

Friday, Sep 10, 2021

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This is It, Isn't It Mr Dar?



In a way, the little book is a serious history of elections, and our ways with democracy.



M.S. Gill +
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Talented cartoonists, like good doctors, are necessary to maintain the social health of a society. Unless we can laugh at ourselves, and not just in the park, we cannot be a stable people. A cartoonist uses the clear sunlight of humour to bring out the absurdity of politics. Only he can prick vast egos with a sharp rapier thrust.

To me Shankar, Abu, Sudhir Dar and Laxman are treasures of this land. Their analysis makes more sense than all the pontification of press pundits. I have over long years had hundreds of belly laughs, over my morning tea, with Sudhir's art. The very first cartoon in this book, a dangerous-looking defeated candidate ringing the doorbell outside an astrologer's home, a chappal clutched behind his back, had me in fits. In page after page of this book on the election circus—the Neta, the booth-capturers, the palmist, the constables, the candidates, the suitcasewalas, even the election commissioners—they all come under his gimlet eye. In a way, the little book is a serious history of elections, and our ways with democracy. You could even call it a book of electoral reforms, because humour cuts deeper than strident opinion. I can never forget Sudhir Tailang's cartoons on me and Krishnamurthy, when we were going through our little love affair with dear old Seshan. In one, both of us are sitting on chaprasi stools outside his office. There were many more. I hung up these signed treasures in my office when I became CEC.

Sudhir's book is fun, yet it is serious political comment. It strikes a blow for true democracy in its own way. I commend it strongly. My only worry is that cartoonists, like tigers, are a vanishing species. They do not seem to get enough space for their art. The loss will be ours. I think that of the many Padma awards which we dish out every year, there should always be a few reserved for these mirrors of ourselves.

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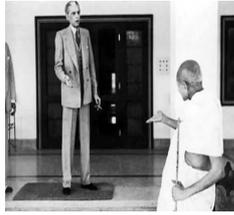


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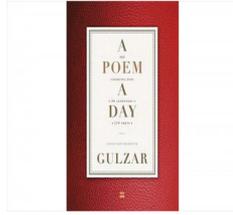
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BJP Fields Poll Violence Lawyer Against Mamata In Bhowanipur

With Priyanka Tibrewal in the fray, the BJP is likely to make political violence by the ruling party on BJP members and supporters as their key poll issue, a senior leader of the BJP's state unit said. Tibrewal had contested the March-April 2021 assembly general election from Entally constituency in Kolkata but lost by a massive margin of 58,257 votes.



COVID Scare! Manchester Test Called Off

The Indians were reluctant to play the fifth and final Test at Old Trafford after a support staff has tested COVID-19 positive on Thursday



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