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First Circular**National Seminar on Varṇa System through Ages**

A nation's good or bad governance system is known by its population, wealth, social, political and economic management.

So far as population is concerned, Bharat has been the world's largest nation since time immemorial. All the Ancient Greek writers and travellers agreed that the Ancient Bharat was the largest nation on earth. Appollodorus states, "There were between the Hydaspes and Hypanis (Hypasis) 1,500 cities, none of which was less than Cos." Megasthenes says, "There are 120 nations in Bharat." Arrian admits that the Hindus were the most numerous people and that it was impossible to know and enumerate the cities in Aryāvartta. Strabo says that Eukratides was the master of 1,000 cities between Hydaspes and Hypasis. Professor Max Dunker says, "The Hindus were the largest of the nations." Ctesias states, "They (Hindus) were as numerous as all the other nations put together." However, the essential proof of the over-abundant population of Ancient Bharat is to be found in the successive waves of emigration from Bharat to the different parts of the world, founding colonies and planting settlements in what is now called the Old and the New Worlds.

As regards wealth, Bharat has always been famous for her immense riches. "Golden Sparrow" is a hackneyed phrase. Both in population and in wealth, Bharat, at one time, was not only pre-eminent but was without a rival. What higher authority, what more positive proof of the Good Governance of Ancient Bharat is required than the fact that "ancient Bharat knew no thieves," nor knew why to shut the doors of its houses even at the time when, according to Dr Johnson, "The capital of the most civilized nation of modern times is the true Satan-at-home."

'Prepare for death if here at night you roam,
And sign your will before you sleep from home.'

Thus, a nation's Good Governance is built upon its system of socio-cultural and economic institutions. With changes in respect to these, the form of Governance also transforms. The best form of Governance is that which provides every citizen with an opportunity to earn livelihood based upon impartial opportunities and social and economic justice, that which enables only men of high character, noble minds, broad sympathies, men of sterling qualities and talents to rise to the top, and prevents men of shallow minds, mean capacities, narrow sympathies, and

unscrupulous characters from coming into power, it is always understood that the proper functions of good Government are only (1) national defence, and (2) protection of one individual or one class from another.

The Vedic people enjoyed and promoted a system of Good Governance, leading to the development of a perfect socio-cultural and economic system. The socio-cultural and economic organizations of the people were based on dharmic (ethical and moral) and scientific principles and were well calculated to ensure progress without parity strife. There was no discrimination of any type based on caste, creed, race, region, or religion hindering people's social or spiritual upliftment. There was no accumulation of wealth in one portion of the community, leaving the other portion in destitute poverty; no social, cultural or economic force stimulating the increase of the wealth of the one and the poverty of the other, as is the tendency of the modern civilization. The keynote of the system, however, was national service. It afforded every member of the socio-cultural and economic body opportunities and meant to develop his/her powers and capacities fully and to use them for the advancement of the commonwealth. Everyone was to serve the nation in the sphere in which he was best fitted to act, which, being congenial to his individual genius was conducive to the highest development of his faculties and powers.

There was thus a wise and statesman-like classification that procured social harmony and economic justice, leading to a general distribution of wealth, expelled misery and want from the land, promoted mental and moral progress, ensured social justice and national efficiency, and, above all, made tranquillity compatible with advancement; made life doubly sweet by securing external peace with national efficiency and social happiness a condition of affairs nowhere else so fully realized. However, *de grado en grado*, the beautiful social institutions, faced degeneration, leading to the disintegration of the social fabric of Bharatiya society, causing its social, political and economic downfall. The most prominent one is the Varna system, which has degenerated into the caste system. There has been a long debate among intelligentsia regarding the veracity of the caste or the Varna system. This issue has always been misused and exploited by people from various spheres of society for their vested interests, which has become exceedingly fatal for maintaining social harmony in our country. The beauty of ancient Bharatiya social institutions, on the one hand, and the degeneration of the same, on the other hand, compels one to revisit these institutions more deeply to find their relevance in the modern-day strife-torn society and national interest. So, the Veda Nidhi Foundation and Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati

Chair (UGC), Maharshi Dayanand University Rohtak, proposes to convene a conference on "The Varna System through Ages". In the proposed seminar, scholars with various affiliations are cordially invited to present their views with evidence on the subjects cited below and participate in the discussions and deliberations of the conference:

- 1) Varna system in Vedas
- 2) Varna system in later Vedic literature
- 3) Varṇa system in Smritis or Dharmasāstras
- 4) Varṇa system in Epics and Puranas
- 5) Varṇa system in Niti Texts and Classical Literature of Bharat
- 6) Varṇa system in Arthaśāstra of Chanakya
- 7) Varṇa system as reflected in the memoirs of foreign travellers
- 8) Varṇa system in view of Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya
- 9) Varṇa system in view of other ancient and medieaval thinkers/saints
- 10) Varṇa system in view of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati
- 11) Varṇa system in view of Swami Vivekanand and other modern Bharatiya thinkers like Ambedkara, etc.
- 12) Varṇa system in view of Communists
- 13) Varṇa system in view of present Śaṅkarāchāryas and various other Hindu religious leaders
- 14) Origin of Caste System
- 15) Difference between Caste and Varṇa system

Note: Interested scholars are requested to send their consent for participation or paper presentation indicating the subject of their paper under the themes given above. These papers will also be published in book form. Based on the response of scholars, the next announcement regarding the dates and venue of the conference will be made in the second circular.

Convenors

Dr. Anand Kumar, IPS Retd.
Veda Nidhi Trust

Prof. Ravi Prakash Arya
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Veda Samskruti is an inherent intellectual property of Bhaarata dEsham. It is the basic duty and right of every citizen in Bhaarata dEsham to protect this Intellectual property. Indian Constitution and Law provides provision for protection and preservation of its culture, its monuments, architecture etc.

The Chaturvedas said to have 1131 shaakhaas right up to the time of Aadi Shankaraachaarya and thereafter during last more than ten centuries, many shaakhaas are out of practice due to various reasons and presently only seven shaakaas are in the practice of Guru shiShya parampara.

There is a need to continuously preserve these available shaakhaas which may likely to disappear in future due to various external forces acting in the country vigorously with the power of money and global politics. It is time for the intellectuals of Bharata dEsham to wake-up and work collectively to protect and preserve Veda Samskruti of Bharata dEsham, by empowering the Youth of Bharat dEsham, the future care takers of this great Indian Heritage , with suitable education of our correct history and culture.

The above background lead to formation of this Veda Samskruti Samiti which is registered under Societies acts of Government of Telangana, with Regd. No. 961/2016 by Sri A.H. Prabhakara Rao, who is the Founder and President of the Samiti.

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