

Why Academicians are Leaders

Debasish Paul

ACADEMICIAN IS KNOWN AS A person whose main pursuit is acquiring and delivery of Knowledge belonging to an academic institution. So he/she belongs to not personal but a public domain of knowledge. He/she cannot become an institution by him/herself but must belong to it, save and except under exceptional circumstances.

Leadership is defined as a person who must have even if a few but multiple followers. It simply implies that a person acquires leadership position by learning to the core the collective sentiment of the people which may be an aspiration or a grief of deprivation of the community as a whole or a segment of it. In practice however in a pluralistic society of India, it is easier to become a leader by fomenting partisan narrow vested interest than attaining a broad consensus national interest. Words like unity in diversity is frivolously true only in commercial Hindi film and small time commercial cricket.

Indian Constitution, a written one, has specified India as a mixed economy, recognizes private right to property but recommended a socialistic pattern of society which implies an active involvement of state in economic activity where there is a recognized public interest but private enterprise is not eager to perform there. Public economic activity is also dedicated to development of heavy industries in core sector or infrastructure like rail, ship, civil aviation, road, bridge, river-ways, Electricity & Telecommunication where private investment is inadequate but it is essential for long term development of the economy.

Political Science defines that political activity of a state is manifestation of its economic activity. The man belonging to a society has a political identity shaped partly by consent and partly by compulsion of his role in the economic activity of the country he belongs to in Marxian terms to the mode of production in vogue at the material time.

The present shape of Democracy in India has its genesis in Renaissance in Europe after the much glorified Industrial Revolution in England fuelled by invention of Steam Engine which made large scale production of mass consumption goods possible at a much lower cost than so far churned out by small manual artisan units. French Revolution liberated humankind from Monarchy. Feudalism collapsed to onslaught of both the revolutions, liberating labour from Feudal slavery. 1st World War gave birth to revolution in Russia. 2nd World War gave birth to revolution in China. British Empire where Sun did not set also collapsed.

Democracy came to India in a cunning way to protect British interest in India since Socialist Republic of China nationalized all colonial properties. The Partition of India was well made to

plunge India into fratricide till date serving the interest of the erstwhile colonial rulers in Indian subcontinent. Even in absentia, the West divides and rules over the East.

Thus many undercurrents have gone through the much hyped largest Democracy of India. Undeniably the Universal Adult Suffrage (Every adult Indian has a right to vote) and the mammoth size of India naming it a subcontinent both has qualified the bigness.

That size signifies a lot in love and war is evident in disclosed Pentagon papers which revealed that after fragmentation of former USSR in pieces, Balkanisation (synonym of fragmentation) of Indian subcontinent is on the agenda of the Pentagon, the Defence HQ of America.

Indian Constitution and Directive Principles of State Policy had promised to build up India as a Socialistic pattern of society in a People's Republic (Republic means the country belongs to the people of India). The article would try among other things that why so much of storm rained so little.

Human being is a distinct type of Mammal who has linguistic skill. In simple terms, man can talk to each other on essential and discretionary occasions in addition to expression of body language. According to Karl Marx evolution of language is due to the fact that man is a social animal. Belonging to society makes man a political animal, according to Greek Philosopher Aristotle.

The human cerebral capacity ie. intelligence has resulted in progress of civilization through Science, Technology and Philosophical discourse. An wise man speaks well. So one who can speak well is considered as a wise man. Hence public speaking is an enormously powerful skill. It builds up self-confidence and self-esteem in a good public speaker and respect to him among target audience.

With steady development of science and technology the community of learned people whose invention and discovery in course of research in educational institutions have made these progress possible, have earned utmost respect.

In the primary stage of civilization, magicians in the garb of religious persons ruled the society. It was Priestocracy. In recent times, the rate of progress of scientific research has become very fast so much so that commoners' surprise is boundless. The place of educationist is of high esteem and it is compounding over time. It is because people now live in a knowledge economy when a man need not be materially wealthy but if he/she is brilliant and an achiever in the field of Technology, Business Management and/or law, he/she can make billions in a lifetime.

By nature Education just like Medical practice is a social profession. An Educationist flows over a steady stream of batch of students one generation after another. All achievers in a modern knowledge society is related to one or the other educational institution.

Great educationists even when they become titular head of the state like world famous Philosopher Sarbapalli Radhakrishnan or in recent time the space missile technologist scientist of repute Abdul Kalam, it increases status of the post by reverse order instead of elevating the status of the person.

Crowd management in simple terms, managing people in group is another organization skill in which educationists are most capable social group by profession and practice. Eventually people in legal profession who also have the gift of the gab (Oratory skill) are having the same built-in advantage of value added oratory skill and social image. In films, the prowess of hero as a successful lawyer in the court scenes have often being an ingredient of once upon a hit formula films. Nothing succeeds like success.

With increasing sophistication of society, when social norms are continuously defined, persons are not credited with inherited resources but more with individual's own achievements. One doesn't get surprised when remuneration of training centre faculty member cashing on entrance test to be admitted in Medicine, Engineering & Management reputed institutes far exceeds salary of target institutes ie IITs / IIMs / AIMS faculty members. After all this is an achievement oriented society where teachers are guiding the achievers.

Each society values high those professions that create its achievers. In fact engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges and Management Institutes are temples of new India, the emerging world power only after China as envisioned by great sage Swami Vivekananda.

In popular media like Cinema, TV, Drama, there is not found a single teacher who is not noble, never a villain is placed as a teacher conversely. Since popular media products are very sharply market focused, this profoundly reflects and reinforces the educationist as an ideal role model.

College and University teachers are entitled to networking in all levels of society from the high and mighty to the common people. In numerous social functions, educationists are most wanted to grace the occasion which place of pride continues after superannuation. In election publicity, it is very commonplace observation that the candidate is premium branded as Professor or retired Professor and more appealing when he/she has Ph.D. and even better D.Phil, or D.Sc. degree.

All political parties make a warm welcome to admit an Educationist into party membership. Even after winning election for state Legislature or Parliament, Professor prefix is used by the achiever incumbents in order to highlight their belonging to a learned and esteemed profession. As a time honoured social ranking, only Professors are contenders of equal status of most esteemed professionals like Doctors, Engineers or Lawyers.

CHANGING SCENARIO

'General Line' Education gives wisdom in study of Social Sciences popularly called Humanities. Professional courses aim at developing technical skills on prima facie consideration with cursory or no exposure on social sciences.

With startling developments of Business Management, Engineering and Technology studies, superior white collar jobs are available only to professionally qualified persons. Just like the classical Industrial Revolution which took away manual jobs to machines, the advent of computer technology has taken away routine mental jobs by paradigm change of official pen and paper based to high tech push button paperless office. All clerical jobs vanished in the blue slow but surely by a pseudo-glorified 'Golden Handshake' to job losers enhancing incredibly the retrenchment benefits.

Primarily because of better employment and secondarily fast growth opportunity, professional education has completely taken over the field of middle class education pushing away Humanities or Social Science studies into oblivion. A special class of white collar jobs became dazzlingly whiter by incredible earning opportunity with a flying start by golden option of global mobility and enormous career growth with a few years of experience gathered. Now a days non-professional or general line studies are considered as cesspool of lower merited students who failed to ride high in 'Joint Entrance Examination' and thus are drop outs of mainstream education. The private gains of job oriented education has become a cause of serious loss of public in a growing vacuum of absence of first grade of intellect in humanitarian studies. Man not machine can carry on a sustainable development.

The 6th pay commission is inspired by the attempt to restore the balance of economic growth and exercise in humanity. The society has been approaching a vacuum in intellectual studies in education and research of pure science and humanities by distracting top talents into money spinning professional courses in Engineering, Medicine and Business Management. India has already reached a situation where top Indian educational institutes are suffering from forty percent faculty shortage. A new generation man finds it simply stupid to sacrifice an industry job with a million rupee salary tag for a one tenth salaried job as a teacher even when it is institution of national or international importance like AIMS, IITs, IIS or IIM, not to speak of the erstwhile in next rung of eminence.

It has strong political implications because the educated middle class is more and more divided, insensitive to carry forward the social commitments of the foremost generation of educated people. A Quiz Contest held in IIM Calcutta on 21st August 2010 revealed that the most intelligent students of India are least aware and concerned of harsh realities of the surrounding states. On the contrary, it is observed that Engineering and Medical students of elite colleges of the city of Kolkata show a lot of intellectual involvement in socio-political issues till they are in campus but once a grad, bagging a plum job, they become a completely deformed careerist with its virtues and vices, an alien to society aloof of any social involvement any more but an opportunist of the worst kind, henceforth networking only for personal gains.

While a precise definition of 'Intellectual' is not an easy exercise, in accepted connotation, it is meant an educated man with social consciousness and commitment. But with the advent of career oriented education ruling the scene, education is a satanic verse rather than what Rabindranath sung for fire of education to burn the vices and illuminate the virtues in many of his verses.

Can one forget the one line question in the lips of young sister-in-law played by Sharmilla Tagore, 'Is it good or bad?' Whenever the vicious hero of the film 'Simabaddha' essayed by Barun Chanda for whom career and greed were synonymous, pointed out privileges of his career advances. Ironically once this die-hard careerist was a noted scholar in Shakespeare who wrote, 'Only those careers are good which do not ride on the miseries of people'. He killed a security staff by design sure but passively in order to be elevated as a board member of an MNC. Ancient Sanskrit verse 'Suktiratnavali' said, 'education enhances violence and greed in man'. So it is. □□□