

Editorial

Thursday, January 25, 2018

Beyond reality: Connecting through virtual world

With the increase of reach and dependence on information technology in the present world, detailed descriptions and knowledge on any subject matter can be had at the touch of a button. The virtual world has shrunk to such an extent that anyone can receive and relay information on someone or something as it happens, anywhere in the world. This has led to an unexpected broadening of one's views and opinions of other people, places, religions, beliefs and customs.

A more tolerant temperament is the result of the ever shrinking virtual world today. The world as we know now is ever evolving and changing and it is upto us to adapt and make the best of it. But just as everything that is continually changing, there emerges a breed of hardliners who are insisting on carrying on with the traditional way of life, and even thinking. While the concept of preservation of culture and tradition for posterity and more importantly, for the preservation of one's own identity and those of the community is without doubt, a vital part of our responsibilities to the future generation, yet the insistence on keeping up and following the traditional way of thinking, to restraint ourselves to the set dogmas and beliefs is nothing short of denying ourselves the freedom to grow-spiritually and intellectually, to think and use our rationality and to pursue our dreams. It is basically denying ourselves the freedom to life as we see fit, so long as our beliefs and practices does not infringe on that of others.

Change is inevitable, and the sooner we accept and embrace it, the better will we be prepared to face the future, uncertain and unpredictable as it will be. Resisting change and attempting to cling on to the old ways of thinking would prove futile and even regressive. Our way of life changes with the changing times. What was once a necessity, like the caste system which was vital for preservation of communities and races, becoming more rigid to keep the increasing intruders and invaders from mingling and diluting a particular race, has now become a major roadblock in the effort to integrate the nation which is intrinsic to the progress of the nation?

The time to walk the line without questioning the rationale behind the dictate is well and truly past. It is time to develop and encourage a scientific temperament which questions and provides a reason for the things we do and think. Tolerance and understanding other' point of view, while, at the same time, retaining the liberty to follow and practice one's beliefs and principles will pave the way for a more inclusive society bound by trust and understanding.

How one lead one's life should not be a subject of discussion, it should rather be an accepted personal judgement that needs to be respected. There are more important and pertinent things to occupy our minds and collective concerns in these volatile times. Progress is not made by adjusting the changes to suit our needs and beliefs. It is through accepting facts and adjusting ourselves to the best we possibly can to these changes that we can prepare for a better future our true gift to mankind.

National and International News

Kashmiri man's death defying rail-stunt has Internet calling for his 'arrest'

TOI
New Delhi, Jan. 25: In an undated video that has surfaced on social media, a Kashmiri man can be seen performing a life-threatening stunt by lying on a railway track as a speeding train passes over him. After completing the insane stunt, the phiran-clad (Kashmiri colak) can be seen letting out a loud celebratory roar, as his friends, who are capturing the

video, cheer him on. The video was widely shared after former J&K CM Omar Abdullah tweeted it, calling the act "stupid". Twitter was abuzz with reactions slamming the man for the act that could have led to a misadventure. There were calls for action against him by law enforcement agencies. Some tried putting sense into the man through brutal trolling.

Blast near save the Children Aid Group Office in Afghanistan, official says

NDTV
Afghanistan, Jan. 25: Attackers set off a car bomb near the office of the Save the Children aid agency in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad on Wednesday and then clashed with security forces, a provincial government spokesman said. "There was a blast and the target was Save the Children," said the spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani. A clash was going on after the blast, he said. Khogyani had no word on casualties but the director of the provincial health department said

11 wounded people had been taken to hospital. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. There were several other aid groups and government offices in the immediate area, raising the possibility that Save the Children was not the target. Jalalabad is the capital of Nangarhar province, on the porous border with Pakistan. The province has become a stronghold for Islamic State, which has grown to become one of Afghanistan's most dangerous militant groups since it appeared around the beginning of 2015.

"ASEAN-India poised for new synergy of robust cooperation and promising future": Lee Hsien Loong ;

PM hails article by ASEAN Chair Singapore's PM, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong

PIB
Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has hailed the article by ASEAN Chair Singapore's PM, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong. PM Said, "A wonderful article by ASEAN Chair Singapore's PM, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong. It beautifully covers the rich history, robust cooperation and promising future of India-ASEAN relations."

The Visiting Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong in an op-ed titled, "Revive a millennial partnership: Singapore has played a major role in India's closer integration with ASEAN" published in the Times of India today writes that the age old trade, commerce and cultural linkages between India and ASEAN have played a major role in giving a boost to the ties.

He writes that as we commemorate 25 years of ASEAN-India relations, India's ties with southeast Asia date back more than 2,000 years. Ancient trade between India and countries such as Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand is well-documented. Southeast Asian cultures, traditions and languages have been profoundly influenced by these early linkages. We see Indic Hindu-Buddhist influences in historical sites such as the Angkor Temple Complex near Siem Reap in Cambodia, the Borobudur and Prambanan temples near Yogyakarta in Indonesia, and the ancient candis in Kedah in Malaysia. The Ramayana is embedded in many southeast Asian cultures, including in Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand. Singapore's Malay name is Singapura, derived from Sanskrit and meaning 'lion city'.

The visiting premier says that Singapore has always advocated India's inclusion in the ASEAN community. India became an ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner in 1992, a full ASEAN Dialogue Partner in 1995, and participated in the East Asia Summits (EAS) from 2005. The EAS is a key component of an open, inclusive and robust regional architecture, and the region's main strategic leaders-led forum.

He adds that ASEAN-India relations were further elevated to a strategic partnership in 2012, the 20th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations. Today, ASEAN and India enjoy multi-faceted cooperation across ASEAN's political-security, economic and socio-cultural pillars. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Act East' policy and 3-C (Commerce, Connectivity, Culture) formula for strengthening engagement with ASEAN speaks to our broad-based cooperation. We have around 30 platforms for cooperation, including an annual Leaders' Summit and seven Ministerial Dialogues. India has participated actively in ASEAN-led platforms including the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, and the East Asia Summit.

Talking about the trade and commerce ties, he writes that with the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA), ASEAN-India trade has risen steadily from \$2.9 billion in 1993 to \$58.4 billion in 2016. On the socio-cultural front, programs like the ASEAN-India Students Exchange Programs and the annual Delhi Dialogue foster closer people-to-people relations. Through these platforms, our youth, academics and businessmen get to meet, learn and deepen ties.

To mark this Silver Jubilee of ASEAN-India relations, both sides have held many commemorative activities. The recent Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Singapore recognized the contributions of the Indian diaspora. Today's ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit marks the culmination of these celebrations. It is an honour for all the ASEAN leaders to be in New Delhi for this occasion. ASEAN leaders are also deeply honoured to be invited as chief guests at tomorrow's 69th Republic Day Parade.

The Singapore PM writes that Major global trends are reshaping the strategic outlook, presenting both challenges and opportunities. The strategic balance is shifting. Demographic, cultural and political changes are underway in many parts of the world. The consensus on globalization and free trade is fraying, but the Asian story continues to be a positive one. We need to push on with economic integration. We must also be resolute in dealing with emerging transboundary challenges, including terrorism, cybercrime and climate change.

According to the visiting premier this geopolitical uncertainty gives new impetus to ASEAN's cooperation with key partners like India. ASEAN and India share common interests in peace and security in the region, and an open, balanced and inclusive regional architecture. India is located strategically along major sea-lanes from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. These sea lanes are also vital trade routes for many ASEAN member states. Both sides share an interest in preserving these vital maritime conduits of trade.

Mr. Lee Hsien Loong underlines the importance and strength of ASEAN and India's combined population of 1.8 billion which represents one quarter of the world's population. The combined GDP exceeds \$4.5 trillion. According to him, by 2025, India's consumer market is expected to become the fifth largest in the world, while in southeast Asia middle-class households will double to 163 million. Both regions are also experiencing a demographic dividend

- 60% of ASEAN's population is below 35 years old, while India is projected to be the world's youngest country with an average age of 29 by 2020. ASEAN and India also have fast-growing internet user bases, which will help us grow the digital economy. Against this backdrop, there is still much scope to grow India-ASEAN ties - India accounted for only 2.6% of ASEAN's external trade in 2016.

The visiting premier has suggested three promising areas of mutually beneficial collaboration.

First, ASEAN and India should redouble efforts to promote trade and investment. We need to keep existing pathways up to date and relevant, including the AIFTA. We should work together to conclude a high quality Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), surpassing the existing AIFTA. This would create an integrated Asian market comprising nearly half the world's population and a third of the world's GDP. Stream-lining rules and regulations will stimulate investments in both directions, complement India's 'Act East' policy and facilitate 'Made in India' exports to the region.

Second, our people will benefit greatly from greater land, air and maritime connectivity. He has appreciated India's efforts to improve land connectivity, including the extension of the trilateral India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway, and India's \$1 billion line of credit to promote infrastructure connectivity with ASEAN. He adds that ASEAN looks forward to working closely

with India to boost our physical connectivity, including by expeditiously concluding the ASEAN-India Air Transport Agreement. This will enhance people-to-people flows across the region and help both Indian and ASEAN carriers tap new and emerging markets, especially for business, investment and tourism. Digital connectivity is another important area of cooperation, and can shape people-to-people connections for the future. India's Aadhaar system creates many new opportunities, for instance, to harmonize India-ASEAN Fintech platforms or connect e-payment systems.

Mr. Mr. Lee Hsien Loong says that India and ASEAN continue to look for new synergies. One objective of Singapore's chairmanship is to develop an ASEAN Smart Cities Network, and here Singapore and India are natural partners. India is rapidly urbanizing and has set itself a goal of establishing 100 smart cities. Singapore, an urbanized city-state, is ready to partner India on this journey and help develop urban solutions based on our own experience. Andhra Pradesh's new capital city of Amaravati is one example.

The Singapore PM sums up his op-ed saying that as ASEAN chair, Singapore is committed to deepening ASEAN-India ties. If both sides use our historical and cultural links to tackle today's challenges and build bridges for the future, our youth and next generation stand to gain the most.

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Stem cell therapy, a new hope to.....

"I did a lot of internet search and reading about those medicines, possible treatment options etc. That is when I came to know about NeuroGen's stem cell therapy for Muscular dystrophy. I consulted another neurologist in Shillong, he admitted me for 15 days and gave the same medicines which were prescribed by the first doctor. I again witnessed a lot of side effects and hence discontinued the medicines again." Tabom and his family then decided to come to Mumbai for Stem Cell Therapy at NeuroGen Brain & Spine Institute. On examination at NeuroGen in February 2017, the chief complaints found in Tabom were that he had stopped getting up from floor since 2 years. He had difficulty in getting up from a supine position. Difficulty in climbing stairs and walking was observed for nearly 4 years. Difficulty in getting up from the chair since 2 years ago.

At NeuroGen, Tabom underwent Stem Cell Therapy along with a customized rehabilitation program. The aim of the rehabilitation program was to improve strength of all the muscles, therapies to increase the strength of the affected areas without fatigue and to increase overall stamina of the patient. He was given exercises that would help him improve his balance, walking, stair climbing, rolling, posture and his grip. These exercises carried out in a systematic pattern with sufficient rest intervals to the patient. Together, the aim of the rehabilitation program was to improve his overall quality of life. Tabom and his family found new hope with NeuroGen's Stem Cell Therapy. He and his family were motivated and positive for him after going back. Physiotherapy and rehabilitation taught at NeuroGen were continued after going home.

The improvements now seem after stem cell therapy are that his Upper

limb overhead activity has improved, feels stronger. Upper limb gross motor activity has improved, feels stronger. Ambulation (walking) has improved. He can walk more distance. Standing and walking balance has improved, falls have completely stopped. Standing posture has improved, stands taller. Muscle strength has improved. Strength in upper limbs has increased but strength in lower limbs has remained same. Stamina has improved. Turning, rolling, side lying to sit, supine to sit, prone to sit, sitting on the edge of the bed, and shifting on bed forward, backwards and sideways activities have improved faster than before. Stair climbing activities have improved, better than before; however, still difficult. Stand independently activities have improved, feels stronger. Knee standing activities have improved, earlier was unable to do so. His upper chest expansion has improved from 4 cm to 6 cm. Middle chest expansion has improved from 3.5 cm to 7. Lower chest expansion has improved from 3.5 to 7. Falls have completely stopped.

Tabom used to be very worried before due his incapability to perform activities. He also discontinued his studies till he finds a relief for his condition. Now he has become an all together a new person with a bright smile on his face. He has continued his studies after taking NeuroGen's treatment and is in final year now. He wishes to pursue for IAS course after completing his final year. His confidence has increased and now he does all his daily tasks with enthusiasm and motivation. The fear of falling has vanished.

Dr Nandini Gokulchandran further said "The available treatment fails to act at the level of injury. No treatment options have been able to slow down the progression of the disease, stop or reverse the pathology. Since it is a genetic

disorder, the ultimate answer rests in gene therapy, which has not yet reached the clinical setting. Stem cell therapy has been the area of interest of researchers globally in analyzing its role in muscular dystrophy. Numerous animal and human studies of stem cell therapy in muscular dystrophy have shown the beneficial effects."

Dr Nandini Gokulchandran added "Stem cell therapy is a productive and safe tool in the management of patients with muscular dystrophy. It has shown functional as well as radiological improvements in these patients, which enhances their quality of life."

Based out of Nerul, Navi Mumbai, NeuroGen Brain & Spine Institute, India's first and only institute that offers not only just Stem Cell Therapy but also Rehabilitation as well. This 11-storeyed building is a super speciality hospital and has 51 beds and with special rehabilitation therapy centres. NeuroGen BSI has been set up to help patients suffering from incurable neurological disorders, get relief from their symptoms and physical disabilities by the use of stem cell therapy in a safe and effective way. NeuroGen BSI offers stem cell therapy and holistic rehabilitation for Autism and Neurodevelopment disorders like cerebral palsy, mental retardation, brain stroke, muscular dystrophy, spinal cord injury, head injury, cerebellar ataxia, dementia, motor neuron disease, multiple sclerosis and neuropsychiatric disorders. Till date, the organization has already successfully treated 5000 patients from over 50 countries. Dr Alok Sharma further concluded saying "For all those millions of patients who had told by us earlier that nothing can be done medically for your illness, we can now say to you with reasonable confidence that with the availability of stem cell therapy and combined with neuro rehabilitation, Achhe Din Aane Wale Hain!"

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