



## INDIA ON AUGUST 15, 1947

### *Historic Messages*

**Mahatma Gandhi** : “Be humble; be forbearing. Now you will be tested through and through. Beware of power; power corrupts. Do not let yourself be entrapped by its pomp and pageantry. Remember you are in office to serve the poor in India’s villages,”

*(to West Bengal Ministers led by Chief Minister Prafulla Ghosh when they called on him at Calcutta on August 15, 1947)*

**Jawaharlal Nehru** : “At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future? The past is over and it is a future that beckons to us now. Freedom and power bring responsibility. The service of India means the service of millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.”

**Dr. S Radhakrishnan** : “History and legend will grow round this day. It marks a milestone in the march of our democracy. A significant date it is in the drama of the Indian people who are trying to rebuild and transform themselves. Through a long night of waiting, a night full of fateful portents and silent prayers for the dawn of freedom, of haunting specters of hunger and death, our sentinels kept watch, the lights were burning bright, till at last the dawn is breaking and we greet it with the utmost enthusiasm. When we are passing from a state of serfdom, a state of slavery and subjection to one of freedom and liberation, it is an occasion for

rejoicing. That it is being effected in such an orderly and dignified way is a matter for gratification. Our opportunities are great but let me warn you that when power outstrips ability, we will fall on evil days. We should develop competence and ability which would help us to utilise the opportunities which are now open to us. From tomorrow morning – from midnight today – we cannot throw the blame on the Britisher. We have to assume the responsibility ourselves for what we do. A free India will be judged by the way in which it will serve the interests of the common man in the matter of food, clothing, shelter and the social services. Unless we destroy corruption in high places, root out every trace of nepotism, love of power, profiteering the blackmarketing which have spoiled the good name of this great country in recent times, we will not be able to raise the standards of efficiency in administration as well as in the production and distribution of the necessary goods of life.”

**B.R.Ambedkar** : “My mind is so full of the future of our country that I feel I ought to take this occasion to give expression to some of my reflections thereon. What would happen to her independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she lose it again? This is the first thought that comes to my mind. It is not that India was never an independent country. The point is that she once lost the independence she had. Will she lose it a second time? It is this thought which makes me most anxious for the future. We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood. If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what must we do? The first thing in my judgment we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. It means we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution.”



We should all create a nation that is one of the best places to live in on this earth and which brings smiles to a billion faces.

## **THE RAFALE CONUNDRUM: NO EASY ANSWERS**

**Admiral (Retd) Arun Prakash**

Former Chief of Naval Staff

Ex-Chairman, National Maritime Foundation

The Indian decision to purchase 36 Rafale multi-role jet fighters from France in 'fly-away' condition will no doubt redress a critical inventory gap for the Indian Air Force (IAF) but it may turn out to be a Pyrrhic victory for French aerospace giant Dassault Aviation rather than the 'coup' it is being made out to be. This is a complex issue, with serious implications for India's security and cannot be viewed in simplistic 'win-lose' terms.

Aircraft attrition, obsolescence and declining numbers, constitute a triple spectre that haunts every Air Chief making him ask for more. The IAF's problem has been aggravated by the fact that a significant proportion of its combat strength consisted of the Soviet era MiG-21 of which about 850 were licence-produced by HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited). Its planned indigenous replacement, the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, promised by the DRDO by the early 1990s, has come 25 years late, and seems to be a case of 'too little, too late.'

Dwindling numbers, coupled with the operational challenge posed by rapidly modernizing air forces of neighbouring China and Pakistan, led the IAF to decide that a quick-fix for its problems was to induct additional numbers of the French Mirage-2000. This aircraft had an excellent record in IAF service and Vayu Bhavan felt that, it could become the future medium multi-role combat aircraft (MMRCA) not only bridging the gap between the Su-30 and the Tejas but also compensating for the eventual de-induction of the MiG-21s.

However, the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) was aware that Dassault was on the verge of closing down the Mirage-2000 production-line and switching to the more advanced Mirage-2000-5 version; a substantially different machine. Refusing to treat the IAF proposal as a 'repeat order' they insisted that a fresh staff requirement be drawn up and followed with a 'request for proposals' (RFP).

Once responses to the RFP were examined, the IAF wasted no time in initiating a rigorous evaluation process in which each of the six competing aircraft were assessed over the full range of maintenance and operational criteria laid down in the staff requirement. However the IAF had rendered an already complex process even more problematic by casting its net too wide. The six aircraft, short-listed for evaluation, fell into conspicuously different categories of vintage, weight, sophistication and cost; making it truly a contentious contest between 'apples and oranges'.

More than a decade after initiation of the MMRCA proposal, the MoD declared, in January 2012, that the Rafale had been selected for induction into the IAF. A letter of intent for acquisition of 126 aircraft was issued to Dassault Aviation; with 18 to be built in France and the rest to be assembled and manufactured in India by HAL. Contract negotiations commenced, soon after, with the programme costs being estimated at between US \$ 12-15 billion.

Although there has been no official pronouncement, in the 27 months that have elapsed since the conclusion of the MMRCA competition, the negotiations appeared to have been deadlocked with no contract in sight. Media speculation has focused on Dassault's lack of confidence in the ability of HAL to attain requisite aviation manufacturing standards. The direct implications are that: (a) Dassault will not stand guarantee for HAL-produced Rafales and (b) there will be significant cost escalations with figures of \$ 22-30 billion being mentioned.

Given HAL's dismal track-record of poor quality-control in every product it has delivered to the three Services, Dassault's reservations are understandable. However, this issue should have been addressed by the French company before it submitted its bid and not at the stage of contract negotiations. This appears to be almost a replay of the serious problems faced by the MoD in the Scorpene submarine project. In the latter case, M/S Thales of France invoked some fine print in the contract after it had been signed in good faith; leading to huge time delays and cost overruns. Obviously, there is need for caution when dealing with French firms.

The hiatus in conclusion of the Rafale contract

Under any circumstances do not let your speech be tainted by harshness.

- Sri Satya Sai Baba

has, inevitably, led to gossip and conjecture in the media, perhaps fuelled by losers in the MMRCA competition. Apart from picking holes in the Rafale, some commentators have castigated the IAF for a flawed force-planning process; focusing on three issues:

- The high cost of the Rafale, especially when compared to the 'formidable' Sukhoi-30 MK, which awaits further upgradation. Some predict that the hidden costs of the Rafale project could bankrupt future defence budgets.

- The 'operational niche' into which the IAF intends to place the Rafale seems odd, given that it has the Sukhoi-30 and Tejas at the 'heavy' and 'light' ends of the combat spectrum with the Indo-Russian 5th generation aircraft (PAK-FA) on the horizon.

- Aggravation of the IAF's logistical nightmare when an 8th type is added to its existing inventory of seven combat aircraft of Russian, British, French, and Indian origin.

Some of the observations merit the IAF's consideration. However, all is not mono-chromatic and four points deserve objective review.

The egregious failure of the DRDO and India's defence industrial complex to meet the operational needs of the IAF is matched only by the detachment shown by the latter towards the indigenous aeronautics industry. Had the IAF assumed positive 'ownership' of aircraft projects, starting with the HT-2 trainer and the HF-24 Marut fighter, it may not have had to seek a basic trainer, an advanced trainer and a MMRCA from abroad today. Even at this late stage a Directorate of Aircraft Design in Air HQ would help create a symbiotic linkage between the Air Staff and India's aerospace industry.

The persistent clamour for aircraft numbers or squadrons sounds convincing when cited in the context of a 'two-front' war. However, these numbers were stipulated in an era when two squadrons of MiG-21s could have been bought for the price of a single Rafale today. Conversely, the versatile capabilities and the invulnerability of a modern multi-role combat aircraft make it the equivalent of a dozen or more of its predecessors. The emphasis now must shift from

'dumb numbers' to 'smart capability'. There is food for thought in the fact that against the IAF's strength of 750-800 combat aircraft, the Royal Air Force and the French Air Force, undertake world-wide commitments with just 225 aircraft of two types each; the FAF with the Rafale and Mirage-2000 and the RAF with Tornados and Typhoons.

The above comparison is not really fair to the IAF since most of its inventory is of foreign origin. There is no guarantee, whatsoever, of how many aircraft will be available for combat on any day; given that the non-availability of even a small imported component can instantly ground an aircraft fleet. Here it must be noted that the Russian system has, despite repeated promises of reform, been the worst culprit for the past 25 years and its abysmal product-support has debilitated all three Services.

The fifth generation fighter aircraft (FGFA) or PAK-FA, being touted as an Indo-Russian joint project, is yet another example of rank bad faith on Russia's part. Based on a Russian pledge that they would share the design, engineering, testing and intellectual property in a 50-50 proportion, India was asked to contribute US \$ 300 million, up-front, and 35% of the \$ 15 billion project cost eventually. While details are under wraps, currently three prototype PAK-FAs are already flying in Russia with zero Indian participation or contribution. This project promises to become a repeat of the BrahMos; a Russian product given an ersatz Indo-Russian label.

Eyebrows may be raised as to why a major announcement regarding outright purchase of 36 French-built Rafales should have been made in Paris rather than Delhi. It is understood that the critical capability gap of the IAF compelled this expedient decision and to that extent it is to be cautiously welcomed.

However, delivering 36 Rafales to the IAF in two years is only possible if some aircraft are withdrawn from French service and refurbished; as was done in the case of British supplied Jaguars in 1978-79. This development reflects French politico-commercial compulsions and perhaps PM Modi's persuasive skills.

If this is just a modification of the original

Non-violence is the law of human beings, violence is the law of the brute.

- Mahatma Gandhi

MMRCA deal to expedite deliveries, it will further complicate the already complex negotiations and render a severe blow to the 'make in India' campaign as well as MoD's 'Defence Offsets' initiative. Presumably the whole contract will need to be re-drafted and re-negotiated.

However, if it is a change of heart on India's part, it may constitute a good all-round compromise. While partially satisfying French commercial interests, it permits India an honourable exit from the Rafale commitment; allowing it to review other options. The IAF, too, can look forward to an early boost for its combat capability, without being saddled with a crippling financial liability.

However, India will keep encountering such conundrums unless the politician acquires comprehension of complex security issues and installs, in the MoD, a professionally 'smart' organization that can undertake adroit management of the military hardware acquisition process; including the drafting, negotiation and implementation of complex contracts.

(Courtesy : South Asia Monitor 12th April 2015)



## **India-Pak Reset Modi-Sharif talks break India-Pakistan impasse**

**Cmdr. (Retd) C . Uday Bhaskar**

Director of the Society for Policy Studies  
(Former Director IDSA & NMF)

The SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) summit meeting that concluded on July 10) in the Russian city of Ufa resulted in two significant developments – both pertaining to the South Asian region. The six member SCO, that includes China, Russia and the four Central Asian republics excluding Turkmenistan, formally admitted India and Pakistan as full members who will join the group in 2016.

Consequently, the expanded SCO will have four nuclear weapon powers as members (Russia, China, India and Pakistan) and this is in contrast to the US-led NATO that has three nuclear weapon states – viz USA, France and UK.

However, this is not to suggest that the SCO is

an Asian riposte to the US-led NATO but the expanded SCO marks the beginning of a nascent Eurasian security framework and the geopolitical sub-text, wherein China and Russia are the leading members, has certain pointers.

The more dramatic outcome of Ufa is the meeting between Indian PM Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif on the sidelines of the SCO summit. The meeting, though announced earlier, had a very unexpected, albeit positive, development in that Modi accepted an invite to visit Pakistan in 2016 for the SAARC summit.

This was a case of surprise-surprise for the two South Asian neighbors have had a very tense relationship over the last year – ever since Modi assumed office in May 2014. Despite his high-octane diplomacy that has enabled Modi to meet a host of global leaders and his bilateral visits to the immediate neighborhood, Pakistan and Sharif have been visibly missing on the Modi diplomatic agenda.

Notwithstanding the fact that Sharif had attended the swearing-in ceremony of Modi in May 2014 in a commendable act of political sagacity, the bilateral has been strained ever since. In August last India called off the foreign secretary-level talks over Kashmir separatists and in the intervening months the relationship went further south.

Official engagement was suspended. The low point from the Indian perspective was the bail given by a Pakistan court to 26/11 Mumbai terror attack mastermind Zikur Rahman Lakhvi in April.

Pakistan's seeming intransigence over prosecuting the perpetrators of the Mumbai terror carnage has been a major source of anger and frustration in India and the most recent Chinese support to Pakistan in the UN Security Council has added to Indian ire. The domestic mood in India has been one of linking resumption of dialogue with Pakistan with the latter's tangible actions in relation to 26/11 and this has become a benchmark for India's Pakistan policy. The tension in the subcontinent was palpable and both sides have exchanged fire leading to the death of their soldiers and para-military personnel. From a global perspective, nuclear armed neighbors engaging in low-level military hostilities is a case of amber lights flickering.

We should cease to think in terms different states or provinces. Instead we should think that we are Indians and should develop a sense of unity.

- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

However, from April to July and Ufa, there evidently has been some catalyst that has allowed India to review and reset its Pakistan policy, absent any visible action by Islamabad. One can conjecture that India and Pakistan have had some back-channel dialogue that encouraged the Indian PM to reach out to his Pakistani counterpart during the month of Ramadan and some mango diplomacy was also at play. It may be recalled that Modi and Sharif had exchanged saris for their mothers during their first meeting and this is a case of distinctive South Asian symbolism.

What could be the triggers that shaped the Modi initiative to reach out to Sharif and take the first step as it were to break the impasse? One may infer that Pakistan, which is reeling under various domestic challenges, is carrying out its own reset of long held policies towards India. The two Sharifs – the PM and the Pak Army Chief - are differently dealing with a deteriorating politico-economic situation as also a fragile domestic security environment where sectarian and related jihadi violence are spreading through the country.

The plausible conjecture is that Pakistan has signaled tentative intent to address India's primary concerns over terrorism and this may have enabled Modi to take the steps he has at Ufa. The fact that both the PMs have been denounced by their domestic critics for ostensibly appeasing the other may well be an indicator that this is a 'good deal' – for the public dissatisfaction is equal on both sides.

The five point joint statement issued in Ufa – unusual for its brevity and density of content – is positive augury and the proposed meeting between the two National Security Advisers may be the beginning of a new dimension to the troubled India-Pakistan bilateral.

While this end to a brittle India-Pakistan impasse is welcome, it must be tempered with caution. There have been many hopes in the past that have been dashed and the Vajpayee-Musharraf agreement of January 2004 is case in point.

The symbolism of the Modi-Sharif meeting in Ufa is to be welcomed but the litmus test will be in the months ahead. Can the deeply embedded anxieties of both nations be assuaged in such a manner that their

suppressed aspirations can be realized? An earlier initiative in Russia – Tashkent (now part of Uzbekistan) of 1966 between then PM Lal Bahadur Shastri and Field Marshal Ayub Khan - remained arid. One can only hope that Ufa will be different though the path will be even more arduous.

(Courtesy : South Asia Monitor, July 2015)



## **Unfashionable Thoughts : IX An ex-policymaker's perspective on regulation in education**

**Dr. R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar I.A.S.(Retd)**  
Former Secretary HRD Govt.of India &  
Professor IIM Bangalore

*(Lecture delivered at Workshop on Education Policy at TISS, Hyderabad on 18 December 2013)*

### **V. Judiciary as the Ultimate Regulator**

There are many who are of the view that education is a public good and ought to be provided by Government, and further that in the interests of equity fees should be low even if the cost of providing is far higher than fees. For them the very idea of full recovery of the cost of education is an abomination. The legal validity of this view was adjudicated by the Supreme Court in the Mohini Jain case in 1992. It is the first in the series of cases spanning nearly a quarter of a century which reviewed the policies of State Governments for regulating admissions to self-financing colleges and of the fees charged by those colleges. Article 45 of the Constitution (as it stood then) obligated the State to provide within ten years of the commencement of the Constitution free and compulsory education to all children until they complete fourteen years of age. In respect of other stages and areas of education Article 41, a Directive Principle, recognised an individual's 'right to education'; however, that right was not absolute and was subject to the economic capacity of the Governments. In spite of these explicit constitutional provisions the Supreme Court bench discovered an unqualified right to education in the penumbra of Article 20 of the Constitution which

One of the biggest responsibilities of the educated women today is how to synthesize what has been valuable and timeless in our ancient traditions with what is good and valuable in modern thought.

guarantees the right to life and personal dignity. Following this discovery it held that the State was obligated to create adequate educational facilities to fulfill the right to education. The State could discharge its obligation either by setting up its own institutions or getting private institutions to set up institutions. By granting recognition to private educational institutions the State government created an agency to fulfill its obligation under the Constitution. As a private institution was only an agent of the State it was bound to collect the same fees as that charged by corresponding Government institutions, and no more. Any fees it might collect in excess of the fees charged by corresponding Government institutions was capitation fee, whose collection violated the right to equality guaranteed under Article 14 of the Constitution, and was consequently illegal. The Court rejected the argument that the cost of providing medical education was very much higher than the fees charged by Government medical colleges, and as fees are their main source of income self-financing medical colleges should be allowed to charge fees sufficient to recover costs. The Court did not accept the economic argument holding that Indian civilisation recognised education as one of the pious obligations of the human society, and never considered that education to be a commodity for sale. Needless to say, the judgment did not take into consideration its consequences, namely that the demand for professional education could not be met as State Governments did not have adequate resources to establish the requisite number of institutions, and few private organisations would have the deep pockets required to philanthropically provide highly subsidised professional education. Traditionally, judicial decision-making does not take into account the consequences of a decision. Thus if a court decides that a petitioner has a right it gives direction for enforcing the right without regard to the consequences of enforcing that right. Such an approach is legitimate if a court goes by the explicit provision of the Constitution or the original intent underlying that provision. However, if it pro-actively seeks to stretch the provision and seeks to fix a

problem on its own instead of reviewing the legality of Governmental policy or action to address a problem a court cannot wish away the consequences of its judgment lest the solution it offers is a solution that is worse than the problem. Whatever, within a few months of the Mohini Jain judgment, the Supreme Court realised that the Mohini Jain judgment was partly erroneous. It held in the Unnikrishnan case that only elementary education was a fundamental right, and the right to other stages of education was circumscribed by the limits of the economic capacity of the State and its development. The citizens of this country could not demand that the State should provide adequate number of medical colleges, engineering colleges and other educational institutions to satisfy all their educational needs. The Court also held that the State had no monopoly on the establishment of educational institutions. Self-financing institutions were a necessity in the prevailing context as Governments were not in a position to meet the demand for medical and technical education. Such institutions could not be compelled to charge the same fee as was charged in Governmental institutions, for the reason that they had to meet the cost of imparting education from their own resources and the main source, apart from donations and charities could only be the fees collected from the students. The scheme it laid down for admissions to and fees chargeable by self-financing institutions were broadly similar to the policies of the State Governments.

To jump the story, the Unnikrishnan judgment was not the last word in the matter of regulating self-financing institutions, all the more so as the litigation was enmeshed with determination of the right minorities were provided by Article 30 of the Constitution to establish and manage educational institutions. In 2002, for the first time in the history of the Supreme Court an eleven judge constitutional bench was constituted in the T.M.A Pai Foundation case for reviewing the regulatory policies of the State Governments in regard to self-financing institutions. However, in spite of the high-powered bench definitiveness proved

We must eschew the fallacy that all problems can be solved by governmental action.

- Nani Palkhivala

elusive as the bench gave six separate judgments. A year after the Pai judgment a five member bench was constituted in the Islamia Academy case to determine what exactly the import of the Pai case was. However consensus again eluded the bench and two separate judgments were delivered. Two years later, in 2005, in the Inamdar case a seven-Judge bench of the Supreme Court once again sought to determine what exactly the import of the Pai judgment was. Mercifully, the bench delivered a unanimous judgment holding that the right guaranteed by the Constitution to carry on an occupation or business included the right to establish self- financing educational institutions. Therefore legally there is no bar on a for-private organization setting up an educational institution. By virtue of the constitutional right to set up an educational institution as an occupation or business, the Government has no right to impose on institutions to which it does not provide any grant its reservation policy or appropriate to itself a quota of seats or fix fees lower than that necessary to recoup the cost of education. Such an imposition would amount to expropriation without compensation. Further, differential fee where in students admitted to management seats cross-subsidise students admitted to Government seats is not legal. Suffice to say, the hoary concept of education being a religious or philanthropic activity was knocked out, and so were the admission policies of State Governments which were in vogue for over two decades and largely validated by the Unnikrishnan case. However, it is premature to hold that Inamdar judgment is the last word on the subject. In 2010, in the Society for Unaided Schools of Rajasthan case, the Supreme Court adjudicated constitutionality of the provision in the RTE Act which mandated private unaided schools to fill a quarter of the seats with children from disadvantaged backgrounds in accordance with the rules framed by State Governments. While the dissenting judge went strictly by the Inamdar case the other two judges ingeniously distinguished the RTE provision from the law laid down in Inamdar case. Whatever, the law as it stands now is that in colleges the Government cannot impose a quota in

the matter of admissions while it can do so in regard to elementary schools. It is anybody's guess in what direction the case law would evolve in future.

There is hardly any area of education which is not subject to judicial review, and the case law is in a state of constant flux. To a certain extent this is inevitable as legal issues are malleable and can be subdivided to successfully contend that the case under consideration has to be distinguished from previous decisions. However, to a considerable extent, what had been described as the 'episodic, uneven and unpredictable' exercise of judicial power to review Government policies is a consequence of the way judiciary is organised in our country and has been functioning. The U.S. Supreme Court has discretionary power in the matter of admitting cases it wishes to hear. However, the Indian Supreme Court is organised on the principle that anyone in the country who feels that his constitutional right was violated could approach the Supreme Court. Such organisation was indeed necessary given that for the first time in Indian history the right to equality irrespective of class, creed or caste is enshrined in the Constitution, that that right to equality outlaws a patrimonial system of administration which does not distinguish between personal and public power, and further that it takes a long time for constitutional morality to take roots in a hierarchical society. As awareness of rights spread among the public and civil society activism gained ascendancy, judiciary came to be increasingly seen as an institutional safety net to protect the citizens from arbitrary exercise of power. That safety net became wider when in keeping with the spirit of the times the judiciary began to expand the scope of fundamental rights far beyond what was intended by the Constitution makers. One 'right' or the other covers every governmental policy and act, and it is not difficult to find a technical hook to latch on to each and every governmental action or policy and haul it to the juridical arena. Consequently, there is hardly any question in public arena that does not turn into a judicial one, and the remit of judicial review goes on expanding without limits like the expanding universe. In turn, that the size of High Courts and Supreme Court has been

China's extraordinary advances in recent decades have dragged the country up from totalitarian poverty to middle-income authoritarianism.

expanding relentlessly and this expansion contributes to the uneven and unpredictable exercise of judicial power. The Indian Supreme Court now can have thirty-one judges as compared to the nine of the U.S. Supreme Court. A consequence of the sprawling structure is that as a legal scholar put it, there is no such thing as the Indian Supreme Court. The Court is a composite of variable benches, and judicial interpretation is heavily influenced by the composition of the bench hearing a case. A good example is the conflicting opinions in the matter of conducting suggestion of a common All India entrance test for medical education in all types of institutions in order to reduce the hardship students face in having to appear in several entrance examinations. Such an examination was in fact suggested by a Supreme Court bench; yet a year later the majority of a three judge bench quashed a proposal of the Medical Council to conduct such an examination citing the ratio of the decision in the Pai case. The dissenting judge, however, upheld the proposal of the Medical College. Elaborating this theme and outlining the reforms needed would require a seminar by itself. That being so, I would confine myself to saying that higher judiciary is a very important player in regulation of education, and that regulation put in place by the courts themselves while exercising the power of judicial review by the court had often done as much to confuse as clarify, and had compounded rather than resolved problems.

## **VI. The AICTE Saga**

By 1986, then Independent India's second National Policy on Education was laid down, the growth of self-financing institutions in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu was too conspicuous to escape the notice of policymakers. There were two contending points of view regarding these institutions. One held that their activities should be curbed because it was iniquitous to provide access to education on the basis of economic status of the guardians and not on the basis of merit. The other held they were serving the social objective of widening the base of technical education by making the well-to-do pay not only the full cost of education but also cross-subsidise the education of meritorious

poor. Beyond outlining the alternate views the Challenge of Education, the discussion paper which preceded the Policy, did not examine the reasons which drove the growth of such institutions, and explore the realistic alternatives available to meet the demand for professional education. The Policy spoke eloquently of the nation assuming responsibility for providing adequate resources for development of education, and outlined in broad terms the various modalities for mobilising non-budgetary resources. It came out against capitation fees and commercialisation of education, even though neither the Policy nor its Programme of Action elaborated what was commercialisation. It scrupulously avoided the use of the expression self-financing institutions. However, the policy prescriptions suggest that commercialisation was a code word for self-financing institutions. The Policy also held out that 'an alternative system will be devised to involve private and voluntary effort in this sector of education, in conformity with accepted norms and goals'- inspiring words which were not acted upon then or later. Within a couple of years of the announcement of the Policy the economy began its plunge into the macroeconomic crisis of 1991. It was only in late 1990s that the economy recovered from the crisis, and it was only from 2003-04 that the economy entered a higher growth trajectory and be acclaimed as an emerging economy, and that the finances of Governments, particularly Central Government, began to show noticeable improvement. Hence the demand for professional education could continue to be met only by self-financing institutions till mid-2000s when Central Government began to expand the intake of its technical education institutions and establish new institutions including IITs, IIMs and All India Institutes of Medical Sciences... The age-old grant-in-aid model would not work as grant-in-aid would not cover capital expenditure which is quite substantial for professional colleges except law and teacher education, and aided institutions would have to collect the same as the corresponding Government institutions, and those fees were too low to recover capital expenditure. Once self-financing institutions had to meet the emerging

Angels fly, because they take themselves lightly.

- G.K.Chesterton

demand and they could recover costs the rhythm and pace of expansion of professional education was governed by the logic of markets. About half a century ago, eminent economist D.R.Gadgil characterised the Indian 'planned' economy as an economy which operated as a laissez faire economy modified in part by specific controls. That characterisation applies equally to the development of professional education system from mid-1970s. What in retrospect the NP E, 1986 did was to add an extra and more stringent layer of control over and above the regulation by State Governments and universities in whose jurisdiction self-financing institutions were located. Ever since Independence the Ministry of Education and the AICTE played an active role in promoting the development of technical education; now their role shifted from promotion to heavy handed regulation. The objectives of the regulatory system put in place by NPE included ensuring coordinated and integrated development of technical and management education, and maintenance of norms and standards in those areas of education. There were three components of the regulatory system. The first was a centralised licensing system to regulate the establishment and expansion of technical education institutions. The second was fee regulation. The third was a mandatory periodic performance appraisal system for universities and institutions imparting technical education. Fee regulation was attended to by the States subject to judicial pronouncements. The licensing system was administered by the AICTE which was vested with statutory powers by the AICTE Act, 1987. Accreditation was attended to by the NAB, an outfit of AICTE till 2010 when it was reconstituted as an autonomous body. The emergence of AICTE, a Central statutory regulatory authority with overriding powers in regard to sanction of new institutions, starting new courses in existing institutions, and imposing and enforcing national standards for facilities and faculty, aroused a great lot of resentment. The States resented the loss of monopoly to sanction the establishment and expansion of technical institutions. They found it

irksome to approach AICTE as a supplicant even for enhancing the seats in a polytechnic, not to speak of opening new engineering and management institutions. Universities found it galling that even their long established constituent technical and management institutions would have to pass the test of scrutiny by AICTE, and further that they no longer could start new courses. They also resented the erosion of their affiliating power. Promoters of private technical institutions found the centralised process for sanction too cumbersome. Within three years of the enactment of the AICTE Act Government appointed the Ramamurti Committee to review the NP E. That Committee gave vent to the widespread dissatisfaction with the over-centralised style of AICTE's operations, and the enormous delays in disposing cases. It suggested a more decentralised functioning through devolution of powers to the regional offices of AICTE.

(to be concluded)



## **WORLD'S WATER WOES**

**Prof. M.N. Sastri**

**"Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting over"- Mark Twain**

One important resource that has been a bone of dispute from the village to the international levels is water. It is essential for daily life and a wide spectrum of human activities as well as the health and functioning of the planet's ecosystems. Water will be more important than oil in this century. There are alternatives for oil but none for water.

About 97 per cent of water is in the seas. It is not fit for consumption because it is saline. Only about 3 per cent fresh water is available on Earth. But about two-thirds of this fresh water is locked up in the Arctic and Antarctic. This leaves only about 1 per cent of fresh water in the rivers, lakes and groundwater on which life depends. This quantity has been constant over thousands of years but its demand has been rising with increasing population, urbanization and mounting demand for agriculture, industry and domestic use. While the world population tripled in the 20th century,

Water is more critical than energy. We have alternative sources of energy.  
But with water, there is no other choice.

the use of fresh water has grown six-fold. Currently the world population stands at 7 billion. According to latest projections it is expected to hit 11 billion by 2100! With its rapidly rising use the potential per capita water availability for the world population is decreasing from 12.9 thousand cubic metres per year to 7.6 thousand cubic metres per year. The World Water Development Report (2015) says that by 2030, the world will only have 60% of the water it needs. Fresh water withdrawals for energy production, which currently account for 15 percent of world's total, are expected to increase by 20 percent by 2035. The agricultural sector is already the largest user of water resources, accounting for 70 percent of all freshwater withdrawals globally, and over 90 percent in most of the world's least developed countries. Already a combination of global climate change, increasing demands, and water mismanagement is leading to alarmingly rapid depletion of fresh water supplies in several regions of the world. A UN study projects that 30 nations will be water scarce in 2025, up from 20 in 1990. Eighteen of them are in the Middle East and North Africa, including Egypt, Israel, Somalia, Libya and Yemen. About 1.8 billion people will be living in countries or regions with absolute water scarcity and two thirds of the world population could be under water-stress conditions. The increasing competition for the diminishing water resources is leading to the risk of water related conflicts within and across the countries and is worsening the water scarcity for the already marginalized and poor communities. A daily struggle for water is one of the distressing burdens of poverty, especially for women and girls who spend long hours fetching water over long distances, invariably from sources that are often unclean or unaffordable. There are even episodes of these groups being cut off from using a particular water source.

Many countries discharge most of their waste water containing harmful substances into water systems with no preliminary purification. Every cubic metre of contaminated waste water discharged into water bodies spoils up to 8-10 cubic metres of pure water. In developing countries 70 percent of industrial wastes are dumped untreated into waters, polluting usable water supply. A recent report says that 80 percent of India's surface water is polluted with untreated sewerage flowing into water sources (TOI

28-6-2015).

A Comprehensive Global Impact Project report published in Nature (December 2013) states that , if the world warms up by just 20 C above the present level by 2100, which now seems all but unavoidable, up to one-fifth of the global population could suffer severe water shortages. The climate driven changes in evaporation and run-off of surface waters will result in a 40 percent worldwide increase in the number of people, who must manage with less than 500 cubic metres of water per year, a commonly accepted threshold to signify "absolute" water scarcity. Water scarcity in parts of Africa could become worse. Regions most at risk from water scarcity include parts of South US, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. By contrast India, tropical Africa and high latitudes in the Northern Hemisphere can expect to receive more water.

Several big rivers and fresh water lakes of the world are running dry from overuse. The Colorado River (US) known as the American Nile, with many dams and diversions along its 2,333 km length, provides water for 30 million people. It is so heavily tapped for agriculture, industry, and municipal uses along its course that it does not reach the sea in Mexico anymore. California's historic Hoover dam, completed in 1936, was erected to hold two years of river flow in reserve. Reeling under continued droughts over the last four years the lake levels have dropped more than 140 feet from their high. The waters in Lake Powell, the second largest water reserve in the US, which sits behind the Glen Canyon dam, have reached levels so low, that if the drought ended tomorrow, it could take nearly a decade for it to fill back up! For the first time in 2015, the California state officials ordered residents of every city and town to conserve water or face consequences (NYTimes, July 8, 2015). The Indus is the primary source of fresh water for most of Pakistan, a fast growing nation of more than 170 million people. This river is exploited to such an extent that it no longer flows into the Arabian Sea at the Port of Karachi. There is a five-fold drop in the per capita availability in Pakistan since independence. The Aral Sea, once the world's fourth inland fresh water lake with an area of 67,300 sq.km. is fed by Central Asia's biggest rivers, the Amu Darya in the south and the Syr Darya in the

All education springs from images of the future and all education creates images of the future.  
Significant part of education must be seen as the process by which we enlarge, enrich and improve  
the individual's image of the future. - Alvin Toffler

north, providing irrigation water to local croplands. With the diversion of these rivers for irrigation purposes, the Aral Sea has shrunk by 50 percent. Due to rising salinity the water is no longer suitable for agriculture. At the current rate of decline the lake is likely to disappear by 2020. Less than a fifth of the water flow in the 3,033 km long Rio Grande River running from SW Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico reaches the Gulf. The Yellow River, the second longest river in China with a length of 5,464 km. has been running dry since 1972 and not reaching the sea, thanks to diversions, largely for agriculture. Lake Chad, which straddles the borders of Chad, Niger and Cameroon in West Africa with an area of 22,772 sq.km. has been a source of fresh water and irrigation projects in each of these countries. Since 1963, the lake has shrunk to nearly twentieth of its original area resulting in shortage of water, and crop failures.

The National Centre for Atmospheric Research, Colorado, reported (2009) that some more of the mighty rivers, including the Ganges, the Niger, and the Yellow River (already cited) are drying up because of global warming. These affected rivers, running through heavily populated areas, are threatening food and water supply to millions living in some of the poorest regions. Other big rivers in Asia, such as the Brahmaputra in India and the Yangtze in China, though currently stable, could also begin shrinking because of gradual disappearance of the Himalayan glaciers and overuse.

Another important source of fresh water is groundwater. Water that occurs below the ground and is brought to the land surface by wells or springs or through pumping is referred to as groundwater. It occurs in permeable geologic formations called aquifers. There are two types of aquifers- renewable and non-renewable (fossil). A renewable aquifer is a shallow underground layer of water-bearing permeable rock or unconsolidated materials like clay, silt, gravel or sand from which water can be extracted through well or pumps. An artesian aquifer flows upward to the earth's surface without the need for pumping. A renewable aquifer is sustainable through recharging by rainwater. Most of the aquifers in India are renewable shallow aquifers. Fossil aquifers are non-renewable aquifers representing water

accumulated through geological changes thousands or even millions of years ago. Due to impermeability of the strata, these aquifers are not renewable with the water withdrawal eventually leading to near depletion. Once this fossil water is gone it is gone forever, potentially changing how and where we can live and grow food. An example is the Ogallala Aquifer in the US, which contains 3,400 cu.km of fresh water, which is being actively exploited by South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico for irrigation. There are 37 major aquifers around the world. The Great Artesian Basin in Australia is by far the world's largest aquifer. It supplies water to Queensland and remote parts of South Australia.

Many of the world's important food-producing regions in world depend on fresh water from the underground aquifers. More than 1.7 billion people rely on these aquifers that are being rapidly depleted. India, China, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan alone account for nearly half of the world's groundwater use. About 10 percent of world's food is produced by exploiting the aquifers. About 27 percent of irrigated land in the US depends upon the Ogallala non-renewable aquifer. It supplies at least one fifth of the total amount of the US agricultural harvest. If the aquifer goes empty more than twenty billion dollar worth of food will vanish from the markets. In the upper Ganges, the underground water reservoir needs 54 times as much rain as it currently receives to replenish the water that is being used by millions of people for farming and domestic purposes. In essence, we are using tomorrow's water from these aquifers to meet today's needs- a theft from the future likely to grow as droughts worsen and spread.

The leader of a team of hydrologists from the University of California, Irvine, after assessing the depletion of groundwater sources on a global scale using NASA's satellite data, observed in June 2015, that "if the world used groundwater at the level it is being used, there is a high chance that it could be depleted to the point that we can no longer use it in my lifetime in certain areas." The team reports that aquifers at risk number 21 out of 37 major aquifers across China, India, Saudi Arabia and the US. Thirteen of these declining aquifers are classified as being

Civilization is a movement and not a condition, a voyage and not a harbour.

- Arnold Toynbee

## A NIGHT IN THE FOREST

Prof. Manoj Das

( A seer among scholars the venerable Prof Manoj Das who lives in Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, has graciously permitted the publication of this essay from his book *My Little India* )

It seemed to be an endless drive. 'You're tired, aren't you? Well, we should reach the Anamalais forest soon after the sundown and a full night is at your disposal for your rest,' my guide assured me as we drove along. 'The new forest bungalow is beautiful,' he added.

If not rest, which appeared to be an unreachable luxury, I surely needed some sleep, for I had worked for the greater part of the past night on my weekly column for a national daily to which I was then committed.

But even though hours of road speedily slipped through our wheels, there was no sign of the beautiful bungalow as we drove along the quiet range of hills identifying the forest between Kerala and Tamilnadu. It was too late when we realized that we had chosen a wrong route.

At last we were greeted by the official gateway into the forest, the reserved haven for wild animals and a valley for taming and training elephants. The new bungalow, under a bluish patch of light, emerged like an oasis. It was past midnight and rarely ever had I craved for a bed more eagerly.

The manager of the bungalow gaped at us in disbelief. Three big officers who had arrived in the early hours of the night with their families, unannounced, had bluffed their way into the suites, telling the manager that our travel plan had been altered.

'But that is absurd, dishonest, and for the officers of their rank to do so is criminal!' shouted my guide. 'Where are they?' he demanded, stepping onto the verandah and heading towards the suites.

Pale as his own shadow, the manager, his hands folded, informed him that the party had gone to sleep. My young guide was an excellent man, but he was a jealous caretaker of his guest and was always ready

“highly stressed”, “extremely stressed” or “overstressed”, with most severe situation seen in dry areas where little or no water is seeping into the ground to replenish the water that is being pumped out. One example under the highly stressed category is the aquifer beneath California’s Central Valley. Examples under the overstressed category are the Arabian aquifer system, the Indus Basin aquifer of NW India and Pakistan and the Murzuk-Djabo Basin aquifer in North Africa.

Four of the world’s top irrigators- China, India, Pakistan and the US- are pumping groundwater faster than it is being replenished in crucial crop-producing areas. But the problem is becoming more serious in India, where 60 percent of irrigated land depends on groundwater. Considered as the largest user of groundwater in the world, India is estimated to be using 230 cubic kilometers of groundwater per year, representing over a quarter of the global total. More than 60 percent of irrigated agriculture and 85 percent of drinking water supplies are dependent on groundwater. If the current trends continue, in twenty years about 60 percent of all of India’s aquifers will be in a critical condition. In addition to the breadbasket states of Punjab and Haryana, the groundwater levels are falling at alarming rates at an average of one metre every three years in AP, UP, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamilnadu. Pumping out water from the aquifers in the coastal zones at a fast pace is causing the intrusion of sea water into these aquifers turning them saline and making the groundwater unfit for use.

Groundwater depletion in India has long been a vexing problem. The availability of inexpensive motor pumps and the government’s populist give away of heavily subsidized electricity and fuel make the cost of pumping water over and above their basic need only marginal. As a result farmers are engaged in a race to pump as much water as they can outwitting their neighbours!

This scenario of looming water crisis makes the well known adage “someone spends money like water” pass?. Now the society should realize that water is more precious than money!



Commonsense in an uncommon degree is what the world calls wisdom.

- Coleridge

for a fight at the sign of the slightest disrespect to his charge. He had already chosen the doors on which to plant his first knock - the doors that mildly vibrated to the sound of a duet of carefree and what appeared to be highly satisfied snoring. What could be more satisfying than stealing the sleep from a tired, unsuspecting lot like us!

I not only checked my guide from acting but also dragged him down near the car. 'Look here, my friend, even if you succeed in arousing the bureaucrats, which would be a miracle, you cannot and should not dislodge them at this hour of the night. They would be irritated and, consequently, vengeful too. Don't forget they are with their families - in the role of their protectors. Why sacrifice the rest of the night at the altar of discord? Let's sprawl on the verandah. I hope that little dog yonder would notify us of any prowling tiger.' But the manager politely reminded us about the old bungalow in the interior of the forest and assured us that it was unoccupied.

'Kindly eat your dinner - we have the food ready - and then I will lead you there.'

'Eat? Eat our dinner after being refused shelter?' said my guide. 'What do you think our guest is? A common holidaymaker? We will not touch even a drop of water here! I cannot sleep until I had reported this goondaism to our chief secretary and the minister concerned.'

We were in the car again, the manager's pilot jeep leading the way. Our new destination could not have been more than a kilometre away. Evidently it had stopped receiving important guests and its ground floor served as homes for two or three forest guards who, too, were away probably on their nocturnal duty. We were received by a herd of barking deer crowding the portico. Despite coming under the focus of two pairs of bright light, they were in no hurry to disperse, a sign that they had not been quite exposed to the beast in man, an occasional poacher notwithstanding.

The guards were summoned through some signal and the rooms upstairs were cleaned on a war footing. I was about to lie down when my guide appeared with a loaf of bread and an orange.

'How wrong it was of me to deprive you of your normal dinner!' He wiped his eyes. 'I cared more for my ego than for your need.'

'Believe me, my friend, I had forgotten hunger. Since you remind me of it, I assure you nothing could serve at this hour as dinner - or should we say breakfast - better than an orange.' It took me some time to convince myself that I meant what I said.

Once he was gone, I persuaded my sleep to wait for the next night, hopefully, and dragging a chair close to the open window, made myself comfortable in it, and tried to persuade the spirit of the sylvan night to unfold to me as much of its mystery as it would care to.

I was not disappointed. The moonlight and the chiaroscuro it made with the loving assistance of a million trees sporting foliage of shimmering silver, gave the forest a throbbing, dreamy and magical personality meant only for the silent nights.

Silent, but not in the normal sense of the term. Besides the spurts of noises made by creatures unknown to me, there were, in the atmosphere, it seemed, the vibrations of some inaudible communication among the trees and they were quite musical in an extraordinary and subtle way. For a moment - though I could not have kept track of the duration of that moment - I felt it was possible to become one with that music and if one could do that, one could gain an open sesame to a very different but a very real world invisibly interspersed with our gross physical world.

I felt as though I had reached the threshold of that world but had not qualified myself to step into it. Even then it was a blessing, for by the time the numerous birds began announcing the dawn, I felt I've had a sip of the elixir for rejuvenation, totally alienating myself from the effects of two consecutive sleepless nights.

As soon as I came down, the manager of the new guesthouse greeted me. 'Sir, one of those officers, the leader of their team, had booked a suite in our bungalow last year. But, on arrival, he was denied accommodation because a ministerial party had

The mind of knowledge and the will of action are not all; there is within you a heart whose demand is for delight .... for the soul's satisfaction your nature must be turned.

occupied it. How could I have imagined that the gentleman would prove a curse for you, out to avenge his old discomfiture?'

I wish I could assure the manager that the gentleman and his tribe, far from being a curse, had been a blessing for me. I could not have had my rendezvous with the forest of the night had I not been hurled into the company of barking deer.

But I am sure, had the bureaucrats had a glimpse of my chauffeur, MGR's favourite, they would have bitten their tongues till they had bled!

The slow unfolding of the dawn, a daily occurrence, appeared like a miracle. Alas, how many miracles we miss marveling at simply because they were daily occurrences!

As we began walking, leaving the jeep near a stream, I requested the forest officer, who had been kind and alert enough to report so early for taking me around, and their two deputies, to refrain from using their long torch lights, for Nature's light was busy working out wonders of art all over the forest. If it smiled over a plethora of wild flowers, it tickled a covey of chicks in their nests to cheep out their sense of sweet bewilderment and the elder birds to flutter their wings before taking off. 'Sorry,' muttered the forester because he switched on his torch, but he was confident of showing me something worthwhile.

'Look,' he said, fixing the light on the sand. 'A tigress has just preceded us in her morning walk guiding her cubs along.'

He surely knew that there was hardly any chance of our feeling elated at his discovery. He hastened to add, 'In this Abhayaranya - the forest in which animals can live fearlessly - they are not the only ones to be safe from man. Man, too, is safe from them. It is never by instinct that they act hostile towards man, but by experience. Poachers are the enemies of the climate of coexistence in this forest. But for their mischief, I could show you the tigress suckling her cubs and she would not mind at all.'

'Better we do with meeting the tiger in the zoo,' our photographer whispered to my guide.



## Towards a sustainable, humane society

**Prof. Jandhyala B.G. Tilak**

National University of Educational Planning  
and Administration in New Delhi

A university stands for humanism, for tolerance, for progress, for the adventure of ideas and the search for truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards ever higher objectives. If universities discharge their duties adequately, then all is well with the nation and the people.

### Jawaharlal Nehru

*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam* is a phrase drawn from ancient Indian Vedic literature that simply means 'global family'. It is not just about peace and harmony among the people living in different parts of the world, but also about a truth that somehow the whole of humankind has to live together like a family in peace and harmony and that any power in the world, big or small cannot have its own way while disregarding others.

Since ancient times, the most important objective of education in Asia has been to inculcate universal human values and to prepare the citizens needed for the creation of a humane *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* – the global family. This was clear in Confucianism as well as in the Vedic values which have been most influential in the laying of the ethical, spiritual and philosophical foundations of Asian societies, emphasising peace and global harmony for several centuries, if not millennia.

Excellence, equity, justice, compassion, caring and harmony were the underpinning values of the ancient universities in countries like India. Famous seats of higher learning of the ancient period like Nalanda, Takshashila (also known as Taxila) and Vikramaditya in India stand as a testimony to this.

As valuable 'public goods' that the whole society cherished were produced by the education systems in abundance, education was accorded a high pedestal in the ancient societies in Asia and education systems received the unquestioned patronage of the entire society – the rulers and the ruled. Teachers were widely respected by all, as it is they who imparted the values

The modern research university, a marriage of the Oxbridge college and the German research institute, was invented in America, and has become the gold standard for the world.

- *The Economist*, March 28 - April 3, 2015

of high importance to young minds and moulded the future citizens of the global family.

Even though Asia consisted of populations with diverse rich civilisations, cultures, religions, ethnicities and faiths, their development paths were deeply embedded in values such as peace, prosperity and human welfare. The creation of a humane and just society was an important objective of education. This tradition continued even during the medieval period.

### **Materialism**

However, all this changed over the years. The erosion of these value-based institutions of learning started noticeably during the colonial period and, as Mahatma Gandhi described, the 'beautiful tree' was uprooted. In the current era of globalisation, the pace of change has been dramatic. Nations and social systems are in rapid transition. Continuities with the past are rarely found. Traditional values gave in to new values.

With very few exceptions, such as in the case of Bhutan which has been striving for 'human happiness', most societies today place undue emphasis on materialistic development and the purpose of education is redefined as to orient it towards the creation of materialistic prosperity as against human values of utmost and universal significance. Few societies aim at creating a balance between materialistic values and intangible basic human values.

During the post-colonial period, the present neoliberal phase is the most important and has, in a very significant way, brought in several questionable ideas on the very nature of societies and their development and methods and strategies of development, including the development of education systems.

The hitherto unquestioned role of the state is attacked. New relationships between the state, markets and education are defined. New elucidation is provided to imply that the state should play only a facilitating role to enable the markets to work.

Novel conceptual paradigms have emerged that have given, inter alia, new interpretations to the very nature and purpose of education. Education is considered merely as an instrument for the creation

of economic wealth. Education systems are increasingly getting re-oriented to serve not even the nation state, but national and global capital markets.

There is a significant shift in the perception of education from it being a public good, a global public good, to a private good, a commodity that can be subject to all, even the vulgar, principles of markets.

During the period of post-socialism and neoliberalism, this is happening rapidly even in some of the tradition-bound societies and erstwhile communist societies. Even theories and methods of research in education, in addition to policy approaches, are seriously influenced by neoliberal approaches. The familiar contours of globalisation are rarely challenged.

### **Western neoliberal values**

Diversity in the development models adopted by different countries of the Asian region is so high that few would say that there is an Asian model of development. As Philip Altbach observes, "no Asian university is truly Asian in origin" or as it has developed over the years. All are based on Western academic models and traditions and universities of the 21st century are increasingly based on the Western neoliberal values.

At this point the pendulum has swung too much to the extreme. Increasingly many sections of society have expressed that these trends need to be reversed; humanism has to be brought back to be the pivot of human society.

This is the most serious challenge most systems of education – particularly higher education systems in Asian countries - face. In the era of globalisation this quest becomes more imperative as we need good quality global citizens and production of good global citizens is the responsibility of education systems.

In order to develop a humanistic society, a humane educational system is absolutely essential. Education systems need to be carefully nurtured towards this goal and the traditional values for which education systems stood need to be resurrected. They need to be restructured to again become places for the cultivation of intellect and humanism.

The public good nature of education has to be restored. In this task, the role of the state assumes

One pen and one book can change the world.

- Malala Yousafzai

utmost importance. The state cannot continue abdicating its responsibility for developing a strong, vibrant, humane system of education to the markets, private players and international actors. Research in comparative education has provided valuable evidence of the grave consequences of excessive reliance on the private sector in many countries in the region.

A fragile under-developed system of education based on weak foundations has been found to be a serious bottleneck in national development, in ensuring political stability, social harmony and economic growth. Literature on comparative education both within the region and in the world at large has also shown that countries with strong public education systems, including specifically strong public higher education systems, have the capacity to ensure harmony, peace and prosperity among and to their people.

The creation of an equitable and just society also requires an equitable and non-discriminatory education system, where people from different strata of society enjoy equal opportunities to pursue their educational aspirations, to become effective partners in development and to contribute to the development of a humane society.

Elitist and authoritarian systems of education do not contribute towards this goal. Market-based models of education systems that rely on financing by students and private players hinder the growth of an equitable education system and a just society.

### **A humane society**

It is also important that education systems are carefully nurtured so as to promote understanding of and respect for the multiple perspectives of various cultural, religious, ethnic and other strata of society, and of traditional indigenous as well as modern modes of living. This is necessary for promoting harmonious living among the increasingly fractured society in many countries.

Goals of individual advancement and human well-being have to be simultaneously met by the system. The co-existence of traditional and indigenous social systems along with modern systems has to be recognised and valued.

A humane society requires harmony not only

between different strata of the population of the society and between traditional and modern systems, but also between people and nature. It means non-violence against people, animals and the environment. Hence sustainable development becomes an integral part of a humane society.

A humane society requires, for its very survival, not only scientists, engineers, doctors, but also philosophers and critical thinkers and organic intellectuals, to use the term coined by Antonio Gramsci.

Only a humanistic education system that combines sciences, engineering and technology with humanities, social sciences and liberal arts, can produce such critical thinkers, intellectuals, conscience-keepers and revolutionaries, who can understand and draw inspiration from the past, live in the present and develop a vision for the future and contribute to the creation of vasudhaiva kutumbakam.

A humane society is perhaps both a utopian and practical idea. Hence it requires utopian, romantic, unconventional, innovative, as well as practical and constructive, ways of imagining and reimagining visions of development of humane education systems. Humane education is the very texture of life, without which the modern world would vanish.

Asian countries associated with a rich historical heritage of pluralistic cultures can and may lead the world education systems in this direction to rediscover and resurrect, thus, the paradise that we are fast losing.



## **THE TRINITY: AADHAAR, DIRECT CASH TRANSFERS AND JAN DHAN YOJANA**

A Review of the Programmes for Delivery of Services

**Prof C. V. Raghavulu**

Former vice chancellor, Acharya Nagarjuna University  
Retd. Professor of Public Administration, Andhra University

Good Governance has many dimensions such as accountability, transparency and efficiency. The immediate focus, as Dr. C. Rangarajan noted, should be on improving the delivery systems. The various programmes must be implemented in a time frame,

We live in a contaminated moral environment.

- Vaclav Havel

and realize the expected outcomes. Economists / policy makers base policies on many assumptions, one of them being successful implementation. But policy by itself is not a magic wand. It is common knowledge that the performance of many government schemes has been disappointing due to policy-implementation lag. UID or Universal Identification Programme, also referred to as Aadhaar, and Direct Cash Transfers (DCT or Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT)) and Jan Dhan Yojana (JDY) may be considered as instruments or aids in the delivery of services/subsidies to the targeted population. Supporters of UID and DCT are convinced of their beneficial outcomes, with a potential to be transformative, whereas their critics are vociferous about the adverse consequences of these programmes. Among the UID'S beneficial effects are reduction in corruption and leakages, facilitating the voting processes and improvement of internal security. A study by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy has estimated that linking of Aadhaar with DCT for major programmes of the government can lead to huge savings. A third component integral to the UID and DCT is the biometric identification technology which would verify and authenticate in weeding out fraudulent cases from the UID registrations. Further, cash transfers into the bank accounts of the consumers or clients are considered better than subsidies. In their analysis of MNREGA, Bhagawati & Panagariya point to the inefficiencies of the programme and conclude on the basis of statistical evidence that a sum of Rs.248 is spent to transfer Rs.50 to the beneficiary; it works out to Re.1 in net transfer for every Rs.5 spent. The effectiveness of these programmes in terms of universal coverage is, however, contingent upon the development and application of biometric technology and ITES, and initiation of supplemental programmes such as expansion of the banking network and bringing the intended social groups into the banking sector. Since the UID and DCT involve a paradigm shift in our approaches to programme implementation it is worthwhile to examine the pros and cons of these programmes and assess their potential for strengthening the instruments of public administration and making the latter more effective and efficient.

### **Universal Identification Number:**

While the advanced countries have developed, incorporated and legitimized national identity systems and have been successful in implementing them for more than half-a-century, most low-income countries are lagging behind. Without a system of identification the citizens are deprived of the facility of a standard means to authenticate that 'they are who they claim to be'; in the absence of a valid system of identification, the data on specific populations tends to be unreliable, most often with inflated numbers of the intended beneficiaries, making it difficult for the benefits to match those who need them most, or resulting in wastage of precious resources when unintended people corner the resources. Claimed identities, often backed by strong political networks and aided by bureaucratic malfunctioning, also produce similar outcomes. It is also not uncommon for the same beneficiaries listed more than once or several times or lists of ghost persons pervading all over. The pervasiveness of these practices, often frustrating intervention efforts, has been reported from many low-income countries.

The phenomenon of ghost workers/beneficiaries is widespread in many African, Asian and Latin American countries. It is estimated that in Nigeria weeding out ghost workers would result in a saving of US \$ 175 mn per annum: in Tanzania it is US \$ 6 mn; and in Cambodia, US \$ 32-43 mn. The percentage of ghost workers in Cambodia is estimated at 8.3% of general practitioners in the health sector alone. In India's MNREGA ghost workers are stated to be around 10-12%. Duplicate/multiple or fake enrollments for subsidies are also rampant in India. It is estimated that a quarter of the LPG connections in Karnataka and a fifth in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are bogus. The alignment of BPL ration cards under the PDS in Delhi with Aadhaar card data resulted in the identification of about 1.5 million fake ration cards. It was noticed that members of family itself was in possession of 901 ration cards. It is estimated that as a result of various defects in PDS across the country, the estimated loss to the exchequer is 46.7 percent of the PDS food grains valued at Rs.33,087 crores. Considering the fact

In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

that subsidies in India account for sizeable proportion of the union and state budgets, a careful examination of the instruments of delivery is of critical importance.

### **The Biometric System**

The twelve digit unique Aadhaar number relies on four demographics (name, address, gender, and date of birth) and thirteen biometrics (ten finger prints, two iris scans and a photo). The main objective of the UID biometric system is to maximize data quality and data integrity with regard to authentication of identities. The central ID Repository (CIDR), established for this purpose, consists of three Automated Biometric Subsystems (ABIS) that operate simultaneously. There is a strong incentive to provide the most accurate and efficient ABIS. The performance of each ABIS is assessed for every 10 million de-duplicators. The ABIS are operated and maintained by outsourced providers who also maintain their own data base of proprietary fingerprint and iris image templates. The outsourced providers maintain a complete gallery of all enrollments. Standard-specific information collected by the service providers is stored at the UIDAI level. A unique identification number is provided against each application after reduplication. The twelve digit number provided to each applicant is just one of the pillars in the Aadhaar ecosystem.

### **Genesis and Evolution of UIDAI**

The idea of a unique identification for all Indians could be traced back to 2006. A study by the Asian Development Bank noted that the subsidies in India were not actually reaching the targeted persons and that less than 50 percent of the poor were participating in the public distribution system (PDS), the main reason being fraud and excess costs, which accounted for more than two-thirds of the public spending. A report of the Planning Commission noted that more than one-third of the food grains meant for the poor households was in fact disposed of to non-poor householders and that 58 percent of the subsidized food grains did not reach the intended beneficiaries due to various errors in delivery and identification. In recognition of these setbacks and problems, the Planning Commission established the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), in 2008. The architecture, design, management and operational oversight of the unique identity number

scheme were entrusted to the UIDAI. In 2009, Mr. Nandan Nilekani, former chairman of Infosys, was appointed as chairman of UIDAI, with the rank of a Cabinet Minister. The purpose of UIDAI is: "to develop and implement the necessary institutional, technical, and legal infrastructure to issue unique identity numbers to residents across India and to issue a unique identification number that can be verified and authenticated in an online, cost effective manner, which is robust enough to eliminate duplicate and fake identities."

### **UPA and Aadhaar and DBT scheme**

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government, which initiated the project way back in 2009, gave a green signal four years later for a launch of the Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT) for subsidies and benefits such as those under the sale of LPG and MNREGA (the jobs scheme) with the Aadhaar link-up with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2013. The scheme was to cover 291 districts in different phases. Very soon the programme was caught up in widespread complaints about operational problems at the ground level. Many eligible beneficiaries were denied the benefits as they did not have Aadhaar number while those who did faced cash flow problems as they were required to pay the full price for LPG cylinders and then wait for the subsidy to be deposited in their bank accounts. Matching names also proved to be a challenge in Aadhaar enrollment. In an exercise with the Union Rural Development Ministry carried out by the UID Authority of India (UIDAI) it could match only 30 percent of the names in its data base with beneficiaries of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (MNREGA). Moreover, it had enrolled and generated Aadhaar numbers that exceeded the population in several districts, raising concerns about quality of verification procedures, it was suspected that the biometric verification procedures were not strictly adhered to. There were widespread criticisms from spokespersons of few political parties and some NGOs about various anomalies relating to the outcome of these exercises. The matter was also taken to the Supreme Court and challenged on the ground that the Aadhaar-based linkage for direct transfer of benefits would be unable to saturate the eligible poor beneficiaries. In

If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

- John F. Kennedy

September 2013 the apex court gave a ruling prohibiting Aadhaar form being made mandatory and making it explicit that no person should suffer for want of it in getting benefits of government schemes. The court ruling came in handy for the UPA government, which was upset with the political heat and the multiple operational problems, to put a hold on the linkage between Direct Benefits Transfer scheme and Aadhaar.

### BJP's Turnaround

During the election campaign of 2014 the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) made plenty of anti-Aadhaar noises. Shortly after the party got the mandate, BJP spokesperson, Prakash Javadekar stated that their party's concerns with the Aadhaar are two-fold: the lack of a legal backing and the security implications. Given the critical stand of the BJP during the campaign, Aadhaar card was expected to be junked by it after it came to power. But this did not happen. A meeting ( July 1, 2014 ) between Mr. Nandan Nilekani (former UIDAI Chairman under the UPA government ) and Mr. Modi, the Prime Minister and Mr. Jaitley, the Finance Minister, proved to be a life saver for Aadhaar. Mr. Nilekani was able to convince the new regime to persist with Aadhaar numbers and the Direct Benefits Transfer ( DBT ) scheme so that they help to trim the subsidy bill of the government. With the NDA PM being on Nilekani's line, the UPA government and the BJP got on to the same page, signifying a non-partisan approach to policy making by PM Modi. It brought forth a *volte face* in the BJP government's attitude towards the Aadhaar programme. Within four days after the meeting the PM made a statement backing the UIDAI. Five days later Mr. Jaitley, the Finance Minister, gave a booster dose to Aadhaar by increasing allocation for UIDAI by 30 percent over that of the UPA's budget provision. The Union Government also took a series of decisions to enable a matching exercise between different data bases. Line Ministries in charge of different schemes like scholarships, LPG cylinders and identity documents such as passports, have been requested to share data to enable this matching exercise. The government also backed the expansion of UID enrolments in 300 districts where around 80 percent of the population have Aadhaar numbers. This was to enable a re-launch of the Direct Benefits Transfer for the BPL families eligible

for subsidies and benefits under various welfare schemes.

### Performance

With the goal of enrolling 1.2 billion people, the UIDAI set out on the gigantic task of selecting the technology and take decisions on how to build and manage data bases and the requisite networks. It entered into MOUs with a few Union Ministries, governments of states and Union territories, public and private sector banks and some NGOs as partners in taking up and fulfilling the task of Aadhaar enrollment. State-wise Aadhaar enrollment data are presented in the following table.

**Table showing State-wise performance in Aadhaar Enrollment**

#### STATE WISE AADHAAR COVERAGE (30 JULY, 2015)

S.No	State / UT	Population	No. enrolled	Percentage
1	Delhi	16,753,235	18,376,447	109.69%
2	Telangana	35,286,757	35,819,468	101.51%
3	Andhra Pradesh	49,378,776	48,573,203	98.37%
4	Kerala	33,387,677	32,095,455	96.13%
5	Punjab	27,704,236	26,579,038	95.94%
6	Haryana	25,353,081	23,573,636	92.98%
7	Maharashtra	112,372,972	95,953,458	85.39%
8	Jharkand	32,966,238	28,080,915	85.18%
9	Karnataka	61,130,704	49,736,086	81.36%
10	Madhya Pradesh	72,597,565	54,640,347	75.26%
11	Chattisgarh	25,540,196	19,225,972	75.28%
12	Rajasthan	68,621,012	51,007,324	74.33%
13	Tamilnadu	72,138,958	52,504,638	72.78%
14	Gujarat	60,383,628	42,069,542	69.67%
15	Odisha	41,947,358	28,242,480	67.33%
16	West Bengal	91,347,736	60,009,822	65.69%
17	Uttar Pradesh	199,581,477	124,882,560	62.57%
18	Bihar	103,804,637	56,985,954	54.90%
19	Others	79,897,179	30,771,610	38.51%
	Total	1,210,193,422	879,127,955	72.64%

All knowledge comes from that one source, which is the highest reality. Intellectual knowledge is finite and mixed with ignorance.

The best performers are Delhi (109.5%), Telangana (101.6%), A.P (98.3%), Kerala (96.1%), and Punjab (95.8%), in that order. The worst performers are Arunachal Pradesh (25.3%), Manipur (4.8%), Assam (1.4%) and Meghalaya (0.9%), in that order. The figures of enrollment of U.P and Bihar are rather low because they were transferred from the National Population Register (NPR) brought into the Aadhaar enrollment, along with Chattisgarh and Uttarakhand, in the fifth phase which commenced in Sept. 2014, after the late addition of these states, accounting for a population of about 34 crores, became a drag on the Aadhaar enrollment system.

After a period of uncertainty, during the UPA rule, enrollment in the world's largest biometric database picked up speed and the tally has improved phenomenally. By July-end 25, 2015 more than 879 mn Aadhaar numbers have been generated by the UIDAI after the process commenced in August 2010. It surpassed the target set by the government to enrol 600 mn within five years. The total expenditure incurred by the UIDAI up to the end of 2014-15 was Rs. 5980 crores. The cost works out to Rs.71/- per number for the Aadhaar numbers issued so far. At the current rate of progress the prospect of achieving 1000 mn Aadhaar enrollments by the end of Dec. 2015 appears possible.

*(Revised version of the Presidential address to the Indian Public Administration Assn, Nilokheri. Haryana, 20<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2014)*

(to be continued)



## **'China aims at controlling the oceans'**

*(Newspaper report on the lecture delivered at Centre for Policy Studies by Vice Admiral Anup Singh, former Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command on July 10, 2015.)*

The Chinese are long term thinkers, strategic planners and quick implementers. With these qualities China aims to control the oceans in the future, said

former Flag Officer Commanding in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command Vice-Admiral Anup Singh.

Delivering a lecture on "China's lust for maritime power", organised by the Centre for Policy Studies in Visakhapatnam, the Admiral said that long ago an American consultant firm Booz Alien Hamilton had predicted that China is building a 'string of pearls' (strategic control points) along the seas to gain control over the major oceans such as the Pacific, Indian and Arabian sea.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy is using both money power and goodwill missions to build relationship with smaller and island nations with a strategic purpose. The 'string of pearls' extends from Mainland China to Gwadar Port in Balochistan province of Pakistan. "This string of pearls is aimed to strategically encircle India," he said.

The PLA Navy till 1982 was considered to be a brown water constabulary force. "Even our Coast Guard was then termed to be a better force. But with the vision on General Liu Huaqing, things have changed," he said. From a brown water force it has transformed to a formidable blue water force and today, has the largest conventional submarine fleet with about 51 subs and takes the third place after the US and Russia when it comes to the nuclear subs, he said. The Chinese vision is to have about 320 naval platforms by 2020, to beat the US navy. "While some defence strategists say that the figure is 415 ships," he said. On how they are able to achieve, the Admiral said that money power and a determined attitude. And coming to India, we lack both the things.

(Special correspondent, *The Hindu* July 12, 2015)



## **DEVOTION, KNOWLEDGE AND SELF ABNEGATION**

**Sri. C. Sivasankaram**

The predominant part of Vedas favours Karma Kanda or system of works and elaborate rigmarole.

Universal health care is the key to a better world.

- Amartya Sen

The system of worship and devotional functions punctuated by sincerity show the path of the fulfilment of ceremonial, ritualistic works, pin-pointed by Karma Kanda. The system of knowledge leads on the path of filling the said fulfilment with sweetness divine. Devotion is of all systems enunciated in the scripture is determined as the sovereign ruler guarded by learned men armed with profound knowledge coupled with renunciation. If these two valiant guards are there, there can be no insecurity to the nourishment of devotion. The foundation to raise citadel of devotion should be built on knowledge full and complete. Bhakti has got to change into discretion for earthly rejoicement. The man of knowledge is the *sthitaprajna* who maintains well-balanced equilibrium and seldom gets ruffled. He is over and above the four sufferings (sorrows). He vanquished the three hostile gunas. He is in a nutshell a ripe renunciant.

Devotee is one who is in and out replete with nectar of love. Devotion, knowledge and renunciation are like the towering peaks graced on the mighty Himalayas. By the reigning power of love, by renunciation control over internal organs and by knowledge righteousness blossoms.

### THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE IS SECURE

Many a Pundit is heard to opine that *Bhakti Marga* is easier than the path of knowledge. But it is not maintainable. The path of knowledge is easier than the path of devotion. If one is competent to sit calmly to cogitate and introspect it is the most easiest of all paths. Knowledge can in, a moment, dawn on such a composed and collected soul.

If the God-conscious soul who attained the final stage of Sayujyam merges in the essence of the Absolute he understands that he is a wave in the ocean of God.

### THOU ART MY SOLE REFUGE

It is not that easy to adapt to the life of devotion.

Never come to believe that the path of devotion entails no difficulty in your endeavour for self-realization. To become a perfect devotee the most undisputed quality is utter surrender and unambiguous continence and to be ready to renounce Samsara. The chief yearning and quest in the path of devotion is to return to source from which the soul is supposed to have sprung.

### KNOWLEDGE IS THREEFOLD

In the present context of things knowledge is divided into three categories. It is the preliminary stage believing truth as truth and lie as lie. It is known as the knowledge of the nature. There are some who tend to think truth as lie and lie as truth. This is to mean for some the visible world is true and real. The invisible God is believed to be a lie. There is the middle path which believes in the form of knowledge which is convinced to declare that the principle of nature as true and disbelieves in the principle of God.

There is hardly palpable difference between this and the former. All is one. All is filled to the brim with the quintessence of lord Vishnu. All is replete with Brahman. This is Spartan spiritual awareness.

### DEJECTION HAS NO PLACE IN DIVINE PURSUIT

Divinity and devotion are not disparate two. They are unconditionally responsible to each other though God is never bound to any type of responsibility. Dejection and feeling of tiresomeness have no place in the practice of devotion. The devotee may remain constantly on a high pedestal and has no need to relent.

He, the devotee, has nothing other than God to mind in his life to work with and dwell upon. An unbroken fervour of God-consciousness must overwhelm to render sincere services to Divinity. There is no room for existence of the devil of dejection or despondence. Stout must be the heart of the devotee. This is the true symptom of devotion.



While one honest, sincere and efficient worker can create millions or billions of rupees, no million or billions of rupees can create an honest, sincere and devoted worker.

- Durgabai Deshmukh

## Homage

Centre for Policy Studies records with profound grief the passing away of its patron and spiritual leader Satguru Kandukuri Sivananda Murty on June 10, 2015. The Satguru inaugurated the activities of Centre for Policy Studies on October 24, 1995 with a benedictory message on the occasion. He was the chief guest when *Dialogue and Democracy*, first in the series published by CPS, was released on October 6, 2010. CPS offers its grateful homage to the memory of Satguru K. Sivananda Murty.



Centre for Policy Studies offers its homage to the memory of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, seer, statesman and scientist who graciously acknowledged the publication of a review of his book in CPS Bulletin.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Rashtrapati Bhavan  
New Delhi - 110004

20 June 2007

Dear Shri Prasanna Kumar,

Thank you for sending me the June 2 issue of your Bulletin and your thoughts on Technology and its multi dimensions. I am thankful for your review of my book "Indomitable Spirit".

My best wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,

(A. P. J. Abdul Kalam)

Shri A. Prasanna Kumar  
Director  
Centre for Policy Studies  
47-7-23, Ba Bapu Bhavan, Fourth Lane  
Dwarakanagar, Visakhapatnam – 530 016



### CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

(GAYATRI VIDYA PARISHAD)

47-7-23, Ba-Bapu Bhavan, 4th Lane, Dwarakanagar, VISAKHAPATNAM-530 016. Tel : 0891-2531727

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Admn. office: 7-5-55, Pandurangapuram, VISAKHAPATNAM - 530 003, AP, India  
45-49-12A, Abid Nagar, Akkayyapalem, VISAKHAPATNAM - 530 016, INDIA

Tel : +91 891 2748722, 2537772 Fax : +91 891 2748735

e-mail : [kumarraja@kkumarrajaprojects.com](mailto:kumarraja@kkumarrajaprojects.com) [www.kkumarrajaprojects.com](http://www.kkumarrajaprojects.com)