

Excellence



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Organ of the Indian Centre for Encouraging Excellence,
Sahakar Bhavan, Bombay-77.

KEEPING YOU POSTED

As you are likely aware, the Centre has a get-together for the members every Thursday at 6.30 p.m. at Sasmira, Worli. Members are welcome to bring in their interested friends, and they do bring them.

Though the main purpose of the get-together is to exchange news and notes of excellence interest, if a visitor has some relevant experiences to share, he is invited to do so. Thus, we had three visitors recently to talk to us at length—Mr. Agashe, a social worker and youth leader, Mr. Karnik, a veteran journalist and Director of Oriental Foundation and a group of visiting American students.

As soon as a suitable hall becomes available in a central place, a monthly public lecture and/or film show will become a regular feature. This activity is likely to start soon after the monsoon.

Since we reported last, some of the members were invited to talk on aspects of excellence to civic, social and professional groups. A special mention should be made of the schools and colleges that invited them to address their students. One girls' school in Bandra has adopted Excellence as its theme for the year.

Since the Centre's role is that of a catalyst and a clearing house, it is anxious to limit itself to activities that are likely to have a multiplier effect.

One school in Vile Parle has agreed to be "guinea pig" and offered full cooperation. The idea is to initiate activities that make for habits of excellence—activities that will build a sense of manliness, a concern

for others, and a sense of functional pride. The emphasis is not on a handful of students taking to these activities—this is done already. The idea is that ALL THE STUDENTS take to these activities. Stray acts of excellence, good as they are, do not provide salvation to a society. A massive effort in the direction is what needs be attempted.

ALL the 2000 and odd children will learn cycling and possibly swimming. They will learn first-aid; and they will visit a nearby hospital atleast once a month to be of some help to the in-patients. Thirdly, all the children all through the year will get the message from the teachers "*nothing but the best from me and for me*—in whatever I do, I will do my best, essentially to please myself."

Hopefully, working with this school will provide a "model" for action in other schools. As the work progresses, we will share with you facts and figures through these columns.

Gandhiji was a great votary of Excellence, of functional excellence that we are talking of. A few youth institutions and schools have sought our cooperation. The few projects that have been tentatively agreed upon are these.

The day will commence with a reading from Gandhiji or Gandhiana. Availing of the public address system or the school assembly, the headmaster, one of the teachers, one of parents or one of the students will read a selected incident from Gandhiji's life or selected passages on a sub-

ject from Gandhiji's writings. A member has taken up the work of making such a selection. This will be a feature right through the Centenary year.

Student groups will take up one of the messages of Gandhiji "Keep your neighbourhood clean." Each group will take a limited area in the city and provide personal and organised effort to get the street, streets, public building or whatever they choose and make it clean, orderly and beautiful. This they propose to do during the Divali vacation and such vacations they may subsequently get. Nearly 15 suburbs are in view but there may be many more groups. One welcome feature of this project is that this will be a secular effort.

Excellence journal has been sent to all our embassies abroad and the embassies of other countries in India. Members are taking gift subscriptions for their friends abroad. Companies are taking subscriptions to the journal so that the staff and visitors may peruse it.

Some more members, a little office in a central place, and a small but full time secretariat may enable the Centre to be a little more effective but until those things come we cannot wait, we have to move on.

The prime fallacy of pessimism is that no one knows enough to be a pessimist.

—NORMAN COUSINS

Let us care, let us write

Many of us think, and probably rightly, that unless the right people start moving, things would not get done. *Can we move these right people?* Are we moving them towards a specific action?

We have two types of people through whom we have to get things done. One is the elected representative; the other is the executive.

Perhaps we know who they are. If we don't, the very first step that we can take is to know who represents us in the Municipal Corporation, in the State Assembly and in the Parliament. These elected representatives would listen to us if we 'speak' to them.

When we find any aspect of civic, public or social life below standard, and *avoidably below standard*, we can perhaps give it a close thought and spell out what constructive steps can be taken by the people concerned. We can also find out who the people concerned are, the decision making authority and the executive authority.

If, for example, we find that hospital services in a particular public hospital are below par, we can make a quick study, develop our thoughts and send them on to the executive in charge of the hospital, to the Municipal Commissioner, to the Mayor, to the Corporator and probably to the M.L.A. and the M.P.

Since we are not registering a complaint, since we have no quarrel with anybody, since we are interested in finding the remedy and not fixing a blame, and since we are not expecting any return except the satisfaction of letting people know *that we care* and, as elected representatives and executives in charge, they too should care, all that we are doing is our civic duty.

In today's world nothing moves without a piece of paper to guide it. It is necessary therefore that we WRITE *and* that we write again and still again. We may write individually; and, where conditions permit, also collectively.

Incidentally, this approach of individuals writing to the concerned people would be the most feasible and would take the least time.

There are certainly other media. Good as they are, they are inadequate for this purpose. Our purpose is to spell out *in detail* the problem and the solution and bring it to the notice of the men concerned. We are not interested in whether other people know that things are done at our instance. What we are interested in is getting the right things done in time.

This job can be initiated in a very *graceful fashion* and it should be that way. Stormy complaints, cynical comments, caustic criticism and the like are not merely unwarranted but they are altogether unhelpful.

Those in power are as fine citizens of this country as we ourselves are. They do not notice a few things because they are preoccupied with a vast number of things. Once things are brought to their attention, the chances are they will give them their attention.

We must keep faith in this and write. If we start attributing motives and claiming a monopoly for ourselves for keeping up standards, we will be only left with a sour mouth.

It is possible that the acts that we initiate may not be taken to the logical conclusion in record time. But what is significant is that we have *started caring* for good and great things, that we have initiated the right action, in the right quarters, and that we will follow it through. If many of us start caring, the impact can be considerable. Let us demonstrate we care; let us write.

DEDICATED LIVES

R R BHARADWAJ

His is not a life of adventures and thrills, or ups and downs. His is the story of "a pebble on a river bed whose sharp corners of personality are rounded over the years in the continuous mainstream of life," to quote Mr. Bharadwaj himself. It is a story of perseverance and hard work; it is a story of an abiding and deep interest in every aspect of life and nature; it is a story of bringing the art to the 'masses'.

Born at the turn of the century in Hoshiarpur, Punjab, Mr. Bharadwaj had his schooling in his native town. His school career was uneventful except that he used to top the class in drawing. Rather than follow the beaten path, he went to Lahore to learn painting, much against the wishes of his father and other elders of the family. Fortunately somebody advised him to take photography rather than painting as his subject for study. The lurking idea was to ensure some immediate income.

In 1923 Bharadwaj joined the Mayo School of Art at

Lahore as the only student in photography and therefore all the resources of the school and the experts were at his disposal. He certainly learnt techniques from books but the art of making pictures throb with life he imbibed from his teachers.

The first challenge came to him while in his second year at school when there was a demand from artists in England for photographs of Indian sculptures for an exhibition at Wembley. RRB was specially deputed by the School to take these photographs. He wandered in the streets of Lahore where every house was almost a historical monument and made a wonderful job of it.

This gave him a name in the world of photography and he immediately got a job as photographer in the Department of Archaeology at Lahore. His entry in the department brought about noticeable changes in the quality of the photographs. Pictures were more distinct, the prints clearer and the total effect was that of a

new life-likeness which resuscitated the past.

He visited Taksh-sheela and Saarnath, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro and a number of Hindu and Buddhist monasteries and got into the camera a life which had been embalmed in stone and in the process vivified it. Temperamentally prone to work independently, dictated by his own artistic instincts, he gave up his Government job after three years.

The following five years he spent silently working hard in his own studio at Lahore, trying out many novel experiments. He did his work with the Kodak papers, but in those days Kodak did not have a very good market in India. Its General Manager while on a tour in this country happened to be in Lahore and was put into touch with RRB by a well-wisher. The meeting ended in the Kodak General Manager offering the job of a Travelling Demonstrator to RRB when he saw the results achieved by RRB with Kodak papers. RRB was reluctant as

he was then married and well-settled which gave the Kodak General Manager the cause for a gibe "You Indians are not enterprising". That settled the matter. RRB joined Kodak. If he was treated as a prince in Kodak, the results he achieved were princely too. The sales went up sharply within one year, but RRB resigned and despite the GM's intervention, his Lahore boss and he could not come to terms.

Once again he was on his own. When the second world war broke out, he was offered the position of a Colonel to supervise the photographic department of the Defence Ministry, but the Independence movement was then in full swing and RRB refused to associate himself with an alien government.

Instead he opened a studio in Mussoorie which became the haunt of princes and tourists. The only self-advertisement he made was to place at the foot of the spiral staircase two photographs (which he

could change every few days) mounted on a frame with his sign-board. While the studio in Mussoorie was a spectacular success, some of his friends were keen to have Mr. RRB in Bombay. This is how RRB came to open his studio in Bombay (JK Buildings, Ballard Estate).

Even at the age of 65, Bharadwaj considers every trouble—whether it be climbing a steep rockface, going deep into the Himalayas or waiting for hours in an uncomfortable spot—to get a good shot worth it.

Awards have come to him, as they would come to any man of his achievement. In 1937 he won the Eastman Gold Medal in a world-wide competition of Kodak employees; in 1944 he was awarded a Diploma of Honour from Berlin and similar Diplomas were conferred on him by Lisbon and by London.

Sustained and devoted pursuit of excellence in photo-

graphy for almost a lifetime has made Bharadwaj a name to reckon with. One secret is his attitude to Nature. In the words of the Photographic Society of India, "with his deep love for Nature, RRB has been able to establish a communion with her." Says Bharadwaj, "Photography just happens to be a medium of expression. I have only expressed my inner thoughts and self through this medium."

He still works with the same diligence he started off with. One finds him working in his dark room with his shirts off, washing, drying and cutting each print himself. One would rarely find a scrap of paper as waste; RRB turns it into a piece of art. His eyes are still open to the wonders of nature; temples of India, traditional dances, the high Himalayas, the far-off villages and the villagers, the flowers, birds and animals, and even raw rocks and deserts—these are still being captured and added to the already rich collection of Bharadwaj, yes, for posterity.

*For one who has found
beauty around him in
every corner, paradise is
not far away.*

—BHARADWAJ

Because of a decision at the Editorial Board that no credit lines need be published, the name of Mr. R. R. Bharadwaj (whose excellent study of the rising sun appeared on the cover page) did not appear in our last issue. We are delighted to present you in this number the dedicated man and his delightful creations.

NEWS AND NOTES OF

Youngest Eye Donor

The world's youngest eye donor came from Bombay.

On July 3rd, 1968, Miss Kusum Bhatia, the Health Officer of Hindoostan Mills, went to Shirodkar Nursing Home to see a patient. There she came to know of a infant who had died immediately after birth. She contacted the dead child's father, Mr. Umakant Mahurkar, and asked him to donate the eyes of the little one.

After some convincing of his home people, the important decision was made. In order to get the name of the donor registered, the dead infant was christened "Smurti".

The Dagan Eye Bank received the precious gift from the infant who had barely been received by the world.

Children's Wall Paper

Excellence breeds excellent ideas. And one of these has just occurred to Mr. R. P. Nadkarni of Voltas Limited. He plans to introduce a wall paper for the children's group of the colony where he lives.

Active young minds will be given much food for thought, news of developments in the wider world, and kept happily busy with fun and games.

The "Week's Gem", a thought or quotation pertaining to the theme of 'Excellence', is a pleasant way of sharing an important message, of inculcating ideals at an impressionable age.

"Do you know?" will provide information about scientific and technological developments and items of general knowledge and interest.

No one can under-estimate the value of a good sense of humour. This is one of the most important assets a person can have. So, "Let's Laugh" will keep the young readers amused—and at the same time build up an essential part of their personality.

To help the development of intelligence, there will be riddles and puzzles to grapple with. Critical thinking will thereby be improved among the children.

An excellent project to project excellence.

A Brave Lad

What a fund of courage this young man has! When floods ravaged Bhoomi Village in Nagor District in July this year, he leapt into the swirling waters, not once but several times, and saved a total of fourteen lives.

Twenty-one year old Kalu Ram Meena has been recommended by the State Government of Rajasthan to the Central Government for an award. But his true reward came much earlier. It was the satisfaction of being able to do something for others, in the face of tremendous risk to his own life.

And that is a measure of excellence.

IN AN HOUR OF TRIAL

In an hour of trial, a man is seen in his true colours. The recent floods in Gujerat proved an ordeal to literally thousands of people and to entire villages.

The readers of *Mumbai Samachar* and *Janma Bhoomi* and other Gujerati periodicals

would have read of many acts of courage, heroism and genuine concern for others.

For the benefit of others and to gain a glimpse of the stuff that the Indian citizen is made of a few incidents are reported below:

An elderly lady, ninety five years old, donated her entire savings of Rs. 75 to the flood relief fund. She personally came to the office of Mr. M. S. Rao to do so. She is a widow and at this age she has to work for her living—all her sons died some years back and she was in affluent circumstances when young. Her name is Narmadaben Jagad.

In the village of Ansoi, a hospital of lepers with 80 patients and 18 staff members was in danger of being washed away by the floods. A fisherman by name Chunibhai took the lead and rescued all but two and took them to a place of safety.

Citizens of town Vaso in Kheda district have taken on themselves the responsibility of rehabilitating two flood-stricken villages—Tarawda Bet and Kansia, besides giving them immediate relief of food and clothes.

Only a week before the floods, Vividh Karmakari Sahakari Mandali of Gadot, an agricultural cooperative society, had good funds, seeds, agricultural equipment etc. Overnight the members were left with nothing. And their appeal to those who were elsewhere at the moment is: We do not want donations. Nor even interest-free loans. Give us loan on interest. Within 2 to 3 years, we will be on our feet again. That indeed

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is the spirit of manliness.

Our humble salute to all such men and women.

CHILDREN'S RULES— FOR PARENTS

The excellent habit of talking things over sensibly and rationally is a tremendous asset which, fortunately, can be developed with patient and persevering practice. It is especially important when it involves parents and children, for it helps to avoid much tension and unhappiness arising from lack of mutual understanding.

Many parents lay down arbitrary rules for their children, not realising that these rules, although good in themselves, place roadblocks on the natural outlets of youngsters merely by the manner in which they are laid down. Young minds tend towards independent thinking, and this is a trait which must be nurtured, albeit with the necessary guidance.

A group of 14-year-old girls in the U.S. had an animated discussion on this subject with a social worker. As a result of this meeting, they evolved a set of excellent rules—for their parents!

A great deal of mature thinking underlies these rules. Not all of them are applicable to Indian conditions, but here are some that are worth appraising.

1. If we have done something wrong, you are quite right to tell us off. Please make it short and pithy, and don't go on about it for hours.
2. Please remember the good things about us as well as the bad.
3. If you want us to do something, or don't want us to, tell us why—not just 'because I say so.'
4. Please tell us when you are pleased with us, because it encourages us to go on behaving like that.
5. If you make a mistake, admit it. If you do something wrong, please apologise. We should do the same.
6. Could you listen to us more often? Then we would be more willing to listen to you.
7. We want to be trusted, so please don't worry about us so much, and don't always expect the worst.
8. You often tell us that you didn't do that when you were young. We would be genuinely interested to know just what you *did* when you were young.

ASPECTS OF EXCELLENCE

Maturity

Maturity means a lot of things. It means the ability to control one's emotions, to avoid resentments and jealousies, to resist unnecessary worries, to live unselfishly and to understand the problems of others, to respect contrary opinions, to accept and discharge responsibilities, to assume distasteful duties, to make difficult decisions promptly,—in general the full assumption of one's place in the scheme of things. It is a large order.

Anon

If you wish to greet a friend here or abroad, gift him with a subscription to Excellence. Details for subscribing are on Page 8.

A NATION'S STRENGTH

What makes a nation's pillars high
And its foundation strong?
What makes it mighty to defy
The foes that round it throng?
It is not gold. Its kingdoms grand
Go down in battle shock;
Its shafts are laid on sinking sand,
Not on abiding rock.

Is it the sword? Ask the red dust
Of empires passed away;
The blood has turned their stones to rust,
Their glory to decay.

And is it pride? Ah, that bright crown
Has seemed to nations sweet;

But God has struck its luster down
In ashes at His feet.

Not gold, but only men can make

A people great and strong;
Men who, for truth and honor's sake,
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men, who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly--

They build a nation's pillars deep
And lift them to the sky.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

aims and objects of the Centre

- (1) To stimulate amongst all sections of the public thought and effort for the promotion and development of the excellence movement in the country.
- (2) To establish a network of contacts both at home and abroad to strengthen this movement.
- (3) To publish a journal that would serve as an organ of the Centre, communicate its ideas and ideals and keep the public informed of the achievements, possibilities and trends in this direction.
- (4) To bring out original writings, reprints, translations of relevant publications in India and elsewhere that would help raise standards of achievement in different walks of life.
- (5) To compile and maintain lists of individuals and institutions that have consistently maintained high standards and to extend such support as is possible.
- (6) To establish and maintain a library of visual aids, books, periodicals and papers on this subject for the benefit of the members.
- (7) To set up institutions like schools, colleges, studios, galleries, libraries etc. for training in excellence as a concept and activity.
- (8) To institute and establish fellowships, scholarships, grants, rewards and prizes to encourage the excellence movement in all its facets.
- (9) To set up a laboratory which will objectively and systematically examine the products and services given to the public and loan them excellence seals for specific periods.
- (10) To found, establish, create and maintain endowments and/or grants for the purposes aforesaid.
- (11) To undertake all such activities as may promote the excellence movement in the country.

MEMBERSHIPS

The Centre is being registered as a trust with the following memberships

Founder Members : Rs. 19/-

Corporate Members : Rs. 100/-

Associate Members :

Donor Members : Rs. 1,000 and above.

Ordinary Members : Rs. 19/- (plus 5 entrance fee)

Students : Rs. 10/- and above.

The membership includes subscription to the monthly Journal EXCELLENCE (Annual Subscription separately for the Journal: In India Rs. 15. Abroad \$4 (by air mail).