

Let us have a heart for these children of a lesser God

Editorial-1

One thing is quite evident from the Chautala conviction episode that our politicians have no heart for the children who study in government schools. If they really cared for them, who constitute 70% of the total school going children, then they would not have recruited teachers who did not qualify for the job by ignoring the ones who deserved to be selected on merit. Do we ever allow ourselves to be examined by a doctor who is not adequately qualified as per the prescribed standards or do we recruit a chauffer whose skill is suspect. What saddens the heart is the fact that Chautala episode is not a rare case. This is one of the many skeletons which have come out after 12 years of protracted battle in the courts. There are numerous such skeletons in all the states which remain unexposed as either people don't have the stamina to fight these long legal battles or political leaders through their musclemen thwart such attempts. But, it is no more a secret that such recruitments are used to make money or show favors to the loyalists.

Overall scenario of education in our country reveals that today our country is divided in to three segments. One segment is of those 25% coming from high income group, middle class, lower middleclass and a few amongst lower class as well, who have come to realize that good education leads to a good future for their



children and it makes them spend huge share of their earnings on the education of their children in the private/Public/Convent schools as per their affordability. The second section constitutes roughly 50% of those, from lower classes, who now realize the importance of education in life but can't afford private schools and are compelled to send their children to the govt. schools. Third section is of those 25% who have yet to learn the importance of education. Sometimes their children start going to school but then in the absence of support or persuasion they stop going. If drop out percentage is as high as 40% from the second and third categories, no body except our political

class is responsible for that. In nut shell even after 65 years of independence if our literacy rate languishes at a poor 65%, which places India at 105th rank amongst all countries in the world, it is our politicians who are responsible. Mind you, this literacy rate is no reflection on the capability of school going children as a very high percentage of the students of these govt. schools can't read or write or solve the problems which a student of

private school, five standards junior to them, can do.

If as an experiment, each of us associates with any two children from these schools, probably we may not be able to pardon ourselves for the injustice we, as an educated and well informed member the society, allow to be



inflicted on these hapless children of the deprived.

Four things have contributed to this deep rooted malady. First, teachers are mostly ill-equipped to teach-reason most of the appointments are done in the manner which Chautala case has revealed. Even amongst these, absenteeism is alarming. Third, our state governments do not allow these schools to function with large number of holidays, and closure of schools on silliest of the excuses. Fourth, not always bright students opt for teaching, best manifested by the fact that 99% aspirants recently failed the Central Teacher Eligibility test (CTET).

Result, the product from these schools rarely gives the impression of an educated class. Very high percentage is not employable and if at all are employed they feel under-employed. Restless, they want to strike it rich by adopting questionable means and this is giving rise to crimes of all sorts. It leaves nothing to doubt that if today crimes in the society have taken a threatening position, we all are responsible.

What needs to be done, instead of coming out with new programmes and changes every now and then, we allow these schools to function. Insulate

these from government working and the hold of politicians-let us have minimum 240 teaching days. The well off amongst us, should spare time, as a part of social responsibility, to see how these schools function. It involves keeping track of whether teachers are attending duties and necessary infrastructure exists or not. It does make a difference when you raise your voice, Mahatma Gandhi rightly said, **“There are not too many bad people in India, but the problem is that there are too many good people in India, who do not speak up about bad deeds, of bad people. By behaving like responsible citizens we can always sensitize people, including teaching community. It is certain that future of my child is not safe if future of other three is dark.**

It goes without saying that we have been unfair and unjust to them. Any society and nation in which injustice prevails, can never hope for peace. It is one reason as we are gaining in prosperity we have started feeling more and more insecure and unsafe. Despite sending our children in cars and school buses, fear continues to stalk our minds. This type of society is our own creation.

Bhartendu Sood

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We need to look within

Editorial-2

Why do we think that behind everything wrong in our country, it is Pakistan or its army at work? Don't we have people who are more hostile to India than the people across the border? If you need any evidence then I will request you to listen to Akbaruddin Owaisi's latest hate speech and the reception he was accorded when he arrived at Hyderabad from London. Mind you, the number of these anti India people is not in lakhs but runs in to billions. You must be well aware that



What makes the speech important is not that Owaisi made it. But, it reflects the thinking of a worryingly large number of lower middle class, semi-educated Indian Muslims and their contempt for India.

Akbaruddin Owaisi is elected again and again from Hyderabad and his party was the ally of UPA.

Growing Maoist activities is another example. Putting a bomb in the abdomen of a dead cop is equally gruesome. I have spent time in all our neighboring countries and I can say confidently that today at least 10% of our people are more anti India than the people across the border. Worrysome aspect is that their number is fast on the increase. We are a country with no neighbor sense and sentiments. We allow ourselves to be guided by the hostilities generated at the time of partition and small local conflicts. We never want to be the part of bygones.

This gruesome act of beheading a soldier has a Taliban stamp. Insurgent groups operating in Kashmir are always capable of doing it. They are better armed than army even. I can't believe if any army can commit such a gruesome killing in 21st century, after the good job done by Geneva type conventions under UNO. Again, gone are the days when army men used to have extreme jingoism. Change in army's mindset with changing times is evident everywhere. Today such gruesome acts can be done only by religious fanatics, who go to any length to spread their highly distorted religious philosophy. But, we fault when we think that we are the only holy cows in the world. Humanity prevails everywhere. Again Pakistan army's hands are already full, fighting Taliban supported insurgents in their own country.

Another factor which should put us to shame is the fact that size wise Pakistan is just equal to UP and Bihar and we despite being seven times bigger always try to compete with them. Now look at China they never compete with us. We celebrated 50 years of Indo-China war, they despite having won didn't even remember it. India doesn't figure in their thinking and scheme of things. To them their only rival is USA and they want to over take USA not by becoming a military force but by presenting themselves as the world's biggest economic power. But here, our total focus is on Pakistan, a failed and collapsing country, pawn in the hands of few super powers. It is time we forget Pakistan and concentrate on better things.

It is also a real pity that we spend years and billions in peace process and then allow it to be derailed in one day. Either our peace process is a big farce or we play in the hands of some pro army lobby who make billions in the import of arms. Let us not forget that to arouse jingoism is the best way to cover up internal strife and failures.

We should have probed whether it was the work of Pakistan army or of any of the so many insurgent groups and jihadees operating in India and Pakistan before jumping to derail the process.