

PR SENSE

Spreading Positive Vibrations
Issue No 183 – May 2022
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Cover Story



Indian scriptures & Modern Science

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From the Desk of Managing Editor

Dear Readers



I am happy to share the 183rd edition of your eMagazine PreSense with its rich content as usual. Recently, Hon'ble Supreme Court of India released one of the Rajiv Killers from the prison invoking Article 142, which is being used in rarest of rare occasions. This has triggered a great debate nationally. Our Editorial analyses the impact of this judgement on the common man.

The ancient Indian scriptures like Vedas and Epics contain rich information on the Scientific facts. Our modern students are not taught about the past. Our Indian Universities do not even research on the ancient wisdom, while International Universities are showing great interest. Our Cover Story analyses the rich heritage of our past with a few examples.

In the day to day, we come across Special Needs Children. They need support from the parents and the society. They are competent in different areas, in spite of their disability. We analyse this for the benefit of parents.

Technology is growing very fast. Artificial Intelligence is the emerging technology. We have a special article on this.

Every month, we bring out the story of one of the freedom fighters. This edition carries an interesting story on Durgabai Deshmukh, an Iron Lady and a great freedom fighter.

Our usual Prince cartoon also entertains our readers.

I am confident that readers will continue to enjoy this edition too. I request you to kindly send your feedback to editor@corpezine.com, so that our Editorial Board can take up your suggestions. Please share this edition with your contacts. I will catch up with you next month with more content.

Jai Hind

K. Srinivasan



Editorial

Release of Rajiv Gandhi Killer Opens a Debate

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor



On 18th May 2022, Hon'ble Supreme Court of India released one of the Rajiv Gandhi killers, Perarivalan, using their special powers granted under Article 142 of the Indian Constitution. Article 142 of the Constitution gives unlimited power to Supreme Court to do complete justice in cases where the litigants have suffered injustices during the proceedings.

Reasons for release

The reasons given by the Supreme Court was that the Governor delayed the decision under Article 161 on the recommendations of the Tamil Nadu Government to release Perarivalan, one of the convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case and who was in jail for 31 years. Tamil Nadu Government had recommended remission of the sentence in Sep 2018. Governor referred to the President in Jan 2021 without taking decision, as it was investigated by CBI and the mercy petition was rejected by the President earlier.

The Court has observed that the advice of the State Cabinet was binding on the Governor in matters relating to commutation / remission of sentences under Article 161. Considering the 'mental stress' faced by the prisoner due to delay, the Supreme Court invoked Article 142, which is being used in rarest of rare occasions, released the convict Perarivalan immediately.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister hugs and celebrates



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin honouring A G Perarivalan

Some of the political parties of Tamil Nadu (other than BJP and Congress), including the Chief Minister M K Stalin hailed the judgement and the Chief Minister met Perarivalan at Airport, hugged him affectionately and hosted a tea party to

celebrate his release. Even many of the regional media in Tamil Nadu started portraying Perarivalan as a great hero. The Supreme Court released him only because he had served 31 years of jail term and did not declare him innocent.

The judgement of the Supreme Court to release the Rajiv killer and the Chief Minister's action of hugging him and honouring him generated a big debate in the national media and frustration among the neutral people.

History of the case

On 21st May 1991, Rajiv Gandhi during his election campaign, was assassinated at Sriperumbudur, near Chennai, by a human bomb, identified as Dhanu. Along with him, 17 others, including policemen and the party workers died. Even Rajiv Gandhi's body itself could



Dhanu, the suicide human bomb waiting to garland Rajiv Gandhi and to trigger the bomb – One eyed Sivarasan (fourth from left) mastermind behind this assassination – 10-year-old student Gokilavani (first from left) innocently standing by her side.

not be identified, but for his Lotto shoes. 43 others had major injuries with penetration of pellets inside their bodies. Some of them died in due course. Some of them are living with all disability. Rajiv Gandhi assassination had a serious impact in the economy and political side of the nation. It had an international impact then. The country took several years to come back to normalcy. The investigations revealed the involvement of LTTE and a well-planned conspiracy to destabilise India.

After the assassination, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was formed and they arrested several people. The Tada court set up for

this purpose sentenced Perarivalan to death penalty. The Supreme Court confirmed death sentence in 1999. Perarivalan submitted a mercy petition before the Governor of Tamil Nadu under Article 161 of the Constitution. The Governor rejected this petition in October 1999. Again, on the orders of the High Court, the Governor reconsidered the mercy petition and rejected it again in April 2000. He filed a mercy petition before the President under Article 72 of the Constitution and this was rejected in August 2011. Aggrieved by this, Perarivalan filed a writ petition before the Madras High Court and this was transferred to Supreme Court. In Feb 2014, Supreme Court commuted the death sentence to 'imprisonment for life'.

In September 2018, Tamil Nadu Cabinet passed a resolution to release the convict Perarivalan. In Jan 2021, the Governor, determined that President of India was the appropriate authority to decide the petition and hence forwarded the recommendations of Tamil Nadu Government to the President of India.

Views of 'the common man'

Though the death sentence was confirmed and reconfirmed by Supreme Court of India and the President several times and in spite of the Supreme Court commuting the death sentence to 'imprisonment for life', Supreme Court has released the assassin considering the 'mental stress' of the assassin due to delay in taking decision by the Governor. Though, no one questions the authority and wisdom of the Supreme Court to invoke article 142, the general feeling among the common man is that Supreme Court should have considered the 'mental stress' and sufferings of the voiceless family members of 17 people who died along with Rajiv Gandhi and also 43 others who got injured seriously due to penetration of pellets.



Rajiv Gandhi patting the 10-year-old girl few seconds before the blast – Suicide human bomb Dhanu (with flowers on her head) waiting to trigger the bomb

While the assassins were able to engage highly paid senior lawyers to represent them at the Supreme Court, the family members of poor victims, who lost the lives or got injured seriously, could not engage any lawyer to represent their case. Both Central and State Governments and the Supreme Court could have considered the sufferings of the poor victims for a moment. One school student of 10 years old Gokilavani, few seconds before the blast, read out a poem to Rajiv Gandhi who appreciated the child patting on her back. This child was blown into pieces. Unfortunately, the authorities did not consider the agony and 'mental stress' of the family members who lost this child.



A police officer and party workers trying to identify the charred body of Rajiv Gandhi

Further the celebration of some of the parties and the hugging by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu added more anger and frustration among the neutral people nationally.

The Supreme Court has observed that the resolution of the Cabinet is binding on the Governor in respect of remission of punishment of convicts. What would happen if the recommendations were biased or irrational or against the interest of the unity of the nation? Governor has to act on his own to protect the interest of the people and sovereignty of the nation.

Now lot of demands are made to release many terrorists from the prison with the support of various State Governments. In our view, Article 142 should not have been invoked by the Supreme Court in the present case. There are delays in the courts also. If Courts can take the executive power, what would happen if executives took over the powers of the

court due to delay in finalizing the court cases. This will create more confusion and conflict between Judiciary, executive and legislature.

Time to review Article 161 and 142

There are many judgements to confirm that 'imprisonment for life' means, that the prisoner has to remain in the custody till the end of his life. A time has come to review the term 'life imprisonment'. Article 161 and Article 142 should include suitable amendments to avoid confusion in future.

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Cover Story

Ancient Indian Scriptures, the Forerunners for Modern Science



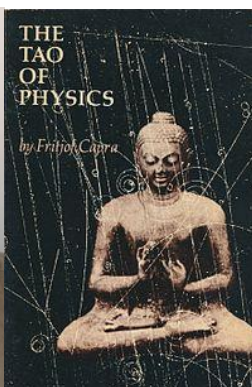
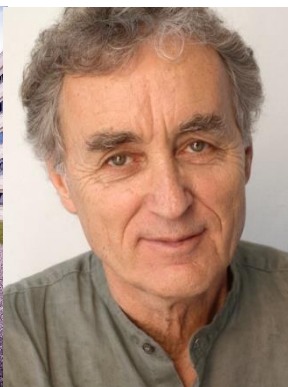
By Prof. Dr R. Jagannathan, Editorial Advisor

While addressing the students in February 2007, Dr. Abdul Kalam suggested to research ancient Sanskrit scriptures and unearth the treasure of knowledge. "Though I am not an expert in Sanskrit, I have many friends who are proficient in Sanskrit. Sanskrit is a beautiful language. It has enriched our society from time immemorial. Today many nations are trying to research Sanskrit writings which are there in our ancient scriptures. I understand that there is a wealth of knowledge available in Sanskrit which scientists and technologists are finding today," he said.

"There is a need to carry out research on our Vedas, particularly Atharvana Veda, for eliciting valuable information in science and technology relating to medicine, flight sciences, material sciences and many other related fields. Cryptology is another area where Sanskrit language is liberally used," he added.

Many of the foreign countries, including Germany and US are exploring the hidden treasures in our ancient scriptures. Unfortunately, the modern Indian education has not taught us to appreciate our own ancient Indian wisdom, while the international scientists have understood the value of ancient Indian knowledge.

Shiva statue at CERN



In 2004, a tall statue of the dancing Shiva was unveiled at CERN, the European Center for Research in Particle Physics in Geneva. Special plaque below the Shiva statue explains the significance of the metaphor of Shiva's cosmic dance with quotations from Fritjof Capra, an internationally renowned American Physicist. "Modern physics has shown that the

rhythm of creation and destruction is not only manifest in the turn of the seasons and in the birth and death of all living creatures but is also the very essence of inorganic matter and for the modern physicists, then, Shiva's dance is the dance of subatomic matter. Hundreds of years ago, Indian artists created different forms of visual images of dancing Shiva in a beautiful series of bronzes. In our time, physicists have used the most advanced technology to portray the patterns of the cosmic dance. The metaphor of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art and modern physics."

The parallel between Shiva's dance and the dance of subatomic particles was first discussed by Fritjof Capra in an article titled "The Dance of Shiva: The Hindu View of Matter in the light of Modern Physics," published in Main Currents in Modern Thought in 1972. Shiva's cosmic dance then became a central metaphor in Capra's international best seller "The Tao of Physics", first published in 1975 and is still in print with over 40 editions.



Max Muller on Vedas



When the phonograph was invented, it was presented before some eminent men of science and men of letters at London. Max Muller, well known German Scholar and Writer was the first to be invited to utter something in the phonograph. Max Muller uttered these sounds: *"Agnim i/e purohitam ya^; asya devam r/tvi^am — hotaram ratnadhatamam."* There was a burst of merriment when these queer sounds came from the machine. Max Muller explained that he recited the words

from the oldest hymn in the world, Rigveda. He further explained to the audience, "In ancient India, Vedas were passed on from one generation to the next generation orally

for thousands of years, in a phonographic way. Each generation was uttering precisely what was poured into its ear by the preceding generation, until their language died, to be recovered in the West, where for the first time the real meaning of Agni, and the human significance of the hymns were studied".

Knowledge of planets

We always credit the great inventions and discoveries to the modern science. But many of these absolute fundamentals, right from the inceptions of our universe to present day scientific advancements were very well discussed in good depth and detail, thousands of years back itself, in our ancient India and they were all well documented also. But this supremely advanced ancient Indian science is never taught in our own schools. For example, in Ramayana and Mahabharata, all important events are indicated in terms of the positions of planets like Sun, Moon, Jupiter, Saturn, etc. Now, using the modern technology, our researchers are able to chronologically match the dates of all these events. This indicates the superior knowledge our ancient Indians had on space and astronomy.

Modern Science

The science that we built up during the last 300 years is called as modern science. Since 1700 onwards, the modern science is well defined, it came out of the previous shackles. This turning point accelerated the growth of science and the progress of the mankind was enormous. The comfortable digital world we are living in is the contribution of modern science.

Origin of Vedas

As Max Muller indicated, all the Vedas were passed on from one generation to the next generation orally. Vedas and Upanishads are estimated to be thousands of years old. Based on the astronomical planetary positions indicated in Ramayana and Mahabharata, it is estimated that Ramayana was around 7500 years old and Mahabharata is 4200 years old. It is so old that it is very difficult to exactly point out the origin of Vedas and other scriptures.

Age of the Universe

Our Universe was born out of a Big Bang explosion and out of nothing, and the time has started flowing from that instant onwards. Rigveda (10:129), explains the cosmos beginning from nothing through the power of heat.



Modern Science estimated the age of our Universe to be 13.77 billion years. But the same modern science estimates the age of a well-known subgiant star HD 140283 as 14.46 billion years! That might raise an eyebrow or two for all of us. But our Vedas say that our universe is about 155.52 trillion human years old, and its total life span is 311.04 trillion human years (which is equivalent to 100 years of Brahma). This prediction of the death of the universe after 311.04 trillion years, is advocated by the Oscillating Universe theory of modern science.

Law of Gravity

Way before Sir Isaac Newton explained gravity, ancient Indian scholars had already figured out how it worked. Rig Veda 10.22.14 states "This earth is devoid of hands and legs, yet it moves ahead. All the objects over the earth also move with it. It moves around the sun."

Speed of light

Sayana, a vedic scholar from the 14th century quoted from Vedas, "With deep respect, I bow to the sun, whose rays travel 2,202 Yojanas in half a Nimisha." Yojana and Nimisha are the ancient methods of measurement. This is equivalent to 185,794 miles per second or 2,99,000 kilometers per second. That is astonishingly close to the real 'scientifically-proven' figure of 3,00,000 kilometers per second.

Distance between Sun and Earth

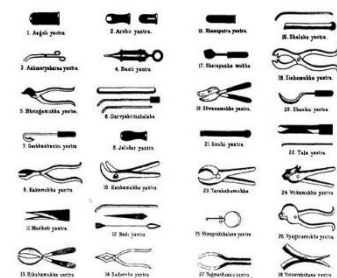
Our ancient Indians knew the Distance Between Earth and Sun well before modern science calculated.

"Yug sahasra yojana par bhanu, leelyo taahi madhura phal jaanu"

The word-to-word translation of the above sloka from Hanuman Chalisa reveals the distance that Hanuman travelled (to reach the Sun), 1 Yuga = 12000 years. 1 Sahsra Yuga = 12000000 years. Also, 1 Yojana = 8 miles. Hence, "Yug Sahsra Yojana", the first 3 words mean $12000 \times 12000000 \times 8 = 96000000$ miles or 153,600,000 kilometers. Interestingly, the actual distance from earth to sun is 152,000,000 kms. Bafflingly, there's error of just around 1%.

Medicine

The First Ever Medical and Surgical Encyclopaedia was by Sushruta Samhita written during the 6th century BCE. The Sushruta Samhita contains 184 chapters with descriptions of 1,120 illnesses, 700 medicinal plants, 64 preparations from mineral sources and 57 preparations based on animal sources. Its author Sushruta is also considered to be the first ever human to perform medical surgeries on humans. The book also has vast details on embryology, human anatomy, along with instructions for venesection, the positioning of the patient for each vein, and the protection of vital structures (marma). The oldest documented evidence (9000 years) for the drilling of human teeth of a living person was found in Mehrgarh along with the evidence of orthopaedic surgeries.



Indian Government and all Universities should ensure that the present generation is exposed to the great wisdom of our ancient Indians.

(The second part of this story will continue in June 2022 edition)

Source courtesy: www.mensxp.com

Guest Column

Children with Special Needs – Role of the Society

By Poornima Premchandran, Special Needs Teacher, Singapore



Who is a child with special needs?

We often hear the words 'special needs' being used these days. Who is a person with special needs and what qualifies a person as one with special needs? An individual may require additional support or assistance for deficits that may be physical, cognitive, or medical. These needs may be identified as special needs as they require more attention, care, and consideration than the neurotypically developed individual or the so-called normal individuals.

Characteristics of a Special Needs child

A child with special needs may have one or more of the following

- Cognitive disability
- Speech and Communication disorders
- Emotional and behavioural disorders
- Physical disabilities - affecting one's physical functioning
- Developmental disorders
- Sensory impairments such as blindness and visual impairments, deaf and hearing impaired

How do we identify a child with special needs?

There are certain disorders that may be more obvious to detect while some may not be as evident; there are certain signs that one may need to watch for and then seek help accordingly. Many disorders such as physical disabilities like visual impairment, hearing impairment, cerebral palsy is more evident while hidden disabilities like autism, learning disorders are detected much later. The early signs that a child could be having some form of special needs may be a delay in physical development, social and emotional difficulties, cognitive development delay, deficits in speech and language processing, emotional regulation issues etc.

Some of the common special needs we find in children are Autism, Cerebral Palsy, ADHD, Down syndrome, learning disabilities such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and other specific learning disabilities are usually detected when the children start school or typically when academic learning begins.

How can parents identify whether their child has special needs?

Each child is unique and may develop at a different pace to achieve the developmental milestones. Parents must be able to watch out for certain signs that may be a cause for concern for e.g., child may have speech and communication delays, suffering from emotional dysregulation, eating, and swallowing difficulties, learning challenges and other delayed milestones. They should seek intervention from medical professionals such as doctors,



developmental paediatrician, or allied health care professionals such as speech language pathologists, Occupational therapists, Physiotherapists etc.

An assessment or diagnosis by professionals will throw light on the profile of the child's disability. This is not done to label a child, but it is very important in seeking the right kind of intervention such as speech therapy, occupational therapy/physical therapy and special education - if required.

Strengths of children with special needs

Children with special needs may be viewed as a disadvantaged group or lacking in competence. While they are born with their set of challenges, their disabilities do not necessarily define them. They are beyond their labels and diagnosis. Children with Autism may experience social deficits and language processing difficulties but they are highly visual learner and logical thinkers. Children with dyslexia may have trouble with reading, writing, spelling etc., but they can also be very creative, have good social or interpersonal skills and be good in spoken language fluency. Children with down syndrome can be trained with vocational and life skills. They are not limited by their disabilities with the right intervention and support, access to education which leads to later employment opportunities - they can be challenged to do much more.

Though they may be having disability in one area, they have the talents in other areas. They are highly creative. Many of them have proved their talents in Information Technology, Sports, Music, etc. Arunima Sinha is the first woman amputee to climb the Mount Everest. Malathi Krishnamurthy, International para-athlete is the recipient of Arjuna Award and Padma Shri from the Government of India. Dr. Suresh Advani, wheelchair bound due to polio, has contributed a lot in the field of oncology. He is the recipient of Padmashri and Padma Bhushan Awards from the Government of India.



Arunima Sinha



Malathi Krishnamurthy



Dr Suresh Advani

Role of parents with Special Needs Children

Becoming a parent is a big responsibility. Like the saying goes 'It takes a village to raise a child', raising a child with special needs may require an actual village to raise one. It becomes even more challenging as parents deal with a different set of challenges every day.

The stigma of having a special needs child may also prevent the parents from seeking help or services available leaving them helpless. They are unable to access information or seek awareness of their child's condition. For some, even with the right diagnosis, cost of services

such a speech therapy, occupational and physical therapy can be a financial strain and they might end up struggling to save up for it. Some travel long distances to avail of subsidised services, some children even come from broken families where parents split up once they are unable to deal with the trauma of not being able to deal with a special needs child. They may face social isolation and often live with the fear of what would happen to their child after they pass on.

Children with Special Needs – What do they need?

In addition to the availability of resources, access to therapy, education, medical facilities etc. what they lack is empathy and inclusion to the society. Apart from the immediate family members/caregivers, a child with special needs might not receive just any form of support and encouragement or even validation from the rest. They are still seen as a taboo even in most developed nations which may have the best of facilities for them but still lack inclusion into the society. Despite many institutions catering to special needs they still are unable to include them into the mainstream of the community.

Children with special needs do not require sympathy all they need and deserve a fair chance to be included in the community. They are entitled to love, care, and support from everyone other than their primary care givers.

Societal and social issues

Often society views children with special needs as less than capable. They might perceive the children as not capable of having feelings of love, pain or aspirations and probably deem them as not eligible for same level of opportunities and achievements. They are targeted based on their lack of ability rather than their actual abilities or potential.

How do we build an inclusive community?

- Create disability/special needs awareness programmes to provide an insight into special needs to highlight their strengths over weakness
- Dispel the myths surrounding children and individual with special needs
- Provide equal opportunities at school to integrate them into the mainstream environment and opportunities for jobs later.
- Build empathy
- Create support groups for siblings and families of children with special needs.

To sum it up, facilitating an inclusive community helps the families and individuals with special needs thrive better. Inclusion does not mean tolerance of children with differences but accepting them wholly for who they are.

(The author of this article Ms Poornima Premchandran (presently in Singapore) has been working in the field of special needs for the past 12 years. She has specialised in the field of autism spectrum disorders from the Rehabilitation council of India and holds a certificate in counselling. She has worked with children with diverse backgrounds and disabilities whilst working in an international school for special needs in Singapore. She is an advocate for inclusion as well as diversity and believes that children with special needs deserve a fair chance to learn. She currently works as a Lead special needs teacher in an Allied care centre in Singapore.)



Technology

Artificial Intelligence – A Bird Eye's View

By Srinivas Gopal, Editorial Team



AI is the ability of a machine to display human-like capabilities such as reasoning, learning, planning and creativity.

AI enables technical systems to perceive their environment, deal with what they perceive, solve problems and act to achieve a specific goal. The computer receives data - already prepared or gathered through its own

sensors such as a camera - processes it and responds. AI systems are capable of adapting their behaviour to a certain degree by analysing the effects of previous actions and working autonomously.

Over the coming years and decades, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is poised to become a key component of all modern software. There is a threat, but there is also an opportunity. Both defensive and offensive cyber operations might be enhanced by artificial intelligence.

Invention (Abstract)

If John McCarthy, the father of AI, were to coin a new phrase for "artificial intelligence" today, he would probably use "computational intelligence." McCarthy is not just the father of AI; he is also the inventor of the Lisp (list processing) language. The author considers McCarthy's conception of Lisp and discusses McCarthy's recent research that involves elaboration tolerance, creativity by machines, free will of machines, and some improved ways of doing situation calculus.

History

Artificial Intelligence is not an unfamiliar word and not a recent technology for researchers. This technology is much older than we would imagine. There are even myths of Mechanical men in ancient Greek and Egyptian myths.

Deep learning is one of many approaches for machine learning research. It works similarly to the human brain - Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs). ANNs are divided into layers, where each layer learns to perform different tasks from sound, images or text.

Google has demonstrated an AI program "Duplex" which was a virtual assistant and which had taken hairdresser appointment on call, and lady on other side didn't notice that she was talking with the machine.



Advantages of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Finishes task faster than a human
- Stressful and complex work completed easily
- Difficult work done in short period
- Success ratio is high
- Less errors in task
- Less space, less size
- Calculation of long term and complex situations and
- Discover unexplored things (outer space)

Disadvantages of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Some time it might be misused leading to mass scale destruction
- Programme mismatch sometime done opposite to the command
- Human jobs affected
- Increase in unemployment
- Creativity depending upon programmer
- Younger generation might get addict to AI Games
- Require a lot of time and money and
- Technological dependency increased



The use and scope of Artificial Intelligence do not need a formal introduction. Artificial Intelligence is no more just a buzzword; it has become a reality that is part of our everyday lives. With companies building intelligent machines for diverse applications using AI, it is revolutionizing business sectors like never before.

AI is now being used in almost every sector of business like Transportation, Healthcare, Banking, Retail, Entertainment, E-Commerce etc.

There are three main types of AI based on its capabilities - weak AI, strong AI, and super AI.

- Weak AI – Focuses on one task and cannot perform beyond its limitations (common in our daily lives)
- Strong AI – Can understand and learn any intellectual task that a human being can (researchers are striving to reach strong AI)
- Super AI – Surpasses human intelligence and can perform any task better than a human (still a concept)

Conclusion

In the future AI will enable new capabilities to address user's information needs. AI is impacting the way information is processed and searched for and information professionals will be able to use these exciting new technologies to enhance their services and help users find and access specific information more easily and quickly. Information centers will get benefits by the development of the efficient expert system for technical services as well as information processing and management.

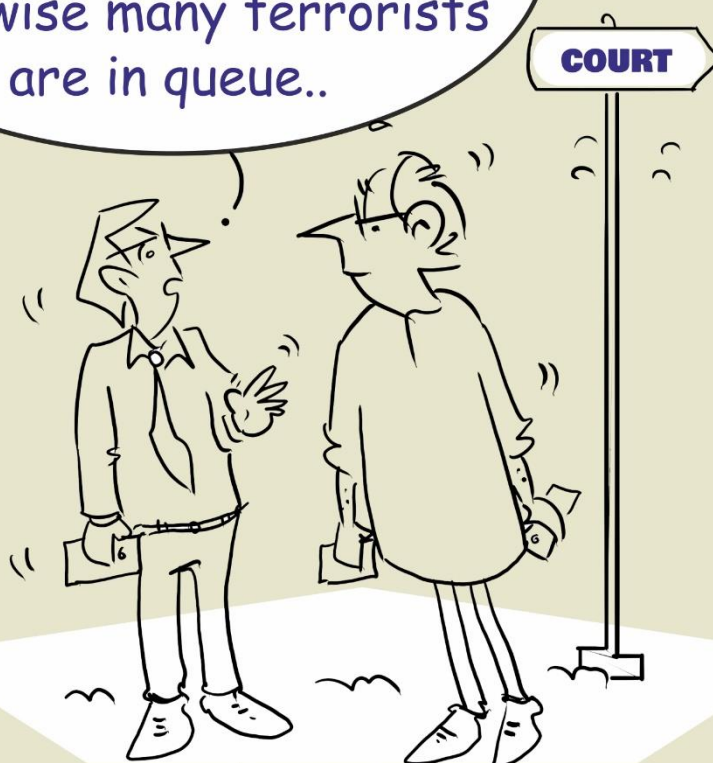
PRINCE

By Triambak Sharma



Release of Rajiv Gandhi
Killer opens a Debate

High Time
to review Article
161 & 142..
otherwise many terrorists
are in queue..



Triambak Sharma



Remembering Freedom Fighter Durgabai Deshmukh – An Iron Lady



By C. Badri, Editorial Advisor

Durgabai Deshmukh (15 July 1909 – 9 May 1981) was one of the great women freedom fighters who along with Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders opposed the British. Apart from being a freedom fighter she was also a lawyer and a committed social worker. She was a member of the Constituent Assembly of India and of the Planning Commission of India. She is also popularly known as "Iron Lady"



Durgabai Deshmukh was born in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh on July 15, 1909 to B V N Rama Rao and his wife Krishnaveni Amma and grew up in Kakinada. Durgabai was married at the age of eight to her cousin Subba Rao but she did not continue her married life with him and went on to pursue her education. Though the family had limited financial means her father was a selfless social worker serving the society. In her autobiography "Chintaman and I" she describes an interesting episode.

"Plague and cholera were prevalent those days. He was not afraid of helping those suffering from these dreaded diseases. He must have attended to hundreds of such victims. He used to take me with him on many of these occasions. Few would volunteer to carry the bodies of those who had died of plague or cholera, and ambulances were unknown. My father, along with three of his friends, used to be the pallbearer. Though the streets of Kakinada were deserted, my father would take my mother and the two children — I had a younger brother, Narayana Rao — to the church, the mosque, or the burning ghat to show us how the bodies were disposed of, perhaps with a view to making us courageous enough to face the inevitable event of death."



Durgabai had been associated with Indian politics and freedom struggle from her early childhood days. She discontinued her education when she was hardly 12 years old in protest to the imposition of English-medium education. After some time, she established the Balika Hindi Paathshala in Rajahmundry to promote Hindi language for girls. The Indian National Congress during the year 1923 held its conference in Kakinada which was also her hometown. She was selected as a volunteer and was in charge of the Khadi exhibition that was also held by the side of the Conference venue. She was entrusted with the duty of checking the tickets of the visitors to the exhibition at the entrance before they could enter. She discharged her responsibility with due care and stopped even Jawaharlal Nehru entering without showing the ticket. The organizers expressed their displeasure but she retorted that she was only following the instructions. Later on the tickets were purchased and Nehru was allowed to visit the exhibition. Nehru appreciated Durgabai for her sense of devotion to duty and courage.



Durgabai was a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi and associated with him in the Indian struggle for freedom from the British. She was a remarkably simple lady who never wore jewellery or used cosmetics. She was a prominent social reformer who participated in Gandhi-led Salt satyagraha activities during the civil disobedience movement. She was instrumental in organising women satyagrahis in the movement. Durgabai was a satyagrahi in true sense. She was the main driving force behind women in Andhra and successfully garnered their support for

the freedom movement. Due to her incessant efforts Andhra contributed the largest contingent of women *Satyagrahis* who despite hardships filled the prisons. This led to British Raj authorities imprisoning her three times between 1930 and 1933. Durgabai continued her studies after her release from prison and finished her bachelor's degree and her master's degree in political science from Andhra University. She thereafter obtained law degree from the Madras University in 1942 and started practicing as an advocate in the Madras High Court.

Durgabai during 1953 married the then Finance Minister of India Chintaman Deshmukh in the presence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Chintaman Deshmukh had a daughter from an earlier wedding but they were otherwise childless. Though she did not continue her marital life with Subba Rao, she supported his widow Timmaamma after his death. Timmaamma lived with Durgabai and Chintaman Deshmukh. Durgabai took care of her and also organised vocational training for Timmaamma.

Durgabai was elected to the Constituent Assembly from the then Madras Province. She was the only woman in the panel of Chairmen in the Constituent Assembly. She initiated the proposal of declaring Hindustani (Hindi & Urdu) as the national language of India. However, she was apprehensive about the imposition of Hindi in South India. She suggested a cooling period of fifteen years to enable all the non-Hindi speakers learn Hindi. She was instrumental in the enactment of many social welfare laws. She was also the first to emphasize the need to set up separate Family Courts after studying the same during her visit to China in 1953. With many women's movement and organizations demanding the same, the Family Courts Act was enacted finally in 1984.



Durgabai was also nominated as a member in the Planning Commission. She was keen to have a national policy on social welfare which resulted in the establishment of Central Social Welfare Board in 1953. During her tenure as the Board's first Chairperson she also mobilized a large number of voluntary organizations to conduct its programs which were aimed at education, training, and rehabilitation of needy women, children, and the handicapped. She was the first Chairperson of the National Council on Women's Education, established by the Government of India in

1958. She was a member of the Indian delegation to the World Food Congress Washington D.C. as a member of the Indian delegation. Durgabai was the President of the Blind Relief Association. In that capacity, she set up a school cum hostel and a light engineering workshop for the blind.

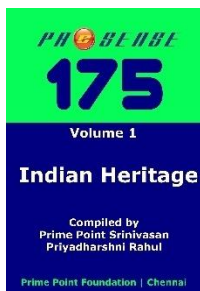
Durgabai established Andhra Mahila Sabha, Council for Social Development, Durgabai Deshmukh Hospital and Sri Venkateshwara College, New Delhi. She also founded Andhra Education Society in 1948 to serve the educational requirements of Telugu children residing in Delhi. She was awarded Padma Bhushan by Government of India. Apart from that she was also honoured with the Paul G Hoffman Award, Nehru Literacy Award, UNESCO Award (for outstanding work in the field of literacy) & Jeevan award and Jagadeesh award to name a few. Andhra University, Visakhapatnam in her honour and recognition to her service to women had named its Department of Women Studies as Dr. Durgabai Deshmukh Centre for Women Studies.

Durgabai died in 09-05-1981 at the age of 71 years. She will be remembered as one of the greatest women freedom fighters of India. Long live her name and fame.

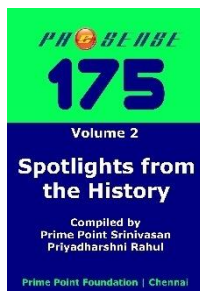
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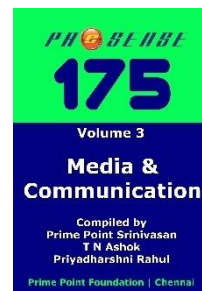
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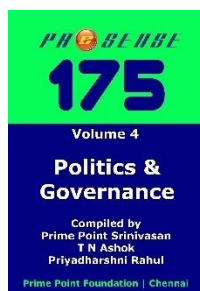
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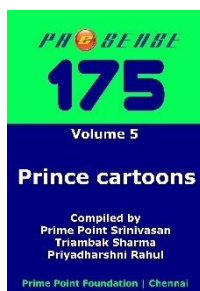
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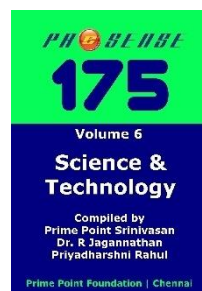
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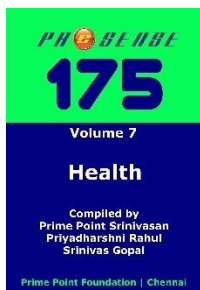
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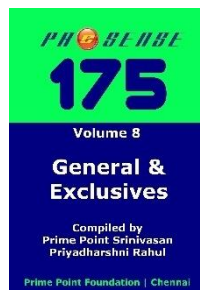
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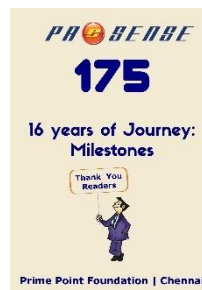
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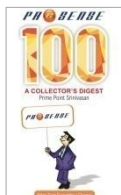
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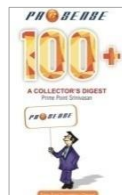


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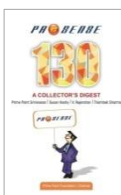
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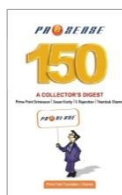
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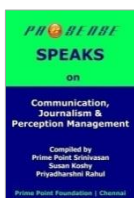
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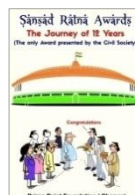
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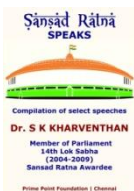
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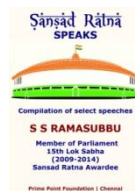
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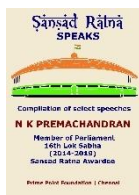
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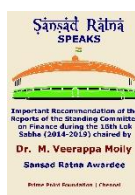
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