

EDITORIAL

Ensure equal opportunities for girls and boys

National Girl Child Day is a powerful reminder of the many girls around the world who face discrimination, violence and limited opportunities. It highlights the need for equal rights and better treatment, working to break harmful stereotypes and practices that hold girls back. The day also celebrates the amazing potential girls have and the important roles they play in shaping our future. But it's not just about awareness; it's about making real changes. By focusing on education, health, and empowering girls, we can create a world where both girls and boys have equal opportunities. National Girl Child Day was launched with the goal of tackling the various social issues affecting girls in India. From infant mortality to child marriage, the issues have been tough to tackle, but this day serves as a reminder that these challenges must be addressed. The initiative aims to bring girls to the forefront of development, allowing them to access the opportunities they deserve. National Girl Child Day significance isn't just about celebrating, it's about taking action. It encourages everyone governments, organizations and communities to focus on protecting and empowering girls. The day helps push for better policies so that girls can access education, and healthcare, and stay safe. It also works to stop gender-based violence and child marriage, giving girls the chance to live the lives they deserve. On this National Girl Child Day, let's promise to create a world where every girl is given the opportunity to flourish. To the girls of today and the leaders of tomorrow, may you always find the courage to pursue your dreams and achieve greatness. May every girl be empowered to chase her dreams and create a bright future for herself. Discrimination based on gender is a big issue that females experience throughout their lives all across the country. Every year on January 24, India commemorates National Girl Child Day to raise awareness about a girl child's rights and the necessity of her education, health, and nutrition. The day correlates with government efforts and programs like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, women's reservations in colleges and universities, free/subsidized education, and Save the Girl Child. The Ministry of Women and Child Development initiated National Girl Child Day in the year of 2008, with the major goal of promoting awareness and addressing disparities that girls encounter in the country, as well as educating everyone about a girl child's rights.

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The complex terrain of relationships

BY
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GAUTAM

Relationships, whether personal or professional, are a delicate balancing act of emotions, perspectives and communication

Relationships are a tricky business. Two people who, at one stage of life, can agree so well that they cannot see or believe in having any difference in the point of view that they will hold. Different perspectives are an enigma; affection, agreement and endorsement are all rolled into one. Identification with each other is more important than identity any day. Very often, it is the bedrock of affection and togetherness in action. The same couple, as time passes and because of hormonal changes in their systems, can and do start having different points of view. What is initially a pleasant disagreement can soon become an assertion of identity. Personality conflicts follow.

These personality conflicts can be a logical derivation, and very often, it is difficult to find the origin of the derivation itself. Coherent dialogue in a spirit of give and take can often be substituted by the urge not only to protect one's turf but also to prove oneself more talented and

resourceful. It can often become the source of further identity conflicts. The skill to handle such disagreements cannot be taught and is often taken over by other habits.

These habits may include being short-tempered, incoherent talking and having a high pitch in conversation, which is seen as an extension of good logic. The aberrations are far too many to be recounted, and the results are easy to identify. Instead of working together to resolve the differences, it becomes a battleground to show who can prevail. The rest, as they say, is history. In an era, that is full of talk about skills, it is important at this stage of dialogue to focus on life skills. Two people who cannot get together try to demonstrate who has the right of way in a marital relationship.

The life story moves from one end of the spectrum to an often incoherent hurtling down the slope of not only a difference of opinion but also a difference in personalities. The analysis can go only so far because then logic gives way to preferences and passion. This is at the root of many marital disorders, and it is difficult to reverse the gears and change the pitch. Unfortunately, while there are numerous dissertations in psychology and elsewhere on relationships, practical-oriented thinking in handling relationships is few and at best, commonsensical.

One is merely indicating the value of focused research and showing how a structured approach to problem-solving, even in everyday life, can be very valuable. There is a need to see research as an enabling situation for problem-solving, and many use the phrase 'applied research' for it. In the present day and age, more of the fashion world is about skill, and it is being generously used because of its attractive value in situations that cannot be practically handled. Sometimes it works; sometimes it does not.

The important thing is to realise that research requires insights and the adoption of a structured methodology, even in commonsensical situations. It is this aspect of research that can lead to a better quality of life, which can be termed as enabling research and it has to do with life skills. Solving this situation, which afflicts many interpersonal relationships, is simultaneously easy and yet difficult. It is easy to control if one can limit one's communication and how much one talks more wisely, keeping the number of words used in a conversation minimal. The truth is, that the more one seeks to talk and explain, the more complex it can become. Let simple things remain simple; it is a significant strategic choice.

This approach works because passion subsides, irritations sort itself out and the choice of words and pitch of



the voice can be better controlled. One only has to look around to notice how talking less is such an asset in keeping relationships positive. Interpersonal relationships apart, work relationships, also get affected and the impression of losing an argument, even in workspaces, is a personal defeat. This, by itself, is a self-defeating proposition. It is self-defeating because even if one wins the argument due to positional power or manipulative skills, the scars of a lost argument leave long-lasting damage to relationships. One can indeed often lose a battle to win the war. As indicated earlier, this applies to work situations as much as to real-life, non-work situations. Gentleness and soft words go far, especially when gentleness is received not as a proposition of the

weaker person, but as a characteristic and indicator of mutual respect. The best solution to many conflicts is when both come out as winners, and no one is growling, smitten by the dangerous feeling of having 'lost one's face'. Be that as it may, it is necessary to reduce differences, not to personalities, but to find the best way forward. This best way forward must focus on protecting everyone's ego and be in the interest of the larger good. Much will depend on the personality elements of the players in the situation and indeed the time available to sort it out. Many times, a shortage of time necessitates two decisions that are sub-optimal and more to 'get along with a job' than 'finding the best option'. Using tentative words and a hypothesis open to correction and improve-

ment may be the best recipe for conflict resolution. In such situations, the personalities do not win or lose; it is the cause that is handled in a far-sighted way.

Examples can be many, and one has to see what the issue at stake is how people perceive the result of the outcome and how they interpret it. In all cases, if there is a loser in an argument, it is best to make him feel that he has not 'lost' and that no personalities are involved. This can be a useful approach to handling institutional issues because every resolution of a conflict should be for the institutional good.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

An unparalleled Constitution

BY
KSS SESHAN

As we celebrate the 75th Republic Day, let's look back on where we stand on social equality introduced by Dr Ambedkar in the Constitution

If India won independence due to a protracted national struggle carried out by millions of our countrymen and women, the framing of our Constitution after winning independence was the noble task carried out by a number of legal luminaries known for their acumen, patriotism, foresight, and above all, commitment to the wellbeing of our country.

The framing of the Constitution for India was the culmination of long years of struggle along with the freedom movement. In fact, the constitutional demands of our leaders gave the freedom movement a clear direction coupled with mature political leadership. It is not a coincidence that several of the top-ranking freedom fighters of the time were themselves lawyers and constitutional experts who had a very clear vision of what type of Constitution the coun-

try needed once it became independent from British rule.

Special Features
There are several unique features of our Constitution and the foremost is that it is the longest written one in the world. It has 22 parts, 448 Articles and 12 Schedules. Its English version has 1,46,385 words in total. It may be mentioned that the shortest constitution is Monaco's and it has only 3,814 words. Our Constitution in its original form is handwritten on parchment and has 251 pages. Each page is 22 inches long and 16 inches wide. It weighs 3 kg and 650 gm. It is a living document.

The Constitution is written in both English and Hindi languages. The calligraphy was done by Prem Bihari Narayan Raizada, originally from Dehradun, but settled in Delhi. He was an expert in calligraphy in both Persian and English. He charged no fee for writing the document. His patriotism was such that when Nehru asked him how much fee to be paid, "not a single paisa" was his emphatic answer!

The constitutional demands of our leaders gave the freedom movement a clear direction coupled with mature political leadership

The original Constitution volume contains beautiful paintings on each page done by noted artist

Nandalal Bose and a few others from Shantiniketan. The scenes from Ramayana, Mahabharata, the life of Buddha and Indian historical scenes right from Mohenjo-Daro to the days of national movement are depicted on each page. The original Constitution in both English and Hindi, is preserved in Helium-filled cases in the Parliament Library, New Delhi, under heavy security. What we read today in the printed forms of our Constitution are only reproductions of this original book.

When the new Constitution was to be adopted all the members of the Constituent Assembly were to sign one after the other. It took three days for all 283 members (there were also 15 women members) to sign the Constitution and it was done by 26 November 1949. The Constituent Assembly which framed the Constitution first met on 9 December 1946 with Satyendranath Sen as the Protem President and Dr Rajendra Prasad was elected as its regular President.

Dr BR Ambedkar was appointed by the Constituent Assembly on 29 August 1947 as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee to draft our Constitution. It took 2 years, 11 months and 18 days to draft. The Constituent Assembly met altogether for 116 days. Sir BN Rau was appointed

as the legal adviser for the drafting Committee and he prepared a rough draft for the drafting committee. Rau visited a number of countries all over Europe, Africa, Latin America and the US, and studied several Constitutions before submitting his draft with notes.

The four lions in our national emblem adopted from the Ashoka Pillar, stand for Power, Courage, Pride and Confidence. Our Constitution has borrowed articles from nearly 10 countries like the US, the UK, the USSR, Ireland, France, the Weimar Republic of Germany, South Africa, Canada and Japan.

Constitutional Luminaries

Our national movement was not a blind struggle against the alien rule surcharged with emotions and mere patriotism. At every stage, the constitutional demands by the leaders were very clear and loud. It was only the British colonial masters who underestimated the constitutional calibre of the leadership of our freedom struggle in evolving a Constitution of our own. A number of British political leaders were proved wrong when they openly expressed their apprehensions on the calibre of Indian leaders to have a viable Constitution of their own.

The idea of a Constituent Assembly

to frame the Constitution was proposed as early as in 1934, at a time when freedom for the country was not even in sight by MN Roy, a pioneer of the Communist movement in India. It became an official demand of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1935 which wanted a Constituent Assembly specifically to frame a Constitution for India. On 15 November 1939, C Rajagopalachari, a seasoned lawyer, also demanded a Constituent Assembly based on an adult franchise. However, the Constituent Assembly came into being under the Cabinet Mission Plan in 1946 after the elections were duly held.

Though several national leaders during the struggle for independence exhibited a mature constitutional mindset, it was the erudite legal expert Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, who was instrumental in shaping the Constitution and is rightly remembered as the architect of the Constitution. He introduced the concept of social equality in the Constitution. He was made the Chairman of the drafting committee that included legal luminaries like KM Munshi, Muhammad Sadullah, Alladi Kuppaswamy Iyer, Gopalaswami Ayyangar, N Madhava Rao and TT Krishnamachari.

Why 26 January
There is an emotive

and historical reason for choosing 26 January in 1950 as Republic Day. After India won independence, the Constitution was drafted and adopted on 26 November 1949 by the Constituent Assembly when Dr Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly, signed it. Hence Constitution Day is celebrated on 26 November every year. Two months later, on 26 January 1950, the Constitution was put into effect, ushering in the Republic.

It was on 26 January 1930 that the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru at its Lahore session declared 'Poorna Swaraj' (complete independence) as the goal of the national movement and this gave a great fillip at that time to the struggle for freedom. When the Constitution was to be put in force, 26 January became a natural choice in 1950.

Today, as we celebrate the 75th Republic Day, we pay our tributes to the father of our Constitution, Dr BR Ambedkar and to all those legal experts who worked in tandem with him in making possible a Constitution that is so distinguished for all its unique features, not found in other Constitutions of the world.

(The author is retired Professor of History, University of Hyderabad)