

## Jagran Lakecity University Igniting Minds Lecture Series

"Is a Nonkilling Society Possible?" - Keynote by Dr. Balwant (Bill) Bhaneja, Vice Chair, Governing Council, Center for Global Nonkilling, Honolulu, USA. ([www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org))

It is a great honour to be invited to speak to this distinguished audience of Jagran university's faculty and student body.

Universities play an important role in a democratic and engaged society. In addition to providing job-driven training for a modern economy, they also have responsibility for developing and broadening intellectual skills of their graduates capable of making ethical choices. The development of critical thinking skills in individuals is needed to evaluate and comprehend a complex world we live in -- to tackle profound challenges of poverty, growth, environment and conflicts that face us.

My presentation "Is A Nonkilling Society Possible" is divided into three parts – the first part deals with understanding of the 21<sup>st</sup> century paradigm of Nonkilling; the second focuses upon essentials of this new paradigm, and the third section concludes with examples of institutions and processes to create a Nonkilling Society. This presentation is just an apercu, hoping that it would pique your interest to delve in more detail about this leading-edge paradigm and related work taking place at the Centre of Global Nonkilling and globally.

What is peace? All my life, I've moved from one definition of peace to another. Peace now I describe in three simple words: 'No More Killing', a definition acquired from Prof. Glenn D. Paige. No-Killing, Nonkilling is my new understanding of peace because it shows that violence emanates from killing. Only when killing stops, seeds of genuine peace can begin to sprout. At the Center for Global Nonkilling we have brought out an excellent volume, *Nonkilling Security and the State* which shows possibility of new and existing nonkilling structures to end violence related to national security. I will not cover

that topic in this presentation directly but deal with it if needed during Qs-As. My intent today is to focus on the understanding of Nonkilling at its core.

Peace is a large tent and has always been awkward to define. Political leaders all over the world have used the term peace while pursuing militaristic policies, dropping bombs including the Atom Bomb in the name of peace (e.g. Hitler, Stalin, Bush).

There is also another definition of peace spoken by spiritual-religious people, that is, of peace within. It is search for internal peace. That kind of peace is vital, it can lead to faith in one's Self. It helps to motivate, provides courage in undertaking challenging tasks.

But when we are trying to build infrastructures of peace which Gandhi ji described as his "constructive program", we need something more tangible. Nonkilling Peace provides clarity that is missing from the above two definitions. The objective of nonkilling peace is unambiguous – peace which aims to stop killings without killing anyone. Glenn D. Paige defines a Nonkilling Society as (Paige, 2007: 1) “a human community, smallest to largest, local to global, characterized by no killing of humans, and no threats to kill; no weapons designed to kill humans and no justifications for using them; and no conditions of society dependent upon threat or use of killing force for maintenance or change.”

Is such a Nonkilling Society possible?

Some say "No!" and that killing is inevitable because of violent human nature, competition over scarce resources, and other factors. However, in 2002, a resounding "Yes!" was asserted in *Nonkilling Global Political Science* book by political scientist Glenn D. Paige. He argues that his is not a utopian vision.

I would like to dedicate this Lecture to Professor Dr. Glenn Durland Paige, an American scholar, a former US soldier who fought in the 1950s Korean War and later awakened to “No More Killing!” in 1974. His inquiry into Nonkilling human capabilities over the

past five decades has taken him to India, Pakistan, China, Russia, divided Korea, Japan, Jordan, Colombia, the Philippines and other countries. Including the American nonviolent tradition ranging from Henry Thoreau, Walt Whitman to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A part of his intellectual journey is described in his 1993 book, 'To Nonviolent Political Science: From Seasons of Violence'. He coined the term NONKILLING in the English language while working towards his Nonkilling Global Political Science treatise which is now translated and published in more than 30 languages, including eight spoken on this subcontinent - English, Hindi, Urdu, Bangla, Tamil, Malyalam, Sinhalese and Nepalese.

Glenn Paige marked his 85th birthday last year; he is the founding Chair of the Center for Global Nonkilling in Hawaii ([www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)). He is recipient of many awards including a Distinguished Career Award in 2004 for being a prolific teacher from American Political Science Association. Three years ago, he received prestigious Jamnalal Bajaj Gandhi Peace Award in Mumbai. This was for his pioneering work in research and education promoting Gandhian values internationally, and for his life-long work in taking Gandhi's message of principled nonviolence beyond civil disobedience and social protests into the realm of social science and public policy. His work showed that metrics of behavioural / social science methodology are required to evaluate and develop policies and programs for preventing global violence.

### **Peace, Nonviolence and Nonkilling**

Paige's insightful thinking can be seen in fine distinction he makes between peace, nonviolence and nonkilling asserting the non-interchangeability of the latter with peace and nonviolence. He writes:

"While it helps to gain acceptance of the unfamiliar term nonkilling and cooperation by pairing it independently with peace and nonviolence, the three are not interchangeable in my view. Let me try to explain:

Nonkilling will certainly contribute to nonviolence and peace. But nonviolence and peace do not necessarily lead to nonkilling. Nonkilling is empirically and logically precedent: one cannot work for nonviolence and peace or anything else if one is killed.

Examples, Gandhian leaders in recent past professing nonviolence have supported India's nuclear weapons programs, death penalty, wars, etc. US policymakers are talking of nonviolence as complement to military actions in Afghanistan, Iraq, etc. As you may know, "Peace is our Mission" is the motto of the US nuclear Strategic Air Command. Wars are fought for peace and veterans who kill are lauded in US for bringing peace.

Thus unqualified nonviolence and peace do not necessarily require nonkilling. But nonkilling by nature *must* contribute to conditions of nonviolence and peace. However, nonkilling, nonkilling nonviolence, and nonkilling peace can become a powerful linguistic transformational troika to carry humanity to a killing-free world--free of the psychological, economic, and environmental consequences of killing."

Having followed the great Jain master Acharya Tulsi for many years, and a recipient of the highest Jai Tulsi Anuvarat Award in 1995, Paige provides as an example the "nonviolence limits" of Jains of India. He writes:

"I have learned much from the Jains of India, perhaps the most comprehensively nonkilling religion-philosophy ever seen in the world. Animals, insects, plants microbes, atmosphere, all. One exercise in a 10-day Jain meditation camp I attended some years ago to raise consciousness is to walk barefoot in sandy ground and watch out not to step on ants. Monks cannot ride horses, cars, boats, or planes because they kill life. They walk barefoot all over India. Lay persons cannot become farmers or fishermen. Strict vegetarians. Women in cutting fruit must not cut seeds. Use water sparingly (water is life). Do not clap hands since sound and force do violence to life in air. (Recommend search Google for Jain religion). But even they are weak on not killing human beings. Some are military officers. Don't protest against patriotic wars or nuclear

weapons. Not visible in campaigns against death penalty in India. Or in diaspora are not prominent in peace campaigns and organizations throughout the world.”

He concludes: “So I prefer to concentrate at least on the *deliberate killing* (italics mine) of humans by humans. If others want to extend nonkilling to everything that exists in the universe that is perfectly fine and admirable—but not as a prerequisite to squarely facing up to ending killing of humans by humans from homicide, crime, terrorism to war.”

Nonviolence helps us in finding our core Self or enables us to delve into (abstract) philosophical, spiritual, or meditational contemplation and reflections. Its focus is however inwards, directed on oneself; it is primarily about seeking inner spirituality to make one not commit any “injury in thought, words and deeds” - civil disobedience/satyagraha is about testing one’s will, ethics, and morality.

Nonkilling, on the other hand, is aimed explicitly at actions for the betterment of fellow citizens, doing good through preventing injury/killing to self, others and group(s). Nonkilling seeks concrete actions urgently needed to prevent violence around us and in us. Our alpha to omega is defined by Life. From birth to natural death no human endeavor can be pursued if we are killed. Without life all issues/problems confronting us from wars, poverty, and environment cannot be solved. Principal 13 of the Nobel Peace Laureates’ Charter for a World Without Violence, calls upon “all to work together towards a just, killing-free world in which everyone has the right not to be killed and responsibility not to kill others’.

An obstacle to nonkilling is the belief of the myth that humans are killers and have animal nature. Paige’s work shows that less than 5 per cent of world population have ever killed anyone in a combat mission, and in most societies the rate of anyone having killed another person is less than one percent. A good example is to look at your home town and count murders committed each year; compare it with population size or compute percentage and you will see the truth of the nonkilling paradigm: most humans are not killers.

However, some human are serial killers who can kill without remorse and even pleasure. Examples of this can be found by google search for “world serial killers list.” The best neuroscience explanation is in brain scan research reported by criminologist Adrian Raine in *The Anatomy of Violence: The Biological Roots of Crime* (2013). Raine is optimistic that such brain dysfunction can be prevented and cured.

The *WHO Report on Violence and Health* in 2002 concluded that “*violence is a preventable disease*”. This was similar to the conclusion of Paige’s book *Nonkilling Global Political Science* that humans could stop killing each other, also published in 2002 independently from the *WHO Report*. Questions raised in both works were: how self-directed violence, inter-personal violence, and collective violence can be prevented? How lethality pertaining to suicides, homicides, and armed conflicts can be eliminated or reduced? Both works focussed upon need for systemic processes of remedial actions of above three kinds of violence with a serious anatomy of killing and cures, focussing upon the imminent need for measurable indices of lives saved.

### **Nonkilling Structures and Processes**

The Center for Global Nonkilling, a United Nations NGO (Non-governmental Organization) which was created in 2007 has a unique mission that is both inspirational for individuals and transformative for societies: “To promote change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world by means open to infinite human creativity in reverence for life.” It concentrates on scientific ‘evidence based approach’ to the problems of violence. This requires drawing upon, advancing, and combining the Spiritual, Scientific, Skill, and Arts capabilities of humankind for change. **‘Nonkilling is THE Measure of Human Progress’** is the flagship banner on its website [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)

To tackle human violence, we need to understand the processes of cause and effect, however complex and interdependent they may be. Paige formulates the questions of the science of nonkilling like this: —A nonkilling political science paradigm shift implies need for *a four-part logic of nonkilling analysis*. We need to know the causes of killing;

the causes of nonkilling; the causes of transition between killing and nonkilling; and the characteristics of completely killing-free societies.

Intersection between politics, violence and public policy is aptly demonstrated in a new work by clinical psychiatrist James Gilligan, *Why Some Politicians Are More Dangerous Than Others* (2011) Gilligan tackles the problem of homicide and suicide in American society with empirical data linking them to two USA political parties. His empirical study covering 1900-2007, shows that suicide-homicide rates went up during Republican administrations and down in Democratic ones. Gilligan is a professor of psychiatry at Yale Medical School and has been working on homicide and suicide in prisons for 40 years. The question raised by the study is: would changes in political regimes correlate with variations in suicide-homicide rates in other countries? Homicide and suicide are known universally to covary.

Some Nonkilling Security tendencies at public policy level that are worth noting, for example, in the existence of 27 countries that are without armies, 95 countries where capital punishment does not exist, and 47 countries where the principle of conscientious objection to military conscription is respected. In 1949 Costa Rica was first country to dismantle its armed forces, the budget previously for the military was instead re-allocated to education and training of teachers, the country maintains only a Police Guard.

In 21st century, we have now Ministries/Departments for Peace in select governments with strategic focus for a nonkilling peacebuilding. In September 2009, Costa Rica announced a Ministry of Peace and Justice; a year before in Nepal, a Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction was established with \$150 million budget; and two years before that a Department of Peace was created in Solomon Islands. Additionally, in the Catalan region of Spain there is now a Peace Department; another variation on the same theme in Philippines is the Office of Presidential Advisor on Peace Process which has been in existence for sometime. Similar developments are underway in Africa in places like Southern Sudan and Rwanda. At the global level, for nonkilling security there is a UN peacekeeping force, but specialised civil peace force trained in prevention, mediation,

and reconciliation is absent from the logistics in most national and international peace infrastructures.

### **Seven Grounds for Nonkilling Global Society**

Summarizing Paige's thesis, the possibility of a nonkilling global society rests upon seven grounds:

1. Most humans do not kill.
2. Powerful nonkilling potentials reside in the spiritual heritage of humankind.
3. Science demonstrates and forecasts nonkilling human capabilities.
4. Transitional nonkilling public policies such as abolition of the death penalty and recognition of conscientious objection to military service have been adopted by even violence-created nation states.
5. Various social institutions based upon nonkilling principles exist showing that in combination they already provide functional equivalents of nonkilling societies. Nonviolent popular struggles for political and socioeconomic change demonstrate increasingly powerful alternatives to revolutionary lethality.
6. Roots of nonkilling inspiration and experience can be discovered in historical traditions throughout the world.
7. Ultimately the promise of nonkilling transition rests upon examples of nonkilling individuals, men and women, celebrated and unknown, whose courageous lives testify to its achievability.

Prevention of violence at the local, national, regional and global level has to be one of the top objectives of any governance system including information needed on self-directed violence and collective violence. The progress toward nonkilling society is ultimately tied to all nation-states building, accepting, and diffusing a comprehensive global Nonkilling Ethic and educating public about it. An educational task needs to be aimed at the citizenry that exposes the long chain to killing and how to reverse it. ( Paige: 74-75).



WHO's *Global status report on violence prevention 2014* is a ground-breaking survey which reflects data from 133 countries, including India on interpersonal violence. Jointly published by WHO, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in its review, it calls for a scaling up of violence prevention programmes; stronger legislation and enforcement of laws relevant for violence prevention; and enhanced services for victims of violence.

### **Research, Education and Training as Tools of Action**

The Center for Global Nonkilling (CGNK) over the past decade has been working on mobilising expertise for a civil society nonkilling platform which now has 700 scholars from 300 universities in 73 countries in 19 research committees. Information on CGNK publications and details of research committees and membership are available on CGNK website: [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org) . The books and reports published by CGNK are a ready-made resource, mostly freely available for further research, teaching and training in this important field.

CGNK is also an early member of World Health Organization (WHO) Violence Prevention Alliance which has over 40 members from various parts of the world - mainly governmental and non-governmental representatives from public health background examining ways of dealing with the three categories of violence earlier described. Prof. Maorong Jiang who heads the Asian World Nonkilling Consortium at Creighton University, Nebraska, USA, commenting on the magnitude of problem of violence at local and global levels and the on the state of research in this field notes: "we have massive "heart disease" problem while we are treating on hand a skin rash."

Though homicide, suicide and war are among top ten causes of lethality, the deaths resulting from war (20%) have been noted to be less than homicide (30%) and suicide (50%). When one reviews government budgets worldwide, one notes general allocation pattern of resources in reverse order – a disproportionately higher funding for military and security sources and relative miniscule funds for either interpersonal or self-directed violence. With a view to develop new methods of tackling these killings, existence of global data could provide us insightful best practice strategies.

More comparative research data is beginning to emerge from diverse sources, for example the work done by Australia-based Institute of Economic and Social Studies under Steve Killelea, founder of Global Peace Index, and more recently Global Terrorism Index. We need more such indicators at national and global level from UN and International organizations such as WHO or the UN Agency on Drugs and Crime which brings out Global Report on Homicides.

Global Million Deaths Study is part of such data based approach in which India is a participant with a focus on pre-mature deaths (but not directly on three WHO typologies of violence mentioned earlier). Nationally, demand has to be made by civil society groups and media for availability of such evidence based data for transparency and accountability of political leadership and decision-makers.

Summarizing, what does this all tell us?

First that we humans are not inherently killers, humans are essentially nonkillers. We may be aggressive, but not killers by nature. Nonkilling societies are possible.

Second there is an empirical problem to be solved. Because vast resources for security are skewed to military interventions and warfare, new legislation for alternative policies, resources, programs and institutions for violence prevention is needed at all governmental and non-governmental levels. It is only when such national legislation and processes are in place, that an effective global monitoring system and support could be effective.

### **Violence and Health in India**

In India, the main source for data about personal violence and inter-personal violence has been the Registrar General of India which has mandate for recording of deaths with a “certified cause”, but most deaths do not have such records as these deaths could occur at home and without medical attention or part of collateral damage in communal

massacres or cross-border violence in which civilian killings do not get recorded by those responsible for violence.

A new terminology of “verbal autopsy” is being developed for missing information in the Million Death Study which examines premature mortality in low- and middle-income countries. (maternal and child health, alcohol, cancer, cardiovascular, injuries, malaria, and suicide). The results for the leading causes of such deaths will be provided to governments, research agencies, and media as they become available so that they can take action against preventable deaths.

India has had a history of communal massacres, the largest one in the past century resulted from the Partition of the sub-continent which saw the displacement of 11 to 13 million people and 500,000 to 1 million people killed in communal massacres. In the new millennium, 30 communal massacres have been listed to have taken place (2000-2013).

For homicides: worldwide intentional homicide rate in 2012 was 6.2 per 100,000 of population. In India, it was 3.5 per 100,000 which comes in the middle ranking countries, but the number of 433,555 murdered is still quite high [For Asia, figures were 2.9 per 100,000, while for Americas 16.3]

For suicides: worldwide about 800,000 people commit suicide every year, of these 135,000 (17%) are residents of India, a nation with 17.5% of world population.

The above numbers have been mainly collected from the Internet/Wikipedia. However, it is not the magnitude but the worth of each individual life that matters. Though there is a page on India’s law and action plans in country profiles in the 2014 Global Status Report, the data provided for interpersonal violence prevention shows big gaps. It lacks for instance information in sub-categories such as Youth violence, Child maltreatment, Intimate partner violence, Sexual violence and Elder Abuse.

Laws against most forms of violence have been enacted in the majority of countries. However, little is known about the quality of these laws as well as enforcement efforts,

and a careful review of these laws against internationally recognized standards would be an important step in improving their quality.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, transition to a nonkilling society is not impossible. Mobilization of efforts by India for example in Space and Nuclear Weapons technology development is well known. To achieve a Nonkilling India as per Gandhi ji's dreams may require a similar level of effort and commitment.

At CGNK over the past decade we moved from Paige's book, research and education, to advocacy for nonkilling global change in Special Consultative Status to UN – ECOSOC: 2014-2018 granted in July 2014. Initial actions have been tabling resolutions including Principle 13 of the Nobel Peace Laureates' *Charter for a World Without Violence* on the individual's right not to kill or be killed to be included in the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. Nonkilling statements have been submitted to the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

We need similar efforts at the national and civil society levels so that effective partnerships can be formed globally. These groups could effectively lobby for legislation calling upon all levels of government and civic bodies to work on developing measures and indices to account for killings with a plan of action for prevention. An example is a draft bill submitted to the Philippine Congress "Declaring a Peaceful and Nonkilling Philippines as a National Goal and Establishing the Philippine Index of Killing/Nonkilling for the Purpose." A political example is the Akhanda Nepal Party's inclusion of nonkilling in its platform. A civil society example is The Sarajevo Declaration for Nonkilling a Balkans resulting in establishment of a nonprofit Center for Nonkilling Balkans promulgated on occasion of the August 2014 World War I centennial. These can be models for creative adaptation in other countries.

It is time our understanding of issues pertaining to physical violence and their resolution in Nonkilling become an imperative in the 21st Century. How all this is to be

accomplished in a widespread manner now remains for us to devise. The Nonkilling human capability thesis offers a challenge for interdisciplinary cooperation and convergence in universities to promote change locally, nationally, and regionally toward a killing-free world of nonviolence, justice, and peace.

My deep gratitude to Professor Paige for providing the Nonkilling inspiration over the past decade, to Jagran Lakecity University, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Swarup for inviting me to speak this evening, and most of all to you to have come and be patient listeners.

Thank you.

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