

# Whither headed is this generation?



**Adi Valliappan. For contact: [valliappan.k@hindutamil.co.in](mailto:valliappan.k@hindutamil.co.in)**

A society undergoes changes with passage of time according to the civilizational progress. It is impossible for any society that carries forward positive development centred around knowledge not to criticise the succeeding generation. As an example, we can think about the features and models that guide most of today's youth. Our country has the highest number of youths in the world. But what do they want to do? Or whom do they want to emulate?

No big inspiring personalities nor stalwarts having worked for uplift of mankind now stand front and centre, who can be good models for the young among the multitude of people to follow. Instead only those driving motorbikes in adventures of daredevilry, the 'pranksters' who tease others and the netizens who upload Instagram reels invariably every day, who are popular among the young.

## **Precedents sans goal**

Uorfi Javed, a well-known social media personality in north India, has crafted her own identity and scripted her popularity, exhibiting her body through obscene garments in a way dreamt of by none. She is always hell-bent on hogging the viewers' attention, setting off a cultural shock.

Similarly, TTF Vasan, who drives motorbike at high speed in an artificial exposition of macho image, is now quite popular among the youth, particularly among the school students.

Usually an identity crisis grips the youth in their teenage before they get groomed so as to attain some identity. At this stage one may try to make a foray into any field, be it literature, arts and entertainment, and to cultivate their own identity. In this respect, we have some good achievers such as Praggnanandhaa, Gukesh, Lydian Nadhaswaram and so on.

But it is unfortunate that most youngsters take only TTF Vasans as their models. The reason for this trend may be that their potential befitting their age remains untapped and unused and the natural confusion that sets in during the growth of their body and mind. If anyone asks them to regulate their behaviour and attitude, the digital age youth just dismiss the advisors as boomer uncles or aunties and carry on with what they've been up to.

Mankind has followed certain fundamental rules and regulations for a peaceful living in all ages. The rules, though, have undergone changes depending on the times. They still remain common and relevant, disturbing none. Nonetheless, the zoomers (Gen Z) have

made it a way of life to shatter what they perceive as suffocating rules and ethical codes.

All is fun here. Several videos have gone viral, shared widely on social media, showing Vasan breaking his hand in his daredevilry act of motorbike driving. The videos bear a testament to the basic nature of the Gen Z youth. The video released by Vasan's friend Aziz, who had accompanied Vasan on another bike, shows no emotions whatsoever on the part of Aziz. His speech feels apathetic as if such accidents were quite trivial. "We just set off in fun. Now we feel a little sorry. Let us pray for Vasan's recovery," he says. That's all. He just keeps reiterating that he will give updates on Vasan's status as if the latter were a great celebrity.

There are some other videos to boot which shed light on why Vasan and Aziz had embarked on this 'historic journey.' Vasan says in one of the videos, "Friend Aziz suggests going to Mumbai for there is Kamathipura in the city. We set off at night itself instantly." Interrupting the speech, another friend says, "I have already seen night life in Vietnam and Thailand. As my friend has no passport, we just go to Mumbai." Vasan gives a disclaimer, saying, "All this is just fun" and thus glosses over the meanness of his speech.

There are no natural human feelings manifest even in the videos asking that no fake news of Vasan's death at the beginning of the journey and after the accident be spread. If there is a resemblance of some emotion in the speech, that is blatantly artificial and fake.

For them it is all fun, fun and nothing but fun; to drive motorbikes at hellish speed, to catch the attention of passers-by and to make them look at the adventurous youths in awe.

## **Violence is the raw material**

The other day someone shared some content on the social media, which drives home powerfully how this generation has shockingly become nonchalant and insensitive.

The young have been playing games such as PUBG that set men upon men. The parents of a youth addicted to these games had met with some accident and escaped with minor injuries. But the youth concerned did not feel shocked and rather in a tone of coolness and insensitivity, he asked his parents if they had not sustained larger injuries. After a while, the youth got some psychiatric treatment.

Recently some films that Tamil Nadu has celebrated with fanfare, directed by directors such as Lokesh Kanagaraj, Nelson Dilipkumar and so on have used violence as raw material. This syndrome spreads like a virus through teasers, trailers, wall posters and digital banners.

The arguments in support of Vasan after his accident, which went viral on social media, the reactions from the youth caught in another accident and the trend of the audience watching the blood-curdling violence on the screens in cinemas as if it was just a fun... all these things point to the major disturbing inference: We have been losing humaneness and sensitivity.

## **Women who have lost their nature**

The present generation is obsessed with making trending content of violence, over-speeding and shock value and with cashing in on these things. In fact, they have done nothing innovatively creative

and have not made any achievement in their fields. To just blabber and blurt out all things without inhibition in a no-holds-barred digital world is enough; you can get followers in lakhs. It is quite unfortunate that even women, who are naturally inclined to identify and solve problems easily, to create something and to offend and disturb none, are adoring such youths as those indulging in nonsensical adventures.

It is not Vasan alone. There are several youths who are adored and admired by their mothers, sisters and lovers sitting on the pillions of their vehicles. The women take the boys' adventure as a great achievement, feeling a vicarious pleasure. Neither the Gen Z youth nor the young women do not understand that all these things are per se foolish and illegal. They are not bothered about how many others are affected in the process. Their parents, blood relations and the netizens either do not question nor they prevent these fake adventurers.

To turn a blind eye to these youths' dangerous activities and gloss over them is as good as a crime of abetting murders.

**Translated by V. Mariappan.**