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(Regn. No. MNG/130/2021-2023)

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EDITORIAL

Amidst the commercial flooding of the Christmas season and the fun, frolic and the gaity associated with it, we often forget the true message of Christmas - that the birth of Jesus in a manger should direct us towards the lost, the forlorn, the poor, the abandoned, the homeless and those who cry for help.

The rescue operation of 41 labourers trapped in the tunnel at Uttarkasi in Uttarakhand State was a herculean and hazardous task. All those involved in their survival for 17 days and the successful rescue thereafter deserve our gratitude and praise. It was the culmination of patience, hard work and heroic efforts from many persons and many organizations.

December 3rd is observed as the International Day of the Disabled. Having supported the work of my husband for the cause of Leprosy for over five decades, I have been closely involved in the cause of the disabled. It is important that the disabled are accepted into the mainstream of society and supported to be equal members of Society.

December 10th is observed as International Human Rights Day. Violation of human rights happens in every country, all over the world. As Mother Teresa has said "Human Rights are not a privilege conferred by the Government. They are every human being's entitlement by virtue of his/her humanity" It is important that all of us ensure that human rights are upheld in all our undertakings.

I earnestly appeal to all the subscribers with pending dues of the *Mangalore* Magazine to kindly settle the same and subscribe further. Some of you have received requests in this regard from the President or me as Editor. We request your support and cooperation.

May the Joys of Christmas be yours bringing peace and love in our homes and hearts.

Until next time……..Patsy Lobo

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS...

For Christians, advent means Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Sometimes, when I ponder over the events that are taking place around us and in the world, I wonder whether man has forgotten God's love for us. The thought of Christmas should fill us with joy, excitement and exuberance. But the moment we switch on the TV or open the newspaper and see what is happening, the joy of Christmas vanishes. With what is happening in the Holy Land which, so many of us have visited, and the destruction that is taking place, I wonder whether in our lifetime we can visit this region again

When you see the challenges that we are facing like climate change, changes in monsoon and rain patterns with rains visiting us even in November/December and the war raging in Ukraine and the Middle East, we have to just cry out like blind Bartimaeus "Jesus Son of David take mercy on me".

However, through all this uncertainty, let us remember that the Christmas season is one of caring and sharing. So in our own way, let us spread some cheer amongst family, friends, neighbours and those in need.

Our organisation has been moving towards achieving greater heights. More members are entrusting us with endowment funds for the humanitarian work we do. May the next generation carry forward the good work done by us so far. In spite of all the turmoil in the world, our Indian economy seems to be doing well.

May the warmth and hope that comes from our random acts of goodness and goodwill light up our hearts. December also culminates the old year and brings in the New Year. It is time to make new resolutions.

I am sure all of us look forward to a pleasant New Year, one that is better than the current year. Let us remmeber those members who are not with us anymore. May they intercede for us. We wish all our members, patrons, and supporters a Merry Christmas and a Happy, healthy and prosperous New year. Do keep us in your prayer so that we may continue our mission of service and charity to the community around us. Our monthly magazine and our website "caskmangalore.org" highlight our performance and achievements.

God bless you all and keep you happy till we meet again in the New Year..... **Capt. Vincent Pais**

*****

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE MEMBERS OF CASK

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GENTLE REMINDER

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THE GREATEST TRIAL OF HUMANITY

Extracts of speech by Prof Jeffrey Sachs to Religious Leaders at 'Faith Leaders Summit' Abu Dhabi, 6 November 2023

Your Holinesses, Eminences, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are faced with the greatest trial of humanity, to live peacefully and sustainably on a crowded, interconnected planet. We are currently failing that trial. The world is aflame in wars. Human-caused environmental devastation accelerates. The Earth is warmer now than it has been in 125,000 years.

The Governments, especially of the rich and powerful states need to accept the blame. In these very days, just when we need the world's leaders to pay attention to the climate crisis in advance of 28th session of the Conference of the Parties **(COP28)** to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, we are instead enmeshed in a devastating war in the Middle East.

The Israel-Gaza war has already killed >11,000 innocent civilians in Gaza and some 1,500 in Israel, yet a ceasefire is not in sight (this article was written prior to the ceasefire). Israel is not sparing even hospitals, ambulances, schools, and neighborhoods, and creating carnage claiming that Hamas functionaries are hiding in those places and using even hospitals to attack Israel..

The United States Government, for its part, vetoes the calls by the UN Security Council and UN General Assembly for a cease fire in Gaza, thereby prolonging the rampage. Moreover, even as the war in Gaza rages, the attempts by some countries to push NATO enlargement to Ukraine, continues over Russia's strenuous objections. The result is an ongoing proxy war between the US and Russia that is utterly damaging Ukraine.

The leaders of powerful nations have dragged us into wars that the people do not want, and have delayed action against climate change to the point where climate change endangers our survival. In addition,

corruption has squandered the toil of billions of people. Why does corruption prosper? The answers are as ancient as they are relevant today.

The **first sin is arrogance**. Many leaders think and believe that only he or she can decide life and death in their country or elsewhere. They are reluctant or unwilling to enter into a negotiation with anybody. They forget that the path to true security runs through justice, not war.

The **second sin is greed**. Many of our wars are about the pursuit of lucre, yet the wars destroy vastly more wealth than could ever be garnered by conquest.

The **third sin is corruption**. This is a common factor in almost all countries. Giant companies and corporations and billionaires fund political parties in all countries and influence the outcome of elections. The corporations are involved in hundreds of billions of dollars of arms contracts, for whom war is business, and for whom campaign contributions the way to encourage more wars.

The **fourth sin is heresy**. Many leaders listen to false prophets who proclaim their nations to be the natural rulers over others. This mindset prevents useful negotiations and cooperation.

I have been involved in policy advising for more than 40 years. I can tell you the hard truth. The rich and powerful nations believe they can rule the world through deceit. The US has engaged in dozens of covert operations to overthrow governments of other countries, including 64 well-documented cases of covert regime change operations during 1947-1989 alone. In the past 20 years, the US has overthrown governments in Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Libya, and Ukraine, just to name a few cases. This war-making and relentless deceit must stop.

We must heed Isaiah, to beat swords into ploughshares. With today's technologies, our modern ploughshares and pruning hooks are powerful enough to end hunger worldwide, to feed all of humanity, and to protect the environment.

The war in Gaza must stop immediately, before it leads to more carnage, and lest we find ourselves in a regional war. Israel can find

its true security only through peace with Palestine. When Palestine is secure in its own state, with its capital in East Jerusalem and with control over the Muslim Holy Sites, Israel too will find security and peace, and Isaiah's vision will be realized.

The war in Ukraine can and will stop if powerful nations stop trying to expand NATO to Ukraine, and instead engages directly with Russia on pressing issues of mutual security, including renewed diplomacy for nuclear disarmament.

Despite the sins of the rich and powerful, yet there is hope for peace, your Holinesses and Excellencies. Yes, there is hope. And you bring that hope.

World public opinion overwhelmingly demands PEACE. You, the world's religious leaders, demand peace and pray for peace. The UN member states overwhelmingly demand peace and a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. When the rest of the world is united for peace, as it is, the United States and Israel will have to listen and to heed the call by humanity.

In his world recent message in advance of COP28, *Laudate Deum*, Pope Francis calls for a new multilateralism, so that the voices of all the world are heard, and so that the deceit of the powerful is constrained. As the Holy Father writes:

"Our world has become so multipolar and at the same time so complex that a different framework for effective cooperation is required…

All this presupposes the development of a new procedure for decision-making and legitimizing those decisions, since the one put in place several decades ago is not sufficient nor does it appear effective. In this framework, there would necessarily be required spaces for conversation, consultation, arbitration, conflict resolution and supervision, and, in the end, a sort of increased "democratization" in the global context, so that the various situations can be expressed and included."

Let us therefore here in Abu Dhabi call for a new and honest dialogue of the rich with the poor, the powerful with the powerless, and the

large nations with the small. Let us say no to the wars, yes to peace, and yes to planetary survival.

Let the new dialogue start this very day today, here in this assembly of religious leaders, and in the halls of the United Nations, home of We the Peoples and humanity's best hope for a multilateral world and a sustainable planet.

Let us tell the world leaders, clearly and unambiguously, "You must do your job, to promote the common good. You must put aside your arrogance, greed, corruption, and heresies. Your current approach is not working, so you must change."

Let us also be clear: there is no one indispensable country. There is only indispensable justice. And with justice, all countries are indispensable.

Thank you for this gathering. May we find the love and respect for our fellow humanity across the world that we so urgently need.

*****

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS OF WAR

Courtesy – The Swaddle Team

WAR impacts people in more ways than one. The Swaddles Hitesh Sonar illustrates the environmental costs of war, researched by Naina Yadav and Ananya Surana.

The Environmental costs of war are steep. The UNEP estimates that 40% of all intrastate conflicts over the last 60 years were linked to natural resources. But there is collateral damage involved during and before, all conflicts. A 2014 study in 'Conservation Letters' says that 1% of the Earth's Surface is officially covered by military training areas. The unofficial estimate – when accounting for Africa, for which data is sparse, is at 5-6%. Then there is nuclear testing. According to the Arms Control Association, over eight (8) countries have carried out 2,056 tests since 1945, with 507 causing atmospheric radiation. The USA accounts for over half of all tests. Not incidentally, the US

Military is also responsible for 1.2 billion metric tons of greenhouse emissions over the last 20 years.

During conflict, there is 'displacement', which puts a strain on local ecologies. As of September 2023, the UNHCR estimates 114 million people are displaced due to conflicts and persecution globally., the highest number on record. People in war zones moreover, rely on wild life, which is linked to species decline, which in turn prolongs the war. Kaitlyn Gaynor, a Conservationist from the University of California-Berkley told The Atlantic. According to another 2021 study, researches from the Wildlife Conservation Society-India (WCS-India), Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF), Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Panthera found that 4,291 and 9,056 terrestrial mammal and bird species respectively experienced Armed Conflicts – far above the IUCN Red List's estimate of 107 total species threatened by 'War', civil unrest and military exercises', Mongabay reported. There is significant vegetation loss too. An under-recognized dimension of the Israel-Palestine conflict : as per the Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem, Israeli authorities uprooted 800,000 olive trees, a Palestinian agricultural mainstay, in the West Bank since 1967. In 2012, two E.U.Heads of Mission reports found that Israeli Settlers violence against Palestinians often manifested in targeting Olive farmers.

In WAR, Human costs are Environmental costs and Environmental costs are Human costs.

WAR displaces people, which puts pressure on local resources. As of September 2023, a total of 214 million people have been displaced worldwide, due to conflicts, persecutions and human rights violations.

WARS are reshaping ecology. Military training areas are believed to cover between 1-6% of the global land surface, in many cases there are ecologically important areas.

Since 1945, at least 8 countries have carried out a total of 2,056 Nuclear Tests. Of those, 507 spread radio-active materials to the atmosphere. USA conducted over half of those nuclear tests. The US military is one of the largest institutional polluters, responsible for 1.2 billion metric tons of the greenhouse emissions in the last 10 years.

WAR also fosters species decline. Researchers say people in war-torn areas rely on wild-life for food and wildlife declines in turn may prolong the war. Between 1989 and 2018, approximately 4,291(78%) of terrestrial mammal species and 9,056 terrestrial bird species experienced armed conflicts.

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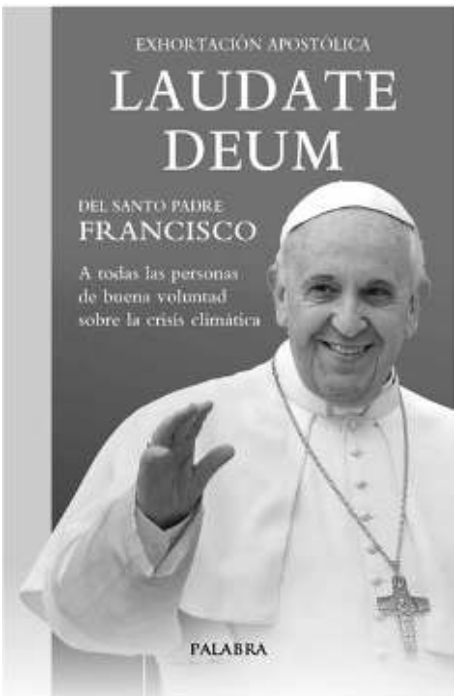
BRIEF ON CLIMATE CHANGE & ITS HUMAN CAUSES

Extracts from the Papal Document – LAUDATE DEUM (PRAIZE GOD)

Courtesy Philip Pullella, CSR



The document, known as an Apostolic Exhortation, titled "Laudate Deum",

In a recent document titled "Laudate Deum" (Praize God), Pope Francis has appealed to climate change deniers and foot-dragging politicians to have a change of heart, saying they cannot gloss over its human causes or deride scientific facts while the planet "may be nearing the breaking point". Climate change cannot be denied, papal document says.

In the new document, released ahead of the COP28 conference starting in November in Dubai, Pope Francis said the transition to clean, renewable energy and the abandonment of fossil fuels was not going fast enough.

He warned against putting too much trust in technology to

capture gas emissions, saying that while it was promising, it did not tackle the human causes at the root of global warming.

The 7,000-word document, called Laudate Deum (Praise God), is a follow-up to his 2015 encyclical on the environment "Laudato Si" (Praise Be). It was prompted by extreme weather events since then, which he called the earth's "cries of protest".

"The world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point," he said. "It is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons."

Addressed to "All people of good will on the climate crisis," it includes some highly technical sections that read like a scientific or foreign policy paper.

"Despite all attempts to deny, conceal, gloss over or relativize the issue, the signs of climate change are here and increasingly evident," he said.

"No one can ignore the fact that in recent years we have witnessed extreme weather phenomena, frequent periods of unusual heat, drought and other cries of protest on the part of the earth that are only a few palpable expressions of a silent disease that affects everyone," he said.

Pope Francis called for an abandonment of "short-term interests of certain countries or businesses," and political forces, saying it was high time to rise to the occasion. "In this way, may they demonstrate the nobility of politics and not its shame".

It is no longer possible to doubt the human - 'antropic' - origin of climate change," he took aim at those who "deride these facts," saying they use "allegedly scientific data" to show that the planet has always had periods of warming and cooling. He specifically faulted deniers and sceptics for refusing to acknowledge the speed of the current changes taking place over "one generation - not centuries or millennia".

"The rise in the sea level and the melting of glaciers can be easily perceived by an individual in his or her lifetime, and probably in a few years many populations will have to move their homes because of these facts," he wrote.

"If we are confident in the capacity of human beings to transcend their petty interests and to think in bigger terms, we can keep hoping that COP28 will allow for a decisive acceleration of energy transition, with effective commitments subject to ongoing monitoring," he said.

Failure in Dubai, he said, "will be a great disappointment and jeopardize whatever good has been achieved thus far".

Activists groups should not be labelled as "radicalised," he said, because they are "filling a space left empty by society as a whole".

The footnotes of the document, which in some parts referred to highly specific projections of temperature increases, statistics about melting icecaps and other technical matters, refer to reports from Catholic sources, the United Nations, specific laboratories and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The Pope acknowledged that even the Church was divided on climate change. He gave no examples but in the United States, for example, former President Donald Trump's assertion that climate change was "a hoax" was backed by some U.S. bishops.

"I feel obliged to make these clarifications, which may appear obvious, because of certain dismissive and scarcely reasonable opinions that I encounter, even within the Catholic Church," Francis wrote.

"Yet we can no longer doubt that the reason for the unusual rapidity of these dangerous changes is a fact that cannot be concealed."

*****

THE SOUND OF CAROLS

By Trisha Lara DSouza

I heard the jingle of the tambourine in the distance and raced inside as I screamed, 'The carolers are here! The Christmas carolers are here!' Grabbed on to Grandma's hand and walked her outside while the rest of the family tidied up and hurried toward the front door. We were sure to keep some Kuswar and cold drinks ready as we snuggled into

our Christmas caps. The jingle came closer and with it the sweet voices of Christmas tunes.

We welcomed the carolers at our doorstep as they sang in chorus and filled the night with the joy of silver bells and glory to the newborn King.

This is one of my fondest memories of the Christmas season since my childhood and a practice that Mangalore still delivers through the Mangalore Ladies Circle. From an excited little girl on her tippy toes to being a part of Carol singing, I still see the glimmer of the most festive season in everyone's eyes as we carry musical notes to several doorsteps.

From carrying joy from house to house, the city now overflows with events and gatherings that feature Christmas carols and delicious food which we diet all year for! The feeling of beginning these gatherings with Christmas carols shares the most delightful warmth in all our hearts.

Christmas has so many elements that bind the best month of the year. Sugar filled treats that we cannot stop munching on, ubiquitous decorations in our homes with a special place for our Crib and Christmas tree and the arrival of family members as we plan our Christmas meals. But there's something about Christmas Carols that instills a vivid exuberance in all our festivities.

The lyrics of each carol add to our vocabulary and have us speak of candy canes and mistletoe. We use these lyrics as wishes, as fodder for a secret Christmas chuckle and in our prayers and blessings.

As we exult the voices of Christmastide let us sing Christmas carols as loudly as we can as we make sure our loved ones feel loved, our vicinity thumps with merry everything and our city glows with the light of a multitude of stars.

Merry Christmas and the best year ahead to you, your family and friends.

*****

TRANSFORMING VICTIMS INTO SURVIVORS

Courtesy – Audrey D'Mello, Majlis, Mumbai

On 14th April, 2017, Amravati Harijan was set ablaze by a young boy as she had earlier stood up to him for sexually harassing her 17-year-old daughter. Two weeks later, despite all best efforts, she succumbed to her injuries. A two year old toddler also died in the incident. Amravati was survived by three children - Roshni, Abhishek and Aditya who were all minors then.

Today nearly six and a half years later, the Sessions court convicted the accused and sentenced him to death calling it a 'cold blooded, rarest of rare case'.

Majlis has been involved with the case since the start and we promised the family both legal and social support. We followed up the case through the investigation and trial.

Transforming victims to survivors is a slow and tedious process. The first step was to clear the humongous hospital bills. But since then in the past 6 years, it has been small and big things - guiding them about education and career options, helping them enrol in courses, being with them during sickness, taking them out during diwali, consoling them when their father passed away due to alcoholism, supporting them when their small tenement was going under redevelopment, standing up to relatives and neighbours who wanted her to forgive the accused. The journey has been steep but satisfying.

Today Roshni (24) has completed her BCom and has done a course in DFA and MSCIT. We helped her prepare for the Junior Associate all-India competitive exams but she did not qualify. Later she underwent training in Banking Financial Services and Insurance and after completion she did a number of internships. Initially the travel was intimidating and we had to keep her motivated. Finally Roshni secured an internship in an Audit firm where she was found to be responsible, sincere and willing to learn. Her team work and communication skills were particularly appreciated. She had been

shortlisted for a job interview with a multinational but could not secure a position. Currently Roshni is giving tuitions to children in her area while she manages the home and her siblings. We are trying to help her secure an office job.

Abhishek (21) is pursuing a degree in commerce. He was struggling with his academics and had to reappear for his 12th std. He wanted to join the ship but the career counsellor advised him to complete his graduation first. Aditya (16) has completed his 10th Std and has enrolled in college.

In 2017, I had written "Our collective response will determine whether these children bounce back from this darkest of events and emerge as sensitive responsible human beings or just fall by the wayside of society's margins." I think we have collectively delivered! I take this opportunity to thank each one of you who have supported us in this journey.

UN DAY FOR ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Professor Sunney Tharappan

While our study of Leadership as Virtual Presence by identifying Fifty Great World Leaders of the Past Twenty-five Centuries and the types of their leadership was in progress, one of the professors brought to the notice of one of the assemblies that there were very few women leaders in the list of fifty. Madam Curie and Florence Nightingale were the only selected ones and they were from the modern centuries. There were nine criteria for the selection of the leaders. Some of them were that they should not be leaders of faith or kings or those who committed genocide. Hitler and Velupillai Prabhakaran remained nearer but above the fifty. There were more than four hundred names which were listed up initially and many were removed as per the criteria. While searching for great female leaders of the past twenty-five centuries, the researchers chanced on Mirabel Sisters of the Dominican Republic who belonged to the twentieth century.

The UN General Assembly designated 25 November, the day in 1960 when the Mirabel Sisters were killed, the 'International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women', in 1999. While resolving the Assembly referred to the Mirabel Sisters; Patria, Minerva and Maria Theresa; who were 'symbols of both popular and feminist resistance'. They considered the three sisters as women more than rebels in the way they rose against a dictator, Rafael Trujillo. They were assassinated on 25 November in 1960 by Trujillo, the dictator who ruled the Dominican Republic for more than three decades. He also was killed in 1961 for the atrocities against and the assassination of the three women, Mirabel Sisters, six months earlier. The sisters were waylaid, beaten and strangulated to death. Their death was falsely depicted as an accident by pushing the jeep in which they travelled as if it ran off the road. There was also an allegation that the CIA planned the killing of Trujillo as US was afraid that he could become another Fidel Castro who led the Cuban revolution in 1959. US was fighting against Castro and Cuba then.

The Dominican Republic is one of the oldest of the Americas with Spanish backgrounds as Christopher Columbus first landed in this island in 1492 during his journey in search of the Indies and called it 'Espanola', in Spanish, meaning the 'Spanish Island'. He reached out to the rest of America from there. Later, it was given St. Dominic's name. Today the Dominican Republic is more than half of an island with the remaining being Haiti. Among popular nearer islands are Cuba, Jamaica, Bahamas and Puerto Rico. The Spanish Island was ruled by native Taino chiefs who managed their kingdoms together before its colonisation. With the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean on either side, the Republic is known for its beaches and peaceful lifestyles of people for more than four centuries. When Trujillo managed to take over as a dictator, he became very unpopular as he massacred of thousands of Haitians who were brought to the Republic by the earlier rulers as sugarcane cutters.

The Mirabel Sisters were four, the three were killed and the fourth one lived till 2016. The four sisters were born into a family of agriculturists with a small business of a coffee mill and a general store.

They were brought up well and were attracted towards groups of people who were fighting against the dictator. Minerva wanted to study law and put up her application. Trujillo, the dictator, had a habit of selecting young women for not only appointments but even for admissions to higher education. He not only married thrice after leaving the previous wife each time. He had several mistresses across the country, a fact which he boasted about. When Minerva appeared for the interview, she was noted by the dictator. The clever dictator gave her an admission and closely followed her though she did not give him a chance to catch her. When she had to get her certificate, the dictator refused it and told her that she would not be allowed to practice unless she obliged him which she flatly refused. This made Minerva become a hardened rebel against the dictator which led to her and her sisters' deaths.

In 'The Time of the Butterflies', a 2001 film by Metro – Goldwyn – Mayar, provides details of the life of the three sisters. The word 'Butterflies' refers to the three of them symbolising freedom and independence. There are also many books which were published on the courageous fight of the sisters against the dictator, especially after they were killed by him.

25 November is the day designated for Elimination of Violence against women, done in honour of the Mirabel Sisters by the United Nations. There is an unusual and strong statement from Minerva Mirabel. She said 'if they kill me, I will reach my arms out from the tomb and I will be stronger'. It is this attitude and willingness to fight against the cruel acts of the dictator that made her and her sisters very famous even before their death. It is the death of the three sisters which gave courage to the movement against Trujillo leading to his death. The activities connected with Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November continues till 10 December which is the Human Rights day being celebrated by the United Nations.

This year, Times magazine listed hundred notable women for the year and included Mirabel Sisters in that. The concept of 'Shadow Pandemic' is brought up world over after Covid made many homes places for domestic violence. As per the UN report published in 2021 titled 'measuring the shadow pandemic: violence against women during

Covid'. It was reported that in thirteen nations in Africa, Asia and South America, domestic violence against women increased during pandemic by 25 to 33 percent. The violence against women in Iran is considered something far beyond the comprehension of sociologists and psychologists. The sacrifices that are made by the Iranian women for not only their freedom but also their stand against harassment and cruelty meted out to them are referred to as modern resistance against violence against women.

Among all forms of violence against women, including acts of dishonouring their sanctity as women, domestic violence is considered more rampant and more disastrous from the point of view of mental development and associated attitudes of growing up children. Moreover, domestic violence goes unnoticed in most cases because of social belief systems of many societies that women are not equal to men. Despite democratic rights being accorded to women through functional laws, the unfortunate status of women in several societies are not conducive for women to fight for their justifiable rights, even as per existing laws.

One wonders whether mere fight against violence against women by women will be the need of the hour. The attitudes of the men have to change if cruelty meted out to women have to be eliminated. Therefore, one needs more men's association and groups to stand against violence against women if that has to be neutralised. What may be needed more is a change in the attitude of men towards women rather than women alone fighting against such violence.

*****

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COASTAL COLLATERAL

(A sequel to "Roller Coaster")

 # chhotebhai

In war, and even out of it, those who resort to aerial bombardment use the term "collateral damage" to explain away the loss of innocent lives, or destruction of non-military targets; as is now happening in Gaza. It is a convenient justification, or escape route, for what should be classified as war crimes.

I am not at war with anyone. Hence I am using the word "collateral" in its original sense; something incidental or parallel to the mainline. In this sequel I am sharing relatively light hearted observations from my recent 15 day sojourn deep south.

My previous piece began with the age of my granddaughter, just six. I now go to the other end of the spectrum. In cricketing parlance I have faced the equivalent of 12 overs and life isn't over yet. It was therefore natural that I would be catching up with several senior citizens like me.

Just before this journey I had stumbled across an expensive tube of toothpaste that had 2014 as its expiry date. I decided to use it, come what may. It was perfect. Was it a harbinger of this trip where I would be meeting many, who today's generation could term as being past their "best before" date? Pope Francis has often spoken out against the "use and throw" or "disposable" modern culture.

This trip proved the contrary, how valuable and inspiring our senior citizens are. In Goa I met my sister-in-law who was touching 90. She was confined to bed, but mentally all there and enjoyed playing cards every evening.

In Mysore I met 82 year old Major General Sudhir Vombatkere VSM ®. He proudly showed me the cycle that he was still using. I had first met him over 20 years ago when he accompanied Medha Patkar on an extensive tour that included my hometown Kanpur. Over the years I had lost touch with him, until I read that he had filed a petition

in the Supreme Court against the anti-people, colonial era, sedition law. Fortunately I was able to re-establish contact.

I took the opportunity for an impromptu interview that I uploaded on my YouTube channel @chhotebhaikanpur6759. He spoke freely on what prompted him to become a "soldier who thinks of people" – his own definition. He shared about the dangers of the agniveer scheme and the Government's directive to soldiers on leave to propagate the government's social welfare schemes, make videos of the same and submit them to their commanding officers.

When I first met Vombatkere I also met the wife of Admiral Ramdas, former Chief of Naval Staff. The only other faujis that I knew of, who were outspoken on people's issues or critical of the Government were Lt Gen H.S. Panag and defence analyst Col Ajay Shukla. Most serving and retired faujis tend to be right wing and blindly support the present Government's extremist policies. They pretend not to know what happened in Pulwama or Galwan!

At Bangalore I was honoured to meet another 80+ civil rights activist, M.G. Devasahayam, a former army man and IAS officer. In 1975, as the District Magistrate of Chandigarh, he had shielded Jay Prakash Narayan from the wrath of Indira Gandhi; during the Emergency, when even Supreme Court judges became spineless. Devashayam has been in the forefront of the battle against Electronic Voting Machines. He believes that digital/ electronic devices are susceptible to manipulation. If Chinese hackers can access Pentagon files, or Pegasus spyware can be planted on any electronic device, then what is safe?

In contrast I also met some 80+ friends who were living retired lives, with no social interaction or commitment. They had entered Shakespeare's seventh stage of life, a second childhood. Their only "activity" seemed to be at the WhatsApp University.

I now turn to food. Having been born and brought up in the north, I have my proclivities. In Goa I enjoyed the poyee bread. My hosts in Kerala conjured up a variety of lip-smacking dishes – fried fish, prawns, beef fry, parothas etc. I should have been younger to do justice to all that. In Palai, Anand made the traditional putt. In Ernakulam Tara made scrumptious appam and in Mysore I got my favourite iddiappam. I

also got my favourite sweets – Goan Bebinca, Calicut Halwa and Mysorepak.

Being a creature of habit, I must have an egg for breakfast. In Kerala, I got everything but eggs! I was getting desperate. On the last leg of my train journey I lunged at the vendor for "bred-aamlate"! While passing through the Coorg region I picked up some pure Arabica-Robusta blend coffee powder and its famed pork masala.

A small digression. In Bangalore I met a young Brazilian lady of Italian descent. She had been living in India for some years and had just returned from a short holiday in Italy. She told me that she was craving to return to tasty Indian food. I agreed. I had a similar experience when I visited Italy in 2017. Halfway through, we went to a Bangladeshi restaurant for biryani.

Shashi Tharoor believes that the Brits took more than the Kohinoor from India. Perhaps the Jewel in the Crown for them was our rich and varied cuisine. All hail to our biryanis, dosas and chutneys.

The trains I travelled on were clean except for the occasional cockroach and one leaking roof. The TTEs were exceedingly polite. None of them asked for my identity proof. Perhaps they didn't want to mess around with a bearded kurta pyjama wearing goonda from the north.

I had two interesting interactions on the trains. Striking up a conversation I discovered that my co-passengers belonged to the Mar Thoma Church. I told them that I wrote for one of their publications. Lo and behold, we discovered a common acquaintance in Dallas, Texas. Small world. On the train from Ernakulam to Payyanur a gentleman told me that he was travelling for just two stations. I asked him how that was allowed on a long distance train. He gave me the all-knowing smile of one who knows how to buck the system.

When the TTE came around he showed him his ticket together with a hundred rupee note. Sensing that I was watching him, the TTE spurned the offer (at least in front of me). This is because he had earlier been counting and reconciling his cash collection. I pointed out that a twenty rupee note was lying on the seat. He quickly added it to another bundle of notes in another pocket. Draw your own conclusions.

What really bugged me was the taxis. It was fine wherever my wife used the Uber app. I had forgotten how to use my Ola one. Unmetered taxis were a rip off. In Goa the taxi mafia has stalled the entry of Uber and Ola, hence charge the sun for going to the moon. Devoid of any other alternative I had to take a cab from Payyanur to Mysore. I paid a "concessional" rate of Rs 5500/,for a 99.5 km trip to Coorg Gate, more expensive than a flight. When we got back, at Kanpur airport the pre-paid taxi service charged me Rs.400/- for 7 kms.

When my cab crossed from Kerala into Karnataka we were greeted with lunar craters. The consolation was driving through verdant virgin forests of the Coorg region. If Trivandrum was pot-holed, Bangalore had speed breakers everywhere, perhaps because of its chaotic traffic. It has an endemic problem. There are Main and Cross Roads at every 50 metres in congested residential areas. Pathetic urban planning, or the lack of it.

Because there are no direct flights from Kanpur to Goa or Bangalore on the return journey, we had to change at Delhi and Mumbai respectively - All Indigo flights. Bangalore airport was the most congested and least user friendly. My wife opted for a wheelchair every time, so the airhostesses were really courteous. The jury is still out if this was because of the wife in the wheelchair, or her debonair husband.

On the last leg to Kanpur I got a rude shock. It was the first time in two weeks that I heard somebody aggressively raising his voice. I also picked up a sense of aggression on the countenances of some of the passengers. It is only when we are away for some time that we notice things that we would otherwise have considered par for the course. Welcome back to Yogiland.

Continue your journey through life without looking at the expiry date and enjoy the food and company on the way. Bon Appetit, Bon Voyage!

** This travelogue is written in lighter vein. No collateral damage is intended. The writer may be forgiven if he has offended anybody's sensitivities.*

*****

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A WALK FOR THE 736 MILLION WOMEN SUBJECTED TO VIOLENCE

- Today I walked for the 736 million women who have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both, at least once in their life.
- Today I walked for all my friends in abusive marriages who had the courage to walk out. And for those who choose to remain, may they find the courage.
- Today I walked for the teenage me who had to regularly call out and sometimes slap men in the street, on buses, in trains, who thought they could press against, pinch, mock...
- Today I walked for our daughters that they never have to face gender violence and more importantly that they shout loud if they do.
- Today I walked because really #ThereIsNoExcuse

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

The campaign was started by activists at the inauguration of the Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991. It is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

In support of this civil society initiative, the United Nations Secretary-General launched in 2008 the campaign UNITE by 2030 to End Violence against Women, which runs parallel to the 16 Days of Activism.

Every year, the UNITE Campaign focuses on a specific theme and this year's is "UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls". The campaign calls on citizens to show how much they care about ending violence against women and girls by sharing the actions they are taking to create a world free from violence towards women. This year's campaign also calls on governments worldwide to share how they are investing in gender-based violence prevention.

BRING IN THE NEW YEAR 2024

Patsy Lobo

On 31st January 2023, at the stroke of the midnight hour, we herald in the new year 2024. Because New Year denotes the first day of the year, it tends to bring happiness into people's lives because it represents a new beginning while leaving the previous year behind. The New Year is a time for us to put all of our negative experiences behind and take a positive step into the future.

Let all that we wish and want, be quietly placed before God, for our hope is in Him. Lord, I patiently wait for all the answers. I place all my hopes in you. I know that it will work out because YOU are working on my behalf

As we celebrate Christmas 2023, let us recall 'The Sermon On The Mount' and direct our thoughts, prayers and support for the poor, the sick, the bereaved, the forlorn.....

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;
- Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted;
- Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;
- Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

In days gone by, when we had a New Year Party on the 31st December we all held hands and sang with all gusto the song "Auld Lang Sang" (Times gone by) as we burnt the old man and pampered the baby who crawled in!

Should auld acquaintance be forgot

And never brought to mind?

Should auld acquaintance be forgot

And the days of auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear

For auld lang syne

We'll drink a cup of kindness yet

For the sake of auld lang syne

And surely you will buy your cup

And surely I'll buy mine!

We'll take a cup of kindness yet

For the sake of auld lang syne

In a nutshell, be it Christmas or New Year, let KINDNESS be our motto and mantra. The miraculous birth of Christ is an eternal event. It must echo in our life, not only in our individual life but in dealing with the family and the outside world of friends and those in need.

THE OLD CHRITMAS CARD

Joan Lobo

There's an old Christmas card in an old dusty trunk
And it brings back sweet mem'ries dear to me
Though it's faded and worn, it's as precious as the morn
And I realise it has been lovingly stored for posterity.

Well! It could not be any different for me as at this time of the year being a ritual to get my home all spruced up, decluttered, tidied and at the end hang the decorations up for xmas.This year in the midst of it all , I discovered treasures in a whole lot of very old Christmas cards carefully preserved by my beloved mum over the years. The impatient me actually made the attempt to scrutinize every one of them and many of the senders were now a picture on the wall as a memory. I thrilled myself with every word, every line and feeling sentimental and emotional was inevitable. The tears rolled down my cheeks uncontrollably as I reminisced the people, the times, the moments and memories. I spared a thought for the effort that was made selecting each of those cards while looking through piles and finally finding the apt one. Every card conveyed so much striking a chord in my heart.

Christmas cards feel like a holiday staple, but not everyone feels the spirit of the exchange. For me, one of the tell-tale signs that the holiday season has arrived is the first Christmas card i receive in the mail from a cousin very early year after year.

In my growing years, during the christmas season the postman with his overloaded bag resembled Santa and delivering cards everyday, my mom used to methodically place them in a decorative basket soon to be accompanied by a lot more from family and friends. My siblings and I were tasked exclusively to put the cards up and more responsibility with helping arrange the copious number of cards. Shopping for cards was an expedition in itself making a list of how many cards were needed , who were getting which and the extra special ones for select people too. I remember my mom would hand address at least 60 Christmas cards and by Christmas day our living room was filled with cards she'd received in return.

Baking cookies for Santa, watching Christmas shows, and decorating the tree are all well-loved holiday traditions. But there's one annual treat that many think is disappearing with each passing year, the sending and receiving of Christmas cards. Who doesn't love to flip through a stack of cards and admire and appreciate the thoughtfulness behind them??

I don't think anyone sends out Christmas cards anymore and I'm certain it's been a few years since we've gotten more than a hand full.We don't send letters anymore, but emails. We no longer have address books, but digital contact lists instead. If we want to get in touch with someone, we facetime them, text them, or tag them on Facebook. We fill out forms online, instead of on paper; we have apps for shopping lists, notes, and to-do lists.

A Christmas card is tactile – something you can physically hold and touch – they're so much more meaningful than a message on the screen. You can keep a Christmas card for years, and look back fondly on festive seasons past. Although you can certainly keep a text message, it's no match for seeing your loved one's handwriting there on the page.

Christmas cards also feel much more personal than a text or e-mail. You know that whoever has sent you this card has taken the time out of their day to select the card for you, write it out, buy a stamp and post it. The experience of receiving personal mail in itself is always exciting. Sitting in a moment of quiet to open the envelope, admire the Christmas card, and then thoughtfully collect it with the others for yourself to revisit later is so personal and meaningful.

Have you sent out your holiday cards yet? If not tis' the season – not just for Christmas cards, that's the easy part – but for the Christmas letter. Some have them funny, some warm and some fuzzy .Many of us send out cards that comprise a photo collage from the past year. That means that fewer of us are sending the long update letter along with our christmas cards. There are so many other ways to share greetings. Between text messaging, email and social media, snail mail has pretty much become a thing of the past and with it, so have Christmas cards.

Christmas cards are actually also a fun, timeless way to share your personal style and family members' personalities, both in the photo and the card choice.I love seeing how people choose to sum up the year in one photograph! It's special to see how the kids have grown or what special memories they have created . Our whole lives wrapped up into a little card at the end of each year. Joyful!"

Have you ever visited someone's home during the festive season and not perused their collection of Christmas cards? It's fun to look at the cards on display You won't remember seeing an Instagram post on a tiny screen in the hazy moments before falling asleep, but you will look through your stack of Christmas cards multiple times over the weeks they're on display in your home.I also believe the beauty in the tradition goes beyond the act of sending the card .I've always been someone who has enjoyed looking at others' Christmas cards on display in their homes. It's as if their whole community is on display in the most joyful and loving way.

I believe that although social media is ubiquitous in our lives, it's not good for every purpose, and it can't replace all of our traditions. There is still a place for real paper cards that have been written out with a thoughtful message. If anything, because so much is now done via the internet, having a physical card to open at Christmas time is more valuable than ever.They're more meaningful. There are expanding digital options, the argument that social media leaves physical cards null, etc., but there's something about a little xmas magic that gets delivered with the whole thing

The number of Christmas cards appears to be dwindling, mailbox by mailbox, jolly Santa by red-nose reindeer. And there's something unnerving about that for some people. What will it mean if no one sends Christmas cards or letters? For many, Christmas cards have outlived their utility. With the proliferation of video chatting, texting, blogging and social media, there's no longer the need to keep friends and family updated in a yearly letter. While they are pretty and full of holiday cheer most holiday cards aren't very planet conscious. Few people realize that paper that has glitter, sticky tape or embellishments on them aren't typically recyclable. So not only do cards increase the

amount of trees being used to make paper but the inability to recycle these products increases the amount of trash.

Social media can sometimes make it feel like we live next door to distant places, but occasional likes and well-wishing comments just aren't enough to hold those bonds taut. Knowing that you took the time, care, and yes, money, to send them a piece of mail that only a certain number of folks received in the first place is pretty darn special. It's an investment in relationships

Cards are the glue holding together the special feelings of xmas ! Mailing physical cards has been a tradition for over a century. Displaying each card in your home makes you feel closer to those who sent them.

Some people may have given up the tradition, but the crowd who is committed to Christmas cards is fiercely so! Receiving a christmas card is delightful, especially in the social media age. I feel greeting cards will come back with a cheerful vengeance soon! So I reiterate that christmas cards maybe here to stay sooner than expected.!

*****

TOWARDS 2024: CITIZENS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ

It is Constitution Day once again! *We, the people of India*, gratefully remember 26 November 1949 when the Constitution of India was passed and adopted by the Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly comprised women and men of distinction, who were able to represent the heart and soul of the people of India without fear or favour. They gave of their best, so that we may a visionary Constitution, which would be the mainstay for and of democracy in India!

In less than six months from now (around end-April, early-May 2024), the General Elections 2024 are due to be held in the country. These elections are expected to be crucial in the context of the future of democracy in India.

It is imperative therefore, that every single adult citizen (above the age of 18 years) of the country exercises one's franchise and does so wisely. Before that however, one needs to ensure that one's name is registered on the Electoral Rolls.

As a starting point: **FIRST** visit the website of the Election Commission of India https://eci.gov.in/ for immediate, updated and accurate information regarding the entire election process. This website has all the necessary information. In some places, it has already been announced that **9 December 2023**, will be the last date for registering one's name on the Electoral Rolls.

Here are guidelines to ensure that people register themselves and engage meaningfully in the electoral process: which is the right and duty of every citizen! Some pointers, which may be helpful, include:

I. THE ELECTORAL ROLL:

- if you are 18 years and above (or will turn 18 in the next few months) and a citizen of India, you must have your name on the Electoral Roll (**ER**)
- it is essential for every adult citizen of India
- check **immediately** whether your name is on the ER (by visiting the ECI website / your State CEO website / Taluka Office / Collector's Office / the local branch Office of a national political party)
- for inclusion of one's name on the ER, you will have to fill **Form 6**
- ask the concerned Officer on what date you should return to check whether your name is in the ER
- for any objection or inclusion of name/s, you will have to fill **Form 7**
- for correction of entries in the Electoral Rolls, you will have to fill **Form 8**
- write your complaints to the Chief Electoral Officer (**CEO**) of your State and to the Chief Election Commissioner (**CEC**) Delhi (complaints@eci.gov.in)
- always retain copies of your application / letters, signed by the receiving Officer, for further reference

- ensure that you have the Elector's Photo Identity Card (**EPIC**)
- *remember having an EPIC does **NOT** mean that your name is on the ER*
- Constantly check on the ER if your name is still there – particularly 2 to 3 weeks BEFORE your Election Day; there are several instances of the names of registered voters mysteriously disappearing from the ER , just before elections
- Organise in your institution a competent team/s with a computer/s to help people to register themselves
- help the poor, the vulnerable, the differently-abled ,to register themselves on the ER

II. POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:

- get involved in mainstream politics
- encourage / support political parties which focus on governance and on issues related to transparency, human rights, justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, secularism, socialism, pluralism and peace and the safeguarding of the Constitutional Rights and freedoms of all.

- **BEFORE** Election Day:
  - check out complete details of the candidates, the parties plan to nominate
  - organise public debates / dialogues with them and assess their views / opinions / promises / track-record
  - study their Election Manifesto of the previous elections and based on that manifesto, see whether the ruling party / sitting candidate has fulfilled the promises made
  - assess their views on all vulnerable/marginalized sections of society particularly, the poor the tribals/adivasis, dalits, women, children, small farmers/migrant workers/casual workers, minorities, LGBTQI community
  - question(preferably in writing) the candidates on critical subjects which plague the country today like rising prices, growing unemployment, widening gap between the rich and the poor, the takeover of precious natural resources (particularly the *jal, jungle aur jameen* of the adivasis) and

profiteering Government-owned enterprises by some of the corporate sector, drinking water, education(particularly the National Education Policy),food, security, housing, ecology(climate change, global warming, use of fossil fuels), employment, agriculture (the situation of the small farmers; the anti-farmer policies) health, displacement, migrant workers, casual labourers (the four labour codes) , electoral bonds, demonetization, rampant corruption (like buying up duly elected politicians from another party),anti-conversion laws, denigration of minorities, misuse of Constitutional/ quasi bodies (like the NIA, ED , CBI , Income Tax, police), military spending. nuclearisation , draconian laws like the UAPA, the incarceration of human rights defenders , the throttling of freedom of speech and expression

- Never fall for their empty promises or 'freebies'

III. ON VOTING DAY:

- cast your vote fearlessly
- encourage all others to freely cast their votes too
- vote for a party / individual that is **NOT corrupt, criminal, communal and / or casteist** and is committed to protecting the sanctity of the **Constitution**
- if you notice any bogus voting, rigging or booth capturing, bring it to the notice of the police / Election Officers immediately and preferably in writing
- ensure that there is photo/video/audio documentary evidence
- make sure that the Electronic Voting Machine (**EVM**) you use – works correctly also demand that there is a Voter verifiable paper audit trial (**VVPAT**)
- you have the right to exercise your franchise as 'None of the Above' (**NOTA**) under Rule 49 – O

IV. AFTER ELECTIONS:

- find out the details of your elected representative (name, address, telephone / fax nos., email, etc)
- arrange that organizations, villages / groups invite the person to share his / her views about the area for the next five years

- ensure that you keep in touch with him / her constantly
- remember that they have budgetary allocations for their constituency; find out for what programmes this money is being utilized
- insist that your views / concerns are voiced in the assembly / parliament
- ensure that they do NOT endorse any draconian or anti-people legislation
- remind the representative that as a voter you have a right to ask for his / her resignation for non-performance

On 25 November 1949, in a passionate speech in the Constituent Assembly the Visionary Dr. Ambedkar warned the nation of three things that could destroy the democratic structure and fabric of the nation, *"If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what must we do? The **first** thing in my judgement we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives…. where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for (...) unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but the **Grammar of Anarchy** and the sooner they are abandoned, the better for us. The **second** thing we must do is to observe the caution which John Stuart Mill has given to all who are interested in the maintenance of democracy, namely, not "to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with power which enable him to subvert their institutions in politics, **Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.** The **third** thing we must do is not to be content with mere political democracy. **We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well.** Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it, social democracy".* In voicing his strong sentiments, Ambedkar would certainly visualized India 2023, when some are determined to destroy the entire Constitution

It is time for *'we the people of India'* to wake up immediately , before it is just too late- we must ensure that as citizens of India, we seriously pay heed to the warnings of Dr Ambedkar and protect the sanctity of our Constitution and our democracy, at all costs!

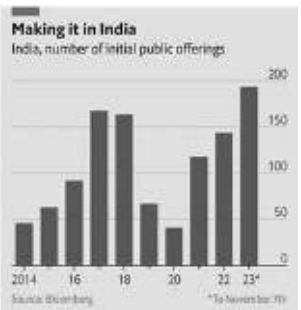
*****

POINTS TO PONDER, DECEMBER 2023

Norbert Shenoy

Primary Market – Out of the Cocoon & Fluttering

Gradually, unobtrusively the Initial Public Offer (IPO) market in India is undergoing quite a few changes and most of them for the better. The quarter ending September 23 has been the best ever since 2014



New companies entering capital market is essential for a vibrant, innovative and growing economy. Some of the well known bigtech companies straddling the globe today are all relatively young. Microsoft and Apple are both less than 50 years old, Google and Netflix are about 25 years, while Uber and Airbnb are 14 and 15 years, respectively.

In India the primary market is witnessing IPOs from diverse sectors. Start-ups like Zomato (Foodtech), Paytm (Fintech) and Freshworks (Software-as-a-Service) have had successful listings. In 2022 a whole lot of defense companies hit the capital market when the sector was much sought after. These companies have so far given decent returns. But noteworthy feature of the IPOs in the latest quarter is the diverse array of sectors from which IPO companies have emerged. These include hospitality, small finance banking, biotechnology and supply chain management, infrastructure, cable manufacturing and as well as apparel & jewellery. There have also been old world, run-of-the-mill companies like Cello World (subscribed over 40 times) making "tiffin" boxes and moulded furniture joining the bandwagon which have benefitted from India's growth story rather than from writing it. But the big picture indicates a departure from the past when a single sector tended to dominate the primary market when a popular trending theme caught market fancy. Moreover an analysis of IPOs in 2023 on BSE and NSE shows that while issue sizes are shrinking, the industries from where these offers originate are becoming diverse along with geographies from where companies are seeking such funds. Half of

the primary offers on the main board of BSE and NSE are from smaller cities like Davangere, Nashik and Jaipur.

Another heartening development is that 88 per cent cited corporate general purposes as the objective of the IPO implying that they will be using the funds for business expansion.

It is encouraging to see that now the big corporates also raring to join the party as they hive off maturing innovative segments incubated in-house. TVS Supply Chain Solutions is the first company from the group to hit the capital market in nearly 30 years. The Tata group after nearly 20 years is tapping the tapping the capital market with Tata Technologies, a subsidiary of Tata Motors. Besides plans are afoot for the IPOs of Tata Sons and Tata Play (erstwhile Tata Sky). Investors are also eagerly awaiting offers from NSE, NSDL, Asianet Satellite Communication, Bhart FIH and Fab India.

With development getting widespread and variegated, primary market has got broad based in tandem. Early stage enterprises along with Small and Medium enterprises are also flocking to the capital markets through the dedicated listing boards of the BSE and NSE. After Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her 2019 budget proposed the idea of Social Stock Exchange (SSE), both BSE and NSE are offering SSE platforms with each of them having onboarded more than 30 entities. SSE is a separate segment that helps social enterprises raise funds from the public. Social enterprises are of two types Not-for-Profit and for profit social enterprises which are governed under specific statutes and rules. It is still a nascent activity but has shown promising growth during the last couple of years.

And there is the trivia spawned by the frenzy in the primary market. As promoters, particularly of start-ups, dilute their holdings through primary market, quite a few of them have quietly walked into the India's elite billionaire club. Ramesh Kunhikannan who holds 64 per cent stake in the Mysuru based Kaynes Technologies, boasts of a net worth of Rs 8200 crores as the shares of the company recently crossed Rs 2650 as against the issue price of Rs 587 in November 22. Similarly Ranjit Pandurthi's wealth is estimated at Rs 4700 crores after the successful IPO of Archaen Chemicals while Ajay P Thakker & Family

have surpassed a net worth of Rs 3000 crores after the stock market debut of their company Jupiter LifeLine Hospital. Then there are promoters who ran into headwinds after their IPOs but have now made a come back. Deepinder

Goyal of Zomato and Yashish Dahiya of PB Fintech for instance, have found their wealth increase by 70 per cent suggesting that the start-up kingpins, with all the hiccups will succeed in wealth creation.

SEBI certainly, has played a constructive role in bringing about the much needed shift in the primary market by making fund raising in the primary market more transparent, cost effective and speedier. By tweaking the ICDR (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, issuers who do not meet specified criteria, are required to make their offers through book-building process wherein 75 per cent of the shares are reserved for QIBs (Qualified Institutional Buyers). If the QIB is quota is not filled, the issue must be withdrawn. The idea is to help retail investors in spotting quality IPOs with institutional lead. When it was observed that the price bands offered under the book-built route was so narrow that it hardly facilitated competitive bidding and price discovery, SEBI specified a minimum range of 5 per cent between upper and lower price bands. Today there are many issuers who offer price band of more than five per cent. Also to tackle the information overload SEBI has mandated 5 page abridged prospectus giving key details along with the IPO application. While SEBI has been doing its bit to improve the primary market, in the ultimate analysis, it is the growth in the economy coupled with the sheer energy of growing and variegated class of young entrepreneurs who will provide the vibrancy and range to the new issues which along with the old but rejuvenated business houses will hopefully, expand and deepen capital markets and consequently the economy. But at a time when the investors are engulfed by euphoria, it is prudent not to ignore likely risks. Remember 2007-08 when the markets were at their peak the world over just before the subprime crisis froze the global markets in 2008-09. But the frenzy in 2007 saw a 100 new issues. Sadly though only 11 of them are giving returns of more than CNX 500 Index now. More than 75 per cent of them are delisted, merged with others, or giving negative returns. Alas! There is no escaping the ruthless reality of **caveat emptor.**

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

Join the global movement with the **#NoExcuse campaign** calling for urgent investments to prevent violence against women and girls.

An updated social media package will be made available soon.

SAY NO - UNITING SINCE 2009

To support the system-wide UN campaign and build public engagement, UN Women launched Say NO–UNITE to End Violence against Women as a social mobilization platform in 2009.

During its first phase, more than 5 million people signed a global petition to make ending violence against women a top worldwide priority. Between 2009 and 2013 the campaign also led to over 5 million actions in partnership with over 900 civil society organizations globally.

Actions showcased advocacy efforts by civil society, activists, governments, and the UN system. These ranged from online petitions and social media campaigns to grassroots national awareness-raising initiatives. It included outreach in schools, engaging young people and faith-based organizations and garnering concrete national commitments from governments, and more.

COMMIT INITIATIVE

In 2012, ahead of the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women which focused on ending violence against women. UN Women launched the COMMIT initiative, asking governments to take a stand by making new and concrete national commitments to end violence against women and girls.

By the end of 2013 the European Union as well as 63 nations had joined the initiative, announcing specific measures to address and prevent violence against women and girls. These ranged from passing or improving laws, ratifying international conventions, launching public awareness campaigns, providing safe houses or free hotline services and free legal aid to survivors, supporting education programmes that address gender stereotypes and violence. It has also led to increases in the number of women in law enforcement, peacekeeping forces and frontline services.

Ending gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19

To address the escalation of violence against women and girls in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 the United Nations Secretary-General urged all governments to make the prevention and redress of violence against women and girls a key part of their national pandemic response plans. The appeal was answered in a statement by 146 Member States and Observers, expressing strong support.

As a follow up the Secretary-General's Executive Committee adopted a "Political engagement strategy" for the UN system in order to mobilize commitments and action to end gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19.

All governments are called to make commitments and undertake policy actions around four key action areas: Fund, Prevent, Respond and Collect.

Today Say NO–UNiTE has transitioned into a network for social mobilization that continues to showcase advocacy, news, and actions on ending violence against women and girls by people from all walks of life.

A global network to end violence against women and girls

To keep the network informed about key developments and advocacy opportunities, UN Women develops bimonthly action circulars shared with partner organizations and women's rights activists across the world.

To join the global UNITE network you can sign up to receive updates, here. Be part of a global network of people committed to realizing a future that is free from violence against women and girls!

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INTERNATIONAL UNICEF DAY – 9th DECEMBER 2023
THEME for 2023 – For EVERYCHILD EVERYRIGHT

Thirty years ago, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child at a moment of rapid global change marked by the end of apartheid, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the birth of the World Wide Web. These developments and more, brought momentous and lasting evolution, as well as a sense of renewal and hope for future generations. In a reflection of that hopeful spirit, the Convention has since become the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. \

In the three decades following the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in spite of an exploding global population, we have reduced the number of children missing out on primary school by almost 40 per cent. Three decades ago, polio paralyzed or killed almost 1,000 children every day. Today, 99 per cent of those cases have been eliminated. Many of the interventions behind this progress – such as vaccines, oral rehydration salts and better nutrition – have been practical and cost-effective. The rise of digital and mobile

technology and other innovations have made it easier and more efficient to deliver critical services in hard-to-reach communities and to expand opportunities.

In other areas, however, the sense of renewal and hope for children's rights is muted. In a very real sense, the Convention stands at a crossroads. It is time to choose the path towards fully realizing its vision. Having achieved historic progress, the Convention stands at a crossroads. The expectations raised by the Convention have been met by historic gains achieved since 1989 in many aspects of children's rights. They are sweeping and undeniable.

UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta H. Fore sums it up as follows in an open letter to the world's children marking the Convention's 30th anniversary:

While having fun together in Adjamé, a suburb of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, a group of girls demonstrate the bonds of childhood friendship.

Significant obstacles to children's rights remain, especially for the most vulnerable In her open letter, Fore notes that "poverty, inequality, discrimination and distance continue to deny millions of children their rights every year, as 15,000 children under 5 still die every day, mostly from treatable diseases and other preventable causes." Indeed, dramatic increases in child survival and access to health care and education are diminished, to some degree, by issues of poor quality and stagnant progress at the global level in the past decade. Stubborn challenges persist, and we (governments, civil society, development agencies, the private sector et al.) have yet to adequately address them. As a result, progress on realizing the rights of the poorest and most marginalized children has been too slow and, in some cases, is at risk of reversal. At the same time, the world's children face alarming new threats to their survival and well-being, such as the resurgence of measles, an increase in overweight in childhood, online bullying, abuse and exploitation, and the impact of a changing climate. Climate change and other trends cloud the future of the world's children and demand a fundamental change of course. Much is being done to address these and many other challenges, including humanitarian crises triggered by protracted conflicts and mass migration. But we must do more, and

with greater urgency. **If current trends persist, in 30 years the world's children are likely to face a much bleaker outlook.** Without a fundamental change in direction, for example, climate change will be irreversible, inflicting disastrous effects on the planet and humanity well before the Convention reaches its 60th anniversary.

Food insecurity and water scarcity are likely to become realities for millions of children. Vector-borne disease will be commonplace in places where they are currently not a threat. Three quarters of the world will live in cities, but much of the urban environment will be unplanned and unfit for children's growth and development. Millions more children will be on the move, as scarcity fosters conflict and violence, and climate change and environment degradation take their toll. We must act now if we hope to realize the rights of every child in the decades to come.

Against this backdrop, respect for human rights generally – and the rights of children, in particular – will be under duress. The Convention will remain timeless and relevant, but its impact and influence may well lessen. Progress for the poorest children will be at the greatest risk - **Unless we act now**. This report is intended as an advocacy tool to both celebrate the achievements of the past three decades and generate dialogue on the critical work that remains. It is not a comprehensive study of the impact of the Convention on the full array of children's rights, which would require a much wider canvas. Nonetheless, the report represents a rallying cry for realizing the rights of every child. They echo an appeal that youth activists like UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Muzoon Almellehan have articulated powerfully. "Children and young people are already taking a stand," Muzoon told the United Nations General Assembly in September 2019. As a Syrian refugee and survivor of war, the 20-year-old has seen and experienced things no child should. Yet her experiences are the inspiration driving her work with other young leaders. "We are marching, we are campaigning and we are speaking up for ourselves," she added. "We need you to join us."

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URMILA ROSARIO – MANGALOREAN CONNECTION TO THE WORLD CUP CRICKET TEAM OF AUSTRALIA

Urmila Rosario, manager of the Australian cricket team, has gained attention on social media after pictures of her holding the ICC men's Cricket World Cup trophy went viral. Despite having a passion for tennis, Urmila was advised by a coach to pursue a career in sports management due to injuries.

It is a matter of pride and joy that Urmila has Mangalorean roots. She is the daughter of Ivy and Valentine Rosario, who hail from Kinnigoli in DK District, They spent their working life in Doha-Qatar and then returned to India and moved to Sakleshpur where they invested in a Coffee Estate. They have four children and Urmila is the youngest. Urmila was born in Doha, Qatar, like her three elder siblings. She is the only one among the four children of the couple who chose sports instead of academics as a career.

Urmila Rosario, became a cynosure in the sporting world following Australia's historic win. Urmila told TOI: "Sometimes we are so focused on one thing, we don't even look at what might be available outside it".

CASK offers congratulations to Urmila and wishes her a bright future.

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NONAGERIAN FRENNY COLACO HONOURED

Professor Frances (Frenny) Colaco, the former head of the English Department of School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya was honoured on her 91st Birthday by the Principal-Dr Sophia Fernandes, Vice-Principal-Dr Jenis Mary, staff, past and present students and her admirers, on 13th November 2023. The programme was initiated by Mrs Maria Phyllis D'Costa who succeeded Frenny Colaco as the Head of the English Department of Roshni Nilaya.

A video encapsulating the wishes, prayers and messages for the wellness and happiness of Frenny Colaco was displayed, Mrs Phyllis D'Costa and Professor Malini Hebbar, President of the Alumni Association and a student of Frenny Colaco, raised the toast. Dr Derek Lobo, a friend and well-wisher of Frenny threw light on her erudition. Professor Shobana Manohar and Professor Malini Mukund spoke with great admiration about Frenny. Professor Vineeta Rai, Registrar proposed the Vote of Thanks. The event was efficiently compered by Ifra Ayesha, the Student President.

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ANIL LOBO – CHAIRMAN, MCC BANK BAGS 'SAHAKAI RATNA' 2023 AWARD

Anil Lobo, chairman of the MCC Bank Ltd has been selected for 'Sahakari Ratna' state level award for the year 2023.

The managing director of Karnataka State Co-Operative Federation stated that the loyal leadership for cooperative movement in Dakshina Kannada and reaching out to the people through cooperative chain, has made Anil Lobo eligible for the award.

CASK congratulates Anil Lobo on being the recipient of the prestigious 'Sahakari Ratna' Award 2023 and wishes him continued success.

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DR JACINTHA D'SOUZA APPOINTED AS DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICER (DMO) WENLOCK HOSPITAL

We are pleased to know that Dr Jacintha D'Souza belonging to Milagres Parish has been appointed as the District Medical Officer – DK District, with Wenlock Hospital as her headquarters.

Dr Jacintha has worked in various positions at the District Wenlock Hospital for the past 8 years. She assumed charge of her new post on 21st November 2023.

Bishop of Mangalore Most Rev Peter Paul Saldanha and Vicar General Msgr. Maxim Noronha honored Dr Jacintha on November 21st 2023.

CASK congratulates Dr Jacintha D'Souza and wishes her a successful tenure as DMO.

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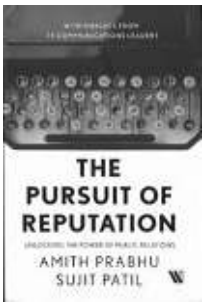
"THE PURSUIT OF REPUTATION" AUTHORED BY AMITH PRABHU & SUJIT PATIL RELEASED IN MANGALORE



The book was launched in Mangalore at Hotel Taj Vivanta on 05-12-2023.

It was formally released by two teachers of the author Amith Prabhu - John Chandran and Celestin Vas.

Book Release - Left to Right Sujit Patil, John Chandran, Celestin Vas, Amith Prabhu

The guests at the book launch with Amith Prabhu

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Dr ROHAN MONIS NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE MANGALORE DIOCESE HEALTH COMMISSION

We are pleased to note that Dr Rohan Monis, Vice-President-CASK has been nominated as one of the members of the Mangalore Diocese Health Commission and the Commission for Social Communication.

CASK congratulates Dr Monis on yet another feather in his cap and wishes him continued success.

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OBITUARIES - NOVEMBER 2023

CASK offers its sincere condolences to the families of the following members of our community, who passed away recently:

- Leo Ronald Sequeira (70), Milagres, Mangalore, husband of Annette Sequeira, father of Ronnette Nirmala/Peter D'Souza and Rayan/Shivali, on November 1, 2023.
- Eliza Pinto (87), Kulshekar, Mangalore, wife of the late Leo Pinto, mother of Peter /Leena Pinto, Carmine/Isidore Pinto and Melwin/Florine Pinto, on November 2, 2023.
- Jerald Pinto (66), Derebail, Mangalore, Brother of the late Eric Pinto, the late Mary Pinto, the late Louis Pinto, Clery Coelho, Jessy Saldanha and Lilly Pinto,on November 3, 2023.
- Patrick D'Souza (69), Bendur, Mangalore, husband of Clotilda D'Souza, father of Pramilla D'Souza & Joyson D'Souza/Rochelle Coelho, on November 8, 2023.
- Pascal D'Sa (92), Mumbai, husband of Juliana D'Sa, father of Robert/ Myra, Premilla/Donald and Priya/Norbert, on November 9, 2023.
- Valerian Augustine Lobo (72), Bejai, Mangalore, Ex Bank of India staff, husband of the late Gracilda Rosemaria Lobo, father of Avinash/Tracy and Abilash, on Sunday, November 12, 2023.
- Hector D'Souza (68), Bangalore, husband of Lilly D'Souza, brother of Herald D'Souza,n November 13, 2023.
- Sr Margaret Coelho CFMSS (90), New Delhi, daughter of the late Salvadore Coelho and the late Martha Monteiro, Abbettu, Holy Family Church, Omzoor, sister of the late Thomas Coelho, the late Pascal Coelho, the late Benedicta Leena Saldanha, Cicilia Peris, Dulcine D'Silva, Fr Raymond Coelho (Diocese of Jaipur), Freddie Coelho and the late Victor Coelho, on November 13, 2023 at Gurugram.
- Aloysius Paul Pinto (79), Paldane, Mangalore, husband of Philomena Pinto, father of Renita/Anil, Roshan/Reena, Rita/Prakash, Reema/ Preetham, on November 13, 2023.
- Nobi Lobo (82), Kelarai, Mangalore, husband of the Emilda Therese D'Souza father of Antony Anil/Jasmine on Monday, November 13, 2023.
- Dominic Savio Arahna (54), Dubai, UAE, husband of Juliet Aranha, father of Alister Aranha and Allinson Aranha, on November 13, 2023.

- Dominic Savio Aranhna (54), Dubai, UAE, husband of Juliet Aranha, father of Alister Aranha and Allinson Aranha, on November 13, 2023.
- Sr Marie Ange (77), Bendore, Mangalore, nee Irene Vas, daughter of the late Michael Faustine Vas and the late Angeline Sequeira, sister of Cyprian, on November 14, 2023.
- Robert D'Cunha (75), Mumbai, husband of Hazel D'Cunha, father of Reshma & Ryan, father-in- law of Lloyd & Chevonne on November 14, 2023.
- Stella D'Silva (83), Bendore, Mangalore, wife of the late Victor Michael D'Silva, mother of Gerald Prakash D'Silva/Shalini & Preeti/Ashok Pinto, on November 14, 2023.
- Cyprian Michael Fernandes (78), Kulshekar, Mangalore, father of Melvin & Neetha Fernandes, on November 17, 2023.
- Valerian Lobo (62), Kadri, Mangalore, husband of Flavy Lobo, father of Venishia and Veron Lobo, brother of Lancy, Jerry, Lydia, Claudy, Jacintha, Nirmala & Sylvia, on November 20, 2023
- Antony Miranda (64), Jeppu, husband of Maria Louisa D'Souza (Teacher, St Gerosa High School), father of Ajay and Vijay Miranda, brother of Celine, Rekha & Jyoti,on November 20, 2023.
- Benedict Pais (54), Jeppu, brother of Juliet/the late Gregory Quadros, Violet/Mark Gonsalves, uncle of Gleron/Flona, Gretel/Kevin and Merrill, on November 21, 2023.
- Hilda Pauline Sequeira (66), Cananda, wife of the late Ignatius Benjamin Sequeira, mother of Shalette Sequeira and Rakesh Sequeira, on November 20, 2023.
- Anita Shanthi Rego (51), Bangalore, wife of Peter Anil Rego, mother of Aaron, Anston and Ann, daughter of Aquileena and the late Xavier Salvadore Fernandes, daughter-in-law of Irene and the late A V Rego, sister of Santhosh and Shailesh Fernandes, on November 21, 2023.
- Lloyd Derick D'Souza (50), Valencia, Mangalore husband of Anitha D'Souza, father of Ethan D'Souza, brother of Lorrain and Canute, nephew of Romeo Saldanha (St Antony Motors),on November 23, 2023.
- Lawrence R Pinto (94), Ex-Servicemen, Ashoknagar, Mangalore, husband of Rosy Pinto, father of Juliet/Walter, Steven, Jud/Patrick, Veera/Michael, Naveen/Carol and Jane/Clifford, on November 22, 2023.
- Lucy David (94), Babugudda, Milagres, Mangalore, wife of the late P D Alphonse, daughter of the late Louis Coelho & Estell Coelho, sister-in-law of Irene Coelho, mother of Bobby/Gladys and Machline/Maria, on November 23, 2023.

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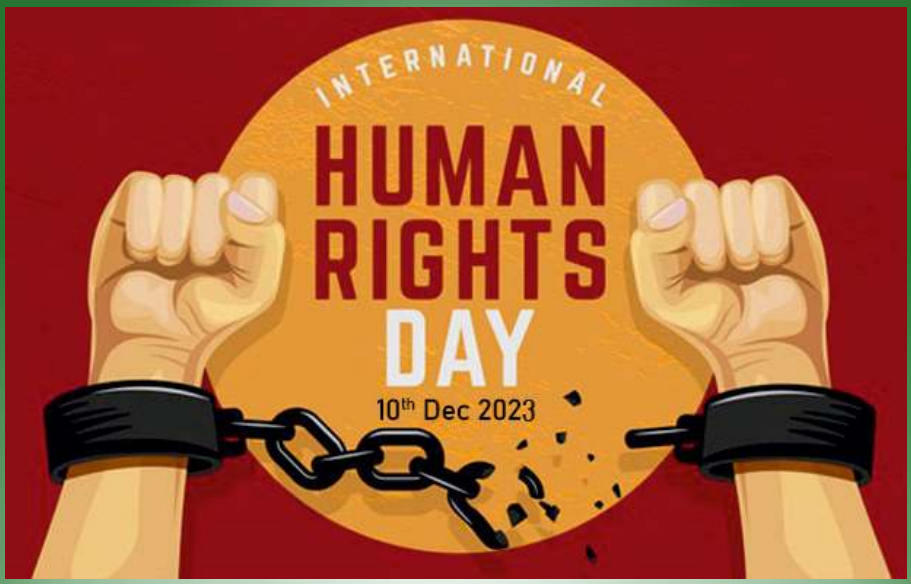

To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity.

Nelson Mandela

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