

Editorial

Expecting the expectation

Every member of society aspires to lead a normal and progressive life, taking up jobs that enable them to provide for their loved ones. This ideal situation however has remained as elusive dream for most of us, as those who are supposed to ensure the peace and security of a society is still being regarded with caution and distrust by the common public.

The rise in the number of armed insurgent groups who are willing to lay down arms to try out a political solution to their grievances and visions are an encouraging indication of the growing acceptance and inclination towards mutually acceptable solution to the myriad problems and hindrances afflicting our present day society. It would, however, be a bit too early and premature to gloat about the development and to rest on the positive aspects of it all.

It is true that there are a large number of armed personnel of the state who are dutifully and conscientiously discharging their sworn duties of protecting and securing the peace of the society, and yet a handful of disruptive and rowdy elements in the state armed personnel have caused a rift between the public and the police as a whole. While it is unfortunate and undesirable, yet the outcome couldn't have been any other way. The excessive and unnecessary use of force and show of power as practiced by a few State police personnel is the reason for the suspicious and hesitant mindset of the public when it comes to dealing with the Police. Only time and consistent efforts on the part of the concerned authorities can win back the trust and understanding of the public.

It is somehow relieved that the new Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has somehow tried to understand the mindset of the public by organising peoples' Day. Still then, the fear psychosis has been deeply ingrained in the minds of the public, both for the State forces and the mushrooming groups of self proclaimed saviours of the downtrodden and the oppressed, will take a long and arduous climb back to be erased from their minds.

The onus of endearing themselves to the public and to win their support and acceptance rests entirely on these parties whose trigger happy image as portrayed needs to be changed and altered significantly. But above all a firm yet committed form governance coupled with the capacity to see through the promises made, with the tenacity and an earnest attitude towards making a visible change in their approach towards alleviating the society and a willingness to admit and atone for the errors made is a prime requisite at the moment. After all, a great leader should be an astute follower of the wishes and aspirations of the common people. The present is just a glimpse of what can be achieved how it should be achieved depends on those who are at the helm of affairs those who are chosen for their promises and assurances. The growing awareness amongst the public will now decide if they really have what it takes to walk the talk.

Did RSS Participate in Freedom Movement?

By: Ram Puniyani

Freedom movement was an all-inclusive movement with the participation of people of all religions and regions. Its underlying premise was pluralism and the concept of a Secular Democratic India, which bound all the people in the bonds of fraternity. Those who were for Muslim and Hindu nationalism kept aloof from this movement for ideological and political reasons.

Since the last few decades the Hindu nationalists have been claiming that they also participated in the freedom movement and that it's only the Congress-Left historians who are trying to paint them in negative colours vis-a-vis the struggle for independence. Rakesh Sinha presents the fantasies of the RSS' participation in the freedom movement. His major sources for this claim are from the British intelligence reports. His claims that the RSS took part in the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930 and that the movement got invigorated due to Hedgewar's participation in the same are pure figments of imagination. It is true that Mr Hedgewar did take part in this movement and was jailed for that, but that was purely at a personal level to be able to meet the people who might support his agenda of Hindu Rashtira. There is not a single writing of his or of the RSS exhorting the people to participate in the same. On the contrary there are authoritative references of his dis-couraging those who wanted to participate in the struggle for freedom.

What was the RSS leadership's attitude to events connected with the freedom movement becomes clear from the quote from M.S. Golwalkar, the second Sarsanghchalak of the RSS. Says he: "There was some unrest in the mind

due to the situation developing in the country from time to time. There was such unrest in 1942. Before that there was the movement of 1930-31. At that time many other people had gone to Doctorji (Hedgewar). The delegation requested Doctorji that this move-ment will give Independence and Sangh should not lag behind. At that time, when a gentleman told Doctorji that he was ready to go to jail, Doctorji said, 'Definitely go, But who will take care of your family then?' That gentleman replied, 'I have sufficiently arranged resources not only to run the family expenses for two years but also to pay fines according to requirement.' Then Doctorji told him, 'If you have fully arranged for the resources then come out to work for the Sangh for two years.' After returning home that gentleman neither went to jail nor came out to work for the Sangh." On similar lines during 1942 when the turmoil began, Golwalkar issued instructions that routine work of the Sangh should continue and nothing should be done to annoy the British. "In 1942 also there was a strong sentiment in the hearts of many. At that time too routine work of the Sangh continued. The Sangh vowed not to do anything directly." (Both these quotes from *Shri Gurujii Sangra Darshan*, Vol IV, pages 39-40) This ideologue of the RSS clearly spells out that fighting against the British has not been part of their agenda. "We should remember that in our pledge we have talked of freedom of the country through defending religion and culture, there is no mention of departure of the British from here." The same is confirmed by C.P. Bhisikar's biography of Golwalkar, *Shri Gurujii—Pioneer of a New Era*. "It was with this clear understanding that the Sangh, as an organisation, decided not to

plunge into the movement. Right from the beginning, the Sangh has decided to observe certain constraints in some matters." (page 47) "So, when Doctorji decided to participate in the satyagraha, he directed the Swayamsevak to keep out of it and conduct the Shakra work with regularity. He had kept the Sangh as such out of the agitation." (page 48)

Now Sinha wants us to believe that lakhs of volunteers of the RSS participated in 1942 and many of them were punished severely by the British. The Sangh is known for its disciplined volunteers. So did the RSS volunteers defy their Sarsanghchalak to be part of the movement led by Gandhi? Even the British intelligence, which was the basis of a British circular warning the officers of the political nature of the Sangh, needs to be taken with a pinch of salt as that was the interpretation of the administration which was contrary to what the RSS itself has always maintained—that it is a cultural organisation and not a political organisation.

Till quite late there were no claims about the RSS' participation in the struggle for India's independence. It is only once the RSS/BJP inched closer to political power that such claims started being made. One of the earliest attempts in this direction has been that of our ex-Prime Minister Vajpayee. In the wake of the 1998 general elections he had issued an appeal for seeking votes; he wrote that not only was he working for the RSS at the shakra level, he also participated in the freedom movement! His claim was around the Batehsvar incident where he was arrested. Soon after his arrest he gave a confessional statement in the court. This

statement helped him getting released from jail and it also named the leaders of the Batehsvar campaign which was part of the 'Quit India' Movement. In this confessional statement Vajpayee says that he had nothing to do with the damages caused to property which was done by the people who had gone to hoist the tricolour on the building. He confesses that he was not part of the procession and was a mere onlooker. Consequent to his apology he was released from the jail. Mr Sinha has a fertile imagination and so he can claim the RSS' participation in the 'Quit India' Movement and that this was the proverbial last straw for the British rulers. The fact is that the RSS' routine work of shakhas and camps continued as usual despite some people feeling uncomfortable about the same. Followers of the Gandhi Congress were on the streets and in jails.

Now the RSS is trying to insert itself into the slot where it does not belong. Ideologically the *Hindutva* political organisations, despite their inner differences, were mainly intent on undermining Muslim nationalism and for that goal had no problem in cooperating with the British. All their efforts were to ignore the diversity of the nation manifested in Gandhi's central slogan of Hindu-Muslim unity. Today a new construct is being brought to the fore for electoral goals, and that is to erase the fact of their absence from the freedom struggle. At a deeper level how could the RSS be a part of the movement for Indian nationalism, as the RSS' aim is totally in contravention to that as it stands for Hindu nationalism?

The author, a retired Professor at the IIT-Bombay, is currently associated with the Centre for the Study of Secularism and Society, Mumbai. Courtesy : Mainstream Weekly

Bangladesh accuses Myanmar of violating its airspace

Cox's Bazar, Sep 16: Bangladeshi authorities have summoned Myanmar's envoy to protest what they say were violations of their airspace amid an exodus of Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence in western Myanmar.

Myanmar's presidential spokesman on Saturday said there's no evidence of any trespassing and that Dhaka should have reached out to discuss its concerns instead of issuing public statements. Up to 400,000 Rohingya Muslims

have fled violence Myanmar and are now in neighboring Bangladesh, living in camps under dire conditions.

The Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Friday that Myanmar drones and helicopters flew into Bangladesh airspace on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. It says a protest note was handed to Myanmar's envoy last evening. Bangladesh warned that the "provocative acts" could lead to consequences.

National & International News

Goa ACB files FIR against Cong leader Chandrakant Kavlekar

PTI Panaji, Sep 16: The Anti-Corruption Bureau of the Goa Police has filed a First Information Report (FIR) against senior Congress leader Chandrakant Kavlekar for allegedly amassing disproportionate assets to the tune of Rs 4 crore. The Goa Police had filed a case against Kavlekar in 2012 under various sections of Prevention of Corruption Act, taking suo moto cognisance of some media reports, which alleged his involvement in illegal allotment of plots. The ACB had started investigations

against Kavlekar's assets, including his properties in Kerala, in 2012 and submitted the preliminary inquiry report to the state government in 2013. "We have received a go ahead from the government to file an FIR against Kavlekar in connection with the case of disproportionate assets," Superintendent of Police (ACB), Bosco George told PTI today. The FIR was lodged under the Prevention of Corruption Act yesterday, he said, adding that the assets are worth Rs 4 crore, which are more than his known source of income.

"We are conducting further inquiry into the matter," he said. George said chief secretary Dharmendra Sharma on Friday had cleared the file on registering an FIR against Kavlekar, who is also the leader of opposition in the Goa assembly. Sources in the ACB on the condition of anonymity said that ACB sleuths would be raiding Kavlekar's house at Betul, Quepem later today. "He has been questioned in the past. We might call him for interrogation again," a senior ACB official said.

When contacted, Kavlekar said that he is ready for an inquiry by the ACB or any other agency. "I am not on the wrong side. I am ready for the inquiry," he said, adding that the government was trying its best to demoralise the opposition through such tactics. Kavlekar is a three-time MLA and was the chairman of state-run Goa Industrial Development Corporation in Congress's Digambar Kamat government during 2007-12 period. The initial investigations in 2012 revealed that Kavlekar owned a plantation worth Rs 32.5 crore in Kerala.

Certificates and Mark Sheets lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my Original Certificate and Mark Sheet for my class XII examination issued by Central Board of Secondary Education, (CBSE) bearing Roll No. 3627564 of 2011 on the way between Sagolband Moirang Leirak to Thangal Bazar.

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21 boys who died in school fire buried in Malaysia

AP Kuala Lumpur, Sep 16: Twenty-one young boys who died in a fire at a private Islamic boarding school were buried in Malaysia amid renewed calls for better regulation of religious schools. The charred bodies were released to family members after being identified through DNA testing. Islamic authorities and grieving family members held prayers for the victims at the hospital mosque before the bodies were taken to cemeteries. Eleven of the boys were buried outside Kuala Lumpur, where hundreds of relatives and well-wishers mourned as the bodies, wrapped in white shrouds, were lowered into the graves. In another cemetery about a half hour away, two siblings and their cousin were laid to rest in the same grave, the Star newspaper said. Others were taken to their hometowns. The burials were sponsored and arranged by state Islamic authorities. The pre-dawn blaze Thursday at a three-story "tadhiz" school, where Muslim boys study and memorize

the Quran, blocked the lone exit to the dormitory, trapping students behind barred windows. Officials said the school was operating without a fire safety permit and license, and that a dividing wall was illegally built on the top floor that blocked the victims from a second exit. A list released by the national news agency Bernama said the victims were 21 boys aged between 6 and 16 and two teachers. Police had put the boys' ages at between 13 and 17 on Thursday, and couldn't be reached to explain the discrepancy. Religious schools, mostly privately run, are not supervised by the Education Ministry because they come under the purview of state religious authorities. Local media reported there were more than 500 registered tadhiz schools nationwide but many more are believed to be unregistered. Data from the Fire Department showed that 1,083 fires struck religious schools in the past two years, of which 211 were burned to the ground. The worst disaster occurred in 1989 when 27 female students at an Islamic school in

Kedah state died when fire gutted the school and eight wooden hostels. Deputy Education Minister P Kamalanathan said his department has proposed that a special committee be set up to obtain state government consent to place all tadhiz schools under the ministry's supervision to ensure they get safety approvals and have operating permits. He said the ministry had previously urged religious schools to register, but that was on a voluntary basis. "This is a good opportunity for us to make it a compulsory requirement for religious schools to register with the Education Ministry. Our main concern is safety," he told The Associated Press. "We have no intention to change or interfere with their teachings." Religion is a sensitive matter in Malaysia, where ethnic Malay Muslims make up about 60 per cent of the country's 31 million people. Firefighters and witnesses have described scenes of horror first of boys screaming for help behind

barred windows as neighbors watched helplessly, and later of burned bodies huddled in corners of the room. Officials initially said they suspected the fire was caused by an electrical short-circuit but later said this wasn't the case. Police said they are still investigating the cause as well as the presence of two gas tanks outside the dormitory. School principal Mohamad Zahid Mahmud has told local media the students were being housed in a temporary building because of renovation work at the main school building. He said they were due to move back at the end of this month. He said the school has been operating for 15 years and registered with the state Islamic religious council. But an official with the state religious council said it had no record of the school. Many grieving parents and family members described the tragedy as fate. Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, the wife of former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, blamed human error. She said she was briefed by a police officer and was told the dormitory was overcrowded.