

News and Views -4
from a g rao

Seasonal Cartoon



Mud gem 4

- *Problems which look unsolvable at surface (present) level are rooted in problems at deeper level*

of One self
or
of Society
or
of Reality..

Recent additions

- In Articles and Papers-
 - *[School Education with a Glimpse into the Future.](#)
 - *[Guruji, a treasure of untold traditional knowledge.](#)
- In Design Projects - [Fish Container for BOBP](#)
- In memory Lane - [Memory Lane 3 – NID days - getting grilled by Bob Gill.](#)

My thoughts

13,july, 2016

Do we really need Schools?

a g rao

She came with her daughter of 6 or 7 years old.

“Do you remember me sir?”

Of course, I remembered her. She always had a pleasant smile. I still remember when she met me after my talk... That was in 1998 or 99. It was a part of introductory talks by faculty. She said she liked my talk. We got into a conversation and to my surprise I found that she also had gone through a course of Vipasana! In my talk I had mentioned my experience with Vipasana and how it can touch deep layers of one's personality and open up one's Creativity!

She came with her daughter of 6 or 7 years old. She has been practicing as a free lancer designer. She said,“I want to take my daughter out of the school! Anyway I can teach her all the things they teach in the school, at Home. We can keep travelling to different places and stay there for 10 days and Learn out there in the new place! How exciting for the kid! I am sure I would have loved it if I were that age! I still remember my father beating me up with a stick for refusing to go to school! But looking back, I don't see School was that big a

Problem. We could cope up with it. There was enough freedom to Learn! It was less regimented in elementary schools at that time! You learnt many things which you could not learn at home!”

Today many parents, especially if they are in creative streams like design have a serious problem of sending their children to school. Many of them are opting for home schooling.

“Do our children need to study in today`s school?”

If we see with a critical eye, the school seems to be damaging the creativity of children! I see the damage done at school level, when I teach basic design to my students of “Master of Design”! Often 'Fantasy and Imagination' are missing and seem to get restricted to prefixed categories like 'Art' or Fairy Tales'! However some students remain 'creative'. It has been possible to trigger their creative thinking.

Many claims have been made that all the subjects learnt in School can be learnt less painfully at Home! If you look at critically learning the subject contents is not the main advantage of School! But children learn other things!

How to share and manage in a group.

How to live and work in a group.

How to cope up with Bullies,

How to Bully others, How to find friends of one’s own match,

How to cope up with teachers,

How to cope up with exams!

.....,

These you definitely miss out in the Home School!

Parents have to mould their life style to suit the home schooling. To do jobs in an Institutional or Industrial frame work may become difficult. And home schooling as we see today can be only for ‘Minority’. I saw the power of schooling when I was in Tamenglong in Manipur.

The remote hilly area is shunned by Govt employees due to fear of 'getting kidnapped' which takes place on the way. Bordering Nagaland, Tamenglong is part of the claim for "Greater Nagaland". A strong presence of Indian Army is there! So also of NSCN(Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland). There has been a Peace Treaty with NSCN. Army men move with AK Rifles, So also NSCN youth. One day our attendant brought a message asking us to vacate the Govt. Guest House where we were staying! Of course we refused and told him to contact the organisers of the workshop who had booked the rooms! The leader of TAMBAC had gone to Delhi. Next day when we were in the 'Craft training workshop', a message came from the workshop organisers requesting us to go back early so that we can shift to another Guest House. We went back. We saw six youngsters. Few had AK rifles. One had a walky-talky, wireless set, Their leader, a young guy was sitting in our room surrounded by some more colleagues. We shifted to other guest house! One of these Naga youth met our team member next day in a tea shop. When he came to know that we have come all the way from 'Bombay', to conduct the workshop he said, 'Bura nai man na ! ye bar hum ko dusra jaga nahi mila!'. "Don't feel bad, we couldn't get any other place this time!"

If you are in Tamenlong you will not be surprised why Nagas are demanding their own country! Their life is so different! Language exposures are so different! We had to translate our talks into four 'dialects'. Each village had its own dialect. Only few knew Hindi or Nagamese. Some had to walk 3 days on the hills to come to Tamenlong to attend 7 days workshop. No vehicles go to these villages on the hills.

But next day morning I saw score of children going to School in their school Uniform in blue colour just like in Mumbai. They were getting indoctrinated in the same School system which runs through out the country! That is when I saw the '**Power of Schooling**', an integrating factor for the Country with wide margin of variations.

Schooling and methods of teaching do need a big change!

We also need to segregate school as an organised system of engaging children with School mind set, which thinkers like Seymour Papert have articulated effectively. He talks of

' a new understanding of a specific feature of the School mind-set which I now recognize (shocking as this may seem to many readers) as a bias against ideas in favor of skills and facts—an idea aversion.'

in his paper '[What's the big idea? Toward a pedagogy of idea power](#)'.

Inspired by people like him, I have been engaged in developing a new learning frame work through a method named “ Teaching Learning Platforms”. A project called 'Doors of learning' has given us many insights in this direction. I will be sharing these insights.

I have made a beginning with the article / report on,

'School education with a glimpse into Future!'
