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WHAT IS AMISS WITH US?

Indian Intellect

Ours is a nation of intellectuals. It is not said out of **sheer patriotism**. Studies at home and **abroad** have revealed that. Not long ago a study was undertaken in the schools of Britain to find out children of which nation excelled in intelligence. It was discovered that Indians were superior to the natives of other countries. If that is the truth why we are lagging behind other super powers, why there is **brain drain** from our country to other **affluent** nations, why our imports exceed our exports, why we look to developed nations for help and aid, where we are amiss.

Saying so does not mean our progress is **nought**. The Bhakra Nangal dams, Bhilai, Rourkela, Durgapur steel plants, Tarapore nuclear reactor, etc., are some of our big achievements. But, in the grandeur of the 'big' the 'small' has been neglected. E.F.Schumacher was not wrong when he captioned his best-seller "Small is Beautiful". Here are a few instances to show how the neglect of these "small" but important issues has **hampered** our glory.

Social Behaviour and Civic Sense

Here we are at the lowest ebb. It may be a journey or a walk, a feast or a fair, a meeting or a gathering, a serious study or a leisure hour, most of us **exhibit crass** ignorance of minimum basic human decencies. Let us see how and where we lack in our social behaviour and **cultivation** of civic sense.

(i) Noise Pollution

Human ear is meant for receiving sound of normal range of decibels. Sound received beyond that measure would not only be **jarring** but also damaging to our hearing sense organs. How many of us take care of this? It may be a TV programme or a radio broadcast, playing a tape recorder or any other instrument, even a gossip or a chit-chat in a company, all are heard at a very high pitch. We may be used to it but what about those living around us. Our neighbour may be a serious student, a sick person, or

a peace-loving being. Have we ever thought of him? How much **agony** do we cause to him/her? The neighbour being a person of cool temperament does not quarrel with us and suffers in silence. The poor fellow shuts the windows and doors and puts cotton in his ears to reduce the impact of high-pitched noises. When shall we learn the simple civic sense?

It may be a marriage ceremony or any other function, a **ritual** or a prayer, there is generally a fashion of hiring a loud speaker to be used the loudest besides engaging a band and other means of producing sound. The pitch is kept so high that sensitive beings get shocks. Even the stones or bricks of a building shake and the impression is gathered that the building may **collapse** one day because of this.

The vehicles, especially the trucks, make living unbearable even the drivers blow the horn not only loudly but also incessantly and that too often without any reason.

The noise pollution caused because of the lack of civic sense and careless social behaviour **mars** the sensibilities of our people at large and affects our efficiency.

(ii) Travel by Public Transport

We all travel by public transport, train or bus and have had many bitter and sad experiences. Orderly queue system at the time of either purchasing the tickets or boarding the train/bus is rarely followed. Everyone in his self-interest flouts the genuine rights of others. Those who are already occupying a seat would very **reluctantly** permit others to sit even on the neighbouring vacant seat. When they do so they grab about half of that vacant seat also. The thought of giving help to other needy ones rarely stirs them.

Some people are fond of chewing betels with tobacco. They spit and spit frequently all around showing no respect for public property. They forget that they have paid for journey and not for spoiling the train/bus. They throw all rubbish and **leftovers** wherever they so desire. Our public transport, our roads and streets, our public places and buildings are seen **littered** with all sorts of stinking refuse that tells upon our health and vigour.

In spite of the **statutory** warning "Smoking is injurious to health" we do not notice any slump in the sale of cigarettes or bidis. The pity is the smokers in their own enjoyment do not think of the people around them. Sometimes the surroundings become unfit for breathing. Passive smoking causes more harm.

(iii) Traffic Sense

We take roads as if they were especially meant for us only. Violation of traffic norms and driving rashly are considered signs of **gallantry**, though when required, such gallants prove to be the worst cowards. The modern youth take pride in driving at great speed. They ignore the basic norms of driving such as how and when to overtake a vehicle, when to take a turn, obeying the traffic signals, keeping the vehicle in order and smokeless, driving in proper lanes, etc. The result is danger to life. It affects them as also the others moving around. In fact the movement on roads has become so dreaded and unsafe that affect the nervous system of many a sensitive being. God knows what **calamity** may happen the next moment. The pity is there is no control on any such things. Most of the vehicles emit smoke to make the surroundings unfit for living beings. People ply their vehicles overloaded with every possible risk of causing an accident. They overtake another vehicle the way they want setting at naught the basic traffic rules and thus playing with the lives of innocent people.

(iii) Encroachment

"Pen is mightier than the sword" is very often kept the subject for debates in many an educational institution. In reality, the muscle power is stronger than the brainpower. And it has been so since **aeon**. Generally those with muscle power are uncivilised. They consider public property their own. Making a small beginning they grab whatever maximum property they can in course of time, thus snatching the rights of civilised and law-abiding citizens. The footpaths on both sides of the road become their property where they may sleep, install their shops or make their dwelling. In the name of religion they may occupy certain area even on the main road to meet their selfish ends. Some people try to encroach upon public property after constructing houses/ shops on their purchased piece of land by way of putting stairs or laying

gardens or making seating arrangement outside their marked boundary. Who is there to check and **thwart** their designs? None. A small beginning made undeterred grows into a big **menace** to all others except to those doing so.

(iv) Cleanliness

Cleanliness is next to Godliness. That seems to remain an **obsolete** adage now. We are so used to uncleanliness that it does not seem to affect our senses leave aside annoying us. We throw the rubbish and waste materials wherever we like, may be roads, public transport, educational institutions, historical monuments, government buildings and do not spare even holy places of worship. In our fond hope of keeping our home clean we do not hesitate in making our neighbour's home unclean. The rubbish may be dirt of the house, shit of the children, skin of the vegetables/fruits or any other waste stuff. The skin of the banana is seen littered on public roads which leads to making many normal beings physically handicapped.

Added to this **malady** is the free movement of stray animals who spoil the roads, houses, public places and hamper traffic. They also cause serious accidents.

We have become so immune against these ills that nobody sees to take a note of these. Even some African countries, not to talk of the advanced countries, when shown on the TV, seem cleaner than ours. We must understand that cleanliness is of paramount importance and the offenders should be dealt with strictly with **punitive** measures.

(v) Dharna Bandh/Rail Roko

The easiest way to give vent to our protest is to stage a Dharna or call for a Bandh or a Rail Roko demonstration. The agitators make the most out of such shows. These devices, besides causing inconvenience, may sometimes irreparable damage to individuals, cause immense loss to the nation. Imagine someone is seriously sick, another has an inescapable appointment, and still another has no provisions at home. Who bothers for other's legitimate needs? One remains wonder struck to see that sometimes such Bandhs are sponsored even by responsible people. Occasionally these demonstrations become violent causing further loss to the national property and human life.

Can't we think of a suitable device for expressing our protest without causing inconvenience to others and loss to the nation? In Japan, the workers of a shoe factory wanted to demonstrate their protest. They made shoes of different sizes of right foot only. When the **dispute** was settled they made shoes of left foot thus completing pairs. It caused inconvenience to none and the initial loss to the owners was made good a little later. Alternatively, the protesters may follow the path of Satyagraha or hunger strike shown by Mahatma Gandhi as they would then put only themselves to inconvenience for their cause.

All these minor issues are of major significance. If things like these are set right, progress, prosperity and pleasure will knock at our doors.

S.M. Goyal

About the Text :

The lesson is about to learn civic sense which we knowingly or unknowingly don't obey or follow. The lesson is also very much inspiring to improve our behaviour and manners towards others and ourselves. If we develop civic sense in ourselves, we can make our life better and healthy.

GLOSSARY

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--|
| sheer (n) | : | clear/mere |
| patriotism (n) | : | showing love for one's country |
| abroad (adv.) | : | in or to a foreign country |
| brain drain (idiom) | : | flow of native talents to foreign countries |
| affluent (adj.) | : | rich wealthy, prosperous |
| amiss (n) | : | wrong, improper |
| nought (n) | : | nothing |
| hampered (v) | : | curbed, confined |
| exhibit (v) | : | to show |
| crass (n) | : | showing no care to other people's feelings |
| ignorance (n) | : | not having enough knowledge or understanding |
| cultivation (n) | : | development/growth |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| jarring (adj.) | : | irritating or unpleasant |
| agony (n) | : | physical or mental pain or torture |
| ritual (n) | : | religious service or activity |
| collapse (v) | : | fall down/ faint |
| mar (v) | : | spoils |
| reluctantly (adv.) | : | unwillingly |
| leftovers (n) | : | the food that remains uneaten after a meal. |
| littered (adj.) | : | made dirty |
| statutory (adj.) | : | legal, something done because of laws |
| gallantry (n) | : | valour, bravery |
| calamity | : | sudden bad event that causes a lot of damage to lives and property etc. |
| aeon (n) | : | a very long period of time. |
| thwart (v) | : | to stop from what they want to do. |
| menace (n) | : | threat |
| obsolete (adj.) | : | out of date, old |
| malady (n) | : | a serious problem |
| punitive (adj.) | : | intended as punishment |
| dispute (v) | : | quarrel |

ACTIVITY 1: COMPREHENSION:

A. Answer the following questions-in about 30-40 words each:

1. What was the study undertaken in the schools of Britain for?
2. Why are we not pacing up with other super powers?
3. Which are our big achievements?'
4. What are the means of noise pollution?
5. What is the statutory warning written on the packet of cigarettes?
6. Which are the basic norms of driving that we ignore on the road?
7. What does increase the possible risk of accidents?
8. Whom does the writer call uncivilized?

9. What is the easiest way of our protest?
10. When can we hope for prosperity and pleasure?

B. Answer the following questions in about 60 words each:

1. Which are the important issues that have hampered our glory?
2. How does noise pollution affect our life?
3. How can you keep public places clean?
4. Why has the movement on roads become dangerous?
5. What measures can we take to make clean our surroundings?
6. According to the writer how can we express our protest without causing any difficulties to others?
7. Which is superior between the muscle power and the brain power and Why?
8. How do the workers of a shoe factory in Japan demonstrate their protest?
9. How do we lack in our social behaviour and cultivation of civic sense?

C. Tick the correct alternatives:

1. The noise pollution is caused most because of:
 - (a) playing a tape recorder at high pitch.
 - (b) blowing horns
 - (c) using loud speakers in ceremonies.
 - (d) lack of civic sense and careless social behaviour.
2. What causes more harm to our health?
 - (a) direct smoking
 - (b) passive smoking
 - (c) chewing of tobacco
 - (d) selling of smoking substances.
3. is next to godliness.
 - (a) encroachment
 - (b) cleanliness
 - (c) social behaviour
 - (d) civic sense

D. Say whether the following statements are true or false. Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false:

1. According to the author, there is 'brain drain' from our country. []
2. High pitch of loud-speakers can collapse even buildings. []
3. People willingly allow others to sit on the vacant seat while travelling in a bus or train. []
4. Pen is mightier than the sword. []
5. Vehicles overloaded would not cause an accident. []
6. Protesters should not follow satyagraha and hunger strike which cause [] inconvenience to the citizens.

ACTIVITY 2 : VOCABULARY

(A) Match the following words in column A with the words of their meanings in column B -Also use them in your own sentences as given in the example below .:

Example: - collapse = fall down

Building may collapse one day because of the noise pollution.

| A | B |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) affluent | a serious problem |
| (2) ritual | physical and mental pain |
| (3) vigour | rich and wealthy |
| (4) malady | justifiable |
| (5) aeon | religious ceremony |
| (6) legitimate | energy |
| (7) reluctant | spoils |
| (8) mars | an extremely long period of time |
| (9) agony | unwillingly |

B. Fill in the blanks with appropriate choice from the words given below: incessantly, littered, slump, calamity, grab, protest, hamper, crass-

1. These days there is a great.....in real estate sector.

2. Most of us exhibit.....ignorance of minimum basic human decencies.
3. Blowing the horns.....make living intolerable.
4. Public places can be seenwith all sorts of stinking refuse.
5. Violation of traffic rules may lead to serious
6. Can't we think other way of our expressing
7. Cultural barriers may.....the learning of language.

ACTIVITY 3: GRAMMAR

DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

In our routine life situations, we have to tell or report to others what we have actually heard or come to know from somebody else or some other source. There are two ways of narrating or saying this : first, by using the **actual words** of the speaker and secondly by reporting using the **words of one's own**.

When we use the exact words of the speaker without any change anywhere, it is called direct speech and it is put within inverted commas (".....") e.g. He said, "I did not do anything."

I said, "Why don't you just ask my size?"

When the words of the speaker are reported without quoting the actual words, it is called indirect speech or reported speech.

e.g. He said that he had not done anything.

I asked why he did not just ask my size.

We use reported speech more frequently than the direct speech because we are often more concerned about the speaker's intention to say than the actual words said for the purpose. Look at the several differences between them:

1. The actual words of the speaker are enclosed in inverted commas in direct speech.
2. In the indirect speech the inverted commas are removed and replaced by the word 'that' in affirmative sentences.
3. the comma after the main verbs disappears,

4. the tenses and the pronouns are also changed.
5. words that indicates nearness are changed into words that signify distance.

Let's get familiar with some other important terms that will be of our immense use while learning direct speech to indirect speech.

Sita said to Geeta, "My mother sings sweet songs"

In this direct speech sentence outside the inverted commas 'said to' is called the **reporting verb**. 'Sita' is the subject of the reporting verb and 'Geeta' is the object of the reporting verb. 'My mother sings sweet songs' are the actual words said by Sita to Geeta within inverted commas and this part is called direct speech or **reported speech**.

Important rules for changing Direct speech into Indirect speech.

1. **The reporting verb 'said to' is changed into told, added, observed, remarked, promised etc. 'said' is changed into told only when it is followed by an object, if there is no object 'said' will not change.**

The other verbs may be used in reported speech depending upon the manner and the purpose of the direct speech.

- e.g. He said to Shyam, "I am going to Ajmer". (Direct)
 He told Shyam that he was going to Ajmer. (Indirect)
 Ramesh said, "Rahul is very clever". (Direct)
 Ramesh remarked that Rahul was very clever. (Indirect)

2. **When the reporting verb of direct speech is in the past tense the tense of the reported speech is also changed into the corresponding past tense:**

He said, "I am waiting."
 He said that he was waiting.

3. **We can learn it in a better way through this table:**

| Direct speech | Indirect speech |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Present Indefinite | Past indefinite |
| Present Continuous | Past continuous |
| Present perfect | past perfect |
| Present perfect continuous | past perfect continuous |

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Past Indefinite | past perfect |
| Past Continuous | past perfect continuous |
| Conditional | conditional perfect |

Auxiliary Verb

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| will | would |
| shall | should |
| can | could |
| may | might |
| must | had to |
| is, am are | was, were |
| has, have | had |
| was, were | had been |

4. If the reporting verb is in Present tense or future tense, the tense of the verb in the reported speech will not change.

Madam says, "She is an intelligent girl."

Madam says that she is an intelligent girl.

Meena will say, "He was wrong."

Meena will say that he was wrong.

Exception: If the reported speech is some universal truth or habitual fact, the tense of the verb will not be changed.

The teacher said, "The sun rises in the East."

The teacher said that the sun rises in the East.

He said to me, "I go for a walk daily in the morning."

He told me that he goes for a walk daily in the morning.

4. Rules for changing pronouns

- (a) Let's first have the table of pronouns according to the type of persons and their forms:

PRONOUNS

| Persons | Subjective | Objective | Possessive | Reflexive |
|---------|------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------------|
| I | I | me | my, mine | my self |
| | we | us | our, ours | our selves |
| II | you | you | your, yours | yourself, yourselves |
| III | he | him | his | himself |
| | she | her | her, hers | herself |
| | it | it | its | itself |
| | they | them | their, theirs | themselves |

- (i) First person pronouns of the reported speech are changed in accordance with the subject of the reporting verb.

He said, "I will do it myself." (Direct)

He said that he would do it himself. (Indirect)

- (ii) Second person pronouns of the reported speech are changed in accordance with the object of the reporting verb.

She said to me, "You are wrong." (Direct)

She told me that I was wrong. (Indirect)

- (iii) Third person pronouns remain unchanged in the **indirect speech**.

I said to her, "She helped her mother in cooking." (Direct)

I told her that she had helped her mother in cooking. (Indirect)

5. The words expressing nearness in the reported speech are changed into the words expressing distance.

Direct speech

now

here

today

yesterday

tomorrow

last night

Indirect speech

then

there

that day

the previous day, the day before

the next day, the following day

the previous night

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| this | that |
| these | those |
| ago | before |
| to- night | that night |
| thus | so |
| next day/week/ month etc. | the following day/ week/ month etc |
| last week/year etc. | the previous week/ year etc. |
| Just | then |

6. Rules for changing of Interrogative sentences:

- (i) Said as a reporting verb is changed into 'asked' or 'enquired of' .
- (ii) Inverted commas and question marks are removed.
- (iii) Questions by the finite verb or its auxiliaries in which the answer is in 'yes' or 'no', we introduce if/whether as connector of both the clauses.
- (iv) In 'Wh' type questions, 'wh' words are used at the beginning of the reported speech.
- (v) The word order is changed from that of a question to that of an ordinary statement.

EXAMPLE

The Judge asked, "How old are you, Sohan?" (Direct)

The Judge asked Sohan how old he was. (Indirect)

7. Rules for the changing of Imperative sentences:

- (i) The appropriate reporting verb expressing 'command', 'request', 'order' or 'advise' is used in the reported speech.
- (ii) 'to' infinitive in place of inverted commas is used

EXAMPLE

He said to me, "Please keep your mobile on silent mode." (Direct)

He requested me to keep my mobile on silent mode. (Indirect)

The teacher said to the boys, "Don't make a noise" (Direct)

The teacher forbade the boys to make a noise (indirect)

OR

The teacher ordered the boys not to make a noise. (Indirect)

8. In reporting exclamations and wishes the reported speech is introduced by some verbs expressing exclamation or wish. Such verbs are:

exclaim, wish, congratulate, applaud etc.

EXAMPLE

He said, "Alas! It is a great loss." (Direct)

He exclaimed with sorrow that it was a great loss. (Indirect)

He said, "May you long live". (Direct)

He wished me that I should long live. (Indirect)

EXERCISE

A. Change the following sentences into Indirect speech:

1. John said, "I work every day."
2. Mohan said, "I am playing the Guitar now."
3. He said, "He has bought a new car recently. "
4. Shalini said, "I'll go to cinema tomorrow."
5. Sita said to me, "I can speak English fluently."
6. Mother said to the son, "I have cooked pasta for you."
7. She said to me, "Yesterday I saw the movie 'Pink.'"
8. Tom said to me, "Will you go with me there?"
9. Sister said, "Don't put this T-shirt on."
10. The teacher said to the boys, "Don't make a noise."
11. Ramesh said, "When does the train arrive?"
12. Sarla said, "I have forgotten my e-mail password."
13. Manish asked, "Where have you hidden the data?"
14. My friend said to me, "Have you finished your home work?"
15. He said to him, "Were you present in the party last night?"
16. She asked, "Can you bring the moon for me?"
17. My friends said, "Let's go to cinema"
18. I said, "Sit down"

19. Mali said to them, "Do you solve my problem?"

20. He said, "Who are you?"

B. Correct the errors in the following sentences:

1. He asked where she lives.

2. The instructor warned not drive too fast.

3. He asked there is anyone.

4. They said that they have done their work.

5. The taxi driver asked where I want to go.

6. Vasu assures that they will win the match.

7. She requested him bring a glass of water.

8. He exclaimed with joy that how beautiful is the rainbow.

9. I asked him what is his name.

10. They told him attend the classes regularly.

ACTIVITY 4 : SPEECH ACTIVITY

Divide the whole class into groups. The group should first discuss the dos and don'ts of our life amongst itself then each group should present its ideas through its leader before the class.

ACTIVITY 5 : COMPOSITION

1 Write a paragraph on importance of cleanliness in about 75 words.

2. Write a paragraph on importance of traffic sense in about 75 words.