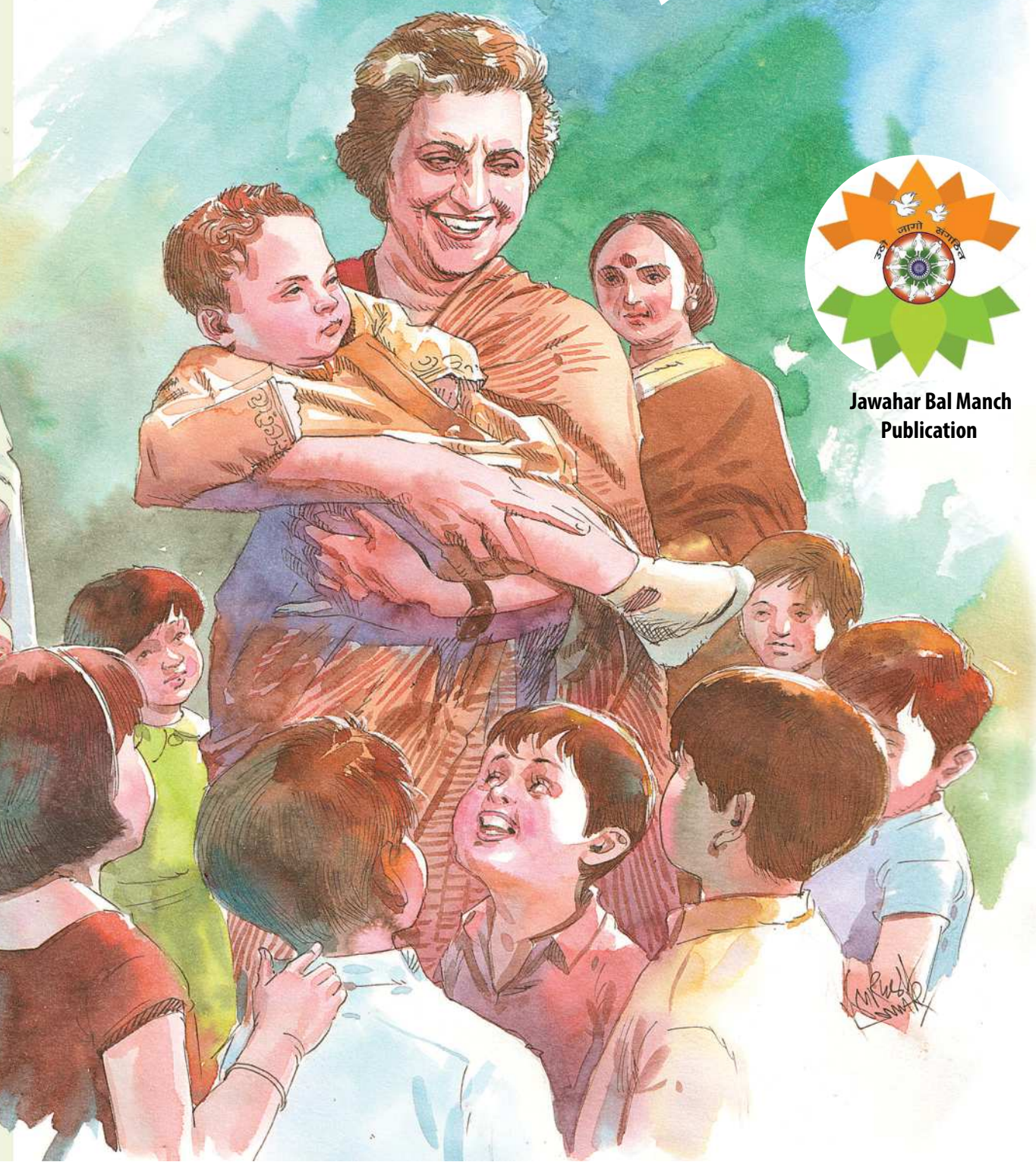


# THE Buds

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# THE Buds

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### Design & Layout:

Narayana Bhattachiri

Edited, printed and published  
by Dr G V Hari,  
National Project Director  
Jawahar Bal Manch  
Indira Bhavan,  
Thiruvananthapuram 695010  
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Dear friends,

Indira Priyadarshini- the great daughter of a great father. If Nehru was one of the chief architects of modern India, it was Indira Gandhi who made India capable enough to stand tall among the world nations.

Indira Gandhi led India in the most tumultuous and complicated era that the nation was stuck in, after the death of Nehru, whom we lovingly call “Chachaji.”

On one hand, she had to continue the war that Nehru had started against socio-economic issues like poverty, famines, inflation, and unemployment. On the other, she had to deal with internal clashes and the aftermaths of the wars of 1965 and 1971.

Plans like “Garibi Hatao” for eradicating poverty, bank-general insurance nationalization, ruling out ‘privy purse’, the green and white revolutions, and various other measures to strengthen the public sector, were all symbols of the intelligent leadership that she had showcased. It is her able management that transformed India from the position of borrowing grains from the USA for its children’s mid-day meals to a large-scale exporter of food grains and products.

Indira Gandhi always cherished the lessons of history that she learned from “Letters from a Father to His Daughter” and the lessons of nature that she learned from the great Tagore, at his Shantiniketan. Her insignia is well evident in the environment conservation activism and related legislation including the Forest Conservation Act, Wildlife (Protection) Act, Project Tiger, Prevention of Cutting Trees, and Afforestation. It is she, who protected Kerala’s Silent Valley, from the axes.

The speech that she delivered at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in June 1972 in Stockholm, is a text for the environment activists across the globe. Quoting Atharva Veda, she said, “What of thee I dig out, let that quickly grow over, Let me not hit thy vitals, or thy heart.”

Humble obeisance to the glowing memories of Indira Priyadarshini.

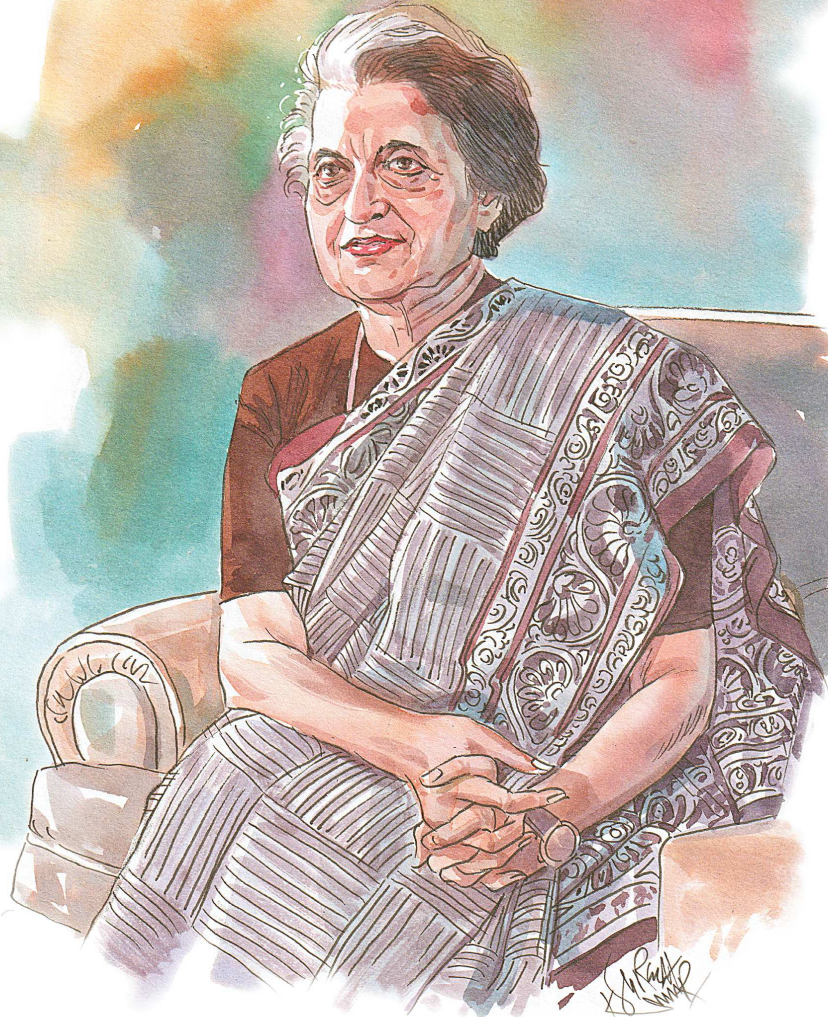
With respect,  
Yours lovingly

GV Hari



# Indira Priyadarshini

1917 November 19 – 1984 October 31



One of the most remarkable women leaders in world history... one of the most powerful leaders India has seen... the first woman prime minister of India – Thus, India Gandhi holds a heroic place in the history of India.

Indira Priyadarshini was born during a significant period of Indian independence struggle. She was born on 19 November 1917 to Jawaharlal Nehru, who was at the forefront of the struggle and Kamala Nehru.

Being from a family that was constantly involved in the freedom struggle, Indira did not experience much closeness from her Jawaharlal Nehru or her grandfather Motilal Nehru. It can be said that she grew up alone with her mother Kamala Nehru, who was suffering from many illnesses.

It was her grandfather Motilal Nehru's wish that his grand daughter should get the best education available in India. So, Indira was sent to a British-run school St.



Cecilia for her primary education.

However, there was a rule that the children of the Congress members should not study in schools run by the British Raj due to which Indira was unable to continue her education.

In 1933, by the time she completed her

education from Pupils' Own school in Pune, Indira had studied in several schools.

### **Vanarsena under Congress**

India's desire to work with the Congress had to be put on hold due to her young age. But she set out to help the freedom struggle as best as she could. As part of this, Indira gathered students from nearby schools to form Baal Charka Group and Vanarasena. Their aim was to provide help to the Congress in small ways. It was this sena which passed on secret messages to the freedom fighters without the knowledge of the British.

It is also said that Vanarasena was Congress' own idea, knowing well that acting through children was a good way to work as it would not raise doubts among the British. Members of the vanarasena also did other works such as sewing flags and nursing wounded freedom fighters.

In 1936, Indira joined the Oxford University for her graduation. During this time, Kamala Nehru's health condition worsened. Although so much was done to save her life, she passed away on February 28. The demise of Indira's mother during her graduation studies shook her life.

### **In Quit India Movement**

In 1942, just before the Quit India Movement, Indira married Firoz, who was also a member of the Youth Congress. They soon got jailed for participating in the Quit India movement.

Indira gave birth to Rajiv Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi in 1944 and 1946, respectively.

From 1947 to 1964, Indira worked unofficially as one of the top advisors of Jawaharlal Nehru. During his rule, Indira's influence was notable.

## Into politics

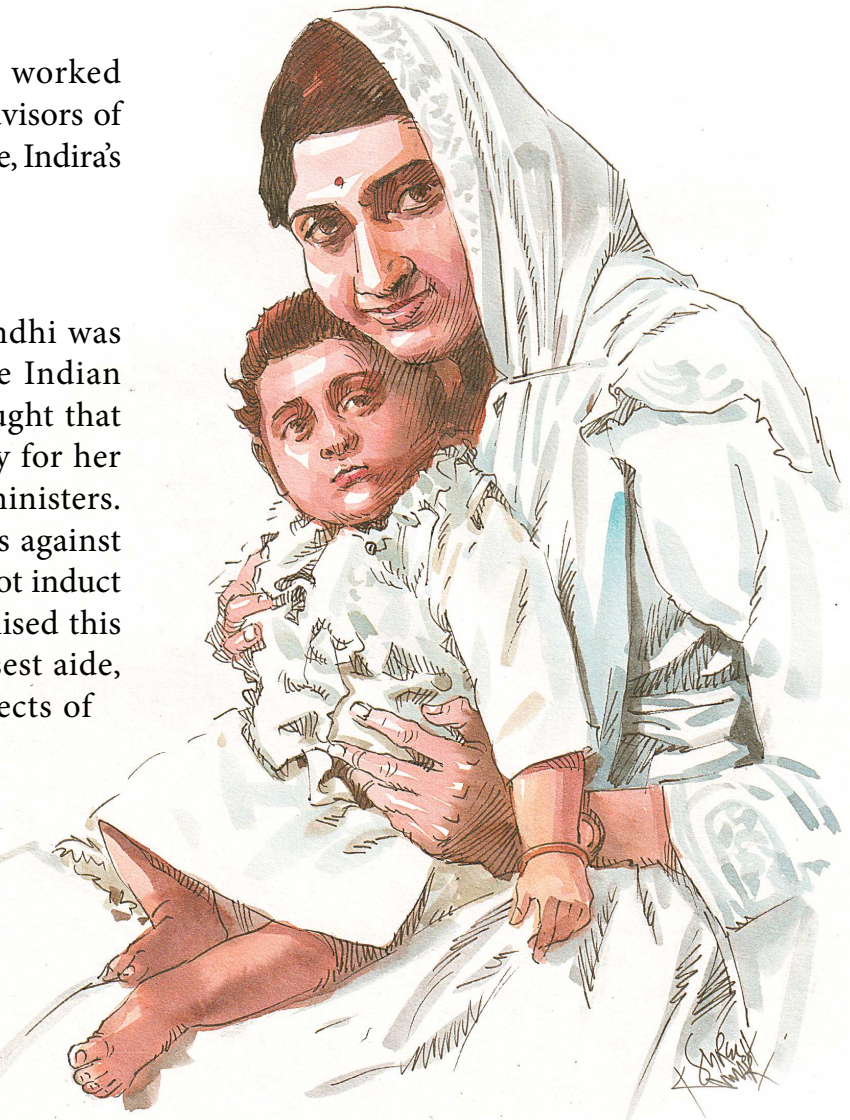
During 1959-60, Indira Gandhi was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress. It was thought that this would give an opportunity for her to be a part of the cabinet of ministers. But Jawaharlal Nehru, who was against nepotism in party politics did not induct her into his ministry. Indira utilised this opportunity to be Nehru's closest aide, allowing her to master all aspects of politics.

After the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri took Indira into his cabinet as a Union Minister. In 1966, after Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi became the fifth Prime Minister and the first woman Prime Minister of India.

Indira Gandhi served as India's Prime Minister from 1966 January to 1977 March and 1980 January to 1984 October. The brave decisions that Indira took as the Prime Minister landed her the title 'Iron lady'.

## Eventful (?) Life

Indira's political career was very eventful. She was one among the few Indian Prime Ministers to be equally admired and hated. Nationalisation of banks, strong stance on protecting religious interests, environment friendly actions such as silent valley national park.... Even though she was appreciated plenty of times during her tenure, she received much criticism for



calling emergency. In the political sphere, Indira was a presence such that she was much lauded by her supporters and much questioned by her opposers.

## India's first woman prime minister

India got its first woman prime minister 55 years back. The second Prime Minister from the Nehru family. After Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira served as the prime minister for the longest period. From 1966-77 and later from 1980 till her death, Indira served as the prime minister for a total of 4 tenures.

Indira realized that in a country with high illiteracy, radio and television were the best means for news to reach common



people. She gave shape to a scheme that enabled to establish radio stations at a low cost. She knew exactly what would draw attention of the media and common people.

In 1965, when the India-Pakistan war broke out, Indira was on a holiday in Srinagar. In spite of security warning by the Army, she stayed in Srinagar itself. Following this incident, there was a joke that all ministers in the cabinet, except Indira, were women. Such small instances gave the message that Indira truly was a deserving leader. As the India-Pakistan peace discussions were progressing, Lal Bahadur Shastri died while in the Soviet Union. The demand for Indira to be the Prime Minister became even stronger at this point.

India went to war with Pakistan, with Indira supporting the independence of East Pakistan. As India won the war, in a way, she also became a reason for the formation of Bangladesh. During her rule, India evolved into a powerful nation in the South Asia. India had grown considerably in economic, political and defense spheres.

### **Nationalisation of Banks**

One of the greatest achievements from Indira's political career worth mentioning is the nationalization of banks. 14 banks were nationalized during this period. People welcomed this decision owing to the exploitation by private banks.

Several reforms were brought in the banking sector. Investments increased by 800%, banks opened new branches in rural areas, Banks became accessible to the larger public. More than increasing the purchasing power of people, the investments made in various sectors paid off.

Even Jayaprakash Narayan, who was the leader of Opposition appreciated Indira's move of Nationalisation.

### **Industry**

In 1971, when Indira came to power for the second term, this wave of nationalization spread to the industrial sector as well. Industries, such as, Iron, coal, and – were all nationalized. The remaining private industries were all subjected to strict monitoring.

### **Bangladesh Liberation War**

The 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War was another event that added to Indira's



fame and achievement.

The Pakistan army started the war by sending back Hindus from East Pakistan into India. India questioned this move of Pakistan at various international platforms, and eventually entered the Bangladesh Liberation War.

India imprisoned close to one lakh of Pakistani soldiers and liberated Bangladesh from Pakistan. Indian victory in the Bangladesh Liberation War strengthened Indira's support among the public. The people believed that India was safe in Indira's hands. Post this war victory, the then leader of Opposition Atal Bihari Vajpayee compared Indira to Goddess Durga.

## **Smiling Buddha**

As far as India's Nuclear Programme was concerned, Indira followed in Jawaharlal

Nehru's footsteps. Soon after China's Nuclear Testing, Indira approved the development of India's Nuclear weapons. Indira wanted to establish India's stability and security by being one of the Nuclear superpowers in the world.

In 1974, Dr. Raja Ramanna informed Indira Gandhi that India was ready to test Nuclear weapons. Thus, India successfully tested Nuclear weapons from the Pokhran desert range in Rajasthan.

This operation, which was called 'Smiling Buddha' did not invite much responses internationally, but a vehement protest came from Pakistan. Indira wrote a letter to the Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and also to the world stating that the nuclear test was undertaken for peaceful purposes.

# The Green Revolution





# and the White Revolution



The research and advancements in the Agriculture sector that began in 1960 led India from severe food scarcity to a country with surplus production of food grains. India eventually began to export the surplus food produce. These measures, called the 'Green Revolution' also led to diversification in agriculture.

During 1978-79, India produced 131 million ton of food produce. The Green Revolution led to not just an increase in agricultural production, but also created employment opportunities in the sector manufacturing farm equipment and machinery. Agricultural productivity was the highest in the states of Punjab and Haryana.



Around this period, the White Revolution led to a multifold increase in the milk production. The white revolution helped reduce malnutrition among children to an extent in the country.

### **Language Policy**

India had constitutionally accepted Hindi as the official language of the Indian Union. However, non-Hindi speaking states, especially South Indian states were not ready to accept this law. They insisted that English should be the official language of India. This became a cause for much unrest. In 1967, through an amendment led by Indira, English and Hindi were both

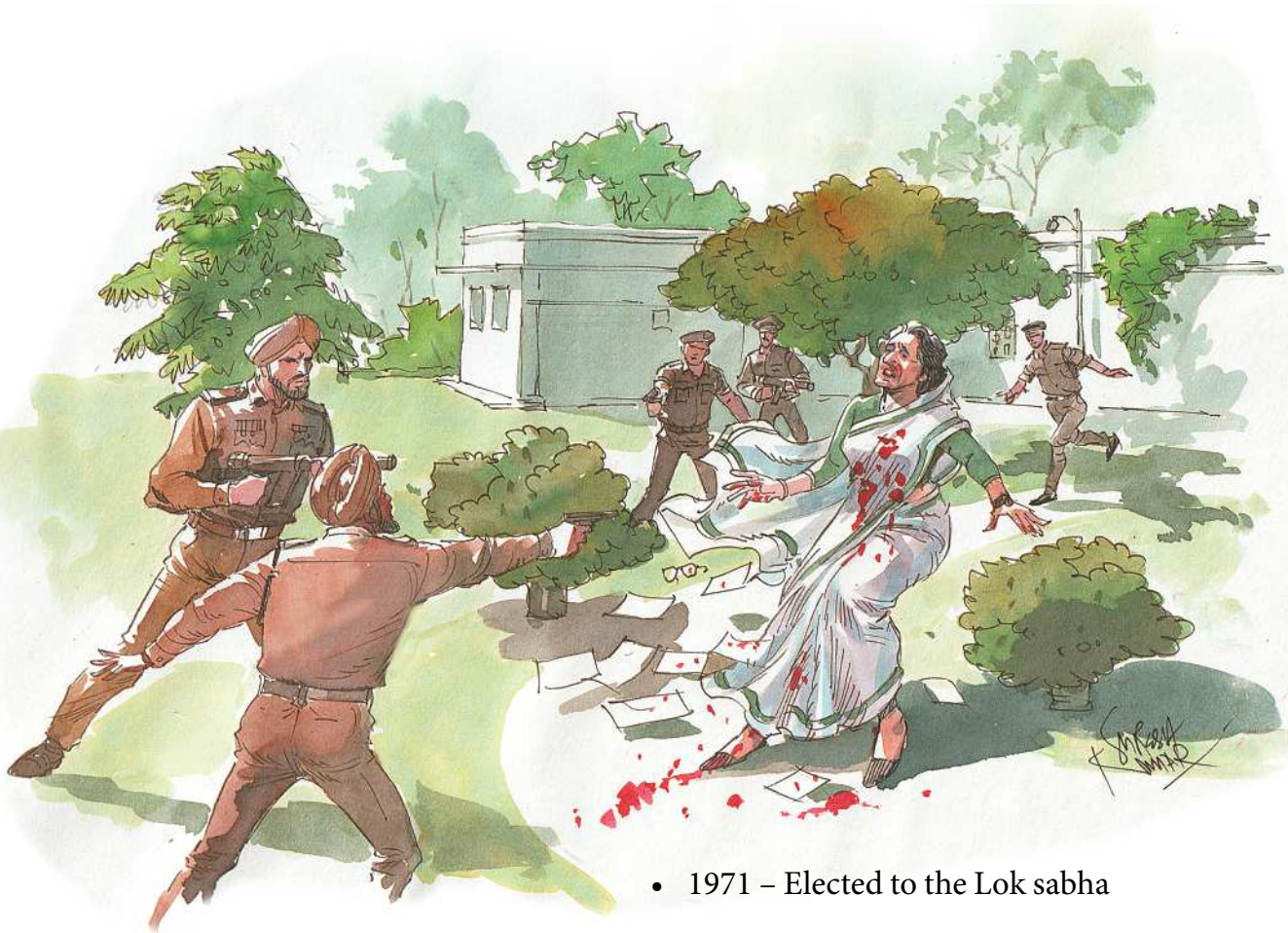
recognized as the official languages of the Indian union.

### **State of Emergency**

The Emergency was imposed from 1975 to 1977. This decision came under severe criticism from the opposition. During the state of emergency, Indira formulated 20 point programme for the country's development.

After 19 months, in 1977, Indira ended the emergency and called for election. Congress lost the election that year. Indira Gandhi lost in Rai Bareilly constituency to the Janata Party candidate Raj Narain. As a result, Morarji Desai of the Janata Party became India's Prime minister.

Following defeat in the election, Indira



- 1971 – Elected to the Lok Sabha

worked to muster the support of the people by calling out the policies of the Janata Party for being anti-people. The increasing public support for Indira and the large crowds that assembled for her rallies generated fear in the Janata Party.

Four different FIRs were filed against Indira by the CBI.

In 1980, the Congress Party, led by Indira rose to power with a huge majority.

## Elections

- 1980 – Won in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh and Medak, Andhra Pradesh (now Telangana).
- 1978 – Became a Lok Sabha member by defeating Janata Party's Virendra Patil in Chikkamagalur, Karnataka
- 1977 – Lost to Raj Narain of Janata Party from Raebareli

## Assassination

Indira had to lay down her life in return for her measures to suppress the Khalistan organization. The Army, directed by Indira, executed 'Operation Bluestar' to bring out militants who were said to be hiding in the premises of the Golden temple, the holy pilgrimage of the Sikhs. In this backdrop, Indira was advised to reorganize her security team. Indira declined with just the question "Are we secular?"

On the morning of 31 October 1984, Indira was walking from her house at H. No.1, Akbar Road, New Delhi to her office to be interviewed by the British filmmaker Peter Ustinov. Walking for about a minute, she reached the gate to her office. Sub Inspector Beant Singh was standing there. Indira smiled at Beant Singh, who had served nine years in her personal security

team. However, Beant Singh's response to her smile was in the form of bullets. Beant Singh had shot her with his service revolver. As Indira fell to the ground, Constable Satwant Singh shot about 30 rounds using his sub-machine gun.

“Every drop of my blood will invigorate India and strengthen it...”

One day before her death, Indira Gandhi gave her speech at Odisha at the Secretariat parade grounds which some consider as a premonition of her imminent death.

“I am here today, I may not be here tomorrow. But the responsibility to look after national interest is on the shoulder of every citizen

“

*“My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people; those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was much less competition.”*

”

-Indira Gandhi

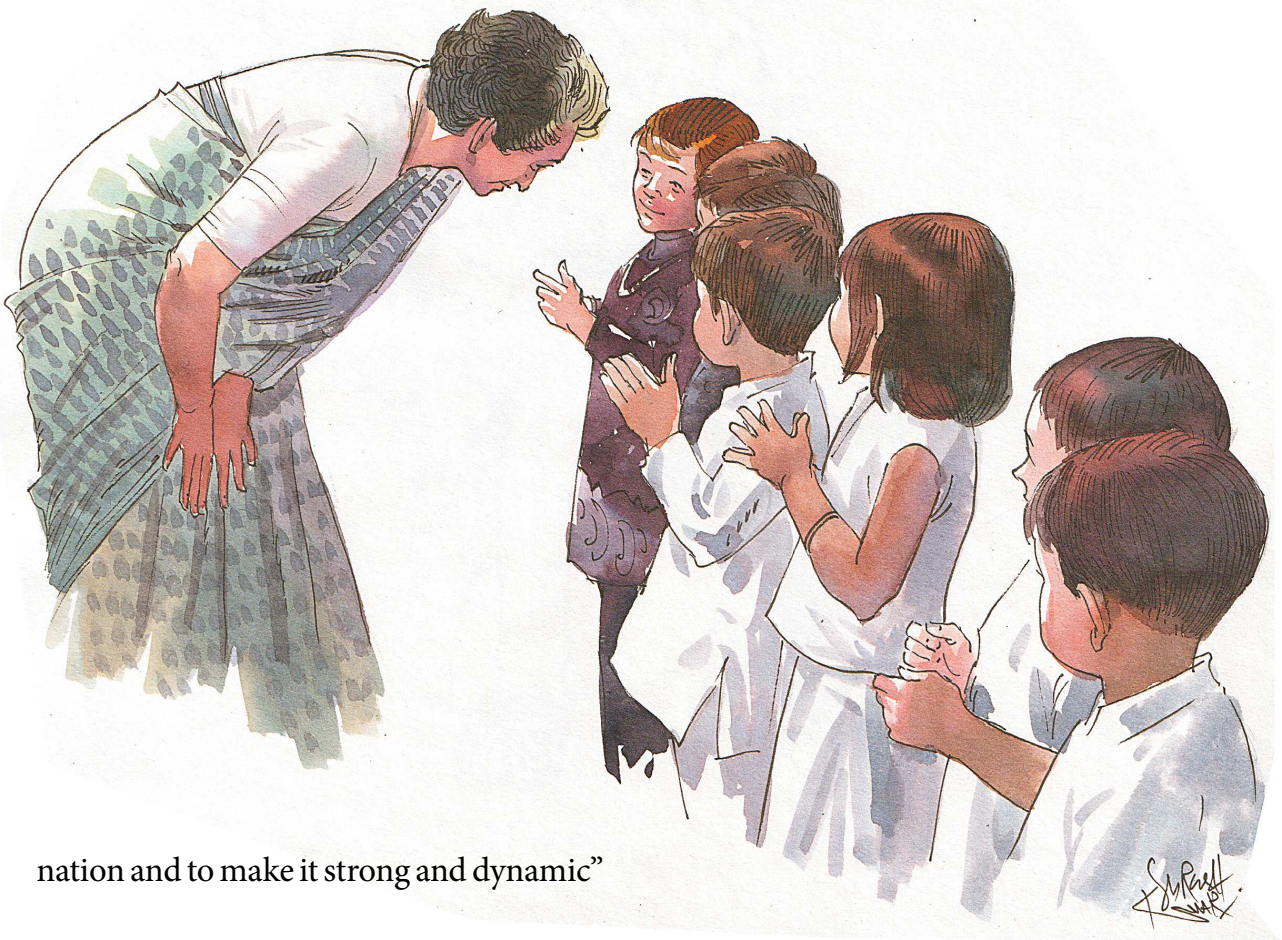
of India. I have often mentioned this earlier.

Nobody knows how many attempts have been made to shoot me, lathis have been used to beat me. In Bhubaneswar itself, a brickbat hit me. They have attacked me in every possible manner. I do not care whether I live or die. I have lived a long life and I am proud that

I spend the whole of my life in the service of my people. I am only proud of this and nothing else. I shall continue to serve until my last breath and when I die, I can say, that every drop of my blood will invigorate India and strengthen it...

Even if I died in the service of the nation, I would be proud of it. Every drop of my blood will contribute to the growth of this





nation and to make it strong and dynamic”

## Bharat Ratna

In 1971, the President of India V.V. Giri awarded Indira with the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honour for leading India to victory against Pakistan in the Bangladesh Liberation War.

In 2011, the Bangladesh government posthumously conferred Indira Gandhi with Bangladesh’s highest civilian award ‘Bangladesh Freedom Honour’ for her outstanding contributions to the Bangladesh Liberation War.

Indira received several awards, such as the Mexican Academy Award for Liberation of Bangladesh in 1972, second annual Award of FAO in 1973, U.S.A Mothers’ Award in

1953, Isabelle De Este award from Italian government, Howland Memorial Prize by University of Yale for

In 1967 and 1968, Indira was voted as the most respected? woman by the French Institute of Public Opinion. In 1971, Indira was voted the most respected person in

the Gallop Poll survey of U.S.A. In 1971, the Argentine Society awarded the Diploma of Honour to Indira Gandhi.

In 1999, BBC, Indira Gandhi was named ‘Woman of the millennium’ by BBC. Other prominent women on the list include Queen Elizabeth, Marie Curie and Mother Theresa.

“I have lived a long life, and I am proud that I spend the whole of my life in the service of my people. I am only proud of this and nothing else. I shall continue to serve until my last breath, and when I die, I can say, that every drop of my blood will invigorate India and strengthen it”

-Indira Gandhi

# The Wind in the Mountains

Golden October was spending its last days. Suddenly one day Madam called.

“Ranjan, we are going to Kashmir.”

“Ma, now Kashmir!”

The trip was dangerous. The minds bitter over the dismissal of the government, had not yet found peace. Ranjan was trying to convince her that she should wait for some other time.

“What if we wait and the trip is never made? No, Ranjan we are going. I can’t postpone it.” Madam was firm.

Now there were no doubts. The arrangements for the trip were made. Kamalendu clung on to him as he bade goodbye to his family. When Maya tried to take her away, she bawled aloud. He hurried to the airport while Maya and his mother tried to pacify the child.

Strong security measures were taken in Kashmir. Madam took her grandkids Rahul and Priyanka along with her. A cold wind blew. There was intermittent snowfall. Ranjan took the children around the Srinagar market.

Ranjan was trying to retrieve the experience of the pleasant lonesome trips of his childhood. The trips with mother to Kashmir. Her relatives used to get together. Those were good times indeed.

The gloomy skies brightened up as the sun came out. The chinar trees were decked with their flowers. In the valley of the mountain ranges, Madam sang

a song:

“Here, Nature holds a bowl of blossoms. The winds sweep down from the mountains. There is the caress of snow in them. Let the snow flakes fall upon my heavy heart, this evening.”

The next day a hurried trip to Bhubaneswar. The elections were round the corner in Orissa. The horrid incident during the last elections rushed to the mind. Madam involuntarily felt her nose. The scare was still there. It was the first time that a stone had hit her face.

“what is the meaning of freedom when the people are poor and miserable?”

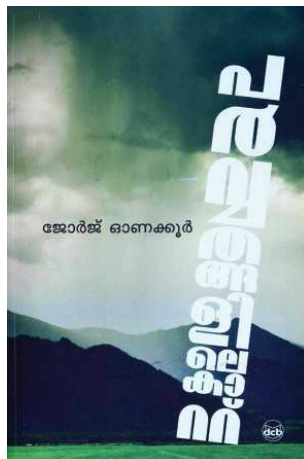
This question was repeated at several venues. Then she said as though directed by some inner compulsion:

“Now I am here. Tomorrow I may not be here. How many futile attempts were made on my life. It is not a problem for me whether I should live or not. I have been on this earth for quite a long time. All these years, I have been living for my country and its people. I have great pride in that.

Till my last breath, till I die, I have no hesitation in shedding each drop of my blood to strengthen my nation.”

She reached Delhi rather late in the night. As she walked into her home she directed Manoranjan to take rest. He need not come to office the next day.

“You must be tired with incessant travels. Convey my



apologies 'to Maya. Tell Manasi that I would like to meet her. Ask her to bring Kamalendu along.'

She said 'Good Night'.

Sonia was awaiting her at Safdar Jung House. Rajiv was away campaigning. The children were in bed. When could Indu have gone to bed? There was light in her room till dawn. Was she writing? Or was she slipping into memories of her childhood?

The next morning was also going to be a busy one. She had to give an interview to the BBC. It was to be given in her office on Akbar Road. As she finished her bath, Sonia had selected her clothes, she served her breakfast, too.

A delightful morning. The sky was clear. The new rays of the sun spread over the land. Flowers smiled on the plants. Butterflies fluttered about in the garden.

Indu walked on like a wind bearing fragrance. Her burden, seemed to have gone. Her mind seemed to be as light as a feather.

As she passed the gate from her residence to her office on Akbar Road, the sentry posted near the bougainvillea climbers a little away, bowed his head. She greeted him with folded hands. ;

Suddenly a revolver sounded.

"What, what are you doing?"

Gunfire swallowed her voice. She fell flat, her body riddled with bullets. Her vermilion sari soaked in blood.

Everything was over in seconds. .

Sonia who rushed out of the house screaming, tried to hold mother up. She was rushed in a car to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

By noon, the curtain came down on a mercurial life.

Rajiv was in a village in Bengal on the election trail.



The wind gathered momentum. It raged all over India. Loud lamentations rose from all directions. Black flags decked the streets. Half-naked adivasis came down from the hills onto the roads. They beat their breasts in sorrow, and ran amok. Children wailed.

Nobody could bear this sudden passing away of so benign a presence.

A mother they had never seen before. With an affection that strokes their foreheads, caresses their souls.

Even the Silent Valley sobbed. Its life was convulsing. The last of the Earth's verdure was being swallowed by the tongues of fire.

# *A daughter, about her father.*

## *Indira Gandhi about Jawaharlal Nehru.*

It is indeed difficult for any daughter to speak about her father. Especially when they had been more than just family, two great friends. Our friendship dates back to as early as my days of infancy. We are all unique individuals. Yet most of us suppress certain dimensions of our individuality and project a few others. My father could liberate all his individual qualities and stay interested in all phases of his life simultaneously, and this I think, is what makes him different from most others.

### **A Real Teacher.**

My father was a real teacher. I amassed most of my knowledge from him. Any Indian who had listened to at least one of his speeches would have understood that his speeches were never argumentative ornamented wordplays, but were sincere efforts to educate the populous- his listeners.

### **His Speeches.**

His speeches were all memorable and honest attempts to educate his listeners with something, which would create an everlasting impact in their lives. His speeches could've been in villages or valleys, but his words were always about the latest inventions of science, the numerous paths

of history, and the power centers that were shaping the world.

Some people thought his speeches were long and boring. That's mostly because the topics spoken about were familiar. It was only later while we visited those villages and valleys that we realized, how impactful those speeches were, among the people. I believe this surely is a reason why modern ways and ideas are accepted in even the remotest parts of the country.

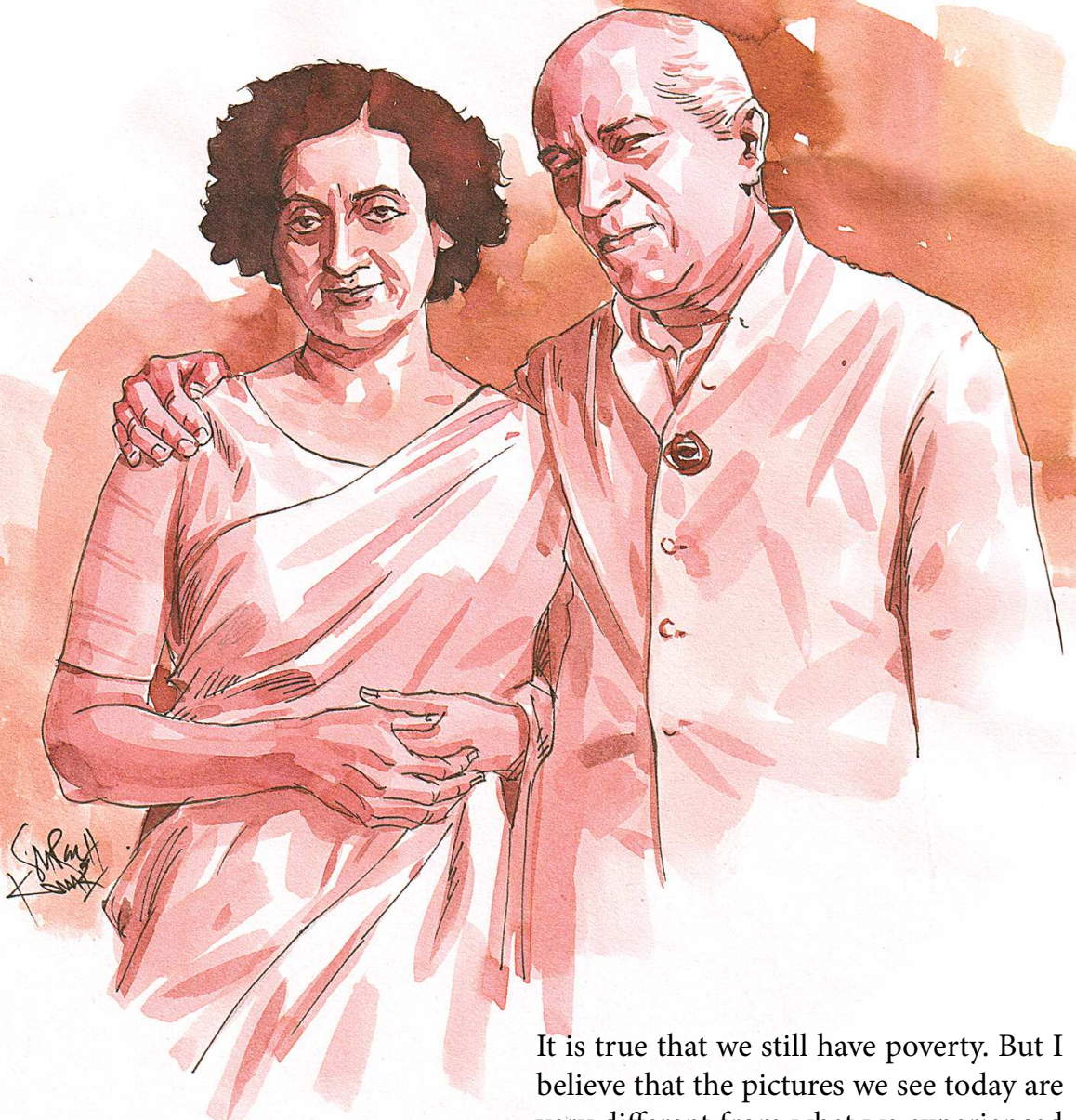
The nation keenly observes international events. I doubt if there is another country in the world where even the villagers are concerned about and are well versed with, the events taking place in the farthest of nations. Not just concern, but an ability to comprehend them as well.

### **A Good Student.**

While being an excellent teacher, he was a good student too. He believed that a person can never stop gaining knowledge. The thought that one has gathered enough knowledge is the point where the mind closes turns itself away from learning. He, therefore, always lived as a student, who constantly gathers knowledge and information.

He considered a few of his friends who





were scientists, writers, and artists as world-class scholars. But he learned new things not just from savants but also from the common villagers and tribals of this nation.

### **The zeal of awakening.**

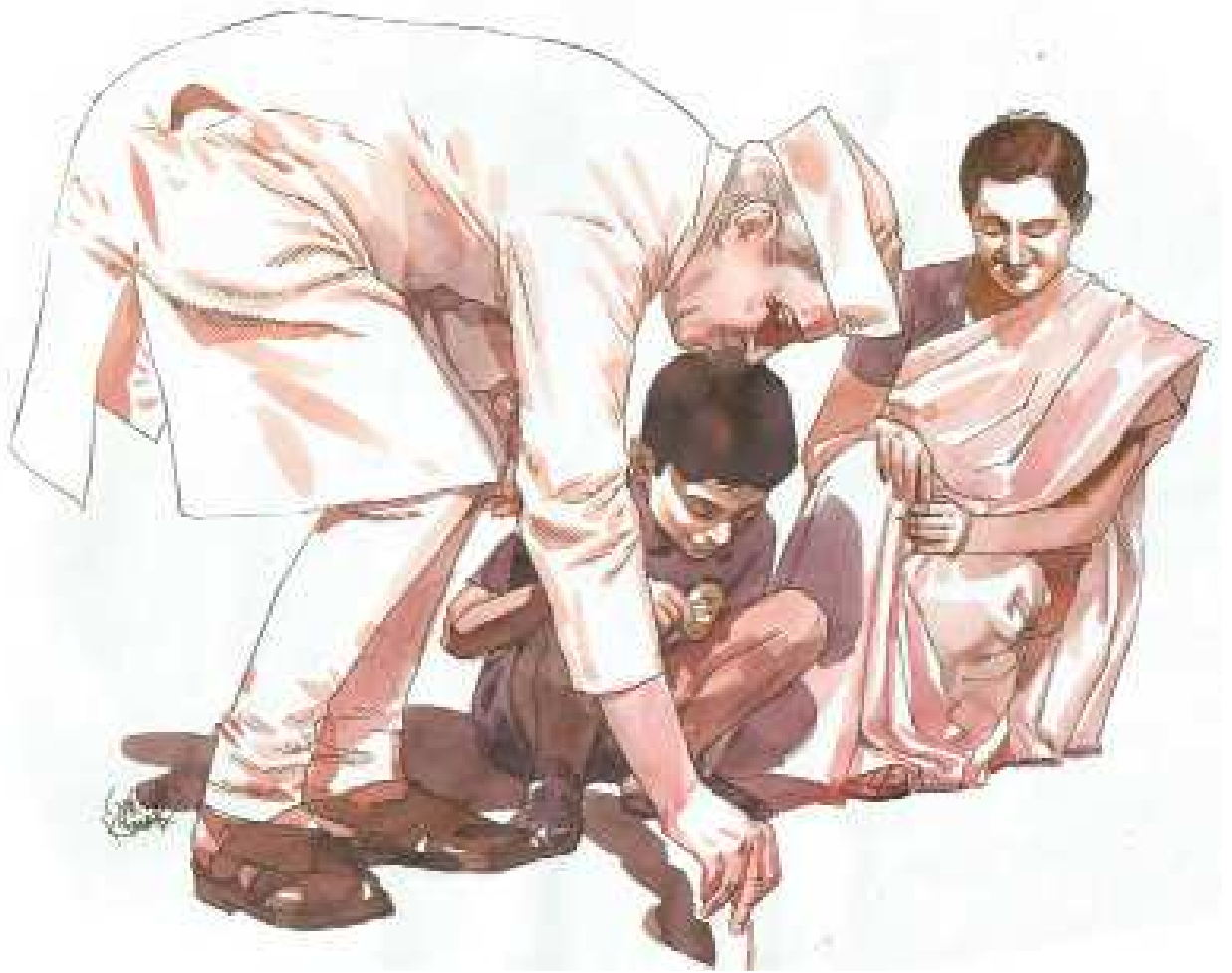
He believed that the unity of this nation was real. He was so firm in his thought that each citizen of this nation has some things to learn and contribute to this nation.

I remember the journeys that I had made with him. I've seen the plights of many.

It is true that we still have poverty. But I believe that the pictures we see today are very different from what we experienced in the twenties or thirties. The real strength of this nation lies in the spirit that we see in our citizens.

### **The true might of India**

It is in the villages, that the love for one's own country and the sense of independence are more prevalent. This is not only the desire to form our own government and maintain material independence, free from foreign powers. Rather, it is a desire to



maintain our own freedom to formulate our own policies despite any pressure and to act in a way that makes us feel right, regardless of how strong the interests and opinions of others may be.

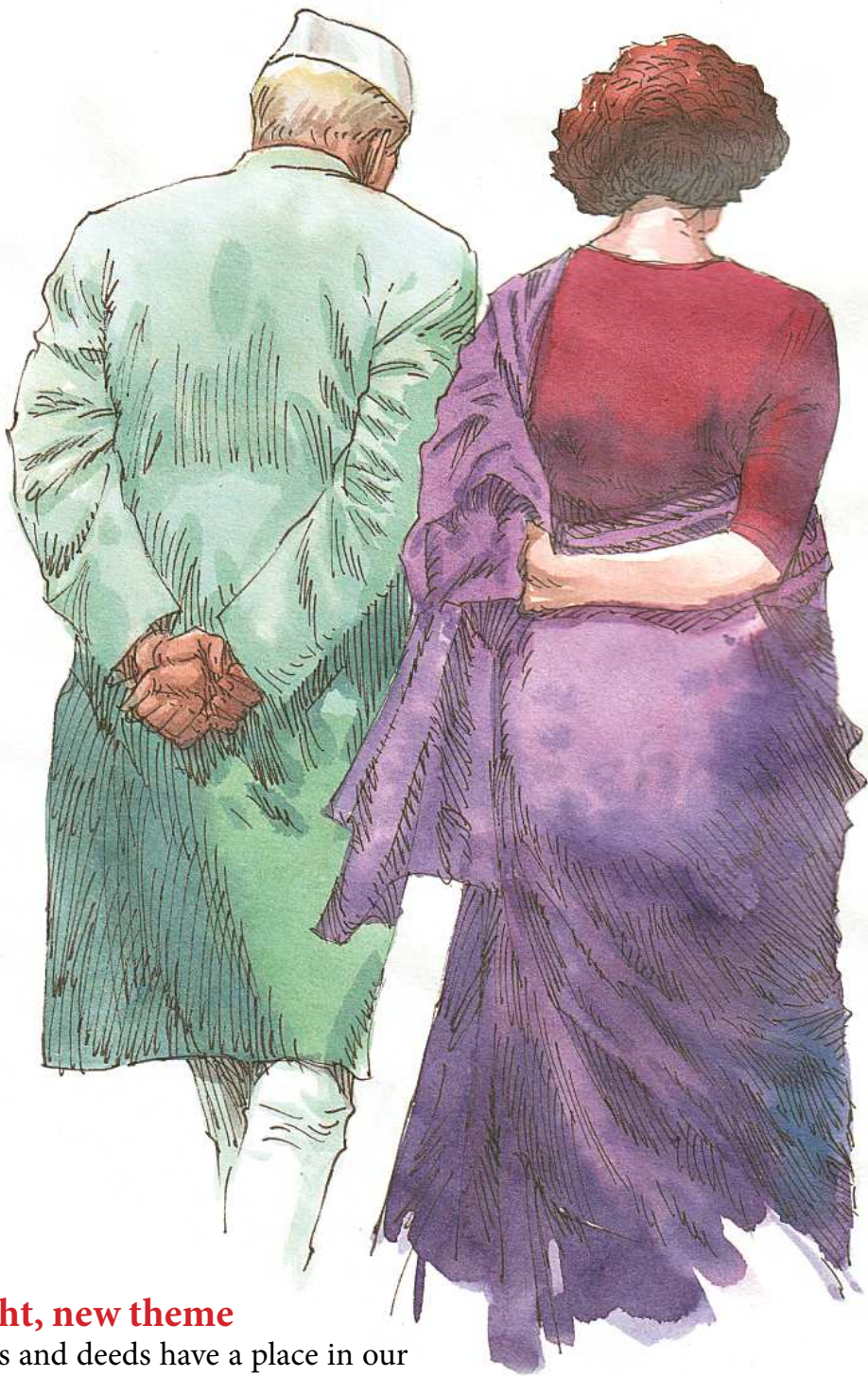
I think this awareness is present in all Indians. This consciousness is manifested when there is foreign aggression or internal strife. This is the real impact of India. I think he worked hard to reflect this effect on the people as he traveled to every part of the country. Yet he was not confined to India, as he saw India and the problems here in the context of developments in other parts of the world.

He believed that our progress and peace were related to others. That is why

he followed the policy of peace. I believe this is a fact that all Indians accept today.

### **Dreamer**

Sometimes people called him a ‘dreamer’. But we know that not a single little thing in the world came into existence without someone imagining it first. This is the secret behind all the innovations since the beginning of the cultures, the invention of fire. Any action is shaped by dreams and fantasies. But Nehru did not calm down with mere dreams. The moment he dreamed, he thought about how to make it a reality. Otherwise, no progress we see today would have been possible. Our economic foundation would not have been so strong and our army strong enough to withstand the challenges.



### **New light, new theme**

Dreams and deeds have a place in our life. So do teaching and learning. If we can coordinate all these, we can give a new light and a new resolution to our society.

India has achieved a lot. But we know there is still a lot to do. We cannot do this just by looking at the past. Individuals have different responsibilities and temperaments. We do not want a nation that blindly follows someone - no matter how great he/she is. All the great ones have said to those who blindly

follow his ideas: “Think for yourself, test all beliefs and consider something before deciding that it is acceptable to you and other people.” The same was the thoughts of Nehru.

His identity was so great that no matter how extensive any definition seems to be, it’ll be unable to contain Nehru’s personality.

