

Mindspeak

When i sat down tapping my flowing mind, penning down the random thoughts that trespass my otherwise secure glial cells, a whole gamut of socially relevant yet fairly unresolved issues started flooding my nerves.

Until last week, whenever I passed the display board on our 4th floor corridor, i had a glance of the photographs reminding the International Women's day celebrations in CET. As the curtains were drawn and yet another International Women's Day passed by, the celebrations worldwide were reminiscent of the endless sacrifice that womanhood have to endure in making their sustenance meaningful. It brings out the stark realities that surround a society which to a large extent is still male dominated. From choosing between her ambitions and meeting the requirements of a house wife and a mother, the innumerable hardship and churning she has to undergo is unportrayable. Sure, this could and would be the story in most of the households. The marginal improvement in figures of the Human Development Index (HDI) especially the Gender Development Index (GDI: ratio of female HDI to male HDI) can mask the actual ground realities. These figures are a far cry from the extent of atrocities and abuses womankind is subjected to.

Another incident which shook my conscience is the case of abuse and assault on two differently-abled persons, one with orthopaedic disability by a pilot of Jet Airways flying from Chandigarh to Mumbai. When the flight landed in Mumbai, the person with orthopaedic disability had to wait for 25 minutes for the wheelchair to be brought to the seat. On top of it, the pilot screamed at him for checking-in the wheelchair and delaying the flight. This was done despite the airline allowing them to check it in at Chandigarh from where they had boarded. Last year, Paralympics silver winner Deepa Malik filed a complaint against poor handling of wheelchair-bound passengers by the staff of Air Vistara. In 2015, disability rights activist Javed Abidi was forced to get off his wheelchair at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. Despite protests, the CISF warned him to comply or miss his flight. Ironically, in 2014, Abidi was part of a panel of activists who had helped frame guidelines to ensure there was no discrimination on the basis of disability in air travel.

The callous attitude displayed by airline staff, the security paraphernalia and even us at times reflects our apathy towards India's 2.68 Cr disabled population. India's built environment is infamously inhospitable to the disabled and

the elderly, confining them to their homes. Most public buildings lack ramps (the entry to our R&D auditorium and even our lab building does not have one on the front side) and even ATM machines have steps leading up to them. The recently passed Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2016, promises barrier-free access to buildings to the disabled, but implementation is lax. Merely de-rostering the pilot, as Jet Airways did, won't be enough to change the ground reality on discrimination. We need to inculcate a culture of sensitivity towards the physically challenged.

Even when India boasts of a robust economic growth and higher GDP rankings, we as Indians have a much larger, much greater responsibility of treading the path of glory, writing each success story, together with all its stakeholders. Introspection is the need of the hour. We need to dig deep, discover the root cause which is eroding and degrading the very fabric of our civility. We need to rise from our perpetual blindness and allow sense to creep, peep and seep in through the shutters of our mind.

As we bring you a fresh issue of this magazine, we are sure it will capture the imagination of each CETian. We have tried to blend the various ingredients in a holistic manner to present before you a desi yet exotic delicacy which will surely splash your mental buds away. We invite all of you to this grand feast showcasing the cuisines of literati amongst CET.

Starting from the fun element in the merry-go-round section, read your way through to the health zone - Ayush, where you will receive tips to a healthy life style. Once you are done building up your health, ride on your good health to "read a bit" section which offers readables of varied range and taste. It beholds prose and poems which will sway your soul and tweak your thoughts in unforgettable ways and includes contribution from a ward of one of our employees. We wish these dear blooming buds the very best in future. Then you can lay your minds on some of the financial aspects that dodge our economy at present: the issue of rising NPA's. The recent ordinance of government empowering RBI to push the public sector banks to retrieve the bad debts could be seen as a foot in the right direction. Then you can hover your attention over the financial condition of our company which has been assessed through the Altman's Z-score model applied for SAIL. The tech-it section takes you on a 360° rendezvous of the technology world including the steel sector.

Once you have munched these heavy weight delicacies, it's time to go slow and feel light on your mind. If you had that rare thirst of having not indulged in a book for a long time, then consider taking your time and your mouse pointer to the "Lets review" wing. We have reviewed a book which we consider is worth spending your time and money. We at mindCET never say goodbye to our parting employees, for it is their years of toil and service that has taken the organization to where we stand today and their words of wisdom will enlighten our path for ever. We give an ear to their golden words in the "Face to face" section.

Wishing all our enthusiastic readers ...A good read!!

Arun Gopinath

