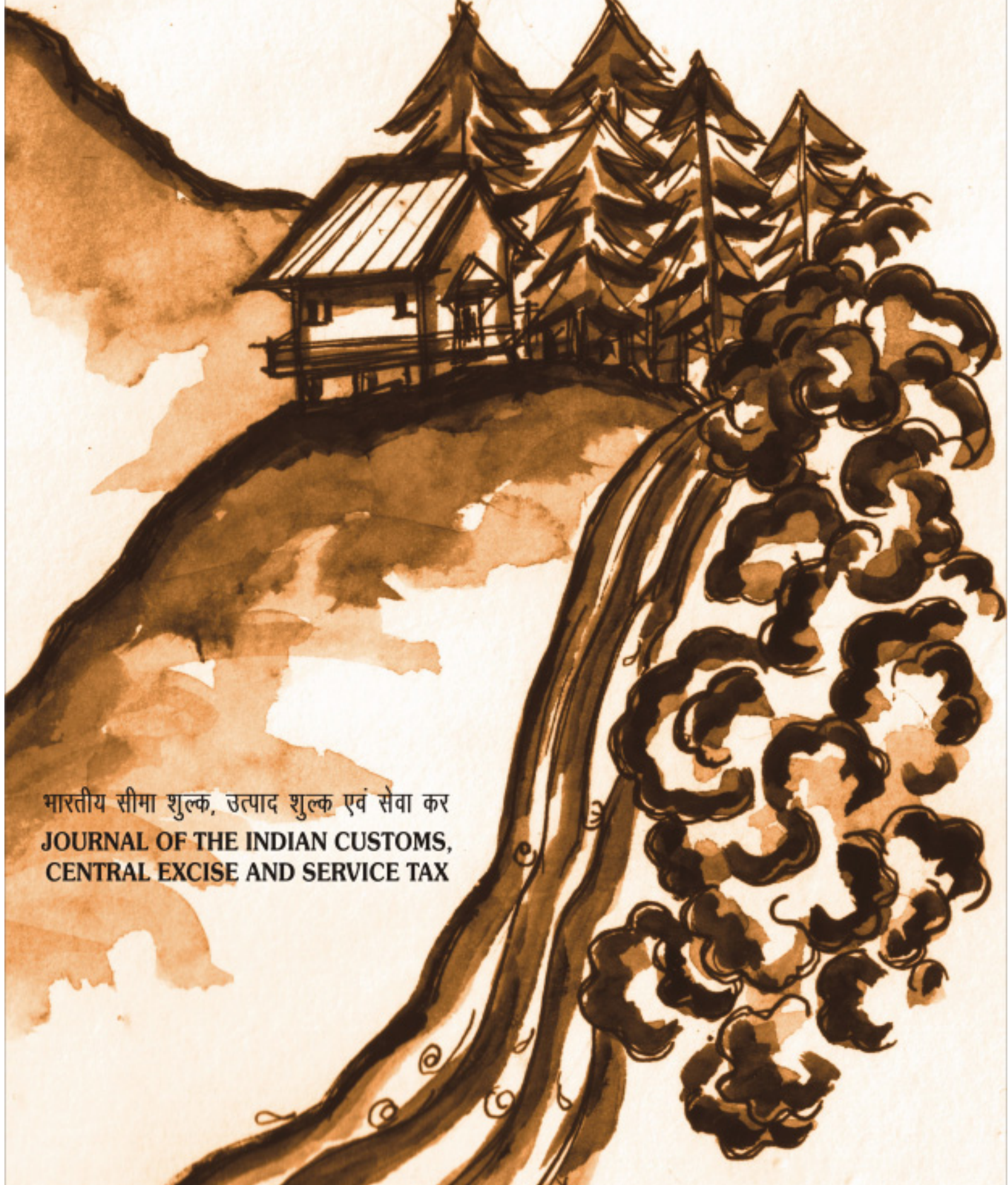


ICE QUARTERLY

March, 2008

भारतीय सीमा शुल्क, उत्पाद शुल्क एवं सेवा कर
JOURNAL OF THE INDIAN CUSTOMS,
CENTRAL EXCISE AND SERVICE TAX





केन्द्रीय उत्पाद शुल्क दिवस एवम् राष्ट्रपति पुरस्कार अंशकरण समारोह
राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय सभागार, जनपथ, नई दिल्ली

24 फरवरी, 2008

CENTRAL EXCISE DAY AND INVESTITURE CEREMONY FOR PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS

NATIONAL MUSEUM AUDITORIUM, JANPATH, NEW DELHI

24 FEBRUARY, 2008



Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram addresses the Central Excise Day function at New Delhi on 24th February, 2008



To our readers

In this edition of the ICE QUARTERLY, we have tried to break away from tradition and attempt a special feature. We decided to go down the memory lane of the department and share the beliefs of officers who have retired, but continue to remain close to us, as members of the same family. The oldest retired officer whom we could contact was 92 years old Shri Lachman Dev, former Collector of Customs and Central Excise, who had joined the government service in 1937. The Editor met him personally at his residence on 7th February, 2008 for an interview which the readers would find immensely interesting. The next senior officer who could be contacted was Shri Jasjit Singh, former Chairman, CBEC, who retired in 1978. We are pleased to bring to our esteemed readers the views, opinions and reminiscences of Shri Jasjit Singh and also a large number of other retired Chairmen, Members, Chief Commissioners, Commissioners and officers of other equal or higher ranks in CBEC, CEGAT, CESTAT, CEIB and Settlement Commission etc.

Apart from the above mentioned special feature, we have tried to bring to our readers a large number of interesting travelogues, sketches, stories, poems and news as usual. Our Assistant Editor Shri Rajesh Khanna has put in tremendous efforts to edit and put every contribution at an appropriate place.

We are grateful to Ms. Mausumi Bhattacharyya, Accountant General, Bhopal, a renowned painter, for accepting our request for designing the cover page of this edition of ICE QUARTERLY. We are also grateful to Shri B.B.Gupta, Deputy Narcotics Commissioner, Gwalior for his guidance, advice and contribution in organizing the special feature on retired officers. We are thankful to Shri T.P. Rao, Superintendent, Directorate of Publicity and Public Relations, who has spared no effort to see this issue printed nicely and in time.

Dr. D.D. Rishi
Editor

ddrishi@indiatimes.com



CONTENTS

Great Expectations Debjyoti Bhattacharyya	4	Social Evil Dr. S. John Bosco	24
Will Chitragupt care...? M.R. Mohanty	6	Van Is Not A Car Sukumar Mukhopadhyay	25
Emerging Challenges Before Indian Customs Sumit Dutt Majumder	10	Globalisation and its effect on the Tribal World Shashi Minz	26
Ranganthittu Bird Sanctuary Deepankar Aron	12	Cataract Dr. Nitish Birdi	28
To Be Or Not To Be Vikas Asthana	17	Taj Weeps / My Wishes Ranjan Kumar Routray	30
Bull's Eye Pradeep Kumar	20	Nhava Sheva: Trade – Customs Partnership N. Sasidharan	31
Mumbaikars have heart – at least some of them! Sunil Achutan	23	Why do people become religious on growing old ? Awdhesh K Singh	33



The Wail of a Bureaucrat S.V. Ramakrishnan	36	“बीती ताहि बिसार दे.... श्रवण मित्तल	44
Purity and Impurity S.Subramanian	36	पहेली / फिर वही दर्द डॉ. कविता भटनागर	45
CBEC to IIM Ahmedabad Gaurav Sinha	37	गाँव के. एम. तिवारी	46
The Sleep of Yesterday Night Dr. G. Sreekumar Menon	39	खाहिश छोटी सी डॉ. डी. डी. ऋषि	47
खुल गया बंद अक्ल का ताला शैलेश कुमार	40	Presidential Awards, 2008	49
ओ माँ आर. के. गुप्ता	42	Reminiscences - Special Feature	51
नमक की कहानी देबज्योति भट्टाचार्य	43	Departmental NEWSLINE	82



Great Expectations

Once upon a time I had a boss. Now friends, I won't divulge the name or the location or even the job I was in during the relevant time. Privacy bhi to aakhir koi baat hoti hain na!!

Now he was a very good boss. As a proof of his genuine goodness he used to share a packet of roasted Mung-fali with me occasionally before leaving the office (Obviously he would be asking the Sepoy to bring it and - ah - I would make the payment afterwards!).

—You all are my children dear, he would say while quietly munching the fragrant nuts one by one, all the while switching from channel to channel in the television set in his room. In office and at home, I have a 24x7 fathering job to do!

—Yes Sir! Thank you Sir!

—It becomes my duty to see to it that all my children shine in life. You need to work hard for that. Real hard!!

—Yes Sir. I understand Sir! I am trying my best Sir. Sir—

—Keya Sir, Siring laagaake raakkhe ho, and what efforts are you talking about, my self proclaimed foster father would roar. There are two PQs pending since today morning. Have you drafted the replies?

—But Sir, the deadline is day after tomorrow and the reports are to be gathered from various places.

My foster father would let out a great sigh— Don't you give me those excuses!! I do not want my children to behave like petty casuals giving excuses for not doing things! You should come up to my expectations! My report should go to the Ministry by 10 AM tomorrow!

—But, Sir—

—Will you keep your mouth shut and listen to me for a while? Whichever formation has not submitted their data will get a memo first thing tomorrow morning. You will collect all the data this evening itself, compile the report and send it to my home through the driver tonight.

—Yes Sir.

While going out of his chamber he would look back and nod tiredly—now you will finish your job and will go home happily and will have no responsibilities till tomorrow. How I envy you! And I shall go home now and shall have to start with that fathead, irresponsible son of mine! He must come up to my expectations! This fathering, this bringing up of children is a 24x7 job! You will know when you have a family and grow up to my age!!

We expect a lot from our children!



My boss would bustle away to his next shift of fathering duties, this time to his biological son. I would go back to my cubicle, pick up the phone, cancel my evening date with my fiancé and begin shouting at the regional officers on their residence numbers, dragging them out from their hearth and home back to the racks and files. What to do! My foster father expects so much from me and I being the foster father in turn to the regional officers expect so much from them! Everybody has to rise upto the occasion and meet the expectations!

While sitting in my office, deep into the evening, dictating away sheaves of pages of a dreary report, I would visualize my boss, with a cup of tea in hand, lounging in his drawing room sofa toying with the TV remote, and a poor grumbling teenager boy, tired almost to death from his day long exertions in various private tuitions and cricket and tennis coaching classes, poring over some dreary lessons in his study room! He has to come up to the expectations of his hard working dad!

A few months later, I accidentally got to see the ACR resume of my boss. He had given the draft to me for checking up the data given therein. It was quite interesting to see that he had mentioned one point in his resume— "made effort and submitted all the reports on or before time!"

So that's that. All this ado about expectation from his foster children boils down to putting one line of self trumpeting in the resume! Baas!!

What happened to his son? The boss has retired now. The other day we had met in some function. He proudly told me that his son is an IT expert now, working in the USA, has got a brand new car, a brand new office, and a brand new wife from a renowned business family in the west coast. My boss is currently living alone with his gout and his old wife. His face beamed while mentioning about his success in bringing up his son and he told me how proud he was that his dream about his son has come true.

While parting company I enquired who was living with them and taking care of them now. He did not say anything but produced a card. It had the address of an upmarket old age home in the town called "The Last Resort" printed on it in bold golden letters.

—Keep the card, it will come handy to you in a few years, he told me and doddered back to his lonely last resort.

I hurried back to my office. It was almost evening but I had to go back to see how much the boys had progressed over the pending PAC questionnaire. The deadline is upto next Monday but no harm if I could chide and goad them to finish it tonight. Chief will be happy with me if he gets the report within tomorrow morning ! The promotion is drawing near. I need a good ACR.

And thus the show went on.

Debjyoti Bhattacharyya
Additional Commissioner, Bhopal



Will Chitragupt care...?

When the time comes, would I go in a car accident, like Sanjeev says? Now, don't get me wrong. Sanjeev is not my enemy. His comment just reflects my love for anything on four wheels. But, I am not sure that it is the best way to die. On the contrary, such an end is likely to be painful. Considering the fact that there might be other occupants in the vehicle I would be driving and more likely some other poor souls in another one that dare cross my path, I quickly discard such an eventuality. The best way to go, I decide, would be to die in sleep. With the wife sleeping peacefully beside me. Or may be go out for an early morning swim in the sea and never come back. I am not sure if I have enough brownie points up there to merit a chosen end. So what if Chitragupt belongs to my caste. I don't think he will try and swing my fate just a little bit. After all one can't expect gods to indulge in a bit of nepotism by the side.

I really don't have a death wish. I am far from suicidal. But sitting on the sand bank inside the Machhgaon canal behind the homestead in my village, the thought of death keeps coming back. May be the bright sun shining on my bald pate is giving me delusions. Or just may be the death of my uncle ten days ago keeps haunting my sub-conscious. In many ways my uncle was a lucky man. Though he chose to depart a bit early, considering that he was a few years younger to my father and my father is still going strong, he did not suffer in the end. He just had a severe cold.

In the morning when he complained of breathlessness he was taken to the hospital. But he passed away in a couple of hours. That is a good way to go, as far as I am concerned. He also didn't leave behind many liabilities considering that all the three of my cousin sisters are married and settled and my cousin brother is in a steady job. If anything, he perhaps only missed his son's marriage. But he already had three grand children from his daughters, so in my book he didn't really miss much.

Ten days after his death, I notice that the close relatives have come to accept the inevitable. The bouts of tear shedding are now far less and so far as I can see, coincide with the arrival of new relatives. I don't mind the rituals associated with the death that includes shaving your head and moustache. After all, it is my elder brother who is bearing the actual brunt of wearing a dhoti all the time, walking without footwear and taking bath in the canal at all sorts of ungodly hours, since my cousin brother, being yet to be married is spared of all these inconveniences.

Besides, with a degree of stubbornness that I don't usually display when my father is around, I have put my foot down and refused to shave my moustache. I did it once, when I was still a student in Ravenshaw College, and the memory of that stupid act is still fresh. I don't even grudge the food cooked without spices during the mourning period.



It is not vastly different from what my talented cook dishes out in Bombay using a plethora of spices. But what I mind is the state of the village that I claim as my own. If anybody takes the trouble of leafing through my service book to check out my home town declaration, they will immediately become enlightened about the existence of a village going by the name of Biribati.

If you have noticed, I am already in despair with the existence of a sand bar right inside a canal where it has no business to be. This canal used to have flowing water all throughout the year. Obviously, a lot of things have changed since the childhood holidays that I used to spend here. The fact that I am coming back to my village after a good fourteen years has not prepared me to face the place that is as different from what is in my memory as is chalk from cheese. Perhaps the only thing that remains unchanged is that it still looks and feels like a village. A good thing considering the fact that we are just eight kilometers outside Cuttack. But good things stop right there. As I can see one of the canals that passes through the village is already reduced to the status of sewerage. And we have to endure the stagnant water and foul smell as the village elders have decided that all death related rituals can only be performed at that particular spot.

Rituals in the canal over, I feel it is time for a proper scrub in the well that stand in our homestead. I notice with satisfaction that the water level is only about four feet from the ground level. Not bad at all considering that

we are already in mid January. Very unlike me, I linger over the bath with a generous use of soap. Extra efforts are required, I feel, to wash away even the last vestiges of the canal episode.

Bath over, the three young nephews home in on me for a trip out of the gloomy atmosphere at home. We take a walk towards the railway track connecting Cuttack to the Paradip port. I see that the East Coast Railway has since added a second track on this route. Walking on the railway track in the evening with air blowing into your face can be good fun. Not this time though as the smell the air brought in continued to remind me of human excreta.

While driving into the village in the morning I had noticed several government posters urging villagers to build toilets. One of those posters even featured a man refusing to give away his daughter in a family which doesn't have a toilet. It is obvious that the villagers don't care much for what the government has to say on this issue. It is equally obvious that the discipline of the earlier days of confining such activities to a particularly demarcated area has since been thrown to the wind. As a result the wind, not one to lie, brings us the actual state of affairs faithfully. Against the wishes of my nephews, who want to see a train passing by, I lead them away with the promise of chocolates and other goodies. It is time to visit the other canal running through the village.



Actually, the Taladanda canal is the original one and the Machhgaon canal starts from it just outside my village and goes in a south-easterly direction. The Taladanda had a sluice gate like system for controlling water levels which gave rise to a dam like effect. In fact, in our childhood our minds associated a dam with this particular feature. Though the canal still has quite a bit of water, there is neither enough of it nor the required force to create that cascading effect. But what pains me more is that the side channel of the canal facilitating movement of country boats is almost entirely filled up with debris. The two gates for regulating the level and flow of water are gone. I tried explaining to my eldest nephew how in those days the gate on the east would be opened first for a boat coming from Paradip side to enter the area in between. Then the small openings in the upstream door would be opened so that water from the Cuttack side of the canal, which was always at a higher level, would flow in. Once the water level inside the two gates and the upstream side is the same the western gate would be opened to allow the boat to travel upstream to Cuttack. The process would be reversed every time a boat from Cuttack side arrived to go east wards.

In those days bulk of the transport between Cuttack and the hinter land consisting of food grains, vegetables etc. would be through water and the employees manning the gates would remain busy from sunrise to sunset. As I keep talking to my nephews, I notice an old man who has stopped by to listen in. "You must be coming to the village after a long time", he says

and shakes his head sadly. "Those days are long gone. Many people don't even know about those boats now." This is an opportunity for me to garner some local knowledge. "What happened to the boatyards at Bidydharpur, Chacha?" I asked.

Bidyadharpur, at four kilometers from Cuttack is the half way mark from between Cuttack and my village. Apart from The Indian Rice Research Institute, it used to be famous as a thriving centre for boat building. It seems that with river transport ceasing to exist there was no rationale for a boat building centre to continue. So much for the emphasis that the government is supposedly paying to inland water transport. We can not even maintain the infrastructure that was built post independence for river transport and irrigation. I shudder to think of what will happen in future to what little is left.

Two things keep gnawing at the back of my mind. I recognize the first one after sometime. It is the lack of tall vegetation. I can see through the entire village from the road which is at a higher elevation. Previously, I remember that only the first row of thatched roofs could be seen. This is the doing of the super cyclone of 1999, I am told, which flattened everything in its wake. Bereft of the tall palms the village bears a denuded, desolate look. The second comes much later, at dinner time on the eleventh day. We had been busy hosting the Brahmins for lunch and simultaneously making preparations for the communal feast in the evening that would mark the end of the mourning period.



Of course, the loss suffered by my aunt, my cousins, and we, the close relatives will take time to heal, but after this day we would be free to go back to our normal work routine and lives. There is a distinct chill in the air. We expect guests, most of whom are relatives, albeit distant, to troop by early. It is close to nine, and we have not yet fed fifty, while we have arranged food for over five hundred. I check with my cousin brother. He confirms that everybody has been invited. At least twice. I ask my father what is the problem. "Did you not notice how many came down yesterday for the shaving and hair cutting ritual?" He reminded me. Only then I realized that despite it being a holiday on account of Makar Sankranti, only a handful from the village joined us yesterday.

In the old days the entire village would have turned up to empathise with our loss. Those days, it is clear, are gone, perhaps for ever. The warmth that greeted us every time we went to the village is conspicuous by its absence. When fellow villagers don't find time or don't deem it important enough to be on your side at times of grief, it is a sure indication that times have moved on.

So did I the next morning. As the Air Deccan jets taxis out prior to take off, my mind

wanders back to the thought of death. Of course, no one has a choice about the time and manner of death and I would be no exception, whatever Sanjeev might say about these things. But just because I don't have a choice in these matters it doesn't mean that I can't have a wish list. I would like to die poor but live rich as my friend Vijay says. I demand all the luck that I deserve and die peacefully with as little suffering as possible. I wish that I don't become the cause of suffering to my near and dear ones. The plane is airborne now. The stewardess is preparing to wheel her trolley laden with goodies for sale. I just want a coffee. I don't know why, but part of a poem from my childhood comes back suddenly. Unfortunately, I can't even remember the poet's name. But the theme is apt. I need to come over this obsession that has been on my mind the last few days. The part I remember goes like this,

And, laugh
Leaning back in my arms
For life is no paragraph
And, death my love
Is no parenthesis

M.R. Mohanty
Additional Commissioner
SAFEMA/NDPSA, Mumbai
mohantymr@yahoo.com



***Don't strew me with roses after I'm dead.
When Death claims the light of my brow
No flowers of life will cheer me: instead
You may give me my roses now!***

Thomas F. Healey



Emerging Challenges Before Indian Customs

Way back in the early 70s, there were basically two broad categories of functions for the Customs Department. The first one predictably was collection of Customs duties by plugging revenue leakages, and the second was prevention of smuggling of various sensitive items like gold, diamonds, wrist watches, textiles and electronic items. The perspective has changed over the years, - with rapid industrialization, and particularly after the liberalization and globalization policies initiated in the early 1990s. The environment in which Customs operates has changed further in the past few years. Today, international trade is the key driver of economic development and the Customs has been called upon to play a significant role in the free flow of international trade. Besides, over the past few years, a new concern has arisen in the form of threat to national security emanating from across the border for which again the Customs has taken the call. Thus, contributing in matters relating to national security and facilitation of the international trade supply chain has now become an important responsibility bestowed upon Customs besides its original function of revenue collection.

The response of the Indian Customs to the emerging challenges as outlined above has been manifold. As for the challenge regarding facilitating flow of trade without compromising interest of revenue, the Indian Customs has

moved to a system of assessment based on risk parameters. The concerns relating both to revenue and security have been incorporated as risk parameters in the Risk Management System (RMS). About 90 per cent of Customs assessment work is now undertaken through the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and around 80 per cent of imported goods are assessed through RMS. The goods get cleared the same day, if it is not hit by any of the aforesaid risk parameters. In order to minimize subjectivity and arbitrariness in the case of valuation disputes, the Directorate of Valuation has developed valuation database viz. National Import Database (NIDB) and Export Commodity Database (ECDB). The Database is used in Valuation Risk Assessment Module (VRAM).

The emerging areas of concern also include 'Country of Origin' frauds, Trade Based Money Laundering (TBML) through overvaluation of exports, and violation of Intellectual Property Rights. The legislations like Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2005, Export Valuation Rules, 2007 and IPR Enforcement Rules are answers to some of these concerns.

While activating the trade facilitation machinery, the Customs simultaneously has focused on proactive intelligence targetting, intelligence sharing and intelligence tasking. Emphasis is also being given on international cooperation in respect of exchange of



information on specific Customs issues through Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements (CMAA).

On Anti smuggling front, new dangerous areas of concern have emerged. The most disturbing amongst them is smuggling of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) from across the border. The seizure figure of FICN with face value of Rs. 4.12 crore in 2007 on DRI intelligence alone underlines the danger. The age-old profession of smuggling of drugs, mainly Heroin, using India as a conduit has recently been of a particular concern because of its magnitude. While in 2004-05, DRI had seized only about 72 Kgs. of Heroin of Afghan-Pakistan origin, seizure quantity rose to about 290 Kgs. in last calendar year 2007.

Customs plays a vital role in protecting flora and fauna of the country. In the last three years, Customs has seized around 1210 MT of Red Sanders (Rakta Chandan) and a huge number of Star Tortoises while being smuggled out.

Indian Customs has risen to the occasion in responding to the emerging challenges suitably. Given the rate at which new challenges are emerging, Customs needs to be alert and it has to be prepared in shouldering more and more responsibility as the call keeps coming.

Sumit Dutt Majumder
Director General, Revenue Intelligence
New Delhi

STOP PRESS

WTO strikes down US import curbs on Indian seafood

6 March, 2008

KOCHI: World Trade Organisation (WTO) has ruled against imposition of additional customs bond by the US on Indian seafood products. The customs bond is a surety guaranteeing that the importer will abide by all laws and regulations governing the import of merchandise into the US.

A dispute settlement panel of WTO has accepted India's plea against imposition of additional 100 percent customs bonds by the US on Indian shrimp imports to that country.

The first positive development in the case came in December 2006 when the US Court of International Trade gave a preliminary ruling that the additional bond imposed on shrimp imports from India was contrary to the law.

Consequent to the tough new rules imposed by the US against Indian shrimp products, the number of seafood exporters which stood at 280 then had dwindled to a mere 68 by the January, 2008, according to sources. Congratulations to the Indian seafood exporters!



Ranganthittu Bird Sanctuary



Ph: Deepankar Aron

A group of Painted Storks

Neither the mother nor the father had come for a long time now. The children were getting impatient. They had been getting their food every now and then. Delicious and fresh food at that! For, this was the time for breakfast, a ceremony that usually lasted for at least an hour. Though the parents were not at home, the chicks could manage to see one of their parents atop a rock, about 30 meters away. While, one of the parents was out surveying the waters of the Cavery hunting for fish, the other kept a vigil over the kids. Usually, this vigil was kept from the same rock over which the kids were present as well. But this time, somehow, the vigil was being kept from the rock faraway. Suddenly, losing

patience, the strongest looking of the three chicks made a go and dived into the unknown waters and started frantically swimming towards that other rock. The mother River Tern panicked and started flying sorties from the rock, but could only helplessly hover over its child struggling to reach the destination. In the meanwhile, the father Tern also came back to that rock and watched the proceedings mutely, but anxiously. A bunch of photographers who had gathered to shoot the morning feeding session from their boats overlooking the rock where the home of the terns lay, were visibly excited. One urged me to capture all this in my video camera. I however preferred to keep freezing



the still frames in time. Much to everybody's satisfaction, the chick soon reached the other rock. However, that was not the happy ending. It was at best only an interval. For, the kid had to ultimately get back to the home rock where the other chicks too were there. But the chick didn't know this. So, the situation continued to remain tense but under control. At this juncture, help came for the Terns. One of the boatmen in our group took his boat to the rock, but as he approached the rock, he wisely took the precaution of wearing a helmet. For, no sooner did he lift the chick to the boat, the parents started attacking him, oblivious to the real motives of the kidnapper. The Terns gave up after one or two attacks, realizing the futility of aggression and leaving it to fate accompli. Their patience was rewarded when they saw the

chick getting reunited with its other siblings and they too joined them for a happy family reunion.

The breakfast ceremony shortly resumed. Each time one of the parents would come backloaded after a sortie from the river, the chicks with their beaks open in anticipation would start clamoring for the feed. The parents would judiciously rotate the food between them. It was sheer bliss to watch this spectacle of beak to beak transfer of the fish. At other times, while waiting for the feed to come, the chicks would be in a state of perfect stillness, conserving their energies, sometimes basking under the warmth of their mother's belly or at other times simply lying huddled together. Indeed, the news about the hatching of this triplet, which were about two to three weeks



Ph: Deepankar Aron

Anxious Parents



Ph: Deepankar Aron

The Lost River Tern

old had reached us even while we were in Bangalore and acted as a perfect magnet for our trip to Ranganthittu.

The crocodiles in Ranganthittu were all this time hardly bothered about the events. They were merrily basking in the sun on some of the other rocks. Their sight did excite our one and a half year old daughter, for, they were not too far for comfort, we however assured her that here they get lots of good food anyways thanks to the river's fishy inhabitants; as such they are rather indifferent to the human presence.

As the friendly forest department boat snaked around the six islands that make up the Ragnathittu Bird sanctuary, we found ourselves under a tree that had a big group

of small Cormorants resting and drying their wings, a session of swimming acrobatics in the river. Seeing Cormorants around water bodies is not unusual at all, but here you felt as if you could touch them if you stood up on the boat. This close was certainly unusual. Besides, the size of the gang was impressive too. Going further ahead, our next rendezvous was with three Spoon Bills perched on a different rock altogether. It was our first brush with these winged creatures and it made us wonder whether the humans discovered how to eat with spoon after seeing them or that after discovering the spoon and then on seeing them, we named them spoonbills! Whichever way, the bills were beautiful and to add to their charms was a lovely red spot right under the bills on their faces!



Our next encounter was with a big herd of a big sized species perched over the tree tops on one of the islands. It was noisy here as, some of the members were constantly coming in or going out (after having come back with their kill or going for it towards the river). With a huge white body ending with black towards the tip of their wings, the birds were characterized by long but open beak. Open Billed Storks as they are called are famous for eating big sized fish by holding them inside the big cavity that they so have and then using this grip, they smash the fish to death against a rocky surface and then lap it up! Seeing this species was another first for us!

The stock of birds in this sanctuary is indeed a treasure for any naturalist and

especially for a photographer, as here the birds perched on either the tree-tops or on the rocks in the middle of river Cauvery allow you to see them so close that few places in the country would rival it! No wonder then, the IIPC (India International Photographic Council) organizes photo-trips to this place for it's members now and then. But all this is thanks to Dr. Salim Ali who quite a few decades back, on seeing the bird diversity at this place advised the Karnataka govt. to declare this as a sanctuary. The sanctuary gets birds from as far as Siberia, Australia and even North America they say!

Moving on, we had more firsts in store for us. Sand plovers were comparatively small vis-à-vis the Storks, but beautiful. A black band around the eye nicely contrasted the grayish



Together

Ph: Deepankar Aron



black wings and the whitish yellow breast. It was however seen solo, a change from the communal living of the other birds that we had been seeing so far. Not quite far, was a group of rocks home to the night herons and the purple herons. Though, they come in the same family as the Pond Herons, however, they have a nice dark colored coat at the back contrasted with a sparkling white breast in contrast to the mud colored coat of the Pond Herons, though they share the whiteness of their breasts!

But, perhaps the grandest spectacle that the sanctuary offered was a close tête-à-tête with one of the most beautiful storks that enraptures me with joy each time I see it. It was late afternoon. This was a second visit to the bird sanctuary. One had been done in the early hours of the day, while this one was in the late afternoon. The sunlight was placid and as it fell on that big rock, it cast beautiful reflections in the not so still waters. The reflection of the sleek and long legs was a bit shaky but soon gave way to gorgeous black and white fuzzy bodies punctuated with a dash of pink. The inverted rusty colored heads tapered into long yellow beaks. To see the

Painted Storks with their reflections was indeed heavenly. As the boat closed on to them, one by one they took off.

It was time for the boat to return. Yet again, the chicks of the Tern greeted us atop their rocky home, though, this time being late afternoon, the sun was shining from behind them and offered great backlit photo-ops. A lone photographer was busy capturing the same scene of nursing the young ones. The chap tells me that he likes to shoot only in backlight. Indeed, wonderful the light was, as it cast a halo around the Terns.

We were now passing under one of the last trees that fell on our way towards the shore. Suddenly, a noise made us stop. Barely had our eyes locked on to that giant winged creature, it took off with a twig in its beak, but not before I had had the satisfaction of freezing this impression of the Painted Stork for ever and ever.....

Deepankar Aron
Joint Director, DRI, New Delhi
aron24@rediffmail.com

Fact file:

Location: Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary is set on a group of islands in the middle of River Cauvery, about 20 km from Mysore, in south-east Karnataka, located not far from the place where Tipu Sultan and Hyder Ali ruled and fought the Brits, a place called Sri Rangapatnam. Also close by is the summer palace of Tipu Sultan and the Sri Rangaswamy temple. Not far is also the Brindavan gardens, famous for their musical fountains with lights.

Getting there:

By Rail: Nearest railhead is Srirangapatnam, 15 km away.

By Road: Drive down from Bangalore 3 hours down the well-paved Bangalore-Mysore Road via Maddur and Mandya. The Sanctuary is a short 15 km-drive from Srirangapatnam.

By Air: The nearest airport is Bangalore, 134 km away



To Be Or Not To Be

It was a brilliantly sunny holiday morning, rare during this part of the year, with an oriental sun, cozily couched in the immensity of the blue opulence of sky, intermittently jostling away the wayward masses of snowy clouds- threatening to devour its entire physical entity. Gentle warmth was spreading far and wide taking into its embrace the humanity as a whole exemplifying the eternal reality about the nature- the giver- that it gives whatever it has, to every body, showing scant regard to the whole gamut of the human considerations. The holiday syndrome was taking its toll upon me and I was laying back half-awake in my bed, tossing and turning but not willing to come back to life. The ajar window was permitting a wide beam of light to enter the room and caress parts of my body to a magical effect. While I was right in the middle of the ecstasy, a sudden heavy-handed knock at the door completely outraged my lethargy and to pre-empt any second attempt at stirring my soul, I rushed towards the door wondering all through that mindless sprint - who could that be?!!

The gradually parting doors afforded me the glimpse of a khaki clad, boat-capped, bespectacled man with a body and soul apart kind of a pen- barely able to pull its physical self together due to magnanimity of a rubber band, perching proudly atop his right ear lobe...well, any guesses? A postman...simple! He handed out an envelope containing probably the hard copy of a rakhi, claimed his

tip and left on his eternal voyage. The soft copy of this bit of the sacred thread had already made its way to my computer a few days before, through the unwinding alleys of the World Wide Web, which also afforded me the luxury of not having to wait endlessly to be face-to-face with my sis to hand out the shagun or route it through the over burdened workforce of the post office - thanks to internet again...But the postman...the thought was perturbing me like a bee in the bonnet. Is the postman poised to be another Archeopteryx and do a vanishing act?

Somewhere in some unexplored corner of my heart, many questions were challenging my thoughts- whether the eternity of the excursions of the postman is merging into mortality? Whether the tireless tread of the postman is about to proceed to an eternal sojourn? Whether the changing parameters of the communication-world have rendered this lesser mortal redundant? And to sum it all up - whether the virtual activities have finally overtaken the reality bytes that we mortals are used to since the epochs. Probably yes... probably no... no certain answer was forthcoming. I coaxed myself deeper into retrospection to stumble upon some logically sound insight into the plethora of questions buzzing around my mind but the confusion thickened...will a day dawn when books will stand to mean CDs and the libraries- stock-pile of recycled plastic diskettes...will the paper currency signifying government's statutory



authority be annihilated into a virtual world of invisible money...

Humanity at large is rapidly configuring itself to this cousin of a jukebox called a computer. To an overwhelming majority of the urban folks computer has begun to mean the abridged version of the planet earth. Computer-aided virtual activities are making deep inroads into the conventional activities, finding great favour among wide cross section of the users- be it letter writing versus e-mail or currency versus credit card or the last but not the least- cheques versus e-payment; realms of electronics are invincibly ruling the roost. But the on-line activity that has really brought about a perceptible turnaround in the lives of millions of the urban and semi-urban folks, emancipating them from the shackles of long queues, blazing sun and trickling sweat, an uncalled for day off and to top it all an avoidable rendezvous with a faceless and numb soul sitting across the counter, is - Electronic Payment- quite unmistakably! Not only are the individuals reaping the benefits of automation of different business processes particularly payment related, but also are the organizations across the globe achieving the twin objectives of cutting the cost significantly yet multiplying the efficiency manifolds through it. Even the government organizations are not lagging behind in the race. Encouragement to e-payment and certification of digital signatures to facilitate on-line submission of documents, etc. are the activities that are presently the buzzwords in our department also. Other government departments too are working in tandem with

the latest technological developments across the world, just out of the compulsion- to be or not to be. The believers of the Newton's first law of motion (law of inertia) who fail to rise to the occasion may ultimately find themselves turning in their graves!

The e-payment (not strictly in the context of our department) comes of age over the years evolving in many ways including wire transfer, credit and debit cards and the more recent innovation- contactless smart cards enabling direct debit; creating a whole new segment in the global consumer market. Due to the convenience associated, e-payment is witnessing a tremendous growth globally, both in terms of numbers of transactions carried out as well as business volume. According to a report, more than 210 billion payment related e-transactions were carried out globally in the year 2004, which is poised to become twice by the year 2010. To further make e-payment a user-friendly affair and to eliminate the need to provide contact details of the user, smart cards are serving as viable options in many countries. These cards make use of an antenna and a chip for registering payment particulars, dispensing with the process of swiping the card. These cards are being looked upon as the indemnity against the unauthorized usage of plastic currency leading to frauds.

After e-mails, e-transaction is the major activity, which has thrown a serious challenge to the style of functioning of the government and to sustain a meaningful existence the latter must come out of its shell and catch it



by horns or its role will be relegated to that of a regulator instead of a player. The loss would be obviously tremendous.

The current trend of proliferation witnessed by e-payments holds out promise for both established as well as emerging economies across the globe. While established economies can benefit from the reduction in cost of operations with a corresponding increase in efficiency, the developing economies can switch to a world-class infrastructure for payment processes and broaden the financial services base by adding more customers to financial sector. Although the challenges including compliance of the regulatory instructions from the authorities and apprehension of scams are diverse, e-payment continues to thrive providing great business opportunities in the process to almost all players and meeting aspirations of majority, giving further impetus to the economy as a corollary.

The momentum generated in adoption of online mode of payments is expected to attract new service providers. The major challenge before all players existing and upcoming should be to ensure sustained growth and properly address to the flexible consumer needs and genuine security concerns. Government is obviously no exception.

So, in view of the rapidly changing scenario and ever expanding horizons of the IT world, adaptation is the key to survival. The rapid changes are potential enough to sweep idlers off the feet. And so- if our Postman has to impart eternity to its timeless circuit, it has to synchronize its gait with the changing needs of the customers simultaneously creating a niche for himself in the market so as to remain in reckoning.

Vikas Asthana
Inspector, Central Excise, Lucknow
vikasasthana@hotmail.com

Digital trade





Bull's Eye

Shooting with the rifle, pistol and shotgun has been practiced in many countries for centuries. During the 19th Century, however, shooting also developed into a sport: Associations, federations, councils, confederations, unions or organizations were formed in some countries, using different words to describe the alliance of shooters in clubs or the alliance of clubs in local, regional or national organizations.

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) is the governing body of the shooting sport. Its major goals are to promote and manage the development of amateur sport shooting in the world and to organize and supervise the shooting competitions and to control all technical facilities at the Olympic Games in cooperation with the International Olympic Committee. It is presently composed of 157 national federations from 137 affiliated countries.

In India, the **National Rifle Association of India (NRAI)** was formed on April 17, 1951, to develop the shooting sport in India and impart training to civilians for self-defense. The NRAI network spans 53 affiliated state associations and units. Regular competitions are now being held at the national, state, district and club levels.

Shooting is gaining popularity in India as a competitive sport. As a result, many of the talented shooters are being offered employment with corporate houses, public sector companies such as the ONGC, Indian

Airlines and the Railways. The Army, BSF and CISF are also hiring shooters.

Pistol Shooting Events

There are five categories in pistol shooting events with its variation for juniors & women. They are 25 m Standard Pistol/Sports Pistol, 50 m Pistol, 25 m Center Fire Pistol, 25 m Rapid Fire Pistol, 10 m Air Pistol.

(i) **25 m Standard Pistol** is introduced at the World Championship level in 1970. The Standard Pistol match is shot with a regular semi-automatic handgun in caliber .22 LR. The target is placed at a distance 25 meters. The 60-shot match is divided into 5-shot series with different timings:

- 4 series within 150 seconds each (5 X 4 = 20 shots)
- 4 series within 20 seconds each (5 X 4 = 20 shots)
- 4 series within 10 seconds each (5 X 4 = 20 shots)

(ii) **50 m Pistol** (formerly called Free Pistol) provides the purest precision shooting among the pistol events, and is one of the oldest shooting types, dating back to the 19th century where target is placed at distance of 50 meters.

The pistol used must be in caliber .22 using .22 Long Rifle ammunition, may only be loaded with one round at a time, and have 'open' sights (i.e. optical and laser sights are not allowed). It must also be operated by one hand and not supported by any other part of

shooter's body. Apart from that, there are practically no rules for the pistol, explaining the former name of the event. Trigger force may be as low as the shooter pleases, the grip may be designed in any way and there are no restrictions on size and weight. Precision pistols with long barrels, grips fitted to the shooter's hand, very light trigger pull, etc., are often themselves called free pistols. The course of fire is 60 shots within a maximum time of 2 hours. The target is same as in 25 m Standard Pistol, but the distance is double (50 m).

(iii) 25 m Center-Fire Pistol is normally a men-only event. Its origin lies in competitions with military-style service pistols, and as such its history dates back to the 19th century.

The name Center-Fire describes the type of cartridges used (cartridge is hit in the center by the firing pin) distinguishes this event from other ISSF events shot with handguns chambered for too small caliber rimfire cartridges. The rules specify that matches are to be shot with handgun of any caliber between 7.62 mm (.30) and 9.65 mm (.38), but the most popular cartridge is the .32 S&W Long, because of good performance characteristics.

The most popular handgun choices are larger caliber versions of rimfire semi-automatic pistols originally designed for 25 m Standard Pistol. Many of these pistol can be changed from one caliber to the other by simply changing the barrel and magazine. Examples of such firearms are usually from companies specializing firearms for ISSF events like Morini, Walther and Hämmerli and most popular of them is Walther GSP (see picture) A Center-Fire match consists of two parts of 30 shots each, both shot at 25 meters:

- A precision stage : six series of 5 shots each where 5 shots are to be fired during a 5 minute period.
- A rapid-fire stage : 6 series of 5 shots each where, for each shot, the shooter has 3 seconds to raise his arm from a 45 degree angle and fire.

In the precision stage, the target is the same as in 50 m Pistol (although at half the distance), with a 10-zone of 5 cm diameter, and in the rapid-fire stage, the target is the same as in 25 m Rapid Fire Pistol, with a 5-zone of 10 cm diameter.

25 m Pistol (formerly called Sport Pistol) is essentially the women's equivalent of this event, the only difference being the smaller rimfire caliber handguns used (often the same models only chambered for the smaller caliber).

(iv) 25 m Rapid Fire Pistol is a sixty shot match and has been a part of the Olympic program ever since the beginning in 1896. Since 2005 it conformed the equipment rules to those of 25 m Standard Pistol, thereby banning .22 Short cartridges as well as encircling grips and low trigger-pull weight used earlier. This caused a decline in results: the pre-2005 world record was 597, while the present world record is 591.

Course of fire

The centers of the targets are 75 cm apart, and the 5 score zone has a diameter of 10 cm.

When paper targets (as opposed to electronic scoring systems) are used, thin scoring rings are printed on the target. The thick aiming lines are present in both versions.



The centers of the targets are 75 cm apart, and the 5 score zone has a diameter of 10 cm.



Walther GSP for 25m Center Fire, 25m Standard Pistol, 25m Rapid Fire Pistol



Air Pistol (with compressed air cylinder)

Traditionally, RFP competitions use paper targets that are able to turn 90 degrees to appear to the shooter and then turn back to disappear when the shooting time is up.

A series (or string) consists of five shots fired at five targets with one shot on each target each within a limited time in one go. The five

targets stand next to each other at a 25 m distance from the shooter. When the targets appear, the competitor must raise his arm from a 45 degree angle, and fire his five shots. If a shot is too late, it will score as a miss.

There are three different time limits for the series: 8 seconds, 6 seconds, and 4 seconds. A stage consists of two series of each type, and a full course of fire comprises two such stages, or a total of 60 shots. Since the targets are divided into concentric score zones with 10 being the most central part, the total maximum score is 600.

(v) 10 m Air Pistol consists of 60 shots within 105 minutes for men, and 40 shots within 75 minutes for women. It is also similar to 50 m Pistol despite the shorter distance and the use of airguns, and most top-level shooters compete in both events. Before the competition shots, but within the time limit, the shooter may fire an unlimited number of sighting shots. The caliber of the pellets used is 4.5 mm (.177).

The air pistol target is 17x17 cm with concentric score zones, the innermost (worth ten points) having a diameter of 11.5 mm.

Pradeep Kumar
Additional Commissioner
Directorate General of Vigilance, Delhi

The author, Shri Pradeep Kumar, a 1990 batch IRS (C&CE) officer, is a sharp shooter himself. He has excelled in pistol shooting events in National Shooting Championships and has won a number of medals.

-Editor



Mumbaikars have heart at least some of them!

I stay at Kalyan and it was just another working day and the usual switching over from the Platform no. 4 to Platform no. 1 of Byculla station to catch the slow train to Currey Road. The 10'o clock Thane train had arrived on the dot & I boarded it without any jostle – empty as it was with only a few commuters.

The train had just started moving when we could hear cries of a small child. We turned our heads and could not believe our eyes - an almost three year old child had been deposited at the door of the train compartment and a lady in tattered clothes, probably the child's mother, running alongside the train.

Unable to board the train, she gave up! The child had by now started wailing uncontrollably. A college going guy standing on the footboard of the train lifted the child and made her sit on the seat inside. Nothing could stop the child from repeatedly running towards the door – not even chocolates.

By this time, the next station came and an old man who was standing near the door merely picked the child & alighted from the train. He placed the child on the bench on the platform and walked away. Surprisingly the toddler had stopped crying and was gladly enjoying the chocolate given to her.

We were all stunned, cursed the mother and voiced our opinions, **not realizing that**

we had done nothing to help the child. The train left and I got down at the next station.

The entire day I thought about it – whether the mother had come to pick up the child – what if not, where is the child, was it safe – and then I blamed myself. Shouldn't I too have got down and waited for the mother to pick the child – **at least I could have saved myself from the tension the entire day!**

The next day the routine followed and when I reached platform No.1 of Byculla station, I found the same child merrily playing with her mother.

I was too embarrassed to go near and ask as to how they were united, hence chose to observe them from a distance.

Yes, not everyone is like me & it must be a helpful Mumbaikar who united the child & its doting mother - all an act of God.

When will we let go of our selfishness?

Innumerable questions & a search for their answers – **this is what Mumbai life is all about.**

Sunil Achutan
Inspector, Central Excise
Mumbai



Social Evil

The great thinker and philosopher Dr. S.Radha Krishnan, who spoke last on the occasion of the crowning glory, the birth of a free India at midnight on 14/15 August, 1947 said: “Our opportunities are great but let me warn you that when power outstrips ability, we will fall on evil days. We should develop competence and ability, which would help us to utilise the opportunities, which are now open to us. From tomorrow morning -from midnight today- we cannot throw the blame on the Britisher. We have to assume the responsibility ourselves for what we do. A free India will be judged by the way in which it will serve the interests of the common man in the matter of food, clothing, shelter and the social activities. Unless we destroy corruption in high places, root out every trace of nepotism, love of power, profiteering and black marketing which have spoiled the good name of this great country in recent times, we will not be able to raise the standards of efficiency in administration of the necessary goods of life”.

Dr. S.Radha Krishnan’s enunciation about corruption was not seriously thought over then. Over a period of years, it was realised that the economical growth and development of the nation were being ruined due to corruption; the Central Vigilance Commission was formed to take appropriate action against corruption from all spheres of our activities. Ever since the Central Vigilance Commission was formed, we the public servants of India pledge that we shall continuously strive to

bring about integrity and transparency in all our activities during the “Vigilance Awareness Week”. This year, i.e. from 12th November to 16th November 2008 on the occasion of the vigilance awareness week, apart from taking pledge as envisaged by the Vigilance Commission, we should try to inculcate the value of “anti-corruption” in the young minds of our own family members. Values are socially desirable goals that have an indispensable relationship with persons. If the young minds of the people are not properly trained and well educated to protest the discourteous value of corruption, the real progress of the nation will only be a nightmare. When the mindset of the younger generation is gradually transformed to desist corruption, it is easy to eradicate the social evil, which has long been deeply rooted in the structures of our society. Mere enactment of laws will not bring about the desired results. An all round effort is to be made to bring out a drastic change in the present function of the various systems in our society. As more and more people imbibe these values, the evil of corruption will become obsolete.

Thus, the young citizens of our country will become the powerful force of anti-corruption in the communities of our society and will lead the country to the glorious past of its ethos.

Dr. S. John Bosco
Supdt.
Dte. General of Vigilance, Chennai



Van Is Not A Car

In early eighties there was a ban on the use of foreign cars by officials of the Government of India. So in the customs department we could not appropriate foreign cars, which had been confiscated and not redeemed by the importers. They had to be necessarily sold and not appropriated for use by the officials of the department. The logic of the Government was unexceptionable. It did not want the officers to flaunt foreign cars. However, it led to queer results. As Collector of Customs, I had several Mercedes Benz vans, which were valued at several lakhs of rupees because the brand Mercedes was precious. However, nobody would like to buy a Mercedes van because a van doesn't have snob value that a Mercedes car has. So the successive auctions failed miserably to fetch the minimum price below which they could not be sold. So we were faced with the piquant situation where neither can we sell them nor can we use them. I wrote several times to the Ministry explaining the situation but the Ministry always quoted the ban on car, which were said to have been imposed at the instance of the then highest.

I was looking for an opportunity to solve this impasse. One day I had a bout of lateral thinking. I went to the Secretary (Revenue) who was indeed a very positive and innovative type, and told him that a ban on car should not be taken as a ban on van. The intention of the ban on car was to prevent the ostentatious display by the officers. Certainly the officers

should not be seen moving around in imported cars. That is not a good example at all. At the same time no officer would move around in a foreign van to show off. So the vans, though of Mercedes brand, would not be used by the officers except for specific official work. The Secretary got convinced and agreed to not applying the ban on car as a ban on van. Van is not a car, I argued, for the purpose of this ban. He agreed that keeping the intention of the ban in mind, van is not a car. So we were allowed to appropriate the vans for official use. These vans were used for taking officers to conduct raids, searches, etc., which are purely official job and for which in any case we would have to buy more Indian cars.

This underlines a very important principle of interpretation of words. Words should be understood in the proper context and not just on the basis of the text. The interpretation should be purposive and not literal. It should go beyond the meaning of the plain word used. It should not be interpreted in such a way that it leads to absurd results. This simple principle has been a source of perpetual debate in the judicial parlance. Reading all of them, the proper conclusion that emerges is that when there are two interpretations, one strictly literal and the other, though not so literal, serves the intention of the legislature, we have to choose the latter.

Sukumar Mukhopadhyay
Member, CBEC (Rtd.)
smukher2000@yahoo.com



Globalisation and its effect on the Tribal World

Globalisation of the Indian economy & the advent of multinational companies, even in the sensitive sectors of economy, have made national economic security vulnerable to machinations and manipulations of external forces. Recent instances are the attempts of super powers and developed nations to use international organizations in furtherance of their own economic agenda at the cost of the developing nations and the emergence of regional organizations with a strong economic and commercial agenda. We need to monitor these developments and assess their impact on our own economic stability, well-being and competitive environment continuously.

In this background, an awareness of the basic needs of the tribal world has become imperative considering the fact that the growth of the nation cannot be achieved by excluding its indigenous communities. If we want to mitigate poverty and actually bring about development then a considerable part of the efforts need to be channelised towards upliftment of the marginalized, both socially and economically, and the indigenous communities form a significant part of the Indian population.

Knowledge of areas of national economy is susceptible to attack not only from known enemies but also from friendly powers, who may happen to be economic rivals. Such areas in the economic firmament should be identified as job opportunities are getting scarce and dividing the society into classes to apportion the existing employment opportunities not on the basis of capability but on politically motivated lines is cutting the branch when sitting on it. We need to preserve

the cultural and traditional ethos of the people & changes, if any, should be gradual and in accordance to the specific need of the place in terms of improved irrigation facilities, canal digging, water pumps etc. to ensure three seasonal crops along with vegetable farming, not only for commercial needs but also for personal consumption and healthy quality of life and living.

We need to study and analyze the facets of globalized economy that are being or could be exploited to breach our economic security / national security & existing inadequacies and be prepared with our responses before the Goods & Services Tax (GST) is introduced. We need to contain the rising unemployment through skill oriented technical education so that the lure of taking up arms & becoming easy prey to those who run militant outfits is mitigated.

Sharing of sensitive information/ intelligence and cross fertilization of ideas of all cultures and creed alone can evolve the tribal world into a strong entity rather than keeping them as show pieces in the forums where the identity of a tribal is being maintained cosmetically rather than ensuring a sustainable development of the cultural and traditional cuisine, medicinal knowledge, and healing therapies which are indigenous to the culture of the people – like the massage therapy of Kerala, which is based on Ayurvedic knowledge of the yore.

Only a holistic view of the various aspects of the cultural ethos can genuinely provide the much needed acceptance of the people with different cultures rather than treating them as outcasts and something to be seen as museum



pieces and showcased for the world to enjoy. Follow up of all projects implemented and responsibly accounted for should be the mantra rather than preparation of project reports alone. We have to rise above ourselves to be available to all others for cooperation and not competition, in this race of equitable development in the world.

When millions are in need of an environment which can provide one the right to earn ones livelihood with human dignity, the organizations which give vocational training to the tribal youth deserve to be encouraged. But the real issue is the paltry number of youths from Orissa, Jharkhand & West Bengal or Chattisgarh who have made it into the Indian Civil Services or in Multi National Corporations (MNCs). Such cases are so rare as to be counted on the fingers. The weakest, the economically starved and the deprived are those who have no means to combat the unjust social structure of the human society.

Commercially viable projects and economically sustainable experiments across continents alone can help conserve the environment along with bio-diversity, sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The tribal world is replete with elements of conservation of bio-diversity – every Clan is blessed with the gift of self-preservation. An Ekka (Tortoise) shall not destroy one of its own species – nor will a Turkey (Bird) consume one of its own kind thus giving a Minz (The Eel Fish) of the clan – the licence to spare its own kind from extinction so as to allow the Lakra (Lion) to feast on the Kujur (Creeper plant) rather than on the Kindo or the Kispotta (Sausages of Pork) thus maintaining a natural balance of the ecology unheard of in the entire universe. Thus globalisation of the universe

can not be allowed to disturb this equilibrium that is deeply ingrained in the culture & tradition of the tribal world. It is this truth that is getting gradually submerged in the façade of development and growth and modernization causing havoc in the world.

It has been rightly observed by Mahatma Gandhi that this world has enough for our needs not our greed. There is no security for a common man/woman out there in the villages where clean drinking water is a scarce commodity as dams are meant to provide sustenance only to the city dwellers. While people in villages continue to suffer, pharmaceutical firms in India & abroad prosper. Where then is this equitable growth and sustenance much talked about in beautifully decked fora and symposia when it comes to harnessing the forces of globalisation for justice & truthful sustenance & genuine addressing of the needs of the aching humanity?

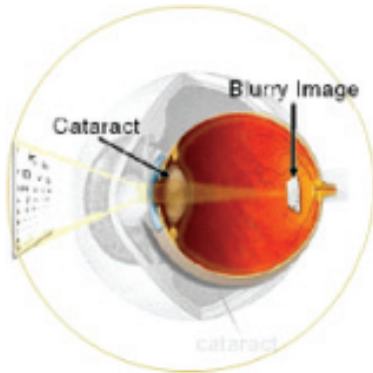
Accepting and respecting the culture and economic differences only can bring about actual peace, love and harmony in these times. Lessons are to be learnt from the Chinese model particularly how political accommodation can transform the economy and at the same time raise serious policy concerns. We need to adjust to globalisation in a concerted manner. No one can exist independent of the other and to say that globalisation has affected the tribals alone is a misnomer, for all the marginalized irrespective of caste, colour & creed have been wily nily drawn into the vortex of the storm & how we find the calm in the stormy seas shall be the strengths of the faith we adhere to as handed down to us since generations.

Shashi Minz
Additional Director General
NACEN, Faridabad

CATARACT

What is Cataract?

Cataract is an opacity in the lens of the eye. The normal lens is transparent and allows light to reach the retina. When it becomes opaque, light does not reach the retina and the patient is unable to see clearly.



Why does cataract form?

Cataract is the most common cause of blindness in our country. Though causes for formation of cataract are not fully known, some known causes are: ultraviolet light exposure, deficiency of protein and vitamins and old age.

Apart from old age (Senile cataract), cataract can also occur in children (Congenital cataract) and in adolescents (Developmental cataract). Injuries can produce cataracts in all ages (Traumatic cataract). Patients with Diabetes mellitus develop cataracts earlier than a normal person.

Symptoms:

- I. Blurring of image in bright light
- II. Double or multiple images
- III. Image distortion

Treatment of cataract

Till today, there is no drug/Laser which has been proved to cure cataract. The only treatment available is surgery i.e. removal of cataract.

When does cataract require removal?

Apart from the mature cataracts, even immature cataracts need to be removed if it hampers with the patient's visual requirements. There is no necessity to wait for the cataract to ripen as in earlier times.

Phacoemulsification / Small Cataract Surgery

Small incision cataract surgery is increasingly gaining popularity as compared to large incision of 13 mm used previously to remove cataract.

Phacoemulsification is a method of removing cataract through small incision by means of ultrasonic energy, which emulsifies cataract. It involves highly sophisticated technology, cost and lot of training on the part of the surgeon. The incision size is 2.5 mm. There is no suture required because of tunnel incision, which is self sealing.

An Intraocular Implant or Lens (IOL) is placed inside the eye as part of the surgical procedure, Phacoemulsification. The Intraocular Implants or Lenses are of different varieties i.e. standard, foldable, injectable, bifocal. Phaco and small incision



cataract surgery is probably a great leap forward in the field of ophthalmic surgery.

The advantage of small incision cataract surgery using phacoemulsification is that visual recovery and rehabilitation is fast which enables the patient to resume normal activities within a few days and even attend to routine office work.

Are they too expensive?

Just think about the disadvantages of traditional surgery, anesthesia, inability to attend work for some days, poor vision etc. You will appreciate that the marginal increase in cost of surgery is more than compensated.

Will I need glasses after surgery?

Very often not. You may need to wear glasses only to fine-tune vision. These are normal glasses and not “thick” spectacles as in the past. However, you need glasses for near vision.

What is after cataract?

In about 25% of the patient who undergo cataract surgery, thickening of the posterior capsule of the original lens occurs causing mild blurring of vision. This can occur anytime between 3 months to 5 years after surgery. The treatment for this is very simple.

These patients require Laser treatment. The ‘Yag Laser’ is used to make a small opening in the thickened capsule behind the Intraocular Lens (IOL). It is a painless, out-patient procedure.

Indeed, You Deserve The Best !!!

‘PLEDGE YOUR EYES’

Dr. Nitish Birdi

M.D. (A.I.I.M.S.)

Presently SDR, CESTAT, Chennai

For any queries : nitish@doctor.com

Eye care for those above 40:

- Go for yearly checkup to rule-out insidious diseases like glaucoma, which are common after the age of 40.
- If you have problems in reading, passing thread through a needle or any other near work, consult your ophthalmologist. You may require the aid of glasses to see near objects. You must also take extra care of your eye sight if you drive a vehicle.
- Patients having diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol values, family history of glaucoma need to consult an ophthalmologist to rule-out any eye involvement. Diabetes affects the retina of the eye and can cause irreversible blindness.



Taj Weeps

Standing majestically
Through the ravages of time
The Taj Mahal
Weeps in the silence of the night
In the cool embrace of the darkness
The whiteness of tears glisten
Reminiscing the emperor Shah Jahan
His dark moments
His agony
His tears
And helplessness in the solitude of his
prison
In the evening of his life

My Wishes

I always have wished
to become a little rivulet
and to mingle with the vast seas
meandering my way
through the terrain of mountains
the villages the towns
and the cities
carrying with me all the highs
and all the lows
all the joys and all the sorrows
like the parched soul
meeting eternity in oblivion
in a moment of self realisation

*Ranjan Kumar Routray
Commissioner (Appeals), C.Ex. & Customs
Aurangabad*



Nhava Sheva: Trade – Customs Partnership

Nhava Sheva Sea Port named after the first Prime Minister of India as Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNP) is unique in several respects. JNP which was commissioned in 1989 is the most modern port in India built to international standards with a high level of automation and computerized handling of operations. It has expanded operations over the years through public- private partnership and is today the biggest in terms of container handling capacity. About 60% of India's container traffic is handled at JNP which would be about 3.6 million TEUs in 2007-08. The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) has already finalized plans for a fourth terminal which will double its container handling capacity by 2011.

2. The linear quay length of this port is 1992 Meters (680 + 600 + 712). Out of this, 680 meters is with the JNPT and constitutes 3 berths for its container cargo. Another Quay of 600 meters has been given on long lease to M/s Nhava Sheva International Container Terminal (NSICT) which is a subsidiary of M/s Dubai Ports World. A third terminal jointly operated by M/s Maersk (APM Terminal) and Concor named Gateway Terminals India Pvt. Ltd. has become operational in January 2007. Apart from these 3 container terminals, JNPT has a liquid cargo terminal operated by IOC & BPCL (capacity 5 million Tonnes). The maximum permissible draft for a vessel in this port is 12 meters and each berth can handle ships up to 70,000 DWT. The Port has handled 42 Million Tonnes of cargo in 2006-07 and is expected to cross the 50 million mark

in 2007-08. About 65% of the import cargo in containers is cleared at Nhava Sheva and the rest is transhipped to interior Customs stations (ICDs) situated all over India.

3. The Jawaharlal Nehru Custom House located at Sheva, Dist. Raigad, in the proximity of the Port handles the Customs clearance work of the cargo moving in and out of JNP. It is the biggest Custom House in the country, in terms of the volume of imports and exports handled. Modern Customs techniques are in place with the help of computerization to expedite the Customs clearance. The entry declarations are filed online and processed by employing risk management techniques with minimum intervention by the Customs officers. No Customs examination of Import Cargo is being done in the Port Terminals. The emphasis is on speedy movement of containers and to utilize the port area exclusively for loading and unloading of the containers to maximize the output. The Customs examination and clearance take place at Container Freight stations (presently 21) located in the vicinity of the Port, owned and operated by both the public sector and private sector organizations. A computerized control and clearance system (SMTP) is in place for the automatic clearance and monitoring of containers transhipped to interior stations.

4. The tremendous increase in volume of traffic without proportionate growth in Customs infrastructure and shortage of staff is a considerable challenge to the Customs



work at Nhava Sheva Port. Economic liberalization and globalization brought in competition and pressure on the Customs to minimize the dwell time for cargo clearance so as to reduce the transaction costs. The Customs dept. has been able to stand up to this challenge by introducing several trade facilitation measures which immensely benefited genuine trade and helped to forge a partnership. Today, reputed importers are able to clear the cargo within 2-4 days of arrival, with a proper planning and automation of their own processes. The trade facilitation measures introduced by the Customs include the following:

-Advance filing of Customs entry documents (Bill of Entry and Shipping Bill) electronically on the Internet.

-Providing the status of Customs processing of documents on the internet, electronic Kiosks established at all central points and an automated email service.

-Accredited Clients Programme for reputed importers to clear the cargo by self assessment and without Customs examination.

-Risk Management System based assessment for imports which reduced Customs intervention by 50%

-E-payment of Customs duty.

-Abolition of Daily Movement Register (DMR) for import cargo reducing Customs-trade interface.

-Direct delivery of cargo for reputed importers directly from port terminals.

-Manual out of charge of import cargo in case of computer system failure.

-Second shift and holiday postings of Customs Staff for speedy clearance of cargo.

-Part delivery facility to avoid waiting time for the arrival of full cargo at CFS.

-Electronic processing and payment of drawback to exporters' bank account.

-Auto-email facility to answer enquiries on status of drawback and transmission of DEPB shipping bill details to DGFT.

-Automatic processing of supplementary drawback claims without separate application.

-Fortnightly trade facilitation meeting by Commissioners to resolve problems of the trade.

-Monthly Open House session by the Chief Commissioner to address any issue relating to Customs for immediate follow up action.

5. The Nhava Sheva Customs has simplified its operations to such an extent that only 7% of the total time taken for clearance is attributable to Customs. The rest of 93% is on account of importers themselves and other public / private agencies involved in the clearance process. Here also Nhava Sheva Customs is taking a proactive role to build in a partnership with other agencies and by better coordination to reduce the dwell time. Initiatives to simplify the procedure for stamp duty collection by the Maharashtra State Government is a case in point.

6. The trade facilitation measures are also supplemented by strengthening Customs controls to prevent misuse of the facility by unscrupulous elements. These include scanning of import containers for contraband goods, a computerized system for monitoring the movement of import containers from the Port to CFS to prevent diversions and strengthening of security measures.

N. Sasidharan
Chief Commissioner of Customs
Mumbai



Why do people become religious on growing old ?

It is well known fact that as people grow older in life, they become more spiritual. This has also been proven by scientific studies. A study conducted by the Gallup Organization, on behalf of The Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion and the Baylor University Department of Sociology, revealed that the people between the ages of 18 and 30 are “three times” more likely to have no religious affiliation than those aged 65 and older.

The younger generation finds it extremely difficult to believe in something that they can't see and logically understand. It is no wonder then the older people often find it difficult to relate to the younger generation as their thoughts are quite different than those of the younger generation. Often they use their authority to force the younger generation to follow the “right path”. However, such attempts are not successful in the modern time. So often the parents, instead of understanding the reasons for the difference of opinion in logical manner, prefer to call the younger generation materialistic, corrupt, sensual, and disobedient. The younger generation too scoffs the older generation calling it “generation gap”.

It is, therefore, necessary to understand the root cause of the faith that becomes so important in the later part of human life. If only younger generation can be “logically” explained the “reasons” for spirituality, they can perhaps lead a spiritual life since their early age and bring peace, happiness and health to themselves.

Childhood: The Rule of Senses

An infant is governed purely by the requirement of his body. He cries, when he feels hungry or can't sleep or wets his clothes. As an infant grows to become a child, gradually his sense perception becomes stronger. A child likes the foods and drinks that are good for the taste buds and hates the food that is not tasty. He touches the object that pleases the skin cells i.e. soft objects. He loves wearing clothes that are bright and appeal to the eyes. A child has no time for sleep till he is completely exhausted as he gets the greatest satisfaction in engagement of the senses. The control of body becomes gradually weakened and the person cares less for the body and more for the senses. A child is always active and running around. However, the mind of the child is still evolving and the child is least concerned about the concepts or achievements that are unrelated to senses. At this stage, a person can't accept anything without seeing.

Youth: When Mind Rules Supreme

As a person advances in his childhood and enters into the stage of youth, the mind becomes stronger. Mind provides the primary understanding of the world to the person based on the knowledge acquired from books and elders. He receives such knowledge in schools and from his parents and considers it to be truth without question. His mind is filled with an artificial model of the world and he continuously changes himself to fit into this model so as to make himself most successful or desirable.



A youth can sacrifice his most desirable food if that makes him or her better looking (even if it makes him less healthy). The worldly logic and reasons fills the mind of a youth. He wants to succeed and get appreciation. He works hard to look good and achieve more and more in this world. He works hard to get higher status as he starts feeling the satisfaction of mind by it.

Most of the actions of a young person are driven by his mind that is based on logic and reason. For him, the world is definable and understandable. He feels that he could achieve anything by personal effort and hard work. At this stage a person can't accept anything without logic and reason.

Adulthood: The Awakening of Soul

A person reaches the peak in physical and mental growth by adulthood and takes the first step to face the world independently. When a person enters into the real world and applies the theories developed by his mind during youth, he fails to get the results as predicted by these theories. It is in the early adulthood that a person learns that everyone does not follow the rules that exist in theory and there is no theory for solving the real life problems. He continuously changes the model of the world to achieve success. The easiest way to learn new knowledge that is never taught in the schools and colleges is from others. He often copies the successful people to achieve success in life. Yet even those models fail as the things are continuously evolving in the world and the same person can never hope to encounter same situations as another person. Here starts the role of intelligence.

Intelligence is an inherent capability of a person to deal with this world. It is the capability that enables a person to see relationships between divergent realities and divergent incidents. Intelligence connects the individual person with the rest of the world.

The intelligence of a person helps him discover himself and through the self discover the world. Through individual intelligence a person connects to the cosmic intelligence and finds the solutions of the problems that have no precedence. Thus he acquires the "true knowledge" that comes from within without any external teaching. In the word of Galileo Gallilei, "*You cannot teach a person anything; you can only help him find it within himself.*"

This discovery of the self is the discovery of soul. Man is surprised to find the hidden potential of intelligence that lies within self. At this stage a man understands that he is unique in this world and the source of his happiness lies in him and not outside. He is situated in self and enjoys the self.

The Age of Wisdom

Intelligence helps the person solving the real life problems and achieving success in life. He acquires a lot of fortune and position in the society, which make him happy for few moments, yet he fails to get the lasting happiness. Here starts the search for real happiness and peace. Then he starts looking around. He can't help but notice that many people are happy even without many achievements. He can see laughter and happiness even in the house of poor people. When he looks back, he also notices that his own parents or other elders lived much more happy life with much lesser possessions.



At this stage, the person understands that material achievements have little or no relationship with happiness. In the search of happiness, he visualizes the inter-connection between everything in the world. He understands that, his happiness can't be independent from others as everyone seems to be connected through an invisible thread. This thread is often called Spirit or God which seems to permeate the world and includes everything in it.

While a man can't see the spirit, but he surely can understand the feeling of happiness and contentment that is seen on the faces of the people who lead a spiritual or religious life. It takes an age for a person to understand that the real goal of the person is to feel happy and that the source of happiness is not material accomplishments but the contentment and

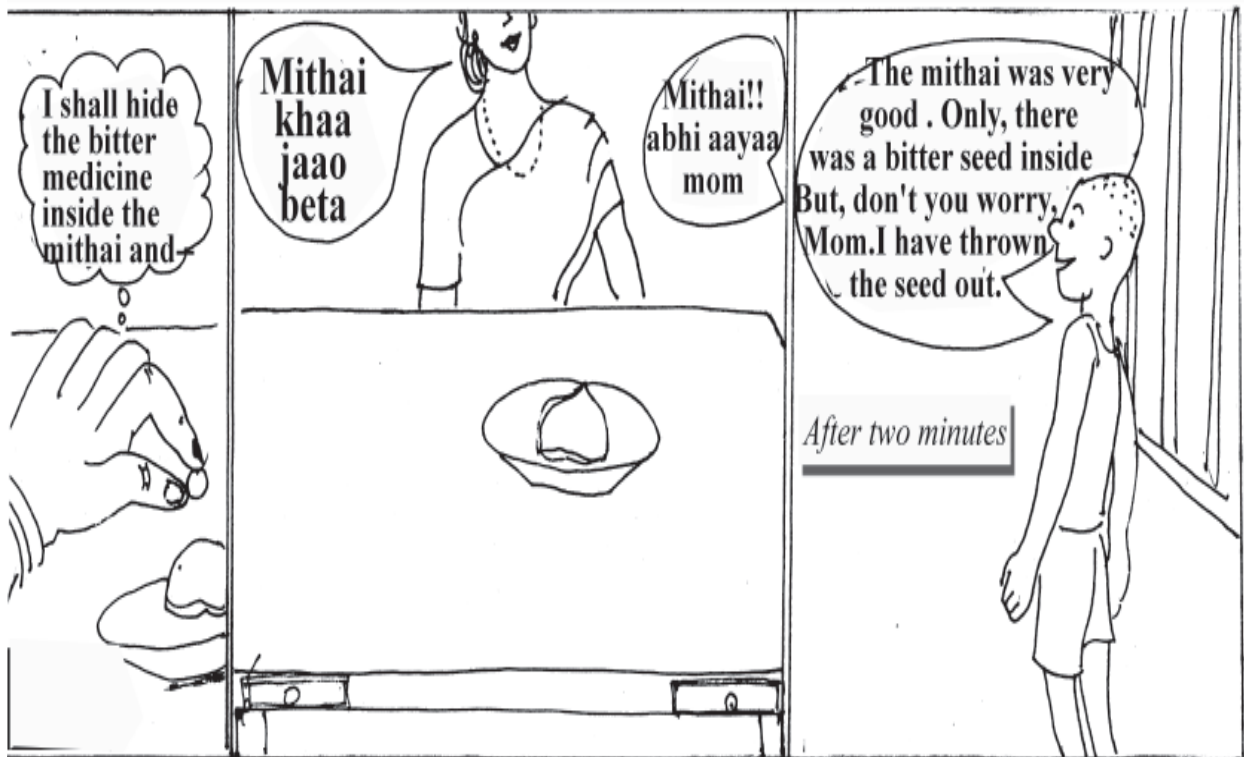
satisfaction that comes from connecting with other people. Therefore, the man inclines towards religion and spirituality which connects him with others in the world and paves the path of lasting peace and happiness.

Awdhesh K Singh
Additional Commissioner
Service Tax, Delhi
aksinghirs@gmail.com

Mr Awdhesh K Singh, an officer of 1990 batch, has taken a novel initiative to create the synthesis of the science, religion and spirituality. He is instrumental in the formation of "The Aatmic Science Foundation" which has its website www.scienceofsoul.com and publishes a journal titled "Science of Soul".

-Editor

MEERA BETAMAHAAN



By : Debjyoti Bhattacharyya



The Wail of a Bureaucrat

I too was once a boy of ten

When I watched with wonder

Birds of different voices

Singing on the banyan tree

With forty five years passing,

I have grown busier by the day

The banyan tree is yet standing by

And the colourful birds still come and sing

But alas, what shall I say

barring that today they leave me cold and

sad

Why, puzzled, I pondered one Sunday

Only to find that I have now grown to them

deaf.

S.V. Ramakrishnan
IRS (Rtd.)

Purity and Impurity

Purity and impurity depend oneself,
Cultivating good virtuous one purifies
oneself;

No fire like lust and no grip like hate,
No net like delusion and no river like
craving;

Eradicating lust and extinguishing hate and
craving,

Virtuous one purifies oneself,
Easy is the life of evil and shameless,
Hard is the life of virtuous and modest;

Strive earnestly discarding evil and
selfishness,

Happily live the virtuous giving up evil and
selfishness,

Woeful is the state of evil and endless is
suffering;

Not in the sky nor in mid-ocean,

Not in mountain cave nor in temple,

Abiding wherefrom could evil-doer escape;

Inexorable is law of Karma nobody is
exempt,

Purity and impurity depend oneself.

S.Subramanian
Addl. Director General, DGCEI
Kolkata



CBEC to IIM Ahmedabad

I was posted in CBEC, New Delhi, for one and a half years as Under Secretary till April, 2007. One fine day, I got a call from one of my old college friends. He told me that IIM Ahmedabad was conducting a one year post graduate programme in public management and policy (known as PGP PMP). This programme was sponsored by Government for civil servants. He told me that we could have a nice time there and back to old college days. Moreover there was also an international attachment for 2 months. Being in Government service, it is otherwise very difficult to make a foreign trip.

I was also not impressed by the idea of studying in IIM due to lack of interest in the subject of management. I had always thought that management is about theorizing common sense. Moreover, I had heard that the studies at IIM are very rigorous one and that the entrance exam is also difficult. Under persuasion from my friend, I applied officially for the course. There was an entrance exam followed by an interview in New Delhi. I was selected and I joined the course in April 2007.

I was delighted initially. There was a pleasure of getting out of the Board and also excitement of meeting new people and a new kind of life. IIM has a very beautiful campus. Accommodation is very good. There is a hostel for singles and there is hostel for married people who want to live with their family.

Refrigerators, air conditioners, televisions are all there. In short, life is quite comfortable there.

Within a few days, the programme started in a rigorous way. Typically, there are classes for 4-5 hours daily. However, students are expected to do a lot of reading outside the class. Expectation from students is nearly six hours of study at home. To add to trouble, there is system of surprise exam – meaning that instructors can take exams at any time without any warning. All of us had job experience of over seven years and we were out of touch with studies. It was common for us to wake up to 2AM. So it was strenuous in the beginning. But after two months- it was ok. We became used to hectic schedule at IIM and started enjoying it.

Evaluation in courses is done on basis of class participation, individual assignments, group assignments and exams. For group assignments, IIM had divided our class into six groups of five students each. These groups used to meet daily for discussion and working of assignments. There were all types of students in the class. Some worked hard and some did not. Those who do not want to work hard had the option to become free riders in group assignments (it is culturally not desirable).

There is a lot of variety in courses taught. We were exposed to economics, sociology,



mathematics, finance, ethics, and operations etc. apart from general management. There is a sufficient breadth of subjects so that every one can find something that interests him. I, for example, found interest in economics.

Then there was an international immersion for two months. I was sent to Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA. In USA, work load was very less. In a week, there were classes for a total of six hours. There was a lot of free time to freak out. We enjoyed many places of tourist interest. It was also an eye opener to see the western civilization. Absolutely no air pollution - no dust, greenery everywhere, no noise pollution. Even during rush traffic hours, people don't honk while driving. During my two months stay there, I heard the sound of car horn only 4-5 times. Respect for pedestrians is there. In India, pedestrians find it difficult to cross roads. In USA, you can cross the road without any trouble. Whenever a person steps to cross road, all the vehicles stop and wait for the person to cross the road. It is altogether a different world and different

standards of life. Public perception is that USA, as a country, is powerful and arrogant. However, I found that Americans are actually very truthful, polite and courteous.

I would like to mention that even though one feels stressed out and exhausted at times due to the voluminous readings, time bound submission of assignments etc., but on the whole, it was very good and rich experience at IIM. It gives variety in life- creates value addition and increases your worth. It also gives you an option to switch career. Many of my batch mates have already switched to high paying jobs in private sector. The camaraderie that has developed shall remain with me to cherish for a long time.

I will recommend this course for all civil servants. Information about this course can be had from website iimahd.ernet.in and persmin.nic.in.

Gaurav Sinha
Under Secretary, CBEC

**Do you know the difference between education and experience?
Education is when you read the fine print. Experience is what you get
when you don't.**

Pete Seeger

The things we know best are the things we haven't been taught.

Marquis De Vauvenargues



The Sleep of Yesterday Night

In this strange world
of pain and desire
no happier alternative
than a peaceful sleep.

Even this simple pleasure
became continuously denied.

Infinite dimensions of the mind
afflicted,
by pain in the body,
discontent in the heart,
and trepidation in the soul
gave endless sleepless nights.

Sleeplessness became
not a temporary indolence of the mind
but a terminal despair.

There was only unnatural sleep
sleep, coerced and enticed, by
sedatives, narcotics and intoxicants.

But, the sleep of last night
returned me into the realm of nature

I slept,
isolated from all things of this world
free from human woes
all lapses forgotten
even a dream never dared disturb
as I simply dissolved
in the endless forgiveness of sleep.

Dr. G. Sreekumar Menon
Commissioner (Appeals), Ranchi



खुल गया बंद अक्ल का ताला

संपादक जी ने मैगजीन के नए अंक के लिए रचनाएँ आमंत्रित करते हुए मुझे जगाया। क्या हुआ पिछले कई अंको से तुमने कोई रचना नहीं भेजी? सवाल के लिए मैं तैयार था। पर जवाब इतना आसान नहीं था। मैं कोई नामी गिरामी लेखक तो हूँ नहीं कि 'न लिखने के कारण' या कि 'बहाने' गिना सकूँ। यदि ये कहता कि सर जी - टाइम ही नहीं मिलता ऑफिस के काम से तो संपादक जी तुरंत ताड़ जाते। कारण यह कि संपादक बनने से पहले वे मेरे बॉस हुआ करते थे और जानते थे कि जब से देश 'लिबरलाइजेशन' के बुखार से ग्रसित हुआ है तब से कई लोगों के पास कंप्यूटर पर 'ताश का गेम' खेलने के अलावा कोई ज्यादा काम बचा नहीं सो मैंने बिना लपेट के जबाब दिया - बॉस आजकल अक्ल पर ताला पड़ गया है। संपादक जी ने छुटते ही जवाब दिया चलो, तुम्हारी इस अंक की रचना का शीर्षक मैं दे देता हूँ - 'खुल जाए बंद अक्ल का ताला'। के.बी.सी. के अंदाज में उन्होंने समय सीमा भी तय कर दी - 'आपका समय शुरू होता है अब'।

मित्रों यह है इस रचना की पूर्व-पीठिका। पर असली कहानी तो शुरू होती है। रचना का 'शीर्षक' मिलते ही मेरे दिमाग में कई प्वाइंट नजर आने लगे। शीर्षक का चुनाव ताले की कुंजी होती है। संपादक जी ने जब कुंजी थमा दी है तो ताला खुलेगा ही। ऐसा सोचते-सोचते दो दिन बीत गए और मेरी समय सीमा बाउंड्री लाइन के नजदीक पहुँचने लगी। मैंने अपने मन को समझाया। भइया-ख्याली पुलाव पकाना छोड़ो और कलम हाथ में लो।

कलम हाथ में आते ही सचमुच बंद अक्ल का ताला खुला - या कहे कि ताला दिखाई दिया। संपादक जी को ये शीर्षक मिला कहाँ से? बहुत दिमाग दौड़ाने पर याद आया कि अमिताभ बच्चन ने 'डॉन' की भूमिका में बनारसी पान खाने के बाद ऐसा ही कुछ कहा था। यानी कि शीर्षक 'एलाट'

करते वकत संपादक जी बनारसी पान का बीड़ा उठा रहे थे। कहने का मतलब यह कि यदि ताला खोलना है तो एक बीड़ा मुझे भी उठाना पड़ेगा।

पान के बीड़े का असर मेरी अक्ल पर हुआ कि नहीं - ये तो संपादक जी जाने या कि पाठकगण पर मेरे मुँह पर अवश्य हुआ। हुआ यह कि पान में चूना अधिक था। देश के अंदर चूना बहुतायत में पाया जाता है एवं जब जिसे मौका मिलता है वह दूसरे को चूना लगाने में कोई कसर नहीं छोड़ता। पान वाला तो खैर इसका 'ऑथराइज्ड डीलर' था। उसकी दुकान पर पान खाने वालों में बड़ी तादाद उन लोगों की होती थी जो दूसरो को चूना लगाने के व्यवसाय में थे। आदतन चूना पचाने की ताकत मेरे जैसे टाईम-पास लेखक से कई गुणा अधिक थी। बेचारा पान वाला मेरे पजामे-कुर्ते की वेशभूषा से चक्कर खा गया और इसलिए पान वाले का कोई दोष नहीं। मेरी ही अक्ल घास चरने गई थी कि अक्ल का ताला खोलने के चक्कर में यहाँ आया लेकिन पान की दुकान पर जाने का एक फायदा अवश्य हुआ। देश-दुनिया की जितनी खबरें आजकल के 'खबरिया' चैनलों की मार से बच गई थी उनसे रू-ब-रू हुआ। वैसे चैनलों की मार ने आजकल पान वालों का धंधा चौपट कर दिया। एक समय ऐसा था कि शाम को लोग पान खाने के लिए कम एवं खबरों के लिए अधिक - एक चक्कर पान की दुकान के लगा आते थे। पान की दुकान खबरों का अड्डा हुआ करती थी। कौन किसकी पत्नी को लेकर भाग गया, किसका चक्कर किसके साथ चल रहा है, किसका प्रमोशन हुआ, किसके ऊपर 'रेड' गिरी यानी तमाम सनसनीखेज खबरें - जो 'आजकल ब्रेकिंग न्यूज' के नाम से जानी जाती है पहले पान के दुकान से ही प्रसारित होती थी। यही नहीं आजकल चुनावों के पूर्व एवं चुनावों के बाद विश्लेषण का जो बुखार चढ़ा है - उसकी जड़ें भी पान की दुकान हुआ करते थे। हमारे आजकल के चैनल तो यह 'डिमाण्ड' नहीं कर पाते हैं कि किसको कितनी सीटें मिलेंगी, पुराने



पान की दुकानों के रसिया छोटे से कस्बों में रेडियो की न्यूज का विश्लेषण करते हुए राष्ट्रपति का चुनाव कर डालते थे और विश्लेषण भी एकदम स्टीक। क्रिकेट का तथाकथित 'फोर्थ एम्पायर' आज भले ही मीडिया बन बैठा हो, एक जमाने में पान की दुकान हुआ करता था। मुझे तो लगता है कि 'न्यूज चैनल' वालों ने पान की दुकान से आइडिया चुराकर "चौबीस घंटे" का पेटेंट करा लिया है एवं पान वालों को एसोसिएशन बनाकर इस चोरी के खिलाफ 'इन्टलेक्चुअल प्रोपर्टी राइट' का मुकदमा चलाना चाहिए।

ऐसा ही कुछ विचारते हुए घर लौटा। देखता हूँ कि घर पर ताला लगा है। पड़ोसी से पूछने पर पता चला कि श्रीमती जी किसी जरूरी काम से बाहर गई हैं एवं घंटे भर बाद वापस लौटेंगी। अमूमन घर के बाहरी ताले की एक चाबी मेरे पास रहती थी - परन्तु अक्ल का ताला खोलने की जल्दी में घर के ताले की चाबी घर के अंदर ही रह गई। एक बार विचार आया कि घंटा भर इंतजार कौन करे ताला तोड़ा भी तो जा सकता है। पर ताले को देखकर विचार त्यागना पड़ा। यह हमारा पुश्तैनी ताला था जो मेरे दादा जी - या उनके पिताजी अलीगढ़ से लेकर आए थे। कहते हैं पुरखों-पूर्वजों की आत्मा हमारी रक्षा करती है। ताले में मुझे उनका प्रतिदर्श दिखाई दिया। ताला तोड़ने का विचार मैंने तत्काल त्याग दिया एक रास्ता और था। ताले की डुप्लिकेट चाबी बनवा ली जाए। कब्बन मियाँ का बेटा बब्बन मुहल्ले की नुककड़ पर डुप्लिकेट चाबी बनाने की दुकान चलाता था। दुकान क्या थी - लकड़ी का एक चलता-फिरता डब्बा। उसका आधा समय लोगों के बंद ताले खोलने में जाता था और आधा समय पुलिस की हाजत में यह सफाई देने में कि फलौं चोरी में ताला खोलने की 'कलाकारी' उसने नहीं दिखाई थी। वैसे कुछ लोग इतनी बार पुलिस में उसकी आवाजाही देखकर उसे पुलिस का भेदिया भी मानने लगे थे। किसी की मालदार तिजोरी के ताले की चाबी गुम हो जाए तो वह बब्बन से ताला खुलवाकर अपने माल-मत्ते को जगजाहिर करने की बजाए ताला तोड़ना ही उचित समझता था।

खैर! हमारी हालत तो बकौल मिर्जा गालिब के 'घर में क्या था तेरा गम जिसे गारत करता' की थी इसलिए हमें ऐसा कोई डर न था। संयोगवश बब्बन मियाँ अभी-अभी पुलिस की परेड से वापस लौटे थे एवं तुरंत घर आने को राजी हो गए। परन्तु घर आकर ताले का मुआयना करने के बाद जो कुछ उन्होंने बताया उसके बाद ताले की नई चाबी का आइडिया ड्राप करना पड़ा। उन्होंने बताया कि यह कोई आजकल का मरियल ताला नहीं है जो मिनट दो मिनट में खुल जाए। यह अंग्रेजों के जमाने का अलीगढ़ी ताला है। अंग्रेज अपने बंदियों को हाजत में रखने मात्र से संतुष्ट नहीं हो जाते थे बल्कि यह तसल्ली करते थे कि कोई 'अन्दर कम बाहर ज्यादा' न दिखे। उन्होंने मुआयना करके यह बताया कि इसे खोलने में कम से कम दो घंटे लगेंगे और खर्च 100 रूपये। मुझे लगा इतने समय में तो धर्मपत्नी जी आ ही जाएँगी एवं यदि उन्होंने मुझे इस चोरी छिपे ढग से 'चोरी का ताला खोलने वाले बब्बन' की मदद से ताला खोलते देख लिया तो मेरी खैर नहीं। सो इस आइडिया को ड्राप करके मैंने चुपचाप इंतजार करने में ही अपनी भलाई समझी।

पर इस ताले ने मुझे यह सोचने पर मजबूर किया कि कहीं संपादक जी के इस शीर्षक के पीछे कुछ व्यवसायिक राजनीति तो नहीं। कहीं अलीगढ़ के ताला व्यवसायियों ने ताले के विज्ञापन का कोई नया तरीका तो नहीं ढूँढ़ निकाला। कुछ ऐसे ही जैसे किसी नई 'बाईक' या 'कार' का प्रचार करना हो तो सिनेमा का 'हीरो' पूरी फिल्म में उसी बाईक के इर्द-गिर्द नजर आता है। कैमरे की निगाहें हीरो के चेहरे को कम और 'कार' या 'बाईक' के 'माहरे' अधिक कैद करती नजर आती है। अब मुझे 'शीर्षक' का गणित साफ-साफ नजर आने लगा। संपादक जी की ससुराल अलीगढ़ थी। अलीगढ़ के ताला व्यवसाय को ताला न लगे इस मुहिम में संपादक जी अपनी नई योगदान देना चाहते थे। आखिरकार मेरे घर के ताले ने मेरी बंद अक्ल का ताला खोल ही दिया।

शैलेश कुमार
संयुक्त आयुक्त, नाशिक



ओ माँ

ओ माँ यह शब्द अमृत सा,
दिल को सुकून से भर देता
शीतल, कोमल सा एक स्पर्श,
घनी छांव सा सुख देता।

तेरा ऋण कोई कैसे चुकाये,
तू उदार, ममतामयी माता,
सौ-सौ हाथों से अपने स्नेह को,
तू ने बच्चों पर सदा लुटाया।

ओ माँ तेरा अपार स्नेह,
तू ने ही दिया हम को तन,
करे कोई कैसे तेरा शुक्रिया,
तू ने ही दिया हम को जन्म।

बोलना सिखाकर बच्चों को तू,
खुद अपनी व्यथा से मौन हो गई,
एक नयी पहचान दिला दुनिया में,
तू अपने व्यक्तित्व से गौण हो गई।

खुद सहे कष्ट सब अपने ऊपर,
हम को अपनी गोद में रखा,
उफ ना करी कभी चाहे जो हो,
खुद गीले में, हमें सूखे में रखा।

जब रोये हम, तू रो दी,
जब हम हंसे, तू हंस दी,
तेरी एक-एक बूंद दूध की,
बनी हमारे जीवन की शक्ति।

खुद का खाना-पीना बिसरा कर,
तू ने हम को तन से सींचा,
कभी जो ठोकर लगी हमको,
दर्द तेरे सीने में उभरा।

पग-पग पर तेरी आंचल की छांव,
रही बचाती हमें ताप से,
दिये संस्कार जो तूने हमें,
जीवन जीने का माप बने।

खुद की खुशियां नगण्य हो गयी,
कदम-कदम जब चलना सिखाया,
अपने बच्चों की एक हंसी ने,
तुझ में जीने का उत्साह जगाया।

जो ये दुनिया तुझ सी हो जाती,
क्या कमी कोई रह पाती,
तुझ सी करुणा जो दुनिया में होती,
कभी जंग ना कोई लड़ी जाती।

जगी रात भर लिये गोद में,
जब कष्ट कोई हम पर आया,
हारी दुनिया की सभी मुश्किलें,
विकट साहस जो तू ने दिखलाया।

आर. के. गुप्ता
मुख्य आयुक्त
केन्द्रीय उत्पाद शुल्क एवं सीमा शुल्क
जयपुर जोन



बच्चों के लिए

नमक की कहानी

उड़िया लोक कथा

प्यारे बच्चो! सोडियम और क्लोरीन दो ऐसी चीज़ें हैं जो अलग-अलग रहें तो इंसान के लिए ज़हरीले होते हैं, लेकिन जब वे दो ज़हर इकट्ठा हो जाते हैं तो बनता है नमक जो हम आराम से खाते हैं। आदिवासियों को इस विज्ञान का पता तो नहीं था, लेकिन उड़ीसा के एक प्राचीन लोक-कथा में इस बात को जरूर बताया गया है कि ज़हर से नमक पैदा होता है। अब मैं वही कहानी आपको बताऊँगा:-

जंगल के पास बिमरगुड़ा नाम का छोटा सा गाँव था। वहाँ था एक दूधवाले का घर। घर में उसकी बीबी और एक नन्हा सा बेटा था। और थी एक गाय। दूधवाली अपने बेटे को नहलाती, धुलाती, खिलाती, सजाती और सुबह शाम बेटे के साथ



मिलकर ढ़ोल भी बजाती थी। दूधवाला दूध लेकर गाँव-गाँव में बेचता फिरता था। कमाई का आधा हिस्सा जाता था चुल्हा चक्की में। बाकी का पैसा वह एक कटोरे में छुपाकर रखता था। एक दिन जब पैसों से कटोरा बिलकुल भर गया तो चादर के कोने में पैसा बांधकर वह निकला अपने बेटे के लिए बहू ढ़ूढ़ने।

ढ़ूढ़ते-ढ़ूढ़ते सात गाँव छोड़कर आठवें गाँव से अपने बेटे के लिए एक खूबसूरत बहू लाया। नन्हा सा लड़का, उसकी नन्ही सी बहू - दोनों मिलकर दिनभर खेलते फिरते थे। दूधवाली दोनों को बहुत दुलार करती थी।

एक दिन दूधवाला दोपहर को किसी काम से पास वाले गाँव में गया। अब दूध-दही बेचने कौन जाएगा? दूधवाली ने बेटे और बहू को नहला-धुलाकर खाना खिलाया, लोरी सुनाकर सुलाया और घर का दरवाजा बन्द करके खुद ही दही का मटका बाजार की ओर लेकर चल दी। बीच में एक जंगल आया। ऊँचे-ऊँचे घास के बीच में से रास्ता था। तेज सी धूप थी। चलते-चलते दूधवाली को थकान लग गयी। प्यास भी लग रही थी। दही का मटका इतना भारी लग रहा था मानो कि लोहे का मटका।

उस जंगल में एक ज़हरीला साँप रहा करता था। दूधवाली की आहत मिलते ही वह फुफ़कारते हुए बाहर आ गया और उसकी उंगली को डस लिया। दूधवाली ज़मीन पर गिर पड़ी और कुछ ही क्षण में उसने अपना दम तोड़ दिया। साँप ने उसके गिरे हुए मटके से जी भरकर दही पिया और बचे हुए दही में अपना ज़हर मिलाकर वापस जंगल में चला गया।

शाम के समय बाज़ार से लौटते हुए गाँव वाले ने देखा, दही का मटका बीच रास्ते में छोड़कर दूधवाली, मरी हुई रास्ते पर पड़ी है। गाँव वाले दही



के मटके से थोड़ा-थोड़ा दही लेकर घर चले गए और उसको चख भी लिया। साँप के ज़हर के प्रभाव से तब तक वह दही नमकीन हो चुका था। सब को वह नमकीन स्वाद बहुत अच्छा लगा, क्योंकि तब तक इंसान नमक के बारे में जानते नहीं थे। दही कैसे नमकीन हुआ इस का पता लगाने के लिए सब मिलकर दूसरे दिन फिर उसी जगह पर जा पहुँचे। तब तक साँप के ज़हर के प्रभाव से दूधवाली के शरीर और दही का मटका मिट्टी में मिल चुके थे। उस जगह की मिट्टी भी एक सफ़ेद धूल जैसा रूप लिए थी। गाँव वालों ने उस सफ़ेद धूल को चख कर देखा तो वह नमकीन निकली। वे वह सफ़ेद धूल उठाकर अपने-अपने घर ले गए और खाने में उसे मिलाना शुरू कर दिया।

आज भी खाने में उस धूल को मिलाने का प्रचलन है। उसे हम नमक कहते हैं। समुन्द्र में जो बड़े-बड़े नाग होते हैं उसके ज़हर से समुन्द्र के पानी में बहुत सारा नमक तैयार होता है। वह नमक हम पानी से निकालकर खाते हैं।

देबज्योति भट्टाचार्य
अपर आयुक्त, भोपाल

“बीती ताहि बिसार दे आगे की सुधि ले”

एक बार राजा जंगल में घूम रहे थे। घूमते-घूमते एक अज्ञात जगह निकल गये। प्यास लगने पर उन्होंने एक वनवासी का सहारा लिया। वनवासी ने पथिक की अच्छी सेवा की। वनवासी के व्यवहार से पथिक बहुत प्रभावित हुआ व खुश भी। जाने के समय पथिक वनवासी से बोला, मैं इस प्रदेश का राजा हूँ। मैं तुम्हारे व्यवहार से बहुत खुश हूँ। उपहार के रूप में, एक चन्दन का बाग तुम्हें दे रहा हूँ।

इस प्रकार चन्दन का बाग वनवासी को देकर राजा चला गया। वनवासी चन्दन के बारे में अधिक नहीं जानता था। वनवासी चन्दन की लकड़ी को काटकर, उसका कोयला बनाकर बेचने लगा। धीरे-धीरे उसके जीवन में, इस तरह कुछ सुधार आया।

एक बार अधिक वर्षा होने के कारण, वह कोयला न बना सका। अब तक चन्दन के वृक्ष लगभग समाप्त हो गये थे। केवल दो-चार वृक्ष ही शेष रह गये थे। वनवासी कुछ लकड़ी काट कर, ऐसे ही बाजार में ले गया। चन्दन की खुशबू से बाजार महक उठा। लोगों ने वनवासी को बहुत सा

धन देकर, उस लकड़ी को खरीद लिया। एक व्यक्ति बोला, अगर तुम्हारे पास और ऐसी लकड़ी हो, तो तुम्हें उसका बहुत सा दाम मिल सकता है।

व्यक्ति की बात सुन कर, वनवासी की आंखे फटी की फटी रह गईं। पछतावा हुआ, असमंजस में सोचने लगा। तब सारी बात वनवासी ने उस व्यक्ति को बताई। व्यक्ति वनवासी से बोला- ऐसे पछताने से कुछ लाभ नहीं होगा। जो भी एक-आध वृक्ष बचा है, उस का सदुपयोग कर के, इसी जीवन में लाभ ले लो। तुम घबराओ नहीं - यह संसार तुम्हारी ही तरह मूर्ख लोगों से भरा पडा है।

बहुत कुछ गवां कर भी, शेष का सदुपयोग कर के, बहुत कुछ पाया जा सकता है।

श्रवण मित्तल
रसायन परीक्षक
के.रा.नियन्त्रण प्रयोगशाला
नई दिल्ली



पहेली

मेरी तन्हाइयों का
तुम जवाब नहीं हो,
मेरी रूसवाइयों का
तुम इलाज नहीं हो।
मेरे शिकवों का
तुम सिलसिला हो,
मेरे सपनों की
तुम कसक हो।
इस प्यार का
फलसफा है यही
मैं
तुम्हारे लिये हूँ
पर तुम
मेरे लिये नहीं हो।
कुछ सवालों के
जवाब नहीं होते,
कुछ जवाब
खुद एक सवाल होते हैं।
जो यह पहेली
सुलझ गयी होती
तो फिर जिन्दगी में
तुम्हारे ख्वाब नहीं होते।

फिर वही दर्द

फिर वही दर्द ले आया समीर
सर्द हवाएं और हम फकीर।
प्यार की आड़ ले
आहट देता है दर्द
और
प्यार की आस में
दर्द को दे देते हैं
हम दावत।
फिर परोसते हैं वही आँसू
वही सिसकियाँ
और
वही तन्हाईयाँ।
पी लेते हैं फिर से
अपने अरमानों का गम
महसूस होती है सिहरन
और काँपता है मन,
कहाँ ये दावत
और
कहाँ हम फकीर।
एक जमाना हो गया
इस दर्द को पाते-पीते,
अब तो बस जान ही जायेगी
यूँ जीते-जीते।

डॉ. कविता भटनागर
संयुक्त आयुक्त (का. एवं सत्)
जयपुर



गाँव

याद आता है,
वह बचपन और वह गांव,
दुबला, पुरवट, बाहा, माई, काकी और अडया,
तालाब के किनारे बबूल पर लटके घोंसले,
साझे का हल-बैल,
उपरी में उधार की आग
बेदा पण्डित।
गुडई का तालाब,
गौरी शंकर का मेला,
चौरहिया जलेबी,
सुबह-सुबह बाबू के श्रीमुख से निकली
ताबड़-तोड़ गालियां,
खूंटे में बंधे बझड़े,
मुन्ना के दुआरे लहकता बेहया,
धुंधलके में हुआं-हुआं करता लेड़िपहवा सियार,
बरपुर की मांट-अफवाहें,
कल्लन का मछली-मारना,
गुरमिहा का कान,
बदल का मड़मूंज,

होली का फाग और चौताल,
पगला और चौरामाई का मन्दिर,
घूर,
बसरही-सुजानगंज का मेला,
लहलहाते धान-मकई के खेत,
खलिहान में चलती बैलों की दंवरी,
पन्डोह, छछूंदर,
कैथ, आम और झरबेरियों के स्वाद,
जोखई की नाच में बजता नगाड़ा, मशदंग,
साहेब लाल और अखिलेश की
भूत-प्रेत-चुडैलों की कहानियां
जांत पीसती मां का मोहक सोहर,
शादी-ब्याह में गाए मदमाते लोकगीत,
याद आता है सब कुछ,
शिदत से,
वो गांव और वे लोग।

के. एम. तिवारी
पूर्व मुख्य आयुक्त, सीमा शुल्क
मुम्बई



ख्वाहिश छोटी सी

आज 25 बरस हो गए हैं। थक गया हूँ। यह मनहूस ख्वाहिश गले की हड्डी बन गई है, जो निगले न बने उगले न बने। उस दिन तो मेरा छः साल का नाती भी कह उठा: “नाना, नाना, हौसला मत हारो। आप होंगे कामयाब, एक दिन। इस बार मन्दिर में पांच रूपये के बजाय ग्यारह रूपये के प्रसाद की मन्नत मांग के आना”। मेरी बीबी भी पहले तो बहुत शिकायत करती थी, पर फिर मैंने अपना एक मोटी रकम का जीवन बीमा करा लिया, अब उसकी शिकायत केवल भगवान से है।

चलो छोड़ो, बात को लम्बा क्या खींचना। हुआ यूं कि मसूरी की लाल बहादुर प्रशासनिक अकादमी में प्रवेश पाने के कुछ दिन बाद ही यह फरमान सुनने को पड़ा कि हमें दस दिन के लिए ‘ट्रैकिंग’ पर जाना पड़ेगा। मसूरी की ठंड से तो मैं पहले ही परेशान था, उपर से और उँचे पहाड़ पर, वो भी पैदल। एक तरफ पसीना और फिर छिड़ी कंपकपी। कोशिश की कि आकस्मिक अवकाश लेकर या बीमारी का बहाना बनाकर जान छूट जाए, लेकिन पहली बार लगा कि यह जरूरी नहीं कि सरकारी दफ्तर में हर चीज ‘मैनेज’ हो सकती है।

खैर, कैसे तैसे मन को मना लिया। हाँ, यह जानकर कुछ संतोष हुआ कि हरेक ‘प्रोबेशनर’ कुल 18 जगहों से कोई एक ‘ट्रैकिंग’ के लिए ‘चूज’ कर सकता है। इन 18 जगहों में क्रमशः सबसे आसान नः 1 पर थी और सबसे मुश्किल नः 18 पर। मुझे तो कुछ सोचने की जरूरत नहीं थी। सीधे-सीधे नः 1 पर ‘टिक’ कर दिया। अकादमी में मेरे दोस्तों को पता चला कि जोर

से डाँट फटकार हुई। अरे, यह ट्रैक तो लड़कियों के लिए है। हमारी नाक कटवायेगा? थोड़ी ‘बारगेनिंग’ करके मामला ट्रैक नः 8 यानि हर-की-दून पर ‘सैटल’ हुआ

पहले ही दिन छटी का दूध याद आ गया। पहले पड़ाव पर जब पहुंचा तो रात के आठ बजे चुके थे। ज्यादातर लोग तो सो चुके थे, एक दो खाना तो खा चुके थे, पर मेरा इन्तजार कर रहे थे। पूछने पर पता चला कि लगभग सभी दोपहर 2 या 3 बजे तक पड़ाव पर पहुंच चुके थे। अरे, टांगों में जरा भी दम नहीं, एक ने फटकारा। कल से थोड़ा तेज चलना।

अगले दिन मैं पूरे जोश से उठा और पक्का इरादा किया कि आज तो नाक नहीं कटवानी है, पर यह क्या, एक-एक करके सब मुझसे आगे निकलते गए और दस बजे तक तो मेरे से पीछे कोई न था। लेकिन उस रात जब मैं नौ बजे पड़ाव पर पहुंचा तो कोई इन्तजार नहीं कर था। रसोई बन्द हो चुकी थी। सोने की जगह भी कम ही बची थी और वहां भी ठंड के मारे एक कुत्ता दुबक कर सो रहा था। थोड़ी आँख खोलकर उसने मुझे इशारा किया कि चलो यहीं आराम कर लो।

अगले दिन से मेरी ‘स्पीड’ तो नहीं बढ़ी। हां दोस्तों के मजाक की हद जरूर बढ़ गई। अब तो लड़कियां भी मजे लेकर पूछती: भैया, आप कालेज में क्या ‘स्लो वाकिंग’ चैम्पियन थे?

‘ट्रैकिंग’ के बाकी दिन मैं लगभग अकेले ही चला। बड़ी तमन्ना होती कि कोई मुझसे भी पीछे



हो। तभी याद आयी स्कूल के मास्टर जी की बात, वो अक्सर रिजल्ट के दिन कहते “बेटा, तू हर बरस क्लास में ‘लास्ट’ होता है, क्या कभी ऐसा दिन भी आयेगा कि तुमसे पीछे भी कोई हो।” मास्टर जी की यह इच्छा स्कूल के मेरे ग्यारह साल में कभी भी पूरी नहीं हुई। पिता जी की बात भी याद आती: “बेटा, तू इतना ढीला-ढाला क्यों है? तुझसे जिन्दगी में कुछ नहीं होगा। बहुत अच्छी किस्मत हुई तो ज्यादा से ज्यादा सरकारी नौकरी ही कर पायेगा।”

कैसे तैसे ‘ट्रैकिंग पूरी हुई, लेकिन मैंने अपने से एक वायदा किया-अगली बार ऐसा न होगा। चाहे मैं पहले स्थान पर न होऊँ पर मुझसे पीछे तो कोई न कोई जरूर होगा। अब जीवन का एक बड़ा मकसद इस इरादे को पूरा करना हो गया।

मौका मिलते ही अपने चार मित्रों को इकट्ठा करके ‘ट्रैकिंग’ का प्रोग्राम बनाया। कोई आनाकानी न करे इसलिए पूरा खर्चा स्वयं उठाने का आश्वासन भी दिया। पर भला अन्दर की बात उन्हें कैसे बताता। खर्चा तो अलग, कई दिन के अथक परिश्रम के बाद भी नतीजा वही। मन मसोस कर फैसला किया कि अगली बार कुछ कमजोर दोस्तों को पकड़कर ‘ट्राई’ मारूंगा।

अगली बार भी असफलता ने बड़े प्रेम से मेरे पांव चूमें। बड़ी मेहनत की थी उपयुक्त पात्रों को ढूँढने की। पर क्या पता, लोगों की टांगों में इतनी ताकत कहां से आती है।

कब तक शर्माता रहूंगा अब दोस्तों से अपना दर्द छुपाना तो दाईं से पेट छुपाने वाली बात है। सहानुभूति प्रकट करते हुए उन्होंने सुझाव दिया: क्यों नहीं कैलाश मानसरोवर यात्रा पर जा आते, वहां पर एकदम बूढ़े-बाढ़े यात्री आते हैं। भगवान

ने चाहा तो तुम्हारी मनोकामना जरूर पूरी होगी। बात मान ली। पर ‘ओम नमः शिवाय’ की ललकार करते हुए बूढ़े क्या और नौजवान क्या, ऐसे चलते जैसे औलम्पिक में भागने की तैयारी करने आये हैं। वाह री किस्मत, हजारों का खर्चा और हाथ लगी तो निराशा। एक बार फिर।

मैं कहां हार मानने वाला था। फैसला किया कि कम खर्चे वाली ‘आरगनाईज्ड ट्रैकिंगज’ में ही जाऊंगा। सफलता तो जब मिलनी है मिलेगी पर अब और पैसा बरबाद नहीं करूंगा।

इसी अभियान के अन्तर्गत कोई 50 लोगों के एक ग्रुप से रूप कुण्ड के प्राइवेट ट्रैक में शामिल होने का फैसला किया। ट्रैक के तीसरे दिन लगा कि भगवान ने सुन ली है। 35 वर्षीय एक महिला मेरे साथ-साथ धीरे-धीरे चल रही थी। मुझे उम्मीद थी कि आज नहीं तो कल जरूर वह मुझसे पिछड़ने वाली है। लेकिन अगला पड़ाव आते तक होठों ओर प्याले का फासला बना रहा। बिजली तो तब गिरी जब उसने पड़ाव पर पहुँच कर शिकायत भरे स्वर में सबसे कहा-“मैंने क्या ठेका ले रखा है, अंकल का ख्याल रखने का। तुम सब तो आगे-आगे भागे आते हो। कल से यह जिम्मा किसी और को लेना पड़ेगा”।

अब भी ‘रेगुलरली’ ट्रैकिंग पर जाता हूँ यही उम्मीद लिए जाने कब किस मोड़ पर पूरी हो जाए यह छोटी सी ख्वाहिश।

डॉ. डी.डी. ऋषि
आयुक्त

प्रचार एवं जन सम्पर्क निदेशालय



Presidential Award of Appreciation Certificate for Specially Distinguished Record of Service - 2008



Ms. V. Usha
Additional Director, Systems



Shyam Raj Prasad
Additional Director, DRI



C.P. Goel
Additional Commissioner, Service Tax



Shaik Khader Rahman
Additional Commissioner, DG Valuation



Ravinder Saroop
Director, TRU, CBEC



Ms. Hemambika R. Priya
Director, CX-6 & 8, CBEC



J.S. Shanshanwal
Assistant Director, DRI



Sanjai K. Srivastava
A.A.D., DOPM



Ms. Susan Verghese
S.I.O., DRI



P. Vijyan
S.I.O., DRI



Ballinani Sreenivasa Gandhi
S.I.O., DRI



M. Venkata Sreeram
S.I.O., DRI



Chetan Kumar Verma
S.I.O., D.G.C.E.I.



S.G. Jadhav
Superintendent, C.C.O.



M.N. Verma
Superintendent



O. Haridasan
Superintendent, Customs



R.K. Kashiv
Superintendent, C. Ex.



N.N. Sinha
Superintendent, DG Vigilance



S.K. Gupta
Superintendent, C. Ex.



T. Joshua
I.O., DRI



V. Karthikeyan
Inspector, C.Ex.



K. Manoharan
Inspector, C.Ex.



Sanjay Kumar
I.O., D.G.C.E.I.



Mayank Koshariya
I.O., D.G.C.E.I.



Abhijeet Dutta
Inspector, C.Ex.



Nilimoy Das
I.O., D.R.I.



Ranapal
I.O., D.R.I. Hqrs.



R.K. Jain
I.O., D.R.I.



Jai Parkash Raju
Tax Assistant., D.R.I. Hqrs.



K. Radhakrishnan
Driver Grade-I, DRI



Jagmel Singh
Sepoy, C. Ex.

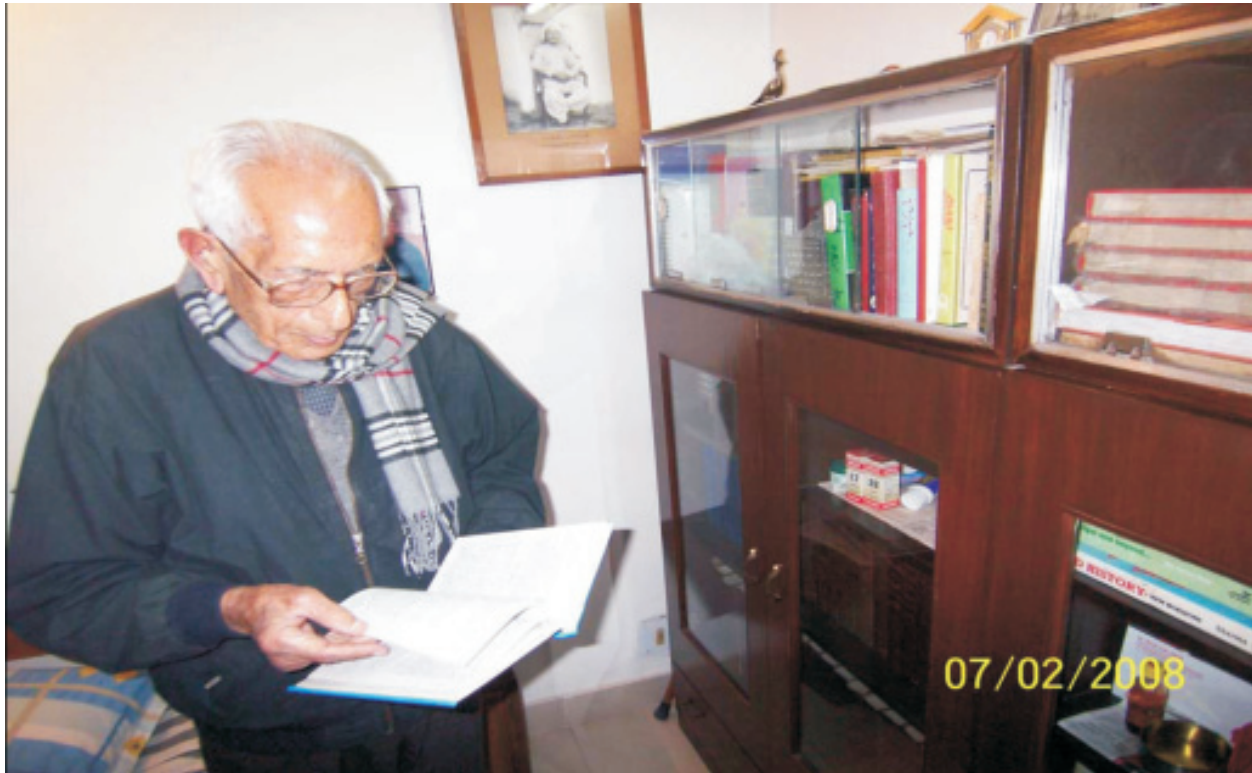
We regret that inspite of our best efforts, we have not been able to obtain the photographs of other recipients, Shri M. Subramanyam, Trade Counsel, CJI, New York; Shri Roop Singh, SIO, DRI; Shri Claudius Anthony Fernandes, Supdt. (Customs); and Shri Santha Kumar S., Supdt.

-Editor



Special Feature

Reminiscences



Shri Lachman Dev (aged 92 years) with his books,
as photographed by the Editor, ICE QUARTERLY, during
an interview with him on 7th February, 2008

LACHMAN DEV

**Collector of Customs & C. Excise
(Last assignment: Secretary,
Central Excise SRP Review Committee)**

Joined: 1937 Retired: 1974

Presently residing at: Delhi

**When and where were you born? Also
tell us about your early education.**

I was born on 31st August, 1916 in Quetta, Pakistan. Initial education was in a nearby village school, after which I shifted to Government College, Lahore (1932-36).

What subjects did you study there?

I did my honours in English. Studied history as well.

Is this the same Quetta which is often referred to in the context of most disastrous earthquakes?

You are right. In fact, I was associated with Quetta earthquake relief work!

What were your aspirations when you left college in 1936?

Those were days of unemployment and uncertainty. A good government job was all that one could aspire for.



What is your daily routine at present?

Reading mostly books of history, writing presently some reminiscences of my official life at the instance of my children, watching cricket on T.V., taking short walks within the colony and musing.

History?

Yeah, Indian history and study of Islam as a religion.

Are you a deeply religious person? How much time you spend on prayers?

Well, my faith is rational. I believe that there is a creator who made this world but I do not pray or follow any rituals.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service?

Not really. No. It is already nearly 34 years since I retired.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

My association with some very remarkable characters both English and Indian during my official career which have been a guiding light.

Any incident worth mention?

Once, we received a letter from an Indian ICS officer addressed to a British boss wherein the former had written something

like this: "I have received a gift of one shawl worth about Rs.500 and a rosary worth about Rs.50 from a muslim friend who has returned from a pilgrimage. As a Government servant I can't accept this gift but refusing to accept will be considered highly offensive not only by my friend but also by his whole community. I request for advice in the matter." The boss sent this letter to us with the remarks to study the matter in the light of regulations and manuals then in force. When we put up the file saying that neither were there any precedents nor was there anything in the manuals, the file came back in ten minutes with clear order: "1. The officer should accept the gifts. 2. He should deposit the value of these gifts, as assessed by himself, in the Government Toshkhana. 3. On the next suitable occasion, he should withdraw goods of equivalent value from the Government Toshakhana for giving gifts to this friend from whom he is accepting the gifts in question." These orders were not only very clear and crisp but also took care of the whole situation in the wisest possible manner.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

The bossing spirit if it still prevails.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Inspire my colleagues with example which obviously was not enough because of my own feelings and weakness.



The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

To be blessed with children and grandchildren who have looked after me so well and satisfied all my wants in my advancing years (particularly after the death of my wife). Loving care bestowed on me sustains me.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

I invariably regretted it and made suitable amends as far as possible.

What thrills you at present?

Gandhiana – Urdu poetry – Ghalib, Iqbal and Faiz in particular.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Refusing requests of leave, assuming that they were not genuine.

There must be something behind this regret?

Yeah, in fact, there was an employee who asked for leave on the ground of his mother's illness. I granted it. After six months, he made similar request and again I granted it. When he asked for leave for the third time on the same ground, I refused. But it so happened that his mother was really ill and she died without her son being with her this time.

One advice that you would give to those who are going to retire in near future?

Quit in grace, forgetting the past and live in the future with confidence and in harmony with your own surrounding.

Anything else you would like to say, Sir?

It has been 34 years since I retired. With you coming to see me, I feel I am still a part of the family.



JASJIT SINGH

Chairman, C.B.E.C. (Rtd.)

Joined: 1943 (Indian Air Force)
1948 (Indian Customs Service)

Retired: 1979

Presently residing at: New Delhi

What is your daily routine at present?

Reading books, magazines, watching sports & other interesting events on T.V., a brief walk, playing bridge and enjoying the company of children, grand children, near & dear ones.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service?

It gives me the greatest pleasure when senior & junior officers call me or see me even now after I have retired 28 years ago. I am 87 now.



Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

The first person I met on entering Bombay Custom House was Mr. Rangaswamy who 'greeted' me with the remark: "Mr Singh, there is no future here - you will retire as Asstt. Collector only." I am glad he was proved totally wrong. I have had a most satisfying career and feel proud of the Service I belonged to.

My advice is that retirement should not be taken as end of everything, but beginning of new chapter. Continue to live your life fully, engage yourself in some hobbies, have lively intercourse on issues of national importance and do some social service, if possible.



Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Improve the image.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

I strived throughout that none of our officers get politicised. Much more needs to be done in that direction.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

I had a stint in the International Narcotics Control Board post retirement and some other occupations to keep me occupied. A very satisfying career of which I remain very proud.

What thrills you at present?

That I am still around at 87.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

D.N. Mehta

**Additional Secretary
(Revision Application) (Rtd.)**

Joined: 1955 **Retired:** 1982

Presently residing at: Delhi

What is your daily routine at present?

Get up at or before 5 A.M. Have exercise and morning walk after my bath. Newspaper after morning prayers. Attend to court matters and children's problems, if any, during the day. Watch T.V. or attend to social obligations before going to sleep at 10 P.M.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes, I am in contact with some of them. It helps in sharing our experiences and makes you feel young with satisfaction that the past was not altogether wasted.



Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

It is the spirit of cooperation that matters. The department offers challenges which are worth meeting badly in the larger interests of the country bearing in mind that virtue is its own reward.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Comfortable life as Advocate and President of CESTAT Bar, several visits abroad, children well-settled in life.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

A foreigner – smuggler's car escaped detention/seizure while I was A.C. Preventive, Madras, despite DRI alert. Fortunately, concerned Inspector (Prev.), who was alerted in turn orally in the mid of night accepted the blame.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Be Happy. In the words of Buddha "whatever has happened, has happened for good. Whatever will happen, will happen good and whatever is happening is happening good."



M.L. WADHAWAN

Director General, Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (Rtd.)

Joined: 1957 Retired: 1987

Presently residing at: New Delhi

What is your daily routine at present?

Playing Golf and attending to my wife – a heart patient.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

There are no friends still in service. But those serving who worked as friends are very regardful. No role as such.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

1981-1986: Specially deputed to Accra and Mauritius on their PM's requests to address their problems – smuggling, drugs, foreign exchange leakages. Discussed my report with the PMs who sent their gratitude to our PM.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Lack of uprightness.



The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Tension free life.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

Just address him as Mr. and tell him why I got angry with him, in a raised voice.

What thrills you at present?

Nothing in particular. But Indian cricket team's grand victory in an international match, yes.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Being too close to the seniors even if the latter drag you to their close proximity.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

When snubbed by the then Secretary, Environment, in the presence of my boss simply on my saying in reply that our officers had no powers to act as the Forest Officers and my boss keeping silent.



I.J. RAO

Vice President, CEGAT (Rtd.)

Joined: 1955 **Retired:** 1991

Presently residing at: Hyderabad

What is your daily routine at present?

In the forenoon I read three newspapers. I do two crossword puzzles in Indian Express and Economic Times. I read the news, editorials and articles. I spend about an hour in Puja and watch TV for news and entertainment. I have an afternoon nap. Then I read a book, generally on History or Philosophy. In the evening I am on the internet for about four hours. I chat with my children, grandchildren and friends. I share selected items with them by forwarding them by e-mail. I surf some interesting sites and use Google often.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

I am in touch with very few serving officers. I have some retired officers keeping in touch. The local officers contact me to invite for a function or occasion. When the Chairman of the CBEC was here, I attended the dinner. The contact is casual. It has no role in my retired life.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?



More courtesy to the retired officers. I had a few painful instances where unthinkingly normal rules of minimum courtesy were not extended. God willing, all serving officers will one day become retired officers. A tradition of courtesy will do good to all.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

After my retirement, I received two awards of honour, one from a local University and another from an important literary body in recognition of my efforts in the field of Telugu writing. It was after my retirement that I wrote several articles on Customs and Excise in Economic Times, Statesman, ELT and other publications. I participated for three years in the live discussion of the National budget on a Telugu TV channel. I enjoyed the company of my grand children and took part in their efforts, earning their love. Yes; I have had a great time after retirement and continue to have it. I am a happy man. I am on the Board of Directors of two companies. I take interest in their affairs. I like the feeling.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

I worked in 23 stations when in Service. These varied from Dhanushkodi in deep South to Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata. The methods to deal with subordinates differed from place to place where different cultures prevailed. In some places I had to use strong language; threats sometimes; in some others a mild rebuke would do the

trick. Early in my service I learnt that getting angry does more harm to me than to the subject. Therefore, after a few days in a new station I used to design methods of dealing with staff that do wrong. These methods differed between individuals also.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

It is said that advice is something wise ones don't need and others don't heed. I can humbly suggest to them that they should find happiness in themselves, their families and a little spiritual pursuit. They must create interests and give time and love to them. Forget all the unpleasant memories, carry only the sweet ones.



S. VENKATARAMA IYER

Spl. Secretary, D.G. C.E.I.B. (Rtd.)

Joined: 1957 Retired: 1991

Presently residing at: Bangalore

What is your daily routing at present?

0530 and 2300 hrs daily:
Watching some devotional program and news in TV, walk for about 45 minutes, reading newspapers, pooja and meditation for about 45 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening, some shopping, and watching some serials on TV.



Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes, mostly through email and chat. One feels happy when suddenly one gets connected to some old colleague or classmate. But I would say, this is not special to one's post retirement life.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

When Sri Rajiv Gandhi as PM was looking after the finance portfolio, I had to go to the Golf Course Road at midnight with the TRU computer and show the PM the estimation of revenue loss of a budget proposal. I could convince him that our calculation was correct, which he had doubted while discussing it in his office room in the South Block.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

I was in charge of computerization in the Department. If I could have, I would have made the officers techno-savvy. I had a tough time to make officers use the computers provided. I presume, things would have changed by now.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

To make a correct balance between office and personal work. One has a feeling that one tended to overemphasize the

importance of the former at the cost of the latter.

What thrills you at present?

Again, very difficult to say. I feel happy when I find that people I know who were in difficult circumstances have got over the bad patch and are living happily.

One officer from the Department, if there is one, whom you still remember and shall always like to remember? What is special about him/her?

I can think up only of my Havildar, Antony, in Cochin Custom House who was an extremely nice human being. When I had to be hospitalized, he looked after me so well that my mother remarked that we must have been brothers in the previous *janma*.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Giving too much of importance to the work. I have the feeling that I had neglected my personal interest getting too much involved in the office work. Bringing about a balance between the two is very important.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Plan your post retirement life to the extent you can. This includes the place you want to settle in, the type of life you would like to have etc. But many times one is driven to



these matters by family circumstances without much of a choice and one should gracefully accept this fact. Take good care of your health.



MADAN MOHAN BHATNAGAR

Member, Central Board of Excise & Customs (Rtd.)

Joined: 1959 **Retired:** 1992

Presently residing at: New Delhi

What is your daily routine at present?

Reading, watching T. V., meeting friends and relations, visiting Gymkhana and CSOI Clubs, walking and occasional meditation.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes. Glad to note most of them progressing very well in service and being respectful and helpful to retired service-mates.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

My first encounter with Mr. A. C. Whicher, last Britisher in India from the Imperial Customs Service when I joined Patna Collectorate as a Probationer.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Preventing NCB from being taken away from the Board.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

My election as Member, UN International Narcotics Control Board for a term of five years and my widely acclaimed contribution to its work.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

Did some shouting and forgot.

What thrills you at present?

My grand childrens' laughter and chattering.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Retire with a feeling of pride for having worked for one of the oldest and most wonderful service.



S.A. GOVINDARAJ

Chairman, CBEC (Rtd.)

Joined: 1959 **Retired:** 1995

Presently residing at: Tirunelveli



What is your daily routine at present?

Some reading, some gardening, and some classical music: lots of walking, sleeping and thinking.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes - occasional contacts, more often I remember those in service, and others who were (sometimes they come in my dreams!). No specific role: But their total impact on me while in service continues in post retirement life.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

- (1) To have the Chairman report to the minister (as in U.K., and as in railway and postal Boards)
- (2) To integrate group B and C cadres of Customs and Central Excise Officers, even as was done for group A officers.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

In 2001, I prevented the forced betrothal of a girl (a close relation) to a groom, whom she did not like, on the day of the ceremony; and got her married to her lover, on the next day! (my experience in planning preventive operations helped!)

What thrills you at present?

Observing nature intensely.

One officer from the Department, if there is one, whom you still remember and shall always like to remember? What is so special about him/her?

(There are many - short-listing two - mentioning one, as desired, one who joined the Imperial Customs service 20 years before me, in 1939 : and one who joined the service 20 years after me in 1979.

Shri D.P. Anand, (Former Chairman) - A perfect gentleman and officer, so nice, so soft spoken and so helpful.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

When I spilt all the soup on my new safari suit, at a lunch I hosted as Collector, Patna, in 1981, in honour of the visting Secretary General, WCO, at Raj Bhavan, Patna, in the august presence of H.E. A.R. Kidwai, the then Governor, Bihar, and a host of other dignitaries !

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Retire gracefully, and enjoy the freedom! Take care of your health with the help of a family doctor: Do not think that you do not need a family doctor; and draw your pension for as long as possible !





SUKUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY

Member CBEC (Rtd.)

Joined: 1961 **Retired:** 1995

What is your daily routine at present?

In the morning I go for swimming, then to NIPFP or some other library and in the evening I write articles for magazines and newspapers. There are variations galore.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

I am in contact with several friends in service, obviously all my juniors by many years. They do not expect anything from me but they are still in touch. That is why it does play an important role in my post-retirement life. I feel less lonely which is the biggest problem in a retired life.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

There are many personal memories. If I have to say what is 'special', I can only say that I have met extremely good people, though a few only. I am gradually forgetting the bad memories.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

To instil courage in the mind of officers to stand up against dishonesty, even if it is not directed against them in particular.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

The best thing is that I started writing for newspapers.

What thrills you at present?

What thrills me now is that I still like this song immensely:

“Fairly tales can come true,
It can happen to you,
If you are young at heart”.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Don't think too much of your chair. Prepare yourself mentally to bring your own glass of water, repair a punctured tyre, stand in the queue and finally to make friends with loneliness.

R. JAYARAMAN

Member (CEGAT) (Rtd.)

Joined: 1962 **Retired:** 1996

Presently residing at: Bangalore

What is your daily routine at present?



Get up at 5 AM
Going for a long walk: 6 AM to 7.30 AM
After breakfast, reading: 10 AM to 1 PM or
writing articles for law journal
Afternoon sleep: 1 PM to 2 PM
Watching T.V. or visiting an ashram nearby:
2 PM TO 4 PM
Gardening: 4 PM to 5 PM
Pensioner's gathering within a park nearby:
5PM to 6 PM.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes. It enables me to have reminiscences of my service period, by spending a few hours with them or corresponding with them.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

The entire period I served in the Department is memorable to me. Having been out and out an executive officer, it is a miracle how I adjusted to the desk work in TRU for more than six years and to judicial work for eight years. At the end of my tenure in Tribunal, the letters received from senior legal luminaries are still being cherished by me.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

There is a remarkable progress in infrastructure in the Department. However, the image of the Dept. is not dependent on these features alone, but on the human resources, who administer the law.

Facilitation measures introduced should be implemented at the grass root level and well monitored by higher ups.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Whatever terminal benefits (about Rs. 6 lakhs) I spent in completing my house construction in Bangalore, I got back through arrears of pay, pension etc., thanks to implementation of Pay Commission proposals effective from 1.1.96.

What thrills you at present?

Even after 10 years of my retirement, when I receive birthday and New Year greetings from staff with whom I have worked and also from the bar of Mumbai, I get overwhelmed by their affection and love towards one.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

During my entire period of service, I was a chain smoker. Even while I was giving personal hearing to Sr. advocates as Collector, I used to smoke, which I now feel, I should not have done. This habit stopped after I joined CEGAT.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Some think that after a long stint of service in the Dept. they should forget, what they have learnt and go into oblivion. I do not



share this view. They should use their knowledge and experience to help those, who are in need, by deeming it as a service to the public.



S.K. BHATNAGAR

President, C.E.G.A.T. (Rtd.)

Joined: 1961 **Retired:** 1999

Presently residing at: Jaipur

What is your daily routine at present?

Morning walk, visit to BIOTECH Institute/ O.T.S. library, Exchange of visits with friends & relatives. Evening walk, T.V./Books.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes – of course. During ‘Ups’ and ‘Downs’ my batchmates, and ‘My Probationers’ have stood by me, are in touch and cheer me up even now.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

3 Miracles:

26th Jan - Mughal Gardens - Batchmates ask Sweets, Lo - Elevated as Vice President unexpectedly.

Tinkle to meet F.M. - Holiday - Phone at home - Suddenly ordered to be ‘Incharge’ CEGAT.

I put in papers; Probationers pour affection, Farewell visit - surprisingly asked to ‘standby’ and assume charge as President CEGAT.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

To organise staff welfare on a substantial scale.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

(1) Renewal of contacts with school, college & RAS friends & relatives (with some after 40 years break) and rediscovering an ocean of affection.

(2) Leisure and pleasure of reading - Literature & Biotech.

What thrills you at present?

(1) Reading

(2) Playing with grandchildren.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Remaining holed up in my own cocoon.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

Once one ‘Boss’ invited me for lunch, didn’t tell his Memsab or just forgot about it – A neighbouring senior knowing his nature rescued me by sharing his meal with me.





GOVINDAN S. TAMPI

**Chief Commissioner/
D.G. (Service Tax) (Rtd.)**

Joined: 1965 **Retired:** 2000

Presently residing at:
Thiruvananthapuram

What is your daily routine at present?

Walking - good lot of reading – some writing
– teaching – editing a magazine – taking
care of my wife.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes, I do but primarily to check on their welfare. I also am in touch with a lot of junior level officers. It does play a role in my life, helps to keep friendship alive.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

When my boss told a group of people who met him on some issue: “Go and meet my Asst. Collr. and explain the matter. You can be sure of a fair decision”.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Knowing all the juniors personally and alleviating their personal difficulties. I was only partially successful in the effort.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

The feeling that the time is my own.

What thrills you at present?

Being in the company of my wife, being in contact with my children and being amidst my students and my books.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

I should have been more assertive towards bullying bosses. My relative politeness came in the way, I regret it.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Keep away from the Department and be in the company of your family, friends and books. Take up some social work, where work is its own reward.



LAJJA RAM

Member, CESTAT (Rtd.)

Joined: 1964 **Retired:** 2001

Presently residing at: New Delhi

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?



I am still in contact with my friends who are still in service. It does play an important role in my post-retirement life.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

Blood donated by customs officers of Santa Cruz Airport when my wife was in a Bombay Hospital during 1986-87.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Relationship between juniors and seniors.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Strengthening training arrangements and giving them futuristic orientation.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

My appointment as consultant by the Asian Development Bank, Manila.

What thrills you at present ?

Journey by road in countryside and visit to hills.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

At times I was soft on my subordinates when they really did not deserve it.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Develop technical abilities and build-up healthy relations with all around you.



R.K. CHAKRABARTI

Member, CBEC (Rtd.)

Joined: 1965 **Retired:** 2001

Presently residing at: Gurgaon

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes greatly.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

3 Miracles.
My stint in TRU; as JS in 9th Finance Commission and FA, Min. of Water Resources. Memories of policy making in CBEC and outside.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Its image.



The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Bringing up my twin grand daughters, seeing them grow up.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

I kept my cool, gave him a long rope to change.

What thrills you at present?

To see how India is positioning itself in world stage and confidence of Indian women.

One officer from the Department, if there is one, whom you still remember and shall always like to remember? What is so special about him/her?

Remember quite a few. I brought Sh. R.C. Gupta, Suptd. from Kanpur to TRU to handle statistical work. He startled Members, Chairman, RS with his brilliance!

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

'Life is beautiful' after retirement, pursue what you enjoy most. Keep fit.



Z.B. NAGARKAR

Commissioner (Rtd.)

Joined: 1970 **Retired:** 2001

Presently residing at: Mumbai

What is your daily routine at present?

I am busy with Consultancy and Golf. Wake up at 5 am, either drive to Golf Course for a round of Golf or go to the Gymnasium near my house. After finishing days work, I usually go home or join for dinner at the Club/friend's house.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

I am very much in touch with officers in Service all over India as I travel quite a bit in connection with Consultancy and certainly as I enjoy meeting them; they also receive me with warmth and affection.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

Working as a Systems Manager in the Mumbai Custom House, I was assigned the most challenging task of preparation of site for the first large Sperry Computer System for the Custom House on experimental basis, which was later replicated in other Custom Houses. Also visited Singapore and Australia twice for the purpose.



Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Will ask all officers, especially the middle and the lower level, to be genuinely helpful to the trade, especially exporters, to facilitate exports and while doing so, be firm as far as the government interests are concerned.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

I always wanted to be part of the team that would start a well equipped gymnasium and Club House at major centers, both in Custom and Excise, especially on the lines of the Armed Forces, where retired officers also can be members.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

One definitely feels free without any encumbrances. I am happy I got plenty of time for round of golf almost every day and socializing.

What thrills you at present?

Playing with my grandchildren.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Plan for transition so that you are fully occupied, if not gainfully, lest you would go senile.



DEVENDRA SINGH SOLANKI

**Chairman,
Settlement Commission (Rtd.)**

Joined: 1965 Retired: 2002

Presently residing at: Pune

What is your daily routine at present?

Morning walk, reading & writing for 2 to 3 Hrs. Research based work on the internet. Rest of the time with family and grand children.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes. Absolutely.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

There are many but one that stands out is my posting in Bulsar Customs Division as Asstt. Collector and 5 years of chasing smugglers in India's second biggest smuggler's den.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Training strategies and its reorientation.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?



Should have devoted more time and energy to training of human resource and change of mindsets.

What thrills you at present?

The growth all around and opportunities to contribute to social causes.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Prepare to gracefully phase out to a different world which is full of exciting opportunities.



K.L. VERMA

Chairman, CBEC (Rtd.)

Joined: 1966 **Retired:** 2002

Presently residing at: Gurgaon

What is your daily routine at present?

Morning walk, attending my office from 11.00 A.M. to 6.00 P.M., spending weekend with my grandson, having at least two lunches with my friends in one of the clubs at Delhi during the week, and golfing once or twice a week. Rest of the time is spent in visiting and meeting friends, relatives and doctors.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes, it provides me with a sense of 'belonging' to a 'family' and identity and I never feel the need to look to any other direction as the response of my friends in service has been overwhelming and most generous and kind as always.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Stopping of spying on own colleagues and getting mileage out of tales.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

I have stopped being nuisance to public at large and colleagues. Yes, the family has to suffer.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

Generally, I would call the subordinate and fire him. Very rarely I initiated action on paper which in retrospect I think was not a hundred per cent correct action.

What thrills you at present?

Playing with my grandson, enjoying company of friends in relaxed manner over a lunch or dinner and being able to render help in any form to any one, gives me real thrill.



One officer from the Department, if there is one, whom you still remember and shall always like to remember? What is so special about him/her?

In 1986, when I was transferred to Kanpur as Collector, Central Excise, I had to leave my family in Delhi for personal reasons. The officer who had succeeded me in Delhi allowed me to retain telephone and provided other help when my wife fell ill and was hospitalized in Delhi. A kind hearted, helpful and a genius human being. He continues to be so even today having settled in Bangalore.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

In 1980/81, once I was called to the room of A.S. (Anti-Smuggling) when J.D. (DRI) was sitting and was told I must be ready to go out of Delhi. The reason was that I was critical of A.S. during a lunch meeting!

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Get mentally prepared that you will be missing the Chair, Power, Influence and People around you to 'sir' you. But you must have a close friend with whom to interact on a daily basis. The link with your family is of great strength. Keep work timings from 10 AM to 6 PM. During this period you must be away from your wife/husband if you want to live or die in peace.

Mrs. LALPARI R. MITHRAN

Commissioner (Appeals) (Rtd.)

Joined: 1967 Retired: 2002

Presently residing at: Shillong

What is your daily routine at present?

Take dogs for run - go to pray.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Not really, not much.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

To mean what is said and do what they mean.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

...make people honest

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

.....time to reflect on the past.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

.....shout.





What thrills you at present?

.....Grace

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

...many but no one knew.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Look forward to the second phase of exciting life.



A.K. DERASHRI

Commissioner of Cus. & C. Ex. (Rtd.)

Joined: 1965 **Retired:** 2003

Presently residing at: Bhilisara (Rajasthan)

What is your daily routine at present?

Upto 11.00 AM:
Asans, Pranjam, Meditation etc.
From 12.00 PM to 5.30 PM:
Reading and writing
5.30 PM to 6.30 PM:
Gardening
9.30 PM:
To bed

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Public perception about the department.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

To live in a small town where one does not have to commute any distances.

What thrills you at present?

To rediscover a person in a history book.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Do not impose yourself on others.



BAKUL BAKSHI

**Vice Chairman,
Settlement Commission (Rtd.)**

Joined: 1965 **Retired:** 2003

Presently residing at: Ahmedabad

What is your daily routine at present?

Fully occupied. Frankly no spare time. Busy with variety of activities including writing.



Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Most have retired. Keeping touch with those in service. Not much of a role.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Where a case is dropped by CESTAT, the officer confirming the demand should be answerable.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Object to fixation of targets for the enforcement agencies.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Able to devote more time to my hobby – writing.

What thrills you at present?

New challenges of life.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

As A.C. Central Excise I booked a major case of gold smuggling and had to explain why I went beyond my jurisdiction when A.C. Customs was posted at that station.

One advice that you would give to those who are going to retire in near future?

If not done so far, develop a hobby to keep yourself occupied.



GOPINATH SARANGI

Chairman, Settlement Commission (Rtd.)

Joined: 1965 **Retired:** 2003

Presently residing at: Bhubaneswar

What is your daily routine at present?

Attending household activities, social work, golfing, writing, learning on construction work and agriculture.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service?

Very very seldom.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today ?

Enactment of unjust enrichment provisions in states and creation of consumer welfare fund to boost consumerism.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Abolish ACR. Only adverse comment with facts.



One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Removing 'ifs' & 'buts' from delegated legislation to reduce litigation.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement ?

Peace and contentment without stress and burden associated with office work and working on priorities of family needs.

What thrills you at present ?

A good piece of creative work or exciting round of golf.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Fiercely articulating views without reading mind of the bosses.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Develop hobby to keep busy without office help.



J.H. JOGLEKAR

Member, CESTAT (Rtd.)

Joined: 1965 **Retired:** 2003

Presently residing at: Nashik

What is your daily routine at present?

6 AM wake up.
7-9 - aerobics and yoga.
Laze till lunch.
Write (2 Books Published).
Play cards twice weekly.
5 PM swim.
7-9 PM watch TV/Surf net.
9 PM Eat.
10 PM sleep.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

No. I have shut the official life off.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

All memories are bitter. Have forgotten most.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Hold DPCs every year. Do away with supercessions.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Buttering the bosses.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Getting my books published.



When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

Shouted.

What thrills you at present?

Viewing photographs of wild animals that I have taken.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Rubbing the Bosses on the wrong side.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

The second time I missed elevation from Collector to Principal Collector.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Come to terms with what ever has happened. Do not carry forward anything from the service.



ROMESH BHATTACHARJEE

Chief Commissioner of Customs (Rtd.)

Joined: 1968 **Retired:** 2003

Presently residing at: New Delhi

What is your daily routine at present?

04.15 get up. 04.45 run (in winter)/exercise in summer till 05.30. After bath etc. and reading newspaper, sleep for 1hour from 07.00. 11.00 till 23.00 – read books and write.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes. Yes.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

On an Imphal-Guwahati-Kolkata flight in 1996, I was between two passengers who acted suspiciously. They started to hide their bulky slippers. Requested the Pilot to ask DRI Calcutta (I was ADG, DRI) to meet me at airport. Recovered 15 kgs of gold.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Make it more honest.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

I did everything I wanted to.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Visited Armenia, Georgia and Afghanistan.

When you got angry with a subordinate when in service, what did you do?

Blew my top off and then apologized.



What thrills you at present?

Adventure.

Morning walk followed by Yoga, Internet and attending to intellectual talks and debates on contemporaneous issues.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Fought with 90% of my seniors. Should have fought with only 70%.

Any personal memory of your years in Service that is special to you even today?

Restart of divisional office in Srinagar in 1990 (April-May).

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

Being stoned by Changba (named) Ratives in Nyoma Customs Preventive Post (Ladakh) in Feb. 2003 for trying to prevent smuggling from Tibet.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Attitude towards subordinates & assessees.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Develop an obsession that is not connected in any way to the Department.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

Accountability and transparency at every level in functioning.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Freedom to manage my own time.



S.P. SRIVASTAV

Member,
Settlement Commission (Rtd.)

Joined: 1967 Retired: 2003

Presently residing at: Noida

What is your daily routine at present?

What thrills you at present?

To see the service and department being more accountable and playing enhanced role in overall International trade and areas hitherto untapped.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

By being too open and liberal in approach.





S.K. BHARDWAJ

Member (Budget & P&V) (Rtd.)

Joined: 1968 **Retired:** 2004

Presently residing at: Mumbai

What is your daily routine at present?

Morning walk/jog & Golf on weekends.
Office from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

I am still in contact with friends in service. I have all along believed that service is a big family where we have spent major part of our active life. It's a sentimental and emotional bond with friends in the service.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

To create the culture of positive evaluation. If bonafides of an officer are not in question he must not have any fear of taking decisions, including a wrong decision.

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

To remove the element of fear in the mind and portraying colleagues in the department in negative.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

The blessings are difficult to count. Life couldn't have been better. I am in the industry in an active manner and in strategic role.

What thrills you at present?

My strategic role in manufacturing industry where in a small beginning we are trying to manufacture high technology items which were never manufactured in the country earlier.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Retained my cool even when someone had blundered.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department?

Supporting a subordinate and trying to save him from harm when he didn't deserve it as he was acting malafide unknown to me at that time.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Be humane, caring and sensitive. Build up morale of the service. Officers will remember you for what you have done for them.





S. MANICKAVASAGAM

Chief Commissioner,
Later, Member, CAT (Rtd.)

Joined: 1971 Retired: 2004 from CAT

Presently residing at: Chennai

What is your daily routine at present?

Attend to a medley of domestic chores!
In between, first completed a novel in
English! Waiting for publication.

Are you still in contact with your friends
who are still in service? Does it play any
important role in your post-retirement life?

Surely yes; but, doesn't play important role.

**Any personal memory of your years in
Service that is special to you even today?**

A hardcore COFEPOSA smuggler wanted to
reveal secrets from his prison to me only and
none else ! (1976)

**One thing you wish you should have done
while in service but were unable to do?**

More tax-payer friendly !

What thrills you at present?

Having a ringside view –it thrills and at times
it pains.

**One advice that you would like to give
to all those who are going to retire in
near future?**

There is life after retirement !



DALBIR SINGH

Chairman, Customs & Central Excise
Settlement Commission (Rtd.)

Joined: 1971 Retired: 2005

Presently residing at: Gurgaon

What is your daily routine at present?

- One hour power-walk in the morning
- Newspapers
- Breakfast
- Thereafter – as it comes.

Are you still in contact with your friends
who are still in service? Does it play any
important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes, with many of them but no important role.

**Today, if you could change just one thing
about the Department, what would it be?**

Bring about camaraderie and bonhomie.

**The best thing that has happened to you
in life since your retirement?**

I am the master of my time.

What thrills you at present?

- Our 3 month-old grandson
- Golf
- Reading
- Travelling – in that order



Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

I can think of no such thing. It was a fabulous journey. I cherish every moment of it.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Look forward to your retired life as the best period of your existence. This is the happiest and the most satisfying phase. Total freedom to carry out your indulgences.



K.M. TIWARI

Chief Commissioner of Customs (Rtd.)

Joined: 1971 **Retired:** 2007

Presently residing at: Allahabad

What is your daily routine at present?

Morning walk (4 Kms), Reading, writing, traveling, listening to classical music, riaz on Flute.

Are you still in contact with your friends who are still in service? Does it play any important role in your post-retirement life?

Yes, very much. I keep in touch not only with my Batchmates but also friends in the

department having similar tastes, hobbies and disposition.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Working conditions in office, with particular emphasis on record management in Customs.

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?

Absolute “Freedom” to do or not to do anything !!! The daily stress of the Custom House is no more there !!!

What thrills you at present?

The vast arena of Human Endeavour to be explored in Arts, Music, Literature, Dance, Painting, Sculpture, Philosophy, religion, and ultimately the mystery of “Life and Death”.

Looking back, one thing you feel, you should not have done while in service?

Nothing !!!

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

Pursue your Hobbies.
Be in touch with your Family and Friends.
Live with “Dignity”





A.C.SALDANHA

Member, CBEC (Rtd.)

Joined: 1955 **Retired:** 1989

Residing at Bangalore

I served for 9 years as Chief Administrator of St. Martha's Hospital, Bangalore, founded in 1886. This opened to me the world of pain and suffering and gave me a chance to help doctors and nurses in the noble work of alleviating the pain and suffering. It transformed me spiritually.

What is your daily routine at present?

30 minutes brisk walk. Reading English classics, literary criticism, Indian History, Philosophy. Listening to western classical music. Following newspapers and small screen.

What thrills you at present?

The wonders of the creation, the infinite variety of flora and fauna in nature. There miracles are an endless source of thrills and amazement to me. I enjoy literature, arts, music and paintings.

Any special personal memory of days in the department?

Mother Teresa visited me in my office when I was Collector of Customs, Chennai. She showed immediate understanding of the departmental action which was adverse to her organization.

Your most embarrassing moment in the department? (Reply to this is optional)

Since narrating what embarrassed me could possibly cause embarrassment to others – I shall avail myself of the option given not to answer this question!

One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?

There were many opportunities for learning local languages, customs and culture in the places where I was posted. I regret today that I did not use these opportunities.

One advice that you would like to give to all those who are going to retire in near future?

I would say: "Don't be afraid of retirement! At last you have the time to rebuild your health, re-charge your mind, travel or open yourself to new experiences. It can be wonderful time. True, it is 'Life's evening' – but all you see, if wisely seen, is bathed in a golden light!"

The best thing that has happened to you in life since your retirement?





A REJOINDER

Editors, by their very nature, are extremely reticent about giving up their power to wield the scalpel. Occasionally, however, they have to appear as being reasonable. Knowing this, some retired officers have prefaced their replies with an apprehension that their contributions shall be mercilessly axed or mutilated by the editor. Hence, this enforced outsourcing to me!

One of the officers has been still careful enough to sign on each page of the response, and even initial on the corrections! On a more serious note, most of the officers remember their days with a sense of pride and achievement and are still concerned about the well being of the Service. Improving brotherhood and camaraderie, remains high on the agenda, so does the need for improved relations between juniors and seniors. Albeit in one response, the propensity to fight with seniors has been honestly admitted. The only improvement with passage of time being, that the contributor thinks, it could have been to a reduced extent. The extent of reduction has been duly quantified mathematically, in percentages. Similarly, latent desires to have been more assertive towards the bosses, is another manifestation running across the replies.

While reading some of the responses, my mind goes back to a joke of probation days. A senior visiting faculty member on the verge of retirement told us, “the department is now in a very bad

condition, and it is up to you youngsters to improve it”. Probationers trust them; one of us quipped, “and well, who created the problem in the first place”. Before I start receiving brickbats, let me concede that after having put in a few years of service myself, incoming juniors can now call me also on the “creation side”. The joke brings out the differences and the generational shift; I dare not say a gap; that has always existed between various age groups of the departmental officers. This may not be true only of our department or job but is something noticed generally amongst all working professionals. Was I hoping to see similar sort of a perception in going through all the responses? The answer may be partly true. While the majority of responses have lamented about the declining standards of the Service, hardly any response has been ebullient and focused on the positive side of things that have emerged over the last many years. A majority of the officers do cherish their past, but to say that all of them feel the same, is not correct. Unfortunately the experience of some officers has also left them with an amount of bitterness.

“I am the master of my time now”. “Total freedom to carry out your indulgences”. Statements like these indicate a sense of newly found personal power and liberty. It is cheering to see that almost all do find time to keep themselves physically active and engrossed in some creative work. The known fitness freaks



continue to play a sport and have rather with new freedom, gone with a vengeance to do their thing. A very good suggestion, expressed in the form of regret, has cropped up: Creating a clubhouse or sporting facility at the major centers on the lines of the armed forces. All of us wish that this does not remain a regret in future too.

Another noteworthy thing has been the reply, when asked to recollect any person whom they have found worth admiration. Understandably, all the officers remember with fondness, and reverence, the seniors who have inspired or protected them professionally during the service. Only in isolated cases, a colleague or a subordinate, any superintendent or inspector has been remembered.

How individual officers dealt with the subordinates when angry? The replies and the further replies to these replies, no doubt can bring out a variety of emotions among the readers; enough to fill the post box of editor. Going through the responses received, all one can say is "AMEN".

Individual articles of retired officers appear in various journals and websites. They are however confined to particular taxation and academic issues. The general concept before ICE QUARTERLY, in seeking views from the retired officers was not to discuss routine issues, but to bring out their thoughts on general perception of their stay in the service, with the advantage of a ring side view. The response was quite prompt and often brutally honest. Through ICE QUARTERLY, the department can look forward to a continuous feedback and dialogue from retired officers especially in

areas of training and staff welfare. Hopefully, this edition makes a beginning and officers continue to pour in their responses, not just about the past and present, but their take on the future also.

At an individual level, I would like to acknowledge the contribution sent by Shri D. S Solanki, who was the first Chief Commissioner I had interacted with. His response is reproduced below which more or less sums up, what made him different.

“One thing you wish you should have done while in service but were unable to do?”

Should have devoted more time and energy to training of human resource and change of mindsets.

Today, if you could change just one thing about the Department, what would it be?

Training strategies and its reorientation.”

**B.B.Gupta
Deputy Narcotics Commissioner
Gwalior**

We regret that we had to edit the responses due to constraints of space and other editorial compulsions. We also regret our inability to take into accounts the responses which were received too late for inclusion in this feature. We are grateful to all the retired officers who have sent in their responses.

- Editor



Departmental **NEWSLINE**

Shri J.K. Batra joins as Member, CBEC

Shri J.K. Batra has joined as the Member, Central Board of Excise and Customs on 31st January, 2008.

Shri Batra joined the Indian Revenue Service (Customs & Central Excise) on 11th December, 1972. He has held a number of important and prestigious assignments in the Department. In the recent past, he has held the charge of Chief Commissioner of Customs in Chennai, Director General of Safeguards and Director General (Exports) before his elevation as Member, CBEC.

ICE QUARTERLY congratulates Shri J.K. Batra and wishes him a very successful career ahead.



in the Tax Research Unit (TRU) of C.B.E.C. for 5 years, as Commissioner (Central Excise), Commissioner (Customs), Addl. Director General (DRI), Addl. Director General (Vigilance), Chief Commissioner of Customs and Central Excise, and Director General (Systems). Before his promotion as the Member CBEC, he was working as the Director General (DGCEI). While in service he has acquired the further academic qualifications of LLB, Delhi University, M.Sc. (Fiscal Studies), University of Bath (U.K.) and a certificate on Advanced Course in Tax Analysis and Revenue Forecasting from the Harvard University, U.S.A. He has worked with the Tax Reforms Committee headed by Professor Raja J. Chelliah. He is also a recipient of the Presidential Award of Certificate of Distinguished Record of Service.

Shri V. Sridhar joins as Member, CBEC

ICE QUARTERLY congratulates Shri V. Sridhar on his appointment as the Member, Central Board of Excise and Customs w.e.f. 3rd March, 2008.

Shri V. Sridhar joined the Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise) in 1973 after completing his M.Sc. (Physics) from the prestigious St. Stephens College, Delhi. He has held various charges both in the Ministry of Finance, Dept. of Revenue and the field formations in Customs and Central Excise. He has worked



Release of Booklet "Service Tax - Frequently Asked Questions"

The function to release the booklet "Service Tax - Frequently Asked Questions" was held on 21st December, '07. The booklet was released by Shri P. Chidambaram, Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance, at a seminar on Service Tax, organized in association with ASSOCHAM, at Roof Top, Hilton Tower, Nariman Point, Mumbai. The function was graced by the presence of Shri S.K. Shingal, Chairman, CBEC, Shri P.C. Jha, Member (CX & ST), CBEC, Shri G.V. Naik, Director General of Service Tax, Shri Venugopal Dhoot, President, ASSOCHAM and senior officers of the Department.



Central Excise Day celebrations at Delhi

Shri P. Chidambaram, Finance Minister, addressed the Central Excise Day celebrations and annual investiture ceremony function at Delhi on the 24th February, 2008. The Finance Minister expressed the confidence that the Department would exceed the budget targets on indirect taxes for 2007-08 and get 1 per cent of excess collections as rewards for this year too.



Hon'ble Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram being escorted



Retired Chairmen / Members and other invitees

In both 2005-06 and 2006-07, the CBEC exceeded budget targets to the tune of Rs 8,615 crore and Rs 11,300 crore respectively and got a reward of 1 per cent of the excess collections, which amounted close to Rs 200 crore.

“You have a little over Rs 200 crore that could be spent on infrastructure, improving the working conditions of your officers and other employees and make the environment friendly and conducive for better work through good housekeeping,” Shri Chidambaram said.

The CBEC Chairman, Mr S.K. Shingal, said that the overall central excise revenue growth was a matter of concern, highlighting that excise collections till January 2008 this fiscal were Rs 97,559 crore, registering only a growth of 7.6 per cent.

He said the Board had introduced sector-specific measures in the current financial year to deal with evasion in sectors such as pan masala/gutkha. “We hope these and other similar measures initiated by the Department would help raise voluntary compliance,” he said.



Dr. Radhika Chopra entralls the audience with ghazals



Sound of Music

Shri Indrajit Dasgupta, Commissioner of Central Excise (Appeals), Ahmedabad has been conferred with the prestigious **Kalakar Award** in the '**Best Music Album**' category for his music album titled "*Mere mann mein, dhadkan mein*" at a glittering ceremony at the Science City Auditorium at Kolkata on 20th January, 2008.

While congratulating him for getting this award, ICE QUARTERLY wishes him many more successes in times to come.



Participation of Shri N. Sridhar, Addl. Commr. in 46th WCO Fellowship Programme at Brussels and Japan

Shri N. Sridhar, Additional Commissioner, Customs Hyderabad-II Comm'te was selected by the World Customs Organisation (WCO) to participate in the 46th Fellowship Programme for English Speaking Customs Officers (FP).

The FP was conducted from 01.10.2007 to 09.11.2007 at World Customs Organization Secretariat at Brussels and in Japan, in two phases. The first phase of the FP from 1st October, 2007 to 26th October, 2007 was conducted at Brussels and the second phase was from 29.10.2007 to 9.11.2007 in Japan.



Excellence in sports

Shri Subhash Batra, Superintendent, Comm'te of Central Excise, Ludhiana has won four Gold Medals in the All Indian Central Revenue Sports Board Invitational Table Tennis Championships organised by the Central Excise, Customs & Service Tax Comm'te, Bhopal.





Rk Saini
Sept 2006



प्रचार एवं जन सम्पर्क निदेशालय
सीमा शुल्क, उत्पाद शुल्क एवं सेवा कर, केन्द्रीय राजस्व भवन, नई दिल्ली-110109
Directorate of Publicity and Public Relations
Customs, Central Excise and Service Tax, C.R. Building, New Delhi-110109