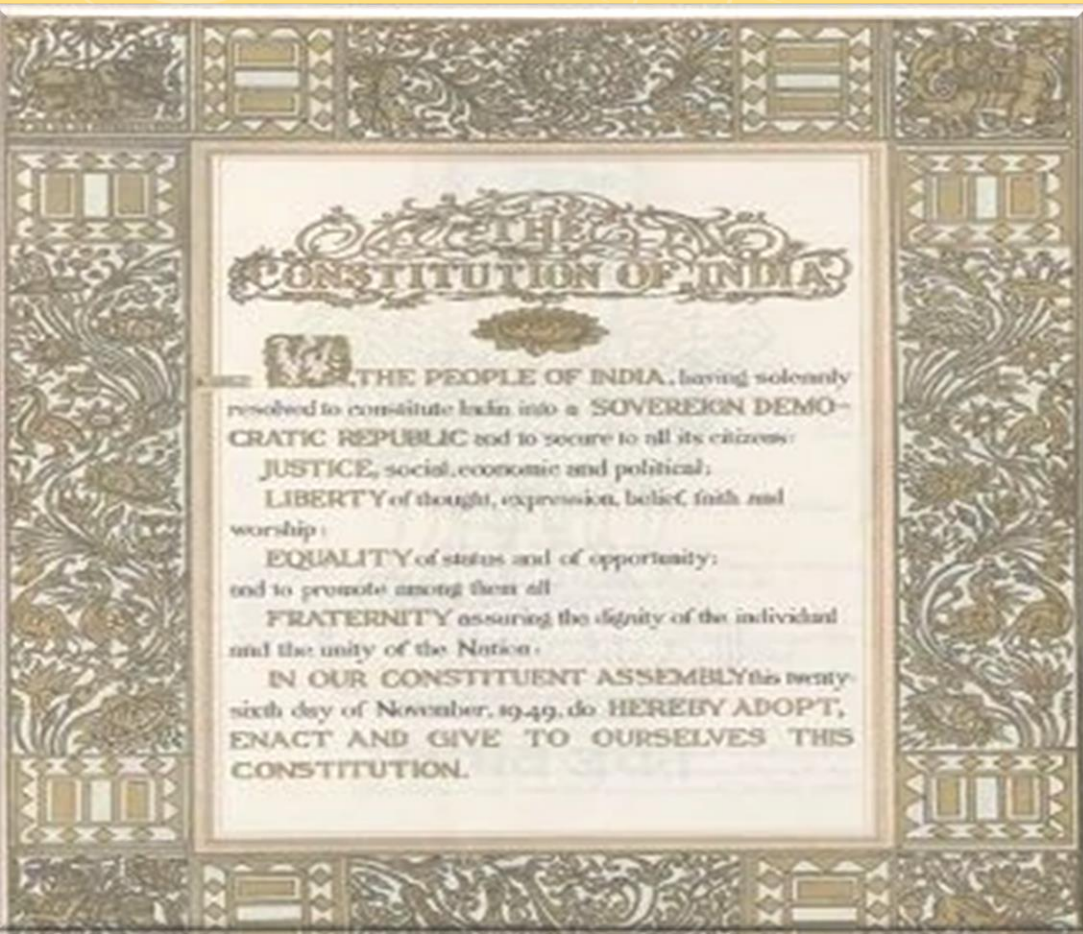


# Did our democracy really give us free will... ?



Arindam Dutta

June 16, 2020

*Caerus3 Advisors*

Advisory | Assurance | Think-Tank

Let's come straight to the point. Till we learn to drive in lanes without honking and till the women find their space in the streets round the clock, every day of the year, safely and without any prejudice, we can't call ourselves a civilized nation. Actually right now we are very far from it.

Sounds two very different matters, but isn't. Our medieval basic instinct hasn't changed. A very misplaced version of manhood making us very dangerous to live with.

As someone famously said, "It is best to rise from life as from the banquet, neither thirsty nor drunken".

Many of us as Indian men are either thirsty or drunken or both. The result is that our self-esteem is distorted. It manifests itself in streets. And it manifests the most in our big cities.

A motorbike with the national flag proudly fluttering atop its speedometer came from nowhere against the flow of traffic, his head tilted and one hand touching his heart in reverence to a religious site he spectacularly rides by. I somehow brake my car, going out of breath in a second and thinking he should have been thanking me for saving his life. But there was no second for me to recover as vehicles behind me honked in unison ordering me to speed up.

I wondered if our democracy has given us this shameful free will. With that an indiscipline below human dignity.

I am traveling to the airport at around four in the morning in a different country. It was approaching winter, it was dark, and it was mostly deserted. The driver dutifully stopped behind a stop line on a red light. I see a bus stop on the other side where a girl is alone, sitting with a beer in a very relaxed posture. There were few people, ones who were walking past her didn't even pause to look up at her, let alone judge what a woman is doing all alone in night at a bus stop with a beer in hand.

I wondered wasn't our democracy supposed to give us exactly this free will?

A free that isn't judged at best and taken advantage of at worst. A free will of being equal. But in our case this notion of equality has instead come with multiple divisions, none more starkly visible than in our gender.

The statistics are numbing, they are horrifying. A person dies in our roads every three minutes, a girl is reported raped every thirty minutes. The basics of civilized life is non-existent.

The fate of our nation will depend on our collective virtues and mannerisms. Yet when we look at our various media forms, our collective idea of nationalism is very different.

In some cases, when they touch on it, quickly falls back under the garb of our high population to explain away everything.

It is as if we have given up on basic freedom of structural thinking. Or the indifference is staggering.

Its painful that we can't give way to an ambulance, but quickly fall in line for a VIP car, it's disgusting when drivers nonchalantly cut out each other with a sly look, it isn't funny when people dressed up in their dazzling best driving in the most expensive cars honk, one starts and everyone starts to honk, all this while just waiting to enter a shopping mall for recreation. Not even the elites staying in high end condominiums will stop by without honking for a child and her care giver trying to just cross over.

Troubling but a very common sight.

It's a moment of reckoning that we need to be put behind hand held ropes to stop us from crossing a street when one isn't meant to cross.



There is no respect for life, no respect for basic dignity. But then standing in a queue is beneath our dignity! It's a national culture not to including with the elites!

We take that distorted view of life to our women. They just live through their lives with a constant threat of sexual harassment every second when they are out in the streets. The well-meaning people in their lives can only caution them not to venture alone, surely not in the night as will be judged in a certain way, just the way she would be judged for the dress she opts to wear.

This society isn't a place for women. Actually most of us men haven't been conditioned at all to think of a woman without a protective company of men around. We get rattled when we see someone alone.

This society cannot endure. There is something seriously wrong. Our family upbringing haven't been part of the solution, actually is where the problem might be.

A solution is nowhere in sight. It's about creating a completely new consciousness for Indian men. It needs to start from childhood. But that isn't going to happen anytime soon.

The more pragmatic way is for women to take over the streets.

You should be seen everywhere and every time of the day and night. Once you get hold of the streets, it will change everything. It will then change things overnight. But getting women to capture the streets wouldn't an overnight affair.

Groups can be formed in small pockets, run as a proof of concept, the success made visible and then the movement will spread the entire length and breadth of the country. Then the flood gates will open, it will be not out of place to see many female truck drivers criss-crossing the country. Remember you have 50% of the vote share too.

Once it all happens, the country will transform into civility, the foundations of nation building would be set. GDP growth, cultural events, festivities, all these would be meaningful then.

Right now we are at wars in our own streets, with one another and with ourselves. Right now it's an assault on our basic humanity. It makes us live in a very inhuman place.

# A word about .....

## the Author

Arindam Dutta is ex Global head, Finance Operations, CFO Poland lead, Credit Suisse. He is ex Global head, BPS Analytics, Asia Pac BPS Hewlett Packard. He has 20+ years in GBS/BPS/ Banking- driving change and transformation. Worked in multiple locations/countries, led senior level and large scale teams across multiple countries and worked with internal and external CXO level stakeholders.

"Award for Excellence & Leadership in Outsourcing" from World HRD Congress (2013), Selected as Asia G6 Visionary by client community votes & panel speaker in SSON week in Singapore (2013 2012)& India I6 in 2013, Selected by buyer community as a sourcing superstar in SSON (2013)

Interviewed & quoted in multiple publications like Information week, Computer World, Dataquest, Global Services (2013, 2012), ,Invited in the speaking panel in NASSCOM, New Delhi (2013), keynote speaker in Dataquest summit, Gurgaon (2013), speaker and presenter in Deloitte Annual Shared Service conference , France (2012) , Joint interview with one of my client by the CFO Magazine on the Analytics success story (2012) Published multiple papers - "Making sense of big data in Finance & Accounting", "Wealth of data and shortage of resources", "From reporting the past to predicting the future: Analytics in Finance & Accounting", "Business Insights to F&A", "Compliance & Risk Analytics", "3As of Business Growth" (2014, 2013, 2012), " The lost pride - A tale of our cities" in the special edition of Consultant review magazine (2018) Multiple blogs in Times Of India (2018 onwards)

## Caerus3 Advisors & Think-Tank

*A Boutique Advisory Firm with a difference; set up by like minded professionals who have been on the "other side of the table" for `3 decades and have a comprehensive understanding of the key pain areas and challenges faced by today's CXO*

*Our Key Practice lines are Advisory and Assurance focus on Human Capital, Technology, Enterprise Risk Management & Process excellence*

*Our Think-tank works as a catalyst for our Clients. We have a dedicated Research team, over a dozen Industry leaders as dedicated "Trusted Partners" who share with us Industry Best Practices, the Macro and Micro Business Drivers that impact Business. We have enlisted support of Former Bureaucrats, Technocrats; Members of Judiciary and Economists who advise us on Political –Socio Economic issues.*

For Further information, please feel free to reach out to

[info@caerus3advisors.com](mailto:info@caerus3advisors.com)

***This Report is proprietary to Caerus3 Advisors & Think-Tank. Provided there is no change in content and IPR of Caerus3 Advisors & Think-Tank; copies of the same may be forwarded or distributed electronically or physically including publishing on Social media.. The author of this Report has undertaken extensive due diligence in accessing both market and non market data and socio-economic drivers as illustrated in the Report, Caerus3 Advisors & Think-Tank nor the Author will not be held liable for any mis-statement or mis-representation***

[www.caerus3advisors.com](http://www.caerus3advisors.com)

Follow us on



**Caerus3 Advisors**

**Advisory | Assurance | Think-Tank**