

T JOSEPH BENZIGER



TO YOUTH
ON
Self Development
Human Rights

Brought out by:
Dynamic Youth Online Magazine
www.dynamicyouth.org

FOREWORD

Change as a catalyst, has always been an invariable aspect of life. The present world is what it is because of the unfathomable changes it has been subjected to, and the changes it has been causing. Change is considered a symptom of life. The strength of living beings is gauged in the light of their ability not only to change themselves but also to face, accommodate, overcome and withstand changes occurring on their paths. Another relevant ability is to create positive changes and influence the world to progress.

Leaving alone the changes introduced by Mother Nature which are cosmological, the humankind also causes changes by invention and intervention, though their pace, intensity and significance have varied greatly. The countless changes like beginning to stand erect, learning to use fire, organizing social life, trying to cultivate land etc, have improved the standard of life. The development of science and technology has brought wonderful facilities within the reach of us.

While most of the changes have spurred us to move in the right direction, we have also experienced negative impact because of many changes. Our developments have placed many things in our hands that are at once advantageous and harmful; protective and destructive; safe and risky.

The speed of changes has been progressively increasing. If it had been several thousand years for man to increase the speed of his movement from three miles to thirty miles, it has taken only less than a century for him to increase his speed from hundred miles to supersonic levels!

On one hand the negative possibilities of the development of science and technology are increasing, on the other their onrush is becoming very fast. While the science and technology places enormous power in the hands of man. It is also increasing the possibilities of his self-destruction! This perilous situation is the concern of Human Resource Development.

To possess and manage the extraordinary power and countless possibilities, man must have a conviction to be good and strong. We want selfless men with great values to lead the peoples of the world safely further on a developmental path. Selfish and ruthless men would simply rock the boat of human life in this planet and can even cause its extinction.

This highlights the importance of Global Youth Development. Our youngsters are our only hope. They should imbibe noble values and understand the nature of changes taking place around them. They should be capable of eliminating negative tendencies and influences that are spreading fast and gaining ruling power in many parts of the world. They should develop courage and strength to achieve this. They should understand that means are equally important as results --*nistraigunya* as expounded in Gita.

Many organizations and individuals are, therefore, tirelessly working to educate the Global Youth and help them in their Self Development. The **United Nations Organization** has embarked upon a number of projects for Youth Development, especially in the developing countries. But if one is aware of the engulfing evil forces, it would be clear that whatever is being done is far from satisfactory. The poisonous factors like Poverty, Unemployment, Drug Addiction, Militancy, Human Trafficking, Corruption, Fanaticism of many kinds, and Disharmony developed by vested interests are capable of leading our Youth to destructive ways of life.

The balanced concern of **T Joseph Benziger**, the Editor of the Dynamic Youth online Journal towards the Youth is well known. His monthly letters to the Global Youth equip them with the knowledge essential to them to avoid the evil and adopt the good. His essays on the matters of topics of Self Development, Human Rights and Global Peace would create in the Youth an awareness of what is happening around them, which is so important to them to lead a meaningful life. I am sure this book would create an awakening among the Youth and enable them to grow as prosperous global citizens.

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Preface

Global Youth are our only hope for future. On their healthy development rests the universal harmony and global peace longed for by all the responsible leaders everywhere.

The modern world is in need of great contribution from the youth. They have to grow strong with noble value system. They have to remove the cobwebs especially in social and political organizations and ensure that they would not bother them again. They have to work for installing a corruption-free government so that the benefits of scientific and technological developments reach all. They have to reform the existing systems and procedures and ensure that justice is available not only to the rich and strong but also to the poor and weak without delay.

The youth would be able to live peacefully and prosperously only if they study the existing problems and their reasons well. If they have to achieve their aims, they should take conscious steps to improve themselves physically and mentally. They should also understand the importance of human rights for the peoples of the world and why many people are prevented from enjoying them as a matter of fact.

Dynamic Youth online magazine is dedicated to Global Youth Development. In this book, I have compiled my monthly letters to the global youth and the essays on various subjects in Self Development and Human Rights. I hope the information given and the ideas conveyed in this book would be helpful to them in consolidating their strength and emerging as responsible citizens.

Serving their Mother Land is the first step for them to evolve as global citizens. The spirit of patriotism and social service will lead them in the path of love for humanity and universal harmony.

I am aware that the contents of this book look more like 'samples' than exhaustive treatises on the subjects touched upon. I realize that there is a large scope for saying more on each subject. This book is a humble effort to give hint of some relevant areas of interest to the global youth.

I do crave for a better world for them to prosper and flourish. As Franklin D Roosevelt said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth; but we can build our youth for the future."

If we can save the youth energy from being dissipated by negative and fissiparous tendencies, if we can harness it for the right purposes, if we are honest towards our youth, if we can give them proper orientation, I am sure they would bring about universal harmony and establish global peace.

I hope this book to be just a beginning of a significant mission.

T Joseph Benziger

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PART I – SELF DEVELOPMENT

A. LETTERS

October 2007

Dear Youth of the World,

Today I am extremely happy in reaching you all through this new magazine **Dynamic Youth**.

Dynamic Youth is *not* just another magazine. It is an expression of our dedication to **Global Youth Development**. Through this we extend our hands to you, offering good wishes and friendship; expressing care and concern for your progress and prosperity in life; promising to be of your mouth-piece for ever; and assuring you of our sincere efforts to deliver relevant expertise and wisdom needed by you; being of help to you in facing the challenges of life.

We shall highlight the innumerable opportunities available to you and strive to provide the much-needed training. We shall warn you when you are heading for a disaster due to lack of down-to-earth knowledge and experience. We shall rejoice with you when you have achieved something and pushed the horizon of human wisdom furthermore. We shall celebrate when you have broken old records and set higher limits than what we were able to.

My dear youth, all these statements are truthful; they are as natural and spontaneous as a mother caressing her baby. You are our hope for the future. We want to leave a safe world to you; and we want you to be capable of not only surviving in it but also to enjoy your life there. We want you to be in a position to improve it much more and leave it for your own posterity. We want to pass on all the invaluable, eternal heritage and legacies received by us to you with some positive addition by us; if not, at least in their original form. We want you to be mentally and spiritually powerful and energetic, in short, 'Dynamic'.

Our love and affection towards you are ineffable. This beautiful world and the wonderful life in it brought us together. We have a joint commitment. Please reciprocate our love by beautifying this world better than we did; and make the life here on this Mother Earth more enjoyable.

Wishing you all the best,

November 07

Dear Youth of the World,

All of you would have seen the inaugural issue of Dynamic Youth. The response from various parts of the world has been amazing and greater than our own expectation. Apart from the general congratulatory messages, there are several constructive suggestions on how Dynamic Youth should spread its wings and fly around the world.

A single suggestion that has impressed us the most, not only because of the number of persons making it but also because of its inherent truthful force, is to become powerfully global in presence, content, presentation and reach.

For example, this is what a friend has written from United States:

The magazine looks great and I look forward to learning more. I am sure the Editor plans in future issues to post articles and news information from around the World highlighting the diversity of culture and thought of the youth and communities across the globe.

Really, I was surprised. How could our inner thoughts, objectives and ambitions register in the minds of so many well-intentioned friends in different parts of the world and come back to us like echoes, to reinforce our commitments!

My teachers have taught me something wonderful. Whatever a person truthfully offers to others with love comes back to him manifold. Dynamic Youth offers its services to Global Youth whole-heartedly, and see, it is wanted everywhere. People around the world are already busy assigning job charts for Dynamic Youth. We accept it as our Labor of Love.

We are happy about this overall acceptance of Dynamic Youth as a global magazine. We would exert ourselves to the maximum extent to play the role as effectively as possible and prove ourselves worthy of trust and goodwill reposed in us.

If Dynamic Youth should fulfill our mission and your expectations, we need your participation. Please write to us all about the issues of youth from anywhere in the world. Share all your ideas having a bearing on Global Youth Development.

I would like to invite your attention to my articles on 'Why not Wife be Head of her Family' and 'Age of Attainment of Majority' published last month. These

relate to issues, which call for concerted efforts in a particular direction. I request the readers to share their opinions on these and similar issues with us.

We ought to share knowledge among ourselves in a number of areas and strive towards emergence of collective wisdom. However, I would invite the attention of all of you to another area that could not brook any lethargic approach. You would have definitely understood, - it is about Climate Change. This issue, referred to as Global Warming also, is assuming disastrous proportions. It threatens the very existence of living beings in our Mother Earth. We should tackle pollution and misuse of natural resources and so on contributing to Global Warming effectively at international level. We are misusing natural sources to such a level that now natural systems are in danger. I request you to give some special attention to this issue and share your ideas with us.

We promise you; we shall take every-one of them seriously, discuss those, consult experts, formulate ways and means and give meaningful expression to them. If necessary, we shall reach formally any international forum or any local government on your behalf. I have this single request; please, be communicative and let us have our hotlines open always.

Wishing you all the best,

December 07

Dear Youth of the World,

A beautiful bud I noticed yesterday evening when I entered home, has blossomed into an enchanting flower this day morning. Waving in gentle breeze it greets me.

The white cow of my neighbor that was full with baby yesterday evening when I returned from office is now standing with its just born calf, proudly licking it with motherly love.

So early in the morning, Ashwin, the darling child of my friend, in his birthday dress comes running to me offering sweets.

Murugan, the newspaper boy, comes 'flying' in a brand new bicycle busily shooting the dailies and weeklies to their destinations inside the gates. What happened to his noisy, rusty old 'bike'?

Suddenly I remember, I have to speak today on the Annual Day celebrations of the neighborhood school.

The world is moving. It is moving fast and without a break. The vibrations of the movement are felt in all of its parts, near and far. Each one of us experiences it in and out. We are part of it.

Are we moving gracefully, keeping pace with the times? Or, are we being dragged helplessly, like a reluctant child being taken to school?

Are we contributing our mite and taking part in the movement with genuine pride? Or, do we live like parasites thriving on others' labor?

Are we the carriers of brightness, enthusiasm and joy? Or, do we carry the loads of ignorance, misery and laziness?

A King placed a huge barrel at the entrance of his palace and asked all his courtiers to pour a cup of milk in it early in the morning, for poor children. Each courtier thought that while all others were going to pour milk, his pouring of a cup of water would go unnoticed. Alas, in the morning there was only water in the barrel!

What is going to be our contribution to the world that has been offering so much to us? Milk or water?

Helen Keller said, "The world is moving not only because of the mighty shoves of its great heroes; but also by the tiny pushes of honest workers."

About a dozen ants are moving a grain with great effort. You could see each one is lending its might unreservedly towards the movement. No over-smartness is there. We see only team spirit and best efforts. Can we claim the same thing for human group efforts?

How much we contribute is secondary. The truthfulness and willingness do matter the most.

And then, there is a special thing which deserves mention. The 82nd annual meeting of the Association of Indian Universities took place in the Anna University, Chennai on 26 - 28 November 2007. One hundred and twenty Vice-Chancellors from India and a number of foreign dignitaries attended the meeting. The main theme was Higher Education. Though the discussions were basically in Indian context, the impact of globalization formed the core of the proceedings. As the event was very relevant to global youth in general and Indian youth in particular, Dynamic Youth extensively covered the entire proceedings. I made use of this opportunity to interview the Vice-Chancellors and the foreign dignitaries. The reports of interviews which I am sure would be of great use to you, will be published in the ensuing issues of Dynamic Youth.

Wishing you all the best,

January 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

Wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I wish that all your developmental plans for the year 2008 should be fulfilled successfully. Coming to fulfillment of plans, I want to tell you, all our life situations depend on three things. Our natural traits and abilities, opportunities we have now and then, and our efforts.

One may have been blessed with sweet voice; another person's voice may be cacophonous. One's hair may be curly; another may have flowing and straight hair. If only we care to think, we would be surprised about how many things have been simply bestowed on us. We begin our life just on given settings, upon which neither we had any control nor could we exercise any option. Somebody is favored with very rich surroundings and healthy family background; and somebody else is born in conditions of abject poverty and unhealthy, criminal environment. Though all the natural gifts do matter, neither we did have nor do have now any choice over them.

Secondly, the opportunities that seem to flow towards some persons in large numbers may not do so in the case of some other persons. However, opportunities are not entirely beyond our control. If we were alert, if we keep our eyes and ears open, we would not allow any good opportunity to slip through our fingers. At times, we can also create opportunities. We should not be timid or hesitant. We should be eagerly looking for opportunities that would help us. Such wakefulness would certainly bring good opportunities to us.

The third factor for fulfillment of plans is 'efforts'. By efforts, we mean 'doing our best' from the stage of conception to fulfillment. Good planning and efficient execution will certainly reward us with fulfillment of our plans. This factor is entirely in our hands. If a plan fails for want of adequate efforts, we shall have to blame only ourselves.

If gifts of nature are absent, if opportunities are not forthcoming on their own, we have no reason to grumble. Even a person, born with silver spoon in his mouth, whom his father-in-law elevates to the position of chairman of a group of Profitable concerns, cannot fulfill his plans without adequate efforts. Let us concentrate on our efforts and convert even hostile situations into hearty victories.

One more thing just now I had to regretfully add. In the long list of gruesome murders of human history, an addition has been made. I refer to the gory assassination of Ms. Benazir Bhutto on 27th December. There is no reason or objective under the Sun that could justify such an atrocity. My dear youth, such bad incidents occur because of loss of values and goodwill among the people. This is a subject worthy of cogitation by all of you. We should put an end to acts of terrorism and extremism by spreading human values.

I invite the attention of all of you, to a historical document published in this issue of Dynamic Youth. Representatives of youth organizations from Africa and Europe met from 5 to 7 December 2007 in Lisbon, Portugal at the Africa-Europe Youth Summit, on the eve of the second EU – Africa Summit of Heads of State. A declaration issued by this Youth Summit reads like a *vade mecum* for the global youth. Touching upon all the salient features of Global Youth Development, the declaration depicts the vision of the global youth about the peaceful world and prosperous future. I request all of you to read the document carefully and convey your valuable ideas as feedback to Dynamic Youth.

Wishing you all the best,

February 2008

Dear Youth of the world,

Arise! Awake! Stop not till the goal is achieved!

These were the words Swami Vivekananda spoke to us. They are ringing in our ears and will continue to do so for all the time to come. His birthday is 12 January. In India his birthday is celebrated as the National Youth Day. It commences celebration of the National Youth Festival till 16 January.

The greatness of Swami Vivekananda lies in the fact that he was not at all limited by nation, religion, race, color or any such thing that we see dividing people into watertight compartments. He emphasized realism. Impractical ideals were rejected by him. He observed, "No dogmas will satisfy the cravings of hunger." In him, we saw a man totally free from narrow considerations, showering love upon all beings.

His universal outlook and emphasis on fearlessness, hard work, dedication and humility continue to inspire the youth all over the world. All along he insisted on the importance of education to all.

He was much against the subjugation of women. He said, "That country and that nation, which do not respect women have never become great, nor will ever be in future."

If we should combine all of what Swami Vivekananda taught and mention one quality he held as the most important, it is undoubtedly 'Self Confidence'.

All of us should cultivate this quality, if we want to achieve our goals. Life is always changing. Nobody can hope to meet favorable situations always. We have to achieve our goals tackling successfully the inevitable ebb and flow of life. Once we have decided on the goals we should achieve, the only thing that will take us towards them is our efforts. The process may be long or short, challenges may be easy or tough, and things may move on expected or unexpected lines, our efforts should not stop. We may have to change our methods or we may have to opt for plan B or even plan C, we should never lose sight of our goal.

The call 'arise' refers to the summoning of all our resources, internal and external. If our thoughts are clear, if our plans are good, if we give ourselves

100 percent to the task, we would find automatically the power to achieve in ourselves. Haphazard, half-hearted or lethargic efforts would move us away from our goals.

And, the call 'awake' is not merely for getting up from bed. It refers to becoming more conscious of yourselves and your efforts. It is, kindling the fire of inner consciousness and concentrating your energy on achievement. By this, you direct all your energy towards your goal. You should put your heart and soul into it.

In the Mahabharata, there is a story to illustrate this point. Dronacharya was a great teacher of martial arts. The princes of Kuru royal family, the Kauravas and the Pandavas were his students. Arjuna, a Pandava prince, excelled in archery. The Kauravas were inimical to the Pandavas. They thought that their teacher had a bias in favor of Arjuna and that it was the reason for his excellent performance. Dronacharya knew this. He wanted to teach all the students a valuable lesson.

One day, he announced a competition. He fixed a toy-bird at the top of a tree in the midst of its vast branches. He asked the princes one by one to take aim at the eye of the toy-bird. When they were ready to shoot, he asked them what was visible to them. They were mentioning many things, like, the tree, its branches, its leaves, its fruits and so on. Some students said that they saw the bird. When it was Arjuna's turn, he took aim and said, "Guruji, now I see the eye of the bird. May I shoot it?" Dronacharya said, 'Yes.' and the next second, the arrow pierced the eye of the toy-bird.

Dronacharya addressed the students, "Dear students, now do you realize why Arjuna is better than all of you in archery. Only the object aimed at should be visible to you. If you include in your vision many other irrelevant objects, extraneous to your goal, you cannot achieve your goal."

If we allow too many things to distract us, if we do not give ourselves wholly to the project taken up by us, the goal will certainly slip through our fingers.

My dear youth, It is a matter of inner commitment and self organization. We should not fix our goals just casually; nor should we work without concentration. This is how we can maintain self confidence, remove obstacles if any and achieve our goals.

Wishing you all the best,

March 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

How does a human differ from other living beings? The first thing that comes to one's mind is the power of discrimination. Several gradually developed special features like ability to stand erect and walk on two legs are also there. There is a mixture of several attributes, which are gifts of nature and practices learnt and improved in the light of experiences. But above all these, there is one qualitative difference in man. That is 'thinking and acting to improve self and environment'. It is this basic quality of humans that is the root-cause for all the developments brought about by them in themselves and around them in the world.

Man, who once upon a time was naked and had nothing above his head except the sky, has visualized better and better things to wear and shelters to live. He has changed barren land as fertile agricultural land. He has removed countless dangers to his survival. His natural urge to improve himself and his environment has resulted in wonderful developments. But the scope for further improvements goes on expanding.

It is also true that many of the 'improvements' have yielded adverse effects. When motor vehicles were developed, there was no inkling about the dangers of pollution. When chemical manures were introduced, we missed the risks of adverse side-effects. So along with the comforts, several harmful by-products have grown as well.

Similarly, the very same things invented for self development, have turned out to be self-damagers! The facilities of Cinema, Television etc., have the potentials of immense benefits to humankind. They could contribute to developments of arts and spreading of knowledge. But they are used to poison the minds with sexual blunders and violence. The impressionable minds of the children and adolescents are spoiled beyond measure. The evil effects on society far outweigh the benefits earned out of many modern discoveries.

The idea is not to deprecate the scientific advances and technological improvements. We should find out the reason why a development meant for universal welfare, should become a danger for the humankind. Modern history has many examples of Frankenstein's monster in many areas of life. We can identify such twists in all fields, viz. religion, politics, education, industry and what not! Why these things happen? If the *sine qua non* of human being is thinking and acting to improve self and environment, why many progressive steps taken to develop self and environment should go awry?

The reason is, as we could see it, the advantages of noble initiatives are snatched away and exploited by selfish people. We sow good seeds in a highly inimical and unsuitable soil.

In forests the timid animals very often could not protect their offspring from the wild animals. Similarly, cut-throat commercialism, narrow regionalism, parochialism, racialism etc. easily gain command over the utilitarian mechanisms developed with noble intentions, thwart their original objectives and turn everything topsy-turvy.

Although **Alfred Nobel** (1833–1896) invented dynamite in 1866 for industrial purposes, he could not help his invention falling in the hands of war mongers; He realized, though belatedly, how dangerous inventions like dynamite might be used. That is why he set up a fund (with a bequest of \$9,200,000) out of which the Nobel Prizes are awarded to those who have done useful work for the welfare of the humanity in various branches of knowledge and service.

Such a great scientist, as Albert Einstein was, he could not prevent use of atomic weapons against the people, though he made an appeal to the President of US. It should be interesting to know, that Albert Einstein, who had studied and understood about the outer world, perhaps, more than anybody else in his times, had to observe, "The most important human endeavor is the striving for morality in our action. Our inner balances and even our very existence depend on it. Only morality in our actions can give beauty and dignity to life."

The morality Albert Einstein mentions about is nothing but absence of selfishness and truthful longing to work for universal welfare. It is not enough if we know our goal. We should be able to visualize it clearly in our minds. The stronger our mental vision, chances are brighter for it to become reality.

What should be our outer world, for our objectives to get fulfilled without any depravation? The great poet **Rabindranath Tagore** explains it for us:



Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free; Where the world has not been
broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth; Where
tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into
dreary desert sand of dead habit; Where the mind is led
forward by Thee into ever-widening thought and action

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Rabindranath Tagore
Geetanjali

**Let us visualize such a heaven of freedom for us to act. In such a place
rogue elements cannot exist. All our noble acts will blossom into our
everlasting gifts to our brothers and sisters.**

Wishing you all the best,

April 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

Joseph Naft in his Inner Frontier declares, "Commitment means that we know, in our heart of hearts, that we shall persevere in a course of action, come what may. Good parents are defined by their utter commitment to the welfare of their children, regardless of whatever challenges may arise...What causes us to commit ourselves to a course of action? In the case of parenting, it is love and conscience, knowing intuitively what's right, what matters. In the case of the spiritual path, it is the same. Love and intuiting the truth about our world bring us toward a stronger, more all-encompassing commitment to the spiritual journey."

All actions start with commitment. A commitment is what for and the extent to which we are determined to proceed and achieve. It can be an inner commitment i.e. what we tell ourselves as a self-promise; it can be external commitment when we promise others to get a thing done; or undertake to get something as a binding on ourselves.

Commitment is purely a conscious undertaking. Commitments can be logical or illogical; clear or confused; strong or feeble. But without a commitment there cannot be a good initiative.

Indian ancient literature refers to this inner commitment as a ***sankalpa***; and deals with it elaborately. The inner commitment is all the more important because, without this there cannot be an external commitment. Unless our inner commitment is logical, clear and strong, we cannot concentrate on the chosen task.

A right commitment is made only after a thorough analysis of our desire. Is it a reasonable desire? Even then, is it really needed? If so, how urgently it is to be attained? What is the price to be paid for? What are the indirect costs? Is it within our limits? Should we involve others on this effort? What are the probable side effects? Many such questions should be asked before a commitment is made. If only the answers to all these questions indicate a positive outcome, our commitment would be logical.

Is the result specific or not? Are we moving towards several possibilities? Is the method we have chosen the best? Shall we have to compromise in any manner in the course of execution? Is it to our advantage to get this? Is there any unexpected risk? Would we need any support from others? Is it available? Positive answers to such questions would make our commitment clear.

What are the difficulties we would face if we fail in getting this done? What are the benefits if we get it done? Positive answers to these questions would make our commitment strong.

Many failures are traceable to the lack of proper commitment. Very often we make a beginning on the spur of the moment, neglecting the important stage of commitment.

Commitment is an indispensable conscious action, and is the first part of planning process. A vague desire should not be mistaken as a commitment.

When we start doing something seriously, others assume that we have already committed fully to the task. If we give it up just like that, it would create a poor impression in their minds about our reliability. And, we shall have to blame only ourselves for this!

In any project, however well had we planned, it is possible that we meet a plateau and know not how to proceed further. All our resources may appear to have dried up. But if we are honest in our planning and efforts, if we believe in the universal love and harmony, if we sincerely look around, there is sure light and guidance. Again, in the words of Joseph Naft:

Desperation burns urgently and transports us to new peaks, but soon flickers. Commitment, however, remains for ever to warm and sustains us through the inevitable droughts. The basic longing behind both commitment and desperation moves us, offers us tastes of new worlds, and brings confidence in ourselves, in the path, and in the Higher.

Let us be committed to Global Youth Development and let each one of us work for the universal harmony, peace and prosperity.

Wishing you all the best,

May 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

There was a weaver bird. It had built a beautiful nest for itself in an enormous banyan tree on a river bank.

You know the weaver birds are praised as 'architects of the bird world'. Their expertise in building nest is so great that even snakes would find it difficult to enter into their nests. If the nest does not turn out to be to its own satisfaction, weaver bird would dismantle everything altogether and then start from the beginning. The nest would be warm in winter and cool in summer. It can withstand fairly strong winds too. There was a monkey loitering in that area. It used to be roaming from tree to tree. It did not know how to do any constructive work. Whatever he gets, he used to tear it to pieces and throw away. If it is an eatable it would eat haphazardly and throw the remnants all around. Totally, it was personification of indiscipline and irresponsibility.

One day it was raining cats and dogs. The monkey was fully wet. It came to the tree where the weaver bird lived. The weaver bird saw the monkey and really took pity on it. It told monkey, "Good Morning, Monkey sir, you are a big animal. You are able to do almost all of what men do. We are slender birds but still we construct a nest and live in it. I am sorry to find you so wet and miserable; but I am unable to help you in any way. Why don't you construct some small house and live in it like human beings?"



The monkey was arrogant. The arrogant are incapable of learning any good thing. He could not understand that the weaver bird was well intentioned and was giving some sane advice. Being a rogue, he could not appreciate

good things in life. He thought that the weaver bird was talking too much. He shouted at the weaver bird, "You impertinent fool, do you think you can advice me! How does it matter to you if I live in a house or in the open?" So shouting, the monkey tore the nest to pieces and drove the weaver bird from the tree.

Sometimes such things do happen. With best of intentions you do something very good to others. For somebody who is entrenched in knavery, all that would appear bad.

The weaver bird would never lose heart. Taking its lessons from the past, it would immediately start building a better nest. Soon, it would be sitting cozily inside its own nest built in a better manner. But alas! The poor monkey, which could never learn a good thing, has to continue to live its despicable life!

Dynamic Youth magazine has spread its powerful wings and is flying high in the air pleasantly greeting all of you, the Youth of the World; carrying messages of goodwill to you, educating and inspiring every one of you, and throwing light on the constructive path of success leading to prosperity and Global Peace. To some lowly, desperate individual, this must have been an eyesore! He had hacked our website in the first week of April 2008 and our readers all over the world could not view our magazine for about ten days.

Funny fellow, does he think that he could stop us? We are learning our lessons of life from Mother Nature, including the weaver bird. We are strongly committed to Global Youth Development, Universal Harmony and Global Peace.

Dynamic Youth's website was reopened for public view on April 16, 2008 and our readers have been sending messages in thousands conveying their support and encouraging us. This has redoubled our strength and spirit of dedication to Global Youth Development. And, here I am, thanks to the felon, sharing my lesson of weaver-bird with you all, with redoubtable aplomb!
Wishing you all the best,

June 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

Recently a thought-provoking narration had been posted in a human resource development forum.

Two tribes lived in a mountainside. One tribe lived at the bottom of the mountain and the other lived at a very high level, nearly at the top of the mountain. Unfortunately, both the tribes were always at war. The tribe, living in the heights, always had a strategic advantage at the times of war. Once they attacked the tribe living down in the mountainside. When they returned after plundering, they also kidnapped a baby.

Afterwards, the lowlanders assembled to examine the situation. The first task was of course to get back the baby. The job was entrusted to a group of ten able bodied men, who should climb up the mountain and somehow bring the baby.

The select group proceeded to climb up the mountain. The path was very steep and narrow. In many places they had to negotiate slippery boulders. At the bottom of their minds lurked a fear of the highlanders. They were going to enemy territory. How they were going to locate the baby? How strongly the baby would be protected? How they were going to break into the correct house and get hold of the baby? If a fight ensues, which was most likely, how could they save themselves and find their way downwards? They also feared that it would be more difficult while coming down the slopes.

They needed a whole day to climb up just about 300 feet. When they looked up, the path seemed endless. One of them said that they should have asked for more men. Another person said that a single baby was not worthy of such a serious expedition risking the lives of ten men. One went to the extent of suggesting that they might go back. The night was fast approaching. They decided to halt for the night. They spent the entire night restlessly worrying about their lot and having intermittent sleep.

The Sun rose brilliantly. They were about to make a reluctant start, when a man shouted in surprise, "Hey, look there!" All others turned in the direction shown by him, most of them fearing if the enemies were coming down to attack them. They could not believe what they saw.

The baby's mother was coming down, with her baby safe in rucksack, through the difficult mountain path, climbing up which had appeared impossible to them.

When she came down, one of the group members accosted her, "*Akka* (elder sister), I could not believe my own eyes! We found it extremely difficult to come this far! How did you achieve it alone?"

The mother tersely replied, "It is my baby."

Yes. It was her baby. Rescuing it was her personal mission. For others it was a task thrust upon them.

There have been instances, when it came to protection of offspring the mother animals have successfully fought with stronger groups of animals and driven them away. In such cases, inborn timidity and weakness vanish and in their place miraculously emerges a ruthless courage.

The secret is Personal Involvement. Whatever task or project we take up, we should do so only after becoming sure of our own personal involvement in it. Sometimes, we find ourselves accepting to do something in which we have no interest at all, for the sake of others, or without having courage to say 'no'; it is more than likely that we spoil it. What is more, we underutilize, if not waste, our own time in such tasks.

Here, I am not talking of whims and fancies. One should think practically and evaluate his own strengths and weaknesses; and identify the latent talents. As far as possible, we should try to engage ourselves in the work of our choice.

In many cases, what we get to do may not match with what we want to do. Even under these circumstances, we should develop a personal involvement in what we have to do, if we should do justice to our own potentials.

Personal Involvement may sometimes spur us to do a work successfully, as in the case of the mother referred to earlier. It may not happen that way always. We should consciously develop this important quality in all of what we do or have to do, by logical thinking. It is sine qua non of success.

Wishing you all the best,

July 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

She was the only daughter of a rich merchant, an innocent girl of eight years. There was a 17 year old boy servant in the house, whom she loved as her own brother. She used to call him *anna* (elder brother) and was full of affection towards him.

A few days back, the boy stole some money and was caught red-handed. While her father decided to send him away, she pleaded for him with tears; she was not for letting him go. Moved by her entreaties, her father allowed him to stay. After the annual vacation, her school reopened in the first week of June. She went happily to school; with sweet thoughts about new higher class, new teachers, new uniform, new friends and so on. She never returned.

Her parents searched for her everywhere. They complained to the Police. Missing the only angel of their family, all the members of the family suffered beyond words.

Next day, their neighbor got a phone call from the servant boy. He had kidnapped her and demanded a ransom of Rs.20 lakhs (two million); no clear directions were given. The boy must have been confused. The police caught him in a nearby town but he was giving many conflicting statements. He was taking them to several places. Finally, the police found the decomposed dead body of the girl hidden in a bush! The boy admitted that he had killed her by strangulating and then by dashing her head against a rock!

He said that he got the idea and inspiration to put it in action by seeing a Tamil TV serial. Many newspapers did not reveal this one detail. The newspaper which gave this information did not reveal which serial it was!

Media, especially the visual media is a powerful influence, especially on youngsters. The impressionable youth can be easily misled by it. In the interest of youth development, the information that the boy committed such a serious crime influenced by a serial, should have received wide publicity. The educational institutions should have raised their voice against not only that particular serial but also against all the serials falling under that category. It should have been discussed in all socially responsible forums. The political leaders should have come out with steps to curb such a menace. All the possible steps should have been taken to prevent such a thing happening again. But no

such thing happened. This news also was consumed by the public and government like a piece of routine statistical information.

Violence is taught systematically from various angles in the television serials and cinemas. The Police are shown as partnering with nasty politicians and criminals. Sadly, nobody thinks of their impact on the minds of the youth.

What I have mentioned above is not the first of its kind; many such horrible things have happened and the culprits have also said that they were influenced by this or that film or serial. This is also not going to be the last.

All the responsible people and institutions should realize that such apathy and inaction are quite detrimental to youth development.

I also appeal to you, the youth, to be careful about the bad influences affecting you. You should strengthen your will power; you should carefully choose the media that would help you grow as responsible citizens of the world. You should protest against the bad sources of influence and drive them away. If only you make them unprofitable, those money-chasers would shut their shops and start looking for some meaningful work.

Wishing you all the best,

August 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

All living beings are dominated by two senses. The first is the sense of 'self'. And, the second is the sense of 'others' or 'outside world'. My self includes what I am as a person, i.e. my body, my mind and so on. Whatever contributes to my personality is part of my 'self'. All the rest I see in the world are 'others' and are part of the outside world.

The term 'Life' has resisted clear definition. But we know that life expresses itself through interaction of 'self' with the outside world. My ceasing to live is marked by my ceasing to interact with others or with outside world.

Such interactions have been observed at physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual levels, i.e. at all levels of one's personality. The physical interaction includes respiration, intake and digestion of food, and sex. Similarly, my mental interaction includes my emotional exchanges, thought processes etc. Thus interactions at all levels of a living being are not proofs of only existence; they prove also meaningful living and evolution.

We cannot simply think of a living being, without ability to interact; leave alone its evolutionary progress. As such, if we want to live meaningfully and develop, we should regulate our interactions properly.

The subject of 'interaction' is vast and I do not intend dealing with it exhaustively here. I shall limit my discussion with an important aspect of it.

All of us, especially in young age, become impressed with somebody's speech, style, strength, power, ability etc. We are influenced by them and accept him or her as our role model. We try to follow them. We draw from the outside world, a select pattern of behavior or conduct or even a line of thinking and absorb it; and internalize it. This is called inspiration.

It need not necessarily be a real living person. Sometimes we accept the historic personalities as great persons and try to follow their principles and behavior. It can also be an imaginary character seen in a cinema or television serial. If the person is weak minded or ignorant, he gets influenced by wrong personalities, either real or depicted.

We inhale lungful of air from outside, use it, and exhale it; similarly, we take to our minds what we observe in some others and imbibe it; and make it a permanent part of our own personality. When we face challenging life situations,

we ask ourselves how that other person would behave; and we choose to behave like that as far as possible. The importance of such inspiration lies in that it does not simply affect one's behavior at a point of time; it molds one's attitude and makes him to behave in a particular way throughout the life!

We understand easily the need for inhaling pure air or eating nutritious food. But the need for becoming inspired by the right person for the right reason is not appreciated that easily.

All of us should examine ourselves and find out who are those, whom we are allowing to influence our personalities. We should also ask if those influences are really good or bad.

There are no rigid rules on how we should go about finding a person to influence us. But there are some fundamental principles in this. For example, can a Physics professor have a famous foot ball player as his role model? Why not? He can emulate the foot ball player in his team spirit or perseverance or concentration towards attaining his goal. Life is qualitative and multifaceted. So, we may draw inspiration from any person belonging to any field. It should be for a right reason and relevant to our goals in life.

Suppose there is a black marketer or criminal in my neighborhood, who is very rich and lives luxuriously. If I become impressed by his ostentatious life style and draw inspiration from him, I would soon find myself in criminal path. Especially in young age, anything clamorous or glamorous would easily appeal. So the youth should be intelligent and selective in becoming inspired by others.

Mahatma Gandhiji, while he was young, was inspired by the legendary character Harichandra, noted for his adherence to Truth. It helped him to become a Mahatma. While Shivaji was a child, his mother used to tell him the stories of great heroes of the ancient Bharat. This inspiration made him a great warrior.

There are many great people around us. They may be close to us in our family or official circles, or may be famous and distant. We should observe and study the people, not only those with whom we move personally but also those about whom we hear or read. We should try to become inspired by their good qualities. Not becoming inspired by the wrong people is also equally important.

Wishing you all the best,

September 2008

Dear Youth of the world,

This month of August has involved us in Beijing Olympics.

This international event taking place in the leap years is not just yet another sports program. This is a global movement, with particular relevance to the Youth.

Pierre Frédy, Baron de Coubertin, a Frenchman was responsible for reviving the Olympic Games. He was born in Paris in 1863. He was an excellent sportsman. He practiced many sports like boxing, fencing, horse-riding and rowing. He was Secretary-General of the Union of French Societies of Athletic Sports (USFSA).

Coubertin strongly believed that 'sports' was the source of moral energy. He worked hard for the revival of Olympic Games. Though his ideas were not received with much enthusiasm, he did not lose heart. At last, his untiring efforts succeeded. The new series of Olympic Games commenced in Athens in 1896.

It was Coubertin who visualized Olympic Games as a global effort towards peace and prosperity. All of us now see it that his vision has become true. Olympic Games have become a powerful instrument for bringing the peoples of different countries together at once with competitive spirit and goodwill. It is our duty to remember Coubertin and dedicate ourselves to the noble goals established by him for the humankind.

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

Pierre de Coubertin did not give just an ivory tower speech; he has given a clear-cut pragmatic philosophy to the humankind. He continued to work for Olympic Movement till 1925 and gave concrete shape to his ideas. He defined Olympism as consisting of certain principles, namely: It should be a religion i.e. to 'adhere to an ideal of a higher life'; It should strive for perfection; It should represent an elite 'whose origins are completely egalitarian' and at the same time 'chivalry' with its moral qualities; It should create a truce 'a four-

yearly festival of the springtime of mankind'; and It should glorify beauty by the 'involvement of the philosophic arts in the Games'.

As such Olympic Games represent much more than competitive sports events. The Olympic Charter declares, "Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles."

I wish all of you, the youth of the world, should understand the Olympic Games in proper perspective. Olympic Games emphasize value-based educational programs all over the world for ensuring global peace and prosperity.

In this Olympics Games the host country China has won the most of events and gained the highest number of gold medals. **But please understand that the real benefit for China is much more pronounced**; it lies in the fact that China has revolutionized its educational system making use of the opportunity it got to host 2008 Olympics. Here is what the Olympics Study Center has to tell us:

The world's largest-ever Olympic education program is being undertaken in schools throughout China, ensuring the Beijing Games leave a lasting legacy for the country's young generation. Embracing the Olympic spirit and values, it underscores the Olympic Charter's first principle, which states: "Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles."

The program, launched by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG) with China's Education Ministry and National Olympic Committee (NOC), is reaching 400 million children by integrating Olympic education into the curriculum of over 400,000 schools. Teachers are passing on the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect, while textbooks highlight the history of the Olympic Games, Olympic sports and the Olympic Movement's contribution to international peace and friendship. Foreign-language speech contests have also helped promote Olympism in schools.

A key plank has been the creation of Olympic Education Model Schools, to acknowledge institutions which have set the benchmark in providing Olympic education for their pupils. Since the December 2005 launch, some 556 elementary and secondary schools have been given the honor, almost one-third

of them in Beijing. Another element is an initiative entitled "Heart-to-Heart", through which over 200 Beijing schools have "adopted" sister schools in countries represented by an NOC, to share ideas and forge international friendships...

Jacques Rogge told the pupils: "The sports arena is like a classroom. There we learn to live together, in society; there we learn solidarity and friendship; there we learn respect for others: whether one is a boy or girl, short or tall, young or old, from Asia, Africa, Europe, America or Oceania. Sport is all these things. And it is also health." Li Binghua, Executive Vice-President of BOCOG, added his support, observing: "This initiative will leave a high-level educational legacy to China."

I request all of you to take note of what has been happening in China; and try to emulate it *mutatis mutandis* in your country as well, thus taking a firm step towards youth empowerment, global peace and prosperity

Wishing you all the best,

October 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

We celebrated the International Peace Day on September 21, 2008 all over the world under the auspices of the United Nations Organization.

The United Nations General Assembly declared an International Day of Peace in 1981, for commemorating and strengthening the ideals of Peace within and among all nations and peoples. After 20 years, the United Nations General Assembly declared September 21 of each year as the International Day of Peace. This year we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 60th anniversary of UN Peace-keeping. The International Peace Day is, therefore, of a special significance this year.

The concepts of Human Rights and Peace are like two sides of the same coin. Whenever a war disrupts the prevailing peace, the violation of human rights raises its ugly head almost automatically. After the Second World War was over, the world leaders had to openly admit that 'disregard and contempt for human rights had resulted in barbarous acts'.

The roots of all conflicts could be traced to the violation of human rights. When we think of violation of human rights, it need not be only those of very big proportions. Whenever a servant is harassed by his master, a poor man is scolded using vulgar words, a policeman uses filthy language against a street boy, a senior student insults a newcomer – in all such instances human rights are violated. Any behavior against the dignity of the other person is a violation of human right.

The human history is full of accounts of victorious armies behaving like barbarians in the fallen enemy countries. Even after centuries such arrogant behavior of the invaders would stay in the minds of the affected people; and they would do everything possible to punish the people who were responsible for the injustices perpetrated against them. Thus enmity between peoples of neighboring countries is perpetuated.

The genocides like the one organized by Hitler would stay as indelible blemishes of the humankind.

Speaking on the occasion of the International Peace Day, the United Nations Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon has effectively highlighted the link between the Peace and Human Rights. He said:

We know that human rights are essential to peace. Yet too many people around the world still have their rights violated – especially during and after armed conflict. That is why we must ensure that the rights in the Declaration are a living reality – that they are known, understood and enjoyed by everyone, everywhere.

Dear Youth, please understand that we should avoid completely even small instances of violation of human rights, at our homes, towns, public places, organizations and so on. The jokes of ill taste have very often led to communal clashes, causing loss of lives and permanent enmity between different sections of the people who ought to live together.

The following words of UN Assembly President Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann deserve to be respectfully imbibed by all of us.

We must never delude ourselves, or let others pretend, that peace is merely the absence of war or some exalted state of impassivity. World peace will only be achieved through active resistance to all that negates and diminishes human dignity.

We must think of millions of people who have had to cross national borders and seek protection as refugees; of millions of people suffering as displaced persons in their own countries; of millions of people who have become victims of sexually based violence, becoming increasingly common even among warring groups and communities; of millions of people deprived of food, water, shelter, sanitation and so on; of millions of displaced children separated from their parents, with nobody to care for them and nowhere to go. All these because somewhere, sometimes, human rights were violated by some arrogant people, thereby generating so much ill will and embitterment that could become blazing fires of war when circumstances would allow them.

Establishment of Global Peace will not be possible simply by stopping wars; we should go deep in finding out the cases of violations of human rights which originally caused them; and work for removing the earlier scars and developing harmony among the people, and restore human rights in a lasting manner.

In all efforts for Peace the human rights angle should not be lost sight of. United Nations Organization monitors the human rights situation and tries to restore balance wherever this sensitive subject is mismanaged. But the role of modern

youth in safeguarding human rights and dignity in all places is great. You should understand and appreciate the significance of interpersonal behavior and relationship; you should ensure that violation of human rights by irresponsible groups or persons is checked legally.

Wishing you all the best,

November 08

Dear Youth of the World,

We, human beings are multi-dimensional in all aspects. A number of wonderful systems are interlinked in us. We also find them inter-dependent, supportive among themselves and functionally correlative.

Such varied systems have been brought together to achieve self-correction and improvement to higher levels. A cycle of spur (usually desire) – action – experience – knowledge - improved spur enables us to go on improving or rising above. This is the Mother Nature's design for our evolution. And, we have been benefited by this all along.

A bad experience calls for analysis; it should enrich us with a better knowledge, which in turn motivates us to higher desires and more competent action and so on. If we do not learn from past mistakes, we are in fact going against the Nature's design, thereby spoiling us.

Our approach to life should be comprehensive. We may concentrate on any area of our choice, specialize in it; but it should not be at the cost of any other dimension.

What is the point if a man strengthens his body to amazing levels by exercises and nutritional food; but neglects his mental hygiene thereby spoiling his character. Soon, both his body and mind would become sick and all his efforts would go waste.

What good would happen to a person who is a genius with an unhealthy body? Before he could achieve anything using his brain, he would leave the world once for all!

Man is able to control several animals, which are stronger than him. If only an elephant has intellect proportionate to its physical strength, can we control it so easily?

The absence of a balance of mind very often leads to tragic happenings. Recently, there was news about one Karthik Rajaram, an engineer and manager by profession, killed all his family members and shot himself because he faced financial problems. Let us assume that he came down unexpectedly several steps in the financial ladder; should it push him to such a decision? Why at all he did all these?

One Hamad Lone wrote, "May his family rest in peace. How did he become a financier anyway?"

Another gentleman David H from UK wrote, "If personal wealth meant so much to this man, he should have been seeking psychiatric help. It is a shame that people base their inner security on wealth and material goods... It is a clear sign of insecurities and a lack of understanding of the true meaning of life. I feel very sorry for his family, but don't his actions just show what a miserable 'money obsessed' coward he was?"

The importance of money cannot be gainsaid. Karthik Rajaram was no doubt a brilliant student. His knowledge was merely a load on his head. The things he learnt by interacting with the world did not ripen his knowledge as wisdom. His intellect did not grow enough to discipline his mind when he had to face real challenges of life and lead him in the right path. The result, innocent wife and children had to die; and thus ended a brilliant man's life!

Dear youngsters, please establish a mental balance on a permanent basis. Nothing is worthy of attaining in this world at the cost of our mental balance. However strong we are physically, however great we are intellectually, if we fail to maintain a balance of body, mind and intellect, the changes in life conditions can easily knock us down, nullifying all our earlier achievements.

Our growth and development should not be lop-sided. Balance is the vital principle of life.

Wishing you all the best,

December 2008

Dear Youth of the World,

We all are always concerned about efficiency and productivity. Whatever be the work we are engaged in, it is important that we perform well and produce maximum output leading to maximum profit. In addition to the maximum profit, what we expect from our work is an inner satisfaction. The work should be enjoyable. This is referred to as Job Satisfaction.

When everybody agrees that job satisfaction and maximum profit are the declared objectives of our work, why not all of us simply attain them? Why many people miserably fail or lag behind on both counts? What stops or pulls us from behind?

If a horse can run at a speed of 30 miles per hour, what could prevent it from maintaining this speed? Weight. Yes. If we load a heavy rice bag on its back, can it run at its normal speed? The weight obviously would slow it down.

In our day-to-day life we commit the mistake of loading many unnecessary things upon our body and mind. Just check your handbag and see how many things are there that need not be there. We blunder more seriously in loading our mind with the burden of our negative past and imaginary future.

The time actually at our disposal is only the present time. We can only act in the present. By continuously acting in the present, we have already created our past. By acting in the present, we are going to realize our plans for the future.

We cannot move backwards and undo what we did in the past. We cannot move forward to tomorrow and do what we shall have to do tomorrow. We have to wait till the tomorrow becomes 'present' and offers itself to our work.

The lessons we learnt from our past actions are no doubt important to guide us. Similarly the plans we have for the future are also important to lead us to desired goals. But often we commit the mistake of allowing our past and future to nullify our present time.

We keep the sediments of the past in the form of regrets, resentments, grudges, arrogance, defeatist attitude etc. that sap our energy and drag us from behind. Similarly relating to future we allow the fear of future, doubts of failure,

suspicion of others, constant anxiety, negative expectations, imagined oppositions etc., to dominate our mind, weakening us thereby.

It is true that sometimes things may not happen as we expect them. We may have to change our course of action or even give up a plan. But by worrying about these things in advance, when they are not at all real, we would only limit our progress. We can cross a bridge only when we have reached it.

We should know the difference between cherishing the lessons of the past and living in the past; likewise the difference between being prepared for the future and being worried about the future.

If the mind is allowed to be sadly engaged in the past or to be unduly worried about the future, this mental weight would stop us from meaningfully using our present. And, this would reduce our efficiency and productivity.

We should be inspired by our past and be confident about our future. We should not harvest negative feelings from our own past and cultivate poisonous thoughts for our future. If we do not regulate our thinking process carefully we may fall prey to such parasitical thoughts that would enervate us. With enfeebled body and mind we can never reach our goals.

Let us jettison the unhygienic burden of past and future from our physical and mental systems. Let us become free and powerful. We should be raring to go and achieve.

Wishing you all the best,

January 2009

Dear Youth of the World,

If one evil eats at the moral fiber of human life in this world that could be termed as Mother of Evils, it is 'corruption'.

As a political maxim declares, 'Power corrupts and the absolute power corrupts absolutely'.

The International Day against Corruption, 9 December, is an opportunity for all of us to rededicate ourselves to fighting this crime. On this day let us realize that we are personally responsible for ending corruption in all parts of the world.

Corruption spreads faster than cancer among the people in power and position; it strengthens itself by emergence of unholy alliances and criminal gangs. In many countries the political structure has become corrupt from top to bottom and lost its moral right to wield power. But there is no authority to control it. Even judiciary some times finds itself at the mercy of the ruling criminals and as a result corruptive politicians spread like parasites in all sections of the society.

They enter the fields of education, industry, agriculture, entertainment and even religion; and swindle public money without compunction.

The honest officials are threatened to submission easily because the dishonest elements in police and the criminal gangs compete to serve the politicians. If some courageous official resists he is taught an unforgettable lesson and is made a non-entity in the department.

Here and there a few cases of corruption are booked; but the manner in which they are dealt with is far from satisfactory. The case is prolonged for several years. Very often the official, who is kept under suspension in the initial stages, resumes service and hampers the progress of the case. They engage efficient criminal lawyers and escape the clutches of law making use of the loopholes available.

If this is the position with regard to officials, it is worse in the case of politicians. They are booked only if some other political party happens to be in power and if they have no friends in that party. Money is not a problem for them and the cases are prolonged for decades. At long last if they are punished, which happens only in the rarest of rare cases, again they dodge the law by way of

appeals. If any of them is ultimately imprisoned, they can always come out by securing remission of the remaining period of imprisonment.

The United Nations Organization has taken a few initiatives to eliminate corruption. But in the absence of any independent authority, the matter is left in the hands of local politicians; it is something like entrusting the key with the thief!

The people who take resort to corruption come under two major categories. The first major group is the third rate politicians, black marketers, unscrupulous businessmen, arms smugglers, drugs peddlers and so on. These people force corruption in all the departments by offering favors and by creating terror in the minds of the officials. Thus corrupt sections emerge in all the departments and they thrive by cooperating and conniving with one another.

The other category belongs to the officials who delay their work, make the people suffer financial losses and other inconveniences and thus force them to come forward offering bribes to them. There are no adequate rules or guidelines to ensure that the problems of the people are sorted out in time. In the absence of effective supervision by higher-ups or with their connivance, corruption flourishes in various departments.

My dear youth, the Augean stables of corruption can be cleared only by you. Please take initiative wherever necessary to snuff out the evil of corruption. There is nothing what could improve this world more than this.

Wishing you all the best,

PART I – SELF DEVELOPMENT

B. ESSAYS

Human efficiency

T.JOSEPH BENZIGER

High efficiency of human beings is more important than that of machines. We may classify human efficiency into physical, mental and intellectual efficiencies.

Unlike human beings, the efficiency of machines does not generally differ among themselves. Efficiency of the same type of machine of the same capacity manufactured by the same company is usually the same. But the efficiency of even twin brothers of the same height and weight may vary drastically depending upon their physical, mental and intellectual training and practice. So, more attention needs to be given to train persons to develop their physical, mental, intellectual efficiency. Scientifically efficiency is output divided by input.

Physical efficiency of a person is his physical output divided by the physical input by way of food. The food consumed by a person can be calculated in terms of calories. Each item of food has its own calorific value. Physical output from the person is the work done by him. The work done by a person can also be measured in calories. For functioning of our body, calories are required. So from the food consumed by a person some calories are used for the internal functions of the body and some calories are used for the external work done by the body and the balance calories will be accumulated within the body.

The internal calorie consumption is naturally fixed for all. Efficiency is reflected by the ratio of external use of energy. So the more external work one does his efficiency is more. In other words his physical efficiency increases with the increase in external output. But there is a limit for the external work, which can be done by a human being. If there is no external work the output is zero, which means the physical efficiency is zero. But it is not possible for a person to live without external work because moving his hands, legs, etc. are also external works.

For a person to be healthier his physical efficiency should be higher because the physical efficiency increases with increase of external work. The more external work a person does his health will increase. He should consume food just to have enough calories for the internal requirements of the body and for the physical work output done by him.

If a person consumes more food and does less physical work, body cannot burn the extra calories generated by the food and it will accumulate within the body by way of fat, cholesterol, etc. This is not good for the health of the person. Excess consumption of food will lead to obesity, diabetes, heart problems, blood pressure, etc. So in order to have a healthy life one should have high physical efficiency, which means one should do lot of physical works. As far as possible carry out the physical works in such a way that is beneficial to livelihood. If it is difficult to carry out physical works which are very much beneficial to livelihood, at least carry out the physical works like walking, cycling to go to school or their work place, etc. which will at least save the cost of fuel for them. It also has social benefits like reduction in atmospheric pollution and road traffic congestion etc. If walking and cycling are not possible, at least opt for some physical exercises or engage in sports to keep the body fit. Higher physical efficiency is a prerequisite for having a sound body. A sound body is necessary to have a sound mind, which is also a must for high intelligence.

Mental efficiency is the efficiency of the mind, which is important for both the physical and intellectual activities of the person. High mental efficiency is a prime requirement to have high intellectual efficiency. When a person comes across a new incident for the first time, he has to use his intelligence and take decision after thinking about its pros and cons. But when he comes across the same incident second time he will not take as much time as during the first instance to take decision. Thus when the same incident occurs many times he develops a habit and in turn takes instant decision even without thinking. An example for a habit is applying break in a vehicle. During learning, the driver thinks and then applies the break, when somebody comes in front of the vehicle. But as experience increases, he develops a habit of applying break without thinking when somebody comes in front of the vehicle.

If a person develops good habits he will be able to get the appreciation of good people and the good habits will help him to achieve high intellectual outputs. Though it is possible to change a habit it is very difficult.

Phobia is also connected with the mind. It is possible to change the phobia. Development of self-confidence is very much important to achieve goals. If one person thinks he cannot achieve, he will not achieve it even if it is very easy for him. So develop the habit of thinking positively and have a feeling that nothing is impossible. This feeling will help the person to work very hard in the right direction and motivate him to achieve it.

Intellectual efficiency of a person is his intellectual output divided by the intellectual input. In practice we come across many highly educated persons with more than one post-graduate degrees and going on spending their time in

accumulating knowledge by reading books, browsing internet, attending seminars/lectures, watching videos, movies, visiting different places, talking to intellectuals etc. They feel great and happy because they are knowledgeable and because of this great feeling they go on spending their time only in accumulating knowledge and not even thinking of any intellectual output. General Public also feel such persons are intellectually very efficient and great. Their intellectual input is very high and day-by-day it is increasing. They do not realize that since they have not made any intellectual contribution, their intellectual efficiency is zero and that their intellectual efficiency will improve only if they increase of their intellectual contribution. What is the use of going on accumulating knowledge when the knowledge accumulated is not giving any benefit? It does not mean one should not accumulate knowledge. But there should be output from the knowledge accumulated by each person. The intellectual efficiency of a person is higher only when the benefits coming out from the knowledge accumulated by him is more.

Foot Note

The quantity of the food consumed by a person can be converted into **calories**. For more details about the conversion of food into calories kindly visit the websites below.

Sources

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Sure Success Formula

T. JOSEPH BENZIGER

Everybody likes to be successful not only in their minor activities but also in life in general. Success is not something like winning a lottery. Winning by chance is not at all the real success. The real Success is achieved by setting a very high goal and by persevering and adopting proper strategy.

Goal: Everyone should set a goal for his or her life. A person without a goal is like a ship in the midst of the ocean without orientation. The goal will show direction to a person. Every person should have an ultimate goal for his life and can set a large number of short-term goals on monthly basis, yearly basis, quinquennial basis etc. An example of lifetime goal for a schoolchild may be that he should become a leading physician and get Nobel Prize. An example for long-term goal may be that he should get the State-first in 10th and 12th examinations. An example for yearly short-term goal may be that he should get the first rank in the school. Goal setting is a very important one. A lot of factors are to be taken into account while setting goals. Before setting goals, one should dream, imagine and put a lot of thinking about what he wants to achieve. Some amount of calculated risk is to be taken in setting a goal. One should not set his goal in such a way that he would be always within his comfort zone. If one has to achieve higher results, he should stretch out from the comfort zone. Recently in a lecture, Ms. Indra Nooyi, the Chief Executive Officer, Pepsi Co, stated that the inordinate pressure she had to face was the main reason for her individual growth. The pressure to achieve or to return to India by next boat pushed her ahead to achieve. The more a person stretches out from the comfort zone the higher will be his achievement, but the risk is also higher.

Strategy: For achievement of the goal, correct strategies / plans are required. One should analyze his strengths, weaknesses, **opportunities and threats** while formulating the strategy. Formulation of correct strategy is very important for success. Logical thinking without yielding to temptations and contingencies to be adopted in case of failure of one or more activities are also to be devised, during the formation of strategy.

If the goal is extremely a big one, the risk involved is correspondingly high. While formulating strategy it is a must to believe that the goal will be certainly achieved. Only if full belief is there, the mind will be seriously involved in formulating the best strategy, by analyzing all the pros and cons of each activity. If the sub-conscious mind feels doubt in achieving the goal, then naturally the mind will not be seriously involved in forming the best strategy and may in addition formulate an alternative shadow-strategy for a possible hidden goal,

which is lesser than the original goal; which the sub-conscious mind feels to be achievable. If there is a hidden goal, the mind will not force you to exert your full strength to overcome the hurdles which occur on the way. The mind will tempt you to follow the hidden strategy at the sight of slightest hurdle.

So it is a must to have a 'do or die' policy in order to achieve the goal. In such a case mind will not oscillate to find out an escape-route, come what may. The mind will certainly invent some ways and means, as 'necessity is the mother of invention', to break the hurdle and proceed forward in the direction of the set goal. 'Do or die' policy is like a person jumping over a deep well. He knows that if he does not cross the well in one jump, he would fall into the well and die. So he will exert himself fully and cross the well.

Let us think of an actual episode from the History of Britain. When Julius Caesar landed on the shores of Britain with his Roman legions, he took a bold and decisive step to ensure the success of his military venture. Ordering his men to march to the edge of the Cliffs of Dover, he commanded them to look down at the water below. To their amazement, they saw every ship in which they had crossed the channel engulfed in flames. Caesar had deliberately cut off any possibility of retreat. Now that his soldiers were unable to return to the continent, there was nothing left for them to do but to advance and conquer! And that is exactly what they did.

In order to achieve the goal one should develop full confidence that he would certainly achieve the goal. He should not think of any other alternatives. The mind has enormous power to overcome any hurdle, however big it may be, if only there is a felt-necessity. Create such a necessity in order to achieve the goal.

Tiruvalluvar says: One should clearly analyze and decide the purpose, the instruments or methods, the time, strategy and the place, before executing a project. (Tirukkural 675)

In the example of the student selecting the school for his studies, deciding how much time he should spend in studies, sports, extra-curricular activities etc. is strategy. These strategies should be changed/modified depending upon the outcome in order to achieve the goal. In the case of the student whose long-term strategy is getting State-first in 10th and 12th standards, he has to change the strategies by increasing the duration of study, spending less time in hobbies, going for tuition etc., if his class test marks are not very high. During the formation of strategy, time frame for each action should be clearly identified. A PERT/CPM network is to be framed during the formulation of strategy which will help in monitoring the progress of the project in achieving the goal.

Action: The strategies formed should be put into action correctly in the right time. Will power is very much essential to carry out the activities correctly in the right time as per the strategy. Correct strategy alone cannot achieve the goal. Correct strategies followed by correct action in the right time are very much essential. Action is the most vital element in achieving the goal. One may come across many hurdles/failures while carrying out the activities. In such cases, the correct contingencies are to be followed by re-working of the strategy on the basis of the outcome and the experience gained during that period. A revised strategy is to be framed on the basis of the outcome and the experience gained. In order to get motivation for carrying out the activities correctly in time, visualize the losses and the problems to be faced if the activity is not carried out correctly in time, and also visualize the benefits and happiness to be enjoyed if the activity is carried out correctly in time.

Result: The outcome is the result. Compare the outcome with the goal. 1) If the outcome is the same as the goal, it is called success. 2) If the outcome is lagging behind the goal, it is failure. All successful persons treat failures as stepping-stones, take them as feedback, and change the strategies with the experience gained. After forming the fresh strategies put them into action and get the result. This time the possibility of success is very high because the strategies are modified with the previous experience and the previous experience helps in carrying out the actions correctly. 3) Do not commence the action again without changing the strategy because if the strategy is not correct, the possibility of again and again getting the same result is very high. So do not keep on trying with the same strategy. Some people will give up their action once they come across failure. This is the real failure. There is a famous saying that "**No failure is failure unless one stops trying**".

A successful person is one who takes failures as stepping-stones and keeps on trying with modified strategies based on the feedback from the experience till he succeeds.

Foot Note:

Comfort zone is the zone where a person normally lives without any risk or difficulty. One cannot achieve great goals if he is always within his comfort zone. In the example of the student if he likes to live a comfortable life by spending a lot of time in entertainment, playing and enjoying with his friends and not spending required time in studies, by not stretching out from the comfort zone, he would be unable to achieve State-first in 10th or 12th examination.

PERT/CPM is Program Evaluation and Review Technique and Critical Path Method. It is a very good technique for monitoring the activities of the project. For further details visit

Sources

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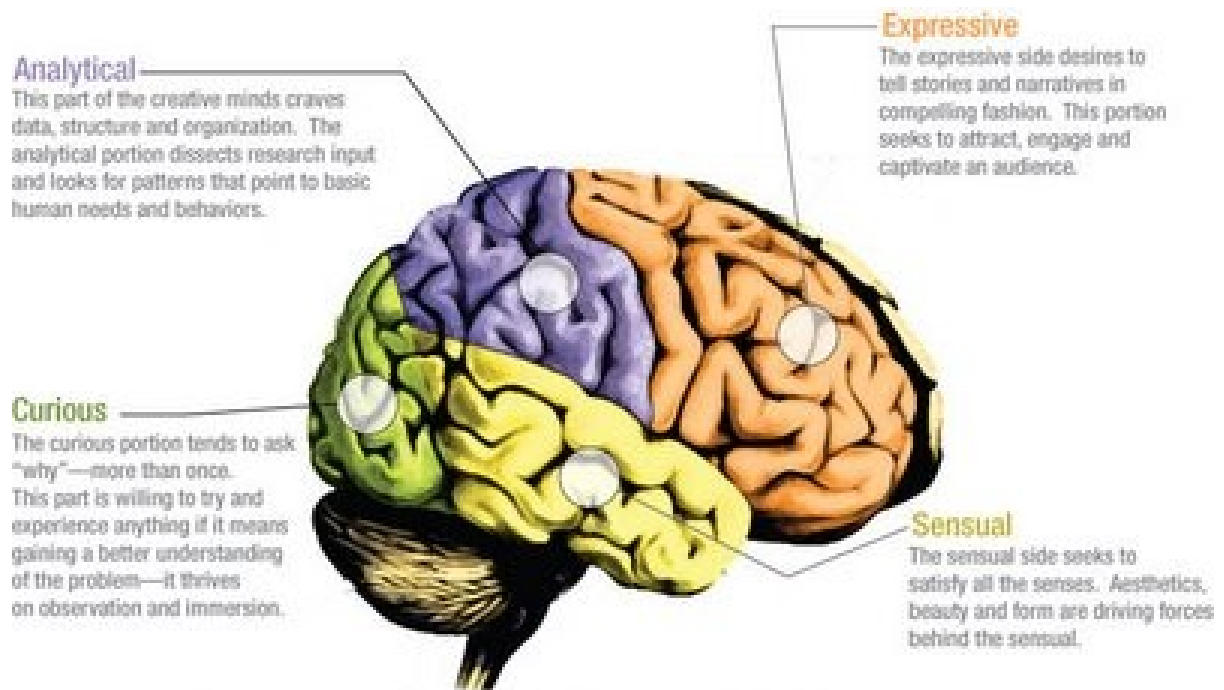
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Useful Tips about Brain

T JOSEPH BENZIGER



Anatomy of the **NEW** Creative Mind

With consumer behavior evolving toward a more empowered status—the definition of creativity has shifted from one-dimensional skills to a four-dimensional type of creativity that blends logical thinking with creative problem solving. Individuals possessing this "New Creative Mindset" blend Analytical, Expressive, Curious and Sensual qualities into their thinking process. **The result is a holistic approach to creativity that is effective across multiple touchpoints and experiences.**

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Human brain a very complex organ, enables us to think, feel, see, hear, taste, smell, move etc. It controls the body, receives information, analyzes them, orders other parts of the body to act appropriately based on the information received and stores the information as memory. The brain produces electrical signals and communicates them throughout the body.

Our brain, like the rest of our anatomy, is made of two halves (**hemisphere**), as **left and right sides**. A big fold goes from front to back in our brain. It divides it into two distinct and almost separate parts. A thick cable of nerves at the base connects them to each other. This sole link between the two giant processors is the **corpus callosum**. Think of it as an Ethernet cable or network connection between two incredibly fast and immensely powerful computer processors, running different programs from the same input. Communications link on each side of the brain functions independently. The functions of each side of the brain are as given below.

The left side of our body is "wired" to the right side of our brain, and vice versa. It applies even to our eyes, which process a majority of their sensory data on

opposite sides of the brain whereas both sides of the brain shares sound perceived by both ears, sensations on both sides of face, pain, hunger.

Our personality is the result of the degree to which these left and right brains interact, or, in some cases, do not interact. It is a simplification to identify "left brain" types, who are very analytical and orderly. We likewise certainly know of the artfulness, unpredictability and creativity of "right brain" types. However, each of us draws upon specific sides of our brain for a variety of daily functions, depending on such things as our age, education and life experiences. The choices of 'which brain is in control of which situations' forge our personalities and determine our character.

Experiments show that most children are highly creative (right brain) before entering school. As our educational systems place a higher value on left-brain skills such as mathematics, logic and language than drawing or imagination, only ten percent of these children will be so creative by age 7. By the time, we are adults, high creativity stays in only two percent of the population

Adding creativity to studies

In order to increase the efficiency we should use both sides of the brain to the maximum extent. When we use both the sides of the brain simultaneously, we will not get bored and we can concentrate on the work very effectively for a long time.

An example is how some children are very much fond of playing computer games. They can continuously play the game for four to five hours without even bothering to visit restroom or to take food. This is because when they are playing computer games both sides of their brain are working simultaneously. They use left-brain continuously for taking decisions about the strategies of the game and the right brain for the pictures, designs and colors in the screen. As they use both the sides of the brain simultaneously and very effectively, they can concentrate on the video games for a long time. The same children cannot continuously sit and concentrate for even two hours during study. The reason is when they are studying they use mostly their left side of the brain and use the right side of the brain to a lesser extent, if at all. This causes boredom and they are not able to study continuously for a long time. If we devise a method to use both sides of the brain simultaneously, like in the computer games, students can concentrate on studies with great interest for hours together. This, we can achieve by adding scope for creativity in studies. Compared to reading, preparation for seminar, project works, research etc. involves creativity along with logic. Students, who are engaged in this kind of activities, do not get boredom. So adopt strategies to use both right and left sides of the brain during

studies to facilitate concentration for longer duration for scoring very high marks.

The conflict between left and right sides of brain

The left and right brains not only see the world in vastly different ways but, in our current society, the left side just "doesn't get" what the right side is all about. It tends to dismiss anything significant, coming into consciousness from its "flaky" cranial twin. Sometimes two sides can actually disagree, resulting in emotional turmoil due to the expressive protests of right brain.

Our conscious mind can only focus on data from one side of the brain at a time. We can switch from one side to the other very quickly (with our corpus callosum intact) but that is not always the most efficient way to act and eventually ultimate authority to enter consciousness settles with one side of the brain or the other. In our modern world, mostly left-brain wins this battle.

Many people never reach their maximum potentials due to the compromises they have made in the functioning of the two side of the brain. Sometimes the skills, which the right brain can command better, are compromised by the left-brain by handling it routinely with less skill.

Both parts of brains work in tandem in people with optimum mental ability. Such coordination is the key to superior intellectual abilities. In most people, however, the left-brain takes control, choosing logic, reasoning and details over imagination, holistic thinking and artistic talent.

Following is an example of right-brain-left-brain conflict. Read the color of the words very fast (not the word).

Black, yellow, white, red, orange, green, rose, violet, magenta, indigo, blue, purple, yellow, red, orange, black, green, violet, blue, red, white & black.

The faster you read the more would be the conflict between the right side and left side of brain. The left-brain tries to read the words by recognizing the spelling, while the right brain induces you to read the words by recognizing the colors.

When you are reading the above, you are giving work to both the sides of the brain simultaneously.

Methods are there to 'shut off' the left side of brain, allowing the right side to have its way. Creative writing courses often use this method to combat 'writer's block'. The logical left side is easily bored by lack of input and tends to 'doze off' during such activities as meditation (repeating a mantra or word) or in sensory deprivation environments. The right side brain is then able to 'sneak' into our consciousness, filling our minds with emotional and visual vignettes and freely associated images. All too quickly, though, the left side will assert itself and dispense with these irrational images, asserting dominance and the right side will have to be content to find expression in dreams.

Facial expressions are nothing more than skin and muscle being pulled or flexed as directed by the brain. Our facial nerves effectively divide our face into two separate sides, each controlled by the opposite side brain. Facial expressions are the earliest form of communication. Experiments conducted on all ages and cultures around the globe have revealed that there is universal agreement to some basic emotional facial gestures.

The brain and spinal cord are made of many cells, including neurons and glial cells.

Neurons are cells that send and receive electro-chemical signals to and from the brain and nervous system.

There are about 100 billion neurons in the brain. There are glial cells, which provide supportive functions to the neurons, and are far more numerous than neurons.

Neurons transmit nerve signals to and from the brain up to 320 kph. Unlike other cells, neurons cannot re-grow after death.

The Brain and Intelligence

There is a known correlation between brain size and intellectual ability. Homo Erectus, our distant ancestor, had a brain size of about 1200 cc. Modern Homo Sapiens have an average brain of about 1400 cc. Oddly, the Neanderthal people who failed to evolve into humans already had a brain size of 1500 cc -- larger than modern man. Obviously then, it is not only how big the brain is as much as how it is configured. This is further evidenced by the fact that we have known genius brains measuring as small as 1000 cc. and as large as 2000 cc.

Increasing brain size was a risky endeavor for human evolution. The brain requires a highly stable temperature and a supply of high protein and energy. One quarter of our caloric intake is used for brain energy consumption.

Ancient beliefs about Brain

It was the Pythagorean Alcmaeon of Croton (VI and V centuries BC), who first considered the brain to be the place where the mind was located. In the IV century BC Hippocrates, believed the brain to be the seat of intelligence. During the IV century BC, Aristotle thought that, while the heart was the seat of intelligence, the brain was a cooling mechanism for the blood. The phrase 'memorizing by heart' came to vogue because of the belief that the heart was the seat of intelligence.

Source

<http://gigamaster.blogspot.com/2008/01/creativity-right-brain-vs-left-brain.html>

I want to build a billion tiny factories, models of each other, which are manufacturing simultaneously. . . The principles of physics, as far as I can see, do not speak against the possibility of maneuvering things atom by atom. It is not an attempt to violate any laws; it is something, in principle, that can be done; but in practice, it has not been done because we are too big.-

Richard P Feynman, Nobel Prize winner in physics

Nanotechnology is the engineering of functional systems at the molecular scale. This covers both current work and concepts that are more advanced. In its original sense, 'nanotechnology' refers to the projected ability to construct items *from the bottom up*, using techniques and tools being developed today to make complete, high performance products.

Nanotechnology has not yet become common discipline. Even for some of the scientists and engineers, Nanotechnology proves to be tough to define. For scientific research studying small objects is nothing new. What could not be seen by human eyes has always been very relevant for scientific research. We have studied minute objects and even invisible things through powerful microscopes and dealt with a number of problems in physics and medicine.

'Nano' denotes a factor of one hundred crores or one thousand million. A nanometer refers to the one thousand millionth of a meter. A Nanosecond is one thousand millionth of a second.

One hundred nanometers is ten millionth of a meter. The technology that helps us in studying the dimensions and tolerances of less than one hundred nanometers is Nanotechnology.

The International Standards Organization has defined a meter as 'the distance traveled by light in vacuum during a time interval of $1/299\,792\,458$ of a second. There is nothing perhaps to relate a nanometer to any everyday object for a common man. Nanotechnology thus deals with the smallest part of a matter we can manipulate.

So it is not a matter for surprise that many of us think that nanotechnology is a futuristic science. But in fact Nanotechnology has become very relevant even now. Almost every year a Nobel Prize goes to an achievement in nanotechnology! A number of companies, small and big, are already active in nanotechnology. The applications of Nanotechnology have already found their way in the production of many products like automobile parts, clothing etc.

It should be understood that nanotechnology is not *per se* an industry. This is an enabling, general purpose technology that helps us to apply our knowledge of the nano-scale to various industries like improved drug delivery mechanisms (pharmaceutical industry) or production of nano-clay particles for plastic industry.

Nanotechnology enables us to understand how Mother Nature functions at the smallest scale we can think about.

One of the popular applications of nanotechnology is insertion of a nano-machine into human body (miniature submarines in our blood stream) to identify a diseased cell and repair it.

Our ability to understand and copy our Mother Nature in Her power to work at nano level is just in its infant stage. The work of viruses and bacteria and the complex mechanisms of immunity provided in the bodies of living beings are amazing applications of nanotechnology. It may take decades for us to understand a minuscule part of it.

In the broad term Nanotechnology are included many existing technologies treated with our newly acquired ability to understand and manipulate at the atomic scale.

The significance of Nanotechnology to the field of business lies in the possibilities of reducing cost of production. We may be able to find much more efficient catalyst in the chemical industry; or we may develop more efficient drug delivery mechanisms. A significant effect of Nanotechnology is coming together of a number of scientific disciplines (like Physics and Biology) that remained isolated so far.

Nanotechnology offers growing opportunities in the field of research. Many universities and other institutions have come forward to teach Nanotechnology. But in the absence of well qualified professors and fully equipped laboratory, they may have to stop with teaching theory. This will not help students.

For running a good teaching and research program, a laboratory may need, *inter alia*, scanning electron microscope, scanning probe microscope, atomic force microscope, high resolution transmission electron microscope, X-ray photo electrometer, X-ray diffraction machine, very high vacuum physical vapor deposition system and a particle size analyzer. These may cost about Rs.10 crores (about \$ 2.5 million).

Some things that become practical with mature Nanotechnology (paraphrasing Dr. K. Eric Drexler)

- Nearly free consumer products
- PC's billions of times faster than today
- Safe and affordable space travel
- **Virtual end to illness, aging, death**
- No more pollution and automatic cleanup of existing pollution
- End of famine and starvation
- Superior education for every child on Earth
- Reintroduction of many extinct plants and animals
- Terraforming Earth and the Solar System

Sources

Richard P Feynman gave a historic talk, 'There is a plenty of room at the bottom' as early as December 29, 1959 at the Annual Meeting of the American Physical Society at the California Institute of Technology. In this lecture he gave an invitation to enter a new field of Physics. Most of the things what he visualized, are already happening through Nanotechnology.

<http://www.iop.org/EJ/abstract/0957-4484/14/1/001>

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The Hindu, Education Plus, April 7, 2008

Origin of Life and Race

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

Give biologists a cell, and they'll give you the world. But beyond assuming the first cell must have somehow come into existence, how do biologists explain its emergence from the pre-biotic world four billion years ago?

Richard Robinson¹

Bacteria-like tiny cells are our universal common ancestor. From these cells, all life on earth, including the humankind, has emerged. Complex life forms have arisen from simpler ones. This is the process of biological evolution.

The bacterium *Mycoplasma genitalium* is described as the most elementary cell, not permanently dependent on host-metabolism. This has 482 protein coding genes. A hypothetical study of minimum number of essential genes brings it to a figure not less than 216. The structure and function of the proteins produced from these genes are mind-boggling matters.

The pre-requisite of 'spontaneous origin of life' was the building blocs of organic molecules. Having due regard to the complexity of the number of allied matters and chemical processes involved, the origin of life is considered to have been a very local event.

The history of humankind constructed more by opinionated interpretations of ancient literature and archaeology, is being refined and perfected by universally accepted findings of genetic research.

The appearance of 'life' in this planet and its evolution, have given rise to a number of theories. Based on fossil evidence there was a view that multi-cellular animals existed in this earth 580 million years ago. Again based on fossil evidence this was pushed back to a period before a billion years.²

The ancient beliefs of different races of human beings emanating from divine sources are totally unscientific. The modern Science acknowledges the common origin of life, evolved over a very long period of millions of years, though different theories are being examined in respect of times and nature of evolutionary processes.³

Even Charles Darwin (1809-1882 English Naturalist, The Origin of Species) was of the view, "Probably all organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed.

Thus the commonness of origin and evolution by interacting with environments provide the basis of irrevocable bond uniting all living beings, not leaving alone the humankind. Based on color, facial structure, hair texture and so on, some 'scholars' advocated theories of several races of men.

And such 'theories' were eagerly picked up by selfish politicians and used to cause havocs all over the world in 19th and 20th centuries. They managed to identify 'racial populations' and flourished by inciting one against another.

In the vast world, living in different environments, living beings struggled, fought and survived by the processes of adaptation and natural selection. Richard Dawkins beautifully compares the varieties of human beings as watches of different designs made by a blind watch-maker.⁴

The mischief of the propagandists of racial divisions among men was that they highlighted the physical differences among men and based on them they divided them into different races as though 'race' was a natural type. But the truth is that the differences are only social and geographical constructs.⁵

The wild assumptions once passed as scientific observations are getting demolished. The genetic research throws better light on the past life of living beings, than other means put together. Richard Dawkins says, "They swarm in huge colonies, safe inside gigantic lumbering robots, sealed off from the outside world, communicating with it by tortuous indirect routes, manipulating it by remote control. They are in you and me; they created us, body and mind; and their preservation is the ultimate rationale for our existence. They have come a long way, those replicates. Now they go by the name of genes, and we are their survival machines."⁶

Our genes contain a mass of authentic information about ourselves. Richard Dawkins declares, "You contain a trillion copies of a large, textual document written in a highly accurate, digital code, each copy as voluminous as a substantial book. I'm talking, of course, of the DNA in your cells."⁷

The argument of having common origin at bacterial level is sound enough. Moving ahead considerably, well after the appearance of 'man' in the world, the size of the humankind had reduced to a record low of 2000 about 70000 years ago. A recent genetic study has revealed that only this small human population spread to other parts of the world, to multiply and grow to the present strength of 6.6 billion. As such there is only one race, called Human Race. After spreading for about 70000 years, we are now coming together making the entire world as a global village.⁸

Notes

1. <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/abioprob/originoflife.html>

2. NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNN) -- September 30, 1998 Web-posted at 1:45 PM EDT

Yale University researchers say they have found fossil evidence that worm-like animals lived on earth more than a billion years ago. Previously, the earliest

fossil evidence of multi-cellular animals was thought to be about 580 million years old.

The new finding suggests complex animal life evolved on earth much earlier than previously thought.

The research was conducted by Adolf Seilacher of Yale University, and colleagues. The results are published in this week's edition of the journal Science. Significantly, the Yale team did not find fossils of the worms themselves, but rather "trace fossils" - tunnels in rock that may be burrows that were formed when the worms wriggled through sand. The burrow structures were preserved when the sand solidified into rock 1.1 billion years ago.

<http://www.cnn.com/TECH/science/9809/30/billion.yearold.worm/>

3. Science contradicts the ancient vision of man as a being belonging to a race created by God, with a place apart in the Creation. To science we are just descended from bacteria and, more directly, apes. Many of our genes are common to animals such as the rat or even the fly.

<http://www.meaningsoflife.com/Science-meaning-life.htm>

4. Natural selection is the blind watchmaker, blind because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences, has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly impress us with the appearance of design as if by a master watchmaker, impress us with the illusion of design and planning.

Richard Dawkins, English biologist, The Blind Watchmaker

<http://www.meaningsoflife.com/Science-meaning-life.htm>

5. Conceptions of race, as well as specific ways of grouping races, vary by culture and over time, and are often controversial for scientific as well as social and political reasons. The controversy ultimately revolves around whether or not races are natural types or socially constructed, and the degree to which observed differences in ability and achievement, categorized on the basis of race, are a product of inherited (i.e. genetic) traits or environmental, social and cultural factors.

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

6. Richard Dawkins, English biologist, The Selfish Gene

7. Richard Dawkins, English biologist, in The Richard Dimbleby Lecture: Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder

8. Study says near extinction threatened people 70,000 years ago. Human beings may have had a brush with extinction 70,000 years ago, an extensive

genetic study suggests. The human population at that time was reduced to small isolated groups in Africa, apparently because of drought, according to an analysis released Thursday.

The report notes that a separate study by researchers at Stanford University estimated the number of early humans may have shrunk as low as 2,000 before numbers began to expand again in the early Stone Age.

"This study illustrates the extraordinary power of genetics to reveal insights into some of the key events in our species' history," Spencer Wells, National Geographic Society explorer in residence, said in a statement. "Tiny bands of early humans, forced apart by harsh environmental conditions, coming back from the brink to reunite and populate the world. Truly an epic drama, written in our DNA."

Wells is director of the Genographic Project, launched in 2005 to study anthropology using genetics. The report was published in the American Journal of Human Genetics.

Previous studies using mitochondrial DNA -- which is passed down through mothers -- have traced modern humans to a single "mitochondrial Eve," who lived in Africa about 200,000 years ago.

The migrations of humans out of Africa to populate the rest of the world appear to have begun about 60,000 years ago, but little has been known about humans between Eve and that dispersal.

The new study looks at the mitochondrial DNA of the Khoi and San people in South Africa which appear to have diverged from other people between 90,000 and 150,000 years ago.

The researchers led by Doron Behar of Rambam Medical Center in Haifa, Israel and Saharon Rosset of IBM T.J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, N.Y., and Tel Aviv University concluded that humans separated into small populations prior to the Stone Age, when they came back together and began to increase in numbers and spread to other areas.

Eastern Africa experienced a series of severe droughts between 135,000 and 90,000 years ago and the researchers said this climatological shift may have contributed to the population changes, dividing into small, isolated groups which developed independently.

Paleontologist Meave Leakey, a Genographic adviser, commented: "Who would have thought that as recently as 70,000 years ago, extremes of climate had

reduced our population to such small numbers that we were on the very edge of extinction."

Today more than 6.6 billion people inhabit the globe, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The research was funded by the National Geographic Society, IBM, the Waitt Family Foundation, the Seaver Family Foundation, Family Tree DNA and Arizona Research Labs.

<http://dailynews.muzi.com/news/II/english/10067727.shtml>

Dr. Michael DeBakey
A Source of Inspiration

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

There are persons who leave an indelible impression in the history of the world. They make it compulsory for the future generations to remember them for the things they have left behind. They are great.

Greater are those whose memory rightfully stays for ever in the minds of posterity for the lessons they have left behind; the lessons that are capable of enhancing the quality of life; that stimulate you when you feel crestfallen; that

motivate you to move towards your goal come what may; that enlighten you when you grope in the darkness; and that convince you about the invincibility of human faith and effort.

Greatest are those who have inspired others while they lived, and continue to inspire the posterity even after death to live as great persons, by their own personal conduct and achievements. A greatest person lives as a shining lighthouse for ever and facilitates for a number of great persons to emerge.



President Bush, accompanied by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev. pose with Congressional Gold Medal honoree Dr. Michael DeBakey, Wednesday, April 23, 2008.

Such a greatest person was Dr. Michael DeBakey, the world-famous cardiovascular surgeon, who passed away on July 11, 2008 (Friday) at the age of 99, in The Methodist Hospital in Houston, Texas. He was the pioneer of the procedures like bypass surgery, which are very common nowadays. He pioneered development of artificial hearts and heart pumps to save the patients waiting for transplants. He has helped development of more than 70 surgical instruments.

DeBakey was the first to perform replacement of arterial aneurysms and obstructive lesions in the mid-1950s. He later developed bypass pumps and connections to replace excised segments of diseased arteries.

Dr. Michael DeBakey has performed more than 60000 heart surgeries during the 70 years of his career as surgeon; a staggering figure indeed! His famous quote was, "Man is born to work hard."

Ron Giroto, President of The Methodist Hospital System put it very nicely, when he said, (Dr. Michael DeBakey) "has improved the human condition and touched the lives of generations to come."

Dr. William T. Butler, a colleague of DeBakey's at Bayl said, "Dr. DeBakey was never afraid to challenge the status quo, often going against the tide... Some times his colleagues did not really accept his visionary ideas, particularly as he propelled beyond the boundaries of existing scientific dogma."

A surgeon who has done something positive in the lives of 60000 seriously ill people, who has gifted valuable procedures to the world's medical community, and who has invented more than 70 life-saving surgical instruments, would certainly remain a source of inspiration not only for surgeons and others in medical community, but to the entire humankind, by his personal example of selfless service and hard work.

Source

<http://edition.cnn.com/2008/HEALTH/07/12/debakey.obit.ap/index.html>

Bring Out Hidden Genius

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

The idea that man is much more than what he appears to be, is very old. Innumerable efforts have been taken, some of them with reasonable success to bring out the hidden genius in man. If a superman is hidden within a normal man, he is waiting to be released for long. Very often we come across some persons doing something what normally others could not even imagine to do. How it happens? How a person lies down upon a bed of nails, places a wooden

board upon his chest, allows a car to go over it, and gets up smiling totally unscathed?

Our brain controls all our actions. Even the inner limbs like heart, lungs and so on are managed by the brain. How the brain is designed and oriented? How does it differ from person to person? Many such puzzles remain to be solved.

If it is the function of the brain to stimulate action of human beings, is it possible to manipulate effectively the function of the brain to change or improve human actions? That is, can we stimulate the stimulator (brain) to get the desired results?

Many researches are in progress in the world to understand the working of the brain in greater details and to find out more about the 'commands' to which it abides.

Professor Allan Snyder, the University of Sydney, Australia has come out with some specific technique to alter the commands for the brain and bring out the hidden genius. The technique is known as trans-cranial magnetic stimulation.

The scientists in Australia are convinced that human beings have hidden talents. They are exploring the possibilities of developing a thinking cap, which could switch on and off select sections of the brain; and by this method could bring out the hidden genius.

Professor Allan Snyder at the University of Sydney is engaged in developing such a cap. He is of the view that human beings do have hidden talents but suffer from an inability to use them. Though his research is nascent at present, he has clarity in his approach and direction. He is confident that the brain could be helped to unlock the secret talents by managing the switching on and off process.

Professor Allan Snyder says, "The two things that drive me – I am passionate about understanding the architecture of thought... Why are we wired up the way we are? Not how we are wired up but what is the master plan, the architectural plan. And the second thing, of course, I am fascinated by wanting to have a true vision of the world. I mean, we make hypotheses of what is out there. Wouldn't it be nice to see what really is out there?"

His work is based on research into persons with extraordinary talents as well as severe mental disability. They appear as if one part of the brain has been subdued so that the other can be more dominant.

The idea is to develop a thinking cap that could unleash creativity when it was needed, such as when we are tired or under pressure and lack inspiration. The cap uses tiny magnets to change the process by which we think. It has been found out by tests that it can improve artistic and mathematical ability by turning off the part of the brain that controls our innate view of the world. The magnets let the brain experience raw sensory information, untainted by preconceptions - just as a child might see the world. Researchers think that trans-cranial magnetic stimulation could help us in treating depression.

Source

<http://enews.voanews.com/t?ctl=1EC7314:F7F0B63DAB0DE8EEA0CBE876865AB38F3CF5CDEF8FC051DA&>

PART II – ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Human Rights Violation in Ethiopia

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

Ethiopia, the eastern African country, has a population of about 68 million. It was formerly known as Abyssinia country. It is now Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Its capital is Addis Ababa. This is a landlocked country.

Ethiopia is mountainous in the northern parts; it has lowland in the east and the west. The Great Rift Valley divides Ethiopia's central plateau. Unscientific

deforestation and misuse of forest wealth, has resulted in frequent droughts and shortages of food. Many wild life species have become endangered, if not extinct.

It is basically an agricultural country with more than 80% of the people depending on agriculture and livestock. Though the country has faced frequent struggles, internal wars, famines and so on, good farms blessed by copious rains have helped the people to carry on with their lives. Coffee, hides and skins are the major export items.

The population consists of several tribes, amongst them Amhara and Oromo are dominant, each claiming about one third of the total population. Other notable tribes are Tigray, Afar, Somali, Saho, Agew and so on.

Compared to other African countries, Ethiopia has zealously protected its independence. In 1890, it was made an Italian colony. But the Emperor Menilek II defeated Italians in 1896. During the times of the Emperor Menilke and after him the Emperor Haile Selassie, many modernization schemes were implemented and the country flourished. Though in 1936 Italy again took over the country, in 1941 the British liberated it from Italy.

In 1974 a Marxist government was formed, deposing the Emperor Haile Selassie. After this, it was a continuous story of civil wars and famine. The government of President Mengistu Haile Mariam had to fight the principal rebel forces -- the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) whose main objective was independence of Eritrea. A sad and long story of human rights violations preceded before Eritrea gained its independence in 1993.

In May, 1991, the government of President Mengistu Haile Mariam was overthrown by the military forces of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), ending seventeen years of the repressive rule of the Dergue regime.¹ After a prolonged civil war, a Transitional Government of Ethiopia assumed power in July 1991, with an ambitious agenda for transforming the political structure of Ethiopia and establishing democracy and human rights. The government, headed by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), promised that human rights and civil liberties will be respected, the press will be free, and the judiciary independent.² But all such promises could not be kept up in reality. Running a government of ethnic federalism was not easy.³

In remote regions where government forces sporadically confronted armed dissident groups pressing for self determination on ethnic grounds, village

shakedowns followed armed encounters or were used to preempt these. As a result, hundreds of civilians were held in 1996 and 1997 under the authority of regional governments that suspected them of supporting armed opposition groups.

In 1995 a new republic was formed.

The curse of the nation is its lack of peace. Though the new governmental set-up consists of a President as the Chief of the State and a Prime Minister as the head of government, internal harmony has not been achieved.

Human Right Violations

The cases of human right violations here are too many to enumerate. Now the conflict relating to Ogaden has given rise to several human right violations.

Ogaden region is in eastern Ethiopia. The population is mainly Somali speaking nomadic pastoralists. It is a barren dry land, forming part of the triangular wedge jutting into Somalia. The Ethiopian Emperor Menilek II conquered Ogaden region in the late 19th century. Italy took it by invasion in 1935. The British liberated it in 1941 and it was under their administration till 1948. Somalia snatched it in 1977 but in the next year Ethiopia took it over again. The Cuba and Soviet Union (Communists) helped Ethiopia in taking it over the Ogaden region again.

It may be seen that the Ogaden region has been the bone of contention mainly between Ethiopia and Somalia; and the European nations freely interfering in this conflict whenever it suited them. Now, for more than two decades, the people of Ogaden region are fighting for freedom from Ethiopia.

Ethiopia took military action and removed the Islamic militant courts in Somalia. For the USA and the western nations, Ethiopia is supposedly an ally in tackling terrorism. Their vested interests do not, perhaps, allow them to take serious notice of human right violations of Ethiopia.

The accusations against the Ethiopian government and its military are contained in a 130-page report Human Rights Watch released in Nairobi.⁴

In the first detailed study of what the group calls Ethiopia's year-long scorched-earth policy in the Ogaden, Human Rights Watch says it conducted interviews with more than 100 victims, eyewitnesses, business leaders and regional government officials in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somaliland.

Researcher Georgette Gagnon told reporters the rights group concluded that Ethiopia's army has committed widespread atrocities, using tactics aimed at not only to defeat the rebel group, but to collectively punish communities suspected of helping the rebels.

"In one particularly awful account, a man describes how Ethiopian soldiers would put ropes around the necks of men and pull from each side, strangling them," she said. "They also forcibly relocated many of the civilians in rural areas into larger towns and confined people in military barracks, where they were tortured and beaten on a daily basis. There was also widespread rape of women and other sexual violence carried out by Ethiopian soldiers."

"This brutal campaign of war crimes and crimes against humanity has contributed to a looming humanitarian crisis in the region that threatens the lives of thousands of Somalis in the area. And of course, this campaign is being carried out with complete impunity," she continued.

The Human Rights Watch report includes satellite imagery that the group says confirms accounts of Ethiopian troops destroying villages. Gagnon says Ethiopia is also waging an economic war against Ogaden's ethnic-Somali population, imposing a blockade on trade, confiscating livestock, and denying them access to humanitarian assistance.

Although much of the report focuses on alleged abuses committed by Ethiopia, Human Rights Watch says the rebel Ogaden National Liberation Front is also responsible for serious human rights violations. They include killing suspected government collaborators and indiscriminately mining roads used by government convoys.

In an interview with VOA, the head of the Ogaden National Liberation Front's Foreign Relations Bureau in London, Abdirahman Mahdi vehemently denied that the group carries out executions of civilians.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's government in Addis Ababa did not issue an immediate response to the report, but it has repeatedly said that the allegations against its military in the Ogaden were false propaganda being spread by Ethiopia's enemies.

But history does not justify the stand of Ethiopia. The annexation of Ogaden region by Ethiopia is a matter of modern history. The aspirations of the people of Ogaden region merit due sympathetic consideration. The human rights violations by Ethiopian military deserve to be condemned by all the self-respecting nations

of the world. This is also a matter for the urgent attention of the United Nations Organization.

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Human Rights Violation in Burma (Myanmar) - I

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

Activist urges Burma's neighbors to put pressure on military to stop sexual violence against women

A Burmese human rights activist has said that Burma's military government continued to use rape as a weapon to subdue ethnic minorities. She has urged Burma's neighbors to put pressure on the military to stop sexual violence against women.

Demonstrators in Philippines condemned Burmese military violence against women. Cheery Zahau, a member of Burma's Chin minority, said that the members of the Burmese army raped women in ethnic minority areas all over the country. She said that in Burma's western Chin State alone, at least 38 cases of sexual violence were committed by soldiers in 2006. The youngest victim was only 12.

Zahau, a human rights activist now living in India, spoke on Friday (June 27, 2008) to journalists in Hong Kong. She claimed that women's groups in Burma had documented more than 1800 rapes by the military since 1995. She accused that the government used rape as a weapon against its opponents.

"The soldiers are raping women to punish the populations who they suspect of supporting insurgency groups... And also they rape the women to disturb the faith and psychological welfare of these ethnic women. For example in 2003, a woman was raped by four soldiers on her way back home from the market. Until now she is mentally disturbed."

Zahau said that the most of the victims were too scared to speak out. Even if they do, the perpetrators are not punished.

The Burmese government denies the reports that it uses rape as a tool.

Last year, the U.N. Security Council considered a resolution calling on Burma to end human rights violations, including systematic rape. But Security Council members China and Russia used their vetoes to block the resolution.

Bruce Van Voorhis, a spokesman for the Asian Human Rights Commission, said that no other country had more influence on the Burmese government than China. He added, "The Chinese government, by not taking action, is condoning the rape of Burmese women by the Burmese army, and we call on the Chinese government to take action to stop that."

Zahau says Burma's other neighbors, such as India and Thailand, also should put pressure on Burma's military leaders. She said that it was in their own interest to speak out, as sexual violence was one of the factors forcing Burmese women to become refugees in neighboring countries.

Many governments, including the United States and the European Union, have imposed economic sanctions on Burma because of its repression of dissidents and rights abuses.

The military has said that it would allow elections in Burma in 2010, but has insisted that it must retain a central role in the government to keep the country intact.

Source

<http://enews.voanews.com/t?ctl=1CE285C:F7F0B63DAB0DE8EE6DACF9BBB96876673CF5CDEF8FC051DA&>

Human Rights Violations in Burma (Myanmar) - II

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

Burma's military government, in power since 1962, crushed protests led by Buddhist monks in September last year. At least 30 people died in the crackdown and hundreds were arrested. Recent reports emerging from Burma are disturbing and disheartening.

Most Western governments have imposed economic sanctions on Burma, to push the government to ease political repression. But its neighbors, including

India and China, continue to do business in Burma, where the government largely controls the economy.

The United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, expected to visit Burma in December, has expressed frustration over the lack of progress on political reforms. Ban has warned he will cancel the trip unless he is confident it will achieve tangible results on reforms.



AP Photo

**Karen villagers stop to rest, while fleeing
Burmese government soldiers in Karen state,
Burma**

The malady of human rights violations in Myanmar continues without any let-up. Increasing troop presence in the Eastern Burma staggers that region. More than 66000 persons have become homeless and helpless.

The Thailand Burma Border Consortium has noticed that the situation along Burma's eastern border with Thailand is worsening day by day. The aid-groups are not allowed by Myanmar's military to operate in this disturbed region. The Bangkok consortium represents 11 aid and advocacy organizations from nine countries. This joint effort to provide help to displaced people is directed especially to the suffering people along the Myanmar's border with Thailand.

In the northern Karen State Myanmar's military is engaged in armed conflict with the insurgents of ethnic minority groups. Forced displacement is the worst in this area because the people are left with no alternative except fleeing for life.

Sally Thompson, a director of the Consortium claims that the situation in this area is becoming from bad to worse. Helping 66000 persons displaced during the last year is by no means an easy task. He says, "We have to say it is an ongoing deterioration in Burma and what the report highlights is that the violations of humanitarian and human rights law in the conflict areas of Eastern Burma are systematic as ever and ongoing."

It is estimated that more than half a million people have been displaced within Myanmar. Most of them belong to Karen and Shan States. Thailand refugee

camps shelter tens of thousands of them. Thousands of persons work illegally around Southeast Asia.

The situation in eastern Burma is that the people are forced to work on military projects. They are very often detained and abused. According to Sally Thompson, "If people are suspected of a relationship with the resistance movement, with the insurgents, they are often brought in for questioning, they are interrogated, they are detained... And if they are suspected of having a relationship it can go as far as torture leading to death in detention."

In the absence of any substantial international pressure on the existing military government of Burma, the end of the difficulties of the Burmese people seems to be very far.

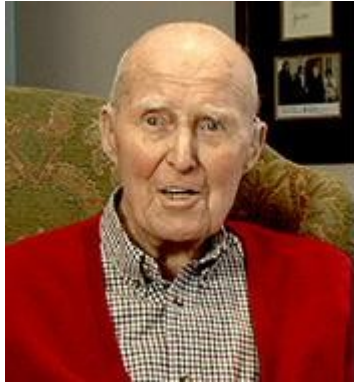
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Norman Borlaug

T.JOSEPH BENZIGER

Among the billions of people passing through the sojourn of life in this world, only a few become concerned with the common problems of humankind. Fewer still are those who take efforts to do something to solve them and leave the world a better one. Even among them only select few succeed in their efforts and become credited with concrete results.



VOA photo - © Flakus

Such a blessed one is **Norman Borlaug**, (born on March 25, 1914 at Cresco, Iowa, USA) now a 94 year old young man, living in Dallas, Texas. His work in scientific and humanitarian fields, spreading for more than seven decades, has earned for him the Noble Peace Prize (1970), the Presidential Medal for Freedom and more than 50 honorary doctorates. He is also the Congressional Gold Medal winner! Above all, he is regarded the Father of Green Revolution in the world.

In the middle of 20th century the world population was exploding. Before people could realize the seriousness and could think of measures to plan and control it, the global population reached alarming heights. In many developing countries the famine conditions prevailed. A large scale extinction of living beings seemed unavoidable. The trend of growth of population was difficult to be reversed in short span of time. It needed sustained social, political and legal measures to regulate the growth of population. Though its impact was different among the countries of the world, no doubt it assumed the proportions of a problem of the world.

While steps to reduce the growth of population were taken up, a more positive solution was also called for. It was the need for increasing Food Production. When hunger and poverty were spreading like forest fire, measures to improve agriculture and increase yields were urgently required. These measures, successfully taken up all over the world, are generally referred to as 'Green Revolution'. Increasing the yields of food crops and preventing starvations were taken up as a noble mission by many great persons.

Norman Borlaug, while he was an agricultural researcher at Rockefeller Foundation Project in Mexico, produced amazing results. The methods developed by him tripled the wheat yield! He helped India, Pakistan and Africa with his genius. His job was not easy. Finding solutions to suit different environments, people with different beliefs and practices; and getting them accepted and implemented by others were naturally ridden with obstacles. He had to carry on his work sometimes with antagonists also. But Norman Borlaug's commitment stood in good stead for him.

His work in Mexico made his brilliance known to the world. On the research stations and farmers' fields of Mexico, Dr. Borlaug developed successive generations of wheat varieties. They had broad and stable disease resistance, broad adaptation to growing conditions across many degrees of latitude, and with exceedingly high yield potential.

These new wheat varieties and improved crop management practices transformed agricultural production in Mexico during the 1940's and 1950's and later in Asia and Latin America, sparking what today is known as the "Green Revolution." His achievements to prevent hunger, famine and misery around the world, have rightly entitled Dr. Borlaug to a claim that he has "saved more lives than any other person who has ever lived."

In an interview with Reason magazine in April 2000, Norman Borlaug observed that Green Revolution was a never-ending job.

Reason: Would you say the Green Revolution was a success?

Borlaug: Yes, but it's a never-ending job. When I was born in 1914, the world population was approximately 1.6 billion people. It has just turned 6 billion. We've had no major famines any place in the world since the Green Revolution began. We've had local famines where these African wars have been going on and are still going on. However, if we could get the infrastructure straightened out in African countries south of the Sahara, you could end hunger there pretty fast....And if you look at the data that's put out by the World Health Organization and [the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization], there are probably 800 million people who are undernourished in the world. So there's still a lot of work to do.

Penn Jillette, of the comedy team Penn and Teller remarked about Norman Borlaug:

- At a time when Doom-Sayers were hopping around saying everyone was going to starve, Norman was working. He moved to Mexico and lived among the people there until he figured out how to improve the output of the farmers. So that saved a million lives.
- The he packed up his family and moved to India, where in spite of a war with Pakistan, he managed to introduce new wheat strains that quadrupled their food output. So that saved another million.
- You get it? But he wasn't done. He did the same thing with new rice in China. He's doing the same thing in Africa -- as much of Africa as he's allowed to visit.

- When he won the Nobel Prize in 1970, they said he had saved a billion people. That's BILLION! Carl Sagan BILLION with a B! And most of them were a different race from him.
- Norman is the greatest human being, and you probably never heard of him.

Let us salute Norman Borlaug and draw inspiration from him to work for solving the problems facing the humankind with confidence. Predicting doom is not going to take us anywhere. But concentration and sincere work will drive away hunger and poverty from this world and certainly lead us to prosperity.

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Human Trafficking

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

The unfortunate victims of human trafficking are forced to live miserably. They are subjected to cruel abuses and denial of their basic human rights. They are controlled by the traffickers and all the doors of escape kept permanently closed. Without help coming from outside, it is hardly possible for the victims to acquire freedom.

Child trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and minors are the most severe forms of abuse that occur frequently in impoverished regions of the Philippines.

The number of people trafficked in a year around the world is estimated to be a staggering 2.4 million! And, according to Marina Leabsch, an expert on the subject of human trafficking, the number is going up every year! Leabsch belongs to the Catholic relief organization Caritas, which is organizing the Paris conference.

The figure presented is admittedly, tentative one. The methods adopted by the people engaged in this heinous activity resist any sort of control.

An international conference took place in Paris on October 16, 2008 to consider the rising phenomenon of human trafficking. Experts have called for better monitoring and coordination to combat the problem, especially in cases involving children who have been the most vulnerable.

Marina Leabsch says, "According to the recent estimates of the International Labor Organization, we can see that half of the estimated people being trafficked are children, and since trafficking is a crime and a serious violation of human rights, it's clearly a concern."

According to Leabsch, most of the human trafficking takes place in Asia - but about 250,000 people are trafficked each year in Europe and other industrialized countries. She adds, "If we talk about [Europe], then we are certainly talking about countries like Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Lithuania - also all the Baltic countries, but also Russia."

Child trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and minors are the most severe forms of abuse that occur frequently in impoverished regions of the Philippines. Experts like Leabsch say children are easy prey for traffickers in particular. In some cases their parents are tricked into believing they are sending their children to a better life in a richer nation.

Caritas and other groups fighting against human trafficking are urging the European Union to do more to monitor the phenomenon within individual member states and to establish more cross - border communication to combat it across the 27-member block.

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China Adopts a Human Rights Plan

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

China is a communist state. In this one party state admittedly individual cannot insist on any personal rights as a matter of course. China has been receiving criticisms from other countries of the world about its human rights scenario. The issue of censorship and jailing of peaceful dissidents and protestors in China has

come up for adverse notice in international forums on many occasions. China is also facing pressure from its own enlightened citizens.

During the last month, the prestigious European Human Rights Prize was awarded to Hu Jia of China. Hu Jia had been jailed for speaking out on AIDS issues and having demanded environmental protections. This was a serious embarrassment for China. China had openly conveyed its displeasure about the award given to a local dissident and had gone to the extent of warning that it might damage the relations between China and the European Union.

Globalization has turned out to be a universal affair and China has been no exception. The effect of various nations of the world coming together has become clear in China also. The Chinese State media has revealed that some awakening is taking place in China in the matter of Human Rights. Introduction of a Human Rights Action Plan is being contemplated by the Government of China. This will be over the next two years and would aim at improvement of citizens' rights.

The Human Rights Action Plan would be the first of its kind in this country. Wang Chen of the State Council Information Office said, "Respecting and protecting human rights... is an important objective and principle of the Chinese Communist Party and the government." No specific time schedule for the introduction and implementation of the Plan was mentioned.

The preparation of the document will be a joint endeavor of courts, the Party-run parliament and non-government groups. It will include proposals to "expand democracy and strengthen rule of law".

The 'national human rights action plan' would cover various aspects related to human rights, including improving government functions, expanding democracy, strengthening the rule of law, improving people's livelihood, protecting rights of women, children and ethnic minorities, and raising awareness of human rights throughout society.

There are also doubts expressed by renowned observers of international relations. Some of them consider the National Human Rights Action Plan as just a public relations ploy.

Jerome Cohen, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York has said, "Most international observers who follow human rights in China consider this mostly eyewash...It would be wonderful if the Chinese government would open up and discuss concrete cases. Human rights watchers want to talk about reality, not principle."

Sara Davis, Executive Director of New York based Asia Catalyst, that is directly involved in supporting Chinese groups in promotion of human rights, has said, "Five years ago, you could not even say the words 'human rights' in China. So the government should be commended for uttering the phrase at last. What's really needed is legal reform and criminal procedure law. That would give their plan some real teeth. Also protections against police abuse; if those are included, this is truly something we should be celebrating."

Zhao Zhengqun, Deputy Director of Nankai University's Center for Human Rights Research and an action plan panel member has told the South China Morning Post that the government's strategy reflected a change in attitude.

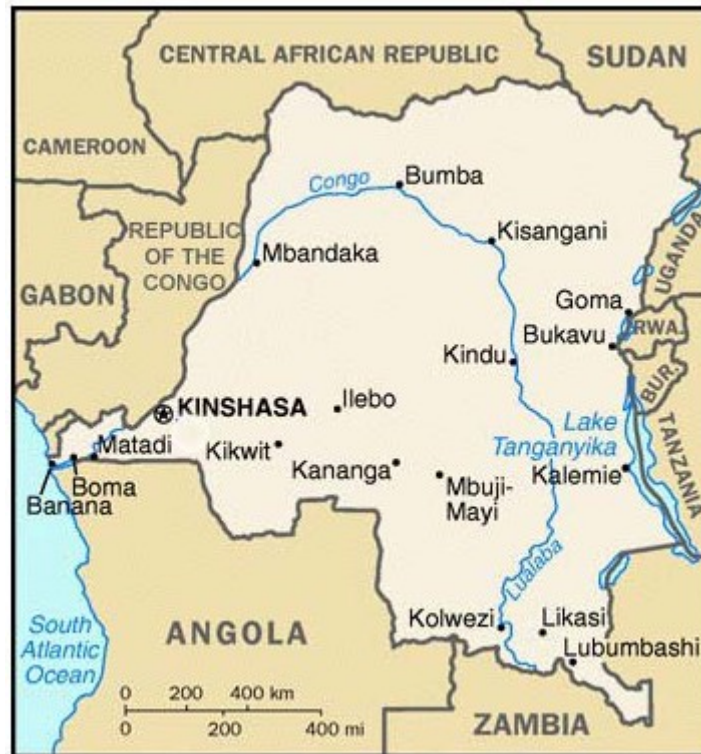
Amidst the doubts, let us hope for the best. Let us hope that the human rights position in China would reach acceptable standards very soon.

Source

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Congo Crisis

T JOSEPH BENZIGER



The intensification and expansion of the conflict is creating a humanitarian crisis of catastrophic dimensions and threatens dire consequences on a regional scale.

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Congo

The United States is deeply concerned by the worsening humanitarian situation in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The violence that has driven tens of thousands of civilians from their homes and placed their lives at risk is deplorable. The U.S. calls on all parties to the Goma Agreements and the Nairobi Communiqué to respect their commitments and renounce the use of arms. We call on the countries of the Great Lakes region to work together to enhance stability and respect each other's sovereignty.

The U.S. calls on the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) and its leader, Laurent Nkunda, to resume discussions with the democratically elected and internationally recognized Congolese government, to avoid further fighting, rescind its previous call for open revolt against the Congolese government, and return to its pre-August 28th positions. The U.S. also calls on the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to lay down its arms, disband, and demobilize.

The U.S. reaffirms its support for the United Nations Mission in the Congo (MONUC), which has played a vital role in protecting civilian populations and ending violence.

Sean McCormack, Spokesman

Washington, DC
October 28, 2008

The African continent has stupendous ecologic and economic wealth. Its flora and fauna are extremely rich. But Africa is sadly the poorest continent on earth. African nations have the highest rates of illiteracy, diseases, mortality and armed conflicts.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly known as Belgian Congo and then as Zaire, is one of the major African conflicts.



Democratic Republic of the Congo got rid of its corrupt military government in 1997, when Laurent Kabila fought his way across Zaire, a massive country in the heart of Africa, took the capital, ousted one of the continent's longest-ruling dictators, Mobutu Sese Seko, and had himself sworn in as president of the newly renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo. Laurent Kabila had succeeded using military help from the neighboring countries Uganda and Rwanda. But the allies tried to grab large territories of Democratic Republic of the Congo. Now Laurent Kabila turned to other countries for support. The armies of Zambia, Zimbabwe and Angola entered the scene and tried to remove the occupation of Uganda and Rwanda. With so many countries involved, it became a very confusing. This situation prompted the former U S Secretary of State Madeleine Korbelt Albright to call it 'Africa's first world war'!

After a prolonged difficult period, it was hoped that the Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo in July - August 2006 would help restoration of normalcy in the country. But the hopes have been belied. Elections have only been followed by large scale violence. In Bas-Congo and Kinshasa more than 400 persons were killed and there were renewed threats of internal war in the Kivus. The relationship between government and the opposition turned out to be very unhealthy. Militias clash with the weak national army in the East and displace hundreds of thousands of civilians each year. A large number of persons succumb to hunger and disease.

Violent clashes erupted in Kinshasa between Kabila and opposition MLC leader Jean-Pierre Bemba supporters when neither gained majority in first-round votes. Kabila took presidency in 29 October second round (58 per cent of vote), and his alliance won majority in national and provincial assemblies. Elections considered by outside observers to be relatively free and fair, ushering in first truly democratic government in 40 years.

Kabila government faces substantial challenges, including an abusive and ill-disciplined national army (FARDC), corrupt public administration, and lack of infrastructure and basic services. Advances in Ituri remain precarious, with slow progress on militia disarmament and reintegration and lack of transparent natural resource management. Security further deteriorated in North Kivu, where the national army and dissidents under command of General Laurent Nkunda, National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) – the political movement of Nkunda, unveiled July 2006) - resumed fighting from late November 2006, displacing up to 400,000.

The U.N.-negotiated Nairobi declaration of November 2007 and the January 2008 Goma peace agreement provided a fairly comprehensive political framework for the disarmament of all militias. But the implementation of these accords fell through.

Nairobi Agreement November 2007 provided for repatriation of FDLR. Goma "Actes d'Engagement" January 2008 provided for ceasefire and voluntary demobilization of combatants in east, to be implemented through "Amani" peace program.

Success depends on will of militias to disengage, continued funding for the Amani program and improved relations between Kigali and Kinshasa over handling of FDLR. But despite some initial signs of Nkunda's readiness to disengage, serious clashes between CNDP and FARDC continued, while June 2008 brought heavy FDLR attacks on civilian camps in North Kivu.

The Kabila government has a strong mandate but the opposition, with the support of over a third of the electorate, has a role in building democracy which needs to be protected if Congo is to be saved.

The UN children's agency UNICEF has said that the latest bout of fighting had resulted in a "very bad" humanitarian situation. UNICEF's Jaya Murthy has told BBC's World Today program, "We're talking tens of thousands of people who have fled towards Goma and thousands more who are fleeing north to a town called Kane Byunga... Many of the population that have fled are staying in vacant schools, in churches and outside."

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay says she is alarmed over killings and other human rights violations in DRC. She has appealed to all parties to respect human rights international law.



Protégée, right, with her niece Réponse, were separated from their mother, Esperance Nirakagoi, after fleeing their home in Kiseguru, 12 miles away, on foot amid fighting on Nov. 6. Ms. Nirakagoi was back at home with her daughter and granddaughter after being reunited Monday at a refugee camp in Kiwanja.

The UN peace keeping force is inadequate. It has been over-stretched in this vast country. It is a mixed force from several countries like India, Pakistan, South Africa and Uruguay. They speak different languages and do not know the local languages. Mostly they are conventionally trained armies and they could not cope with the guerilla tactics of the local rebels.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the richest countries on earth, with an estimated \$300 billion worth of timber, gold, diamonds, cobalt, copper, tin, and coltan. Nearly 80 percent of the world's known reserves of coltan – a key metal used in cell-phones and video games – come from Congo. Yet instead of a blessing, Congo's riches have turned out to be a bane. Each of the neighboring countries wants to exploit the political immaturity of the people of the DRC and grab a sizeable part of its territory and wealth.

Turmoil is not new to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is experiencing it for more than a decade. But this round of fighting is different. In past it was more in the nature of scattered battles over strategic sites like gold mines and airfields. Now the conflict is broader and more focused politically. The rebels' leader, Laurent Nkunda, talks of marching to the capital and taking over the governance of the country! He has also said that he was ready to fight regional peacekeepers if they entered eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and supported the Congolese army and its allies.

Many large parts of the country seem to be without any government. Neither the government nor the rebels are in charge. The rule of the jungle prevails! Instances where school boys are forced to join and serve rebel army are too many to narrate!

The conduct of the government troops has not been in any way better. The United Nations has found government troops in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo guilty of raping civilians and looting villages. Lieutenant Colonel Jean-Paul Dietrich, a spokesman for the U.N. mission in Congo, has said that the attacks referred to were centered around the Kanyabayonga area, north of the regional capital, Goma.

The people of Democratic Republic Congo are not allowed to live in peace because of the greed of the neighboring countries; whether they call themselves allies or foes – it does not matter. They use some of the willing local leaders as their pawns and succeed in creating trouble. In that process human rights violations go on unchecked in a mass scale. This has been going on for years.

Unless the United Nations Organization intervenes strongly and directly the nefarious activities of the neighboring countries could not be curbed. Some original ideas have to be evolved at the level of the United Nations. Even administering the DRC directly by the UNO for a given period of time would not be appropriate in the interests of the local population. The initiative for this has to come only from the United States and other well intentioned nations.

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Desmond Tutu gets Fulbright Prize

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

From 1993 onwards, the Fulbright Prize is awarded each year to honor the U.S.-sponsored education exchange program named for the late U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright. More than 300,000 foreign scholars have benefited under this program and studied in the United States so far. The Fulbright Prize carries a \$50,000 cash prize provided by the Coca-Cola foundation.

This year, Desmond Tutu, South African Anglican Archbishop has been honored by the award of the Fulbright Prize, in view of his lifetime work for reconciliation among peoples.



AP Photo

On Friday, November 21, 2008, 77 year-old **Desmond Tutu** was honored at State Department ceremonies. He became the 14th recipient of the U.S. Fulbright Prize for International Understanding. Desmond Tutu played a key role in the struggle against South Africa's apartheid racial system.

Suzanne Siskel, Fulbright Association President Suzanne presenting Archbishop Tutu with the Fulbright Prize on 21 Nov 2008

It is worth mentioning that Archbishop Tutu is the recipient of Nobel Peace Prize in 1984. Nobel Peace Prize was given to him for his role in the drive for racial justice in South Africa. The Fulbright Prize citation honors him for his subsequent work - as chair of South Africa's post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as a crusader against global human rights violations, and work to ease the suffering caused by HIV/AIDS.

The Coca Cola Company Chairman Neville Isdell, himself a white South African, presented the prize at the State Department ceremony. He observed that the words of Desmond Tutu brought the immoral system of apartheid 'to its knees'.

He added, "He (Desmond Tutu) would have fully earned this honor for his fight against apartheid alone. But of course, he did not stop there. As chairman of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he heard stories of the worst inhumanity. But yet he calmly interrogated, and he emerged from that not with bitterness but with a wonderful sense of forgiveness." He added further that Archbishop Tutu's greatest achievement was in having prevented a race-based civil war in South Africa.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in his philosophical acceptance speech, said that each person had a capacity for doing both good and evil, but that the world's revulsion for human rights violations in places like Darfur, Burma, Zimbabwe and Gaza shows that evil is not the norm. He recalled a folk tale about a barnyard chicken that became an eagle. He said that every person had the capacity for soaring achievement. He mentioned, "God says to us: 'hey, you are no chicken, you are an eagle. Fly eagle fly.' God wants you to shake yourself, spread out your pinions [feathers] and lift off. Lift off and soar towards laughter, joy. Soar towards compassion and caring. Soar towards transcendence and goodness. Fly eagle, fly," said Tutu. Archbishop Tutu is the second South African to win the Fulbright prize, after the country's former president Nelson Mandela who was the first recipient of this international prize in 1993.

Other notable winners of the Fulbright Prize are former U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, and former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari (winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize for peacemaking in Namibia, Kosovo and elsewhere).

Dynamic Youth magazine salutes, the Noble laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu now on the occasion of his receiving the Fulbright Prize, for his great service to the cause of global peace and universal welfare of humankind.

Source

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Palestinian Reconciliation

T JOSEPH BENZIGER

Of all the international conflicts the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been the most deep-rooted and prolonged. The conflict has become multi-faceted and hence more complicated.



AFP Photo

Mr. Tony Blair served as the British Prime Minister for about ten years. As soon as he resigned, the same day, he was appointed as the representative of the Middle East Quartet, consisting of the United Nations, European Union, Russia and the United States, to help the Palestinians develop their institutions and economy. Now he has been the representative of the Middle East Quartet for more than 18 months. A statement he made on the need

for Palestinian Reconciliation in his speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington on December 3, 2008 can be easily termed a locus-classicus. Tony Blair said:

The problem is that until now the reality on the ground for Israelis and Palestinians has not passed what I would call the minimum threshold of credibility for the political negotiation to succeed. Not for the Israelis on security, not for the Palestinians on lifting the occupation.

For a conflict to get solved there should be a basic inclination on the part of the parties concerned. And, the ground realities should be conducive to allow that inclination to flower as a final political decision. It is doubtful if such a basic inclination is there; and the ground realities seem to be drawing the conflict away from solution.

Existence of two factions among the Palestinians, viz. Hamas and Fatah has created an impossible situation so far as the resolution of this conflict is concerned. These two factions have become more hostile after the Hamas seized control of the Gaza strip from the Fatah. The authority of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Fatah Party) has been practically restricted to the West Bank region. If the two factions cannot sort out their differences, Mr. Abbas would be forced to opt for elections soon. But the Hamas commands a large majority in Palestinian Parliament and challenges the authority of Mr. Abbas to call elections. The Arab nations who have been supporting the Palestinian side all along want to be neutral between the Hamas and the Fatah. They, however, want President Mahmoud Abbas to continue in office and bring the two factions together. Arab League foreign ministers met in Cairo on

November 26, 2008. In that emergency meeting they appealed to both Palestinian factions to reconcile and work harmoniously.

To complicate the issue further, the Hamas controlling the Gaza strip, are accused of cross-border rocket attacks against Israel. This clash has led to the blockade of the region by Israel. Though Arab nations have come forward to send food and medicine to Gaza strip, the damage caused to the atmosphere cannot be easily undone.

It is important that the faction-ridden Palestinians should understand the sense behind what Mr. Tony Blair has highlighted. He has said:

There can only be one Palestinian state. It will combine Gaza and the West Bank. However much we are tempted to set Gaza to one side because of the chaos it causes to Palestinian cohesion, it cannot be. But neither is its predicament inevitable. It can and it must be reversed.

A silver lining in the cloud is the optimism of the Israel's Prime Minister **Ehud Olmert**. On November 25, 2008 he said in Washington that two sides did not need months to make a decision on a peace agreement. He said that he believed he could reach agreement with the Palestinians on core peace issues soon.



AP Photo

However sincere **Mr. Ehud Olmert** may sound, the time factor is not very favorable. It was the President Bush, who took strong initiatives for the revival of Middle East peace talks last year. He would cease to be President on January 20, 2009. There will be a new Prime Minister in Israel early in February. With very limited time at their disposal, what both these leaders could do does not appear bright.

The efforts of these two leaders, however, deserve very special mention in the annals of middle-east history. The Mid-east conference in **Annapolis** opened in the presence of President George Bush on November 27, 2007 has paved the way for comprehensive consultations between Israel and Palestine.



From left, Israeli PM Ehud Olmert, President George Bush, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at opening of Mideast conference in Annapolis, 27 Nov 2007

The Annapolis conference, however, set a goal of Peace Agreement by the end of 2008. This has not been achieved.

US Secretary of State **Condoleezza Rice** has said, "They won't achieve agreement by the end of the year. But they have achieved a good deal of progress in their negotiations, a good deal of progress in the work that is being done on the ground. And I would just remind you that this is the first time in almost a decade that Palestinians and Israelis are addressing all of the core issues in a comprehensive way to try to get to a solution. And if that process takes a little bit longer, so be it."



On the advantages of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict Tony Blair has said:

Peace between Israelis and Palestinians would release forces of modernization across the region. It would pin back the forces of reaction and it does not inhabit an entirely separate sphere from issues like Iran or Iraq or Afghanistan or Pakistan or any of the other troubled parts of that region, which crowd in on our consciences and compete for our attention. It is integral to resolving them too.

It is now very clear that any solution of Israeli-Palestinian conflict would be possible only after the Palestinian reconciliation. The ball is no doubt in Palestinian court.

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Plight of Darfur Region

T JOSEPH BENZIGER



President George Bush with Darfur human rights activist Dr. Halima Bashir

Sudan is the largest African country. With good oil and mineral resources, the people should live there prosperously. But they don't. There is no unity among the various peoples inhabiting the country. Nearly 100 languages and dialects are used by the various tribes. Constant civil war has been the curse of the country all these years.

The Arab Muslims living in the north are generally the rulers; in south people are divided among various tribal populations following Christianity and several traditional religions. The religious and cultural differences keep the people divided permanently. In the absence of an enlightened welfare government the misery of the people and human rights violations continue unabated.

On the International Human Rights Day, incidentally also marking the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UNO, US President George Bush highlighted the plight of the people of Darfur region of Sudan. He met Halima Bashir, a tireless human rights worker of the region in White House.

Halima Bashir is a doctor. She was running her clinic in Darfur. She came to know of the rapes of girls at a nearby school. The young girls, some of them not even eight years old, had been assaulted by government-supported Janjaweed militias. She treated them and made their story public, thus incurring the wrath of the militias. The Janjaweed militias kidnapped her; tortured and gang-raped her. She escaped and published her experiences titled 'Tears of the Desert: A Memoir of Survival in Darfur'.

President Bush praised Halima Bashir for her brave work. He described her as a brave soul and said, "She has witnessed violence, deprivation, and she carries a message of a lot of people who want our help."

Mr. Bush assured her that even in these tough economic times, the United States will continue to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Darfur. He said he also expressed his frustration with the pace of action at the U.N.

"The United Nations must expedite sending troops, peacekeepers, to provide security for the people," said Mr. Bush. "That's what they want. They want to be able to have a secure life, and we will help."

President Bush did not refer directly to the charges leveled against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir by the International Criminal Court, which has accused

him of a campaign of rape, murder and deportation in Darfur. But Mr. Bush left no doubt he believes the Sudanese leader bears responsibility for the violence. He said, "It is very important for President Bashir of Sudan to know that he cannot escape accountability, that if he so chose he could change peoples' lives - the condition of peoples' lives - very quickly."

Halima Bashir listened quietly, and then responded in a very soft, low voice. She was covered from head to foot in a bright cotton cloak. The White House said she wanted to shroud her identity from her enemies.

Halima Bashir said, "I am very happy, because now the Darfur victim's voices are heard in the White House." She said the people of Darfur have endured five years of bloodshed. She said they do not need to wait anymore; they need action.

The plight of Darfur region calls for international attention. The janjaweed militia has the open support of Sudanese government and its army manned by Arabic speaking Muslims. Darfur's non-Arabic speaking tribes are the victims. The militia abducts thousands of civilians from Darfur, including children and uses them as sex slaves and forced labor.

Darfur Consortium is a coalition of 50 African and international charities. Dismas Nkunda, Co-Chair of the Darfur Consortium has said, "The Government bears a direct responsibility for these violations as they have generally been carried out by government forces or the militias which the government of Sudan established and supported." The western aid agencies and diplomatic sources consider that in the last six years, nearly 30000 persons have been killed and that at least 2.5 million persons have been forced from their homes. Darfur Consortium states that the human right violations of the worst order carried out by the Arabic Muslims are part of a determined government policy of ethnic cleansing in Darfur.

Such gross violations of human rights are blemishes on the humankind. The injustice perpetrated in Darfur region is government-sponsored one! The UNO should be able to intervene effectively in such cases without wasting time and restore normalcy in the lives of these innocent poor people.

Source

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About the Author

T Joseph Benziger is an engineering and management professional. His global outlook and eagerness to serve the humankind have led him to take up many voluntary assignments in the field of research and journalism. Having run a weekly magazine 'Benziger Times' for years, he has developed a nose for things that do matter in the long run. According to him we are not doing 'enough' for the global youth development; nor have we developed a good world for them to live in. He is highly critical of our political and social systems which leave much to be desired. In this world, where the corruption side is increasing the modern youth will have very poor chance of survival if they are not educated frankly of the pitfalls we have allowed to exist; and if they are not specially trained to solve the existing problems and taught to prevent them from recurrence.

He is the Editor of 'Dynamic Youth', the free online magazine dedicated to global youth development. He is drawing inspiration to run this magazine as a holy mission from a body not less than the United Nations Organization, which has been trying to push through a number of ambitious projects in the area of Youth Development. He is making substantial contributions to Dynamic Youth.

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