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# EDITORIAL

**A**s we go to press, India has a new Lok Sabha where the BJP has an absolute majority and a government with Narendra Modi as Prime Minister. There is tremendous anticipation about how this government will perform—there is a large section of the population that hopes the country will emerge from economic gloom but there is, equally, concern about a Hindutva agenda that the new dispensation may have. Whatever be one's position, it is clear that change is at hand.

The debate over development being at the cost of people, especially the marginalised, will continue, particularly given the emphasis on growth and development by the new government. Is it a paradox that big business, which is responsible for much of the displacement of the marginalised, is now expected to atone via corporate social responsibility? Amita Joseph's paper discusses this new buzzword.

People do dissent and resist, as seen in the many social movements that have taken place in the country. Ashis Nandy's paper, which is a shorter version of the Rosalind Wilson Memorial lecture delivered at the Centre, looks at dissent and resistance to hegemony, either as rebellious and untamed, or rational and tamed.

In conflict situations, too, displacement, land acquisition and denial of human rights are the first to raise their ugly head, be it in Palestine (Suad Amiry's interview) or pre- and post-apartheid South Africa (Kuruvilla Mathews). Suad Amiry, a well-known Palestinian writer and architect, was in Delhi recently to discuss her book, *Golda Slept Here*, published by Women Unlimited. We carry in this issue the conversation she had with Githa Hariharan. While not a political treatise, it brings out the everyday lives of a people uprooted from country and home. Suad spoke of friends and family, with both humour and nostalgia, and the deep-rooted conflict within—to remember or forget?

Shinder Singh Thandi in his paper argues that we should forget and move on—but not without due justice and reconciliation. It is time for post-Khalistan Sikh advocacy groups outside their homeland to work towards closure.

Differences in society are rarely tolerated, and human rights are often at risk. Mekhala Sengupta traces the lives of the celebrated courtesans of yesteryears and their subsequent change in popular imagination to the position of prostitutes. Today, ‘You are Criminal if Gay’. These are the words of Leila Seth about the overturned judgement that decriminalised homosexuality. Here, she speaks as a judge and the mother of a gay son who does not have the freedom or legal right to love another human being of the same gender. Why should this be a legal issue, or even anyone else’s business? Fortunately, there is space for dissent, but it is a struggle.

The papers by Ania Loomba, Fabrizio Petri and T. N. Madan’s review article focus on Gandhi. What is interesting is their very different approaches and arguments. Ania re-visits Gandhi’s notion of violence and non-violence and the paradox that ‘one must simultaneously resist the law and submit to it’. Fabrizio Petri juxtaposes Jung’s ‘Deep Psychology’ (Anima) with Gandhi’s ‘Nonviolent Philosophy’ (Ahimsa) and their relevance for the globalised world. To fully appreciate T. N. Madan’s commentary, one has to go back to the Winter 2013–Spring 2014 issue on *Living with Religious Diversity* as he takes off from two papers in the volume to develop his views of Gandhi’s position on religious pluralism and the theology of religious pluralism in Indian Islam.

This time we carry two ‘colourful’ photo essays—one entitled ‘Red’, typically set in West Bengal, and the other, ‘Turbulent Turmeric’ on the *Bhandara* festival.

The summer heat is upon us and we approach the season of holidays and vacations. Let us hope this is followed by a good monsoon despite the Met office’s gloomy predictions about the El Niño effect. Alongside the monsoon we look forward to the new government’s first budget on which hinge the aspirations of millions.



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