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G20 SUMMIT CONCLUDES IN ST. PETERSBURG





World Federation of United Nations Associations



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Dr. Mukul Sangma
Chairman
Indian Federation of United Nations Associations
C-6, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi – 110 016

18 July 2013

Dear Dr. Mukul Sangma,

**Mukul Sangma
Chief Minister, Meghalaya and
Chairman, IFUNA**



It is with great pleasure that I write to you to offer my heartfelt congratulations on your new appointment as Chairman of the Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA) at IFUNA's Executive Committee on Monday 15 July 2013. IFUNA is a highly respected civil society organization and a prized long-standing member of WFUNA. This is a big honor and an opportunity that I am sure you will relish.

We feel privileged to have such a respected and experienced politician and policy maker to join the leadership of IFUNA. I warmly welcome your intention to contribute to the spreading of IFUNA's chapters in different parts of India, including the North East and, in doing so, to keep all sections of society involved so as to make them broad-based and effective.

I personally look forward to our future cooperation and would like to take this opportunity to extend to you a warm welcome to our Federation.

Yours Sincerely,

**Bonian Golmohammadi
Secretary-General**



IFUNA Chairman Mr. Mukul Sangma(Chief Minister Meghalay) Presiding executive committee meeting

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page 5

LEAD STORY



WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR CHEMICAL WEAPONS

PAGE 8

IFUNA & IC

FELICITATES JULIET REYNOLDS AND FILM MAKER DEEPAK PARVATIYAR ON AUTISM

PAGE 11

FOCUS NAGALAND

Page 16

GUEST COLUMN

ARIANNA HUFFINGTON



Page 19

'EARTH ANTHEM' FELICITATED

Page 22

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL HONORS MALALA YOUSAFZAI AND GORDON BROWN

Page 26

States UNA's -

Bihar UNA

Chandigarh UNA

Himachal UNA

Maharashtra UNA

Orissa UNA

Spiritual Talk



IFUNA CONGRATULATES



Mr. Justice Shambhu Nath Srivastava (Retd.) on assuming office of Lokayukta of Chhattisgarh State. Mr. Justice Shambhu Nath Srivastava (Retd.) was Vice-President of IFUNA.



Its Vice-President Mr. Sitaram Sharma on assuming office of The Chairman of Maulana Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata of Ministry of Culture, Government of India.



AT G20

Politicians Push the Same Neo-Liberal Agenda?



P M Parvatiyar
(pmparvatiyar@gmail.com)

EARLIER this month, world leaders at the G20 Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia were promising to develop proposals to regulate big banks and international tax heavens. Meanwhile, an international group of activists in the same city were proposing a striking alternative.

According to Alec Luhn a journalist focusing on global issues, 'Activists' organized a counter-summit to discuss the problems world leaders were unwilling to address of good governance, i.e., human rights and activism, especially in Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

Participants in the G20 Counter-Summit spent two days discussing ways to solve the intertwined financial and environmental crises that the G20 has been unable or unwilling to seriously address for five years now.

Mike Callaghan Director of the G20 Studies Centre at the Lowy Institute for International Policy, in his analysis "Relaunching the G20" released by the Lowy Institute, observes:

If the G20 is to live up to its potential, it must confront the forces that could see it slide into irrelevancy. The forum should build on what has worked, and avoid what has not.

The G20 has achieved a great deal, beyond what is widely acknowledged as its high point at the London G20 leaders' summit, which President Obama described as "a turning point in our pursuit of global economic recovery."

But criticism is growing. It is being described as little more than a talk shop.

"Do we still need the G20?"

"Absolutely".

We live in an increasingly interconnected world. We need a forum that brings together the leaders of the major advanced and emerging economies. But we need more than a talk shop. We need a forum where leaders can deal with some of the most pressing challenges confronting the global economy. This is the potential that the G20 offers.

But if the G20 is to live up to its potential, it has to confront the forces that could see it slide into irrelevancy. The forum has to build on what has worked, and avoid what has not. In this regard there are few lessons from the G20 summits to date.

a). Recognize the importance of leadership. All forums require leaders, the G20 is no exception. It took the leadership of George Bush to call leaders together in Washington in 2008. And the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, enthusiastically chaired the London summit. However it needs to cultivate champions for reform both within and outside the forum to get things done.; b). The G20 is above all a political forum. Its strength and effectiveness comes from the highest level of political involvement. So let the leaders lead. Instead of officials trying to pre-cook everything in advance of the summit.; c). Those leaders' summits perceived to have been the most successful were the ones that were seen to take real action. For example, there was the commitment at the London summit to increase the resources of the IMF and development banks by over \$1 trillion dollars.; d). What does undermine credibility is a lack of action. A prime example has been the repeated but unrealized commitments by leaders to complete the Doha Development Round.; e). Make sure the messages are clear. Just as the agenda has increased, the amount of documentation coming from G20 summits has grown enormously. It is hard to determine what the main message is. The G20

needs to replace quantity with quality and spend more time in ensuring that clear and succinct messages emerge from summits. But this is always easier if there is something to say, if the summit has really made progress on some key issues.; f). Targets and timetables can be effective in demonstrating that leaders are committed and also a benchmark to measure progress, but care needs to be taken. The timetables have to be realistic, and changes in economic circumstances have to be taken into account. A major outcome from the 2010 Toronto summit was the commitment by members to reduce public debt and deficits by specific dates. But with ongoing weakness in the global economy, these timetables are no longer appropriate for all countries.;

g). Keep the focus on achieving a sustainable recovery in the global economy.

The G20 declared victory too soon when at the Pittsburgh summit leaders said "our countries agreed to do everything necessary to ensure the recovery". Has it worked?

To be effective, the G20 must maintain its focus and not lose its inherent strength, which is the engagement of leaders. But the agenda continues to grow each year as the rotating chair adds its priorities to what it inherits from previous chairs.

There has to be a collective agreement by G20 members that there needs to be a break from the past. There has to be a circuit-breaker.

The BRICS emerging markets caucus - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - also met. They are unlikely to progress on joint steps, such as a shared pool of forex (foreign exchange) reserves, to guard against capital flight.

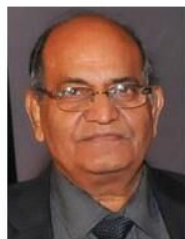
The G20 needs to be relaunched. This is a challenge Australia should take up when it chairs the G20 in 2014.

So far they have not been able to deliver any thing substantial.

At G20 one expect: policy, clarity and global rebalancing to avoid any further mess.



INDIA FOR A WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR CHEMICAL WEAPONS



■ BY SURESH SRIVASTAVA
Secretary General, IFUNA

The explosion of death and destruction that consumed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 engulfed the world in the fear of the unknown forces that were being unlocked. That was the first time when a Nuclear Bomb was used on civilian population and let us hope it was the last time. India under the leadership of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was dedicated to the peaceful use of atomic energy but it could not wish away the lurking threat posed by nuclear weapon, and so purposely India's option for nuclear weapons were kept open for both areas peaceful applications and weapon option. A poor country like India at that time could not afford to give priority to have atomic weapons and uranium enrichment based on diffusion process, the then prevalent route to weapon making. Vagaries of the Indian situation are inevitably imprinted on its quest for nuclear power to be used for peace and for weapons albeit with the limitation that India's aim is a build up of credible

nuclear deterrence and no more. It rules out India joining a nuclear arm race of global proportions.

India decided to join the partial test ban treaty in 1963 hoping that such a step would reverse the nuclear arms race but with the increase in underground test India's hope was razed to ground. India's earlier decision to develop the complete nuclear fuel cycle allowed it to easily acquire technical capability to build nuclear weapons when the geopolitical situation changed.

In November 1964, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri authorized theoretical work on the Subterranean Nuclear Explosion for Peaceful Purposes (SNEPP). Subsequently India decided in 1968 not to sign Non proliferation Treaty.

Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi made a statement on the floor of parliament that the NPT is discriminatory to non nuclear states. In 1978 the then Prime Minister Mr. Murarji Desai, proposed in the General Assembly of the United Nations to put a total ban on Nuclear Weapon testing. In 1982 when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was again Prime Minister she proposed for no use or threat of use of Nuclear weapons.

In 1988 the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi presented an action plan based on shared responsibility and global vision. India has always approached the Nuclear disarmament issue from moral and its security point of view.

The flash point in the Indian weapon programme came in 1998 when on 11th



and 13 May five tests of varied strength, which included the testing of thermonuclear device, were conducted with great success at Pokhran. In this run up, the 1974 Pokhran test served as a rehearsal. Between Pokhran 1 and Pokhran II a vast scientific, nuclear technology acquisition by Indian Scientific Institutions is revealed, a striking advance on all sectors of nuclear capability. Glamorous as the Pokhran II tests appears to be, far most fascinating and absorbing is the uphill road taken by India on the Indian Nuclear Programme. The West imposed a complete embargo, technological as well as nuclear material on the Indian Nuclear Programme. The acquisition of advanced nuclear capability by India in these extraordinary conditions and amidst the limitations of a developing economy may well



be described as a nuclear miracle.

I am not eulogising concept of nuclear weapon by India but at the same time I must say that India's nuclear quest was more circumstantial than a deliberate attempt to become a nuclear power. During the period when China and France were on tossing free which cost India dearly in terms of being declared a spoil sport with one opinion because of its Veto of CTBT. In itself, the Indian Veto of CTBT at the Geneva Parleys was the right act, a far sighted act, for if the Veto had not been imposed the Indian's implosion as in 1998 would have been veritably impossible. The credit for the Veto at the Geneva Conference goes to Shri I K Gujral, then Foreign Minister. It is true that subsequently, when Gujral Ji became Prime Minister he too could not muster enough courage to conduct the test, but he was wise enough to keep the door open for the Vajpayee Government to accomplish this talk. Shri I K Gujral however, extended full support to the test conducted by India on 11th and 13th May 1998 contrary to the strange response of some of his own party men, and even more blatantly, the Congress and left parties.

India with its strong tilt in favour of nuclear disarmament and peaceful application of atomic energy may be seen as a responsible state, far removed from the category of rogue states.

The United States indeed occupies a pivotal position in nuclear world. The America's policies on global in the nuclear issues have inevitably major repercussions initiating the nuclear scenario worldwide. India decided not to be part of NPT and remain outside the Treaty is the most glaring reason is China being given a nuclear weapon status and another hostile neighbour Pakistan which can be termed as rouge state having nuclear capability. The American mistake is not realising that a nuclear armed China could pose a threat to India in futuristic evolution if India was pushed down to a permanent non-weapon status. India on the other hand, erred in not being realistic and pragmatic about American Nuclear supremacy and alongside redefining its own options articulating its nuclear weapon capability.



Strange as it might appear, the emergence of Pakistan as a nuclear weapon state has largely been made possible by United States abetting and Ronald Reagan deliberately keeping a close eyes. The west european nuclear industry was the principal contributor to build up of Pakistan's nuclear weapon facility, through clandestine multi-billion dollar contracts which added the nuclear black markets murky deals, running into a few billion dollars all under the nose of the CIA and twelve Western Intelligence Agencies. It was not Chinese hardware, but western nuclear equipments that fed these murky black market and clandestine deals. The Chinese contribution to the Pakistani nuclear weapon quest has by comparison been small.

Then came the events of 11 September 2001 which has changed the perspective of an effective non-proliferation region, the monster of terrorism has since occupied centre stage. Begin the war on terrorism described by President Bush as the first war of this century. A fallacious statement, since the first real war took place in Iraq where the American presi-

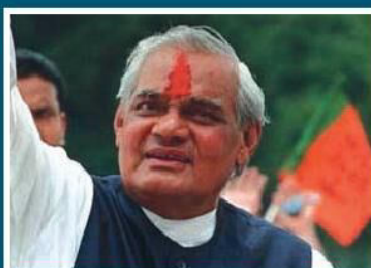
dent has been charged the divergence of battle against Al-Qaeda. Even as CTBT has been tossed about in the wake of the American Senates refusal to rectify the Treaty, the shadow of the twisted International happenings since 11 September have thrown a big question mark on the future rule of nuclear weapons and the shape of the non-proliferation regime as such. The outburst of terrorism, cloaked as Islamic jihads with the terrible happenings in United States on 11 September and subsequent outbursts have thrown up a new situation. The factors that guided the United States in carving out its approach hitherto have suddenly received a big blow. Particularly so American strategy of retaining its supremacy in relation to China, and on keeping Indian nuclear capability contained. While there are many indications of re-approachment by Washington for New Delhi, but it is less receptive on what a fool proof known proliferation regime should be in the new circumstances of Al-Qaeda led terrorism. The world policy makers appear to be dazed. The haunting fear of terrorism is



Mrs. Indira Gandhi
NPT is discriminatory



Murarji Desai
Ban on Nuclear Weapon testing.



Atal Behari Vajpayee
Great success at Pokhran



Dr. Manmohan Singh
For Nuclear Power Plant

now the prime concern in relation to nuclear weapons. Washington continues to loiter amidst the proverbial devil and the deep sea. To be or not to be, lest Al-Qaeda led Islamic terrorism lays its hands on some kind of nuclear weapons, even a crude A bomb is a terrifying thought. From this point of view Pakistan is in focus, symbolic of American follies and lack of reception for the future. Here the Islamic fundamentalists have done deep roots. What if these haunting prospects become a stark reality? Has Washington a well thought plan of action to neutralise Pakistan's nuclear weapons in the event of a danger of these weapons falling into wrong hands.

However, the post 11 September scenarios do not mean that the CTBT can now be dispensed with. On the other hand, CTBT and along with it the known proliferation region has to be reviewed, to remove the discriminations and discrepancies so as to seal all loopholes. Countries that are yet outside the orbit, India and Pakistan in particular have to be integrated in the known proliferation struc-

ture. India in its own interest should become an active participant in a strictly imposable and enforceable nuclear non-proliferation regime of which CTBT will continue to be the centre space. The problem for India is the NPT that does not accord India weapons status, which is its due. This anomaly has to be rectified by suitable modification of the known proliferation regions instrument, eventually merging NPT with the CTBT edifice and completion of negotiations on the fissile materials cut off treaty.

In 1992, India signed the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), stating that it did not have chemical weapons and the capacity or capability to manufacture chemical weapons. By doing this, India became one of the original signatories of the Chemical Weapons Convention. India informed the United Nations in May, 2009 that it had destroyed its stockpile of chemical weapons in compliance with the international Chemical Weapons Convention. With this India has become the third country after South Korea and Albania to do so. This was cross-checked by inspec-

tors of the United Nations. To reiterate the latter point, in October 2002, Indian President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam asserted that "we [India] will not make biological weapons. It is cruel to human beings..."

What we have discussed above belongs to 20th Century. Now we are in the 21st Century. The issue of Nuclear Weapons though relevant but not very important as now the race is to control outer space and the nations who control outer space would control the world. The new weapons of mass destruction may be laser-beam weapon or any such advance technology from the outer space which makes Nuclear weapons redundant. We would have reached by and large an agreement on Antarctica and Arctic region where there is no human habitat but a broad consensus is required about outer space and placement of weapons in the outer space. There is a need for a transparency and confidence building measures in outer space activities. India has the capacity and capability to be a part of the race to control outer space but historically India has never postured aggressiveness since time immemorial and as a responsible nation should be a part of CBM and transparency in outer space activities.

We demand that the Indian Ocean be declared as a Zone of peace. The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution No. 64/23 has called for implementation of the declaration of the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace though it was opposed by France, United States and United Kingdom. We also demand that there should be complete ban on dumping of Radio Active Material, we also demand adequate measures to prevent terrorist from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

The most assuring part of Indian polity is that the foreign policy is a national policy and we have seen change of guard at centre with Congress, BJP, Left and Socialist. They all adhered to the established foreign policy starting from Nehru to Dr. Manmohan Singh.

We sincerely hope that coming generation and leadership shall work to make this world free from the threat of Nuclear weapons, Biological weapons, Chemical warfare and a peaceful outer space. ▼

**IFUNA & INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE**

FELICITATES

AUTHOR OF 'FINDING NEEMA' JULIET REYNOLDS**AND FILM MAKER DEEPAK PARVATIYAR ON AUTISM**

On 6TH AUGUST 2013 The Seminar Hall no.2 of India International Centre was full to its capacity with the elites of the capital.

Welcoming the guests Mr. Suresh Srivastava, Secretary General, Indian Federation of United Nations Association (IFUNA) said, today we are screening a short film on Autism, by Mr Deepak Parvatiyar, Media Advisor of IFUNA who has produced an Internationally acclaimed short film 'I'm Special: my world is different' and discussion on Autism by Juliet Reynolds Author of the Book finding Neema.

Strange are the ways of destiny. One author Juliet Reynolds who decided not to have her own children and to become a guardian of an autistic child Neema and Mr Deepak Parvatiyar one night on the call of his neighbor in Ahmedabad to take to their child hospital transformed him to work on autism a relatively unknown disease or condition which is very much lesser known in this part of the world. Both the producer of the film and writer of the book have not personally suffered or came across a situation to having to rear an autistic child. But the great feeling of humanity in both of them have inspired them to work for the same cause and as it happened, I wrote to India International Centre for the screening of short film of Mr Deepak, I received a communication from IIC suggesting to organise a programme in which Juliet Reynolds who



हम खुदा के कभी कायल ही न थे
आपको देखा तो खुदा याद आया।

Suresh Srivastava, Secretary General, IFUNA said addressing the audience. Sitting on his left are Deepak Parvatiyar and Ms. Juliet Reynolds

had written the book on her personal experience and Mr. Deepak Parvatiyar who had produced this film to do this programme by combining the talent of both film producer and writer. It is a great opportunity provided by IIC under their platform and we are grateful to them.

Frankly speaking, I myself did not know much about Autism and my first encounter was to watch the film of Mr Deepak and then to read the Book written by Juliet Reynolds finding Neema.

Mr Deepak Parvatiyar has already having to his credit documentary "The Wizard of Needles" which is a motivational story of

how physical disabilities cannot be a deterrent to one achievement to serve human beings. In this film Mr. Anil Kumar who is a blind is practicing acupuncture and curing people very successfully. He was even called by our former Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee for his ailments. The film on Autism is very inspiring as how a little child seeks space where he can develop with love and care and not neglected. He is not retarded rather he is brilliant. I was surprised to know that people like Einstein, Mozart and Edison were all autistic.

This short film on an autistic child - "I'm Special, My World Is Different" directed by Deepak Parvatiyar who is a Delhi based journalist and filmmaker shot it in Ahmadabad. -- Has won the first prize at the first edition of Autis

Movie - Festival Internazionale di Cortometraggi sull'Autismo in Italy.

The result was declared at the conclusion of the two-day finale of the international film festival at Parco di Monte Claro in Cagliari on June 2, 2013.

The international film festival was organized by L'Associazione Diversamente Onlus with the contribution and the patronage of the Province of Cagliari – Department for Cultural Policy and show – and in collaboration with the Association of Social Promotion in mediazione.

Deepak Parvatiyar's film was the only Asian film to make to the finals of the festival.



While declaring the film as the winner of the first prize, the jury stated that it was declared as the winner "For the positive message of extraordinary normality, to be successful in a few minutes to summarize effectively the best practices of social inclusion and rehabilitation of a person with autism starting from the family until you get to the therapeutic intervention itself and for putting in the foreground the importance of the contribution of our brothers / sisters with autism, individuals often forgotten or sidelined when it comes to autism."

The film by Mr. Deepak not only tells a story but we also make sure to stir the audience to transform them into a better human being.

I am sure Mr. Deepak will further elaborate while screening this short film.

"Finding Neema" a book written by Juliet Reynolds is an expression as how a human being can sacrifice her own pleasure of life and to be a guardian of a child who was having problem of club foot and with autism. Ms Juliet Reynolds after marrying Anil could have lead a life enjoying the pleasure of motherhood by having her own child, but instead both of them opted to be the guardian of an autistic child Neema. I was surprised that even up to the year 1967 a story was propounded of the refrigerator mother by Bruno Bettelheim a child psychologist of considerable international repute, which ultimately turn out to be a notorious story. Even in AIIMS where Neema was taken for diagnosis, doctors have little knowledge of Autism.

The book 'Finding Neema' is a journey which takes you to the "reality of autism which is a spectrum disorder, affecting individual to widely varying degrees, it is further underline that no two autistic people are alike. So is the other human beings and they required individual handling, yet they are few symptoms and behavior patterns that is common to all individual diagnose on the spectrum. Impaired communication and social skills are among the most recognizable the dislikes participating in normal conversation or engaging in small talk. They have difficulties in expressing their own emotions and reacting to those of others, but in their own shell they have all the feelings of emotions and understanding. When Anil, beloved husband of Juliet expired, Neema was the one to



Deepak Parvatiyar introducing his film on Autism to the audience

understand grief of Juliet, who is more than a mother to him and for Juliet, she could not asked for more from the god than Neema.

Juliet has given best part of her life to the child Neema and understanding Neema . The example of Neema after seeing Shyamal playing Tabla and ask for and indicated to play the same and Juliet was astonished and fascinated when Neema a left hander changed the Tabla to play the same from his left hand. That showed the musical intelligence in an autistic child. We need not repeat name of Mozart the greatest Musician of this world. Neema was a great dancer and Juliet came to know about his dancing capability and dancing with rhythm in Dehradun and Neema became darling of all the people in the party.

I need not to go into details of the Book written by Juliet Reynolds Finding Neema. The only thing which I can state that to serve the people with disability, is like serving the God.

I would like to brief and would like to give floor to Juliet to speak on her Book and then to Mr. Deepak for screening his short film. The only thing which I can say about them would like to sum up in a urdu couplet -

Aaa

Ms. Juliet Reynolds author of "Finding

Neema" was quite emotional when she stated that Neema was destined to come to her not only as child but to fulfill the meaning of her life. She referred to Mr. Anil Karanjai her husband who was no more in this world but because of the presence of Neema, she had forgotten the devastation which came to her life after the death of Anil, who was a highly reputed Indian artist.

NEEMA though an autistic child was very intelligent and his sixth sense was very sharp to understand emotions of Juliet, her husband Anil and their friends and colleagues. Neema was an in born artist who was never exposed to music and dance and at the first instance he showed his skill of dancing and was soon a darling to the gathering in her house on New Year's Eve and everyone was looking for an opportunity to dance with him. He understood musical rhythms and his steps in dancing were perfect. The book "FINDING NEEMA" is a real life story.

"I am sure this recognition to my film will go a long way in creating awareness about the highly neglected and highly discriminated autistic children in India and beyond," Deepak Parvatiyar said responding to Mr. Srivastava. He informed that the film on autism was his second documentary on disability issues. His first documentary, "The Wizard of Needles", was on India's only blind acupuncturist which had won the Jury's special mention award at the We Care Film Festival - India's only travelling film festival on disability issues that is patronized by UNESCO, United Nations Information Centre, India and Bhutan, and National Trust of the Government of India - in 2011.

"I'm Special: My World Is Different" is a documentary that captures the life of an autistic child, Sunny D'Costa, of Ahmedabad India. Sunny was about two-and-a-half years old when his parents realized that he was not responding to them. It was diagnosed that he was autistic — something that they had never heard of before.

Sunny's story is the story of love and care and Hope. The way the entire family including Sunny's parents and his younger sister have taken care of an autistic child is exemplary. It is also the story of a mother's love for her child and how she sacrifices her life to ensure Sunny is not neglected. She has faith and regularly takes Sunny to church and temples. She also teaches Sunny to pray.▼



Human Rights Training for youths at Geneva

A Report by Abhitej Sandhu

W FUNA held its third annual Human Rights Training for young UNA representatives in the Palais des Nations in Geneva From 22 to 25 July 2013. Seventeen participants from 12 different UNAs (Ghana, Greece, India, Italy, Nepal, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda, UK and Zimbabwe) joined the intensive 4-day course on Human Rights and the Project Management.

The training aims at empowering UNA youth world-wide to become active in the field of human rights and to provide them with the knowledge and capacity to implement human rights projects in their countries. The first two days were dedicated to the complex UN human rights system while the last two days concentrated on human rights project management. The program included sessions with diplomats, UN staff, NGO representatives, and WFUNA staff as well as open discussions and challenging case studies.

The International Human Rights System After a warm welcome at the Palais des Nations, Wiebke Harms, WFUNA's Human Rights Education Program Officer, gave the participants a short overview of the training agenda. After an open discussion on the definition of "human rights", Wiebke introduced participants to the UN Human Rights System in general. This overview was complemented in more detail by various speakers who shared their knowledge and experience with the students:

Dr. Heather Collister from the International Service for Human Rights explained how NGOs and civil society can engage with the Human Rights Council and identified obstacles but also opportunities and success

stories of effective participation. Mr. Jamshid Gazyev from Special Procedures Branch of the OHCHR, provided the group with first-hand knowledge on the role of Special Procedures in holding up human rights values internationally. Mr. Ian Duddy, Head of Human Rights at the UK Mission to the UN, came to speak to our participants about what it means to be a human rights diplomat at the UN. Mr. Duddy spoke from an essentially British perspective and vividly illustrated how being British greatly affects his priorities and focal points in the field of human rights.

cracy, drawing the conclusion that it can be most rewarding if one has patience. The final speaker on the UN human rights system was Mr. Roland Chauville, Executive Director of UPR-Info, a Geneva-based NGO focused on informing the public about the Universal Periodic Review.

At the end of day two, participants could apply their newly gained knowledge during a WFUNA-designed simulation on the UPR process. During two hours they slipped into the role of diplomats and NGO representatives and concluded the session with a very positive and cooperative review.

Human Rights Project Management

In the last two days of the training session, Wiebke introduced the participants into the complexities of effective project management and equipped them with the tools to implement their very own local human rights project.

IFUNA Delegate Abhitej Sandhu participating in the Training Program

Theory of the project cycle came to life when participants developed detailed project proposals, which they presented in the final session of the training. Projects ranged from raising awareness about human rights among university and high school students, to providing advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities, to empowering local NGOs to become more effective by giving them professional training in the UN human rights system.

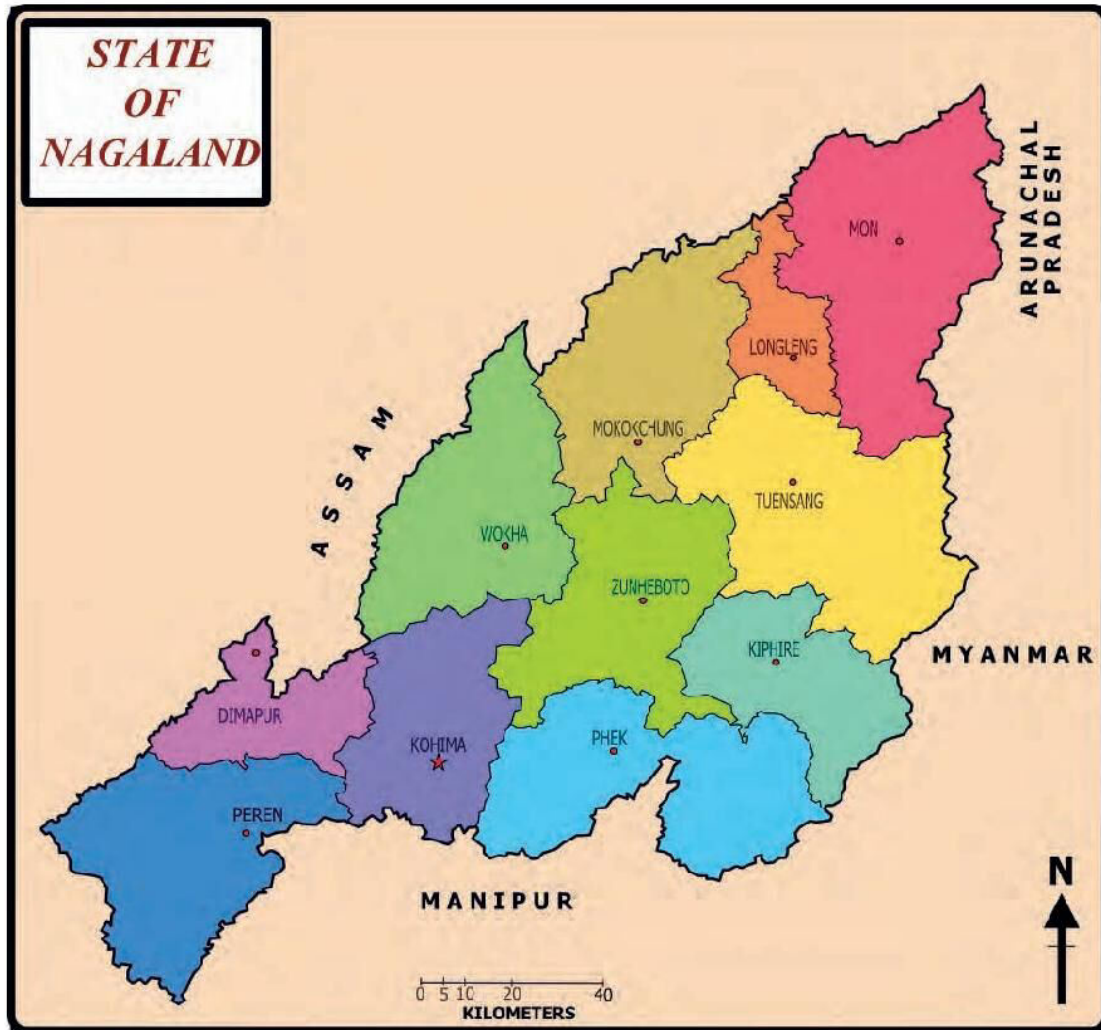
All of the proposals included detailed thought on problem identification, target groups, goals, specific objectives, expected results, an elaborated work plan and a lot of imagination of how to bring an idea into practice.

Every participant left with the objective to develop and implement their own human rights project in coordination with their respective UNAs in the next six months. ▼



IFUNA Delegate Abhitej Sandhu participating in the Training Program

He sensitized the participants that the Human Rights Council, as an inter-governmental organ, still suffers from a degree of politicization and that, even in human rights negotiations, economic interests play an essential role. Mr. Kevin I. Koh from the Human Rights Treaties Division of the OHCHR talked about the UN Treaty Body System. He explained how the protection of human rights is essential for any form of sustainable development and why one has to fight for it in all parts of the world. He elaborated on the positive and negative aspects of working for the UN and its extensive bureau-



NAGALAND

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies

Nagaland is situated in the north-eastern part of India sharing international border with Myanmar. It lies between latitudes of 25°10' N and 27°04' N and the longitudes of 93°05' E and 95°06' E and has geographical area of 16,579 km². Nagaland consists of a narrow strip of hilly area running north-

east to southwest which is located in the northern extension of the Arakan Yoma ranges. The altitude ranges from 194 m to 3,826 m. The summer temperature varies from 15°C to 30°C and the winter temperature ranges from 4°C to 25°C. Average annual rainfall in the state is 2,000 mm.

As per Census 2011, the population of

the state is 1.98 million which constitutes 0.16% of the country's population. Rural population constitutes 71.03% and urban population 28.97%. The population density is 119.46 persons per km². The livestock population of the State as per Livestock Census 2007 is 1.42 million.

As per the Forest survey of India 2011



Phensunyu Khenyu Rumensinyu (PKR) Community conservation area, Kohima District Area: 8 Sq. Km.

report, the recorded forest area of the state is 9,222 km² which is 55.62% of its geographical area. The Reserved Forests constitute 0.93%, Protected Forests 5.51% and Unclassed Forest constitute 93.56% the forest cover in the State, is 13,318 km², which is 80.33% of the State's geographical area. In terms of forest canopy density classes, the State has 1,293 km² area under very dense forest, 4,931 km² are under moderately dense forest and 7,094 km² under open forest.

The pattern of land ownership is such that the land is owned either by the village community as a whole or by a clan within the village or by individuals. There are no records for conferring upon them ownership rights but the ownership rights are exclusively determined by traditions which are also referred to as "Customary Laws".

The loss of forest cover influences the climate adversely. Further, siltation, flooding, and soil degradation affects the productivity of the forests as also agricultural productivity thereby threatening the livelihoods and cultural integrity of forest-dependent communities. The causes of deforestation and forest degradation are complex. It has been identified that demographic factors are one of the five most important underlying causes because of agricultural expansion, wood extraction and expansion of infra-structure.

While it has been recognized that shifting cultivation is one of the main reasons

of deforestation however, shifting cultivation is deeply embedded in the cultural and traditional ethos of the Nagas. The local populace depend almost entirely on wood and its products to meet their daily fuel-wood requirements. Therefore the pressure on forests for the demand of fuel-wood are very high and as the

population increases the pressure on forests for fuel-wood increases at an alarming rate. These fuel-wood requirements are met presently from the jhum-lands. Besides fuel-wood, they obtain various minor forest produces from the jhum-lands. Commercial extraction of timber has been drastically reduced with the banning of felling of timbers by the Hon'ble Supreme Court order 1996 and subsequent orders issued by the State Government for regulations of timber felling. As a result of this, the number of wood-based industries specially saw mills have been reduced to only a few of which about only 60% are functioning. Forestry sector in the State has been one of the main source of providing livelihood and revenue. However, of late rapid increase in population, insufficient infrastructure, diversion of forest area for developmental activities, inadequate public awareness about forest functions and its administrations have led to deforestation. Some of the factors that are already adding pressure on existing forests and biodiversity are

- Intensive Jhum Cultivation



Kanglatu Community Biodiversity Area, Mokokchung District. Area: 760 Ha



Saramati Range Community Conservation Area, Kiphere District spread over 17 villages Area 100 Sq Km

- Deforestation
- Rapid Urbanisation
- Natural hazards
- Mining activities

■ Converting of forest land to agricultural use (e.g cultivation of cash crops like cardamom, rubber plantation)

Nagaland is vulnerable to climate change as per report "Nagaland State Climate Change Action Plan prepared by Prof Ravindranath of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Forest vulnerability index was developed by Indian Institute of Science; Bangalore considered the following indicators with equal weight:

■ Disturbance index: An indication of the human disturbance for a particular forest patch. More the disturbance index, higher the forest vulnerability.

■ Fragmentation status: An indication of how fragmented the forest patch is.



Neiphiu Rio,
Nagaland Chief Minister

More the fragmentation status, higher the forest vulnerability.

■ Biological richness: Indicates the species diversity of the forest patch, a measure of the number of species of flora and fauna, per unit area. Higher the biological richness, lower the forest vulnerability.

Impact of climate change obtained from IBIS model: The value of each of the indicators was reduced to a scale of 1.0 to 5.0. All values of vulnerability in this study hence range from 1.0 (very low vulnerability) to 5.0 (very high) Based on the CFVI, it was found that the forests of the following districts of Nagaland have high CFVI (have high to moderate to low vulnerability): Mon, Mokokchung, Tuensang and Zunheboto, Kohima, Wokha, Phek as per the report the whole of Nagaland is vulnerable.

Forests hold immense potential for addressing mitigation and adaptation

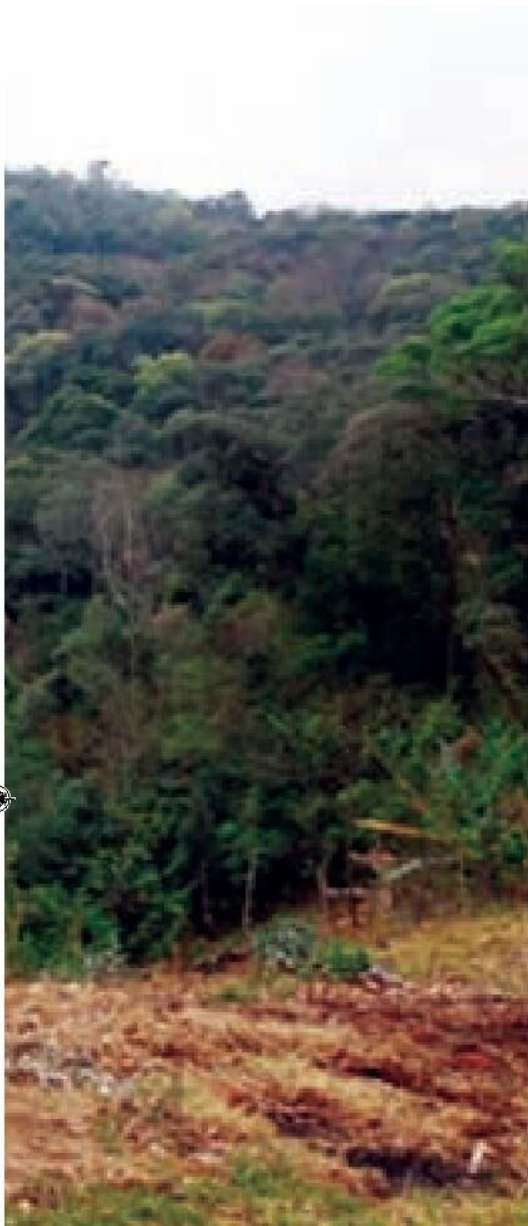


Community conservation area Jalukie Peren Dist, Area: 208 Ha

efforts that are required to meet the challenges posed by the imminent climate change. Overall goal of the Green India Mission one of the eight missions aims at responding to climate change by a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures, which would help enhancing carbon sinks in sustainably managed forests and other ecosystems, adaptation of vulnerable species/ ecosystems, and adaptation of forest-dependent communities. Since the whole Nagland is vulnerable to climate change and communities are affected, Min-

istry of Environment and Forests, NAEB New Delhi has approved the implementation of Green India Mission Project in most vulnerable district of Nagaland i.e Mon and Mokokchung. In Mon Chingphoi, kongan, Wakching, wanching and shiyong and in Mokokchung five villages Kangtsung, Anaki, Merangkong, Mollungyimsen and Yaongyimsen were taken up during 2011-12 for preparatory phase of bridge plan. Jhum cultivation is a way of life in Nagaland. Nagaland has tremendous capacity for wood production, more potential for

making Nagaland rich Simple Arithmetic is: a hectare of jhum cultivation produces rice only once in 8 years – the general period of jhum cycle in Nagaland and that too only in the fertile cultivable areas. After the jhum harvest, vast stretches of jhum land in Nagaland lie idle for a minimum of 8 years without producing any agriculture crops. These vast stretches can be planted which will produce firewood, and provide livelihood to our village communities and plants planted in fallow areas will act as carbon sink



There are no records for conferring upon them ownership rights but the ownership rights are exclusively determined by traditions which are also referred to as "Customary Laws".

old customs and traditions for forest dependence and forest management. Approach uses the land cover map to identify different sampling strata and assumes that measurements of forest Carbon stocks will be made in these strata. The Carbon stock estimates are then used with change in land-cover maps over time. Nagaland has prepared state action plan on climate change which was submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Forests for final approval. Eight sectors have made action plans for mitigation and climate change strategies.

The communities in Nagaland, at their own initiative, are also conserving biodiversity through Community Conservation Areas. A combination of scientific knowledge along with their traditional wisdom is needed for the implementation of REDD+ in Nagaland.

The efforts of Communities that have taken up Conservation by way of self-

Forest Department of Nagaland with TERI collaboration has taken up a Pilot study Phenshonyu Khenyu Rumensinyu (PKR) villages Community forest area in Kohima.

A project for REDD+ prepared keeping all important elements such as governance, methods of carbon assessment through GIS remote sensing technology as well as manually, dependence on forests and also the maintenance of other ecosystem services. Kind of forest governance needed for REDD+ is already in place and also has age

imposed restrictions have shown tangible and exemplary success towards this endeavor. The Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development (NEPED), in partnership with Salim Ali Center for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), Coimbatore, and supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT), Mumbai took up the task of further strengthening and recognizing the efforts in biodiversity conservation, covering the Five eastern districts of Nagaland.

The project identified 229 Community Conservation Areas (CCA), the details of which are appended in the table below:

DISTRICT	Number of CCA		Total no. of CCA
	Primary Forest	Secondary Forest	
Mon	39	60	99
Longleng	7	11	18
Tuensang	31	13	44
Kiphere	30	5	35
Phek	16	18	34
TOTAL	123	107	230

Source:- *Strengthening Community Conservation Efforts in Nagaland: A Programme to Impart Technical Support on Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Options*

Saramati Range Community Conservation Area, Kiphere District spread over 17 villages Area 100 Sq Km

Besides the identification of these CCAs, the project also provided technical support to the establishment of joint CCAs of two or more villages, which are strategically and comparatively more sound in the conservation of biodiversity. The joint CCAs supported by the project are given in the table below: ▼

NAME OF JOINT CCAS	DISTRICT	NUMBER OF VILLAGES	APPROX. AREA (SQ KM)
Saramati Range CCA	Kiphere	17	100
Hongmong CCA	Mon	6	35
Phoyisha Range CCA	Phek (Meluri)	4	10
Common Community Conservation	Phek (Meluri)	12	50
Helipong Khong CCA	Tuensang	3	15
Yai Zone CCA	Tuensang (Shamator)	6	20
Noksen CCA	Tuensang	6	15

Source:- *Strengthening Community Conservation Efforts in Nagaland: A Programme to Impart Technical Support on Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Options*



Lincoln, Mandela and Obama: Lessons for Leaders Over Three Centuries



■ ARIANNA HUFFINGTON

I'm happy to be back breathing the hot and muggy-though-wonderfully-sea-level air of New York, having just returned from the Aspen Ideas Festival. There were, as usual, many great speakers, but one of the speeches that became the talk of the festival was by Nancy Koehn, a professor at the Harvard Business School. Though she teaches at the business school, Koehn is actually an historian and the speech, titled "Crisis Leadership: Lessons for Here and Now," was about lessons we can learn about leadership from the experiences of Abraham Lincoln and the explorer Ernest Shackleton. The speech was particularly poignant as the world is beginning to focus on Nelson Mandela's leadership, with regular updates on his health as he lies in critical condition at a hospital in South Africa.

The overall theme of Koehn's speech was about how leaders can find their "stronger, better selves in the midst of great crisis." And the quest for effective leadership is particularly intense now that, as Koehn put it, "turbulence is the new normal.... It's all around: it's social, it's technological, it's political, and it's geopolitical." And what that means is that "we need a new frame... a new operating system."

One thing we don't lack, however, is

information. In this era of Big Data triumphalism, we are slowly realizing that raw information doesn't solve many problems. What we need, said Koehn, is wisdom, because "information... does not equal knowledge, and knowledge does not equal understanding, and understanding does not equal wisdom."

She then gave one of my favorite definitions of leadership, by the late novelist David Foster Wallace:

Effective leaders are individuals who help us overcome the limitations of our own selfishness and weaknesses and fears and get us to do harder, better, more important things than we can get ourselves to do on our own.

"Aren't we searching like frisky pilgrims through the desert for that right here, right now?" she asked.

So what were the lessons of Lincoln and Mandela, two giants at helping their respec-



Nelson Mandela



Guest Column

tive nations overcome the limits of selfishness and weakness? One who ended a civil war and one who prevented one from breaking out. And both who, in the end, kept their divided nations together.

One of the most important aspects of Lincoln, said Koehn, was "how he used his own knowledge of himself to grow and lead and have impact." She tells the story of Lincoln, as a young lawyer, learning how to become a good speaker. After opening up his law practice, he assumed he'd just be able to convince a jury relying on his speaking ability alone. But he soon realized that wasn't enough -- it would take more rigor and focus and prioritizing than that. So, as he told his law students, he'd focus his argument down to the two or three points most important to his case and zero in on those. This capacity to see his strengths and weaknesses from the outside and make adjustments was invaluable. "He had the ability to walk all around himself and his place,"

Koehn said.

And that ability — to step outside of ourselves and the minute-to-minute turbulence of the moment — is becoming harder not just for our leaders but for all of us. "I worry a little bit that our love affairs with our technology and our reactive default mode is keeping us from stepping away from who we are, what we're doing, how we might make a bigger commitment to something like goodness or to the higher road," Koehn said.

Too often, Koehn said, we want to find salvation in external tools, in the belief that we can outsource our responsibility and wisdom to technology. "We think often that the solution to what we need... is about the aids we have," she said. "Often it's our smartphone."

But that's not the answer. It's not about technology, Koehn said, "it's about the core — it's about the center of who you are physically and emotionally." Our country is "so hungry for people whose core is strong." And both Lincoln and Mandela are obvious examples of leaders whose moral cores were not only strong but became stronger as the turbulence around them intensified.

It's not as if they didn't have doubts and fears about the path they were embarking on and the consequences of their decisions.

Likewise, Mandela was not free from fear, either. Rick Stengel, now the managing editor of *Time*, collaborated with Mandela on his book *Long Walk to Freedom* in 1994.

"Mandela was often afraid during his time underground, during the Rivonia trial that led to his imprisonment, during his time on Robben Island," wrote Stengel in 2008. "'Of course I was afraid!' [Mandela] would tell me later. It would have been irrational, he suggested, not to be. 'I can't pretend that I'm brave and that I can beat the whole world.'"

But they both managed to navigate what Koehn calls "the shaky floorboards of doubt" without falling through.

Koehn also very deliberately makes the point that once a leader has this extraordinary commitment to a cause, he can afford to be very flexible about the means used to fulfill that cause. This is something that both Lincoln and Mandela had in common.

Koehn talks about the "extraordinary strain" Lincoln was under by 1862, with

generals he didn't trust, and a lack of will on the part of the North. After several Union defeats, he has his Damascus moment. "In that moment comes his leadership backbone," Koehn said, with Lincoln deciding, "I will save the Union — I will save it with every single card I can play."

And one of those cards was the Emancipation Proclamation. Koehn tells how Lincoln marched into a cabinet meeting and said, in essence, "'Here gentlemen, I am going to present this to you. I don't want your advice on whether to do it; I've made up my mind. I want your advice on its presentation.' And he presents the Emancipation Proclamation."

And yes, at Seward's urging he delayed presenting it until after a Union victory — but that was about tactics, not principle. And this commitment, this "promise of emancipation" that "must be kept," as Lincoln said in 1864, changed everything. "This whole new template, this whole new caste to the struggle to save the Union," Koehn said, "it opens the door to a brand new kind of covenant about these United States -- it changes all."

Flexibility in the service of commitment. "Mandela, above all, had a clear sense of his core principles: freedom, equality, the rule of law," writes Bill Keller in the *New York Times*. "He changed tactics, shifted alliances (one day the Communist Party, another day the business oligarchs) but never lost sight of the ultimate goal."

This is how Stengel puts it:

For Mandela, refusing to negotiate was about tactics, not principles. Throughout his life, he has always made that distinction. His unwavering principle — the overthrow of apartheid and the achievement of one man, one vote — was immutable, but almost anything that helped him get to that goal he regarded as a tactic. He is the most pragmatic of idealists.

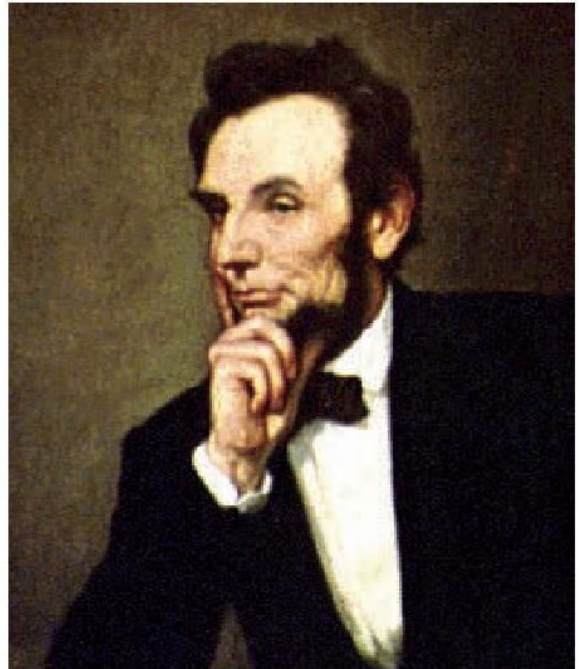
Stengel also makes the point that, unlike Obama (and for that matter, Lincoln), Mandela was not a particularly good speaker. "People often tuned out what he was saying after the first few minutes," Stengel writes. "But it was the iconography that people understood... more important was that dazzling, beatific, all-inclusive smile."

Contrast that to the current moment. "Mandela usually seemed to be having the





Barack Obama



Abraham Lincoln

time of his life," writes Keller. "Obama more often seems to regard the job as an ordeal." Mandela's charge to his fellow revolutionaries was that "you don't address their brains — you address their heart."

Another key skill that Koehn identifies as crucial to crisis leadership — and one that Lincoln was unparalleled in — is the ability to "frame the stakes of the moment." Yes, there are currently many obstacles and entrenched interests standing in the way of solutions to our many crises right now — just as there obviously were for both Mandela and Lincoln. But to lift the country over those obstacles, a leader has to tell the country, as Koehn put it, "where we came from, what we're doing right here right now, why we're doing it, and what it's costing us, what the trade offs are."

The U.S. is not facing such an obvious life or death moment as it was during the Civil War, or as South Africa was when it began dismantling apartheid in 1990 en route to its first elections four years later. But we're still in what Koehn calls a turbulent moment. We still have a disastrously high unemployment rate, and we're still facing up to a decade more of it before we hit something approaching full employment. And the jobs that are being created

are too low-paying to support a family. The stakes of the current moment for the middle class and the continuation of the American Dream are huge -- but have the stakes been adequately framed?

The White House now seems to simply react to whatever comes over the transom, neglecting most of the time to appeal to our hearts. Timothy Egan, in the *New York Times*, contrasted the lack of urgency from the White House with the momentous decisions that came down from the Supreme Court last week:

In contrast to all this life-changing, work-defining, election-shaping Big Stuff, President Obama continues to give limp speeches and moan about how he can't get anything done with a Congress of Neanderthals and talk-radio spawn. An activist court, a passive president and a feeble Congress — such is the current balance of power.

At home, the president continues to get his clock cleaned on the brutal sequestration cuts, a result of his pact with the aforementioned mindless Congress. Obama did not have enough muscle to marshal through something favored by 90 percent of the American people -- background checks to keep criminals and crazy people from

getting guns.

Not to discount the forces arrayed against the president, but the roughly one million-member Confederate Army, and the entire state apparatus of the pre-democratic South African government were, we all would agree, pretty formidable.

Is immigration reform really the central cause of Obama's presidency right now? If it's not, what is? If it passes, or if it doesn't, what's next? The mere fact that this is in question is part of the problem.

The president was not able to personally meet with Mandela. But Mandela's leadership lessons will belong to the ages, just as Lincoln's leadership lessons do. Two very different men, but they shared the same defining qualities that we need in the 21st century. As Koehn put in the conclusion of her speech:

We need muscles of moral courage, we need to flex them, we need to find them, we need to help others recognize them and find them in themselves. Nothing more is needed and nothing less will do at this moment of great turbulence, great promise, great peril. ▼

(The writer is president and editor-in-Chief at The Huffington Post Media Group, The views expressed are personal)

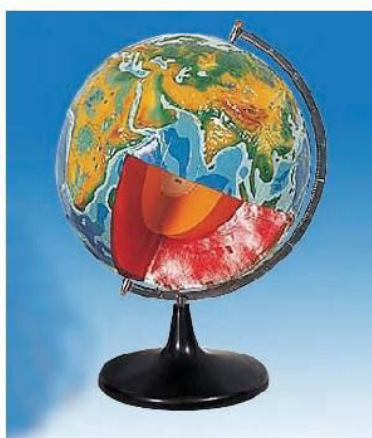


'EARTH ANTHEM' FELICITATED

■ ABHAY K.

On 3rd June 2013, on a very hot summer evening in Delhi, a number of people from different walks of life gathered at the Azad Bhawan, the headquarters of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). Azad Bhawan is not as well located as the Mandi House on the Copernicus Road; it is near ITO, a little far away from the comfort zone of Delhi's cultural elite. Yet the evening was full of diplomats, professors, scholars, media personalities and above all was glimmering with the presence of the two erudite Union Ministers of India – Kapil Sibal and Shashi Tharoor. They all had gathered to listen to an anthem for our home planet Earth written by Abhay K., sung by Shreya Sotang, a talented singer from Nepal, the music of which was composed by Sapan Ghimire from Darjeeling.

Speaking on the occasion, Abhay K. said, "as I remember correctly, I had scribbled the first Earth Anthem in 2009 while I was posted in St. Petersburg, Russia as Consul at the Consulate General of India. I don't remember exactly what inspired me to write an anthem for our planet but those days I had taken great fascination to painting and one of the very first paintings I had done was of our home planet Earth, shining like a blue pearl or diamond in vast dark space. This painting was symbol of my worldview, my beliefs, my subconsciousness overwhelmingly dominated by the extraordinary brilliant view of our beautiful planet from the space, from the moon or from the international space station. Over



the years that brilliant blue has settled in my heart as a dew drop of immense peace, a source of inspiration, creativity, poetry and purpose of life.

Earth's immense beauty has transformed me into a patriot. I see her as the cradle and grave of all civilizations that have risen on her surface, creator and destroyer of all life, all history, all riches, all glories of the mankind and yet more. She guards secrets of our future. A paean to mother Earth was long brewing within me. It came out four years ago and I rewrote and refined it several times and published it in my collection of poems 'Remains' published last year. However, its transformation into an anthem, a song remained dormant till my arrival and settling down in Kathmandu.

About four months ago, I had a chance meeting with Sapan Ghimire from Darjeeling, who lives and works in Kathmandu and earns a living teaching music to the school children. I shared with him my poems and asked him if he would be interested in turn-

ing some of them into songs. He nodded in positive.

I wrote my poem 'Earth Anthem' on a blank paper in my own handwriting and handed him over nervously as I was not sure about its transformation into a song or an anthem. After a few weeks Sapan came back with a smile on his face as Archimedes' Eureka with the news that he had succeeded in setting the poem to music, the only thing that had to be done was to remove a numbers of words which did not fit in. I readily agreed. The next time we decided to meet soon and Sapan came with his keyboard and sung the first stanza of the Earth Anthem. I was delighted. The transformation of a poem into a song was magical to me.

We met again a number of times and I realized that voice of Sapan ji was excellent but he could not sing the anthem in English. I started looking for singers who could sing well in English. I made inquiries and friends and colleagues suggested me a number of names. I finally zeroed in on two of them- Abhaya Subba and Shreya Sotang. I tried to contact Abhaya but she did not respond. Shreya's voice was mellifluous and magical when I first heard her singing the words of Earth Anthem without any music. I was convinced that she was the one who could do justice to the anthem.

Meanwhile Chandrakant Jha, a friend from Janakpur, Nepal advised me that an anthem for the planet should contain words from all official languages and Hindi and Nepali. This was a huge task. First to get the right translation of the words of the anthem and on top of that get the right pronuncia-



Earth Anthem



■ ABHAY K.

Our cosmic oasis, cosmic blue pearl the most beautiful planet in the universe our cosmic oasis, cosmic blue pearl all the continents and the oceans of the world united we stand as flora and fauna united we stand as species of one earth black, brown, white, different colours inshan hain ham, dharati hamara ghar hami manav houn, yo sansar hamro ghar mi lyudi, zemlaya nash dom leken kulena bashiran wal arda mawtinena. Our cosmic oasis, cosmic blue pearl the most beautiful planet in the universe our cosmic oasis, cosmic blue pearl all the people and the nations

of the world all for one, one for all, all for one, one for all united we unfurl the blue marble flag black, brown, white, different colours nu sum de sê the zumains, la terre notre maizun somos seres umanos, la tierra es nuestra casa w?men shi zénlèi, dishiye shi w?men dechi? we are humans, the earth is our home.

Shreya suggested that we find a music-arranger who could further enrich the anthem. After much deliberations the task was given to Sapan Ghimire and he chose Phanindra Rai, one of the most experienced music arrangers. The recording was also done at the studio of Phanindra Rai located near Kamalpokhari. Shreya had to record the anthem twice as the voice of the chorus did not match with her voice at some places. I visited the studio at least four-five times to get the sound mixing right along with Sapan Ghimire. It took almost a month to get the Earth Anthem right. I also wanted instrumental versions of the Earth Anthem, so I requested Resham Chaudhary, a well known music arranger and film-maker from Tikapur to help and he helped me to get the flute and guitar versions of the anthem.

Soon after the anthem was ready, I went to meet the country representative of UNESCO in Nepal, Mr. Alexe Plathe with an idea that UNESCO should use the Earth Anthem written by me as a sample to launch a global Earth Anthem Challenge and the winning entry of the Challenge should be declared the official anthem of our home planet. He liked the idea and promised that he will take it up with the appropriate department of the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Meanwhile I published an article in the Kathmandu Post titled 'An Anthem for the Earth' to make a case for the need of such an anthem for our planet.

After the anthem was ready, the challenge was to make a video for the anthem. As a poet, I already had images of the anthem in my mind and it was not difficult to visualize the video. I myself started putting together images of Earth from the space taken by satellites and images of different species and peoples of the world into the Windows Movie Maker. I was ready with a video within a short time but it was not the very best that I really wanted. I approached a professional video editor of Nepal Television, Mishree Lal Yadav and he readily agreed to edit the video.

As the video was getting ready I approached the Director General of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations Suresh K. Goel for the release of the Earth Anthem in New Delhi and he promptly agreed. Both Union Cabinet Minister of IT and Law and Justice Kapil Sibal, Union Minister of State for Human Resource Development Shashi Tharoor gave their consent to release the Earth Anthem at a very short notice. **(IN EIGHT LANGUAGES)**

(Abhay K., a poet-diplomat, awarded with SAARC Literature Award, nominated for the Pushcart Prize, is the author of the Earth Anthem. He currently lives and works in Kathmandu.)

tion and fit that in the music composed by Sapan Ghimire. The task looked daunting but was not impossible. I wrote to my friends and colleagues in France, Russia, China, Egypt, Spain for correct translation and pronunciation of 'We are humans, the earth is our home'. It took them a few days to reply but they all came back with much needed help. Now the challenge was for Shreya to twist her tongue and master its pronunciation of in all the UN languages.

MR. Kapil Sibal speaking on the occasion made the following remarks -

First of all, my congratulations to you, Abhay, for this very important step that you have taken for uniting everybody, for them to realize what a fragile place we live in, how important it is for us to realize its fragility and ensure its unity and that's really the message that comes through your anthem. Way back in 1971, Secretary General of the United Nations U Thant signed the proclamation declaring the Vernal Equinox, I think it was on March 21, 1970, that he made a statement, which is declaring the Earth Day, and Earth Day is celebrated every year on that particular day, he said something very important and I have it as a quote-"May there be only peaceful and cheerful Earth Days to come for our beautiful spaceship Earth as it continues to spin and circle in frigid space within its warm and fragile cargo of animate life."

We share this space with others, by and large we forget this fact that we share this with planet with others, we forget that over the years, despite all the talk of climate change, global warming, the melting of the ice of the Arctic and the melting of the ice of the Antarctic, I don't think the global community is really serious about taking some steps forward in that direction so that we preserve the planet Earth. So I think it is important to have a rallying point, to ensure that all of us come together to realize to maintain the dignity of our planet, we all attempt to maintain our own dignity, but we never realize that there is yet another dignity that we have to maintain, but we seldom do. I mean we can't even imagine how pollination takes places, how little squirrels bury acorns in the ground that is the beginning of growing of a tree, we never think of those things, we never think what



Union Minister, Kapil Sibal and Shashi Tharoor displaying the book on Earth Anthem, the writer Abhay K. is seen in extreme right

enormous contributions little things, little animate objects, little life makes to the planet. Our only anthem, if I may say so, even in the Western world, is exploitation. I think we need yet another anthem to deal with the senseless exploitation that is taking over planet earth, so I really think this is something that needs to be done.

What is an anthem, anthem is a mode of identifying yourself with a purpose, you have a national anthem because you identify with your country, you have a school anthem because you identify with your school, do Homo Sapiens identify with planet Earth? I doubt very much. We have issues of territorial identity, racial identity, religious identity, all kind of identities and Shashi talked about diversity, these are all diversities which have an identity but is there an identity of the planet Earth? I doubt. It is important to have an anthem of the Earth that allows us, persuades us, cajoles us to identify with the planet Earth and I think what you have done today is to take a very big step forward in persuading us to identify with the planet Earth and I am sure that when this goes viral on the net millions around the world, I hope that happens, identify with the need for us to preserve planet Earth better. Thank you.

Mr. Shashi Tharoor in his his speech said-

It is my pleasure to join you, at the behest of the Indian, Council of Cultural

Relations (ICCR), at the Launch of this unique Anthem for Earth. Abhay, when he wrote to me about this initiative, described the need for such an anthem - to pay tribute to our planet, to remind ourselves of our responsibilities as global citizens, and in conjunction with the many other anthems we sing to remember that we have a supra-national loyalty alongside the claims of our nation, our state, or our favourite football team.

It is, when you think about it, a simple and elegant idea. We live in an increasingly interconnected world. Whether it is the advent of technology bringing us together, or the common challenges imposed by climate change, a global consciousness has certainly begun to emerge. To tap into this nascent consciousness and give it form and focus, we need to establish a common language and common icons. In time, then, emerging generations of global citizens would come to rally around these, in realising their debt to and in paying tribute to the planet that sustains us all. What better icon, then, than our planet itself, and what more universal language than music!

So this notion — of finding a rallying point for a global consciousness of Unity in Diversity - is one which will find particular resonance in India as ICCR celebrates. We are, after all, an ongoing and highly successful form of coexistence that encompasses exceptional diversity woven with loyalty to

a higher set of ideals, and in doing so finds a unity of thought and purpose that surpasses all our differences. We are, if you will, one model for the kind of unity that would one day seem an Earth Anthem shared and sung by all the peoples of the world.

In fact I remember quoting Winston Churchill's nasty comments that "India is merely a geographical expression. It is no more a single country than the Equator." Churchill was rarely right about India, this was no exception but Abhay has come up with an anthem for the equator and the planet, that is incredible, for that Abhay, I congratulate you.

There was an illustrious attempt before this and that was no less than a figure than the poet W.H. Auden who wrote a "Hymn to the United Nations" and also attempting a hymn to the world which then Secretary-General U Thant hoped would become the de facto anthem of the UN but it didn't. But even if the UN might have done that, it was hardly ever played. As we release Abhay's new paean to humanity and our home, the Earth, it might be worth recalling words of Auden's famous lyrics, his hopes for humanity: and this was the UN anthem he wrote-

"Our several voices Interblending, Playfully contending, Not interfering But co-inhering, For all within The cincture of the sound Is holy ground, Where all are Brothers, None faceless Others."

You walk in illustrious footsteps Abhay, I am delighted that you have in the shape of Kapil, a distinguished poet himself, to do this release, I am very privileged to be part of this very special occasion. I wish you, this anthem and ICCR, all the very best. Jai Hind.

Now the huge challenge staring at my being is to take the Earth Anthem to the schools and colleges, to radio and television stations and the Internet across the world and to inspire, convince and cajole UNESCO to launch a global Earth Anthem Challenge inviting talented people across the globe to write their paeans to our home planet, our only oasis in this vast universe. Hope I succeed.

Abhay K., a poet-diplomat, awarded with SAARC Literature Award, nominated for the Pushcart Prize, is the author of the Earth Anthem. He currently lives and works in Kathmandu. ▼



Youth Assembly in New York on Malala Day, 12 July

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon'S remark to Youth Assembly on Malala Day, in New York on 12 July

Welcome to the United Nations. It is wonderful to see you all here.

Before I begin I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for his leadership in organizing this very meaningful Youth Assembly on 12 July, honouring Malala, our hero, our champion.

And I would like to also thank the extraordinary leadership of our UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown, for his strong commitment and

raising the awareness of global education. It is a great pleasure to have again Malala, our champion, among us in celebrating her 16th birthday.

Today, youth of the world, are taking over the United Nations. This United Nations is occupied by youth delegates. I welcome it.

You are sending a message – a strong message of hope and empowerment, a message of dignity and opportunity.

All of you are on the frontlines to give

everybody an opportunity for education.

And we are honoured to have a courageous, humane, resilient and proud young girl leading this charge.

Usually the main seat at this podium is by the General Assembly President or myself, depending on the subject, but today it might be quite natural that Malala is sitting at front and centre.

Most of us celebrate a birthday with a party or perhaps a day off.



Malala chose to mark her 16th birthday at the United Nations, celebrating her cause for education. I thank her for her vision, and my warmest congratulations on your birthday. And Happy Birthday to you!

In fact, the United Nations marked the 1,000-day countdown for action for the Millennium Development Goals.

On that very particular day, that was April 5th, I was thinking of somebody - with whom should I speak, and with whom I should spend this day. If I am not able to meet anybody, then at least talk to somebody who would give a strong message for this 1,000 day countdown to the Millennium Development Goals.

I decided to speak to Malala. I took up my telephone, but in fact, we Skyped.

As you know, the Millennium Development Goals number two priority is education. On that day I wanted to reach out to her and ask her to send out a strong message for the importance of education, and empowering women and girls. On that special day for the United Nations and development we called on her and for her action.

And now on her special day, she is calling on us.

She is calling on us to keep our promises - invest in young people - and put education first. My message is that this world is very young. More than half of the global population is young people under the age of 25. So this world is young. It is only natural that we pay more attention to the aspirations of young people - all of you - including Malala.

So I have asked her to raise her voice and send out a strong message - what are your aspirations; what your concerns would be - to the world today. Use this forum properly. Send out a strong message to the world so that your parents and your leaders of your country can listen to your aspirations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, she was targeted just because of her determination to go to school and learn.

Targeting Malala, extremists showed what they feared the most: a girl with a book.

When girls are educated, when young people are educated, then that is what terrorists are most fearful of most, rather than

UN Secretary-General Honors Malala Yousafzai And Gordon Brown

United Nations Special Envoy on Global Education and former UK's prime minister

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in a Press Encounter On 12th July 2013 in New York remarked : I am going to give you a Charter of the United Nations. Normally this Charter of the United Nations - leather-bound - is reserved for Heads of States, normally. But I am giving it to you as a birthday gift. In this charter there are several articles where this Charter emphasizes the importance of education.

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear parents and family members of Malala, Special Envoy Gordon Brown,

It is a great pleasure to welcome our hero, our champion for education, Malala Yousafzai to the United Nations. She is a symbol of courage and hope for many millions of children, particularly young girls, whose human rights and human dignity and whose right to education are not respected. She has shown such strong courage. She was attacked because of her determination to go to school and learn.

She has inspired many millions of people, particularly young people. This world is very young. More than half the global population is young people under the age of 25. We have to hear their voices. We have to meet the expectations of these young people, particularly when it comes to education. Still, 57 million young people are out of school. When it comes to secondary education, more than 100 million people are out of school. This is not acceptable.

I have spoken for the first time with Malala last April on the occasion of the launching of the 1,000-day-for-action countdown to the Millennium Development Goals. As you know, one of the very important pillars of the Millennium Development Goals is to provide primary education to all people, all children

around the world.

She has inspired all young people.

The United Nations takes education as a number one priority. Last year, I launched the Global Education First, together with Special Envoy Gordon Brown, as Special Envoy of the United Nations. I really appreciate his leadership and strong commitment to raise the awareness and the importance of education.

With Malala, I think we can make this dream of providing quality education to all people around the world, and I am very glad that she has chosen to celebrate the cause of education on the occasion of her 16th birthday today. And I would like to sincerely congratulate you on your birthday. This is the first time that the United Nations is convening a Youth Assembly, and please speak out - your dreams and your challenges and a strong message of hope to many people around the world.

I welcome you again to the United Nations, and my warm congratulations on your birthday.

Thank you very much. I wish you all the best.

■ Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani school pupil and education activist from the town of Mingora in the Swat District of Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. (Wikipedia)
Born: July 12, 1997 (age 16), Mingora, Pakistan
Parents: Ziauddin Yousafzai
Awards: National Malala Peace Prize
Nominations: National Malala Peace Prize, International Children's Peace Prize.



GORDON BROWN ON MALALA

Malala at U.N.: The Taliban failed to silence us

Gordon Brown is a United Nations Special Envoy on Global Education and former UK's prime minister. Reeling from adverse comment worldwide, Adnan Rasheed, the Taliban commander who spoke out on Wednesday, tried to suggest that all that the Taliban opposes is Western education. But in trying to extricate the Taliban from the charge that they oppose girls' schooling full stop, his comments reveal that the only education they favour is indoctrination and the only form of government they embrace is theocratic.

Rasheed's protestations are at odds with the reality of 1,000 closed schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan because of arson attacks - and threats of the same. Indeed schools have been shut hundreds of miles from any Pakistani army presence, undermining the claim that only schools used as army bases are attacked.

In the last few weeks alone, 14 young women were blown up when the bus carrying them from college was firebombed; a school principal was shot dead and his pupils maimed in broad daylight at a prize giving ceremony held in the playground of an all-girls school in Karachi; and a teacher was gunned down in front of her son as she drove to teach at another female college.

These atrocities testify to the continued war against education. Not a word the Taliban utter about the right of girls like Malala to go to school will be believed until they stop bombing schools, killing teachers and massacring girls. defy the Taliban in Pakistan promoting youth education

Malala has shown it is possible to stand up to Taliban intimidation and, emboldened by her courage, two million



Malala Yousafzai

Pakistanis have signed petitions supporting the right of girls to go to school, part of four million signatures worldwide. This includes a million signatures from out-of-school girls and boys in Pakistan, who supported – in some cases by putting thumb marks on the petition – a plea for universal education delivered to the Pakistani President and Secretary-General of the UN.

As I found when I visited Pakistan only a few months ago, the silent majority is prepared to be silent no more. With girls openly wearing 'I am Malala' headbands and t-shirts and identifying with Malala's demands, they are defying Taliban

anything else.

I was so heartened and encouraged by the groundswell of support for Malala.

It started with the people of Pakistan who stood up and said: I am Malala.

My Special Envoy on Global Education, Mr. Gordon Brown, rallied the world and millions of signatures were collected in support.

It was a clear call to Malala: You are not alone. We are all with you, standing behind you.

By sharing this special day at the United Nations, she is now telling the Malalas around the world that they are

not alone.

Governments and partners around the world have made important progress in education. UNESCO and UNICEF have helped lead the support of the UN family.

Yet we have much work to do – 57 million children are not in school. We have to bring all 57 million people to school by the end of 2015. That is our strong commitment at the United Nations.

Most of them are girls. Half live in conflict-affected areas.

At a time when we must step up our efforts, international aid for basic

education has declined for the first time in a decade.

And as we have tragically seen in several countries around the world – most recently in Nigeria – where children were attacked by terrorists at school – Schools must be a safe haven, a safe place, for all children – girls and boys – and their teachers who have been targeted in schools. This is an unacceptable situation.

They have been threatened, they have been assaulted. They have been killed.

We cannot let this happen again. No child should have to die for going



threats - and Pakistan cannot ever be the same again.

A modern civil rights struggle is now underway, led by young people and influenced by online information about what is happening in other countries. Young people are insistent that education is a universal right, demanding that all the barriers that stand in the way – child labour, child marriage, child trafficking and blanket discrimination against girls – are pushed aside.

The recent revelations of both Taliban weakness and the strength of public opinion for education should signal much more than a set of petitions: it should be the start of a determined Pakistani effort to speed up the delivery of education to every girl and every boy. Pakistan cannot achieve its full potential until girls and boys are educated, for employment and for citizenship.

Today there are at least seven million girls and boys out of school in Pakistan – and most girls will never complete their education. Even in 2050, only one in five young adults will have had the chance of college or university on current trends.

Malala's global voice stronger than ever

Illiteracy, especially among girls, will hold Pakistan's development back for decades unless something is done. China, Singapore, Taiwan, Korea and even Bangladesh will enrol millions of students at college and university – but while Pakistan's population will grow to 300 or perhaps 400 million, making it one of the world's most populated countries, it will remain in the dark ages for education.

The world's other Malalas

We also know that young people denied opportunity fall prey to extremist propaganda. This is yet another reason why a new Pakistani national education plan is required, involving all NGOs, and, while recognising that education is a devolved not federal matter in Pakistan, a national consensus on doubling investment in schools is now urgently needed.

In the last few months, we have been working with the government, civil society organisations, UN sister organisations and donor governments to draw up proposals to



Gordon Brown

expand education, to get girls in particular to school, and to help the provinces where education attendance is lowest. This includes Malala's home of KPK, where 700,000 children are not at school, 600,000 of them girls.

Gordon Brown: The story of Malala's friend

We will discuss these proposals at a summit meeting between the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Nawaz Sharif in September when the new Pakistani Prime Minister visits New York. And I will visit Pakistan to meet civil society organisations to assess the role they can play in improving educational opportunities for the left-out millions.

The good news is that we need no scientific invention or technological breakthrough to deliver education for all: we need instead the same willpower to move mountains that Malala showed when she stood up to the Taliban and lit the fuse that could inspire a modern educational revolution.

The opinions expressed in this commentary are solely those of Gordon Brown.

to school.

Nowhere should teachers fear to teach or children fear to learn.

Together, we can change this picture.

This is the vision of my Global Education First Initiative. It has three priorities. Bring all children to school, give them quality education, and foster global citizenship.

I didn't have to learn about the importance of education from a textbook. I lived it. As Gordon Brown has just mentioned, my village, my whole country, was destroyed by the Korean War. And I had to study in the open,

under the trees. When it rained, there was no school. We were very poor. We were hungry. Our stomachs were empty. But also, we were hungry and thirsty for education. That is why I was able to learn more about the world. I was able to learn more about my country and the world.

That is my story and the story of my country [the Republic of Korea].

All of you have your own stories. Your own experiences. Your own voices.

I thank you for bringing those voices together today. But this should not be the only day. You have to continue, and world

leaders must listen to your voices.

You are leaders in education. That is why you are here.

I urge you to keep speaking out. Keep raising the pressure. Keep making a difference.

And together, let us follow the lead of this brave young girl, Malala.

Let us put education first. Let us make this world better for all, and let us shape the future we want.

And I thank Malala, and Happy Birthday again. I wish you all the best.

(courtesy UNIC,India) ▼



Bihar-Jharkhand UN Assocaiton



School children planting /saplings for their future at a school in Bhagalpur (The famous silk producing city of the country) in Bihar. Mr. P M Parvatiyar, Secretary general Bihar Jharkhand UNA and Vice president IFUNA is seen in the right



Bihar-Jharkhand UNA Members participated in celebrating Independence day 15th August Flag hoisting with Bihar Industries Association . Seen in the picture Bihar-Jharkhand UNA Secretary General P.M.Parvatiyar along With K.P.Jhunjhunwala and Mr. K,P,S, Keshri (with cap), President Bihar Industries Association.



Harcharan Singh Ranauta President Chandigarh UNA Elected Regional Grand Master of Grand Lodge of Northern India



installed R.W. Bro. Harcharan Singh Ranauta as Regional Grand Master of Regional Grand Lodge of Northern India in the august presence of M.W. Bro. Gautam R. Devan, OSM M.W. Bro. H.P. Mathur, OSM M.W. Bro. D.D. Udeshi, OSM M.W. Bro. Arun Chintopanth, OSM M.W. Bro. Justice Devinder Gupta, OSM M.W. Bro. Dr. B. Biswakumar, OSM, Past Grand Masters, R.W. Bro. Sushil Raj, R.W. Bro. V. Nagarajan, R.W. The District. Grand Master of District Grand Lodge of Northern India, Representatives of Regional Grand Masters of Eastern India & Western India, Representative of Provincial Grand Lodge of

Ireland in India, Past Regional Grand Masters of Northern Region and large number of Brethren. In spite of unfavorable weather conditions more than 800 Brethren were present in the Meeting. Brethren and Ladies enjoyed festivities and sumptuous dinner after the meeting.

During the meeting the ladies were kept busy in variety of entertainment programmes including Raffle Draw. Showing the Charitable disposition, the ladies contributed a handsome amount of Rs.75,000/- to Northern India Masonic Charitable Society for construction of additional rooms in Masonic Public School. ▲

The Masonic event during the Annual Meeting of Regional Grand Lodge of Northern India which was also the occasion of Installation of R.W. Bro Harcharan Singh Ranauta as the Regional Grand Master began with Board Meetings at Freemasons' Hall, Janpath, New Delhi in the morning of 16th February, 2013. In spite of unexpected rains, the meetings were attended by almost all Board members.

Late in the afternoon Annual Meeting of Regional Grand Lodge of Northern India was held in which M.W. Bro. Vasudev Jannabihar Masurekar, OSM M.W. The Grand Master



RGM Harcharan Singh Ranauta presented a plaque to R W Bro Gaur Hari Singhania, a fatherly figure of the region with immense contribution to the cause of masonry.



'George' comes home

Naik Kirpam of 8th battalion, 13th frontier rifles was awarded the George Cross posthumously for sacrificing his life to save his fellow soldiers from harm while disposing of a misfired rifle grenade at a camp in Bangalore.

The George Cross is the highest gallantry award for civilian as well as for the member of the armed forces in actions for which purely military honors would not normally be granted.

The widow Brahmi Devi, 80 was only 13 when she had received the gallantry medal from the then Viceroy, Field Marshal, and Archibald Wavell in 1946.

Being put up by the auctioneers, Dix Noonan Webb (DNW) for an estimated price of £25000, high price for a piece of metal, Brahmi Devi from Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh, raised an alarm claiming that she had been defrauded of the medal in 2002; resulting DNW to put off the auction until the facts were verified.

It takes determination to hold on to an important medal, because medals like George Cross are sought not only by collectors but also the awardees' regiments. In the absence of effective laws; art work, antiques, awards of significance only turn into global commodities.

More than seven year after the George Cross went missing, reportedly priced at rupees 50 lacs in the world market of antiquities, remained untraced until its sudden appearance in 2009. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the Whistle blower, Shakti Singh Chandel a retired IAS officer from the State to stall the auction of the stolen George Cross medal of a Bilaspur soldier by a London auction house. He wants to get the medal back to Himachal.

Village residents suspect local involvement in the theft as they believe the thief must have been aware of the value of a medal otherwise it could not have reached the UK from a remote



By Chander P Mahajan.
Former Chief Engineer, Himachal Pradesh and a freelance journalist.

Himachal village. Chandel says there is a big racket engaged in theft, smuggling and illegal sale of medals which fetched very high prices in the international market.

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles remembered to send Christmas and New Year greetings to Soldier's widow who

wants the medal to be kept in the safe custody of Center and State government after it is restored to her.

Captain Ashok Nath a former Indian army officer and a historian who put up the medal for auction in 2009 in London claimed that he had bought the medal from a dealer in New Delhi. Having failed to negotiate the issue of return of the George Cross back to the police with Ashok Nath, formal proceedings were initiated through the diplomatic channel. The CID tried to build up pressure on Nath by establishing his alleged involvement in a number of other cases relating to acquiring of antiques where the permission of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and other agencies was not taken by him.

Of late, a compromise has been struck with the approval of the London High Court where the medal is soon being restored to the widow of soldier in Himachal Pradesh by paying £12000 to Captain Ashok Nath by the enthusiasts in London, on her behalf. ▲

(This write up is with inputs from media)



MODEL UN ASSEMBLY AND OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2013 at Mumbai

Maharashtra United Nations Association (MUNA) in association with Rotract Club of Mumbai Shivaji Park (RC-MSP) organized the Model United Nations Assembly, a zealous event at Amulakh Amichand Bhimji Vividhlokshi Vidyalaya, from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm on Sunday 25th August 2013. The resolution being debated at the Model UN Assembly was "Protecting Human Rights in the Syrian Conflict".

The programme was graced by Mr Braphus Kaalund, the Vice Consul for Political Affairs, Consulate General of the United States of America, Mumbai, members of the Maharashtra United Nations Association and Rotary Club. An inaugural and welcome note was read by Mr Abhishek Patel, the President of Rotract Club, Mumbai Shivaji Park, followed by messages of the Chief Guest Mr Braphus Kaalund, members of Rotary Club Mumbai Shivaji Park and Maharashtra United Nations Association.

Mr A. A. Syed read out the Aims and Objectives of Maharashtra United Nations Association with a special emphasis on its numerous activities planned round the year to promote the aims and ideals of the United Nations.

Ms Mohini Mathur expressed her views about the role of youth in today's modern society. She also elaborated on the special qualities possessed by the youth, which makes them an "ideal force for change".

Mr Ashraf Ahmed Shaikh spoke about the role of UN and its programmes in giving the youth a platform to become effective leaders of tomorrow. He also read out the UN Secretary General Mr Ban-Ki-Moon's message on the eve of international youth day 2013 focusing strongly on the theme of the year that is "Youth Migration: Moving Development Forward". He spoke about the



importance of Model UN and also appreciated the partnership of MUNA with Rotract Club in Mumbai.

Mr Malhar Chaudhari spoke about the role of Maharashtra United Nations Youth Association in providing a platform to youngsters in the state to work for the aims and objectives of the United Nations. He also spoke about the rising interest of the UN leadership in the problems of the youth and the various steps taken by them in this regard.

The Chief Guest Mr Braphus Kaalund spoke about the importance of the Model United Nations Assembly and his experience of participating at similar assemblies during his college years.

The members of the Rotary Club on dais Rtn. Himanshu Kapadia (Past District Rotract Representative), Rtn. Sanjay Shah (Past

President of Rotary Club of Bombay Uptown), Rtn. Manish Solanki (PHF, District Rotract Representative) and Rtn Neena Kalra (Principal, Amulakh Amichand Bhimji Vividhlokshi Vidyalaya) spoke about the role of Model United Nations Assembly in developing proficient diplomats for our country and the role of Rotary in giving the youth such regular platforms to transform themselves into pillars of a sustainable future.

The Model United Nations Session was chaired by Rtn. Himanshu Kapadia with Mr Nisarg Kamdar as the Deputy Secretary General. The 1st part of the session saw the young diplomats delivering their foreign policy statements. It was a truly exhilarating experience to see the participants dressed in the traditional attire of the country they were representing. Also the use of phrases from



MAHARASHTRA UNA

continue page 29

their country's local dialect added a special touch to the event.

The post break session saw a very heated discussion on the amendments to the resolution presented by the delegates during the lunch break. Towards the end of deliberations, it was a general observation that all the countries accepted the acts of terror and complete negligence of human rights happening in the Syrian conflict. The amendments were in general anti-Syrian government and went to the stretches of introducing democracy into the country to stabilize the current situation. The committee accepted the new resolution with a majority.

The session saw about 120 participants representing 36 countries from various schools across Mumbai, with the total count



A view of Model UN Assembly in Session at Mumbai.

of all the people who attended and organized the Assembly being at around 200.

The session concluded with the prize distribution ceremony. The judges and the executive board committee members of the Model UN Assembly spoke to the participants about developing their negotiating skills and becoming better diplomats.

The judges for the session were Mr Malhar Chaudhari (Secretary General MUNYA) and Mr Nihal Mayur (Member MUNYA). The session formally ended by a vote of thanks proposed by Mr Dhananjay Adodra (Project Chair for the Model UN Assembly).

*(A Report by Ashraf Ahmed Shaikh
Hon. Secretary MUNA and President
MUNA Youth Wing)*

Spiritual Talk

THERE here is a legendary story about a poor woodcutter. He worked hard to earn his livelihood. One day, as the king was passing through the woodcutter's part of the woods he saw the man working hard. He felt sorry for the man's poverty and wanted to do something to help him.

"Woodcutter," said the king. "I have some land with some sandalwood trees on it. I will give you that land so you can use it to become rich."

The woodcutter thanked him. Since he did not realize the value of the sandalwood trees, after cutting them down he sold them on the same price as the regular trees. After he had used most of the trees, the king returned. Expecting to see the man rich, the king was shocked to find him still in poverty.

"How is it that you have not made any money from selling the sandalwood trees?" inquired the king. "Those trees are worth a lot of money."

The woodcutter realized that he had lost a golden opportunity. There were but a few trees left. He was able to sell those for the correct value and earn enough to live on comfortably.

The story of the woodcutter is the story of our life. The sandalwood is equivalent to the number of breaths we have been given in our life. But, like the woodcutter, we waste much of the precious gift of our breath and our time. Instead of amassing spiritual riches with our gift, we are wasting away our time. Time is precious. Once it is gone we cannot retrieve it. Let us make the best use of our time. If we do so, then we can amass spiritual wealth far beyond our wildest dreams.

There is a saying that helps to remind us about the importance of every moment. For what are we trading away that moment? Do we want to trade it away for thoughts of anger or greed? Do we want to trade it away to brood over the past or worry about the future? Do we want to spend it on pastimes that have no value for us? Or do we wish to spend

the moment in doing something to discover who we really are and why we are here? What will be the most valuable for us in our life?

Are we aimlessly adrift on the sea of life? Do we spend some time in our life to decide the direction in which we wish to go? Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj, my

spiritual Master, spent time in his early years deciding what he wanted to do with his life. After much soul-searching, he finally decided, "God first, and the world next." He took the decision that he wanted to attain self-knowledge and God-realization as his first priority. With that goal in mind, his course was set, and he did not stop until he reached his goal.

If we look at the lives of great people, we find many of these people had decided a direction in life. They may have wished to pursue their art, their hobby, their science, their research, or their spiritual growth, but they all held one thing in common. They were not aimlessly adrift; they had a course set and they followed it.

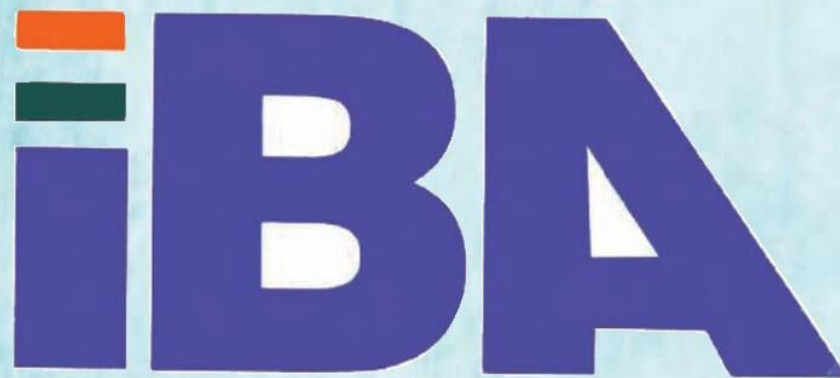
Tegh Bahadur, the ninth guru of the Sikhs, spend years meditating in a small closet room until he found God. Lord Buddha left his kingdom to search for enlightenment. He spent years finding answers to questions about the nature of the world and who we really are. Prophet Mohammed spent many years in a cave in pursuit of Allah.

If we wish to discover our soul, we need to allot time to it. We have seen how easily our life can be eaten away by just trying to keep our physical body alive and cared for. Activities like eating, sleeping dressing, and working to make money to pay for our necessities in life occupy a good portion of our time. With little time left over, we want to evaluate how to make the best use of it. Like the woodcutter, we do not want to throw away the precious gift of time in our human existence.

We can analyze how much time we devote to various activities throughout the twenty four hours of the day. Then we can decide how to fit in time for finding our soul within us. To uncover the luminosity and riches of our soul, we need to spend time daily in meditation. The more time we can put in for this quest, the better. If we spend time daily in the quiet of our own self and tap our spiritual divinity within us, then we will use the gift of the sandalwood trees to its full benefit and will have made the best use of our life. ■



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