

Poetry Series

# Alok Agarwal

## - poems -



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# Alok Agarwal(1st Jan 1990)

I was born on 1st January 1990 in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh(INDIA) . I am currently working as an Officer in Grade 'C' in Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. I have done B.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering from Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology.

I have done my schooling from St. Joseph's College, from ISC board. I have reached several milestones. The most notable being Regional Mathematical Olympiad (RMO) qualification with 5th rank in State.

I always feel that key to my success is that I am a very cool person who keeps tension and pressure out of the way. I have got a very positive attitude towards life. I believe in 'Simple Living and High Thinking'. I have got a smiling face. I am greatly inspired by Thomas Grey's poem 'Elegy written in a churchyard court'.

My hobbies include playing chess, watching idiot box and sleeping. However i have some vices. The biggest vice in me is that I take things very lightly and sometimes carelessly too; but it doesn't mean that I am not responsible. I am a great lover of Indian classical music, and I am inspired by their composition, especially the ones which tell us about life.

I want to lead a peaceful, tension free and a very simple life. I want to uphold the dignity of my country. I want myself to be called a 'True Indian' and most important of all 'Human Being'.

# Preface

The journey of the book is a testament of an experimental journey of the author himself. I was educated in English medium school and college education was also in English. Naturally, English was the first choice of language I would have written something. The first literary piece was written in 2011 (at 21 years of age) during my college days which was a self-inflicted challenge to myself, 'Can I write a poem'? My earlier work was forced by my school with the aim of passing an exam with good marks for which I used to study some essays a day before the exam. However, they did not bring succor to my literary heart.

After accepting the challenge, came a dilemma - topic and choice of words. At 21 years of age - I was puzzled by meaning of life at all levels - cultural, philosophical, economical, emotional, religious and all other things in between and beyond. To write, I must have a fair degree of command over language, and I feared English. So, the journey was akin to Batman. "Bats frighten me, and it's time my enemies share my dread." Such was my love affair with the language.

I started re-learning the language with the newfound intention to write poems. I started reading dictionary and exploring the meaning of words and in the journey, I came across some other books on History and other subjects as well. Einstein had said that a person must be good in at least two subjects - language and Mathematics. Maths was my forte and language was not. Hindi was my mother tongue and I was pretty much comfortable with the language. I had even opted for the language for my 11th and 12th unsuccessfully. My choice was forcibly changed to Computer Science because of its relevance in the futuristic job market, which I can now comprehend.

I started reading books, watching movies, listening songs with the dual intention of entertainment, gaining knowledge and learning English as well. The foundation of English was already present because of my school academia, and it was improved with such studies.

After entering professional life and spending 4-6 years in the organization - I observed that Hindi was also respected as a medium of communication and in fact while interacting with local contract workers - there was no option but to use Hindi. It may be termed as a job requirement.

Further, there were some Hindi events organized in my organization in which some prizes were also distributed. So, writing in Hindi had its own perks. These activities rekindled in me my love for the language. I started writing in Hindi as

well.

With the passage of time - I came across some ghazals which opened a new window of literary treasure. I immediately fell in love with the numerous gazals and sher which exist in the same planet as of mine. A new challenge was born and was accepted.

Amalgamation of Hindi and Urdu was a unique blend and may be compared with flavors on offering in masaledaar food of India.

Somehow, I despise the amalgamation of English and Hindi. I don't have the reason for the same; but, it doesn't suit my taste buds as of now.

The term 'as of now' holds much significance because it reflects ideologies that I associate with. With the passage of time and interaction with people belonging to different walks of life - much of the hardcore principles which were very dear to me have been shaken.

I would like to share one of such beliefs. In my hometown - meetha is served after lunch/dinner/ after main meal. In Bikaner, this trend is 360 degrees reversed. 1st meetha and then other things. Life is short and have ice cream first is the philosophical foundation of people of Bikaner. Though the narrative seems simple but see it from Mars. You will find lives getting wasted on petty things.

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When seen from airplane and if you see three lane traffic and one of the cars breaks lane to reach destination - I feel that if my hands were bigger, I would reshuffle the cars as a kid does to its miniature toy cars.

The example put forth is simple enough to be ridiculed but extend it to religious matters, polygamy, nationalism, Article 370 and what not - the discussion cum debate can escalate to such an extent that people might pick up swords to kill others.

I don't intend to be either politically correct or incorrect in my writings.

I expect my readers (if there are any) not to read beyond the print and even if they do pls. keep it to yourself. The reading should influence us to learn more.

I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch where thro'  
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades  
For ever and forever when I move.

Similar is my experience with quest for learning. Whenever I think I have

garnered mastery over Galib, some other poets have risen from the ashes to challenge me again; and I am like 'You too'!

Such is the aura of knowledge. No one conquers as it is not meant to be conquered. It's a journey that must be cherished for the love of it.

Alok Agarwal

# An Invisible Woman

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It would have been better had there been more educated people at this ?????

Leave that hustle-bustle to thy self. Let me tread my own path.

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Now, I have tried to portray an incident of my life in a subtle sarcastic manner. But I would still like my audiences to refrain from judging me or develop some pre-conceived notions about me.

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Alok Agarwal



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Alok Agarwal

# Mermaid And The Cats (Kids Story)

Once upon a time, a little mermaid was sitting on the tree gazing at the sun. The sun was shining with all its might.

Suddenly, a cloud came passing by and asked the mermaid, "Aren't you feeling hot?". The mermaid replied, "Yes. A bit. But, I am bored of swimming all day and night. There is nothing new to be done. So, I just thought of taking some time off."

The cloud sighed and invited a breeze of wind to provide some relief.

Another cloud joined the conversation and remarked, "It would have been wonderful if it could swim in water instead of gliding in air. It feels heavy to carry the weight of water all time along";.

Amidst, the rustling of leaves - the mermaid said, "Yes. I know. I wish all our lives could be more happening. But what can be done right now. My parents don't allow me to go very far from this tree. This tree has been standing all along since the birth of my grandparents."

A cat came to the rescue and said, "I have been listening to all your conversations and I have an idea for making today 'funday'. If you all are interested, you can join."

Everybody including the tree who has been silent all along expressed their interests in joining.

The cat invited everybody at her new house where she had planned a house-warming party.

Everybody put on their best attire and reached the cat's place before the scheduled time of 07: 00 PM. The mermaid was looking gorgeous as ever. The wind was gutsy. The tree was tall. The cloud brothers were cloudy. The sun could not join as it was forbidden for him to go out in the dark since he was born.

The house of the cat was lavish, and she had invited all her catty friends, and it was destined to be a long party.

The music was soft and there were several games to be played and prizes won.

At 09: 00 PM, it was decided to play a game around cauldron. Everyone gathered encircling the cauldron. The cats decided to play racing game and the last two

losers of the race will be put inside the cauldron for half an hour and will be served last.

The racing game would put tree and mermaid on the obvious disadvantage but could express their concerns explicitly.

As was the obvious, the mermaid and tree lost the race. The mermaid was put inside the cauldron. The tree was too tall to be put inside the cauldron. So it was decided that only the face of the tree with leaves will be put inside; while the trunk and roots shall be left outside in a manner that cauldron is in the lap of the tree.

The cloud bothers got suspicious of the activity and sensed some foul play. They immediately whispered in the ears of the wind about their suspicion.

As soon as leader cat ignited a matchstick - the clouds started crying. Wind took a cue and started blowing rapidly.

Hearing the commotion, the tree started shaking its head and started shedding its leaves. The mermaid also jumped out the cauldron and sat on the cloud.

The cats grew impatient and, in the hustle-bustle that followed, one of the ignited matchsticks fell on the fallen leaves and within minutes - the entire house was engulfed in fire.

The cats learned their lesson and the mermaid safely reached to the river and swam to her house. The parents hugged her with love and kissed on her forehead.

The mermaid has now become old and shares this story to her grandchildren who refuse to believe. ??

Alok Agarwal

# Behavior Based Safety - A Way Of Life (Bbs Conference)

Introduction: What is BBS?

Wikipedia defines Behavior-Based Safety (BBS) as the 'application of science of behavior change to real world safety problems' or 'A process that creates a safety partnership between management and employees that continually focuses people's attentions and actions on theirs, and others, daily safety behavior.' At its very core BBS is based on a larger scientific field called organizational behavior management.

BBS is safety culture of the organization that is by the people, of the people and for the people. It focuses on what people do, and why they do - BBS then scientifically analyses the reason of WHY and then applies a research-supported intervention strategy to improve what people do'. Linking it to Indian mindset - it is basically a mother-child relationship between different departments and different levels of hierarchy of the organization.

Approach to BBS: How to go about it

For improving the safety culture of the organization since industrial revolution, various approaches have been tried to enhance the safety culture of the organization. These approaches had reasonable success in reducing unsafe behaviors in the workplace. Some of the approaches involve penalties; others involve surveillance; others involve guidance, codes and procedures to follow; others still are supportive and training-oriented. Some initiatives come from the employer, from the social partner organizations, from state regulatory bodies, and some worthwhile initiatives come from individual employees' own insights, ideas, training and development activities around health and safety. However, the methods being traditionally employed have had comparatively less success as the approach is mostly by FEAR.

BBS offers a paradigm shift in the existing approach to safety by being more people centric. It has been realized by the industry that almost 90% of accidents are caused due to unsafe behavior. To tackle this, a scientific approach in improving the behavior induced unsafe acts is required. BBS offers a solution to this.

BBS: Mr.360 degree

A successful BBS program includes ALL employees, from the Head Office, Regional Office, State Office, Location-in-charge, Safety officer and front line workers including daily wage, salary, union employees, contractors and sub-contractors. To achieve changes in behavior, a change in policy, procedures and/or systems is also warranted. These changes cannot be done without buy-in

and support from all involved in making those decisions.

A behavior-based safety approach promotes interventions that are people-focused and often incorporate one-to-one or group observations of employees performing routine work tasks, setting goals carefully and giving timely feedback on safety-related behavior, coaching and mentoring. The initiatives have a proactive focus, encouraging individuals and their work groups to consider the potential for incident involvement, (accidents) and to assess their own behavior as safe or unsafe always, no matter what.

#### Technique of BBS: Positive Reinforcement

One of the techniques in BBS is 'reinforcement'. Reinforcement occurs when a consequence that follows a behavior makes it more likely that the behavior will occur again in the future. Therefore, a reinforcing consequence is one that causes behavior to occur more frequently. For eg. To encourage safe behavior - rewards are given. This prompts good workers to not only follow safety in their lifestyle but they then become brand-ambassadors of safety. They also encourage their colleagues to follow a safer path.

#### BBS @ Indian Oil

In my organization (India Oil) , the existing trend in improving safety culture is typically carried out under negative reinforcement conditions (i.e. because we 'have to') . This results in adequate performance; employees do enough to satisfy a compliance standard, but they do not go that extra mile. On changing this trend via BBS, we have introduced a culture of working under positive reinforcement. Such conditions have resulted in employees going above and beyond their job duties, and employees taking personal account for safety. If employees work under positive reinforcement conditions (i.e. because they 'want to') , then they will be:

- 1) working towards something good (as opposed to avoiding a negative) ,
- 2) motivated to work, which might result in
- 3) creative thinking, employing new strategies, successful decision making, seeking more responsibility.

Research into motivation and behaviour change tells us that setting goals leads to better results and that 'what gets measured gets done'. A person who is encouraged to get sixty letters typed in a day is far more likely to succeed than a person who is told to 'do their best'. Likewise, if there is any room for ambiguous interpretation, it is crucial to elaborate, e.g., rather than saying 'Overalls should be worn correctly', say, 'Overalls should be done up to the neck with sleeves outside gauntlet gloves'. It is better to be specific than vague, to aim higher than lower and to get participation and engagement from the start. Safety should always be at the core of goal setting: saying 'Do it by Friday but do it safely' rather than 'Do it safely but do it by Friday' puts the emphasis on safety as the most important factor, not the deadline.

#### Case Study: Bikaner BP

By incorporating the tagline '?? ?? ?? ???, ?? ?? ?? ????'- safety culture has penetrated among the common masses. The workers are now more inclined in complying with the safety norms. Not only this, any new worker entering the system also inculcates this safety culture and safety becomes a part of his lifestyle. During interview with people, I have found that even BBS implementers have started wearing seat belts while driving their way home. People have started wearing helmets on motor-cycles. BBS has transformed the lives among all walks of life.

Rewards at Bikaner BP

When we distribute rewards to our workers during safety week celebrations, new year celebrations, Indian Oil celebrations; we have included following lines:

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Such lines and such words of encouragement have had a positive effect on the psychology of the workers actually performing the task.  
Overall, we have had a good experience in enhancing the safety culture of our plant. It has been learning and rewarding experience personally as well.  
Bikaner BP has successfully realized the virtues of '?? ?? ?? ???, ?? ?? ?? ???'

Alok Agarwal

# Kitsch

As the time passes by,  
So do I

It's the time to fly  
To reach high

To learn to forgive  
Should I try?

Naysayers go passing by  
Say good bye!

Doing something; doing something  
Who's that guy?

Times keep changing  
But why?

What the poet wants to say  
Worlds got fry!

Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal



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Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal

# India - The Path Chosen (Self Reliance With Integrity)

'Do not seek yourself outside yourself.'

In Aug 1947, when India became independent, the entire world was skeptical about the duration upto which we will be able to uphold the principles of Integrity and self-reliance in a unified India. But India was to prove otherwise. With such a myriad of cultural, political, religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds; it is a case study for world scholars to examine the soil of its personnel which has made unification of such diversity a living reality. It was infact the USSR that disintegrated in Dec 1991 rather than the Soverign, Socialist, Democratic, Republic of India.

Since time immemorial, India has been a beacon of civilization for the entire world. Starting with the Indus valley civilization and right up to the current age of Mars exploration, India has been a fore-runner in every field. Boasting of a rich cultural heritage, India has been a pearl of the world. The writings of Gita, the Vedas, the Upanishads have long been mentors of world leaders and taught them the significance of leading a lifestyle of integrity and making their nations self-reliant. With it being the pearl, its luster has attracted invaders - be it the Mughals or the British. The Mughals came with the intent of invading but later on adapted and amalgamated with the people living right of the Indus river whilst the British saw India as producer of raw materials with little or no respect to human life of Indians.

Even during the rule of the British, the concepts of self-reliance and integrity were few of the keywords that shaped the freedom struggle. The famous Dandi March for Salt Satyagraha is a living proof of a pinnacle that the world witnessed. In India salt has traditionally been associated with auspiciousness, loyalty and integrity. In colonial India, roughly 8.2% of the tax revenue was from the salt tax and impacted the poorest communities the most. Salt was next to air and water as a means of survival; yet, there was no freedom for Indians to make salt. Though abundantly available in coastal areas and simple technique of manufacturing by evaporation of water from sun - it had to be purchased from govt. shops only. By catching this pulse, Gandhiji successfully transformed the freedom movement into a movement of the masses.

Gandhiji believed that in order to successfully nurture a tree, the ingredients we use in its growth are also very important. Similarly, if India were to realize its dream of Purna Swaraj, then the path adopted to realize this dream must be pious and must emancipate in the lifestyle of its leaders. He was a true champion of self-reliance with Integrity. This act cut across religious, cultural and ethnic

lines; and unified the people of India towards a common goal of Purna Swaraj. During the same time, concept of small scale cottage industries emerged. Boycott of foreign goods and adoption of hand woven Khadi goods made the common man take pride in its ethnic indigenous culture. Infact, the charkha was in one of the initial designs of tricolor before independence. Charkha was a symbolism of 'self-reliance with integrity' of progressive India.

In the aftermath of Independence, up until 80s and 90s; we had maintained a largely socialist approach towards economy wherein many of the assets were govt. controlled. With the economic reforms starting early 90s and uptil now - the influx of foreign direct investment has increased multifold. With this, India is no longer a market within closed walls but a part of world market. The Indian companies and products now compete in an international arena along with other companies which is a need of the hour. India has progressed leaps and bounds and earning a name in itself in pharmacy, automobile, software development, food grains, fruits, vegetables, space industry, defense, textile, steel manufacturing, coal production etc.

The concept of 'Self-Reliance' does not mean shunning the doors of the world but it is a process of inclusive economic development. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said 'Atmanirbhar Bharat is not about being self-contained or being closed to the world, it is about being self-sustaining and self-generating', pursuing 'policies that promote efficiency, equity and resilience' and creating 'wealth and values not only for ourselves but for the larger humanity'. He also defined five pillars of Aatmanirbhar Bharat - Economy, Infrastructure, System, Demography and Demand.

To support the concept of Self-reliance, the govt. had made various policy changes in the last decade and popularized slogans of 'vocal for local' and 'make in India'. Though these measures seem simple, but resonate deep with the common folk. The growth of economy starts from 'agriculture sector' moves to 'manufacturing sector' and culminates in to 'service sector'. India already is in advanced stage in 'agriculture' and 'service' sector which make up bulk of its GDP contribution; but with the advent of 'make in India' campaign, focus on 'manufacturing sector' is now brought in the limelight. Some of the measures taken to achieve this feat include grant of economic package to small and medium companies, changes in definition of MSMEs, ease in public policies, rules, regulations etc. Due to such efforts, India jumped to 63rd place out of 190 countries in the world Banks' 2019 Ease of Doing Business Index from 130th in 2016.

India always advocated self-reliance with a pinch of external help but always

sidelined any chronic financial aid from any country or world-bank. In the backdrop of Covid-19, from zero production of PPEs in March 2020; we have grown to 4,50,000 pieces of PPEs a day by July 2020 (in a span of 4 months) . The research and development schematics of Covid-19 vaccine can be linked to this concept of 'self-reliance with integrity'.

The mark of a nation is being able to stand alone and to be looked upon with pride. In the recently concluded Olympics, we were pained to see Russian athletes not competing under Russian flag. It is a customary practice to play the national anthem of a country being played when its athlete wins gold medal. But this was not a case to be for our Russian counterparts. In 2019, the world doping agency had placed a ban on Russia for the involvement of its govt. in sponsoring doping programs. Thus, despite being a top sporting nation, it was 'integrity' which let the whole nation down.

The Prime Minister of India has rightly said, 'At the core of Atmanirbhar Bharat is to create wealth and values not only for ourselves but for the larger humanity. We believe that an Atmanirbhar Bharat is good for the world'. One of the inferences that can be drawn from above statement is the fact that India is a country which nurtures the values of 'Vasudev Kutumbukam'. We always talk about the world. We wish for growth and development of the world. This is a core value which is endearing to our political leaders. Both 'self-reliant' and 'Integrity' are the words that are woven in the fabric worn by my 'Bharat Maata'.

The future seems bright. The govt. is playing its part. The people are playing its part. We are steadily marching towards realizing our dream of 'self reliant' nation where there is inclusive development of all the individuals with 'integrity' being the foundation pillar of our march.

Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal



# Speed Limit

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Alok Agarwal

# Jaane Wo Kaise Log Hain

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Alok Agarwal

# Kyun Na Ek Din

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Alok Agarwal

# Insomnia

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Alok Agarwal

# Dekhte Raho

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Alok Agarwal



# Mere Gunahon Ke Raazdaar Nahin Rahe

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Alok Agarwal

# Sapne Dekhte Hain To Dar Jaate Hain

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Alok Agarwal

# Accha To Tha

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Alok Agarwal

# Mere Ishq Ko Ishq Rehne Do

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Alok Agarwal

# Kya Na Kiya

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Alok Agarwal



# Kuch To Baat Hai

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Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal



PoemHunter.com

# Khuda Hoon, Khuda Rehne Do

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Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal

# Vigilant India, Prosperous India

India is one of the emerging and promising economies of the 21st century; but is marred by three problems:

1. Poverty
2. Illiteracy
3. Corruption

Though all the above three issues are inter-connected but the issue of corruption is the epicenter of the issues. It is one of the sole reasons that prevents from taking a giant leap forward in 21st century. It has and is preventing India from taking a central role in world affairs. Due to corruption, basic infrastructure of education is not present. In cases, where it is present public has little faith over public education. The public schools are often found in a dingy condition and lack basic amenities. The quality of teaching is also questionable. Only a portion of the funds which are allocated towards such schemes is able to penetrate the clumsy system of corruption. This means a large population remains uneducated and unskilled and is unable to contribute to the development of the nation. The illiterate population also suffers from lack of opportunities and remains poor.

This creates a vicious circle which becomes very difficult to break.

The following data is worth mentioning, "A study conducted by Transparency International in 2005 recorded that more than 62% of Indians had at some point or another paid a bribe to a public official to get a job done. In 2008, another report showed that about 50% of Indians had first hand experience of paying bribes or using contacts to get services performed by public offices, however, in 2019 their Corruption Perceptions Index ranked the country 80th place out of 180, reflecting steady decline in perception of corruption among people." (Source: Wikipedia)

The big budget government schemes such as MNREGA, Swachh Bharat Mission, and other schemes are frequently under scanner for siphoning of funds. The public spending of government is always under scrutiny. The recent Rafale deal, allocation of 2G spectrum, Bofors case is some note-worthy and cringe-worthy examples.

A large amount of India's wealth is suspected to be in tax havens, esp. Swiss banks. Even one of the populist anti-corruption schemes of 'note-ban' which was supposed to bring out black money has been surrounded by controversies. Critics

site poor management on the scheme of things and the fact that 99.3% of money was deposited back in the banks raises serious questions. This was coupled by reduction in GDP. Though the intent of the demonetization seemed right, but yet it failed to achieve its objective.

Statistics show bulk of corruption is in the field of real estate, mining, transportation and defense. There is a myriad of reasons that make a field centre of corruption; some of which are presence of middleman, complex laws and procedures and lack of competition in open market. The presence of stringent and complex clauses in big value public procurement tenders often end up in vigilance commission. The mala fide intentions of the relevant office do come in limelight due to active vigilantism of the whistle-blower. However, this comes at a cost of delay in tendering procedure and lack of public confidence in bureaucracy.

The strong nexus of politicians, bureaucrats, business houses, media houses and even judiciary has made corruption a force which is almost impossible to reckon with.

Media which is regarded as a fourth pillar of democracy and is considered a watchdog of every country is being silenced. We are consuming populist news instead of relevant news. There is no debate and discussion on the policies rolled out by the government but instead we are forced to watch same news on all channels. The same content is telecasted by all media houses which possess political affiliations to one political party or another. Day in and day out, it appears that repeat telecast of badly scripted movie is being telecasted and that too in all channels.

Media was supposed to be vigilant and bring to light the harsh and blatant reality of our country. But that is nowhere to be observed. Free speech is being curtailed often in the pretext of false and baseless allegations. In case, someone breaks the nexus and chooses to freely express his opinion; then he is branded as 'deshdrohi' and/or 'contempt of some person related to or belonging to ruling party'.

The denial of criticism by the ruling elite has hampered the prosperity of India in a very negative way. The opaque laws, lengthy procedures, dearth of adequate manpower in government institutions, discretionary powers of bureaucrats work like maggots in the India economic dream.

There are many socially responsible people who are having the zeal to serve the nation through whistle-blowing. However, the fate of Satyendra Dubey and



Manjunath somehow prevents the common man to become a whistle-blower. Despite bearing the agony of seeing your nation crumble in front of your eyes, we are just mute spectators. Some of the journalists have to work outside the domain of national territory to safeguard themselves and their family members. Those who work in India become puppets in the hands of ruling class.

One of the steps that can be taken in this regard is to have a strict policy on whistleblowers. The existing policy on whistle-blowers is deeply inadequate as it does not incorporate state government employees and private sector despite the fraud of 'Satyam'. There is also criticism on the policy on the point that the law was passed without inviting public opinion which is against the working culture of ministries.

The only mechanism to churn itself out of this labyrinth is for citizens to become vigilant. In a democratic setup like ours; it is the will of its people that prevails. The government is of the people, by the people and for the people. Whatever may be the back story of 21st century India, the reign is ultimately of the citizens. It is the fundamental duty of each and every citizen of India to, &quot;Develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform&quot;. The reform can be brought by socially active and vigilant citizens.

The coming into force of RTI Act, lokpal bill, presence of independent Vigilance commission and promoting and increasing usage of digital media has reduced the probability of corruption; but still a lot is still to be achieved. The increasing usage of digitization of services by GOI towards its citizens has meant that corruption has taken a back seat in India's quest towards prosperity. Digital India initiative has come a long way forward and is taking big leaps in realizing that dreams of 1.33 billion citizens to have a corruption free India.

Despite the numerous obstacles that char the path of vigilantism; it is still the path worth following. It is our moral duty to raise voice against the oppressor for it is because of the silence of the good men that world suffers. Patriotism is not something that is sung in the form of ballads but is something that is acted upon. It is the least a common man can do for his country.

Alok Agarwal

# Let's Reason

The act of migrating from aristocracy towards democracy is marked by coming into prominence of 'freedom'. The word 'freedom' encompasses freedom of speech, freedom of belief, freedom of expression and freedom of press.

In the current Indian diaspora, what we are witnessing is a drift from healthy ground of debate towards a society that is skeptical of criticism.

There is no longer any debate on ideologies but on the people who create them. If I speak for 'Janta curfew', then I am pro-Modi and if I am against them I am branded as against-Modi. There is no environment for intellectual debate. People just love brandishing.

Most supporters will go to extent for calling people who don't support his ideology of 'janta curfew' as pro-pakistani, anti-national, anti-liberal and what not.

Some people are making claims that the event of taali, thali and ghanti will spark of vibrational energy leading to death of germs. Seriously arghh! ! !

I don't know what impact does this have on Corona - and as a matter of fact there is no recorded scientific paper to support this.

We just love walking along pre-defined paths. Bhed-chaal.

Some people who are freer than me are calling it 'kudrat ka kaher'. It is nature's way to seek revenge for the atrocities committed by humankind on mother Earth. What impact does this have on us? Even if it is true that nature is seeking revenge, then also isn't it our moral duty to save mankind. I mean that this is just something out of context. It is analogous to someone asking you about your name and you answer that you live in India.

Everything is now turned into a brand that has a commercial value. Nirbhaya has also turned into a brand, though amid Corona it has garnered less of prime-time media footage. If you support hanging, it's normal as it is the feeling of the masses, but as soon as you oppose hanging of the convicts, then you may even expect mob-lynching.

It is the views that must be debated not the person who is expressing his views. The credibility of a particular statement is the statement itself not the author who

has penned it.

Debate is whether the hanging is justified for a particular crime or in this case 'rarest of the rare' conundrum. The role of media is to provide a platform to people to express their views, but they themselves express their own views. It is common to see media houses to brand people as either pro-rapist or anti-rapist. By linking the act of hanging with the act of raping totally diverges the point of discussion. The sad part is that, it is done by media. This is something which is reaped by politicians.

I remember a time that if you criticize some policy of BSP government, then Mayawati would tactfully call you anti-dalit. She would change the fulcrum of debate so cleverly that the opponent has to retreat.

This is the same as brandishing Rahul Gandhi as 'pappu'. You brand someone as pappu, and then you don't need to bother what he is saying. If he says, wash your hands to prevent Corona, and then people are like what's the scientific proof. But if the same is said by Modi, then people are like washing hands will not only fight off germs, it will also make your hands soft, provide employment to numerous people who are part of soap industry, will boost economy amidst falling GDP; and God knows what not.

Just put a label of 'I-phone' on any phone and it will sell like hot cakes. I have an I-phone and the only thing I use is WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube and sometimes use it call people who don't have I-phone.

Why do we need I-phone? Because it is developed by Steve Jobs who was one of the pioneer in this field and the quality of I-phones is very good, it has fast internet (as if cellular network has nothing to do with it) , blah-blah-blah and all sort of reasons - some of which have no reason.

It is this power of reasoning that needs to be nurtured. The scientific temper needs to be imbibed in the masses.

We must act now and learn to question, accept the questions and seek the answers; for this is what distinguishes mankind with other life-forms.

Let us justify our reason for being a human.

Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal



PoemHunter.com

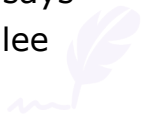
# As It Unfolds

Took a walk  
Down the memory lane  
Found a box of treasure  
That brought me pleasure

Lost in thoughts  
About the story  
That unfolds  
Worth bags of gold

I was young  
So was my brother  
So were my parents  
Love transparent

With a camera in hand  
Is my father  
Smile he says  
I pick a glee



PoemHunter.com

My brother in tender age  
New to the world  
Gets confused  
Can't figure the word smile

Hear my son  
Preaches mother  
Show some teeth  
Look cute

Brother don't care  
It is my way  
Or highway  
He replies

Not interested in photo  
Happy is HE  
Why smile  
All efforts futile

Chocolate

Toys

Train

Dance in rain

All in vain, All in vain

Time is passing

Mother impatient

Shouts she

Click Click

Dressed in summer and winter

Somewhere in Haridwar

A picture is taken

Of Two men

Standing

In grass green

And water blue

Men of such charismatic hues

Born few

Alok Agarwal

# The Concept Of Double Pseudo Secularism (Beef-Ban)

(To be read in conjunction with India's political-religious situation in 2015)

Recently there has been controversy regarding beef-ban. Then you link it with religion or you first link with religion and then put a ban on beef.

On the one side there is a group of people who are dubbed as religious fanatics and on the other side there is a group of people who consider themselves as intellectuals, non-nomadic, non-barbarous tribe; generally considered as part of progressive group. Basically the other group may be classified as religious but with reasons. Scientific Hindu...may be.

Why ban beef? We should even allow cannibalism. We are a progressive society. I know- -your jaws have dropped. But examine the scientific benefits; have you ever considered the proteins/vitamins available in a human liver. May be it can put an end to poverty. Every poor can sell one, earn 10 lakhs and wossh....its a magic wand. End to poverty. You just need to grow babies. (Google: kuru - A disease caused by cannibalism) . Got a reason. We must learn to reason.

India is the only country where the sentiments of the majority are criticized and labelled as Dehati. From which logic, serving my community, society, religion and nation is a symbol of backwardness.

Now I am totally against ban. Why ban? You can pee anywhere but not PDA. This gives me a license to PDA. Agreed. I am a scientific person. I should disregard all norms of home, and do everything in khulla. Instead of preaching to use bathrooms, the new debate has shifted to French culture of PDA.

This is something new to Indian mindset. Instead of correcting the wrong, we give example of another wrong and wrong the right.

My reasoning allows me to question everything and then find answers. Some of us have learned to question, but when it comes finding answers, then it all blank; as some of us did in our exams. My reasoning should seek answers and consider all aspects to the extent possible. Every scientific theory is supported by facts, figures, experience, knowledge, experiments, research, re-experiment, etc. it is basically a multi-dimensional approach to problem solving.

Let's examine cow slaughter, point-by-point:

Points For Cow slaughter:

- 1) My freedom of eating anything I like.
- 2) The economy of people dependent on usage of leather. Both direct and

indirect employment.

3) Contribution in export market. Heavy words like GDP. India ka naam hoga, etc.

Points against Cow slaughter:

1) My freedom should not hurt sentiments of other. The term 'Freedom' is controversial. I am free to write this article, but this may hurt others. So should I withdraw this - if people start labeling me as an wrongly educated and a supporter of BJP/RSS/any other group supporting beef ban.

2) Economy of people linked with ivory trade. You name a trade, and there is an economy linked to it.

2A) What about a cow after it is no longer use to the society.

3) Export karne ko yahi mila hai.

Neutral Points:

1) The term 'Freedom' is controversial. I am free to write this article, but this may hurt others. So should I withdraw this?

2) The point of discussion should rather be Economy of society WITH and WithOUT beef. We should compare the cost incurred to revenue generated in the timeline of a cow.

a) To generate beef - What expenses were incurred to raise a cow. No. of people who got employment? The conditions in which it was kept. The feed it was provided. Isn't it the basic right of any living creature to be dealt with dignity.

b) To use dairy products (Alternate economy) - Expenses incurred. No. of jobs. Conditions of living.

A comparative data should be generated (which is available in 'google') and then see yourself which way to go.

2A) What about a polio infected infant. Should we throw it in a dustbin

Counter Logic

Q) What about goat?

Hmm...The SWOT analysis needs to be done again. A comparative study needs to be done animal-wise.

1) Comparative usage and scientific usage of goat/cow as a source of milk and other facilities.

2) The feelings/brain reaction/mapping when siblings of both are slaughtered in front of their mother. The pain felt by each species. The brain of every species and emotional intellect is different.

3) The availability of animal species in a particular geographical area, and its relevance to that.

4) Human factor: The emotional connect of a species with the society. Is any other animal species equally revered as cow? Means of all the diverse animal species nature has to offer, we want to eat only that which hurts other people. This is a classic case of reverse psychology. We have craving for things, which are most restricted.

Legal Point:

As per the Directive Principles of State Policy contained in Article 48 of the Constitution. It reads, 'The State shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle.'

Religious Point with historical perspective:

Traditionally in India before the birth of other religions, there was a custom of people having atleast one cow in a family. Consider cow as a factory who takes in grass (not consumed by humans) and delivering milk (consumed by us) . Even cow-dung could be used as a biodegradable fuel, fertiliser, has excellent coolant properties (prevents Indian summer heat from reaching indoors) . Cow's husband can be used in agriculture. The couple together can be made a part of bullock-cart (zero emission transportation) . A perfect green couple factory with ZERO carbon footprints. Now, this can't be explained to general public. So, it was decided was to religiousify cow. Label it as sacred, so common man will worship cow and thus save society.

Religion is a common man's opium. You can make him do anything in the name of religion, just as you can make any engineer believe anything that has facts and figures. In this way, you indoctrinated common man follow the right path, but slowly we forgot the reason and now the debate has started.

However, even after writing so much the points I have put forward could be extended and diversified. Personally, I am against killing any living creature, but in this write-up I have tried to restrict my pro vegetarian feelings.

Alok Agarwal

# Caste Based Reservation

For those who feel reservation system in India is peculiar to India. Brace yourself. (Caste based reservation is unique to India because of its social diversity) .

Just as animal/plant species adapt to particular environment; countries adapt to their social ethnic structure as per their need.

In 1969 the UN hosted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination which states:

The principle of equality sometimes requires States parties to take affirmative action in order to diminish or eliminate conditions which cause or help to perpetuate discrimination prohibited by the Covenant.

Brazil has Vestibular

Canada has Employment equity (Canada) which affects aboriginals and minorities

China reserves positions for ethnic minorities and women

Finland has quotas for Swedish speakers

Germany has quotas in their Gymnasium system

Israel has affirmative action

Japan has policies to help the Burakumin, who are considered the outcaste group of Japan.

Macedonia has quotas for Albanians

Malaysia has the Malaysian New Economic Policy

New Zealand has affirmative action for Maoris and Polynesians

Norway requires 40% of the PCLs boards to be women.

Romania has quotas for Romas

South Africa has Employment Equity

South Korea has affirmative action for Chinese and North Koreans

Sri Lanka has rules for Christians and Tamils

Sweden has general affirmative action

The United Kingdom has the Equality Act 2010

The United States has Affirmative Action

Alok Agarwal



# Oil And Gas Conservation Write Up

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Alok Agarwal

# Surgical Strike

(This is to be read in political scenario of India in Sept 2016)

India has three problems

- 1) Poverty
- 2) Illiteracy
- 3) Corruption

To counter these following measures are adopted:

- 1) Skill India
- 2) Make in India
- 3) RTI
- 4) MNREGA
- 5) Mid-day meal, and others

Are these political schemes or govt schemes?

Turning back to the issue of surgical strikes.

To counter external aggression - nations keep defence forces and depending on the extent of the aggression by the enemy state, one of the numerous counter insurgency measures are adopted. Every nation has it's right to defend it's frontiers.

Modern warfare has numerous techniques on warfare.

Some of them are shoot and scoot, ambush, guerilla, blitzkrieg, etc. Even the Mahabharata war lists 17 vyuhs; the most famous being the chakravyuh. Thus to combat Pakistani ants, we chose SURGICAL STRIKE which was one of the several options available to us.

Questions being asked.

Q1) Proof

A1) Should we question our defence forces.

Q2) Who should take the credit?

A2) Me. Because at the time army men were busy facing bullets - I was busy sleeping and when I woke up I saw military taking the credit for having helped me sleep peacefully. That's ridiculous. They don't even know my address.

In any organisation or any country it's the topmost management that takes decisions based on the inputs from the lower management. Thus, the sole responsibility rests on the the leader of the majority govt. Also it is commendable for the army men to frame the master plan and then execute it.

Flow chart is like:

Decision-Plan-Action

Q3) Link to UP election?

A3) Surely yes. Some paid terrorists to set up camps in PoK and attack Kashmir just before UP elections.

If govt does not retaliate - You are a coward. Where is the the 56' chest.

If it retaliates - Then it's khoon ki dalali.

We will gain political milieu in each case as the junta does not has brain as it has proved in Delhi and Bihar and everyone knows UP is no better than Bihar. We have proven track record for it. Mulayam and Mayawati \_/\\_. World is thinking about settling humans in Mars and we are yet to figure out difference between Brahman, Yadav and Muslims. The sad part is we are making the same mistakes every now and then. For 60 years politicians make the same false promise and we fall for it. It's like a LION going vegan and seriously we believe it.

Who says terrorists have set up camps in PoK. We are breeding them even inside our motherland. There is so much pollution starting from JNU - we surely need to conduct surgical strike even within India against those who are not Indians.

Let illiteracy be removed more quickly. We probably need to strengthen 'praudha shiksha abhiyaan', and organisations like Congress which once freed us from foreign clutches needs to be taught history lessons and reminded of it's lineage so that they behave like an educated opposition.

Alok Agarwal

# The Letter

To,

Miss Congeniality

Disclaimer: The contents of this letter are highly sensitive and filled to the brim with my emotions. The contents of this are purely original, and in case you find any resemblance of this somewhere else; then it is either a case of co-incidence or plagiarism on be-half of the other person. In such a case, I request you to inform me the details of the other letter, so that I can file a case against him on grounds of theft of intellectual property. In case you are seeing someone else, please do not read further and return it to me. Do not copy this yourself. This letter is the copyright of the writer and any distribution of this must be duly approved by the author himself.

Dear,

It has been a pretty good amount of time since we have met each other. At first sight, I thought you as too nosy in someone else's affairs. But as the time passed gradually, you have punctured my heart with all your little things and those couple of dimples on your lips. It appears that God has taken utmost care to place them strategically on your face, so as to seduce the opposite sex. I know that was plot from the God himself to lure me raise white flag. I being a mortal human being cannot decipher the enigma and just got myself trapped. And see here I am writing this piece of letter onto white paper.

Now, as I have allowed myself to fall into your love; I consider this as my linguistic duty to express it. I desire to say lots and lots of things to this marbleous beauty. The lot you belong to is biologically known as Aphrodite. In Greek mythology Aphrodite was the goddess of love, desire and beauty. The Indian mythological equivalent of Aphrodite is Apsara (celestial nymph) . Meneka was a famous Apsara whose anecdotes we have heard when we were small kids. Meneka as is foretold was the most beautiful of all Apsaras in Indra's court. She was sent to lure Vishvamitra break his meditation. She caught him while meditating. You caught me doing nothing. He had the armor of meditation, but what did I had?

It is time I move upward from your lips to your pointy nose whose curves are

just curved. Wait! I never visited your lips. I certainly will if I get a chance. I also desire to visit those rosy cheeks. The lips and the cheeks - they make a deadly combo when you smile. You know what, when you smile those teeth come out ("Bhaiyaji! Smile" as in Dabang) . They doth serve the purpose of biting and grinding. Grinding is a tool making process and is one of core and diverse aspect of manufacturing science. I say tools, God gave you weapons.

God gave you a complete arsenal full of weapons. Maybe the God forgot about world peace. He had no general knowledge about world wars. He was a barbaric sculptor without IQ. He just sculpted you with his own hands on ivory and then said 'hokus pokus woogly woosh' and you just reincarnated on earth. The earth suddenly became a lot greener when you saw it with your own eyes. Those eyes - the two of them - are really 'qatil'. 'Qatil' is an Urdu word and its literal meaning in English translates to 'killing'. I don't know how many have died because of them, but I have started using goggles. I also don't know if those eyes are released on parole, but let them just see. Let them see the beauties of nature, the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, the blue sky, the green trees and ME (singular) . A piece of advice - don't use collyrium. Killing someone with AK-47 is OK, but why use tanks? To make the matters worse, you also use that gloss on your lips. And what about that nose ring and those multiple anchors in your ears. Don't you know that world is moving towards disarmament? And nuclear missiles are just a plain NO. The radiance and ambiance are hazardous.440 volts! Khatra! If I could just draw that skeleton head with those two 'X' shaped bones.

God has bestowed Earth with day and night. Both complement each other. One must bear the brunt of scorching heat to appreciate the calmness and serenity of morning and evening. But when you flock your hair, the earth is saved. Those hairs - they just convert noon to evening. And even when you tie them, which you do so fluently and elegantly - it is just so wonderful.

The real thing is that we have known each other for good and for long. I like enjoying your company. I have started feeling for you. Maybe it is the mischief of the cupids or the hormonal imbalance that just creeps in the heart, body, mind and soul of a person attaining puberty. These matters are hardly within human control. The arrow shot by the cupids has pierced my heart and I am really in love with you. It is becoming increasingly difficult to imagine life without you. I just like spending time with you. I can talk to you on any matter without feeling awkward. That is a good feeling. I don't mix easily with people. I am a shy, reserved and introvert kind of personality. I really am, though my description about myself doesn't fit in the public image I carry. The public image is like a cloak of invisibility that saves the real me. The problem with me is I find myself short of words when expressing the real feelings. I tend to say a lot on the peripherals of the core issue, but I could not concentrate on the main topic.

To cement my place in your heart, I would like put forward my credentials. I am currently employed in IOC which is a good company. I have done Engineering in Mechanical from MNNIT. I secured good marks in my engineering curriculum and I have been a very good student since my school life. Mathematics is my strong area. I am also good in chess. This is a strong indication regarding my intellectual strength. I am not very good in outdoor games, but I consider myself a decent player of badminton - but I don't have a certificate to prove it; so you have to accept it by believing in me or competing with me. I hope to win, in case you dare to compete.

My mission in life is to lead a successful peaceful life; to contribute to the society which has given so much to me. According to me the key word 'success' is to be measured by someone's contribution in his lifetime. A person must strive for making his life meaningful, so that people remember him for good when he is gone. People don't die when they die; they die when people forget about them. As per this definition Mahatma Gandhi and all the greats are still very much alive. Nathuram Godse is alive as well. It is the sides we have to choose. To attain immortality one must do great deeds and right deeds. Not all deeds can be put in black and white. There is always a grey area and the human's personality is decided by how he acts in this grey area. If people just know what is right or wrong, they might never commit any wrong(s) . In very few instances we actually do wrong by knowing that we are doing wrong which is generally under the garb of false ethics. To develop ethics one must possess strong personality and positive attitude. You will always find successful people having good habits, qualities and hobbies.

Hobbies are an integral part of someone's personality which can tell us a lot about a person's character. My hobbies include listening songs (preferably old) , reading (not novels) and travelling (with you) . I am a great lover of vegetarian food. Contrary to what people normally presume by my weight, I do not eat in large quantities. I just like different kinds of food, but I can't eat something which is too spicy. Also, I can't eat non-vegetarian (as of now) . I can try it, but I do not intend to. I am a connoisseur of food. I enjoy reading about food, recipes and ingredients as much as I like consuming them. I am also interested how they make it, process it right from the point where seeds are sown.

My family includes my parents and younger brother. Ours is a nuclear family. We believe in family values and have a mix of liberal and conservative thinking. We believe that freedom must be given but not exploited. With freedom comes responsibility. The responsibility is shared among all members equally without discrimination of caste, color, creed or sex. Family is like council of ministers

which swims and sinks together. I love my family a lot. I also love you. If I need to describe the extent of my love, then I will place my love towards my family as infinity and towards you as  $[\text{limit } n \rightarrow \text{infinity}]$ . Here I have used 'limit' in its mathematical form and to explain it - it denotes that the value of 'n' approaches towards a certain value. It cannot reach that value, but also cannot be separated from that value. Here 'n' denotes love and is a qualitative term that cannot be quantified; and so is infinity.

Till the time of writing this letter, I have not disclosed this to my family; but they know about you and will certainly embrace you. I hope your family follows the same with me.

Now, let us come back to the main content. I would like to re-iterate that I love you and it is a good feeling. Through the means of this write-up, I put forward my candidature as an eligible bachelor for you. I hereby propose to marry you. If you accept this - I promise the best days ahead of us both. I will not pressurize you regarding this, because I want you to make a careful and unbiased decision in my favor. Marriage is a sacred institution whose sanctity cannot be tempered with. It is a decision of lifetime. As per unwritten code of conduct, it is a ritual that needs to be performed once. I personally abide by this line of thinking. I don't want you to reply instantly. I want you to take your time and seriously consider me as the best option available in all the universes (if there exists more than one) . I know I am smart, talented and may be too good for you; but, let that not come between us. Everything is fair in love and war. Do not consider yourself inferior to me. Consider yourself superior to all the girls in your vicinity as I have chosen you instead of any other. In this way, you are superior to everyone else of human race. And when the two superiors meet, the offspring are also elite. The genes are good. It is an endeavor of every living soul on this planet to find the right mating partner so as to pass on the genes to the next generation. This is embedded in the genetic code of every living species. I have chosen you to decide further in the matter.

In anticipation of a positive reply. [Chuckles]

Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal

# Make In India

A lot has changed since Alisha Chinai released Made in India in 1995 to Narendra Modi's unveiling of Make in India campaign in 2014. The first set of economic reforms was introduced in early 1990s and cemented a strong Indian position in the economic world map. These reforms were pioneered by the then Finance Minister Manmohan Singh and eliminated much of prevalent License Raj. This was further strengthened by PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's project of golden quadrilateral; and focus was on infrastructure development. The country's GDP reached new heights with enhanced levels of per capita income and inclusive growth. India became third largest country in terms of purchasing power parity.

The benefits of these reforms started declining by 2006 and reached saturation by the end of 2010. The weak coalition government at the center faced many roadblocks in pushing new set of economic policies leading to economic stagnation and widespread discontent among the general public.

The 2014 Lok Sabha elections saw the emergence of a new political culture in the country, with the focus shifting from politics of caste to politics of development. The clear cut majority at the center provided the government the teeth at the right time before anything went astray.

The launch of Prime Minister's conceptual 'Make in India' could not have come at a better time. With the developed countries searching for new markets, and India looking for breathing space in core manufacturing sector; it was a win-win situation for all. The humongous domestic market of India and ready availability of cheap skilled and unskilled labor is sure to lure investors.

From India's point of view, the campaign is aimed at heavy industries and public enterprises while providing job opportunities to a country with the highest demographic dividend. The economy is young and so are its people. There is a dedicated attempt to attract foreign investments by calling businesses from all around the globe. Besides providing employment, it will serve to reduce imports thus mitigating the ill effects of trade deficit; and in the long run help increase our exports. There is added benefit of technology transfer instead of just purchasing ready-made items from the external world.

The best way to ensure that the objectives are met is by providing a level playing competitive field where survival of the fittest takes place. This has to be facilitated by providing them the right environment; an environment that eliminates unnecessary laws and regulations, an environment that makes

bureaucratic processes simple and supportive, and at the same time making government transparent and responsible. Another key player in realizing the above said objectives is by implementing a transparent and user-friendly intellectual property rights. At no point of time, the innovator must feel that he is robbed of his due credit.

In this context The National Manufacturing Policy is made by the government. The policy is the first of its kind addressing areas of regulation, skill development, technology, availability of finance, exit mechanism and other pertinent factors related to the growth of the sector. Another key feature of this campaign is time-bound project clearance through a single online portal which is dedicated to answering investor queries within 48 hours and addressing key issues like labor laws, skill development and infrastructure.

But in the fanfare following, the government must refrain itself from following unethical routes in realizing its dreams. The ordinance route taken for controversial Land Acquisition Act was widely criticized in public arena. This was a source of embarrassment for the government when the President of India referred to this in his presidential speech of Republic Day 2015. The passing of an Act without parliamentary discussion is something that is against the democratic principles of this country and requires introspection by the government in power.

The policies are made in the right spirit with zero defect and maximum effect. The onus now lies on the Union Budget 2015, so that the campaign can be provided the platform to realize its full potential. It is the perfect time to get the perfect matrix of fund allocation to all sectors that contribute to GDP.

Lastly, there was never a better time to make in India.

Alok Agarwal

# Trails Of Love

The blistering heat of the sun was playing havoc in the crazy Indian summers. With no respite in this scorching heat, I had no option but to pray to Lord Krishna's arch-rival Indra. Indra on the other hand was sitting comfortably numb in his paradise. He was perhaps long dozing off over the numerous application files transmitted directly to his Ministry. I firmly believe that his ministry is grossly affected by the contagious disease of red-tapism. Some Anna must quickly reach there to profess the gospels of Mango Man aka Aam Aadmi. Considering his delicate age, I sincerely hope that he will soon be advocating our case in the Court of Heavens.

In the meantime, I had expected that Mr. Steve Jobs, who is already cherishing a seat in the heavens, would have engaged himself in creating an 'i-link' between the Gods and his earthly devotees. Alas! He is lured by the beautiful Apsaras of Indra. Men! Haa! Nothing beats the idiosyncrasies of huMAN behavior. What a utilization of his precious talent.

My talent is equally notorious, so I request my readers not to pray to send me there to advocate for their cause.

Having set your mood to continue reading further - I can direct you to fasten your seat belts in yet another roller coaster ride of my verbose writings.

The story begins with myself being caught snoozing with my tongue out. 'WHAT the HELL! Don't you know this is office time? ', shouted my boss. His ignominious remark made me fall off my chair. Salaam bhai (Sallu style) . I mean good morning...gud evening...(a quick glimpse at my watch) gud...gu...good afternoon sir. The banters were fiery enough lest we forget the chilly summers. I posed like a guilty schoolboy, who was just nabbed for igniting crackers during Diwali in the ever-cursed bathrooms.

What a pleasant day is this turning out to be!

The clock ticked 3: 00 pm. Still two hours left. Everything was in doldrums, and I just wasn't able to plan an escapade from my numerous gaffes. Ohh God! In thy Holy name, forgive me for my sins and bestow your sacred blessings upon your disciple. 'GRANTED', a thunderous voice was accompanied by lightening. The whole environment quickly culminated into a Rajnikant flick. There were sudden gusts of sandstorms. The chirping of the birds, rumbling of the leaves...nature seems to resonate my eternal happiness. The clock now shows 5: 00 pm. For the

first time, I got a chance to experience the modern mythological concept of general relativity.

La La La! Shakira! Shakira!

I ran out of my captivity like a nursery school boy. Happy as a lark.

The environment was perfect for evening snacks, which in Indian context are always deep fried. I occupied a cozy corner in a roadside dhaba, while waiting for my coveted order. While waiting for my order to be served, I paid homage to Lord Indra, from now on to be prefixed with 'Lord' against his holy name, for the downpours he has showered onto Mother Earth. The downpours marked the entry of THE Aphrodite.

Very few events deserve importance enough to distract me from the wafting aromas of street food. This was surely one of those incidents, with mathematical probability of occurring once in a millennium. She was as beautiful as God could have created. She had black eyes, rosy cheeks, red lips, golden hair...she was a complete rainbow occurring concurrently with the rains.

My eyes were glued onto her. I can always describe her in the most sycophantic way possible, but that will only undermine her beauty. Just a single eye contact with her, and I had already entered the divine cosmos. All these years I have been running like a Kasturi gazelle, who is unaware that the aura of his felicity is within him only. Till now, I was just a robot - but henceforth, I was instilled with a soul. I am no longer like a cog in a wheel. I am now beyond the cycles of births and re-births. Just a glance at her, and I am speaking Bhagvad Gita. Such was her influence on me.

Under the spell of my Aphrodite, a lousy figure engrossed by wrinkles appeared with my food order. The malicious smile on his face suggested that he has vividly lived my experiences when he was of my age. His era is now part of history books, and does not deserve space in this civilized writing. I care not of his enigmatic intent, and focused myself in engulfing a morsel of paneer pakoda. The food was delicious enough to have me disenchanted from the beauty of the princess, but only temporarily. Romance was in the air and I was a part of it.

We all know that rain will eventually stop, and I won't be able to capture any more of her glimpses again; but does that matter or rather should it matter? Can love be restrained in the threads of physical intimacy? Numerous questions bombarded my head. I dare not seek answers to the questions, the answers of which are beyond my learned wisdom to understand.

There wasn't a single word exchanged in my encounter with her. I might not even exist in her conscious or sub-conscious mind.

In a parallel universe, a similar story might have been unfolding. The protagonist over there might have shed his inhibitions and taken a lead. The most plausible ending, '...and they lived happily ever after'. But, this isn't a fairy tale. I will not reach out to her, for the fear of being dubbed as a womanizer. I do not wish to get involved in a sanguinary row with the junta of the dhaba, in case she happens to create a scene. This is a risk I am reluctant to take. This is not just my story. How many of us actually follow what we dream of. The human heart is grossly affected by the dubious maze of emotions, passions, ambitions and insinuations. The more we try to unravel the mystery of human psychology, the more complicated the mystery becomes.

Bringing the spotlight back to my castle with a thatched roof, and muddy floor - the inevitable has occurred. Rain has stopped. All the courtiers have slowly started to leave; leaving behind their own fragrance of memories, their own trails of love. Before I left, I saw someone barbaric whose heart was burning with celestial fire succeeded in achieving the feat that I was only dreaming. What was her response? Did she retaliate with the same warmth of emotions by which she was approached, or that someone was strangled by her of his barbarism? That will never be known to us, for I left the theater before the play could actually be enacted.

Having struck a chord of sentiment in your bosom; I would like to clarify and specify to demystify that - a similar incident occurred a few days later, when I was walking down the aisle of temple; and then, when I was taking a walk in the garden; and then, in a marriage function of some distant relative; and then, when I was attending an office meeting; and then, numerous such incidences that occur rather frequently in my life. To cut the story short, 'Baharein aur bhi aayengi', cryptically translated as, 'Greenery is all around, just take a walk around, and leave your own trails of love'. ?

Alok Agarwal

# Chronicles Of Side Upper Berth – A Journey By Train

Sneaking some time out of my mysterious busy schedule, I have engaged myself again in giving my keyboard some work-out.

The events begin with the advent of my setting afoot on Prayagraj Express. This event is definitive from the historical point of view, because of its similarity to Lance Armstrong's setting foot on moon. Critical but modest! Setting ablaze the aisle as I calibrated my every move like a chess player; I quickly plonked in my lower birth. Tragic abrupt ending of a story well begun...?

Naah! The pugnacious pugilist could not be so easily defeated.

Having secured a vantage point, I could admire the human beings around me – with sheer machismo. I thank God almighty for the gift, he has bestowed upon his true disciple.

In a classic Indian train, it feels soothing to get surrounded by the diverse population. The crowd we witness represents a sample of the country in a manner that is better than what we see in the parliament. Besides, the crowd is behaviorally more parliamentary. [I hope I am not sued for making such a bold politically motivated statement, and dubbed as a fanatic of westernization].

Talking about the janta of train, what I see is myriads of people from different spheres of life – taking the same route to different destinations. There is an elderly couple striving for lower berths, vandalizing any young person possessing the luxurious lower berth tickets. They seem to have match-fixing with the Gods – for they have an offer you cannot refuse. The blessings unabridged from heaven. 'Beta', is what they call you, and devour your joyous lower seat.

Having being sweetly forced to move to the middle berth, I landed into the devilish clutches of a newly married couple. You become sick of the amorous embrace of the husband with his pregnant/pseudo-pregnant (chubby) wife. Sometimes, their public display of affection embarrasses you. This couple will attack your coveted middle seat and move you to the topmost seat available.

Now at farthest point from sea-level and low on morale, I thanked my stars for the blessing in disguise. I saw a pristine divine figure in front of my upper berth. With a seductive smile she greeted me. My eyes startled with the gleam on her eyes. The hapless chap has got an ace card. As I was plunging into the depths of my self-created ocean of dreams, than she greeted me with yet another 'Hello! '.

Her voice brought succor to my grumpy mind.

'Yes', I replied candidly.

'Are you single? ', she asked plainly.

Whoa! 'Castles in the air. Castles in the air', shouted my mind. I cared to ignore my mind from my lessons of the Bollywood flicks. Baba SRK says, 'Follow your heart, and victory shall be yours'.

She again gave me a seductive smile and asked, 'Would you like to exchange seat with my mom who is on that side upper berth? '

Actually, lots of thoughts flooded in my mind at that instant. But none deserve space enough in this dignified writing of mine.

'Chillax buddies', I am now in my most endearing seat 'Side Upper Berth'. To list a few advantages, it offers you a pure solitary confinement where the mind can plunge into the darkness of spirituality. You realize that ultimately, you are nothing but a drop of the great ocean. All living beings will ultimately coalesce with the supreme Lord.

True. Very true. With these high spirits and still smiling about the recent turnout of events, I quickly fell into a deep slumber. My smiles were however muscular enough not to cause cheek pain. [Chuckles! ]

Alok Agarwal



# Damsel In Distress – An Adventure Gone Wrong

I first felt that such a horrendous event must not be jotted down. It should just pass down on the memory lane like a dream, which is never remembered once consciousness is achieved. But, I slowly realized that I am no Lord Rama that someone special would take care of writing down about the events that occurred in my life. So the scourge task of giving words to my thoughts had to be done by me. I must take the responsibility to distribute Gyan to the literates holding a driving license.

Cruising at the speed of 120 kmph, with my group of friends – I was driving like a prisoner released on parole. Oh yaaa! The driving wheel is in my hands. Whoa! I am feeling intoxicated by the rumbling sound of cold breeze passing my ears. The sound of the gas guzzling engines is adding to the music. What else do mortals crave for in this earthly world?

Now I tell you, what people do miss at the speed of light? At this marvelous speed, you don't hear the lyrics of your favorite musician playing on your car stereo. It also kills the valuable conversation that occurs between the group mates – no one discusses about the Katrina's raunchy bold scenes in her recent movie, you don't joke about Arvind Kejriwal being the Chief Miser(ster) /Aggravator/Agitator/Allegator, no one talks about the petty mischief he has done in his adolescent age, nor doth one mimics about his horrible bosses. All eyes are glued on the roads and minds on the One. A sense of insecurity lingers around the walls of the cabin.

Still cruising at that mystical speed, suddenly a truck incarnated in the midst of nowhere.

"HEY! Did you see that? " a shrill shout knocked my ears.

"Yes. Of course! I am not a four-eyed man.", I replied carelessly.

There is still a lot of distance. I relied on my skills as a Schu(Shoe) maker. Don't worry! Daddy is here.

The difference in distance is eloping with time. There is nothing much that can be done now. I have already applied full brakes, but my car is still under the spell of my speed thrill. It won't stop on my orders. Now what? What are you gonna do now? Destiny is not your home grown child.

The inevitable will certainly happen. The car has refused to answer the call of his dungeon master. After all, it also lives in a democratic country of liberty, equality and fraternity. Blah! Blah! This is not time to argue with thy master. I command thee to stoppp.....

Bam! \_\_\_\_\_

I took a free i10 crash test. The Hyundai should hire me. The beating of the retreat ceremony is here.

Have I done a commendable job? Am I not aware of myself being a cat having the luxury of nine lives?

The blank(dark) ness and my self-obsessing crude monologues will take time to ooze out. Just as my reader is taking time to realize that have I really collided with the truck or not; I also took the same time to actually realize that my wind shield is broken. Luckily, all the human souls are intact in their physical bodies; and not a drop of blood spilled.

I stepped out of my defaced car, and didn't dare to have a glimpse of my fellow passengers. The burden of lives of others is indeed too heavy to be handled by my obese shoulders. The not-so-peaceful silence has camouflaged the entire situation.

"Where's your damsel in distress? ", asked a cunning bystander.

"She's having an evening tea with my neighbor". I gave him a Medusa-like stare.

"Ohh! Then better you hurry", replied his brother.

In no mood to extend the conversation, I sought refuge in a reclusion camp to create a facade of emotions, creations and passions (Don't find sanity in these words, as I am deeply traumaticised in my Kingdom of Dreams) .

Things happen. Lessons learnt. Life is always on a roller-coaster ride, but we must play calm – to say soothe, "there is never a damsel in distress more precious than human life."

Alok Agarwal

# Rajasthani Platter Vs Sarangi Beats Amidst Feminine Divinity

The fading memories of the godly instrument must be penned down before goddess of Amnesia takes her toll.

The sacred event occurred in the chilly winter of North India, when I was in no mood to be disturbed in my eternal sleep. It was an era when I preferred romancing with my solitude. Wings of nostalgia were not strong enough to lift a person living in his eighty plus weight category (Since, I am the author I can dictate terms about my weight) .

The January weather was as usual fogged up. The environment was damp and serene. Me and my group of friends decided to hit a theme food park. [At this weight, I am fonder of food parks than water parks; for some great heavenly mind (that mind is mine) has already said, 'A bite of extra paneer will give you enough fat to store in your most troubled days'.] Having set my philosophy of life based on agnosticism – I really feel that one must live for eating instead of eating to live. I firmly believe that God showers his blessings on epicurean people like me; and I openly summon the wrath of underworld to fall on those who feel contrary.

In the backdrop of my dreamy love sequence with my gourmet files – a mystical musical instrument struck my ear-bells. What is this? In the 21st century of instant noodles, where on earth has such an instrument emerged? For the first time, even the wafting aroma of delicious food couldn't make me stuck into my chair. I stood up and followed the seductive beats till I reached a tribe of Rajasthani folk singers. I gazed at the eldritch instrument till blankness appeared in front of my eyes. I had woken up from a state of trance, just to reach another. The engineer in me wanted to understand the physics of sound production; but I let my spiritual senses take control of the situation.

I requested the tribe master to lend me his instrument so as to have a finer look. Sooner my wish was fulfilled. The music producing enthralling Sarangi was now in my clutches. [My precious! ] I am now the father of Tansen. Everybody should envy me. I will now control the menial earthly beings with the palette of my musical tones and overtones. Devilish Chuckles! ! !

My chuckles however, didn't last long. The tribe master maybe overheard my soliloquy. He took the instrument back and started playing it. The atmosphere

was again filled with the myriad of emotions. He somehow managed to instill life in inanimate objects. Even the mild breeze started to sing with the band of musicians. I could hear the chorus of the trees. The dusky fragrance of the earthen lands could be easily felt. In a quick turn-out of events, the entire ecosphere became full of life. Words are certainly crippled to describe the aura of this scenic liveliness. I leave this petty job of scene description to uncouth painters.

Anyways! A new wave of energy emerged from the ground and made my bulky body dance like a true disciple of Lord Natraj. I never knew that I could dance, and that too better than Michel Jackson. But this is just my servile opinion. For the bystanders, it was just another shaadi dance. SHAADI DANCE! Eww! Are all my efforts in vain? You pour out your heart and this is all what you get. SHAADI DANCE! What a pity! Unfortunate events occur in the life of every individual. I am no hermit, to enjoy satanic patronage of God.

Not bogged down by the murmuring of the evil fellas, I continued to dance. It was at this very moment than a mystic feminine figure entered the dais and made swift moves like a belly dancer. Why has the femininity been so adept in dancing? This is just gender biasness? No one doth complain about this. This is serious business. It is these things that must be discussed in parliament. Fiscal deficit could be easily left with economic goons to handle. Huhh!

What can now be done? I am like a warrior lost in a battle. Feeling deserted, I just ate my dinner (afterall, I had already paid for it) and left the Shangri La of my dreams; only to fall in love with my solitude, again.

Alok Agarwal

# Me And My Laundry – A Bachelor's Tale

Knock-knock! A friend of mine, enters my room decorated by masculine muscles. My nostrils had previously never noticed the aroma of my unwashed clothes. Hey! When were these last washed? I replied swiftly and firmly, "Recently...previous month...or previous to previous month...don't remember the exact time". Who writes the time of laundry-a palpable thought ran through my physical body. At this tender moment, the science of facial reading came to my rescue. I just nodded while receiving banter. I dared not look into those scary fiery red eyes. All my masculinity was subverted in the scenic beauty of the melodrama.

Alok Agarwal



PoemHunter.com

# The Call - A Short Story

8: 00 p.m. 'Hello! '. A sulky sultry voice escapes my smart-phone to enter the mirror-maze of my ears. In the midst of 'Why so sarkari' evening shift, (without any prior appointment) an unwelcomed female voice pours elixir in the life of govt. employee. The Mughal gardens have send hell-bred music to awaken my tardy spirits.

The dreamy Me, feels the sun has risen amongst the stars. The opaque office walls have blocked the golden gleam of sunlight from entering our tainted minds, but the sweet voice on the other side is unaware of the man-made barriers. Her voice has released me on parole to talk to a stranger and Excel (sheet) in something 'personal'. Is she my long last love from the forgotten SRK movie, or is the sound goddess playing some of her little tantrums on her devotee?

Who cares? I summoned my ethical-Sarkari attitude, to sneak out some time to chit-chat with my mystical princess on the opposite side of the communication tower. I stepped out from the masonry structure around me to have a 'feel' of my articulate caller. Having being used to live in a cozy air-conditioned space, I am out of the building without my weapon (jacket) . Mesmerized by the attack of chilly winter air from all directions, I am a lone warrior fighting with all my might with the merciless winds.

Never mind! I am the 'Great Satan'. I will be back with vengeance, but not now. I have greater battles to win today. The king himself has entered the eternal arena to salvation. The undaunted warrior will leave no land untouched to rescue you from the devilish clutches of (umm, aaa) \_\_\_\_\_. Ahh! Grr! The words will prove no hurdle in my description of your silken musical melody.

'Ahem! Hello! Ahem! Hello! Hello! Wrong number. Sorry to disturb you! '

Alas! There is always a next battle to be won. I am a disciple of the spider-king story.

Alok Agarwal

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Alok Agarwal

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# Single Heart

I have gotta single heart,  
Which wassa released on parole,  
You shoulda leave ya worries,  
Come on, lets rock and roll.

It was time to party hard,  
The hapless chap got an ace card,  
Heart roses blossomed the deck,  
Aroma could be felt over the beck.

Its sweet fragrance made me go crazy,  
Wings of nostalgia aided me to fly,  
The ever candid vultures were awe-struck,  
As how a heart which was in prison could rise up.

It was now when my heart met someone and eloped,  
But hey, Everybody shoulda keep mum,  
Coz its time to have fun,  
Satan too was having a ball.

Even the top-notch detectives failed,  
I was totally perplexed,  
How it feels to lose a heart,  
Which was later found in a mart.

The tag read thousand dollars,  
Indeed a high price for a perfect kitsch.

Alok Agarwal

# Autobiography Of Puppet

The play has been badly cast  
But it was indeed not the last  
I was merely a puppet  
In the hands of a turret.

The stage wasn't empty  
Life has become like Humpty Dumpty  
His fall was great  
But mine was too late.

The crowd laughed at me with glee  
I dared not ask for a plea  
I was only an actor  
Directed by the Director.

The strings were very strong  
Which were playing ping-pong  
I did a simple mistake  
That made the bonds go fake.

The puppet lost its soul  
It was now like a basket with a hole  
The tears came pouring down  
Who could weep for a clown?

Its not always you win  
You lose yourself to your kith and kin  
It is they who really care  
No one else has time to spare.....

Alok Agarwal

# Notorious Nature

Let the darkness rule, despotism may prevail,  
Clock has struck thirteen, even a ray requires a tool;  
Coin stands biased, dice shows seven,  
The game has been set, mirror is not even.

Sun has been abducted, moon is the culprit,  
Stars are causing fracas, Mother Earth is still silent;  
But its colorful tears are making everything colorless,  
Over flooded oceans are causing havoc and life has become topsy-turvy.

Still the world is xerantic, He is in coma,  
History is rewritten, but we are free from trauma;  
Hopes shattered, dreams demolished, nothing to mourn,  
Inanimate objects are speaking volumes, laugh to scorn.

Seeds of cumin requires volcanoes, nabbed roots are in pain,  
Branches involved in deadly combat, fruits are in vain;  
Leaves display numb, zany feelings dispersed over the atmosphere,  
To mark the rise of joker cum poet, murder the satire.

Alok Agarwal

# Lief

Life is a mystery, where future is future  
Present is past, and past is history

The rainbow of emotions entangled by honey bonds of money  
Everything around us is a question mark, the roads of construction leads to  
destruction

Here the winner is a loser, loser is still a loser  
Where there is nothing to lose and nothing to fear, who is near is not near

Solutions are easy, result is complicated  
The problem is unknown, while everything else is deserted

Impossible things happen, yet a young rose is accompanied by thorns  
Unpredictable things happen, yet sweet words are dangerous than violent storms

Your critic is your friend, your friend is your enemy  
Hard to distinguish, hard to find 'Who am I? '

Basic laws of nature stand violated, sunset happens before sunrise  
People are born by virgin birth, yet I comes before us

Promises are broken, a lie is a truth, your identity is lost  
Still you are happy when others are sad and hell is our new host

Striving for mirage in concrete, when our coach is stabbed  
Eye witnesses are silenced, and our contagious dagger is forlorned

Breaking shackles is a crime, punishment left to decide  
Lion preys on lion but human devours human, its not far when jungle would  
preside

Doomsday approaching with dark black golden lining, an inevitable hour, run fast  
Origin unknown, end unknown, everything that was known will again be  
unknown...but run fast

All hail to thee! A new poet to challenge Shakespeare is born  
To teach the world, some more uncouth lines are pondered over to morn.

