



THE

# TECHNO-GANDHIAN NEWS

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News and information pertaining to the life and principles of Mahatma Gandhi, Gandhian Philosophy of Nonviolence and Peace, Technological Impact on Culture, Society, and Current Affairs of the world

**Internationalism and national sovereignty**  
*[Nobel Laureate Bertrand Russell's book 'Political Ideals' has immense details about the foundations of internationalism and national sovereignty. Some excerpts here:]*

My pupils came from all over the civilized world: France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Greece, Japan, China, India, and America. None of us was conscious of any sense of national divisions. We felt ourselves an outpost of civilization, building a new road into the virgin forest of the unknown. All cooperated in the common task, and in the interest of such a work the political enmities of nations seemed trivial, temporary, and futile.



But it is not only in the somewhat rarefied atmosphere of abstruse science that international cooperation is vital to the progress of civilization. All our economic problems, all the questions of securing the rights of labor, all the hopes of freedom at home and humanity abroad, rest upon the creation of international good-will.

**So long as hatred, suspicion, and fear dominate the feelings of men toward each other, so long we cannot hope to escape from the tyranny of violence and brute force.** Men must learn to be conscious of the common interests of humankind in which all are at one, rather than of those supposed interests in which the nations are divided. It is not necessary or even desirable, to obliterate the differences of manners, custom, and tradition between different nations. These differences enable each nation to make its own distinctive contribution to the sum total of the world's civilization.

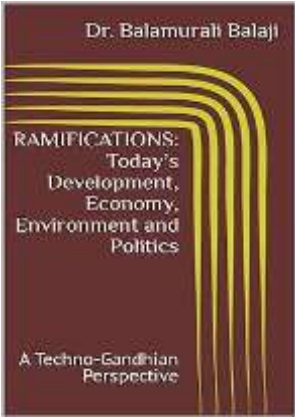
The matters in which the interests of nations are supposed to clash are mainly three:

1. tariffs, which are a delusion;
2. the exploitation of inferior races, which is a crime;
3. pride of power and dominion, which is a schoolchild folly.

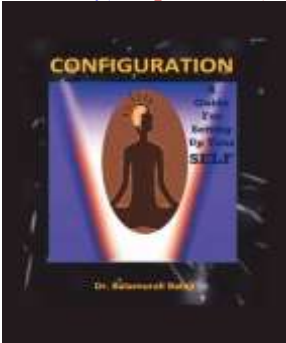
In the relations between states, as in the relations of groups within a single state, what is to be desired is independence for each as regards internal affairs, and law rather than private force as regards external affairs. But as regards groups within a state, it is internal independence that must be emphasized, since that is what is lacking; subjection to law has been secured, on the whole, since the end of the Middle Ages. In the relations between states, on the contrary, it is law and a central government that are lacking, since independence exists for external as for internal affairs. There can be no good international system until the boundaries of states coincide as nearly as possible with the boundaries of nations.

What constitutes a nation is a sentiment and an instinct, a sentiment of similarity and an instinct of belonging to the same group or herd. In national feeling there is always latent or explicit an element of hostility to foreigners. So long as national feeling exists, is very important that each nation should be self-governing as regards its internal affairs.

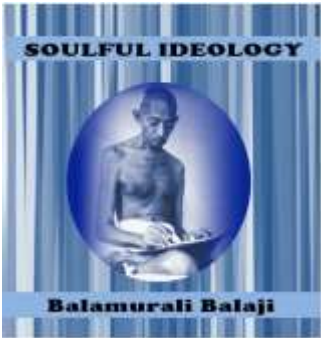
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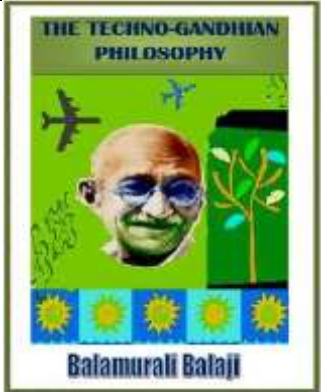
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This principle, however, does not decide how the relations between states are to be regulated, or how a conflict of interests between rival states is to be decided. At present, every great state claims absolute sovereignty, not only concerning its internal affairs but also about its external actions. This claim to absolute sovereignty leads into conflict with similar claims on the part of other great states. Such conflicts at present can only be decided by war or diplomacy, and diplomacy is in essence nothing but the threat of war. ●

Tangled row over Tungsten mining in Tamilnadu

By Dr. Balamurali Balaji

5<sup>th</sup> December, 2024 6:32 pm

The state of Tamilnadu has strongly objected for granting rights for mining tungsten ore in Arittapatti in Madurai district to Vedanta Minerals. Vedanta, a company that went into controversy in running the copper production unit Sterlite in Tuticorin that led to shooting of thirteen people during the protests, is keen on verging into digging of tungsten ore in Madurai district..

The Chief Minister of Tamilnadu M.K Stalin has urged the Centre and the Prime Minister to cancel the rights conferred to Vedanta and has moved a resolution in the assembly to cancel the license as well. The state and the local residents strongly feel that the tungsten minining risks the eco-system, displace communities and violate people’s rights. Moreover, the minister of Natural resources and mines reportedly said that the state government has not received any application from Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) a subsidiary of Vedanta, nor had given permission for the company to mine tungsten in about 5000 acres of land in Madurai district. However, HZL has bagged the contract on 7<sup>th</sup> November to mine tungsten block in Nayakkarpatti in Tamilnadu and another one in Andhra Pradesh, the Union Ministry of Mines said.

A few facts about tungsten in India:

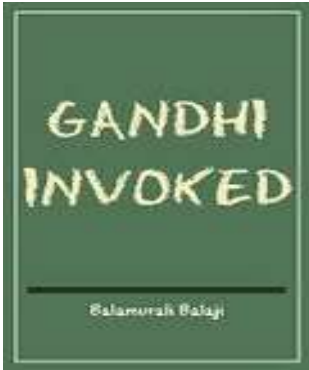
- Tungsten, also known as 'wolfram' is a very dense lustrous, brittle greyish white to steel-grey metal.
- Resources of tungsten-bearing minerals are mainly distributed in Karnataka (42%), Rajasthan (27%), Andhra Pradesh (17%) and Maharashtra (9%). The remaining 5% resources are in Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.
- There was no reported production of tungsten ore/concentrate after 2019. In the past, production of tungsten was reported from Degana in Rajasthan and Chendapathar in West Bengal. These mines, owing to economic non-viability, had to be closed down.
- Tungsten remains essentially unsubstitutable in its use for production of filaments, electrodes and contacts in lamp & lighting applications.
- There is increase in the use of tungsten scrap. The value of tungsten and other metals present in the scrap, such as, cobalt, columbium, copper, nickel, rhenium, silver, titanium and tantalum, is worthy enough reason to recycle them from scrap.
- The entire domestic requirement of tungsten ore/concentrates is met by imports and recycling, as there is no indigenous production. High content of WO3 in the tailing dumps of Kolar can be worked on priority basis to meet the demand.



The T.N. situation:

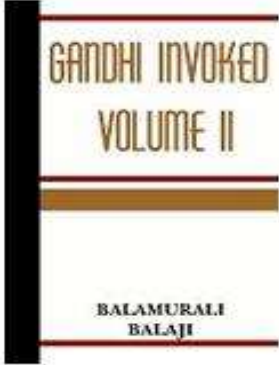
While villagers and activists continue to agitate against the move by the union ministry, the location of mining site Arittapatti has ever since been an ecologically sensitive zone as it lies amidst a chain of seven granite hillocks with a distinctive rocky landscape acting as a watershed in the surrounding region. It supports almost 72 lakes, 200 natural spring pools and three check dams. Such an ecologically

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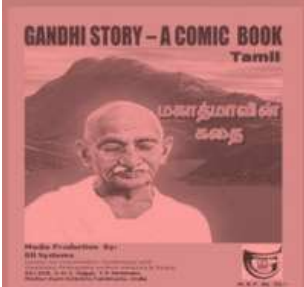
The spirit of Gandhi invokes you again!



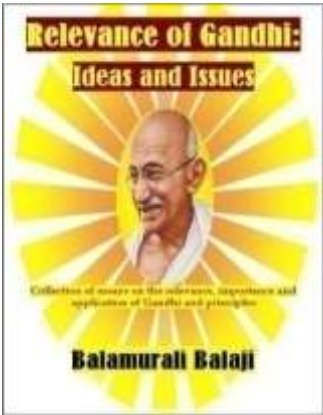
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Thought of the month

“...Our difficulties are of two kinds; those that are imposed from without and those that are of our own creation, The latter are far more dangerous, because we often hug them and are therefore reluctant to remove them..”

Source: Gandhi in “Young India” 1920





important region chosen for mining would, the localists fear, gradually swallow the entire inhabitant just as it happened in Neyveli lignite mining site.

Interestingly, Arittapatti village was declared as the first Biodiversity Heritage site of Tamilnadu in 2022.

To add more speculations to the mining ecosystem in India, Vedanta Sterlite corporation has pleaded to the Supreme Court that it would form an expert committee to evaluate whether the copper smelting plant in Tuticorin could resume operations! The SC had maintained that health and welfare of the people is the foremost priority in the case. ●

Nature and Natural Resources Photo Series



The Maldives Floating City is the world's first floating city designed to tackle rising sea levels. Set to open in 2027, it will house 20,000 residents in eco- friendly, floating homes and structures that rise with the ocean.

Photo source: Social Media

Secularism –new paranoia... old faith!

By Dr. Balamurali Balaji

7<sup>th</sup> December, 2024 7:00 pm

“WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST **SECULAR** DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens...”

The very first line in the preamble of the Constitution of India reads as above highlighting the term “*secular*”, which has often been construed, practiced and understood widely by the people of India and the rulers (who were democratically elected) as ‘equality of all religions’ and as being irreligious while delivering justice and exercising liberty of any citizen in this great country.

Technically, and politically, all sects of people have religiously believed this ever since the constitution was wrote and came in to vogue in 1950. The term ‘secular’ was more popular and pious for political parties too, more specifically the Indian National Congress and its allies, for whom the secular card has been a matter of electoral vote bank politics and a vehicle for long enduring voice for the minority Muslims, Christians, Parsis etc.

# Secularism

STATE

Freedom OF + FROM religion

- No privilege / penalty for faith
- No belief specially protected
- Religious inequality not binding on wider society

(Blasphemy / apostasy non-punishable)

An inimitable prayer!

During a ceremony in view of Christmas, a man walks towards the church carrying the cross (though it has wheels under for an easy pull) to fulfil his entreaty in the southern state of Kerala, India.



Photo source: Social Media

Cattle on Indian Roads

By Dr. Balamurali Balaji

Roads in Indian cities are not only meant for vehicular traffic and pedestrians. It is a common sight in major cities like Chennai, Surat, Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad and even the capital city of New Delhi buffaloes,, cows and calves are often roving along the roads causing a major concern for free flow of traffic and cleanliness of the roads.



Roads in and around the market place in suburban areas and interior parts of the city are piled up with the mass of garbage and waste food and fruits not entirely cleaned up by the corporations. Vendors and shopkeepers throw the waste and trash along the roadside inviting the neighbouring cattle folks to feed on them, not just one or two but sometimes in large numbers as herds. Cattle owners are not STRICTLY WARNED OR ISSUED

The rising of Hindu Nationalist government, which consecutively engraving in power since 2014 under the leadership of Bharatiya Janata Party and its allies, have not only sent mixed reactions of ‘Hindu dominance’ at the grass root level Hindu cadres, but also provoking the denial and objection of the term ‘secular’ in the constitution. Not irked only by the incidents of beef-eating, ban on the use of Hijab, loud speakers at the temples and mosques, mob lynching and the great verdict of recovery of Ram Janma Bhoomi to the Hindu camp – the secular card has been under serious threat causing a big blow to India’s moral fabric because of certain Hindu organizations were demanding the removal of the term ‘secular’ from the constitution.

Certainly, there are some minority groups within the Hindu fold have been given unjust, unfair and unprotected treatments in parts of the country. Whether it is Brahmins in northern states, or pandits of Kashmir or the voiceless sects in the south – the rise of Hindu leadership at the Union government has evidently motivated them for want of more security, more provision and reservations. There also exist a widespread belief that only decades of secularism had snatched their rights, jobs, voice and power.

Therefore, in India, the broader understanding of the term ‘secularism’ is gradually changing owing to the inclusion of religion in civic affairs and the state. The consistent promise of the Hindu nationalist parties of a Hindutva dominant India or Bharat would mean a greater change not only in India but elsewhere in the world as well. The repercussions of deviations from ‘secular’ strings has a paramount impact in neighbouring Bangladesh when Hindus temples were vandalised and Hindu minorities were attacked. In the far distant U.S. and Canada, the nations who claimed to have no state religion and committed to religious pluralism, secularism is a modernity and an extension beyond religion but race, colour, gender and other demographic divides.

Therefore, the current stance taken by certain factions of Hindu groups does have a bite when the same is threatened in foreign countries. What is secular for you is secularism for others as well! For a country like India, whose people are economically reliant and geographically spread over many parts of the world, much of care must be present while upholding the secular thread amid addressing the issues of under-privileged sections within the Hindu communities. More debates and tensions have given an impression that the world, especially India, shall have to move to post-secular condition since the term ‘secularism’ itself is contested and challenged. ●

Syria moving in the right direction?

By Dr. Balamurali Balaji

With Syrian Islamic rebels advancing to the capital city of Damascus on 7<sup>th</sup> November, the President of the Alawite dynasty that ruled the country for over five decades Bashar al-Assad was forced to flee to seek asylum in Russia leaving more scope for the formation of interim government, possibly a Taliban style rule.

Abu al-Julani is the rebel leader who fuelled the Syria’s civil war in 2011 conducted series of protests (The Arab Spring) against Russia and Iran backed Assad government. Later, he also became the U.S. most wanted terrorist for his strategic insurgencies and attacks in Syria for putting ‘chemical weapons’ in danger.

Amid series of attacks and waging war situation in the Middle East, Syria has been in a perplexed state of affairs ever since the 7<sup>th</sup> October attack on Israel by Hamas. As the warring attacks spread like pandemic all over the Arabian countries, Syria that was already in the grip of internal civil war, has gained momentum to focus on its internal war. Rebel forces headed by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham launched fresh offensive in 2024 against the dynastic rule. Capturing of Damascus and penetrating into the key cities have marked the final blow to the Assad’s family rule and its dominance in key positions in military, defence and economy.

Syria at this moment need a united stand for or against the ongoing Israeli attacks in the neighbouring Lebanon, Iran and Gaza. The establishment of new government, post-rebellion would result into resolving the differences and initiate fresh reforms inland. However, the challenging phase for Syria is still a way ahead as the U.S. strongly feel the ways Syrian people uphold their democracy. ●

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RESTRICTIONS IN breeding their cattle pets for commercial purposes. Though they are feeding the animals with proper food in the designated homes or shelters, owners often let them go wander on the roads for ‘extra nutrition’ thrown freely by hotels, vegetable and fruit shops.

It is disheartening to learn that many road accidents occurring in the congested cities are due to these cattle folks who refused to yield or move aside despite a busy traffic. Two-wheeler riders fall as victims on this menace, very often. There are quite a few incidents of cows fighting each other, bumping on the pedestrians, excreting on the road itself.

On 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the Chennai High Court issued a notice to the state government to come out with a clear report on what was done so far on this beast ‘encroachment’.

People feel uneasy and on edge only when some untoward incident occurs. In a speedy traffic, none has time to take this matter seriously. Enough is enough. Let the cattle pets stay at home! Whatever quantity of waste and leftovers fed by the cattle is very ‘negligible’ not so enough to clean the vicinity in its entirety as imagined by some vendors and merchants. Rather it is causing more solid waste that what it consumes.

A speedy, strict warning notice by the state governments would ensure safe and cleaner roads in India. ●

Cartoon of the month

CORNER STONE

5 Global issues to watch in 2025

In the middle of shattering conflicts, chaotic climate changes, overwhelming human rights violations leaders and experts weigh in the five key issues to watch in the year ahead.

1. Resolving the conflicts to stop ongoing wars in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan and Syria.
2. Financing for Development to meet the Sustainable Future goals
3. Attention on COP 30 in Brazil and International Maritime Organization (IMO)’s new targets to achieve climate actions.
4. Increased women rights in view of Global Gender Equality movement
5. Inducting some key reforms in the United Nations to mark its 80<sup>th</sup> year of existence.

Click the [link](#) to read more on above.

