



BY SOME OF US IN WHICH I FOUND MYSELF THE HUBBLE BUBBLE, BUT I DO NOT REPORTS SUGGEST THAT LIFE MIGHT OMINOUSLY BE IMITATING ART. COMPUTER PROGRAMS MONITOR EMPLOYEES, SECOND BY SECOND IN REAL TIME, AND ASSESS THEIR INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES. IN EFFECT, THESE CYBER-SNOOPS HAVE BECOME SUPER-BOSSES WHO RATE AND REWARD, OR PUNISH, HUMAN ENDEAVOUR BY INCREASINGLY TAKING CHARGE OF THE HIRING AND FIRING OF THE STAFFERS, WHO OFTEN CAN'T EVEN APPEAL TO ANY HIGHER AUTHORITY. ISAAC ASIMOV POSTULATED THAT ROBOTS, POWERED WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), CAN NEVER HARM HUMANS. THE PROBLEM WITH AI IS THAT IT CAN ON OCCASION BE JUST ARTIFICIAL, AS UNDERSCORED BY THE STORY OF THE PASSENGERS ON A PILOTLESS AIRCRAFT WHO RECEIVED A RECORDED MESSAGE FROM THE COCKPIT. "THIS IS A FULLY AUTOMATED FLIGHT IN WHICH THERE IS NO CHANCE OF HUMAN ERROR AND NOTHING CAN GO WRONG... NOTHING CAN GO WRONG... NOTHING CAN GO WRONG...."

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD, A MAN WAS ACCUSED OF BEING AN ELECTION GIMMICK AND EXPENSIVE DOLE. FINDING HIS VIRTUE AS SIMPLY BEING A 'SAFETY MEASURE FOR WOMEN', HOWEVER, WOULD BE PIGEONHOLING THE PROPOSAL. FREE MASS TRANSIT IS NOT A NOVEL IDEA. BUT WHEREVER IT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED, IT HAS BEEN ON A LIMITED SCALE. LUXEMBOURG, A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A POPULATION OF AROUND SIX LAKH PEOPLE, BECAME THE WORLD'S FIRST COUNTRY TO ANNOUNCE IN DECEMBER 2018 THAT IT WOULD PROVIDE ITS CITIZENS FREE UNIVERSAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT FROM MARCH 2020, CILING CONGESTION AND COMMUTING WOES. FREE BUS TRANSPORT WAS INTRODUCED IN DUNKIRK, A FRENCH CITY OF NEARLY 90,000, IN SEPTEMBER 2018. ONE MONTH IN, BUS RIDERSHIP WAS UP 50-85% ON

FRANCE. BIKES, CYCLES, ROPES, AND RICKSHAS OWN A TWO-WHEELER IN CHENNAI.



IF IT WORKS IN DUNKIRK...

TO SAVE. CHENNAI'S 1.6 LAKH METRO BUSSES ESTIMATED ₹25 A TICKET FOR A FULL TRIP) WILL BE SAVED BY THOSE ALREADY PAYING FOR TICKETS WHO WILL NOW TRAVEL FREE. THESE ARE NOT JUST SAVINGS, BUT PURCHASING POWER THAT ONE IS DIRECTLY PUTTING IN THE HANDS OF THE LOWER ECONOMIC SECTIONS. SUCH A MOVE WILL ALSO LEAD TO LARGE FAREX SAVINGS (AN ESTIMATED \$81 MILLION A YEAR FOR CHENNAI ALONE) DUE TO LOWER NEED FOR CRUDE IMPORTS. NOT TO MENTION SAVINGS ON LOGISTICS, WITH ROADS MORE DECONGESTED AND FUEL EFFICIENCY OF OTHER VEHICLES IMPROVED. FREE TRANSPORT ALSO NEEDS TO BE LOOKED AT THROUGH THE PRISM OF ENTITLEMENTS. FOR INSTANCE, MANY SHANTIES IN CHENNAI HAVE BEEN CLEARED AND THEIR INHABITANTS MOVED ON MASSE

UNEMPLOYED ARE BEING MOVED MASSIVELY UNLEASHED. THIS WILL HAVE AN INTER-GENERATIONAL IMPACT ON THEIR CHILDREN, DUE TO MORE DISPOSABLE INCOME. ADDITIONALLY, THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF MAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT FREE FOR ALL WOULD BE IMMENSE. AS A COROLLARY SOME 15 MILLION TONNES OF CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS WILL BE SAVED. TO BELIEVE THAT FREE MASS TRANSIT IS A 'FREEBIE' OR WASTEFUL IS, THEREFORE, QUITE MISLEADING. BY PROVIDING AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE, PEOPLE CAN BE GENTLY NUDGE TOWARDS CLEANER AND GREENER HABITS WITHOUT INDIA BECOMING A NANNY STATE. *Amerleel Narayanan is a Tamil Nadu Congress spokesperson, and Kanya Narayanan is a commerce graduate*

LIBERTY AND JUSTICE UNDER GOD. THE UNHANDLED APPROACH DUE TO THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN. WHEN CONVENTIONAL CURRENCY HAS BEEN BASED ON GOLD OR SILVER, BITCOIN IS BASED ON MATHEMATICS. ALREADY, THE EUROPEAN BANKING AUTHORITY AND OTHER SOURCES HAVE WARNED THAT BITCOIN USERS ARE NOT PROTECTED BY REFUND RIGHTS OR CHARGE-BACKS. THE RISKS IN ALLOWING CRYPTOCURRENCY ARE WELL-KNOWN. ANY CURRENCY MUST UNDERGO THE TEST OF DURABILITY, PORTABILITY AND DIVISIBILITY AND SOVEREIGN GUARANTEE FOR ITS VALUE AND ACCEPTANCE. **S KALYANASUNDARAM**  
*By email*