

Superstition ; it's modern practices

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Scene 1 :- A higher secondary school at the city Agartala. Time is 10.45 a.m. About 400-500 students are roaming outside classrooms as well as beneath the trees. Physics teacher is just crossing the school-gate. Some 50-60 students of Class-XI watch him doing 'namaskar' to his specific almighty turning his head towards sky. That's all. School is going on normally.

Now, it seems to be a common sight in every place. But the school is known as the production unit of human resource development. And teachers are defined well as the prime architecture for development of mind and body of a student. Science teachers are responsible regarding building the rational mindset of a child in terms of explaining towards them about creation of the world, human beings and other natural happenings. Showing divine respect to his/her God may be kept personally not in front of students. In our society, almost all the students are family bound to think irrationally but a least percentage of student may take the namaskar episode of their beloved Sir as irrational act and in his mind that particular Sir may be a superstitious one.

Scene 2 :- A hospital. Anxious relatives are waiting outside patient chamber for a recent bulletin. Suddenly Doctor comes and told them to chant in the name of God to save their relative as he is just trying to get the patient out of danger. A good number of ten zodiac rings are seen one in each finger of the doctor.

Men of anatomy and biological science are also supposed to explore us about the formation of body and brain. They are the best teacher to explain our activity and mind set up caused by brain. But, in reality we see lot of them indulge

in zodiac stones and whole lot of superstitions causes of which are best known to them.

Well, you, my beloved readers of our surroundings can easily fathom the depth of superstition around us even in this 21st century. As far as the geographical area is concerned, a vast region of Africa, Middle East and South East Asian countries are comparatively become victim of this eternal superstition. Countries of white people are also affected but their rituals and superstitions are ever changing with the time phases. Great Rabindranath Tagore rightly pointed out in his writing 'Our Culture, Their Culture'. He also expressed his agony of this subcontinent in his poem 'Where the mind is without fear'. Boldly he remarked our ritual evils as 'dead habit'.

While talking about superstitions in our surroundings, I have started with top two professionals who used to be in the process of making human resource development and giving birth & healing respectively ; thus be respected by other elements of society. But, one rational mind may ask question to their teacher regarding logic behind the particular activity. A medical student may raise finger to his/her anatomy teacher regarding the false belief. The answer would be very critical to make.

If this poor fellow tries to find out the root of this, it may create another controversy. Our thousand years' old social system gave birth to some cruel superstitions in the name of religion and culture. While anatomically every human beings are same, our religious forefathers divided them into 4 clear divisions in the form of caste system. It is undoubtedly labelled as a major superstition results of which are being seen till today. Another serious instance lies with gender biasness ; an evil gift by those religious pundits. Even after 3000 years of

civilisation, girl child as well as women are not getting equal social status though Governments are trying their best. Even in this space-age, girl fetus are being killed, girls are molested, raped. This gender biasness is another example of fatal superstition.

Apart from these major instances, our great country is running with lakhs of superstitious deeds. Some popular ones like halt at sneezes and crossing of cat on the road are still be practised. Traditional superstitions in India are related with animals, birds and reptiles. Example lies with seeing an elephant when one is leaving for a journey is considered lucky because an elephant represents Lord Ganesha, the Indian God who is the forerunner of good luck and removes obstacles. Leaving one's home after wedding or for some other important task is a significant occasion. Indians, most of the time, consult astrological charts to fix an auspicious time for leaving one's home. Monday is not an auspicious day for shaving and Thursday is a bad day for washing one's hair. Everyday life of Indians is governed by false beliefs and superstitions. This society now-a-days run by politics and it's torchbearers i.e. politicians. You can see no political parties lay stress upon formation of a superstition-free, rational, scientific minded society. Even major portion of politicians have become serious patient of superstitious activities like starting of his political career by touching some baba or mata's holy leg, sometimes by breaking coconut ; to mention a few. In the whole northern India politicians seem to be busy building Mandir, Masjids etc. rather funding more on Primary School, Health Centres etc. In the 80s, left led parties concentrated upon strict party classes on eradication of superstition from society. They used to campaign some street drama, student awakening programmes. But, in the present days, middle and grass root

level left party activists are also become victim of Puja Path at home, raising fund for local Mandirs etc. activities. Only ray of hope is that, in India, some Juktibadi Sangathans were emerged from 70s. They are inspired by renaissance movement of 19th Century Bengal led by Henry Derozio, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Ch. Vidyasagar, Keshab Ch. Sen etc. sages. They had been busy in awakening us from the dark web of superstition by distributing leaflets, street dramas, various programmes in schools/colleges. One prominent name is Prabir Ghosh who has come several times to Tripura and conducted so many effective shows to open our eyes. With this sigh of relief, I conclude this ever controversial topic raising so many questions from your side.