Cover Story

THE BOSE

A dispassionate assessment of Netaji and his contribution to India’s Freedom Struggle
Netaji & Modi: Two conquerors from two different eras

Subhas Chandra Bose, a man of huge stature who admired Gandhi but despised at his aims and methods, and became a bitter rival of Nehru. Bose played a very active and prominent role in India’s political life post 1930s. For example, he was twice (1938 and 1939) elected President of the Indian National Congress, the country’s most important political force for freedom from the Raj, or British rule. While his memory is still held in high esteem in India, in the West Bose is much less revered, largely because of his wartime collaboration with the Axis powers. Both before and during the Second World War, Bose worked tirelessly to secure German and Japanese support in freeing his beloved homeland of foreign rule. During the final two years of the war, Bose with considerable Japanese backing led the forces of the Indian National Army into battle against the British. Netaji, without a shadow of a doubt, remains one of the most key figures in the history of India’s independence. He played a crucial role in freeing the country from the clutches of 200 years of British rule in his own inimitable way, much like the other leading lights of the day such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Till the last day of his life as an active freedom fighter he kept the spirit of fighting the British till his last breath. Today Netaji is perhaps the tallest name in modern Indian history and our contemporary military and foreign policy are guided by the impact that Bose has left for independent Mother Land - INDIA.

Narendra Modi has come with a Modi 2.0 as the most loved national leader. Now it appears 2014 was no aberration. Besides his charismatic and famous persona, the 2019 victory was certainly fuelled by the relentless and highly apt style of campaigning. The figure of Modi has towered over the entire contest of elections like no other prime minister since Indira Gandhi in the 1970s. People have reposed faith in him despite not being satisfied with the kind of economic policies the government has made so far or the WAY Indian economy is managed by the present government. His popularity has incessantly increased compared with 2014 in India and abroad. Modi’s recent USA visit, howdy Modi show, PRC President India’s visit to Chennai to improve Indo-China relations, PM Modi Saudi Arab visit to enhance trade and commerce, German Chancellor Indian visit with a focus on high tech transfer of cutting edge technologies has shaken the foreign policy of India dramatically. Though the months leading to the elections were quite a bumpy ride for the BJP, Modi’s promise that ‘good days are ahead’ literally turned into a milestone and the party had a terrific win. The chowkidar’s impeccable strength and hard work represented a stunning vote of confidence in him by the people of India. No Indian prime minister has ever returned to power with such a huge mandate. A simple man from Gujarat changed the idea of India, the perspective of Indian people and the endeavour to create a corruption-free country.

—Prashant Tewari, Editor-in-Chief
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A VISIONARY WITH CHARISMA

An assessment of one of the tallest leaders of India’s Freedom Struggle who experimented with the fusion of socialism and fascism

Prashant Tewari

Two figures dominated the last leg of Indian freedom struggle were Gandhi’s favorite soldiers namely Fabian Socialist acolyte, Jawaharlal Nehru and assertive and aggressive Subhas Chandra Bose, a man of comparable stature who admired Gandhi but despaired at his aims and methods, and became a bitter rival of Nehru. Bose played a very active and prominent role in India’s political life post 1930s. For example, he was twice (1938 and 1939) elected President of the Indian National Congress, the country’s most important political force for freedom from the Raj, or British rule. While his memory is still held in high esteem in India, in the West Bose is much less revered, largely because of his wartime collaboration with the Axis powers. Both before and during the Second World War, Bose worked tirelessly to secure German and
Japanese support in freeing his beloved homeland of foreign rule. During the final two years of the war, Bose with considerable Japanese backing led the forces of the Indian National Army into battle against the British. Netaji, without a shadow of a doubt, remains one of the most key figures in the history of India’s independence. He played a crucial role in freeing the country from the clutches of 200 years of British rule in his own inimitable way, much like the other leading lights of the day such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Till the last day of his life as an active freedom fighter he kept the spirit of fighting the British.

Bose propounded the Ideology of fusion of socialism and fascism: In years that followed, he asserted that India must have a political system of an authoritarian character. In India, though, Bose is regarded as a national hero, in spite of his repeated praise (as will be shown) for autocratic leadership and authoritarian government, and admiration for the European fascist regimes with which he allied himself. During his lifetime, Bose was frequently denounced as a fascist or even a Nazi, particularly in the wake of the radical, revolutionary (as opposed to reformist) views he expressed in radio addresses broadcast to India from National Socialist Germany and, later, from quasi-fascist Japan. By 1930 Bose had formulated the broad strategy that he believed India must follow to throw off the yoke of British imperialism and assume its rightful place as a leader in Asia. During his years in Mandalay prison and another short term of imprisonment in Alipore jail in 1930, he read many works on political theory, including Francesco Nitti’s Bolshevism, Fascism and Democracy and Ivanoe Bonomi’s From Socialism to Fascism. It is clear that these works on fascism influenced him, and caused an immediate modification of his long-held socialist views: as noted above, in his inaugural speech as mayor of Calcutta, given a day after his release from Alipore jail, he revealed his support for a seemingly contradictory ideological synthesis of socialism and fascism. Until his death 15 years later, Bose would continue publicly to praise certain aspects of fascism and express his hope for a synthesis of that ideology and socialism. Contending that the Indian National Congress was somewhat “out of date,” and suffered from a lack of unity and strong leadership, Bose predicted in The Indian Struggle that out of a “Left-Wing revolt there will ultimately emerge a new full-fledged party with a clear ideology, program and plan of action.”

Bose was willing to tone down his more radical political beliefs on those occasions when he considered it advantageous or necessary to do so. For example, in his February 1938 inaugural speech as President of the Indian National Congress, Bose - probably in a sincere attempt to placate the Gandhian faction -- made statements that appear to represent almost an about face from the political views he had expounded in The Indian Struggle. In a future independent India, he said, “the party itself will have a democratic basis, unlike, for instance, the Nazi party which is based on the “leader principle.” The existence of more than one party and the democratic basis of the Congress party will prevent the future Indian State becoming a totalitarian one. A year later he successfully re-contested the presidential election, but two months afterwards was forced to resign because of his inability to resolve his differences with Gandhi and the Gandhian faction. Probably believing that his earlier suspicions of democracy had been proven correct, and feeling that there was now no use in trying to win the favor or approval of more conservative elements in the Congress party, Bose once again proclaimed his belief in the efficacy of authoritarian government and a synthesis of fascism and socialism.
Many similar examples can be cited to show how Bose outwardly (but probably not inwardly) modified his views to suit changing political contexts. "In the struggle for the cause of India’s independence he has given his life and has escaped all those troubles which brave soldiers like him have to face in the end. He was not only brave but had deep love for freedom. He believed, rightly or wrongly, that whatever he did was for the independence of India. Although I personally did not agree with him in many respects, and he left us and formed the Forward Bloc, nobody can doubt his sincerity. He struggled throughout his life for the independence of India, in his own way." Along with his abiding love for his country, Bose held an equally passionate hatred of the imperial power that ruled it: Great Britain. In a radio address broadcast from Berlin on March 1, 1943, he exclaimed that Britain’s demise was near, and predicted that it would be “India’s privilege to end that Satanic Empire. The fundamental principle of his foreign policy, Bose declared in a May 1945 speech in Bangkok, is that “Britain’s enemy is India’s friend.” Although these two speeches are from his final years, they express views he had held since before his April 1921 resignation from the Indian Civil Service. It was this principle of making friends with Britain’s enemies in the hope that they would assist him in liberating India that brought him in 1941 to Germany and then, in 1943, to Japan. Indeed Bose was infatuated with military discipline, and later commented that his basic training in the University Unit of the India Defence Force (for which he volunteered in 1917, while a student at Scottish Church College in Calcutta) “gave me something which I needed or which I lacked. The feeling of strength and of self-confidence grew still further.” Bose was able to give much grander expression to his “militarism” when, in 1930, he volunteered to form a guard of honor during the ceremonial
functions at the Calcutta session of the Congress party. Such guards of honor were not uncommon, but the one Bose formed and commanded was unlike anything previously seen. More than 2,000 volunteers were given military training and organized into battalions. About half wore uniforms, with specially designed steel-chain epaulettes for the officers. Bose, in full dress uniform (peaked cap, standing collar, ornamental breast cords, and jodhpurs) even carried a Field Marshal’s baton when he reviewed his “troops.” Photographs taken at the conference show him looking entirely out of place in a sea of khadi (traditional Indian clothing). Gandhi and several other champions of Non-violence (Ahimsa) were uncomfortable with this display.

A high point in Bose’s “military career” came in July 1943 in Singapore. At a mass meeting there on July 4, Rash Behari Bose (no relation) handed over to him the leadership of the Indian Independence League. This “Free India Army” (“Azad Hind Fauj”) would not only “emancipate India from the British yoke,” he told the soldiers, but would, under his command, become the standing national army of the liberated nation. Bose clearly admired strong, vigorous, military-type leaders, and in The Indian Struggle he listed several whom he particularly respected. These included Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and even a former British governor of Bengal, Sir Stanley Jackson. Nowhere in this book is there any criticism of these individuals (three of them dictators) for having too much power, yet another man is chastised for this: Mahatma Gandhi. Bose admired Gandhi for many things, not least his ability to “exploit the mass psychology of the people, just as Lenin did the same thing in Russia, Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany.” But he accused Gandhi of accepting too much power and responsibility, of becoming a “Dictator for the whole country” who issued “decrees” to the Congress. Ac-

“In the struggle for the cause of India’s independence he has given his life and has escaped all those troubles which brave soldiers like him have to face in the end. He was not only brave but had deep love for freedom. He believed, rightly or wrongly, that whatever he did was for the independence of India. Although I personally did not agree with him in many respects, and he left us and formed the Forward Bloc, nobody can doubt his sincerity. He struggled throughout his life for the independence of India, in his own way.”
cording to Bose, Gandhi was a brilliant and gifted man, but, unlike Mussolini, Hitler and the others mentioned, a very ineffectual leader. Gandhi had failed to liberate India because of his frequent indecision and constant willingness to compromise with the Raj (something Bose said he would never do). Bose’s militarism, ambition and leadership traits do not necessarily indicate (contrary to popular opinion) that he was a leader in the fascist mold. If they did, one would have to consider all personalities with similar traits — Winston Churchill, for example — as “fascist.” In this regard, it is worth noting that during his many years as head of various councils, committees and offices, and during 15-month tenure as President of the Indian National Congress (February 1938 to May 1939), Bose never acted in an undemocratic manner, nor did he claim powers or responsibilities to which he was not constitutionally or customarily entitled. Neither did he attempt in any way to foster a cult of his own personality (as, it could be argued, Gandhi did).

Bose proclaimed, on October 21, 1943, the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (“Free India”). While retaining his post as Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army, he announced that he was naming himself Head of State, Prime Minister, and Minister for War and Foreign Affairs. (The most important of these positions — Head of State — he anticipated retaining in a free India.) These appointments involved no democratic process or voting of any kind. Further, the authority he exercised in these posts was dictatorial and often very harsh. He demanded total obedience and loyalty from the Indians in south Asia, and any who opposed him, his army or government faced imprisonment, torture, or even execution. Additionally, if wealthy Indians did not contribute sufficient funds to Bose’s efforts, they risked confiscation of their property. Bose’s threats were taken very seriously, and had the desired effect: funds did pour in. His INA troops were obliged to swear an oath of loyalty to both the Provisional Government and to him personally. He ordered the summary execution of all INA deserters, and also prepared (but was never able to implement) law codes for the entire population of India. These laws, which stipulated the death penalty for a range of offenses, were to come into force when the INA, together with the Japa-
nese Army, entered India to fight against the British. With regard to his leadership style during this 1943-1945 period, in fairness to Bose is should be pointed out that the entire world was then engulfed in a horrendous war, and political and military leaders everywhere, on all sides, adapted extraordinarily authoritarian and repressive measures.

As he frequently stated, Bose aimed for nothing less than the formation of “a new India and a happy India on the basis of the eternal principles of liberty, democracy and socialism.” He rejected Communism (at least as it was practiced in the Soviet Union) principally because of its internationalism, and because he believed that the theoretical ideal found in the writings of Marx could not be applied, without modification, to India. Still, he maintained socialist views throughout his adult life, and, on very many occasions, expressed his hope for an egalitarian (especially classless and casteless) industrialized society in which the state would control the basic means of production. He was opposed to liberalism, believing that greater emphasis should be placed on social goals than on the needs or desires of individuals. Individual wishes, he reasoned, must be subordinated to the needs of the state, especially during the struggle for independence and the period of reconstruction immediately following liberation. Nonetheless, having himself been imprisoned eleven times and sent into exile three times, he was fully committed to upholding the rights of minority intellectual, religious, cultural and racial groups. He hoped for an “all-round freedom for the Indian people -- that is, for social, economic and political freedom,” and would, he said “wage a relentless war against bondage of every kind till the people can become really free.”

Of course, Bose demanded not only the total mobilization of Indian resources in south Asia, but of Indian resources everywhere. He called for mass mobilization not only in support of his army, but also for his dynamic new government, the various branches of which required financing and manpower. First, his ideology and actions were not the result of any extreme neurotic or pathological psychosocial impulses. He was not a megalomaniac, nor did he display any of the pathological traits often attributed (rightly or wrongly) to fascist leaders, such as hostile aggression, obsessive hatred or delusions. Moreover, while he was an ardent patriot and nationalist, Bose’s nationalism was cultural, not racialist. Second, his radical political ideology was shaped by a consuming frustration with the unsuccessful efforts of others to gain independence for India. His “fascist” outlook did not come from a drive for personal power or social elevation. While he was ambitious, and clearly enjoyed the devotion of his followers, his obsession was not adulation or power, but rather freedom for his beloved Motherland -- a goal for which he was willing to suffer and sacrifice, even at the cost of his life. Bose was favorably impressed with the discipline and organizational strength of fascism as early as 1930, when he first expressed support for a synthesis of fascism and socialism. During his stays in Europe during the 1930s, he was deeply moved by the dynamism of the two major “fascist” powers, Italy and Germany. After observing these regimes first-hand, he developed a political ideology of his own that, he was convinced, could bring about the liberation of India and the total reconstruction of Indian society along vaguely authoritarian-socialist lines. Bose’s lack of success in his life-long effort to liberate India from alien rule was certainly not due to any lack of effort. From 1921, when he became the first Indian to resign formally from the Indian Civil Service, until his death in 1945 as leader of an Indian government in exile, Subhas Chandra Bose struggled ceaselessly to achieve freedom and prosperity for his beloved homeland.

(Writer is Editor of Opinion Express and regular columnist to The Pioneer)
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS
A lowdown on Fundamental Rights ensconced in the Constitution of India
First of all, it is true that India is a democratic country. We all have equal rights to assert our democracy as long as we are part of this nation. We have learnt during our growing days and seamlessly exercise these rights as we grow up to be ‘contributing’ as citizens in the betterment of the nation.

Governance— if we can redefine for ease of understanding is a public forum elected to bring limitations to factors that are in fluid state and cannot be left unbounded causing inadvertent damage to the nation. Any force, if left to move on its own, then the resulting effect can only be estimated to be exponential. Therefore, government is a body that was formed to be elected ‘by the people’ and their governing rules should be for the people’ resolving the troubles ‘of the people’ i.e., to bring decency and civilised system into the nation that shall be commonly applied when once is not in their personal fortress or realm of life, this means- As long as I am within the four walls of my residence or my personal space, I can follow my religion, my prayers, my practise etc that would not affect the general lives of either my neighbour or influence a community against government or any governing body or involve in anything that brings harm to the nation. But the question is it possible to expect this from present scenario in the country? Is our constitution in question? over the years have we subtly amended its original existence to unknown such that the purpose- that is to secure all its citizen has weakened?

It is true that we are all in a country that is diversified by not just religion but also by colours, food habits, lifestyles, geographies and various such substantial factors—by and large was greatly welcomed within our social circle in the past, has now come to light in the recent years that belonging to certain religion or cast is a stigma. But, whilst the tasteful sharing of all the above mentioned, we continue to discriminate on one major factor called Religion that has far spread its evil wings wide into our core fundamental rights gifted by the constitution. This is the kind of ‘Stigma’ that we did not occur to us as growing children, nor was it instilled by our parents or neighbours or families or friends into our routine. It was the thing of the past, perhaps 18th century and lasted till about mid of 19th century and faded with the dawn of literate, open minded, tolerant and modern 21st century. Today, my deep introspection has revealed that we have come back

**Shakila Makandar**

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens’

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this 26th day of November 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION
full cycle in terms of social reformation, understanding the constitution in truth by every letter and word, re-creating awareness on brotherhood and blood wars or simply returning to dark ages of the new era.

Fundamental rights (wikipedia, n.d.) are those rights which are essential for intellectual, moral and spiritual development of individuals. As these rights are fundamental or essential for existence and all-round development of individuals, hence called as ‘Fundamental’ rights. Fundamental rights apply universally to all citizens including the governing body itself - be it President or Prime Minister or just a civilian; irrespective of race, birthplace, religion, caste or gender. There are six fundamental rights recognised by the Indian constitution:

1. Right to equality (Articles. 14-18)
2. Right to freedom (Articles. 19-22)
3. Right against exploitation (Articles. 23-24)
4. Right to freedom of religion (Articles. 25-28)
5. Cultural and Educational Rights (Articles. 29-30), and
6. Right to constitutional remedies (Articles. 32-35)

Here’s the new evolution to reformation:

Right to Equality - Nation’s outlook into “Equality” as a subject matter looks very well. It is also very well professed by other nationals who think that India is the most tolerant country with such diversity and yet the citizens of the nation have the integrity that never let go the pride of ‘Unity’ in this nation.

1949, when the constitution was released it meant to remove all the evils that prevailed for very long in Indian (then Bharat) history. BharataKanda-Indian Sub-Continent, went through life of slavery, brutality in terms of penalization for meagre crimes such as theft of robbery, common-man feared cruelty that was imposed on them based on discriminations at various levels - Gender discrimination was on the top of the chart - Male V/S Female and their limitations respectively followed by Caste, Race, Colour, Religion and other trivial factors. Truth is told, from the original Indian history that hailed for thousands of years, it’s hardly evident during the administration of great leaders that such huge range of discrimination existed. However, given to the colonization and Indian Colonial Era- we were left stranded amidst learning, unlearning and relearning the government norms. The civilians acted as the government suggested- majority of these suggestions were only aimed at breaking India into as many divergent little chunks as possible. Thanks to our great leaders, who could bring in the reformation in the form of “The Constitution of India” that eradicated these discriminations in the name of united nation thus continuing to accept the nation and its culture as guided by the constitution?

This is true that the citizens play a very important role in not just forming the present government but also to continue to support the chosen proving it to be the most capable one.
the name of power or leadership.

How it acceptable is either then or now that there is cast/creed/religion etc that can define a social stature of a person. What is the meaning of General Category in our current constitutional arrangement? Why shouldn’t the social strata be (if at all it should) for reasons of discussions or gathering otherwise in the form of education, specialization etc? Why are we continuing to segment the population in terms of the era that are by gone? Where is the EQUALITY in this time while we are talking about “Global Justice”?

We must voice out these differences clearly in-order to retain the oneness in the nation. We are privileged generation that has many quick tool, tricks and mechanism available with the advent of technology, we are not limited to running a rally or conducting ‘Protests/Strikes/Hartals’ or going on a ‘Silent Protest/Fasting/Satyagrah’. We now have access to anyone and everyone within a click of a button- USE IT to remain INDIAN!

Inequality exercised brutally- refer Case Studies:
1. SC/ST (Jatvas) V/S Upper Class (Takurs) in UP over a marriage processions/Baraat- Justice was lame. Ref:
2. Kathua, Unnao rape- The entire family went through torments including brutal death.
3. Khanaia Kumar JNU- Sedition& Criminal charges under IPC Sec 124 (A) and 120(B) respectively
4. Cow Slaughter- the right to moral policing to pick possible Muslim peasant or trader involved in any cattle related business- categorized, tortured and many beaten to death across the country
Right to Freedom: yes there is all the freedom we as a nation wanted during our freedom struggle—freedom of speech & expression, gathering in assemblies & forming Unions, moving from one state to another or choosing a particular place for living within the nation or even to start your own trade or business—because we were in the caught in the claws of foreigners. All of the above mentioned were achieved with a purpose and resolve—it was called FREEDOM; to this extent, that eminent personalities from various parts of this nation sacrificed every ounce of their world to create this freedom that we are proud to pronounce at every given opportunity, we are proud to use at any given point in time, we use it very subconsciously in our day to day life. This “Freedom” was so important for India, not only to be free from existing rulers, but also to hear out to civilians at that time, whose grief never reached the powerful sitting in the decision-making capacity. Let’s look into couple of these aspects one at a time—

Freedom of Speech & Expression has changed in these few years—Social media, technology and other innovative discoveries that are our new tools to democracy, were supposed to enable us as a developing nation has snatched the freedom away within a jiffy. Every moment, every action, every event, everything that one does—ethical, unethical; legal, illegal; good, bad & ugly is all available for everyone’s consumption; and all of it costs less than a penny—thanks to Internet. The question isn’t about is it wrong to use? The question is rather about why is it misused? Freedom of speech in any form should also follows the same mandate as to maintaining decency and healthy conversation, instead to be misused as a medium to instigate, propagate or provoke ill-will onto the audience.

The best use of it is made during the Elections. Any party campaigning took the best advantage of such digital medium and became unabashed before public losing their image, value and also losing the sense of basic decency, dignity and humanity. It has time and again come to light to the general pub-
whose agenda is mostly selfish than selfless towards the nation. The entire motto of providing ‘Freedom’ to common man and his wellbeing has turned out to be political or profit making in nature, driving the innocent civilians into con-works, terrorism, communalism, and other such atrocious activities causing discordance.

Our constitution includes right to freedom to ensure harmonious living to one and all under one nation, one flag, one anthem and one government in order. It should be the government who understands the meaning of Freedom under the constitution and imbibes the same whilst propagating its right use rather than its misuse. Use “Right to Freedom” rightly. Citizen is always guided by government; else no nation would need a government.

**Right to freedom of religion:** The most important but vulnerable and bleak matter. Religion is and will be individual choice; the choice made purely out of one’s own will to practice in order to bring work-life balance, orderliness, peace of mind and positivity in one’s life or any other reason one should find to practise for his own wellbeing. If religion can be left to one’s individual interest, the world will be a better place. Nonetheless, the fact is—this is the most vulnerable aspect in people’s mind as this brings sense of communism and belongingness easily in them and that has proved ‘good for all political reasons’ to be exploited. For E.g.- if only one says that I follow “Lord Sri-Krishna” as a god, even casually to a total stranger and that incidentally the stranger also acknowledges to follow the same, they both along with their entire family get friendly within no time. This is the strength and also the weakness that any religion asserts in one’s mind. Whether one likes it or not, but I can bet on the fact that any other factor might not be as important as religion in gathering favoured votes. This is not just here, entire world in a way or the other follows religious politics, without which there are bleak chances of winning the elections; to these tune missionaries of respective religions play a very political role in rubbing shoulders with aspiring or popular politicians. But this is not what we are worried about, isn’t it?

Sadly, I’m certainly worried about the fact that this single aspect-sensitively yet vulnerable has left deep scare in our ‘united-by-diversity’- nation. Our house problems have become others’ passage to enter our home and ruin our peace. Our home is cracking slowly and parting with each other internally. From “very few states during independence to every language in a land mass is a state” has become the trend; from everyone is Indian to “Hindu” in Indian and the others are- minorities living on mercy- is in today’s air; from hugging a buddy studied together to “Oh! Your last name is Kumar” is the conversation. Wow! We have lost it all by one. Faith, trust and confidence on our own is questionable. Our binding reason “Being Indian, Being Human” has lost in this era of great literacy, booming economy and well settled life. Who is happy with all this? Who is enjoying the fruits of innocent, naïve and blending civilians? Who is being exploited for power and money? Point to Ponder.

Our constitution never says anything regarding such religious freedom, but it never shrugged off the matter either. Considering the kind of cast system, discrimination and other differences it was a very thoughtful act to have included Right to Freedom of Religion, however the current state of affairs are not any different to the then scenario; except the fact we are now fighting within the educated community while we had to earlier educate “right to religious freedom” to the uneducated community.

Right to Freedom of Religion is to practice at one’s own will and in one’s own place, not to exploit it to be imposed on every civilian in the country. It is not “Religion” based country; India is a diversified country, unified by efforts of every individual’s independent contribution.
contribution. It is a fundamental flaw if one wishes to rule a country based on religious grounds. Great administrators have tasted mud whilst this trial, they fall flat on their faces even before they realised the mistake. Civilians don’t wish you administer their homes, they wish you administer their steady income for better lives. We need employment, better payments and some better use of our taxes, not religious discourse from governments.

Right to Education- “Our Constitution fathers did not intend that we just set up hovels, put students there, give untrained teachers, give them bad textbooks, no playgrounds, and say, we have complied with Article 45 and primary education is expanding... They meant that real education should be given to our children between the ages of 6 and 14” - (MC Chagla, 1964) - there were hundreds of programs that were initiated to bring educational reform in the country.

To remind- Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a fine example of what education can do to a person and his story was literally included in every syllabus and in every standard. Likewise, Mahatma Gandhi, a man from Hindu Gujarati family who went on to become a Barrister and later was awarded the title ‘Mahatma’ and is known for his work greatly through non-violence (Africa and Indian continent) and hence Mahatma. These were more inspiring stories for - educated, uneducated and to be educated class alike and such testimonials encouraged education in India; despite the fact that the entire nation’s population was going through economic pitfalls; majority of the nation survived of petty earnings to make their living but still were able to manage to enrol the next generation to engage under some government scheme or the other to ensure education took place as a mass project nevertheless the bread winning load was shared by all at home. Therefore, we saw an era of Joint families, farming families, increased number of government schools, respectful and grateful jobs like Teachers, engineers, doctors etc had flourished without religious bias or discrimination.

At present- everything has changed in terms living, social gathering, and number of government schools or even government hospitals for that matter. The fundamental right to education has become commercial, the need to spread education as a source for better living has become a challenge to common man. Government schools are in peril, teachers aren’t being paid well, infrastructure is least of conditions etc. We say- There is Education but discriminated in a way. Wealthy people v/s poor people. Upper society school v/s lower society school. Highly paid teachers’ v/s hardly paid teachers. If this is right to EDUCATION- we are HEADING to nowhere!

The above 4 out of 6 points are part of our fundamental right in Indian Constitution. The reason to touch base on these pointers was to simply remind people with like-minded thoughts to come together and help the nation and its citizen in continuing to follow what India use to be, unlike where we are standing now- New ERA of discrimination, New ERA of cast system, New ERA of fighting for our own right, New ERA of belonging to this nation. We have to re-identify now, emphasis that we are also Indians instead of just saying “I’m Indian”. We are in an ERA of fighting our own evils. This must end before we enter into another war zone on religious, communal or identification grounds.

Writer is principle correspondent with Opinion Express
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The parking mess of Delhi

NEW DELHI: With more than 75 lakh active vehicles on the road, the capital faces massive parking problems, further causing road blockages and traffic jams. The parking problem gets worse at the time of weekends, when the open market areas are completely crammed full with commuters walking around, shopkeepers selling things on pavement and most of them parking their vehicles at the wrong side. Manoj Singh, a worker in the New Delhi Municipal Corporation said, “There is an unplanned handling of parking spaces. On weekends the rush is uncontrollable hence complete disorder.”

Conversely, after the newly amended Motor vehicle Act came into effect, the increase in penalty rates has become a massive complication for Delhites. Mansi Sharma, a commuter, said, “It’s a routine issue. There are no sufficient spaces for parking and the spaces built are jam-packed. I have to leave home early so that I get a parking space.” The efforts by the government have failed to address the problems of people. Consequently, car owners park on public place which causes road congestion. Kuldeep Kumar, a Municipal Corporation official, said, “The issue is not only with less parking spaces but people’s heedless behavior amounting to mayhem.” Kumar further cites an example of Krishna Nagar, “BJP government had built a parking lot last year but hasn’t started it. This caused two major problems –the revenue is eventually at halt and people are getting affected since a year.”

Delhi is considered worst city in the world in terms of the availability and quality of parking spaces. Anju Kamal Kant, Mayor of EDMC, said, “Media make things look different. We have always ensured excessive space for parking.” However, she blames the previous AAP government for not releasing enough funds. She says, “On the one hand the AAP government denies to raise funds for the municipal corporation and on the other provides ten crore to their MLAs.”

Perhaps, it will be a good idea to channel the funds and resources for building adequate parking spaces for strengthening the public system. Anju further mentioned some of the upcoming projects by EDMC “Last week, we had a standing committee meeting in which we have planned to make new lots in Preet Vihar area and build open-parking spaces of about eighty slots. We aren’t able to perform effectively because of lack of funds.”

Then there is an open secret about the corruption in police that is assigned the duty of regulating the traffic. In Delhi, half of the available road space in any main street is encroached by traders and street vendors, and they are paying to the police and municipal authorities to survive. The estimated collection of this speed money “hafta” runs in several crores of rupees and it is impossible to curb this menace. The entire city is running on half of the total road space made available for commuters, it leads to regular jams and chaos.

To save the city from the increasing disaster, government must increase parking charges on hourly basis in the main city centre and important places in the city to discourage the people to travel on private vehicle and to promote the public transport: it will solve the parking problem, pollution related issues and save energy resources hence the saving of the national wealth.

LARAIB FATIMA: Writer is JMI Media student and a regular columnist with Opinion Express.
Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, popularly known as Baba-saheb Ambedkar, was an Indian jurist, economist, politician and social reformer who inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement and campaigned against social discrimination towards the untouchables (Dalits), while also supporting the rights of women and labour. He was independent India’s first law and justice minister, one of the architect of the Constitution of India, and a founding father of the Republic of India. In India and elsewhere, he was often called Baba-saheb, meaning “respected father” in Marathi and Hindi.

Ambedkar was a prolific student earning doctorates in economics from both Columbia University and the London School of Economics and gained a reputation as a scholar for his research in law, economics, and political science. In his early career, he was an economist, professor, and lawyer. His later life was marked by his political activities; he became involved in campaigning and negotiations for India’s independence, publishing journals, advocating political rights and social freedom for Dalits, and contributing significantly to the establishment of the state of India. In 1956, he converted to Buddhism initiating mass conversions of Dalits. He died six months shortly after conversion. In 1990, the Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian award, was posthumously conferred upon Ambedkar. Ambedkar’s legacy includes numerous memorials and depictions in popular culture.

Dr Rai Singh

BR Ambedkar was much more than just the author of the Constitution of India
Early life

Ambedkar was born on 14 April 1891 in the town and military cantonment of Mhow (present-day Dr. Ambedkar Nagar) in the Central Provinces (present-day Madhya Pradesh).[1] He was the 14th and last child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal, an army officer who held the rank of Subedar, and Bhimabai Sakpal, daughter of Laxman Murbadkar. His family was of Marathi background from the village of Ambadawe (Mandangad taluka) in Ratnagiri district of modern-day Maharashtra. Ambedkar was born into a poor low Mahar (dalit) caste, who were treated as untouchables and subjected to socio-economic discrimination. Ambedkar’s ancestors had long worked for the army of the British East India Company, and his father served in the British Indian Army at the Mhow cantonment. Although they attended school, Ambedkar and other untouchable children were segregated and given little attention or help by teachers. They were not allowed to sit inside the class. When they needed to drink water, someone from a higher caste had to pour that water from a height as they were not allowed to touch either the water or the vessel that contained it. This task was usually performed for the young Ambedkar by the school peon, and if the peon was not available then he had to go without water; he described the situation later in his writings as “No peon, No Water”. He was required to sit on a gunny sack which he had to take home with him.

Ramji Sakpal retired in 1894 and the family moved to Satara two years later. Shortly after their move, Ambedkar’s mother died. The children were cared for by their paternal aunt and lived in difficult circumstances. Three sons – Balaram, Anandrao and Bhimrao – and two daughters – Manjula and Tulasa – of the Ambedkars survived them. Of his brothers and sisters, only Ambedkar passed his examinations and went to high school. His original surname was Sakpal but his father registered his name as Ambadawekar in school, meaning he comes from his native village of Ambadawe in Ratnagiri district. His Devrute Brahmin teacher, Krishna Keshav Ambedkar, changed his surname from “Ambadawekar” to his own surname “Ambedkar” in school records.

Education

Post-secondary education

In 1897, Ambedkar’s family moved to Mumbai where Ambedkar became the only untouchable enrolled at Elphinstone High School. In 1906, when he was about 15 years old, his marriage to a nine-year-old girl, Ramabai, was arranged. In 1907, he passed his matriculation examination and in the following year he entered Elphinstone College, which was affiliated to the University of Bombay, becoming, according to him, the first from his Mahar caste to do so. When he passed his English fourth standard examinations, the people of his community wanted to celebrate because they considered that he had reached “great heights” which he says was “hardly an occasion compared to the state of education in other communities”. A public ceremony was evoked, to celebrate his success, by the community, and it was at this occasion that he was presented with a biography of the Buddha by Dada Keluskar, the author and a family friend.[

By 1912, he obtained his degree in economics and political science from Bombay University, and prepared to take up employment with the Baroda state government. His wife had just moved his young family and started work when he had to quickly return to Mumbai to see his ailing father, who died on 2 February 1913.

Postgraduate studies at Columbia University

In 1913, Ambedkar moved to the United States at the age of 22. He had been awarded a Baroda State Scholarship of £11.50 (Sterling) per month for three years under a scheme established by Sayajirao Gaekwad III (Gaekwad of...
Baroda) that was designed to provide opportunities for postgraduate education at Columbia University in New York City. Soon after arriving there he settled in rooms at Livingston Hall with Naval Bhathena, a Parsi who was to be a lifelong friend. He passed his M.A. exam in June 1915, majoring in Economics, and other subjects of Sociology, History, Philosophy and Anthropology. He presented a thesis, Ancient Indian Commerce. Ambedkar was influenced by John Dewey and his work on democracy.

In 1916 he completed his second thesis, National Dividend of India – A Historic and Analytical Study, for another M.A., and finally he received his PhD in Economics in 1927 for his third thesis, after he left for London. On 9 May, he presented the paper Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development before a seminar conducted by the anthropologist Alexander Goldenweiser.

Postgraduate studies at the London School of Economics

In October 1916, he enrolled for the Bar course at Gray’s Inn, and at the same time enrolled at the London School of Economics where he started working on a doctoral thesis. In June 1917, he returned to India because his scholarship from Baroda ended.

Ambedkar as a barrister in 1922

As Ambedkar was educated by the Princely State of Baroda, he was bound to serve it. He was appointed Military Secretary to the Gaikwad but had to quit in a short time. He described the incident in his autobiography, Waiting for a Visa. Thereafter, he tried to find ways to make a living for his growing family. He worked as a private tutor, as an accountant, and established an investment consulting business, but it failed when his clients learned that he was an untouchable. In 1918, he became Professor of Political Economy in the Sydenham College of Commerce in Mumbai. Although he was successful with the students, other professors objected to his sharing a drinking-water jug with them.

Ambedkar had been invited to testify before the Southborough Committee, which was preparing the Government of India Act 1919. At this hearing, Ambedkar argued for creating separate electorates and reservations for untouchables and other religious communities. In 1920, he began the publication of the weekly Mooknayak (Leader of the Silent) in Mumbai with the help of Shahu of Kolhapur i.e. Shahu IV (1874–1922). Ambedkar went on to work as a legal
In 1926, he successfully defended three non-Brahmin leaders who had accused the Brahmin community of ruining India and were then subsequently sued for libel. Dhananjay Keer notes that “The victory was resounding, both socially and individually, for the clients and the Doctor.”

While practising law in the Bombay High Court, he tried to promote education to untouchables and uplift them. His first organised attempt was his establishment of the central institution Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha, intended to promote education and socio-economic improvement, as well as the welfare of “outcastes”, at the time referred to as depressed classes.[32] For the defence of Dalit rights, he started five periodicals – Mooknayak (the leader of the dumb, 1920), Bahishkrit Bharat (Ostracized India, 1924), Samta (Equality, 1928), Janata (The People, 1930), and Prabuddha Bharat (Enlightened India, 1956).

He was appointed to the Bombay Presidency Committee to work with the all-European Simon Commission in 1925. This commission had sparked great protests across India, and while its report was ignored by most Indians, Ambedkar himself wrote a separate set of recommendations for the future Constitution of India.

By 1927, Ambedkar had decided to launch active movements against untouchability. He began with public movements and marches to open up public drinking water resources. He also began a struggle for the right to enter Hindu temples. He led a satyagraha in Mahad to fight for the right of the untouchable community to draw water from the main water tank of the town. In a conference in late 1927, Ambedkar publicly condemned the classic Hindu text, the Manusmriti (Laws of Manu), for ideologically justifying caste discrimination and “untouchability”, and he ceremonially burned copies of the ancient text. On 25 December 1927, he led thousands of followers to burn copies of Manusmriti. Thus annually 25 December is celebrated as Manusmriti
Dahan Din (Manusmriti Burning Day) by Ambedkarites and Dalits.

In 1930, Ambedkar launched Kālaram Temple movement after three months of preparation. About 15,000 volunteers assembled at Kālaram Temple satyagraha making one of the greatest processions of Nashik. The procession was headed by a military band, a batch of scouts, women and men walked in discipline, order and determination to see the god for the first time. When they reached to gate, the gates were closed by Brahmin authorities.

Poona Pact

In 1932, British announced the formation of a separate electorate for “Depressed Classes” in the Communal Award. Gandhi fiercely opposed a separate electorate for untouchables, saying he feared that such an arrangement would divide the Hindu community. Gandhi protested by fasting while imprisoned in the Yerwada Central Jail of Poona. Following the fast, Congress politicians and activists such as Madan Mohan Malaviya and Palwankar Baloo organised joint meetings with Ambedkar and his supporters at Yerwada. On 25 September 1932, the agreement known as Poona Pact was signed between Ambedkar (on behalf of the depressed classes among Hindus) and Madan Mohan Malaviya (on behalf of the other Hindus). The agreement gave reserved seats for the depressed classes in the Provisional legislatures, within the general electorate. Due to the pact, the depressed class received 148 seats in the legislature, instead of the 71 as allocated in the Communal Award ear-lier proposed by British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. The text uses the term “Depressed Classes” to denote Untouchables among Hindus who were later called Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under India Act 1935, and Madan Mohan Malaviya and Palwankar Baloo organised joint meetings with Ambedkar and his supporters at Yerwada.

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Political career

Ambedkar’s political career started in 1926 and he continued to hold various positions in the political field until 1956. In December 1926, the Governor of Bombay nominated him as a member of the Bombay Legislative Council; he took his duties seriously, and often delivered speeches on economic mat-
ters. He was a member of the Bombay Legislative Council until 1936.

In 1935, Ambedkar was appointed principal of the Government Law College, Bombay, a position he held for two years. He also served as the chairman of Governing body of Ramjas College, University of Delhi, after the death of its founder, Rai Kedarnath. Settlement in Bombay (today called Mumbai), Ambedkar oversaw the construction of a house Rajaigruha, and stocked his personal library with more than 50,000 books. His wife Ramabai died after a long illness the same year. It had been her long-standing wish to go on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur, but Ambedkar had refused to let her go, telling her that he would create a new Pandharpur for her instead of Hinduism’s Pandharpur which treated them as untouchables. At the Yeola Conversion Conference on 13 October in Nasik, Ambedkar announced his intention to convert to a different religion and exhorted his followers to leave Hinduism. He would repeat his message at many public meetings across India.

Ambedkar published his book Annihilation of Caste on 15 May 1936. It strongly criticised Hindu orthodox religious leaders and the caste system in general, and included “a rebuke of Gandhi” on the subject. Later, in a 1955 BBC interview, he accused Gandhi of writing in opposition of the caste system in English language papers while writing in support of it in Gujarati language papers.

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After the Lahore resolution (1940) of the Muslim League demanding Pakistan, Ambedkar wrote a 400-page tract titled Thoughts on Pakistan, which analysed the concept of “Pakistan” in all its aspects. Ambedkar argued that the Hindus should concede Pakistan to the Muslims. He proposed that the provincial boundaries of Punjab and Bengal should be redrawn to separate the Muslim and non-Muslim majority parts. He thought the Muslims could have no objection to redrawing provincial boundaries. If they did, they did not quite “understand the nature of their own demand”. Scholar Venkat Dhulipala states that Thoughts on Pakistan “rocked Indian politics for a decade”. It determined the course of dialogue between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress, paving the way for the Partition of India.[

In his work Who Were the Shudras?, Ambedkar tried to explain the formation of untouchables. He saw Shudras and Ati Shudras who form the lowest caste in the ritual hierarchy of the caste system, as separate from Untouchables. Ambedkar oversaw the transformation of his political party into the Scheduled Castes Federation, although it performed poorly in the 1946 elections for...
Constituent Assembly of India. Later he was elected into the constituent assembly of Bengal where Muslim League was in power. Ambedkar contested in the Bombay North first Indian General Election of 1952, but lost to his former assistant and Congress Party candidate Narayan Sadoba Kajrolkar, who polled 138,137 votes compared to Ambedkar’s 125,576. He tried to enter Lok Sabha again in the by-election of 1954 from Bhandara, but he placed third (the Congress Party won). By the time of the second general election in 1957, Ambedkar had died.

Ambedkar had twice become a member of the Parliament of India representing Bombay State in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament. His first term as a Rajya Sabha member was between 3 April 1952 and 2 April 1956, and his second term was to be held from 3 April 1956 to 2 April 1962, but before the expiry of the term, he died on 6 December 1956.

On 30 September 1956, Ambedkar had announced the establishment of the “Republican Party of India” by dismissing the “Scheduled Castes Federation”, but before the formation of the party, he passed away on 6 December 1956. After that, his followers and activists planned to form this party. A meeting of the Presidency was held at Nagpur on 1 October 1957 to establish the party. At this meeting, N. Sivaraj, Yashwant Ambedkar, P. T. Borale, A. G. Pawar, Datta Katti, D. A. Rupavate were present. The Republican Party of India was formed on 3 October 1957. N. Shivraj was elected as the President of the party.

**Opposition to Aryan invasion theory**

Ambedkar viewed the Shudras as Aryan and adamantly rejected the Aryan invasion theory, describing it as “so absurd that it ought to have been dead long ago” in his 1946 book *Who Were the Shudras?.* Ambedkar viewed Shudras as originally being “part of the Kshatriya Varna in the Indo-Aryan society”, but became socially degraded after they inflicted many tyrannies on Brahmins.

According to Arvind Sharma, Ambedkar noticed certain flaws in the Aryan invasion theory that were later acknowledged by western scholarship. For example, scholars now acknowledge anās in Rig Veda 5.29.10 refers to speech rather than the shape of the nose. Ambedkar anticipated this modern view.

Ambedkar disputed various hypotheses of the Aryan homeland being outside India, and concluded the Aryan homeland was India itself. According to Ambedkar, the Rig Veda says Aryans, Dāsa and Dasyus were competing religious groups, not different peoples.

**Drafting India’s Constitution**

Upon India’s independence on 15 August 1947, the new Congress-led government invited Ambedkar to serve as the nation’s first Law and Justice Minister, which he accepted. On 29 August, he was appointed Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee, and was appointed by the Constituent Assembly to write India’s new Constitution.

Ambedkar was a wise constitutional expert, he had studied the constitutions of about 60 countries. Ambedkar is recognised as the “Father of the Constitution of India”. In the Constitution Assembly, a member of the drafting committee, T. T. Krishnamachari said, “(...) it happened ultimately that the burden of drafting this constitution fell on Dr. Ambedkar and I have no doubt that we are grateful to him for having achieved this task in a manner which is undoubtedly commendable.”

Granville Austin described the Indian Constitution drafted by Ambedkar as ‘first and foremost a social document’. ‘The majority of India’s constitutional provisions are either directly arrived at furthering the aim of social revolution or attempt to foster this revolution by establishing conditions necessary for its achievement.’

The text prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability, and the outlawing of all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women, and won the Assembly’s support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs in the civil services, schools and colleges for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and Other Backward Class, a system akin to affirmative action. India’s lawmakers hoped to eradicate the socioeconomic inequalities and lack of opportunities for India’s depressed classes through these measures. The Constitution was adopted on 26 November 1949 by the Constituent Assembly.

**Opposition to Article 370**

Members of the Bharatiya Janata Party state that Ambedkar opposed Article 370 of the Constitution of India, which granted special status to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, and it was included in the constitution against his wishes. Ambedkarite scholar Pratik Tembhurne points out that this attribution emerged for the first time in a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh publication *Tarun Bharat* in 1991, four decades after Ambedkar’s death. Its veracity is not confirmed. According to Dhananjay Veer’s biography, when asked in a press conference whether Article 370 helped solve the problem of Kashmir, he responded that it was unfair on the part of Kashmir to expect India to provide military and other necessary services but to not merge with it.

**B.R. Ambedkar in 1950**

**Support for uniform civil code**

During the debates in the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar demonstrated his will to reform Indian society by recommending the adoption of a Uniform Civil Code. Ambedkar resigned from the cabinet in 1951, when parliament stalled his draft of the Hindu Code Bill, which sought to enshrine gender equality in the laws of inheritance and marriage.

**Economic planning**

Ambedkar was the first Indian to pursue a doctorate in economics abroad. He argued that industrialisation and agricultural growth could enhance the Indian economy. He stressed investment in agriculture as the primary industry of India. According to Sharad Pawar, Ambedkar’s vision helped the government to achieve its food security goal.
Ambedkar advocated national economic and social development, stressing education, public hygiene, community health, residential facilities as the basic amenities. He calculated the loss of development caused by British rule.

Ambedkar was trained as an economist, and was a professional economist until 1921, when he became a political leader. He wrote three scholarly books on economics: Administration and Finance of the East India Company, The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India, and The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution.

Conversion to Buddhism

On October 13, 1935 Ambedkar presided over the Yeola Conversion Conference, held in Yeola, in Nasik District. He advised the Depressed Classes to abandon all agitation for temple-entry privileges; instead, they should leave Hinduism entirely and embrace another religion. He vowed, “I solemnly assure you that I will not die as a Hindu.” Ambedkar considered converting to Sikhism, which encouraged opposition to oppression and so appealed to leaders of scheduled castes. But after meeting with Sikh leaders, he concluded that he might get “second-rate” Sikh status, as described by scholar Stephen P. Cohen.

Instead, he studied Buddhism all his life. Around 1950, he devoted his attention to Buddhism and travelled to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to attend a meeting of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. While dedicating a new Buddhist vihara near Pune, Ambedkar announced he was writing a book on Buddhism, and that when it was finished, he would formally convert to Buddhism. He twice visited Burma in 1954; the second time to attend the third conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists in Rangoon. In 1955, he founded the Bharatiya Baudhika Mahasabha, or the Buddhist Society of India. He completed his final work, The Buddha and His Dhamma, in 1956 which was published posthumously.

After meetings with the Sri Lankan Buddhist monk Hammalawa Saddhatissa, Ambedkar organised a formal public ceremony for himself and his supporters in Deekshabhoomi, Nagpur on 14 October 1956. Accepting the Three Refuges and Five Precepts from a Buddhist monk Mahasthavir Chandramani in the traditional manner, Ambedkar completed his own conversion, along with his wife. He then proceeded to convert some 500,000 of his supporters who were gathered around him. He prescribed the 22 Vows for these converts, after the Three Jewels and Five Precepts. On this occasion, many upper caste Hindus too accepted Buddhism. After Nagpur, on 16 October 1956, Ambedkar again gave Buddhism to more than 300,000 of his followers at Chandrapur, since the place is also known as Deekshabhoomi. He then travelled to Kathmandu, Nepal to attend the Fourth World Buddhist Conference. His work on The Buddha or Karl Marx and “Revolution and counter-revolution in ancient India” remained incomplete.
Death

Since 1948, Ambedkar suffered from diabetes. He was bed-ridden from June to October in 1954 due to medication side-effects and poor eyesight. He had been increasingly embittered by political issues, which took a toll on his health. His health worsened during 1955. Three days after completing his final manuscript The Buddha and His Dhamma, Ambedkar died in his sleep on 6 December 1956 at his home in Delhi.

A Buddhist cremation was organised at Dadar Chowpatty beach (Chaitya Bhoomi) on 7 December, attended by half a million grieving people. A conversion program was organised on 16 December 1956, so that cremation attendees were also converted to Buddhism at the same place.

Ambedkar was survived by his second wife, who died in 2003, and his son Yashwant Ambedkar (known as Bhaiyasaheb). Ambedkar’s grandson, Prakash Yashwant Ambedkar (known as Bhaire), and his wife, who died in 2003, and his son Yashwant (1912–1977), the other four survived as his descendant. His second was Saint Kabir, and the third was Mahatma Jyotirao Phule.

Influence and legacy

Ambedkar’s legacy as a socio-political reformer, had a deep effect on modern India. In post-Independence India, his socio-political thought is respected across the political spectrum. His initiatives have influenced various spheres of life and transformed the way India today looks at socio-economic policies, education and affirmative action through socio-economic and legal incentives. His reputation as a scholar led to his appointment as free India’s first law minister, and chairman of the committee for drafting the constitution. He passionately believed in individual freedom and criticised caste society. His accusations of Hinduism as being the foundation of the caste system made him controversial and unpopular among conventional Hindus. His conversion to Buddhism sparked a revival in interest in Buddhist philosophy in India and abroad.

Ambedkar’s political philosophy has given rise to a large number of political parties, publications and workers’ unions that remain active across India, especially in Maharashtra. His promotion of Buddhism has rejuvenated interest in Buddhist philosophy among sections of population in India. Mass conversion ceremonies have been organised in modern times, emulating Ambedkar’s Nagpur ceremony of 1956. Followers of the Navayana regard him as a bodhisattva, the Maitreya, although he never claimed it himself. Outside India, during the late 1990s, some Hungarian Romani people drew parallels between their own situation and that of the downtrodden people in India and converted to Buddhism. Japan’s Burakumin community leaders are spreading the Ambedkar’s philosophy to the Burakumin people.

For his actions towards the salvation and equality of mankind, his followers and the Indian people started respectfully addressing him as “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar”, since sometime between September–October 1927. Babasaheb is a Marathi phrase which roughly translates, literally as “Father-Sir” (baba: father; and saheb: Sir) or “Respected Father” because millions of Indians consider him a “great liberator”. Ambedkar is also known as “Bhi”. This name is used for many things like Bhih Jannabhoomi (birthplace of Bhih), Bhih Jayanti (birthday of Bhih), Bhih Stambh (Bhih pillar), Bhih Geet (Bhih song), Bhih flag, Bhih Army, Bhih Nagar, BHIH, Bhih Sainik (Bhih soldier), Bhih Garjana etc. Jai Bhih is a greeting used by Ambedkarites, followers of Ambedkar.

Statues and monument commemorating Ambedkar are widespread throughout India, as well as existing elsewhere. Many public institutions are named in his honour, such as the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Institute of Technology, Jalander, and Ambedkar University Delhi. A large official portrait of Ambedkar is on display in the Indian Parliament building.

Ambedkar was voted “the Greatest Indian” in 2012 by a poll organised by History TV18 and CNN IBN. Nearly 20 million votes were cast. The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru said that, “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of the Hindu society.”[ In 2004, Columbia University honors Ambedkar in the course of its 250th birthday celebration. The University also referred him as “the founding father of modern India”. The Maharashtra government acquired the house in London where Ambedkar lived during his days as a student in the 1920s. In 2015, the house was converted into a museum-cum-memorial named Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar Memorial.

Writer is Retired IAS & prominent social activist
Nirvana is a roller-coaster ride that will make you question everything you ever about your own happiness.

Runjhun Noopur’s Protagonist The Corporate Guy embarks on a journey casting away his routine corporate life as he finds himself sucked into an astounding, mystical world of talking mirrors, alternate dimensions, crazy set designs, terrifyingly apt background music and one crazy Baba who loves Cobain as much as he loves sarcasm. Will our corporate guy survive this wacky quest? And find himself what he thinks Nirvana, happiness is.

More on the book

On an average bad day, a troubled corporate guy has a bizarre encounter. A faceless voice promises him the one thing he craves for but can’t seem to get - Happiness. As he sets out on this thrilling quest, he finds himself sucked into an astounding, mystical world of talking mirrors, alternate dimensions, crazy set designs, terrifyingly apt background music and one crazy Baba who loves Cobain as much as he loves sarcasm. Will our corporate guy survive this wacky quest? Is the light at the end of this weird tunnel a dream? Or is it really elusive key to happiness?

Nirvana is a roller-coaster ride that will make you question everything you ever about your own happiness. Runjhun Noopur’s wild, hilarious but surprisingly profound debut looks beyond the solemnity of self-help and offers a take on principles of happiness that is as unique as it is life-changing. If you feel trapped in a daily rut, or if you simply seek a fulfilling life, Nirvana may just be the answer you were looking for.

About the author

Runjhun Noopur is an ex-corporate lawyer turned author and entrepreneur. Runjhun has been writing for over 10 years, was chosen for the ‘AIB First Draft Writers’ and was one of the winners of the prestigious DWL International Short Story Competition, 2018.

(Writer is head of Corporate Communications)
On Wednesday 25th September 2019 the cat was finally out of the bag. And what may you say am I referring to? It was the day when the British Labour Party under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn passed a motion during their annual conference that can only be described as anti-India and pro-Pakistan.

The resolution was proposed by Uzma Rasool and Seconded by Cllr Neghat Khan and supported by Naz Shah MP and Kaneez Akhtar. JKSDMI (Jammu and Kashmir Self-Determination Movement International) led by Cllr Yasmine Dar, Chairperson JKSDMI UK and Mohammed Azam were active participants for the motion and Raja Najabat Hussain, Chairman JKSDMI, was also present at the Conference.

I give you this information to show the infiltration that has taken place in British politics by the Pakistani community. I refer of course to the British Labour Party which one can say is increasingly becoming Sharia compliant.

There was outrage from NRI, PIOs, the HCIL and of course from Delhi. This was quite surprising to me. After all, why the outrage? The Labour Party has not hidden it’s anti-India, anti-Modi and even anti-Hindu credentials from anyone. They have openly campaigned against India and Indian interest. In fact, it was Labour Party MPs who put forward the motion to place a Visa ban on the then CM Modi. It was the same Labour Party that objected to PM Modi and his visit(s) to the UK. It was the same Labour Party that had tabled several anti-India and anti-Modi EDM (Early Day Motions) in Parliament.

We have ALL known for more than a decade that the British Labour Party under many of its previous leaders, including its present leader Jeremy Corbyn, has steadfastly followed a course of action that has been pro-Pakistan. They do so because the huge Sunni vote bank...
of Pakistani heritage has leveraged its position to such an extent that politically they now control the narrative of the Labour Party when it comes to India and Pakistan.

I have written several articles since at least 2014 in which I have explicitly made it clear to all the readers the anti-India underbelly of the Labour Party. I know that both HCIL and Delhi are fully aware of the politics of the Labour Party. Yet, and this is what is so astounding, we Indians have given a platform to our enemy at every given opportunity. Some Labour MPs and Councillors seem to have a free pass to walk in and out of HCIL. They are invited to all the key functions. They are wined and dined. They are given the stage to narrate their fake support for India to keep the Indian voters on side. Even Delhi is guilty of such practice. Some Labour MPs and Councillors have had access to the corridors of power since 2014. How is that possible? Ask yourself a simple question. The Government of PM Modi allowed MPs from the Labour Party to have access to Delhi for their photoshoots, the very political party that sought a Visa ban on CM Modi and the same political party that campaigned against PM Modi’s visit to the UK. Think about it folks, what on earth is going on with us Indians? How stupid are we that we allow our enemy into our homes to exploit us? Is this any different to the invaders who enslaved Bharat for some 1500 years? They did so because the ‘Sepoys’ of Hindustan sold the people out for their own privileges. It seems very little has changed. The white man in London still wants to tell the Indian how to do things. Only this time it’s the Labour Party.

It was only after this public embarrassment that the HCIL cancelled its dinner at the Labour Party conference. Yes, you read that correctly, the HCIL has been hosting dinners at the Labour Party conference for many years. Why on earth would the largest democracy, one of the biggest emerging economies belittle itself to a British political party that spits in its face? Is there no honour? Where is the Lion of Bharat? It has become a little kitten being patted by the British Labour Party that treats
We have operatives representing India in London, as well as those who run Delhi who have quite honestly let the side down. They have relied on their friends as advisors. The only problem, these so-called friends are in fact members (or ex-members) of the Labour Party. Think about it, we have got Indian officials who are advised by people whose first loyalty is to the British Labour Party.

all Indians with utter contempt. Is this going to be the new emerging superpower called India?

So why is this happening? Well let’s be clear. We have operatives representing India in London, as well as those who run Delhi who have quite honestly let the side down. They have relied on their friends as advisors. The only problem, these so-called friends are in fact members (or ex-members) of the Labour Party. Think about it, we have got Indian officials who are advised by people whose first loyalty is to the British Labour Party. They know who they are, as do I. I have just heard that some of them are claiming that they had left the Labour Party many years back. Interestingly because those very same people have been campaigning for the Labour Party at local elections, General Elections and in fact, even for the Pakistani Labour Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. Yes, the same Sadiq Khan who sat on his backside whilst the Pakistani goons were violating the peace outside the HCIL on the 15th of August. Think about it, the Indian Consulate was attacked by Pakistani goons whilst the Pakistani London Mayor turned a blind eye and the Police stood by and watched. Indian men, women and children at one point had to seek sanctuary within the HCIL building itself. And even after such open provocation, the HCIL thought it would be a great idea to host a dinner at the Labour Party Conference. Think about the utter madness of those in senior positions. Would a British or American consulate ever allow anything like this to happen? Never.

I highlight this uncomfortable truth so we can set the developments taking place in some sort of context. In my view Pakistan has played this brilliantly. They have over the past 4 decades spent millions of pounds to ensure that grassroots organisations, and grassroots champions of Pakistan are resourced well. Many are full-time operatives. Their sole purpose to fight the battle against India. They have infiltrated the Labour Party which is now becoming Sharia Complaint. This infiltration is embedded to such a degree that proportionately Muslims are represented significantly more when it comes to positions as Councillors, or MPs or even in the Lords. A terrorist nation such as Pakistan has used the oldest trick in the book, spend money and it has resourced its supporters so they can fight the local battle. And what has India done? Nothing in comparison. In fact, the champions of India who have fought the battle with one hand tied behind their back have never been supported. They continue the fight because they are true Indians. They do so at their own expense and they put their lives at stake each and every day. And for all their effort what do they get? Nothing. Why you may ask. The answer is the ‘Sepoys’ who are the gatekeepers to the Indian hierarchy ensure that no one of competence gets through, lest they outshine them. If the PM of India wants to know whose advice he should seek when it comes to the UK (or even America) then one call to Dr Swamy will do the trick. He will tell them the facts as they are on the ground.

Whilst I have outed the HCIL for their oversight, let me turn to the hundreds of organisations representing Indians in the UK. These might be Mandirs, Mosques, Gurudwaras, community centres and so on. How many of their presidents have written to Jeremy Corbyn to demand that the motion be rescinded? How many of these organisations will entertain Labour MPs and Councillors during our upcoming Dussehra, Navratri and Diwali celebrations? You see, we are our own worst enemies. These Labour MPs who have stabbed us, not in the back – but directing in our chest facing us, will be invited to contaminate our sacred religious and cultural events.

The modern day ‘Sepoys’ thrive in our organisations because we the public could not care less about what they do. Every one of us who shouts and screams temporarily on this Labour Party motion will be the same people who will remain silent when these Labour anti-India politicians come to visit our events.

Not all organisations are the same though. Thankfully we have got some organisations like the Hindu Forum
of Britain and the National Council of Hindu Temples that have historically exposed the true face of the British Labour Party. They get attacked from both the lovers of Labour as well as the ‘Sepoys’ from within. I take this opportunity to commend them for their efforts. If only all our organisations and leaders had the same Dharmic courage, then so much that is wrong can be put right.

Let us come back to the original point of the Labour Party passing a motion that is anti-India with respect to Jammu and Kashmir. As early as 2009 I traced an EDM in the British Parliament that is anti-India on Kashmir. It was signed by Jeremy Corbyn who was just an MP at that time. Now he is the leader of the Labour Party that wishes to form the next Government. Meaning Jeremy Corbyn wants to be the next British Prime Minister. Just take a breath and give that idea some thought. Now do you see how far back the Pakistani hand stretches. For decades they have patiently invested time, money and energy in cultivating the Labour Party so that when the time comes, they would have their support. Of course, the game is not over yet! But it’s time for India and Indians to grow up. British Indians who continue to vote for the Labour Party, let us be clear, you are traitors. Yes, that is indeed a strong word, but it represents my genuine belief of their actions. When people vote for a political party that is hell bent on destroying your ancestral heritage, then what else can we call them but traitors. I say to all of them, you alone are responsible for the mess you help to create when you vote for this anti-India party. The buck will stop at your door.

For India, for how long will you give privilege and access to those who undermine the nation? I know the Indian Government is securing advice from certain PIOs and NRIs. Let me make it clear, these people are or have been members of the Labour Party for years. Their best friends are the seniority in the Labour Party as well as in the House of Lords. Do you honestly think their advice will ever be truthful? These PIOs and NRIs might be friends of the BJP hierarchy, but they are traitors to India and Indians. It’s time people in Delhi woke up to ground reality and understand what is really at stake.

With respect to the UK I have conducted a straw poll on Indian origin politicians in the Labour Party. I wrote to the MPs and also to Labour Councillors in Leicester (the city which has such
a huge Indian population). Let me list out these people for your reference:

Indian Origin Labour MPs: Keith Vaz, Virendra Sharma, Lisa Nandy, Valerie Vaz, Seema Malhotra, Thangam Debbonaire, Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi and Preet Gill.


Having sent them reminders to ensure they understood their response was required to my questions to them, to date only two have responded. What does that tell you about these Indians in the Labour Party? When faced with the truth of their treachery, they exhibit cowardice of the highest order.

The two responses (I thank them for their response):

“I am very disappointed that this motion passed at Labour Party Conference. I was not at Conference I was instead working in my constituency with schools, community groups and the police. Kashmir is a matter for India to address internally as decided by their own constitution and laws. Britain cannot preach the rights of self-determination but deny them to India itself.” Virendra Sharma MP

And

“I’m actually very pained and shocked by this motion taken by the Labour delegates. I firmly believe that it is India’s internal matter and no foreign political party has any right to intervene in such a manner. I’m writing a letter to Jeremy Corbyn along with many other Cllr colleagues and copying our respective MPs to object to it and seeking for it to be withdrawn. I have also posted my rejection on Twitter.” Cllr Hemant Rae Bhatia.

I suspect if I were to ask every single Indian origin Labour Councillor the same questions, the vast majority no doubt would go into hiding. They care more for their seats than their heritage, their faith and their bloodline. As far as I can assess, I believe not one Indian from the Labour Party stood up on that momentous Wednesday to defend India at the Conference. Some might have been away from the conference but that still does not mean they cannot object to this absurd motion of lies and fake narrative by the Labour Party.

Where does this leave of us as far as the UK is concerned. Well fortunately the Conservative Party is actually on the side of India, broadly speaking. If you recall, it was the Tory PM Cameron who invited and gave an astounding welcome to PM Modi. Who can forget the scenes at Wembley Stadium? British politics is in a bit of a pickle at the moment. In this climate it is now inevitable that a General Election will take place. Probably in November. Under normal circumstance one would be fearful that the Labour Party might come into power. However, my reading of the situation is that when a General Election is finally called, the Conservative Party will win and come in with a working majority. This is great news for India and all Indians, but it’s no thanks to PIOs or NRIs. The proportion of NRIs and PIOs still voting for the anti-India Labour Party is still too high. I am hopeful that this final shameful act by the Labour Party has exposed its anti-Indian mindset. That as a result we will see a dramatic shift of Indian voters to the Conservative Party. We Indians need to put in power the Party that is more likely to be on our side. It may not be the perfect Party with the perfect manifesto, but our bottom line should be, will they stand by us? And if the answer is yes, then that’s where your vote goes.

The Jewish community has almost asa whole now transferred their allegiance to the Conservative Party. They faced racist antisemitic behaviour by many in the Labour Party. They saw the Labour Party passing motions against them and in the end, as a community they realised their well being in the country would be dependent on the Labour Party, but the Conservative Party. It’s time we took a leaf out of their play book, it’s time to nail our colours to the Conservative mast.

If India and Indians cannot see the writing on the wall, then we know only too well who to blame.

Twitter: @kk_OEG
Indian designer Sonia Mehra has built her long-standing career in fashion by following her own set of rules. Known for her celebration of the exuberant, the embellished, and the over the top, Sonia has been rocking the fashion industry with her unique and original designs since the 1990’s. Her commitment to remain true to her one-of-a-kind vision has afforded Sonia continued success in an industry known for its fickleness. Her ability to change with the times while keeping her designs pure has not gone unnoticed. Since a very long time she has been portrayed as one of the leading designers and a lot has been written about her work and her accomplishments which has influenced a lot of upcoming designers to look at her work and creativity.

Her inspiration was derived by such artistic handy work of women of Gujarat and Rajasthan. With all the interest and passion of a designer Sonia took to the skies and flew around the world to study Fashion and look at the work of various designers around the world. In 1990 Sonia officially entered the Indian Fashion scene and soon established herself a name in being one of the top designers in the Bridal wear segment, Branding in India in the early 90’s was not all that popular and just a few names were thrown about in the circle who know what branded clothes really meant. Sonia decided to give it a go at branding and she started her own label - “Sonia Creations by Sonia Mehra” in the year 2001, which soon was changed to a personal signature name “Sonia Mehra”. The personalized signature name soon became her brand or so called brand image with a formulation which said: Sexy silhouettes, hippie inspired flowing fabrics, whimsical detailing and most importantly, a fabulous fit.

Looking back on her successes, Sonia diversifies her future collections based on what was missing in the past and the need of the current. Priding herself on the ability to design for any one, Sonia features everything in Women’s wear from Bridal wear, Sarees, Indo-Western Dresses, Salwar-Kameezes, Tunics & Fusion wear and onto the changing fashion trends which are ongoing, of late she has also introduced accessories with complement with her collection.

**Future Plans of Sonia**

After her short course in London, Sonia is considering new fashion avenues, but wants to build her business slowly by taking time and keeping abreast of the happenings in the world of fashion, she wants to build her brand where she is known to be creative with new designs and styles which keep on changing from year to year.

Truly luxurious, infinitely wearable, minimalist approach and an appeal to modern aesthetics, the brand is fashionable, with key colours, with soft feminine touches per use of draping Her dream is to further pursue her dreams and move forward with her label which is known for its bridal couture and diffusion line.
IGNITES FASHION TRENDS
Sonia’s designs are for the modern, confident woman who believes in herself and knows how to flaunt fashion, who feels that timeless elegance and classic grace is important to her! A woman who thinks that she should be complimented by her clothing, not overpowered by it.

The aim at Sonia’s has been to showcase a diverse collection in order to represent the rich cultural heritage of the East. The overall ambiance is very ornate with great emphasis on the use of cuts, both ageless and contemporary, to create a look which is elegantly classic yet sophisticatedly modern.

The design philosophy behind Sonia’s couture and wedding is timeless elegance. The colour palette is in accordance with the international forecast. Indigenous fabrics including jamawars, silks, chiffons, chantilly lace and other luxurious fabrics. Heavily embellished raw silks and chiffons dominate the collections with intricate threadwork and crystal based embellishment that adds to the grandeur. There is variety in silhouettes and colors; from the short and fitted to the long and flowy and from the soft pastels to the rich, vibrants. All in all, the Sonia’s couture radiates luxury and the superiority of the clothes speaks for themselves.

On the other hand Sonia’s ready to wear line caters to the young, style conscious woman of today who likes to dress with sophistication. Here the traditional trend and design meets modern flamboyance in style! The line represents freedom of expression, comfort and exuberance. The collection is all about reaching out to the masses; it’s affordable, trendy and exclusive. Every season a new range comes out with a new theme and color palette, which makes four collections a year. Rich, vibrant colors along with soft pastels make the collection young and fun!
The Pioneer thanks all its readers and patrons for their support. The journey of passion continues with your blessings as we enter our 20s.
Even in a world overrun with award shows, the DPIFF remains the most prestigious, and a best picture victory cements film makers, actors and technicians placed in South Film Industry.

Continuing the legacy of Shri Dadasaheb Phalke, in current generations of films, Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival (DPIFF) is aimed to recognise and honour the South Film Industry for the very first time with Dadasaheb Phalke Awards South 2019. The Dadasaheb Phalke Awards represents recognition from peers and level of career excellence to honour the best in films and film talents both in front of and behind the camera.

The Dadasaheb Phalke Awards South 2019 was a burst of love and sprightly, held its gala night in Hyderabad marking the occasion on 150th birth anniversary of Dadasaheb Phalke. The event seemed to have been symbolised ascending the stairs of triumph as it was a success for the organisers and team for the very first time in south and this will continue each year on the 20th of September whereas the date for Bollywood has been marked on the 20th of February which has been happening for the last five years.

Chadrashhekar Pusalkar
Grandson of Shri Dadasaheb Phalke & Founder of Dadasaheb Phalke International Awareness Mission
“I would like to call Dadasaheb Phalke as the ‘Celebrity of the celebrities’. He is not only the Father of Indian Cinemas but also master of multiple arts. He was the first person to produce and release first feature length movie in India in 1913. The DPIFF organisers and team have been working really hard in Mumbai and Delhi organising a successful award event like this. Now I am overwhelmed about DPIFF coming to South India as ‘Dadasaheb Phalke Awards South’ and I look forward for the next year!”

Anil Mishra
Founder, MD - DPIFF & Advisory Panel Member at CBFC
“Being the Founder of DPIFF, it’s a great honour to venture into South Film Industry which contributes 60% of the revenue for the Indian Cinema. We like to thank the people of south who supported us with this great event at Hyderabad and we promise to get bigger each year!”

Yash Jain
Creative Director - DPIFF
He handles right from scripting, delivering new ideas, working on the event flow and meeting sponsors. He hails from a small district called Harda, Madhya Pradesh. After college he got his first internship in BBC. He later di-
rected ad shoots and has worked as associate talent producer for reality shows and also for Bigg boss 4 in Hindi. It was then, the Founder of DPIFF recognised his talent and offered him to join DPIFF team!

Abhishek Mishra,  
CEO of DPIFF & Advisory Panel Member for CBFC (Young Entrepreneur)
He is the brain behind DPIFF. His main aim is to develop the most prestigious award for the Indian Film Industry. He is the youngest CEO in the awards film world in India. When asked about how he managed to achieve this feet, he responded by saying I was a strong follower of Dadasaheb since my childhood and always wanted to contribute the same through DPIFF at Pan India level.

How remarkable is DPIFF going to be this year considering the mark of 150th birth anniversary of Dadasaheb Phalke?
Firstly, we wanted to venture into south and had been planning for quite sometime. It was then Chandrashekar Pusalkar ji decided on this very special occasion of Dadasaheb Phalke’s 150th birth anniversary to launch the South Awards for the South Film Industry. We want to continue his legacy every year and the least tribute that we could do for his deep-rooted contribution towards Indian cinemas.

He is the brain behind DPIFF. His main aim is to develop the most prestigious award for the Indian Film Industry. He is the youngest CEO in the awards film world in India. When asked about how he managed to achieve this feet, he responded by saying I was a strong follower of Dadasaheb since my childhood and always wanted to contribute the same through DPIFF at Pan India level.
How is South treating you?

People here are absolute sympathetic, kind and very helpful. We have been treated as special guests here. I would love to visit other places in South too and visit Hyderabad often.

About the event

The event took place at N-Convention in Hyderabad on the spectacular Friday night, 20th of September. There was huge crowd gathering for the show with fans waiting to meet and greet their favourite stars. The event started off with all local and National media channels waiting for the arrival of celebrities along red carpet. The Honourable Governor of Telangana, Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan commenced the ceremony by lighting the lamp. There were splendid dance performances for the audience to keep them glued to their seats. The 2019 show featured crowd pleasing awardees. Among the notable awardees were Mahesh Babu as the Best Actor for ‘Bharath One Nenu’, Sukumar as the Best Director for ‘Rangastalam’, Yash as the Outstanding Performance of the Year Male for ‘KGF:Chapter 1’, Keerthy Suresh as Outstanding Performance of the Year Female for ‘Mahanati’, R Rathnavelu as the Best Cinematographer for ‘Rangastalam’, Devi Sri Prasad as the Best Music Director for ‘Rangastalam’, Payal Rajput as Best Debut Female for ‘RX 100’, and such others. Also there notable celebrities like actress Lakshmi Manchu, DOP Ravi Varman, actor Thakur Anoop Singh, director Prashanth Varma, producer Allu Bobby, actress Nabha Natesh, actress Hamsa Nandini among others to grace the event continued by gala dinner and after party.

It may not be a golden man but winning Dadasaheb Phalke Awards South is right up on many actors lists of ambition. Let us see wait and watch what awaits them next year.

Report filed by Ms Nithya Ramesh
– Bureau Head Fashion & Entertainment with Opinion Express
Q. What and who inspired you to be in the entertainment and fashion industry?

A : Beauty pageant was the stepping stone to anything that I wanted to do. The organiser saw my photos on social media and reached out to convince me to participate in the contest. I went, I saw and I won. Post my win, entering the fashion industry was just an expansion of my creativity. I mean, all I wanted to do was to grow in life and for me, getting into the international fashion industry from Indian fashion industry was all about challenging myself more than ever. Walking the top international fashion weeks to walking for the world known international celebrity designers was an inspiration in its own.

My journey from fashion to entertainment was so creative and exciting, that, I kept manifesting and achieving from walking the ramps to walking the Oscars of Asia – The Asian Film Awards Red Carpet and having the honor to become the brand ambassador of AFA.

What inspired me was my own ambition to achieve it all by being who I was. My passion towards my goals has been a driving force that became an inspiration to myself and to many lives that followed the path.

There was a big stereotype with models that they had to be in a certain size, a body structure and enrolled with an agency to be an international model. I neither felt that pressure of being the expected or changing myself, nor I believed in following the conditioned path. I wanted to be who I was and I always reflected that vibe through my work to inspire others to be their own best selves. I made my own team, worked on my own terms and conditions and reached where I wanted to. I proudly owe it to my hard work and dedication.
Q. How do you compare Indian fashion industry with the present global benchmark?

A: They are just two very similar mediums of creativity. Indian fashion industry feels more like home and global platform gives the sense of being comfortable outside your comfort zone. The medium is the same everywhere in the world, it’s just a different system of working in place. What is more respected globally compared to Indian industry is the value of time and your work ethics. Despite your gender or ranking, it is your professionalism that speaks volumes and is respected the most. It is extremely fulfilling to work on a global platform, as you get to interact and work with so many different nationalities and cultures. It is more satisfying to see yourself learn and adapt to new challenges and environment and still work as a team. Indian fashion industry totally equals global benchmark in terms of creativity, talent, hard work and passion. What we just need to learn more is the value of time and make our working approach more respectful and professional.

Q. All the well-known names in the fashion world are associated with social causes, you are involved in any significant social work anywhere in the world?

A: The sense of giving in return has always been incorporated in by my parents since my early childhood. Both my parents have been very generous towards less fortunate, hence, the realisation of sharing and doing any bit possible comes very natural to me.

I have been associated with SOS children’s village in Jaipur. It’s a non-governmental organisation that focuses on supporting children without parental care and families at risk. The aim is to provide a family and a home to orphaned and destitute children wherein they feel secure and grow as normal children. The family comprises of their SOS Mother, brothers and sisters and sometimes an aunt also. The Mothers have the support of an efficient team of co-workers who are trained in child care. There are more than 30 such villages spread around the country and a large number in 131 countries worldwide.
CRY is yet another organisation I have been associated with last many years. Surman Sansthan, in Jaipur, is I have been involved with for quite some time now. It is one place that I never miss visiting if I’m in my home town. This NGO provides shelter and other necessary amenities for destitute, abandoned children and women of the society.

No matter what medium it is, I feel socially responsible in several ways towards the society and the people who have given me so much love and support throughout my life and career and that it must be reciprocated and given back either same way or with more. By doing so I feel grounded and stay connected with my inner soul and compassion.
Prashanti Tiwari

Why are divorces, breakups and misunderstandings increasing these days in relationships?

With the ever-lasting change, the dynamics of relationships have changed as well.

Today we live in the Era, where we live in two different worlds - Virtual and Real.

With this, the need to calm one’s emotions virtually is different and that of the real life differs.

Also, the time, communication and frame/structure of language play a vital role. Whether the language used is empathetic or rational or of some other tone to your loved one. Human needs are endless and will continue. The best way to overcome the pool of emotions is expression at the right time and in right degree with effective communication.

Besides, if you feel free and feel loveless and non-productive at times then in that case find something you love doing the most or interact with friends that add a smile to your face or watch a comic series. Feeling empty or lonely or attention deficit or loveless is not the solution to misunderstanding.

One has to bridge the gap of understanding between two different schools of thoughts that got missed due to rapidness.

(Author is an actor and producer & CEO, Legacy Overseas Education)
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Visit us: www.getwow.in
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