



CHAND  
INSTITUTE  
OF NATIONAL AFFAIRS

# COMMUNAL HARMONY AN IMPERATIVE FOR PROSPERITY

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Divya Chand Institute of National Affairs

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# COMMUNAL HARMONY

## An Imperative for Prosperity

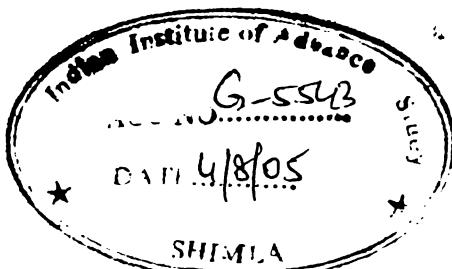
Symposium held on August 30, 2003,  
at India International Centre, New Delhi

**Diwan Chand Institute of National Affairs**  
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## Introduction

Diwan Chand Institute of National Affairs, under the aegis of Lala Diwan Chand Trust, organized its second symposium on “Communal Harmony: An Imperative for Prosperity” on 30 August 2003 at India International Centre, New Delhi. The first one on “Living in Peace with Pakistan as Good Neighbours” was held in August 2002.

This well-attended symposium was chaired by Shri T. N. Chaturvedi, Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka, and addressed by distinguished speakers. Dr. P. C. Alexander, M.P., former Governor of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, gave the keynote address. Shri Rajendra Kumar Gupta, Secretary of the Trust, proposed a vote of thanks.

Jan. 1, 2004

—Vishwa Nath



# Contents

<b>Chairman's Address</b>	9
<i>T.N. Chaturvedi, Governor of Karnataka</i>	
<b>Keynote Address</b>	16
<i>Dr. P.C. Alexander, M.P.</i>	
<b>An Alternative Approach to Combat Communalism</b>	25
<i>Dr. Habil James Massey</i>	
<b>Peaceful Co-existence in Multi-faith Society</b>	31
<i>Dr. Surjit Kaur Jolly</i>	
<b>मज़हबी रिश्तों के इतिहास की हकीकत</b>	40
<i>Prof. N.A. Faruqi</i>	
<b>Interactions from Audience and Conclusion</b>	49
<b>About Lala Diwan Chand Trust</b>	67



## Chairman's Address

**T. N. Chaturvedi,**  
*Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka*

[Shri T. N. Chaturvedi started his career as an IAS officer in 1950 and has been one of the most distinguished civil servants. He has held one of the highest positions at the Union/state levels, such as Union Home Secretary; Secretary Education & Culture; Secretary Department of Justice, Ministry of Law; Chief Secretary, Delhi Administration; and Constitutional position of Comptroller & Auditor General of India. He served as Member of Rajya Sabha from 1992 to 2002, when he was appointed as Governor of Karnataka. He also served as Honorary Chancellor of Lal Bahadur Shastri Sanskrit Vidyapeeth (a deemed university). He has been honoured with several awards, both national and international, including *Padma Vibhushan* in 1990.]

I join Shri Vishwa Nath in extending all of you a warm welcome. I happen to be one of the trustees for more than one year now. I will start by saying a few words about Diwan Chand Institute of National Affairs.

When I came as a young probationer to Delhi

at Metcalfe House, I would see the name Diwan Chand Institute of National Affairs, whenever I had to pass Ferozshah Road. Later on, I saw some of the pamphlets, monographs and documents that were brought by the Institute. A small journal used to be issued at that time which I saw in some of the libraries. These documents aroused my interest and after a few years, when I was in Jaipur, I subscribed to the journal for a year or two. Later on, the board of the institute disappeared and I did not know what happened to it, though very often Diwan Chand Institute's activities were reported in the Press.

Lala Diwan Chand was quite a unique personality, as was mentioned by Shri Vishwa Nath. He had hardly any benefit of education. I saw a small biography of his in Hindi, which said that the total amount spent on his education was Rs. 10 or so. And such a man should earn after joining business lakhs of rupees! You can very well calculate what that would mean in today's terms. Even more remarkable is the foresight that he displayed, as was mentioned. At that time, when India was at the threshold of independence, he observed that it was absolutely necessary that public opinion makers and representatives of people should also educate themselves on various issues that concern the people. This also finds a specific mention in his will.

The Trust has been active in many spheres, helping certain institutions, running several other institutions working in the fields of education, culture, health, etc. Really, the Trust has been doing excellent work. Unfortunately, Diwan Chand Institute of National

Affairs faded away since many other institutions came into being. And after the departure of Shri Natarajan—I am not aware, I can only surmise—the Institute could not find a dynamic person who could guide its affairs.

Shri Vishwa Nath took the initiative about two years back and the matter was discussed with the trustees. Everybody was very enthusiastic, including Shri Arun Kumar. He did a fair amount of spadework and then we tried to revive this Institute. The main reason behind our effort, we felt, was that in our country, and even in Delhi, which happens to be a centre of political and other kind of activities, we lack a place like an Institute or a small organization where eminent people, people with proper education and experience, can meet from time to time and discuss, dispassionately and with objectivity, issues that bother us for which solutions are not easy to attain. This forum will also provide some kind of a voice to the civil society which can interact with the government. It was with this objective that this Institute was revived. Sustained with the interest that the trustees have taken, the day-to-day work of the institute has been carried on with enthusiasm by Arun Kumar, who happens to be our Director.

We were sure that revival of the Institute will re-ignite a good deal of interest among people, who knew about this Institute earlier. This became evident when we had our first symposium on our relationship with our neighbour, Pakistan. It turned out to be an extremely fruitful symposium. Unfortunately, I could not attend it due to a pressing engagement and at my request Shri Jethmalani was kind enough to

inaugurate it and he gave a scintillating address since he was engaged in the Track II discussion on Indo-Pak relations in the country. Very distinguished people participated in the symposium. It was decided to publish the papers presented in the symposium and its proceedings as a monograph, which was very well received. Some copies of it are still with Shri Arun Kumar. Those interested can leave their addresses and we will send them its copy. In continuation we felt, why not have another symposium. The subject chosen was communal harmony which has brought us together in the symposium this morning.

It is indeed very kind of Dr. P. C. Alexander, my distinguished senior colleague, who has agreed to give the Keynote Address. I don't think, as Arun Kumar rightly said, he needs any introduction in the formal sense. Instead, he deserves a very elaborate introduction. As I said, I had the opportunity to know him and work with him from early 60s in different capacities. I have enjoyed his guidance, his support, friendship, even in very difficult situations in which we have worked. Incidentally, I was referred to as 'Dr. T.N. Chaturvedi'. Although it is technically correct, but since I have done only honorary doctorate work, I normally don't use it. But Dr. P. C. Alexander is a genuine doctor in literature. His work is on Buddhism and many other aspects of history, which I have been requesting him to republish. Fortunately, I have the copies of some of those books. Incidentally, today people will not realize that he was also the University Union President in his time. He travelled all the way from Trivandrum, now Thiruvananthapuram,

to Allahabad to persuade Dr. Amarnath Jha—the then Vice-Chancellor there, whom some of us, in this hall, had the opportunity to know—to come and inaugurate the Union. He also worked as a Lecturer for a short time. He had taken a number of initiatives for industrial development. Some of us are fully aware of those and I do not want to go into the details. He even wrote on those particular subjects. He worked with many international organizations; was our High Commissioner in UK and Governor of two very major States of the country. He is also writing his memoirs which will be interesting to us today not only from the angle of facts, but also from the angle of expression as he has a deep understanding of the issues and he tries to express them with absolute objectivity and fairness, and at the same time, fearlessness.

I would only relate a small incident, which the present Prime Minister, Shri Vajpeyi, mentioned once earlier and then, again, when he was releasing a book by Dr. Alexander subsequently. Normally, there is a procedure that when the PM goes to a state, its Governor is supposed to receive him. After receiving the PM at the airport, Dr. Alexander mentioned to the PM that the function that the PM was going to attend was a very important event, and he had all the respect for the prophet and seer in whose honour the function was held. However, since he unfortunately has not been approached to attend it, he will be sitting in a different car as he would not be going to the function. But the PM insisted that this could not happen: "You have to come with me". He then naturally agreed to accompany the PM. After his welcome, PM

gave quite a bit of his mind to the organizers of this very august organization. Later, after Dr. Alexander's speech, the PM said, that it was surprising to listen to Dr. Alexander without any preparation, without any notes, on Jainism and founder of Jainism, Mahavira. The PM then told Dr. Alexander that the organizers will apologize to him, but before that I, as PM, will apologize to you. We sometimes see Dr. Alexander's articles appearings in print after his coming over to Rajya Sabha as a Member of Parliament. He is a very active participant in the House and anybody who has listened to the debates recently would know it. Although many of his colleagues in parliament disagreed, yet he did oppose imposition of restrictions on Joint Secretaries onwards, in the Government. He didn't favour it. I don't want to go into its details.

It is a matter of great honour for us and for me here, as a former colleague of yours and a recipient of your kindness and also as one of the trustees, to welcome you to this symposium. I also extend a very warm welcome to Dr. Massey and others who will follow him.

I do not want to take more of your time except to say that communal harmony, as an imperative to peace and prosperity, is self-speaking. The word imperative itself expresses its necessity, the need, etc. The problem really is that this issue is not only topical and timely but it has been with us for fairly long. We have discussed sociological, political, historical, and economical reasons for its genesis, growth, etc., but unfortunately, the solutions have still eluded us. A psychological analysis or dissection of the problem

has yet to be done. It is a problem which, frankly, continues with us and is bothering us. How a congenial climate can be created, the public opinion mobilized, the administrative and legal set up strengthened, and how all of them can be reconciled and harmonized so as to cope with this problem—all these questions continue to haunt us. It is not a question of negative measures, of containing what we consider as harmful, but how to prevent it and then create an atmosphere in a positive manner so that this evil doesn't raise its head again. That is very important for us and I have no doubt that the kind of experience that I see represented here, these will get reflected in the interaction and discussion that will follow, and in the issues that might be raised by the distinguished speakers.

## Keynote Address

**Dr. P. C. Alexander, M.P.**

*Former Governor of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra*

[Dr. P. C. Alexander has been one of the most outstanding and highly respected public servants of post-independence era. His record in civil service as well as in service to the nation has few parallels. He has held several high positions in GOI, including those of Commerce Secretary and Secretary to Prime Minister. He worked in the UN and was Assistant Secretary and Director of UN ITC, when he decided to accept the challenging assignment of Principal Secretary. He was India's High Commissioner in UK for three years and served for 12 years as Governor in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. He was elected as member of Rajya Sabha in 2002. He has been the recipient of Kanchi Paramacharya Award for National Eminence in Public Administration in 1999. He is a prolific writer and is currently in the process of completing his Autobiography, expected to be published early next year.]

If we had been a properly integrated nation or if we had succeeded in forging our unity as a nation, communal harmony would not have been a problem. I would, therefore, speak of communal harmony in

the wider context of national integration and national unity. When we speak of communal harmony, we think of Hindus and Muslims as part of communal harmony. In the course of my talk, I will be referring to other aspects of lack of communal harmony, lack of unity and integration in the nation. For example, even if we establish harmony among Hindus and Muslims, we would have equally important problems that would pose a still greater challenge to unity and integration of the nation. One of these, which I will deal with later, *i.e.*, the caste problem, if not tackled properly in the next one or two years, will pose a greater threat to our nation than communal harmony. I am raising a platform, giving warning to those who speak only of religious or Hindu-Muslim harmony. They should not forget that new dimensions have arisen out of older problems and they have to be handled properly with vision and foresight.

Now, I will speak on communal harmony in the context of national integration and unity. It is very important for us to understand the historical growth of this problem; you cannot deal with it as a problem of 2003. We have to understand how this problem arose in our country. It is a problem of more than a century and a half. Probably no other problem has such a long history.

In the older days, the sages, saints, civil servants, etc., belonged to the so-called upper class. There was no division because they were bound by the common class. The lower class was represented by the farmers, who farmed other people's lands. But instead of these two classes, they created a class of Hindus and a class

of Muslims. By these actions, the year 1909 saw the beginning of Pakistan. The British created so many more insidious distinctions. In the elections to legislatures, they decided that a Muslim having an income of Rs. 3000/- a year would be registered. But if a Hindu had to get himself registered, he would have to show an income of Rs. three lakhs per annum. In other words, they wanted to restrict the electoral rights of the Hindus. Even at that time, if a Muslim were a graduate, which was one of the qualifications to be a voter, it was enough if he was a graduate for three years, whereas in case of a Hindu he had to have a standing of 30 years as a graduate to find his name in voters' list. It was planned and organised in such a way with minutest details that it was loaded heavily against communal unity and national integration. This was in 1909. By the time the Indian National Congress came to know, the process was over. Congress people protested against it, but it became the *fait accompli*. A major change had taken place. Just like the Congress which was not a fully representative body of the people, a body representing Muslims had been formed in 1907 and was called All India Muslim League. Then Mahatma Gandhi came and converted the struggle for freedom into people's struggle; but the Muslim League continued to be an organization mainly of zamindars, the landowners—leaving the mass of Muslims, *i.e.*, the farmers, the workmen, and the artisans, who were totally isolated from the leadership.

I will now quickly move on to the later events. The Lahore resolution for Pakistan was passed. The

1942 movement was started and there was no division between Muslims and Hindus. Even though communal electorates had been introduced and reservation had been made, in the minds of average Hindus or average Muslims, no poison had entered. I will say this happened when Jinnah took over the leadership of Muslim League; he introduced a new concept in politics. Till he took over, there was no element of hatred between the Hindus and Muslims. A Hindu never hated his Muslim brothers; a Muslim never hated his Hindu brothers and neighbours. Hatred now became a factor in politics. Jinnah injected the poison of hatred deliberately. He was a very clever man. He knew that unless the mindset of Muslims was changed and they were made to hate their Hindu brothers, the hold of Muslim League on Muslims would not be strong. Partition, migration of people from one region to other, and all that followed it—and we are now where we are, watched by Pakistan. And there is undefined war and we all know from where the inspiration comes.

Now I want to present to you, what I consider the myths of national unity and integration. The first myth is that we are not a nation at all. This myth was perpetrated by the British, who said that as you have so many religions and languages, etc., you can never be a nation on your own. You are a nation only because we ruled over you so long. This is an absurd theory, because the concept of Nation State emerged only after the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There was no such thing as Nation State before that. People were known by their civilization. The identity of a person was

the civilizational identity, not a national identity. It is a modern concept.

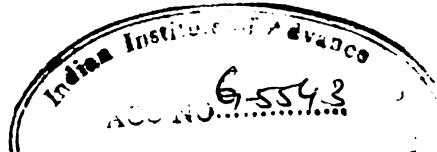
To be exact, after Govo and Garibaldi united Italy and Bismark united Germany, only then the concept of 'national state' came forward. Otherwise people were known by their civilization only—Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Arabians, Chinese, Hindus or Indian civilization. They were not known as Germans, Italians, or English. In England, it was Heptarchy—seven states in the tiny England. For them to tell us that we were never a nation is a myth. True, we were never a nation, but nobody was a nation at that time. We were also like that. That was the first myth.

Then they found out the diversity of languages and diversity of religions. They said you have 14 languages and 257 sub-languages, so you can't be a nation. Switzerland has only 7 million people, but three official languages—German, French and Italian. If one billion people have 14 languages, then that becomes a disqualification, and what are those languages? I can speak with authority on Tamil and say that Tamil had classics long before Homer wrote his *Odyssey*.

If they speak about their languages with pride, it is because their classics date back to 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Marathi, Hindi, Sanskrit—the language of languages—existed long before the English people had a language to be called English. It was what they call Old English that you can't understand without two dictionaries. They are now trying to teach us that because we have so many languages, we can't be a nation. And then how did some people set an

identity at that time? It was by conquest. The people did not know whose flag was flying at the fort and whose flag was being replaced by some other flag. Conquerors came with horses behind. They conquered territories and said, "This is my land." Can that be a right or basis for nationality?

This is one of the most absurd claims that they have made. Then they say about the division on the basis of religion. Remember this, when we talk of politics of today—forget the hang-ups of history. That is the first lesson that we have to learn, because we in India have a habit of judging people, who lived in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the standards of morality of 21<sup>st</sup> century. We should not condemn them, if they practised intolerance, because those were the days of intolerance all over the world. You would have read about Bloody Mary, the queen of England, who persecuted all the Protestants as soon as she became the queen. Many of the martyrs in Protestant theology had their origins in personal vendetta of Bloody Mary. When Edward, the Second, succeeded her as the king, he started massacring Catholics, because he was a Protestant. If we were to look at the British history on the basis of what happened in that period, how can we say they were united at one stage or the other? Intolerance has been there for a long period of time in the history. We should not be guided by that legacy. So, what I am trying to establish is, we have to recover what we lost. We have to take back what the British had taken out of us. Go to the time when we differentiated on the basis of economic status and economic factors, not religion.



only. Only then we can come together and be a united nation.

But I will still say a word or two of warning here. You cannot and should not aim at unity, equating it with uniformity. If we have any sense to draw from history of countries or if we have any lesson to be drawn, those who were trying to introduce uniformity have always failed to have uniformity, and along with that unity also. One billion people, and as I talk today we are 1.15 billion already, living in different parts of the country claiming to have a heritage of their own, which binds them, but also having a sub-culture of their own, which makes them different. If you say that you all become one and forget about your separate identities, we will lose both—uniformity and unity. We have to be a mosaic of a nation, not a melting pot of a nation. That is the first thing that I have to place before you.

Many people think that Christianity came to India with the British and the Dutch. Probably, many of you present here may not know—I belong to a church, which is older than all the churches in Europe. My forefathers became Christians at the hands of St. Thomas, the Apostle, himself. We have heritage and history of Christianity of 2000 years. If somebody tells me that you were converted by the British and therefore you should go back or that missionaries made you Christians, what will be my attitude towards him? Utter contempt.

I have pride in my religion because it was part of my civilizational heritage. My ancestors did not give up the Vedas or Upanishads. Their culture

remained despite what they got from the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. Their religion remained what they got from the Bible. This is what we have to understand. We are one people, sub-cultures may vary, but we are one people with one heritage, in which we all take pride.

I will mention now another problem. We all speak of communal harmony, forgetting that a new demon has already been born: the demon of casteism. Take it from me, an old administrator, but an older student of history—and a good student of history at that. If there is a danger I find for our country, it is not a religious danger; it is not a split between the Hindus and Muslims. They were brothers, but were separated; they will again become brothers. There is no doubt about it. With the spread of education and enlightenment, they will come together.

But if you try to divide them, as you are doing now, on the basis of caste; not merely as forwards and backwards; not merely backwards, the more backwards and the most backwards but as sub-castes within castes. If you choose a candidate for election based on caste considerations, winnability means caste winnability in our country; and if you apply the caste criterion, you will find this great nation of 1.15 billion people divided very soon into narrow boundaries of castes and sub-castes. You have to take note of this danger that is facing us. We try to leave that aside as if that is not a problem and talk only of Hindu and Muslim unity. They will unite because they were united before 1858. Therefore, they can easily unite again. But if you divide Hindu society on the basis of castes and sub-castes and that Hindu society loses its strength, then it becomes incapable of union within

itself, and then you find danger to the country's concept of national integration.

So what do we do? I have only two suggestions to make. One is use of the tool of education, which we have not done. How did America become one nation? They were Romans, Hungarians, Englishmen, French, Germans, etc., who had migrated there and are now Americans. They have cleverly used the tool of education for spreading the message that we are one nation. We come from different streams, we still belong to different identities, but we are one nation—that has to be instilled in the minds of the people. Do not ask them to dress alike, speak alike, eat alike, and behave alike. Let them have their individual choices, but instil in them that you have the same civilizational heritage. Use education as a tool for this purpose.

The second message is: Don't ever think that Talibanism can be destroyed or defeated by Talibanism. Extreme fanaticism can never be fought by more extreme fanaticism. Why did we survive as a great civilization? All these years, many people conquered us, ruled over us, but we survived as a great civilization—why? Have you asked that question to yourself? Very simple; because our great ancestors taught us the virtue of tolerance, respect for others. Respect even for enemies. That is what the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita taught. Tolerance, and not passive tolerance, but active tolerance. That is the only antidote to religious fanaticism or caste fanaticism. Fight fanaticism not with more fanaticism, but with our heritage—greater tolerance, understanding, and respect.

I have tried to put the problem in wider context. I hope I have done some justice to it.

# **An Alternative Approach to Combat Communalism: Reflections on 'Inter-Religious Solidarity'**

*Dr. Habil James Massey*

[Dr. Massey is an erudite scholar and a crusader of Human Rights for the weaker sections and Dalits. Hailing from a humble family of Punjab, he has experienced social injustice of growing up in a marginalised society. Through the trials and tribulations, he has emerged as a staunch Christian committed to the Gospel.

He has been a member of National Commission on Minorities set up by GOI. He is currently the General Secretary of an all India inter-religious organization, 'Dalit Solidarity Peoples' and Honorary Director of Centre for Dalit Studies. For his work on Sikh religion, he was awarded doctorate of Philosophy and Post-Doctoral Academic Degree (Habilitation) in the field of Religious Studies by Goethe University, Frankfurt. He translated Bible into Punjabi and has authored and edited over 20 books and papers.]

**T**he need for Inter-Religious Solidarity has been expressed by a number of thinkers and activists in recent times. For example, Hans Kung, a leading world thinker, expressed his views about the need and

scope of inter-religious dialogue in these words: "Even more, we need everyday dialogue of all the people of different religions, who meet and discuss daily and hourly all over the world on all possible occasions ... all over the place, where in questions great and small, the religions constantly interact in quite a practical way." Hans Kung also stressed the fact that there will be "no peace among the nations without peace among the religions" and "no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions". Hans Kung has used the expression "inter-religious dialogue", synonymous with "inter-religious solidarity". Maulana Wahiduddin Khan joins Hans Kung in stressing on the need of dialogue among people. His suggestion to the Muslim and Hindu communities after the demolition of the Babri Mosque on December 6, 1992 is noteworthy. He said : "It is high time that Muslims changed their way of thinking. They must look to the Hindu public... In fact, Hindus and Muslims must interact at all levels if ever tensions are to be eased between them and misunderstandings removed. Only that way, improved relations and peaceful co-existence become distinct realities."

The views of Hans Kung and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan are two representative views dealing with the problems of religion, which are created at the top level either by the religious or political leaders. It is true, in the Indian context, that such dialogue among people is going on at all the time, both in villages and cities, specially in celebrating the festivals of different religions, such as Christmas, Gurpurabs, Diwali and Eids. These celebrations are

linked with the major historical religious traditions of 'great religions' (which include Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh religions). However, every great religion has to reach the people's level in order to become a popular religion. Michael Amaladoss says : "A popular religion... is primarily concerned with everyday life and community relationships, is constantly influenced by the reflection and spiritual quest of a great religion. A great religion keeps prophetically opening up popular religion to more universal perspectives. A popular religion keeps a great religion down to earth and relevant to life." Here, we agree with the views of Fr. Amaladoss that, when any religion reaches the people's level or takes a popular form, it actually starts building up a common and larger human community.

About the 'inter-religious solidarity', Daniel O'Connor says that it takes place when one starts moving out of the narrow boundaries to "across frontiers, in order to stand beside, to identify with the other." Contrary to this, there is also 'a primordial solidarity' according to which one's solidarity is with one's specific origin. Daniel O'Connor quotes from a document, entitled *Sollicitudo Reo Socialis* (Concerns for Social Matters) to make his meaning of the 'inter-religious solidarity' clear as "a commitment to the good of one's neighbour with the readiness ... to lose oneself for the sake of the other." "Solidarity, then like friendship across the religions, can be a religious event in itself, not the least because it is motivated, as it almost has to be, by live, by a sense of justice, or by a vision of human unity."

It is interesting to note that the concept of 'inter-religious solidarity' has been fully accepted as part of the Indian democratic polity. The Indian Constitution has recognized the religious pluralism with a clear guarantee of religious freedom for peaceful coexistence of different religious groups and their active participation for the common good and unity of the country. But the real problem is not the 'diversity of opinion', which drags our people into religious conflicts, but absence of tolerance and understanding. We hear much discussion on 'tolerance', but very little on understanding of one's own 'faith' and the 'faith' of the other. The latter is more important, since it can lead different groups with 'diversity of opinion' into a 'solidarity'. Solidarity does not demand organic unity or merger at the cost of one group's annihilation or dissolution. Here, the need is of solidarity with the meaning of interdependence. Real solidarity rejects the 'melting-pot approach', according to which different identities have to be banished in order to give birth to a new identity. Instead, this solidarity accepts a 'bouquet approach', in which each flower retains its identity, yet 'tied' together as a single whole. The Indian Constitution upholds the latter approach.

The Preamble of the Constitution of India declares India as a secular state. The text of the Constitution does not define the term 'secular', yet states it clearly in Article 15, prohibiting discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. It guarantees freedom of religion to all citizens under Article 25. The freedom of religion is, however, subject to the State's right to intervene on grounds of 'public

order' and 'morality and health', which State can do by law to restrict any economic, financial, political or other activity associated with religions. Notwithstanding constitutional guarantees about the status of religion, still there have been many questions and misunderstandings about the meaning of 'Secular State' or 'secularism'; which instead of helping us in leading into solidarity with one another, has led us more and more into conflicts. These conflicts are still communal in nature. The country has already paid a heavy price and continues to do so. Hence, we need to know what actually is the meaning of a secular state in the Indian context. In this regard, we need to remember following three things:

*Firstly*, the intention of the Indian Constitution is not to establish a State which is opposed to the religious welfare of the people, but one that does not subscribe or favour any one particular religion. *Secondly*, in our context, both religion and the State have recognized that religion is an area of human need, outside the scope of the State. It has taken an area of every citizen's voluntary responses, where the State has no function except to guarantee its autonomy. *Thirdly*, the religious freedom offered by the Constitution does not hold the view either of equal sufficiency of all religions or the uniqueness of any particular religion. It is the freedom to profess, practise and propagate one's own religion.

The above said features spell out the nature of the State as envisaged by the framers of our Constitution. Unfortunately, the testimony of the last decade, which started with the demolition of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya in 1992 and ended with the most

tragic event of Godhra (Gujarat) in 2002, tells a different story—that of victory of communalism over secularism. Today, the very foundations of Indian culture, which the Constitution has described as "our composite culture" has been shaken. The conflicting demands of different communities are the main reasons behind this state of affairs. The conflicting demands centre on religious fanaticism, which is responsible for hundreds of communal conflicts. Therefore, there is need of 'inter-religious solidarity'. It has been included as part of the fundamental duties in Article 51A of our Constitution, which says: "It should be the duty of every citizen of India... (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India, transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities."

The above mentioned words of the Constitution pose a challenge to the citizens of our country to promote and undertake activities which focus on and strengthen the bonds of unity and affinity between different religious groups in the country, since they are the base or foundation of our country as a Nation. It is the duty of all those belonging to different living faiths to enable and encourage them to be part of the 'inter-religious solidarity'. Here, they have to enter into the process of respecting the 'differences' of various religions. 'Solidarity' means accepting other person, as he or she is and 'not' as he or she ought to be in another's view. The principle of 'inclusiveness' has to supersede the principle of 'exclusiveness', in order to pave the way to the communal harmony and national integration and thence to prosperity.

## **Peaceful Co-existence in Multi-Faith Society**

**Dr. Surjit Kaur Jolly**

[Dr. Jolly is an eminent principal of a Delhi University College. A renowned scholar and an administrator, she has been doing script writing for radio and TV programmes. She has contributed articles in many distinguished research journals. Recently, she participated in an international conference at Seoul. Dr.Jolly is a dynamic person—a scholar, a writer, a social worker and a deeply religious person—ever willing to champion the cause of communal harmony and national integration.]

**T**he word 'communal' means conflict, specially between ethnic or religious communities, and 'communal harmony' would mean healthy and peaceful co-existence without any conflict. In fact, religion governs the whole gamut of human life. It is personal, private and still social. It is both a response to man's total environment and an exploration into its frontiers. It is both conservative and liberal, even radical. It may defend the status quo or it may take the initiative against entrenched interests. Religion may also mean

fanatic zeal for rituals, customs, and tradition. It may be sacrificially compassionate, universally inclusive and humbly redemptive. It may be profoundly inward, reflective, and mystical or it may be attached to externals.

*Jagatjalanda rakhi leh  
Apni kirpa dhaar  
Jit duare ubre  
Titte leh ubaar.*

(O God! the world is burning. Please save it, by whichever portal it can be done.)

Guru Nanak Dev wrote these lines in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but the world is still burning. We can blame the Britishers, we can blame anybody else, but even after the Britishers left, six decades have gone by. What have we done? Are we not answerable? Should we not do some introspection? Where are we going? Can't we save ourselves from all these problems?

The problem is much more severe; it is the problem of disharmony among religions leading to communal riots, pains, hatred and terrorism. Feeling of co-existence, unity, happiness, mutual love, trust and prosperity have vanished. The need of the hour is to develop mutual understanding, inter-faith and multi-faith dialogue.

I have seen this. I have visited different parts of the world, presented papers on such themes. Recently, I was in South Korea in an inter-religious international meet. This opened a flood of information and knowledge for me. While attending, I learnt that efforts were being made to have an inter-religious body

at UNO and that the structure of the UNO needs to be changed because most of our problems are created there.

Originally, human beings were meant to live with their mind and body united, responding to the complete love of God, because they were created like Him to be His children resembling Him, and that their mind and body should not fight.

Human beings were supposed to create unity because God's mind and power were not in conflict. Almighty God could never have any conflict within Himself. The human ideal of unified mind and body is realised when a person is fully possessed of the true Love of God.

*Har jan aisa chahiye har hi hoye*

They were supposed to create unity as God's mind and power were not in conflict. We should be very clear on this. All the prophets in the house of God are His sons. If He is manifested in light or in some other form, we know that all "avatars" and all prophets are coming from Him. They do not quarrel. Guru Gobind Singh and Krishnaji will never quarrel. If a Sikh celebrates the day of Janmashtami, Dusshera, Ram Navmi or chants "Harihari Narayan"—*Guru Granth Sahib* is full of this—I think they feel very happy that day. I have felt it myself.

When you read *Guru Granth Sahib*, and at the same time give honour to *Quran Sahib*, I think you get a different type of satisfaction.

Now, the human ideal of unified mind and body is realised when a person is fully possessed of the true life of God.

*Bible* says, "Blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called sons of God."

x

x

x

I have just briefly touched a few points on how communal harmony is an imperative to peace and prosperity because that is our subject. When one religion or community wants to dominate, dictate and tries to convert others to their community, it leads to disharmony. What happens then? Riots, bloodshed, burning of houses, loot, arson—all sorts of bad things follow. Then, it leads to disruption of families and huge financial and property losses. Children lose their parents and become orphans. Who is going to take care of them? It is loss of human resource, of national resources, resources of the community and society, and the process of rehabilitation which begins after that, again weighs heavily on the exchequer of the State. And then begins a cycle of hatred and vengeance.

Now, we have the example of Kashmir. This problem, according to me, is more of fanaticism and fundamentalism. We should go and see how the Kashmiri migrants are living. We should go and meet the families of terrorists who have been killed in encounters. Ask their mothers, they are also like our mothers. We cannot solve any problem by just condemning some one as a terrorist and isolating him. No, it's not over; there is a family behind him. He has parents, maybe he has a wife and children. Therefore, the problem has to be taken care of in a proper way. And what happened to the State of Jammu & Kashmir? You know it was called the '*Jannat*' or paradise. Tourism was the main source of prosperity

of the state. Its handicrafts, hotels, transport—everything suffered because it was infested with terrorism having roots in the communal problem.

I will recall a few other events. You know the riots in Delhi in 1984. I worked during those riots; I used to go to the camps and interacted with the victims. I pleaded with them not to go back to their homes with hatred, because hatred begets only hatred. You have suffered, that's true, but you have to leave this hatred behind in these camps. I requested them to go back as happy neighbours. But, today, with the existence of strong feelings the problem unfortunately persists at Tilak Vihar, which is a resettlement colony of the riot-affected people. I would not like to go into the details about what is happening? Women and youth are even today used for political purposes. I won't say for religious purposes, but they are used by the leaders of the religions having political axe to grind.

Riots in Delhi took place in 1984. But till date, most of the affected people have not been able to overcome the shock and trauma.

Take the case of Middle East, where bloody conflicts persist between Christianity and Islam, and even between different wings of Islam.

Destruction of World Trade Centre of America is symbolic of communalism in the most hateful form. A Gurudwara at Gobind Sadan, Syracuse, USA, was burnt because its manager was a Sikh, who looked like Laden. Saddam also seemed to them like Laden only.

Some local Americans thought Saddam and Laden are quite akin and maybe it is Laden's place. The Sikhs

in their attire with their beard untied to them appeared to be more like Talibans. You know this has actually happened there.

Now, in contrast to these, look at the prosperous countries like America, Canada and Australia. People of all faiths, communities and creeds live there in utter harmony. Nobody bothers about the personal life or religion of others.

We can see yellow people, dark-skinned people and whitish people, in different dresses. But nobody is bothered about what is happening in the neighbour's house or what is happening to somebody sitting next to him in the bus or train. In a multi-faith society, peaceful and healthy coexistence, unity and love are definitely essential and urgent needs of the time for prosperity. Money is spent on arms and armaments; police and army can instead be used to fight diseases, and to promote hygiene or electricity. We have all these problems.

In any multi-faith society, peaceful and healthy co-existence, unity and love are definitely essential and urgent needs of the time.

To achieve these, we need:

- Positive role of religious leaders,
- Positive role of Political leaders, and
- Proper understanding of role of religion by the masses.

*Guru Granth Sahib* refers to the words "Hari Hari", "Ram Ram", and "Narayan" so often while "Waheguru" has been uttered only a few times.

*Bed, kitab kaho mat jhuta, jhuta jo na bichare*

I don't think any Granthi has ever come out with this. He will never lay enough stress on whatever is constructive. I don't know why don't they talk about it while the Guru Granth Sahib clearly says:

*Vedan mein nam utam to sune nahin phiren jo betalian*

*Ek noor te sab kuch upjaya kaun bhale ko mande  
Aval Allah noor upaya kudrat ke sab bande*

Coming to the role of Sikhism, I would like to take the case of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

In fact, the very compilation of *Guru Granth Sahib*, the variety of its contributors—representing different religions, castes, creeds, religions and languages of India—speak about its liberal and pragmatic attitude. No other revered book of any religion of the world is so diversified and speaks about religions other than theirs.

If left to fanatic Sikhs, they would have never allowed *Guru Granth Sahib* to come out of Harminder Sahib, what to speak of Punjab, Delhi and beyond the boundaries of India. When I speak there, I discuss these problems with them. This is a Book which is universal, which needs to be read and understood, but instead we decorate it with beautiful *rumals* and covers, and offer all sorts of incense and puja, but do not try to go into the true meanings of words that it contains; word in fact is the spirit, word is power. There has never been a time when understanding between religions and reconciliation between religious people was more urgent than it is today. The precious teachings of a religion are sources of wisdom that has

brightened human history.

Religious people of all faiths tend to have followings three weaknesses:

- They are not realistic but are oriented towards the hereafter;
- They can be narrow-minded and sectarian; and
- They can be fanatical.

Religious leaders must be able to embrace all people with open mind. The real duty of all religious people is to overcome the lines of division which cripple the human race. The goal of God is not the victory of one religion or one ideology: It is the realization of a world of love in which all people live in peace, unity and joy. For this reason, leaders and followers of each religion must reflect on their roots and their origin. That means return to the founding ideals expressed in the core teachings and practices of prophets and founders. Judaism, Christianity and Islam have their roots in Abraham and are sometimes known as "Abrahamic faiths".

Moral vision and exemplary life style of religious leaders can be a lighthouse for human kind, not only pointing the way to the world beyond this one, but also teaching the road to genuine happiness, peace and prosperity on this earth.

Leaders of the society and countries should become ideal leaders who should inherit and pass on experiences of clean lives of unselfish service. The great disqualification of any leader, whether religious or political, should be selfishness.

To achieve prosperity and happiness of human

kind, deep-rooted disharmony and communal feeling need to be eradicated. Challenging injustices and the sins committed in the name of religion, we should recognize how critically important it is that the religions must come together, hold dialogue with one another, and learn to embrace each other.

Who is from outside the world? We are all human beings; we have same feelings. Whichever society you go to, emotions are the same, feelings are the same, gestures are the same.

In the end, I would like to refer to the message of Baba Virsa Singh. I do go there quite often because that is the only place now in the world, which speaks about coexistence; may I say, he follows and even practises it. Once in his talks, he said: "The day we start celebrating the days of the prophets of others, like in mosque if a day of Lord Krishna is celebrated and in a Gurudwara we celebrate Ram Navmi or in a Mandir Guru Nanak's birthday is celebrated, only on that day we will be able to achieve real harmony."

Lip service is not enough.

I think, we have talked enough about it and I give an open invitation to this august body, if anybody wants to visit Gobind Sadan and meet its founder Baba Virsa Singh, I would strongly recommend him to go there.

## मज़हबी रिश्तों के इतिहास की हकीकत प्रोफेसर निसार अहमद फारूकी (प्रोफेसर फारूकी ने 36 वर्षों तक युनिवर्सिटी में इस्लाम के इतिहास का अध्यापन किया है।)

मेरा विचार यह है कि हिन्दू समाज में पढ़े लिखे तोग ज्यादा कम्युनल हैं, जबकि मुसलमानों में पढ़े-लिखे और समझदार लोग कम्युनल नहीं हैं। आम आदमी, यानी गली-मुहल्ले का आदमी कम्युनल है। जब पाकिस्तान की टीम जीतती है तो वह तालियां बजाता है।

जो लोग उच्च वर्ग के हैं, वो कम्युनल हैं तो क्यों हैं? वो गलतफहमियों की वजह से ऐसे हैं। जब तक हम एक-दूसरे को समझेंगे नहीं, जानेंगे नहीं कि हमारी फिलासफी क्या है, हमारा धर्म क्या है, और वो हमें क्या सिखाता है, उस वक्त तक तो हमारी गलतफहमियां रहेंगी ही। देखिए कुरान कहता है : “क्या जो लोग जानते हैं और जो नहीं जानते दोनों बराबर होंगे?” क्या अंधेरा अंधेरा है और उजाला उजाला है? हमारे सामने जो चीज़ें आएं उन्हें हमें जानने की कोशिश करनी चाहिए। उनके अन्दर, उनकी गहराई में जाना चाहिए, उसको देखना चाहिए कि यह हकीकत में है क्या? अब मुश्किल यह है कि हमें तारीख़ भी यही राजनीति सिखा रही है और हमारी तारीख़ को भी यही बना रही है। भूगोल जानने वाले भी हमें यही बताएंगे।

यानी हर चीज़ जो उनकी जुवान से निकलेगी वो सही है और बाकी सब गलत। इस पर अकबर इलाहबादी का शेर है :

मिर्ज़ा गरीब चुप हैं, उनकी किताब रख दी,  
अब बुद्धू अकड़ रहे हैं कि सबने यूं कहा है।

अंग्रेज़ के ज़माने में जो साहब कह देते थे वो तो असली था और किताब में जो लिखा है सब बेकार था। तो असल यह है कि हिन्दू का और इस्लाम का कोई संघर्ष तो शुरू में हुआ ही नहीं। उनका जो ताल्लुक था, सबसे पहले उनका जो संघर्ष था वो हुआ था यहूदियों से। और क्यों हुआ था? इसकी वजह यह थी कि यहूदी जो मदीने में थे, वे पढ़े-लिखे भी थे और उनके पास अपना पैसा भी था और वे सूद पर अपना रूपया चलाते थे। और वहां के जो गरीब लोग थे, उनसे कर्ज़ लेकर और कच्चा सामान लेकर वो कुछ चीज़ें बनाते थे, और उसके बाद ये यहूदी उनसे वो चीज़ें खरीद लेते थे। खरीदे सामान को लेकर उनके साल में दो काफिले जाते थे। एक इधर को जाता था, एक उधर को जाता था। उनका एक सफर जाड़ों में होता था और एक गर्मियों में होता था। और ये उस माल को बेचते थे और वहां से फिर वहां का जो माल होता था, उसे लेकर आते थे। और वो लाकर यहां बेचते थे। इन्होंने अपने पंजों में पूरी तरह समाज को जकड़ रखा था। उनकी अर्थव्यवस्था के खिलाफ उस वक्त रसूलल्लाह ने संघर्ष किया। यह संघर्ष वो उनको इनके पंजों से निकालने के लिए था और उसके बाद यह हुआ कि उनको वहां से बिलकुल निकाल दिया गया। बाद में जब रसूलल्लाह का इन्तकाल हो गया और हज़रत आमारे फारूक का ज़माना आया तो इन्होंने एक दस्तावेज बनाया और उसमें यह दिखाया कि रसूलल्लाह ने हमें यहां आने की और फिर रहने की इज़ाज़त दे दी थी। वो एक जाली दस्तावेज़ लेकर आए दूसरे खलीफ़ा के पास। किसी मुसलमान की यह मजात नहीं हो सकती, चाहे वो किसी ज़माने का हो, कि रसूलल्लाह ने किसी को कोई इज़ाज़त दी है तो वो उसको मना कर दे। चाहिए यह था कि वो उनसे कहते कि आप आ जाइए। अपनी बस्तियां वसा लीजिए। लेकिन आमारे फारूक ने यह कहा कि जनाब वो उनका ज़माना था, वो चला गया, वो ज़माना लद गया, अब आपको यहां रहने की इज़ाज़त नहीं मिलेगी। अब आप कहेंगे कि क्यों, तो मैं कहूँगा कि इन यहूदियों को तो ईसाइयों ने भी, रूस वालों ने भी और सबने इधर उधर से खदेड़ कर इसरायल में इसलिए वसाया है कि यह उनकी भाहरों को लिपटे हुए हैं। आज अमेरिकी भी क्या है, अपनी पॉलिसी उनकी मर्ज़ी के

बगैर नहीं बना सकता।

असल मसला यह है कि जो भी प्रेसीडेन्ट चुनाव लड़ने के लिए आएगा वो पहले यह देखेगा कि उसके चुनाव को कोई ठेस न पहुंचे, कोई तकलीफ न पहुंचे।

मुसलमानों से जो ताल्लुक हुआ, जो राबता हुआ, वो तो बहुत बाद में हुआ। हिन्दुओं की दूसरी बात है। मैं 36 साल तक इस्लाम का इतिहास पढ़ाता रहा हूं यूनिवर्सिटी में। दो बातें आपको बताता हूं। आप सब मेरे बुजुर्ग हैं, सब सीनियर हैं। आप गहराई से इसको जानिये। दो चीजें आपको नहीं मिलेंगी तारीख में कहीं भी। एक तो खुदकुशी की मिसाल नहीं मिलेगी। अगर मिली भी तो बहुत ही कम मिलेगी। इसका क्या मतबल है? इसका मतलब है कि तब सामाजिक सुरक्षा वहाँ मौजूद थी। जैसा कि आज आप देखते हैं, रोजाना खबरों में पढ़ते हैं कि आज उसने खुदकुशी कर ली, बच्चों को ज़हर दे दिया, मार दिया, सब छत से कूद गए, आग में कूद गए। यह हो गया, वो हो गया। पर क्यों हो गया? इसलिए कि सामाजिक सुरक्षा नहीं थी। उन्हें अपने ज़िंदा रहने के जो साधन हैं, वे नहीं मिल रहे थे। या और भी किसी किस्म का कोई दबाव था। और दूसरे आपको सांप्रदायिक दंगा नहीं मिलेगा। मैं जंग की बात नहीं करता। जंग जो है वो मज़हबों की नहीं होती है। शिवाजी की फौज में भी मुसलमान थे। औरंगज़ेब की फौज में भी हिन्दू थे। और अकबर को समझा जाता है कि वह बहुत उदार ख़्यालात का था। उसके जो सरदार थे उनमें 52 हिन्दू थे। आप कहें तो मैं सूची बना कर दे दूंगा। जिसे सबसे ज्यादा कम्युनल और संकीर्ण दिमाग का समझा जाता है, वो औरंगज़ेब है। औरंगज़ेब के हिन्दू सरदार 64 थे, अकबर से ज्यादा। तो आइए, इतिहास पढ़िए, देखिए कि हकीकत क्या है। हमारे रसूल जो दुआएं मांगा करते थे उनमें से एक यह थी कि ए अल्लाह! चीजों की जो हकीकत है वो मुझे दिखा दे। इल्म उसी का नाम है। इल्म उसी को कहते हैं। जहल अज्ञान यानी अंधेरा है और इल्म रोशनी है। आप अगर किसी चीज की हकीकत को जान रहें हैं, तो उसका इल्म है आपको। सिर्फ आप यह कहें कि हवाई जहाज उड़ रहा है, तो यह इल्म नहीं है। इल्म यह है कि उसकी पूरी

तकनीक को आप जानें कि वह क्या है। हज़ारों टन का यह वज़न लेकर क्यों उड़ गया ऊपर, क्यों नहीं गिरा वहां से। इसकी सारी हकीकत आप समझ लेंगे तो मालूम होगा कि आपको हवाई जहाज़ का इल्म है। यह सिर्फ़ मुकायदा है कि आपने देखा कि साहब वो उड़ गया।

तो अब राबता कहां-कहां पहुंचता है, आप ये देखिए। मुसलमान जब अरब से निकलकर दूसरे इलाकों में आए, ईरान में आए, मध्य एशिया की तरफ़ गए, इधर आए तो सबसे पहले उनका प्रवेश सिंध में हुआ। अब सिंध पता नहीं संस्कृत ज़बान का लफज़ है या किस ज़बान का लफज़ है। बहरहाल वो सिंध को जानते थे। इससे आगे हिन्दोस्तान कितना बड़ा है और कहां तक फैला हुआ है, इसकी अरबों को खबर नहीं थी। इसलिए आपको बिल्कुल पुराने जो उल्लेख हैं उसमें सिंध के उल्लेख में ‘सीन’ की और ‘हे’ की आवाज आपस में बदल जाती है, जैसे ‘सोना’ और ‘होना’, ‘सप्ताह’ और ‘हफ्ता’। इस तरह आप देखेंगे बहुत से लफज़ों में कि ‘सीन’ की आवाज जो है वो ‘हे’ से और ‘हे’ की आवाज ‘सीन’ से बदल जाती है। तो उन्होंने ‘सिंध’ को ‘हिंध’ कहना शुरू कर दिया। अब वो ‘हिंध’ हो गया। मालूम यह हुआ कि जो नाम इसका हिन्दोस्तान है, उसमें ‘सितान’ जो है वो ‘स्थान’ है। जो संस्कृत में ‘स्थान’ है वो फ़ारसी में ‘सितान’ है। फ़ारसी और संस्कृत दोनों खालाजात बहनें हैं। एक ही खानदान की हैं दोनों बहनें। हिन्दोस्तान का मतलब है हिंदू-स्थान। अच्छा, हिंदू में जो स्वर है वो निस्बत के लिए आती है, अरबी में आती है सिबत के लिए—मक्का के रहने वाले को कहेंगे मक्की या मक्के से निस्बत रखने वाला। हिंदू के लिए कहेंगे हिंदी या उसमें निस्बत ‘की’ लगा दी। हिन्दू हो गया। तो मतलब यह कि हिंद हो या हिंदी हो या हिंदू हो, ये नाम अरबी से आए हुए हैं, यह संस्कृत के नाम नहीं हैं।

तो इस तरह मतलब यह निकलता है कि हिंदुओं और मुसलमानों का आपसी संबंध, आखिरी ज़माने तक वैसा ही रहा, जैसा कि अभी एलेक्ज़ोंडर साहब कह रहे थे कि 1858 तक दोनों के बीच कोई नफरत नहीं थी। यहां एक वज़ीर था, बाद के मुगल युग में, इमादुल मुल्क, जो काल्पी चला गया था, वहीं मरा, वहीं दफन हुआ। उसने अपने लोगों द्वारा

यह कहलवाया बादशाह से कि एक बहुत बड़े एक साधू, एक दर्वेश आए हुए हैं, जो कोटला फिरोज़शाह में ठहरे हुए हैं। ऐसे हैं वे कि जो कहते हैं हो वही हो जाता है। उस ज़माने में बादशाह सब परेशान थे और किसी भी तरह अपना भला चाहते थे। इबते को तिनके का सहारा भी बहुत होता है। कहा कि उनसे जाके कहिए, कि दुआ करें। बादशाह आलमगीर, शाहआलम का बाप, बेचारा उनसे मिलने के लिए कोटले आया। वहां उसने अपने आदमियों को छिपा रखा था। अब फकीर-वकीर तो वहां कोई भी नहीं था। कोटला का खंडहर तो अब भी आप देख रहे हैं कि कैसा पड़ा हुआ है। इन लोगों ने मिलकर उसे वहां मार दिया और मारकर कोटले के पीछे उसकी लाश रेती में फैंक दी। करीब ही जमुना वहती थी, अब तो दूर हट गई है। सुबह का वक्त था। रात को इसे कल्प किया। सुबह को जब तड़के कुछ लोग स्नान करने के लिए जमुना पर आए तो एक हिंदू औरत ने, जो उधर से स्नान करने के लिए जा रही थी, देखा कि यह कैसी एक लाश पड़ी हुई है। गौर किया तो वो पहचान गई (झरोखा दर्शन में देखती होगी बादशाह को) कि ये तो बादशाह की लाश है। कई घंटों तक उसके सर को अपने पास रखकर बैठी रही कि लोग यहां आएं तो उनको बता दूं कि बादशाह मारा गया है। बताइए ये उस ज़माने की बात है जब पूरी हुक्मत मराठों के हाथ में थी। लेकिन किसी ने यह नहीं किया कि बादशाह को हटाकर खुद बैठ जाता तख्त पर। गुलाम कादिर ने अंधा कर दिया था शाह आलम को और कोई अंधा बादशाह की गद्दी पर नहीं बैठता था इसलिए जिसको न बिठाना होता था तख्त पर उसकी आंखों में सलाई फेर देते थे। अंधा कर देते थे उसे। यह शाह आलम अकेला बादशाह है जो अंधा था और तख्त पर बैठा हुआ था, और मराठों ने उसे बिठा रखा था। सारा राजशासन मराठों के हाथ में था। उन्होंने ही गुलाम कादिर को पकड़कर, उसे कल्प किया, बहुत सख्त तकलीफें दे देकर। तो यह उस वक्त का हाल था।

1857 में जब अंग्रेजों ने यह देखा कि हिंदू-मुसलमान ने मिलकर किस तरह यहां संघर्ष किया है उन्हें निकालने के लिए, अंग्रेज़ की हुक्मत को खत्म करने के लिए, तो उन्होंने अपनी यह पॉलिसी बनाई कि इन लोगों

के अन्दर फ़र्क पैदा कर देना चाहिए, इनके अन्दर दुश्मनी पैदा कर देनी चाहिए। इलियट और डॉसन दोनों ने मिलकर फिर यह किया कि जो इतिहास की किताबें हैं उनमें कुछ और लिखा जाए। उनमें तो सभी कुछ लिखा जाता है, मगर जो दूसरों द्वारा लिखाया इतिहास होता है उसमें वही लिखा जाता है जो बादशाह चाहता है या जो हाकिम चाहता है, और अगर कोई स्वतंत्र रूप से लिख रहा है तो जिस भी सम्प्रदाय से वो हो या जो उसकी योजना है या जो उसके अपने ख्यालात हैं उनके मुताबिक लिखता है। अगर शिया है तो वो शियाओं को तरजीह देगा। सुन्नी है तो वो सुन्नियों को तरजीह देगा। तो इलियट और डॉसन ने सब इतिहास में से घटनाएं निकालकर और उनकी जगह "History of India As Told by Its Own Historians" लिख डाली। अब ये क्या है? ये हिस्ट्री उनकी ऐसी है जिसको हम समझते हैं कि बड़ी प्रामाणिक है पर दरअसल बिल्कुल प्रामाणिक नहीं है। ये ऐसी है कि आपके घर में जाकर मैं झाड़ से तमाम चीजें जो एक घर में होती हैं वो सब निकाल के लाके सड़क पर रख दूँ कि साब ये था इनके घर में। भई, हज़ारों रूपए के झाड़ फ़ानूस भी रहें होंगे, और चीजें भी रहीं होंगी ज़ेवरात भी रहे होंगे, बहुत खुशनुमा तस्वीरें भी रही होंगी, सब कुछ होगा, उसको तो न देखूँ और जो गंदगियां हैं वहां, कूड़ा हैं, कबाड़ है, ये है वो है, वो सब निकाल के बाहर रख दूँ कि साब यह था इनके घर में। तो यही वो इतिहास है जो इलियट और डॉसन ने लिखा। उसके ख़त मौजूद है, आर्काइव्स में आप जाकर देख लीजिए। वो उस वक्त यह लिख रहा है गवर्नर जनरल को कि आप हिन्दू मुसलमान में फ़र्क पैदा करने के लिए जितना रूपया खर्च कर रहें है उससे धौथाई से भी कम कीमत में यह इतिहास मेरा छापा जाएगा और उससे दस गुना काम पूरा करेगा। और वही हुआ। सारे इतिहास को उन्होंने बदल दिया। जो कुछ बचा खुचा था उसको अब खराब किया जा रहा है। भई, इतिहास को इतिहास रहने दो। उसको हकीकत रहने दो। कोई जान तो ले कि क्या है। ठीक है, मैं यह नहीं कहता कि मुसलमान सब फरिशते हैं, सब नूरा के पुतले हैं। उन्होंने बहुत गलतियां भी की हैं। या यह कहा जाए कि इतिहास अपने आप को दोहरा रहा है तो आज जो इतिहास है

क्या यह अपने आप को कभी नहीं दोहराएगा । यह भी दोहराएगा । अगर उस वक्त गलतियां की थीं और उनका अब खमियाजा भुगतना है तो अब जो गलतियां हो रही हैं, इनका भी खामियाजा भुगतना पड़ेगा ।

तो बेहतर यह है—जैसा हज़रत निज़ामुद्दीन कहते हैं—कि अगर कोई आपके लिए कांटे बिछाता है और तुम भी जवाब में कांटे बिछा देते हो, तो कांटे ही कांटे हो जाएंगे । क्या होगा तब? यही तो होगा । भई, एक टोकरी कांटे आपने लाकर रास्ते में डाल दिए तो एक टोकरी मैंने भी लाकर आपके रास्ते में डाल दिए । बात तो जब है कि अगर किसी ने कांटे बिछाए हैं तो आप उसके जवाब में फूल बिछाएं । तब वो खुद ही खत्म हो जाएगा कि भई, यह तो मेरे काबू में आता नहीं । कांटे अगर बिछाओ तो इसके ऊपर तो कोई असर ही नहीं होता । तो एक आध बार वो हरकत करेगा और फिर खुद तौबा कर लेगा । इन सूफ़ियों का तो असल में यही पैगाम है । हज़रत निज़ामुद्दीन ने कहा कि—

जो हमारा दोस्त नहीं है, खुदा उसका दोस्त हो ।

जो हमें तकलीफ़ देता है, अल्लाह उसे बहुत ज्यादा राहत पहुंचाए, उसे बहुत ज्यादा आराम पहुंचाए ।

और यही सब है । बाबा नानक को पढ़िए, कुरान का अध्ययन कीजिए, मुकद्दस गीता को पढ़िए, देखिए, जानिए । बहुत सी चीज़ें हमारे आपके सोच के अन्दाज से मुख्तलिफ़ भी हो सकती हैं, लेकिन उसकी रुह तक अगर आप पहुंचेंगे तो आपको सही मालूम होगा ।

देखिए, सबसे बड़ी चीज़ तो यह है कि—और सब बातों को जाने दीजिए—मज़हब की बुनियाद क्या है, इसे समझिये? मज़हब की बुनियाद ये है कि हम कौन हैं? कहां से आए हैं? किसने हमें पैदा किया? जाएंगे कहां? तो उसके बाद आदमी इस नतीजे पर पहुंचता है कि कोई बड़ी ताकत है । और कैसी बड़ी ताकत है यह? जो उसका काम है, जो उसकी कुदरत है, उसको हम समझ नहीं सकते, कोई सवाल नहीं पैदा होता कि उसको आप समझ लें या उसकी ज़ात को समझ लें, उसका जो भेद है उसको पा लें । मैं अपने आंख टेस्ट कराने के लिए अस्पताल में गया था । डॉक्टर साहब किसी मरीज़ से बात कर रहे थे, बैठे हुए थे । मैं भी बैठा

हुआ था इंतजार में। तो उन्होंने एक बात ऐसी कही कि मेरी आंखें खुल गईं। वो जनाव उससे कह रहे थे, दूसरे मरीज से—पता नहीं उसने क्या कहा होगा—कि यह जो तुम्हारी पलकें हैं, यह अगर  $\frac{1}{2}$  सें. मी. बढ़ जाएं तो तुम मालूम होने लगोगे। देखिए, खुदा की कुदरत देखिए कि आपकी पलकों को खुद उसने क़ाबू करके रखा है। उस दिन मेरी समझ में आया कि ये क्या बात कह रहे हैं। कौन कर सकता है यह? सिवाय एक बड़ी ताकत के कौन कर सकता है? कोई नहीं कर सकता। तो खुदा तो वो है कि जिसने इस कायनात को ऐसे इंतजाम के साथ पैदा किया है कि आपकी पलकों तक का जो नाप है, वो उसने बता दिया है कि इतना होगा, उससे आगे वो नहीं बढ़ेगा। उसको जानने की कोशिश कीजिए, उसको पहचानने की कोशिश कीजिए। और यह जो बुजुर्ग हैं—जैसे हज़रत बाबा नानक हैं—मैं यह समझता हूँ, जितना मैंने पढ़ा है, कि हिन्दोस्तान के क्रष्णियों में, इन बुजुर्गों में, साधुओं में खुदा की हकीकत को जिस अंदाज़ से बाबा नानक ने अपनी तालीमात में पेश किया है, पूरे हिन्दोस्तान में किसी ने नहीं किया। जिसकी बहुत ही गहरी नज़र होगी, और जो दिल से और अपने दिमाग की रोशनी से और अपने मोहब्बत के ज़ज्बे से जो देखेगा और गौर करेगा वो ही पहुंच सकता है उन बातों की असलियत तक। कहने में तो आसान मालूम होता है कि भई, यह क्या बात है, मामूली सी बात कह दी, पर कह के देखो वैसा तो पता चलेगा यह मामूली बात थी या कोई गैर मामूली बात थी। तो हमें ज़रूरत इस बात की है कि जब हम बहुत सी भाषाओं, बहुत से धर्मों और संस्कृतियों वाले समाज में रहते हैं तो हमें एक दूसरे को जानना भी चाहिए, एक दूसरे को पहचानना चाहिए। मैं आपको पहचानूँ, आप मुझे पहचानें। मैं आपकी धार्मिक किताबों को जानूँ, आप मेरी मजहबी किताबों को जानें। मैं आपके बुजुर्गों को जानूँ, आप मेरे बुजुर्गों को जानें। उस मुहब्बत के माहौल में देखिए। अगर आतंकवाद का माहौल है, नफ़रत का माहौल है, तो कोई तहज़ीब या कला का कोई पौधा नहीं पनप सकता। आज कितने साधन हैं आपके पास, लेकिन अब कोई तुलसीदास पैदा नहीं होता। अरबों रुपया आप खर्च कर रहें हैं हिंदी पर और संस्कृत पर, इस पर, उस पर। क्यों नहीं पैदा होता? गौर कीजिए।

अब कोई शकुन्तला क्यों नहीं लिखी जाती? किस चीज़ की कमी है? तो मालूम यह हुआ कि ऐसा माहौल होना जरूरी है जहां हमें अपने ख्यालात को परवान चढ़ाने की और उनको सामने लाने के पूरे मौके मिलें, उसमें रुकावटें न हों।

अभी हमने इस 50-53 साल में कितनी संपत्ति खराब कर दी। यह जो संपत्ति है यह तो देश की है, मेरी और आप की है क्या? यह तो देश का सरमाया है। इसको देखकर पता चलता है कि हिन्दोस्तान कितना खुशहाल है और कितना बदहाल है। जब चाहा ज़रा सी बात पर आगे लगाना शुरू कर दीं—बसों को और मोटरों को और मकानों को और दुकानों को—यह कोई इनसानियत है।

यह ट्रस्ट जो काम कर रहा है यह वक्त की ज़रूरत है।

शेख सादी ने गुलिस्तां में छोटी सी एक हिकायत लिखी है, उसपर बात खत्म करता हूं। देखा उन्होंने कि बादशाह ईरान का, जा रहा था। एक बूढ़ा आदमी जो सत्तर-अस्सी साल का था, वो कोई पेड़ लगा रहा था। उसने पूछा कि भई क्या कर रहे हो? उसने कहा कि साब मैं ये पेड़ लगा रहा हूं। काहे का पेड़ है ये? तो उसने एक ऐसे फल का नाम बताया जो बहुत दिनों में जाकर फलता है। कोई 40-50 बरस के बाद जाके वो फल देता है। बादशाह कहने लगे कि ये तो बहुत देर में फलता है। तुम खा लोगे इसके फल? उस बूढ़े ने कहा कि मेरे दादा ने जो पेड़ लगाया था मैंने उसके फल खाए हैं। अब मैं जो पेड़ लगा के जाऊंगा, उसके फल मेरे पोते खाएंगे। तो आपके बुजुर्ग जो पेड़ लगाकर गए हैं, जिनके फल आपने खाएं हैं, अब आप ऐसे पेड़ लगाकर जाइए जिनके फल आपके बाद आने वाली नस्तें खाएं और आपको दुआएं दें।

## Interactions From Audience

### *Chairman's Observation*

Friends, we had a very scintillating session. We were given excellent historical background by Dr. P. C. Alexander. He placed the problem in the context of history and our heritage and a number of things that can be said about the divisive tendency after the Minto-Morley reforms. When the same kind of things happened in 1918; then the Chelmsford reforms came and similar things happened. You can find this in the documents. Even Lord Minto's wife's memoirs bring out many of these facts. Again, in the Round Table Conference, the same kind of things took place. Even in the last phase before India attained Independence, Jinnah's secret letters—showing how Jinnah corresponded with Churchill and many other things allied to it—strengthen the historical context that Dr. Alexander made. There are many other things that he discussed and he has given us food for thought. He has presented the problem in a much wider context and has suggested particularly two things. One is the question of education. Education is also the biggest instrument of empowerment. Empowerment—socially

and economically—liberates us from obscurantism, superstition, narrowness and so on.

The second thing, which he said, is that not only in Pakistan the syndrome of revenge has percolated the psyche after 1971, but it also creates the reaction within us, which is another problem. That is why, I mentioned that it is not by fundamentalism that we can fight fundamentalism, as he has very rightly put it, but by tolerance and understanding. Another very important instrument and powerful vehicle is the inter-faith dialogue, which Dr. Massey very forcefully argued. The inter-faith dialogue is an educational process for all persons and at all levels and it is the most powerful instrument for creating wider awareness. It is through such awareness that further action or the meeting of the minds can follow. A Christian Centre has brought out a lot of publications on inter-faith dialogue, where the people of different faiths have met and have said what the commonality in understanding of our religion is. Recently, I picked up a book at the book fair published by Punjab University on the same kind of subject, where a lot of people from this country met in a seminar and many fruitful ideas were thrown up.

It is a very wide subject, and you cannot do justice to it in a short time. I would like to thank Dr. Alexander and Dr. Massey. We have learnt a lot from the books of Dr. Massey, which have been read very widely.

A point made by Dr. Alexander is that Vivekananda mentioned that tolerance was much wider in the sense of acceptance, not exclusiveness.

Another point that Dr. Alexander made, which

holds the key to unity, was about civilization. You can see Aurobindo's writings—two or three of his books deal with the sociological aspect of this country's evolution. We know that, in this civilization, identity has been one of the great binding factors, which unfortunately we tend to ignore at present.

A number of fresh and new points, which we forget, have been brought out in a refreshing manner by Dr. Alexander and commented on by Dr. Massey's exposition, which we will have an opportunity to discuss.

The Trustees have decided that the next symposium will be on the menace of casteism and caste politics. We will be announcing the dates subsequently.

## DISCUSSION

*Anil Chandra [IAS (retd.), New Delhi]*

Sir, I have two questions. One: Is the parliamentary form of government the best way to promote communal harmony and national integration? If the answer is no, then what should be done to change the system so that there is better communal and caste brotherhood and national integration?

Second question is: With Pakistan trying to promote greater communal divide between Hindus and Muslims through various methods, what India can do to contain this mischief?

*P. C. Alexander*

I have absolutely no difficulty in answering your first

question in the negative. I am one of those who believe that for a country of our diversity and variety in cultural practices, linguistic affiliations and all that, parliamentary system would be better than presidential system because it allows freedom to each component of this great nation to operate in an ambit which would be conducive to growth and at the same time retaining separate identity of cultural diversity and language. Also, parliamentary system of government is not by itself an impediment. Unfortunately, the way parliamentary system is being implemented in our country does not augur well for the future of the system but that is a grave subject upon which I don't want to comment.

The second question: Pakistan has suffered a complex since 1971. They have been suffering a great complex. Somehow the revenge mentality that is prevalent in history has not been taken out of that nation's psyche. So they are coming back over and over again, year after year. Three wars have been fought and now a proxy war is being waged to promote trouble in order to get them the satisfaction of having avenged the defeat of 1971. The world has shrunk and the concept of fight against terrorism is gaining acceptance all over the civilized world and I have no doubt in my mind that, given wise political leadership, we will be able to use that opportunity, which is available to us to fight this menace that Pakistan is encouraging.

*Rajinder Kumar Sachhar [Formerly Additional DG of Police, New Delhi]*

When we have the good example of unification of

Germany, why is nobody talking about re-union? If initially the hatred has led to partition, why can't we see reversing the whole process of partition? Why isn't anyone thinking of this? With Pakistan, it is understandable, but why nobody in India is coming up with this idea?

*P. C. Alexander*

I earnestly think that India will not come up with the idea. We don't want a reunion with Pakistan. We want a prosperous, peaceful democratic Pakistan as our neighbour. Let them survive in their set up. We have carved out our territory or we have been forced to carve out our territory different from what we had thought we would be having. Let us try to build up traditions, which will make us feel happy with our neighbours, without making them merge as one nation or one entity. Personally, I am against any further integration with our neighbours; we have to achieve integration within ourselves.

*K. K. Khandelwal [Chairman, Khandelwal Solar Power Ltd., Mumbai]*

I had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Alexander several times. But the one that I particularly recall is about communal harmony part, wherein Swami Ranganathanandaji and a few others participated. The way in which you explained the Gita, the way in which you had made important contribution towards writing the two volumes, I think that is the answer, where the three religious luminaries came together to answer some of the questions and that is possibly the answer

which we might be seeking when we are talking about communal harmony.

*P. C. Alexander*

I fully agree with you.

*K K Khandelwal*

I do not agree. I don't think we are going far enough. Are there some further suggestions from your side where these could be brought together under a common forum, where each one is appreciating religious dignity of their separate religions?

*T. N. Chaturvedi*

That was really the occasion when the first volume on commentary of the three volumes of the Gita by Swami Ranganathananda was released by Dr. Alexander and reference was made to the inter-faith dialogue or solidarity, the point that Dr. Massey made or when Dr. Alexander said that India is a mosaic, and not a melting point. That addresses the issue you have very rightly raised.

*P. C. ALEXANDER*

I believe that there is enough in our heritage to bind us together. I am not at all pessimistic about the widening gulf that we can see through rise of terrorism here. This will be a passing phase. I believe in it and I say publicly that Hindus and Muslims are destined to live together as one nation, one territory, being proud of our past, anxious to get along to achieve what is beckoning us in the future. We draw

inspiration from our heritage and I mention particularly the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. Which country in the world can say that their ancestors 6000 years ago said "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"? Which culture, which civilization in the world can say that 6000 years ago people could conceive of the whole world as one family? Similarly, Lord Krishna says, "In whatever way you want to reach me, I will reach you through that way." Who else could say this thing 3000 years ago? So we draw inspiration from this great cultural-religious heritage of our nation and we will continue to be united. But I was flagging new problems which you are not attending to, like casteism and sub-casteism, and the thinking that fanaticism can be fought with greater fanaticism, *i.e.*, going against our heritage. Certainly, we will overcome this in a much shorter time than we think. Don't lose your heart at what presently happens between Hindus and Muslims; we will get over it. This is my promise.

*Ashok Madhukar*

Isn't ignorance the cause of discord which leads to the problems we are discussing and hasn't prejudice, without enquiry, also come out of ignorance? Moreover, what is being done to create awareness first and then understanding? These are the two stages that we have to go through, specially interfacing this with education so that at the early stages of child's growth, we have a short-term and long-term solution. If the new generation is aware of the issues and understands the issues, probably the discord will drop down.

*P. C. Alexander*

I agree with you. I mentioned the historical fact deliberately as an introduction to my subject because one-and-a-half century of history has divided us. Before 1858, we were not divided in the way as we were divided later. I also said, we did not divide ourselves; a third party divided us. Unfortunately, today, we are dividing ourselves. When I speak of casteism, I would not blame British for it or any third country. The British divided us, we must have overcome that, but, unfortunately, today again we are trying to divide ourselves.

*Ashwini Ray [Professor, Centre for Political Studies, JNU]*

I must confess that I was a little provoked by a couple of very-very insightful comments that Dr. Alexander made. I was extremely impressed by his insights into history, but somewhat distressed by some of the prescriptive formulations that he made. I am happy that a question was raised which indicated an attempt to unscramble the egg as it were and then about Pakistan-India coming together. I am also happy that Prof. Faruqi has brought up the point which I think has been disturbing me, and he has put it in his own way. It is about reversibility—in other words, assuming a historical argument on which enough number of professional historians have tried to argue in a bid to unscramble the egg. I am not against ideas of national integration, communal harmony, and secularism. I am not inherently against it. I share some of these concerns. But I am not sure that they can be preached without being counter-productive.

The reservation I have on Dr. Alexander's suggestion has been precisely indicated by Prof. Farouqi. However, let me put it across a little more sharply, not because Dr. Alexander is absent. I think it has all the dangers of what is said about communal history.

I had my reservation and it is about the secular history promoted at a particular phase of Indian governance, which I think inevitably leads to the backlash of a communal version of the history. I personally think that there is one history, which should be left to professional historians and not dictated by any state power. This is no reflection on the present, political coalition. I think state intervention, whether by a feudal aristocracy or even in a democratic structure, in the form of what could be the content of history, has its own dangers. This can go both ways. You can write one history, and another political party would write its own version of history. I think it should be left to professional historians even on a normatively attractive goal like communal harmony.

One more question, and that would be the most important intervention, about Hindu-Muslim identity. My own guess is Dr. Alexander is right and I am wrong. But I am not too sure that this can be unscrambled in the way he is wanting us to do, hoping that it would. I share that it is not simply Hindu-Muslim identity. It is an identity of what we call multiple-ascriptive identities. In a sense, I am happy that we have these multiple identities according to some social scientists and I share this view, that one of the saving graces of this country is that you cannot divide this country on the basis of any two significant

ascriptive identities, which includes Hindu-Muslim identity. The moment you talk of Hindu-Muslim identity, you know, our V. P. Singh Saheb comes out with Mandal identity, and someone comes out with Telugu identity. In other words, there are many identities based on language, religion, place of residence, etc. We have multiple-ascriptive identities and the country cannot be divided and mercifully so, unlike Pakistan, which was divided on the basis of Punjabi and Bengali identities which fell apart. This country cannot be divided on the basis of any single ascriptive identity. The minority-majority identity is different when viewed from different places and time. I can give an example, but I don't want to. You understand what I am saying. I have multiple identities, many of them I did not choose. I was born to Bengali parents, living in Orissa. I didn't choose either. I hope all of you had better luck. I didn't. I happen to be upper caste, I didn't choose it. I happen to be male, I didn't choose it. I chose one identity, a university teaching job and I would like to have that identity. I don't deny, when I go to Mandal, I am an upper caste; in south I am a north Indian; and at home I am a replica of what I will call patriarchal creation to my wife and child. Now all these identities, happily I say, keep us together.

I am not particularly any more concerned with this ideal, normatively, howsoever strongly we desire of harmony and solidarity. I would be pretty happy—and I am making this as a serious point—if each of us is allowed to have the democratic rights of asserting our citizens' rights given by the Constitution and the

liberal principles. You don't need to bother about one, just leave me alone to pursue my own identity. This is the quintessential liberal value. I don't want to love my Muslim neighbour, though normatively it is desirable, or my lower caste or, you know, sort of women of all possible identities. I have a set of rights given to me by my Constitution and I must be allowed to exercise that right and I must allow every citizen to exercise that right, independent of any identity—Hindu, Muslim, Christian, upper caste, lower caste, south, north, male, female, etc. I think this is the quintessential liberal principle. And I think it is time for us to get away from this caste, language and communal identities and try to bring them together; ignore these distinctions and try to bring in liberal principles of citizens' rights and assert these in a way that I think these identities could take care of itself.

I am a former practitioner of Indian administration. I was tackling this problem when Mr. Gupta was Transport Minister in Delhi. Having retired from there, now I am a professor in an NGO, Indian Habitat Centre.

Dr. Alexander rightly put the communal harmony in the wider perspective of caste, etc. Exactly, in a similar way, I would like to touch on the other part of the slogan today, that is the imperative for prosperity. It is not just prosperity, but the very survival today, the very existence of the Indians as a community, as a nation, and as a society. Prosperity will come only when communal harmony is there. And, therefore, it is very essential for the very existence of Indian society.

Dr. Alexander gave a twin prescription at the end and that was education and tolerance. Very well said, and I fully agree that education has an economic value. Not only from a welfare economy angle, but even from economic angle it is so important. Tolerance is a must for civil society, and also at the level when you interact at person-to-person level. But shall we also extend the same degree of tolerance to violence? I believe that we probably cannot and should not show tolerance to violence. The situation here is so very distinct from freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, freedom of accepting and exchange of views, and so on violence. If we fall into the trap, then probably the very existence of the State, India as a State, will be in serious danger of collapsing. Prosperity will not be there, if there is no law and order. And, therefore, we must say that no tolerance will be extended to terrorism or violence. I am saying it from my own experience of 30 years. I have seen that most communal problems are tackled most effectively if the people understand that the people at the helm of affairs will not spare them, if they go beyond the Lakshman Rekha. That means if they indulge in violence, whatever be the party, the government, the collector or SP will not relent. I think this is one fear which keeps them within the limits and that is what is wanted in a democracy.

To find out whether the religious routes should be this way or that way or whether a Mandir should be there or a Masjid is in order but all this must, of course, be within the limits of democratic rights. That was my first point.

Now, second thing is about having and pursuing

a national objective or a slogan ardently. I feel strongly about, it because I belong to the five decades of Gandhi era, when we found that he was able to give slogans from a higher pedestal than this divide-and-rule pedestal. Therefore, people preferred to go for a higher cause, forgetting the lower cause. Exactly in a similar way, in the post-independence era, probably to my mind, we have not been able to inculcate the feeling of a larger vision, that is of economic development, or seeing India as a very, very prosperous state. I am told by those who were visiting China in the last few years, that when you talk to any Chinese about their motto in life, they say: "My motto is to beat Americans." I don't say it is a good thing. But this is a good mission for economic development and they have been inculcating it over the last decade with 7 to 10% of economic growth rate.

Now, I come to my last point. It took almost 52 years for the Supreme Court to say that the right of government servants does not include the right to strike. Earlier, we thought the right to strike was also very, very fundamental. Although there is a difference of opinion, yet the highest court of the land has held that Government servants will have to probably circumscribe this right. Similarly, a time will come when people will have to hold that religion is personal. Accept any religion, worship anything but within your personal ambit. Worshipping in your house is not the same thing as taking a procession on the road, disturbing others. If it strikes or disturbs others, it is no longer your fundamental right. So probably, this concept of personal religion, *vis-a-vis* public

manifestation will have to be differentiated by all thinkers, politicians, administrators and law-makers.

*B. L. Singhal [Manager, Diwan Chand Arya Sr. Sec. School, New Delhi]*

My first submission is that we are suffering because somehow a notion has been given to us to remove religion from our education system. The result is that the motive force, the totality of attitude, the resultant perception for masses has been lost, and we have gone astray. No ethics is being thought of these days; no esthetics is being taught these days, so on and so forth. Through this galaxy of intelligentsia, I want to approach the government to ensure to give a foundation course on religions and ethics to students at an age where it is required the most, that is when they are in classes IX, X, XI and XII in school. I have written to Government of NCT, to please have the quintessence of religions and to expose our children to this sort of positivity.

We have heard a very good remark from Dr. Farouqi that among Hindus, the intelligentsia, the educated people, are more fanatic. Now, I would like to know whether he has made this remark on the basis of any scientific study. If it is so, then I will worship him. But, otherwise, what we need is science of religions. Why cannot we study religions on a scientific basis and whatever is common to all can be preached as good values.

My submission further is, as an educationist and as a social engineer, I would say that none of the politicians should be allowed to fight elections unless he has got a four-year foundation course of all these

things. This is not something funny; it is conceptual, and we must understand it.

Now look at our mass media, what damage it is doing. We must control it. My point is that proper awareness and understanding of religious values always promote harmony. In Patel Nagar, we have Sanatan Dharma Mandir; we have got gurdwara also, Baba Jogas Singh's Gurdwara; and we have got Arya Samaj and other such places also. They all came together. This is an example, an illustration of getting together.

*K. K. Vidyarthi [IRS (retd.), Delhi]*

I am formerly from India Revenue Service and attached to Temple of Understanding, which is an inter-faith organization.

I only want to present three stanzas of my own composition. The first two are on lack of communal harmony, which will bring out, what I say :

*Roko is pagalpan ko, is vahshipan ko,  
Varna manav ki saari pragati nasht hogi  
Dharmandha manuj ke hathon, dharm ahit hogi  
Yug yug ki yeh arjit sabhyata bhrasht hogi*

And the prescription is:

*Mandir, masjid, girja, sab ishwar ke ghar hain  
Inme kaisa bhed, sabhi sabko swikar karo  
Sab dharmon se upar manushya hai, yaad rakho  
Yadi tumhe dharm se pyar, to manushya se pyar  
karo*

And one couplet for my friend Dr. Faruqi :

*Toon mazhab ko jahan mein faroge husne bana,  
Khayale kham na de, vaham ki deewar na de.*

*B. K. Sharma [Teacher, Diwan Chand Arya Sr. Sec. School, New Delhi]*

Right from the morning till now, I have come only to one conclusion—the question that Dr. Alexander raised in the very beginning—is that there cannot be any disagreement on what is communal harmony and why it is required. Tolerance, understanding, inter-faith dialogue—all these prescriptions are not new. They are all known to us. The question that you raised, which is very pertinent, is how to go about it? What are the solutions? And it is the solutions which are eluding us. In fact, no religion—whether it is Sikhism or it is Hinduism or it is Islam—teaches us to be violent, or intolerant. But how is it that at one stage we say that there is people-to-people understanding that the people participate in the festivities of other religions, and yet how is it that all of a sudden we become bitter rivals. How is it that we all of a sudden involve ourselves in killings?

Now the question is, we shall have to find out those factors which prevent inter-faith dialogue. Inter-faith dialogue, yes, but how to promote it? That is the basic question, which I think, so far, has not been addressed.

Rights, as Prof. Ashwini Ray was talking about, are good, but how can you enjoy rights in the absence of communal peace and prosperity. Peace and prosperity are basic for enjoyment of rights, howsoever

liberal the Constitution may be, and whatever protection we may get from the Constitution. Despite the protection that we have got from the Constitution, communal harmony and other issues are eluding us even today.

So, therefore, sir, I would say that 2-3 things are required to achieve the goals of prosperity and peace. One is that we must have some course on civilizational heritage that must be taught, maybe from 6th standard onwards. Dr. Alexander was talking about pride in civilizational heritage. Until we know what this civilizational heritage is all about, diversities notwithstanding, we can not be proud of that. Therefore, there must be a curriculum to include civilizational heritage. Value education must be there, whereas I was being told that some religious kind of education must be there. Sir, what I say is that in civil society, intervention—effective intervention—is required.

*J. S. Badhan [IAS (retd.), Noida]*

We are talking of communal harmony in national context. But now, the world has become a global village. In fact, we have got the menace of international terrorism now. And now that it has cropped up, we have to apply our minds to this aspect. I think the type of education, which is being imparted to the younger generation in different countries, is probably defective or rather dangerous. I had even suggested that the United Nations should itself study the education system of various countries and then see that this poison is not injected into the minds of our younger generation, so that they do not grow up into people of biased minds and then create conflicts.

Anyway, whatever we have talked today, I think, is more than enough. Let us now act upon it.

*Concluding Remarks By Chairman*

There are a number of other important things, but I do not wish to take more of your time on this. I will say that anybody else also, who has not been able to speak, but has some ideas or thoughts can send these on to us as a note. It will be very welcome, because, as I said, the idea of the Trust is that there should be really informed-thinking, without any kind of barriers—intellectual, ideological or otherwise. And, so, we will welcome them. I have made some notes on the points that various speakers have made and so has Arun Kumar and others who were requested to do so, in order that not only the gist but the spirit of the discussion gets reflected, without any kind of discord, or any kind of particularist view-points. As Dr. Massey said, at least an effort towards understanding and the need for inter-faith dialogue, not only dialogue but a little bit more, leading to solidarity which may merge or converge on the point of spirituality. That process can also start. We will take note of the points, which have been made with some amount of care, when the summing up of the discussion takes place. If need be, we may have further discussion on it. Possibly, we will attempt that kind of a programme. That's why we had the learned speakers and we requested Dr. Alexander, Dr. Jolly and Dr. Faruqi to participate. We want more and more discussion on this because only discussion can lead to some understanding.

Thank you.

## About Lala Diwan Chand and the Trust

Born on 24th September in the year 1885 to a poor Khatri family of village Saidpur, district Jhelum, (now in Pakistan) Lala Diwan Chand was an orphan at eight and had to venture out at that tender age into the struggle for existence. His first employment on Rs. 10 per month, while still in his early teens was a formative stage in his life during which he equipped himself with knowledge and experience that proved invaluable in his later life.

Years of struggle followed. Finally, in the year 1911 with less than Rs. 500 as his entire capital he came to Delhi and started his business. His meteoric rise to dizzy heights of success is still a matter of living memory. In the heyday of his prosperity, his pent-up silent sympathy for the poor, the weak and the helpless, streamed out into a grand channel of charity. His ungrudging help went to every cause that the Society sponsored and to numerous schools, orphanages and widow homes. But before the bud could blossom into full glory, the cruel hands of death snatched him away on 4th February, 1930 at the young age of 45.

With his usual foresight Diwan Chand had left a Will and Lala Diwan Chand Trust was formed. The

Trust has continued to do the noble work of Lala Diwan Chand according to his behests. Immediately after the death of Lala Diwan Chand, a Girls School, a Hospital and a Community Hall were set up in his native village and a sum of rupees one lakh was made over to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab for the maintenance of these institutions. Lalaji was an ardent follower of the Arya Samaj and had willed a provision of rupees one lakh fifty thousand for the erection of a suitable building at Delhi which might serve as a centre for the activities of the Samaj and also provide accommodation to Scholars and sanyasins visiting the metropolis. Within a few years of his death this wish was realized with the completion of Diwan Hall—a magnificent building embodying a beautiful blend of traditional and modern architecture at the eastern end of Chandni Chowk, Delhi facing the Red Fort.

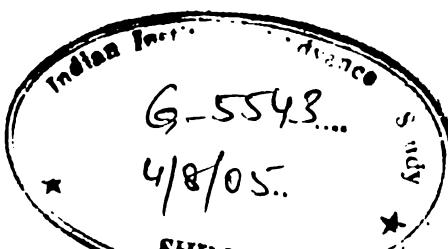
Lala Diwan Chand was a great patriot. The interests of the country were always in his mind. The need of the members of the Central Legislature were easily visualised by him and with his rare foresight he had made provision for an organization in his Will to be styled as the Political Information Bureau for providing the members of the Central Legislature with a specialised library and a forum for intellectual interaction. A fine building at 30, Ferozeshah Road, was bought for housing the Bureau which was formally opened by the Hon'ble Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I., Kt., in the presence of all the members of the Central Legislature and other prominent persons on 1st April, 1936. Dr. M.B. Natarajan, M.A., Ph.D., a professor and a noted journalist, was appointed in July 1936 as its

first Director.

Incidentally, the offices of the Congress Assembly Party, the largest opposition party in pre-independence days, were housed in this premises gratis for nearly a decade.

Over the years, Lala Diwan Chand Trust has done pioneering work in the cause of welfare of the society and for promotion of sundry charitable activities. The Trust constructed a building to house Diwan Chand Arya Senior Secondary School, Lodhi Colony, New Delhi. Apart from making a hefty contribution to the running of the school, the Trust gives scholarships to other deserving individuals for pursuing their studies. Diwan Chand Nursing Home was established 2, Jain Mandir Road and distinguished well-known doctors were associated with this Nursing Home to provide excellent medical service to patients. It was run on 'no profit no loss' basis. The poor patients were provided free treatment.

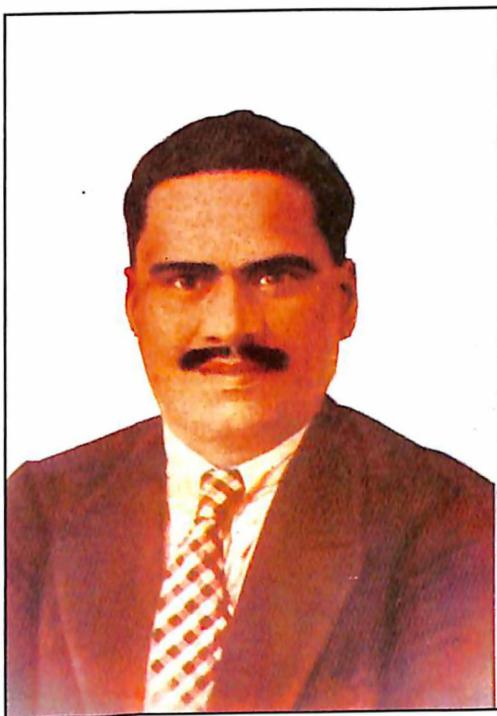
Financial assistance to educational institutions, scholarships to tribal girls, dissemination of literature, orphanages, holding of free eye camps, setting up of a para-medical Science Institute in Yamuna Nagar, a cardiac centre in Mool Chand Hospital of New Delhi and immediate relief in times of national distress are just a few of the many charitable activities of the Trust. □



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