

PRO  *SENSE*

175

Volume 2

**Spotlights from
the History**

**Compiled by
Prime Point Srinivasan
Priyadharshni Rahul**

Prime Point Foundation | Chennai

1 PreSense 175: Volume 2 | Spotlights from the History

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Publishers: Prime Point Foundation
www.primepointfoundation.in
www.corpezine.com
editor@corpezine.com

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION ----- 5

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The First Edition PreSense100-----	6
Preface to the First Edition-----	7
Preface to the Second Edition-----	10
Preface to the Third Edition -----	11
Preface to the Fourth Edition -----	12
Preface to the Fifth Edition-----	13
Journey of Ezine PreSense - Milestones -----	14
Editorial Board – October 2021 -----	16
Prime Point Foundation and its Initiatives-----	17

SPOTLIGHT FROM THE HISTORY ----- 19

First Meeting of Narendranath (Vivekananda) with Guruji -----	20
Indian Institute of Science – Swami Vivekananda’s Vision, Executed by Jamshedji Tata -----	22
Interesting Facts and Unknown People Behind Swami Vivekananda’s Visit to Chicago -----	24
Jai Ho – Indian Cinema hits Century -----	28
Gory Jallianwala Bagh Massacre – 13th April 1919-----	33
First Transmission by BBC – November 1922-----	36

3 PreSense 175: Volume 2 | Spotlights from the History

Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi Yatra That Shook the Foundations of the British Raj-----	39
Quit India Movement – August 1942 -----	42
World War II (1st Sep 1939 to 2nd Sep 1945) -----	46
Where was Mahatma Gandhi on Independence Day? -----	51
Gen. K M Cariappa, India's First Army General – Some Inspiring Facts -----	54
The Making of the Indian Constitution -----	56
India–Pakistan War 1947 -----	60
India–China War 1962 -----	64
Soviet and US in Space Race -----	66
June 1975 – When Indian Democracy Came to a Grinding Halt	71
Circumstances Leading to the Proclamation of Emergency -----	72
Emergency Days – Four Pillars of Democracy Crippled-----	74
End of Emergency – All Records Destroyed -----	76
Shankar's Weekly – Final Cover 31 st August 1975 -----	78
Shah Commission Report – Lost and Regained -----	79
Abu Abraham's Popular Cartoon in The Indian Express dated 10.12.1975 -----	80
Dissolution of the Mighty Soviet Union – December 1991 -----	81
September 11 Attack on World Trade Centre -----	84
Terrorist Attack on Indian Parliament – 13th December 2001 -	87

Mumbai Attack on 26th November 2008 – Remembering Heroes -----	90
Rajaji – Mahatma Gandhi’s Conscience Keeper, History’s Forgotten Hero – Part I (Pre-Independence) -----	91
Rajaji – Part II – His Role in the Post-Independent Era -----	95
Babasaheb Dr B R Ambedkar - Another Forgotten Legend in Indian History -----	99
Lessons from the Sunken Titanic -----	109
Netaji Files to Re-write History - West Bengal Government Declassifies 64 'Netaji Files'-----	114
Forgotten Heroes of our Freedom Struggle -----	119
Remembering Shaheed Bhagat Singh -----	122
India’s Political Destiny – Hope or Despair-----	125
The Indo-China Border Dispute – What is It All About? -----	128
The Olympics – Interesting Historical Facts-----	133
Taliban Seizes Kabul After American Troops Withdraw - India & US Worry About the Uncertainty of Billions in Investments-----	137
Chronology of Afghanistan History of Govts, Russia, American Presence and Tribal Rising - Background of Why Tribal War Lords rule Afghanistan?-----	142
Index-----	145

Introduction

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The First Edition PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



10, Rajaji Marg
New Delhi-110011

FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015


A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Preface to the First Edition

The emergence of Internet in the 1980s changed the way of communication globally. When Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) introduced the internet for commercial use on 15th August 1995, India too adopted the new communication model and medium.

Way back in 2002, we published our first electronic newsletter in a move that was viewed as progressive and visionary in nature. After 8 issues, we had to discontinue the newsletter as its electronic form was not regarded contemporary then. In March 2006, we resumed with an ezine titled 'PreSense' with a shift in focus to creating awareness about the essence in personal and corporate communication.

Interestingly, at that time, no bigwig was willing to give an exclusive interview for the re-launching ezine, or even launch it, as there was apprehension about the success of the concept of an electronic magazine. Dr Y S Rajan (co-author of the book, India 2020, with Dr APJ Abdul Kalam) however encouraged us and volunteered to launch the ezine online.

And so we progressed, introducing interesting interviews with eminent personalities recorded on podcast and synchronised with the ezine format, so that the readers were treated to both online reading of contents as well as audio version of interviews. This enabled the readers to a feel of listening to the personalities they have read about in the ezine. We also introduced the concept of Guest Editorship, enabling the association of renowned professionals to share their experience and viewpoints as Editor for the month. This move gave an uplift to the outlook of the ezine and a new trend in its journey ahead.

Many newsletters and ezines launched during the same period were discontinued later for various reasons. PreSense however, survived the test of time and continued till its 60th edition in February 2011. After a deliberate brief break of a few months, we resumed the publication of our ezine, with a new look and a shift again in the focus to a social and general theme, with the tagline,

'Spreading Positive Vibrations'. This shift in focus enabled a more holistic approach to the theme and subject of communication. The attention moved to global current news, historically significant events, and knowledge-based breakthroughs in technology. This turned out to be an exciting challenge for the editorial team to sustain the positive strain while including novel and currently interesting topics for the reading pleasure.

Although an ezine might not be comparable with a giant-sized main line medium of communication, it has its own advantages as a medium of reaching out. The *Sansad Ratna* Award Scheme and the Education Loan Task Force were two major initiatives by our ezine, giving it the privilege of being recognised as the host to two major issues of national relevance.

Over a period of 9 years, our ezine has given opportunities to many young people to experience firsthand, the nitty-gritty of digital magazine making, editing and publishing. At the request of many of our loyal readers, we are now bringing out this book called 'PreSense 100', containing 100 plus articles, handpicked from the past 99 editions of our ezine. We felt that the selected articles qualified as a collector's item, and hence this special issue is described as a Collector's Digest. It is our belief that the reader too will appreciate it as one.

Up until now, our ezine has been published, not for commercial gains. We are proud to have many professionals on board, contributing their valuable time and talent in the making of the ezine every month.

I place on record my gratitude and appreciation to all the past Editorial Team Members like Satish Naaraj, Vidya, Tushar Panchal, Veena Vinod, Swetha and innumerable others who contributed immensely to make the ezine a professional one.

I personally thank our ezine's Editorial Team members for their sustained support in bringing out this book. I acknowledge the valuable support given by Susan Koshy, V Rajendran, T N Ashok, Prof. Jagannathan, Sukruti Vadula and Dr Ramamurthy Natarajan for editing and formatting this book.

At this stage, it is pertinent to mention that during the process of publishing every edition of the ezine, there was the collective, professional and committed involvement and input of every editorial team that was associated then. It has been the endeavour of the team to maintain a progressively high standard of the contents and readability of the ezine. We believe these efforts met the expectations of the readers, based on the positive and constructive feedback we kept receiving from our diverse and loyal readership base.

Right from the beginning, we have always been the beneficiary of the blessings and guidance of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Former President of India. I also thank Mr V Ponraj, (Scientific Advisor to Dr Abdul Kalam) who supported us in the selection of its contents.

When we planned to publish this book for free distribution, Dr Maria Zeena of Sathyabhama University volunteered to sponsor the cost. I thank her and her team for the noble gesture. I thank Polaris (Padmini and her team) for designing the cover. I thank Sri Logeswari Prints and its owner, Shri M Muthaian for bringing out this book on time.

I thank the innumerable readers and well-wishers who have given unstinted and close-knit support during our journey. Finally, I thank God Almighty for the divine blessings during the journey of 100 editions.

K Srinivasan
Chairman, Prime Point Foundation
Editor in Chief, PreSense

Preface to the Second Edition

The First edition of PreSense 100 was released in June 2015 as a digest of articles published in the earlier 99 editions. The first edition received an overwhelming response from multifarious groups as students, IAS aspirants, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, and other intellectuals. In view of the support received from the readers, our editorial team decided to come out with the second enhanced edition titled PreSense 100+ with additional articles published between June 2015 and April 2016.

We thank Dr P Ganesan, Chairman of Sony Fire Works (Pvt) Limited and AAA College of Engineering and Technology, Sivakasi who volunteered to sponsor and print this second edition for distribution. The Editorial Team gratefully acknowledges the support given by Shri Bharath Matha Mohan (Educationist at Chennai) and Shri VSM Velmurugan (Chairman of VSM Groups, Kovilpatti) in bringing out this second edition. We also thank Smt. Padmini and her team at Intellect Design for designing the wrapper. We thank innumerable other people who contributed to make this second edition possible.

K. Srinivasan
Editor in Chief
PreSense

Preface to the Third Edition

The first edition of the Digest titled PreSense 100, containing articles published in the first 100 editions of our ezine was released in June 2015. The second enhanced edition titled PreSense 100+, covering 110 editions, was released in June 2016. Due to the overwhelming response from our readers, we are now bringing out the third enhanced edition, covering important articles published in 130 editions of our ezine PreSense. This Digest is titled PreSense 130.

Dr P Ganesan, Chairman of Sony Fire Works (Pvt) Limited and AAA College of Engineering and Technology, Sivakasi has always been a source of inspiration to us. He sponsored the second edition of Digest. This time too, he has volunteered to sponsor and print this third edition for distribution among youth.

We also thank Smt. Padmini and her team at Intellect Design for designing the wrapper. We thank innumerable other people who contributed to make this third edition possible.

K. Srinivasan
Publisher & Mg. Editor
PreSense

Preface to the Fourth Edition

The journey of the eMagazine PreSense since March 2006 is amazing and exciting. During this journey, we were able to publish in the print format three editions Digest of articles published in the 100,110 and 130 issues respectively.

We have been receiving large number of appreciation from readers on the contents of Digest. Enthused by this, we are now pleased to release the fourth edition of digest in digital format titled PreSense150 containing select articles published in the 150 issues.

We thank Dr B Muthukumar, Co-Founder of Digital Security Association of India (DisAI) and Advisor to Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI) for all technical support in making this eDigest. We also thank Smt. Padmini and her team at Intellect Design for designing the wrapper.

I personally place on record my gratitude to Mrs Susan Koshy, Mr Rajendran, Mr Triambak Sharma and other editorial team members for the sustained support they are giving for successful publication of the eMagazine PreSense every month. We thank innumerable other people who contributed to make this third edition possible.

K. Srinivasan
Publisher & Mg. Editor
PreSense
24 August 2019

Preface to the Fifth Edition

The eMagazine PreSense which was started in March 2008 on the suggestions of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam for positive journalism has reached the 175th edition in September 2021. This digital only eMagazine is passionately run by a group of eminent volunteers without any commercial motive and without accepting any advertisements.

Looking back, we have published high quality articles on various subjects, including current affairs in every issue. Earlier, we have published Digest of articles after 100, 110, 130 and 150th editions. We had the great honour of getting the Foreword from Dr Abdul Kalam himself for the first Digest published at the end of 100th edition.

This is the fifth Publication at the end of 175th edition. Earlier, we provided all articles in a single book. Due to the large number of important articles, we have grouped all the articles in 8 categories. We are now publishing PreSense175 in 8 volumes covering (1) Indian Heritage, (2) Spotlights from History, (3) Politics and Governance (4) Prince cartoons (5) Media and Communication (6) Science and Technology, (7) Health and (8) General and Exclusives.

I am thankful to Priyadharshni Rahul (Editor), T N Ashok (Consulting Editor), Dr R Jagannathan (Editorial Advisor) and Srinivas Gopal (Technology Advisor) who helped in compiling the select articles published in the past editions.

K. Srinivasan
Publisher and Managing Editor
PreSense
26th September 2021

Journey of Ezine PreSense - Milestones

Dec 1999	Launch of Prime Point Foundation, Publisher of the ezine.
Feb 2006	Launch of ezine, PreSense online by Dr Y S Rajan.
Aug 2006	Integration of Podcast with the ezine contents.
Aug 2007	Introduction of Guest Editors.
Feb 2008	Second Anniversary Edition with Dr Abdul Kalam's exclusive interview. Masthead changed.
Apr 2008	First ezine to become 'Media Partner' for a global event held at London.
July 2008	Introduction of cartoons - Cartoon Character 'Prince' launched by Dr Abdul Kalam.
Sep 2008	Change in layout, introducing photographs on the cover.
Jan 2010	Ezine's new initiative 'Education Loan Task Force' (ELTF) launched to create awareness among students and parents.
May 2010	Ezine's second initiative to honour top performing Parliamentarians, with the <i>Sansad Ratna</i> Award launched. Golden Jubilee (50 th) Edition launched.
Feb 2011	Diamond Jubilee (60 th) Edition.

A hiatus after 5 years of uninterrupted journey

Apr 2012	Ezine resumed in a new format of contents. The tag line changed from 'Communicate the Communication' to 'Spreading Positive Vibrations'.
Apr 2013	Tamil Nadu Governor launched a special edition on the Indian Parliament, coinciding with the <i>Sansad Ratna</i> Awards.
Jun 2013	Platinum Jubilee (75 th) Edition launched by the youth at three places simultaneously, across the nation.
Jun 2015	100 th Edition - PreSense 100 released in print format.
Mar 2016	Ezine's third initiative 'Digital Journalists Association of India' (DiJAI) launched.

15 PreSense 175: Volume 2 | Spotlights from the History

- Jun 2016 Second edition of PreSense 100+ released in print format
- Dec 2017 Ezine's fourth initiative 'Digital Security Association of India' (DiSAI) launched.
- Mar 2018 Third edition of Digest PreSense130 released in print format.
- Aug 2019 Fourth edition of Digest PreSense150 launched in pdf format.
- Sep 2021 Fifth edition of Digest PreSense175 in 6 volumes released.

The Journey Continues.....

Editorial Board – October 2021

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K. Srinivasan (Prime Point Srinivasan), Digital Journalist

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Priyadarshni Rahul, Advocate, Supreme Court of India,
New Delhi

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Ramesh Sundaram, Senior Journalist

R Nurullah, Senior Journalist and columnist

M B Jayaram, Chairman Emeritus, Public Relations Council of India

Editorial Team

Srinivas Gopal, Technology Expert

Nandini Alagar, Digital Marketing Expert, Author, Writer and
Musician



Prime Point Foundation and its Initiatives

Prime Point Foundation, a Non-Profit Trust and NGO was founded in December 1999 by Shri K Srinivasan (popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan), a former Senior Banker and a Digital Journalist and Communication Professional, to promote leadership and communication skills among the youth. Very eminent persons are associated with the Foundation.

In the past 21 years, the Foundation has organised several seminars, workshops, training and interactive sessions, both offline and online, on various subjects of national interest. The Foundation manages various online discussion groups and podcasts on communication, and digital journalism.

The Foundation has formed 5 initiatives to create awareness in various domains. All these initiatives are managed independently by passionate experts. These initiatives are non-commercial, and focussed on youth.

PreSense: The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam to promote positive journalism. Till September 2021, the Foundation has published 175 editions. This is a digital-only



magazine. Digests, containing select articles upto 150 editions of the eMagazine, have so far been published. Dr Abdul Kalam has written the foreword for the Digest of articles upto 100 editions. PreSense publishes the cartoon character Prince, which was launched by Dr Abdul Kalam in 2008. PreSense will be publishing a Digest of select articles published upto 175 editions in the month of September 2021.

Sansad Ratna Awards: This is a flagship initiative started in 2010 to honour top performing Parliamentarians

Sansad Ratna®
AWARDS COMMITTEE

every year, based on various performance parameters, and selected by a Jury Committee of eminent Parliamentarians. Dr Abdul Kalam himself inaugurated the first edition of the Awards event in May 2010. Till 2021, the Foundation has conducted 11 editions and presented 75 Awards. IIT Madras was the supporting Partner upto the 9th Edition. 10th Edition was held at Raj Bhavan, Tamil Nadu. 11th Edition was held at Constitution Club of India, New Delhi.

Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) is an off-shoot of Sansad Ratna Awards. This is a registered NGO operating since 2018.



NGPL has organised several workshops online and offline, for young political leaders and aspirants. Ministers, parliamentarians, legislators and retired constitutional authorities have participated and shared their views.

NGPL will shortly be instituting Awards for young promising politicians.

Education Loan Task Force (ELTF) was started in 2010 to create awareness about education loans, among students and parents. More than 30,000 queries have been responded to, through email, and more than



5000 serious complaints have been taken up with the top management of the banks concerned, for redressal. Many policy issues have been taken up by Sansad Ratna Awardee MPs, in the Parliament for solution. ELTF does not facilitate loans.

Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI): DiJAI is an independent NGO founded in 2017 to create awareness about digital journalism and its implications, among the public and particularly among the journalists. DiJAI conducts several



online and offline workshops and seminars, with panels of domain experts.

Spotlight from the History

First Meeting of Narendranath (Vivekananda) with Guruji

How many of us are aware that William Hastie, a relatively less featured individual of the British-Indian era, is the person behind Narendranath's (original name of Swami Vivekananda) transformation by motivating him to meet Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa?

Revered William Hastie



Reverend William Hastie

Photo courtesy: The Hindu

Scotland-born William Hastie, after distinguishing himself in physics and mathematics, pursued his studies in philosophy and divinity in Germany and Holland. Since he was not interested in priesthood, he received the licence from the Church of Scotland to teach abroad. In 1878, he joined as the principal of the 'General Assembly's Institution' (now called the Scottish Church College, Kolkata).

After joining this college, Hastie restructured the Department of Philosophy. The scholastic reputation of Principal Hastie attracted Narendranath to join this college in 1881. William Hastie's simple lifestyle attracted his students.

State of Trance or Spiritual Ecstasy

One day, Reverend William Hastie was discussing the poem, "Excursion" written by poet William Wordsworth, in the class where Narendranath was present. He was explaining how the poet fell into a state of 'trance' (spiritual ecstasy) when experiencing the sublime beauty of nature. Hastie suggested to the students to meet Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, a priest at Dakshineswar (Kali Temple), who had attained the status of 'trance'.

Meeting of Narendranath with Sri Ramakrishna

The 19-year-old Narendra was excited about this suggestion. He immediately met Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa in December 1881. He had a volley of questions for him. This meeting of two great souls became the turning point in the spiritual history of India.

After failing to get satisfactory answers of real time experience from other people, Narendranath questioned Sri Ramakrishna, "Have you seen God?" Sri Ramakrishna spontaneously responded, "Not only have I seen God but I can show Him to you too. I see Him more intensely than I see you".

This conversation influenced the mind of Narendra in that historic moment and he surrendered himself completely to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. This is the beginning of the spiritual journey of Narendranath, who later became Swami Vivekananda.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: July 2013 issue of PreSense

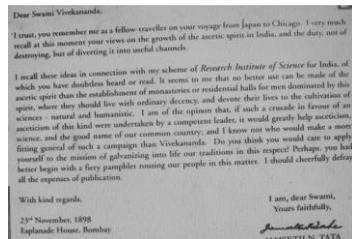
Indian Institute of Science – Swami Vivekananda’s Vision, Executed by Jamshedji Tata

India is celebrating the 150th year of Swami Vivekananda’s birth. He is a great source of inspiration to the Indian youth. From this issue for another 12 months, PreSense will bring out interesting episodes from the life of Swami Vivekananda to inspire the readers.

Many Indians may not know that Swami Vivekananda was not only a great spiritual leader, but also a visionary for promoting science. In 1893, when Jamshedji Tata and Swamiji were travelling together in a ship from Japan to USA, Tata told Swamiji that he was going to USA to bring the steel industry to British India. Swamiji blessed Tata for his venture and suggested that the steel industry consists of two components viz. (1) science of steel and (2) manufacturing of steel. Besides bringing the manufacturing technology, Swamiji suggested to Tata to develop the ‘science of steel’ in India itself.

Visionary Tata took Swamiji’s advice very seriously. From that day, Tata started visualising both the steel industry and a world-class Science Research Institute in India.

On 23rd November 1898, Tata wrote a personal letter to Swamiji, recalling their conversation on the ship and requested him to be the captain of the new Science Institute and guide the initiative. Since Swamiji was busy in the setting up of the Ramakrishna Mutt, he could not accept this invitation. Swamiji passed away in 1902. However, Tata continued the mission of establishing a Science Institute at Bangalore, donating a part of his property for the purpose. Jamshedji Tata too passed away in 1904. His successors took the initiative forward and launched the Indian Institute of Science known as Tata Institute at Bangalore in 1909.



23 PreSense 175: Volume 2 | Spotlights from the History

The Tata Institute continues as a world class Science Research Institute, symbolising the vision of two great sons of India, *Swami Vivekananda and Jamshedji Tata*.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: January 2013 issue of PreSense

Interesting Facts and Unknown People Behind Swami Vivekananda's Visit to Chicago

Swami Vivekananda's Visit to Ramnad

After Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's passing away in 1896, Swami Vivekananda began a padayatra of the country. In 1892, he visited Ramanathapuram and stayed with Bhaskara Sethupathy, the King of Ramnad. Shri Bhaskara Sethupathy, even at his young age of 24, was a great scholar in Saiva philosophy. At that time, he received an invitation for the 'Parliament of World Religions 1893', to be held in Chicago and was preparing to travel to USA.



When Bhaskara Sethupathy interacted with Swami Vivekananda, he realised that Swamiji was the right person to attend the World Parliament of religions and to present the Indian spiritual views. He became Swamiji's disciple and requested Swamiji to go to USA to attend the World Parliament of Religions. He was even willing to fund his trip to the extent possible by him, cancelling his own visit. Swamiji initially declined this offer.

Decision at Kanyakumari

Swami Vivekananda then moved to Kanyakumari, the southern tip of the country on 24th December 1892. There is a rock in the sea, 500 metres from the mainland. Since the fishermen were busy celebrating Christmas Eve, no one was willing to take him to the rock. Without hesitation, he swam across the sea and reached the rock. He was in meditation for two days on the rock and got enlightenment about his duties. He decided that he would go to Chicago to participate in the World Parliament of Religions. This rock is now known as the Vivekananda Rock Memorial and it is a popular tourist place.



Vivekananda rock memorial at Kanyakumari where Swamiji got enlightenment

Swamiji then returned to Ramnad and stayed with Bhaskara Sethupathy. He accepted his suggestion of going to Chicago and participating in the World Parliament of Religions.

Support by the Madras Students

From Ramnad, he visited Madras (now known as Chennai). Since he was in need of more money, Mr. Azhagiya Singaperumal, a professor of the Pachayappa's College, Madras and many of his students went on a door-to-door collection of money to raise funds for Vivekananda's USA trip. Swamiji was highly motivated by the enthusiasm shown by Bhaskara Sethupathy and the people of Madras about his journey to USA. He left Madras for Bombay to continue to Chicago by ship.

Returning to India after a victorious trip to America and Europe

After Swami Vivekananda's Chicago speech, he became very popular in India. After touring America and Europe for four years, he returned to India via Ramnad and Madras, as a mark of gratitude to the people who had encouraged him to go to Chicago.

On 26th January 1897, he returned to India by a steamer from Sri Lanka. As he was about to land at Pamban, Bhaskara Sethupathy, the King of Ramnad, who was waiting with his entourage, gave him a royal welcome. He reverentially bowed his head and offered it as a step for Vivekananda to land from the boat as Vivekananda was returning to Motherland after five years. But, Swamiji tactfully avoided by jumping from the boat onto the land. Since the king was kneeling down in this place to receive Swamiji, this place is now known as 'Kundukal', in Tamil, meaning 'kneeling down'. A memorial is also erected in this place



to mark the historic landing of Swamiji after his visit to Chicago, successfully establishing himself as the Spiritual Ambassador of India.

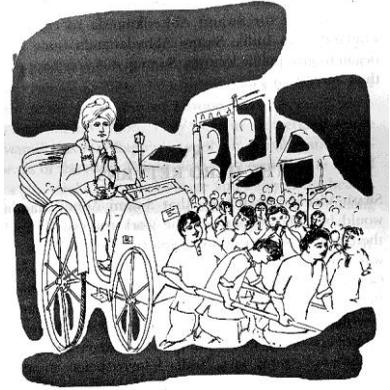
After landing, Swamiji was to be taken in a procession to the town in a chariot, drawn by six horses. After Swamiji boarded the ceremonial chariot, Bhaskara Sethupathy suddenly unyoked the horses from Vivekananda's ceremonial chariot and pulled the

chariot manually with his entourage till it reached his palace, in spite of the repeated cries of “no no” by Swamiji.

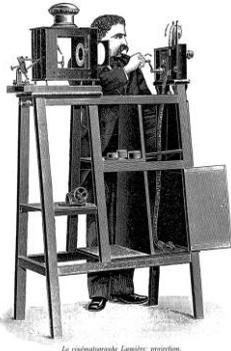
Later he erected a victory pillar of 25 feet height with the Upanishad expression Satyameva Jayate to commemorate the success of Swami Vivekananda at Chicago.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: March 2013 issue of PreSense



Jai Ho – Indian Cinema hits Century



The Indian Cinema Industry entered the 100th year on 3rd May 2013. India ranks first among the nations which produce films and contributes nearly 23% of the films produced in the world.

Lumieres' Cinematographie

Within a year of Lumieres' first exhibiting their cinematographie in Paris, an agent brought the equipments and films from France and exhibited the moving pictures in Bombay (now known as Mumbai) on 7th July 1896. Within a few months, this was shown in Madras and Calcutta. It is said that when the Lumieres showed their moving picture of the arrival of a train on the screen, the audience rushed out of the theatre at Bombay and Madras fearing that they were going to be run over by the oncoming train.

The First Silent Movie in 1913

The first feature film in Marathi "Raja Harishchandra" (a silent movie) made by Dadasaheb Phalke was released on 3rd May 1913, marking the beginning of the Indian cinema industry. The film was Dada's first feature film venture of a full film length of 3700 feet (in four reels) and about 50 minutes of running time. It took seven months 21 days to complete the film. The film was screened at the Coronation Cinema in 1913 before an invited audience of representatives of the press, and guests. The film received wide acclaim and was a commercial success. Phalke followed it up by making films such as Satyavan Savitri, Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra (1917), Lanka Dahan (1917), Sri Krishna Janma (1918) and Kaliya Mardan (1919). Dadasaheb Phalke was by then known as the 'Father of Indian



Cinema'. During the early days, no woman was willing to act in films and hence men were playing the roles of women.

The First Indian Talkie in 1931



The first Indian talkie 'Alam Ara' (with sound), directed by Ardeshir Irani was released in Majestic Cinema on 14th March 1931. This film had 7 songs. During that time, there was no sound proof recording theatres or dubbing. The shootings used to be held in the nights with actors acting and delivering the dialogues or singing live. The recordings used to be done with hidden microphones. Alam Ara ran for 124 minutes. This film changed the course of direction of Indian films. This film was produced by "Imperial Movie-Tone".

Tamil and Telugu Movies

After producing Alam Ara in 1931, Ardeshir Irani made many talkies in the same sets at Bombay. In the same year, Bhakta Prahlada, the first Telugu talking film and Kalidas (in Tamil) were made in the same sets as Alam Ara. Both were directed by H M Reddy, one of the earlier assistants of Ardeshir Irani. Kalidas had multiple language dialogues and songs.

Newspaper Advertisement about Kalidas on 29th October 1931

It is reported that when the first film reels of Kalidas was brought to the Madras Central Railway Station, it was received by the people with great excitement. Although the film was released on 31st October



1931, Swadesamitran, one of the leading Tamil dailies of those times wrote a review on 29th October itself, praising the movie.

Bhaktha Prahlada (Telugu talkie) was first released in Bombay on 6th February 1932 and then in Madras on 2nd April 1932. Later it was released in Andhra Pradesh, but no documentary proof is available on the date of its release in this region.

Gemini Introduced a New Style of Publicity

A turning point in the film industry happened when 'Chandralekha' was produced by Gemini S S Vasan in 1948. This was the first grand film in India produced at a cost of Rs.30 lakhs (Rs.3 million) during 1948. It had a magnificent dance sequence with a large number of dancers dancing on drums. This was also the first film in India to be released with sub-titles in 609 theatres in India and abroad. For the first time, S S Vasan spent heavily on huge publicity banners all over the country to promote the film. The face of the actress in a large mega poster in Bombay, attracted a large crowd at that time. The film, which was 207 minutes long, was produced in the popular 'Gemini Studios' and the production took 5 years. The film was released in April 1948.



Growth of Indian Cinema

From then on, the Indian cinema progressed faster. From the 'drama' type cinemas, real dialogue-oriented and music-oriented films evolved. Moving from the ancient epic-oriented films, directors started taking up social issues. From studio-oriented settings, the directors moved to real outdoor locations in villages, rivers and mountains for shooting their films.

Today, the Indian Cinema has acquired the capability in technology and creativity to match international standards. India is the

topmost country in the world to produce the largest number of films. India produces around 1200 films every year. On an average, around 20 million people watch the movies in theatres every day. With the growth of television, cable TV, and exclusive film-oriented channels, more and more people are watching movies.

Hindi (Bollywood), Tamil (Kollywood) and Telugu (Tollywood) films constitute nearly three-fourth of the films produced in India. These films have also captured international attention.

Great Indian Directors

Many Indian cinema directors like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, V Shantharam, Dada Saheb Palke, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, K. Balachander, Mani Ratnam, Mahendran, L V Prasad, K Viswanath, Adurthi Subbarao and many more veterans have contributed in their own way to the growth of the Indian Cinema Industry.

Films Influencing Politics

In the past four decades, we have seen film personalities like MGR, NTR, Jayalalitha, Karunanidhi and Vijayakanth occupying high political positions in the South. The film industry still influences political decisions in Tamil Nadu and Andhra.

Serious Concerns

On the positive side, the Indian cinema has developed creativity and capability to match international standards. In the recent decades, it has also become highly commercial, focusing only on revenue. The involvement of underground people and black money has made the industry dangerous to be associated with.

Many of the young directors feel that the 'Masters' who are highly creative and take the industry to the next level, do not get recognised, and in their passion for films and creativity, they undergo much humiliation. The industry, which provides employment opportunities to millions of people directly and

indirectly, should get relief from the clutches of unwanted anti-national elements and work towards the development of the industry and the nation.

Input courtesy to P K Saravanan (Anna University) and Dhanapal Padmanabhan (Cine Director)

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: May 2013 issue of PreSense

Gory Jallianwala Bagh Massacre – 13th April 1919

It was on 13th April 1919, when Punjab was celebrating the 'Baisaki' festival that more than 1000 people, including children and the aged of Punjab were ruthlessly killed by Dyer, who was later known as the 'Butcher of Punjab'.

Why did People Gather at Jallianwala Bagh?

After Mahatma Gandhi's active entry into the freedom movement in 1915, the entire country was behind him in the struggle for freedom from the British. On 9th April 1919, two popular leaders, Dr Satyapal and Dr Saif ud-Din Kitchlew, were arrested by the Governor of Punjab, Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer and they were deported from Amritsar. The same day, Mahatma Gandhi's



entry into Punjab was banned under the Defence of India Rules. This led to a protest by the people. In the shootout, 30 civilians were killed. The angry mob went on a rampage and killed five Europeans. Unnerved by the fury of the people, the Governor called in the army to manage the situation, and this infuriated the people further.

In the evening of 11th April 1919, Brigadier-General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer, commander of the 45th Infantry Brigade at Jalandhar, arrived in Amritsar with his troop. On 12th April 1919, he issued an order, prohibiting all meetings and gatherings.



Martyr well

Massacre

On 13th April 1919, which marked the Baisakhi festival, a large number of people, mostly Sikhs, had poured into the city from the surrounding villages. Local leaders called upon the people to assemble for a meeting in Jallianwala Bagh, a garden in Amritsar, at 4.30 in the evening.



The narrow lane through which the army entered the garden.

The meeting went on peacefully, and two resolutions, one calling for the repeal of the Rowlatt Act and the other condemning the firing on 10th April 1919, were passed. At about 5.15pm, when a third resolution protesting against the general repressive policy of the government was being

proposed, Brigadier-General Dyer entered the garden through a narrow lane with 50 riflemen and two armoured cars with machine guns mounted on them. He deployed his riflemen on an elevation near the entrance and without warning or ordering the crowd to disperse, they opened fire. The firing continued for about 20 minutes, after which, Dyer and his men marched back the way they had come. 1650 rounds of .303-inch ammunition were fired. This led to 379 being killed and 1200 wounded. Since there was no escape route, many people including children, fell into the well and died. This triggered a protest across the nation and led to the renunciation of the British Knighthood by Rabindranath Tagore.

The Fate of Dyer and O'Dwyer



Dyer

O'Dwyer

Udham Singh

After an enquiry, Brigadier-General Dyer was relieved of his army duties. The Governor, Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer defended Dyer's action.

One Udham Singh (who later changed his name to Ram Mohammad Singh Azad), a 20-year old Sikh, who was disturbed mentally by this massacre took a vow in the Golden Temple to take revenge. After 21 years, on 13th March 1940, Udham Singh assassinated Francis O'Dwyer in London. He was arrested immediately and hanged to death on 31st July 1940.

While the English media in India condemned Udham Singh for assassinating Francis O'Dwyer, the vernacular media hailed him as a hero. Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru condemned Udham Singh. Dyer died of cerebral haemorrhage and arteriosclerosis on 24th July 1927 when he was 62 years of age. This Jallianwala Bagh massacre triggered the freedom movement further to drive the British out. A memorial is erected in this place.

By Sukruti A Vadula, Editorial Team, PreSense

Source: April 2014 issue of PreSense

First Transmission by BBC – November 1922



The privately-owned BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) was the world's first national broadcasting organisation. It was founded on 18th October 1922 as the British Broadcasting Company Ltd by the British General Post Office (GPO) and a group of six telecommunications companies — Marconi, Radio Communication Company, Metropolitan-Vickers (MetroVick), General Electric, Western Electric, and British Thomson-Houston (BTH) to broadcast experimental radio services.



The first transmission was made on 14th November of that year, from station 2LO, located at Marconi House, London. That year, its founder John Reith became its first general manager.

In 1923, he became its Managing Director and in 1927 he was employed as the Director-General of the British Broadcasting Corporation, created under a Royal Charter (picture).

The Royal Charter is the constitutional basis for the BBC. It sets out the public purposes of the BBC, guarantees its independence, and outlines the duties of the Trust and the Executive Board. The current Charter runs until 31st December 2016. BBC is the first public service broadcasting statutory corporation in the world. Its



main responsibility is to provide impartial public service broadcasting in the United Kingdom.

The BBC is the world's oldest national broadcasting organisation and the largest broadcaster in the world employing around 23,000 staff. The BBC is a semi-autonomous public service broadcaster that operates under a Royal Charter and a Licence and Agreement from the Home Secretary.

Within the United Kingdom, its work is funded mainly by an annual television licence fee, which is charged to all British households, companies and organisations using any type of equipment to receive live television broadcasts; the cost of the fee is set annually by the British Government and approved by its Parliament.

Outside the UK, the BBC World Service provides services by direct broadcasting and re-transmission contracts by radio, television and online. The Corporation's guaranteed income from the licence fee and the World Service grants are supplemented by profits from commercial operations through a wholly owned subsidiary, BBC Worldwide Ltd.

According to BBC's 2012-13 Annual Report, its total income was £5,102.3 million. Of this, nearly 71% came from license fees collected from householders; 22% from BBC's commercial business and 6% came from Government grants.

The licence fee has, however, attracted criticism. It is argued that in an age of multi stream, multi-channel availability, an obligation to pay a licence fee is no longer appropriate.

Presently, BBC operates flagship television channels, radio stations in English and many other languages, news service with largest network, the most popular online internet service, etc.

Although BBC is a public service broadcaster, created under the Royal Charter, they have full independence to produce and broadcast their programmes. They provide the most efficient service to its listeners. Even the private broadcasters consider BBC as the benchmark to evaluate their own efficiency. Will AIR and

Doordarshan, Public Service broadcasters of India learn to be independent and more efficient like BBC?

BBC official website **<http://www.bbc.co.uk>**

By K. Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: November 2013 issue of PreSense

Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi Yatra That Shook the Foundations of the British Raj

Dandi March from Sabarmati Ashram



On 12th March 1930, Mahatma Gandhi set out on foot from his Sabarmati Ashram, along with 78 *satyagrahis* for the coastal village of Dandi, Gujarat. This Dandi March is an important part of the Indian independence movement. It was a direct action campaign of tax resistance and non-violent protest against the British salt

monopoly in colonial India, and triggered the wider Civil Disobedience Movement. This was the most significant, organised challenge to British authority since the Non-cooperation Movement of 1920–22, and directly followed the Purna Swaraj declaration of independence by the Indian National Congress on 26th January 1930.

Mahatma Gandhi walked for 24 days to cover the distance of 240 mile (390 km) to produce salt without paying the tax. Thousands of *satyagrahis* and leaders like Sarojini Naidu joined him. Every day, more and more people joined the march, until the procession of marchers became at least two miles long.

Massive Support from the People

At Surat, they were greeted by 30,000 people. When they reached Dandi, more than 50,000 joined the procession. Gandhi gave interviews and wrote articles along the way. Foreign journalists made him a household name in Europe and America. The New York Times wrote almost daily about the Salt March, including two front-page articles on 6th April and 7th April. Towards the end of the march, Gandhi



declared, "I want world sympathy in this battle of Right Against Might."

When Mahatma Gandhi broke the salt laws at 6:30 am on 6th April 1930, it sparked large scale acts of civil disobedience against the British Raj salt laws by millions of Indians. The campaign had a significant effect on changing the world and the British attitude towards Indian independence and motivated a large number of Indians to join the fight for the first time.

Picking up Salt and Shaking the Foundation of the British Empire

On 6th April 1930 after a prayer, Gandhi raised a lump of salty mud and declared, "With this, I am shaking the foundations of the British Empire." Salt Satyagraha succeeded in drawing the attention of the world. Millions saw the newsreels showing the march. Time magazine declared Gandhi as its 1930 Man of the Year.

Rajaji Leading the Salt Satyagraha in the South

While Gandhi marched along India's west coast, his close associate



Rajaji leading the Salt Satyagraha in South - Photo courtesy The Hindu

C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji), who later became independent India's first Governor-General, did a parallel salt march along the east coast from Tiruchi to Vedaranyam.

On 13th April 1930, Rajaji started from Tiruchi and he was joined by a large

number of people at Thanjavur, Kumbakonam and other places till they reached the coastal village of Vedaranyam. Sixteen days later, Rajaji and his followers picked up a handful of salt and were immediately arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

41 PreSense 175: Volume 2 | Spotlights from the History

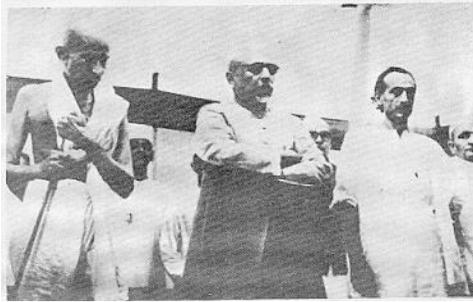
This 'Salt Satyagraha' was a turning point in the Indian freedom movement. This galvanised the Indians to fight against the mighty British.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: March 2013 issue of PreSense

Quit India Movement – August 1942

9th August 1942 is one of the important days in the history of the Indian freedom movement.



Mahatma Gandhi, Azad and Kripalani

We share the following interesting information for the knowledge of our young and old generations. This will give some idea about the sacrifice made by our leaders during the freedom struggle.

World War II and the Cripps Mission

In the year 1939, the Second World War started between Britain and Germany. In 1942, the then British Governor involved India, without consulting the Congress leaders. This angered the Congress leaders. In March 1942, the British Government sent a delegation under the leadership of Stafford Cripps in what is popularly known as the Cripps Mission, to negotiate with the Congress leaders and persuade them to agree to join the British side in the war, in turn for a promise of freedom. The leaders did not agree to the proposal, as they wanted to maintain neutrality in the war.

Preparation for Civil Disobedience

On 14th July 1942, the Indian National Congress passed a resolution demanding complete freedom to India from the British. The resolution also stated that if the British did not accept the demand, Congress would start a 'mass civil disobedience'.



Huge crowd at Gowalia Tank Maidan on 9th August 1942

Since Britain was engaged in the peak of World War II, this resolution faced controversy. Sri C Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) opposed the resolution and he quit the Congress. (Rajaji returned to the Congress later) Rajaji warned the Congress that it was not the right time to go for civil disobedience, as the entire world was engaged in World War II. But all other senior leaders accepted the resolution. Some other political parties like the Communists, the Hindu Maha Sabha and the Muslim League, too did not support the call.

"Do or die' Call in the Historic Session on 7th August 1942

The historic session of the Indian National Congress was held on 7th August 1942 at the Gowalia Tank Maidan, Bombay (now known as the August Kranti Maidan in Mumbai). In the midnight of 8th-9th August 1942, the Congress passed the famous 'Quit India Resolution', which electrified the country. This has become the popular 'Quit India Movement', and the mass civil disobedience movement was launched with Mahatma Gandhi's "do or die" call.

Quit India Movement Turning Violent

Within a few hours of the resolution and call, all the national leaders were arrested. Since there were no leaders outside, the movement became violent. The people burnt the Government offices and violence could not be controlled by the Congress. The British Government moved in the army and more than one hundred thousand people were arrested. During this period, the contact of the leaders with the masses was cut off. During this period, Mahatma Gandhi's wife, Kasturba Gandhi and his trusted secretary, Mahadev Desai were also put into jail. Mahatma suffered failing health.



Aga Khan Palace near Poona where Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned from Aug 42 to May 44

Different reasons were attributed for 'violence' like the absence of the top leaders, mistaken interpretation of the 'do or die' call, inducement by the British rulers indirectly etc. That was why Rajaji forewarned Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress not to announce the 'civil disobedience' policy. His fear proved right.

Hoisting of the Indian Tri-Colour

When the Quit India movement was started on 9th August 1942, the British Police treated the masses brutally. At that time, Aruna Asaf Ali proudly hoisted the Indian tri-colour in the Gowalia Tank Maidan. This was the first time the Indian tri-colour was hoisted.

Underground Radio Station

During the movement, Aruna Asaf Ali and Usha Mehta (a student) broadcasted news from an underground radio station (42.34 metres). They were shifting the broadcasting equipment frequently to avoid being captured by the British Police.

All the leaders and freedom fighters who participated in the movement were released only after three years, after the World War II ended.

Freedom to India

After World War II, the Labour Party won the elections and captured power in Britain. They took the initiative to transfer power to the interim Government headed by Pandit Nehru. India attained full independence on 15th August 1947.

Though the Quit India movement generated controversies at that time, this movement is considered one of the important milestones in the Indian freedom movement to force Britain to hand over power to the Indian leaders.

Let us salute those brave freedom fighters for their great sacrifice.

45 PreSense 175: Volume 2 | Spotlights from the History

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: August 2013 issue of PreSense

World War II (1st Sep 1939 to 2nd Sep 1945)

Beginning of World War II

Nationalistic tensions, unresolved issues, resentments resulting from the World War I, the inter-war period in Europe and the effects of the Great Depression in the 1930s were the main reasons for World War II.

The culmination of events like invasion of the Republic of China by the Empire of Japan in 1937 and invasion of Poland by Germany and Soviet Russia in 1939 led to the outbreak of World War II.



German battleship Schleswig-Holstein during a shellfire of Gdynia (Poland) on 13th sep 1939.

These military aggressions were the result of decisions made by the authoritarian ruling Nazi elite in Germany and by the leadership of the Kwantung Army in Japan. World War II started after these aggressive actions were met with an official declaration of war and/or armed resistance.

On 1st September 1939, Germany invaded western Poland. In response, Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3rd September. On 17th September 1939, Soviet forces invaded Eastern Poland. These invasions marked the beginning of World War II.

Impact of World War II

Major countries in the world grouped themselves into two major forces (a) allies and (b) axis to fight against each other. The World War II lasted 6 years and 1 day. The battle was fought in 9 different locations across the world.

Soviet Union, USA, UK, China, France, Poland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Yugoslavia formed the 'Allied Powers'. Joseph Stalin, Roosevelt, Winston



Mussolini and Adolf Hitler

Churchill and Chiang Kai Shek were leading the Allied forces. Germany, Japan, Italy, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria formed the 'Axis Powers'. Adolf Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito were leading the Axis Powers.

The two groups involved nearly 100 million military personnel in this world war, resulting in the death of nearly 24 million soldiers. 50 to 55 million civilians lost their lives. In total, nearly 80 million people lost their lives during this World War II and this comprised nearly 4% of the then world population.

Adolf Hitler's Atrocities

Hitler began a military build-up on Germany's western border, and in April 1940, German forces invaded Denmark and Norway. On 9th April, Hitler proclaimed the birth of the "Greater Germanic Reich" to his associates; this was his vision of a united empire of the Germanic nations of Europe, where the Dutch, Flemish, Scandinavians, and other people would join to form a single, racially-pure polity under German leadership. In May 1940, Hitler's forces attacked France and conquered Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Belgium. These victories prompted Mussolini to have Italy join forces with Hitler on 10th June 1940. France surrendered on 22nd June 1940.

Hitler's forces committed numerous atrocities during the war, including the systematic killing (known as 'Holocaust') of around 17 million civilians, including the genocide of an estimated six million Jews. Many victims of the Holocaust were gassed to death, while others died of starvation or disease while working as slave labourers. Hitler eliminated nearly 80% of the Jewish population in the Nazi Germany in hundreds of 'concentration camps'.



Horror Chamber at Buchenwald Concentration Camp

Japan Attacking Pearl Harbour – Another Turning Point

On 7th December 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, Hawaii. Four days later, Hitler's formal declaration of war against the United States engaged Germany in a war against a coalition that included the world's largest empire (the British Empire), the world's greatest industrial and financial power (the United States) and the world's largest army (the Soviet Union).

Participation by Indian Soldiers – Mahatma and Netaji

Since India was under the British regime, the British Government involved India in the war without consulting the Indian leaders. Nearly 2.5 million soldiers were fighting alongside the British soldiers. Mahatma Gandhi ridiculed the Britain's opposition to Nazism and fascism as hypocrisy since Britain was violating human rights in India.

Meanwhile, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose reorganised the 'Indian National Army' (INA) in alliance with Japan to fight against the British troops. Nearly 40,000 Indian soldiers captured by Japan as 'Prisoners of War' (POW) joined INA and fought against Britain. They gave a tough fight to the British Army in the battle field.

Fall of Hitler and Mussolini

In late 1942, German forces were defeated in the second battle of El Alamein, thwarting Hitler's plans to seize the Suez Canal and the Middle East. In February 1943, the Battle of Stalingrad ended with the destruction of the German Sixth Army. Thereafter came a decisive defeat at the Battle of Kursk. Hitler's military judgment became increasingly erratic, and Germany's military and economic position deteriorated along with Hitler's health. It was also believed that Hitler might have suffered from Parkinson's disease.

HITLER DEAD

Fuehrer Fell at CP, German Radio Says
Doenitz at Helm, Vows War Will Continue

German radio announced today that the Fuhrer had died. The report, which was repeated by the German radio, was the first official announcement of Hitler's death. It was said that the Fuhrer had died at the age of 54, after a long illness.

Churchill
Bliss-Force
Is at Hand



A headline in the U.S.
Army newspaper Stars
and Stripes announcing
Hitler's death

Within three years, Germany and the Axis powers occupied most of Europe and large parts of Africa, East and Southeast Asia and

the Pacific Ocean. However, the Allies gained the upper hand from 1942 onwards and in 1945 Allied armies invaded Germany from all sides. On 29th April 1945, Mussolini was assassinated. On 30th April 1945, Hitler shot himself.

Surrender by Germany and Japan – End of World War II

The war in Europe ended when Nazi Germany signed its Instrument of Surrender on 8th May 1945, but the Pacific War continued. Together with the United Kingdom and the Republic of China, the United States called for the surrender of Japan in the Potsdam Declaration on 26th July 1945, threatening Japan with "prompt and utter destruction". The Japanese government ignored this ultimatum, and the United States deployed two nuclear weapons developed by the Manhattan Project. American airmen dropped Little Boy on the city of Hiroshima on 6th August 1945, followed by Fat Man over Nagasaki on 9th August. Nearly 250,000 people died.

The atomic bombings of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan were conducted by the United States during the final stages of World War II in 1945. These two events represent the only use of nuclear weapons in war to date.



Japan Foreign Minister and Chief of Army Staff
on board USS Missouri during surrender
ceremony on 2nd Sep 1945

On 15th August 1945, six days after the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan announced its surrender to the Allies, signing the Instrument of Surrender on 2nd September 1945, officially ending World War II.

Post War Impact

The victory of the Allies over the Axis in 1945 ended the conflict. World War II altered the political alignment and the social structure of the world. The United Nations (UN) was established to foster international co-operation and prevent future conflicts. The great powers that were the victors of the war — the United States, the

Soviet Union, China, the United Kingdom, and France—became permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The Soviet Union and the United States emerged as rival superpowers, setting the stage for the Cold War, which lasted 46 years.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: September 2012 issue of Ezine PreSense

Where was Mahatma Gandhi on Independence Day?

India celebrated her Independence Day on 15th August 2012. In our ezine, every month, we trace back the historical event relating to that month. In this issue, we take our readers back to 1947 when the nation was celebrating the Independence Day. During the celebrations at Delhi, when Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was unfurling the Indian Flag at the Red Fort, Mahatma Gandhi was on a fast and prayer at Calcutta. We trace back the historical event.

Communal Clash at Calcutta in 1946

During the Quit India Movement in August 1942, more than one lakh leaders were arrested. When all the leaders were in prison, Muhammad Ali Jinnah brought a two-nation theory and demanded partition into India and Pakistan. After Mahatma Gandhi came out of the prison, he wanted to stop the move for partition. Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared a 'Direct Action Day' on 16th August 1946 demanding the partition. This resulted in communal clashes across the nation. In Calcutta alone, more than five thousand people were killed and more than fifteen thousand people injured.



At that time, Mahatma went to Calcutta to get the Hindus and Muslims together. When he was at Calcutta, violence broke in Bihar, killing more than 4500 people.

Mahatma's Fast on 15th August 1947

Mahatma Gandhi declared that he would go on a fast to end his life, if the communal clashes were not stopped. Although his appeal brought calm where he was, rioting continued in other places.



Mahatma Gandhi reluctantly agreed for partition and the British Government handed over powers to the Indian leaders, with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister. The entire country was celebrating the Independence Day on 15th August 1947.

But Mahatma Gandhi was in Calcutta fasting on that day and spending his time in prayers, and spinning. He also met groups of people, as usual. The previous day (14th August 1947), while speaking at the Marwari Club, Mahatma had said that although

India would be free from slavery under the British from midnight, India would be cut into two pieces. That reflected his mood that day. He was not happy that India was being "portioned out".

The partition of India and the communal clashes affected him. On that day of Independence, when a group of students met him, he said, "I am not lifted off my feet by these demonstrations of joy."

Fasting Again in Sep 1947 Without Even Taking Water

Since communal clashes continued in Calcutta, Mahatma Gandhi began his



fast again from 1st Sep 1947. Normally during his fast, he used to take water with salt. Rajaji, then Governor General of India came to Mahatma's place at Calcutta and tried to persuade him to end the fast, which was causing concern to all. Mahatma Gandhi said that he left everything at the 'disposal' of God. Since Rajaji was a close associate of Mahatma, and was his advisor on many key issues, Rajaji jovially asked him, "If you have left yourself at the disposal of God, then why are you taking water with salt". Mahatma Gandhi immediately stopped taking salted water too during the fast.

After the assurance of Hindu and Muslim leaders that they would remain peaceful, he ended his fast on 4th Sep 1947. He did not drink the salted water till the day he ended his fast.

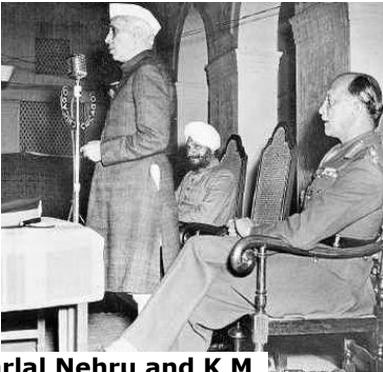
*(Based on input from Mr Annamalai,
Director, Gandhi Study Centre, Chennai, and other sources)*

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: August 2012 issue of Ezine PreSense

Gen. K M Cariappa, India's First Army General – Some Inspiring Facts

After gaining Indian Independence, a meeting was organised to select the first General of the Indian Army. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru chaired that meeting. Leaders and army officers were discussing about whom this responsibility should be given to. During the discussion Nehru said, "I think we should appoint a British officer as the General of the Indian Army as we don't have enough experience to lead the same." Everybody supported Nehru because if the PM was suggesting something, how could they not agree?



Jawaharlal Nehru and K M Cariappa

But one of the army officers abruptly said, "I have a point, sir."

Nehru said, "Yes, gentleman. You are free to speak."

He said, "You see, sir, we don't have enough experience to lead a nation too, so shouldn't we appoint a British person as first PM of India?" The meeting hall suddenly went quiet.

Then, Nehru said, "Are you ready to be the first General of Indian Army?"

He got a golden chance to accept the offer but he refused the same and said, "Sir, we have a very talented army officer, my senior, Lt Gen Cariappa, who is the most deserving among us."

The army officer who raised his voice against the PM was Lt General Nathu Singh Rathore, the First Lt General of the Indian Army.

On being appointed as the first Commander-in-Chief of the independent Indian Army on 15th January 1949, Gen. Cariappa was

instrumental in the integration of troops and turning an imperial army into a national army.

During the 1965 war, when his son, an Indian Air Force pilot, flew an aircraft, the plane was shot down by Pakistan. He was captured and imprisoned as a Prisoner of War (POW). When Ayub Khan learned about this, he informed Cariappa that he would not be kept in a POW Camp like other Indian POWs, since they had worked together before independence. But Cariappa politely declined the offer, saying every soldier in the Indian Army was his son, so he could not request special privileges for only one.

As a token of gratitude by the nation for the exemplary service rendered by him, the Government of India conferred on Gen Cariappa the rank of Field Marshal in 1983. On 15th May 1993, Field Marshal K M Cariappa died in Bangalore, when he was 94. Let us all salute this great Indian Soldier.

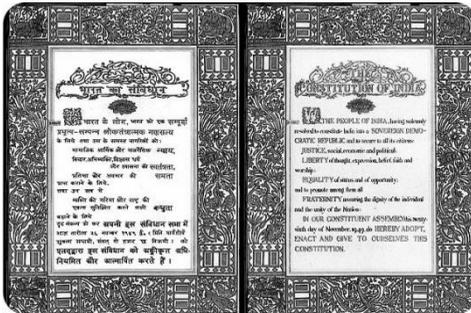
***Photo courtesy: The Hindu
By K. Srinivasan, Editor in Chief***

Source: May 2012 issue of PreSense

The Making of the Indian Constitution

on 26th January 2013, India celebrated the 64th Republic Day with joy and gaiety. While conveying the greetings to all the readers, we thought of sharing some interesting facts about the significance of this day for the benefit of our young readers.

The British Rule



The first Britishers entered India in 1579. Thereafter, merchants started coming in and soon began to rule us. In 1765, the authority was formally transferred to the East India Company. Then the British Parliament took over the administration. Indians started protesting

the foreign rule even from the 18th century. The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885 to formally fight the foreign rulers. After the entry of Mahatma Gandhi, the freedom movement became dynamic. Before Independence, India was governed by various Acts enacted by the British Parliament. The Government of India Act 1858, the Government of India Act 1909, the Government of India Act 1919 and finally the Government of India Act 1935 framed by the British Parliament governed Indians. (These Acts became irrelevant after Independence and the adoption of the Indian Constitution)

Constituent Assembly Formed

After a prolonged struggle and negotiations, as a fore-runner of Independence, a 'Constituent Assembly' was formed with members, representing different regions and religions. The first meeting of the Constituent Assembly was held on 9th December 1946. Many great leaders were part of this Assembly. On the first day, 207 members participated.

On the first day, Acharya Kriplani, one of the respected leaders, started the proceedings invoking the 'divine blessings' and proposing the name of Shri Sachchidananda Sinha (Bihar), the eldest member of the Assembly as the 'Provisional Chairman' till the Chairman was elected.

Shri C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) was the first member to present the credentials and sign the register to become a member of the Constituent Assembly.

On the third day, Dr Rajendra Prasad was elected Chairman of the Constituent Assembly. The designation 'Chairman' was subsequently replaced with 'President of the Constituent Assembly'.

India attained freedom and independence on 15th August 1947 and this Constituent Assembly took over the Governance of India from the British Parliament. Lord Mountbatten was requested by the Constituent Assembly to continue as Governor General for some time. Shri C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) took over as the Governor General on 21st June 1948 and he continued till 26th January 1950. Rajaji was the first Indian Governor General of India. After 26th January 1950, the post of Governor General was made President of India. Dr Rajendra Prasad become the first President of India.



Framing the Draft of the Constitution for India

After independence, the Constituent Assembly wanted to frame the Constitution for India. They constituted a 'Committee to draft the constitution' on 29th August 1947 under the Chairmanship of Dr B R Ambedkar. Shri Alladi



Jawaharlal Nehru moving the resolution for an Independent Sovereign Republic in Constituent Assembly

Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Shri N Gopaldaswami Ayyangar, Shri K M Mushi, Shri Saiyid Mohd Saadulla, Shri B L Mitter and Shri D P Khaitan were included as members of this Committee.

These eminent people drafted the Indian Constitution and presented to the Constituent Assembly on 4th November 1947.

Discussion in the Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly discussed the Draft Constitution in detail in 114 sittings, spread over 2 years, 11 months and 17 days. The final Constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26th November 1949. This day is also known as National Law Day.

Constitution Document Signed

On 24th January 1950, 284 members of the Constituent Assembly signed the document and presented the official Constitution to the nation. Two hand-written copies of our Constitution (one in English and the other in Hindi), and one print copy of English Version were signed by the members.



Rajaji declaring India as a Republic

After putting their signatures, all the members including Dr Rajendra Prasad (President of India Elect) sang 'Vandemataram' and 'Jana Gana Mana' in a chorus, symbolising a great achievement of the Sovereign Independent Republic of India, after a struggle of nearly three centuries.

The proceedings of the Constituent Assembly can be read in the link

<http://164.100.47.132/lssnew/constituent/vol12p1.html>

This Constitution came into force on 26th January 1950. From that day, India is a Sovereign Independent Republic.

When the new Constitution was signed by the members on 24th January 1950, it was drizzling outside the Parliament at Delhi. It was considered a good omen by them.

This Constituent Assembly was made a 'Provisional Indian Parliament' from 26th January 1950. The first General Election was held in 1952 and the 1st Lok Sabha was constituted.

Indian Constitution - Some interesting facts

The Indian Constitution, drafted by great visionaries, continues to be one of the best constitutions in the world. Many global legal experts have praised our constitution. The Indian Constitution contains 22 parts, 395 articles, 12 schedules and 2 appendices. Over a period of 64 years, the Constitution has undergone 97 amendments.

We are publishing these details for the benefit of the younger generation. The freedom and sovereignty we enjoy did not come in a single day. Our elders have struggled and lost their lives in the freedom movement spread over nearly 300 years. The great visionary leaders have also provided us a great Constitution. None of these leaders, who had signed the constitution is alive today.

It is the responsibility of every one of us to salute our great leaders and freedom fighters on this day and live upto their vision.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: January 2013 issue of PreSense

India–Pakistan War 1947

When India and Pakistan were given independence in August 1947, the British Government gave the choice to the Princely States existing then in the Indian sub-continent, to join either India or

Pakistan. With the efforts of Sardar Vallabhai Patel, the then Home Minister, who was also known as the 'Iron Man of India', 566 Princely states (excepting 3 states) chose India.



At that time, Jammu & Kashmir State was ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh (Father of Dr Karan Singh, a well known leader currently). The state, with a majority of Muslims, was ruled by a Hindu King. The state consisted of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladak. While the Kashmir Valley had a majority Muslim population, the people in Jammu and Ladak were mainly Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. As he was under pressure from both India and Pakistan to accede to their Governments, he postponed his decision.



Pakistan Invading India

Meanwhile, in October 1947, Pakistan organised a clandestine invasion of the State by a force of Pathan tribesmen, ex-servicemen and soldiers 'on leave'. They broke out in Pooch in Southwest of Kashmir. The

Maharaja Hari Singh

Pakistan army gave them full support and back-up as they wanted to capture Kashmir within a week. Maharaja's army could not withstand this sudden invasion.

Kashmir accedes to India

In the afternoon of 26th October 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh (photo) offered to accede to India and this was accepted by the then Governor General Lord Mountbatten the following day. Within a few hours, the Indian Army was sent to Kashmir Valley to drive out the invading tribal people and Pakistan army men.

Indian Army Fighting Back Pakistan

At that time, the Indian Army was under the control of the British officers and they had some technical problems in entering Kashmir to fight against the Pakistan army. The Indian Army under the leadership of Major S K Singh (who later became the Governor of J & K State) entered Kashmir Theatre of war. In spite of bad weather, they managed to airlift the army men in 800 Dakota sorties from Delhi to Srinagar within a short time. `Lord Mountbatten recorded: "In my long experience of war, I have not come across another such massive airlift carried out so successfully."

Sudden Orders to Cease Fire



The Indian Army succeeded in chasing out the invaders. Had they continued for another week or a little more, they would have flushed them out completely. Meanwhile, the Indian Army got the orders to cease fire and to halt the advance to Muzaffarabad. The British Commander, Russell was surprised by the orders. He felt they were losing a golden opportunity. He was

of the view that the Indian forces should advance to Muzaffarabad and seal the border by securing the two bridges at Kohala and Domel. Sealing the entry points into Kashmir, he opined, would also relieve the pressure on the besieged forces in Poonch.

The then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru took up the matter with the UN Security Council and under Resolution 47 of UN, ordered Pakistan to withdraw the troops for a free and fair 'plebiscite' in Jammu & Kashmir region. Although Pakistan did not withdraw their troops from the J & K Region, the cease fire came into force from 1st January 1949.

Was India's Move an Historical Blunder?

Because of this, Pakistan occupied nearly 35% of the J & K Region ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh, who had acceded to India. This portion is still known as 'Pakistan Occupied Kashmir' and problems continue till date.

According to the army officers and the political leaders of that day, taking up the Kashmir issue to UN by Pandit Nehru was a great 'historical blunder'. If the Indian Army had continued the war for another week without declaring a unilateral cease fire, the Indian army would have flushed all the invaders out of the Indian territory, and Kashmir would not have become the grave issue it is today. The Indian Army site even records the event so: (<http://goo.gl/ytupG>)



Source: www.rediff.com - POK : Pak occupied Kashmir
COK: China occupied Kashmir

"Before the remaining areas occupied by Pakistan could be liberated by Indian troops, a cease fire came into effect on 1 January 1949. After bitter fighting lasting 14 months, the UN mediation brought about an uneasy truce."

Since a majority of the Kashmiri people at that time were more keen on joining India, 'plebiscite' immediately after the flushing out invaders would have permanently resolved the Kashmir issue. Instead the then Indian Government took this issue to UN for intervention, and this complicated the issue, and it remains unresolved till date.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: October 2012 issue of Ezine PreSense

India–China War 1962

1962

WAR AND THE NATION

FORCEFUL SETTLEMENT

THEN: Swift assaults by the Chinese on two fronts bewildered India

October 19-20, 1962: The first Chinese attack came at 2300 hrs on October 19 on forward posts on Chip Chap rivulet in **Daulat Beg Oldi** sector, Galwan Valley and Track Junction area.

Places where Chinese and Indian troops clashed

WESTERN SECTOR

- There was lull in fighting in eastern Ladakh sector between October 28-November 18. The Indian Forces withdrew to Sultan Chushku on October 22, 1962.
- The main Chinese attack in Ladakh was on Chushul on November 18, 1962 with the Indian forces fighting a tremendous defensive battle. Official ceasefire was declared on November 21, 1962

EASTERN SECTOR

- October 20, 1962:** 4.30 am: PLA attacks Bum La, & then Thag La in Namka Chu
- October 22:** Brigadier J P Dalvi (CO 7th Brigade, 4th Div) taken prisoner
- Oct 23:** IV Corps orders troops to withdraw from Tawang to Bomdi La
- Oct 25:** Tawang occupied by PLA
- November 18 :** Bomdi La occupied. Attacks on Chushul & Se La
- Nov 21:** Unilateral withdrawal by Chinese PLA

On 20th October 1962, the Chinese launched simultaneous offensives in Ladakh and across the McMahon Line. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the Prime Minister then and Mr V K Krishna Menon was the Defence Minister. The war ended when the Chinese declared a ceasefire on 21st November 1962. The border dispute continues till now.

India did not fare well in this war. While China

was fighting with 80,000 soldiers, India was fighting with only around 12,000 soldiers. At the end of the war, China occupied around 50,000 sq.km of the Indian territory and the dispute remains unresolved till this date. Kailash and Mansarovar which were once part of India after independence are now in the possession of China.

India lost around 1600 soldiers. Nearly 1400 soldiers were wounded. Around 1700 soldiers were missing. 4000 soldiers were captured by China as 'Prisoners of War' and later released.

Many reasons are attributed to the failure of India in the war. Although Pandit Nehru was the Prime Minister, the political leadership and planning for defence preparedness were reported to be lacking. Even when the Chinese Army was invading India, India was shouting slogans like 'Indi-Chini bhai bhai' (India and China are brothers), without knowing that China was occupying Indian lands.

Many army officers, who were part of the Indian army then, allege that the Indian Army was not equipped with enough weapons and Jawans. Although the Indian army had enough war experience from the World War, they failed due to poor planning and leadership by the political system. In fact, during that time, the Government reported to have reduced the army strength from 2.80 lakh to 1.50 lakh.

The 1962 War taught us several lessons. Some of the important reports like the Henderson Brooks–Bhagat Report on the failure of India, are not made public even after 50 years, for the reason that it might embarrass many of the leaders who were in the Government then.

Let us pay respect and homage to the Jawans who lost their lives in the 1962 War to secure the Indian borders. (Graphic courtesy: Hindustan Times)

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: October 2012 issue of ezine PreSense

Soviet and US in Space Race

On 20th July 1969, history was created by mankind by landing on the moon. Neil Armstrong set his foot from America's Spacecraft Apollo 11 on the moon. Looking back on the history, PreSense focuses on the important events in the space mission.

Space Race during Cold War

Between 1957 and 1975, the Cold War rivalry between the two nations, the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States (US) focused on attaining firsts in space exploration. These were seen as necessary for national security, and symbolic of technological and ideological superiority. The Space Race involved pioneering efforts to launch artificial satellites, sub-orbital and orbital human spaceflight around the Earth, and piloted voyages to the moon. While the Soviet Union was the first to enter the space, the United States became the first to land man on the moon.

The space race began with the Soviet launch of Sputnik 1 artificial satellite on 4th October 1957, and concluded with the co-operative Apollo-Soyuz Test Project human spaceflight mission in July 1975. The Apollo-Soyuz Test Project came to symbolise détente, a partial easing of strained relations between USSR and USA.

The Space Race had its origins in the missile-based arms race that occurred just after the end of the World War II, when both the Soviet Union and the United States captured advanced German rocket technology and personnel. The Space Race sparked unprecedented increases in spending on education and pure research, which accelerated scientific advancements.

Some of the famous probes and missions include Sputnik 1, Explorer 1, Vostok 1, Mariner 2, Ranger 7, Luna 9, Alouette 1, Apollo 8, and Apollo 11.

Seeding the Space Exploration

In 1952, the International Council of Scientific Unions decided to establish July 1, 1957, to December 31, 1958, as the International Geophysical Year (IGY) because the scientists knew that the cycles of solar activity would be at a high point then. In October 1954, the Council adopted a resolution calling for artificial satellites to be launched during the IGY to map the Earth's surface. In July 1955, the White House announced plans to launch an Earth-orbiting satellite for the IGY and solicited proposals from various Government research agencies to undertake the development.



Sputnik (USSR)

The Sputnik 1 rocket (picture) was launched at 19:28:34 UTC, on 4th October 1957. The Sputnik satellite, weighing 83kg (183lb) and only twice the size of a football, could be seen with the naked eye as it circled the Earth for 22 days. It emitted a signal that could be heard on a household radio. It took about 98 minutes to orbit the Earth on its elliptical path. The successful launch of Sputnik 1 changed history, by starting the space age and space race between US and USSR.

In addition, the Europeans and the Americans feared that the Soviet Union's ability to launch satellites also translated into their capability to launch ballistic missiles that could carry nuclear weapons from Europe to USA. Then the Soviets struck again. On November 3rd, 1957, Sputnik II was launched, carrying a much heavier payload, including a dog named Laika.



USA's Response by Launching Explorer I

The launch of Sputnik triggered US to grant more funds to compete with USSR. On January 31st, 1958, the United States successfully launched Explorer I. This satellite discovered the magnetic radiation belts around the Earth, and was named after Principal Investigator, James Van Allen.

Launch of NASA by US

The Sputnik launch also led directly to the creation of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on 1st October, 1958.



First Person to Orbit the Earth (USSR)

USSR was achieving more success in space mission, ignited by intense rivalry from USA. These included sending the first man, Yuri Gagarin into space, and carrying out the first spacewalk. On April 12th, 1961, the Soviets launched Yuri Gagarin into orbit around the Earth on Vostok 1 spacecraft. Yuri Gagarin was in space for 1 hour and 48 minutes. (See picture)

Historic Speech of Kennedy (US)

In an historic speech on 25th May 1961, President John F Kennedy announced an ambitious space exploration programme in the joint session of the Congress. This included putting a man on the moon before the end of the decade. (picture on right).



First Space Ship to Land on Moon (USSR)

On February 3rd, 1966, Luna 9 spacecraft was the first spacecraft to achieve a soft landing on the moon, or any planetary body other than Earth, and to transmit photographs.

Apollo 11 – Man on the Moon (US)

On 16th July 1969, Apollo 11 with 3 astronauts Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Edwin E. Aldrin Jr, was launched. After entering the lunar orbit, Armstrong and Aldrin were transferred to Lunar Module (LM) named 'Eagle'. Eagle landed on the moon's Sea of Tranquillity at 4:17 pm EDT, 20th July 1969. The first humans on the Moon waited for six hours before they ventured out of their craft. At 10:56:15 pm EDT, Armstrong became the first human to set foot on the Moon.



The first step was witnessed by at least 500 million TV viewers on Earth. His first words when he stepped off the LM's landing pad were, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." Aldrin joined him on the moon's surface almost 20 minutes later. Together, they spent just under two and one-quarter hours outside their

craft. Apollo 11 safely blasted out of the moon's orbit on its way back to a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean on 24th July 1969.

Thus, USA kept up its commitment of landing on the moon before the end of the decade with 161 days to spare and won the race to the moon.

Apollo Soyuz Test Project Ended the Space Race

Marking the end of Cold War between the two super powers, in July 1975, the first Joint US-Soviet space flight US-USSR Apollo Soyuz Test Project (ASTP) was launched.



Astronaut Thomas P. Stafford (in foreground – see picture) and cosmonaut Aleksei A. Leonov made their historic handshake in space on 17th July, 1975 in Earth orbit. The American and Soviet spacecrafts were joined together in space for approximately 47 hours on July 17th, 18th, 19th, and 1975.

Watch this podcast on 'Space Race' by USSR and US with rare audio and visual clippings.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJVjNKdItJw>

By Susan Koshy, Editor

Source: July 2012 issue of PreSense

June 1975 – When Indian Democracy Came to a Grinding Halt

Ever since Indian independence, the country has been facing serious challenges from time to time, and every time, it overcame with courage and conviction. India got its freedom from the British in the midnight of 14-15th August 1947. The same freedom and democracy was put to a 'grinding halt' in the midnight of 25-26th June



1975.

In the midnight of June 25, 1975, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed issued a proclamation on the advice of then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, as follows:

"In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of Article 352 of the Constitution, I, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, by this Proclamation declare that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India is threatened by internal disturbances."

By this historic proclamation, the freedom enjoyed by the citizens of India was compromised. Some of the provisions of the Constitution were suspended. Even the judiciary was made powerless. Within a few hours, many of the national leaders like Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan, Morarji Desai, Kripalani, George Fernandes, Chandrasekhar, Vajpayee, L K Advani and Charan Singh were arrested and put behind the bars.

There is nothing much in the records about those 'dark days'. Thus the present generation is deprived of knowing the details of this period of the Indian history. In this edition, we attempt to bring out some of the important aspects of Indian Emergency.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: June 2012 issue of PreSense

Circumstances Leading to the Proclamation of Emergency



Indira Gandhi

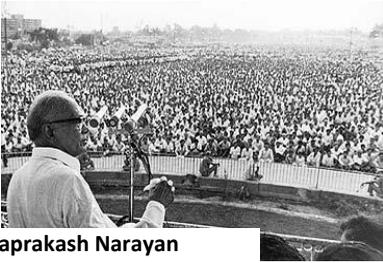
Immediately after India's victory in the Indo-Pak war which created Bangladesh, the Congress Party led by Indira Gandhi (see photo) won by a massive majority in the 1971 General Elections. During that time, the country was suffering from large scale unemployment, price rise, etc. Sarvodaya leader Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan (popularly known as JP) gave a call for a 'Total Revolution'. People gathered around JP in large numbers. The opposition parties united under the banner 'Jan Morcha', to fight against Indira Gandhi.

Indira Gandhi and Raj Narain (see photo) fought the Lok Sabha Election from the Rae Bareilly Lok Sabha Constituency in 1971. Indira Gandhi was declared elected. Raj Narain filed an election petition in the Allahabad High Court, alleging that Indira Gandhi committed an election fraud by misusing the Government machinery. Shanthi Bhushan, the noted advocate argued for Raj Narain.



Raj Narain

On 12th June 1975, Allahabad High Court declared Indira Gandhi's victory as null and void and also banned her from contesting elections for six years. This sent shock waves. Even the Supreme Court refused to stay the order of the Allahabad High Court. The same day, the Congress led by Indira Gandhi lost the Assembly Elections and the Jan Morcha alliance captured the power.



Jayaprakash Narayan

The opposition leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan and others demanded the resignation of the Prime Minister. There were protests against Indira Gandhi at that time.

In this backdrop and on the suggestions of Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Indira Gandhi advised the President of India to declare internal emergency in India.

By K. Srinivasan, Editor in Chief,

Source: June 2012 of PreSense

Emergency Days – Four Pillars of Democracy Crippled

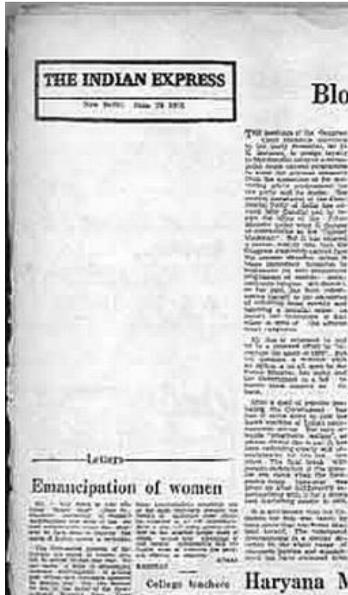


Nearly 140,000 leaders were arrested during this period. Of this, around 40,000 were from the Sikh community. Some of the senior leaders were even handcuffed (See photo of George Fernandes in a handcuff).

Sycophants surrounded Indira Gandhi. Many excesses were committed. Sterilisations were carried out by force. Huts were removed through police force. Many officers were 'more loyal to the kingdom than the king himself'. Indira Gandhi's son, Sanjay Gandhi was accused of all the excesses. The powers of the Courts were removed. There was press

censorship. Only All India Radio broadcasting approved news. had to obtain prior news items, from Officer of the region. Hence, the privy to correct Only a handful of houses showed time. We have to courage shown by Express and Ramaswamy) at against the

Doordarshan and were Government The print media approval of their the Censor respective people were not information. newspaper courage at that appreciate the The Indian Thuglak (Cho that time, to fight emergency.



The Indian Express published a 'blank editorial' as a mark of protest against 'censorship'. Through this 'blank editorial', they conveyed a powerful message

to their readers, more than what could have been communicated through a well-written editorial. (Photo)

When the newspapers were asked to compromise to the Government's *dictat*, many of the national papers acceded to it. Historically, the so called 'big brands' of today, were on their knees during the emergency days, to save their skin.



Sanjay and Indira Gandhi

emergency.

Dr Subramaniam Swamy was a Member of Parliament then. The Government wanted to arrest him. Every time, he used to make a brief appearance in the Parliament and within a few hours, he would re-surface in some foreign country. He gave a tough fight against the

The Rashtriya Suyam Sevak Sangh (RSS) was banned. Their leaders were arrested. Many of them went underground. They were working against emergency in disguise. Many of the Communist leaders were also arrested.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: June 2012 issue of ezine PreSense

End of Emergency – All Records Destroyed

Elections Declared

On 23rd January 1977, Indira Gandhi announced elections to the Lok Sabha. Emergency was lifted on 23rd March 1977, after 21 months. After the declaration of the elections, all the leaders were released from jail.

When the leaders came out, they had neither the money nor the organisational structure. The workers were also in prison. Four major political parties Congress (O), Bharatiya Jan Sangh, Bharatiya Lok Dal and Socialist party merged to form the 'Janata Party'. All of them contested under the same party symbol of 'chakra-haldhar'. (picture)



In the General Elections, Janata Party and its allies swept the polls, winning 330 seats out of 542 in the Lok Sabha. Indira Gandhi could win only 154 seats, that too in the four states of South India. In North India, Indira Gandhi won just 2 seats. Both Indira Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi were defeated. Indira Gandhi apologised for the emergency excesses and atrocities.



During the emergency days, Indira Gandhi made a constitutional amendment (known as the 42nd amendment) crippling the constitutional powers. But after the Janata Party came into power, they reversed all the amendments, to restore the supremacy of the Constitution. (popularly known as 44th amendment).

Appointment of Shah Commission by Janata Government

Janata Party formed the Government under the Prime Ministership of Morarji Desai. (picture) They appointed a Commission under the Chairmanship of Justice Shah to enquire into the atrocities and excesses committed during the Emergency period. Justice Shah submitted his report in August 1978.

Unfortunately, the Janata Government could not continue in power for long, due to the internal differences of its leaders. Thereafter, the Janata Party split into various parties, like Janata Dal, BJP, Samajvadi Party, etc. Dr Subramaniam Swamy is the lone leader at present, who remained in the original Janata Party.

Indira Back to Power

Indira Gandhi came back to power in 1980. After her return to power, all the copies of the Shah Commission Report were removed from the libraries, including the Parliament and the national libraries. Not even a single copy of the report was available after that time.

By K. Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: June 2012 issue of ezine PreSense

Shankar's Weekly – Final Cover 31st August 1975



Shankar's weekly, the most popular cartoon magazine of India, started in 1948 exclusively for cartoons, was forced to shut down in 1975 after the introduction of Press Censorship during the Emergency.

After 27 years of publication, Shankar's Weekly published their last edition on 31st August 1975. The cover page carried the words, "Parting – Not without sorrow". (Picture)

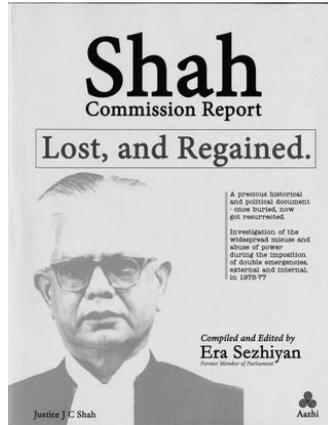
In the Editorial of the last edition, Shankar Pillai, the Editor wrote, "Dictatorships cannot afford laughter because people may laugh at the dictator and that wouldn't do. In all the years of **Hitler**, there never was a good comedy, not a good cartoon, not a parody, or a spoof. From this point, the world and sadly enough India have become grimmer."

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: June 2012 issue of PreSense

Shah Commission Report – Lost and Regained

The entire 21 months' dark period in the Indian democracy was buried under. Mr Era Sezhiyan, a well-known Parliamentarian and Member of Parliament during the Emergency period, had one copy of the Shah Commission Report in his library. He is now 90 years old. The report has now been reprinted and published. I took an interview with Mr Sezhiyan about the Shah Commission Report. Please listen to an exclusive interview with Mr Era. Sezhiyan on the Shah Commission Report: <http://goo.gl/XQNF6>



The interview can also be watched on **YouTube:** <http://goo.gl/OrPH8>

Forgotten History and Heroes

Martyrs have been forgotten in history. Attempts were made to erase this part of the history too. Because of the ignorance of this great struggle, even Anna Hazare team called his movement the 'second freedom movement'. Calling Anna Hazare's movement the second freedom struggle would amount to belittling the sacrifices made by Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan and the other great leaders. More than 140,000 leaders had spent their time in prison during the Emergency days.

Let us salute to those UnSung Heroes who fought to restore the democracy back to India

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief
Source: June 2012 issue of PreSense

Abu Abraham's Popular Cartoon in The Indian Express dated 10.12.1975

Abu Abraham's (A well-known Indian cartoonist) cartoon in the Indian Express showing Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed signing the Emergency declaration from his bathtub. In this cartoon, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed tells PM's emissary, "If there are any more ordinances, just ask them to wait". This cartoon is the most popular cartoon published by Indian Express with courage.



Source: June 2012 issue of PreSense

of the Republics of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, acknowledging the independence of the twelve republics of the Soviet Union that created the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mikhail Gorbachev

The USSR had been in a long economic stagnation when Gorbachev came to power in 1985. In order to bring about change, he introduced several reforms, including perestroika (economic restructuring) and glasnost (openness). Glasnost opened the floodgates of protest and many republics made moves toward independence, threatening the continued existence of the USSR.

On February 7, 1990, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) accepted the recommendation of Mikhail Gorbachev that the party give up its 70-year-long monopoly of political power.

During 1990 all fifteen constituent republics of the USSR held their first competitive elections. Reformers and ethnic nationalists won many of the seats. The CPSU lost the elections in six republics.

In August 1991, a group of Communist Party hardliners, frustrated over the separatist movement, attempted to stage a coup. It failed due to a massive show of civil resistance. This attempt destabilised the Government further.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Representatives from 11 Soviet republics (Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) met in the Kazakh city of Alma-Ata and announced that they would no longer be part of the Soviet Union. Instead, they declared they would establish a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The three Baltic republics (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) had already declared their independence from the USSR. Georgia joined CIS in 1993 and withdrew in 2008.

Cause for Soviet Collapse



Post-Soviet states in alphabetical order: 1. Armenia, 2. Azerbaijan, 3. Belarus, 4. Estonia, 5. Georgia, 6. Kazakhstan, 7. Kyrgyzstan, 8. Latvia, 9. Lithuania, 10. Moldova, 11. Russia, 12. Tajikistan, 13. Turkmenistan, 14. Ukraine, 15.

Stagnating economy, unwanted army involvement in Afghanistan, economic reforms Perestroika, decentralisation with more autonomy to republics, transparency and openness (Glasnost), cover up of nuclear power plant accident at Chernobyl, growing nationalism in the individual republics due to the political blunders of the Communist leaders, lack of economic incentives to encourage innovation and productivity, excessive focus on military power due to keeping pace with massive US military build-up, reduced motivation and fear against the American threat, Importance given to Russia over other states were the major causes for Soviet disintegration.

***By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense
Source: December 2013 issue of PreSense***

September 11 Attack on World Trade Centre

On 11th September 2001, Al-Qaeda, a terrorist group launched a series of four coordinated attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C. and the metropolitan areas in the United States.

Attack on World Trade Centre and Pentagon



Four passenger airliners were hijacked by 19 Al-Qaeda terrorists for the suicide attacks. Two of the planes, the American Airlines Flight 11 and the United Airlines Flight 175 were crashed into the North and South Towers respectively, of the World Trade Centre complex in New York City. Within two hours, both the towers collapsed. The debris and the resultant fire and heat caused the partial or complete collapse of other buildings in the WTC complex.

Major damage was also caused to ten other large surrounding structures.

A third plane, the American Airlines Flight 77, crashed into the Pentagon (the headquarters of the United States Department of Defence), leading to a partial collapse in its western side.

The fourth plane, the United Airlines Flight 93, was targeted at Washington, D.C, but crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania after its passengers tried to overtake the hijackers.

Death Toll

In total, around 3,000 people, including 227 civilians and 19 hijackers aboard the four planes, died in the attacks. This included citizens from over 90 countries. It was the deadliest incident for the fire-fighters in the history of the United States.

Along with the 110-floor Twin Towers, numerous other buildings at the World Trade Centre site were destroyed or badly damaged.

Al-Qaeda Claiming Responsibility

Suspicion quickly fell on Al-Qaeda. Although the group's leader, Osama bin Laden, initially denied any involvement, in 2004, he claimed responsibility for the attacks. Al-Qaeda and bin Laden cited U.S. support of Israel, the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, and sanctions against Iraq as motives for the attacks.



US launched War Against Terror



Osama Bin Laden

The United States responded to the attacks by launching the War on Terror and invading Afghanistan to depose the Taliban, who had harboured the Al-Qaeda. Many countries strengthened their anti-terrorism legislation and enhanced their law enforcement powers. After evading capture for several years, bin Laden was finally located and killed by the U.S. forces in May 2011.

Post 9/11 - Recovery

The destruction of the Twin Towers and the other buildings had caused serious damage to the economy of Lower Manhattan. This had a significant effect on the global markets, closing Wall Street

until September 17 and the civilian airspace in the U.S. and Canada until September 13. Many closings, evacuations, and cancellations followed the attack, either out of fear of further attacks or respect for the affected.

Clean-up of the World Trade Centre site was completed in May 2002, and the Pentagon was repaired within a year. Numerous memorials have been constructed, including the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York, the Pentagon Memorial, and the Flight 93 National Memorial in Pennsylvania.

On November 18, 2006, construction of One World Trade Centre began at the World Trade Centre site. As of September 2013, the new tower's concrete construction is largely completed and is likely to be opened in late 2013 or early 2014. The fact remains that 9/11 had unquestionably changed everyone's lives and the course of history in the world.

Source: September 2013 issue of PreSense

Terrorist Attack on Indian Parliament – 13th December 2001

Indian Parliament Attacked

On December 13, 2001, the Indian Parliament was in its winter session. At 11.30 in the morning, five armed terrorists belonging to Pakistan-supported Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist groups, drove through the gates of the Parliament House in a white Ambassador car, fitted with an Improvised explosive device.

When they were challenged, they jumped out of the car and opened fire. In the gun battle that followed, all the attackers were killed. Eight security personnel and a gardener were killed too. 22 people were injured.



The police said that the dead terrorists had enough explosives to blow up the Parliament building, and enough ammunition to take on a whole battalion of soldiers. Unlike most terrorists, these five left behind a thick trail of evidences — weapons,

mobile phones, phone numbers, ID cards, photographs, packets of dry fruit, and even a love letter. There were about 100 Members of Parliament in the building at the time, and none was hurt.

Prime Minister's TV Speech

The then Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, made a televised address to the nation shortly after the attacks, and was quick to denounce the militants.



"This was not just an attack on the building. It was a warning to the entire nation." he said. "We accept the challenge."

Investigations and Arrest

On Dec 14 and 15, investigating agencies, together with the Special Cell of the Delhi Police, captured four people under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) that was in force then. They were Afsal Guru, SAR Geelani, a Delhi University professor, Navjot, also known as Afsan, and her husband, Shaukat Hussain Guru.

Geelani and Afsan were let off and Shaukat Hussain Guru's death sentence was reduced to 10 years' imprisonment. He is now out of jail.

Death sentence to Afzal Guru

Afzal Guru was sentenced to death on Dec 18, 2002 by a trial court, which the Delhi High Court upheld on Oct 29, 2003. His appeal was rejected by the Supreme Court on Aug 4, 2005. His mercy plea is pending with the President. The Government is yet to take a decision on the mercy petition.

Government Delaying the Execution

After the hanging of Ajmal Kasab, who was involved in the Mumbai attack, a large section of the Indian population is now demanding the hanging of Afzal Guru, who was the mastermind behind this Parliament attack. The Human Rights' organisations have been protesting against the hanging of Afzal Guru. For fear of Muslim backlash in Kashmir and elsewhere, the Government of India is holding the decision without hanging him.



The citizens desire that there should not be any mercy on terrorists and that all terrorists should be treated as terrorists, irrespective of their caste, creed or religion, because terrorism is beyond all religions and beliefs.

(Afzal Guru was since hanged on 10th Feb 2013)

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief, PreSense

Source: December 2012 issue of PreSense

Mumbai Attack on 26th November 2008 – Remembering Heroes

In November 2008, Pakistan supported Lashkar-e-Taiba sent some terrorists to Mumbai to attack and to create instability in India. On 26th November 2008, these terrorists entered Mumbai through the sea and started their attacks in 8 places commencing from the Chatrapathi Shivaji Railway Terminus. Simultaneously, they attacked the Taj Hotel and the Nariman House, where the Jewish community people lived. 168 innocent people lost their lives. More than 300 people were injured. 19 police and other officials lost their lives in their bid to save the public and the nation.



The Rapid Action Force personnel and Marine Commandos (MARCOS) and the National Security Guards (NSG) commandos did an excellent job to save the lives of the people and to kill the terrorists. 10 Terrorists were shot dead by the commandos. One terrorist by the name, Ajmal Kasab was caught alive. After due judicial process, he was hanged on 21st November 2012 at Pune.

Source: November 2012 issue of PreSense

Rajaji – Mahatma Gandhi’s Conscience Keeper, History’s Forgotten Hero – Part I (Pre- Independence)

The Indian freedom movement produced many patriotic leaders from all parts of the nation. However, barring a few leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, the others are not so well-known to the present generation. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (10th December 1878 – 25th December 1972), popularly known as ‘Rajaji’ and also as ‘CR’ is one of those great leaders India has produced. He was supportive behind every movement organised by Mahatma Gandhi.

First Person to Recognise M.K. Gandhi’s Potential

After graduating in law, Rajaji began his practice as a criminal lawyer in 1900 at Salem, and even at a young age of 25, he was one of the highest paid lawyers in those days. When M.K. Gandhi (later popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi) was fighting against the South African Government through *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha*, in 1912, Rajaji distributed pamphlets about Gandhiji’s activities. He was probably the first person to recognise Gandhiji’s potential for fighting against the British through *Satyagraha*. After Gandhiji returned to India from South Africa, Rajaji was the first leader to support Gandhiji’s *Satyagraha* movement in India. Although Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel had met up with Gandhiji before Rajaji had, they were not impressed with Gandhiji’s ideas at their first meeting. They accepted him as their leader only after Rajaji did.

Fight Against Untouchability and Liquor

As the Municipal Chairman of Salem (1917-1919), Rajaji fought against untouchability in spite of strong opposition from the upper caste. He also fought against alcoholism. When he subsequently became the Premier of Madras State (as it was called during those days), he brought about an Act permitting the entry of the Dalit community into temples. He also introduced ‘prohibition’ (of liquor) in the state. Thirty years later, when there was a proposal to reintroduce sale of liquor in the state, he pleaded with the then

Chief Minister against this move. Liquor was prohibited for a generation till then. His plea was rejected and liquor shops were re-opened in the state.



“ Similar to the Sabarmathi Ashram in Gujarat set up by Mahatma Gandhi, Rajaji set up the ‘Gandhi Ashram’ in 1924 in a village near Tiruchengode and lived in a small hut for 10 years with his children. Both these Ashrams played a significant role in India’s freedom movement.

Similar to the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat set up by Mahatma Gandhi, Rajaji set up the ‘Gandhi Ashram’ in 1924 in a village near Tiruchengode and lived in a small hut for 10 years with his children. Both these *Ashrams* played a significant role in India’s freedom movement. Rajaji was a great follower of Gandhiji. On several occasions, Mahatma Gandhi described Rajaji as his ‘conscience keeper’ and also his ‘political heir’.

Shoulder-to-Shoulder with Mahatma Gandhi

On 6th April 1930, Gandhiji started his *Dandi Salt Satyagraha*. On 13th April



On 6th April 1930, Gandhiji started his Dandi Salt Satyagraha. On 13th April 1930, Rajaji started his march from Tiruchirapalli to Vedaranyam to collect salt. He was arrested.

1930, Rajaji started his march from Tiruchirapalli to Vedaranyam to collect salt. He was arrested. These two marches galvanised the entire India.

Visionary Ideas Not Understood

Rajaji was a great visionary. His ideas were always futuristic and he did not worry about the contemporary ideas. Most of the time, his ideas were misunderstood and he was criticised for his revolutionary ideas. It was only on a later date that people realised the worthiness of his ideas. Rajaji had both admirers and critics for his philosophy. Notwithstanding criticisms, he used to express his views freely, keeping in mind the interest of the nation and the people.

In 1942, when the British Government was engaged in World War II, Mahatma Gandhi announced the 'do or die' slogan and the 'Quit India Movement'. Rajaji at that time had advised against venturing into such aggressive movements, as the Government was engaged in war. He also suggested a friendly dialogue with the Muslim League, in preparation for the country's independence after the world war. Mahatma Gandhi and the other leaders rejected his idea and went ahead with Quit India Movement. Rajaji then resigned from the Congress and returned to Madras.

More than one hundred thousand freedom fighters, including senior leaders, were arrested. The *Ahimsa* movement turned out to be a violent event, in the absence of the leaders to guide the people of the movement. The arrested leaders and freedom fighters were released only in 1945 after the war was over. This was a setback for the freedom movement. Meanwhile, the Muslim League was aggressive in their stand for the partition of India, since there was no Congress leader to engage them in dialogue. It was only then, that the Congress leaders realised that they should have heeded Rajaji's advice. Rajaji returned to the Congress in 1945 at the request of Mahatma Gandhi, to galvanise the freedom movement.

Though there was opposition against partition, Rajaji introduced a formula, popularly known as the 'CR Formula' before independence. Talks were held between the Congress and the Muslim League, based on the CR Formula. Many Congress leaders later felt that if the Quit India Movement had been abandoned and Rajaji's advice followed, the partition would have been smoother and without bloodshed. At a critical time when India's

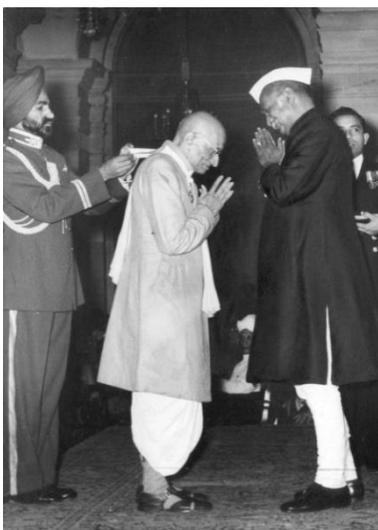
independence was in the vicinity, all the senior Congress leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi were in the jail.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: December 2014 issue of PreSense

Rajaji – Part II – His Role in the Post-Independent Era

After India's independence, when communal clashes broke out in West Bengal, Rajaji was requested to be the first Governor of West Bengal with effect from 15th August 1947. He played a major role in curbing the violence. In 1948, he was made the 'Governor General of India' (now renamed the President of India). Rajaji was the last Governor General of India and the only Indian to hold the position. As he was opposed by a section of Congress leaders for his non-participation in the Quit India Movement, he was not made the President of India after 26th Jan 1950. Pandit Nehru requested Rajaji to help him by joining the cabinet in 1950. Rajaji resigned in 1951 after a misunderstanding with Nehru.



President Rajendra Prasad presenting the Bharat Ratna to C. Rajagopalachari on January 27, 1955.

In 1952, a large number of Communist candidates were elected to the Madras State Assembly (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra and part of Karnataka) and the Congress failed to obtain a majority. This resulted in political instability in the state. Prime Minister Nehru then approached Rajaji to help the Congress by becoming the Chief Minister of Madras State. Rajaji reluctantly took up the position as the Chief Minister of Madras State in 1952.

During his tenure, he brought about strict rules for good governance to function without political interference. He wanted corruption-free governance. He introduced an education policy known as 'The Modified Scheme of Elementary Education', combining vocational courses with the academics, and with reduced academic hours. He wanted to encourage more children to attend school. At that time, less than 48% of children attended primary schools, and more than 50% dropped out after primary school. His critics opposed his

policy as a 'hereditary education policy' and accused Rajaji of supporting casteism.

A committee of eminent educationists known as the 'Parulekar Committee' endorsed his education policy, and proposed that it be extended to all rural areas. President Rajendra Prasad, Prime Minister Nehru and the Central Advisory Board on Education too appreciated and endorsed the policy scheme. Rajaji defended the scheme saying it was necessary to train the students on various vocational courses, to make the country vibrant and progressive.

His political opponents in the Congress party wanted him to withdraw the scheme. Rajaji preferred to resign from the post, rather than withdraw it. He resigned from his position in 1954. Kamaraj, who succeeded him as Chief Minister withdrew the Scheme. Several years later, India realised the need for more vocational and professional education.

Leaving Congress

Rajaji was the first recipient of the 'Bharat Ratna' Award, when it was introduced in 1955. Rajaji resigned from the Congress Party due to differences in opinion between him and its members. He founded the 'Swatantra Party' in 1959. In 1967, the Swatantra Party became the second largest party with 44 MPs. Rajaji never contested in the national elections in his political career. When the Congress was leaning towards left, he advocated liberalisation of economy and the removal of the 'License-Quota-Permit



C. Rajagopalachari (second from right) and members of the Gandhi Peace Foundation meeting the then American President John F. Kennedy (centre)

Raj'. Although the Congress did not accept his economic policies at that time, they introduced the very same economic policies later in 1991, after 32 years.

In 1967, he formed the first political alliance in India with 7 parties in Tamil Nadu and defeated the Congress, paving the way for DMK to come to power. Thus, even the very powerful leader, Kamaraj was defeated in the elections. It is a different story that later in

1971, he formed an alliance with the Congress(O) led by Kamaraj to dethrone DMK, but failed.

Rajaji as an International Leader

Rajaji was against nuclear weapons. In 1955, he appealed to the Government of India to refuse American aid if the country continued with its nuclear tests. This embarrassed Pandit Nehru too. Rajaji wrote a book called "Mankind Protests", opposing nuclear weapons. Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, General Secretary, USSR, got it translated into Russian for wide circulation in his country.

In 1962, Rajaji visited USA, along with the members of Gandhi Peace Foundation delegation, in response to President Kennedy's invitation. This was the only foreign visit Rajaji undertook in his lifetime. He was the only civilian not in office, to be given a red carpet reception at the White House. President Kennedy was impressed by his presentation, and he spent more than one hour with him as against the allotted 25 minutes. Rajaji explained to Kennedy the dangers of embarking on an arms race, even one in which USA could win.

Multi-Faceted Personality

Rajaji was a prolific writer and in 1922, he was the editor of 'Young India'. He was a regular contributor of articles on a variety of subjects, to several magazines including 'Kalki' and 'Swarajya' from 1960 till his death. Rajaji authored among others, commentaries on important books like the 'Ramayana', the 'Mahabharatha', the 'Thirukkural' and the 'Bhajagovindam'. These have since been translated into several languages.

Rajaji died on 25th December 1972, after a short illness. It is interesting to know that when Rajaji's parents checked his horoscope at the time of his birth, the astrologer told them that the baby's future included the fortunes of a king, of an exile, of a guru, and of an outcast. The people would worship him; they would also reject him. He would sit on an emperor's throne; he would also live in a poor man's hut.

Rajaji was respected for his immaculate honesty, his integrity and his selfless dedication for the welfare of the poor.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: December 2014 issue of PreSense

Babasaheb Dr B R Ambedkar - Another Forgotten Legend in Indian History

With the 125th birth anniversary of Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891–1956) happening this year, we remember him as yet another legend forgotten in the annals of Indian history. He was the architect of the Indian Constitution, which has stood the test of time, braving various challenges of Indian politics and governance. He was a great philosopher, economist, lawyer, political activist and social reformer.

His Early Days - No Peon, No Water

Bhimrao Ramji Sakpal Ambavadekar (later Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar) was born to a Maratha family, as the 14th child to his parents. His community was considered 'untouchable' in the society. As a school student, he underwent much humiliation due to this social practice of caste discrimination. It is distressing to read about his personal experience because of 'untouchability' prevailing then.

Quote

While in the school, I knew that children of the touchable classes, when they felt thirsty, could go out to the water tap, open it, and quench their thirst. All that was necessary was the permission of the teacher. But my position was separate. I could not touch the tap; and unless it was opened for it by a touchable person, it was not possible for me to quench my thirst. In my case the permission of the teacher was not enough. The presence of the school peon was necessary, for he was the only person whom the class teacher could use for such a purpose. If the peon was not available, I had to go without water. The situation can be summed up in the statement—no peon, no water.

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Unquote

Mahadev Ambedkar, his Brahmin teacher was sympathetic towards him and supported him. He changed his original name in the school records from 'Bhimrao Ramji Sakpal Ambavadekar' to 'Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar', adding his own surname of Ambedkar.

With his father's encouragement, Dr Ambedkar completed his graduation in Bombay. Although he was opposed to '*Manu Smriti*', his writings reveal his deep knowledge of the ancient scriptures, Vedas and the Upanishads. Even in the Constituent Assembly, he favoured Sanskrit as the national language, although it was not accepted by the majority.



Sayajirao Gaekwad III

Support from the Baroda Ruler

Sayajirao Gaekwad III, the ruler of Baroda was a social reformer who supported poor students from the 'depressed class' (untouchables). When he met Bhimrao Ambedkar, he recognised his potential and offered him a scholarship to study abroad. Ambedkar completed his studies, including a doctorate at the Columbia University (USA), and at the London School of Economics (UK). In spite of the caste discriminations and untouchability practices, some good-hearted people like Mahadev Ambedkar and Sayaji Rao III recognised Ambedkar's potential and helped him to move to the higher levels in academics. Ambedkar proved to be an outstanding student wherever he studied.

On his return to India, he served the Baroda ruler for some time. In 1918, he became the Professor of Political Economy at the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay. Even though he was popular with the students, the professors objected to his reformist activities such as sharing the same drinking-water jug that they all used.

Round Table Conference

The British Government invited leaders from different political parties to the Round Table Conferences held in 1930-32, to draft a



Dr Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi in the Round Table Conference

new Constitution leading to the self-rule by Indians. Dr Ambedkar attended all the three Round Table Conferences. Mahatma Gandhi did not attend the first Conference due to a difference in opinion with Dr Ambedkar. During the First Round Table Conference held in November 1930, Dr Ambedkar proposed the concept of a 'Separate Electorate' for the 'Depressed Class' (Untouchables). He argued that the problems faced by the

untouchables were not social problems but political problems. More than 20% of India's population were from the untouchables category. Dr Ambedkar pleaded that the problems of such a sizeable portion of the population could not be ignored. He wanted a proportionate political power to resolve the issue. He suggested a 'Separate Electorate' for the Depressed Class, meaning thereby that their representatives could be elected only by the untouchables and not by all the others. He even quoted from the Mahabharata that the kings and the ministers therein were from all communities, (including Sudras, which is equivalent to the socially deprived class).

Since Mahatma Gandhi held a different view, he did not agree with the suggestion. He opposed it in the Second Round Table Conference. He feared that allowing a 'Separate Electorate' might divide the Hindu community further. He believed in a change in the social mindset of the people to eradicate untouchability.

Poona Pact

British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald made an Award in 1932 known as the 'Communal Award', providing 'Separate Electorate for Muslims, Christians, Upper Caste Hindus, Lower Caste Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Depressed Class'. The Depressed Class (Untouchables) could then elect their own representatives to the various provinces under the British rule. This was opposed by Mahatma Gandhi on the ground that it would disintegrate the Hindus. Gandhi was then in Pune Yerwada prison. He went on an indefinite fast from 20th Sep 1932 against the 'Separate Electorate' for Depressed Class. After some lengthy negotiations, Ambedkar and Gandhi reached an agreement on 24th September, 1932 to have a single Hindu electorate, with Untouchables having seats reserved within it. This is called the 'Poona Pact'. The text uses the term "Depressed Classes" to denote Untouchables. It was later called the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the India Act 1935, and then the Indian Constitution of 1950.

Reserve Bank Conceptualised

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1st April 1935 to address the economic troubles of the nation after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr Ambedkar as written in his book, "The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution."

Forming Political Party

In 1936, Ambedkar founded the Independent Labour Party, which contested in the 1937 Bombay elections to the Central Legislative Assembly for the 13 reserved and 4 general seats and securing 11 and 3 seats respectively. Right from 1916, Dr Ambedkar began uniting all the untouchables in India. In July 1942, he organised a national conference at Nagpur under the banner of Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF). More than 75,000 scheduled caste people, including 25,000 women participated. In his historic speech, he demanded self respect and freedom. Later, SCF transformed itself into the Republican Party of India (RPI).

Joining the Government

In 1942, he was invited to join Viceroy's Executive Council as Labour Member with three additional portfolios. As Labour Member, he influenced the British to concede 13% representation to Scheduled Caste (SC). The British gave just 8.33%. (Later, while writing the Constitution, he made a provision of 15% for SCs.)

He continued in this position till 1946. He was responsible for reducing the working hours of labourers from 12 hours to 8. He also introduced the concept of Provident Fund and Dearness Allowance. He created the employment exchanges. He introduced maternity leave for women. As a believer of free market, he introduced the Gold Standard.

He was the brain behind the Hirakud Dam and the Damodar Valley Project. He was also the brain behind the India's Water Policy and the Electric Power Planning.

Constituent Assembly

Under the Cabinet Mission Plan 1946 of the British Government, a Constituent Assembly was set up in 1946 in the then undivided India to frame the Constitution for India. The members were elected from different provinces.

Since Dr Ambedkar could not be elected from Mumbai, he was elected from East Bengal with the help of the Muslim League. These districts were later identified for inclusion in Pakistan. To prevent Dr Ambedkar from leaving the Constituent Assembly, Dr Rajendra Prasad (President of the Constituent Assembly) wrote a letter on 30th June 1947 to the then Prime Minister of Maharashtra (as he was called then) to get him elected from Maharashtra Province. Thus, he got elected to the Constituent Assembly again.



Dr Ambedkar with Members of Drafting Committee

He was made the Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee on 29th August 1947. Although there were 7 members in the Committee, he was practically the only one shouldering the entire responsibility and burden of drafting.

The Draft Constitution was presented by Dr Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly and was discussed and adopted by the Members. The Constitution was adopted in its complete form on 26th November 1949 and came into force on 26th January 1950, which is celebrated as the Republic Day of India. While adopting

the Constitution, all the members praised the extraordinary work done by Dr Ambedkar in drafting the Constitution.

Dr Ambedkar served as India's first Law Minister from 15th August 1947 in the Nehru Cabinet. Due to his differences of opinion on the Hindu Code Bill, which deprived equal rights to women, he resigned from the cabinet in September 1951.

Defeated in the Elections

During the first General Elections in 1951 to Lok Sabha, he contested from Bombay North, but lost to a little known Congress candidate, Narayan Kajrolkar, who was once his assistant.

He became a Member of Rajya Sabha as a nominated member in 1952 and continued as a member till his death.

In 1954, he contested again in a by-election held in Bombay Bandra. Here too, he was placed third and lost to a Congress candidate.

Sadly, Dr Ambedkar could not sit in the First Lok Sabha, the Constitution for which was created by him. The Second General Election was held in 1957 after his death in 1956. He could therefore not enter the Lok Sabha at all.

Conversion to Buddhism

He declared his intention to convert to another religion, public as



Dr Ambedkar and his wife during 'Dhamma Diksha' at Nagpur

a large section of the society was treated as untouchable by the Hindu section. Although Christians and Muslims approached him to convert to their religion, he preferred Buddhism. On 14th October 1956, Ambedkar, along with his wife,

converted to Buddhism in the presence of a monk. Thereafter, he

persuaded thousands of people of the Scheduled Caste to convert to Buddhism. He passed away on 6th Dec 1956 in his sleep.

His Bold Views

He was a great scholar and philosopher. He was bold in expressing his views. He preferred Sanskrit as the National Official Language. However, it was not approved in the Constituent Assembly. When Prime Minister Nehru wanted him to draft Article 370, he

THE HINDU
Sept 11th 1949

INDIA'S STATE LANGUAGE

CLAIMS OF SANSKRIT AMENDMENT TO BE MOVED TO ARTICLE

AMBEDKAR AMONG SPONSORS

SANSKRIT PROPOSED AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

ALLIED MEMBERS' PROPOSITION FOR SANSKRIT

विद्युत्वाज (विद्युत्)
12th Nov, 1949

राजभाषा संस्कृत ही प्रस्तावकी भण्डो, सम्बोधक भी

STATESMAN
Sept 15, 1949

SANSKRIT SCHOLAR'S DEMAND

तेषु दिनेषु दिनपत्रिकासु प्रकाशिताः वार्ताः महासभा कार्या-

THE SUNDAY HINDUSTANSTANDARD
Sept 11th, 1949

Sanskrit As Official Language Of Indian Union

AMENDMENT TO DRAFT PROVISIONS: AMBEDKAR AMONG SIGNATORIES

THE NATIONAL HERALD
11th Sept 1949

AMBEDKAR FAVOURS SANSKRIT

Amendment To Article On Language

A SANSKRIT SCHOLAR'S DEMAND

विद्युत्वाज (विद्युत्)
12th Nov, 1949

राजभाषा संस्कृत ही प्रस्तावकी भण्डो, सम्बोधक भी

Media Report – Dr Ambedkar for Sanskrit as Official Language of India

refused as he felt that it would be against the interest of the nation.

While all the modern historians argued in favour of the Aryan theory, he wrote that there was no race by that name. He also said that the theory that Aryans invaded India through Khyber Pass was false.

He openly criticised Mahatma Gandhi on various issues and even wrote a book titled 'What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables'. In response to this book, Rajaji and K Santhanam wrote a book 'Ambedkar refuted', defending Mahatma Gandhi.

Forgotten Legend

There could be several people who had differences of opinion with Dr Ambedkar. But no one can deny the fact that Dr Ambedkar formed his views, based on his own experiences and despite the harassment he faced in the society. But for this legendary personality, India would not have got the time-tested and the much-acclaimed Constitution. Due to various reasons, he was not fairly recognised in the past by the Government and by the society. In 1990, he was conferred the Bharat Ratna Award



Dr B R Ambedkar

The Indian society little supported the architect of Modern India when he was alive. It is time to stand up and salute him for his exemplary contribution to Modern India because although Dr Ambedkar was an 'exclusive member', belonging to the 'Depressed Class', his lifelong work, activities and contribution were inclusive and to the benefit of the nation as a whole.

posthumously, under pressure from political parties.

In response to an RTI activist, Rusen Kumar (Raipur), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

disclosed recently that a documentary film on Dr Ambedkar made by the Government of India and Government of Maharashtra 14 years ago, is yet to be telecast through Doordarshan for public viewing.

The Indian society little supported the architect of Modern India when he was alive. It is time to stand up and salute him for his exemplary contribution to Modern India because although Dr Ambedkar was an 'exclusive member', belonging to the 'Depressed

Class', his lifelong work, activities and contribution were inclusive and to the benefit of the nation as a whole.

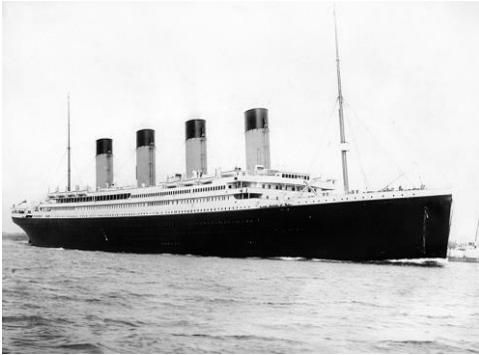
By K. Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: April 2015 issue of PreSense

Lessons from the Sunken Titanic

"Well boys, you've done your duty and done it well. It's every man for himself now, and God bless you.... Be British."

These were purportedly the last words of Edward Smith, Captain of the historic ship, RMS Titanic, which sank soon thereafter in the early hours of April 15, 1912 in the icy waters of the Atlantic Ocean.



**RMS Titanic departing
Southampton
on April 10, 1912**

Ironically, this voyage was supposed to be Captain Smith's final one as he was on his final journey before retirement from service. The wreckage of the Titanic was discovered in 1985, on the sea bed around 12,500 feet below the surface, about 370 miles off the coast of Newfoundland in North America.

When RMS Titanic set sail on her maiden voyage from Southampton, England, to New York, on April 10, 1912, she was considered the ultimate passenger liner – unparalleled in luxury, size and technology, so much so that the crew thought it 'unsinkable'. On April 14, 1912, she hit an iceberg at 11:40 p.m. The collision caused the ship's hull plates to buckle inward along her starboard side and open five of her sixteen watertight compartments to the sea. The ship sank slowly but surely.

Whatever be the mysteries that went under with the ship, the disaster has since been examined as case studies with valuable management lessons to learn from.

1. Preparedness for Crisis

Titanic was built with advanced safety features such as watertight compartments and remotely activated watertight doors. The ship therefore, did not equip with a sufficient number of lifeboats to accommodate all who were on board. During the rescue mission, several of the boats were released to the sea with only half its capacity of people filled.

Lesson Learnt: Critical crisis management training and preparedness is essential for a company to rise to the challenge of any crisis. Such training is directed towards creating situational leaders, with the ability to take appropriate decisions independently during the crisis.

2. Reality Check

When the iceberg hit Titanic, it punched holes in the ship's steel plates, allowing water to flood the ship's six compartments. It was later discovered from the ship's ruins salvaged from the ocean that the steel used were of substandard quality.

Lesson Learnt: Any compromise in the quality of staff, process, product and security systems even at the base level could cost a company dearly. As they say, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

3. Misplaced Confidence

"Not even God could sink this ship".

This was the verdict given by an employee about RMS Titanic. That confidence turned out to be arrogance when the ship broke into two and sank like a paper boat.



The Washington Post announces the disaster

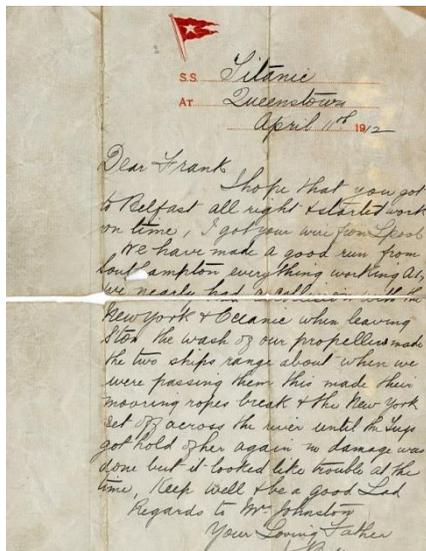
Lesson Learnt:

Organisations should have constant reality checks to ensure that their confidence in their company’s systems or performance is based on factual back-up, and is not simply built on an optimism that disregards telling facts.

4. The Greatest Risk Often Lies Beneath

The greatest dangers lie unseen below the surface of the obvious. That night in 1912, the Pacific water was smooth like glass and deceptively dangerous. When the iceberg, which lurked below the waters tore the ship’s hull, it was the crew working below, who saw the damage first before the first class passengers and the upper deck crew realised the gravity of the situation.

Lesson Learnt: Often, it is the alert staff working hands-on at the base level, who are first to be aware of the tell-tale signs of distress in a company. The feedback from these workers must be recognised in the company. They may also be best equipped with the practical solution or safeguard.



A 102-year-old letter from the chief engineer of Titanic to his son has revealed that the ship almost collided with two other vessels as it left Southampton to begin its doomed voyage

5. Fast is Not Always Best

RMS Titanic was speeding on its cruise. When the iceberg was spotted, the ship had about 30 seconds to steer away from it. The high speed at which it cruised was an impediment in manoeuvring the ship safely away from it.

Lesson Learnt:

Companies often take the fast track to compete in the market. If it is not backed by awareness of the big picture in which the company is functioning, the company finally lands in an unexpected crash in the market.

6. Priorities in Place

RMS Titanic provided a wireless telegraph for the convenience of its passengers as well as for operational use. The wireless operators, inundated with the personal messages to send, became overworked and tired. This turned out to be critical.

Around 11:30 p.m. on April 14, when Titanic's wireless operator received a warning of an iceberg ahead, he ignored it. Later on, when he relayed the message, "*We have struck iceberg....sinking fast....come to our assistance*", the wireless operator on the nearby ship, had retired for the night, after being rebuffed about his iceberg warning. When the rescue ship finally arrived two hours later, only about 705 passengers could be rescued.

Lesson Learnt:

Companies must not lose focus of its core mission and activity and be carried away by commercially more flamboyant activities or expenses. Some companies risk strained bottom lines, diverting money to items of administrative nature instead of operational essentials.

RMS Titanic might have sunk to the doleful music of "Nearer My God To Thee" as its swan song, played on the deck by the ship's band. Companies that ignore such crucial lessons, risk losing out on the big picture and into their swan songs.

With inputs from

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RMS_Titanic

<http://www.chartcourse.com/the-sinking-of-the-titanic-an-analogy-of-failed-leadership/>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travelnews/10765766/Titanic-40-fascinating-facts.html>

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-opportunities/unsinkable-wisdom/article7103123.ec>

By Susan Koshy, Editor

Source: April 2015 issue of PreSense

Netaji Files to Re-write History - West Bengal Government Declassifies 64 'Netaji Files'



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

In an historic event, Mamta Banerjee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, declassified 64 files (12,744 pages) relating to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, in the possession of her Government. Although it is regarded a political 'master stroke' by Mamta, the Central Government is put in embarrassment. It is estimated that around 60,000 pages of 'Netaji Files' are classified. It is also reported that 41 files are with the Prime Minister's Office; 27 files are with Ministry of External Affairs and 77 files are with Intelligence Bureau of the Government

of India. While the family members of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose have been pressurising the Indian Government to declassify all 'Netaji Files', in August 2015, the Indian Government had decided not to declassify the files, as they considered it might hamper the relationship with some foreign countries. Netaji admirers and family members questioned how foreign relationship could be hampered by the declassification. In this background, Mamta's decision to release the 64 files in the custody of West Bengal Government, assumes serious significance.

Netaji's Death and the Mystery

In 1945, a news item appeared in a Japanese paper that Netaji lost his life in an air crash on 18th August 1945. Netaji's death itself is one of the most controversial issues debated since 1945. Netaji's admirers accuse Nehru of



Japan Paper dated 23 Aug 1945

undermining the importance of Netaji in India's freedom movement, as Nehru and Netaji were in opposite camps. The declassified files bring out earlier undisclosed documents to conclude that Netaji was alive in 1949.

Netaji's Family Snooped Even After Independence

Some of the documents disclose that the Central Government was snooping around Netaji's family members till 1971 and intercepting their mail through the Post Office. Netaji followers state that the Indian National Army (INA) members who fought against the British under the leadership of Netaji are not recognised for pension or privileges as freedom fighters. Although Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose differed in their approach towards the freedom struggle, no one can underestimate the contribution made by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in getting the British Government to decide to grant freedom to India. The Bengalis had felt hurt when Netaji was sidelined by the Nehru Government, and Netaji's family members were snooped by the Intelligence agencies. The death of Netaji, and the reasons for snooping around Netaji family members till 1971, even decades after India getting freedom, remain a mystery.

The Soviet Union, which was in existence when Netaji was reported dead in 1945, is now totally disintegrated. The Labour Party which was in power then, is not in power now in England. Hence, some of the political parties and Netaji's followers question the wisdom of the Indian Government in not declassifying the remaining files on the flimsy reason of foreign relations getting affected. They suspect that it might only defame Nehru and the Congress Party.

To resolve the mystery of Netaji's death, various Committees were formed at various times.

The Figges Report, 1946

When Netaji was declared dead in an air crash in 1945, the British Government had set up an investigating team. They visited the INA offices and the spot. Colonel Figges submitted a report in July 1946. At the same time, a military intelligence report was also submitted. Although they confirmed Netaji's death, the supporting documents submitted by them differed in facts, including the time and date of death. Even though this report has not been officially released, it was released anonymously after 1997. This report was prepared by the British Government before Indian Independence.

Shah Nawaz Commission, 1956

As the Government of India had not taken any initiative to enquire into the death of Netaji after independence, some eminent citizens decided to start an unofficial probe. In response, Pandit Nehru appointed an official committee headed by Shah Nawaz Khan. He included Netaji's elder brother, Suresh Bose in the Committee. The Government made available some of the secret files to this Committee. This Commission confirmed the official version that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose died in Taipei. Suresh Bose filed a dissenting report alleging that Khan was influenced by Nehru to stick to the official line.

Khosla Commission, 1970

The Indian government later set up a one-man inquiry commission, consisting of Justice G D Khosla, a retired judge of the Punjab High Court. He submitted his report only in 1974. Once again, Khosla concurred with the earlier reports.

Mukherjee Commission, 1999-2005

The Justice Mukherjee Commission was formed in 1999. The commission produced a report that ran into three volumes and thousands of pages, and was made public in 2006. The

Mukherjee Commission Report concluded that Bose did not die in the air crash of 1945. His death and his cremation were engineered



De-classified files by West Bengal Government

with the cooperation of the Japanese military authorities. The government rejected the report.

Cabinet Secretary's Committee, 2015

Since the classified documents contain information about his death, Netaji admirers and family members have been demanding the declassification. To review and decide on the declassification, a committee was set up in April 2015 headed by Ajit Seth, Cabinet Secretary, including officials from Intelligence agencies. Although the report is not available to the public, the Central Government has now decided not to declassify the 'Netaji files' in the custody of Central Government on the grounds of 'national security'.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death is shrouded in mystery and much fantasy is propagated as facts. According to Sugata Bose MP, a grandnephew of Netaji, declassification might not disclose anything significant, but could reveal the dishonourable things done by the upper echelons of India's post-Independence Government. Definitely, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose deserved a better treatment in India.

Forgotten Hero

In 1992, the Government of India decided to honour Netaji with the highest civilian Award, 'Bharat Ratna'. The family members felt offended that while Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi were given Bharat Ratna in 1955, 1971 and 1991, Netaji was considered after 45 years of Independence.

Further, they also objected to his death not being confirmed by the Government officially. For these reasons, the family members rejected the Bharat Ratna Award.

Declassification of the remaining 'Netaji files' may create more ripples in Indian politics.

By K Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: Sep 2015 issue of PreSense

Forgotten Heroes of our Freedom Struggle



Shri Arya Bhashyam, who hoisted the Indian Tricolour, after removing the Union Jack in 1932 – a rare photo

On 15th August 2016, India celebrated her 70th Independence Day. During the freedom struggle, many patriots had come out and fought against the British Raj, spending the prime of their youth in prisons. These patriots had also contributed to the independence and freedom we now enjoy. Their families suffered. Many of these patriots' grandchildren lead very simple lives. Sadly, but for a few top national leaders, several thousands of great men and women are not even known to the present generation.

The media, especially the television channels rarely talk about the freedom struggle and the sufferings of these great men and women who struggled for this freedom. During the Independence Day and Republic Day celebrations, the mainstream freedom fighters are lauded, with no mention about the true UnSung Heroes. Our school text books too recognise only a couple of the leaders of the Independence period. Many citizens across the country prefer to spend these national holidays entertaining themselves.

Many Indians are under the impression that our National Flag has been flying atop only since 15th August 1947. Very few are aware that on 26th January 1932 at 2 am, someone had dared to bring down the Union Jack and hoist the Indian Tricolour at the prestigious flag post of Fort St. George at Madras. This was by a 25-year-old vibrant youth named Arya K Bhashyam.

In 1919, as a young 12-year-old student, K Bhashyam (Arya was his pen name) was disturbed to hear about the massacre of hundreds of innocent people at Jallianwala Bagh by General Dyre. He was also inspired by Vanchinathan, who shot and killed Collector Ashe in 1911 and later killed himself at Maniyachi Railway station. Bhashyam purchased four pistols secretly to kill the then Governor of Madras Province and later shoot himself. However, when he stood before the Governor face to face, ready to shoot

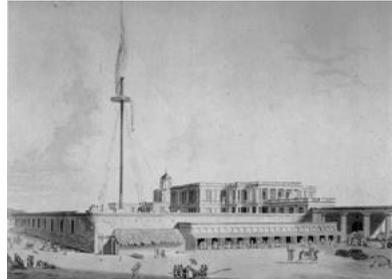
him, a spark crossed his mind and he resolved not to resort to violence, but follow Mahatma Gandhi.

Spurred by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's vision of *Swaraj*, Bhashyam became a firebrand revolutionary and dared several feats protesting against the British colonial rule. He was imprisoned several times and tortured by the police.

The Fort St. George, Madras was built in 1644 by the British rulers as their first fortress in India. In 1687, they erected a 148-foot high flag post made of teakwood to stand as the tallest in the country. The Union Jack used to be hoisted on that flag post everyday. The British considered these two among the most prestigious emotional accomplishments by them.

26th January was considered the *Swarajya* Day by the Congress leaders then. Bhashyam wanted to hoist the Indian Tricolour on the Flag Post on Swarajya Day in 1932. Two days in advance, he personally made a large tricolour flag, using his *dhoti* and wrote in Tamil "இன்றிலிருந்து இந்தியா சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தது" ("From today India has attained independence"). He tied the tricolour *dhoti* on his waist to skip the notice of the security personnel. In the early hours of 26th January 1932 at 2 am, he arrived at the flag post. Arya Bhashyam shinned up the 148-foot flag post, removed the Union Jack from the ropes and hoisted the Indian tricolour. The Union Jack was torn into pieces.

No doubt, seeing the Indian tricolour flying atop the flag post infuriated the British and two days later, they arrested Arya Bhashyam and sentenced him to rigorous imprisonment in the Central Jail. He was treated as a 'dangerous prisoner' and kept in quarantine. Netaji Subash Chandra Bose was also brought to the Madras prison during that time. Both Arya Bhashyam and Netaji became close associates.



Fort St George and the Teakwood Flag Staff (100 years ago)

In an exclusive interview to the All India Radio during 1970s, Arya Bhashyam described the torture he faced with the police in the jail. He said he was given 30 lashes for questioning their atrocities. He continued to shout '*Vandemataram*' while he was being given the lashes by the police.

Bhashyam was an artist and sculptor. After independence, he returned to a quiet and simple life. He refused the pension given to freedom fighters. He died in 1999 at the age of 93.

The Indian tricolour was hoisted in all the states, including Delhi on 15th August 1947. But Bhashyam accomplished this, way back in 1932.

Today, only a few records have registered his achievements. With great effort, *PreSense* traced his only available photograph. The teakwood flag post was replaced in 1994 with a steel replica by the State Government.

In every district of the country, there were thousands of such Arya Bhashyams, who are not known to the present generation. Both the Central and the State Governments should initiate efforts to identify these UnSung warriors and inform about their contributions, for the knowledge of the present generation. *PreSense* salutes these great men and women, who had contributed to India's freedom.

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Editor in Chief

Source: August 2016 issue of PreSense

Remembering Shaheed Bhagat Singh



Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru

Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru were hanged to death on 23rd March 1931 by the British Government.

Bhagat Singh was one of the most influential freedom fighters of the Indian

freedom struggle. The title 'Shaheed' meaning 'martyr' most often precedes his name. Shaheed Bhagat Singh was a martyr who inspired the youth of the country to take part in the Indian independence movement.

Bhagat Singh was born into a Sikh family on 28th September, 1907 at Jaranwala Tehsil in Punjab. He was born into a family of revolutionaries. His birth coincided with the release of his father and uncles from jail. They had been imprisoned for carrying out anti-British activities.

Bhagat Singh's grandfather was a follower of *Arya Samaj*, the religious reform movement founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The young Bhagat Singh joined the Dayanand Anglo Vedic High School for his education.

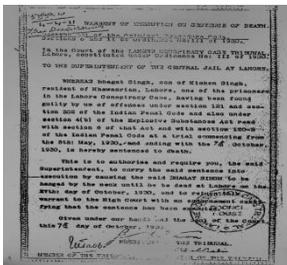
At the age of 12 years, Bhagat Singh was greatly moved by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919, when thousands of people who had gathered at a peaceful public meeting were shot dead by the British. This tragic event sowed revolutionary sentiments in the mind of Bhagat Singh.

At the age of 14 years, Bhagat Singh was witness to another gruesome incident when a large number of unarmed people were killed by the colonial dictators at Nankana Sahib Gurudwara.

Thus, apart from being born into a family of revolutionaries, these violent incidents perpetuated by the British ensured that Bhagat

Singh would also become a revolutionary at a young age. Bhagat Singh soon became a part of the Young Revolutionary Movement to defeat the colonial rulers. In March 1926, Bhagat Singh founded the Naujawan Bharat Sabha (Youth Society of India). The Youth Society of India sought to bring together youth peasants and labourers against the British.

When his family wanted him married, Bhagat Singh ran away from home, leaving behind a letter which read, *"My life is dedicated to noblest of causes, that of freedom of the country. So there is no worldly desire that can lure me now."*

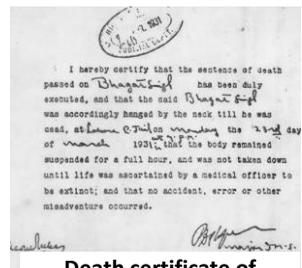


Death warrant of Bhagat Singh

In 1928, Lala Lajpat Rai, another revolutionary, was killed by the British for leading a non-violent struggle demonstration against the Simon Commission. This infuriated Bhagat Singh who sought to take revenge. Bhagat Singh was then involved in the killing of the British police officer, John Saunders. Bhagat Singh was an accomplice with Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru in this assassination

that was carried out to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai. Immediately after this, he went with Batukeshwar Dutt, another revolutionary, and threw bombs into the Central Legislative Assembly.

Bhagat Singh was soon imprisoned by the British. Even in jail, he continued his struggle, by undergoing a 4-month fast, seeking equal rights for Indian prisoners on the lines of British prisoners. Bhagat Singh was convicted by the British for carrying out the murder of John Saunders and was hanged on 23rd March, 1931, along with Sukdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru.



Death certificate of Bhagat Singh

Bhagat Singh today finds a place in Indian Parliament in the form of a large bronze statue. There are innumerable memorials of Bhagat Singh at different parts of the country. There are many

films on his life and stamps released in his name. He continues to be a source of inspiration for the youth of this country.

By Dr. D K Hari and Dr. D K Hema Hari
www.bharathgyan.com

Source : March 2017 issue of PreSense

India's Political Destiny – Hope or Despair

India won its independence through the relentless freedom struggle by many political leaders and intellectuals, who led the country of people in a unique, non-violent war against foreign rule. Although the fight for independence was on the principles of non-violence, the days of partition and the birth of free India, witnessed many violent scenes as the country was territorially torn into India and Pakistan. Therefore, our freedom came at a heavy price. And we, as the future generations of Indians, should treasure the victory and nurture the country's welfare dearly and conscientiously.

Unfortunately, the state of affairs especially in the governance of the political and public offices of the country tells a sorry tale of corruption, lethargy, deceit and lack of conscientiousness – one that would make our martyrs turn in their graves. Surely, our forefathers would have rallied for a great and mighty India that its future generations would be proud to uphold and preserve.

Surprisingly, the great visionary, statesman and freedom fighter, C. Rajagopalachari (December 1878 – December 1972) had expressed a reserved prediction in 1921 itself, about the future state of governance in independent India, from his prison cell in Vellore, Tamil Nadu where he was imprisoned for his activist role in the freedom struggle.

C. Rajagopalachari, fondly known as Rajaji or CR, was the first and only Governor-General of independent India before the position was abolished, after India became a republic in 1950. He was better known as one of the active participants in the freedom struggle for independent India. He was a multi-faceted personality. He was an intellectual, a lawyer, a writer, an historian and a statesman. He wrote in 1921:

"We all ought to know that Swaraj will not at once or, I think, even for a long time to come, be better government or greater happiness for the people. Elections and their corruptions, injustice, and the power and tyranny of wealth, and inefficiency of administration, will make a hell of life as soon as freedom is given

to us. Men will look regretfully back to the old regime of comparative justice, and efficient, peaceful, more or less honest administration. The only thing gained will be that as a race we will be saved from dishonour and subordination."

Today, as the country gears up for the General Elections, there are many Indian citizens who remain disillusioned because they believe that irrespective of who wins, it would be, sadly, 'old wine in new bottle'. Lack of vision, and mud-slinging in election campaigns, horse-trading thereafter, unkept promises, a corrupt bureaucratic system, exploitation of the public welfare schemes to benefit a few, and continued disparity in the social and economic status of the people, has become ingrained so deeply that many see them all as part of Indian culture!



When former British Premier, Sir Winston Churchill declared in the British Parliament in March 1947, "*The Indian political parties and political people do not represent the Indian masses. It is a delusion to believe that they do. I wish they did*", one attributed the statement to his prejudice against a developing country of people, under his Government's rule. But was it?

While India as a country, can boast of some outstanding achievements, as long as the majority of its common people do not stand to benefit, we still have a long way to go. When Gustavo Petro, Colombian politician and economist said, "*A developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. It's where the rich use public transportation*", he described the essence of development. That is true democracy and development. Would the Indian people dare to dream of such 'utopia'?

Rajaji, while expressing despair at what the future of India held in governance, projected the way forward to a better India when he said, "*Hope lies only in universal education by which right conduct, fear of god, and love, will be developed among the citizens from childhood. It is only if we succeed in this that Swaraj will mean happiness.*" He concluded the passage by cautioning, "*Otherwise it will mean the grinding injustices and tyranny of wealth.*"

Today, it is generally perceived that the functionaries in our country, from the macro to the micro and grassroot levels, are 'elements of grinding injustices and tyranny of wealth', because of the extent of corruption and inefficiency. If so, will we be able to resurrect ourselves as a nation, to glory and honour, for which our forefathers had fought and won our independence? Hope lies in what Rajaji believed in - education where right values are inculcated.

We need to review our education system and revamp it to make it an effective medium for developing and grooming a sincere and committed population of Indians, and from among them, leaders committed to value-based governance.

by V.Rajendran, Editor

Source : Dec 2018 issue of PreSense

The Indo-China Border Dispute – What is It All About?

On June 15, 2020, the torrid summer heat was felt even in the icy glaciers of the Himalayan region of India and China along the Ladakh border when the dragon intruded into the Indian border



Image Courtesy: Associated Press

before being pushed back. But it led to a brutal hand-to-hand combat in which Chinese soldiers of the PLA (People's Liberation Army, the armed forces of the People's Republic of China) were thrashed by Indian soldiers and made to retreat. The story did not end there. Before long, the PLA did a U-turn after traversing a kilometre and attacked the Indian *jawans* (soldiers) led by Commanding Officer Santosh Babu, with wooden clubs strapped with barbed wires, killing about 20 Indian soldiers. As per the military convention, neither India or China should be carrying firearms for any combat while patrolling the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Ever since this hand-to-hand combat, both China and India, have been amassing military might across the LAC, facing virtually an eye ball to eye ball confrontation in the Galwan Valley, along the Pangong Tsao Lake.

History

In the last 60 years, China has never disputed that the Galwan post belonged to India, but it does now as it is apparently important for its ambitious One Belt One Road (OBOR) project, a massive highway cutting through the territories of Bhutan, Pakistan and Afghanistan, to enable movement of crude oil from the gulf countries to China faster than the current sea route which inflates its logistics costs.

India has taken a strong position supporting Bhutan that the road passes through disputed territories, but China has been in denial, saying that India was constructing road blocks and bridges to stall the OBOR project. The cause of OBOR has resulted in symptomatic scuffle and skirmish between India and China along the LAC at the flash point of Galwan in Ladakh.

History shows that during World War II, the British annexed Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh from Burma (now Myanmar) while fighting the Japanese at the North Eastern Frontier Area (NEFA), and drew the McMahon Line separating the Indian and Chinese territories. China disputed this claim which India holds onto, when the British drew the Indian map while partitioning India and Pakistan. While the Chinese claim that the people of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh bear closer ethnic resemblance to the Chinese people and hence the territory should be ceded to them, the citizens there feel more attached to a democratic India than to a communist regime in China. China has since made over 600 incursions into Indian territories along the LAC in the last several years and were mostly beaten back.

Understanding the Difference between LOC and LAC

Comparison	LOC	LAC
Full Form	Line of Control	Line of Actual Control
Location	Areas of Kashmir occupied by Pakistan, and two-thirds, Jammu,	It is scattered in three areas of north Indian states: eastern

	Ladakh, and the Kashmir Valley, administered by India (although the whole of Kashmir is an integral part of India).	(Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh), western (Ladakh, Kashmir), and middle (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh).
Appearance	It is clearly demarcated by the militaries and a lot of activities (face-to-face confrontation, firings, etc.) take place. The Indian and Pakistan armies are present here.	These are big vacant regions of nearly 50 to 100 km distance, maintained between Indian and Chinese armies.
Area (Length)	776 kilometres (unofficial)	4,057 kilometres (unofficial)
Between	India and Pakistan	India and China

LOC or the Line of Control is a live border line where constant firing and face-to-face confrontations take place between the armed forces of India and Pakistan. It is clearly demarcated by the military on either side of the border. It denotes a kind of boundary separating parts of the Indian union territory, viz. Jammu & Kashmir, controlled by India and illegally occupied by Pakistan. The length of LOC is around 776 kilometres. The Indian side (southern and eastern parts of the region) of LOC is known as Jammu and Kashmir which constitutes about 45 percent of Kashmir.

LAC stands for Line of Actual Control. It is a boundary between China and India. The concept of 'Line of Actual Control' (LAC) came in a bilateral agreement in 1993, although there was no concrete settlement on ground positions between these two countries. The LAC separates the Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory. It is a large vacant region of nearly 50 to 100 kms distance, maintained by the armies of India and China. The Chinese government considers LAC to be around 2,000 km while India considers the LAC to be 3,488 km long. LAC is divided into three regions: the western sector in Ladakh, the middle sector in

Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and the eastern sector which spans Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

Since there is no clear-cut demarcation at the LAC, standoffs have taken place many times such as Doklam in 2017, Chumar in 2014, Depsang in 2013 and Sumdorong Chu in 1987. A similar situation exists at the LOC where the Pakistan army is using POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) regions to send terrorists into India.

High level talks continue between India and China at the military level and the diplomatic channels. The diplomacy level is being handled by India's Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar with his Chinese counterpart. The military level talks for disengagement are being conducted by Lt Gen Harinder Singh of the Indian Army and Lt Gen Liu Lin of PLA. Even as a broad agreement was reached that China would pull back its troops from the Galwan post, China said it would not be done overnight but would take months to withdraw as the terrain was hostile and the climate horrendous. But India has found that the PLA has now moved to different areas, regrouping and amassing troops on the LAC along the Indian border. This is unacceptable to India. India has therefore started moving more troops closer to the border on standby alert even as jets, drones and helicopters do air surveillance of the Ladakh region daily.

It is a continuously evolving situation that has caused global concern particularly with the United States and United Kingdom. Both US President Donald Trump and UK Premier Boris Johnson have expressed serious concern as both India and China are nuclear powers. USA has pulled out NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) troops from Germany and put them on alert against an aggressive China towards India. US has strong naval presence in the South China Seas and would like to protect its allies Vietnam, Philippines and India on the Indian Ocean.

China has 280 nuclear war heads but the extent of deployment of its bombs is unknown. India does not have a nuclear stockpile or silos as the NPT countries but can, according to western military sources, assemble 20 nuclear warheads on its ICBM Brahmos, developed with Russian collaboration, to launch an assault directly on Beijing and Shanghai. China's military strength in terms of

manpower is 3.9 million against India's over 2 million. While India has reserve strength of about 1.2 million, China has reserve military strength of over 8 million. China is militarily stronger than India though it spends only 1.9% of its GDP on defence at \$228 billion, compared to India's \$55.6 billion, which is 2.5% of its GDP.

Galwan has traditionally been with India and is named after a Ladakhi warrior. India has no territorial ambitions over any country's domain except guarding its own, drawn by the British after the Partition. While China has aggressive postures on Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, claiming them as its territories, Pakistan claims Kashmir as its own due to the dominant Muslim population there.

China is at an advantage with a trade deficit of \$60 billion against India which it wants to protect. Economics more than demographics has driven the military agenda of China against India.

by T N Ashok, Consulting Editor

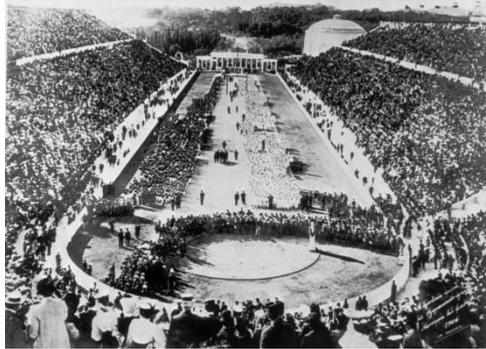
(The author holds a War Correspondent Certificate from the Defence Ministry of India, on combat, amphibious and logistical operations of the Indian armed forces, especially the Indian Navy.)

Source: June 2020 issue of PreSense

The Olympics – Interesting Historical Facts

The Olympic Games, held once in four years, is one of the top leading international sporting events where thousands of athletes drawn from more than 200 Nations participate in a wide range of competitive events.

The Olympic Games actually originated from Greece, where representatives of several city-states and kingdoms under the realm of Greece competed. These Games featured mainly athletic and also combat sports such as wrestling and the pankration, horse and chariot racing events.



First modern Olympics 1896

The first Modern Games were held in the Panathenaic Stadium, Athens (Capital of Greece) in 1896. The Games brought together 14 nations and 241 athletes who competed in 43 events.

The Ancient Olympic Games:

The history of the Olympics began some 2300 years ago which was held in Olympia of ancient Greece. It's a strong belief that the Games started as a festive event of art and sport to worship the gods. These games ended abruptly in 393 CE with the outbreak of wars in the region.

The Modern Olympic Games:

After nearly 1500 years of hiatus of the Ancient Games, the Olympic event was resumed in the late 19th century. Baron Pierre de Coubertin founded the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894, leading to the first modern Games in Athens in 1896. He also invented the five-ring emblem, representative of the unity of the five continents of the globe.

Are you aware that in the 1896 Summer Olympics, The United States won the most gold medals (11), while the host nation Greece won the most medals overall (46).

The Olympic Rings:

The Olympic Rings has two elements of symbolism. One is 'the 5 rings' interlocked with each other and another is of colour. The five interlocking rings represent the five main regions of the world that have been brought together by the



Olympic Movement. The regions are Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and America. Secondly, the Olympic rings colours simply mean that they have at least one colour of every nation's flag in them. People tend to ask as to why the Olympic Flag has only 5 rings when there are 7 continents. The Authorities explain the continents of South America and North America are combined into one region of America. In addition, there are no athletes that compete under the flag of a country within Antarctica.

The Olympic Flame:

The tradition of lighting a flame during the Games started in Ancient Greece. It's the symbol of the modern Olympic Movement which was introduced by architect Jan Wils in 1928 Amsterdam Summer Olympic Games.

The Torch Relay – The Torch will be lit at the original location of the Games in Olympia, Greece, and carried to the host of the current games which started eight years later in 1936. This symbolic race represents the journey of the Olympics from past to present.

Types of Olympic Games:

- Summer Olympic Games – The First modern Olympic Games held in 1896.
- Winter Olympic Games – The Winter Olympics was created to feature snow and ice sports that were logistically impossible to hold during the Summer Games. The First Winter Olympic Games held in 1924
- Paralympic Games - In 1948, Sir Ludwig Guttmann, determined to promote the rehabilitation of soldiers after World War II. The Stoke Mandeville Games later became the Paralympic Games which first took place in Rome, Italy, in 1960 featuring 400 athletes from 23 countries.
- Youth Olympic Games - In 2010, the Olympic Games considered athletes between the ages of 14 and 18 the chance to compete.

Olympics 2021, Tokyo:

The Olympic Games in Tokyo were originally scheduled for 2020, but due to the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic, it was postponed to 2021. There are 33 sports and 46 disciplines in the official 2021 Olympic program. IOC approved the addition of five sports - baseball/softball, karate, skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing. That includes 339 total medal events. The Torch relay for 2021 Olympics covered a distance of 20,000 kilometres.

Motto of Olympics:

The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating the youth through sport practiced without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

Interesting facts

On 6 April 1896, American James Connolly won the triple jump to become the first Olympic champion.

The United States has bagged 2828 Medals till the 2016 Olympic Games, which includes 1127 Gold Medals.

Charlotte Cooper of the United Kingdom was the first female Olympic champion, in the 1900 Games.

By Srinivas Gopal, Editorial Team

Source: July 2021 issue of PreSense

Taliban Seizes Kabul After American Troops Withdraw - India & US Worry About the Uncertainty of Billions in Investments



USA & Allies Rudely Awakened

The dreaded Taliban, which had been fighting US presence in Afghanistan for the last 20 years, seized the crown jewel Kabul on August 15 in a lightning offensive hours after taking the prized Mazar E Sharif city soon after US marines began their disengagement in the land locked country in pursuant of Doha talks for total withdrawal of troops after a 20-year presence between 1991 to 2021.

The US and its NATO allies and other countries were rudely awakened by the shocking news Kabul had fallen, thousands were fleeing the country and the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled through Tajikistan to take asylum in UAE. Even as US President declared recognition of the Taliban regime was dependent upon guarantees that it will not grant sanctuary or encourage terrorism on the soils of Afghanistan, an ISIS-K sponsored suicide bomber blew up the Hamid Karzai international airport killing 13 US marines and wounding seriously 18 other soldiers. Some 169

people were killed in the blast. The Doha peace agreement for American withdrawal had extracted a Taliban assurance that it would respect human rights and disallow terrorism from the soil of Afghanistan.

A shocked US President Joe Biden had faced a double whammy, first the fall of Kabul hours after American troops withdrew, Trump withdrew 7,500 and Biden an equal number, in a single stroke. Some more remained to be withdrawn when ISIS-K, more barbaric and fundamental islamists than Taliban, struck at the airport.

Choked, wiping tears from his eyes for the loss of US marines, Biden told a shocked nation that America will not forgive or forget those who carried out this gruesome attack at Kabul airport, anyone who wishes America harm, we will hunt you down ", he warned saying he would defend US interests with every measure at his command. The soldiers who died are heroes. The ISIS-K attacks come in utter violation of assurances by Taliban at Doha that it will not allow terrorism to operate from its soil.

US Military Drone Strike Blows Up Bomb Laden IS -K Car Near Kabul

On August 29, the US military took a punitive drone strike on a IS bomb laden car headed for Kabul and blew it up in keeping with Bidens remark "We will hunt you down", for the barbaric ISIS-K suicide bomber attack at the Hamid Karzai international airport that killed 13 US marines, seriously wounded 18 others and left dead 169 civilians. Pentagon said the drone strike was in self defence even as Taliban regime claimed the US has no right to attack After August 31.

India & USA Worried About Uncertainty of Investments

India and USA, which have invested totally over 50 billion US dollars in building infrastructure in terms of roads, highways and hospitals, are worried about their investments as Taliban has begun destroying every symbol or edifice, they think represent the Afghan government that was under the influence of the US. Taliban leaders have demanded that India continue to complete all the

projects it has undertaken in the strife torn country. India has not replied and is adopting a "wait & watch" policy as the foreign office feels it has to take stock of first what sort of government will be formed in Kabul and if the previous Afghan government ministers will form part of it for continuity. Moreover, India as part of the Quad led by US will take decisions in sync with the new entity.

India and US security services had jointly strategized the evacuation of all Indian diplomats, Afghans of Indian origin including Sikhs, and Afghan ministers and Afghan people wanting to leave the country. Both India and USA and the United Nations have clearly said all fleeing Afghans would be granted visas without any procedural delays. Thousands have fled the country and Taliban has said it will not allow any further outflow by stationing its soldiers at the airport. They have already blocked all road crossings to other countries.

Taliban to Taliban – 1991 to 2021 – Badly Scripted History

Four presidents – George Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump and Joe Biden – 20 years of US presence, trillions of dollars invested, it was Taliban to Taliban, a badly scripted history. China is the first country to recognize the Taliban regime, probably because of its business interests of having invested billions. Pakistan is an enigma. It has supported Taliban because of its nexus to Al Qaeda providing sanctuary to the worlds most wanted terrorist Osama Bin Laden from the caves of Afghanistan to Peshawar and ultimately to the outskirts of Islamabad until President Barack Obama in a highly secret offensive through Navy Seals killed an ailing Osama in his den. Bin Laden was the mastermind of the 9/11 twin tower attacks of the WTC that happened 20 years ago in which thousands died when two planes crashed into the twin towers causing shock, horror and sorrow across the globe.

When 18-year-olds were drafted for military service in Iraq and Afghanistan, grieving families that lost their sons and daughters questioned the US government: why engage militarily in an alien soil where it had no interests. The then US President Donald Trump after the Doha peace talks negotiated a withdrawal from Kabul, as part of his election pledge, by May one subject to certain terms of

respecting human rights. President Joe Biden vowed to bring back American troops ASAP and set a deadline by September One, but pulled them back in mid-august itself.

Afghan Govt Collapses, Prez Flees, Chaos on Streets of Kabul

As the government in Afghanistan collapsed, the president fled, chaos prevailed on the streets and Kabul airport, world opinion turned against the US President Joe Biden of literally abandoning a country that had been protected for 20 years. But Biden stood his ground saying he honoured a legacy of Trump Even intelligence agencies did not foresee Kabul's fall so fast. When the Afghan forces did not put up even a semblance of a fight surrendering meekly, why should American soldiers fight alone for Afghanistan, Biden asked.

The bigger picture here now is: what happens to the hundreds of billions of US dollars invested by the USA (38 billion) India (about 6 to 8 billion), on infrastructure in terms of hospitals, educational institutions, health care facilities, roads and highways, airports built there.

Pakistan, an Enigma, with nexus to Taliban and Al Qaeda

How to do deal with Pakistan in the new scenario is a big question? Renowned for home grown terrorism, aiding and abetting with the Taliban and Al Qaeda, Pakistan is deemed a terrorist nation having its own problems in Sind and Baluchistan. What stand will the European Union take is a million-dollar question, even as Turkey, one of its members, has said it would recognize and work with the Taliban regime.



Panic Rules Kabul

At present fear and panic rule Kabul and other principal cities in Afghanistan as Taliban commanders have taken full control of all border crossings from which you can neither enter nor exit. To show a semblance of modicum to the world, Taliban's supreme commander Haibatullah Akhundzada has said the rule of Sharia law would now apply. An appeal to all government servants and military and police to return to work without fear of persecution has been made.

"We will not discuss what type of political system we should apply in Afghanistan because it is clear, it is sharia law and that is it ", says Waheedullah Hashimi, with access to council's decision making. He is the face of Taliban to the world now. The future of Kabul is tense unpredictable, and its relations with progressive nations across the world is on the precipice as uncertainty haunts the future of their foreign policy and investments is being called into question after a 20-year security blanket by USA has been lifted.

By T N Ashok, Consulting Editor

Source: August 2021 issue of PreSense

Chronology of Afghanistan History of Govts, Russia, American Presence and Tribal Rising - Background of Why Tribal War Lords rule Afghanistan?

1919 - Afghanistan went through turbulent history. A Great Game" of ping pong was played by Britain, which occupied India, and Russia in the northwest frontier of Afghanistan attempting to gain control of Kabul. Home rule returned to Kabul after the Anglo - Indian war when King Amanullah became the monarch only to be replaced a half a century later by King Zahir Shah , who was also overthrown and a republic was established.

1978



Afghanistan witnessed the infamous Saur Revolution where a socialist government was established passing controversial land reforms legislations dis-agreeable to the feudal class or the power structures. The socialist govt was oppressive and jailed many critics and opponents to the land reforms. The Saur Revolution was the brainchild of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which overthrew Afghan President Mohammed Daoud Khan on 27–28 April 1978. Daoud Khan had himself seized power through a coup de tat in 1973.

1979 – The Saur Revolution sparked the Soviet–Afghan War of the 1980s. Mujahideen rebels, tribal groups grouped together to topple the socialist government through a guerrilla war that lasted nine long years. As the Mujahedeen became stronger by the day, President Amin sought the help of the Soviet Union to suppress the uprising and Russian Troops walked in destabilizing the region.

Despite international protest and pressures to withdraw, led by the USA and its European allies, the troops stayed under the order of President Karmal. He was considered a soviet puppet.

Russian Presence and Withdrawal

1980 – 1989: Afghanistan was rocked by unprecedented violence and bloodshed as the Islamic fundamentalist group Taliban took the baton from the Mujahedeen supported by USA, China, UK and some other European nations, which wanted the Russian troops out.

American Presence and Withdrawal

1991 – 2021: Taliban in its five-year reign, between 1989 to 1994, came to represent a regime that was totalitarian, terrorist, and the country slipped into poverty and economic regression. US forces invaded Taliban territories with drone attacks and missiles as CIA found that the Taliban was in nexus with the dreaded terrorist outfit Al Qaeda, led by the excommunicated Saudi citizen Osama Bin Laden, son of a Yemeni billionaire construction magnate, who owned the renowned Bin Ladin construction company in Saudi Arabia. Banished from Saudi Arabia for founding the Al Qaeda, which funnelled funds and arms to the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan, Osama was given sanctuary in the North West Frontier caves and moved to Peshawar and ISI of Pakistan shifted him to a secluded farm house in the outskirts of Islamabad at Abbottabad, where he was shot dead by US Navy seals.

2001: The US drone attacks on the Afghan caves nearly ousted the Taliban hold in Kabul followed in by the US infantry into Kabul and surroundings. But Taliban managed to control large portions of the country still.

2020: Sept 12, 2020 saw an agreement following the Doha peace talks in which President Donald Trump agreed to withdraw half the force by May 01 2021. Biden withdrew almost the entire force by mid- August against his own deadline of September one. Some 3,000 soldiers remain to be evacuated at the Bagram base.

US Troops Withdraw pursuant to trilateral meet at Doha – Afghan govt, USA and Taliban leaders

2021: August 16 saw the twenty-year-long war between the US backed Afghan government of Presidents Hamid Karzai and later by Ashraf Ghani saw the fall of Kabul in a lightning offensive hours after the US withdrew over 15,500 troops in two phases under the then US President Donald Trump in 2020 and President Joe Biden in August 2021 ahead of the deadline of September 01,2021. The withdrawal followed the commitment made at Doha in the middle east.

By T N Ashok, Consulting Editor

Source: August 2021 issue of PreSense

Index

4

44th amendment..... 76

A

Abu Abraham..... 80
Afghanistan .. 83, 85, 129, 137, 139, 140,
141, 142, 143
Afzal Guru.....88, 89
Arya Bhashyam.....120, 121

B

Bhagat Singh.....122, 123
Bhaskara Sethupathy24, 25, 26
British Broadcasting Corporation .36, 37,
38
British Raj 39, 40, 119

C

Cartoon.....14, 80
Charan Singh..... 71
Chicago 24, 25, 26, 27
China War..... 64
Constituent Assembly.....56, 57, 58, 100,
103, 104, 106

D

Digital Journalists Association of India
..... 12, 14, 18
Dr APJ Abdul Kalam 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 17, 18
Dr B R Ambedkar .. 57, 99, 100, 101, 102,
104, 105, 106, 107
Dr Ramamurthy 9
Dr Subramaniam Swamy75, 77
Dr Y S Rajan7, 14
Dyer33, 34, 35

E

Education Loan Task Force14, 18
Emergency. 71, 72, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80

G

General K M Cariappa.....54, 55
George Fernandes71, 74
Gorbachev81, 82

H

History 13, 19, 79, 91, 99, 114, 129, 139,
142
Hitler.....47, 48, 49, 78

I

Independence Day.....51, 52, 119
Indian Cinema.....28, 29, 30, 31
Indian Constitution..... 56, 58, 59, 99, 102
Indian Express.....74, 80
Indian Institute of Science 22
Indian Parliament 14, 59, 87, 123
Indira Gandhi. 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 117
Introduction.....5, 14

J

Jallianwala Bagh33, 34, 35, 119, 122
Jamshedji Tata22, 23
Janata Government76, 77
Justice Shah 77

K

K Srinivasan 9, 17, 21, 23, 27, 32, 41, 45,
50, 53, 59, 63, 65, 71, 75, 78, 79, 83,
89, 94, 98, 118

Kabul. 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143,
144

Kashmir 60, 61, 62, 63, 88, 129, 130, 131,
132

L

L K Advani 71

Line of Actual Control 128, 129, 130

Line of Control 129, 130

M

Maharaja Hari Singh 60, 61, 62

Mahatma Gandhi.. 33, 35, 39, 40, 43, 44,
48, 51, 52, 56, 91, 92, 93, 94, 101,
102, 107, 120

Milestones 14

Mumbai attack 88

Mussolini 47, 48, 49

N

Narendranath 20, 21

Netaji... 48, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120

Next Gen Political Leaders 18

O

Olympics 133, 134, 135

Osama Bin Laden 139, 143

P

Pakistan War 60

Pearl Harbour 48

Pentagon 84, 86, 138

Prime Point Foundation 1, 9, 14, 17

Q

Quit India Movement . 42, 43, 51, 93, 94,
95

R

Raj Narain 72

Rajaji ... 40, 43, 44, 53, 57, 91, 92, 93, 95,
96, 97, 98, 107, 125, 127

Rashtriya Suyam Sevak Sangh 75

S

Sabarmati Ashram 39, 92

Sansad Ratna Award 8, 14, 18

September 11 84, 86

Shah Commission 76, 77, 79

Soviet Union ... 46, 48, 50, 66, 67, 81, 82,
115, 142

Space Race 66, 69, 70

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa 20, 21

Srinivas Gopal 13, 136

Sukruti Narayanan 9, 35

Susan Koshy 8, 12, 70, 113

Swami Vivekananda ... 20, 21, 22, 23, 24,
25, 26, 27

T

T N Ashok 8, 13, 132, 141, 144

Taliban 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144

Thirukkural 97

Titanic 109, 110, 111, 112, 113

U

Udham Singh 35

V

Vajpayee 71, 87

W

World Trade Centre 84, 85, 86

World War 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 65, 66,
93, 102, 129, 135