

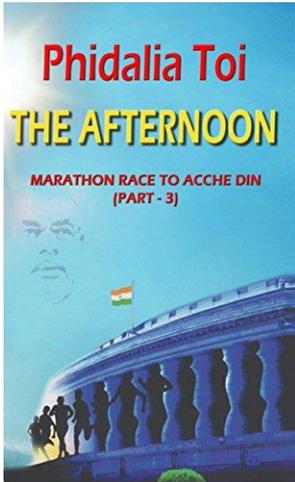
## Book Review on Phidalia Toi's *The Afternoon: Marathon Race To Acche Din – Part 3*

Dr Dalip Khetarpal

*Poet, critic, author, reviewer, editor and columnist.*

### Sieving truth from the hype

With a very keen perception, observation, updated knowledge, objectivity, panache, balance and in all fairness, Phidalia Toi, a renowned writer, composer and filmmaker of Meghalaya, picturesquely and insightfully depicted truthfully and impartially both the positive and negative aspects of the picture of the three phases of Modi's govt. as has been run by him for more than three years through three books: *The Dawn*, *The Morning* and *The Afternoon*. While the first two unfolded the first and second phases of Modi's rule respectively, *The Afternoon*, i.e. the current



book, elucidates the mid-phase of the government. However, it is really praiseworthy that the visionary, insightful and devoted author is hell-bent on accomplishing her task of assessing the performance of the whole five-year term of the govt. through two more books that have in advance already been symbolically entitled, *The Evening* and *The Dusk*.

With a historic mandate when Narendra Modi's saffron juggernaut rode to power in May 2014, every wretched common man thought of witnessing some glorious and promising near future in many crucial spheres of life as promised by him. Investors hoped for a business-friendly government, while 125 crore Indians, one-third of whom is below the poverty line, aspired for more jobs, affordable life and the coveted promised 'acche din'.

In *The Afternoon*, i.e. the mid-term of Modi's govt., the seriously hopeful author who has been deeply concerned with the welfare of the nation, endeavours to subtly scrutinize and boldly reveal the true extent of the delivery of Modi's tall poll promises. She could vividly see that statistics, as showcased by the Govt. are different from the ground reality at places. With all fairness, wisdom, deep insight and foresight, Toi probes, evaluates and analyses every inch of the working of the govt. and releases a detailed progress report of its performance realistically and analytically through her illuminative and informative magnum opus *The Afternoon* for the whole nation, rather the entire world to evaluate and see what the truth is. In

much the same way, the two prequels: the first *Achhe Din* (The Dawn) and the second, *The Morning* vividly, objectively, effectively and impartially delineated the positive and negative aspects of the initial two years of the rule of Modi.

### **The Brighter Side of the Govt.**

Toi, blessed with bifocal vision and penetrating insight, can easily perceive both the bright and dark sides of Modi's governance unbiasedly, with great clarity. After whatever has been seen, felt and proved in *The Dawn* and *The Dusk*, she could see how the Prime Minister, in *The Afternoon* realized that 'noontime temperature's scourge was bearable because the earth needed a tangible change'. For that, he had to accelerate the speed of socio-economic progress and induce revolutionary changes in many other areas of life too, so that when the nation enters the fourth phase, it should get relief from the 'searing hot pain of surgery'. The author quite reasonably feels that the approaching evening i.e. the fourth year of the govt. would be the opportune time to assess its output as well as that of all the previous years jointly and on the basis of this approach, there could be also a possible anticipation of the performance of the dusk i.e. the end of the term of the rule which would be resurrected only after fresh elections in 2019.

8<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016, the vital period of *The Afternoon*, as properly assessed by Toi, witnessed some short-lived 'financial pandemonium', because, through demonetization, Modi trod the uncharted terrain and cutting off the hydra-headed monster that had been damaging the Indian economy. One witnesses the popular support for this type of 'surgical operation', which though gave rise to few evils, was basically aimed at curbing black money, counterfeit notes, money laundering, superficial hike in real estate and funding of terrorists i.e. draining 'out muddied swamp of corruption,' eliminating 'the shadow of economy' and bridging the gulf between the haves and have-nots, says the author. The Prime Minister also seemed to see a 'foundation for a New India', underscoring the same time and again on his app with almost monthly televised address to the nation, *Mann ki Baat* that created stronger public faith and confidence in him.

As keenly observed by Toi, Narendra Modi's government has taken a number of initiatives and measures to directly impact the common man. Make in India was announced to ensure that MNCs implement their plans in such a way that employment is generated and contribute vitally to the economy. Make in India has gained momentum and many countries have signed deals with State and Central governments to boost both FDI and employment. There has been an increased inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) -----from \$34,487 billion in 2013 it has gone up to \$ 61,724 billion in 2017. The competitiveness of the nation

has also sufficiently risen, said the government. The World Economic Forum's Global Competitive Index shows how India has risen from 60<sup>th</sup> position to 39<sup>th</sup>. Also, bold initiatives like Digital India have brought millions of citizens into the mainstream economy and created a future for them. Optical fibre broadband network too has greatly expanded. The network, which covered 358 km in 2013-14, has now covered 2.05.404 km. Digital transactions, the government claims, went up from 254.5 crore in 2013-14 to 865.9 crore in 2016-17. The promotion of e-ways, which would install broadband connections in all villages by 2020, is also a vital step to modernize all rural areas of the country.

When *Swach Bharat* was announced, the writer saw how many people thought the government was giving too much importance to such a trivial issue. However, very soon the idea worked and awareness of cleanliness among the people increased; all villages, towns and cities also began to realize the importance and hygienic values of cleanliness. Railway Stations, parks and all public places are now cleaner than the past and the general public has been made to involve to create a mass movement wherein all work together in unison, deeming that cleanliness drive is a shared responsibility. This drive, that also scrapped the red beacons from cars, highlights how it could even go to the extent of cleaning the showy, empty, superficial VIP culture. The area under sanitation coverage has gone up

from 42 per cent in 2014 to 64 per cent in 2017. The number of toilets constructed has gone up from 48.76 lakh to 2.09 crore. The Prime Minister displayed the statistics on his App to show comparisons between 2014 and the current state.

Upgradation of various sectors for women empowerment covered agriculture, tourism, electrification, tele-density, mobile banking, distribution of LED bulbs and solar energy. To bring about transparency, the Prime Minister also motivated the people to participate in the surveys of government's performance on all fronts. *Sath hai, vishwas hai, ho raha vikas hai* (There is cooperation, there is confidence and progress is being made) Modi tweeted. The data as cited spoke volumes about the government's cardinal programs like Make in India, Clean India and Digital India. Under Make in India, electronics production has shot up from 11,198 crores in 2013 to a whopping 1,43,000 crores in 2017. In 2013, only 29 per cent people were satisfied with how things were going on in the country, but the figure went up to 65 per cent in 2016. The govt. claims that eighty percent people are happy with the way the government handles the economy, showing an increase of 57 per cent since 2013. Even black money was deposited in Jan Dhan bank account which hitherto had almost no balance. Direct Benefits Transfer of LPG subsidy accelerated the process and encouraged and involved those below poverty line in bank transactions. India has sufficiently raised its ranking in the index of World Economic Forum's Global competitiveness from 71<sup>th</sup>

position in 2014-15, 55<sup>th</sup> in 2015-16 and finally crossed 16<sup>th</sup> mark to rank 39<sup>th</sup> in the 2017 financial year. It has repealed 1100 outdated laws, created new ones and further also simplified certain facets of law. The govt. has also been expanding the scope of Socio-Economic and Caste Census of 2011 by updating the daily data of the well-being of even the poorest beneficiaries availing of various central rural welfare schemes. The Prime Minister's popularity rating, the government said, stands at 81 per cent. "The last three and a half years have seen concrete steps that have transformed people's lives," also tweeted the PM.

Though often been criticized by the opposition for many foreign tours, none can deny that Modi's foreign tours have made many friends and won the hearts of greatest diplomats and leaders like Donald Trump, Barak Obama, Shinzo Abe, Benjamin Netanyahu, Edouard Philippe, Ashraf Ghani and many more for his country. It was because of his influence and dynamic leadership that UAE criticized Pakistan sponsored terrorism. The author has aptly and wisely suggested that 'India should shrewdly work to expose Pakistan's propaganda until Pakistan falls flat on his own malicious propaganda against India'; she also suggested a rethink on Most Favored Nation (MFN) status given to Pakistan, for every peace talks between both the countries has only been a casualty till now. It is because India continually exposes terrorists' activities that

are supported by Pakistan that the U.S.A. blocked \$300 million of the military aid to Islamabad. India also hindered Pakistan from reaching out to U.N. chief and 15 Nation Security Council over the Kashmir dispute. The world knows the truth and sympathizes with India. Even China, a close ally of Pakistan, has set itself aloof from this crucial issue. However, to save itself from continual terrorists' border attacks, India even had to resort to surgical strikes to destroy Pakistan bases in Pak-occupied Kashmir. Along with troublesome jihadi terrorists and internal threats posed by the Maoists, tension in border areas still persists and there are continuous ceasefire violations by Pakistan, resulting in regular casualties of the soldiers. However, India is strong and capable enough to contain and keep itself back from all threats and dangers. Over the last few years, there has been a major crackdown on the number of terrorists caught by the security forces and derailing their plans. Indian Army has always displayed their valour by boldly defending the border at the cost of their lives and PM Modi also showed his political will that takes into account defence and national security as something most important. This apart, communal violence has also been sufficiently decreased and the country seems to be looking forward to focussing on vital mainstream issues.

The author praises the government for boldly and successfully, though inconveniently facing the Chinese government on various crucial issues involving Arunachal Pradesh and Dalai Lama. At the time of concluded Doklam

standoff, India showed its resistance and refused to yield to the Chinese pressure. The situation was such that India had to show a more aggressive way to deal with sensitive issues, but this also strengthened India's international image. The last presidential elections in Sri Lanka were rumoured to be influenced by Indian top leadership. Also, without caring for reactions, India has extended open support to Israel and both the countries are working together on many deals involving defense and technology. India has extended financial help to the countries like Bangladesh, Nepal and Afghanistan and that has resulted in increased regional influence. Bangladesh has allowed all goods from India to flow through its territory. Both the countries share power, water, energy, fuel and even their borders. Their relations have been termed as 'Fraternal Friendship'. During Suu Kyi's visit, two agreements were signed between India and Myanmar that included power, banking and insurance sectors besides increasing ties in areas like oil, gas, renewable energy, healthcare and agriculture. The PM of Sri Lanka promised India that it will not permit China to build harbours to endanger India's external security, neither would it allow any clandestine visit by Chinese nuclear submarines. The Afghanistan foreign minister termed India a 'brother country' and that 'the ties between the two are one that no enemy can hamper'. During recent years, India has entered into strategic partnerships with many countries, but '...France remains the original one'. Also, the launching of the South

Asian satellite will come a long way in India's plans to become the next Asian super-power. For the last several years, our armed forces have been asking for One Rank One Pension (OROP), but their repeated requests have always fallen on deaf ears. However, now, the Modi government ensured that OROP would be implemented in letter and spirit. Before the BJP government was in power, Indian scientists used to be satisfied with launching only three to four satellites. But now, India has set world records by launching 104 satellites. Amit Shah assured the Indian scientists that the Modi government will always support the scientists to the best of their ability.

The GST (Goods and Services Tax) or One Nation One Tax was a dream for traders and entrepreneurs throughout India. Modi made sure that the crucial bill was passed in the Parliament. The GST Bill is one of the most significant reforms, which makes India, one unified market. Goods and Services Tax, termed as the biggest tax revolution since independence that replaced multiple cascading taxes imposed by the central and state governments, was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017. The government has assured that the new reform does not have any adverse effect on the people in any way. Taxes on goods and services showed that most of the items would become cheaper after the implementation of GST and that again strengthened the people's faith in the intentions of the government. Before GST was introduced, the government had decreased the rate of income tax in the lowest slab from 10% to 5%, benefitting many middle-

class people. Schemes like *Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojna*, *Krishi Sinchai Yojna*, and *Sukanya Samridhi Yojna* have directly impacted the rural population by raising their standard of living.

Since independence, a lot of plannings and executions were done at the centre by the Planning Commission. Modi government intelligently replaced the commission with *Niti Aayog* that promises equal power to the states on matters of planning. In 2017, the old five-year plan was also substituted by the three year and 15-year plans, with explicit aims, agendas and objectives. *Niti Aayog* seeks the support of entrepreneurs and MSMEs to give a fillip to employment of all sections of the society. This *Aayog* also works as a corporate identity with an accountable CEO and answerable representatives.

After the bold initiative taken by the central government, the Supreme Court declared Triple Talaq unconstitutional and asked the government to introduce a law within six months. The decision attracted mixed opinions, with Muslim women openly supporting the government and with the opposition, as usual, opposing the government. Though these were the main achievements of Modi as also claimed by the govt., there are certain issues that have not been properly addressed, and of course some are yet to be addressed in the coming years. But on the whole, the government has surely instilled a feeling of hope among

the citizens by making them realize their rights, roles and responsibilities.

### **Setbacks and Pitfalls**

Phidalia, while observing the rosy picture as portrayed by the govt., is also alive and awake to its squalor and grimness. Her statistical analysis of Toi reveals that despite best efforts, best rhetoric and high-octane speeches by Modi, glaring deficiencies and flaws still remain, generating a sense of grave misgiving amongst the public. The government claims to be clean and progressive sans any corruption taint on it. While in reality, some glaring, some faint and some imperceptible taints are surely present in the system and functioning of the govt. While during the formation of the government, PM Modi said that this government would be for the poor and downtrodden, for farmers and for the Dalits. This government, doubtless, had worked day and night to ensure that the promise made by Modi is fulfilled. But no perceptible change or much improvement could be seen in the lot of the poor, downtrodden, farmers and dalits. Rather their complaints, grouse and grievances are multiplying day by day.

Demonetisation, an offbeat initiative by the PM, witnessed labourers and the general public (sans black money) queuing up at cashless ATMs, further resulting in many innocent deaths that saw no compensation or relief by the demonetiser. It also adversely affected 'micro and small

establishments employing 127.7 million workers'; GDP declined by around 2%. Though farmers were allowed to use Rs 500 banned notes for their transactions, they still had to sell their produce at prices much lower than the approved prices because due to demonetisation, demand decreased. Pathetically, even after 70 years of freedom, agriculture has no assured irrigation facilities and so, has to depend on the whims of monsoon. Unlike urbanites who are familiar with digital transactions, those from rural areas like, farmers and illiterates that also constitute 85% of the country's population, had perhaps, the toughest time of their life to withdraw their own hard-earned money even when in dire situations like marriage, death, medical treatment, etc. Man Mohan Singh seemed justified at least from some points of view when he said 'note-ban is an organized loot and legalized plunder'. His enlightened speech would surely have impacted the nation and capitalized on Modi's poor implementation of demonetisation drive if the Congress had only maintained a clean background, especially between 2004 and 2014.

Pathetically, earlier only 1% Indians owned 53% of the nation's wealth, but last year it rose to 59%. The Govt. has also failed to control inflation in various domestic items of daily use. GDP has further weakened those living in abject poverty and squalor also. Even economic development is useless because it is not benefitting the poor as desired and required. The gigantic task of providing water to every

household has not been accomplished. It is the constitutional and moral duty of the govt. to keep its citizens sound and healthy. For this, the central and state governments should take effective measures to control adulteration in food, milk and all edible items meant for public consumption. Though the apex food regulator has set up Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to check and punish adulterators, the corrupt food safety officers, instead of doing their duty honestly, are indulging in profiteering business by accepting bribes and allowing sub-standard and contaminated food to hold sway. Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus (MNT) that is to be provided free to all, has not reached every door-step, giving rise to child-related diseases. Many benign rivers across India have been so contaminated that they are unsafe or unfit for drinking. Uncontrollable factors like defecation on the river banks, discharge of domestic and industrial waste into the rivers, insufficient sewerage, lack of sewage treatment plants, mismanagement of water resources and careless execution of water supply are main causes that lead to water crisis and that need to be addressed instantly. On the occasion of World Water Day in March 2016, the global report Water Aid unfolded that a large number of people in India do not have access to clean and safe drinking water. Two years of continuous drought, insufficient or plummeting job-creation and rising prices have lowered domestic savings in banks, resulting in the fall of GNDI (Gross National Disposable Income) to 4.7% and NPA (non-performing assets) rose

from 2.45% to 4.63%. However, to some relief of the Govt, Ratan Tata has promised to give Rs 300 crore from Tata Trust 'for water and sanitation programs'. Paradoxically, India is both one of the poorest and also one of the richest countries in the world with a high prospective market for branded global luxury brands.

The perceptive abilities of Toi could also perceive that even after 32 years of the setting up of Sports Authority of India, the condition of sports in India still remains deplorable and there is an urgent need to search for capable and talented sportsmen and women. But this may not be possible simply because political interference, red-tapism, favouritism, government's insufficient financial support and apathy of sports officials, reign supreme. 2016 Olympics in Rio in Brazil would have been a great disaster for India, had not two sportswomen, P V Sandhu and Sakshi Malik brought silver and bronze medals respectively for the nation. The Rio Olympics organizers had also accused the Indian sports officials of being engaged in taking selfies instead of helping the athletes. Even the Sports Minister, Vijay Goel and his entourage were accused of 'aggressive and rude behaviour'. However, to achieve all targeted goals in sports and all projects and schemes of the Govt. there should be an independent Lokpal that could keep a strict vigil over all allegations of corruption against public servants of all shades.

Corruption sees no respite even in the afternoon of Modi's governance and Shah seems to be correct when once, perhaps, out of disappointment, depicted the Govt. as one of *jumla*. Vadra is still a free man though Modi promised to imprison him within 100 days of assuming office. 15 lakhs, as promised by the PM, have not been credited in anyone's bank account till date, as promised. The govt. has also failed to put a lid on the mysterious death of the judge, B H Loya who was hearing the Sohrabuddin fake encounter case wherein Shah was an accused. Shiv Sena has broken its old alliance with the BJP and will go it alone in the next elections in Maharashtra. Relations of the govt. with some student unions have also not been cordial. The tendency to categorize students as nationalists or anti-nationalists or as heroes and villains, only reveals insularity of thinking. As observed and known to the general public, the RSS and ABVP have undertaken the task of silencing or harassing those who do not fall in line with their ideology or who they consider anti-nationalists. Kanhaiya, Vemula and Muthukrishnan are some pathetic cases in point. The worst happens when one is victimized because of caste discrimination as it hurts the sensitive soul of the victim. Most ironically even terrorists like Kasab, Afzal Guru and many others of the same ilk were not beaten as Kanhaiya was thrashed in the Patiala High Court, New Delhi. Is our system insensitive to his being a scheduled tribe or to his anti-Sangh Parivar activities? Violent clashes between AISA and ABVP students arose and marred the festive mood of centenary

celebrations at Ramjas College of Delhi when two students, Umar Khalid and Shehla Rashid of JNU were invited by the College to join the celebration. Many students, teachers, journalists and policemen were injured in the clash. Doubtlessly, alleging that JNU is a den of anti-nationals and terrorists was tarnishing and damaging 'the rich legacy of this prestigious University'. Sadly, political patronage of student groups, instead of promoting peace and harmony, fuels chaos and violence. Similar clashes between SFI and ABVP on almost similar grounds were recently witnessed in Himachal Pradesh University. Though the PM replaced Samriti Irani with Prakash Javadekar to better the functioning of MHRD, results are still hopefully waited.

As painfully viewed by the author, Gurmehas Kaur whose father was martyred during the Kargil war in 1999 was trolled and threatened with rape for only expressing what she believed in, though all her tweets and background prove that she had never been anti-national. Because of such incidents, the RSS, obsessed with Hindutvatva, in collusion with some insensitive parliamentarians, have been accused of encouraging communal divide. Incidents of burning churches and beating clerics are increasing day by day. The choice of dates to celebrate Good Governance and Digital India precisely coincides with Christmas and Good Friday (the two globally significant days among the Christians) are clear signs of belittling Christians as if

forbidding them from participating in such national programs. The date and time chosen for banning cow-slaughter also precisely coincide with the eve of the holy month of Ramzañthe sacred month of the Muslims all over the world. Religious tolerance, hence, seems to be at stake. Chandrababu Naidu, disappointed with the budget wants to bid farewell to the BJP. While all citizens have been brought into the 'banking domain' in a cashless economy, tax evasion, black money, corruption and other burning issues and setbacks faded into oblivion, but correspondingly the sheen that surrounds Modi is also fading. Ironically, all these are drowned in the deafening sound of the slogan of bringing Achche Din, economic prosperity with a sufficient number of jobs for the frustrated teeming unemployed millions. Despite the PM's remarkable performance in media management, party building and toughest endeavour to keep the party clean, the masses are not satisfied with the way the govt. has delivered on its poll promises.

It was really disheartening for the author that in the BRICS summit held in Goa on Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2016, the PM had to be disappointed when BRICS document which instead of including India's anxiety for state-sponsored terrorists of Pakistan only condemned terrorism in neutral terms. China, besides deeming India as a good trade partner, has never been concerned with it's internal and external peace. India has always considered POK to be its legal and constitutional part. But it becomes most depressing when China through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

clearly declares Pakistan's ownership of the POK and that it has been illegally occupied by India. India also earned China's wrath when against the warning of Chinese Foreign Ministry, it allowed Dalai Lama to visit Arunachal Pradesh. The sixth India-China Joint Training Exercise in Nov. 2016 only displayed superficial affinity between these two countries. Russia still doubts whether India could retain its non-alignment policy and resist the pressure of joining the U.S. in case of an outbreak of war. It was also much displeased with India's signing the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with the U. S. Modi made infinite efforts to make SAARC work in its favour, but SAARC is 'embroiled' by Indo-Pak conflicts. Uncertainty over Indo-US bilateral ties arises when Trump proposed to alter visa rules, specifically with regard to US H-1B visa or non-immigrant visa that authorizes US companies to employ Indian professionals 'in specialized occupation'. Judging the Indians emotional well-being, India is placed at 122<sup>nd</sup> position in the World's Happiness Report of 2017 which is much behind Pakistan (80<sup>th</sup>) and Nepal (90<sup>th</sup>). This way, India is among the saddest nations and rather became sadder in 2016 i.e. sinking below its 118 rank. The WHO pointed out that over five crore Indians, especially in low and middle-income groups, suffer from various anxiety disorders. The total years that the number of disability lived around two years ago was 1,00,50,411, those with anxiety disorders was 35,19,527, while 7,88,000 committed suicide and many more

attempted suicide. Sadly, more women are affected by anxiety than men. Keeping into account the seriousness of the situation the Parliament passed the Mental Healthcare Bill in 2016, granting citizens full rights over his/her life and that if a person commits or attempts suicide under great strain, he should 'not be accused of a penal offence'.

The Supreme Court clearly pronounced that it is wrong to keep the implementation of Lokpal and Lokayukta Act of 2013 pending for long periods since it is an 'eminently workable piece of legislation'. Violating this pronouncement, cases, on some or the other pretext, are seen pending for unduly long periods in both the Courts. This also goes against the PM oft-repeated dictum: 'Minimum government and maximum governance'. Now, as matters stand, unless the PM is really honest, committed and serious in what all best he speaks, promises and commits and unless with awakened conscience, the whole nation is also equally committed, serious and ready for any positive change, there is going to be great confusion and chaos sans any development in any area of life. After all, all development and progress should be a shared responsibility and joint aim and dream of the Govt. and the masses

Without naming the Congress, Amit Shah said, "After years of corruption under the previous governments, we finally have a government that not even the opposition can accuse of corruption. But the opposition, armed with evidence, has been accusing the govt. of its various acts of

corruption in almost all spheres. Till date, it appears that Modi has been very focused and tries to do many things at the same time. Probably, he also seems to be the hardest ever working PM. But does his diligence bear the required and desired fruit is a pertinent query that often resounds in the minds of most men. The Govt. seems focused on building a strong platform that can enable growth. But after three and a half years there is still no concrete sign of the growth happening mainly due to global factors. A number of those contentious issues could have been avoided which take away the focus, and time is wasted in resolution. From all accounts, the biggest failure of this Govt. is in managing the Kashmir situation. In the appearing fourth book, *The Evening*, Toi, in all likelihood, would mention how the BJP by-poll defeat in Rajasthan and West Bengal should likely be a cause of serious concern, reality check and rude wake-up call for the Modi-Shah duo for the Congress managed to wrest two Lok Sabha seats and an assembly seat from the BJP. This way Modi's landslide victory in UP, Rajasthan and Gujarat also met with a rebuff. These results surely are a 'tectonic shift in North Indian politics'. The govt. has also failed to justify its fairness in the Rafale fighter jet deal with France. Modi's magic that had India in its thrall appears to be waning. The unfulfilled promises are piling up day by day; the development and good governance claims of PM seem to be an empty boast. The subtle analytical survey of

the author reveals that she has, with astounding success, sieved truth from the hype.

If the saffron party at all hopes to clinch another term in power, it is important that it only enters the fray with the proof of all major promises fulfilled and sustain a positive public perception. While its performance on many fronts remains debatable, it certainly still seems to have something that makes most party supporters hopeful of a better future. Now, only a little more than a year is left for the next elections and the govt. has to shift its focus on deliveries if it wants to return to power again. Now, only 2019 Lok Sabha elections will show whether the tall claims and promises made by Modi are false or true.

All laws, plans, schemes and reforms are redundant unless the Govt. implements them and the mindset of the civil society is also reformed. Above all, the author wittily, but ironically says, '...the noisy 'argumentative' Indian democracy is healthily strong and thriving, and above all, it is a mature democracy'.

Phidalia Toi has written *The Afternoon* with commendable honesty. The phenomenal book vividly highlights her breadth of vision, the mellowness of perception, insightfulness and precise reading and comprehension of the existing socio-political and economic reality as seen in the current set-up. It must surely have been an enlightening experience for all those who read it. At least, it was for me!

Title: The Afternoon: Marathon  
Race To Acche Din – Part 3

Author: Phidalia Toi

Publisher: Evincepub  
Publishing

Genre: Politics

Language: English

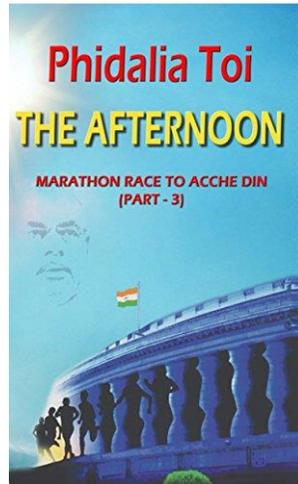
ASIN: B0779HLJMV

Paperback: NA

Price: Rs. 161

Available:

Evincepub Publishing &  
Amazon



#### Author's Bio



**Phidalia Toi** was born and raised in a small town called Jowai, in Meghalaya, North-east of India. She has acquired a Masters degree in Khasi Language Literature from North Eastern Hills University Shillong. She has also learnt Cinematography from Mumbai. Writing Lyrics, Novels and scripts for Dramas are her passions.

Reviewer's Bio

**Dr Dalip Khetarpal** worked as a Lecturer in English at Manchanda Delhi Public College, Delhi. He worked in various capacities, as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and H .O. D (English) in various academic institutes in Haryana. He was a Dy. Registrar and Joint Director at the Directorate of Technical Education, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Dr Dalip has also started a new genre in the field of poetry, which he would like to call "psycho-psychic flints".

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