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REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN HOMELAND *India's Traumatized Migrants*

Over eight crores of migrant workers, equal in number to the population of Germany, are in acute distress as India faces another grave crisis. Newspapers have published heartrending pictures of these poor people trekking hundreds of miles in soaring temperatures, the most poignant of them being barefooted poor women carrying children in their arms and boxes on their heads. It was a grueling marathon for men, women and children many of whom were denied entry when they crossed the border of a state, others not allowed to move forward as they belonged to another district, even if it was a neighbouring one. The video clip of a cop brutally kicking a migrant with his boot and another thrashing a group of migrants with the lathi evoked widespread public anger. These images dented the goodwill, policemen in general have earned for their hard work, day and night, during the lockdown.

A massive exodus of people without jobs, homes and money walking long distances in search of livelihood exposed the failure of the government and civil society as well, in tackling an unprecedented national crisis. While the union government was engaged in releasing every day a tranche of the prime minister's new economic package and the details of the lockdown relaxations, most state governments were struggling to raise revenues to meet expenditure. The picture of Bihar's sobbing Rampukar who was unable to attend the funeral of his nine year old son mirrored the agony of eighty million migrants, nearly a hundred of whom were killed in road accidents and some due to exhaustion. "We labourers have no life, we are just a cog in the wheel, spinning continuously until we run out of life," wailed Rampukar. Adding to their woes is the fact that many of the migrants are not covered by the National Food Security Act or any State welfare scheme. Life versus livelihood is the dilemma of the unfortunate migrants. Life without access to the means of livelihood at home or going to distant places in search of jobs is the dilemma of the confused aliens in their own homeland. The government claims that it is taking care of the problems of the itinerant millions. "Too little and too late", say the opposition parties. The fact of the matter is that the migrant workers are not a burden on the society. On the contrary they are the backbone of the unorganized sector contributing more than 10% of India's GDP. The mysterious COVID-19 pandemic has made them the most vulnerable section of the society. They are seeking neither sops nor subsidies but employment opportunities. Their demands are just and legitimate and it is the bounden duty of the government and the society to provide them with adequate means of livelihood. Demographic dividend will cease to be a cliché and become meaningful when the legitimate aspirations and creative energy of our younger generation are harnessed for rebuilding India into a vibrant democracy. Underlying the march of the eight crore migrants, is a non-violent revolution of rising expectations. Let it not be converted into 'a revolution of rising frustration'. As Thomas Carlyle warned: "Revolutions are born out of trifles but not trifles out of revolution".

The hiatus between the haves and the have-nots is becoming alarmingly wide. Political parties no longer strive to serve the people and elected representatives seldom articulate the demands of the poor and disadvantaged sections. Corruption has been institutionalized at all levels and apt is the quip that describes public-private partnership as 'privatization of profits and nationalization of losses.' "Power is a value, chasing other values", said a renowned political scientist. Worship of Mammon is the most prominent of them all.

The Editor

We must first come in living touch with them by working for them and in their midst. We must share their sorrows, understand the difficulties and anticipate their wants.

Mahatma Gandhi (on the plight of the poor labourers)

RIGHT TIME TO USHER IN REFORMS IN INDIA'S ARMED FORCES

The armed forces, after decades of clamouring, have been accorded a historic opportunity to usher in change and reforms. It is imperative that this opening is utilized with sagacity and deliberate forethought

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If we take the 2001 Group of Ministers Report as the starting point, the Indian state has taken 19 years to initiate the process of genuine national security reform, whose ‘green shoots’ are represented by the newly constituted Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and Department of Military Affairs (DMA). Although unduly delayed, this move, by the NDA government represents the most significant development in the national security domain since Independence.

To put things in perspective, the Indian military has, for the first time, been accorded recognition in the edifice of the Government of India (GoI) and has thereby been empowered to take decisions that will shape its future. The first priority for the armed forces should be to squarely address certain fundamental incongruities that have stunted their capabilities vis-à-vis adversaries and impinged adversely on India’s national security. While these anomalies are being rectified, the process of defence reforms should be set in motion and pursued with vigour.

But before proceeding further, let me deal with a seemingly trivial issue. The term CDS does not connote a ‘rank’; it is a ‘post’ tenable by a General, Admiral or Air Chief Marshal. Therefore, the creation of a new rank-badge for the first incumbent was unnecessary. The new, maroon shoulder epaulette seems designed only for an army uniform and conveys an inappropriate message since the navy and air force wear their ranks on the sleeve.

Coming to a more substantive issue, if the relegation of Service Headquarters (SHQ) to ‘attached offices’ was an early ‘act of commission,’ which made the military

subaltern to the bureaucracy, an equally damaging ‘act of omission’ was the failure to accord recognition to the armed forces of the Union in the new Constitution.

While Article 312 created the IAS and IPS as ‘All India Services’, the functions, responsibilities and status of the armed forces, and their Chiefs, found no mention in the Constitution of India or any Act of Parliament. Even the GoI Allocation of Business Rules (AoBR) have ignored them. This absence of recognition and lack of defined status has worked to the detriment of India’s military in many ways.

The PIB note of December 24 and brief gazette notification of December 30, 2019, has added two more anomalies that can further complicate the already tangled arena of higher defence management.

Firstly, the CDS, in the pay-grade of Cabinet Secretary/Service Chiefs, has been designated as ‘Secretary DMA’, which is a rung lower. This sets a wrong precedent and jeopardizes the status of Service Chiefs who are on par with the Cabinet Secretary. Secondly, having created a CDS it seems anomalous to retain the responsibility for, “Defence of India and every part thereof...” with a bureaucrat; the Defence Secretary. Indeed, the Defence Secretary has been given even greater institutional responsibility by adding “... defence policy and preparation for defence,” to his new charter. This goes against the very spirit of reforms and needs to be reviewed. The recognition of senior military appointment-holders as ‘functionaries of the GoI’ will provide a legal basis for the discharge of their duties, and is an issue that needs to be pursued by the new DMA on priority.

This brings me to the second area of concern; India’s failure to attain self-reliance in defence hardware. Dependence on foreign countries for weapon systems not only diverts our defence budget into their coffers but also undermines our strategic autonomy and freedom of action.

The main reason for the dismal failure of India’s Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and massive defence-production complex, to

India’s Constitution may be summarized as having three strands: protecting and enhancing national unity and integrity; establishing the institutions and spirit of democracy; and fostering social revolution to better the lot of the mass of Indians.

Granville Austin

achieve self-reliance, is three-fold. Firstly; the SHQs have been denied a say in the prioritization of DRDO's projects, and the latter is free to spend its budget on technologies which often do not have relevance to the military's operational needs. Secondly; since no instrumentality exists for independent review and oversight of DRDO's projects, time/cost overruns, performance shortfalls and even failures go unaccounted for. Lastly; the armed forces, by focusing exclusively on 'current combat capability', have displayed indifference towards the indigenous defence industry and contributed to the current stasis.

A key result area for the CDS must be to ensure that DRDO and the defence-production complex are put on the right track and provided motivation and guidance; so that India can aim for self-reliance in defence by 2070. Apart from other policy changes, the GoI must be persuaded to appoint Service officers as CMDs/CEOs of DPSUs and to ensure military representation on the boards of directors of these units.

The most serious consequence of the military's isolation from MoD has been the huge delays imposed in the processing of cases; related to hardware acquisition, infrastructure and personnel-management. Each case, after being steered through multiple layers of MoD bureaucracy, is questioned all over again by its Finance Wing. Queries are sequential, repetitive and often raised to prevaricate.

Integration of SHQ with MoD has been sought for decades because bringing civil and military expertise under one roof would reduce file discussions and eliminate delays. These attempts have been firmly opposed by the bureaucrats, who insist that the status quo is quite satisfactory. Loosening the stranglehold of the bureaucracy and putative 'financial advisors' on the SHQs, through civil-military integration, should be an important objective of the DMA. Its attainment will have the most beneficial fallout for force-modernization and combat efficiency.

Finally, I come to the crux of the reform process – the evolution of 'unified' or 'joint' command structures.

Contrary to the general impression, the GoI has not specified any deadlines for creation of what is called, 'theatre commands.' In fact, while embracing every other aspect of jointness at the earliest possible, the constitution of such commands, their span of responsibility and geographic boundaries must be decided after due consultation between the CDS, the Service Chiefs and their staffs. There are two other reasons for proceeding with due caution.

Firstly, we lack officers with the background or qualifications to function on the staff, and as 'component commanders' or Commanders-in-Chief, of a unified command and to operationally deploy its three service components. Creating a cadre of such officers calls for re-shaping the system of professional military education followed in the armed forces. Important steps in this process will be to re-cast the Defence Services Staff College as the Joint Services Staff College and to alter syllabi of the service War Colleges so that their graduates are competent to fill billets in a unified HQ.

Secondly, once unified commands are created, the operational control of field forces would devolve from respective SHQs to the unified commanders. The Chiefs, having been divested of operational responsibilities, would, then, focus only on recruitment, training, and logistics. Since the critical transition from one system to the other could lead to degradation of operational capability, it must be preceded by adequate preparation and undertaken in phases. Creation of a Joint Staff HQ would facilitate the oversight of this process.

The armed forces, after decades of clamouring, have been accorded a historic opportunity to usher in change and reforms. It is imperative that this opening is utilized with sagacity and deliberate forethought. While making haste, it is important that the leadership gets it right the first time, for there may never be another opportunity.

(Courtesy: *South Asia Monitor*, April 16, 2020)

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There is no illness worse than desire, no foe fiercer than attachment, no fire so ravenous as anger, and no ally so reliable as wisdom.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

India isn't prepared to meet its defence needs

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Last week, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled some major structural reforms in India's moribund defence sector, as part of a coronavirus disease (Covid-19)-related macroeconomic stimulus, and the increase in foreign direct investment in defence manufacturing to 74% is radical. However, these are all policy changes that have "potential" and need to be implemented effectively before their outcome can be objectively assessed.

In the interim, India's military security challenges, both current and long-term, came into unintended focus in this month even as the nation is grappling with the pandemic and its tragic impact on millions of citizens.

In early May, the Handwara terror attack saw the Indian Army losing a colonel and other personnel, pointing to the abiding tenacity of the low-intensity-conflict (LIC) that has been simmering in Kashmir. This is a complex proxy war where the external Pakistani stimulus has permeated the internal security strand with all its corrosive communal elements. It is unlikely to end soon.

Currently, India is managing an anomalous territorial challenge exigency, albeit of a low order. The eastern Ladakh sector saw a stand-off between Indian and Chinese soldiers in the Pangong Tso sector. While it is well below Doklam, media reports indicate that stones were used and it is encouraging that no ordnance was exchanged, as has been the pattern for well over three decades. But the long-festering territorial dispute with China, remains alive on the national security radar.

The more intriguing element is that Nepal summoned the Indian ambassador on May 11 to lodge a protest against the construction of a road by India in

an area (Lipu Lekh pass to Dharchula in Uttarakhand) that Kathmandu claims lies within its territory.

To add to the spectrum of challenges, reports have emerged of China enhancing its Indian Ocean (IO) footprint in an island proximate to Male in the Maldives. Thus the possibility of a Hambantota kind of facility/access for the PLA navy in the IO cannot be ignored by Indian security planners.

And to cap this opaque security challenge, May also symbolises India's complex nuclear-missile anxiety. The regional strategic environment became rough for India when China acquired nuclear weapons in October 1964; the subsequent Sino-Pakistan weapons of mass destruction (WMD) covert cooperation presented Delhi with a *sui generis* security conundrum. The Pakistani nuclear weapon that Beijing had enabled was being used to help terrorism stoked by religious fervour — what one had described as the nuclear weapon-enabled terrorism (NWET) dilemma.

India sought to assuage its latent WMD anxiety in May 1998 through the Shakti nuclear tests under Atal Bihari Vajpayee's watch on May 11. Two decades later, the regional WMD-terror nexus has become muddier and the techno-strategic permutations are bewildering.

Does India have the wherewithal to deal effectively with this complex spectrum of national security challenges — one part of which is further aggravated by the current domestic political-ideological orientation? The answer is no — and for years experts have been pointing out that the annual defence allocation cannot sustain the kind of human, material and inventory profile that India needs. The last defence budget (excluding pensions) was Rs 3,37,000 crore. The amount available for modernisation of equipment and new acquisitions was shrinking to about 32% from the optimum of 40% of the budget.

In the backdrop of COVID-19, India's macroeconomic challenge will worsen. The fiscal deficit is set to breach the recommended 3.5% limit;

Reasoning is central to the understanding of justice even in a world which contains much 'unreason', indeed, it may be particularly important in such a world.

Amartya Sen

the only question is how high it would go. On May 8, the government pegged central borrowing for 2020-21 at Rs 12,00,000 crore — a significant increase from the budget estimate of Rs 7,80,000 crore. This fiscal stress will have a bearing on sectors earlier referred to as “non-plan” in the budgetary allocation, of which defence is a visible component. Thus, it is unlikely that the armed forces will receive anything close to Rs 3,50,000 crore (approx \$46 billion). There are also unconfirmed reports of a budget slash in defence allocation due to COVID-19, ranging from Rs 40,000 to Rs 80,000 crore.

Given that the COVID-19 challenge and its accumulating debris of economic devastation and human destitution will be the higher national priority for some years, India will have to embark on a radical review of its security challenges and the road map to deal with this complex spectrum. Many nations are facing a similar predicament, but some abiding elements in the Indian context must be noted. Strategic geography and its attendant security exigencies will not change due to the pandemic. The low-intensity conflict stoked by Pakistan and the internal security fabric will be turbulent and the political apex will seek to assuage national sentiment in this regard.

What kind of military capability India needs, its technological contour, and how this can be both nurtured and sustained in an affordable manner in a post-COVID-19 world needs careful and objective assessment. Against this backdrop, some of the sweeping remarks attributed to the Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, justifying lower defence spend and suggesting that the military may have been misrepresenting its requirements are perplexing, to put it mildly. One hopes this is not the distilled wisdom of Modi 2.0 in the security domain.

(Courtesy: *South Asia Monitor*, May 9 2020)

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Are we Facing an Evolutionary Crisis?

Prof. Manoj Das

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Those who had taken Einstein's warning in his '*Out of My Later Years*' not to trust our intellect because it had no conscience though it had muscles, need not be surprised at the thesis put forth by Dr. Gerald Crabtree of Stanford University in a recent issue of Trends in Genetics suggesting that the human race had begun to lose its intellectual and emotional abilities.

As expected, the scientist makes a brilliantly detached analysis of the situation in terms of genetics and mutations but leaves it to us to evaluate the socio-psychological consequences of his deduction that runs against the modern man's self-assured complacency about his mind. But the suspicion that the attributes of mind -intellect, intelligence, wit et al are proving to be less and less dependable for the very fundamental needs of life – peace, happiness and a certain stability of faith in the very purpose of life - have been felt for quite some time by now. We have to focus on some developments within a wider range of life to appreciate this assumption.

If two persons from the same milieu and more or less similar in everything and suffering from the same malady are treated by the same medical and psychiatric care, the signs of healing should be more or less the same. But it was observed that while one's response to the treatment was along the expected line, the other staged an inexplicably sudden recovery. The regularly monitored physical and emotional reactions of both did not lead to any clue for this phenomenon. The question several such cases raised was - could our consciousness contain an unidentified faculty that responded in a positive way in the second case?

Several experiences of this nature, after thorough discussions on them by the Executive Board of the World Health Organisation at Geneva in 1978 as well as in its subsequent meetings, led it to pass a resolution at the 36th World Health Assembly in 1983 to add to the prevailing scope and definition of health which was

Adi Sankaracharya was the builder of the empire of spirit.

“a state of complete physical, mental and social well being” - the factor of spirituality. Under the auspices of the WHO the then chief of Health Services of the Government of India, Dr. D. B. Bisht and Director, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Dr. G.N. Reddy, convened a workshop at Bangalore, in February 1985 to assess this proposition in the Indian context. It was an unpublicised brainstorming event in which forty of the country’s leading medical practitioners, life-scientists, psychologists, psychiatrists, jurists and a few students of the mystic lore (which included this author) participated. Although spirituality was an age-old concept, to determine its relevance to as down-to-earth a field as health was a challenging exercise.

Concrete cases were cited that could lead to the hypothesis that deep within man a hitherto ignored constituent of consciousness was demanding recognition and its suppression could lead to several problems, mental, emotional and physical. What had been for ages an experience only with Yogis and mystics, an aspect of consciousness that was its very basis and which sustained the whole structure of our being despite its other constituents like mind and emotions constantly fighting among themselves, was probably at last trying to assert itself, slowly but surely, in the life of a greater number of people.

Hence the hypothesis: if polygraph, popularly known as the lie-detection test, leaves us in little doubt that there is a part of our consciousness that shrinks from lies – and the fact that despite all the deviations and aberrations civilisations survive on the ideal of truth and values aligned with it – it should not appear unrealistic if the élan of evolution strove to bring to the forefront what is already involved in us – call it “Factor X” if not Soul.

In the wake of Dr. Crabtree’s thesis the significant finding of a research conducted by the Notre Dame Professors of psychology, Anita Kelly and Lijuan Yang, has come to light. It claims that those who avoid speaking lies enjoy a better quality of health. Simply through a casually developed habit we utter lies – exaggerations included - most of which were unwarranted. The well-oriented and documented research shows that those who willed and stopped the habit got rid of a lot of irritating disorders.

It was in the voice of Aurobindo that we heard the message of political freedom for the first time.

The research only confirms what is an inborn knowledge with us: Not only consciously, but also unconsciously we respect truth and honesty. We spontaneously exclaim with appreciation, “What an honest man is he!” We do not exclaim in the same spirit, “What a dishonest man is he!”

Needless to say, truth and honesty are not the natural virtues of mind and its instrument, the intelligence. If we have to realise these goals, we have to surpass mind. Such findings assert that we are indeed passing through an evolutionary crisis as observed by Sri Aurobindo.

Dr. Crabtree’s thesis leaves us with a choice between two attitudes: we resign to a future when technology would mould our fate, our mind growing cipher, or we cultivate a collective aspiration to release what remains involved in our consciousness. To a professor who was logically convinced of Sri Aurobindo’s vision but wondered if the ugly man of today could really grow into something beautiful, a rustic school teacher told, “If a wonder like the lotus could bloom out of mud with the Sun’s Grace, why can’t out of our muddy mind bloom the Supramental with the Divine’s Grace?”

We may replace Divine’s Grace with Evolutionary thrust, if we please – or better still – a collective aspiration.

(From Manoj Das ‘*Of Mystics and Miracles and other Essays*’)

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A Modern Maharaja - II

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(*Scindia is much in the news. In this article I narrate my stint with Madhavrao Scindia.*)

As elections were due to be held in May 1996, right from day one in the MHRD, Scindia knew he was racing against time. He used to say that it was not the right time to join a ministry like MHRD in the last year of the government. Had he joined at the beginning of the Government he would have started with culture. The akademies were full of politics; the factions were

Subhas Chandra Bose

self-serving and perpetuating. He had just 15-16 months to leave a mark on MHRD, and whatever he did was conditioned by that time horizon. Soon after he joined MHRD, he realised that in MHRD the technocratic and managerial solutions like those undertaken during his stint in the Ministries of Railways and Civil Aviation were unlikely to acquire for him the name and fame he craved for, and that it was important to protect the image that he was set to address topical educational issues in an unconventional way. To that end, he took up three initiatives: a bill to regulate the establishment of private universities was introduced in the Rajya Sabha in August 1995, four Synergy Groups were set up to suggest new approaches to primary education and literacy, vocational education, IITs and IIMs, and organising a 'National Debate' on topical issues. In keeping with his search for unconventional solutions the synergy groups were headed by unconventional people. That on primary education and literacy was headed by Abid Hussain, a distinguished administrator and known proponent of liberalisation, that on vocationalisation by Sam Pitroda, that on IITs by industrialist V. K. Modi, and that on IITs by the Hindustan Lever Chairman S. N. Dutta. The national debates were to be organised in different regions of the country through interactive sessions to which a cross section of teachers, academics, parents and students were to be invited to discuss issues. These sessions were to be, modelled after the janavani programme introduced by Doordarshan during the Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi. He hoped that unconventional ideas might emerge from these interactions; even if that hope was not fulfilled, the interaction would provide opportunities for photo-ops and media coverage, and also act as insurance against the possibility that he might not succeed in giving a new direction to education given the short time and the need to carry most if not all the States. For the national debates, he zeroed in on for topical issues: compulsory primary education legislation, vocational education, value education and reducing the 'load of the school bag', a catchy expression for reducing the curricular load of school education. In retrospect, the omission of reform of higher education was one of the glaring omissions of topics selected for the synergy groups and the national debate; so was de-bureaucratisation of education of which he often spoke about.

Not to speak of acting on the recommendations emanating from the regional meets, Scindia could not even complete them as his tenure was abruptly cut short in January 1996 by the hawala (money laundering) racket. During raids on the premises of S.K.Jain and his brothers accused of hawala transactions, the CBI came across a diary which listed the names of politicians to whom the Jain brothers paid bribes. Scindia's name figured in the list. As the CBI sought the prosecution of Scindia and other politicians whose names figured in the list, he submitted his resignation as a Minister. Come to think of it, Scindia's political career and life were jinxed. In July 1988 when Scindia was Railway Minister, more than a hundred people died when the Island Express fell into a river near Quilon, Kerala; Scindia submitted his resignation but as he put it Rajiv tore off the resignation letter. At Civil Aviation he 'wet leased' Russian aircraft to break the strike of the pilots of Indian Airlines; in January 1993 all the 163 passengers and the crew died in the crash of one such leased plane. He took responsibility and resigned. This time, however, PV the Prime Minister accepted the resignation, and he was out of office. As he once joked 'a crazy Russian pilot crashed his plane and I lost my plush office in the Civil Aviation Ministry'; now he was hit by a scandal and lost MHRD. Five years later he was to lose his life itself in a plane crash.

As was usual in the Department of Education during the seven years I spent there, the preparation of the various notes Scindia wanted was entrusted to me, the resident idea man of the Department. But the real turning point in my relations with Scindia came about three weeks later when I prepared the briefs and speeches for Scindia's participation at the World Social Summit at Copenhagen (6-12 March 1995). Scindia was included in the Indian delegation which was led by the Prime Minister. Apart from participating in the side-event, Scindia was also scheduled to speak at a workshop on social cohesion, one of the many events associated with the Summit. I brought to bear on the briefs and the speech the understanding I acquired from my study of international relations, and multilateral diplomacy as well as reflections on my experiences of participating in multilateral forums like the UNESCO General Conferences, and negotiating

Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint.

B.R. Ambedkar

with many international organisations like the European Union and the World Bank. On March 13, the day after Scindia returned from Copenhagen, I met him to brief him on a parliament question, and as I got up out to leave after the briefing was over, he asked me to stay back and thanked me for the excellent briefs and speech. From that moment I came to be the court jester- or to use imagery nearer home vidushaka in Sanskrit plays- who could take the liberty of speaking out his mind. As Scindia told me on quite a few occasions he liked me because I said what I thought was right rather than what he would like to hear, that he had so many around him who said what pleased him and that he did not need me if I were to be like them. Scindia relied on me to provide him information and alternate points of view in regard to not only educational matters but also many other areas. Thus, it was I who prepared the brief and speech for a seminar on restructuring of the UN system which the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation organised. I got accustomed to receiving calls from him seeking information on some matter or other; many a time in the morning he would ask me to come over and assist him on some matter or other. Knowing that the office car would not have as yet arrived at my home, he would send his car to fetch me. When I arrived at his home, I would find him dressed in his night dressing gown with a mug of tea in his hand and walking up and down the porch of his house. On one occasion, he showed me a scrapbook of his speeches, and asked me whether I knew what his first speech in Parliament was. Seeing my blank face, he answered the question himself. ‘Can you believe it’, he asked me as he showed that speech,’ it was a speech attacking Mrs. Indira Gandhi as a Jana Sangh MP’.

Scindia had a deep attachment and deference to the Gandhi family the way his ancestors had to the Peshwas. It is said that the Scindias never designated any of their ministers as Dewan in deference to the Peshwas. When he hosted a dinner for Frederico Mayor, Director General, UNESCO he arrived early at the Hotel Taj Palace and like an experienced host went round the hall with me, the organiser of the dinner, to locate the high table where he could seat Sonia and the most important guests. The official dinners he hosted had an unusual charm; for the dinner he hosted in connection with the

International Seminar on Mahila Samakhya (a woman’s empowerment programme I was handling) the lawns of Hotel Samrat were turned into an illuminated fairyland. He invited all the women MPs and women officers of his Ministry. When he arrived with his wife and I received him he introduced me to her in effusive terms and told her that my promotion was imminent and that he had asked Surendra Singh the Cabinet Secretary to ensure that I was retained in the DOE itself. He harnessed the Zonal Cultural Centres attached to the Department of Culture in his charge to stage a cultural programme for his guests: Chhau dance from West Bengal, Bhangra dance from Punjab, and Siddhi dance from Konkan, Maharashtra, and so on. Scindia and his wife acted as gracious hosts; it was like they were in their palace receiving and entertaining high level dignitaries and foreign delegations; Madhavrao Scindia wanted me to get the Nepali group and introduce them to his wife who was from Nepal’s royal family; when they were presented to her she asked them where in Nepal they were from, and engaged them in polite conversation for quite a while. While the dinner was going on Madhavrao Scindia called me aside and told me that a lady from Pakistan wanted to visit her hometown Saharanpur, and that that visit should be arranged.

Like sophisticated men of the world, Scindia would jovially banter to get his way through. Soon after his return from Copenhagen he began to press me for including in the World Bank-funded District Primary Education Programme a few districts of MP in which he was interested. When I pleaded for time, he observed ‘You can’t put me off like that. I would not leave you. I would chase you till the end of the world to get my districts’. I could get the districts he was interested included in the DPEP-II Project except for Gwalior district (his home town) as Gwalior district did not fulfill the criteria of its female literacy rate being lower than that of Madhya Pradesh. Scindia was understanding and told me, ‘I know you are more comfortable with dollars than rupees. I would not embarrass you with the World Bank. I am happy that all other districts of my fiefdom were covered’.

I really felt very sad for him when he had to resign

Jawaharlal Nehru had a temper, P.V.Narasimha Rao a temperament.

K. Natwar Singh

and leave the Ministry because of the Hawala scandal. While most Ministers and Chief Ministers with whom I worked liked me immensely, Scindia was the only Minister who treated me like a friend. My parting with Scindia was poignant. When I went to his home for a farewell call, he was in the porch, our usual meeting place. He was casually dressed, and his eyes were moist. He told me that he respected my intellect and was keen that I should be promoted in the Ministry itself; he achieved it but he himself could not stay. Then with a choked voice he said that he had a clean conscience and that though it would take time he would come back and would work with me again. I took his permission to talk on a personal vein. I recalled what he once told me about his ancestor Mahādji Scindia and his ancestor's grit in resurrecting Maratha power after the Third Battle of Panipat which was calamitous for the Marathas. I told him that I was sure that he would draw courage from that experience of his ancestor. Then alluding to my own experience during my assignment as Development Commissioner (Drugs) I told him that one feels bitter about the way the system sometimes turns against you in spite of your serving the system so well. He was touched by what I said and spoke of the lies and disinformation that were being spewed out. Our paths were to cross never again, for Congress Party did not return to power till 2004 and by then I had retired, and he was no more.

(Concluded)

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Constitution and Democracy: 70 Years of India's Experience - II

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In the U.S the number of Ministries / Departments are limited to a specific number and subjects as per an Act of the Congress. In Switzerland, the Constitution itself enumerates what would be the Ministries. In India the size and specification of the Ministries are flexible beyond

description. Once in Karnataka, the Chief Minister Sri Ramakrishna Hegde appointed Sri Poddar as Minister for Coffee while there were other Ministers for Sugar and Milk. Fortunately there is limitation on the number of Ministers a state can have: 15% of the MLAs and MLCs. Even this does not stand to reason fully. There are states as big as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal etc while small states like Goa, Manipur etc also exist. Budgetary allocations matter, too. Ministries may be organised on a near-equal footing. Special consideration like tribal affairs etc also needs to be taken in account. There is hierarchy among the ministers, too. Some are of the Cabinet rank while others are of the status of Ministers of State whatever it might mean! Sometimes, Ministers are appointed without their being a member of the legislature. Their term expires after six months. But no problem; they are reappointed the day after the expiry of the term. (It happened in Punjab). All in all, there is a need to take a fresh look at the composition, structure and functioning of the Council of Ministers.

We claim that the Westminster model is followed here. A significant matter we have ignored altogether in the model is the concept of Shadow Cabinet. As an alternative to the prevalent Councils of Ministers an opposition party in the U.K draws up a list of possible Ministers in charge of different subjects who would train themselves to take over the responsibilities of a government if a chance permits them. Background preparation would have been provided by advance-training to the would-be ministers. Even in the ruling party a set of MPs could be enlisted to prepare themselves in the specific subjects so as to enable them to contribute to the debates in the House meaningfully. This measure, if followed by all the parties in the Parliament, would go a long way in heralding a healthy and meaningful deliberations in the House.

Time-sharing for Government : One of the principles of parliamentary democracy is that those who manage to secure 51% of seats on the floor of Lower House of Parliament should form government while all others would sit in opposition (wilderness). If the loser party, or group of parties, were to command a strength of 49%, or near to it, should they necessarily be denied

The electronic media's conduct, practically unchallenged during the first phase of its much awaited advent in our country, had come under suspicion before long thanks to its gross amour for questionable commerce.

Manoj Das

the opportunity of forming the government? For all the remaining time? Should it be then a proposition of zero-sum game? Why not make it a non-zero-sum game?

If there are only two major political parties, or even three, and they each have won a sizeable number of seats, would it not be fair to allot a share in time to run the government according to their strength in the House? The total period of an Assembly is 60 months. Party A might have got 51% of strength; Party B got 40% and other(s) 9%. In proportion to the seats why not they be entrusted with power to run the government for 30 months and 24 months respectively? This type of distributive justice may appear to be radical and unusual but it stands to reason. In Karnataka some time ago the Congress, BJP and JD(S) had held strength of 20% each. Instead of making them share power cordially and Constitutionally for 20 months each, they were forced to play power-game/ political manipulation/immoral political opportunism and hold power for an equal period of time as per their strength of seats. They were driven around in the name of Constitutional morality. What was politically possible was constitutionally termed immoral. Ultimately the political possible was imposed on the Constitution. Instead, it would be prudent to write a provision in the text of the Constitution which would permit ('morality') formation of governments by different parties in proportion to their strength in the House. Of course, a minimum of time share, say, of 12 months, may be prescribed. The people who extended support to a political party at the time of election to the Assembly should not feel dejected or out-casted for the reason that they did not pass the 51% mark. The Constitution should appear to them to be inclusive in its essence.

Electoral Considerations: The Election Commission of India has, no doubt, performed a stupendous task. But the electoral system needs to be tightened and the undesirable elements need to be prevented from entering the electoral fray. Firstly, any Tom, Dick and Harry need not contest the elections. To keep the process clean and purposeful, the voters should be informed properly about the desirability and feasibility of the candidates from among whom they decide to elect one as their representative. The

candidate should be: an educated person who can read, write and participate in the discussions in the Assembly/ Parliament; should be a person who has a record of social service or be a professional (sometimes, the widow or son is put up as winnable candidate- that seems to be the only eligibility!); should declare his and family's income and assets/ liabilities annually; paid all taxes, and refunded government or bank loans; should have a clean police record; and finally should be prepared to provide a performance report to his constituency periodically. Political parties who choose and field candidates should also be asked to file application for registration before the Election Commission of India (ECI) every year compulsorily failing which they may be barred from election activities. Along with the application itself the parties should submit certified records of: income/fund-raising/assets as well as expenditure, the charter of the party along with the muster of active members, proof of their functioning democratically in their internal matters and as per their own charter, and a general declaration that they will abide by the Constitution of India and laws of India. Individual or independent candidates would have to float their own parties and stand for elections on their behalf: this eliminates the scope for their escape from ECI's scrutiny in future. The ECI should be enabled to verify the various records and if they are proved to be dubious or unsatisfactory the party's registration should be suspended forthwith.

Apart from the above constructive suggestions, quite a few popular or even populist demands for electoral reforms need to be examined before they are supported uncritically. These are mainly:

Recall: In some countries, an elected representative on his failure to perform duties properly is called back by a popular petition and fresh elections are held. Should this practice be followed in India?

Yes: It will act as a deterrent and help improve the performance of people's representatives-MP's, MLA's etc.

No : What happens in Switzerland cannot be replicated in India. Here we have no signature-bank as in Switzerland whose officers can tally signatures of a

The only lesson we learn from history is that we learn nothing from it.

petition for recall with authentic signatures of voters, recorded officially. Secondly, a petition for recall can be moved easily and successfully where in a constituency the winning candidate has a small margin of victory while the opponents of his put together command votes which would far exceed the requisite number for moving a recall-petition.

NOTA: This suggestion is supposed to instill fear in the hearts of unworthy candidates. But the details of the recording of NOTA reveal that no candidate/s could be disqualified on account of the NOTA votes even if these are more than the total votes gathered by the winning candidate. This anomaly has been witnessed in the last Gujarat Assembly elections. NOTA or not the election results are not affected.

State-Funding of Electoral Expenses:

Yes: It is believed that many worthy aspirants are deterred from contesting elections for the reason of their poor financial conditions. Hence, the State should come forward to foot their bill for election expenses.

No : When crore-patis are in the field they do not need this flea-bite financial subsidy. On the other hand, the poor candidates cannot summon enough courage to challenge the multi-crore-patis with the help of a small subsidy from the State. Besides, accounting problems arise.

Compulsory Voting: If electoral successes are to be read as popular support, it is found that in several instances the percentage of votes cast in an election to the Assembly or Parliament is pathetically poor. Often, the winning candidate carries no more than 10-15 percentage of registered voters in his constituency. This is not only unfair to the principle of representative democracy but also confirmation of apathy on the part of the people. To set right this impairment it is suggested that voting should be made compulsory in Parliamentary/Assembly elections.

Yes : It helps the democratic/representative process.

No : If people don't come forward to cast their votes, how can they be made to do so compulsorily?

Under the threat of penalty or imprisonment? How to trace and pin-point the offenders? How many more jails to house them? How to examine the bona fide of their excuses not to come to vote? This is a classic case of remedy being worse than disease.

Simultaneous Elections: This new suggestion is fraught with many problems.

Yes : Avoidance of wasteful and enormous amount of money; non-stopping of schemes and appointments to jobs during the recurrent cycles of elections, and the minimisation of work load of conducting the elections.

No : Several State Assemblies undergo political instability from time to time for a variety of reasons. If they have to wait for long to reconstitute their Assemblies in the wake of simultaneous elections, a lot of harm would have been done to governmental functioning as well as to democratic ethos.

Proportional Representation: This idea was dismissed, rightly so, by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru as an excellent suggestion to usher in anarchy in the country. With all its faults, the first-past-the-post system is better than other systems for our vast and semi-literate country.

Governors: Governors of states in our federal Constitution occupy a unique if not unenviable position. They have three masters to abide by-- the Central Government, the State Chief Minister and their own conscience. No-body knows exactly how and why Governors are chosen and even dismissed. Dr Ambedkar during the Constituent Assembly debates took different stands on the exact Constitutional position they hold. The Rajamannar Committee and Sarkaria Commission in their respective Reports made detailed examination of the Governor's role etc. Their recommendations are worthy of acceptance by one and all. But Governments at the Centre have not been able to implement any of them. One novel idea may be to put forward. Instead of Governors, have 29 Vice-Presidents of India, one for each State (28) and the senior-most of them all being made the presiding officer of Rajya Sabha. They can be given enough powers and made accountable. Their names can be picked by an-all-India committee headed by the Prime

Elected executives have been the principal agents of democratic destination in some countries;
in others, the military has.

Larry Diamond

Minister and the Leader of Opposition at the Centre. The nominees need not be affiliated to political parties in the recent past. Judges of the High Court/ Supreme Court, Padma Awardees, Generals, Vice-Chancellors or any distinguished personality could be put on the panel of eligible candidates. Governors, if need be, given a competent advisory legal assistance. The present practice of appointing Governors without a deep thought is going to hurt the image of Constitutional functionaries.

Rajya Sabha: In 1919, exactly a century ago, the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) was born. Its original purpose was to ensure the support as well as expert advice of Princely States to the ruling dispensation of the country. Gradually it moved into the place of a second chamber/upper chamber in the Central/federal legislative setup. After India gained independence, after Princely States ceased to exist, after the decision to frame a new Constitution for the country, the Council of States continued to exist as though no change has occurred at all. A mere cosmetic change took place in the number and manner of election of its members. It was, and still is, devoid of any federal characteristics seen in the Upper Chamber in any other federal system in the world. It may not be far wrong to state that it constitutes a harmless Parliamentary appendix. At its best, this House of elders is expected to hold dispassionate and learned debates on issues of national importance. But at worse times, the Rajya Sabha has witnessed undignified, partisan and unproductive debates. In the 1980's the ruling party Congress's members of the House behaved in such an ugly and unruly fashion that the Presiding Officer, Vice-President of India, Dr. Shankar Dyal Sharma, a very much Congressman himself, wept, sobbed and wiped off tears from his eyes and begged the elderly Members to behave. This was no isolated instance.

Addressing a conference of Political Science Association in December 1978 Prof. Aloo J.Dastur of Bombay University had said: "Perhaps, the time has come when we as political scientists, teachers and students of Parliamentary government, have to give serious thought to the conduct of the elders. Is it necessary, or is it even useful to have a second chamber? The old English cry

"either mend the House of Lords or end it" raised in the election of 1910 could very well be the rallying cry (here now)". In the opinion of Prof. Bhavani Singh "the Rajya Sabha has become an exotic transplanted on our soil. It represents neither the people nor the Government nor the State Legislatures."

However well argued, the Rajya Sabha is not going to be abolished for the reason that politicians have a vested interest in keeping it. But, we can exert pressure for its reconstitution and make it more useful and meaningful.

For example, the members of Rajya Sabha may be all the nominees of State legislatures as in U.S, Germany and Switzerland. They may act as the guardians of the interests of the States. Further, this second chamber need not be entrusted with the burden of repeating the functions of the Lok Sabha. Instead, it may be endowed with powers special to the federal character of the polity. The President may be asked under Constitutional provisions, to obtain the approval of Rajya Sabha (only) for the following, before the Central Council of Ministers acts:

- Imposition of President's Rule in States
- Appointment of Governors
- Appointment of officers to the federal agencies like the U.P.S.C., U.G.C., Election Commission, Finance Commission etc
- Perusal of Annual Reports of Performance of various bodies submitted to the Parliament annually.

The present practice of the Upper House acting as a brake on the Lok Sabha in legislation may be done away with except for specific cases involving federal issues.

Thus, it is advisable that the Rajya Sabha should be reoriented to serve better the interests of federalism, democracy, and the Constitution.

Generally speaking, the experiment of Constitutional democracy has faced odds all over the world except in a few countries. Constitutions have been scrapped or replaced almost all over Asia, Africa, Latin America and even Europe for reasons of unworkability

The leading figures on the world stage today practise a brutal, smash-mouth, politics, a personalized authoritarianism.

and changing circumstances. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka are some of the leading examples in our own neighbourhood. It is heartening to see that in India the Constitution, launched in 1950, is working well. Democracy and Constitution have helped each other well here. The performance of any institution or idea can never be perfect. The Indian laboratory for experimenting the joint working of democracy and Constitution has indeed been satisfactory although there is room for improvement.

(Concluded)

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Time to focus on a bottom-up economic model

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Covid is giving us a chance to mend our ways. More of our resources must be allocated to protecting the environment, strengthening education, health and housing, and creating infrastructure that will work for all people everywhere Covid-19 has dealt a terrible blow to our economy. But there is a silver lining. The long shutdown has shown us what a lovely world of clear skies and clean rivers we can gift ourselves once this crisis passes over.

For that however, we need to consciously revise the model of growth we have adopted since liberalisation began in 1991 and which has been so destructive to our environment. For much less to show than China in the headlong rush to develop, we have a pollution level which is no less than China's, and groundwater depletion that is as bad. The fragility of our social fabric has also been exposed by the mass flight back to the homelands of casual wage-earners.

One of the adaptations we need to make will therefore be in the very economic models we have followed since 1991, especially the single-dimensioned

pursuit of 'GDP' growth rates and the whole complex of the open-borders free-market model based on the pre-eminence of the private incentive.

It is time we listened to those who have been warning us over the decades against purely market-led growth. One of those who set the ball rolling was EF Schumacher with his widely read but hardly followed 'Small is Beautiful.' Amartya Sen has been especially vocal about a heartless economic model that is further marginalising the marginalised. The latest and most vocal is the economist Kate Raworth of Oxford University in her book Doughnut Economics, who makes a powerful case against neo-liberal economics, that seems to have caused much of the environmental problem that's threatening the world today.

John Kenneth Galbraith, a successful actor in the very heart of the American political system, in his 1958 work '*The Affluent Society*' warned us of the fragility of economies that made production of consumption goods the only objective measure of success, and that looked to the market to adjudicate the prices and availability of all goods, even social ones like education and health.

In more recent decades, growing ecological and environmental stresses have underlined the need to leave space for our fast depleting and fragile eco-spaces, be it rainforests in the Amazon or Indonesia and Africa, or the natural habitats closer home in our Western Ghats and the Himalayas.

Public institutions

The case for strengthening rather than weakening the role of public institutions in these areas is stronger today than ever before. Correspondingly, perhaps we need to find new ways of reducing expenditures and funnelling what funds we have into areas, which make small but critical changes that make a positive difference to the lives of common folk in the countryside, Gandhiji's last man and woman.

This, of course, will mean giving up our fancy for super-fast communications and prestige projects, and aiming at a bottom-up model where small players get precedence over the big ones in allocation of the resources that will be released under the economic recovery packages.

There are two kinds of forecasters: those who don't know and those who don't know that they don't know.

We must consciously allocate more of our resources to strengthen education, health and housing, and create infrastructure that will work for people everywhere, such as better rural connectivity, efficient storage and cold-chain systems that will store our produce better and reduce wastages. All these have been neglected over the last few decades.

Although we cannot reverse the destructive decisions of the past, the least we can do today is to do no harm: by bringing ongoing projects to a safe conclusion, but consciously avoiding ecologically and socially destructive mega-projects in future, that tear into the entrails of the earth, destroy more forests and wetlands, and disrupt poor communities across the countryside.

By paying more attention to consciously preserving what is left of our ecosystems and natural resources like freshwater, soil, vegetation, and biodiversity across the country, we'll be laying the foundations of a state that is assured of survival even under the onslaught of the imminent climate change disasters. Covid is giving us a second chance to mend our ways and we must seize it for all it is worth.

(Courtesy: *The Hindu BusinessLine*, e-paper, May 13, 2020)

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NATURE AS BACKGROUND IN HAMSA SANDESAM

Dr. (Mrs.) Prema Nandakumar

Ever since the Alvars transformed the yavanika maya jaganmohini into a revelatory presence bringing us the contours of the Supreme, nature has been used by the Acharyas in several ways to help us absorb ourselves in the higher consciousness. Most of the verses in the Nalayira Divya Prabandham use nature to bring out the drama in the human heart that is yearning to come face to face with the Divine. Tiruviruttam which reads like a mystic's autobiography speaks of a pining heroine who is the jivatman, our soul, struggling to reach the Divine. The different psychic moods that besiege the aspirant

are projected with the help of nature imagery. Here is Nammalvar's jivatman trying to indicate a dark night of the soul:

'Though I have watched many nights in the past,
Such pitch darkness I've not heard of nor seen.
When will He come to save me on this earth,
The dark Lord who devoured and spewed it out!"'

Of the Acharyas who came after and wrote great devotional poetry, Vedanta Desika stands out as one who made use of nature in a variety of ways to help put across the philosophical concepts imbedded in Srivaishnavism. Here again, Hamsa Sandesam has a unique place in his oeuvre. Drawing upon the Ramayana for his theme, Vedanta Desika, linked Rama at Pampa Lake with the messenger-verses of the Alvars who have sent the cloud, the koel, the bee and the swan as ambassadors to convey the anxieties of love. It was Desika who said that the hymns of the Alvars revealed the meanings of the Vedas to him and it is not surprising that the same Alvars also gave him a direction to use nature to understand the ways of the avatar who veils himself with the ignorance that is associated with humankind.

If the Alvars provided him the flair for nature poetry, Kalidasa led him in the format. However, unlike Megha Sandesam which is only about a guilty Yaksha, we have incarnate divinity sending a message to another incarnate divinity in Hamsa Sandesam. Written in the madrakranta metre, Desika's work has 110 verses that make up the two parts of the poem. It has been said that the race of the birds was raised to high levels when Alvars chose them as ambassadors to the Divine. The 'Nalopakhyanam' in the Mahabharata describes Nala as sending a swan as his messenger to Damayanti. Valmiki speaks of no such episode but Desika's creative genius has produced an utterly credible poem which does not go contrary to the character of Rama in any way.

Of the creations in nature, the swan is one of the most beautiful and graceful birds. One of the incarnations of Vishnu was as a swan to teach the Vedas to Brahma. Since the realised soul is referred to as a Parama-hamsa, it becomes appropriate to use the swan in connection with Rama. In keeping with the subject, we have an arresting opening. Hanuman has returned

Astrologers and economists operate on the same principle. They utter prophecies so vague that any event can substantiate them.

from Lanka after meeting Sita. Sita had sent her head-ornament (choodamani) to Rama. Now the army of Sugriva is ready to start for war under the leadership of Rama and Lakshmana. On the eve of their starting for Lanka, Rama is unable to sleep and sits watching a lotus lake, lost in thought. It is a very human situation when he sees a swan swimming in the waters and is immediately reminded of Sita.

“Setting Sugriva’s army in formation expeditiously in the morning, He, with a depressed mind due to the sense of separation from Janaka’s daughter, sighted a majestic swan with the splendour of a full moon in some lotus pond, frolicsomely sporting with its mates, having migrated in season (from the Manasa Lake).”

The swan reminded Rama of Sita because of its graceful gait; and he remembered the motif of the swan woven into her garments, a motif that has remained popular to this day. As we move with the route for the swan being mapped out by Rama, what beautiful sights of nature greet us! The swan would be flying southwards and there flows the Tamraparni, its gleaming treasury of pearls gladdening the bird’s heart. The southern breeze that comes kissing the trees in the sandalwood forests would chase away any tiredness due to the travel.

There are two pathways to Lanka. There is the western one which has an abundance of rain and naturally it would not be comfortable. The eastern path is the best as it has heart-warming sights to see. Of course the swan should not tarry too much watching the sights on its way to Lanka!

We glide with the swan among the clouds and come to the meeting place of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Here is an abundance of sugarcane. Ah, the Venkata Hill!

“Ahead of you will be Anjanadri, pleasing to the eyes, extolled very much by people verily as Sesha, being the abode of Vishnu, carrying the earth with gems on its hoods, and light clouds hovering over like a snake that has just shod its skin.”

It is understandable that Desika waxes eloquent over his birthplace, Kanchipuram. This is an area where even the dust is sacred! The seven branched Vegavati

river is fascinating. Once we immerge in this river, we are freed of sins. The atmosphere is conducive to gain purity of one’s being. Swan’s movement takes it to the rice bowl, the Kaveri Delta, What an abundance of betelnut trees and look at the river, always in spate with fish springing in the waters! Desika refers in particular the sacred grove of Tiruvellarai temple. The garden is in the charge of a woman, Nili.

“There, you will spot the sprawling and pleasing grove with dense shade, blue like His effulgence, guarded by Nili (a Yaksi). Seeing it worthy of perpetual enjoyment of the celestial maids, you will feel the opulence of the celestial garden quite ordinary.”

One must needs meditate upon the wisdom of our ancestors when they systematised temple worship by giving a major thrust to the sustenance of nature. Each temple must have a sacred water source (pushkarini) and a sacred grove (nandavana). How our heart leaps up with joy when we enter temples that have tanks which are full of water and which have flourishing gardens attached to them! And how our thoughts droop low to see tanks with little or no water choked up by dirt and plastic waste! And temple gardens which are forlorn, with not even a well kept Tulsi plant! Reading Vedanta Desika’s Hamsa Sandesam does create positive thoughts in us and if we put at least some of it into action, our temples will become heavens on earth. Srirangam-on-Kaveri and Desika and his swan tarry for long here, lost in the loveliness of nature. The flowing river, the superior variety of sugarcane called Pundra cultivated here, and then Desika’s imagination takes off to scale the heights of nature poesy:

“It would appear that the Kaveri, with gentle smile, is being led by the wind towards the sea with auspicious chantings bidding farewell by twice-borns like you and with application of sweet perfume by the petals of areca flowers falling in it in the nights.”

From Chola to Pandya land. Another charming scenario is readied for us in this land of pearls where Tamraparni has banks created by heaps of shells.

“Going further, to the left of it (Tamraparni), the dark tali (a small tree of the family of Phyllanthus emblica, nela nelli) and tamali (Xanthochymus pictorikis, honge)

The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance – it is the illusion of knowledge.

Daniel Boorstin

trees will exhilarate the minds of youths of your age. Made beautiful by the pearls thrown by the variety of waves on the sea-shore, you will see from a distance the sand mounds as if doubled in size by the pollen of Ketaki (palm) flowers."

The second Aswasa is about the swan in Lanka. Rama gathers scenes of nature to describe Sita to the swan. She is moonlight, a lotus pond, a lotus stalk, the moon, a doe. The loving heart of Rama is laid bare before the swan, as he sits still on the bank of the pond, gazing at the beautiful bird. Then the messenger-poem leaps to a quick and auspicious end. Just one sloka and it is victory, the release of the Earth-born, and Ananda everywhere:

"After messaging thus, Rama crossed the sea along with the hordes of vanaras by means of a bridge, accepted Sita with glory after killing Ravana in the battle and assumed himself the leadership of the kingdom hitherto protected by the paduka."

There is a veritable treasure-trove of nature-projection in Vedanta Desika's works that awaits the scholar's perusal. The perfect placement of nature imagery by him be it in Hamsa Sandesam or Yadavabhyudayam or Padukasahasram is splendid and leads our thoughts into new pathways where we experience the Divine with electrical ease. Where is the equal of the opening verse in Vedanta Desika's Goda Stuti?

"She is the wish-yielding creeper
In the sacred grove of Vishnuchitta,
Entwined with the Harichandana tree
Of Rangaraja, in yogic union".

Not a trace of the humdrum physical, and Desika marks a divine union by positing the togetherness of the tree and the creeper as a yoga-drishya. Like Poykai Alvar who made a supreme lamp out of this world, the oceans and the sun leading to the inauguration of the Bhakti Movement, Vedanta Desika has also taught us how to enter the worlds of god-consciousness by traversing through nature, the yavanika maaya jaganmohini. With the acharya's help we not only enjoy this multifoliate nature but also envision the Lord who is very much present in the splendour and sublimity of His creation.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale

K. Iswara Dutt

It is now a little over 50 years since GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE died ere he was fifty. On his death, K. Natarajan, his great friend and the great Editor of the Indian Social Reformer said: "It is not too much to say that never before in the history of this country, have intellect and character such as those of Gokhale, been devoted to the furtherance of secular aims in a spirit of renunciation." This still holds true after half a century. Indeed, according to another great friend of his, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, there has seldom been in our annals so rare a combination of "the practical, strenuous worker and the mystic dreamer of dreams."

Born on 9th May, 1866, in a village in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, Gopal Krishna belonged to the family of the Gokhales who were well known for their character and iron will. If his father had these tigerly qualities, his mother was endowed with the humane ones of piety, tenderness and devotion. Gopal's early years were those of genteel poverty and noble self-denial. He owed much to his elder brother, Govind who, on the father's death in 1879, made himself responsible for his education, despite the privations it meant for him. Little wonder that for years later Gopal's anxiety was to lighten his brother's burdens in life.

Though he acquitted himself with credit, there was nothing remarkable about Gopal as a pupil. He passed his Matriculation at 15 and took his degree at 18. What, however, distinguished him in the Elphinstone College was his exceptional zeal to study the English classics and acquire an easy command of the English language of especial advantage to him in the achievement of this objective was his excellent memory.

For a while young Gopal thought of I.C.S., of Engineering, and also of Law but by force of circumstances had to abandon all such plans and take to school-mastering for a living. The noble example of the men in Maharashtra who thought of dedicated service—to the nation of Tilak, Apte and Adarkar, for example—

Jainism's consistent historical stance with regard to itself is that it is at the most profound level different from and superior to other parts.

Paul Dundas

was not wasted on him though the idea of giving relief to his brother weighed with him heavily. However, his brother having been won over by his friends to the cause of dedication, Gopal, ere he completed twenty, joined the Education Society as a member. It made a difference to him in life but he made his choice; not for him a life of ease and comfort but that of “a poor pedestrian”.

Soon he became a lecturer in English but one who could also teach Mathematics and Economics. But whatever he taught, he did after considerable preparation. And happy for long years were the young men who sat at his feet and did their Burke. Gopal Krishna had already been giving indication of his rise to fame as a speaker. As chairman at a public meeting addressed by him at Kolhapur, on India under the British rule, the British Resident William Lee Warner bore testimony to his command of the English language and captivating eloquence.

A momentous year in India as that of the birth of the Congress, 1885 was equally eventful in Gopal Rao's life. There was, it seemed, a heavenly conjunction above when Gopal Rao (as he was called), the rising star of the Deccan, swam into the orbit of Mahadeo Govind Ranade, who in India occupied a position of pre-eminence, next only to that of Dadabhai Naoroji, and in Maharashtra was accepted and adored as a Socrates or a Greek Oracle. Never were two souls so instinctively drawn towards one another, with solicitude on the part of the teacher and gratitude on that of the pupil, with mutual love and a common devotion to the cause of the Motherland. Inestimable were the blessings of that spiritual kinship and consecrated collaboration in worthy causes, to Maharashtra and India, till Death parted them. On the death of Ranade in 1901, Gopal Rao felt that a sudden darkness had fallen upon his life, but being yet more determined to serve the country in the tradition of Ranade, turned to G.V. Joshi (who, next to Ranade, played a great role in shaping him), for solace and support. The old task-master was not there to chide or cheer him and to guide him in every way, but to Gopal Rao, the memory of his guru remained the fountain-source of inspiration to all his creative endeavour in life.

It was in the nature of things that under the friendly and inspiring auspices of Ranade, who, from behind the scenes, assisted, in the birth of the Congress, Gokhale (as Gopal Rao was known outside Maharashtra) should have been drawn to it, with a sense of inevitability. It was at the Allahabad Congress of 1889 that he made his first appearance. The tremendous impression he created on that occasion made him as attractive as familiar a figure at the successive sessions. He raised his voice on all burning questions of the day and never did he raise it without compelling • far-flung attention. He was always so well-informed, lucid and vigorous, and an example of purposeful speaking and persuasive eloquence.

He had some interesting experiences too. If in 1895 he read the Welcome Speech on behalf of the Chairman of the Reception Committee who because of advanced years could not stand the strain, in 1906 he had the privilege of reading for the venerable Dadabhai the Presidential Address. He had already held the stage as “the coming man”. It was an exciting experience to have at 31 appeared before the Welby Commission as a witness and come out of the ordeal with flying colours.

Nor was he spared some bitter and humiliating experiences which put him to severest test in life. Impulsive by nature but in good faith, he publicised in England about the violation of two women by soldiers during the plague relief operations in Poona, on the strength of private reports. It led to sensational results, the Government having thrown out a challenge and Gokhale not been able to get evidence to substantiate his statement. As an honourable man, he had to offer an unconditional apology. It was a stunning blow to his prestige and reputation-and for a time he reeled under it.

On the domestic front too, he had his trials and tribulations. Having lost his wife he married for a second time in 1887, but 12 years later, lost his second wife too. Earlier his mother died in 1893. And what completely shattered him and left him disconsolate was the passing of Ranade in the middle of January 1901. All the solace he needed, he found only in service. Even as early as in 1898, he desired to become “a perfect instrument for India's welfare”, and lead a dedicated life in the cause

Basic liberties are those rights that are essential for humans to exercise their unique power of moral reasoning.

John Rawls

of the Motherland. If he slowly recovered from his recent eclipse and could reestablish himself in the public bosom, it was because of his personal probity and the missionary spirit of his public service.

Two years' experience in the Bombay Legislative Council where he easily distinguished himself as an outstanding Legislator, encouraged him to seek wider avenues. After eighteen years of strenuous service as an educationist, he desired to become whole time public worker. On having heard of the approaching retirement from the Supreme Council of Pherozeshah Mehta (to whom he had owed so much in public life), Gokhale wrote to him for a chance to succeed him—and wrote not in vain. In a moving utterance he bade his adieu to the Fergusson College which he loved so deeply and laboured for so devotedly, and he embarked on the stormy and uncertain sea of public life “purely from a sense of duty to the best interests of country” and “in a spirit of hope and faith”.

It was in 1902 that Gokhale entered the Supreme Council. He was fully conscious of having succeeded a veritable giant who had, by his debating prowess, dazzling eloquence and dynamic personality, left an indelible impress on its proceedings. Yet Gokhale remained not only to maintain the high standard set by the indomitable Pherozeshah Mehta, but, as a Parliamentarian, reach heights unattained to, earlier or later in our Parliamentary annals. With a rare combination of strength of conviction and sense of restraint, he set a tone which brought a breath of fresh life to the Indian Councils. He soon became the most distinguished member of the Supreme Council while, as “Leader of His Majesty’s Opposition” he was recognised by the ‘Superior Curzon’ himself as a foeman worthy of his steel.

Gokhale was but 36 when he became the leading Indian spokesman in the Supreme Council. He made history by his Budget speeches which were listened to with rapt attention by the entire House and, received far beyond, as models of parliamentary eloquence, full of substance and clothed in a language at once lucid and terse. They were an annual intellectual treat and they provided the pabulum for serious political discussion

in the country. They evoked the admiration, even when they did not win the approbation, of Minto, Meston and Montagu, not to speak of Curzon. During the entire period of his career in the Supreme Council—and he remained there till his very end --Gokhale stood on a pinnacle of his own, with none above him or even anywhere near him.

For crowded achievements and multiplying laurels there was seldom in the life of any politician in India a period comparable to Gokhale’s last decade—1905-15. In more than one sense, the year 1905, was Gokhale’s most glorious year. For, it was the year when he founded the Servants of India Society, for organising, on however limited a scale, dedicated service to the Motherland, and also when he presided over the Congress on the holy banks of the Ganga in Banaras. It must have been particularly gratifying to him to have been further engaged, during the same twelve month, in the collection of funds for the Ranade memorial.

The months following the Banaras Congress were of exceptional consequence to Gokhale in as much as he had, as the leading Indian spokesman of the day, to influence British public opinion on the right lines. Once again he went to England to deal with the situation created by the Partition of Bengal and to make the British democracy realise that the East was “throbbing with a new impulse, and vibrating with a new passion” and that India could only be pacified and placated by a liberal measure of immediate political reforms. His speeches in England and interviews with British statesmen were of far-reaching significance, and it was no small comfort to him to have found Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, receptive and sympathetic. Of him whom he had praised earlier as student of Mill, disciple of Burke and friend and biographer of Gladstone, he said: “We never had so true a friend of our aspirations in a responsible position since Lord Ripon’s day.” There was no question about the leading part played by Gokhale, officially or un-officially, in the deliberations preceding the inauguration of the Minto-Morley Reforms.

But he did so at the risk of being misunderstood—even misrepresented-by“the rulers and the ruled alike”.

The Republic of India is a truly astonishing experiment in democracy on the grand scale.

Charles Allen

Also, the odds were against Moderate leadership or Liberal statesmanship, in view of the rise of militant nationalism in India, amidst hectic developments like the deportation of Lajpat Rai, the Surat fiasco and the prosecution of Tilak. Not all perhaps realised what Gokhale really stood for. He firmly held the view that the situation required "not the police man's baton, or the soldier's bayonet, but the statesman's insight, wisdom and courage". The atmosphere in which he had to work during those years was very intriguing. He was supposed to be appeasing the Muslims on the one hand and playing the role of a Hindu schemer on the other. Minto doubted his constancy; even Morley was not completely free from prejudice. But he bore it all like a man and continued his legislative and political activities in the faith that even by their failures they could serve the country. It was in the same faith that he fought, for the introduction of free and compulsory education in the country, in the style of a crusader,

Of even greater consequence was his visit to South Africa in the cause of the Indian Settlers led by Gandhiji and the part he played in bringing about the Gandhi-Smuts Settlement of 1914. Its violation by the South African Government led to sharp reactions in India against Gokhale though his was the consolation that his position was correctly understood by Gandhiji. The merits of this Settlement apart, it can never be forgotten by Indians that, out of Gandhi-Gokhale collaboration in South Africa was born the mutual comprehension of theirs, with its momentous repercussions on our history.

Those were strenuous years for Gokhale. It was generally known that he was taking more out of the system than it could stand. He was himself conscious of "a death-warrant" when, as a member of the Public Service Commission, he was being overworked. It was also too much of a strain to him to endure the misunderstandings that incidentally arose out of his part in the protracted negotiations between the Moderate and Extremist sections in the Congress. The shades, it seemed, were closing in, on him: indeed, they did, on February 18, 1915. The country was plunged into gloom. Touching were the funeral scenes in Poona: the chief

mourners included Bhandarkar, Tilak and Kelkar.

Gokhale was still on the right side of 50 when he passed out of the Indian ken, darkening it forever. As his biographer T.V. Parvate put it:

A graduate at 18, professor and associate editor of the 'Sudharak' at 20, editor of the Quarterly Journal and Secretary of the Sarvajanik Journal and Secretary of the Provincial Conference at 25, Secretary of the National Congress at 29, leading witness before an important royal commission at 31, provincial legislator at 34, Imperial Legislator at 36, President of the Indian National Congress at 39, national envoy to the Imperial Government and founder of institutions at 40, a recognised Leader of Opposition in such Indian parliament as obtained in those days till his death, a trusted tribune of the people and a man of truth, rectitude and character in whom the rulers confided at all times and, above all, a patriot whom Mahatma Gandhi himself regarded as his master and a perfect man in the political field—what a truly marvellous and brilliant career and beyond anybody's emulation!

He first rose to fame as Professor Gokhale; while yet young he cast a spell on the Congress; by founding the Servants of India Society he sought to spiritualise politics; as a politician he brought a certain precision as well as thoroughness to the study of public questions; as a Parliamentarian he soared to unknown heights; as a statesman he convinced both the Indian and British public that in a free country he would have excelled Asquith and equalled Gladstone; as a patriot he was recognised to be of the 'purest ray serene' and, as a man, he was deemed worthy of adoration. Apart from his eminence, political, intellectual and moral, his place in our history is secure as Ranade's sishya and Gandhiji's guru.

A PRODIGY

He is a selfless man and a political ascetic; indeed, he is a prodigy of intellect, being a debater, a speaker and an eloquent orator, to say nothing of his wisdom, as a statesman.

-BISHAMBHAR NATH

(From *Congress Cyclopaedia*)

I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

Nelson Mandela

World Without Statesmen

A.Prasanna Kumar

The 21st century, now going through an unprecedented crisis caused by Covid 19, is lamentably different from the 20th for the lack of statesmanlike leadership in world affairs. A hundred years ago, the League of Nations that came into being in January 1920 thanks mainly to the vision of American President Woodrow Wilson who was busy trying to enforce the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles that formally ended the hostilities between the Central Powers and the Allied powers. If the First World War was described ‘as a war to end war’ the Treaty that was made to ensure peace came to be derided as ‘peace to end peace.’ Ironically enough, the architect of the League of Nations and a facilitator of the peace talks between the victors and the vanquished, President Woodrow Wilson, the first US President to travel to Europe to spend nearly six long months there, was humiliated at home with the Congress not ratifying the Treaty and the United States not joining the League of Nations. “When Gandhiji sat down, Mr. Justice Broomfield bowed to the prisoner, and pronounced the sentence.” ‘The determination of a just sentence,’ the judge declared, ‘is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever heard or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that in the eyes of millions of your country men, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and even saintly life.’

The First World War, fought for 1565 days resulted in the death of 9 million combatants and 7 million civilians and in such demoralizing devastation of life and property that the refrain heard everywhere was ‘Never Again.’ The pandemic virus that struck Europe around that time, known as the Spanish flu, took a heavier toll of three times more than the number of people who perished in the war. President Woodrow Wilson contracted the disease during his stay in Europe and became a victim of disorientation caused by the effects of the deadly pandemic. Though Wilson’s popularity

remained high in Europe with his 14 Points as the basis for the peace process at Paris he had a tough time negotiating with the aggressive French Prime Minister ‘Tiger’ Clemenceau and the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. In spite of mutual differences ‘the Big Three’ ushered in a new era in world politics marked by President Wilson’s famous Fourteen Points, the last of which proposed the establishment of an international association for ‘affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike’. Clemenceau, known for his biting sarcasm, did not conceal his malice towards Wilson when he quipped: “God was satisfied with Ten but Mr. Wilson needed Fourteen!”

Hardly twenty years elapsed before the Second World War broke out between the Allied Powers and the Axis powers when the pusillanimous Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister known for his ‘policy of appeasement’ finally declared war on September 3, 1939. “Hitler was taking countries in the weekend while Chamberlain was taking weekend in the countryside,” wrote John Gunther. As Adolf Hitler was on the rampage countries disappeared from the map and Hitler the master German strategist, lured Benito Mussolini of Italy and the Japanese into a geopolitical trap by forming the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. The Second World War (1939-45) witnessed fierce fights between the Allied Powers and the Axis triumvirate on land, sea and in the sky. The ‘Big Three’--- USA led by Franklin Roosevelt, Great Britain by Winston Churchill and USSR by Joseph Stalin defeated the Axis powers in 1945. On April 28 Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was shot dead and two days later on April 30 Adolf Hitler committed suicide. Roosevelt’s vision articulated through his famous Four Freedoms, Churchill’s inspirational leadership during difficult times and Stalin’s shrewd strategic moves highlighted the victory of the allied powers and paved the way for the birth of the United Nations. It was a great triumph of democracy over dictatorship that eventually led to the liquidation of colonialism and imperialism and the emergence of newly liberated states.

Prominent among the statesmen of those times was Jawaharlal Nehru of India, the trusted lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi, who designed the architecture of India’s foreign policy even before India became free and he took over as its first Prime Minister. In external affairs Nehru was ‘the mentor of both Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress.’

As a nation, we have to prove to the world that the United States is prepared to lead again.

Joseph R. Biden Jr.

At Haripura Congress session in 1938 when the great powers were getting ready for the Second World War, Nehru declared that India ‘desired to live in peace and friendship with all countries and would work for international cooperation and goodwill’. Eight years later even before India won freedom Nehru convened an Asian Relations Conference in March-April 1947 ‘to assert Asian unity.’ As the Prime Minister of the world’s largest democracy Nehru founded and led the Non-Aligned Movement the Big Three of which in the early years were Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia and Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt. Such was Nehru’s popularity that as Geoffrey Tyson wrote ‘Nehru did not need to go to New York to address the world press. The World Press came to Delhi to meet him. Indira Gandhi held aloft the torch of non-alignment lit by her father and the Non-Aligned Summit she hosted at Delhi in 1983 was described as ‘the finest hour of NAM.’ Rajiv Gandhi who succeeded her as Prime Minister took the lead in organizing a six nation summit for nuclear disarmament which was welcomed by many. That Mother Teresa and Dalai Lama, both Bharat Ratnas and Nobel Laureates, chose to live in India is a matter of pride to the billion plus people of India.

The twentieth century produced powerful leaders who were also great because of their high ideals and unwavering commitment to human values and freedom. The 21st Century has leaders who are powerful but by no means great. Their minds are small and moods unpredictable. The levers of power are in the hands of such leaders as Donald Trump, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin who will be in power for long. That makes the world unsafe for democracy

* * *

Self-Awareness, Not Self-Reliance

Rohit Sai Ayyagari

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On May 12th, Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered an address to 1.3 billion quarantined Indians in which he outlined his five-pillared response to the coronavirus pandemic. As part of his proposed \$265 billion stimulus package, the Prime Minister vowed to pursue an economic philosophy of “AtmaNirbhar,” or self-reliance, while being “vocal for local”.

“AtmaNirbhar” appears to be a revitalization of

Modi’s ‘Make in India’ campaign from 2014 which set out to transform India into a global manufacturing hub and bolster its share of local production to account for 25% of its GDP within five years. Six years after Modi announced the initiative, India’s share of manufacturing has only grown about 0.6%, from 15.066% in 2014 to 15.677% of GDP thus far in 2020 (World Bank). What has caused this stagnation in Indian industrialization despite being a central tenant of the incumbent’s platform? How can India position itself as a worthy alternative as the world reassesses its reliance on China?

At the nation’s founding, India adopted socialist import substitution policies such as the License Raj System, establishing a governmental body to oversee the private sector and limit threats of commercial exploitation by foreign powers. Despite India’s protectionist roots, it began its road towards economic liberalization in 1991 under Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Dr. Manmohan Singh in an effort to secure an emergency loan from the IMF following the foreign exchange crisis. In the early 2000s, Prime Minister Vajpayee successfully expanded upon his predecessor’s deregulation policies by simplifying the tax code and inviting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Though a disciple of Vajpayee’s business-friendly policies, Prime Minister Modi has sent mixed messages to countries and businesses looking to invest in India and consequently restricted India’s manufacturing potential. In 2014, a newly inaugurated Prime Minister Modi promised “minimum government and maximum governance” and began his tenure with a series of foreign visits in an attempt to attract FDI from countries such as Brazil, Japan, United States, and Australia. Despite these efforts, the Prime Minister gave the countries little incentive to invest in India by maintaining its 13.5% simple average import tariff rate and increasing it to 17.1% in 2018, the highest among BRIC nations. While this tariff increase along with an exit from the RCEP trade deal may have been a strategic move to limit Chinese imports that have flooded Indian markets, applying broad-based tariff increases also impedes investment from other countries in Indian manufacturing. In February of this year, Modi’s “...government proposed in its budget to change rules that will allow it to ban the import of any goods it deems

Strategy is the purposeful alignment of means and ends.

Graham Allison

harmful to domestic industries" (Beniwal, Bloomberg). This government overreach resembles the socialist philosophy of the License Raj System rather than the liberalization that P.V. Narasimha Rao, Vajpayee, and even Modi once championed.

Such measures have not gone without consequence. Buried under recent headlines of the U.S.-China trade war and the political theater of the Howdy Modi and Namaste Trump rallies, the United States and India have had a trade spat of their own through 2019 and into 2020. In March 2019, "the U.S. stripped India of special low-tariff status over claims it discriminated against American companies. India responded by implementing tariffs it had previously threatened over U.S. steel duties." (Ip, WSJ). In an increasingly transactional economic environment, India's heavy import duties and non-tariff barriers will significantly hinder Modi's vision to develop meaningful trade partnerships, reap foreign investment, and build a "global brand" for domestically produced goods. Simply put, India's deterrence of foreign imports will inevitably be reciprocated by other nations when it attempts to promote its own goods abroad.

With a burgeoning middle class and an increasing share in global consumption, India should not limit its consumers from foreign goods and services for the sake of nationalism and self-reliance. Doing so will only slow innovation by insulating Indian companies from global competition, and lessen the addressable market for exports with unnecessary trade disputes. Instead, the nation can enhance its standing as an economic powerhouse and attract investment by funding domestic infrastructure and manufacturing in industries of the future.

As part of his five-pillared approach, the Prime Minister aptly prioritized the modernization of India's infrastructure, systems, and supply chains. Modi spurred tremendous growth as Chief Minister of Gujarat with infrastructure development initiatives at the core of his economic reforms. At a national level, "Indian manufacturers face supply-side constraints such as a lack of proper infrastructure—roads are poor, energy shortages are common, and so on. According to India's 2018 economic survey, logistics costs in the country are estimated at about 13 to 14 percent of GDP as compared

to about 8 percent in developed countries" (Pant, Foreign Policy). Infrastructure investments in interstate connectivity and 24-hour power availability would help limit the number of roadblocks for foreign and domestic investment in the manufacturing sector and build confidence in the country's long-term growth potential.

On May 16th, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled a breakdown of the administration's stimulus package with the majority of its infrastructure spend allocated to agriculture and coal industries. Federal support for Indian farming and agro-business supply chains is essential as high transportation costs often offset revenues for many in the industry. On the other hand, the Modi government's 50,000 crore investment in coal transportation negates its laudable progress in clean energy and contradicts its promise to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

India has a unique opportunity to diverge from the seemingly unregulated Chinese manufacturing model and establish itself as an innovative and ethical producer in industries of the future such as affordable medicaments, renewable energy, and electronic goods. India is the largest exporter of generic pharmaceuticals globally and can play a vital role in providing accessible and affordable treatments to combat the coronavirus pandemic. In renewables, India has proved the economic viability of solar energy as it now "...costs less to generate in India than the cheapest competing fossil fuel—coal—even with subsidies removed and the cost of construction and financing figured in" (Dvorak, WSJ). Lastly, major high-tech hardware manufacturers such as Apple and Foxconn have shifted production from China to India within the past year to weather the volatility of the U.S.-China trade war. India can and should capitalize on these tectonic shifts with investments in automation, connected factories, and additive manufacturing.

Prime Minister Modi is well-positioned to revive the Indian economy and its manufacturing sector not through self-reliance, but through self-awareness of India's competitive advantages. The administration has responded to the pandemic with ambiguous calls for localized production and consumption. Instead, Modi can chart a path for targeted and sustainable growth by easing trade barriers, investing in infrastructure, and empowering manufacturing in next generation industries.

China is a de facto empire that tries to behave as a nation state.

Odd Arne Westad

Book Review

C.P. BROWN'S LIFE IN LONDON AFTER HE LEFT INDIA

Dr. P.S.N. MURTHI

(Published by Dr.P.S.N. Murthi & Sri Yagna Publications, Hyderabad; pp. 156, December 2019, Rs.299)

It was by chance that Dr.P.S.N.Murthi started his journey in finding out about Charles Philip Brown. When he was leaving for London to pursue higher studies in medicine, as he puts it, "my father-in-law wanted me to get a photograph of C.P. Brown to publish in *Bharathi* (Telugu language monthly magazine) and gave me a folder of notes". At the time, little did he understand the gravity of the pages he was holding. The author admits that he had no knowledge about Brown, but agreed to do so, not realising what lay ahead of this casual promise. So the quest for C.P. Brown's photograph took Dr. P.S.N.Murthi on a mission to know about C.P. Brown's subsequent life in London after leaving India. After a decade of incessant searching, to quote from his letter to Sri J.Hanumath Sastry dated May 16, 2005, he states, "In my quest to secure a photograph of C.P.Brown, for nearly a decade in London, I could only locate the house where he lived and the tomb where he was buried".

C.P. Brown's father Rev. David Brown, an Englishman, was a provost and linguist at Fort William College in Calcutta. He wanted his sons also to learn many languages. It was on November 10, 1798 when Charles Philip Brown was born in this city of joy that his wish came true. The child would soon grow to master Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Persian and Telugu languages.

Unfortunately, after his father's demise the family moved back to London in 1812. Brown trained from Haileybury College for a civil service position in India. He entered the Madras civil service in 1817, and by 1820, he was appointed assistant Co-Collector

of Cuddapah. Many of his service years were in the Telugu districts and towns, especially Machilipatnam, where "he laid the foundation of that profound acquaintance with Telugu literature". He learnt chaste Telugu at 19 and even excelled in the study of its literary richness. For a number of political and social reasons, Telugu literature was in a state of neglect in the 18th century. Brown collected and edited many literary works. While at Machillipatnam he began collecting palm-leaf copies of the verses of Vemana and translated them into English. He translated 1215 verses in all and published them in 1829. Brown won laurels for his knowledge of Hindustani and Sanskrit.

He collected rare manuscripts of Telugu poems and had them copied. He also collected essays, stories, and poems that existed as oral literature. During his stay in London from 1835 he was employed by Horace Hayman Wilson in cataloguing South Indian language manuscripts from the East India House Library. Ultimately, many of those were sent back to Madras. To name a few of the works of C.P. Brown

- ❖ *Andhra Geervana Chandamu* (Prosody of Telugu and Sanskrit), College Press, Madras in 1827.
- ❖ *Vemana Sathakam* (verses of Vemana): Collection of 693 poems by Vemana along with English Translation and glossary in 1829.
- ❖ *Vemana Sathakam* (verses of Vemana): Second collection of 1164 poems by Vemana along with English Translation and glossary in 1839.
- ❖ *The Zillah Dictionary*, in the Roman Character; explaining the various Words used in Business in India. By C. P. Brown, Madras, 1852.
- ❖ *The Wars of the Rajas or Rajula Yuddhamulu* being the History of Anantapur written in Telugu translated into English by Charles Philip Brown. Madras, 1853.

But the opus magnum was his Telugu to English and English to Telugu dictionaries in 1852 and 1854 and A Dictionary of the Mixed Dialects and Foreign Words used in Telugu; with an Explanation of the Telugu Alphabet 1854.

Life is a continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations.

Herbert Spencer

Because of his contribution to the cause of Telugu language, he is revered even today as ‘Telugu Suryudu’.

At the first glance ‘C.P. Brown’s Life in London after He Left India’ by Dr. P.S.N. Murthi, might look like a souvenir, printed for some centenary or bi-centenary celebrations, with so many photographs, reprints, messages and facsimiles put in. But do not get misled. This work of 156 pages deftly arranged in five chapters has everything in it to qualify as a rich research source. The collection of reprints of letters, messages, newspaper cuttings and Dr.Murthi’s relentless search to know more about C.P.Brown is no less than a profound and deeply committed research work. Nowhere does one find in the book off-the-cuff statements or things he casually heard about Brown. Instead, he referred to and presented Xerox copies of the originals, for e.g. the proceedings of Brown’s appointment to the post of Professor in Telugu at London University on May 8, 1865. Says Dr.Murthi with justifiable pride “this date was not available to many earlier researchers. From the copies of the record collected by me, the exact date of appointment reached their step” a modest statement of his personal contribution to the already existing literature on C.P.Brown. The author’s unrelenting

endeavour in making several visits to the library in the hope of getting a picture of C.P.Brown or the assiduous determination in tracing out Brown’s grave at the sprawling 72 acres of Kensal Green Cemetery is a testament to his unwavering effort to enrich the material on C.P.Brown.

It is a deeply researched and engaging book which serves as an excellent source of reference for further academic work on the life and work of C.P. Brown. As a matter of fact, many academics in India and abroad have approached Dr.P.S.N.Murthi for any other important information he might have on C.P.Brown.

The author is a doctor by profession, yet the tone of the book reflects a learned appreciation of literature and arts. Each chapter, filled with photographs and facsimile specimen of letters, newspaper clippings, documents etc. makes it an absorbing read. About C.P.Brown’s contribution to Telugu language and grammar quite a few books and articles have been written before, but none with such intensity, sincerity and commitment as Dr.Murthi’s work.

Prof. (Mrs.) B. Meena Rao

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