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Editorial

GANDHI MARG HAS been in publication for the last 62 years. Since the subscribers include people with low income, it has been distributed at subsidized rates. For a single issue, the cost is Rs. 70 or roughly one dollar. Considering the quality of the paper on which it is printed, the journal is perhaps the most affordable one available in the country. The Indian Council of Social Science Research has been providing the foundation annual grants to partly facilitate such subsidised distribution of the journal. It is learnt that the grants from ICSSR have been discontinued for quite sometime. Understandably, Gandhi is no longer a priority area of the Council. This is quite surprising particularly at a time when the nation is observing the 150th birth anniversary of the Mahatma.

When the Prime Minister evokes the legacy of the Mahatma as a source of India's soft power or describes the nationwide sanitation drive as aimed at realizing his dream or cites the famous talisman of Gandhi to opt out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement or while addressing the IAS probationers, the ICSSR seems to turn a Nelson's eye to such overtures. Not only Gandhi, even Gandhian themes like peace, rural development and panchayat raj are anathema to the Council. People who propose to do research in such areas are most likely to get a negative response from the Council.

During the six decades of the existence of the journal, it had the rare distinction of being guided by distinguished like G. Ramachandran, T. K. Mahadevan, R. R. Diwakar and Dr. Mahendra Kumar with contributors ranging from stalwarts like Jawaharlal Nehru to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, making it the definitive and most prominent journal in the area of Gandhian Studies globally. It has also been able to bring out several special issues on relevant themes. Being an academic journal, it attempts to carry different perspectives on Gandhi. The Gandhi Peace Foundation, under whose aegis the journal is brought out, does not interfere in the selection of articles,

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enabling the journal to retain its professional character as a refereed journal to which scholars of all hues and a range of disciplinary backgrounds can contribute. Since the Foundation does not seek grants from either the government or the private sector, the journal has been published on a shoestring budget. The decision of ICSSR is therefore unfortunate and can only be described as prejudicial.

This issue of the journal is a special one on Gandhi and Aurobindo. This is being guest edited by Ananta Kumar Giri of Madras Institute of Development Studies. I am grateful to him for bringing together nearly a dozen scholars to reflect on the above theme in its manifold dimensions.

JOHN S. MOOLAKKATTU
Editor