

LET US STAY WITH THE 'QUAD'

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India has, since 1998, signed 'strategic partnership' agreements with 30 countries and organizations, ranging from Afghanistan and ASEAN to Uzbekistan and UAE. Since the term 'strategic' in international relations implies a convergence of interests in areas of security, economics and foreign affairs, perhaps the MEA needs to be more discriminating in its choice of partners lumped together in this pro-forma inventory.

Ironically, the USA (figuring in this list) has been in quest of a 'strategic partnership' with India since 1991. As the Cold War ended and winds of change brought globalization and pragmatism to India, the US mooted a set of proposals seeking military-to-military cooperation. The Indian Navy (IN), eager to emerge from its chrysalis of isolation, took a lead by initiating the first ever Indo-US naval exercises, to be named 'Malabar'. These became a precursor for bilateral exercises with at least a dozen other navies, internationally; now an annual feature of our maritime outreach.

During the first decade of the century, such diplomatic initiatives by the IN – especially in the US context - did not always have a smooth passage. Having a comatose MoD and suspicious MEA were bad enough, but the full political spectrum, from archaic left wing ideologues to right wing ultra-nationalists could be rallied by an accusatory war-cry of 'pro-Americanism', to bully the timid ruling UPA coalition. In the author's experience, every 'Malabar' exercise was hostage to a capricious Parliament, and was liable to be cancelled at the last minute.

The Modi government In a dynamic foreign policy transformation, has not only backed a stronger strategic partnership with the USA, it has also converted 'Look East' into a more positive 'Act East' policy and initiated a more intense engagement with the Gulf and West Asia. Emphasizing inclusivity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) PM Modi encapsulated this thought in the watchword, 'SAGAR'; signifying 'security

and growth for all in the region," which should become the *leitmotif* for India's maritime diplomacy.

Against this backdrop, it was a disagreeable surprise to read in the September 2017 issue of the respected US Naval Institute Proceedings, an article, which, bluntly described Indo-US maritime engagement as, "*a security cooperation courtship that never gets past the first date,*" and then asked rhetorically; "*If India is not ready, willing or able to play in the maritime security cooperation game, what is the benefit of trying to force it?*" Mr Modi would, therefore, need to bear in mind that while visionary leaders may strategize on a grand scale, their policies will be only as good as the implementation, on ground; by bureaucrats, technocrats and diplomats.

This aspect assumes salience in light of the November 2017 revival of the India-Australia-Japan-US quadrilateral (or 'Quad') dialogue. Representative of the four maritime democracies met ahead of the East Asia Summit, in Manila, for 'consultation on issues of common interest in the Indo-Pacific region.' The renewal of this dormant grouping and repeated use of the term 'Indo-Pacific' by President Trump seem to have generated a degree of animation in strategic circles. As it happens, the provenance of the 'Quad', and coining of the term, 'Indo-Pacific', both have an Indian context that bears mention.

On 27th December 2004, a few hours after the Great Asian Tsunami struck, I received a phone call from distant Hawaii. It was the US Pacific Fleet Commander, requesting IN concurrence for deployment of US units in our region and asking for the deputation of a liaison officer to the Utapao air base, in Thailand, where a Joint Task Force was being set up. That is how we found ourselves working in close coordination with a 'core group' that included US, Australia, Japan and India; the future Quad.

The term 'Indo-Pacific' was coined by young IN Captain Gurpreet Khurana, in a 2007 essay, wherein he visualized linking of the Indian Ocean with the Western Pacific, across the Malacca Straits, to form a seamless, economic and security continuum. It was offered as an alternative to the 'Asia-Pacific' paradigm which included only Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands, and terminated at the Malacca Straits;

The objectives of our foreign policy are the preservation of peace and enlargement of human freedom.

Jawaharlal Nehru

leaving out India. Despite the skepticism of Indian diplomats, the term seems to be here to stay.

It is in the interest of all nations, that peace and stability are preserved and good order is maintained at sea in the Indo-Pacific. Ensuring safety of international shipping would involve anti-piracy operations, maritime interdiction and cooperative maritime domain awareness. Natural calamities and man-made crises may call for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, non-combatant evacuation, and search & rescue operations.

No single nation or navy can hope to provide all this, and the Quad would be well-placed to form a maritime partnership for the common good. While each of the four participants, no doubt, has its own national interests to advance, there is no reason for China to suspect containment or 'ganging up'. In fact, if all goes well, there is no reason why the Quad could not, subsequently, become a 'pentagonal' or a 'hexagonal' partnership.

Turning from idealism to realism, there was a time when India's dynamic economy, its demographic profile, military strength and nuclear capability tantalized us with the hope of becoming China's rival. Today, China's economy is five times the size of ours and growing; and this economic asymmetry is reflected in the unfavourable military and technological balance. Having translated its enormous economic gains into coercive military power, China expects neighbours to submit to its hegemony.

If India is to resist domination and gain a breathing-spell for economic consolidation, it will need hand-holding – moral and political – for a few years. At the same time, it must boost military muscle by urgently modernizing the armed forces. Above all, India must attain true 'strategic autonomy' through infusion of advanced technology for its defence-industrial complex. The choices before us are few and stark; and being a member of the Quad – a concord of four democracies - has many potential advantages that India could adroitly exploit, in many spheres.

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MISSILE MIGHT

India cruises into elite power club with air launch of BrahMos missile

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India joined a select global club of nations with advanced weaponry when the Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully carried out a launch of the 2.5 ton BrahMos cruise missile from a fighter aircraft, the Sukhoi 30 MKI, on Wednesday. The supersonic missile, with a range of 400 km and a speed of Mach 2.8, is reported to have acquired the target, a ship in the Bay of Bengal, with the required accuracy.

This demonstration of the BrahMos in its air-launched avatar makes the missile multi-platform and three-dimensional, in that it can now be launched from land, sea and air and offers a range of platform options to the Indian military, depending on the operational exigency. The DRDO, which has been steering India's overall integrated missile development programme since the mid 1980s, and the IAF are to be commended for this achievement—that of enabling India with an air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) of the supersonic category. The BrahMos flies at 2.8 times the speed of sound, hence it is supersonic; whereas the earlier generation of cruise missiles were subsonic or flew below the speed of sound (1,235 kmph).

Cruise missiles have been part of the inventory of the major powers during the Cold War and their most distinctive feature is that they 'cruise' in a horizontal flight path, which is often terrain hugging and acquire the target with advanced guidance features that allow for the highest degree of accuracy—in metres by way of circular error probability (CEP). In the US-led war for Kuwait in January 1991, the Tomahawk missiles were used in a lethal manner.

While cruise missiles in the Cold War could be fitted with a nuclear warhead—for instance, the nuclear-tipped Tomahawk that the US Navy fitted on submarines (hence known as submarine-launched cruise missile [SLCM]) as part of deterrence capabilities—both the US and the former USSR decided *not* to invest in nuclear cruise missile capability. The conclusion that had been arrived at after rigorous operational analysis was that the existing

It is the duty of every man to realize the purpose of life and utilize his time in the performance of his duties, to sanctify his existence.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

index of deterrence stability was degraded with the introduction of the relatively short-range cruise missile and its inherent detection-evading characteristics. By extension, though both sides had the technological capability to do so, they did not invest further in supersonic cruise missiles, much less the nuclear-tipped variants.

How does the addition of the ALCM add to India's overall military capability and is this a 'triad' in terms of nuclear deterrence? The BrahMos ALCM definitely enhances India's overall trans-border ordnance delivery or strike capability and the Wednesday test is illustrative of this. The Sukhoi operates at heights of 3,000 metres and more and would have launched the BrahMos about 400 km away from the designated target. The fact that the target was acquired in under seven minutes from that altitude gives one an idea about the potency of this capability. With a conventional warhead and this level of accuracy, it can be used in a number of operational exigencies where a single high-value target is to be neutralised.

Currently, the IAF is among the very few air forces in the world to have demonstrated this kind of ALCM capability in the supersonic range and this has its tactical advantages. However the word 'triad' may be misleading, for the former is used in the traditional nuclear deterrence calculus and, as of now, there is no evidence to suggest that India will invest in the cruise missile for deterrence purposes. The Cold War experience had revealed the inherent destabilising nature of the cruise missile and this needs to be internalised not just by India but Pakistan and China, the other regional powers with weapons of mass destruction.

The DRDO, which has been subjected to considerable adverse comment for not being able to deliver on what it has often promised to the Indian military has reason to be proud of this success. The integration of a heavy 2.5 ton missile onto a fighter aircraft is a major technological challenge and the cooperation with Russia has paid rich dividends. Moscow's valuable help in this domain must be acknowledged. But the penchant to overstate the 'strike' capability of the BrahMos in its ALCM mode would be imprudent.

Speak softly when you acquire a lethal missile is sage counsel.

(Courtesy : *The Week*, November 23, 2017)

Back to the Drawing Board -IV

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Sarva dharma samabhava is also not a natural sentiment. It is a natural instinct for believers, be it religious belief or a secular ideology like communism, to believe that their faith alone is the repository of Truth, and is intrinsically superior to every other belief. The essential unity of all religions can be perceived only if that instinct suppressed. The University Education Commission (1948-9) chaired by S.Radhakrishnan and the Kothari Commission (1964-6) strongly advocated teaching of education about religions. The Kothari Commission admirably drew a distinction between 'religious education' which is prohibited by the Constitution (Article 27) and 'education about religions'. The former, the Commission observed 'is largely concerned with the teaching of the tenets and practices of a particular religion, generally in the form in which the religious group envisages them, whereas the latter is a study of religions and religious thought from a broad point of view-the eternal quest of the spirit'. It is necessary for a multi-religious democratic State to promote a tolerant study of all religions so that its citizens can understand each other better and live amicably together. 'Owing to the ban placed on religious instruction in schools and the weakening of the home influences which, in the past, often provided such instruction, children are now growing up without any clear idea of their own religion and with no chance of learning about others. In fact, the general ignorance and misunderstanding in these matters are so widespread in the younger generation as to be fraught with great danger for the development of a democracy in which tolerance is rated high as a value'. The Commission went on to say that that the walls between the secular and the spiritual are breaking down and that what is secular is seen to have spiritual roots. India should strive to bring science and the values of spirit together and in harmony. The Commission suggested that a syllabus giving well-chosen information about each of the major religions should be included as a part of the course in citizenship or as part of the general education to be introduced in schools and colleges up to the first degree.

Unfortunately, from the mid-1960s educationists and historians of a 'secular' bent of mind dominated the preparation of curriculum and history textbooks at the national level, and religion became a taboo subject. No wonder the religion which the young imbibe is religiosity touted by not-so-profound *babas* and *mullahs*, and TV serials of epics.

The practice of secularism in our country was afflicted by law of unintended consequences. In the immediate aftermath of the Partition, Hindu communalism seemed a greater threat than Muslim communalism, and that threat was articulated again and again by Nehru. An unintended consequence was that the perception that Hindu communalism alone was a threat to secularism came to be a cardinal tenet of 'secular practice', even though figuratively there is little to choose between cholera and plague, and minorityism and majoritarianism reinforce each other. Yet another example of unintended consequence was Nehru steering far reaching changes in Hindu marriage and inheritance laws in 1956 while refraining from similar legislative initiative in respect of Muslim law or alternately enacting a uniform civil code which would govern all communities irrespective of caste or creed or region. Nehru had valid reasons not to touch Muslim personal laws; he felt that it was important to reassure the Muslims who opted to stay back in India that their customs and traditions would be respected. However, an unintended consequence of his decision had been that non-interference in Muslim personal laws came to be perceived as a cardinal tenet of 'secular practice', strengthened the hold of status-quoist elements in the Muslim society and assertion that Muslim personal laws are beyond the purview of the State came to be the hallmark of Muslim identity. An example how such secular practice made a mockery of secularism was the action of the Rajiv Government diluting through legislation the judgment of the Supreme Court in the *Shah Bano* case upholding the right of divorced Muslim women to maintenance under the Criminal Procedure Code. With such acts, the charge of pseudo-secularism and appeasement of minorities levelled by the Hindutva elements gained plausibility. Suffice to say, for all the reasons outlined above once BJP began to emerge as a strong political force secularism ceased to be a strong countervailing power to a non-ecumenical Hindutva ideology.

Yet another consequence of well-meaning but in retrospect unwise project of the writing of NCERT history textbooks was abandoning the nationalist space to Hindutva elements. The influence of NCERT textbooks pervades beyond the schools in which they are used as they are exemplars used by the State Governments all over the country. The project began with the appointment of a committee in 1964 by education minister M.C.Chagla who was concerned that textbooks in history 'should not recite myths but provide *secular* and *rational* explanations of the past'. With some interruptions the NCERT history textbooks written in the period 1967-78 were used till 2005 when the UPA Government introduced a new National Curricular Framework and textbooks were written in accordance with that Framework. The introduction by BJP State Governments and the first NDA Government (1997-2004) to introduce history textbooks with narratives different from the NCERT were dubbed as saffronisation, and 'detoxification' was a major agenda of Arjun Singh during his two stints as Minister of Human resource Development (1991-1994 and 2004-9).

Strange but true, unlike with natural sciences subjectivity cannot be wholly eliminated in historical reconstruction. As the eminent historiographer E.H.Carr put it 'the belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the historian is a preposterous fallacy, but one which it is very hard to eradicate'. The Past is past in the sense that it could only be reconstructed and never totally captured or comprehended, every historical narrative is dependent on explanation, interpretation, and appreciation, and the way a historian interprets 'facts' is very much linked to the way he would like to contemplate the Present and shape the Future. Suffice to say, the worldview of the textbook writers necessarily influenced the content of the textbooks. Broadly speaking, a few common strands can be discerned in the treatment of different topics in these textbooks. The textbook writers did not like to uncritically accept the nationalist attempts to construct Indian history so as to rebut the colonial construction, glorify the Past and establish an Indian identity. Apart from professionally critiquing the Past they also sought to strike a blow for secularism, combat Hindu communalism, and incorporate the then contemporaneous shift in focus from political

and dynastic history to social and economic history. The theme of unity in diversity which nationalists emphasised is akin to saying that the glass is half full. The textbook writers were prone to say that the glass was half empty, and saw diversity as the defining characteristic of India. Glorifying the Hindu past was avoided lest it should foster Hindu communalism. The nationalist portrayal of the 'Muslim' period was reinforced by further downplaying episodes of tensions and violence, and offering political explanations for bigotry and intolerance. Thus the book on Medieval India for Class VII had a whole chapter on Akbar and represented him as a ruler symbolising tolerance. In contrast, Aurangzeb is disposed of in just two paragraphs; Shivaji and Guru Gobinda Singh are not mentioned as they are 'regional' leaders. The textbooks prepared after 2005 differed from the earlier textbooks in the emphasis they laid on conflicts in everyday life and Indian society. Even leftist historians, some of whom wrote the NCERT textbooks, criticised the new curriculum and its textbooks for 'an enmity towards the very idea of nation building and progress'.

Educators exaggerate the transformative power of education ignoring the historic experience of Jesuit educational institutions turning out in large numbers atheistic French *philosophe*, and later of students from developing countries who studied in Paris returning home as Marxists while those who studied in Moscow returning home as anti-communist liberals. Likewise Indian history warriors seem to have an exaggerated opinion of the impact of their historical narrative on the worldview of students oblivious of the fact that there are other sources of influence on the student such as home, cinema and the electronic media. Nivedita Menon, a teacher at JNU and a liberal herself, is right on the dot when she observed that the textbooks were in use for many decades and 'generations of school-students have read them and learnt history the secular way', and yet every college teacher knows that 'the majority of students who come into her class in the first year of the undergraduate course invariably tell the story of India the way 'they' tell it'. The majority of students believe that there was a Golden Age of Hinduism when women were respected and educated, that the Muslim invasions destroyed an egalitarian society, that 'India' has existed since the 'Vedic Age'. And further, tourist guides at historical monuments

all over the country 'retell this story in various ways, alleging the previous existence of temples at almost every monument built by 'Muslim' rulers'. All in all, 'our' history had dominated the academy and intellectual circles, 'theirs', the streets and common sense. Even *Amar Chitra Katha* the comic series designed to acquaint children with Indian history and cultural heritage seems to be more influential than history textbooks for children. All in all, 'their' history was increasingly shaped by the Hindutva elements as Left liberals vacated the nationalist space by ignoring the natural human instinct to be proud of one's ancestry.

To conclude, the parochial feeling underlying the slogan *garv se kaho hum Hindu hai* cannot be countered by rationalist/rational arguments that religion is superstition, and that Hinduism is so incredibly varied that the term 'Hinduism' is no more than a label for variety of diverse creeds, and that to assert Hindu identity is to 'restructure the indigenous Hindu religions into a monolithic, uniform religion, paralleling some of the features of Semitic religions, a restructuring which is a fundamental departure from the essentials of Hindu religions.'

(Concluded)

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QUO VADIS – WHITHER ACTIVISM?

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Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely (Lord Acton). With the horrendous experience of the despotic regime of King Louis XIV behind him, Motesquieu has advocated the doctrine of separation of powers among the three organs of the State. The legislature makes laws, the Executive enforces laws and the Judiciary applies laws where they are clear and makes laws clear where they are not clear. A natural corollary of this has been the system of checks and balances. This has been incorporated

The important task is not so much to find a 'new India', but to contribute to making one.

Jean Dreze & Amartya Sen

in the democratic constitutions all over the world. In contemporary times, the working of liberal and democratic constitutions has proved that sometimes fissures arise in the working of the principle and the delicate apple cart has been upset causing severe strains to the working of the systems.

Ever since Marshall has propounded the principle of judicial review stating that we are governed by the constitution but the constitution is what the judges say what it is, a debate has been raging over respective roles of the three organs of the state. The New Deal is too familiar an illustration. Can a bunch of Judges, who are nominated, arrogate to themselves the power not fully envisaged in the Constitutional scheme of things and undo the Acts of the people who are elected periodically by the people? Can this be done in the name of the Constitutional values? The moot question is – Who are the better judges of people’s aspirations and expectations? Can the judges say populist measures are transient and smack of political expediency and therefore be relegated to the background for protecting the long term goals and the cherished values of the Constitution? Are not the judges entrusted with the Holy mission of protecting the Constitution? If, yes, is it only singular to judges? Is not the executive also clothed with the same responsibility? These are some of the issues dividing the jurists into two different camps.

Seventy years after commencing her tryst with the destiny, India has emerged as one of the true champions of the RULE OF LAW. The principles of liberal democracy have been like the clarion call and the signature tune of the Constitution of India has been the protection of the dignity of the individual. One thing needs to be mentioned. A number of countries became independent along with India and a number of Constitutions have been drafted. But in most of the countries, democratic forms of government have disappeared and Constitutions have been thrown overboard. The unique feature of working of the Indian Polity has been that the Constitutional principles have been growing from strength to strength. This is no small measure due to the role of Supreme Court of India which has been rightly called Sentinel on the quiver. Today the evolving principles and the expanding horizons of different facets of constitutional moorings,

being enunciated by the Supreme Court of India are looked at with awe and admiration by jurists and judicial institutions all over the world. In fact, Prof. Upendra Baxi in his inimitable style observes that India might have had become Republic in 1950 but the Supreme Court of India became Republic only in 1970’s. This is because, the Supreme Court has started evolving the new principles of administrative Law only in 1970’s by liberating itself from the narrow confines of the earlier years. Whereas in the first twenty odd years, the Supreme Court of India has been always quoting the courts of the United States, United Kingdom and France among other countries, later it started enunciating new principles of administrative law to such an extent that today the judgments of the Supreme Court of India are quoted with respect by the U.S Supreme Court and the Highest Courts in other countries.

This judicial activism has been possible due to the advent of judges with vision and far sighted wisdom like Justice P N Bhagwati, Justice V R Krishna Iyer and Justice O Chinnappa Reddy among others. The poor people who have hitherto been priced out of the Indian legal system found the savior in the Supreme Court. The butcher, the pavement dweller, the bounded labour, the destitute women, the neglected child, the hapless prisoner - the list is only illustrative – found the beacon light in the new vistas of jurisprudence with focus on human rights. Epistolary jurisdiction, public interest litigation and forsaking of forms have been cited as examples of the Court’s concern of Human rights culture.

The whips issued to the Executive have sought to drive out the indifference of the executive in fulfilling the mandate of the Constitution. But the saga bordering on hyperactivism has sent ripples when the judiciary started entering the domain hitherto considered as the exclusive preserve of the Executive. One should remember that executive and legislative action is the province of the organs specified in this regard. There may be gray areas on the boundaries, especially with the steady growth of case law on intervention in the public interest.

Former Chief Justice of India, Justice K M Ahmadi observed that it is a misnomer to call it judicial activism and it is only common man’s activism. Judicial activism

should be only a temporary phenomenon when the other organs fail to discharge their constitutional obligations. The three organs of the state should remember that the days of mutual fault finding are over and that they are collectively responsible to fulfill the Constitutional mandate. What is required is JUDICIOUS ACTIVISM on part of all the three organs.

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Reinforcing Bridges of Communication Between Parents and Children for Resolving Youth Problems

Shri Himakar Tata, I.R.T.S. (Retd.)

A sample of the following newspaper headlines on juvenile and youth crimes in India during the last four months calls for a serious introspection. We need a corrective agenda to stem the rot in the moral fibre of the Indian society.

i) A sixteen year old student of a well known corporate school in Gurgaon confesses to the killing of a seven year old school mate. The reason - he wanted the school exams to be postponed at any cost!

ii) A spate in the number of suicides by students in I.I.Ts and I.I.I.Ts.

iv) In Hyderabad, in a swoop down on 1000 odd drug users, over 100 were school going students while a big group was from colleges.

v) In Visakhapatnam a married woman guided her paramour to loot her grandparents' house indicating the vicious influence of greed in polyamorous relationships.

vi) A stalker and his friends molested a class 9 student and slashed her with a blade- all in the name of love.

vii) A Chennai techie was burnt alive by her former classmate after she rejected his proposal.

viii) Revenge takes an E-turn in Sex & the City's India Season.

Five years back, similar news stories offer no consolation to us as regards the downslide in the moral index of our society.

i) In a gruesome episode of a teenage girl in Andhra Pradesh was stabbed to death not once but ten times by her jilted 'lover'! On the same day there was another horrific incident of another hapless girl having acid thrown on her face, just because she declined the marriage proposal made by someone in her neighbourhood.

ii) A thirteen year old girl in Bengal hanged herself to death because her mother scolded her for watching too much of TV before her exams and switched off the TV. The adamant girl did not believe in compromising her life style.

These nauseating tales of violence under the garb of love, revenge and all the base animal instincts have been receiving the continued patronage of all Indian language film makers. No remorse is shown by those guilty of such crimes. Instead, they all say brazenly that they did it for 'love'! (At least as defined crudely by Indian movies). "It is my way or the highway!" - One of the many Americanisms that have permeated the language of the overconfident and assertive generation Y and Z in India.

These are indications that the young generation these days have been brainwashed into believing that they should never ever take a "No" for an answer to their demands. Be it the coveting of a material asset or the establishment of proprietary rights over a person, it appears that whatever is demanded by a youth has to be fulfilled immediately without an iota of compromise - by hook or by crook!

It is not just Indian films made in all languages that foster such a mentality through their mindless depiction of violence with 'crude love' as an excuse. The blame is also to be shared by the lopsided educational system aided with liberal dosage of inputs from personality and confidence building classes for excellence. Together, they egg the students on to 'go for the kill'. There is simply no place for failure in our focused, achievement oriented society!

"The word "impossible" is only in the dictionary of fools!"

"You name it, you keep thinking about it and you will get it!"

Central banks need to preserve space for public policy at the national level consistent with their obligations to the global economy.

Dr Y.V. Reddy

“Think hard, focus intensely and you are there!”

These are only some of the samples of the phrases often used by motivational speakers. How many coaches actually bother to talk of contingency measures, in case our meticulously chalked out plans are to go awry! How many of the go-getting seniors actually rally around a person who fails to reach his targeted goals? Do they pause to sort out the emotional problems plaguing a loser?

The middle aged generation, cannot wash their hands off from the blame of driving their children towards selfish and ruthless ambition, whether knowingly or unknowingly. The rat race starts off as the scramble for IITs early in the twelfth year through FIITJEE and umpteen other coaching centres. Without a pause it propels the poor child into an endless upward spiral of IIT, IIM, Ivy League American Universities, multimillion dollar pay packages, fast track promotion to a CEO etc. These are only a few of the glories to be heaped on a person in his lifetime. If all these are achieved well before your fortieth year, then it would be an indication of a life well lived! Otherwise, it would be tantamount to an incomplete and sub standard curriculum vitae!

But somewhere down in our rigorous coaching, do we caution to teach the children that there is room for only one at the top? Do we care to teach our children that even in a failure, life offers several alternatives for a decent and honest survival? Have we inculcated in our children the dignity of labour? Have we reassured them that the world has a place for someone at every point of time? As the saying goes, there is a place for even a cook in the army. Somewhere, sadly along with our children, adults too have brainwashed themselves into believing that life is doomed, if one does not attain the Numero Uno or the Number One status!

It is our duty to ensure that ambitious and hard working children do not get abruptly derailed midway in the journey of life by a most unexpected roadblock. A certain degree of “Emotional Intelligence” is to be attained by them in handling mental stress at both home and workplace. We must, therefore, drill into

them the following important guidelines for a more balanced lifestyle.

i) Lesson No. 1: Early in one’s life let each child be taught that no one is invulnerable. Technology has not conquered everything, though it has streamlined many aspects of our lives. We have to brace ourselves for moments where, because of sudden quirks in Fate, we may not be able to get what we strongly desire. It may be an accident, an illness, a death of a dear one or an all destructive natural calamity that could shatter our dreams. In short, we need to train our children to embrace failure with a certain degree of equanimity.

ii) Lesson No. 2: We must train ourselves as also our children to accept with grace a ‘No’ for an answer. This is the only way whereby we can prevent our future generation from growing up into spoilt brats throwing up tantrums, becoming violent or going into bouts of deep depression when material success eludes them.

iii) Lesson No 3: They also contribute - those who do not finish at the top: Children have to be reassured that life does not come to a standstill or a dead end, just because someone has not reached the top in the rat race of life. May be it is time for them to travel the road less travelled or try the road untested. They need to become pioneers in a different field instead of joining the bandwagon and treading the same beaten path over and over again.

iv) Lesson No 4: Somewhere in life we must also train ourselves to slow down our race to be of some assistance to a less fortunate brethren. The cruel hand of Fate may make us or our dear ones disabled or differently-abled. It may hurtle us into a situation where we have to reprioritize the goals of our life.

It is important that parents counsel their children at the start of their rebellious teen years that success does not comprise unswerving focus on material goals for personal glory alone. Life on a fast track should not tempt us into illegal acts; like the way doping ruined many overambitious, hypertensive athletes. Life is also about slowing down in the race to help a less fortunate person. The greatest happiness

of life lies in giving and not a mindless obsession with endless acquisitions.

v) Lesson No 5: Parents should make an earnest attempt towards transparency and confidence building measures in their own homes. One cannot earn the confidence of a child automatically just because one is the biological parent. Parents have to convince their children that they have confidence in the capabilities of the latter. They should be large hearted to forget and forgive a child's misdoings. Only then can they bridge the generation gap. This is one effective way to ensure that children refer all their teenage problems to their parents. It will prevent them from keeping these bottled up inside themselves till they explode in volcanic proportions.

Unfortunately many parents and children have made themselves so busy with their work and work related socializing. They have totally ignored the importance of keeping the flow of intra-family communication flowing smoothly. Some parents are held in low esteem by their own children because the latter feel that the former are technologically challenged. What children fail to realize that, even with fast paced technological changes, human intelligence and horse sense, based on experience and exposure of the elders still play a vital role in resolving some unnerving psychological problems.

In an era where glamour and glib talk rules the roost in both printed and visual media, children are misled by their naïveté to believe their best role models and counselors are the highly telegenic, syrupy voiced TV anchors. Little do they know that many such celebrities don a mask just for that half hour show. It is only ironic that many chirpy, confident celebrities who motivating us with their pep-talk and bubbly laughter on TV screens are themselves entangled in an emotional mess! The suicides of many stars on the tinsel screen are sad testimonies to this sordid fact.

vi) Lesson No 6: Face to Face audio communication is the best way for a teenager to discuss his or her problems with elders. Parents! Do not allow your indifference and silence towards your own children to facilitate Twitter and Facebook to

usurp your anointed role as the emotional balm for your children.

Cellphones are available with us 24X7 like appendages of our bodies. Sadly, many youngsters are reluctant to use it for audio communication. Increasingly children have no time or inclination for answering an incoming call from their parents, let alone returning missed calls. (It is an altogether different matter that hours of talk time may be spent on lovey-dovey talk with close friends).

“Please SMS me whatever you want to convey! It is much cheaper and less intrusive!” seems to be the popular refrain among youngsters

This fashion has caught up among parents too! It is evident that, with the advent of Internet, chatting has ceased to be a face to face event. E-chat was once designed initially for overseas communication (in view of prohibitive communication costs). It is now deployed for communication with the next door neighbour too!

A decade back, a prominent Delhi based socialite jumped off to death from the top floor of a posh Delhi hotel. She was the daughter-in-law of a famous politician and a mother of two kids. Before committing suicide she sent an SMS to many friends that she would soon be ‘flying high’. Could matters have been ameliorated? Could she have been dissuaded from her suicide, had she spoken out her problems instead? Or, was the SMS mode of communication a result of her elitist friend circle not sparing a listening ear for her audio talk? Quite possible, considering that the poor lady's own biological mother (who was in Goa at the time of her death) did not show any inclination to attend her own daughter's funeral!

Given the 21st Century technological advancement, ‘friends’ are neither meant to be seen nor heard in person or over phone. Move over all you old fuddy duddies ! Facebook and Twitter seem to be acquiring the status of the new emotional anchors in our daily lives !! The younger generation is being forced to join Facebook and Twitter to be accepted as a part of the ‘in’ and ‘hip’ crowd. On the flip side their vulnerability to emotional blackmail may have increased through these media. Morphed photographs and videos appearing on the cyber space

along with hate messages are the tools of blackmail. Big Brother is watching! Every movement of your mouse is being faithfully recorded by an all powerful Facebook Timeline. Needless to say, one stray, immature tweet on Twitter or one impulsive post on Facebook triggers off a useless thread of superficial one-liners. By according undue importance to these shallow comments, the hapless, emotionally insecure teenager is thrown into deep depression and anxiety.

To sum up, the time has come for bridging the growing communication divide between the younger generation and the older generation, more importantly within the family between parents and children. Parents will have to work very hard to prove to their children that they are better friends and counselors for their children than film and television celebrities, Facebook, Twitter and other hordes of 'Agony Aunts' available on the Internet at the click of a mouse!!

* * *

Knowledge and Wisdom

His Holiness The DALAI LAMA

(Convocation address delivered at the Andhra University in 1992)

Your Excellency, the Vice-Chancellor, Members of the faculty, students and friends,

I am extremely happy to be here today at the Andhra University as the Orator of today's convocation. I would like to thank you for this opportunity and I would also like to thank you for conferring on me the Honorary Degree of D. Litt. of this University.

Students who have received their degrees today, on the happy New Year, I warmly extend to you my good wishes. I also quite appreciate the happy moments when you are assembled here to receive your degrees and diplomas, after years of study and hard work. Any way this is a very happy occasion and I would like to congratulate you on this happy time and also share with you your happiness. After returning from your studies, I think you are ready to get some job or other. This should give you more and more happiness in your lives.

I think the basis for human thinking is, and of

course this is very important, real wisdom - this real wisdom and ability must come from experience. On the basis of your knowledge, and through a feeling of unity real wisdom comes. Particularly when you face some visual experience or find a vocation, in a way, you gain more personal experience. And when we pass through difficult experience, sometimes it may become difficult to check mental unrest or mental unhappiness and by that we are prone to lose self-confidence. This leads to a difficult situation. As I mentioned earlier, real wisdom puts us away from inexperience and promotes self-confidence. For this, one of the main factors is, a good heart. I believe determination and will are the chief motivating factors in acquiring faith. A negative attitude towards others, I am afraid, is loathsome. As a result of this we find it difficult to understand and move with others. We are all social animals. Now if you develop compassion and love, through that you can develop fellowship. Thereby, eventually you get some more self confidence and lessen your strain. This does not mean that when you develop compassion, all other virtues become secondary. Now, due to our own attitude, the environment becomes more and more positive. You know, everybody can remain calm and peaceful when external things do not disturb us. Therefore, our own inner mental attitude is one of the crucial factors. Therefore, develop a good attitude and a good heart towards others and this will enable you to feel quite happy. When our happy moments become happier our general attitudes, also change. This goes a long way in maintaining a good relationship. Qualities like forgiveness, compassion and good behaviour must be developed by us. Without compassion, we cannot survive. Compassion and love go together. These are the best qualities I find in any human being. Even without religion, we can manage, we can survive. But we cannot live without compassion. Therefore compassion occupies a unique place in our daily life. Genuine compassion is a central thing in our lives, and it occupies a pivotal place. This gives us more and more happiness. Compassion gives more self-confidence and our future will be worthier and nobler. Humility is another essential quality in any human being, whether he is highly educated or not and whether that education is being used properly or not.

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations.

Woodrow Wilson

This country produced such eminent personages like Lord Buddha and Mahaveer who are great masters. I believe during ancient times, many Indians derived for their teachings solace and peace. Western civilization and scientific advancement are quite useful for human development. People of all countries imitate western civilization. Simply by imitation problems cannot be solved, without these very basic qualities, compassion and love. I think western civilization will not survive for long. Yet our traditions could survive many an onslaught since times immemorial.

One of the another most important things is Ahimsa or non-violence should not be considered as almost as a scientific instrument. Sometimes I feel that the ancient Indian thought of non-violence, during Mahatma Gandhi times who implemented this, as a method for succeeding in politics. I think they adopted a policy of non-alignment. Under any circumstances there is no point in including this nonviolence as political philosophy during 1980s and 1990s. But the situation is quite closer when you think of Indian tradition. On the basis of non-violence we could achieve many wonderful events. Ahimsa, even in modern times also it seems to mean is the only remedy to better the world situation. It is one of the decisive factors in the life of millions of people all over the world. However, at times I feel diffident which is a sad thing because we do not observe non-violence in our dealings with other persons. I must consider myself and by my own feeling that I am following the Indian tradition and Indian spirituality. Therefore I myself also consider as Indian and it is that kind of my feeling which prompted, me to follow my deep feelings and sympathies with this country and its people.

I think India's prestige will grow, if these traditional methods are being followed and implemented as far as possible. And it is time to recognise our own potential also.

Thank you very much.

(From Challenges and Opportunities - Convocation Addresses of the Andhra University)

* * *

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

Al Gore

Former Vice-President of the
United States of America

WE, THE HUMAN SPECIES, face a planetary emergency. That phrase still sounds shrill to some ears but it is deadly accurate as a description of the situation that we now confront, and as Dr Pachauri and his three thousand colleagues in the IPCC have freshly reminded us, the accumulation of greenhouse gases continues to trap more and more heat from the sun in our atmosphere, threatening the stable climate balance that has been an unappreciated but crucial assumption for the development of human civilization.

Just this week new evidence has been presented. I remember years ago listening to the scientists who specialize in the study of ice and snow express concern that some time towards the end of the 21st century we might even face the possibility of losing the entire North Polar ice cap. I remember only three years ago when they revised their estimates to say it could happen halfway through the 21st century, by 2050.

I remember at the beginning of this year when I was shocked to hear them say along with others that it could happen in as little as 34 years and now, this week, they tell us it could completely disappear in as little as five to seven years.

. . . For those who believed that this climate crisis was going to affect their grandchildren, and still said nothing, and were shaken a bit to hear that it would affect their children, and still said and did nothing, it is affecting us in the present generation, and it is up to us in this generation to solve this crisis.

A sense of urgency that is appropriate for this challenge is itself a challenge to our own moral imagination. It is up to us in this generation to see clearly and vividly exactly what is going on. Twenty of the 21 hottest years ever measured in atmospheric record have come in the last 25 years – the hottest of

Happiness does not lie in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort.

Franklin Roosevelt.

all in 2005, this year on track to be the second hottest of all. This is not natural variation. It is far beyond the bounds of natural variation and the scientists have told us so over and over again with increasing alarm.

But because our new relationship to the earth is unprecedented we have been slow to act. And because CO² is invisible, it is easy for us to put the climate crisis out of sight and out of mind until we see the consequences beginning to unfold.

... I am not an official of the United States and I am not bound by the diplomatic niceties. So I am going to speak an inconvenient truth. My own country, the United States, is principally responsible for obstructing progress here in Bali. We all know that, but my country is not the only one that can take steps to ensure that we move forward from Bali with progress and with hope.

... So, we must leave here with a strong mandate. This is not the time for business as usual. Somehow we have to summon, and each of you must summon a sense of urgency here in Bali... I don't know how to tell you how you can find the grace to navigate around this enormous obstacle, this elephant in the room that I've just been undiplomatic enough to name, but I'm asking you to do it. . .

... If you decide to continue the progress that has already been made here on all of the items other than the targets and timetables for mandatory reductions; on the hope (and with the expectation) that, before this process is concluded in Copenhagen, you will be able to fill in that blank (with the help of a different position from the United States); then you can make great progress here.

For starters, that means a plan that fully funds an ambitious adaptation fund, to build an adaptive capacity in the most vulnerable countries to confront the climate crisis. It means creating truly innovative means for technology transfer, to allow for mobilizing technology and capital throughout the World.

We need a deforestation-prevention plan. Deforestation accounts for 20 per cent of global carbon emissions — the equivalent to the total

emissions of the US or China. It is difficult to forge such an agreement here.

These are not political problems. They are moral imperatives.

Believe me, if I could snap my fingers and change the position of the United States of America, and change the position of some other countries, and make it instantly much easier to move forward with targets and timetables, I would do so in an instant. But if we look realistically at the situation that confronts us, then wisdom would call for moving forward in spite of that obstacle.

I can tell you that there is a growing realization all over the World - including in my country - beyond these actions that have already been taken that I've described to you. Mothers and fathers, grandparents, community leaders, business leaders, all around the world, are beginning to look much more clearly at what is involved here.

... These are not political problems. They are moral imperatives. But our capacity to strip away the disguise, and see them for what they really are, and then find the basis to act together, to successfully address them, is what is missing.

... We are one people on one planet. We have one future, one destiny. We must pursue it together, and we can.

The great Spanish poet from Seville, Antonio Machado, wrote: 'Pathwalker, there is no path. You must make the path as you walk.'

... There are two paths you can choose. They lead to two different futures. Not too long from now, when our children assess what you did here in Bali, what we and our generation did here in this world, as they look backward at 2007, they will ask one of two questions. I don't know which one they will ask. I know which one I prefer that they ask, but trust me, they will ask one of these two questions.

They'll look back, and either they will ask "What were you thinking? Didn't you hear the IPCC four times unanimously warning the world to act?

We are not only scientists; we are men, too. We cannot forget our dependence on our fellow men.

Robert Oppenheimer.

Didn't you see the glaciers melting? Didn't you see the North Polar ice cap disappearing? Didn't you see the deserts growing, and the droughts deepening, and the crops drying up? Didn't you see the sea level rising? Didn't you see the floods? Didn't you pay attention to what was going on? Didn't you care? What were you thinking?

Or they will ask a second question, one that I'd much prefer them to ask. I want them to look back on this time, and ask: 'How did you find the moral courage to successfully address a crisis that so many said was impossible to address? How were you able to start the process that unleashed the moral imagination of humankind to see ourselves as a single, global civilization? And when they ask that question, I want you to tell them that you saw it as a privilege to be alive at a moment when a relatively small group of people could control the destiny of all generations to come.

... We ought to feel a sense of exhilaration that we are the people alive at a moment in history when we can make all the difference.

That's who you are. You have everything that you need. We have everything we need, save political will. But political will is a renewable resource.

(From "Speeches that changed the world" with an introduction by Simon Sebag Montefiore - 2014)

* * *

THE SINISTER TWILIGHTS

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*)

Twilights at Port Blair were never pleasant for Dr. Diwan Singh, the Senior Medical Officer for the Andamans and Nicobar Islands. They made him nostalgic; the faint clouds on the horizon, gilded by the unsteady brush of a drooping sun, silhouetted his distant home.

That particular evening in 1941 had disturbed him more than ever - he could not make out why. He had, of course, heard some blood-curdling yells from a tribal hamlet, while passing by a small island, on his way back to his headquarters after inspecting a medical camp. It continued to echo in his memory and sounded somewhat ominous-again he did not know why.

He must do something to cleanse his mind of elusive forebodings. He drew a scrap of paper and scribbled out his thoughts in Punjabi:

"It is the storm- over there,
Lingering with a blind fury,
It will strike, from across the horizon;
It will strike

And leave in its wake,

Darkness, obliterated Sun - the Moon - the Stars.

The storm of destruction, turmoil and change.

I won't know you, neither you me

The storm will strike-

The storm...'

His feeling proved premonitory, in a few days. World War II broke out. On the 23rd of March 1942 the Japanese struck at Port Blair. By then most of the English officers on the archipelago had escaped to the mainland. The rump of the administration had an uncertain duty. As a few thousand Japanese marched into the town while more waited in their ships off the coast, the leftover of the colonial bureaucracy had to take prompt decisions - whether to retain their allegiance to the beaten British lion or to salute the Rising Sun. Among those who decided in favour of the former course of action were the officials of the telegraph department. They blew up the office with the help of mines laid earlier - but were captured. The hapless native population managed to show welcome signs to the grinning invaders. The occupation was complete within twelve hours without a single shot

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

J.F. Kennedy

being fired. Many viewed this as auspicious. And when the Japanese threw the doors of the Cellular Jail open and signalled the prisoners out, there was a bit of euphoria among those who knew something of history and of the fall of the Bastille. A few exciting hours were to pass before the islanders would realize the meaning of the invaders saving their bullets that long. Soon, the Japanese were seen moving about through the bazaars, picking up anything they liked and from any shop. Hard as they tried, the merchants found it difficult to keep their welcome smiles stretched for too long. Nor could they cry, for some of them were slapped even for drawing long faces. They must look grateful. The plundering spree continued on the second day-until the unexpected happened. Look, Mr. Kesar Das, a kind of legend in Port Blair, popularly known as Masterji, told us, pointing at a row of houses across his balcony. Beyond that was the residence of my friend Julfiquar, called Sonny by us. A Jap entered his house and picked up two eggs. "Please leave one, for we have a child who needs it," Sonny had the cheek to say, trying to look polite through a grin. But the officer cast a menacing look at him, his gestures daring Sonny to check him. Sonny suddenly drew his gun and fired.' The picture of the aftermath that emerges from what Masterji told us and from an invaluable document prepared by Rama Krishna, a Tahsildar whom the Japanese had appointed the Deputy Commissioner of the Territory and who was also the Chairman of the Andamans Branch of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian Independence League, was like this: Julfiquar's shot only grazed past the Jap's head, but he was soon back on the scene with a thousand soldiers firing their rifles in every direction. They went on setting fire to all the houses on their way. Finally they caught hold of Sonny. It was evening. Practically all the residents of Port Blair were driven to the market place. They included Sonny's parents and brothers. They saw their Sonny, dear to all for his courage and kind-heartedness, kicked and dragged to a corner of the ground. And here is how Bijay Bahadur, an eye-witness, narrated the event over All India Radio, Port Blair: 'A burly Jap soldier approached and caught Sonny by his hands and started beating him methodically. I had never known

anything so cruel in my life. Then Sonny was made to stand; six soldiers took positions with their rifles; the Commander stood with a white kerchief. He dropped it and Sonny was shot dead.' As the deadly sound died down, the stunned crowd was ordered to disperse. While the Japanese were plundering and burning Port Blair, some of the convicts let loose by them attacked the suburban villages. There were clashes. Both plunderers and innocent villagers, scores of them, fell dead. Some affluent locals thought it a sound strategy in the prevailing situation to befriend the Japanese, throwing parties or heaping gifts on them. Through these contacts the Japanese realized that most of the people who mattered had fled the islands or were absconding. The population present could be easily cowed down. And they acted promptly. They must have the best available accommodation. Without the least apology they entered any bungalow, private or official, and literally threw out its occupants. Atul Chandra Chatterjee, an officer who stuck to his position as the head of the Treasury and Financial Advisor to the Chief Commissioner, was evicted from his house. As he came out to the lawns, hapless and perplexed, the Japs saw that a crowd had gathered in front of the gate, curious about the fate of an officer considered important by them. It could be favoured with a glimpse of the Japanese sword power. "Halt' cried the leader of the gang. He gave abroad grin at the crowd before rushing upon Atul Babu. He then unsheathed his sword and stretched his grin as well. Next moment Atul Babu's head rolled on the grass. Once comfortably lodged, they looked for pleasure. They mobilized a gang of ex-convicts who raided the villages, captured women. 'They were led into Jap camps in the manner cattle are driven into slaughter house', reminisced an old witness. Days passed smoothly for the new potentates. They had set up a civilian government with Narayan Rao as the Chief Commissioner. Rao, partly in good faith and partly under the spell of his unexpectedly gained status, liberally used the only car at the disposal of an Indian. But perhaps he sported his blessings a bit too liberally. Before long the Japanese ships were bombarded by the Royal Air Force. There must be a spy ring transmitting information to the Allies

Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity, to me the female sex, not the weaker sex.

Mahatma Gandhi 15

and Narayan Rao could be its hub, for he had been observed driving his vehicle at night. One evening the 'Chief Commissioner' was stopped right in the market and unceremoniously dragged from his status symbol and pushed into the Cellular Jail. Suspicion grew into phobia. Hundreds were rounded up and herded into jail. Let us listen to Rama Krishna:

'Between the tortures, interrogation by the Japanese continued, accompanied by constant blows with a thick stick. When continuous questioning alternated with beatings yielded no desired result, new steps were taken. Sprinkling a part of the body with petrol and setting fire to it until the entire skin burnt deep was one step. Another step was to incise daily some part of a man's body and to sprinkle the cut with salt or powdered chilli.

'When all these methods failed, wives and children from the homes of the victims were brought to the jail. In the torture chamber the woman was beaten in front of her husband and the husband was beaten in front of his wife. Or the wife was asked to beat her husband and the husband, the wife. Children were beaten in front of their parents ... sometimes the son was asked to beat the mother or father. Confession? But what confession, having done nothing . . .? Seven prisoners were shot dead. Many died in the torture chamber and it is not known what happened to their dead bodies. The entire population was panic-stricken.'

Summary deaths were meted out to those who did not prove quite servile. Among them was Dr. Dewan Singh.

It was a relatively lonely forenoon when I was walking across the courtyard of the Cellular Jail. Early in the April though it was, the heat was unbearable, particularly for a group of three Europeans passing by me. They wiped their faces frequently and cursed the weather, hardly paying any attention to their guide's commentary: 'This is the famous Cellular Jail, the Bastille of India ..'

The best jail of India?'

'No, madam,' the guide corrected the stooping old lady. The Bastille.'

'What?'

'The Bastille, you see...'

The lady shrugged. Every European was not bound to know the significance of the Bastille. Her eyes had fallen on me. No reason why I should not help.

"The Bastille was the fortress used as a prison which the rebels stormed, marking the beginning of the French Revolution.'

"Oh, oh, oh ... the French Revolution! Thanks."

She hurried to catch up with her companions. The guide eyed me with some wariness.

"Look, my friend,' I told him in Hindi..Your analogy does justice neither to the Bastille nor to the Cellular Jail. The Bastille had been stormed by the French themselves and not by any foreign invader. Therein lies the Bastille's glory. The Cellular Jail had a more glorious past than the Bastille and far more tragic"

He did not seem to appreciate.

* * *

Book Review:

HOW INDIA SEES THE WORLD Kautilya to the 21st Century

Shyam Saran

(Published by Juggernaut Book, 2017, pp.312, Rs.599)

"Not a typical memoir" Shyam Saran says in the very first line, "nor a thesis on India's foreign policy". It is a blend of history, memoir, diplomacy in 21st century and future challenges. As former Prime Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh writes in the foreword 'Shyam Saran who has a wealth of experience with regard to the formulation and implementation of India's foreign policy, is highly qualified to evaluate India's foreign policy in the post independence period'.

The whole world requires light. It is expectant! India alone has that Light, not in magic, mummery, and charlatanism, but in the teaching of the glories of the spirit of real religion—of the highest spiritual truth. Now the time has come!

Swami Vivekananda.

The book is divided into four parts, each representing 'a seminal theme'. The first is titled 'Traditions and History', the second 'Neighbours', the third 'The Wider World' explores the 'borderless world that is emerging in the virtual sense driven by technological change and globalization' and the last an epilogue that looks at the future trends and their impact on India.

Tracing the sources of India's world view from the Mahabharata and Ramayana and 'using the prism' of Kautilya's Arthashastra of 4th century B.C.E. and Ka-mandaki's Nitisara of 8th century A.D., Shyam Saran rediscovers templates that are 'ancient in origin but enduring and quite relevant today'. He explains the relevance of Kautilya's seven components of state power and Kamandaki's categorization of ambassadors, as 'wise words of advice which our diplomats today would do well to follow even if their predecessors often did not'. The author cautions at the same time against applying this template 'in a mechanistic way to contemporary situations'.

In tracing India's foreign policy from independence to the end of the cold war, Shyam Saran begins with a definition that 'foreign policy' is the strategy a state adopts to advance its national interests as articulated by its political leadership but within a contested geopolitical space characterized by complex interstate relations. National interests, therefore, cannot and should not be ascribed absolute value. The main goal of foreign policy is to 'safeguard and, wherever possible, expand a country's strategic space, he says. At a time when India is making a strong bid for global status, Shyam Saran reminds us that the spirit of non-alignment remains a compass for India's foreign policy, even though the original Cold War context no longer exists. He commends P.V. Narasimha Rao's pragmatic leadership and the look east policy which enabled India to reconnect with south and south east Asia. In his view, 'Narasimha Rao represented the Kautilyan mind more than any other Indian leader in recent times. "To be a successful leader in India you must be ruthless but also ascetic" Narasimha Rao revealed the secret of his success to Shyam Saran.

The current level of counterterrorism

cooperation between the US and India would have been unthinkable even a decade ago. The Modi government is faced with a far more complex and challenging international environment, according to the author. The competitive relationship between India and China has been a reality and 'there is enough space in Asia and the world for both India and China to rise together and neither is a threat to the other', writes Shyam Saran. India's success as a liberal democracy helps it score over China. India will continue to retain this perceptual advantage as long as it remains an open and plural democracy. Referring to Indo-Pak relations the author writes how his visits to Pakistan and interactions with diplomats enabled him to understand the nature of relations between the two neighbours. Shyam Saran writes that 'it was a familiar trajectory of India-Pakistan relations – what I describe as 'dialogue-disruption-dialogue'. The Sino-Pakistan axis targeting India has been a nagging security challenge for us for the past few decades and is likely to remain so. To refrain from rapping Pakistan's rulers for fear of destabilizing that country is a flawed proposition. creating and using both positive and negative levers to yield the results we want, he says. This may include the option of inflicting pain on Pakistan if India's security is threatened longer-term project to enhance people-to-people links.

China's world view is inherently hierarchical. Chinese culture is a predominantly visual one. India's is predominantly an aural culture... There is a certain subtlety to the Chinese use of deception, which escapes most Indians. The use of force is an essential and accepted way of pursuing national interests; and war is not necessarily an unmitigated evil. Mao suggested that war was not necessarily a bad thing since revolutions took place through war, emancipating countries and peoples. He suggested "that the Second World War had created conditions for China's liberation, just as it may have also allowed India's independence."

The author points out that China's claims and assertions have rarely come under unbiased and critical examination. In dealing with the changed

dynamic in India-China relations, the application of Kautilyan principles may still be useful. It is necessary to first build India's comprehensive national power in all the different attributes Kautilya has listed, in particular leadership, good governance, a strong economy and a strong military. India still falls short on this score, states Shyam Saran.

Shyam Saran visited twenty countries in a year as prime minister's special envoy engaged in the task of persuading forty-eight countries of Nuclear Suppliers' Group on India specific and took an active part 'in three years of complex, often tortuous, negotiations.' With characteristic modesty he gives credit to President Bush and Prime Minister Dr Singh 'for creating such a historic moment.'

"In world affairs", writes Shyam Saran, "hegemony often leads to hubris which in turn leads to overextension and then to exhaustion and sometimes war through miscalculation".

He points out the contrasting scenarios between two great powers - U.S. and China. "Neither the Chinese version of national rejuvenation nor American hopes of revivalism are realistic, precisely because the diffusion of economic and military power and the horizontal and accelerated spread of scientific knowledge and technology point to what author Thomas Friedman has called the Flat World".

Referring to globalization the author writes that there is something of a backlash against globalization but the economic and technological drivers which lie behind it are now so deeply embedded in our lives as individuals, communities and nations that they cannot be unravelled. On India's energy security and resource utilization the author makes insightful and highly useful observations.

In the epilogue he observes that "this is the Age of Acceleration, where the only constant seems to be the certainty of even more change. The new global landscape has 'three critical domains - a terrestrial domain defined by maritime space, an extra terrestrial domain related to outer space, and the Cyberspace encompassing both the terrestrial and extra terrestrial. He warns against the awesome power of cyberspace and the threat of state justifying

an artificially created fear psychosis. Authoritarianism may 'become imperceptibly internalized' India cannot afford to ignore its cherished values of freedom, democracy and pluralism. Values. 'A shrinking vision at home cannot sustain an expansive vision abroad', he warns. Finally, Shyam Saran returns to Kautilya and Kamandaki for the solution which is 'prudence in managing interstate relations' and adopting 'such policies that would enable one to survive and live to fight another day.'

True to his style Shyam Saran maintains a low profile, rarely preferring to use the first person singular in this unputdownable narrative. He does not claim any credit for himself despite rendering years of outstanding service to the nation as a brilliant negotiator-diplomat. A role model civil servant---alas! their tribe too is decreasing - Shyam Saran's book must be a source of inspiration to the young civil servants in particular. He takes the reader on a long and exciting intellectual voyage through centuries of history, beyond time and space, making a smooth and perfect landing at the end. If the first line in the book states 'what the book is not about', the last line superbly says it all. "Hundreds of years later, these principles are valid even in our transformed world."

A Prasanna Kumar

* * *

Book Review:

ADVICE & DISSENT - MY LIFE IN PUBLIC SERVICE

- Y.V.Reddy

(Published by HarperCollins Publishers, 2017, p.p.480, Rs.799.00)

The title of the book, seems to be a take-off on the US novel "Advise & Consent", highlighting the consultative process between the US President and Congress over important issues. With puckish humour, Dr. Reddy calls the book "Advice and Dissent", though on reading it, it is evident that his "Dissent" of the opinions of his bosses and even the ministers was generally accepted with some slight, face saving, modification.

Just as an aquatic bird, like the pelican, dives into water without the water wetting its plumage, so the perfect man lives in the world, but the world does not touch him. Sri Ramakrishna

Venugopal Reddy had his early education in his village and higher education at Anantapur and Madras. He obtained M.A. degree in Economics from Vivekananda College, Madras though he had originally planned to study engineering. He worked as lecturer in Nizam College, Hyderabad and enrolled for doctoral research in Osmania University under the guidance of Prof. V.V.Ramanadham. Despite heavy administrative responsibilities in government, Y.V.Reddy completed his research work and obtained his doctoral degree by 1975.

Yaga Venugopal Reddy is a born administrator. Right from the beginning when he was a topper in civil service examination which he appeared for, in deference to his father's wish. He made a mark at every stage in his long and distinguished career. As a trainee sub-collector in Visakhapatnam, he learnt the ropes under the guidance of the popular and dynamic Collector Abid Hussain. He was fortunate to have received, early in his career, encouragement of such seasoned administrators as B.P.R.Vithal, S.R.Sankaran and K.R.Venugopal. He enjoyed the affection of and close association with another outstanding administrator U.B.Raghavendra Rao till his premature and tragic death.

Y.V.Reddy held several important positions in the service of A.P.State Government, including that of a key advisor to the charismatic Chief Minister N.T.Rama Rao. Venugopal Reddy's transfer to the centre to work in the Dept. of Economic Affairs enabled him to meet and develop a good rapport with the then Secretary Economic Affairs, Dr. Manmohan Singh. Impressed by Reddy's abilities, especially in negotiations, Manmohan Singh recommended his name for appointment in the World Bank as technical assistant to the Executive Director. At World Bank, Reddy first served under another distinguished expert M. Narasimham and later worked with H.N.Ray, an old ICS officer and a gentleman of great integrity who treated Reddy like his own son. Though Reddy was once pulled up by Ray for displaying unwarranted vehemence and lack of sophistication in presenting in negotiations. Ray did not take amiss Reddy's retort on one occasion and the latter eventually realized that it pays to be polite and cool in presenting even a dissenting note. And that

lesson learnt at World Bank, allied to innate humility remained Reddy's big asset.

Reddy felt that the economists, statisticians and other professionals of the RBI were highly qualified and knowledgeable, and discussions with them was stimulating. The RBI was rigidly hierarchical, but people were free to express their opinion. Dr. Rangarajan was the Governor when Dr.Reddy joined as the Deputy Governor. Rangarajan felt that price stability was essential for development, and with the concurrence of Manmohan Singh put a stop to printing currency notes on demand thus checking deficit financing. RBI also felt the rupee was over valued, and should be devalued. Reddy decried people describing gold as non productive asset. For the women of the middle class as well as the poorer sections, gold jewellery is their only property. They can use it as a security for a short term loan or sell it for cash in difficult circumstances. He is for free import through designated channels. Chidambaram as finance minister was against it, but Y.V.Reddy convinced him with the argument that the position was critical and devaluation of the rupee was done accordingly. During that period because of financial crisis the Asian currencies tumbled. RBI's foresight insulated India from the Asian financial meltdown. S.S.Tarapore remarked that Reddy came out as the saviour of the Indian exchange rate policy. Rangarajan's term ended and he was succeeded by Dr.Bimal Jalan who was also a brilliant person. The Asian financial crisis was at its height when he took charge and Jalan managed it well. By the time he left office in 2003, India was in robust financial condition.

In 2002, when Reddy reached the age of superannuation in the government, he was offered a job as the executive director at the IMF which he gladly accepted as his children and grandchildren were in US and he could spend time with them. In 2003 Mr.Jaswant Singh, the finance minister, inducted Reddy as the Governor of RBI. The relationship between the RBI Governor and the Finance Minister was exceptionally good marked by mutual admiration. In 2009 Jaswant Singh, then in opposition, gave him a copy of his book *Jinnah:India-Partition-Independence* with his inscription "For a wise counsel, a great guide, the Statesman sans-pariel of the country's Central Bank

and a great helpmate: Governor Y.V.Reddy, with highest regards and warmest good wishes". In 2004 the UPA led government came into power with Manmohan Singh as the Prime Minister and Chidambaram as the finance minister, Reddy enjoyed good relations with both of them. Later on the suggestion of Pranab Mukherjee, the then finance minister, Manmohan Singh made Y.V.Reddy the Chairman of the 14th Finance Commission. Interestingly, when the report was submitted in December, 2014, Pranab Mukherjee who had recommended Reddy for chairmanship was now the Rashtrapati. Reddy wrote: "As I was taking leave, Rashtrapati Pranab Mukerjee smiled and said: 'Congratulations. You have really addressed very fundamental issues.' Y.V.Reddy finally took leave of all governmental activities and returned to his home in Hyderabad.

Y.V.Reddy's lively sense of humour and quick repartee earned for him many admirers along with some critics too who mistook it for arrogance. Early in his life when he was a trainee at the Mussorie Academy he was asked by a tutor on his experience in the academy. "Before I joined academy, I was wondering how I got in. Now that I have been here for a month, I am wondering how everyone else got in," was a typical Reddy quip. When there was some volatility in the market, Reddy was sure that it would set itself right. Asked why he was not acting he replied that he was on "thoughtful inaction". On another occasion when questioned for increasing policy rates, he replied 'you are paying more for vegetables, oil etc., so why not have a costlier rupee!' When asked what his role was, he replied "protecting the economy from the Government of India!" adding that the RBI was created to moderate the government when it took a short term view of the existing conditions

From this eminently readable autobiography, Y.V.Reddy comes out as a person regularly acquiring fresh ideas and knowledge. He is firm in giving his opinions but ready to discuss the issue with anyone not agreeing with him. Basically, he is a humble person who is capable of laughing at his own failings and failures, though people could, at times, misunderstand him because of his strong views.

Dr.Reddy writes simple and lucid English, with a free-flowing style. His prose is never turgid even while describing complicated concepts and matters. All in all it is pleasant reading.

Calamur Subrahmanyam

Ex Chief Manager, Hindustan Shipyard Ltd.

"Cut expenditure on defence to fund education"

Country failed in checking dropouts, says expert.

(Newspaper report on the lecture meeting organized by Centre for Policy Studies on the occasion of its 22nd anniversary on October 2, 2017)

"India will miss the demographic dividend as China does if it does not educate its children and youth by investing in education, cutting down on military expenditure and making peace with China for the next decade", Uday Balakrishnan, visiting faculty, Centre for Contemporary Studies, IISc, Bangalore, has said. He said the country had miserably failed in retention up to standard XII and in inculcating quality education, vocational education and skills. He was addressing a gathering after releasing the "Dialogue and Democracy- Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies", the fourth in the series, marking the 22nd anniversary of the Centre for Policy Studies here on Monday. Giving a glimpse of the magnitude and the failure of the system, Dr. Balakrishnan said the US with 5% of the world's population had 15 million between standard IX and XII in Schools whereas India with 17% of the World's population had 22 million.

Former Union Energy Secretary EAS Sarma released the 127th issue of CPS bimonthly bulletin. CPS president A. Prasanna Kumar recalled how the centre was earlier supported by Sankar Foundation and Gayatri Vidya Parishad and now functioning independently. Its aim was to bring people together to discuss issues, make demands and exercise intelligent choices. Its website was also launched recently.

(Special correspondent, *The Hindu*, October 3, 2017)

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“Public accountability vital for ensuring good governance”

Decline of institutions has led to India’s poor rating on the development index, says expert

(Newspaper report on the lectures delivered by Shri Kailash Gupta, IRS (Retd.) and Smt. (Dr.) Vijayalakshmy Gupta, IDAS (Retd.) on October 31)

“Public accountability is vital for ensuring good governance and India’s failure to provide transparent accountability is the biggest drawback,” said Dr Vijayalakshmy Gupta, retired bureaucrat, at a meeting jointly organised by Centre for Policy Studies and Visakhapatnam Public Library, here on Tuesday. Explaining how accountability is both vertical and horizontal, Ms Vijayalakshmy gave several instances of the government letting down the people in providing basic services like water supply and health care. “India is not moving on the right track despite being the largest democracy in the world”, lamented Ms Gupta who was strongly critical of the judiciary for the enormous delay in settling cases. She made special references to gender exploitation and neglect of infant care under the existing healthcare system. Earlier, Kailash Gupta, retired Customs and excise official, narrated how he got out of awkward situations by sticking to the basic rules of Civil Service. “By keeping away from the lure of temptation which Civil Service offers in abundance, I and my wife have retired without a stigma in our long years of service,” Mr. Kailash said. “A civil servant should bear in mind that while he should go by the rule book, the human element is also important in ensuring good governance”, said Mr. Kailash. D.S. Varma, secretary of VPL and CPS, welcomed the gathering while A. Prasanna Kumar presided.

(Special correspondent, *The Hindu*, November 1, 2017)

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SADHGURU IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE

Dr. Ramesh Ramanadham
Dept. of English, GITAM University

“All these years I have known that I should love my neighbour as myself, but after coming to India and reading Bhagavath Gita, I have come to know why I should love my neighbour as myself? For my neighbor is none other than my own self,” – was the response of a revered bishop to the journalists at Mumbai port while leaving India for England.

When you see the service aspect of the spiritual leaders, it is quite different from that of the governments or even committed organizations. The sole reason is that the spiritual masters render service treating people as their own brethren. It’s only because of this reason the opening words of Swami Vivekananda, ‘sisters and brothers of America’ in the parliament of world religions at Chicago, a century and a quarter ago, had enormously appealed to the Americans. To the spiritual masters, there are no boundaries of region or religion or even the national geographical boundaries. They plunge into human service whenever they find it necessary and their spiritual organizations, indeed render greater service to the society than the mighty governments. On his birthday in 1990, Bhagavan Sri Satya Sai Baba declared that he would gift a super specialty hospital to the nation by his next birthday, and the hospital with all modern facilities became a reality in 1991 as Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences. The world is aware of the noblest service, being done at the hospital, free of cost, with utmost care and compassion by the eminent doctors. Whether it is Ramakrishna Mission or Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity or Mata Amritanandamayi’s hospital or Swami Sivanada’s Ashram(Rishikesh) or ISKCON –they all render service to people in an amazing manner with volunteers, more committed than the regular employees of the state and central governments drawing high salaries.

One among such modern masters is – Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev of Isha foundation, Coimbatore, who has been inspiring millions of youths into service across the globe. Sadhguru is a classic example of modern times, how a realized soul can launch massive projects that are not possible even for the governments. One such recent project that has caught the attention of the nation is – Rally for Rivers. From a common man to the chief ministers to film and sports stars, everyone has taken part in it. The main reason is the spirit with which the Sadhguru has reached out to the people in remote areas. To Sadhguru, water is just not a renewable resource, but a rejuvenating elixir. He often says that if one looks at the water with veneration and drink it or wash the body, the impact is totally different. In the Indian philosophy, water is holy. Hence, he is deeply pained at the manner in which massive deforestation is reducing rivers to trickles of water. Sadhguru has rightly diagnosed the ailment when he said that our rivers are dying. Perennial rivers are becoming seasonal, losing their flows, while some smaller rivers have vanished altogether. If the same situation continues, people will die of thirst and starvation. But governments have unfortunately been embroiled in water wars. Sadhguru has drawn up detailed and practical plans of action to enhance the water flows of the rivers through several measures, one being afforestation. Sadhguru's Isha foundation has been doing it with missionary zeal, planting millions of saplings and increasing the green cover of Tamilnadu to a significant extent for which the organization received Indira Gandhi Award for Environmental Work.

Another task that Sadhguru has taken up in a big way is– education i.e., Isha Vidya. Sadhguru is concerned at the existing system of 'motivated education' and 'suppressive education' which controls even the thinking process of the children. Sadhguru often asks, "Is there one more person exactly like you on this planet?" When that is the truth, how can we put together unique beings together in a big room called 'class room' and force them into studying

the same subject/syllabus and bringing unequal comparisons. Sadhguru says, 'Education means inclusion,' and the present day education is the reason behind the 'exclusion' philosophy. Through cooperation only a student can grow, but not due to competition. Sadhguru says that 'academics has become economics' and the parents have become financiers. He says that if the student is not interested in going to school, it means that there is a serious problem with the education system. For children are always enthused to learn something new. Sadhguru has set up Isha schools and also started training the teachers of the thousands of government schools in the true sense of education.

Sadhguru's comparisons of the age old human problems with the current context, clothed in the modern day vocabulary can be captured in almost all his speeches. Sadhguru feels that if the human beings wish to live joyfully in the external world, they must take care of their 'interiority' (a term coined by Sadhguru); they should know how to manage themselves and their surroundings. If the leaders can manage themselves, then the nations will be peaceful. According to Sadhguru, 'the whole purpose of the spiritual science is to awaken the human beings to their ultimate possibility, so that they become complete human beings and live a full life at all levels – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. "If we don't have peaceful human beings, having peaceful planet is just a pipe dream", says Sadhguru. What he feels is that the human beings have not even tasted peace within themselves. Indeed, when people have not experienced what peace is, how can they establish it? Experiencing peace is mainly a matter of inner self. When the leaders of the world cannot manage themselves i.e., their emotions, one cannot imagine it on the external plane, on the globe. No emperor in the history of the modern world has ever created a peaceful world. For, they are not the rulers of their inner selves. Ruling the outer world, being a king of oneself is completely different from ruling the world being a slave to one's own emotions. Hence, Sadhguru keeps on speaking about 'the inner

When Bradman was asked what he did when he was out of form he said:" I can't answer that.

When I played I was never out of form.(*The Economist* September 9,2017 Review of Mike Brearley's book *ON*

FORM)

engineering'. He exhorts the people to become global citizens- not in terms of commerce and business but in terms of cooperation and understanding, freed from the glorified prejudices like region, religion and race. In the pursuit of 'economic wellbeing', Sadhguru says that the world is filled with enormous amounts of violence.

Regarding health, what Sadhguru states is that there are many people who are medically healthy only, in the real sense, but they have not experienced a sense of 'wellness' within themselves. Physically, as per medical terms, one may be healthy, but the 'energies may be lethargic.' One's energies must function in a certain level of intensity within oneself. When one's energies are properly activated and balanced in full flow, one's physical and mental body will be in perfect health. Sadhguru opines that the modern medicine is only offering to manage the diseases, but never really freeing people from those diseases. Today, there are so many kinds of specialists to manage diseases for people, to manage them within certain limitations. People are only aware of the 'physical bodies', whereas spiritual masters are conscious of 'energy bodies' which keep the physical body intact. Sadhguru has introduced to the world the ancient medicine in a modern method.

Most religious leaders usually exhort people to become staunch followers of religion, but Sadhguru, as a spiritual leader, has a different dimension altogether. Sadhguru says that most of those passionate followers are the very source of perpetual pain and continuous conflict. The moment man became religious, it should have been the end of all conflict, but unfortunately, everywhere in the world, religion has become the main source of all the conflict. This has taken the maximum number of lives and caused the maximum amount of pain on the planet for thousands of years. This is only because people believe in something that is not a reality for them. Sadhguru has demonstrated to the world what spirituality means without quoting any scriptures. Sadhguru's arresting blend of profundity and pragmatism, in his life and work serve as a reminder that yoga is not an esoteric discipline from an outdated past but a contemporary science, vitally relevant to the present generation of a technologically advanced age. For his missionary work and motivation in all socio-economic aspects and for his insightful grasp of current political and economical issues Sadhguru has been awarded 'Padma Vibhushan'.

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