible solution to the disease of 'educationlessness' that has crippled the education system and has killed the spirit of enquiry. We will definitely need to do more than just organise quizzes on the lines of Kaun Banega Crorepati.

Richa S Advani

Routine stories

This month's magazine brought nothing new in terms of stories covered and the way they were covered. The style and the angle from which the stories have been explored have nothing fresh about them. The stories picked lacked imagination and looked very routine. It is

almost as if the drudgery of churning out a magazine every month has taken its toll on the staff and in the process butchered the spirit and enthusiasm that the magazine once boasted off.

Preeti Jain

Go the Drik way

This is in relation to the article 'Drik's way is to make pictures pay'. I am happy that people are taking up the cause of 'third world' countries being stereotyped at the hands of western news agencies. We need more news and photo agencies to shatter the myths attached to the Indian sub-continent. We are more than just a country of elephants, snakes and poverty.

Anshul Gupta

Flimsy topics

It is a shame that a magazine like Civil Society has to go the lifestyle way. Recipes and jogging tips should be left to mainstream glossy newspapers and magazines. It is their job to make news out of flimsy topics like these. Please stick to stories which make Civil Society what it is, or shall I say what it was.

Aanya Sehgal

WHERE TO VOLUNTEER

CanSupport India

Kanak Durga Basti Vikas Kendra, Sector 12
R.K. Puram Near DPS School
New Delhi-110022
Tel: 26102851, 26102859, 26102869
E-mail: cansup_india@hotmail.com

Rahi

Rahi is a support centre for urban middle class women suffering from the trauma of incest. It provides information, individual support, group support and referrals. Through workshops and peer educators they help survivors and spread awareness.
Contact: H-49 A,
Second floor, Kalkaji, New Delhi-3
Phone: 26227647

Association for India's Development(AID) – Delhi Chapter

AID works for the environment, children, women's issues, education, and health. They also undertake fund raising.
Contact: Anuj Grover
B-121, MIG Flats,
Phase-IV, Ashok Vihar Delhi- 110052
Phone: 9818248459
E-mail: anuj.grover@gmail.com

Youthreach

A volunteer team at Youthreach helps to match your skills and interests with the needs of their partner organisations. This exchange is monitored and facilitated from beginning to end by the volunteer team. The team also partners other non-profit organisations that are working with children, women and the environment.
Contact: Anubha or Ria 11 Community Centre,
Saket, New Delhi - 110 017
Phone/Fax: (011) 2653 3520/25/30
Email : yrd@youthreachindia.org

Deepalaya

They work with economically, socially deprived, physically and mentally challenged children. They believe in helping children become self reliant and

lead a healthy life. Deepalya works on education, health, skill training and income enhancement.
Contact: Deepalaya 46, Institutional Area,
D Block Janakpuri New Delhi - 110 058
Phone: 25548263, 25590347
Website: www.deepalaya.org

Mobile Crèches

Mobile Crèches pioneered intervention into the lives of migrant construction workers by introducing the mobile crèche where working parents can leave their children. They work in the following areas: health, education, community outreach, networking and advocacy, resource mobilisation and communication. You can volunteer by filling out a simple form online.
Contact: DIZ Area, Raja Bazaar,
Sector IV New Delhi -110 001
Phone: 91-11-23347635 / 23363271
Website: www.mobilecreches.org

The Arpana Trust

Arpana is a charitable, religious and spiritual organisation headquartered in Karnal, Haryana. They work with rural communities in Himachal Pradesh and with slum dwellers in Delhi. Arpana is well known for its work on health. They have helped organise women into self-help groups. These SHGs make beautiful and intricate items which are marketed by Arpana.
For more details:
Arpana Community Centre, NS-5, Munirka Marg
Street F/9, Next to MTNL, Vasant Vihar,
New Delhi-110057.
Phone: (Office) 26151136 and (Resi) 26154964

HelpAge India

HelpAge India needs volunteers from doctors to lay people in all our locations. Older people love to talk to younger people and need emotional support. We require volunteers in Delhi and Chennai to survey older people staying alone in homes, who could use our Helpline for senior citizens. If you wish to volunteer please email Pawan Solanki, manager at pawan.s@helpageindia.org or write to Vikas, volunteer coordinator, HelpAge India.

WHERE TO DONATE

Indian Red Cross Society

The society provides relief, hospital services, maternity and child welfare, family welfare, nursing and community services.
Contact: Red Cross Bhavan
Golf Links
New Delhi-110003
Phone: 24618915, 24617531

Child Relief and You (CRY)

CRY, a premier child rights organisation, believes that every child is entitled to survival, protection, development and participation. You can sponsor a child's education, healthcare, or a health worker and a teacher.
Website: www.cry.org

Community Aid and Sponsorship Program (CASP)

CASP enhances the capacities of children, families and communities through participation and advocacy leading to sustainable development and empowerment. You can help by sponsoring underprivileged child/children from any work area where CASP implements its programmes. These include building old-age homes, projects relating to AIDS etc.
Website: www.caspindia.org

ActionAid

ActionAid is an international development organisation which works with poor and marginalised women, men, girls and boys to eradicate poverty, injustice and inequity. You can become a part of their Karma Mitra loyalty program, which is based on the concept 'When you do good things you should get good things in return.' As a member of this program you can avail various tangible benefits.
Contact: ActionAid India
C-88, South Extension - II
New Delhi-110 049
Website: www.actionaidindia.org

CanSupport India

Kanak Durga Basti Vikas Kendra, Sector 12
R.K. Puram Near DPS School
New Delhi-110022
Tel: 26102851, 26102859, 26102869
E-mail: cansup_india@hotmail.com

HelpAge India

HelpAge India is involved in the care of the poor and disadvantaged elderly in 55 locations across the country. They organise primary health care at village and slum level through 53 mobile medical vans, care of the destitute elderly through Adopt a Gran programme with 222 voluntary agencies, Helplines and income generation for the elderly. Their recent programmes are in the tsunami affected regions and in Kashmir for the rehabilitation of the elderly affected by the earthquake disaster. HelpAge serve more than a million elderly in India. If you wish to donate or adopt a granny, please donate online on our site www.helpageindia.org or send an email to helpage@nde.vsnl.net.in
Address: HelpAge India
C-14 Qutub Institutional Area
New Delhi- 110016
Chief Executive: Mathew Cherian -
mathew.cherian@helpageindia.org

Bharatiya Academy

The Eco Development Foundation and the Soni Foundation Trust have set up the Bharatiya Academy which runs a school for underprivileged children and for children of defence employees serving on the border who are victims of violence and war. The school is located in Tashipur, Roorkee, Hardwar district and has 115 children on its rolls. The school requires money for buildings and sponsors for the children. Temporary buildings have been made by the Bengal Sappers regiment. Teachers are also required.
Contact: Soni Foundation Trust, F-2655
Palam Vihar, Gurgaon, Haryana-122017
E-mail: kcjecodev@rediffmail.com
Phone: 0124-2360422