



World Farm Animals Day

Established in memory of Mahatma Gandhi, who believed in treating all living beings with respect, *World Farm Animals Day* was founded to highlight the poor conditions suffered by some farm animals, and promote awareness in the hope that something may be done to improve the lives of these innocent creatures. The first *World Farm Animals Day* was celebrated in 1983 as part of an international movement for the rights of farm animals. This day aims to raise awareness for and commemorate the 65 billion land animals, who are raised for food every year.

#FESTIVITIES

The Vibrant Colours Of Navratri

Did you know there is a beautiful connection between the dazzling colours and Navratri? Each night of Navratri has come to be associated with a particular colour because of what the colour symbolises.



Indian festivities are known globally to be a colourful and vibrant celebration of life. One such festival that we all look forward to is the nine nights of worshipping and celebrating the divine force of *Devi*, popularly known as 'Navratri' ('nav' meaning nine or new, 'ratri' meaning nights). The festival is defined by celebrations including spiritual penance or fasting, keeping silence on

one hand and sacred homa ceremonies, diverse cuisine, dance, music, vivid decorations, and dawning colourful dresses, on the other. Navratri celebrates and honours the nine different aspects of Mother Divine, also known as *Nav Durga*. Did you know there is a beautiful connection between the dazzling colours and 'Navratri'? Each night of Navratri has come to be associated with a particular colour because of what the colour symbolises.



The Nine Colours of Navratri 2024

Every year, while the set of colours remains the same, the order varies depending on which day Navratri falls. Here is a list of the days of Navratri, along with the associated colour, this year, in a snapshot.

- First Day (3rd October), *Pratipada*, White
- Second Day (4th October), *Dwitiya*, Red
- Third Day (5th October), *Tritiya*, Royal Blue
- Fourth Day (6th October), *Chaturthi*, Yellow
- Fifth Day (7th October), *Panchami*, Green
- Sixth Day (8th October), *Shashthi*, Grey
- Seventh Day (9th October), *Saptami*, Orange
- Eighth Day (10th October), *Ashtami*, Peacock Green
- Ninth Day (11th October), *Navami*, Pink

Significance of the Colours

Each of the nine colours of Navratri symbolizes a distinct quality of the *Devi*.

- **White:** White symbolizes peace, purity, and prayer in devotees' hearts when they worship the *Devi* energy.
 - **Red:** Red symbolizes action and vigour. It symbolizes the fierce form of the Goddess.
 - **Royal Blue:** Royal blue symbolizes tranquillity and the depth of the dark blue sky. It is a representation of the depth of wisdom that the *Devi* holds.
 - **Yellow:** Yellow is the colour of brightness, happiness, and cheer; traits of the *Devi*.
 - **Green:** Green is a symbol of growth and fertility required to sustain in every field.
 - **Grey:** Grey represents balance.
 - **Orange:** Orange symbolizes radiance and energy.
 - **Peacock Green:** Peacock green represents uniqueness and individuality.
 - **Pink:** Pink symbolizes love, affection, and harmony.
- This year, as the celebrations draw closer, make it fun at work by showing up in colour co-ordinated dresses and accessories to make the most of the festival and honour the divine. You can also flaunt these vibrant colours during *Garba* and *Dandiya raas* nights!



To be honest, not only Darjeeling, all the so-called Hill Stations of India have been left in the lurch. Mussoorie is no longer the quaint little town it was, nor is Shimla. They have been invaded by the hordes, people from the surroundings, people from the plains have come as tourists and sometimes as settlers. They have brought with them their crass preferences as well as large scale migration from neighbouring areas, as in the case of Darjeeling.



The Queen is a Dowager...



Anjan Roy
A renowned veteran journalist, having worked with *Business Standard* and *The Telegraph*.

Darjeeling is a traveller's blissful escape and honeymooners' dream destination. This beautiful hill station is alluring and its visitors, through the breathtaking panoramas, are captivated in every way. Darjeeling stands as the most visited hill stations of India, all around the year. Surrounded by the snow-capped Himalayas and lush green Tea gardens, it is definitely a *paradise on earth*.

It was once the Queen of the Hill Stations, and has today become a *dowager queen*. But it remains the queen all the same. In a way Darjeeling represents a kind of pedestrianisation of Indian towns and cities, symptomatic of the transition that the entire country was undergoing immediately following independence from the colonial masters. It was perhaps inevitable.

Colonial administrators planned the hill stations in the nineteenth century to create an idyllic social space away from the tropical climate and the Indian cities in the plains. Therefore, the hill stations represented topographical, climatic, social and architectural ideals, that were radically different from the cities in the plains. But the

process of colonizing what were, after all, remote tropical mountain villages and establishing and sustaining an urban centre which, on the one hand, for the Europeans looked similar to the Alps and on the other hand, the urbanized, lively, lucrative hill stations attracted investment, labour and visitors. In the process, their segregation and social exclusivity were both attractive to the British residents as well as affluent Indians.

To be honest, not only Darjeeling, all the so-called Hill Stations of India have been left in the lurch. Mussoorie is no longer the quaint little town that it was, nor is Shimla. They have been invaded by the hordes, people from the surroundings, people from the plains have come as tourists and sometimes as settlers. They have brought with them their crass preferences as well as large scale migration from neighbouring areas, as in the case of Darjeeling.

With the process of development, there are, today, many more Indians, who can afford a quaint vacation. Some of them are so prosperous that they can afford buying up vacation homes in the hills, unlike previously, when only the *creme-de-la-creme* could indulge in these. The many people, who now can afford, visit these places and they have come with their habits.

In the face of the invasion of the ordinary many of the earlier high brows have chosen other places, including those in West Europe. *Dowager Queen*, Darjeeling, has been forsaken by its former elites.

Darjeeling, for example, was

MOUNTAIN-VIEW



the preferred vacation locale for the *Bengali* elites in the early years of last century. Chittaranjan Das, one of the most well-known lawyer and freedom fighter, went to the hill station when he had fallen sick. Unfortunately, he could not really recover from his illness in the wonderful and cool hills, and breathed his last there, in Darjeeling.

There were new beginnings as well in Darjeeling. Remember for example, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan, was one of the most successful lawyers of his time and was a *'sahib'* to his boots. Jinnah had met his wife on a trip to Darjeeling and Jinnah had come to Darjeeling for his honey-



moon. The story goes like this. Sir Dinshaw Petit, famous Bombay based Parsi businessman, was visiting Darjeeling and he had invited Jinnah to join his entourage. Jinnah went to Darjeeling with Sir Dinshaw, who was accompanied by his beautiful daughter.

In course of their break-fast conversation, Jinnah had asked Sir Dinshaw about his views on mixed inter-religious marriages. Jinnah sought to evoke Sir Dinshaw's views, which in the elevated plateaus of national integration, looked reasonable to Sir Dinshaw.

But subsequently, when Jinnah informed his deci-

sion to marry his daughter, whom he had met during his Darjeeling stay, Sir Dinshaw had grown furious and immediately threw out Jinnah from his party of vacationers. Jinnah, of course, was a flourishing lawyer and could afford alternatives promptly. He married shortly afterwards.

It is exactly that class of elites and their tastes which had created the myth around what was Darjeeling. That class had vanished and their sensibilities had deserted. No wonder that those elitist institutions of former India would fall on evil days.

The myth has lingered for a while after independence. In the mid-1960s, when Satyajit Ray was conceiving his film on the life of a zamindar, Kanchanghonga, he chose Darjeeling as the location. Their *Chhabhi Biswas*, the eternal fallen-from-savvy-days zamindar of Bengali cinema, was cast against the solitary walks around Darjeeling's mall.

Following independence, the masters had changed. The new political class was not the elites of pre-independence era, the new political class has moved from the lower rungs of society and their priorities and preferences were different.

This changed nature was the culmination of the emergence of Gandhi in Indian politics. Before Gandhi, the Indian political class was composed of the elites, the barristers and successful lawyers, the zamindars and the educated cream of society.

After Gandhi and his civil disobedience movement, the ordinary folks had come into the mainstream of Indian politics. They were not always the powerful upper classes,

who were successful and professionals in other ways. They were not the dispossessed. They were the possessed. Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal's father, was a successful lawyer and had a prosperous life. As opening sentence of Nehru's autobiography admits, "The only child of a prosperous family is likely to go astray." Motilal's close friend and political comrade, Chittaranjan Das, was another example.

He was successful and so monied that legends grew around him. He had money enough, rumours went, that he could send his formal clothes to Paris for laundering. Chittaranjan was the grandfather of Siddhartha Shankar Ray, once the chief minister of Bengal.

Jinnah, himself, was a barrister and did not like Gandhi from his guts because of his politics and his personality. Gandhi had alienated Jinnah, right at their first meeting, in course of the first formal reception accorded to Gandhi after his return from South Africa. It was in Jinnah's home in Bombay and Gandhi, in his abrasive manner, rather belittled Jinnah.

After independence, the leadership was increasingly passing on to those whose social beginnings were at much lower rungs of society. Most of them did not have a career behind them, and they did not have any prior taste of the high life of those early freedom fighters. Their tastes were reflected in their vacation tastes as well. They demanded *pakoras* and colour TVs for their evening entertainment in the hills. This can be witnessed in today's politics as well.

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#GANDHI JAYANTI

Gandhi, Truth and Ahimsa

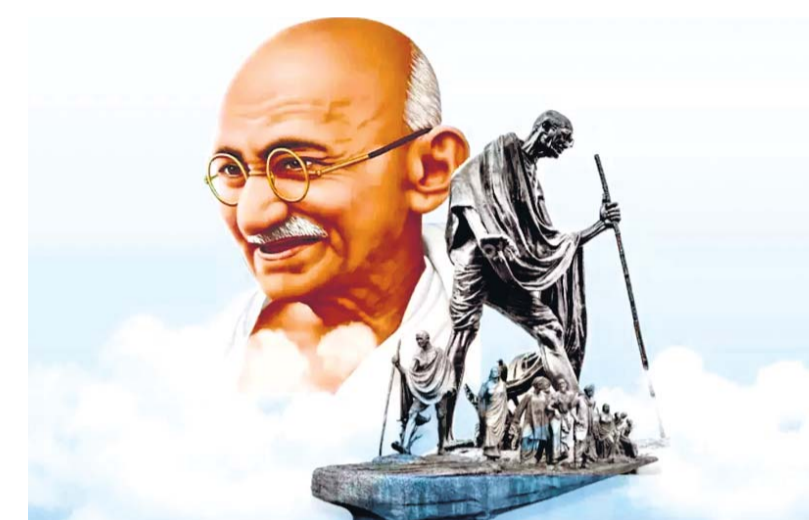
"My religion is based on Truth and Non-Violence. Truth is my God. Non-Violence is the means of realising him."

- Mahatma Gandhi

We have learnt about the Indian National Movement in our school textbooks, and everyone, without any exception, is well familiar with the name *Mahatma Gandhi*. Often revered as the Father of the Nation, sometimes referred to as *Bapu*, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was an eminent lawyer, a social activist, a writer, a leader of the Indian National Movement, and a known figure in Indian history. Born in Porbandar, Mahatma Gandhi went to South Africa to pursue higher studies and work as a legal representative. He stood up against racial discrimination and developed his political views, ethics, and leadership. He arrived in India in 1915, and organised various *Satyagrahas* that emphasised the power of Truth. He launched the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement and finally, the Quit India movement, after which India gained independence. To put Gandhi's ideas in a quick read is rather a difficult thing to do. Scholars across the world have spent their lives studying the life of Mahatma and his various ideas. We have attempted to mention a few of his thoughts on Truth and Non-Violence, which are still relevant in 2024.

Gandhi, Truth and Satyagraha

The idea of Truth is the principle on which Mahatma laid the thrust of the methodology, that he referred to as 'Satyagraha,' where he emphasised the need to search for Truth. For Gandhi, nothing exists in reality but the Truth. Devotion to what is true is the only justification for a



person's existence. The general understanding of Truth only indicates that one must speak the Truth. However, the word *Satya*/ Truth has a broader connotation for Mahatma. The Truth has to be observed not only in one's speech but also in thought and action.

Mahatma's idea of *Satyagraha*, where 'Satya' means Truth and 'agraha' translates to insistence, implies following the path of Truth. It is the demonstration of the Truth that does not seek vengeance but appeals to the oppressor's conscience to see what is true. *Satyagraha* is resistance, but it cannot be equated to passiveness. It is not the weapon of the weak. It is a power that only the strong have, as it demands intense activity. It neither implies any hatred nor destruction. It recognises the difference between evil and evil-doers. This is a significant distinction that *Satyagraha* recognises. It understands that the oppressor is not the enemy, but only away from the Truth and can be convinced (not forced) to know the Truth.

Gandhi and Ahimsa

The word '*Ahimsa*' is loosely translated to Non-Violence. *Ahimsa* means 'lacking any desire to kill.' It means to be harmless to oneself, others, and all living beings. But that is only a limited definition of what he meant by *Ahimsa* or Non-Violence. Gandhi gained an understanding of Hinduism and Jainism in his childhood, and perhaps, that was the significant influence that allowed him to advocate for *Ahimsa*. His belief in non-violence was demonstrated when he decided to call off the Non-Cooperation Movement at its height after a peaceful demonstration turned into



a violent conflict at *Chauri Chaura* in Gorakhpur. For him, there was no space for violence. He advocated *Ahimsa* (Non-Violence) in his idea of *Satyagraha*, a method used for mass mobilisation. While the Truth was the foundation of his philosophy, *Ahimsa* was the guiding law that should be followed by each *Satyagrahi*.

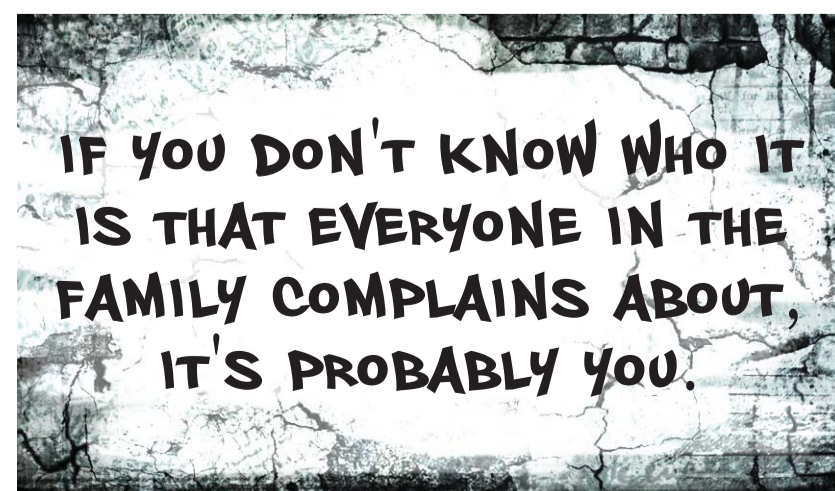
Ahimsa has two different connotations. In the narrow sense, it means not harming the other or oneself by body or mind. In the positive and broader sense, it denotes infinite love and charity.

Gandhian Thought and Present Generation

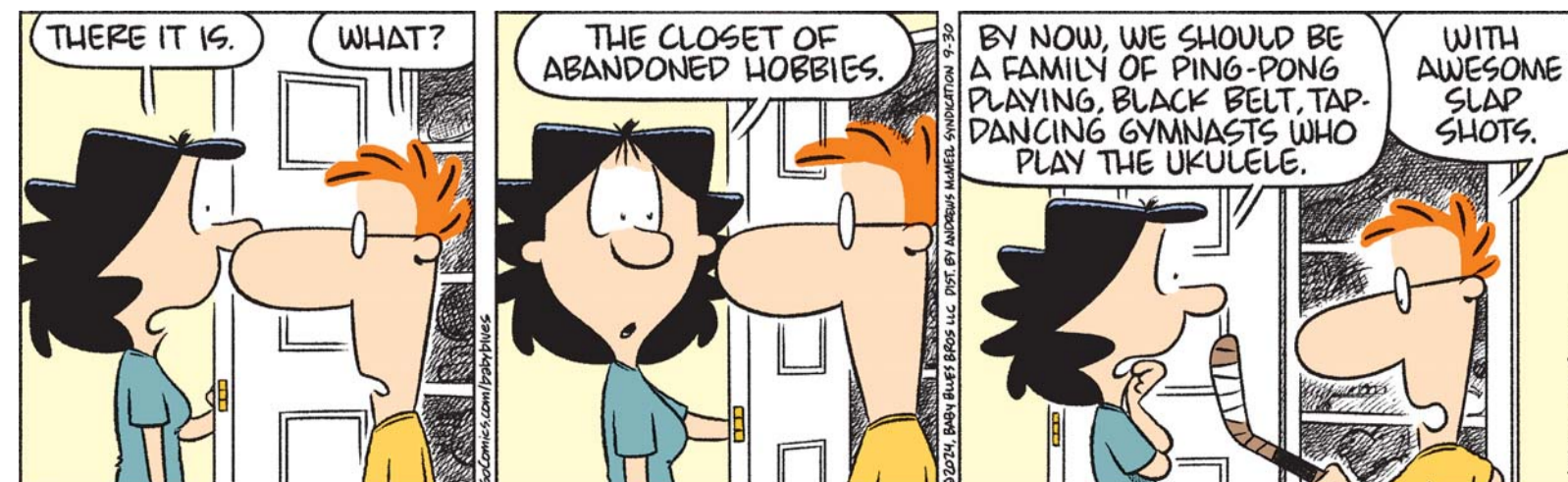
It would be a cliché, but still, it would be fitting to state that *Ahimsa* and Truth are two sides of the same coin. They are so intertwined that it is not possible to separate them. If *Ahimsa* is the means, then Truth is the end. It is *Ahimsa* that forms the base of the search for Truth. The goal of Truth is not to embarrass the wrong-doer but to bring a change of heart, and the aim of Non-Violence is not limited to non-injury but also infinite love for the other. As Gandhi states, "With truth combined with *Ahimsa*, you can bring the world to your feet."

On this *Gandhi Jayanti*, let us begin understanding Gandhian thought and try to imbibe those thoughts in our everyday lives.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman