

FORUM OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

President :
Prof. A. C. DEVE GOWDA
74, Miller Road
Bangalore-560052.
Phone : 28082

Hon. Secretary :
P. JAGANNATH
316, Cavalry Road
Bangalore-560042.
Phone : 52551

14th August 1976

Dear Sir,

I thank you very sincerely for your kindness in agreeing to address the members of the Forum of International Affairs on Friday, the 20th instant at 6.00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Hall of the Institution of Engineers, Vidhana Veedhi. We will be very happy if Madam Devika Rani could accompany you and give us the pleasure of her company.

Looking forward to the pleasure of hearing you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Svetoslav Roerich,
9, Edward Road,
Bangalore-1.

C. I. d. / m

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FORUM OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BANGALORE

President :

Prof. A. C. DEVE GOWDA
(Retd. Director of Public Instruction)
74, Miller Road, Bangalore - 560 052

15th August 1976

Dear *Dr. Roerich,*

We are glad to inform you that the Forum of International Affairs has decided to erect a memorial for Shri P. Kodanda Rao who, as its Founder-President, nurtured it for over a decade, giving all his energies and talents. As the Forum does not have its own habitat, it is felt desirable to construct a building with an auditorium and name it after him as our humble tribute to his memory. Efforts are being made to secure a site. In the meantime, we appeal for your generous contribution.

P. Kodanda Rao, as you know, was an unique man. Whoever truly made his acquaintance will think of no equivalent to him. He did not wield any power or authority in his life time, nor did he become the head of any powerful organisation. Nevertheless, he had friends both distinguished and undistinguished. He had a large circle of admirers and friends. He learnt from his life that "friends were more valuable than money".

It was our good fortune that he left Nagpur to settle down in Bangalore. Soon, he became a one man's Citizens' Forum. He interested himself in civic problems—not individual grievances but problems which concerned the people in general, be it, an electric crematorium, preservation of valuable trees, prevention of cruelty to animals, consumers' interests, public or municipal ethical standards, etc. He was a familiar figure in public meetings, big or small. Donning his gold-laced turban, he used to attend almost all public meetings. It looked as though he knew almost everyone in those meetings by the way he greeted them or he was greeted.

An aspect of Kodanda Rao's varied public activities was his involvement in the position and condition of Indian settlers in Britain's former Colonial Empire.

In pre-independence days they were known as Overseas Indians. His services were requisitioned by the then British Indian Government to visit British Malaya (now Malaysia), Fiji, British Guiana (now Guiana), the Caribbean Islands, Jamaica, Trinidad, etc. As Personal Secretary to Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, India's first Agent General in South Africa, Kodanda Rao had also opportunities to study the problems of Indian settlers in the racist white South Africa.

After independence, he turned his interest to India's relations with the external world as a great developing nation, as his interests were always world-wide. That is why he was so much interested in the Forum of International Affairs. Diplomacy and diplomatic activities are everywhere capital-centred. He thought Bangalore was an ideal place to study international questions in an atmosphere of objectivity, detachedness, intellectual curiosity and some requisite scholarship.

His earlier activities as a member of the Servants of India Society were mainly concerned with the social problems including prohibition, untouchability, and labour relations.

He was an untiring worker for several causes and never gave them up even in the most trying circumstances. Some of the public causes for which he campaigned were prevention of cruelty to animals, saving of trees, elimination of beggary, advocacy of euthanasia and family planning. Though he was an indefatigable crusader for English, at the same time, he was responsible for a Kannada publication: T. P. Kailasam's first play, '*Tollu Gatti*'. He was fearless in expressing of his views. No sacrifice was too great for him in the espousal of good causes. Sometimes he championed unpopular causes also, like opposition to the formation of Linguistic States.

He had developed a special style in propagating his views.

He was free from pedantism, dogmatism and controversialism. He was urbane, convincing, friendly in tone. Somehow he established a rapport with the listener of his views, who, even in disagreement, felt that here was an honest man saying it so well. His writings never left you irritated or angry. In fact, one loved him for saying what he felt like saying. His sincerity was beyond question or cavil.

Though he differed from Mahatma Gandhi on many issues, Mahatma Gandhi took his assistance in the anti-untouchability campaign, which the

Mahatma conducted from Yervada Jail. His first assignment in the Servants of India Society was to work for the upliftment of Arundhatiyas, who were the leather workers and considered as of the lowest caste among the untouchables. One of the vows he took, while joining the Servants of India Society, was that he would "work for the advancement of all Indians without distinction of caste or creed". He lived up to his vow.

His campaigning for English was not a whim or a hobby. He always felt and thought as an Indian. He had no regional or sectarian loyalties. He was passionately wedded to India's unity; he believed that unity would be fractured by the language question. His generation had for long campaigned for the unity of India and fought against what they thought were the fissiparous tendencies which were the bane of India.

The doors of his house were open to all, the high or the low. There was hardly any place in Bangalore, other than his house, where people of all communities and walks of life with different views could meet and discuss the problems of public life. One of the editors of the *Quest*, in a message, said:

One of the most interesting ways of spending an evening in Bangalore was to go to Kodanda Rao's house, and to allow their bright spirits and humour to wash away one's tension. It was also a very educative way of spending an evening.

He had relentless logic both in his discussions and writings. He was the author of *East Versus West*, *Denial of Contrast*, and a biographer of Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri. When he published his book, *Foreign Friends of India's Freedom*, he presented the first copy of it to his wife, his 'best foreign friend'. His 'Bubbles of Memory' was a highly popular column in the *Deccan Herald*. He was a prolific writer and was known for his forthright views.

He gave learning and enlightenment to many institutions in the City freely. He was always willing to address students' associations and public groups. On all such occasions he had something new to say.

In the last days of his life he had developed an interest in the setting up of homes in Bangalore for the aged people. He had proposed a comprehensive scheme by which he wanted to provide all necessary services to them. He gave

a donation of Rs. 3,000 for this cause. Thus, to the last moment of his life, he maintained an active interest in public activities.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, in her condolence message, said: "He was a dedicated servant of India and the country will miss him. He made a mark in every field in which he chose to serve the country, as a scholar, public worker, editor, social worker and writer of distinction".

He wanted his doctors to terminate his life painlessly when "I can no longer live usefully to myself and others". It was his wish to live with honour and die without pain. Luckily for him, this wish was granted. He was cremated in the electric crematorium for the establishment of which he was in no small measure responsible. He formed and headed the Committee on Funeral Reforms which gave the citizens of Bangalore both the electric crematorium and the hearses.

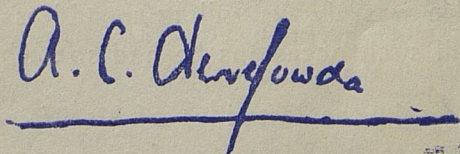
Kodanda Rao was a genuine cosmopolitan Indian of his generation, intensely secular in his outlook and, what is more, he practised secularism, not merely talked about it. His intellectual curiosity was wide and far ranging. But he subjected them all to the rigorous test of rationality. He was meticulous about facts and he always strove to have a clear perception that facts must be related to ideas or ideals in life. He loved and worked for some ideal which he thought was good for life.

By his example and dedicated life, he enriched the life of the City of Bangalore. He embodied, in his long life of service, the ancient Sastric adage: "To those who are liberal minded, the whole world is a family".

We request you kindly to send your contribution early in order to enable us to execute the memorial project expeditiously.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



(A. C. DEVE GOWDA)
President.

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C/o. The Indian Bank,
Lady Curzon Road,
Cantonment,
BANGALORE - 1.
KARNATAKA, South India.

16th August 1976.


Dear Prof. Deve Gowda,

Many thanks for your letter of
14th August 1976.

I shall be happy to be among you
all on Friday the 20th and I am looking forward
with pleasure to our meeting. Mme. Devika Rani
Roerich will be glad to join me on Friday.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



(SVETOSLAV ROERICH)

Prof. A.C. Deve Gowda,
FORUM OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
74, Miller Road,
BANGALORE - 560052.

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BANGALORE, SUNDAY, AUGUST 22, 1976

CITY

35 PAISE

Our works of art must be preserved

By A Staff Reporter

BANGALORE, Aug. 21.— India should develop the art of preserving works of its great cultural masters on the lines of the USSR. This would be of great benefit to posterity, renowned painter Dr. Svetslov Roerich said here yesterday.

He was speaking on "Some aspects of Indo-Soviet cultural relations," at the Forum of International Affairs.

In the USSR, Dr. Roerich said, art and artists were encouraged to enrich the lives of the people. Today the old palaces housed excellent museums where visitors could spend many peaceful hours admiring the works of Soviet artists, be they paintings or works of culture.

The State machinery and the press particularly, he added, created the right atmosphere.

Prof. A. C. Deve Gowda welcomed the gathering. Mr. P. Jagannath proposed a vote of thanks.

THE SUNDAY STANDARD

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Arts enrich Soviet life

By A Staff Reporter

BANGALORE, Aug. 21
Soviet Russia encouraged arts and artists and this has contributed to the enriching of the lives of its people, Dr. Svetslov Roerich, noted artist, said here yesterday.

Dr. Roerich who recently toured the Soviet Union was addressing the forum of international affairs on "some aspects of Indo-Soviet cultural relations."

He said old palaces in USSR today housed excellent museums where onlookers could spend many peaceful hours admiring the works of Soviet artistes, be its sculptural, paintings, collections or exhibitions. The state machinery and the press particularly created the right atmosphere and evoked interest of the lay citizen to eagerly look forward to such cultural expositions.

Turning to life in USSR, he spoke appreciatively of the Soviet youth, and the constructive harnessing of their energies for nation building work. Youth's surplus time and energy got directed into pursuit of hobbies like painting, he added.

Prof. A. C. Deve Gowda, FIA president, welcomed the gathering. Mr. P. Jagannath, secretary, proposed a vote of thanks.

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BANGALORE

MONDAY

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10 THE HINDU, Monday, August 23, 1976.

Youth Urged to be Art-Minded

BANGALORE, Aug. 22.

Dr. Svetslov Roerich, noted painter, called upon the Indian youth here on Friday to be art-minded and not to copy the West by indulging in escapist arts. Paintings must make an impact and convey a feeling to the viewer and they should speak an internationally understood language of the artist's mood as depicted on the canvas for the posterity to appreciate.

Addressing the members of the Forum of International Affairs on "some aspects of Indo-Soviet cultural relations", he traced the evolution of relations between India and the Soviet Union.

Referring to his recent trip to the USSR, Dr. Roerich, said through TV, press and meetings addressed in the evenings, he had occasion to meet millions of people who came to his paintings exhibitions. He said a large number of people waited for hours in chilly weather to have a look at his paintings and that was an inspiring experience which he would never get anywhere else in the world. He spoke of the meticulous steps taken by the Soviet authorities to preserve the home and works of eminent artists and said his own ancestral birth place near Leningrad was going to house a museum of paintings of his own, as well as his father.