Are We Patriotic As A Nation?



Extracts from book "G R A T I T U D E"
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I served as the First Secretary/ Defence Advisor at the Sri Lanka High Commission in New Delhi, from November 2001 to April 2004. I served under two High Commissioners, namely late Professor Senake Bandaranaike and the late Mangala Moonesinghe. The Late Lakshman Kadirgamar and the The late Tyronne Fernando were the Foreign Ministers during my tenure.

I was occupying a residence inside the High Commission complex at Kautilya Marg, Chanakyapuri, in the diplomatic enclave of New Delhi. Our chief gardener was Perry Ram. He was a very experienced gardener who had served in the High Commission for 30 years. He was a very dedicated person who worked tirelessly to maintain the High Commission premises with beautiful flower beds and pots.

Our High Commission garden looked very beautiful during thanks to Ram and his assistants. He had received education only up to the fifth grade. Our High Commission garden won the "Best Garden in New Delhi" award three times in the 1990s. Now he is old and the award has been awarded to the garden of the Indian Chief of Air Staff (Indian Air Force Commanders') residence.

I had a CD which contained Indian patriotic songs presented to me by the then Indian Chief of Naval Staff (Indian Navy Commander). I used to play these songs loud at my residence. They were beautiful and could be heard even from my garden.



I noticed something unusual when the song Aye Mere Wathan Ke Logo sung by Great Indian singer Lata Mangeshkar was played. Ram, who was working in the garden would stop his work and come into attention until the song was over. It's not the Indian National Anthem! Then why does Perry Ram come into attention? I asked an Indian Naval officer why Ram was doing that. He said "Ravi, this song was sung by Lataji in honour of the Indian Armed forces personnel who died in the Sino-Indian War in 1962. So, everyone comes to attention when it is sung in honour of those brave service personnel who paid the supreme sacrifice." The gardener showed me what gratitude was and how to honour the War Heroes.

Aye Mere Watanke Logo (available in YouTube – please listen) song was written by Kavi Pradeep (refer Wikipedia) saddened by the large loss of Indian Army officers and men in the Sino-Indian War in 1962. Stories about the bravery of the Indian forces to stop the Chinese advance were heard throughout India.

During his morning walks at Mahim beach in Mumbai, the writer of the song, Kavi Pradeep had some ideas for a new song to be dedicated to these gallant men. He immediately borrowed a pen from a fellow walker and wrote a few verses of this new song on a cigarette packet.

Later, the song was composed by C Ramachandra. The initial plan wasn to have the song sung as a duet by Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle. However, the composer Kavi Pradeepopposed to the idea and it was sung only by Latha.

The song was first sung at the National Stadium of New Delhi on 27th January 1963 during the Indian Republic Day celebrations by Lata Mangeshkar in front of S. Radhakrishnan, the Indian President and Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister (PM) of India. The stadium was packed its capacity and it was only a few months after the conclusion of the Sino-Indian War. The song became an immediate hit. The story says that Jawaharlal Nehru was moved to tears. Later, when it was inquired by a reporter, the PM said,

"Those who aren't inspired by the Aye Mere Wathan Ke Logo song, don't deserve to be called Hindustani."

Artistes/technical staff and Lataji agreed that the income from the song should be sent to Indian Army welfare fund for the benefit of the families of the Indian Army personnel killed in action.

Even today, when it is sung, everyone gets u. At the end of the song, it says "Jaya Hindi Ke Sena" (Long live Indian Army!) Please enjoy the song:

Lata Mangeshkar

Aye Mere Watan Ke Logon (Original Version | Patriotic songs)

I wish we also have a song dedicated to our war heroes

O people of my
Country Let us shout

the slogan This
auspicious day Belong
to all of us

Hoist our beloved
flag and let us not
forget Our brave
warriors
Who left their lives on the border

Give a thought to them Let us also
remember Those who did not return
home O people of my Country

Fill your eyes with tears
Remember the sacrifice
of those who became martyrs
And lets you forget
them Listen to this story

When the Himalayas were
attacked and our freedom was
threatened they fought right to
the end

Then they laid down their
bodies with their faces on their
bayonets

The immortal martyrs went to
sleep when the country
celebrated Diwali They sacrificed
themselves
in the fire of holi.

When we were sitting safe in our
homes. They confronted the deadly
bullets blessed were they those
young men blessed was their youth
those who attained

Martyrdom Remember their great sacrifice
Sikhs, Jaat and Marathas
Gurkhas and Madrasis

All those who died at the front
every dead warrior at the front everyone
Belongs to India The bloodshed on
The Himalayas
That blood was India
their bodies' drenched
blood they picked up their
guns and each killed ten men,
then they fell
unconscious and when
the end came

They said "We are dying
now "Be happy, beloved
countrymen
"We are going our journey"
How wonderful were those
warriors How great were those
people

Long live India
long live the Indian
army long live India
Long live India

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