

(1)

HAS ANYTHING LEFT ?

(TRANSLATION OF MALAYALAM POEM
'BAAKKI VALLATHUMUNDOE?' BY
SHRI N.V.KRISHNA WARRIOR)

(1)

Has anything left?

Kindness and forgiveness,

manners and etiquettes;

all lost.

Has anything left?

All doors remain closed and bolted from inside;
mutual apathy of neighbours around.

The chain wrought by us and for us

is hooked to legs, arms, heart and vulnerable spots.

Has anything left? No smiles, no more tears

and heart beats enfeebled. Has anything left?

(2)

Has anything left?

Law and justice,

systems and conventions;

all lost.

Has anything left?

Street lights have died out. All of a sudden
is the siren of a police van raising?

Who knocks at a door? Who curses?

Against whose ribs a rifle's butt strikes?

Who flees? Has anything left?

Sound and light, and so peace and sleep;

all lost. Has anything left?

2

(3)

Has anything left?

Flowers and floral season,
birds and butterflies;
all gone.

Has anything left?

Like aspirations bananas become bunchy topped,
like convictions coconut leaves wilt and shrivel.
Paddy fields parch, reservoirs fill with silt,
sand deposits in canals, bunds slide and flatten.
Air smoulders, fire in the sky and no fuel
for water pumps, Openings to paddy fields are
blocked to irrigation. Has anything left?

(4)

Has anything left?

Work and efforts,
unity and inspirations;
all lost.

Has anything left?

Jobs in factories are for pilfering only,
fingers organise to show fists only,
acquire knowledge to keep company;
losses incurred are accounted as profits in ledgers.
Has anything left? Leaves earned by sweating forehead
have lost taste. Has anything left?

(5)

Has anything left?
Wisdom and curiosity,
drive and alertness;
all lost.

Has anything left?

No smiles on lips but slogans are,
no tears in eyes but anger flames,
heart parches with the unquenchable thirst of deserts
and no amount of food cloy the hunger within !

Has anything left? No contentment nor prosperity
no reasoning nor sanity. Has anything left?

(6)

Has anything left?
Sense of reality is lost,
words have lost their meanings
Has anything left?

We fill our pens now with arrack,
we note our songs now on ashes heaped.
Subjects without predicates, only objects are there.
Mouths stuffed with gross misdeeds,
what lingers is its foul taste only.
Has anything left? No truth nor relevance,
no originality nor correlation. Has anything left?

(7)

Has anything left?
Knives and daggers,
rifles and grenades;
has anything else?

Letters explode? Dynamites in market places?
Huts on fire? Who was stabbed, by whom?
Who falls down? Poison flow thro' water pipes?
Medicines, all adulterated? That died after meals is humanity?
Has anything left? What I gave was counterfeit notes?
Will you exchange? Allow discount? Has anything left?

(8)

Has anything left?
Mind soaked in bitter taste,
lacks interest, yet,
has anything left?

Will evenings again turn purple the slopes of sky?
Will dews relieve the sufferings of the sultry summer?
Will a white lotus shoot up from the muddy bed
of our heart and will we inhale the scent?
Has anything left? Freedom? Youth? Dharm^m?
Friendship? Compassion? Peace? Has anything left?

.....

COIMBATORE,
28TH NOVEMEER 1986.