

Responses to Manushi

Message of Support

I read Rohini's letter printed in MANUSHI in Issue No. 122 in the Readers' Forum.

I want to convey to her through MANUSHI: Be gentle with yourself and be as understanding of yourself as of your friend. Life is full of surprises, pleasant and unpleasant. Many sacrifices and adjustments are required as you go along. So be prepared to take your marriage with it. A divorce will be traumatic for both sides. Children don't deserve broken homes.

You should take as much time as you need to come to the above decision. If your partner is not willing to wait and allow you time to understand him fully, it is his decision. You should not hold yourself responsible. It is not as important to marry as to be happy in marriage. If you are at peace with yourself, cheerful, sharing and caring, you will find a partner when time comes.

**Smt P P Trivedi, Distt. Nainital,
Uttaranchal**

Source of Inspiration

This is in response to your article "Reasserting Their Lost Wisdom and Rights" which profiles the work of Rajendra Singh in issue No. 123.

In this context, I would like to mention two brief stories. I work at a golf course and some months ago, got a new superintendent, Mike Rinowski. He just can't understand how we, the supervisors, can be paid for watching others (the quasi-human

class of labourers) work and insists that we work with them. His asking engineers to mow grass (even for a while) has met with outright refusal. I tried to explain the situation to him and told him that we Indians have rather feudal mentality. After a weeks in Srinagar, he told me: "You were wrong when you said you have a rather feudal mentality; you have a *very* feudal mentality." Mike himself started life at nine by picking up rocks from farmers' fields and is still a sturdy labourer (plus an intellectual who loves talking).



Another incident. I was stopped by a traffic policemen on a very stupid pretext and was asked to show all the foolish papers one is supposed to carry to appease them. They also stopped a scooterist and harassed him in a similar manner. I am ashamed to admit that I told them that an official of the traffic department was a relative of mine and I was allowed to go, even though I didn't have a particular document that I should have been carrying. The scooterist offered the two policemen a bribe of Rs 50. They were so enraged by such a paltry bribe that one of them crumpled the note and threw it away. I don't know how much they finally took.

When a vast majority of us live lives like this, someone like Rajendra Singh becomes a source of inspiration and hope. Everyone—social workers, engineers, managers, entrepreneurs can draw inspiration from his work and success. May God bless this country with millions of Rajendra Singhs!

I would also like to inform you that Anjana Mishra's article on her experiences of Ranchi asylum MANUSHI No. 120 was reprinted in *Greater Kashmir*. Shortly after that, a minister in the J&K government paid a visit to the mental hospital in Srinagar. This may well have been sparked off by Anjana Mishra's moving article. I am circulating copies of that article among progressive NGOs in Kashmir.

S.A. Owais, Srinagar, J&K

Macaulayite Indians

I was delighted to read the article on Kumbh Mela by Rajiv Malhotra titled *From Exotica to Disdain* in MANUSHI No. 124. Recently at the Montreal film festival, I saw a film titled *Maya*. This is an Indo-US production, a debut film by Digvijay Singh. It is said to be based on the exploitation of a *devdasi* but has absolutely nothing to do with that. It illustrates the kind of Macaulayite Indian that Rajiv has talked about. I also liked Shyamala Nataraj's article on prostitutes.

Vijaya Mulay, Montreal, Canada