

For 04Apr2023 Meeting

Girish (03/04/2023)

Discussion in the last three of our weekly meetings has led us to the conclusion that we should launch Swaraj Gyan Panchayat as a major initiative of VA and LJA. The SGP aims to start a new political dialogue as described in Sunil's Note around issues listed in the second Note, both of 31Mar2023 and open for further discussion.

There was some initial and incomplete discussion in the Meeting on 28Mar2023 on how to go about doing this. The feeling was that we need to work out two things:

1. How to concretely propagate the need and the idea of SGP, and
2. How concretely to open and conduct the dialogue addressing the different issues identified for this

The following is an elaboration mostly of what came up in the last meeting.

1. Propagate the Need and the Idea of SGP

Apart from finalizing Sunil's note and sharing it widely via media available to us we need to prepare several short videos of 5 to 10 minutes each. These videos may be parts of one series on our youtube channel. The video titles may appropriately bring out the focus in each on different aspects (need, significance, idea, issues, conduct of the dialogue – program, etc) of SGP. We need to come out with scripts to create all these videos. In the next stage we may have some of these videos in the form of a short dialogue (say, 15-20 min) between someone from VA and another activist / thinker from some other organization, which may be convinced of the need for SGP type of dialogue, possibly on different grounds.

Most of the work for this will be done at Varanasi, with suggestions / responses from others.

2. Concretely constructing the dialogue

We need to discuss and possibly modify / add to the list of broad issues / subjects for the SGP contained in the second Note and name broad categories within SGP. We also need to form an idea about which issues in the list we should, and can

pick up to start with. Everyone may then be expected to take initiative in following up one, or more from this shortened list.

We then need one or two notes – like, say, a 100 – 150 word summary of Gandhi's recent piece on secularism and swaraj – on each of the issues / subjects chosen initially. These notes need to be discussed and given final shape as these will go as basic lokavidya-based / LJA / VA thinking on the subject.

The (longer) write-up, which a note summarises can be put out on the website / fb group etc. The note accompanies the video of lecture / dialogue announcement etc. We can aim at online dialogue on a subject with one, or two of us and another one, or two from activist backgrounds in the appropriate movements . An example could be a discussion / dialogue on some issue related to social justice with activists / leading figures in farmers movement, or jal-jangal-jamin movement. We may expect participation from movement people only after some groundwork on launching SGP is successfully done.

Along with these tasks we need to think about how to present all the resulting material on media. Website redesign with a new theme will soon be under way. SGP page may be designed for frequent updates and appropriately designed links to all the generated material. The videos may be prepared by Harishchandra in Varanasi and via Zoom from here as well as Bengaluru, Mysuru, Kolkata and Hyderabad. They are best stored on our youtube channel rather than on website server. For this videos will need to be converted to youtube format.

Also, this may be a good time to start multilingual content at least in translated summary form and also produce some videos and original content authored in different languages.

We can resolve to do much of the above in, say, coming six months. If we can, then we should be in a position to think of organizing SGP physically at a few locations.