

Short Story

Change yourself and not The World

Long ago, people happily lived under the rule of a king. The people of the kingdom were very happy as they had a very prosperous life with abundance of wealth and no misfortunes. The king decided to go on a travel to visit places of historical importance and pilgrim centres at distant places. He decided to travel by foot to interact with his people and accompany them. People of distant places were so happy to have a conversation with their king and they were proud that their king was so kind with a good heart!

After several weeks, he returned to the palace. He was quite happy that he visited many pilgrim centres and could see his fellow people leading a propitious life. However, he had regret. He had intolerable pain in his feet as it was his first trip by foot to longer distance. He complained to his ministers that the roads weren't comfortable and were very stony. He could not tolerate the pain as he walked all the way through the rough path. He said he was very much worried about the people who used to walk along those roads as it would be painful for them too!

He made an order to cover the road of the whole country with leather

so that people might feel comfortable, immediately. The king thought that he had to change this for the betterment and happiness of the people. His ministers were stunned to hear his order as it would destroy the life of thousands of cows to get the sufficient quantity of leather and it would cost a huge amount of money also. A wise man from the ministry came to the king and said that he had another idea. The king asked - what was his alternative idea. The minister told, 'Why do you want to kill the holy animal cow to cover the road with leather? Rather, you can just have a piece of leather cut in appropriate shape to cover your feet?' The king was very much surprised by his suggestion and applauded the minister. He ordered for a pair of leather shoes for him and requested the countrymen to wear shoes. **Many of us criticize the world for many things. We curse and blame the things in our surroundings and never understand that we need a change in us. Changes are inevitable in the world, and the changes should be from us. We cannot or should not force others to make a change.** (Courtesy Kids world fun)

By : Iril Turell

We have reached to a point where if Eche from Sharmila wakes up today and starts eating and eating beef the Indian nation is going to charge at her, first for eating, and then for eating beef. People in Delhi and Bombay and Allahabad are going to scowl at her for upsetting the little sympathy they've garnered over the image of her weak frame and unkempt hair (the same kind of sympathy you garner upon seeing small kids begging on Indian roadsides). Why from Sharmila - their cry will go like this - how can you be so inconsiderate and hurt our feelings when we are beginning to develop a certain likeness for you after all?

So where has Eche's protest gone? A protest that was supposed to be against the idea of India and India's policy in the region to begin with, has now been reduced to a cliché. Nobody talks about the idea of India when talking about her, nobody talks about what Indian nation is (who are included in it, who cannot be included, and so on), nobody associates her to the original Indian occupation of the state - when all of these, if you consider, has raised the central question Eche raised. Who swept aside this central question of hers and turned her into a theatre and a circus clown? Compare Eche's more-than-a-decade-old campaign with the event that is still unfolding in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), where, upon the slightest suggestion of

Who'll Cook Eche's Beef Steak?

'azaadi' (Freedom) by a certain student, a wide range of debate on what India is has ensued: whether India is secular nation or a Hindu one, the difference between the two narratives, or is it just another colonial formation that was designed to oppress and colonize, etc. At one point a renowned professor at the university even pointed out in a public speech that Kashmir and Manipur were illegally occupied by India - something not usually admitted in the Indian public, even by their most progressive ones; and yet she did. Everyone feels and knows this is a high-stake issue and they cannot afford to remain silent. If this is the kind of debate a small after-class huddle of students can spark, why has a longstanding, now already world famous project called "Irom Sharmila," which by the way raises similar questions the JNU debate has raised, not been able to produce any such a debate - not least among the Manipuris? It's hard to say this but it's true: Eche's protest no longer remains a protest. It has lost all meaning. Now that I have given the ground and we are aware of where Eche and her campaign's relevance stands today, let me come to straight what I have come to say. Obviously I cannot allow Eche and her struggle go to waste. Letting it sink into oblivion after all that would be foolish. Something needs to be done to reinstate meaning and relevance to the whole campaign. A meaning-

(re)giving act, a ritual, must be performed. A final act. And the person who can perform this act is only she herself. But what act? What is it she must do now? She must do that very thing I hinted in the very first line of this writing. Break her fast. Eche from Sharmila should immediately start eating. Not just that, she must commemorate the event (for indeed it will be an event!) with the earth's finest beef steak (and it has to be beefsteak - no chicken and pork business here). This I say for three reasons:

- 1. Ideological.** The idea of self-denial as a political act without mass backing is nihilistic (meaningless). It's a Buddhist idea, an idea of the weak, and it leads to suicide (death). The way Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Anna Hazare used self-denial was in the form of blackmail, as tactic, with the possibility of mass riots always backing them. In Eche's case a mass backing of that proportion has never manifested.
- 2. Historical.** NGOs and rights activists seem to have taken over Eche's cause. While Eche's cause has been against AFSPA (and by extension India's policy and the idea of India itself), these NGOs and rights activists have reduced her cause to a mere 'human rights' funeral march totally sidetracking the question of nationhood and emancipation that was raised. Why they have done this I have no idea, but I'd like to see the industry of NGOs and funding agencies

surrounding Eche go. I'd very much like to see those dozen or score people benefitting from this industry lose their funding-agency based livelihood so that they can now return to the street and work for affording historical and political rights of the people Eche represents. Start working with the neighborhood, with schools, colleges, universities, and community clubs.

- 3. Semiological.** With this one single act - lunging into a deep bowl of the earth's finest beefsteak - Eche has now the chance to bring back life and relevance to a cause whose meaning is slowly slipping away. This would be her nail on the Wittenberg Church door: once and for all she will have declared her inviolability. Not by time, not by those working against her. A matter of great significance, something that will do justice to the years she crawled under the earth, this act would strike right at the heart of the complacency and the laziness and the fake sympathies surrounding her. It would be an act of sublime wickedness, a most self-assured intellectual malice, the finest creative endeavour a free-spirited person can pull off. An act of the strong and not the weak. To tell the world: I am strong. We are strong. We will not withdraw under your gaze and your sympathies. Enough is enough. Here is what I did, and here's still more I can do!

One final act
- or wither!

JD(U), RLD, JVM(P), SJP in merger talks

PTI New Delhi, March 20: After a failed attempt at unification of the larger Janata Parivar, JD(U), Rashtriya Lok Dal, Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajantrik) and Samajwadi Janata Party look set to merge in Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, JD(U) President Sharad Yadav, RLD chief Ajit Singh, his son Jayant Chaudhary and poll strategist Prashant Kishor had a meeting at the residence of JD(U) general secretary K C Tyagi in the national capital on March 15 to work out the modalities, sources close to the development said. While Nitish Kumar is in direct talks with JVM(P) leader and Jharkhand's former chief minister Babul Marandi, who had parted ways with BJP long back and formed his own outfit, Ajit Singh and K C Tyagi have held several rounds of discussions with Samajwadi Janata Party (Rashtriya) chief Kamal Morarka. "The four parties can merge together very soon. Talks are in final stages. The date has not been decided but the new party may come into existence this month itself," a source said.

AP Istanbul, March 20: A suicide attack on Istanbul's main pedestrian shopping street, on Saturday, killed five people, including two dual nationality Israeli-Americans and one Iranian citizen, and wounded several dozen others, in the sixth suicide bombing in Turkey in the past year. Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu issued a statement saying there were several foreigners among the victims. "Turkey has always said that terrorism has no religion, no language and no race and that terrorism has to be condemned no matter who the perpetrators are," he said. "This sad event has shown once again how right our position is." There was no immediate claim of responsibility but suspicion fell on the Islamic State group and on Kurdish militants who have claimed two recent attacks in the capital, Ankara. DNA samples were taken from family members of two possible Islamic State militants who could be the bomber, the private Turkish Dogan news agency reported. The explosion ripped through Istiklal Street, a popular destination for tourists and locals in a central neighborhood that is home to cafes, restaurants, foreign consulates and a government office. Istanbul Governor Vasi Sahin said there were five fatalities and that investigations were still under way. An interior ministry official said the death toll included the suicide bomber. Police swiftly sealed off the area as ambulances and a forensic team rushed to the scene after the bombing about 11 am. Normally packed cafes were either closed or virtually empty, with business owners making frantic calls to loved ones to assure them of their safety. Rattled tourists wondered where to go. "It was one loud explosion," said Muhammed Fatur, a Syrian who works at a butcher shop near the scene of the explosion. "Police came to the scene and sealed off the area." The site remained off limits until shortly after sundown when tentative pedestrians and shopkeepers returned to inspect the damage. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed that at least two of the victims were Israelis. An

National and International News

Suicide bomber kills five, injures 39 in busy shopping street

Israeli diplomat in Istanbul said the two also held American citizenship. "We can sadly confirm that two Israeli civilians were killed and we might have a third fatality," he said. Israel was cooperating with other intelligence agencies to determine whether the attack was directed at Israelis specifically. Two planes were being sent to Istanbul to evacuate others wounded in the blast. The majority of the Israelis caught up in the attack were on a culinary tour of the city, officials said. The group had just eaten breakfast nearby when the blast ripped through the street. Israeli media named one of the victims as 60-year-old Simha Damari, a mother of four and said her husband was also wounded in the attack. Ned Price, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, confirmed that two American citizens were among those killed in the Istanbul attack. Their identities were not released. A group of Iranian tourists were also among the victims. Alireza Razmkhah, 45, was killed and his wife, Azan, and baby, Diana, were wounded, according to IRNA, the official Iranian news agency. An elderly woman was also wounded in the attack, but was in stable condition, the agency reported. The attack coincided with a visit to Turkey by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. He condemned the "inhuman" act and offered his condolences to Turkey. Turkey's health minister, Mehmet Muezzinoglu, said the 36 people wounded in the attack included six Israelis, two Irish citizens and one person each from Iceland, Germany, Dubai and Iran. Istanbul's governor later raised the number of injured to 39 and said 24 of them were foreigners, without providing a breakdown by nationalities. The governor would not confirm media reports that the suicide bomber may have been an Islamic State militant. He said, "The inspection is continuing in a detailed way. It is too early to say anything." Turkey was already on edge following two recent suicide car bomb attacks in the capital, Ankara, which were claimed by a Kurdish militant group that is an off-shoot of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. The most recent

bombing attack, on 13 March, targeted bus stops on Ankara's busiest street, killing 37 people including two bombers. British singer Skin wrote on Facebook that the blast went off near her Istanbul hotel and that buildings "shook like paper." She also expressed solidarity with the "innocent people and their families caught in this evil situation." Turkey has had heightened security in Ankara and Istanbul in the run-up to the Kurdish spring festival of Newroz on 21 March, which Kurds in Turkey traditionally use to assert their ethnic identity and demand greater rights. NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg condemned the attack in Istanbul, describing it as "yet another terrorist outrage targeting innocent civilians and our ally Turkey." In his statement, the White House National Security Council spokesman condemned the "heinous attack" and said the United States remains steadfast in support of Turkey, its NATO ally and partner. "These repeated acts of terrorism in Turkey must come to an end," Price said. "We are in close touch with Turkish authorities and reaffirm our commitment to work together with Turkey to confront the evil of terrorism." The Irish foreign and trade minister, Charlie Flanagan, expressed "horror and sadness" at the attack and confirmed that a number of Irish citizens were among the injured.

Video posted on social media apparently capturing the aftermath of the blast showed several motionless bodies lined up at the foot of shuttered shops as a second ambulance arrives at the scene. Footage filmed by a witness showed a severed male head resting next to the street's tramway tracks a few feet away from the bodies. On Thursday, Germany had closed its embassy in Ankara, the German school in Ankara and the consulate in Istanbul, which is in the same neighborhood as the blast, following a security warning. Twelve German tourists were killed in a January suicide attack in a historic district of Istanbul. Saturday's explosion marks the sixth suicide attack in the country since July. The previous five attacks, which have killed more than 200 people, were either blamed on the Islamic State group by Turkish authorities or claimed by an offshoot of the PKK. The PKK has been fighting for autonomy in southeast Turkey for three decades in a conflict that has killed tens of thousands of people. A two-and-a-half year peace process between the government and the PKK broke down in July, reviving the conflict. Turkey, which is a partner in the US-led war against the Islamic State, has also been drawn deeper into the Syrian conflict and forced to absorb 2.7 million Syrian refugees. Last August, Turkey began allowing U.S. fighter jets to launch airstrikes from Incirlik air base in southern Turkey.

Five killed, twelve injured in truck-bus collision

ANI Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), Mar. 20: As many as five people were killed while twelve others injured after a truck collided with a state road transport bus in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh. The injured were rushed to a nearby hospital for immediate treatment. The police is investigating the exact cause of the accident.

Mizoram celebrates Palm Sunday

PTI Aizawl, March 20: People, irrespective of church denominations, today took out massive procession in urban areas and villages of Mizoram to celebrate Palm Sunday before Easter. Children and adults joined the processions waving palm leaves, singing hymns and chanting verses from the Bible to commemorate the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, a few days before he was crucified. According to the Bible, Palm Sunday was the only day when Jesus was hailed as a king during his lifetime. Special praise and worship services were held in all local churches to commemorate the day.

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Militants gun down 13 policemen in Egypt's northern Sinai

ANI Cairo (Egypt), Mar. 20: At least 13 Egyptian policemen were killed by militants yesterday on a checkpoint south of northern Sinai's provincial capital of el-Arish, said Egyptian Interior Ministry. "A mortar round was fired at the Safa checkpoint... which resulted in the martyrdom of 13 policemen," Dawn quoted the statement issued by the ministry as saying. According to reports, a statement has been circulated on the social media that a Sinai-based Islamic State affiliate has claimed

responsibility for the attack but the authenticity of the statement has not been verified. It said that a suicide bomber, identified by the nom de guerre 'Abu Al-Qaqaq the Egyptian' blew up a car packed with explosives at the checkpoint. Egyptian security forces have been targeted by the local IS affiliate in Sinai who had claimed the downing of a Russian airliner last October. Following the attack, Russia suspended all flights to Egypt and it lost hundreds of millions of dollars in tourism revenues since.