

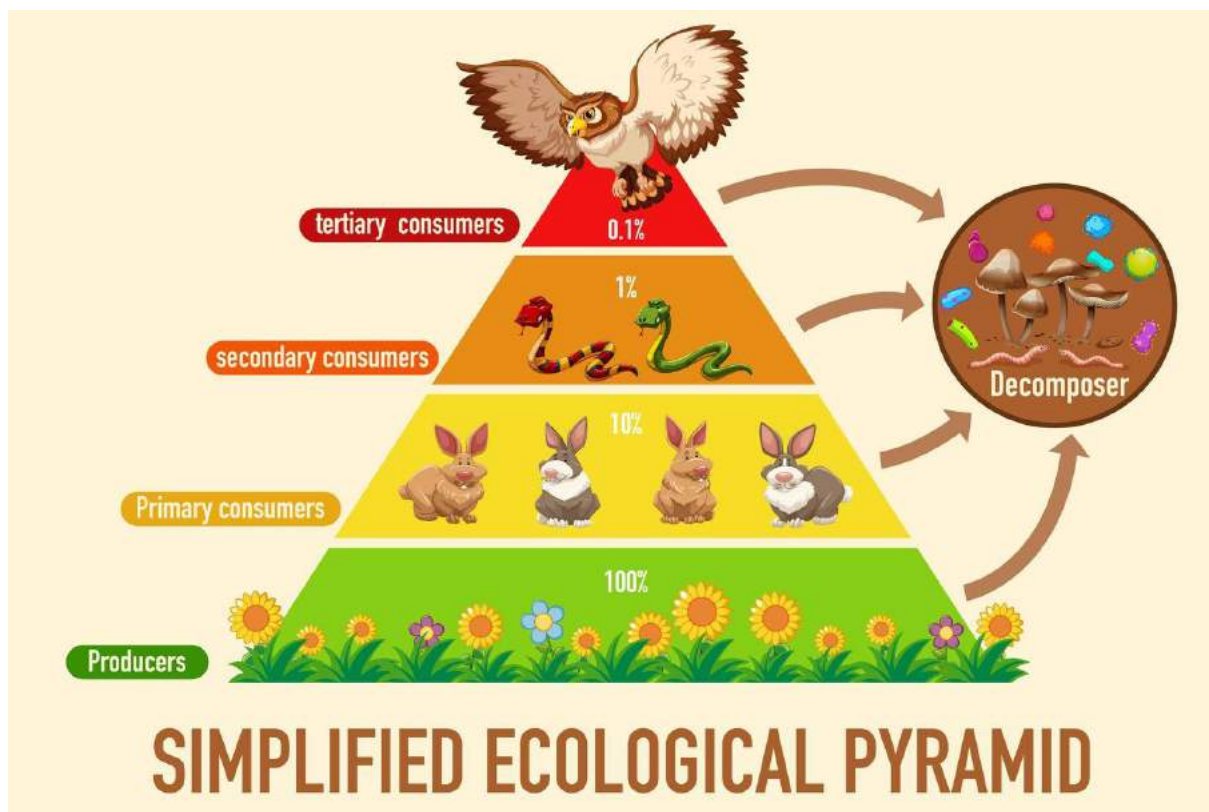
The Bridge linking Past, Present, Future

Unfolding the Secrets of Life?

Edited by Viren Lobo

An Especioza Trust Production

(In Hindi this is called Trikal Samaj – learning from the past, live in the present with an eye to the future)



This triangle of life has many representations in Nature, Society and Religion too – Why?

Foreword

ABM (UF) comments on the “Draft Forest Conservation Rules 2022 notified by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on 28th June 2022”

The Forest Conservation Act 1980 in a way upfront placed the question of the unfettered destruction of the Forests due to commercial exploitation and unfettered diversion of Forest Land. However it ignored the real culprits of this destruction which was initiated during British rule and continued post independence in the name of development. The limitations of Social Forestry to provide the needs of local communities and industry outside of the forest were soon apparent, as also the differential treatment of local communities in terms of price paid for the produce. The 29th report of the Conditions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes under Article 348 of the constitution for the year 1987-89 highlighted upfront the impact of this deprivation on Forest Dwelling communities. About the same time, the Forest Policy 1988 highlighted that without the cooperation of local communities was impossible. The resultant GOs facilitating joint forest management in this country, did indeed prove to be true as the forest cover improved considerably over the next ten years following protection. Ignoring this, when the Forest department following the SC ruling on Godavarman case when the Forest Department tried to paint the local communities as the villains of the Forest, the nation-wide uproar and struggle led to the passing of the Forest Rights Act 2006. Even as the rights of Forest Dwelling Communities began to be politically recognised and the process of drafting the FRA was initiated, moves to scuttle the process were facilitated by the Forest Department, leading to the Act finally being passed under the aegis of the Ministry of tribal Affairs.

The above background has been provided to point out that instead of using this opportunity to overturn the long outdated colonial approach to Forest Conservation, even 16 years after passing of the historic Forest Rights Act 2006 which promised to correct the historic injustice to Forest Dwellers, efforts to strengthen the Forest Department through various ways and means are slowly but surely being put in place once again. Studies have shown that even the GoI recognises that Communities have rights over at least 75 of the Forest area being currently held by the Forest department. Sincere efforts to grant such rights would have meant an entirely new management regime for such forests under the control of local communities recognising their tradition knowledge and wisdom in the governance of such forests. The same would have resulted in an entirely different approach to the conservation of the Biodiversity and recognition of its intricate role in the livelihood of local communities. However till now only 10% Forests have been recognised with a maximum of 40% in Chhattisgarh, even with this limited recognition, rights of local communities to govern, manage and harvest the produce are severely curtailed.

The large area recognised in Chhattisgarh hides the fact that most of this was done post the COVID pandemic and ignoring the mining belts of Chhattisgarh. Indirectly it implies

recognition of the value of forests in helping local communities deal with issues related to the pandemic while not providing the communities the full wherewithal to do so. Far from that instead, process to fast track forest diversion have been put in place with great rapidity, the latest of these being the Draft Forest Conservation Rules 2022.

The above Draft Rules 2022 is proposed to supersede Forest Conservation Rules 2003 made under the parent law, Forest Conservation Act 1980. The Sub-clause (e) under Clause (3) of Rule 6 of the FC Rules 2003 mandated the District Collector to ensure fulfilment of 2 conditions, that is, settlement of forest land (proposed for diversion) in favour of STs and OTFDs; and consent of concerned Gram Sabha for proposed diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes, before issue of In-principle Approval of any application by a User Agency seeking clearance from the Central Govt for use/diversion of forest land for on-forest purpose. The Rule 6(3)(3) as mentioned above was inserted by an Amendment in 2017. And this very provision, which is in sync with both Forest Rights Act 2006 and LARR Act 2013, is sought to be done away with by the Draft FC Rules 2022, which if brought into force would not require either the prior settlement of forest land or the prior consent of Gram Sabha. As is well known, soon after the NDA Govt came to power at Centre in 2014, the new PM then brought a series of amendment bills in Parliament to amend those provisions of LARR Act 2013, which required Social Impact Assessment, Public Hearing, prior consent of Gram Sabha, and settlement of forest rights before issuing Preliminary Notification for acquiring any land, but all these amendment bills fell through. The present Draft FC Rules 2022, especially its Rule 9 (Proposals for Prior Approval of the Central Government) aims to achieve the very purposes, which couldn't be fulfilled by its successive bids in the past.

Coming back to the larger questions posed by the glorious history of the struggles of Forest Dependent Communities. Schedule 5 and Schedule 6 of the Constitution indicate that leave alone other aggressors even the British could not fully subjugate the tribals of this country who by and large governed themselves. It is true that these communities need easy access to modern amenities related to health and overall welfare. Experience across the world indicates that modern development has not provided dignified lives and livelihoods to these communities. The feats of Jaipal Singh , Konalika Bari, Pete Sampras and other tribal sportsmen and women indicate that given proper facilities, tribals are next to none however this cannot be done by alienating them from the very surroundings, milieu and context in which they have learnt their first lessons from nature and governance of human society. CNTA, SPTA, Van Panchayats and the various accords signed with communities of the North East recognise these basic facts.

The long time failure of the government to deal with issues related to malnutrition of children and tribals deprived of their habitat in Melghat and other tiger reserves, protected areas and sanctuary points to a lack of recognition of the value of wild foods in the diets of local communities, one that has been systematically undermined/ destroyed by alienation/ deprivation of local forest dependent communities to their rights to access and harvest the produce of the forest.

Yet history has shown that time and again every effort is put to ensure that forest dependent communities of the very essence of their life support systems. Very much akin to making fish live without water. Eklavya, Birsa Munda, Sidhu Kanhu, Komaram Bheem, Alluri Sitamaraju and many others are witness to these glorious struggles. Modern science indicates that renewable energy can be tweaked to facilitate decentralised governance by local communities. Development minus displacement and recognition of the power of decentralised governance to deal with modern issues and problems related to COVID, unemployment, malnutrition, health and overall well being.

ABM (UF) join hands with the tribals and other indigenous communities of this country to assert their collective identity and link these to the other struggling masses of this country who unequivocal in their understanding that destruction of forests and the related life support systems of communities dependent on them is not the road to progress.

Suresh Kinaka

President Adivasi Bharat Mahasabha Unity Forum

Background

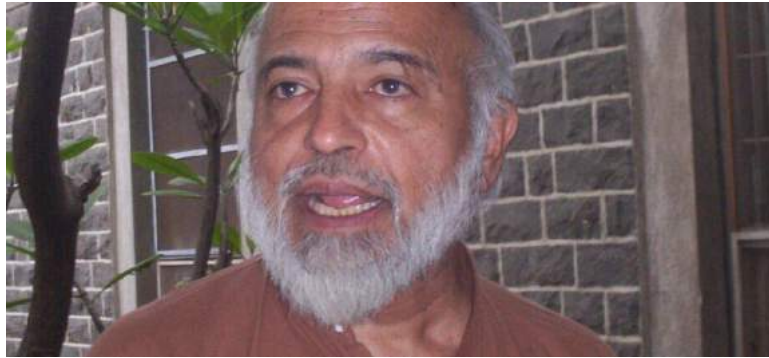
This title indicates not only that the shift has been made but that a bridge has been built to reconnecting many broken threads. The spectre of past still looms large over the present and casts its gloom over the future in terms of rising xenophobia and rampant destruction of the biodiversity on which life on earth depends. Opponents to the Club of Rome call of doom still cite man's ability to bounce back, theory of resilience tries to explore the extent to which man can go and still revive. Seed bank gene samples locked up in vaults below the ice at Svalbard https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Svalbard_Global_Seed_Vault is one protective mechanism evolved by mankind to deal with this. There are others. The process of natural selection dominated by anthropogenic influence is punctured from time to time by nature's response in terms of Climate Change, Natural disasters, COVID pandemic among other things. They serve as warnings that man tampering of nature comes with costs and sometimes nature's fury and wrath.

Adivasi Bharat Mahasabha (Unity Forum) reported in the last newsletter provides a bridge between what exists today due to past struggles and where we want to make a qualitative shift from the current struggles termed by Tarun Kanti Bose as ***Marginalised but not Defeated***. Local Self Governance principles, Right to Self Determination and principles of relative autonomy as currently applied by Capitalism reflected in the one hand by dismemberment of countries/ states on one hand and assertion of individual/ collective rights on the other is the playing field on which ABM (UF) is trying to assert human ability to respond rather than succumb to Nature's call. Defeating the politics of hate (born out struggle for territory and now fuelled man fold by the dictates of Capitalism as it compromises with religious fundamentalism, a force it once sought to overpower to establish the principle of individual right over that of the feudal right of kings and nobility) by the politics of love for mankind (born out of the historical necessity of cooperation).

The bridge takes many diverse forms. Not all will be showcased here, but a sample cross section will be taken to provide a glimmer of this qualitatively different movement between past, present and future. It is in the process of being born by closely looking at Capitalist attempts at survival where human beings are expendable and the larger question of individual human survival when pitted against this juggernaut. ***Marginalised but not Defeated*** by Tarun Kanti Bose provides an outline of the nature of struggle being waged. Since then however many a debate and action has taken place.

The foundation for the current discourse has now been buried. It lies deep in previous editions of this newsletter and hence not visible on the surface any more. For me personally it was an agreement with many of my co-partners in the journey. One of them said, let them bury the dead; we care only about the living. What about the living dead, people rendered corpses in different forms by the workings of Capitalism? The movie aNEk provides a similar but different twist to the one carried here earlier <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anek>. Looking forward to how this blend of real life with reel life evolves.

Dedication



Fr Subash Anand who passed away on May 23rd 2022

<https://mattersindia.com/2022/05/father-subhash-anands-sudden-death-mourned/>

By Jose Kavi

New Delhi, May 23, 2022: Father Subhash Anand, a renowned philosophy professor who challenged Catholics in India to become Christ's authentic disciples, died of a massive heart attack May 23 in Udaipur, Rajasthan. He was 78.

Father Anand, a priest of the diocese of Udaipur, was born Benedict Alvarez on November 15, 1943. He was ordained a priest on October 28, 1967.

He was a resident of St Paul's School in Udaipur's Bhupalpura area.

Father Anand was part of Pune's Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV) seminary as a student and professor of Indian Philosophy and Religion for more than 30 years.

Father Subhash Anand "deeply loved the Church and his path took unusual twists and turns. He wouldn't tolerate hypocrisy, be it among scholars or the Church's officials," says Jesuit Father Stanislaus Alla, a theology professor in Delhi's Vidyajyoti College of Theology.

According to him, Father Anand "loved to go to the root of the Gospel that invites and challenges the faithful to be authentic disciples rather than get struck in the infantilizing traditionalism."

Observing that such a stand often led Father Anand to court controversy, Father Stanislaus hails as admirable the renowned philosophy professor's "rigor and passion" during theological discussions and debates.

"He brought Indic ethical values and virtues such as Satya, Dharma and Ahimsa to the fore and integrated them with the teachings of the Gospel, inviting all to be truly Indians and authentically Christians. Also, in the spirit of Incarnation, he allowed himself to be permeated by local cultures and languages and it is evident in the Wald-Bulke Bible Bhashya (Hindi Bible Commentary) he painstakingly produced," Father Stanislaus told Matters India.

Jesuit Father George Karuvelil, a former philosophy professor of JDV, says Father Anand's original contribution to the academic world was his Christian interpretation of Hindu festivals. "He was my teacher and later a colleague," Father Karuvelil told Matters India and described

Father Anand as “a man of principles and who offended many in the process. I fondly remember him.”

Presentation Sister Shalini Mulackal, another Vidyajyoti professor, says she received the news about Father Anand’s sudden death with deep sorrow and pain.

“He was a clear thinker, a bold theologian who dared to question some of the fundamental beliefs of our Christian faith. I would consider him as a seeker who never stopped seeking after Truth. He was a scholar in every sense of the word,” says the former president of the Indian Theological Association.

Father Anand’s latest book, “Seven Baskets Full” is on Eucharist. No one can deny his scholarly work when you turn the pages of this book. He has contributed greatly in the theological thinking in India,” Sister Mulackal adds.

She says she came to know Father Anand more closely when she was invited to participate in an inter-faith seminar at Udasin Karshni Ashram in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, where the priest was among the main organizers.

“He used to bring his Mass kit so that we could celebrate Eucharist every day in that Hindu Ashram. Most participants in these workshops used to be retired professors from various universities both Hindus and Muslims. He had a nice way of relating with all those came for the seminar,” the Catholic nun recalls.

“What I admire most about Fr. Subhash Anand is that he was deeply human and compassionate” and he did not send away empty handed those who came to him for help. “He was a detached person, happy and contented with minimum comforts and conveniences.”

Jesuit Father Kuruvilla Joseph Pandikattu, a JDV professor, too hails Father Anand’s concern for the poor. “He cherished poverty as a way of life and supported the marginalized. He had a special commitment to the secular institutes in and around Pune and served them with devotion,” Father Pandikattu recalls.

Father Anand, he says, was “a man of deep conviction and commitment” and “a person of vision and values,” who was he was “critically and creatively committed to the Indian Church.”

Father Anand radiated “a sense of fairness and calm in his undertakings. Forthright and articulate, he could put forward his views forcefully and articulate himself clearly,” Father Pandikattu adds.

Father Anand, who cherished both the ancient Indian wisdom and its contemporary relevance, tried to make the Indian insights applicable to the modern times in his classes, says Father Pandikattu.

Father Anand’s doctorate studies at Banaras Hindu University “helped him assimilate the Indian insights to the Christian experience. It was this experience of his Indian identity and profundity that made him change his name from Benedict Alvarez to Subhash Anand,” Father Pandikattu explains.



Lourdes Baptista

Samuel Clemens known by his pen name Mark Twain (1835 – 1910), an American writer and humourist has said “ Truth is stranger than fiction, but is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn’t.” I experienced the truth of this powerful saying today at 9 p.m. when I returned to my living room and checked for WhatsApp messages. There was a message from my companion and friend Fr. Peter D’Cruz, SJ, a Jesuit of Pune Province. The message read, “Did you hear about Lourdes Baptista's sudden demise?” I was stunned for a few moments. Then I took the courage and called Fr. Peter to confirm the unbelievable sad and shocking news. He said that it was true but to check with Lourdes family members. Hence, I sent indirect messages to Lourdes Baptista’s life partner Mrs. Marina, his nephew, nieces and sister-in-law whom I know for years. They confirmed the sad news.

Lourdes Baptista’s family was originally from Revora, Bardes, Goa. His ancestral home is still there. But Lourdes was born and brought up in camp, Pune. He studied at St. Vincent’s High School, Pune run by the Jesuits. In June 1970 he joined the Society of Jesus to become a Jesuit priest. After completing his two years of Novitiate and one year of Juniorate at Xavier Training College, Desur, Belgavi, he was sent to Dnyanamata Vidyalaya, Sangamner, Maharashtra for a year of Marathi studies. During that period he lost his colleague Sch. Bernard D’Sa due to drowning in the river while swimming. Lourdes tried to save him but in vain.

1974-76 he did his Philosophy studies at Jnana Deep, Pune. Now Jesuit Frs. William Rodrigues, Justin Borges, Alfred Benjamin, Jeevendra Jadhav, late Rosario Rocha, Pius Fernandes, and myself were his Philosophy colleagues. For his regency Lourdes was at St. Britto High School, Mapusa. I was his colleague then there.

From 1980-84 he did his Theology studies at Vidya Jyoti, Delhi. He, William Rodrigues and myself were ordained as priests in 1983.

Lourdes worked with Fr. Rudolph Schoch to be trained as a future Treasurer of the then Goa-Pune Province. In fact, he became our Treasurer when late Fr. Edwin D'Souza was the Provincial.

Lourdes felt he was called for a different vocation and way of life. Though many including myself were surprised and pained by his decision, he took the courage to follow his conscience. He left the Society of Jesus but till the end remained a good and close friend of Jesuits. God had his own plans for Lourdes.

He worked in various secular and religious organizations for their development projects as a consultant. He found his life partner Marina and led a cheerful and meaningful life and was constantly grooming his two sons Joshua and Jorryn. After his retirement he had settled down in Sangolda, Bardes, Goa.

Last week, I sent a message to him saying that he will be officially invited for the Mass followed by lunch on 31st July 2022 for the Feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola. He thanked me for the invitation. Now he has gone and never to return. Unbelievable but true!!!

Lourdes was a talented person. Good in studies and sports. He knew music and in the past played organ, violin, and guitar. Soft spoken words and always a smile on his face were his unique features. In his death I have lost a good friend. I am at a loss to write an adequate tribute for my friend. His smiling face is still vivid within me. He has suddenly left this planet as a healthy person without causing any burden to others.

May Lourdes continue to smile as he will be accepted in the loving embrace of his creator.

Adeus Lourdes till I meet you.

Pratap Naik SJ

24th July 2022

Dariyaben from Panej village: Kavant tehsil, Chhota Udepur

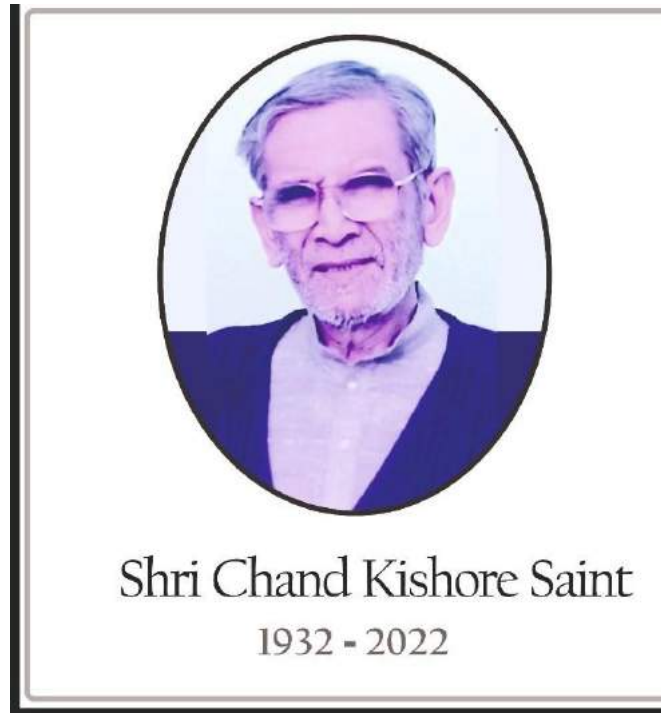


On 8th August Nandubhai went to Panej village and met Deputy Sarpanch Mr. Nirmal Singh. Rawarsingh Parmar had told him that due to heavy rain on 10th July, the river had got flooded and the whole village got submerged in water. There are 350 houses in the. Water had entered 80 per cent of the houses. All families got a cash dole of Rs 4500 to buy household goods, 28 animals died of which 10 dead cattle got compensated. 18 animals did not get compensation. Dariya Ben was paralyzed and her body was heavy, that is why she had to stand and do the cooking. Her son made her sit on a cot and went to save the animals. He did not get a chance to return home because the flooding had increased. The neighbours tried to save her but more water had entered the house, so they could not save Dariyaben. She was drowned in the water.

Floods affected five villages, Kadachla, Chudeli, Panej, Ghelpur, Chhachhadra, the fields suffered heavy damage with the soil becoming sand.



Floods in Panej village



Kishore Sant a mentor with a difference

Associated with Kishoreji began in 85 when we were exploring questions related to restoration of the Aravalis

Then came the issue of preparing a micro plan for Ubeshwar Vikas Mandal

A question pursued by a colleague of mine

Later I began to notice the unique role played by Kishoreji in movements related to Adivasis and eco- restoration of the Aravalis.

I noticed the distinction made between him and UVM

A distinction I learnt how to respond to when becoming the Executive Director of SPWD

Later Kishoreji correctly caught the spin I gave to my concept note on Commons, one he felt needed to be replied to.

There are many other facets, spirituality, ecology, cultural ethos and geography

For now am satisfied that he touched my life and to that extent enriched it.

Part I

Searching and Service in Unity Camp



SSU Camp at Kune June 2022

This camp from 10th to 12th June was to mark a new beginning for the SSU after COVID lockdown. There were a total of 11 who participated. The major highlight of the camp was the ghost stories told after 11 am till lights out at 1 pm. Munira, Andrea and Abbas contributed to making these stories very realistic with Aditya (Andrea's brother) being the one to give the effects. For me it was fascinating to see Aditya who was a master with the Rubic cube, making the ghosts look very real and egging Munira and Abbas provide the fuel to the fire.



Cyril's daily inspection at 8 am in the morning revealed the following

- a. Cyril's room was not only spic and span; his effects were also tastefully place on the ledge reinforcing the artist at work.
- b. The girls were neat and tidy as usual.
- c. The boys did manage to pass muster but for the clutter on the table.

All in all a lesson that fun and games did not mean neglect of personal hygiene and lack of concern for others who may have had to come to tidy after you.

Another highlight being the fashion show with boys dressed up as girls and vice versa.





Munira and Abbas stole the show.



The Scene at the Morning Prayer - the meaning of silence

A Community full of fun, giving the strength to look outward. Public speaking, nurturing and the message of the five loaves and two fishes a major take home from the camp.

Part II

SADDAC



Children of Pansare Wasti

Update from SADDAC - Daund

On 23rd June, there was a meeting with 20 children and 7 animators to create a children's parliament in Pansare Basti of Daund. The concept of local self governance was explained in the context of the Bhima river basin, case study of Daund in which Pansare Basti would be taken up as a pilot. More details in the report to be prepared shortly. Subsequently concept of SDGs as a way of creating Children's participation at hamlet level, Federated into Ward Sabha, Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary Constituency was explained. How this will engage at Nagar Palika level, Maharashtra Assembly and Delhi will be explained later. Target however is participation in the National Inclusive Children's Parliament in Delhi in January/ February 2023 was kept in mind. The process of Sociocracy was put into practise in the election of the Najish as PM for Pansare Colony.



Najish elected as PM CP Pansare Wasti

Another meeting was held on 24th June with a smaller batch who could not come yesterday. Perspective for the Children's Parliament based on the SDGs was given. SDG 4 related to Education for all was explained at some depth; In terms of how the Education ministry works and examination of the nature of budgets available for children at Nagar Palika, State and National level. Raj was elected as Education Minister through Sociocracy process.

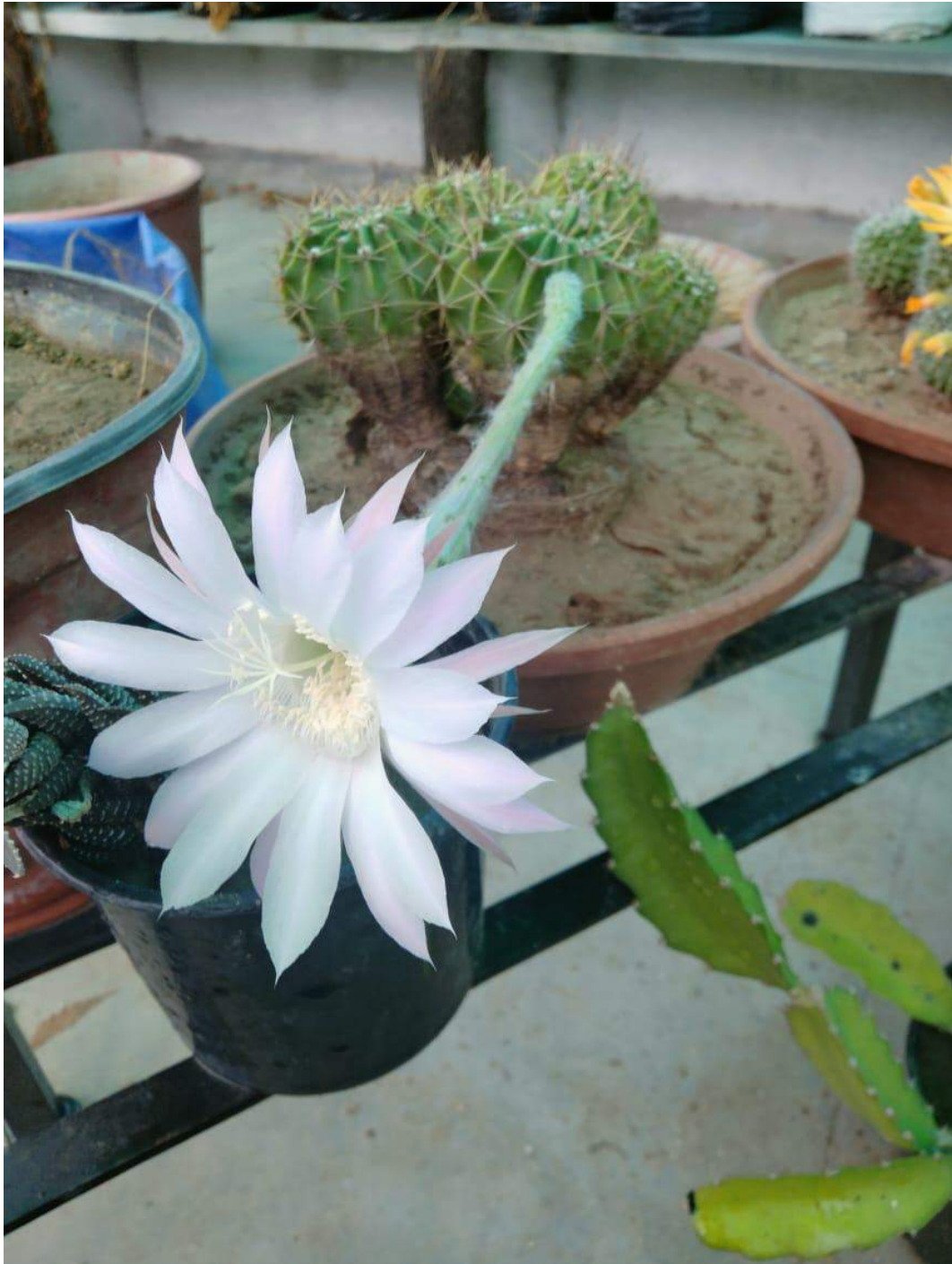
Raj was elected as Education Minister



Rajesh Elected as Education Minister CP Pansare Wasti

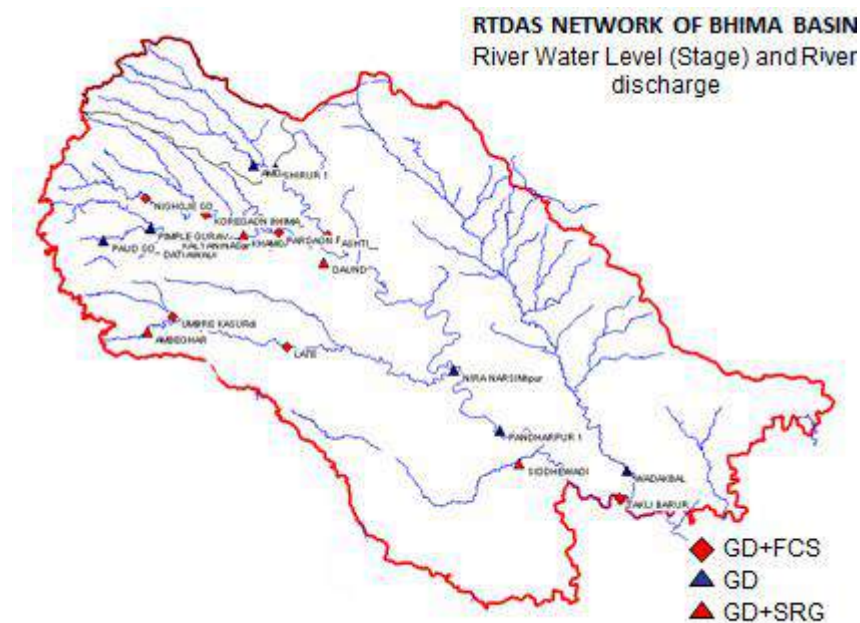
Part III

Spiritual/Ecological Connections & Our Common Home



Cactus in Bloom Vatsalya Terrace garden Udaipur

From Watershed Development to Ecological governance: Case study of Bhima River Basin



A letter to Bishops, priests and other representatives of the Catholic Church in India, on the progress made by me on Laudato si (rebuilding broken community threads).

Dear All,

I will be shifting this to a more conducive form shortly. For now please bear with me. As I have mentioned earlier, Landscape is the smallest unit for understanding Climate change and Gram Sabha / Hamlet/ Ward Sabha, the smallest unit for decentralised governance. Given the assignment I had with XINRM/Social Centre, on behalf of Institute for Ecology and Livelihood Action of which I am the Managing Trustee, I am in the process of developing a methodology for looking at *Our Common Home* which concretely combines the principles of *Think Locally Act Globally*. Thanks to the cooperation of many along the way I have come so far. There will be many fellow travellers till the deadline for completion of this report ie June 2023.

This effort has been dedicated to Fr Bacher and is an attempt to take his vision of watershed development one step further. *From Watershed Development to Ecological governance - Case study of Bhima River Basin*. This is a **non funded initiative** and so though there is a specific outline, developed in consultation with SOPPECOM of which I am a member, the specific elements studied will depend largely on the kind of support/ Fellow travellers I get along the way (there have been many). I will be using my prerogative as the *Principle Investigator* to tailor make the inputs I get into a definite pattern. However the inputs left out / Contradictions faced along the way will be the basis for further studies and associations.

regards

Viren

PS; This work builds on the outline HABITAT and IELA prepared for studying Narmada river Basin based on our work in Chhota Udepur .and collaboration with SOPPECOM.

PPS: This is turn was developed based on the work done by SPWD/SOPPECOM in Jaisamand Catchment area.

Some of the secondary research material being built upon during the course of the study:

<https://kalpavriksh.org/our-work/conservation-livelihoods/bhimashankar/> .

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-Mula-and-Mutha-Rivers-catchment-depicted-with-a-land-use-classification-of-2009-10_fig1_287608835

<https://www.travellersuniversity.org/>

<https://kalpavriksh.org/our-work/alternatives/vikalp-sangam/>

<http://ielaind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/IELA-Report-Maharashtra.pdf>

PPS: Not part of the original email

I am also including two more case studies. The first is a case study on Ecuador and the Andes. The reason for its inclusion is shrouded in mystery, very much like the misty clouds that hang over the Andes. Let us just say that certain events made me confident that I could give it a personal touch. The second case study on Sikkim was inspired by a recent conversation where my father in law Denis D'souza revealed that the bus from Kala Mandal driven by him was the first to cross the pontoon bridge to Sikkim. The Chogyal of Sikkim came out to see the event as the bridge swayed from side to side as the bus crossed into Sikkim. Things have considerably improved since this event but the damage that nature can do is still a reminder of many struggles yet to come. <https://www.newsclick.in/arterial-road-link-between-bengal-sikkim-snapped-rain-pounds-states>.

These case studies are not meant to be comprehensive or complete, but to give a flavour of the different parts of the world we live in pointing out some common connections that unite us all together. It is also simultaneously a struggle to build on the Millenium Assessment (MA) initiative for which an extract from an MA exercise done in Ecuador has been copied here. It is an attempt to point out that think globally and act locally is indeed possible. Is it possible for an individual to catch one of the threads that inextricably links us all to a brighter and better future? My picking on Ecuador certainly has this invisible thread which in turn is linked to a number of others as well. I keep them close to my heart as I light the candle of hope for a better future.

Case study of Ecuador on the Andes:



In Ecuador's Amazon provinces of Orellana and Napo, recent CIFOR research has turned an old gender stereotype on its head. The study found that the indigenous Kichwa women don't just work in the home and the orchard – instead, they go to the forest with their husbands to help harvest timber.

Maricela Tapuy : Because of the high cost of labor in Ecuador, she helps her husband with the logging, rather than hiring outside help. Even though this increases her family's income, Marciela still needs to tend to her domestic duties as a wife and mother, which leaves her exhausted.



Maricella Tapuy: Photo Credit Kate Evans/ CIFOR

I follow my husband to the forest to save on the work. When I'm busy, I stay at home. But if I'm free, I always go and help. The way we help is to paint [guiding lines on the logs], to

gather logs, anything we can do to help. If we hire a worker, we will have to pay them. And if we pay, we can't make a profit. That's why we women help out. This way we make money for ourselves. As women here, we work in the home, washing clothes, looking after the children, we women have quite a lot of work. It's not small thing! Double the work! We cook as well, and it just continues like that.”

<https://www.cifor.org/knowledge/photo/36614038291>



Photo by Thomas Munita cifor.org

70% of those surveyed in both Orellana and Napo said they cut timber without a management plan at some point between August 2011 and September 2012.

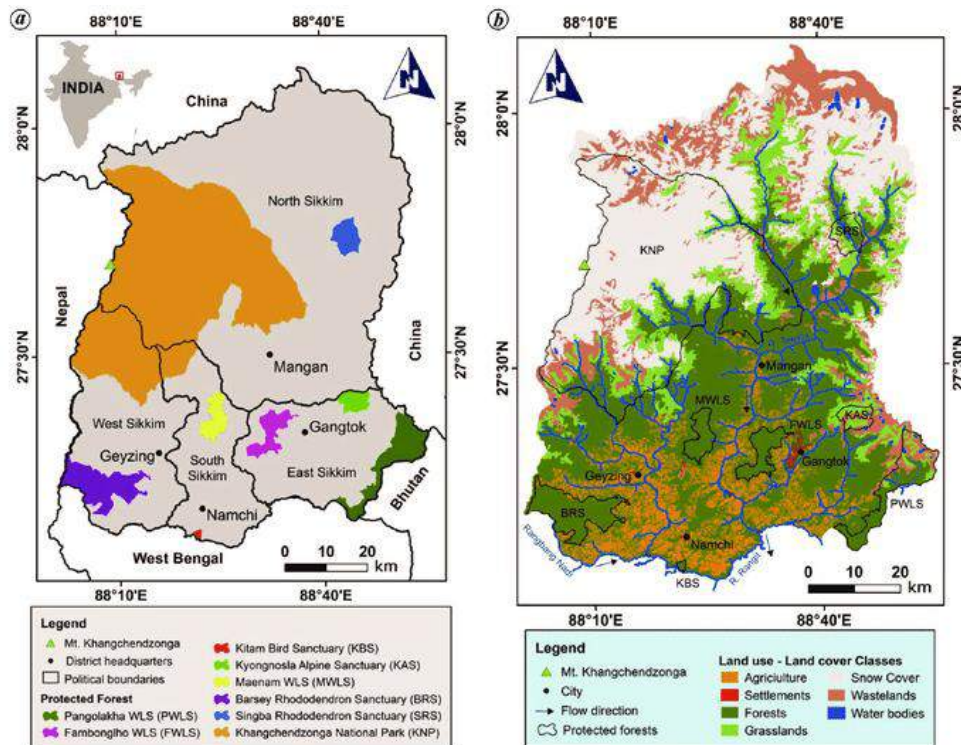
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260133933_Environmental_Changes_Affecting_the_Andes_of_Ecuador

Thorsten Peters, Thomas Drobnik, Hanna Meyer, Melanie Rankl, Michael Richter, Rüdiger Rollenbeck, Boris Thies, and Jörg Bendix

It is indisputable since the announcement of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) that global environmental change, especially land use and climate change, are threatening biodiversity. Although it is widely supposed that climate change will lead to the extinction of many species in the future (Colwell et al. 2008; Williams et al. 2007), human land use is currently the most important threat to biodiversity (Pimm and Raven 2000; Köster et al. 2009; de Koning et al. 1998; Southgate and Whitaker 1994; Bebbington 1993). Sala et al.

(2000) have pointed out in this regard that global terrestrial biodiversity will be most severely affected by expanding agriculture by the year 2100, with climate change and nitrogen deposition being the next most important factors. Tropical forests have recently undergone great changes, due mainly to land use activities that annihilate ecological niche diversity and lead to the extinction of species (Sala et al. 2000). In this context it must be emphasised that the tropical Andes contain about one-sixth of all known plant species in a space of <1 % of the world's terrestrial area (Mittermeier et al. 1997). The area of our research—southern Ecuador—comprises dry and humid mountain biomes as well as lowland tropical rainforests. A great variety of ecosystems are found in this area, ranging from high altitude habitats harbouring only a few species to complex, extremely species-rich habitats on the eastern escarpment of the Andes (Richter et al. 2009). Williams et al. (2007) argued that the climate conditions that favoured this biodiversity hotspot during the twentieth century may disappear entirely during the twenty-first century. Consequently, the extraordinarily high biodiversity of this region appears as strongly endangered (Myers et al. 2000; Brummitt and Lughadha 2003; Southgate and Whitaker 1992; Harden 1993; Myers 1988, 1993; Bendix et al. 2010). Scientific research is therefore essential for developing and fostering conservation strategies. In this chapter current knowledge of the recent development of the three major ecosystem threats of land use dynamics, climate change and nitrogen deposition (Sala et al. 2000) will be discussed for the study area of southern Ecuador.

Case Study of Sikkim on the Himalayas:



Location Map of Sikkim with its districts and Protected Forests

The Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalese are the three ethnic groups of population of the state of Sikkim. They are simple and hardworking people. Among the Sikkim here ethnic communities it is universally accepted now that Lepchas were the original inhabitants of Sikkim. Nepali is the lingua franca of the State because the majority of the population belongs to Nepali community. Besides there are several dialects prevalent among the different Nepali castes like Gurung, Rai, Tamang, Mukhia, Newer, Manger, Sherpa etc., however within these communities also these dialects are rarely spoken. They usually speak Nepali language. English is the official language of the State; along with it Nepali is also used as official language in Sikkim.

Majority of the population belong to Hindu religion. Other important religions professed by the people of Sikkim are Buddhism and Christianity. Bhutias are Buddhist and majority of the Lepchas, and some Nepalese also practice Buddhism. But majorities of the Nepalese practice Hinduism. Some people from all three ethnic communities are now converted to Christianity. Besides this, there are a very few Muslims, Sikhs and Jains who basically belong to non-ethnic community.

Plainsmen apart from the ethnic groups, there is a sprinkling of plains people who migrated here generations ago. Plainsmen mainly the Marwaris entered Sikkim for trading purposes. People from other parts of India like Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Kerala, Punjab etc. also resides in the state of Sikkim. Besides trading, some emigrants" plainsmen were engaged in other types of occupation such as teaching, administration etc.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344433924_Cultural_Aspects_of_Sikkim_India_A_Review

Case Study of Bhutan:



Photo Credit: Aditya Vikram More

Bhutan opened in the 1970s for the world and today tourists spend a mandated \$250 a day to witness its wonders. A marriage was arranged between the mystic and modern with the monarchy lifting the ban on television in 1999. The mobile toting monks, men and women clad in *gho* and *kira*, prayer wheels swirling in mountain streams, and music bands playing guitar to the tune of ‘Lamborghini’ in the night clubs of Paro are a proof of arranged marriages that last.

We revelled in stories Bhutan is made of. The fairy tale-ish Dochu-la, pinned with icicles, waiting to house a fable. Mebar-tsho, the Burning Lake, of buried treasures and butter lamps. The 17th century Punakha *dzong* at the *chuzom*—confluence of Mo Chhu (female) and Pho Chhu (male) rivers, flowing forever in a symphony. Chimi Lhakhang, the temple of the giant phallus of the divine madman, who would shoot an arrow from a mountain-top and make love to a woman in the village it landed. Yes, I know, the last story got your attention.

There was beauty everywhere, sure, but the one we lost our hearts utterly to was the sweeping valley of Phobjika. Luminescent. Lyrical. The winter home of the stoic black-necked cranes who famously eluded Salim Ali all his life. The valley has sunburst meadows dotted with charming little houses and farms. Pines shoulder the horizon, stars put the mountain sky on fire and *bukhari* warms the feet of winter nights.

Case Study of Nepal:

<https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2020/09/06/the-galwan-valley-stand-off>

India and China have a history of border conflict. The last Sino-Indian clash before 2020 was in 2017 in the Doklam region. It was a three-month-long stand-off between the two armies from June to August. The most recent military confrontation between the two countries was witnessed in the Galwan Valley in June 2020. The Galwan valley face-off was, however, not the end of the conflict. China reportedly moved in 20 martial art trainers from the Enbo Fight Club to the Tibetan plateau to train its forces, three weeks after the clash. The martial art fighters have been employed to help with border patrol and special forces. However, there is some ambiguity as to which border area have they been deployed to; some suggest that the fighters were reinforced near the Indian border.

Experts have raised concerns over whether there is an ultimate agenda that China aspires to achieve or if the face-off was linked with its behaviour elsewhere. Some analysts have suspected that this stand-off is connected with the Kashmir angle; Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's move to withdraw Kashmir's special autonomy. Foreign affairs experts and China watchers believe that the conflict in the Galwan Valley was anticipated and calculated if viewed in light of China's overall international performance.

<https://kathmandupost.com/opinion/2016/08/11/the-cross-they-bear>

Although Nepal was the only officially Hindu kingdom in the world until recently, many religions were practised in the country. According to the 2011 census, there are 10 different religions in Nepal. The country has now been declared secular, but voices in support of a Hindu kingdom still remain strong. Some even argue that secularism was the main cause of Indian displeasure with Nepal's constitution promulgated last year. Those who have been advocating for Nepal to remain a Hindu state claim that religious conversions have been on the rise since the interim constitution of 2007 declared Nepal to be secular. Religious conversion to Christianity seems to be the main concern for many.

However, the argument that religious conversion have been on the rise only after Nepal was declared secular is flawed. To prove this, we need to go through the data on religion generated by the Nepal government in the past and compare the state of religious conversion before and after Nepal was declared a secular state.

Part IV

Communal Politics and the Misuse of Religion



The Cremation of Kanhaiya Lal amid tight security

Artistic, cultural, spiritual representations once brought to life by its creator have a life of its own. Without understanding why it came into exist, is it possible to dismiss it?

Are the Shivling controversy and the divine union of Shiva and Shakti they related? Is it important to know?

<https://www.templepurohit.com/shiva-shakti-divine-union-consciousness-energy/>

Is there a connection between the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve disciples of Jesus and the twelve wives of Prophet Muhammad?

<https://www.alislam.org/articles/lost-tribes-of-israel/>

The real story of Aisha, is there any link with the recent raging controversy on Prophet Muhammad. Who was she and why did Prophet Muhammad marry her?

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aisha>

Why the International outrage on Nupur Sharma's remarks? Is it similar to the outrage on the remarks on the Shivling and then later on the film Kaali?

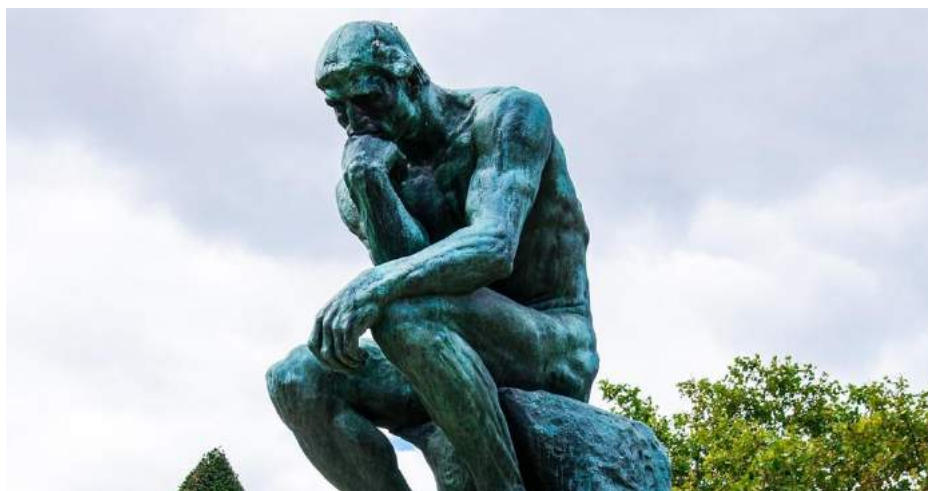
<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/uae-condemns-bjp-nupur-sharma-prophet-remarks-1959124-2022-06-06>

<https://www.republicworld.com/india-news/politics/like-a-scorpion-on-a-shivling-shashi-tharoor-directs-controversial-chappal-scorpion-shivling-analogy-at-pm-modi.html>

<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-what-is-kaali-poster-controversy-what-s-wrong-in-the-kaali-poster-who-is-leena-manimekalai-2966371>

Did Jesus marry Mary Magdalene? When did this line of thought gain credence? Why is it absent from the Gospels or Historical records?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_bloodline#:~:text=The%20claims%20frequently%20depi ct%20Jesus,proposed%20in%20numerous%20modern%20books.



Martin Luther and the Ninety five theses posted by him. Why was he protected by Frederick the Wise.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ninety-five_Theses

Revisiting Ignatius the Black Pope in the 500th year of his enlightenment



Lord Jesus, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to seek reward, except that of knowing that I do your will. Amen.

St. Ignatius Loyola

As we conclude the Ignatian Year, I wish each one of you a grace-filled celebration of the feast of our father and founder St. Ignatius. May we continue to walk with St. Ignatius to deepen and strengthen our conversion experience. I pray that our conversion at the personal level impact our process of conversion at the community and institutional levels.

Fr. Agnelo Mascarenhas SJ

Like our Founder St Ignatius of Loyola, we are challenged “never to be content with the status quo, the known, the tried, the already existing. We are constantly driven to discover, re-define and reach out for the ‘more’, - seeking the Greater Glory of God, as the Jesuit motto reminds us. For us, frontiers and boundaries are not obstacles or ends, but new challenges to be faced, new opportunities to be welcomed, with a holy boldness, a ‘certain apostolic aggressivity’.” (GC 34, D26)

On this pilgrimage on earth, we meet others – as Ignatius did in his life. These others are signposts who help us to keep on track and who invite us to convert every time again. They are brothers and sisters; they are situations and God speaks to us also through them. Let us listen to one another. Let us read the situations. Let us be signposts for others, showing the way to God. Conversion always happens in dialogue. With God, with the others, with the world.

Pope Francis

Part V

Health, Happiness and the Hope Gene



[The New Symbol of Hope atop New Parliament Building](#)

The artists creating the Lions atop the New Parliament building points out how distance requires a correction factor.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/sculptor-cites-scale-dimensions-amid-row-over-aggressive-lions-on-national-emblem-atop-new-parliament-building/2592415/>

And this is a story from the Panchatantra on the angry lion and the rabbit

<https://nriol.com/indianparents/indian-tales/foolish-lion-clever-rabbit.asp#:~:text=The%20Lion%20was%20angry%20at,reach%20safely%2C%20the%20rabbit%20said.>

The laws of the concrete jungle and the real jungle are different: Guided as they are by manmade laws instead of nature's laws. The Panchatantra represents age old wisdom on what some people might call rent seeking blood suckers.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/a-tribal-president-and-the-tribal-cause-1131119.html>



Tribal Women beaten by forest department at Lukumba

A 2019 report titled *Forest and Trees: At the heart of land degradation neutrality* released in 2019 by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification noted that indigenous communities were the custodians of around 40 per cent of protected and ecologically intact landscapes and managed nearly 300 billion tonnes of carbon on lands owned by them with almost negligible investment.

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/forests/world-nature-conservation-day-these-5-communities-of-india-preserve-ecology-in-their-own-distinct-ways-84008>

The gruesome gangrape and murder of 8-year-old girl in Jammu and Kashmir has brought the spotlight on deepening existential crisis of twin nomadic tribes in the state which form the third largest ethnic group, Gujjars and Bakarwals. The barbaric crime incident soon snowballed into a major controversy in the aftermath of alleged directives of the state government to police and civil administration not to carry out anti-encroachment drives

against tribal population without prior approval of the Tribal Affairs Department and nor harass them when they transport cattle.

<https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/india/javed-rahi-with-jammu-and-kashmir-state-land-shrinking-nomad-gujjar-and-bakarwal-have-nowhere-to-go>

The District development Committee Budgam has passed a resolution in which members have sought action against the DDC Chairperson over the alleged illegal appointment of the Biodiversity Management Committee.

As per the resolution accessed by the Kashmiriyat which was passed by 13 members, the District Development Committee (DDC) Budgam has come to know through a surprising Facebook post of DDC Chairperson Budgam, Mr. Nazir Ahmed Khan that a biodiversity committee of the District Budgam is already in place and Raja Muzaffar Bhat appointed as its chairman.

<https://thekashmiriyat.co.uk/ddc-budgam-demands-action-against-its-chairman-over-illegal-appointment-of-biodiversity-management-committee/?amp=1>

In early May 2022, the Karnataka government announced its plan to denotify two-thirds of its deemed forest land. As part of this, 6.64 lakh hectares of forest out of 9.94 lakh hectares will cease to be forest land, leaving less than a third of the forest land – 3.3 lakh hectares – as deemed forest in the state. The intent to cut back on deemed forest cover comes close on the heels of the state opting for a raft of measures to increase its green cover to meet India's climate action goals.

<https://india.mongabay.com/2022/07/karnataka-sets-green-goals-but-denotifies-two-thirds-of-its-forest-land-in-plot-twist/>

Francis has said he is on a “penitential pilgrimage” to atone for the church's role in the residential school system, in which generations of Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their homes and forced to attend church-run, government-funded boarding schools to assimilate them into Christian, Canadian society. The Canadian government has said physical and sexual abuse were rampant at the schools, with students beaten for speaking their native languages.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/canada-government-say-pope-francis-apology-to-indigenous-children-not-enough/article65692588.ece>

Francis on Monday, July 25, 2022, apologised for the “evil” of church personnel who worked in the schools and the “catastrophic” effect of the school system on Indigenous families. In a speech before government authorities Wednesday, Francis apologized anew and blasted the school system as “deplorable.”

He asked forgiveness “for the wrongs done by so many Christians to Indigenous peoples” as well as “local Catholic institutions.”



Pope Francis In Edmonton Canada

<https://www.e-coexist.org.in/eco-campaigns/eco-ganesh/>

Renewal and Recycling of clay: The Campaign

This campaign is to launch a city wide campaign to collect and redistribute the shaadu maati clay sludge after the visarjan of the Ganesh idols. Our main task is to ensure that the clay is kept clean and stored carefully so that it can reused by the artisan. We will also need to identify artisans that can take the clay and reintegrate it into their production for the following year.

Memories of Pune:

<https://memoriesofpoona.blogspot.com/>

Memories of Pune have been launched. This featuring the first set of ten stories for posterity. Among those featured are Eddie Carneiro (Sportmans), Yvette Gonsalves (Teacher), Major

Tom Siqueira (Serviceman), Albert & Biddie Mendonca (toast on their ruby anniversary), Angelo da Fences (artist), Rudolf Gonsalves (early settler), Fr Cyril Desbruslais SJ (youth leader) and others. Contact Kieran Gonsalves, Michelle Bambawale, Cynthia Rasquinha, Joshua Ferreira, Marshall Mendonza and Frederick Noronha Memories of Poona Project
Email memories.of.poona@gmail.com

FB <https://www.facebook.com/groups/memoriesofpoona>

Blog <http://memoriesofpoona.blogspot.com>

Features Francis and Nora Lobo too

<https://memoriesofpoona.blogspot.com/2022/08/francis-and-nora-lobo.html>

Adventures of Rigid Thorn

<https://www.instagram.com/adventuresofrigidthorn/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y%3D>

Adventures of Rigid Thorn

Personal blog

Hi, I am Ryan.

Let's navigate through my world of Rigid Spine Muscular Dystrophy (RSMD).

Spreading love and awareness.

🌀 Sports fanatic.

About the editor:



Viren Lobo who was influenced by liberation theology during his college days did an MBA from Institute of Rural Management Anand. He has been working the development sector since he passed out from there in 1985. Employer, employee and other contradictions observed by him during his thirty year stint at Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development (SPWD) forced him to examine the relevance of Marxism as a way of looking at reality in relation to change he sought to bring. During the course of his work covering more than twenty States, he noticed a link between the livelihoods and ecology which he pursued strongly as Executive Director SPWD. The limitations of existing organisations to deal with the complex questions society posed motivated him to set up Institute of Ecology and Livelihood Action as the transition needed to address issues he was looking into at that time. The contradictions arising out of the a series of Bills that were passed during the last five years encouraged him to use the enforced sedentary life imposed on him to use his creativity to write plays. These were the first of a series which have helped serve the purpose of putting on paper the complex dilemma and diverse social opinions he came across.

About Especioza Trust:



Especioza Trust is named after my great, great grandmother who widowed at an early age brought up her only son Aogustinho (seated in centre). Shortly after a family reunion in December 2013, we got news that the family home at 84 Porvorim had been illegally sold to a builder. My aunt Marie stepped in and after getting the required mandate from the family not only got the family home back but the previous ancestral home of 85 Porvorim as well. Since then it became her project in memory of her widowed great grandmother till her death on her mother Amy Lobo's 117th birthday (25th July 2019). Since the informal trust set up by her could not achieve fruition I decided to keep the struggle and memories alive by carrying on her mission to bring unity within the family and dedicate the work of the Trust to all widows and single women of the world. My Aunt/Cousin Hazel Cardozo the daughter of Liban Pinto one of the two brothers born on my birthday (6th September) has helped me to give this project shape. The other brother Lucian in whose name the house was, also happened to be born on my birthday as well. The spiritual connection and the necessity for me to step in also come from a lot of other quarters which need not be documented here.

Viren Lobo