

Reflections

India under siege

THANKS to the world media, particularly the BBC, for the live news coverage on the seriousness of India's battle against a covid tsunami.

It is heartbreaking to see the horrendous scenes of mass cremation, overflowing hospitals, soaring infections and desperate cries for help. I was very much moved by the sympathy and concern that so many people here in England have expressed through letters, emails and phone calls. My thanks to all of you for your solidarity at this time of global crisis, in which India is

in a dreadful situation and unable to cope with the pandemic.

Many countries in the world including the UK, USA and Singapore have already sent aid, with more on the way and other countries have already pledged to do so. While most of the local language media in India is complaisant to the ruling elite, the English and the Tamil channels are constantly bringing the latest news to the world.

Along with the reporting of the news, significant airtime is given to criticising and critiquing Prime Minister Modi. He is under immense pressure to do something

drastic— similar to the demonetization (withdrawal) of all ₹500 and ₹1,000 banknotes of the Mahatma Gandhi Series, which was in fact considered to be a total failure, although it did bring in a system that benefited the economy.

Modi has tightened his power, with more seats in the Parliament elections for his second term. His success is praised by his party, and he will be immortalised by every citizen of India if he issues an executive order to nationalise all private hospitals.

In this country we have the wonderful National Health Service (NHS), which was

born immediately after the Second World War crisis. Whether Modi will nationalise private hospitals is the big question and hotly debated in India — 'Where there's a will there's a way'. If he does, it will certainly make the poor Indians healthy, but will inevitably make some wealthy private hospitals poor.

It is a time of crisis, not only for India, but also for Modi. Will he join with the poor Indians since he calls himself the son of a poor grocer? Or will he side with the wealthy elite whom he holds close to his mighty 56 inch chest? Or will he continue

to hold both the rich and the poor at a convenient distance for his political survival, with the hope of being Prime Minister for life? Let us continue to support and pray for India and for Modi.

'Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me' Psalm 51:10.

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