

Towards a purposeful regimen

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TOWARDS A PURPOSEFUL REGIMEN

A JOURNEY OF 25 YEARS

ISSUES & CONCERNS

ON AN UNCHARTED SEA

25th
YEAR OF
PUBLICATION

The Importance of Flags and Banners

Remembering greatest Indians of our time



on 2nd October
Shastri - Gandhi
Jayanthi Divas

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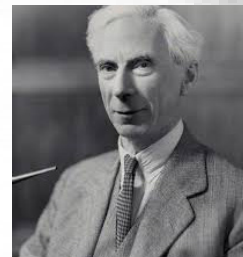
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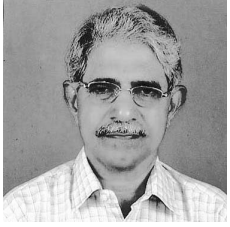
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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



**Too little liberty brings
stagnation and too much
brings chaos
- Bertrand Russel**





Friends,

This October, unlike any October of the past years is most important for us at ISSUES & CONCERNS. This is the month, October 2025, that marks the completion of 25 years of our presence in the Indian English print media. That is, by any standard of measurement, is a milestone, any publication can justifiably feel happy about. We are indeed very happy that we have arrived at this remarkable post with the active support of our readers, patrons and well-wishers.

It was in November 2000, the maiden edition of ISSUES & CONCERN was launched. It is indeed a matter of great satisfaction that we published every month without break for all these past 25 years and kept alive the confidence that we had when ISSUES & CONCERNS first hit the news-stand. Our journey TOWARDS A PURPOSEFUL REGIMEN is continuing without any pause.

We do hope that we will continue with the grace of God and the support of our readers, patrons and well-wishers.

Dasara or Naada Habba, as it is called, was inaugurated as announced by the state government at the hands of Kannada writer Baanu Mushtaq, due to her winning the prestigious International Bookers Award after her collection of short stories 'Hridaya Deepa' was translated into English as 'Heart Lamp' by Deepa Bisht. As a matter of fact it is the English translation of Kannada short stories which truly brought the honor and glory to Baanu Mushtaq. Therefore in fitness of things the government in Bengalooru in all fairness should have invited both Baanu Mushtaq and Deepa Bisht. Instead Karnataka government invited readymade controversy by extending the honor to only Baanu Mushtaq, clearly indicating an agenda. So not only the truth of the award being jointly bestowed was given a go-by, but Deepa Bisht was subjected to completely avoidable injustice. If the Government of Karnataka had failed to invite Deepa Bisht, at least Baanu Mushtaq could have insisted on inviting Deepa Bisht along with her. In the event however, she turned out to be of petty mind and conveniently didn't remember Deepa Bisht at the hour of reckoning. Baanu Mushtaq would have certainly risen in the public esteem if only she had insisted on Deepa participating in the inaugural function. Sadly that was not to be.

Month-in-Perspective has been as usual. We have tried to touch some of the happenings here.

Its very rare that a lady police inspector being ordered to pay for exceeding her brief. Recently one Krishna Prasad, a UK citizen of Indian origin was awarded compensation of Rs 2 lakhs by the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) for his wrongful detention by the police which made him miss his Bengalooru to London flight. Upon bringing the matter to SHRC, the probe revealed wrongful action on the part of Inspector Shailaja. It happened in 2019. SHRC took a considered stand and awarded Rs 2 lakh to be paid to Krishna Prasad, including his ticket fare of Rs 57,000/- recoverable from the salary of Inspector Shailaja. Indeed a lesson for all concerned.

A report datliened New Delhi informed about the successful development of its first indigenous water soluble fertilizer technology after some 7 years of research supported by Ministry of Mines. Reportedly India is almost 100% dependent on Chinese supplies. Therefore this truly "Make in India" breakthrough is a welcome development. Hope in coming days import of these Chinese Specialty fertilizers will become a thing of the past.

Despite the financial misdemeanors within the portals of Kerala government offices and senior functionaries, one thing that stands out is the story of saving tiniest lives. Kerala

has a very pleasantly surprising feat of maintaining its IMR or Infant Mortality Rate for decades, better than even the best, the United States of America's rate of 5.6 per 1000 live births. According to the latest report Kerala has achieved an IMR of 5. This record is not a flash in the pan, it's consistently so, for over 2 decades. This was possible due to the rare partnership between the state government and the pediatrician community, informs the latest SRS or the Sample Registration System. Two cheers for those responsible for this magnificent feat.

Torrential rain in north India causing havoc all over with huge loss of life and property is becoming increasingly frequent. It has affected Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab and even Rajasthan. There has to be some extensive study why it's been happening and the way to prevent such disasters and way ahead to live a more protected life for our people, especially those victims who have nowhere to go. Those with means will always find alternatives and there are those who have no alternatives. It's they who need the attention and support from the authorities. They should be the developmental priorities.


Right to Education, RTE, has been a bit of contentious issue ever since its inception when it came to be applied to minority educational institutions. Article 30(1) of the constitution provides for religious and linguistic minorities to start and administer educational institutions according to their own set of dos and don'ts, without any interference from state. Among these dos and don'ts is the provision of keeping the seats for poor students from non-minority group an option. However the latest Supreme Court intervention was categorical when it said "Putting minority schools out of RTE ambit wrong". According to SC "Exemption of minority institutions from RTE Act leads to fragmentation of the common schooling vision and weakening of the idea of inclusivity and universality envisioned by article 21A". Hope it takes effect for the larger interest of justice for all.

Jogathi is a concept prevalent in parts of North Karnataka, where women dedicate themselves in service of God full time and live by asking for hand-outs. Here is the story of Rajamma, a 63 year old who has donated most of her collections to government school children for their uniforms, note books, pens, pencils and other petty needs. No wonder, every time she visits the government primary school in Suggenahalli in Bellari district, she is welcomed with loud claps and celebratory chants by students. She is a model for all of us to look at and if possible follow. Long live Rajamma and her ilk.

Similar is the case of one Vishnu Shetty, a social worker who took over the dead body of a 70 year old ashramite, when the brother of the deceased refused to take the body for cremation. Reportedly Vishnu Shetty performed the last rites of the deceased, whose identity is not available, at Beedinagudde Rudra Bhumi within Kaapu police station limits in Udupi district. That's being a 'Everyday Hero'. Wish God gives more strength and longer life to likes of Vishnu Shetty.

Kerala has set another benchmark in developmental paradigm. It is the first state to have set up "Senior Citizens Commission" (SCC). We are all aware of the hardships faced by many senior citizens, like neglect, exploitation, abuse, orphaned, etc. and that there should be a mechanism to protect the rights and dignity of elders in the evening of their life. Hope SCC will look after the interest of seniors in their moments its greatest need. Two cheers to government of Kerala for this singular initiative.

Now that ISSUES & CONCERNS has touched the 25th milestone with this edition of October 2025, its only fair that we present a narrative of our journey of the last quarter century under trying conditions. We have therefore taken it up under FOCUS. Hope readers will find the account by Chaitra Padukone, our Bengalooru representative, interesting and informative. Do revert with your valued inputs.





MONTH-IN-PERSPECTIVE

J&K – INCONSIDERATE LT. GOVERNOR

There was this report datelined Srinagar “Uproar over holiday in J&K”. According to the report, the Lt. Governor representing the centre had declared a public holiday for Eid-e-Milad, the day Prophet Mohammed’s birthday celebrated. But it was a day earlier on 5th September and did not reschedule since the sighting of the crescent moon was on 6th September in and around Srinagar. 5th September was as per the holiday declared in the calendar.

The calendar published by the government press is supposedly subject to the appearance of the moon – which means that the holiday is subject to change depending upon the moon being sighted, wrote J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdulla, on X “The deliberate decision by the unelected government not to shift the holiday is inconsiderate and designed to hurt the sentiments of the people”, CM Omar Abdullah had added.

Clearly if what Omar Abdullah says is right, the Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha is not merely insensitive, he is also arrogant to show that he is the boss, take it or leave it. Such behavior of gubernatorial position neither would win friends nor influence people. For sure his boss in the New Delhi corridors of power, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wouldn’t



Row erupts after J&K administration fails to reschedule Eid-e-Milad holiday to September 6

approve of this apparently high handed behavior of Lt. Governor Sinha.

As was expected, all those who were affected by the denial of holiday on their revered day have called the decisions of the Lt. Governor unfortunate and that it reflects a negative approach towards governance. And come to think of it, that this denial was despite the many requests from different quarters. As a matter of interest the General Administration Deptt, which falls under the Chief Minister’s domain, but is headed by an IAS officer and all IAS officers of J&K directly report to the Lt. Governor. What a mockery of governance and you call it democracy!

MAHARASHTRA: DY CM PAWAR V/S IPS OFFICER.

Political interference by powerful politicians is generally taken for granted in India, by and large. So its not surprising that Dy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar interfered with the police action to fix his party members indulging in illegal sand mining.

Reportedly, a freshly inducted lady IPS officer Anjana Krishna, an IPS from 2022-23 batch, has incurred the wrath of powerful Maratha leader. She was acting on a complaint at Madha police station, in the Solapur district, about illegal sand mining. On learning of the complaint she rushed to stop the mining, and men mining illegally contacted Dy CM Pawar, who in turn talked to the young IPS probationer from Kerala and introduces himself as Deputy Chief Minister. But young officer that Anjali Krishna is, insisted that he speaks from his official cell phone instead of speaking through someone else’s number. Being Dy Chief Minister, he didn’t expect a fresh IPS to be doing the talking. Reportedly irritated by the boldness of lady IPS officer he makes a video



call on his cell phone to show his face asserting his position of Dy CM of Maharashtra, questioning “how dare you talk to Deputy Chief Minister in such a way? I will take action against you so that you remember my face”.

Unfortunately for the Deputy Chief Minister, the video of his threatening call to the IPS officer has gone viral and opposition politicians are going to the market to demand his resignation. Its another matter that same political leaders would have acted similarly in similar situations involving their supporters. This is Yeh Mera India.

Yes we need bold officers, whether IPS or IAS, who can stand-up to politicians making the discharge of their duties difficult. Two cheers to Anjali Krishna.

BIHAR: SPECIAL INTENSIVE REVISION

There appears to be intensive responses and reactions, not just from opposition politicians but also a section of the media, about the so called Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral roll in Bihar.

We had ‘Dog Babu’ who had a residence certificate issued with ‘Kutta Babu’ and ‘Kutiya Devi’ being parents in Mohalla Kanlichak in Patna district. Now there is this news report datelined New Delhi “80k fraud voters found in 3 Bihar seats: Report”.

According to the report, The Reporters Collective (TRC) has revealed that over 80,000 voters were bundled and registered on fake and wrong addresses in just three Assembly constituencies in Bihar. They were investigating the way Special Intensive Revision was



conducted, in an unprecedented exercise to revise the entire country's voter database from scratch starting with Bihar. It noted that in a single house in Galimpur village in Pipra, as many as 500 voters were registered from different families, castes and communities as living to-gether and the house did not exist! And there are many such registrations with dubious particulars, it remarked.

Going further TRC had noted that it has discovered that there are nine households with over 100 voters registered in the same address in Bagaha, the largest being one with 248 individuals. "This is the result of the 30 day sprint EC carried out as part of its SIR of Bihar's electoral rolls which it claimed would purify the states voter database before the upcoming assembly election", TRC had stated.

Thus, there appears to be justified suspicion on the SIR of the Election Commission. The job of EC is therefore cutout to explain these glaring flaws.

MADHYAPRADESH: CRUEL AUTO DRIVERS

There was this report in the print media, datelined Bhopal, "MP auto driver drags 8-year old girl by her feet, throws her, flees; arrested", was the ultimate an auto



driver, who is a human, would do it to a child.

According to the report, in the early morning at about 8:00 people in Mandipur of Raisen district heard the screams of a small girl and they rushed to the spot and saw the auto driver, Babu Joseph pulling the girl by her clothes and then by her feet and threw her to the ground when people stopped him and sped away with other girls in the auto. Villagers reportedly chased the auto on their motorcycle, caught him handed him over to the police.

Report further informs that the auto driver Joseph has a history of behaving badly with children and was warned by the school in the past. But the matter of concern is the reported statement of Supt of Police Pankaj Pandey. He is reported to have stated "The matter is being investigated. It was a private auto hired by the parents, who knew the driver. We will go by the complaints of parents". Which apparently means, he is waiting for the complaint by parents, despite there being a prima facie case of violence against a girl child of just 8 years! So for whatever compulsion, if parents do not complain against the auto driver Babu Joseph, according to SP Pankaj Pandey there may not be any action. He could even be released and allow the violent auto driver to run his writ! This is clearly wrong and unjust if not completely illegal. Auto driver should be detained until justice is done.

Details of why the auto driver was dragging the girl child is not available. In fact it has to be part of the investigation and the report in silent about it. It's only the people's movement, it looks like that will make everybody fall in line including the police. After all the objective of every law is to unravel the truth and deliver justice not just judgment based purely on evidence and witness.

NEW DELHI: RESERVATION CONUNDRUM

There was this report in print media, datelined New Delhi, "Reserved category candidates with more mark can't claim general seats; SC". Courts, many a time are wasting their time by their own actions and inactions, and they keep complaining that there are



millions of cases pending in courts.

In the above reported matter, it was purely a reservation issue as understood by everybody. Once reserved is always reserved unless it is categorically reversed legally. Therefore, it does not require repetition or reminders about status of every situation. See the title of the report, does it need the highest court of the land to come on board to tell it so?! It is as clear as black and white. Reserved candidates cannot have either this or that or both, unless it is clearly spelt out, it does not require courts to intervene, the systems must take care of such situation with affected persons dealing with authorities directly without court intervention.

Coming to the above report, the Supreme Court held that a candidate from a reserved category who has availed concessions and relaxations cannot be recruited against general category seats, even if they have higher marks, if rules impose an embargo. Purely as a matter of debate, where is the role for Supreme Court to enter the scene? You have an embargo about what can open category get and what can reserved category get, does not matter the higher marks of reserved category. Its clear and system, per se, has to take care of



it with no scope for any court, let alone apex court, to intervene! The freedom to migrate is available only if there is no clear embargo prohibiting migration. Why should it need court intervention when authorities can act on it?

There is an earlier UP High Court ruling which had held that “denying OBC candidates (read reserved) the opportunity to migrate to the unreserved category despite scoring higher than the last selected candidate in that category, was contrary to the principles of merit based recruitment and violated the principle of equality. The HC should recognize that there is no equity and therefore equality on the very basis of reservation. Once a person has availed reservation, he has forfeited his right to equality, period.

WORLD: CHARLIE KIRK-TRUMP MAN

‘Those who live by sword shall perish by sword’, is an old saying having time-tested relevance.

This saying has come from Bible. According to public space, Jesus had told Peter while asking him to put away his sword saying, “Those who draw the sword will die by the sword”, that is those who promote violence shall meet with similar violent consequence.

No wonder, there is this report datelined Washnigton, “Trump loyalist Kirk, backer of gun rights, shot dead at campus talk”.

According to the report Charlie Kirk who was shot dead at Utah Valley University when he was engaged in

conversation with students. The assassin reportedly was atop a rooftop some 200 mtrs away and fired a single bullet into his neck and jumped off to vanish into the neighborhood woods. Reportedly, the suspected killer was caught after some 33 hours of shooting and is under police detention. He is Utah resident Tylor Robinson, known to be a bitter critic of Charlie Kirk. What is the deeper feeling that led to the killing is still unknown.

However, it is important and relevant to understand the victim of the shoot-out. Charlie Kirk, a conservative youth activist of Republican rank was known to have strong views on immigration in general but Indian immigrants in particular, since allegedly, Indians take away jobs of US citizens. Due to his fierce opposition to immigration he was in the closure circle of Trump. He was in the ‘American first’ mould like President Trump. He was only 31 years old. On his killing President Trump had gone on record, “Charlie Kirk is dead, no one understood or had the heart of youth in USA better than Charlie, he is Great, even legendary. This is a dark moment for America.”

However what is relevant to the present context is, he was a fierce defender of gun rights. Reportedly in 2023 he had argued that “its worth have a cost of, unfortunately, some gun deaths, every single year. So that we can have the right to bear arms to protect our other God given rights.” So did it come back to him! In the Utah Valley University, an audience

member had asked him, “Do you know how many mass shooters have been in America over the last 10 years? His response remained incomplete, “Counting or not

counting gang violence” and the gun of the killer overtook him. He collapsed and died while speaking.

According to report datelined Washington, “Charlie Kirk was an unabashed Christian conservative and often made provocative statements on issues like gender, race and religion”. So how did he not remember what Jesus had told Peter about the ‘violence only begets violence’?. However it was left to a cable TV commentator to point out that ‘Kirk himself was a divisive figure who pushed hate speech aimed at some groups”, was fired from his job, in the citadel of freedom, the United State of America. So even in the U.S.A. there are limits to freedom of speech. depending on which side of the divide you are.

WORLD:- NETANYAHU’S DANGEROUS STRATEGY

This man, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel is slowly emerging as a hawk, who does not want to stop the mid-east war between Hamas and Israel, or so it appears. At least his latest incursion into the Qatari territory, is an unacceptable international transgression. His justification for hitting Hamas leaders, inside Qatar, since Qatar had provided ‘safe havens’ for terrorists, Israel has its right to eliminate them. But in the bargain Netanyahu has attacked and violated the Qatari sovereignty. If he had warned Qatari leadership of an attack to target Hamas leaders and then followed it up, maybe he could have been excused.

In the event everybody came on board to condemn Israel, whether its UK, India and others besides whole lot of middle-eastern countries. In fact UAE, Jordan and Saudi Arabia are already calling on Qatar to express their solidarity with Doha.

The strike by Israel becomes all the more condemnable since Qatari intervention with Hamas affair is with the full knowledge and approval





of Israel. This time round Qatar was only hosting the peace-meet with Hamas senior leadership. With this unexpected turn of events Doha is hosting an Arab-Islamic summit to decide the regional response to the latest Israeli strike on Qatari soil, where even a Qatari official died.

Surely this provocative piece of action by Israel will also put US administration in a bit of embarrassing situation. However President Trump has not reacted so far except despatching his Secretary of State Marco Rubio to Jerusalem. This was also a show of solidarity with Israel with UN having its debate on the creation of Palestine, which Israel opposes.

Now that with the latest hostility by Israel, international opinion is increasingly becoming unhelpful to the Israeli cause. Will Benjamin Nethanyahu check his no-holds barred attack of Palestinian targets?

KARNATAKA: NAADA HABBA

Controversy regarding the inauguration of Naada Habba on 22nd September by Baanu Mustaq in Mysore do not seem to die. The latest intervention came from Karnataka High Court. The report datelined Bengalooru “HC rejects plea against state government’s Dasara invite to Baanu”, tells it all. The court was discussing the PIL by former M.P. Pratap Simha of BJP challenging the decision of the state government.

Pratap Simha is not the first to challenge the government decision, there were many vested interest groups who had tried in the past since

the August 22nd announcement by the government in Bengalooru.

There are many angles to look at the issue. It’s a good gesture on the part of Karnataka government to invite Baanu Mustaq to declare open the state festival or Naada Habba. But it clearly erred in inviting only Baanu Mustaq and not along with Deepa Bhisth the translator of the works of Baanu Mushtaq, which truly got the award. It could be, as many felt in public space, that the selection by the state government to invite only Baanu Mushtaq was agenda driven.

Here we all need to recognize that it was the translation of the short stories of Baanu Mushtaq by Deepa Bisht that truly catapulted the book “Hridaya Deepa” which became “Heart Lamp”. So truly speaking, for Booker Committee it was ‘Heart Lamp’ that mattered and accordingly awarded Booker International Award to both Baanu Mushtaq and Deepa Bisht. They both shared the honour with Prize Money of 50,000 sterling pound being equally shared as 25,000 sterling pound each. So, for the state government, it was an opportunity to honour both, but they decided to honour only one, that truly invited ready-made controversy.

It is another matter that those who are opposed to Baanu Mushtaq alone being invited also have their own agenda.



However the fact of the matter is both sides are wrong. If government in Bengalooru has erred in inviting only Baanu Mushtaq, the writer, Baanu Mushtaq herself had the opportunity to tell the government to invite Deepa Bisht too along with herself. This positive reaction, if she had already shown, she would have risen in public esteem to a much higher level. In the event, however, Baanu Mustaq proved herself a pigmy with small heart not to share the honor with Deepa Bisht, despite fully being aware that but for Deepa Bisht, she would have remained only for Kannadigas and not for the English reading global readership including Booker Committee.

Do you hearken Baanu!

So, it’s not too late in the day, for Baanu Mushtaq to make amends by asking the state government to extend the invitation to Deepa Bisht as well. Then, it’s all well that ends well and no controversy!

MAHARASHTRA: SAFEENA HUSSAIN

How many Indians had heard of Safeena Hussain and her NGO, Educate Girls, before 1st Sept 2025! Chances are none or very few among her close circle.

It was on 1st September, print media published the story “INDIAN NGO ‘EDUCATE GIRLS’ BAGS MAGSAYSAY AWARD”. Suddenly the unknown Safeena Hussain became a virtual celebrity with global recognition.

After all Ramon Magsaysay Award established in 1957 in memory of the late Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay for recognizing personalities and institutions involved in community leadership, international understanding, journalism and literature besides emergent leadership and government services is an important milestone. It is considered as equivalent to ‘Nobel Prize of Asia’ which recognized personalities and institution in Asia



for their 'great spirit' through selfless service in public interest.

That Safeena Hussain deserved this recognition, is an understatement. Started in 2007, some 18 years ago, with a single girl, now having some 2 million girls from across 30,000 villages to enroll them back to school is a huge statement of selfless service. Either she remained media shy all these years, or more likely media ignored her presence.

That's how media savvy Indians were not aware of this unique personality Safeena Hussain. Her own educational attainment is story of Ripley's 'believe it not'. From being a semi-literate to end up as a scholar in London School of Economics is a stuff of impossible dreams. She tells, "My school was interrupted for 3 years, but a lady in the neighborhood took her into her wings and encouraged her to pursue her academics knowing Safeena's brilliant academic credentials. "That changed my life completely", she tells "Probably I became first among my peers and of course my family to have travelled abroad to study in the iconic London School of Economics. This extraordinary development ensured within me that no girl is denied the chance to pursue her education" she added.

She had recognized early that despite near universal enrolment at

the primary level, dropout, especially among girls, remain high in most states at secondary stages. Her concentration is on rural areas and hence deliberately works in most rural, remote tribal areas where the problem apparently is more acute. According to her "Two things keep girls out of school- poverty and patriarchy. Poverty forces girls into work but it is patriarchy that deprioritizes them when families decide who gets educated."

"Our work is about changing that mindset through community volunteers we call TEAM BAALIKA. No girl wants to stay home, marry early or graze goats. Every girl wants to study, have friends and opportunities. I hope this award, this recognition, gives us tail-wind to bring every girl back to school."

Award has come, "for its commitment to addressing cultural stereotype through education of girls and young women liberating them from the bondage of illiteracy and infusing them with skills, courage and agency to achieve their full human potential" the statement from Award Committee stated. Safeena has plans to reach 10 million learners in the next decade with her initiative like Development Impact Bond. Nation must join to celebrate this singular achievement and congratulate Safeena Hussain for what she has been doing and continues to do.

However, neither Safeena nor even the report gives any indication

of the lady in the neighbourhood who 'took Safeena into her wings'. This information is very important to know the role of faceless individuals doing great service. Safeena should share the details of this Good Samaritan for the information of posterity.

MAHARASHTRA: PATHETIC STATE OF BMC HOSPITALS

There were two reports in the print media, datelined Mumbai, "Rat crawls over sleeping patient" was one and the other was "Doctors sound alarm on staff shortage at Cooper".

Reportedly, a videographer found two rats moving around the female general ward of RN Cooper General Hospital in Juhu-VileParle suburb of North West Mumbai. One of them reportedly was crawling on the bed of a woman who was asleep. There have been complaints of rat menace. "I have noticed multiple rats running all over the floor during the night due to unhygienic conditions leading to infestation" informed an inpatient attender, according to the report.

Reportedly in 2017, two elderly women at Shatabdi Hospital in Kandivali in North-West Mumbai were bitten by rats while under treatment. This had prompted State Human Rights Commission to order compensation. Shockingly in January 2024 face of a deceased patient was disfigured by rats while awaiting post mortem at the same hospital. Hospital then was forced to pay compensation



of Rs 5 lakh to the family of the deceased patient. Sadly despite complaints and repeated assurances from Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) ‘things are as bad as ever’ informs the report, while adding, ‘putting at risk the life and dignity of patients’. For record Dr Neelam Andrade, director of BMC Hospitals termed the incident as serious. And come to think of it, reportedly on this 25th Aug, Shatabdi hospital recorded delivery of 35 babies on a single day, with 23 caesarians and 12 normal deliveries! With rats all over the place what could have been the fate of these new born?

However, rat menace is not the only issue at Cooper Hospital, writes Amit Srivastava, the media reporter. According to him the hospital is facing serious shortage of staff. Shortages include medical officers, X-ray technicians, ambulance attendants and even pharmacists. Naturally all these shortages are delaying patient management and therefore delayed discharge of inpatient, complicating crowd control and overburdening the available staff. According to Amit Srivastav, administration had, in the past, did not renew the contracts of staff who left the service of hospital, leading to the present crisis of staff shortage and resultant mess. Reportedly Out Patients Deptt (OPD) for disabled patients has stopped registration since many weeks due to insufficient registration assistants. This is an entirely unacceptable situation for a premier Municipal Hospital with attached medical college.

But Amit Srivastava didn't stop there, he went further to report “55 Malaria, 47 Dengue cases reported daily”. According to him, the metropolis of Mumbai is experiencing a surge in vector-borne diseases with significant increase in Malaria, dengue, chicken gunya and leptospirosis cases since many weeks. He informs, malaria cases risen by 18%, dengue by 48%, chicken gunya by 47% and

leptospirosis by 49% in the past weeks.

This is rather bad news for a megacity with exploding population. Wonder what the Briham Mumbai Municipal Corporation is doing to control and manage the situation!

M A H A R A S H T R A : EXTORTIONISTS IN UNIFORM

In a country like India with people swarming all over the place, someone fooling someone else in the legal garb is fairly happening incidents. A report datelined Mumbai has come up with “Extortion racket exposed at Mumbai Railway Stations”, was the story by Megha Kuchik.

Mumbai is a very big city with facility of local railways covering most of the city with three railway networks. Western Railway, plying between Churchgate in South Mumbai to Virar in the north. Central Railway plying between Chatrapathi Shivaji Terminus earlier known as Victoria Terminus in the South to Kalyan in the Horth. Then you have what is known as Harbour line, as part of the Central Railway, primarily plying along the Mumbai harbor and transporting commuters to the interiors of Mumbai, touching both Central and Western Railways.

Every day lakhs of people travel to and fro. It's a huge infrastructure of public transport and therefore is manned by hundreds of Railway Protection Force (RPF), similar to police. They are found all over the place on platforms of every station, inside railway compartments and other spots needing security. So people travelling at odd hours, in early mornings and late nights feel secure and safe. This has been a very old system in place.

However, in recent past, its been reported that these uniformed security personnel of RPF are playing dirty with passengers leading to day light robbery mildly termed as extortion. Reportedly these uniformed robbers are targeting passengers in CST or V.T,



the main starting station on the Central Railway. Other crowded stations are Mumbai Central in the Western Railways. Then you have Lokmanya Tilak Terminus in Kurla, where cross country trains originate and terminate and those stations where long distance trains halt, like Borivali, Vasai on Western Railway and Thane, Kalyna and Panvel on Central Railway.

The modus operandi, reportedly is, these RPF personnel start checking bags of travelers and sometime even taking the unsuspecting passengers to rooms inside ostensibly to check his persona. Reportedly all these tricks by RCF leads to some kind of forced payments, kind of extortion.

A jeweler in Mumbai Central was reportedly extorted 30,000/- and he complained that's how some vigilance took place to check the CCTV to arrest the person responsible for the robbery. Another person at Vasai was extorted Rs 5,000/- as fine. After complaints of harassment by these uniformed personnel CCTV checking was increased to nab culprits. They even follow stolen mobiles to locate them with new user and threaten him to cough up money. Passengers are warned to be careful, report every matter to the nearest station master at the railway station, so that these activities of security personnel is nipped in the bud.

J.Shriyan

JOURNEY OF 25 YEARS – ISSUES & CONCERNS

In November 2020, when my good friend, Jayaram Shriyan, asked me to write about **ISSUES & CONCERN'S** journey of twenty years, I wrote, “From its humble beginning twenty years ago with very ordinary looks, modest printing and hardly any catchy design and most importantly, content management of a typical small town publication, **Issues & Concerns** has made a remarkable journey”. And the journey continues. **ISSUES & CONCERNS** never looked back. Its contents continue to improve, journalistic quality has been rising to higher levels, commitment to professionalism in presentation remains steadfast. There is hardly any subject of social and political relevance which I & C did not cover in the last twenty-five years, stretching from local to national to global, particularly in the ‘Focus’ pages. One may or may not agree with Jayaram Shriyan’s opinions, pronounced in clear words, sans journalistic ambivalence, sometimes even sweeping; but his understanding of the issues, and sincerity of views are unquestionable. Indeed, **ISSUES & CONCERNS** stands up to what it believes to be right and condemns what it believes are wrong with piercing words.

I wrote in 2020 on the occasion of I & C’s twentieth anniversary that the issues picked up were not necessarily fashionable from the journalistic lens, but what mattered to **Issues & Concerns** was their social, political and economic relevance in addition to human interest. These words are true today as much as they were five years ago. Regular readers of I & C will not fail to see a strong string of consistency over the years. But it is not the consistency of opinions, views and ideology, or of preaching and sermonizing. I & C’s consistency is in its belief in high standards of journalism – I & C will express its views on issues without fear or favour, but at the same time if there is a contrarian view, I & C will not fail in providing space for that view as well.

I wish **ISSUES & CONCERNS** all the very best, many more years of service to our society and country. From one little corner of our vast country, a little known suburban town, let I & C be the torch-bearer of high standard of journalism, continuing to speak what may not be pleasant but true, continue to tell us what is right no matter who agrees or not, continue to uphold causes long forgotten so that they are not totally extinguished.

-V.K. Talithaya, Bengalooru, former Sr V.P. MRPL

“Congratulations to J Shriyan and I&C on reaching the milestone of 25 years of uninterrupted publication. Your determination and resilience in bringing out issues on time, despite challenging circumstances, is a remarkable achievement. Reflecting on your journey, you must feel a sense of satisfaction knowing that you’ve contributed to raising awareness and influencing readers on various socio-political issues. Your incisive analysis under the ‘Focus’ column has been refreshing and thought-provoking, undoubtedly winning many hearts. As you look ahead, the experience gathered over the past two decades will undoubtedly guide you with confidence. Congratulations again, and I wish you continued success.”

-Ragunath Kodical, Bengalooru

ISSUES & CONCERNS -SILVER JUBILEE EDITION

I have been reading **Issues & Concerns** for over two decades. What I appreciate very much in its contents are the excellent editorials penned by the editor, analysing the most recent events and happenings. Month That Was is also an interesting feature catching the attention of the readers. Every month the magazine carries articles by the editor under **FOCUS** which is liked by the public at large, for its enlightened views. All in all, the magazine, with its various features, sustains the attention of different sections of the public and I am happy to note that I & C has made rapid strides in the field of journalism in its journey of a quarter century. I wish the magazine will thrive for a long time to come under the able leadership of J. Shriyan. Congratulations to editor I & C as they bring out the Silver Jubilee edition!

- Dr K V Venkataramana, Sullia

I heartily congratulate you for achieving with sole determination, vision by expressing your concerns on issues faced by Indians in India. Good luck for your future plans and vision.

- Vishwanath Shenava, Mumbai





TOWARDS A PURPOSEFUL REGIMEN

A JOURNEY OF 25 YEARS

ISSUES & CONCERNS

ON AN UNCHARTED SEA

Welcoming the maiden edition of ISSUES & CONCERNS there were close to a dozen prominent citizens of Mangalooru who shared their positive thoughts on the new publication and wished it good going. There were senior Professors, a former state president of People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), a chairman of a public sector undertaking besides a former Air Force officer among them. One called it "social activism in true sense". Another said "great

job". "Well intentioned effort" remarked the third one, when another echoed "well-meaning venture". These encouraging vibes have surely helped the media toddler as it entered the world of letters.

Fittingly, the editor writing his first editorial, remarked about what truly inspired the birth of ISSUES & CONCERNS. He said, "It was felt that there's a vacuum in the reporting and then following it up with issues involving large section of disadvantaged

population of the country not getting adequate representation in the main stream media". Addressing this in earnest appeared to be his honest effort. Years that rolled down proved abundantly the commitment 'towards the purposeful regimen' that ISSUES & CONCERNS had envisioned.

The Editorial Board of ISSUES & CONCERNS initially consisted of Dr.M.V. Kamath, former Chairman of Prasaar Bhaarathi, Prof. B.M.Hegde, the then Vice



On completion of 10 years of Issues & Concerns, the Bheeshma of Indian journalism Dr M.V.Kamath wrote, “For ten long years Shriyan has kept himself busy prodding our intellectuals and social workers for action by reminding them of existing problems and the absence of meaningful action. He has brought out month after month, without fail, this one-man attempt to remind us of our failure in building a structured society. He has sought to arouse our conscience at society’s obvious short comings with implicit courage and daring. These ten years have often been a lone journey for Shriyan. He appears to be an extraordinarily detached man who does his duty irrespective of results thereof. He has dipped his hand in his own pocket without the slightest hesitation and has never regretted it. That is to his eternal standing as a man who has put his country above everything else. That is where Shriyan stands head and shoulder above most of us. On the 10th anniversary of the birth of ISSUES & CONCERNS I salute Shriyan for his indomitable will and courage of conviction”.

At the end of 12th year of its publication, when ISSUES & CONCERNS crossed its 150th edition Dr M V Kamath commented “It is to be sure, almost a one-man job, but one has just to read Shriyan’s editorial notes to realize that he is one of the best read and one of the most original commentators in the country. One does not have to agree with Shriyan all the time. And that is precisely why what he writes has such relevance. He prods his readers to think, one suspects, to challenge him. A journal’s responsibility is to reveal the obvious to unmask the truth. ISSUES & CONCERNS fulfills its responsibilities in ample measure.”

Chancellor of Manipal University, Dr Ravindranath Shanbhog, Professor and Consumer Activist and Father Henry D Souza, President of Sandesha Foundation, Mangalooru.

ISSUES & CONCERNS is a shining example of thoughtful journalism in a world that seems to be driven by sensationalism and self-interest. It is appropriate to take stock of the magazine’s incredible journey and the admirable goal that inspired its founding as it enters a new chapter as it completes 25 years of continuous publication. What began as a modest idea by Jayaram Shriyan has developed into a prominent platform calling attention to important social issues, encouraging social consciousness with courage of conviction to challenge authority.

Publishing a journal of the standard of ISSUES & CONCERNS demands relentless effort, uncom-

promising commitment, unwavering integrity, and immense personal sacrifice. Such an undertaking has daunting economics. With very limited resources and little institutional support, it is indeed, difficult to maintain regular publication.

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Coming from the doyen of journalism, these are no small words for a comparatively new-comer to journalism.

From the beginning the main goal of ISSUES & CONCERNS’ has been to draw attention to issues that actually affect society’s well-being rather than chasing short-term attention or dramatic headlines. Its mainstay is well-researched articles, dedicated reporting, and a singular focus on bringing up significant societal issues.

As Dr. N. Vinaya Hegde, Chairman of Nitte Group, rightly noted, “Shriyan’s dedication and unwavering will have been essential to the magazine’s success over the past eleven years. His unwavering commitment is a prime example of what





According to former Supreme Court Justice K Jagannath Shetty, “ISSUES & CONCERNS is an honest and rare effort. Its editorial is bold and direct. Such efforts need to be kept alive in the larger interest of participating democracy”.

honest, moral, and civic-minded journalism ought to be.”

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ISSUES & CONCERNS’ journey has been one of perseverance in the face of adversity. Maintaining a publication that is exclusively focused on the public interest demands courage and vision in a world where print media faces numerous obstacles, including dwindling readership, budgetary limitations, and political



“ISSUES & CONCERNS is famous for its simplicity of get-up which is more than made up for by the richness of its contents. For more than 2 decades of profound originality, the **ISSUES & CONCERNS** has delighted its readers. Intellectual genius of its editorial does not bend, it’s frank and outspoken yet dignified and inoffensive”.

-Justice Michael Saldanha



pressures. The inaugural issue of **ISSUES & CONCERNS** was a tentative step, a hopeful but uncertain beginning. It was about speaking up for the voiceless and bringing neglected issues to light. As Prof. B.M. Hegde correctly pointed out, “the magazine is a rare journal of substance because it constantly offers daring viewpoints that ignite sparks of awareness and hope.”

The magazine has covered a wide range of topics over the years, including social, political, educational, and economic crisis and many others. Every challenge serves as evidence of the diligent work done by Shriyan to gather, examine, and present data in an objective way.

The true spirit of democracy is reflected in **ISSUES & CONCERNS**’ constant capacity to pose pertinent queries and contest established structures. Dr. Ravishankar Rao noted that ‘having the guts to consistently confront uncomfortable realities is more important than a journal’s con-



tinued existence.’

Shriyan’s selfless and intimate approach has been one of the most motivating parts of this journey. Unaffected by monetary compensation or fame, Shriyan dedicated not only his time but also his personal funds to support this admirable cause. His dedication stemmed solely from a desire to enlighten, educate, and create a more conscious society. As Padmabhushan Dr. M.V. Kamath noted, ‘Shriyan’s contributions are more than just journalism; they are sincere acts of social service meant to uplift underprivileged people and marginalized communities.’

According to former Supreme Court Justice K Jagannath Shetty, “**ISSUES & CONCERNS** is an honest and rare effort. Its editorial is bold and direct. Such efforts need to be kept alive in the larger interest of participating democracy”.

And there have been many luminaries who shared their positive thoughts on **ISSUES & CONCERNS**, including former Justice Michael Saldanha, of Karnataka



High Court, who had on record observed “**ISSUES & CONCERNS** is famous for its simplicity of get-up which is more than made up for by the richness of its contents. For more than 2 decades of profound originality, the **ISSUES & CONCERNS** has delighted its readers. Intellectual genius of its editorial does not bend, it’s frank and outspoken yet dignified and inoffensive”.



The magazine has boldly tackled subjects that most others would avoid, from opposing communalism, casteism, and separatism to scrutinising government policies that impact the ordinary citizen. It is crucial to a democratic system because it promotes political education, demands accountability, and fosters logical thought. Shriyan had a clear vision: to make the silent majority aware of their rights and obligations.

Additionally, the magazine has served as a forum for numerous academics, social workers, and intellectuals to voice their opinions and make significant contributions to public discourse. Numerous distinguished individuals have pointed out that Shriyan's work had an impact not only locally but also nationally.

We must acknowledge the unmatched tenacity that has propelled this journey as the magazine approaches its 25th milestone. It is not just about print surviving in the digital age, but also about honesty, integrity, and writing with a purpose. Every edition of **ISSUES & CONCERNS** serves as a reminder of the value of maintaining our composure in the face of difficulties and apathy.

Each article's representation of the subaltern voice serves as a reminder of our shared responsibility

to uphold democracy, advance justice, and increase public awareness. Clearly, **ISSUES & CONCERNS** is a tale of silent bravery, tenacity, and a strong faith in the transformative power of words. The existence of such a platform in our society, one that is motivated by a vision to awaken, educate, and serve rather than by market forces, is a source of pride. Let's all keep up the support for this incredible journey and contribute to the effort to improve and educate our society.

ISSUES & CONCERNS has been a shining example of fearless journalism for more than 24 years, a voice that never backs down from a challenge. Raising awareness, stimulating thought and acting as a mirror reflecting society's unsaid struggles, disregarded injustices and unheard voices have always been the goals of this incredible journey.

Why someone with Jayaram Shriyan's potential and talent would choose this route over more lucrative or well-known careers may be a mystery. His strong sense of obligation to the society holds the key to the question. Shriyan has taken on the burden of social responsibility at an age when most people withdraw into comfort and retirement. He continues to publish the journal out of

pure passion and unselfish dedication, without the backing of influential people, without financial stability from outside donors and frequently at the expense of his own comfort.

This journey is not merely about publishing words on paper; it is about standing tall in the face of adversity, about giving a platform to the marginalized and about kindling the flame of democratic consciousness. His journey is an ode to the spirit of authentic journalism, not one of ambition.

This is the story of **ISSUES & CONCERNS**, which launched its maiden edition in November 2000. Since then for all the 25 years, without break, the periodical appeared in print to the disbelief of all who had raised eyebrows. After all this Jayaram Shriyan, the publisher of this newest member of the Fourth Estate is not a journalist, either by training or by qualifications. How long will he go with his over enthusiasm and some jingle bells in his pocket!

In the event he left nobody in doubt about his 'never say die' attitude of endurance and purpose.

Yes **ISSUES & CONCERNS** has arrived in style to the utter dismay of Cynical Minds and Doubting Thomases.

-Chaitra Padukone

FROM THE ARCHIVES

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep, but I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep, miles to go before I sleep." Robert Frost
These poetic lines ring true in the heart and soul of all who have made this magazine a success, especially Mr Shriyan, the editor, who with his dauntless efforts, limited human and financial resources is managing a unique venture called "**ISSUES & CONCERNS**" in competitive commercial media world. This magazine has made a foray into the world of the

common man and helped to express many an issue which would have gone unnoticed and unmentioned. It is truly a privilege to read a magazine that has not lost its credibility, ethics and values, but has remained sincere to the basic truth. While most of the media have become commercial, unethical and subjective, "**ISSUES & CONCERNS**" offers a ray of hope for people who look for some objective, credible and pro-people news and information. It is a rare phenomenon to find a journal that covers so

many aspects ranging from politics, science and technology, economic concerns, international, regional and rural topics. It is exceptional in its stories regarding the weaker and forgotten sections of the society like women, farmers, street children and daily wage earners and is an educated voice for those who are without an arena to voice their opinions.

I congratulate Shriyan and wish him all the very best in this venture of his.

- Fr.Denis D'sa, Former Administrator, Fr.MullerGroup, M'lore 15 Years ago.

America as a Third World Country

America is the richest country in the world, so why does life feel so poor for so many of us? This isn't a temporary crisis, this is real life for millions of people in a country that calls itself the land of opportunity. Over 38 million Americans live below the official poverty line, 44 million face food insecurity, more than 650,000 Americans are homeless each night, over half of working adults can't afford a \$500 emergency. The top 1% of Americans hold over 30% of the nation's wealth, while the bottom 50% of Americans hold just 2% of the wealth. I know what it feels like because we lived it.

We are. low-income family. We've experienced food insecurity. We have lived without access to affordable health care.

We have lost jobs through no fault of our own, and we have been exhausted. But after we left the US to find a better life for our family, we noticed something that changed the way we viewed everything. In places that America calls developing countries or third-world countries, we have found people living better on far less, but are much happier. They have much higher quality of lives than we did back in the States.

Through our experience traveling through lesser developed countries, we have discovered that the system

in America is not broken by accident, it is broken by design, and it is something that we all need to start talking about more. Let's be honest, for a lot of Americans, especially in rural areas, life isn't just hard, it's broken. And if you're living it, you don't need statistics to know what I'm talking about, but let's go over some anyway, just so that you know you're not alone. One in eight Americans rely on food banks or SNAP just to feed their families.

Rents have doubled in many towns, even while wages stay flat. Health care cost is the leading cause of bankruptcy in The US, and in rural areas, no hospitals for miles, no public transit, no options. If you're poor in America, you are expected to survive a system that was never designed for you. You're told to work harder, hustle more, grind until it gets better, but the truth is, you can work every single day of your life, multiple jobs, and still never be able to afford to buy a home, to pay all of your medical bills, or to buy truly healthy food for your family.

That is not a personal failure. That is what happens when your country treats basic human needs as a profit opportunity. For most of our lives, we have lived in. The southern Appalachian region of East Tennessee, and then later we moved to

southwest Virginia.

We not only have personal experience with this, but we also watch the struggle of our entire families. So, this story isn't just about us. It's about our community, our friends, our loved ones, and it's about a lot of you. We did everything to make it work.

We grew our own food. We bought things secondhand. We took care of our stuff. We fixed stuff when it broke instead of buying new things.

We were not materialistic. We were super frugal and lived below our means, debt-free. We just did all the things that we felt were right, but still, no matter how frugal we were, no matter what we did, we still could never truly break out of the system. And it's not just us, it's our loved ones, our grandparents, aunts, cousins, neighbors.

They are all working so hard and they're still struggling. They work in factories, construction jobs, in slaughter houses. They're CNAs, they're teachers. These are irreplaceable jobs that are vital, but yet they're still not paid a living wage.

The constant fear of your car breaking down or an illness that will keep you from going to work and paying your bills, let alone a doctor's visit. One bad month, that can completely wipe you out. That isn't freedom, that is survival mode.

And that's what it feels like to millions of people across the US. This is the country that is the wealthiest nation in the world, and a huge percentage of the population can barely make ends meet. So we made a decision that most people don't even think is possible. We left.

We started traveling Southeast Asia, Thailand, Vietnam, and what we saw completely changed our viewpoint of what a poor country actually looks like, and what's possible when a society prioritizes people



over profit. We weren't Looking for much when we left the U.S. Honestly, we were just looking for a more affordable place to survive and have a higher quality of life, but what we found when we got here was something we never really expected. We found access to health care, to affordable housing, affordable transportation, fresh food, amazing community, safety in countries that we had been told our entire lives were third world countries.

In Thailand, there's universal health care. In Vietnam, 90% of people are covered by public health insurance, and health care costs are much lower. While we were in Vietnam, we had to Take our two-year-old to the ER after a head injury, and we paid a little over 7outofpocketto beseen,andthatwaswithouthealthinsurancemeansure. Meanwhile, in America, it can cost \$7 out of pocket to be seen, and that was without health insurance. Meanwhile, in America, it can cost \$300 just to go to the doctor and thousands of dollars for an ER visit, and that's with insurance.

And the food, the food here is so healthy, it is fresh, it's grown locally. There are neighborhood street markets on every corner. It is affordable food, even when you compare it to the wages that the people make here. There's fresh vegetables and fruit and meat and spices and precooked to-go meals that you can just grab and take home with you that are made by local families. Even the poor families here

eat well. They have access to affordable, healthy foods. It's not owned by corporations.

It's not profitized. It's just local people feeding each other. Compare that to rural America where processed food is more affordable, may be the only thing available, and people may have to drive 20 miles just to get to a grocery store. And the community, the community here is strong.

They are still very much family oriented. Families live together. Elders are respected. Children are respected.

People know their neighbors. They. Look out for each other. Even us, even being foreigners, even not being from this area, just the community vibe that we get, particularly with our 2-year-old, we feel so safe and accepted here.

Listen, we've been told our whole lives that America is the greatest country in the world, and I'm not here to bash America. There are some amazing things about America. I love certain parts of being American, of course, I'm not denying that, but we still have to acknowledge the problems that we are facing, a lot of us are facing, and are truly struggling. We've been sold the lie that if you work hard enough.

That if you sacrifice enough, everything is going to be okay. But what I've seen overseas is that a good quality of life is not only about wealth and making more money, it

is about priorities. These countries aren't perfect, far from it, no country is, but they are prioritizing health care, affordable housing, transportation, community care, basic human dignity, while in America that is slipping away for millions of people. So when people ask us, why did we leave? Isn't it scary to move abroad? Our answer is no.

What's scary is being one hospital visit away from losing everything. What's scary is Watching people that you love break down from stress, debt, and isolation in the richest country on earth. If you are struggling right now, if you're exhausted, anxious, stressed, just know that it's not your fault. You're not lazy, you're not stupid, and you're not broken.

You are living in a system that was not designed for you to succeed. It's not designed to take care of you. It's designed to extract from you. We've all been sold the same story: if you work hard enough, if you follow the rules, if you keep your head down, then you will live the American dream.

But that American dream just isn't true. For most of us anymore, the cost of housing, food, education, healthcare have all skyrocketed, and wages have barely moved in 40 years. Meanwhile, billionaires are tripling their wealth, and corporations pay almost no taxes. This isn't a failure of individuals, it is a failure of policies, policies by both parties that over decades have prioritized profit over people.

Us in America are owned by corporations. Everything is for profit, our health care, our food system, things that are basic human needs. Our government bails out banks. They let corporations outsource jobs, slash benefits, and raise prices, they defund schools and health care in our towns, and you are just told to pull yourself up by your bootstraps.

I get told a lot that wages in these other countries are a lot lower than in the US, and yes, while that is true,



somebody in Thailand can still pay for housing, food, health care, all of their basic needs, and still have money left over at the end of the month to save or have a little bit of fun with. While in the US, if you look at the same average wage and then deduct all of your meeting your basic needs expenses, healthcare, housing, transportation, all of that, there's no money left. Over. In fact, most people are going into debt just to meet their most basic needs today.

So, while the wages are lower in these developing nations, the cost of basic living expenses are also much lower. We have personally lost family members due to the health care crisis in the US. We have watched families not only lose their lives, but their homes. We have watched neighbors lose jobs, lose hope.

And through it all, we've been told that it is our responsibility to fix it. But there's no fixing the system that is controlled by money when you don't have any to begin with. And the thing that is most Frustrating is that this country has the money, it has the resources, but what it doesn't have is the desire to build a system in which ordinary people are able to survive and maybe even thrive. And that's why we left, not because we hate America, but because we wanted to be able to live.

So, you might be thinking, "That's great for you, but I can't just pack up and leave the country," and I totally get that. I am not suggesting that everyone just pack up and move. I know that there are very valid reasons why a lot of people can't do that, but what we need to do is we need to wake up to the reality of what is going. And you need to know that you are not trapped.

You've just been told that you are. Step one is to question the narrative. Start asking yourself, who is benefiting from me believing that my suffering is normal, that I should have to work two jobs just to afford to pay rent and put food on the table,

that I deserve to go into debt just to go to the doctor. You don't deserve that.

Nobody does. The system wants you to believe that. They want you to think that you're failing so that you will work harder. It's your fault for not figuring it out.

It's your fault for not working hard enough, for not getting the right college degree, for not having the right job. Step two is to rebuild your life around your priorities. Wherever you are, whether you live in rural America, the city, or another country, really stop and think what you want your priorities in life to be. Is it healthy food? You can start a garden or going to farmers markets or really deep diving in ways on how to source healthy, low-cost foods.

I have a whole playlist on my channel on the most affordable foods that we bought while we were in the US, and tons of recipes and everything that we were able to keep our grocery budget really low by eating very Low-cost but healthy foods. Do you want to establish a greater sense of community, getting to know your neighbors, building mutual support with each other, having that strong support system with your community? Are there things that you want to learn, which everybody should continuously be learning? Reading books, learning about other cultures and countries. You don't have to go anywhere to learn these things. That's something that I'm going to be sharing here on my channel, or just the things that we learn as we're traveling around.

Do you need to become more financially literate so that you Can understand debt and savings and living below your means, budgeting. All of those things are still very, very important and very vital to living in a weak economic society. And step three is to consider your options. And yes, that might even mean thinking about leaving the country if that is a viable option for you.

There are safe, affordable, family-friendly countries all over the world where you can live a higher quality of life than you have in the US. No country is perfect, but for us it has been the difference between surviving and really living. If your health, your safety, your sanity, your Children's future are at risk, you owe it to yourself to explore every possible option. No guilt, no shame, no apologies.

Millions of people are waking up to the same realization that the idea of the American dream that we have been sold is a lie. But the human dream to be healthy, to be safe, to be connected, to have enough, that is still alive and thriving in all of us. That dream is still possible, and the first step is refusing to continue to suffer in silence anymore. We're not just telling the story from the outside.

We have lived the struggle, and now we're traveling around to different countries. To find something that works, not just cheaper places to live, but healthier, more connected, more human ways of life. We're searching for more affordable, sustainable options for ordinary people like us, and we're sharing them here in case you might find them helpful, too, because it's not just about finding a new place to live, it's about finding a new way to live, a new way to live that is sustainable for everyone, no matter where you are. So, if you want to follow along and see what we're learning and unlearning, make sure that you subscribe because I'm going to continue to share our experiences.

In all the countries that we visit, I know that there's other people like us that are searching for something different, that have felt the struggle and want things to be better. They just want to be happy and free. There is another way to live, so let's find it together. As always, thank you guys so much for watching, and I'll talk to you next time.

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Empowering beyond hunger

In 2008, when India was celebrating the 60th year of independence, Paramjeet Singh and a few of his associates came across a news piece that left them startled. The article stated that approximately 6,000 people were dying due to hunger and malnourishment every day, even after six decades of freedom! “This amounted to almost 20 lakh people dying due to something that can be stopped. This is when we decided to do something about this as we found it appalling that people didn’t have nutritious meals and basic healthcare,” says Singh, co-founder of DBM (Dharma Bharathi Mission) India. Since then, the not-for-profit has worked consistently to educate, employ and empower.

They started by feeding 50 children in the slums of M-East ward and the surrounding neighbourhoods namely Govandi, Chembur, Mankhurd, Trombay and Deonar. These are the poorest and by far the worst affected neighbourhoods in Mumbai in terms of Human Development Index. “The average lifespan of people from the slums in this ward is 39, while in the rest of the country it’s 74. This is mainly because they live around the dumping yard that releases toxins,” explains Singh on why they chose to work in these

neighbourhoods.

Operating under the legal framework of Navasruti International Trust, what began humbly with the provision of midday meals at one school with 50 children; today they have adopted 11 schools and feed 2,000 kids daily. The work has since expanded into a strong institution with its own infrastructure, offering education, healthcare, livelihood training, and job placements.

“It became equally important to address the deeper, underlying issues that hinder overall progress and development. That’s why we came up with the tagline: education, employment, empowerment,” explains Singh, who is a former officer of the Indian Revenue Service. In order to break the cycle of poverty and make the people independent, apart from taking care of their food and education, it was important to ensure they get employed. Hence, the NGO started offering a variety of vocational courses around nursing, beautician, computers, warehouse management and customer service, among others, in their six vocational centres.

To propel the students into the mainstream workforce, those who are keen and focused on pursuing knowledge and skills are adopted each year. 40 students from their 11 adopted schools are selected based on a test. The selected ones are given holistic grooming which includes, apart from regular academ-



ics, communication skills, English proficiency, career guidance and exposure visits.

“We have Udaan (educational) centres at Bandra and Deonar for this and the aim is that they match up to the level of the students from the rest of the city,” explains Singh. These consistent efforts have borne fruit and for the first time, the neighbourhood has seen its youth become an IAS officer, a chartered accountant, an engineer, and candidates successful in the Maharashtra Public Service Commission exams.

Dr Jaydeep Mirashi, Founder and Chairman, Hill Spring International School, shares, “Paramjeet Singh is a beacon of hope through his leadership at DBM, focusing on the transformative 3E model—Education, Employment, and Empowerment. His dedication has led to over 10 million meals provided and thousands receiving vocational training, which is especially vital during the COVID-19 crisis. He has created safe spaces for skill development in areas like Dharavi, emphasising empowering women and youth. His impactful work has earned him recognition as a changemaker on both global and national platforms, as he paves the way for sustainable change that will benefit future generations.”

—Pooja Patel



A PROPOSAL & AN APPEAL



Master Harshith, a less than 14 year old student of a local school had committed suicide, for reasons best known to him.

What drove him to end his blooming tender life so early in the day, is not relevant for the purpose at hand. But for his grieving parents and his elder sister, he is no more. The school concerned lost a good student. His neighbors and his friends lost one of them.

But the fact is, every time someone commits suicide or ends his life under some mental pressure is an indictment of the society around him, be it his parents, be it his teachers in the school, be it his co-students – classmates, seniors and juniors, his neighborhood, all failed him. All of them, in some way, are responsible for his sudden unnatural death.

It happened over an year. But his memory is fresh for his parents and all those who used to see him every day. Now that he is no more there is no point to point a finger at anyone, who pushed him to the precipice. The issue at hand is how to reach out to the family under the circumstances. He was the only son of the family. The father, Sudhakar Devadiga, is an unskilled workshop hand, mother rolls beedies to help run the kitchen.

It is proposed to raise Rs. 5 lakhs to be deposited in a doubling scheme with a scheduled bank for 15 years period in favour of his parents. At the end of this period, Rs. 5 lakhs would have become Rs; 20lakhs. If left in F.D it can guarantee a monthly return of Rs: 15000. This amount can ensure, in the evening of Harshith's parents a peaceful existence for the rest of their life. They would live with the memory of their loving son and in some basic comforts.

Can we as civil society, rise to the occasion to make sure that we have made a DIFFERENCE to the life of a family in distress!

Contact : 94800 15863 for any query.

N.B: We have managed to open a bank a/c for the above contributions. The details are as follows.

Title: Sudhakar Devadiga / Jayaram Shriyan (I&C)
Bank: Karnataka Bank Ltd, Iddya/Surathkal Branch
A/C No: 3512500146921901. IFS Code: KARB0000351

All contributors are requested to either remit directly to the bank or to post a cheque drawn in favor of the above title to I&C office.

Mr. Sudhakar Devadiga is the father of Master Harshith. Jayaram Shriyan represents ISSUES & CONCERNS, under whose initiative this drive for collection is being organised. Our target is Rs 5,00,000/-. Once the target is reached or even earlier, if decided to pass on the collection to the parents, it will be transferred to Sudhakar Devadiga family.

I&C is completing 25 years in Oct.2025. The plan is to present the cheque on 10th Oct 2025 or before. Those who have offered to contribute but have not paid so far are requested to pay a.s.a.p. Thanks

-Editor

Reacting to our proposal/appeal, there have been responses and queries. Since the target for collection is somewhat high, it is expected to take a few months. Since only our subscribers/readers are being tapped. Following are the ladies and gentlemen who have agreed to contribute to the cause. Presently no collection is being taken, but only commitments are being accepted. Once we reach near the target the modus operandi of collection and accounting will be discussed and agreed upon with complete transparency.

NAME & AMOUNT

Dr.Gururaj Murthy	Rs 15,000
Ms. Sunita Gururaj	Rs 15,000
Rajnikanth Shastri	Rs 25,000
Prof Ravishankar & Dr Anita Ravishankar	Rs 10,000
D.K Shetty	Rs 10,000
Jayaram Shriyan	Rs 50,000
Ln.B.N Sanil	Rs 1,000
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Dr. Prabhu	Rs 5000
Girish Puttur	Rs 5000
Prof. Ramesh Kulai	Rs 5000
Harish R Shriyan	Rs 15,000

ISSUES & CONCERNS INITIATIVE

COLLECTION RECEIVED FOR MASTER HARSHITH MEMORIAL FUND

(Please refer to page number 21)



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2. B.N.SANIL	Rs. 1,000
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42. PROF RAMESH KULAI	Rs. 5,000
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44. HARISH R SHRIYAN	Rs. 15,000

This page will be updated as and when we receive further contributions.

THE PARTITION OF INDIA PAKISTAN AND THE MALAISE NATIONAL FRUSTRATION



Dr. B R Ambedkar

The statement created a great stir. Many did not believe that Mr. Mahomed Ali, who testified to so much veneration for Mr. Gandhi, was capable of entertaining such ungenerous and contemptuous sentiments about him. When Mr. Mahomed Ali was speaking at a meeting held at Aminabad Park in Lucknow, he was asked whether the sentiments attributed to him were true. Mr. Mahomed Ali without any hesitation or compunction replied*:-

“Yes, according to my religion and creed, I do hold an adulterous and a fallen Musalman to be better than Mr. Gandhi.”

It was suggested at the time that Mr. Mahomed Ali had to recant because the whole of the orthodox Muslim community had taken offence for his having shown such deference to Mr. Gandhi, who was a Kaffir, as to put him on the same pedestal as Jesus. Such praise of a Kaffir, they felt, was forbidden by the Muslim Canon Law.

In a manifesto on Hindu-Muslim relations issued in 1928 Khwaja Hasan Nizami declared:-

“Musalmans are separate from Hindus; they cannot unite with the Hindus. After bloody wars the Musalmans conquered India, and the English took India from them. The Musalmans are one united nation and they alone will be masters of India. They will never give up their individuality. They have ruled India for hundreds of years, and hence they have a prescriptive right over the country. The Hindus are a minor community in the world. They are never free from internecine quarrels;

they believe in Gandhi and worship the cow; they are polluted by taking other people’s water. The Hindus do not care for self-government; they have no time to spare for it: let them go on with their internal squabbles. What capacity have they for ruling over men? The Musalmans did rule, and the Musalmans will rule.”

Far from rendering obedience to Hindus, the Muslims seem to be ready to try conclusions with the Hindus again. In 1926 there arose a controversy as to who really won the third battle of Panipat, fought in 1761. It was contended for the Muslims that it was a great victory for them because Ahmad Sha Abdali had 1 lakh of soldiers while the Mahrattas had 4 to 6 lakhs. The Hindus replied that it was a victory to them a victory to the vanquished because it stemmed the tide of Muslim invasions. The Muslims were not prepared to admit defeat at the hands of the Hindus and claimed that they will always prove superior to the Hindus. To prove the eternal superiority Muslims over Hindus it was proposed by one Maulana Akbar Shah Khan of Najibabad in all seriousness, that the Hindus and Muslims should fight, under test conditions, fourth battle on the same fateful plain of Panipat. The Maulana accordingly issued a challenge to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the following terms:-

“If you, Malaviyaji, are making efforts to falsify the result at Panipat, I shall show you an easy and an excellent way (of testing it). Use your well-known influence and induce the British Government to permit the fourth battle of Panipat to be fought

ont without hindrance from the authorities. I am ready to provide...a comparative test of the valour and fighting spirit of the Hindus and the Musalmans.... As there are seven crores of Musalmans in India, I shall arrive on a fixed date on the plain of Panipat with 700 Musalians representing the seven crores of Muslims in India and as there are 22 crores of Hindus I allow you to come with 2,200 Hindus. The proper thing is not to use cannon, machine guns or bombs: only swords and javelins and spears, bows and arrows and daggers should be used. If you cannot accept the post of generalissimo of the Hindu host, you may give it to any descendant of Sadashivrao or Vishwasrao so that their scions may have an opportunity to avenge the defeat of their ancestors in 1761. But any way do come as a spectator; for on seeing the result of this battle you will have to change your views, and I hope there will be then an end of the present discord and fighting in the country.... In conclusion I beg to add that among the 700 men that I shall bring there will be no Pathans or Afghans as you are mortally afraid good family who are staunch adherents of Shariat.”

Such are the religious beliefs, social attitudes and ultimate destinies of the Hindus and Muslims and their communal and political manifestations. These religious beliefs, social attitudes and views regarding ultimate destinies constitute the motive force which determines the lines of their action, whether they will be co-operative or conflicting. Past experience shows that they are too ir-

reconcilable and too incompatible to permit Hindus and Muslims ever forming one single nation or even two harmonious parts of one whole. These differences have the sure effect not only of keeping them asunder but also of keeping them at war. The differences are permanent and the Hindu-Muslim problem bids fair to be eternal. To attempt to solve it on the footing that Hindus and Muslims are one or if they are not one now they will be one hereafter is bound to be a barren occupation-as barren as it proved to be in the case of Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, time has come when certain facts must be admitted as beyond dispute, however unpleasant such admission may be.

In the first place, it should be admitted that every possible attempt to bring about union between Hindus and Muslims has been made and that all of them have failed.

The history of these attempts may be said to begin with the year 1909. The demands of the Muslim deputation, if they were granted by the British, were assented to by the Hindus, prominent amongst whom was Mr. Gokhale. He has been blamed by many Hindus for giving his consent to the principle of separate electorates. His critics forget that withholding consent would not have been a part of wisdom. For, as has been well said by Mr. Mahomed Ali:-

“...paradoxical as it may seem, the creation of separate electorates was hastening the advent of Hindu-Muslim unity. For the first time a real franchise, however restricted, was being offered to Indians, and if Hindus and Musalmans remained just as divided as they had hitherto been since the commencement of the British rule, and often hostile to one another, mixed electorates would have provided the best

battle-ground for inter-communal strifes, and would have still further widened the gulf separating the two communities. Each candidate for election would have appealed to his own community for votes and would have based his claims for preference on the intensity of his ill-will towards the rival community, however disguised this may have been under some such formula as the defence of his community's interests. Bad as this would have been, the results of an election in which the two communities were not equally matched would have been even worse, for the community that failed to get its representative elected would have inevitably borne a yet deeper grudge against its successful rival. Divided as the two communities were, there was no change for any political principles coming into prominence during the elections. The creation of separate electorates did a great deal to stop this inter-communal warfare, though I am far from oblivious of the fact that when inter-communal jealousies are acute the men that are more likely to be returned even from communal electorates are just those who are noted for the ill-will towards the rival community.”

But the concession in favour of separate electorates made by the Hindus in 1909 did not result in Hindu-Muslim unity. Then came the Lucknow Pact in 1916. Under it the Hindus gave satisfaction to the Muslims on every count. Yet, it did not produce any accord between the two. Six years later, another attempt was made to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. The All-India Muslim League at its annual session held at Lucknow in March 1923 passed a resolution urging the establishment of a national pact to ensure unity and harmony among the various communities and sects in India

and appointed a committee to collaborate with committees to be appointed by other organizations. The Indian National Congress in its special session held in September 1923 at Delhi under the presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad passed a resolution reciprocating the sentiments expressed by the League. The Congress resolved to appoint two committees (1) to revise the constitution and (2) to prepare a draft of a national pact. The report of the committee on the Indian National Pact was signed by Dr. Ansari and Lala Lajpat Rai and was presented at the session of the Congress held at Kakinada in 1923. Side by side with the making of the terms of the Indian National Pact there was forged the Bengal Pact by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee with the Bengal Muslims under the inspiration of Mr. C. R. Das. Both the Indian National Pact and the Bengal Pact came up for discussion in the Subjects Committee of the Congress. The Bengal Pact was rejected by 678 votes against 458. With regard to the Indian National Pact, the Congress resolved that the Committee do call for further opinions on the draft of the Pact prepared by them and submit their report by 31st March 1924 to the A. I. C. C. for its consideration. The Committee, however, did not proceed any further in the matter. This was because the feeling among the Hindus against the Bengal Pact was so strong that according to Lala Lajpat Rai it was not considered opportune to proceed with the Committee's labours. Moreover, Mr. Gandhi was then released from jail and it was thought that he would take up the question. Dr. Ansari, therefore, contented himself with handing over to the A. I. C. C. the material he had collected.

to be contd...

Born different but seer in Basava mutt forced out



A young seer of Gurumalleshwara Mutt has been forced to leave the mutt. after his religious identity was revealed through the Adhaar

card he had saved in his mobile phone.

Mohammed Nissar (22) from Yadgir taluk in Kalaburgi district had obtained Basava Deeksha (religious initiation) when he was a 17-year-old and he was named as Nijalinga Swamy. Nijalinga Swamy had dedicated his life to spreading teachings of 12th century Poet and Philosopher Basaveshwara.

Recently, he was appointed as head of the new extension unit near Gundlupet, started by Nanjangud

Gurumalleshwara based Mutt.

However, last week, while going for prayers, seer had handed over his mobile phone to one of his disciples, who opened the phone out of curiosity.

After seeing the seer's name as Mohammed Nissar and religion mentioned as Muslim, the disciple informed the other villagers about it. The villagers protested for a Muslim heading their Mutt and Nijalinga Swamiji was forced to step down as the seer.

500km walk to expose highway flaws

Even as Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar sanctioned Rs 21 crore for urgent repairs on the Mumbai–Goa Highway ahead of the Ganesh festival, it is the efforts of a 29-year-old that is emerging as the torchbearer of a larger cause.

Armed with a camera in one hand and a cause in his heart, Chaitanya Laxman Patil, a fisherman from Pen who is also an electronics engineer and pursuing a Master's in Social Work, has embarked on a 500 km mission to walk the length of the Mumbai–Goa Highway. His goal: to document the road's dangerous condition, which has claimed thousands of lives and continues to put motorists at risk.

Patil began his "Rasta Satyagraha – On-Foot Inspection Campaign" on the Mumbai–Goa National Highway (NH-66) from Palaspe Phata on 10th August morning. By August 14, he had covered around 84 km. Having his village near Goa and seen the road's hazards firsthand, Patil

says he wants to give authorities a personal, ground-level view of the problems and urge corrective action.

"This is not a stunt; it's a cause I feel very personally about. In fact, last year I did a similar survey on my bike," Patil said.

This year's walk is fuelled by disturbing data from an RTI he filed in April: 1069 people have died in accidents on the Raigad stretch alone over the past 12 years. "similar number of lives are lost in Ratnagiri as well. The data is deeply disturbing. This road passes through multiple districts, and I'm still awaiting death toll data from Sindhudurg. In Raigad and other areas, over 2,000 lives have been lost due to the road's poor condition," he said.

On the sixth day, as he neared Mangaon, he noted that his walk-



ing hours were reduced because of frequent stops to photograph potholes and cracks—even on newly concretised patches.

"I have already documented over 1,000 potholes and cracks on newly built roads, which signal future potholes. Normally, I should be able to cover 20 km a day, but due to the road's condition, I barely manage a few kilometres," he said.

"Littering by motorists is a menace. Food waste attracts stray animals, which can go unnoticed by two-wheeler riders, causing them to lose balance. I'm also speaking to villagers and sarpanches to understand their perspectives," he said.

During the walk, Patil is recording waterlogging spots, accident-prone “black spots,” damaged or missing signboards, and other critical faults, tagging each with GPS coordinates and photographs. His findings will be submitted to the concerned authori-

ties, ministries, and organisations.

Patil is also looking into alleged delays and hurdles in the highway-widening project, which has dragged on for more than a decade. He clarified that this is not a protest or demonstration but a peaceful, organised campaign

within the legal framework to push for urgent repairs and road safety measures.

“Before Ganeshotsav, as a Konkankar I want the roads should be safe enough that no family has to fear losing a loved one on the way home.” he said.

Parents beat up Bihar teacher for slapping child.



Angry parents barged into a

school in Bihar’s Gaya, created a ruckus and beat up a teacher who had allegedly slapped their child.

Two Class 5 students were fighting each other, when another student complained about it to the teacher. Rakesh Ranjan Srivastava, the victim, went to the class, stopped

the fight between the children and slapped both. While both children calmed down, one of them ran out and told his family he was slapped by the teacher.

The parents entered class, created a ruckus and rained slaps and punches on Srivastava.

IPS officer with secret bank a/c

IPS officer Rashmi Karandikar, 51, is facing growing legal trouble after allegedly failing to submit her mandatory assets and liabilities declaration to the Director General (DG) of Police’s office within the stipulated deadline.

In response to the delay, the DG’s office unsealed her confidential declaration and reportedly discovered that she had failed to disclose a bank account containing Rs 2.64 crore.

This omission has triggered the possibility of an Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) investigation against her. However, Karandikar has claimed that the account in question is operated solely by her husband, Purushottam Chavan, and that she has no involvement with it. Purushottam Chavan, 53, is currently the subject of

two First Information Reports (FIRs) being investigated by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai Police.

Registered in January and February 2025, the FIRs accuse him of defrauding six individuals out of Rs 7.42 crore under the pretext of securing government plots at subsidised rates and offering contracts to supply T-shirts and hoodies to the Nashik Police Academy from 2015 to 2024.

In a separate case, Chavan allegedly duped 19 people between 2014 and 2019 by promising them affordable flats under various government housing schemes. The



total amount misappropriated in that scheme alone is estimated to be Rs 24.78 crore.

With mounting financial irregularities and allegations tied to her spouse, Karandikar now finds herself in the crosshairs of internal scrutiny. The ACB is expected to further investigate whether there was any complicity or knowledge of the undeclared funds on her part.

Home guard enforces rules to DM & SSP

In a rare display of discipline and duty-bound resolve, a home guard posted in Mathura stopped the convoy of the District Magistrate (DM) and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), insisting that

no one was allowed beyond a designated barrier on the Govardhan Parikrama route due to restrictions on e-rickshaw movement during the ongoing Mudiya Mela.

The incident occurred

at the Bagdari Pyau trisection near Radhakund, where District Magistrate C.P. Singh and SSP Shlok Kumar, accompanied by other officials, were conducting an on-ground inspection of arrangements



for the fair. They were traveling in an e-rickshaw as part of their review of the Govardhan Parikrama Marg, which attracts thousands of devotees daily during the religious festivities.

As the convoy approached the restricted stretch, the home

guard manning the barricade halted their vehicle. Despite the officers introducing themselves, the home guard remained firm and cited clear administrative orders that prohibit the entry of e-rickshaws on the parikrama route for safety and crowd management. The very ban, ironically, had been enforced by the top officials themselves to ensure smooth movement of pilgrims.

Rather than showing displeasure, the officials appreciated the guard's adherence to the rules. SSP Shlok

Kumar even announced that the home guard would be formally felicitated for his integrity and commitment to duty.

Forced to respect their own rules, the officers changed their route and continued their inspection via an alternative path. Additional District Magistrate Pankaj Verma and other officials were also present during the incident.

The Mudiya Mela, which continues until July 11, draws lakhs of pilgrims. With such large footfall, enforcement of traffic and safety protocols has become a critical task.

3rd police suicide case in four days

A 45-year-old police constable, Mukesh Dev, allegedly died by suicide by hanging himself at his residence in New Police Colony, Andheri East, near Agarkar Bus Depot. Attached to the Armed Police Force of Marol (LA-4), Dev left a suicide note citing illness and family issues as reasons for his extreme step: "Children were not with me, and no one is responsible for my death. Illness and family issues led me to this decision."

The Andheri police discovered his body at 4 pm after neighbours, concerned by his unresponsiveness, alerted the authorities. Dev was rushed to Cooper Hospital in Juhu, where he was declared dead at 5.15 pm. An accidental death report has been registered, and investigations continue.

Dev had been battling jaundice for three months, which kept him off duty, and was also suffering from tuberculosis

and alcohol addiction.

His wife and children—a son in class IX and a daughter in class VII—had been staying with her parents, leaving him distressed. Dev's father, a retired assistant sub-inspector, lived with him. Previously, Dev served in the wireless department. This incident marks the third police suicide in Mumbai within four days, raising alarm over the mental health crisis in the force.

Ganesh Raul, 32, from Samata Nagar police station in Kandivali, died by suicide by jumping in front of a train at Nalasopara railway station. Initially considered an accident, CCTV footage confirmed it as a suicide. Hrithik Chauhan, 25, a recent recruit from 2023, died by hanging in Bhayander after his mother left for her village. The motives for these suicides remain unclear. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis recently



informed the Legislative Council that between 2022 and June 2025, 427 Mumbai police personnel died, with 25 by suicide.

Psychologist Dr Suresh Patil attributed such incidents to systemic issues. He said, "Police personnel have odd duty hours and face high work stress as they often do not get adequate leave. Alcohol and other addictions are also common. There is often a lack of coordination and communication between senior and junior officers."

Drugs & Energy drinks supplied in jail

What is going on inside Assam's jails? Jailer & warden are involved in anti-social activities to earn easy money.

A surprise inspection by Nagaon Deputy Commissioner Debashish Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Swapnaneel Dekha exposed rampant illegal activities inside Nagaon Central Jail, where drugs were being supplied to inmates

by two security personnel.

According to officials, the two personnel identified as Patangi and Hazarika were allegedly supplying drugs to a convict named Salim, who is said to be running a large-scale drug network from within the prison.

"We came for a sudden visit. What we witnessed was shocking. Patangi and Hazarika were bringing in drugs from outside and handing them

over to Salimuddin. If they are tipped off about inspections, they hide everything beforehand," DC Sharma said.

Three canteens are operating inside the jail where items like fish, meat, cold drinks, and energy drinks are easily available.

Jail Superintendent Mukul Bhuyan has been accused of shielding the illegal activities.

MF manager with 200 identities in laundering scam



The Enforcement Directorate has alleged that Viresh Joshi, former fund manager of Axis Mutual Fund, received Rs 91 crore from suspicious sources, which he has used to buy immovable properties in India and abroad. He is also alleged to have laundered funds by establishing more than 282 fake entities or individual mule accounts. Huge proceeds of crime were also routed through accounts belonging to Joshi's family.

The court accepted the ED's request and remanded Joshi to judicial custody. According to the

agency, he was working as the chief dealer of Axis mutual fund and had access to confidential information regarding the mutual fund's schemes and policies. However, it is alleged that he violated this trust by sharing sensitive information, causing severe financial losses to numerous investors.

The ED pointed out that the statement of Sumit Desai, one of Joshi's associates, revealed insights into the crime. The accused apparently arranged dubious trading accounts, said Desai, as per the agency.

It is further alleged that Joshi had received Rs 91 crore from various unknown entities or individuals in various accounts of the family members of Joshi. After detailed analysis, the ED claimed that

certain individuals were involved in a synthetic scheme to launder the illicit proceeds collected via multiple channels.

"It is revealed that certain individuals opened accounts in the name of fictitious entities or persons. Large sums were credited to these accounts from various sources (like shell firms) and shortly after, a significant portion was transferred to the accounts of Joshi's family members," the ED said. The money was then diverted to Joshi, it added, alleging that Rs 2.4 crore was transferred from his accounts to buy property abroad.

In her statement, Joshi's wife gave details of nine properties, which he bought between September 2017 to July 2020. Two flats each in World View tower and Trump Tower, and a property in Karjat are among the assets.

200 men forced 14 year old for months



In a case of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, 10 persons have been arrested for kidnapping a

14-year-old girl from Bangladesh and pushing her into prostitution. The girl was rescued recently from Naigaon during an Vasai-Virar operation by the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the Mira-Bhayandar (MBVV) police, with assistance from NGOs Exodus Road India Foundation and Harmony Foundation.

Of the 10 persons arrested so far, six are Bangladeshi nationals, and two of the accused women, aged 32 and 33, are suspected of facilitating the girl's illegal entry into India. The victim was allegedly trafficked to different locations, including Navi Mumbai, Pune, and Nadiad in Gujarat.

The victim ran away from home

out of fear over her academic performance. A Bangladeshi woman lured her and illegally transported her to Kolkata. From there, a broker flew her to Mumbai.

She was handed over to Mohammad Khalid Abdul Bapari, 33, a Bangladeshi national, who kept her in Navi Mumbai. It was there that she was allegedly raped and forced into prostitution. When she resisted, she was subjected to severe beatings and torture, leaving burn marks on her body. The police officials said the girl may have been given hormonal injections to induce premature puberty and sedatives to keep her from running away.

In Nadiad, she was placed under the control of brokers Pritiben

Mohida and Niket Patel. During her three-month stay in the state, she was reportedly raped by at least 200 men. The police sources said customers paid between Rs5,000 and Rs15,000 per session, but the victim was only given Rs500 for each encounter, with promises of being sent home soon.

The victim was eventually rescued after an NGO received information about her plight. Authorities have so far arrested nine persons: nationals Bangladeshi Mohammad Bapari, Juber Sheikh, Shamim Sardar, and Ruby Bapari; and Indians Ujwal Kundu, Parveen Kundu, Pritiben Mohida, Niket Patel

and Sohel Sheikh, all in their 20s and 30s.

A police team has been dispatched to Ahilyanagar for further investigation. Naigaon police inspector Abhijeet Madke said more arrests are anticipated as the investigation progresses.

Karnataka: In Primary school dropout rate is best in the country. But in Secondary 2nd highest

Karnataka has the second-highest dropout rate in secondary education in the country, according to a Unified District Information System for Education (UDI-SE) report released by the Centre. Karnataka's dropout rate for classes 9 and 10 is at 18.3%, just below West Bengal's 20%.

The dropout rate is the proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are no longer enrolled at any grade in the following school year. Curiously, Karnataka's dropout rate in primary classes is 0—the best in the country, along with states like Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. Karnataka had a 1.7% rate the previous year.

In upper primary, Karnataka's dropout rate is 2.1%, among the best. At the secondary level, the

dropout rate alarmingly balloons to 18.3%, sharing the dubious slot with Arunachal Pradesh.

Other states with a score of more than 15% are Assam (17.5%), Meghalaya and Mizoram (17.4), Gujarat (16.9), Madhya Pradesh (16.8), and Andhra Pradesh (15.5). However, Karnataka has improved over the 2023-24 dropout rate of 22.09% when it was the third and trailed behind Bihar and Assam.

Ironically, Karnataka is one of the states where the percentage of schools available is more than the percentage of students enrolled, implying “underutilisation of available schools leading to suboptimal economy to scale”.

An official from the school education department argued that the UDISE data is not validated.

Yet the dropout rates in Karnataka are high, partly because the state has a disjointed system with primary schools, elementary schools, and high schools working separately, forcing students to jump from one school to another, creating gaps. Most states are

consolidating,” said the official, adding the class 10 exam fear could be driving the dropout rate higher.

“Availability of schools at different levels with adequate facilities, including teachers, influencers the enrolment and completion of schooling. Though we have a large number of primary and higher primary schools, the commensurate increase in secondary and higher secondary levels did not happen. Secondly, incentives such as bicycles were stopped, which were very useful for students to access the school. We have less focus both in terms of investment and planning for the universalisation of secondary and higher secondary education in the state as compared to elementary said VP Niranjan Aradhya, development educationist.

“We need to think of more incentives for girl students, especially from marginalised communities like SCs, STs, OBCs and the Muslim minority. A special focus needs to be on Kalyana Karnataka. A roadmap for seamless universalisation of school education from pre-primary to class 12 should be the top priority and need of the hour for the state,” he added.



Main zinda hoon: Septuagenarian's plea to bungling bureaucracy

With folded hands and tears welling in her eyes, 70-year-old Ram Dulari stood before government officials at Bakshi Ka Talab tehsil in Lucknow. Her voice quivered as she uttered words no living person should ever have to say: "Sahab, I am alive. Yet my pension has been stopped. Please start it again."

For the past one and a half years, Ram Dulari has been running from office to office, trying to convince authorities that she is not dead. On paper, the Social Welfare Department had declared her deceased, abruptly cutting off her pension. For a woman who survives on that small monthly support, the declaration was nothing short of a cruel joke.

Her neighbours in Chakbankat village of Daulatpur vouch for her

existence, but government records say otherwise. The result: endless rounds of bureaucratic red tape. "I do not have anyone to take care of me. That pension was my only support. Now I am forced to beg officers to accept that I am alive," she told locals who had gathered around her outside the tehsil.

On August 18, her plight finally reached the ears of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) during the Samadhan Diwas grievance hearing. Moved by her desperation, the SDM directed the Social Welfare Department to immediately look into the matter and restore her pension. He also ordered an inquiry into how and why her name was struck off the list of beneficiaries. "If anyone is found guilty, action will be taken," he said firmly.

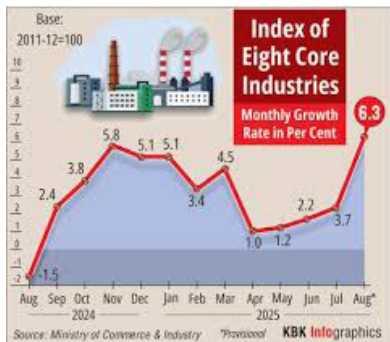


But for Ram Dulari, it has already been a long ordeal.

What should have been a straightforward welfare benefit turned into a nightmare. For over a year, she has lived under the shadow of a bureaucratic death certificate-alive in flesh and blood, but erased in files and registers.

The incident underscores how the poorest citizens often suffer the most due to clerical errors and indifference. A small pension, meant to provide dignity in old age, becomes a battleground for survival.

August records high growth in key sectors



New Delhi: India's eight key

infrastructure sectors grew at a 13-month high of 6.3% in Aug 2025, driven by expansion in coal, steel, and cement production, according to official data released. Core sector output growth stood at 3.7% in July and (-)1.5% in Aug last year. A similar pace of 6.3% growth was last recorded in July 2024. During April-Aug of this fiscal year, the eight infrastructure sectors expanded 2.8%, compared with a 4.6% rise in

the same period last year. Coal, steel, and cement production rose 11.4%, 14.2%, and 6.1%, respectively, in Aug, data showed. Refinery products, fertiliser, and electricity output increased by 3%, 4.6%, and 3.1%, respectively, during the month under review. Commenting on the data, Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ICRA, said that aided by a low base, year-on-year growth in core output improved to a 13-month high.

Key lending rates cut by RBI rational: SBI study

New Delhi: An SBI study release stated that there is merit and rationale for the Reserve Bank to reduce the key benchmark lending rate by 25 basis points in the forthcoming monetary policy, as retail inflation is expected to remain benign even in the next financial year.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has already reduced the repo rate by 100 basis points since Feb, amidst declining consumer price index

(CPI) based inflation. After reducing the repo rate three times in a row, RBI hit a pause button in Aug.

The Reserve Bank Governor-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which decides on the interest rate, is scheduled to meet on Sept 29 for a three-day deliberation. The decision will be announced on Oct 1. "There is merit and rationale in going for a Sept rate cut-... This will but require calibrated communication

by the RBI as post June, the bar for rate cut is indeed higher," said 'Prelude to MPC Meeting', the research report from the State Bank of India's Economic Research Department. It further said central bank communication is a crucial toolkit for monetary policy and post-June policy, such communication has played a major role in yields hardening.

Doctor without certification in ICU



A serious lapse has emerged involving Dr. Bharat Chandrakant Sawant, who was found working in the ICU of BMC's VN Desai Hospital without registration from the Maharashtra Medical Council (MMC) a

mandatory requirement for medical practice in the state. Despite being barred from VN Desai Hospital once the issue came to light, Dr. Sawant allegedly continued to work at other civic-run hospitals and draw salary.

According to sources, he served on contract at two other BMC hospitals without valid MMC registration, earning lakhs in salary raising major concerns about the civic body's vetting process for contractual medical appointments.

On August 5, The media reported that contractor Sai Sanjivani Polyclinic had deployed Dr. Sawant to treat critical patients in VN Desai Hospital's ICU despite his lack of MMC certification.

Records show that during the COVID-19 period (2021-2022), Dr. Sawant worked as a Resident Doctor at R-North ward hospital, where he earned over Rs 7 lakh. More recently, between April and June 2025, he served as a House Officer at Jogeshwari Trauma Hospital and received an additional Rs 2 lakh from BMC.

Shockingly, despite MMC registration and valid degree certificates being mandatory for all medical appointments under BMC subject to strict verification Dr. Sawant was able to secure multiple roles. The revelation has triggered a wave of scrutiny and criticism.

A health activist expressed alarm: "Dr. Sawant handled critical patients. Citizens trust municipal hospitals to be staffed with qualified professionals. It's deeply disturbing that someone without registration was allowed to treat patients."

The activist further questioned the BMC's inaction: "Since the BMC has acknowledged that the doctor submitted a forged certificate, why hasn't an FIR been filed? Even the legal department consulted did they not recommend criminal proceedings?"

Following the exposé, the BMC suspended all pending payments to Sai Sanjivani Polyclinic and issued two show-cause notices, with a third reportedly underway.

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The Importance of

...from pg 34 necessity for all nations. Millions have died for it. It is no doubt a kind of idolatry which it would be a sin to destroy. A flag represents an ideal. The unfurling of the Union Jack evokes in the English breast sentiments whose strength is difficult to measure. The Stars and Stripes mean a world to the Americans. The star and the crescent will call forth the best bravery in Islam.

It will be necessary for us Indians-Hindus, Mohommadans, Christians, Jews, Parsis and all others to whom India is their home to recognise a common flag to live and die for.

An early design of a national flag was shown to Gandhiji by a young man called Pingali Venkayya of the National College, Masulipatam. Improvements were subsequently made on it at the behest of Lala Hansraj of Jullundur (now Jalandhar) who suggested that the flag should carry the spinning wheel on it. Gandhiji said: "India as a nation can live and die only for the spinning wheel." The spinning wheel, or the charkha, symbolised industry, production and the economy. The colours chosen for the flag were white, green and red.

The original concept was not then adopted by the Indian National Congress but such a flag came to be hoisted whenever Congressmen gathered at meetings. To preserve the honour of the flag men and women courted imprisonment. In Indian political history, the Nagpur flag satyagraha is a milestone. It was led by Seth Jammalal Bajaj who was arrested and sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 3000. Over a thousand other Congress volunteers were also arrested. After that, hoisting the national flag became an important part of all Congress meetings.

For all that there was dissatisfaction about the design of the flag and a committee was formed by the Congress to look into the matter. When the All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay on 6-8 August 1931 under the presidency of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, an agreement was finally arrived at. A resolution unanimously passed declared:

The National Flag shall be three coloured, horizontally arranged, as before, but the colours shall be saffron, white and green in the order stated here from top to bottom with the spinning wheel in dark blue in the centre of the white stripe, it being understood that the colours have no communal significance, but that saffron shall represent courage and sacrifice, white, peace and truth and green shall represent faith and chivalry and the spinning wheel the hope of the masses. The proportion of the flag should be three to two.

This flag became the official flag of the Indian National Congress: however, India had to wait till 15 August 1947 to have its own national flag at last.

-Your loving Ajja

Out of fear, man grabs viper to death



For nearly half an hour, a small mud house in Tisgana village of Lalitpur echoed with cries of fear. Inside, 32-year-old Govind, a daily wage labourer, clutched a four-foot-long snake with his bare hands, weeping uncontrollably, convinced that the reptile had sunk its fangs into him.

It began as an ordinary Sunday evening. Govind was folding bedding when suddenly, from inside the sheets, the snake fell on him. Shocked and trembling, he instinctively grabbed it by its hood with his left hand. But instead of

throwing it away, his terror only deepened.

“It has bitten me... save me!” he screamed, collapsing to the floor. His mother and brothers rushed in, only to find him sobbing, the snake tightly wound in his fist.

“I was so scared, I could not even go near my son,” his mother recalled, tears in her eyes. “He kept saying again and again that the snake had bitten him. I begged him to throw it away, but he would not. He was terrified.”

Neighbours gathered outside, stunned by the sight. Some shouted that he should let go, others prayed. But Govind refused to open his fist. For nearly 30 minutes, he wrestled with the snake as it struggled. In the end, the reptile went limp, its life squeezed out by his iron grip.

Only then did the family manage

to take it out from his hand and rush him to the community health centre. On the way, Govind kept repeating, “Doctor sahib, save me, I have been bitten!”

At the hospital, doctors examined him thoroughly. To his family’s relief, there were no bite marks. “There was no evidence of a snakebite,” said Dr Veerpal Singh of Madawara CHC. “We explained this to him, but he was so traumatised he did not believe us. He kept pleading to be saved.” On the family’s insistence, he was referred to the district hospital.

Even though doctors declared him safe, Govind’s fear has not gone away. Back home, his brother keeps reminding him that the snake never bit him and his mother sits by his side, consoling him. But Govind still whispers in fear, “It has poisoned me... save me.”

Crime confession after 50 years

After nearly, five decades of legal wrangling, a 71-year-old man from Gwalior, Kanhaiya Lal, stood before the Chief Judicial Magistrate in Jhansi and confessed to theft and embezzlement from a cooperative society, a crime committed in 1976.

“I am tired. I am now 71 years old and have grown weary of appearing in court again and again. I no longer have the strength to fight this case. I confess the crime, and I want it to end,” Lal told the court, his voice laden with resignation

The case had dragged on for 49 years. Lal, was one of three employees accused of misappropriation and forgery at LSS Cooperative Society in Bamanus village of Jhansi,

The then-secretary of the society,

Bihari Lal Gautam, had filed a complaint in 1976 alleging that Lal, along with colleagues Lakshmi Prasad and Raghunath, had stolen a receipt book and a wristwatch valued at Rs150. Investigations revealed that forged receipts with fake signatures had been used to collect Rs 14,472 from society members.

Lakshmi Prasad alone was accused of embezzling Rs 23,887.40.

All three men were arrested and later released on bail. Over the years, Lakshmi Prasad and Raghunath died, leaving Kanhaiya Lal as the sole surviving accused. He continued to attend court hearings regularly until 2012. A non-bailable warrant was issued against him in 2021, and charges were re-framed soon after.

On 2nd August, Chief Judicial Magistrate convicted Lal under multiple sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Taking into account his age, health, the time already spent in jail, and his voluntary confession, the court imposed only a fine — Rs 2,000 in total. Upon payment, he was allowed to walk free and return to his home in Gwalior.

Legal experts said the case highlights the severe backlog of cases burdening the Indian judiciary.

“This pendency of cases is not unusual in our judicial system,” said GS Chauhan, a senior advocate in the Lucknow High Court. “The only solution is to establish more courts at the district level, strengthen the lower judiciary, and ensure time-bound disposal of cases.”

The Importance of Flags and Banners

My dear Gauri,
On Independence Day everywhere in India we fly the national flag, don't we? It is the symbol of our sovereignty, our very existence. The national flag stands for the nation and its honour. To defile the flag is to defile our honour. Men have fought and even died, for it.

Flags and banners were not unknown to ancient India, but there never had been a common flag for all of India till we attained independence. The Sanskrit word for a flag is dhwaja and flag salutation is dhwajavandan. A banner is known as ketu. The Rig Veda makes two references to dhwajas, both in the plural which would suggest that many principalities had their own flags. The Atharva Veda makes a reference to a flag with the device of Surya (Sun God) on it.

Our Gods, too, had their flags each with a special symbol. Siva's flag had the bull on it, Vishnu's had Garuda, Indra's a sword, and Kama's a fish.

In Puranic times, Arjuna's flag had Hanuman on it, Aswattama's a lion's tail, Bhima's a lion, Bhishma's a palmyra, Duryodhana's a serpent and so on. Salya's flag featured a ploughshare and Yudhishtira's a moon.

Before the British came and took over the country, there were many Indian rulers each of whom had his own flag. When the British became

the rulers, they imposed the Union Jack on the country.

When our independence movement began, there naturally was a desire to have a purely Indian national flag. The question arose: What should it be? Many patriots must have given thought to it. The greatest ferment in India around the turn of the century was in Bengal, which had been partitioned by Lord Curzon. That was the beginning of the swadeshi movement. To rally the Bengali people against partition, someone designed a flag. To this day no one knows exactly who designed it, but the first 'national' flag in post-1900 India was hoisted by the people of Calcutta at what was then known as the Parsi Bagan Square. It was on 7 August 1905.

This flag was a tricolour: red, yellow and green in that order. The red band at the top had eight white lotuses in a row. The yellow band in the middle had Vande Mataram inscribed on it in the Devnagari script, embedded in blue. The green band at the bottom had a shining sun on the left and a crescent moon and a star on the right. It certainly was a very complicated flag indeed!

Two years later another flag was born, but it was hoisted for the first time not in India but in Stuttgart, Germany, by Madame Bhicaji



Dr. M. V. Kamath

To keep the association with late MVK alive, and to keep the Last page going, we are falling back on MVK's writings. His book – Letters to Gauri – includes some of his brush with historical wisdom. We are reproducing them with some sequential order for the benefit of our readers.

– Editor

in Devnagari script. The green band at the bottom contained the sun on the left and a crescent moon and a star on the right. Madame Cama herself designed the flag which was flown in Stuttgart on the fourth day of the 12th International Socialist Congress and subsequently shown elsewhere as in London in February 1909.

Still later, other flags were designed. There was the so-called Home Rule flag designed by Dr Annie Besant which was not acceptable to many because it also showed the Union Jack-the British imperialist sign-on it.

When Gandhiji first came on the political scene, he wanted a national flag for all nationalists to rally round. He wrote:

A flag is a to pg 32...



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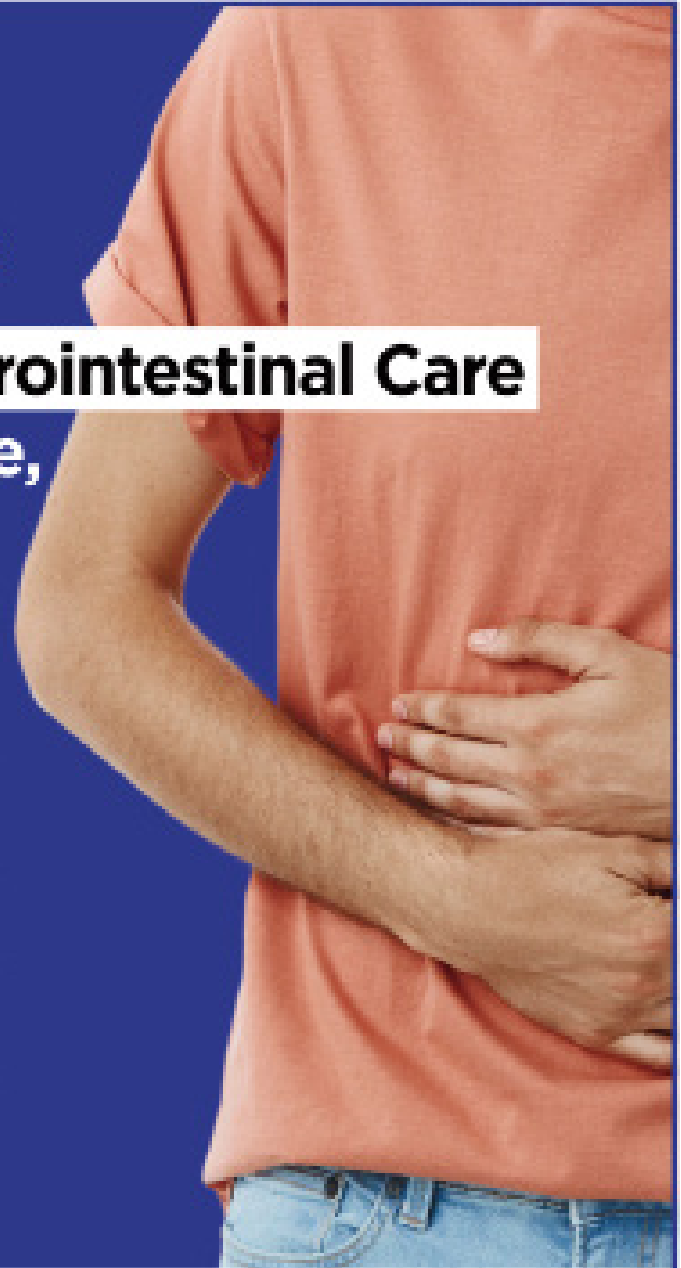
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