

Dialogue and Democracy

Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies
(3rd in the series)

Dr. Karan Singh

Secularism: A New Approach

Shri K. Natwar Singh

How PV Became PM

Admiral (Retd.) Arun Prakash

An Indian Ocean Strategy; At Last?

Vice Admiral (Retd.) Anup Singh

Chinese Chequers In The Indian Ocean

Dr. R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar I.A.S. (Retd.)

Who Are We ?

Vice Admiral Satish Soni

Indian Navy's Heritage

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Civil Services Need To Rediscover Themselves

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Gandhian Smart City

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Emotional Secrets In Musical Constructs

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The 'Purity Syndrome'

Religious Pluralism In A Secular Age

Shri. C. Sivasankaram

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa - The Summum Bonum
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Tributes to late D.V. Subba Rao

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The Yeoman's Service of "DVS" to Legal Education

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The Quintessential Vizagite

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S.K. Rau

A Journalist Reflects On Eminent Governors,
Editors and Politicians

Edited and compiled by A. Prasanna Kumar

Centre for Policy Studies

Gayatri Vidya Parishad

Visakhapatnam

May 2015

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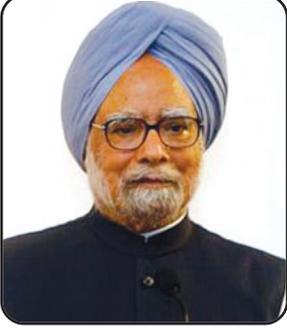
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सत्यमेव जयते

Manmohan Singh
Former Prime Minister
India

FPM/.....212....., 2014



New Delhi
14 August, 2014

Dear Professor Prasanna Kumar ji,

Many thanks for sending me a copy of Prof. M.N. Sastri's publication entitled "The Nuclear Genie". I look forward to reading this book with great interest.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Manmohan Singh
(Manmohan Singh)

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13th August, 2014.



Dear Shri Prasanna Kumar,

Many thanks for sending me your excellent publication which will be a useful addition to my library. I hope you will enjoy reading my essays on Hinduism.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Shri A. Prasanna Kumar,
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Soli J. Sorabjee
Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Former Attorney General for India

06th April 2015

MESSAGE

The publications of the Centre for Policy Studies cover a wide range of matters which are of significance to citizens in our country. The articles on the subject are written by persons having excellent credentials and expertise in their respective field.

Hearty congratulations for your rendering signal service to the society and I hope and pray that you will continue to do so in the years to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Soli Sorabjee". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Soli J Sorabjee

MESSAGE



Master Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar
International President, The World Teacher Trust

Every act of Goodwill contributes to progress of Life.

Acts of Goodwill are the need of the hour, specially in these times of disorder. Goodwill in action is but a humble effort to dispel disorder. Men of Goodwill all over the World are engaged in ceaseless action of Goodwill. Love is the other name for such action.

Prof. Prasanna Kumar is a well known man of Goodwill. He is gentle, amicable and ever pleasant, befitting the name he is given. Through and through he remained a teacher and a social worker. He strived and continues to strive to uplift the surroundings in every way.

The Centre for Policy Studies is but one of his cherished activities of service.

The Professor relentlessly networks men of eminence, organizes thought provoking Seminars, Conferences and Meetings to generate public awareness with regard to socio-economic and cultural trends in India. India today, is in many a crisis, while it is also progressive. It is plagued with many sided illnesses which need to be addressed. Identifying them and deliberating on them is a major part of activity of the Centre for Policy Studies, which it ably does, for it has a base of thinkers and proved performers.

In India, despite all failures, weaknesses, shortcomings a definitive progress is evolving itself. Never before The Holy Land of India was encountered with such multiplicity of challenges. The moral, ethical, social and cultural fabric of the Land is at threat. But the Land has enormous strength to withstand and the key lies in WILL TO GOVERN AND BE GOVERNED.

Astrological view gives a dimension of good hope for India. India's Sun sign is Aries, a natural ruler and its ascendant is changing from Capricorn to Aquarius. The changing ascendant brought importance to India through electronic age. The ascendant has set India amongst world leaders. When the Soul quality emerges through Aries, things turn better for Governance. Soul searching is now the work at hand.

Over 20 long years, the Centre found its own rightful place for forum based deliberations in this part of India. The Centre disseminates valuable views through its Bulletin, an effective tool indeed, by which the purposes of the Centre are accomplished. The Architect behind the whole thoughtful work is the Professor, who serves relentlessly and is humbly silent enough. The fragrance of his personality permeates the whole activity of Goodwill as it flows from The Centre for Policy Studies. He is ably assisted by Gayatri Vidya Parishad, a well known institution that serves the cause of education in Visakhapatnam.

I ardently pray that the Centre continues to effectively fulfill its noble purposes. I also pray that the selfless efforts of Sri Prasanna Kumar find their continuity for decades to come through a dedicated team of servers. A good succession enables continuity.

MESSAGE



A.S.N. Prasad

President, Gayatri Vidya Parishad
and Chairman Centre for Policy Studies

I am happy that Centre for Policy Studies, which will complete twenty years on October 2 this year, is bringing out *Dialogue and Democracy - Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies* 3rd volume in the series to be released shortly at a function. The first two volumes in the series have been well received and I am sure the forthcoming issue also will be welcomed with the same warmth and interest. That so many eminent persons have contributed articles for the volume enhances its importance and strengthens the resolve of Centre for Policy Studies to regularly bring out useful publications for the dissemination of ideas and knowledge. I am glad that Centre for Policy Studies of our Gayatri Vidya Parishad has earned the goodwill of many people from far and near. On this happy occasion I send my congratulations to Centre for Policy Studies and good wishes for the success of its future activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A.S.N. Prasad', with a horizontal line underneath.

A.S.N. Prasad

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A word about this volume

Discussion, debate and dissent are the backbone of democracy. Dialogue opens the door to public discourse and even to better human relationships so necessary in this age of awesome technological power. Democracy may not be the best form of government created by man. But there is no alternative to it as its strengths outweigh its weaknesses. From Pericles, hailed as ‘the first ideologue of democracy’ in Athens, the home of ancient direct democracy, who justified it on two important grounds that ‘it promoted tolerance and public spiritedness’ to modern thinkers and scholars like Harold Lasswell and Robert Dahl this system of government has been accepted as superior to all others because it pursues ‘higher and nobler purposes than other governments’.

Public discourse enables the dissemination of informed opinion on public issues and policies of the government. People need to be engaged in it directly or indirectly. As Pericles said about public discussion, in his famous oration of 431 B.C.E., ‘instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action.’ Emphasizing the need for improving one’s skills in political analysis well known modern political scientist Robert Dahl has given three reasons for it: 1. to understand the world we live in 2. to make more intelligent choices among the alternatives we face, and 3. to influence the changes, great and small, that seem to be an inevitable aspect of all political systems.

The decline of Parliament and legislatures as deliberative bodies and custodians of public interest has created space for media – print, electronic and social – to take over the role of the former. The daily debates and discussions in newspapers and on television, watched by the elite and middle classes in urban areas and on the regional electronic media in rural areas, often confuse and irritate the readers and viewers. Instead of providing accurate information based on facts and promoting healthy public debate on issues and policies, the media has tended to trivialize or sensationalize news and information. As a sociologist put it the ‘media thrives on numbing disaster or eccentric success.’

Technology, without doubt, a boon to humankind, has created new problems at all levels. Nicholas Carr argues in his book ‘The Shallows’ that technology is changing the way our brains operate and he explains how ‘our minds operate as high speed data – processing machines’ as knowledge has shifted from ‘the realm of reason and reflection having been reduced to a commodity or data that can be applied’. It is not artificial intelligence, writes Carr, but ‘artificial humanity that gathers surface level information’. A solution for these new challenges is to provide fora and opportunities in every village, town and city to enable people belonging to all sections of the society to participate in debates and discussions on issues of contemporary relevance. ‘Think Tanks’ and ‘public intellectuals’ are high sounding terms. People do meet and discuss public policy and issues during their daily walks, now of course on social media. Many towns and cities have fora and facilities for such healthy democratic exercises.

Centre for Policy Studies was launched on October 2, 1995, the 126th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, with the object of providing a forum for the intellectual, the academic and the expert to interact focusing on issues and policies of contemporary relevance. It is just a forum that does not receive any grant or aid from any public or private agency. Nor does it collect any membership fee or subscription for its publications, except advertisements for its bimonthly Bulletin, nearly a thousand of which along with all its publications are distributed free of cost to individuals, institutions and libraries. It has brought out the first volume of ‘Dialogue and Democracy’ Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies, in 2010 followed by the second in 2012, containing articles by eminent persons on different subjects. The first volume was dedicated to the memory of Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao, Founder-President, Gayatri Vidya Parishad and

Chairman, Centre for Policy Studies and the second to the memory of Dr. Abid Hussain, Patron of Centre for Policy Studies, former Ambassador to the United States and ex-Collector of Visakhapatnam. This volume is being dedicated to the memory of Shri D.V. Subba Rao, former Chairman of Centre for Policy Studies and of the Bar Council of India and tributes to him for his outstanding services are carried at the end.

As Octavio Paz wrote India is 'a reality that is far easier to delineate than to define.' The 'paradox' of Indian democracy has been a 'puzzle' to many scholars in India and abroad. Rajni Kothari aptly summed up in 1997 that 'the most remarkable aspect of the fifty years story has been the almost continuous coexistence of democracy and poverty...the people still have faith in and actually work through the democratic process.....the poor and suffering classes have kept the democratic process alive far more than the elite and affluent middle classes.' Still the words of that celebrated authority on Indian Constitution, the late Granville Austin reinforce our faith in our democracy and ourselves too: 'The ideal of consensus is the most democratic of standards. The ideal of non-violent, non-coercive self-rule, also strongly established in India, is equally so. The Indian cultural tradition, rich, deep, and undogmatic, has been able to absorb the most advanced intellectual concepts..... The Indians' sense of their rich cultural heritage, their record of professional achievement in the arts and sciences of the modern world, and their faith in their ability to govern themselves, combined to give them a national maturity that allowed a reasoned approach to the creation and working of government. Equipped with the basic qualifications, attitudes, and experience for creating and working a democratic constitution, Indians did not default their trust with destiny.'

Still, India has a long way to go and a challenging task to overcome. The words of Mahatma Gandhi to West Bengal Ministers led by Chief Minister Prafulla Ghosh when they called on him at Calcutta on August 15, 1947 come to mind in these troubled times. 'Be humble; be forbearing. Now you will be tested through and through. Beware of power; power corrupts. Do not let yourself be entrapped by its pomp and pageantry. Remember you are in office to serve the poor in India's villages,' warned the Father of the Nation sixty seven years ago. Power has corrupted every branch of government to such an extent that poverty, exploitation and injustice have increased alarmingly. In the words of Nani Palkhivala, 'Indian democracy has reached its nadir because in our average politician we have the sordid amalgam of lack of intellect with lack of character and lack of knowledge.' Palkhivala's evaluation is as timely as his prescription for overcoming the crisis when he exhorted all 'right minded citizens' not 'to stand frozen in disgust and dismay' but to 'devote themselves to the task of educating public opinion. The peacock must not be replaced as the national bird by the ostrich.' Public apathy must give way, sooner than later, to public initiative and appropriate action for course correction.

Centre for Policy Studies offers its grateful thanks to former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, philosopher and scholar Dr. Karan Singh, legal luminary and former Attorney General for India Shri Soli J. Sorabjee for graciously sending their messages. To Dr Karan Singh and former minister and diplomat and versatile writer Shri K. Natwar Singh CPS conveys its gratitude for according permission to publish articles from their books. CPS is deeply indebted to the distinguished contributors of articles for their generous support. It thanks Shri V. Seetaramaiah, the respected chartered accountant and well known educationist, for his valuable suggestions and for patiently going through the proofs, a task also ably and cheerfully undertaken by Dr. Ramesh Ramanadham, department of English, Gitam University. Thanks are also due to the ever dependable Shri M.K.Kumar of Sathyam Offset Imprints and his able assistant Mr. K. Prakash for completing the publication work in time with care and efficiency.

Visakhapatnam
April, 2015

A. Prasanna Kumar
Editor

SECULARISM: A NEW APPROACH

Dr. Karan Singh

Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha)

The classical concept of secularism which we adopted soon after freedom is now subject to immense pressure and seems to be rapidly disintegrating. There are three main reasons for this. Firstly, the Western concept of secularism originated in Europe several centuries ago when the question of separation of the church and the state had become a major concern and a subject of fierce political controversy. India has never had an organized church, so the European concept of secularism was not really relevant to our requirements. The term *sarva-dharma-sambhava* which is sometimes used in place of secularism is, in fact, a far more meaningful formulation, and certainly much closer to the views of Mahatma Gandhi, who was deeply imbued with the Vedantic concept of the essential unity of all religions.

Secondly, our secularism was based upon the assumption, which has proved to be erroneous, that religion is a purely private affair with which the state is not concerned. This may be true as far as individual prayer and spiritual practice is concerned, but quite clearly the collective impact of religion upon society and the state is something which is far from personal. That millions of Indian citizens should flock regularly to the Kumbha Melas and numerous places of worship, whether Hindu, Muslim or any other, is itself an indication that the state has necessarily to take cognizance of religion as a social force. When we add the conflicts within and between religious groups which create serious law and order problems, it becomes quite clear that the myth of religion being a purely personal matter can no longer be sustained. Indeed, that view is often put forward by a section of our intelligentsia who, for all practical purposes, are not believers and who, therefore, tend to look upon all religions as being equally irrelevant hangovers from the past. It is obvious that such a view is shared only by a miniscule percentage of India's vast population.

The third assumption upon which classical secularism is based revolves around the belief that, as education increases and living standards improve, religion will steadily lose its hold over the minds of people and become increasingly peripheral in its impact upon the human psyche. This assumption, too, has been repeatedly disproved in our own lifetimes. Not only in India but in other developing countries it has become clear that there is little relation between economic progress and the decline of religion. On the contrary, there is evidence to show that with increasing affluence in hitherto poor nations the interest in religion shows a marked upsurge. One has only to travel in the more affluent parts of India to see the tremendous burgeoning of new temples and gurdwaras, mosques and churches, while a survey of rural India will show that a place of worship is one of the first demands of a new affluent area. The upsurge of Islam in the oil-rich countries of West Asia proves the case convincingly.

If these three points are accepted, it becomes quite clear that we have to move on to an entirely new concept of secularism if it is to have relevance in the years and decades to come. In the Indian context, secularism cannot mean an anti-religious attitude or even an attitude of indifference towards religion on the part of the state. What it should mean is that, while there is no state religion, all religions are given respect and freedom of activity, provided they do not impinge upon each other and provided again that foreign funds are not allowed to be channelled through ostensibly religious organizations for political purposes.

It is also essential that we overcome the religion-phobia in our educational system. At present we are getting the worst of both worlds. On the one hand, we refuse to take a positive attitude of presenting our rich, multireligious heritage to our students, thus depriving them of contact with much that is noble and great in our civilization. On the other, we leave religious education entirely in the hands of bodies which are seldom adequately equipped to undertake the task, and usually offer narrow and obscurantist

interpretations of the living truths that permeate religious traditions. While the new education policy talks of 'value education', it is clear that without an understanding of our religious heritage it will be extremely difficult to develop a coherent and widely accepted value system.

The multireligious situation in India is a reality which will not go away. Instead of approaching the whole problem from a negative viewpoint, it would be far better to take the bull by the horns and convert what is sometimes looked upon as a major 'problem' into a positive asset for the new India that is struggling to be born. This can only be done, if our educational system gladly accepts the multiplicity of our religious tradition. I have before me an admirable textbook brought out in London last year entitled *Worlds of Difference*, which presents a variety of cultural traditions in a simple, positive and appreciative manner. Sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund and with a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the book published by Blackie has separate chapters on the Chinese world, the humanist world, the Jewish world and the Muslim world. Attractively illustrated with photographs from the various religious traditions, it is accompanied by a guide which provides the teacher with an interpretative framework for the classroom. The book is meant for the age group 9-13, but much of it is useful for older children also.

I doubt if in our educational system, whether at the primary, secondary or higher levels, there is a single book which presents the rich diversity of the Indian cultural tradition in this manner. Even at the post-graduate level there is hardly any significant work being done in the field of religious studies and comparative religion, which is so popular an area in the West. Inter-religious dialogue is also virtually non-existent in our country. All this is a reflection of the fact that among our elite religion seems to have become unfashionable. This is a sad commentary upon our intellectual capabilities. India is by far the richest area for multireligious studies anywhere in the world, and should attract some of our best scholars. Hinduism itself, the religion of over four-fifths of Indians, is a vast treasure house of philosophy and mythology, sociology and worldly wisdom. Yet, in the last four decades, more work on Hinduism has been done by foreign scholars than by our own. Evidently *their* 'secularism' is not affected by working on one of mankind's oldest religious traditions.

If we are really serious in our efforts to build a strong and integrated India, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that the younger generation understands and appreciates not only its own religious traditions but also those of the other religions in the country. How many Muslims in India are able even remotely to appreciate the depth of feeling among the Hindus regarding the sanctity of Lord Rama's birthplace? Conversely, how many Hindus understand the emotional trauma among Muslims when they see idols being worshipped in what they consider to be a mosque? I do not want to comment on this deeply divisive issue, which is still *sub judice*, except to say that in Kashmir we do have places of worship which are common both to the Hindus and the Muslims, where *arati* and *namaz* are done at the same time. But my point is that the gulf of incomprehension between the Hindus and the Muslims on this issue is fraught with grave danger for the nation, and is a reflection of our failure over the last forty years to tackle the religious issues adequately.

No nation can continue to grow if its central concepts become fossilized and it loses the capacity for creative reinterpretation of its philosophical roots. The great secret of Indian civilization, which has survived so long lies precisely in its capacity for such periodic reformulations. It is no longer good enough for us to try and hide behind an outmoded concept of secularism. What is needed is a deeper understanding of the importance of religion in the life of our people, and the formulation of a new and dynamic interpretation of secularism which would ensure the creative co-existence of our many religions, all making a positive contribution to the rich and varied mosaic that is India.

From : Essays On Hinduism (third edition 2014)

The 'God-Souled' Himalayas

Prof. Manoj Das

(A seer among scholars the venerable Prof Manoj Das who lives in Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville and teaches at Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education has graciously permitted the publication of this essay from his book My Little India.)

A pre-dawn hour in winter at Rishikesh is hardly the time for coming out of one's room, more so if one had been put to sleep by the sweetest music imaginable, the lullaby of the Ganga flowing a couple of yards beyond one's window, her music capable of working into one's subconscious and moulding one's dreams.

*Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp-laced
With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds:
Lower grew rose-oaks, and the great fir groves
Where echoed pheasants's call and panther's cry,
Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
Of circling eagles:—Under these the plain
Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
Of those divinest altars.*

—Edwin Arnold: *The Light of Asia*

But the shouts were too intriguing to be ignored: *Gangajine Shivjiko hadap liye* (Goddess Ganga had kidnapped Lord Shiva!) I came out to the banks of the river. The rescue party, consisting of three young Sadhus, had plunged into the awfully cold water with strong current. But they were brave and well-familiar with the playful whims of Mother Ganga. The impressive image of Shiva, newly installed on the ghat and swept away by one of those sporadic surges of the river, was discovered after an hour's search and brought back to the shore.

The gigantic masses from which the Ganga was rushing towards the plains were still dark outlines against the sky but for a faint glimmer on a peak. An invisible drizzle transported me to a surreal plane, where gods and goddesses were as matter-of-fact as men and women.

I realised then that the geographical definition of the Himalaya was no clue to its psychic character. It was an alternative to and a suppressed laughter on the world dominated by intricacy, ego, ignorance, violence, anxiety, conflicts and clashes. It was a world of faith invincible and of innocence sublime.

The Himalaya is a stunning wonder, but it does not stupefy, it only inspires aspirations for a knowledge of things beyond. It is too big to make one feel small; it does not look down upon the dwarf that is man; it arouses the urge in him to transcend his dwarfism.

Apparently nothing but a physical phenomenon, the Himalaya proves itself to be a fusion of the physical and the occult the moment one begins meditating on it. An observation like this can be dismissed as a thing subjective, but if so many people experience the same revelation, we should be unorthodox enough to accept it as objective - if not at the scientific, at the psychological plane.

Liberated spirits for whom the Himalaya is the abode, we are told, dwell not in the physical, but in the subtle ranges of this infinite grandeur. It required a Kalidasa to capture in poetry the visible as well as the invisible features of those invisible valleys. He wrote further how certain plants and creepers of the Himalaya grow fluorescent at night - and how hidden from the human eye there are valleys of minor divinities like the *Gundharvas* and the *Kinnaras*. Somewhere atop a high peak nestles a lake known as the *Saptarsi*, teeming with lotuses frequently plucked away by celestial beings.

My familiarity with the Himalaya (at least in my present incarnation) was limited to its often-haunted spots, but I was lucky to have met people who had the gift of beholding the 'god-souled' mountains in their special and exclusive ways.

Among them was Svetoslav Roerich, the great Russian painter.

Svetoslav and his wife Devikarani lived in a sylvan corner of Bangalore during the last phase of their life. As he showed me and went on interpreting to me some of his paintings that he valued most (and also permitted me to reproduce them in *The Heritage*), for a moment I had the delightful hallucination that I sat in meditation in a remote Himalayan cave, overlooking a million deities lost in trance. I requested my educationist companion and Svetoslav's confidant, Aditi Vasisth, to record his statement:

'What truly makes a place important is the spiritual message it contains and conveys. The Himalayas carry a wonderful imprint of the thought that was generated for thousands of years by the greatest men, the Rishis of ancient India. We know that thought lives. Here we come directly under the radiation of that Eternal Thought which these heights reflect back to us in a wonderful way. Hence the Himalayas contain a treasure of great ideas and energy imprinted upon their slopes and sacred peaks. Only those who are truly sensitive can feel and receive these vibrations. I have travelled widely and seen several other mountain ranges in the world which are also beautiful, but they haven't got all that concentrated wealth of the Himalayas. Indeed, they haven't got the spiritual presence of the Himalayas, and that makes all the difference.'

Years before I undertook brief travels in the Himalaya, I encountered the thoughts of another indefatigable explorer of the unfamiliar areas of that splendid world whose experiences I loved to hear—Pramod Kumar Chattopadhyay, author of the Bengali classic, *Tantrabhisir Sadhusanga*. He, too, was a renowned artist, though, unlike Roerich, not exclusively devoted to the Himalaya. What made him undertake long and lonely travels in the region was not so much the spell of the mountains but that of the Tantriks and Yogis residing in the little-known or unknown hermitages amidst them.

He met several of them. But one of the experiences that came to him uninvited in the course of his explorations, was astounding!

We believe that Gomukh is the source of the Ganga. But is that so? (After all, the real source of the Amazon was discovered only in 1971 by Loren McIntyre!) Pramod Kumar was told by a mystic that the Ganga's source was farther north, in a snowy realm simply inaccessible to men. He was then young and he ventured out into the desolate north in search of the secret source of the holy river. He stumbled into a bewildering valley - a world breathing an air which filled one's consciousness with delight and made one's body light. He communicated with the inhabitants of that world, probably in a state of somnambulism though it appeared to him to be a normal transaction and, on the third day, was shown the secret source of the Ganga. He was led out of the region into the gross geographical point from which he had taken his unintentional diversion.

Was his experience a hallucination? I do not know. He would swear that it just happened - that there were supra physical realms interspersed with the physical in the Himalaya and the one he had accidentally entered was the valley of the *Gundharvas*. 'Do you believe you could find your way there again?' I asked him.

'Nobody could experience the repetition of a dream by will. Though mine was no dream, I do not think I can ever enter that region at my will,' was his response. But even as a bare physical phenomenon, as a geographical reality, it was an institution non pareil. The more I saw it, the more I agreed with K..M. Panikkar:

'To the peoples of the south, a thousand and five hundred miles away, to the men of the sea coast, to the dwellers of the desert land of Rajputana no less than to the inhabitants of the Gangetic Valley the Himalayas have been the symbol of India. The majesty of the snow-clad peaks, visible from afar, the inaccessibility of even the lesser ranges, the mysteries of the gigantic glaciers and the magnificence of the great rivers that emerge from its gorges have combined to give to the Himalayas a majesty which no other mountain range anywhere can claim.' (*The Himalayas in Indian Life*)

How PV Became PM

Shri K. Natwar Singh

Former Minister for External Affairs

Jawaharlal Nehru and P.V. Narasimha Rao did not have much in common except that they both were intellectuals. Nehru's intellectualism was shaped by Harrow, Cambridge and Lincoln's Inn. By Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell, the Fabians. He probably dreamt in English. The title of his book, *The Discovery of India*, is a disarming confession of his need for discovering the land of his birth.

Rao came from a humble home. His intellectual centre was India. Unlike Nehru, his knowledge of Sanskrit was profound. His speech on Mahatma Gandhi at the UNESCO on 11 May 1995 was a masterpiece. One has only to read his address on 'India's Cultural Influence on Western Europe since the Age of Romanticism' given at Alpbach, Austria, on 19 June 1983 to realize that PV was a man of learning, a scholar, a linguist and a thinker of the first order. His roots were deep in the spiritual and religious soil of India. He did not need to 'discover India.'

In early 1990 he had decided to retire from politics. He had made all arrangements to go back to Hyderabad. He used one word where two might do.

He once told me that some things should be left unsaid. He conveyed a serene calmness. At the same time he was no saint. His private life inclined towards passion and sensuality. Very few were privy to this aspect of his life. He was astute, crafty, patient. Also capable of biting sarcasm. He smiled without a smile. Nehru had a temper. PV, a temperament.

On 21 May 1991 a devastating and murderous tsunami hit Rajiv Gandhi. He was in the prime of his life. He had come to Bharatpur, my constituency, to help me in the 1991 elections, on 16 May, accompanied by his close friend Suman Dubey. A nicer and self-effacing man one could seldom find. The next day we drove to Agra. That was the last time I saw him. I wrote in an article two days later, 'The country weeps. The world mourns. I feel a terrible emptiness within and there is no drowning this sorrow. At the moment our consolations are few, our torments many. When the tears have dried, the anger subsided, the horror diminished, the scar will remain. So will the heartache.'

For his funeral many world leaders arrived in Delhi. The US vice-president Dan Quayle, Prince Charles, Yasser Arafat, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, the king of Bhutan, the deputy PM of the USSR, the foreign minister of China to name a few.

Before leaving Delhi most of the VIPs called on Mrs Sonia Gandhi at 10 Janpath. I was present at many of the meetings. Sonia Gandhi's world had shattered. In public she lost her composure only once. This grief was no ordinary grief. I distinctly remember the late Begum Benazir telling Sonia Gandhi and her children that after such a tragedy she should keep away from politics and look after her son and daughter. Sonia Gandhi sat in silent sorrow. Both her children said that this was not the time for such matters. Benazir again laboured the point. I then said to her that she had herself not followed what she was preaching. 'You have stepped in the shoes of your father. The Gandhis have a tradition and legacy of serving India. They cannot abandon that heritage.' Her response was that 'these were seductive words' which belied reality, etc. This was no occasion to bandy words with Begum Bhutto. The meeting ended on a sober note.

After the kings and captains departed, intense political activity was evident. The aspirants to succeed

Rajiv included the late Arjun Singh, N.D. Tiwari, Sharad Pawar and Madhavrao Scindia. Sonia Gandhi was aware of this. I told her that the time had come for her to indicate her preference for the presidentship of the Congress, who would naturally become prime minister. For so momentous a decision, I suggested that she ask P.N. Haksar for advice. She said she would let me know. Meanwhile she had been consulting several other people, including M.L. Fotedar.

The next day she asked me to bring Haksar to 10 Janpath. Haksar's advice was to offer the presidentship of the Congress to Vice-president Shankar Dayal Sharma. He suggested that Aruna AsafAli and I should meet the vice-president. (Some overenthusiastic meddlers have created the impression that they had been asked to meet the vice-president. The most prominent among them was T.N. Kaul.) Mrs AsafAli said to the vice-president that she and I had been asked to see him to request him to accept the Congress party's presidentship. In other words, he would be the next prime minister. Dr Sharma gave us a patient hearing. He then said that he was touched and honoured by Soniaji placing so much trust in him. However, what followed staggered Mrs Alt and me. The vice-president continued, 'The prime ministership of India is a full-time job. My age and health would not let me do justice to the most important office in the country. Kindly convey this to Soniaji.' His answer was wholly unexpected. To turn down the prime ministership of India was something only a man of tremendous self-confidence and integrity could do.

On the way back Arunaji and I hardly exchanged a word, because Shankar Dayal's response had overwhelmed us.

We reported to Mrs Gandhi the vice-president's decision. The country was without a prime minister. Such a hiatus could not be prolonged. Already the media was reporting unseemly and not-so-innocent jockeying for the job. Once again Sonia Gandhi turned to P.N. Haksar, who advised her to send for P.V. Narasimha Rao. The rest is history.

Jawaharlal Nehru – Can he be demystified ?

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Former Governor of Tamil Nadu

Ex-DGP, Government of Andhra Pradesh

2014 marks not only 125 years of Jawaharlal Nehru's birth but also 50 years of his death. This should have been an appropriate time for a total reappraisal of Nehru. Unfortunately, the opportunity has been lost in party polemics over the ownership of his legacy.

The predominance of Nehru's family in the governance of India and the stewardship of the Congress Party for most part of these 50 years has resulted in Nehruvian mystique overshadowing Nehru's legacy. But, as the "perspective of time" lengthens, new facts emerge; old predilections and prejudices give way to a more detached view and hindsight enables a more critical evaluation devoid of passion and informed by reason.

Apart from the Mahatma, there were six dominant participants in India's freedom struggle led by the Indian National Congress during the years 1930-1947. Three of them, viz. Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and Subhas Chandra Bose were of patrician descent. Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Prasad came from middle class backgrounds while Vallabhbhai Patel could be truly called a plebeian. Of all the six, Nehru had the best available education though in terms of academic excellence, his record would not match any one of the others. Their good looks and relative youth endowed Nehru and Bose with a charisma which the others lacked. Also, both espoused and articulated radical ideas and beliefs which had a special appeal to the youth of India.

Nehru and Bose, unlike the others, were frequently at odds with Gandhiji in regard to their political thinking as also the strategy and tactics of the freedom movement. Bose was more direct and frontal in his opposition, a factor which was responsible for his forcible exit from the Congress in 1940-41. Nehru, on the other hand, would only complain of his frustrations with the Mahatma's 'flip flops' but would fall in line when it came to the crunch. The only time that he insisted on his point of view and prevailed over Gandhiji was in the period 1927-1929 when the Congress abandoned "Dominion status" for "Poorna Swaraj" as its only goal. That was also the period when Gandhiji bemoaned that Nehru was drifting away from him. In his little known memoir "The Indian Struggle 1920-42" (the book was proscribed by the British) Bose frequently alluded to Nehru's vacillation between his intellectual leanings towards the radical left and primordial loyalty to Gandhiji which invariably was resolved in favour of the latter. In fact Bose declared that Nehru was chosen by Gandhiji as his successor for such loyalty.

Why did Gandhiji choose Nehru as his political heir in 1942 in spite of their differences in outlook on most issues. Of all his peers, Gandhiji enjoyed the best equation with Motilal Nehru, both politically and personally. His family mansion in Allahabad, which he acquired by his enormous legal practice, became the Congress headquarters when he gifted it away to the party. There was clearly a touch of nepotism when, by an emotional pitch of his desire to see his son as Congress President before he died, he persuaded Gandhiji to anoint Jawaharlal Nehru as the Congress President in 1929 in preference to Patel who was the popular choice in the party. Patel was passed over in similar circumstances twice again in favour of Nehru (1937 and 1946). Gandhiji was also, contrary to how reality unfolded time after time, apprehensive of Nehru leaving the Congress if he was not given the primacy among his colleagues. Not, surprisingly, it was Bose who left the Congress to plough his lonely furrow and write his own page in Indian History.

Nehru enjoyed a further advantage accruing from the 'halo' of sacrifice built around him by stories, some true and others fictitious, of how the family sacrificed a regal lifestyle to join the freedom struggle.

In fact, the sacrifices of his colleagues could be considered greater than that of Nehru, because he gave up nothing that he had personally built up, whereas the others threw away what they had accomplished by their own sweat and toil. For Nehru, who was at a loose end having had no taste for legal practice, it was an easy passage to politics, but it meant a painful break from the past for his colleagues. In fact, the folklore of sacrifice sat better on Motilal Nehru, the father, than on his son.

Nehru was an agnostic. However, when caught in the conflict between modernity and tradition, he leaned towards tradition. Nehru's distaste for religious ritual and superstition are widely known and acclaimed. Yet, he performed his daughter Indira's marriage according to Hindu ceremonial. When his grandson, Rajiv Gandhi was born, he wanted his younger sister to get a horoscope cast. His own will, couched in sentimental imagery of a modern human being, still yielded to traditional beliefs by suggesting that part of his ashes should be immersed in the Ganga. The same ambivalence was evident throughout his political relationship with Gandhiji.

Another major factor for Nehru's choice was his undoubted charismatic mass appeal generated by his good looks, 'halo' of sacrifice and his articulation of radical ideas. The exit of Bose from the Congress left Nehru without any competition in this regard. Besides, Nehru was a compelling communicator both in speech and on paper. His autobiography and "Discovery of India" – not to speak of his highly popular letters to his daughter built for him a constituency even among the educated which his peers did not have. His speeches and the raw energy, he displayed during his political travels across the country enthralled the masses.

According to Raj Mohan Gandhi, his grandfather realized by 1945 that Patel might prove to be a better administrator of free India than Nehru. Also there could have been little doubt in the light of experience since 1927 that Nehru would not have left the Congress at that critical juncture when freedom was in sight, even if Patel had been chosen to lead India into freedom. Yet Gandhiji stuck with Nehru considering his relative youth in the hope that Nehru would follow in his footsteps once he was no longer on the scene.

As independent India's first Prime Minister for 17 years, Nehru has been credited with the following achievements.

1. A stable democracy
2. A pluralistic and secular society
3. A modern economy
4. Scientific temper
5. A strong and modern India

As Prime Minister, Nehru aimed at building a modern India free from dogma and prejudice of any kind in which individual freedom and enterprise will lead to collective prosperity and an egalitarian society. His score card in this regard is fairly impressive. Moderating his socialistic and Soviet leanings, evident since 1927, he pursued a mixed economy, though with public sector at the commanding heights. His policy of non-alignment did not prevent him from persuading all the major world powers to help India build its industrial infrastructure and technological capability. He launched major irrigation and power projects to free India from the scourge of periodic famines and facilitate industrial progress. Reflecting his scientific temper, he created a chain of National Scientific Institutions devoted both to fundamental research and technological prowess.

As for the foundations of a stable Democracy, he did attach great importance to parliamentary institutions, freedom of the Press, independence of Judiciary, constitutional rights and rule of Law. But in his own conduct, he tended to prove right his own premonitions articulated in his famous self critique,

published in the Modern Review in 1937 under the pseudonym 'Chanakya'. He was a copy book democrat in Parliament where the opposition was weak though articulate and posed no threat to his position. But in the Congress Party, he did not hesitate to employ any means to squeeze out dissent. The memoirs of his colleagues in the Government and Party like Azad, K.M. Munshi, N.V. Gadgil, D.P. Mishra and above all Patel's correspondence testify to his methods. The manner in which he employed Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, a close confidante, to bring down P.D. Tandon, the Congress President would offend all canons of democratic functioning. The overthrow of the Communist Government in Kerala in 1959 was indeed a severe blot on his democratic credentials.

Nehru's convictions about secularism and pluralism were so much beyond dispute that Patel was supposed to have remarked, in jest, that Jawahar was the only nationalist Muslim in India. But to portray him as the shield and sheet anchor of India's secularism and pluralism would amount to insulting Indian civilisation and ethos. India has, right from the dawn of human civilization, a unique record of assimilation and absorption of both the invader and the immigrant. India did not witness holy wars and crusades. Of course, it had its share of communal disturbances and violence but they were due to local causes and were very much a part of the Indian experience even in Nehru's time.

No reappraisal of Nehru is complete without a scrutiny of his foreign policy which he considered as his forte and therefore, his exclusive preserve. His formulation of non-alignment was indeed the right prescription for India at that point of time, to enable it to tackle its internal problems of poverty, inequality and illiteracy etc. without entanglement in the cold war. But, in practice, he turned it into a third world stance of anti-imperialism.

Over time, India's tilt towards the Soviet bloc became obvious. Non-alignment enabled Nehru to assume third world leadership thereby enhancing his own international stature and India's prestige. China and its leadership were yet to find their feet on the world stage which circumstance gave an altruistic Nehru the opportunity to chaperon Chou-En-Lai at Bandung and generally espouse China's cause in the world fora. In fact, his altruism extended to the point of politely declining Russian Prime Minister, Bulganin's offer to campaign for India's permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council on the argument that it should wait till communist China was admitted.

Ironically, what was Nehru's favourite occupation proved his undoing. His misjudgment of the then Chinese leadership landed India into what has turned out to be intractable border dispute. Nehru's handling of the Kashmir issue was as ineptly altruistic as his China policy. To have taken the matter out of Patel's hands altogether and allowed himself to be guided solely by Mountbatten was a gross error of judgment. This was compounded by his reference of the issue to U.N. as a dispute between India and Pakistan and not as an act of aggression by the latter. A worse blunder was the offer to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir. The outcome of these errors is the China-Pak axis whose consequences are being suffered by India to this day.

Since Bose counted himself out of reckoning by his actions, any one of the other five lieutenants of Gandhiji could have become India's first Prime Minister. The choice was not of the best person but the right person for the moment. Therefore, it would be futile to debate if Patel should have been the first Prime Minister. In any case, he did not live long after Independence, though he had accomplished his mission in that short time.

There can be no doubt that Nehru was a visionary with captivating charm, a refined sensibility, an acute sense of history and a national purpose. But his broad-brush vision lacked the perspicacity of Patel. His failings could be attributed to this innate deficiency. Nehru will always be venerated in India for what he had accomplished. But whenever India faces a crisis, Indians of the Independence generation wish that Patel and not Nehru was alive to tackle such crisis. That is the ultimate and true test of his legacy.

An Indian Ocean Strategy : At last ?

Admiral (Retd.) Arun Prakash

Former Chief of Naval Staff,
Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee and Ex-Chairman NMF

Given Prime Minister Modi's sharp focus on foreign relations, it was inevitable that a section of our media would point to his peripatetic inclinations and complain that he was not devoting enough time to domestic issues. The critics may have a point, because foreign affairs, often, seem easier to manage than intractable domestic issues. But they overlook the deep linkages between domestic and foreign policies in the context of a country's supreme national interest. This, in fact, gives hope that India's foreign policy may, at last, be acquiring a grand-strategic underpinning?

In the face of many provocations in the neighbourhood, including China's undisguised jingoism, all that India has had to offer, so far, is the empty nostrum of 'strategic restraint'. The term 'strategic' has, unfortunately, come to be grossly over-used in New Delhi's diplomatic discourse. For example, India has established 'strategic partnerships' with at least 20 countries (including China), and officials in MEA as well as MoD often find it hard to explain the significance of these relationships and their bearing on India's posture of 'strategic autonomy.'

Pre-meditated change was, obviously, on the new PM-elect's mind and he started off by converting his government's inaugural ceremony into a foreign policy event.

Modi has continued in the same vein, thereafter; and used every opportunity to mend neighbourhood fences. He has also reached out to nations and leaders likely to play a role in shaping India's economic and geo-political destiny in the medium/long term future. Showing an acute sense of 'realpolitik' Modi has courted both the US and China with gusto. While New Delhi seeks closer ties with the US for acquiring strategic space in foreign affairs as well as high-technology vital for India's development; it views China, its intimidating strategic posture notwithstanding, as a lucrative partner for industrial and infrastructure growth.

While these seem to be the right macro-level moves, Modi has also been quick to realize the steady erosion of India's standing in its maritime neighbourhood and the, corresponding, steady rise in China's stock. Modi's recent visit to Sri Lanka, Seychelles and Mauritius came not a day too soon and should serve to redress some of the impairment caused by a remiss MEA and a slothful MoD.

Against this backdrop, a recent sequence of events vis-a-vis Sri Lanka provides a good example of the foreign policy challenges India faces in its 'near abroad'.

According to media reports, a PLA Navy (PLAN) diesel submarine accompanied by a support ship docked in Colombo port's South Terminal on 7th September 2014. It is noteworthy that this terminal was built and has been operated by a Chinese company for the past 35 years. A Chinese defence ministry communiqué declared that the "submarine was en route the Gulf of Aden for anti piracy duty" and described the submarine's replenishment at a foreign port as "common practice".

These statements could have been accepted at face value, but for two facts. Firstly; it stretches credulity that a diesel submarine could have anything meaningful to contribute to an anti piracy mission. More significantly, the Chinese submarine docked on the day that Japanese Prime Minister Abe arrived in Colombo; a move clearly orchestrated by Beijing. A few weeks later, on 31st October, either the same or another PLAN submarine and an escorting warship arrived in Colombo on a five-day visit. Could it be a coincidence that this call almost coincided with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung's visit to India?

For quite some time now, there has been speculation about the impending entry of PLAN submarines into waters of the Indian Ocean. In April 2013, Indian media was rife with reports that ‘unknown submarine contacts’ had been detected 22 times by Indian Navy (IN) and US Navy units; at the mouth of the Malacca Strait (in the vicinity of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands), off Dondra Head (southern tip of Sri Lanka) and in the Arabian Sea.

India’s foreign policy establishment interpreted the hosting of PLAN submarines in Colombo as a violation of the 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord which calls upon the two countries not to allow their respective territories to be used for “activities prejudicial to each other’s unity, integrity and security”. Sri Lanka was told that the docking of a Chinese naval submarine at the Colombo Port in September was of “serious concern to India’s national security”.

Seemingly dismissive of India’s concerns, the Rajapaksa government had declared that the Chinese ship/submarine visits were “usual practice.” A Sri Lankan navy spokesman breezily rattled off statistics of foreign ships that had visited Colombo in the recent past.

However, there were other viewpoints. Colombo’s Sunday Times made a telling editorial comment, on 6th November 2014: *“No other country in Sri Lanka’s post-war history has wielded the influence, or commanded the servility that China today does...New Delhi has always been wary of China’s geostrategic interests in South Asia. But nothing has raised its hackles more than China’s aggressive expansion into Sri Lanka and Colombo’s unquestioning acceptance of it.”*

Dispassionate examination will, however, show that the appearance of PLAN subs in neighbouring Sri Lanka warranted neither surprise, nor indignation on the part of New Delhi. With all the resources at the disposal of RAW, MEA and Naval HQ, one would have expected them to be sufficiently forewarned and even to have attempted preemption. As for indignation, a recap of recent history shows that it was uncalled for.

Sri Lanka’s victory over the LTTE was made possible by military support from a number of countries including US, India, Israel and China, which supplied weapons, platforms, training, intelligence and advice to the Sri Lankan armed forces. China’s military support, however, goes back to the early 1980s and stands out for its scale and constancy.

In order to respond rapidly to Sri Lankan requests for arms, China’s North Industries Corporation (NORINCO) had established a bonded warehouse in the port of Galle in 1994. This warehouse stocked military hardware and ammunition, which were available on demand to Sri Lankan forces. Beijing also supplied heavy weapons and fighter aircraft to Sri Lanka, if not directly, then through Pakistan. Pakistan also met Colombo’s requirements of pilot training as well as of mission-planning for anti-LTTE air operations.

In comparison, India’s military aid to Sri Lanka was grudging and intermittent. While the PMO and MEA remained hostage to blackmail by Chennai as well as their own myopic vision, the MoD’s lethargic work-ethic did the rest. A saving grace was the camaraderie, at the senior levels, of the Indian and Sri Lankan navies, created by the traditional training linkage between the two. This professional-fraternal spirit ensured that the IN was able to reach out across the Palk Strait from time to time with assistance. This bond was further cemented by the help rendered by IN during the 2004 tsunami.

Thus, China has backed Sri Lanka with military assistance at a crucial juncture in its history, rendering President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Defence Minister Gotabaya Rajapaksa deeply beholden to Beijing for their victory over the LTTE. Subsequently, China has also provided a huge quantum of economic aid. No visitor to Sri Lanka can miss China’s spectacular contribution to the development of this island nation. Sri Lanka’s roads, railways, ports and harbours, airports and power projects are near world-class – thanks to

China. India was given the 'right of first refusal' for many projects; but the government could muster neither the political will, nor the administrative competence to grab the opportunity. One wonders whether the private sector was consulted before declining.

Under these circumstances, our diplomats should have anticipated that the PLAN would – sooner than later – demand a port visit by a submarine; and that Sri Lanka would not be in a position to decline. The more important question that should have engaged their attention was: what should India's strategy be to reverse or change this situation?

Modi is indeed a lucky man; because providence has intervened to remove President Rajapaksa, and his clan, from the scene just weeks before his visit – the first in 28 years by an Indian PM – and created conditions for a grand Indo-Sri Lankan reconciliation.

India, as a regional power, is justified in feeling deeply concerned about the possibility of Sri Lanka, deliberately or inadvertently, becoming China's pawn, in total disregard of India's strategic interests. Hopefully, realization will dawn on both sides of the Palk Strait that economic and security interests of India and Sri Lanka are inextricably entwined. Any deliberate action that harms either nation, will eventually rebound on the other.

Similar 'cautionary tales' can be told about our other Indian Ocean neighbours; Maldives, Seychelles, Mauritius, Oman and Madagascar. At the strategic level, there is need to acknowledge the critical importance of regional maritime cooperation. For far too long has the dissonance between MEA, MoD and Naval HQ thwarted the navy's endeavours to create strong bonds with maritime neighbours. Instead of complaining about China's 'string of pearls' and now, the 'maritime silk route' concepts, India needs to craft a creative and dynamic strategy to counter both.

Our proximity and ability to render timely assistance can win us many friends and allies in the maritime neighbourhood. An accidental fire in a desalination plant may seem a minor incident to us, but for an island nation like the Maldives, it was a national catastrophe. India did well to air and sea-lift freshwater stocks to Male in February 2015. Building a series of desalination plants for Maldives could be part of a regional strategic initiative.

October 2011 saw the first initiative towards the crafting of an Indian Ocean strategy; when the maiden trilateral meeting on Maritime Security Cooperation took place between India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Subsequently, with Mauritius and Seychelles as 'guest participants', agreement was reached regarding cooperation in the fields of maritime domain awareness, training, pollution-control and joint-exercises.

The future thrust area for enhanced cooperation amongst Indian Ocean nations should be exploitation of the 'Blue Economy.' With limited land-based resources coming under stress, and with advancing technologies opening new frontiers of marine resource development; it seems obvious that we should be progressively turning to the oceans for meeting our sustainable developmental needs – including 'blue energy' from wind, wave and tidal resources.

Given PM Modi's proactive focus on foreign affairs and the priority that he has accorded to Indian Ocean neighbours, the signs – at long last - seem propitious for the evolution of an Indian Ocean Strategy – modest in scope but coherent in substance.

Is India's Nuclear Deterrent Credible ?

Shri Shyam Saran

Former Chairman, RIS & former Foreign Secretary

(Lecture delivered at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on April 24, 2013.)

Mr Chairman, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank the Subbu Forum Society for Policy Studies, in particular my friend, Commodore Uday Bhaskar and the India Habitat Centre for once again giving me an opportunity to share with you my thoughts on certain issues of contemporary relevance to India's national security. And thank you, Sanjaya, for doing me the honour of presiding over this meeting. I recall well our fighting in the trenches together during the difficult negotiations on the Indo-US civil nuclear agreement. While I have been introduced as the Chairman of India's National Security Advisory Board I must hasten to add that the views what I shall be sharing with you today are entirely my own and do not in any way reflect those of the Board or the government. These are views that have evolved over a fairly long period of time drawing upon my earlier experience dealing with disarmament and international security issues at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the two year stint I had at the Prime Minister's Office in 1991-92, handling issues relating to External Affairs, Defence and Atomic Energy and more recently my involvement in the Indo-US negotiations on a Civil Nuclear Cooperation agreement, both as Foreign Secretary and later as Prime Minister's Special Envoy. I cannot claim personal familiarity with our strategic establishment but I believe my engagement with it has given me a sense of how our security perceptions have evolved over the years and how different generations of our political leadership have dealt with the security challenges confronting the country. I make this presentation in the hope that there could be a more informed discourse on the role of India's strategic programme in national security, a discourse that is truly rooted in India's own circumstance rather than influenced by external commentaries.

India became a declared nuclear weapon state in May 1998, although it had maintained a capability to assemble nuclear explosive devices and had developed a delivery capability both in terms of aircraft as well as missiles several years previously. In May 1998, this capability was finally translated into an explicit and declared nuclear weapon status. This is important to recognize because India did not overnight become a nuclear weapon capable state in May 1998. It was already a state with nuclear weapons capability and had the capacity to deliver such weapons to their targets but until the May 1998 tests, a deliberate choice had been made to defer the acquisition of a nuclear weapon arsenal as long as there was still hope that the world would eventually move towards a complete elimination of these weapons of mass destruction. India's leaders recognised the prudence of developing and maintaining national capability and capacity to develop strategic assets if this became necessary but the preference remained for realising the objective of a nuclear weapon free world. The nuclear tests of May 1998 reflected the judgement that nuclear disarmament was no longer on the agenda of the nuclear weapon states. On the contrary, their objective was to make permanent the division of the world into nuclear haves and have-nots, which India had rejected since the very dawn on the atomic age.

India's policy towards nuclear weapons evolved over a period of nearly three decades and this evolution was impacted by several significant developments in the country's security environment. The testing of a nuclear weapon by China in 1964 was the first major driver. There is evidence that both Nehru and Homi Bhabha had not excluded the possibility of India acquiring nuclear weapons even earlier, in case India's

security and defence warranted it. India's first plutonium separation plant came up in 1964 itself at Trombay when both Nehru and Bhabha were still in office. The pursuit of strategic capability took time and each subsequent stage would be linked to certain adverse developments in India's security environment. It would be 10 years before India carried out a peaceful nuclear explosion, in 1974, to signal its capability to design and fabricate a nuclear explosive device. In the background were a series of developments which had heightened India's security concerns and led to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's decision to approve the nuclear test:

- The conclusion of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 which sought to prevent the emergence of any new nuclear weapon states, without a concomitant and credible commitment on the part of the existing nuclear weapon states to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame. India had to stay out of the treaty in order to maintain its nuclear option.

- The NPT was followed by the 1971 Bangladesh war and an unwelcome Sino-US axis targeting India. The appearance of USS Enterprise in the Bay of Bengal heightened India's sense of vulnerability.

The next phase in the acquisition of capabilities is also linked to certain new developments adversely affecting India's security. Reports began to appear that China had delivered a fully tested nuclear bomb design to Pakistan in 1983. China may have tested a Pakistani weapon at the Lop Nor test site in 1990. Pakistan emerged as a "front-line state" in the war against Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the decade of the ninety-eighties, bringing fresh worries to India's security planners. Its feverish and clandestine pursuit of nuclear weapons capability also heightened threat perceptions in India, particularly when it became clear that the U.S. was not willing to deter Pakistan from the quest, given its equities in the ongoing war. This also marks the phase when Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme, which was led by its civilian political leaders, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and later Ghulam Ishaq Khan, passed into the hands of its military establishment, thus acquiring an altogether more sinister dimension. Today, Pakistan is the only nuclear-armed state where it is the military and not the civilian political leadership that is in effective control of its nuclear arsenal. During this period, India's sense of vulnerability increased due to the surge in Khalistani insurgency, aided and abetted by Pakistan as also the blow back from the ongoing war in Afghanistan. Despite these developments Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi launched a major initiative at the United Nations in 1988 to promote a world free of nuclear weapons through the Action Plan on Nuclear Disarmament. This was a serious effort to promote nuclear disarmament which would enable India to avoid the less preferable alternative of itself becoming a nuclear weapon state in order to safeguard its security and political independence.

The decade of the nineties marks the next phase in India's nuclear trajectory, leading up to the "break-out" in May 1998. This phase was marked by a serious debate within the political leadership over whether the time had come to go ahead with a declared nuclear weapon status or whether the likely international political and economic fallout made this a costly choice. As the decade of the nineteen nineties unfolded, it became abundantly clear that the choice was being forced on India as a consequence of several serious geopolitical developments.

What were the drivers during this phase? One, the U.S. emerged as a hyper-power after the demise of the Soviet Union and this severely narrowed India's strategic space. Two, the nuclear weapon states moved to enforce a permanent status on the NPT in 1995, thereby perpetuating the division between nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear weapon states, with oblique threats to use the U.N. Security Council to sanction and to penalize those countries which resisted the universalization of the NPT. This

would have put India in state of permanent strategic vulnerability to nuclear threat and nuclear blackmail. This may have happened during India-Pakistan tensions in 1990 though the record is ambiguous on this score (Yaqub Khan's visit to Delhi in 1990 is said to have been undertaken to convey the threat of nuclear retaliation against India in case the latter moved its conventional military forces to threaten or to attack Pakistan). During 1991-92, one was also witness to a determined attempt by the U.S. to put serious limits on India's civilian space and missile programme by pressuring Russia under President Yeltsin to deny India the cryogenic engine technology that it needed to upgrade its civilian space capabilities. The precipitating factor proved to be the effort in 1996 to push through a discriminatory Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which would have permanently foreclosed India's options to develop a credible and fully tested nuclear deterrent. These developments in the decade of the nineties meant that India could no longer have any credible assurance of its security in the absence of its own independent nuclear deterrent. It would confront increased vulnerability vis-a-vis its adversaries, its security would have been severely undermined and made its quest for strategic autonomy a mirage.

It is against this background that a decision was taken in May 1998 to breach the narrowing nuclear containment ring around the country and assert India's determination to retain its ability to deter threats from States hostile to it and to ensure an environment in which it could pursue its development priorities without disruption. This is clearly articulated in India's Draft Nuclear Doctrine released in August 1999. The official Doctrine based mainly on the draft was adopted in January 2003, but its full text has not been shared with the public.

It is important to keep this historical perspective in mind because the nuclear tests carried out in May 1998 were not a mere episode driven by current and largely domestic political compulsions (though this may have influenced the precise timing), but rather the logical and perhaps an even inexorable culmination of a decades-long evolution in strategic thinking, influenced by an increasingly complex and hostile security environment. The timing may have also been influenced by geopolitical developments. The end of the Cold War and the rise of China brought a sense of strategic opportunity to India.

The collapse of the Soviet Union meant that the U.S. was no longer inimical to Indian interests as it had been during the Cold War years, with India seen as being on the wrong side of the fence. China's emergence as a potential adversary to the U.S. made a more rapidly growing India an attractive countervailing power, quite apart from the opportunities it offered to U.S. business and industry. India's swift emergence as an I.T. power and the rising affluence and influence of the India-American community, reinforced the positive shift in American perceptions about India. Therefore, while fully conscious of the adverse fallout from its decision to undertake a series of nuclear tests and to establish itself as a declared nuclear weapon state, Indian leaders may also have calculated that such fallout would be temporary and India's growing strategic relevance would eventually overcome such impediments. This judgement has proved to be true in most respects.

There is no doubt that the shift to a declared nuclear weapon state posture confronts India with new and more complex challenges. These challenges involve the nature and structure of the nuclear weapon arsenal as well as delivery assets. India has articulated a nuclear doctrine that is appropriate to the current geopolitical environment, is aligned with its existing and projected levels of technological capabilities and affordability and most importantly, is reflective of India's domestic realities and its value system. The people of India want their leaders to pursue an independent foreign policy, maintain strategic autonomy and safeguard the security of the country and its citizens by having adequate means to deter threats to

national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Sustaining democracy within the country is seen as integrally linked to the ability of the State to deliver on these fundamental aspirations.

At various stages of India's contemporary history, the Indian state has pursued different strategies to achieve these objectives in a nuclearized, asymmetrical and often hostile regional and global environment. It has had to make difficult choices including embracing a three decades long strategic partnership with the Soviet Union which helped the country to meet the threat from an implacably hostile and belligerent Pakistan and a China that turned into a threatening and often arrogant adversary post India's humiliating defeat in the 1962 border war. Those who perennially bemoan India's lack of strategic culture such as the recent Economist article, seem strangely reluctant to acknowledge the difficult choices that governments of every persuasion in the country have made whether in seeking strategic partners, maintaining a nuclear option or eventually exercising that option despite the odds confronting us.

That mistakes have been made, that sometimes opportunities have been missed or our judgments were misplaced is undeniable. But if having a strategy means the readiness to make reasoned choices, then India has demonstrated an ability to think and act strategically.

It is against this background that I find somewhat puzzling assertions by some respected security analysts, both Indian and foreign, that India's nuclear weapons programme has been driven by notions of prestige or global standing rather than by considerations of national security. For example, typical of comments from U.S. analysts is the remarkable observation that "India now lacks a credible theory of how nuclear weapons might be used than as an instrument of national pride and propaganda".

India does have a credible theory of how its nuclear weapons may be used and that is spelt out in its nuclear doctrine. One may or may not agree with that doctrine but to claim that India does not have a credible theory about the use of nuclear weapons does not accord with facts. Yes it is true that since January 4, 2003 when India adopted its nuclear doctrine formally at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), it has moved to put in place, at a measured pace, a triad of land-based, air-delivered and submarine-based nuclear forces and delivery assets to conform to its declared doctrine of no-first use and retaliation only. It has had to create a command and control infrastructure that can survive a first strike and a fully secure communication system that is reliable and hardened against radiation or electronic interference. A number of redundancies have had to be created to strengthen survivability.

In all these respects, significant progress has been achieved. To expect that these should have emerged overnight after May 1998 is a rather naïve expectation. India today has a long range ballistic missile capability and is on the road to a submarine - based missile capability. These capabilities will be further improved as time goes on and more resources become available. The record since the May 1998 nuclear tests demonstrates quite clearly a sustained and systematic drive to operationalize the various components of the nuclear deterrent in a manner best suited to India's security environment. This is not the record of a state which considers nuclear weapons as "instrument of national pride and propaganda".

There is a similar refrain in Chinese commentaries on India's nuclear weapons programme. Here is a typical Chinese comment:

"Unlike China, which was forced to develop its nuclear option under a clear nuclear threat, India has never been faced with an immediate major military or nuclear threat that would require New Delhi to have a nuclear weapon option to ensure its national survival. The acquisition of nuclear weapons appears to have been almost entirely motivated by politics. India seems to have an explicit strategic goal; to be

accepted as a world power. And this goal seems to reflect India's deep rooted belief that nuclear weapons constitute an effective physical signature of world power status, and even short-cut to this status".

And this extraordinary assessment of India's quest for security in a nuclearized regional and global environment comes from an analyst in a country which over the years actively and relentlessly contributed to the clandestine nuclear weapons programme of Pakistan, firstly by providing it with the design of a tested weapon and later by assisting it with developing its missile capabilities, both directly and through its North Korean ally. This is a rare case where a nuclear weapon state has actively promoted the acquisition of nuclear weapon capability by a non-nuclear weapon State, though similar allegations have been made about US and French assistance to Israel. Chinese assistance to Pakistan's strategic programme continues apace.

Could India ignore the implications of this alliance and the role of Pakistan as a most convenient Chinese proxy to pose a nuclear threat to India? The narrative that I have sketched out does not square with the observation that "India has never been faced with an immediate major military or nuclear threat that would require New Delhi to have a nuclear weapon option to ensure its national survival". And it is rather odd that a representative of a country whose iconic leader Mao Zedong called for "politics in command" can now say that India's nuclear programme has been "almost entirely motivated by politics". Of course, it has been, but not the politics of seeking world power status as is claimed, but the politics of keeping India and its citizens safe from nuclear threats. We have long been familiar with the Chinese predilection to dismiss India's role in international affairs as that of a pretender too big for its boots, while China's super power status is, of course, regarded as manifest destiny. One should reject such self-serving assertions.

What is worrying, however, is that this status-seeking argument has been finding an echo among some Indian analysts as well. One analyst recently claimed:

"During its long and unfocused nuclear weapons quest, India came to develop a highly self-absorbed approach. This was because India's dominant objective was political and technological prestige, while for every other nuclear weapon state it was deterrence."

Such sweeping statements show a lack of familiarity with the history of India's nuclear weapons programme, set against the broader political and security backdrop. They also serve to diminish the very legitimacy of India's nuclear weapons status though this may not be the intention. For if deterrence was not the reason for which India became a nuclear weapon state, but only for "political and technological prestige", then why should it have nuclear weapons in the first place?

If the argument is that India has and does face threats for which a nuclear deterrent is required, but that these have been ignored by successive generations of India's political and security elite, then obviously it must be a mere fortuitous coincidence that we have strayed into a strategic capability. This elite, it is implied comprehends neither the security threats nor the manner in which this accidental acquisition of nuclear weapons and delivery capabilities, must be operationalized. This does not square with facts.

The thesis that India's nuclear deterrent is mostly symbolic is, for some, driven by the perception that India's armed forces are not fully part of the strategic decision-making process and that they play second fiddle to the civilian bureaucracy and the scientific establishment. Even if this perception was true, and in fact it is not, one cannot accept that the credibility of India's nuclear deterrence demands management by its military. The very nature of nuclear deterrence as practiced by a civilian democracy dictates that

decisions relating to the nature and scope of the arsenal, its deployment and use, be anchored in the larger architecture of democratic governance. It is the civilian political leadership that must make judgments about domestic political, social and economic priorities as well as the imperatives imposed by a changing regional and global geopolitical environment.

The military must be enabled to provide its own perspectives and inputs, just as other segments of the state must do. Undoubtedly the military's inputs and its advice would have to carry weight, especially in operational matters. But to equate exclusive military management of strategic forces, albeit under the political leadership's overall command, as the sine qua non of deterrence credibility is neither necessary nor desirable. One should certainly encourage better civil-military relations and coordination. It may also be argued that the military's inputs into strategic planning and execution should be enhanced to make India's nuclear deterrent more effective. But one should not equate shortcomings in these respects with the absence of a credible nuclear deterrent.

If we look at the current status of India's nuclear deterrent and its command and control system, it is clear that at least two legs of the triad referred to in our nuclear doctrine are already in place. These include a modest arsenal, nuclear capable aircraft and missiles both in fixed underground silos as well as those which are mounted on mobile rail and road-based platforms. These land-based missiles include both Agni-II (1500 km) as well as Agni-III (2500 km) missiles. The range and accuracy of further versions for example, Agni V (5000 km) which was tested successfully only recently, will improve with the acquisition of further technological capability and experience. The third leg of the triad which is submarine-based, is admittedly a work in progress. We need at least three Arihant class nuclear submarines so that at least one will always be at sea. Submarine-based missiles systems have been developed and tested in the form of the Sagarika but these are still relatively short in range. It is expected that a modest sea-based deterrence will be in place by 2015 or 2016. There is also a major R&D programme which has been in place since 2005, for the development of a new, longer range and more accurate generation of submarine-based missiles which is likely to ready for deployment around 2020.

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CHINESE CHEQUERS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Vice Admiral (Retd.) Anup Singh

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What made the two Chinese submarines' port calls at Colombo (in September and November 2014), intriguing to the Indian security establishment was not the visits as much as the explanations offered by the two sides. The script in both countries' initial explanation seemed to have been pre-checked (for convergence) – perhaps by the Chinese. As per China's Xinhua news agency, a China Ministry of National Defence spokesperson said after the September incident: *"It is an international common practice for submarines to stop for refueling and crew refreshment at an overseas port."* It also laboured the point that the People's Liberation Army "Navy" {PLA(Navy)}'s submarines were joining the Surface Task Force in the Gulf of Aden, to supplement the anti-piracy mission(!) The Sri Lankan statement went a step further to bolster that point from the Chinese. It read: *"A submarine and a warship have docked at Colombo harbour there is nothing unusual Since 2010, 230 warships have called at Colombo port from various countries on goodwill visits and for refueling and crew refreshment."*

The fact that PLA(Navy) submarines have started making "visible" forays into the Indian Ocean is in itself a matter of serious concern to, not only India but also many other powers – within and without the Indian Ocean. Over the last decade, there have been many pieces of news that indicated Chinese submarines having made quiet patrols in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). But none was ever seen on snort (breathing to charge batteries), or calling at friendly ports, and therefore, news – whether from intelligence sources or as a result of media speculation – remained unconfirmed. The two incidents in 2014, however, appear to be a deliberate move by the Chinese, to nudge all such powers particularly including India, with a catch-me-if-you-can nuance.

Coupled with the impressive economic growth over the last decade, the eye-catching naval expansion of China is being 'directed' by a clearly defined maritime strategy. Initially it was thought that its naval expansion was a result of the hurt felt by China in the third Taiwan Strait incident, and was intended only for imbibing the capability of "offensive defence" against any future American adventure in the Western Pacific. This was, of course true; but simultaneously the Chinese also had the Indian Ocean in mind. That is why, starting with the early years of the last decade, the Chinese had begun positioning special vessels with huge parabolic antennae in the Indian Ocean, ostensibly to track their satellites (and enable telemetric control of ballistic missiles) from these floating "earth stations". In actual fact, such vessels double as "spy ships" which conduct surveillance and research in the ocean. The Chinese had also started wooing developing (particularly Least Developed Countries or LDCs) in the Indian Ocean, with grants, low interest loans, and offers of developing maritime infrastructure – almost free. On execution, that pattern was identified as the "String of Pearls". And in 2011, a big pie measuring 10,000 sq km area on the South West Indian Ocean Ridge (SWIOR) was allocated to China, for exploration and production of polymetallic sulphides. Now, the pieces in the jigsaw are clearly in place. The Chinese are known to be long term thinkers and planners. Their strategy for presence in the Indian Ocean was scripted more than a decade ago, and put in to practice through well-conceived steps, soon thereafter. The allocation of seabed by the International Seabed Authority (ISA) – a UN body – itself came as a surprise to many including India. The Chinese did their home-work, lobbied hard at the ISA, and received approval in record time. That was a huge step to legitimize (one more) interest in the IOR, while simultaneously securing their future with promise of precious metals including gold, silver, and other rare minerals.

The *string of pearls* was initially appreciated to serve the purpose of securing China's sea lines of

communication, in fact its “strategic” lines of communication in the IOR; but it is now becoming abundantly clear that China had scripted its strategy with a plan that hinges on force projection to instill a feeling of hegemony by the dominant external power.

If the Chinese were planning a permanent presence in the Indian Ocean so long ago as a decade, the greatest god-send for infusing impetus to their effort came in 2008 – at the peak of piracy in the Gulf of Aden – when a couple of successful attempts by Somali pirates alarmed the Chinese, whose trade has sensitive linkages with that critical waterway. So, in early 2009, the Chinese sent their first Task Force – comprising of two Destroyers/Frigates, and a Supply Ship on a three month deployment to escort their ships coming from the Suez, or going into the Red Sea. That effort by the PLA(Navy) hasn’t stopped despite a lull in piracy incidents since 2012. Each Task Force has spent three to four months on station, in the bargain earning valuable experience in the India’s waters. Till a couple of days ago, the 19th Task Force was on active duty there (temporarily suspended to enable evacuation of Chinese citizens from war-torn Yemen). The anti-piracy mission has enabled the Chinese get their “sea legs” in the Indian Ocean, as also confidence on “blue water” capability. An additional windfall has been the opportunity to learn and practice maritime diplomacy through goodwill visits by these Task Forces while returning home. (Some of them have gone to the Mediterranean and all the way to Western Africa as well). They don’t seem to be in a hurry to withdraw from this mission as yet. Money and force levels are not a problem with the Chinese!

In late 2010, the Dutch sent a Walrus Class (conventional) submarine, the *Zeeleeuw*, at the request of NATO, to “assist” coalition forces in their anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden. That deployment itself had raised questions about the viability of an expensive and stealthy platform in assisting surface forces with “surveillance” against pirates’ vessels. But it did not surprise us since the real purpose must have been (a cover) for gaining experience in picking up shipping signatures at one of the most important choke points of the world, and environmental experience in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. It was a leaf taken from the cold war years when US and Soviet submarines would clandestinely operate in the Indian Ocean. The Dutch once again deployed a Walrus class boat in 2012, this time the *Bruinus*. It is these examples that the Chinese found convenient to emulate in their recent deployment by a Song Class conventional submarine. It was a perfect excuse to replicate the NATO model of 2010 and 2012. And if the Dutch stopped sending a boat after 2012 because of a pleasant decline in the incidence of piracy, the Chinese were not concerned about the world view on their venture. So, a Song Class submarine first docked at Colombo’s spanking new Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT) from 07 to 14 September, and had a Submarine Support Vessel for company. The next time a boat docked at the same terminal was in November. It was, in all probability, the same Song class boat that had completed her deployment in the Gulf of Aden. There was alarm raised in various quarters including in India that the November visit had been by a nuclear powered boat (an “SSN”). That is unlikely to be the case as a nuke does not have to halt for rest/ replenishment with the attendant risk of exposing her movements and also her acoustic signatures when transiting out of such a port.

Another factor in this game of window dressing the object of sea denial is the carefully scripted plan of augmentation of the South Sea Fleet over the past decade, and basing of submarines at the Hainan Island in the South China Sea. Being closest to the archipelagic straits of Indonesia, it is submarines from this base which are intended for deployment in the Indian Ocean, as was witnessed in early 2014, when China “notified” India, and a few others (including the US and Russia), about one of its nuclear powered submarines making a round of the Indian Ocean.

A conventional boat of the Song Class would have an endurance of about 45 days, but in sending

them to a different and distant region like the IOR, they have utilized the rest and replenishment (R&R in naval parlance) method, to use some of the nodes in the *string of pearls* (starting with Colombo). Simultaneously, China's submarine support vessel was also deployed – obviously to test its efficacy in independently supporting conventional boats in foreign ports.

There is now no doubt that China craves a permanent strategic presence in the IOR. After all, the various ports and other infrastructure projects it has established in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and in a number of East African countries, over the past decade, were planned only with the purpose of enabling "presence" in the IOR. In other words, China has executed a carefully crafted plan of creating for itself, *places* which also double as rightful *bases* – tweaking the methodology of first building, and then dictating the utilization rights of such ports, as distinct from the cold war models of the two sides which had their own problems of uncertainty of lease or offer by the host countries. China had made such lucrative propositions to the host countries that they could not think of refusing because of the openly lavish funding incentives that meant almost zero burden on these countries. So, Gwadar in Pakistan (now a Billion Dollar port project) was almost entirely funded and built by them, and now the Chinese have even taken over management of that port by "nudging" out the Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) which stood guard for the first four years. In Sri Lanka's case, the story is even more interesting. Hambantota port's first phase was funded and built by the Chinese at about 350 Million Dollars' "long term financing". It is located on the East-West trade route and was intended as a transshipment hub. It lies 90% underutilized except for an odd car ferry a week, that brings vehicles India's Mudra Port, for transshipment (to larger vessels), destined for other countries. Phase Two of that port is now under construction, and will be much more expansive and deeper than Phase One. Its cost, almost a Billion dollars, is being financed by the Chinese on long-term-low-interest basis. This means that the Chinese will have a complete hold over utilization of Hambantota, whenever required, for its own forces. But much more interesting is the case with the Colombo South Port Project. The Colombo port is old, and has limited capacity for handling general cargo, particularly containerized cargo. Therefore, in the year 2008, a US \$ 360 Million project (majority funding by ADB), was executed to extend the old port, by building two long breakwaters to provide berths and tranquil waters for what is now known as the Colombo South Port. These breakwaters were built by M/s Hyundai Engineering and Construction Co. of ROK (South Korea) in well under the contracted period of four years, and the infrastructure created with these, including congruent perimeter roads, a Port Administration and Operations Control Building, and a unique 5 metre high concrete barrier wall along the Main Breakwater, to provide shelter against rough weather, can all be described as of contemporary global standards in terms of design/quality. Then in mid-2011, it was time to award a contract for making the Container Terminals on the Main Breakwater. Hyundai sought preferential rights to build the Container Terminals, but the Sri Lankans denied them the bid. It was once again a case of "*Enter the Dragon*". So, in Dec 2011, the Chinese firm, M/s China Merchants Holding International (CMHI), was awarded the contract to build only one large terminal of 1200 mts length x 300 mts width along the Main Breakwater. (The entire breakwater is 5.1 km long, and has provision for creating three such terminals of 1200 mts each, with up to four berths on each such length). Construction of the terminal (including massive reclamation) was commenced in Dec 2011, and the terminal was ready by Apr 2014, as per schedule. The terminal is called the "Colombo International Container Terminal" (CICT), and has the capacity to add 2.74 Million TEUs (containers) to the existing throughput of the old Colombo port.

The deal with the Chinese was concluded with a 35 year Build Operate Transfer (BOT) model. Even though the international norm is to offer a lease of 30 years in projects financed by the builder, this terminal will be operated by the Chinese for 35 years. This is because the Chinese have 85% stake in financing the project and therefore dictated the lease terms. The balance 15% has been provided by the Sri

Lanka Port Authority (SLPA). It is this Terminal on which the PLA(Navy)'s Song Class submarine had berthed in September (along with a Submarine Tender), and again in November 2014.

The Chinese were obviously very clear about their long term plans. Undoubtedly, they are going to extract every pound that they have infused in to this port. And the bargain will not be limited to the lease period alone. By the end of the 35 year period of lease, they would have dug in their heels so well in Sri Lanka's strategic projects that the hosts will find it difficult to say "no" to any further advances.

In so far as China's use of submarines to "tease" is concerned, one has to remember that the first offensive arm to be raised by China, was its submarine arm – right from the days of Chiang Kai Shek. Mao went a step further by introducing nuclear submarines from the Soviet Union, and insisting on indigenization – for the sake of self-reliance. What the PLA thought at the time to be an instrument of power projection, was actually intended for sea denial against bigger powers whose surface and air forces could not be matched. Today, however, China has so many of the conventional submarines, that it is able to send them on reconnaissance patrols even to the distant waters of the Indian Ocean – its secondary area of interest after the Pacific. It finds the time right to do so, as clients in the IOR are now "hosts" who have no choice but to offer port facilities. But these countries do not realise their (future) security implications of *sleeping with the enemy*.

Sri Lanka's Actions

In so far as International Law goes, Sri Lanka did not flout any rule in providing a temporary (transit) home to the submarine and the Support Ship. Men-of-war routinely visit foreign ports – after obtaining diplomatic clearances – whether on goodwill visits, or on transit to another area. The only condition in which Sri Lanka could be found legally at fault is, if it had allowed these actions with India and China being at war. That would have meant violating the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC). However, **between India and Sri Lanka, there is a clearly spelt out agreement under the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987**, that makes it obligatory upon Sri Lanka, against making any of its ports available "*for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests*". Sri Lanka has, of course, cited the international norm of permitting warships on goodwill visits, and not bothered about the 1987 accord, as it is keeping another answer up its sleeve, should the need arise: that the Chinese submarine was on its way to the Gulf of Aden – for a mission that involves international effort, and that apart from goodwill, the submarine being conventional, required an R&R halt!

In its heart of hearts of course, Sri Lanka knows that its actions were less than noble, and it has lent itself to continued manipulation by the Chinese, because of the precedent set in September/November 2014. Perhaps the new political dispensation in Colombo gives us hope, but that dispensation will find it hard to deny its country's part of the bargain as sealed in Hambantota, and in CICT/ Colombo South Port. In its nascent weeks in power, the new Government in Colombo has attempted some damage-control in the statements by its leader that it will not allow relations with China to be built at the expense of India. Then, during a recent visit to China, the new Sri Lanka Foreign Minister, Mangala Samaraweera noted that Sri Lanka would not allow visits by Chinese submarine to its ports. "I really don't know under which sort of circumstances that led to some submarines... to [visit] the port of Colombo..... we will ensure that such incidents, from whatever quarter, do not happen during our tenure".¹⁰

On its part, India has to work very hard on four counts, and on 'fast track': firstly, it will have to deal with the new polity in Sri Lanka with some plain speak. Sweet diplomacy may have to be replaced by a different form of diplomacy on the many areas of preferential treatment that Sri Lanka enjoys. Secondly, the Government must fast track those capital acquisitions for its Armed Forces that will replace ageing

platforms which have become 'vintage' by legacy. The Indian Navy must have sufficient forces to be able to position them at hot spots in the IOR. Thirdly, it is time for India to give China, a taste of its own medicine. The Navy should make some additional ship visits to friendly ports in the South and East China Seas. Exercising with countries like Japan, Vietnam, and ROK should become even more frequent now. In fact, India should climb the multi-lateral ladder like it did once in 2007. That event (touted as the "Quad" of India, US, Japan, and Australia) had truly got China's goat. India unnecessarily got worried of China's discomfiture, and retracted from that module after 2007. This time, India should boldly form a multi-lateral forum of Indian, US, Japanese, Vietnamese, Australian, and Singapore Navies, to stage "peaceful" exercises in both the South, as well as East China Seas. Lastly, it is time for the Indian Government to truly "activate" the Andaman and Nicobar Command. Surveillance aircraft, destroyers, and frigates should routinely launch themselves from there, to announce "sea control" at the gateway to the Indian Ocean. The Chinese, and others will start paying obeisance to power projection by us. Still, some back-to-basics will have to be dictated by India. However, India must remember that the other *pearls in the string*, namely Pakistan (Gwadar), Myanmar, Bangladesh will also be used by China soon enough. While Pakistan cannot be tamed (and is a gone case), it is time for India to start interacting with Bangladesh, Myanmar, and East African countries with more than those frugal "Lines of Credit". These countries who have had the benefit of Chinese largesse, will need to be rerouted through the soft power route so that they are fully aware of the dangers of falling prey to the game of give-and-take. For India, not conducting this "education" in time for friends in the IOR would mean *hanging the albatross around its neck!*

The present political dispensation in India is just right for putting in to action all the above measures, and should do so in quick time to arrest Chinese teasers in the IOR.

When China's geopolitical history is written in a couple of decades from now, the baby steps it has taken in the Indian Ocean will receive kudos from many quarters – particularly from Chinese historians – for having laid the ground work for expanding influence to the far seas! But what is of concern to the world right now is the turn its current maritime strategy is likely to take with the excessive confidence that the Chinese of the day have harnessed. The unprecedented surge in PLA (Navy)'s force levels, and simultaneous rise of its activity in the Indian Ocean, have raised alarm not just in India, but across the larger world. There is no doubt, that China's rise; its Navy's unprecedented expansion; and its interests in the Indian Ocean were foreseen almost a decade ago, but its forays into this region were not expected to take such aggressive and intimidating form as displayed by the submarine arm since early 2014. China will continue unabated unless it is checked in its tracks. Nations aspiring to greatness find the maritime medium the most convenient route to flaunt their riches and military might. But those that take the route of confidently portraying a favourable tilt in military balance must be shown the code of international norm. In Sri Lanka's case too, some back-to-basics have to be dictated by India. However, India must remember that the other *pearls in the string*, namely Pakistan (Gwadar), Myanmar, Bangladesh will also be used by China soon enough. These countries that have had the benefit of Chinese largesse, will need to be taken to the class room of geopolitics through the soft power route so that they are fully aware of the dangers in falling easy prey to the game of give-and-take.

NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE : OSTRICH ACT ?

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The ninth Review conference of the NPT will commence in New York on Monday (April 27) and it is moot whether this mega-event will squarely face the complex nuclear reality that confronts the world in the early 21st century – or do a familiar ostrich act – as it has for the last five decades.

The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty better known as the NPT came into force in March 1970 and while it deals with an extraordinary technological capability that spans the bandwidth from Hiroshima to Fukushima – it has an anomalous status. It is deemed to be an international treaty with near global membership (only four nations including India are non-signatories) but has no legal sanctity and is more in the nature of a self-created club by the USA and the former USSR to maintain their strategic exclusivity..

The core of the NPT was the consensus between the US and the former USSR in 1967 that their core security interests were best served by ensuring that the apocalyptic nuclear weapon remained with a select group of five nations (the NWS or nuclear weapon states) and that all other countries, irrespective of their security concerns and strategic considerations would have to eternally renounce their right to acquire this capability. The exclusive N 5 club was co-terminus with the UN Security Council P 5 viz; USA, USSR, UK, France and China.

While the draft treaty was couched in normative language that sought to project the objective of the NPT as being the larger collective global interest so as to ensure nuclear non-proliferation, facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the Holy Grail of nuclear disarmament – the unalloyed reality was more of maintaining nuclear hegemony.

For India this was a totally unacceptable treaty given its inherently discriminatory core – the division of the world into the nuclear haves and the have-nots. India opposed the NPT and dwelt on the invidious US led intent of seeking to ‘disarm the unarmed’ – and over the years when Washington mounted pressure on Delhi – the latter refused to accept what it termed ‘nuclear apartheid.’

The regional context for India was distinctive and unsettling. China acquired the nuclear weapon in October 1964 – two years after the Sino-Indian border war and a few months before PM Nehru’s demise in May 1964. To prevent further nuclear horizontal proliferation, the US and the former USSR despite their bitter Cold War rivalry closed ranks and conceived the iniquitous NPT.

The inherent King Canute element in the NPT was evident – but glossed over due to cynical realpolitik compulsions. Just as Canute was unable to prevent the sea-waves from swirling around his throne, the NPT sought to impose a political diktat to regulate the inexorable techno-commercial rhythms nuclear domain – albeit unsuccessfully. While the initial objective of ensuring that the Axis powers – Germany, Japan and Italy renounced nuclear weapons was realized – many nations chafed at this imposition.

India stayed outside the NPT and carried out its own ‘peaceful nuclear explosion’ in May 1974 but did not weaponize this capability – and remained suspended in a strategic twilight zone; and over the years, South Africa, Israel and Pakistan acquired covert nuclear weapon capability with major power (N 5) assistance. North Korea chose to opt out of the NPT though it had signed it as a non-nuclear weapon

state and countries like Iran and Libya maintained an opaque status and were accused of pursuing a clandestine weapon program.

Vertical nuclear proliferation was rampant – from 1970 to 1990 and the US-Soviet nuclear arsenal climbed to over 60,000 nuclear warheads. The Cold War ended in December 1991 and paradoxically – both France and China came on board the NPT as NWS only in 1992. The prevention of horizontal proliferation was a partial success and like King Canute's experience, technological know-how and the furtive transfer of fissile material was either tacitly enabled – or the provisions of the NPT proved inadequate and the emergence of the Pakistan military cum AQ Khan nuclear Walmart is illustrative.

Review conferences of the NPT have been held since 1975 amidst bitter contestation among the members. The Israeli nuclear capability for example generated dissent in the Arab block but to no avail. And at the 1995 RevCon – 25 years after the treaty came into force among its signatories – the US led global coalition voted for an indefinite extension of the NPT as it was in an odd procedural initiative – and the NPT is now cast in stone. The Holy Grail of global disarmament remains even more elusive.

The NPT RevCons of 2000, 2005 and 2010 have been inconclusive and in the interim – the global nuclear domain has become more tangled. The maze includes the AQ Khan network and what it symbolizes – a state enabled non-state nuclear proliferation racket and the linkages to terror groups ; the loss of US moral credibility over the 2003 Iraq war and the accusations made against Baghdad ; the flaring up of regional nuclear tensions (North Korea) and brittle bi-lateral growling (Russia-US and Pakistan-India) are only some of the more visible tips of a murky iceberg.

Iran and its nuclear status is the current challenge and a crucial fork - by way of which path the global nuclear discourse will take. The Rev Con that opens in New York on April 27 has the option of either squarely facing the many nuclear cobwebs and political fudging that has been swept under the status-quo carpet, or engaging in business-as-usual posturing – as it has since 1975.

The second option seems more likely and hence and nominating the ostrich as the abiding symbol of the congenitally flawed NPT may be appropriate.

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Who are We ?

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Back in the year 2000, the then NDA Government decided to organise a review of the functioning of the Constitution as part of the official celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Indian Republic. The opposition parties cried hoarse construing the review to be a ploy of the Government to pursue its *Hindutva* agenda and subvert the secular nature of the Constitution. President K.R.Narayanan himself expressed his apprehensiveness at the ceremonial function in the Parliament wherein the celebration was launched. He declared that it was not the Constitution which 'failed us' but it was 'we who had failed the Constitution'. The President's disquietude notwithstanding the Government appointed a commission headed by Justice Venkatchaliah to review the functioning of the Constitution. The justice agreed to head the commission only if the basic structure of the Constitution were outside the purview of the review, never mind that if one goes by the drafting history of the Constitution the constitution-makers did not envisage any part of the Constitution to be immune from the purview of the amending power of the Parliament. The basic structure doctrine and the selection of the High Court and Supreme Court judges by the Supreme Court Collegium are illustrative of the fact that all organs of the State, society, politics, reigning values and beliefs are no longer what were expected to be when the Constitution was being drafted. To my knowledge there is no comprehensive and rigorous analysis of these far-reaching changes; to the extent that there is discussion the discussion is suffused with a feeling of gloom. When I come across these discussions I am reminded of Cicero's lament: *O tempora o mores!* (Alas the times, and the manners!). Rather than wallow in self-pity and bemoan the fall in values it is imperative to analyse the changes rigorously and identify the forces driving the change; the much talked about reform of the governance can be designed only if one has a clear understanding of the dynamics of change. I hope that at some point of time the Centre for Policy Studies would bring out a well-researched compilation on the subject. In this contribution, I would limit myself to briefly narrating the conflicting perceptions about secularism and stressing the fact that the centrifugal forces intrinsic to a multicultural society can be contained only by following the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi.

II

In a seminal article written in 1971, the eminent anthropologist Clifford Geertz wrote about the challenges facing the new States 'after revolution'- after liberation from colonial rule. Nation building was not a matter of just creating the 'State' apparatus and institutions; it was also necessary for the citizens of the new States to collectively redefine themselves, to address the question 'who are we?', and identify cultural forms, systems of *meaningful* symbols, which give value and significance to the activities of the State, and by extension to the civil life of its citizens. That was a difficult task because the very success of the independence movements in rousing the enthusiasm of the masses and directing it against foreign domination tended to obscure the frailty and narrowness of the cultural foundations upon which those movements rested, because it led to the notion that anti-colonialism and collective redefinition are the same thing'. The challenge is one of fostering a national identity comprising among others a shared Past and a strong sense of collective destiny and purpose. The people of the new nation need an overarching sense of a greater whole to which the interests of the individual, the group or the party are ultimately subordinate. It is necessary for the nation to have an emotional core of nation that is at peace with itself and be able to face the future with confidence. It was said of Italy after unification that 'Italy has been made, now we must make Italians' Geertz made the important point that the challenge of redefining might not crop up immediately after Independence given the euphoria following the liberation and the

presence of charismatic leaders who led the struggle against foreign rule; however, once the novelty of Independence wears out and the charismatic leaders pass from the scene the challenge of redefining might burst out with ferocity. The turn of events in India broadly fits in the proposition of Geertz.

In a country like India with myriads of castes and languages as well as several languages the society and polity are strewn with several fault lines, and the narcissism of small differences can be blown up; consequently, ensuring national integration and cohesiveness can never cease to be a pressing concern. Writing of history textbooks is therefore as much about fostering national identity through a historical narrative which promotes a sense among *all* citizens that they share a common Past as portraying *wieeseigentlichgewesen*. Like it or not, it is an extremely difficult, if not an impossible, task. In a country like India trying to portray the unvarnished truth about the Past with ruthless honesty – narratives of who did what to whom- would only induce hostility towards some groups, and paranoia, and secondly, different groups might have different views. Contrary to what George Santayana posited, the best way to avoid repeating history is to forget it. Collective amnesia might be the best path for reconciliation. The events in Eastern Europe and Balkans provide a good example of this truism.

During the Freedom Struggle the ideational contest among different political formations was about the manner in which the nation was to be defined, the modalities of political mobilisation and of conducting the fight against colonial rule. The task of defining ‘who are we’ and using techniques of political mobilisation that paper over the divergences in the Indian society were a challenging task. In 1884, Sir John Strachey, a distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service who officiated as Viceroy for some time, claimed that the first and most essential thing to learn about India was ‘there is not, and never was an India, or even any country of India, possessing, according to European ideas, any sort of unity, physical, political, social, or religious; no Indian nation, no “ people of India,” of which we hear so much’. In his view, no superiority of the Englishman would have enabled Britain to conquer by her own military power the continent of India with its 300 millions of people, nor could Britain hold India in subjection if India had not been just a geographic expression. Strachey’s thesis of there being no India would have been accurate had he spoken in early 1800s and not 1884, for before English education was introduced and spread ‘there were Bengalis, Hindusthanis, Marathas, Sikhs, etc.’ It was English education which helped nationalisms of all types – political, economic, and cultural- to sprout and flourish. As Bipin Chandra, one of the historians whose books were at the heart of the controversy during the Janata regime, observed in Modern India early nationalists like Dadabhai Naoroji felt that a detailed economic critique of colonialism, and their intense intellectual activity over nearly half-a-century destroyed the imperialist argument that colonialism was beneficial to India, and demonstrated that India’s economic ills were a result of political subjugation. Apart from Western ideas nationalism was fostered by the discovery of the glory that was India by scholars as well as colonial administrators like William Jones, James Prinsep, Muller, R.G. Bhandarkar and Rajendralal Mittal brought home to all English-speaking Hindus the glory and grandness of ancient Hindus; the common heritage of a great culture, the common bondage of a common religion, mutual intercourse through English serving as a *lingua franca* and improved communications and transport like railways, posts and telegraph helped foster nationalism among the Hindus. The symbols and discourse employed by the ‘militant nationalists’ like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Sri Aurobindo were distinctly Hindu. It should, however, be said in their defence that political mobilisation requires symbols, all the more so in a society in which the process of modernisation was still in the early stages and the economy predominantly agrarian there was no alternative but to invoke symbols with which the politically uninitiated can readily empathise; from this point of view deifying India as Mother, nationalism as religion, celebrating Ganapati and Shivaji festivals are in the medium term politically astute. It is the use of widely popular symbols which enabled the militant nationalists to spread nationalism in a way that the moderates of the Congress Party could not. Even Bipin Chandra who faults the strong religious and Hindu tinge of most militant nationalists as

a step backward in respect of national unity conceded that far from being anti-Muslim or even wholly communal most militant nationalists including Tilak favoured Hindu-Muslim unity.

While in the medium term use of Hindu symbolism was politically astute *exclusive* use of such symbolism was counter-productive in a society with significant religious minorities. In the late 19th century when nationalism was taking roots a glorious past was a distant memory for Hindus but for Muslims it was recent memory for the last Mughal Emperor was deposed only after the Mutiny of 1857. The six hundred odd years of the 'Muslim era' could not be wished away, and it was not easy for Muslims and Hindus to look at those years in the same way. Historic memory is more likely to be in keeping with the saying of Shakespeare's Mark Antony that 'the evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones'. The humiliation of defeat and subjugation, and the elation of defiance and victory are more likely to be remembered than long periods of peaceful co-existence and fruitful interaction. Thus historic figures like Muhammad bin Quasim, Mahmud of Ghazni, Muhammad Ghori, Alauddin Khilji, and Aurangzeb were heroes of Muslim nationalists but their very names evoked bitter memories of humiliation for the Hindus.. Suffice to say, invoking the religion and symbols of a *single* religion was bound to alienate Indians belonging to other religions and come in handy for the colonial rules to play the game of Divide and Rule; the quintessential challenge facing national leaders was how to bring the Hindus and Muslims using a cultural idiom which is acceptable to both. No less importantly for the textbook writer the 'Muslim period' is excruciatingly challenging for presenting an unvarnished truth of everything that happened would not be conducive to promote a single national identity and national integration.

It was the Mahatma's genius that he sought to unite the Hindus and Muslims in the struggle against the colonial rule without abandoning deep faith in religion. He stressed the essential unity of all religions, and popularised that message of unity through his prayer meetings where among others the famous *Bhajan Raghupati Raghav Rajaram* with its memorable line *Isvar Allah Tere Nam* (Isvar and Allah is your name) was rendered. He took for granted the fact that India was a nation, and fervently believed that everyone who was born and brought up in India was an Indian irrespective of his religion. In his seminal work *Hind Swaraj* (1909) he convincingly offered elaborate reasoning as to why religion cannot be the basis for nationhood, why 'the introduction of Mohammedanism [had not] not unmade the nation', and why there is no 'inborn enmity' between Hindus and Mohammedans. Like an astute lawyer he advanced several lines of reasoning. The reasoning based on pragmatism highlighted the fact that if the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they were living in a dreamland. The Hindus, the Mohammedans, the Parsis and the Christians who have made India their country were fellow countrymen, and they all would have to live in unity, if only for their own interest. The reasoning based on spirituality highlighted the fact that religions are different paths converging to the same, and hence there was no reason to be at war with those whose religion we may not follow. The reasoning based on a reading of history highlighted the fact that India had a great capacity for assimilation. Talk of 'inborn enmity' was appropriate when Hindus and Muslims fought each other but not after they ceased to fight. Even before the British arrived each party recognized that mutual fighting was suicidal, and that neither party would abandon its religion by force of arms. Both parties, therefore, decided to live in peace. The Hindus flourished under Moslem sovereigns and Moslems under the Hindu. Quarrels recommenced only after the English advent. And then reasoning by analogy: the followers of Siva and Vishnu used to quarrel, and Vedic religion is different from Jainism but does it mean that Saivites and Vaishnavites, Hindus and Jains were different nations? Hence how could one argue that past quarrels between Hindus and Muslims make them separate nations? He consistently held that 'the India of today is not only a blend of two but of many other cultures'. He did not privilege one religion over others, and similarly one culture over others. Most Congressmen including Patel, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari, and Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad accepted the Mahatma's approach. The Mahatma's approach, however, was challenged by the Hindu nationalist organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS as well as the Muslim League under the leadership of

Jinnah which propounded the Two Nation theory holding that religion, rather than their language or ethnicity as the primary identity, and therefore Indian Hindus and Muslims are two distinct nations, regardless of ethnic or other commonalities; each nation was entitled to have a country of its own. The Hindu nationalist organisations opposed Partition on the ground that India was essentially a Hindu nation with a glorious civilisation and culture, that persons of other religions were essentially Hindus who were converted by coercion or inducement during Muslim and British rule, and that such persons could live comfortably in India and practice their religion so long as they acknowledged the greatness of Hindu civilisation and culture and did not attempt to undermine Hindus by forcible conversion. Historians like R.C.Mazumdar might be right in claiming that the Mahatma failed to win over the majority of Muslims to his point of view, and that he heroically failed in his attempt to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. However, there is no doubt that the Mahatma's approach anchored in religion and Hindu tradition, and his personal example ensured that the type of nationalism he espoused was so acceptable to the Hindu masses that Hindu nationalists who believed that India should be organised as a Hindu nation had little following ; not only that, he could get millions of Hindus to question and abandon age-old evil practices like untouchability, and through the historic Poona Pact with B.R.Ambedkar he prevented Dalits from emerging as a minority like Muslims.

Even though Nehru was one with the Mahatma in holding that India should not be organised as a Hindu nation, the fountainhead of his approach was different. As with the Mahatma, for Nehru, the unity of India was not an intellectual conception but an emotional experience. In his travels 'from Khyber Pass in north-west to *KanyaKumari* in the distant south', he found that 'though outwardly there was diversity and infinite variety among our people, there was the tremendous impress of oneness, which had held all of us together for ages past whatever political fate or misfortune...this emotional unity had been so powerful that no political division, no disaster or catastrophe had been able to overcome it'. Yet when it came to secularism Nehru's approach was intellectual. It would not be correct to say that he was not spiritual for he wrote evocatively about the 'personality', and 'soul' of India, of the 'vital impulses' that gave her strength and her 'destiny'. Yet like most intellectuals leaning to the Left he had a dim view of religion, particularly organised religion, and held that religious outlook on life, so pervasive in the country, should gradually give way to scientific temper, and that in the interim religion should be relegated to the private sphere. Nehru's approach is utterly rational and keeping with the secular tradition dating back to the Enlightenment; it is not something which could appeal to people in a deeply religious country which is not secularised the way Western Europe. Consequently its appeal is limited to liberal and leftist intellectuals. The British historian David Washbrook has a point when he recently observed that Nehru attempted to bring a modern version of the State, as a Westerner would understand it, and that his version of secularism did not allow enough for the particularities and the distinctiveness of culture. His secularism was extremely critical of all kinds of cultural markers because of their threat to divide India; but it neglected trying to construct an alternative set of cultural markers for an Indian national identity which could be widely recognised. Consequently, it had no impact whatsoever on the common people. It is also significant that in Nehru's time no effort was taken to disseminate Nehruvian secularism among the youth and children through measures such as textbooks for school children. That apart, while the Central and State Governments did not discriminate between citizens on the basis of faith the strict separation between the State and religion as required by Nehruvian socialism never fell in place. Nehru was too much of a democrat and realist not to force separation of religion and the State the way Kemal Ataturk did in Turkey . A *cause célèbre* was the reconstruction of Somnath Temple which was raided many times by Muslim invaders including the Mahmud of Ghazni, was built again and again every time it was razed it till it was totally destroyed by Aurangzeb. In Hindu popular imagination Somnath embodied the spirit of defiance against religious oppression. Reconstruction with private funds began soon after Independence, and among others Sardar Patel and K.M.Munshi were associated with the reconstruction. Nehru disassociated himself

from the reconstruction on the ground that it was an inopportune time to go in for large-scale renovation. He objected to President Rajendra Prasad participating in the opening of the reconstructed Somnath Temple on the ground that public officials should never publicly be associated with faiths and shrines. Rajendra Prasad disregarded his advice and in his address at the function made an eloquent plea for inter-religious harmony reiterating Mahatma's arguments, and made clear that 'I respect all religions and on occasion visit a church, a mosque, a *dargah* and a *gurudwara*'. He made it clear that the reconstruction of the Somnath temple was not designed to reopen 'old wounds which have healed to some extent over centuries', but rather to 'help each caste and community to obtain full freedom'. The question as he implicitly saw was why deny the majority of its long cherished aspiration to reconstruct the temple on an undisputed site with private funds because some in the minority community might feel insecure by perceiving the reconstruction as Hindu resurgence. Suffice to say, even in his life time Nehru's secularism had little impact either on his Party-men or the State Governments; Hindu prayers and *pujas* came to be commonplace in State functions. There is a point in what Rudolph and Rudolph, in their study on the textbook controversy during the Janata Government, that Nehruvian secularism left many unanswered questions, including ones about India's minorities. It did not 'face up ideologically to the causes and consequences of a persisting Muslim cultural identity for India's national identity and public philosophy'. Over time, the practice of secularism by the State had come to be more and more parity in treatment of people belonging to different religions rather than secularism as inter-faith harmony as expounded by the Mahatma or secularism as strict separation of the State and religion as envisioned by Nehru. Ironically, the principle of parity in treatment legitimated Governments' placating one religious group or another so long as the dominance of one religion was not officially recognised, thereby giving rise to the charge of 'pseudo-secularism', and 'minoritytism' when special concessions were offered to Muslims, and of pandering to Hindu communalism when special concessions were offered to Hindus. A good example is the decision of the Rajiv Government invalidating through legislation the judgment of the Supreme Court in the Shah Bhano case upholding the right of divorced Muslim women to maintenance under the Criminal Procedure Code, and then to neutralise the political backlash acquiesce if not play an active role in securing a judicial order directing the removal of the locks on the gates of the Babri Masjid in existence from 1949 and permitting the Hindus to offer prayer to the idol of Rama inside the Masjid.

Ironically, the policy of placating Hindus and Muslims by turns had the unintended consequence of facilitating some political parties opposed to the Congress Party to foster a strong feeling of victimhood in a sizeable section of Hindus and Muslims. The rise of BJP can be traced to its ability to instil the feeling of victimhood by raising issues like the failure of the Central Governments to enforce the Directive Principles obligating the State to 'prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle' and enacting a uniform civil code, failure to prohibit religious conversions through inducement, constructing a temple for Lord Rama in the *janmasthan* (birthplace) in Ayodhya, and Government shying away from proclaiming the glory of Hindu civilisation and culture. What matters in politics is perception with the result that fostering the feeling of victimhood had helped the BJP to continually expand its electoral base. As subsequent events like Modi's ascension to Prime Ministership in 2014 indicated that the appeal of intellectual secularism to the Indian electorate is limited. What Shiv Visvanathan wrote in *Why Modi Defeated Liberals like Me?* is apposite

The Left intellectuals and their liberal siblings behaved as a club, snobbish about secularism, treating religion not as a way of life but as a superstition. It was this same group that tried to inject the idea of the scientific temper into the constitution (one of the Fundamental Duties of a citizen incorporated in the Constitution through the 42nd amendment enacted during the Emergency) as if it would create immunity against religious fears and superstitions... The secularist misunderstood religion and by creating a scientific piety, equated the religious with the communal. At one stroke a whole majority became ill at ease within its world views.

RED TAPE Vs RED CARPET

Shri T.S. Krishna Murthy

Former Chief Election Commissioner of India

“If you are going to sin, sin against God, not the bureaucracy. God will forgive you but the bureaucracy won’t”

-Hyman Rickove

“Bureaucracies are inherently anti-democratic. Bureaucrats derive their power from their position in the structure, not from their relations with the people they are supposed to serve. The people are not masters of the bureaucracy but its clients”.

-Alan Keyes

A controversy has been generated in recent times about the role of bureaucracy as hindering economic development. The Prime Minister is reported to have stated that hereafter there will be less red tape in attracting foreign investments into India and that such investors will be given a red carpet reception, thereby meaning that rigid bureaucratic hurdles will be removed and attractive incentives will be provided so as to encourage foreign investments. There is a widespread perception that although India is an attractive destination for investment because of its vast market potential and scientific/technological talent, many investors are reluctant to invest in India because of the bureaucratic hurdles, policy uncertainty, legislative complexities and judicial delays. Viewed in the light of Ease of doing business index compiled recently by the World Bank, India ranks 142 out of 189 countries surveyed. It is indeed unfortunate that a country with rich resources both human and natural should rank inferior to countries like Botswana, Cambodia, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal and even Pakistan. Ranking wise India is only next to Uzbekistan(141)and just ahead of West Bank and Gaza (143). While this statistics reveals the pathetic state of affairs in relation to India, it also highlights abysmal governance deficiency in the country.

Bureaucracy which is critical to governance is perceived as the major obstacle in attracting foreign investments and promoting business and employment opportunities. There is indeed an universal impression that Indian bureaucracy is unhelpful, rigid, unfriendly, rule-bound and insensitive to the public. Bureaucracy is also blamed because of its rigid adherence to rules, procedures and indifferent/arrogant attitude. It is perhaps easy to blame the entire bureaucracy because it is too general and a vague description covering a wide range starting from the lowest level officials and ending with the topmost civil servants. In my opinion, this wholly negative outlook seems totally unwarranted and seems to be based on certain misconceptions. Firstly, the reluctance of investors is not only because of bureaucratic hurdles but also due to other political, economic and social reasons such as political corruption, judicial delays, labour disputes etc. This is not to say that the bureaucracy is blemishless in its performance. But, to tarnish the entire bureaucracy as the villain in public administration is neither fair nor factually correct. At any point of time, we can always find some bureaucrats helpful, sympathetic, efficient and fair minded in spite of many rigidities in the system. But in a country like India where we have a oversized bureaucracy created to meet the increasing activities of the State (both at federal and local level) as also other political and social compulsions, the number of civil servants with negative attitude is disproportionately high presumably because of the high discretion given to civil servants, fear of audit/vigilance and ineffective supervision.

Many of us fail to note that bureaucracy is only a tool in public administration. Its usefulness and effectiveness or otherwise is dependent upon the system and the environment in which it operates and the leadership that is provided by the political masters. If the system (viz., rules and regulations) is rigid and insensitive, naturally bureaucracy cannot be public friendly. Similarly, if the environment is hostile, it cannot be effective. If the political leadership is corrupt and/or incompetent, the bureaucracy tends to get

vitiated in its attitude and performance. This essential aspect of bureaucracy is very often forgotten or ignored.

Perhaps it is worthwhile to go briefly into the evolution of bureaucracy especially in western countries. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "In every day usage, the term bureaucracy connotes 'red tape' and inefficiency that one often experiences in dealing with large-scale organizations, especially with a state administration. As a sociological concept, the term has a less pejorative, a more 'neutral' meaning. It simply refers to a type of formal organization. Thus, purposive design and goal specificity seem to be two crucial criteria differentiating formal organizations from other types of social groupings." It is therefore commonly understood that a bureaucratic organization is characterised by a rational and impersonal regulation of inferior-superior relationships as distinct from a feudal or patrimonial organization. The most important ingredient of bureaucracy is the existence of a system of control based on rules and regulations for achieving maximum efficiency with neutrality and high integrity. Although the evolution of bureaucracy in Western Europe is surrounded with mystery because of the frequent influence of religion and royalty, it can be stated without any doubt that at every stage it got organized meeting the demands of the time and the needs of services of the State. Political corruption and its impact on governance was all too evident. Oliver Cromwell's well known address (as stated below) to the British Parliamentarians is a case in point.

".....

Is there a single virtue now remaining amongst you? Is there one vice you do not possess? Ye have no more religion than my horse; gold is your God; which of you have not barter'd your conscience for bribes? Is there a man amongst you that has the least care for the good of the Commonwealth?

..... *In the name of God, go!"*

Political corruption has always influenced the quality of bureaucracy more so in countries freed from colonial rule because of social and economic factors. As a result, political and economic considerations started affecting bureaucratic governance in course of time. On the one hand liberal European economists were alarmed at the proportions of the State bureaucracy and its increased intervention in the economic sphere destroying free enterprise and democratic institutions, there are those who attribute increasing bureaucratisation and decline of democracy not to the state's interference but to the internal dynamics of the capitalist economic system.

In a typically bureaucratic administration, the arbitrariness of the rulers is believed to be curtailed by the existence of legal norms and regulations. For instance, the tenure of a bureaucrat is often pre-determined by rules and hence the bureaucrat cannot be dismissed due to whims and fancies of the superior. Similarly, an ideal bureaucrat can refuse to obey orders that go against established rules and standards. In so far as general policy making is concerned the bureaucrat is expected to be a mere tool who should put aside his own preferences while executing the orders in a neutral manner. The delicate blend of professional autonomy with political neutrality in bureaucracy is indeed an ideal (and its chief merit) but ironically does not often exist in actual practice. Weber himself saw clearly that such a balance could easily be shattered in actual situations. There is therefore a built-in tension between the bureaucrat and the legitimate ruler.

A mature and well organized civil service is high on the agenda in the list of needs of the rulers coming out of the shackles of colonialism and embarking upon quick economic development because in many of these countries, entrepreneurial spirit is weak, private capital is scarce and standards of management inadequate. In such circumstances, governments opted for a system where the civil service could play a larger catalyst role in promoting industry, trade and commerce. Ironically, in actual practice, bureaucracy in these nations turned out to be synonymous with red tape, inefficiency, nepotism and corruption. Further,

as stated by Edward Shils that owing to the increasing needs of State responsibilities, the governments liberally recruited to the civil service at a dizzying rate without caring for high standard. There is also a view that the political leaders in developing countries are willing to sacrifice values and traditions of a mature civil service in order to placate political ideologies and interests. As a result, the blame for failures of bureaucratic performances due to external reasons is attributed conveniently and generously to bureaucracy. No wonder bureaucracy does not function with the efficiency and neutrality implied in Max Weber's ideal.

Turning to the conditions in India, the existing bureaucracy owes its beginning to the British rule. Prior to the British rule, the bureaucracy was mainly confined to the requirements of small kingdoms and feudal chiefs. There is evidence of a reasonably efficient bureaucracy during the Maurya rule as is seen from Kautilya's Arthashastra**. Kautilya refers to the existence of bureaucracy with fixed tenure and official accommodation for administrators, decentralization of powers and a large network of intelligence system with enforcement machinery at District levels. According to Kautilya, the State comprises of eight elements-King, Minister, Country, fort, treasury, army, friend and enemy. And State's prime function was to maintain law and order, ruthlessly punishing wrong doers and protecting subjects. However, after the Maurya dynasty, there was no centralised administration in large parts of India due to the emergence of small kingdoms over a period of time. Although some of these rulers were enlightened, cultured and educated in certain parts of India where bureaucracy performed diligently and efficiently (e.g., Baroda, Mysore, Jaipur, Pune and Trivandrum), there were many other regions where feudal culture prevailed which was not public friendly. Thereafter, with the Moghul rule and subsequent British colonial rule the purity of public administration seems to have had a nose-dive with a feudal bias. When the East India Company started playing a role in Indian administration, its representatives like Robert Clive and Warren Hastings have themselves admitted to looting the native kings by viciously interfering in their administration. The British Government after taking over the East India Company, initially brought civil servants from the United Kingdom and later realised the need to develop bureaucracy locally. Since the focus of attention of the British rule was only law and order, bureaucracy was not geared to meet the needs of economic development and social justice. Post-independence, the government reorganized the civil service however borrowing heavily from the British model. Further, in order to give representation to various classes of citizenry merit was not always the criterion in recruitment/promotion. While this is justifiable for a country aspiring for social equality especially because of the reservations provided for in the Constitution for socially backward persons, the top echelons of service did suffer from the consequences of such policy often twisted for political gains. The government failed to take adequate steps to make good this deficiency by proper periodical theoretical and on-the job training, along with inculcating ethical values through senior officers. Moreover, the distance between the civil servants and the people especially in the rural areas was dominated by a feudal attitude both by senior officers and the new young entrants to the civil service. Even though in Western nations the style of public administration changed substantially from the point of view of transparency and accountability, the Indian bureaucracy has been functioning based on archaic and outdated rules and procedures very often based on suspicion and mistrust. It appears that the hangover of the feudal rulers seem to have percolated to the administrators and continued to be prevalent even after independence. With the increased activities of the State due to developmental needs and the consequent ballooning of the civil service by large number of entrants, bureaucracy in India turned out to be a huge white elephant both in terms of increasing expenditure and inadequate output. It is not that the government was not aware of the inadequacy of the bureaucracy. A number of Committees and Commissions were appointed periodically more as a ritual to recommend measures for improving the civil service and yet many of these recommendations went unnoticed by the various governments. It is also necessary to refer to the Report of the Shah Commission immediately after withdrawal of emergency in 1977 wherein the Commission observed that there were number of civil servants "who were willing to

crawl even when they were required to bend” in order to curry favour with political masters. It is also true that governments from time to time competed in setting up new Committees but the same zeal was not shown in implementing the salient recommendations. As a result, 83 retired civil servants under the able leadership of Sri T.S.R. Subramanian, former Cabinet Secretary filed a petition before the Supreme Court for implementing some of the important recommendations of these Committees/Commissions to make public administration fair, transparent and accountable without any political interference. The Supreme Court delivered its judgement on 31st October, 2013 to the following effect.

- (i) *Fixed tenure of bureaucrats will promote professionalism, efficiency and good governance.*
- (ii) *Much of the deterioration in the functioning of bureaucracy is due to political interference.*
- (iii) *The Centre and state governments to pass an order within three months on giving fixed tenure to civil servants.*
- (iv) *Top bureaucrats should record in writing the oral instruction of political bosses on files so as not to be hounded later on for a particular decision. Such recording of political instructions by bureaucrats will also help in promoting transparency and will allow general public to access correct information.*

The impression that bureaucracy *per se* is only an impediment to economic development and social justice is no doubt a distorted and prejudiced view. Just as Dr. Ambedkar mentioned that if our Constitution failed, it was not because of the deficiency in the Constitution but it was due to persons who were vile, bureaucracy in any country will be a failure not because of inherent deficiency of bureaucracy but due to misuse of the system and the persons involved in operating the system. One of the important adverse consequences of bureaucracy in modern public administration is its size. An oversized bureaucracy especially in developing countries is the first invitation to public criticism and contempt. An unfairly recruited, ill trained, politically tainted and rule bound bureaucracy without scope for any discretion in humane exercise of power can result only in Red Tape. Very often, these deficiencies in bureaucracy as distinct from it being an organized civil service have brought a bad name to bureaucracy which is collectively described as Red Tape. A well oiled bureaucracy where merit, integrity and efficiency are recognized, encouraged and rewarded can be a boon to any political system. As observed by our former President Mr. Abdul Kalam “*Good governance is, in the end, carried out by individuals and teams. The quality of people who provide governance decides the success or failures of schemes. Good people lead to positive results in governance.*”(Governance for Growth in India- Rupa 2014) It would therefore be appropriate to say that bureaucracy like fire is a good tool but a bad master.

The dictionary meaning of Red Carpet is “a special treatment or hospitality”. Red Carpet in this context is used to mean a liberal approach of the Government to investors so as to incentivise investment resulting in employment and growth. When a Government promises Red Carpet to investors, it is obviously keen to simplify procedures and processes to promote investment. It would therefore follow if major deficiencies in a functioning bureaucracy such as inefficiency, incompetence, indifference and injustice can be surgically eliminated, such a bureaucracy will automatically usher in Red Carpet for policy making. This also leads us to the question whether Red Carpet means total absence of any restriction and/or regulation. It has to be borne in mind that in most of the developing economies, total absence of restriction or regulation of business entities would normally result in chaotic consequence such as economic inequality, environmental hazards and social conflicts. It is therefore desirable that in the context of developing countries especially in Asia and Africa, Red Carpet to investors has to go along with reasonable and adequate regulations so as to avoid adverse socio-economic consequences, whether you call it Red Tape or otherwise. To put it in a nutshell, an efficient, neutral and responsive bureaucracy is a necessary requirement to provide Red Carpet to investors.

India can boast of having everything- human and material resources, a vast market, a reservoir of scientific and technological expertise, substantial entrepreneurial talent and management competence. In spite of this being so, the country suffers from deficiencies in the quality of governance probably due to historical and attitudinal factors. While governance means different things to different people and has many dimensions, it can be said without any hesitation that the fruits of freedom and development have really not reached all the poorer sections of society. Development has been lopsided and consequently societal reforms are far from satisfactory. Equality before law and equality of status and opportunity cannot be said to have been achieved in full measure. Justice, social, economic and political is also yet to be adequately realised. It is therefore necessary that immediate action should be taken to reform public administration with a clear, coherent and comprehensive roadmap. The root cause of poor governance in India lies in the design of the democratic administration and leadership deficiencies of political and administrative masters. Hence, any attempt to improve the quality of governance calls for a totally new approach to public administration by which the legal framework is suitably modified to make it unambiguous and people friendly, the mindset of the administrators and the politicians is changed to make it transparent and accountable, and a systemic regulatory mechanism is implemented with minimum discretion to officials. This new approach is also referred by some as New Public Management.

Part-II

While bringing about the new approach in public administration, it has to be borne in mind that too much of control by government in the name of regulation will only result in obstacles and irritants in governance. Conversely, too much of freedom in economic activities in the name of liberalism will only result in chaos and conflicts. There is therefore a need for a healthy blend of regulation and freedom. It is easily said than done. Here lies the challenge. The government should as far as possible set up appropriate institutions for regulation as well as good governance with checks and balances. No doubt these institutional mechanisms should be manned by professional and pragmatic experts with less bureaucratic approach.

To meet this daunting objective, the following broad suggestions are worth consideration to usher in Red Carpet without much of Red Tape:

(A) Measures to tackle corruption:

- i) Good governance can survive and thrive only if we have good politics. Corruption is unfortunately a cancerous feature of Indian politics. The starting point of corruption in governance is political corruption. Political corruption thrives mainly because of donations to political parties both by Cheque and Cash which often leads to nexus between donors and rulers thereby tainting policy decisions of the government. Although the law permits only profit making corporates to make donations to political parties within certain prescribed limits, it is a well known fact that corporates and non corporates donate funds to political parties both in power and out of power violating the law in order to curry favour with the parties when they come to power. These funds are largely used for meeting ever increasing election expenses. Perhaps a better alternative would be to constitute a National Election Fund on the lines of Prime Minister's Relief Fund to which donations can be made by all taxpayers including corporates with 100% tax exemption. As result, the existing obnoxious nexus between the corporates and non corporate businesses to political parties can be snapped. Consequently, the threat of government policies being influenced by donors can be eliminated to a large extent thereby freeing policy formulation from any political bias. The National Election Fund can be used by the Government to conduct elections provided (a) political parties are banned from accepting donations; (b) no candidate/political party is allowed to spend their funds for election expenses; and (c) the fund is administered and utilised by the Election Commission of India which should formulate guidelines in consultation with an All Party advisory body to fund the election

expenditure of candidates . One important consequence of this is that there will be a level playing field among all contesting candidates. No doubt such a change can be implemented with adequate notice to all stakeholders and necessary legislative change.

- ii) The approval to be given by government for starting any business operation both at the Centre and the States should only be through a single-window system and preferably online. The practice of promoters of new enterprises personally visiting the Ministers and officials should be completely avoided. Only Trade Associations, Chambers of Commerce etc., alone should meet Ministers/officials to represent the grievances of industry/trade. Any correspondence relating to individual business unit should as far as possible be only on on-line.
- iii) There should be an Ombudsman with adequate powers to entertain public grievances in respect of each Ministry/cluster of ministries. The Ombudsman and the ministry concerned should be statutorily mandated to reply grievances within a time frame of say a month or two depending upon the complexity of the issues involved. The Ombudsman should be required to submit an annual report on the grievances received and action taken which should be placed on the table of the legislature at the Centre/State.
- iv) The procurement system of Government of India and the States should be thoroughly reorganized. The Tendering process should be transparent similar to the World Bank procurement system. Apart from introducing e-tendering/e-auctions for utilization of public resources there should be a mechanism of internal control/audit of projects beyond a particular amount. The present system of Independent External Monitors introduced for Public Sector Undertakings could be extended to all ministries having tender procurement. Under this system, grievances against tendering process can be placed for advice before a body of three Independent External Monitors who are from outside the organisation and approved by Central Vigilance Commission. Their advice need not be binding on the Ministry/Department concerned but reason should be required to be recorded for rejecting their advice by the authority concerned.

(B) Administrative Reforms:

- i) Government should ordinarily move out of service industry and if it is necessary to have some control, Government can be a dominant partner in the outsourced entity. (eg.) Government should corporatise Railways, Airlines, etc. There is no need for a huge bureaucracy running these services. It can be run on a PPP (Private Public Partnership) basis with Government retaining 51% control. Each of these units should be required to ensure that it functions as a self-sustaining economic unit without depending on funds from the government. There can be a single regulatory authority for all transport services. The bureaucracy in the Ministries concerned can be substantially done away with.
- ii) Already we have public sector institutions which are carrying out some of the requirements of Government. For example, NBCC (National Building Construction Corporation) is a public undertaking intended to do construction activities. Similarly in some States there are public undertakings for undertaking construction activities. This being so, is it not possible to wind up the Ministry of Public Works completely and entrust all government constructions to this organization with of course a suitable mechanism just to monitor and regulate the undertaking under Ministry of Programme Implementation.
- iii) Similarly, most of the public hospitals and clinics are run by government either by the Centre or State. The hospitals can be corporatised again on a PPP basis. In fact, government should promote more hospitals with adequate facilities to reduce the existing congestion in government hospitals. As far as outpatient treatment is concerned, all the government servants and senior citizens can be

covered by an appropriate Insurance scheme to be designed by the public sector general insurance companies. If this is implemented, the present over sized Central Government Health Scheme can be substantially reduced. The system of Authorised Medical Attendants can be introduced in various localities. The Authorised Medical Attendants can be asked to sign a code of conduct to conform to Government rules and regulations.

- iv) The allocation of powers between the Centre, State and Local Body institutions in regard to maintenance work within the territorial jurisdiction should be mutually exclusive. For example, the maintenance of roads/libraries etc., in villages and towns should be handed over to the village panchayat and corporations with suitable financial allocations. The local body institutions should also be empowered to raise funds within a broad limit for creating public goods such as roads, libraries, stadia etc., the central government providing necessary guarantee. This will be in line with Gandhiji's recommendation for decentralising administration.
- v) The holiday culture in government offices needs to be arrested. There is no need for so many public holidays in addition to casual leave given to government employees. Apart from National Holidays (Republic Day, Independence Day, Gandhi's Birthday) all employees should be given optional holidays for about 15 days in a year thereby abolishing the present casual leave, restricted holidays etc. Even for elections, the employee should be allowed only half a day absence either in the forenoon or afternoon at the employee's option.
- vi) Another area of economy in administration is to discourage domestic and foreign travels by resorting to Video-conferencing to the maximum extent so as to save time and cost.
- vii) There is a need to rationalize various ministries and departments in the Union Government. For example, there are two separate ministries for Urban Development and Housing and Urban Poverty alleviation. There are separate ministries for Mines, Coal, Textiles, Steel, and Earth Sciences etc. Is it not possible to merge some of these ministries/Departments with the existing ministries? It is true that some of the ministries/departments are formed for special reasons some years back. But they need to be relooked as a creation of ministry/department is fraught with a danger of creating new posts.
- viii) Every Minister is provided with a Special Assistant or Personal Secretary post which in many cases is occupied by Director/Joint Secretary level officer. Very often these officers function as super-Ministers and dominate with or without the knowledge of the minister. When every department is headed by a Secretary a senior level officer, there is no need for these posts as after all there are junior level officials attached to the Minister's office. At best, the Personal Secretary or Special Assistant should not be above the level of Under Secretary.
- ix) The bane of urban governance is the growth of unauthorized illegal colonies and slums. The government should prepare a policy paper for gradual elimination/recognition of such settlements with a focused attention. For example, in Singapore every confirmed employee whether he is in private sector or government is required to dedicate the person's Provident Fund Account for a flat which is allotted by the Singapore government. This ensures regular construction of residential units fully funded by employees' /employer's monthly contribution towards the project.
- x) The setting up of new offices by Central and State governments in the capital cities needs to be properly regulated. There is no justification for locating institutions like Institute of Applied Manpower Research, Central Institute of Educational Technology, Central Soil Salinity Research Institution, Centre for Cultural Resource and Training, Institute for Studies in Industrial Development, Indian Institute of Ecology and Environment, Indian Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, V.V.Giri National Labour Institute. In my opinion, all these institutions can well be located in the

proposed new smart cities to reduce the congestion in Delhi. There is one National Institute of Science Communication and there is another Institute – National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources. I wonder why nobody thought of merging these institutions to avoid wastage of manpower and other resources.

(C) Police Reforms:

Another area requiring urgent attention relates to effective enforcement of Law and Order. This being the concern mainly with the State Government the present state of affairs in many States is highly unsatisfactory. In most of the States, the State Police is controlled by the State Government often for political purposes with the result that the people have very little faith in police as an instrument of fairplay and equality before law. In fact, this led to the formation of Central Para-Military forces such as CISF, BSF, CRPF etc. The Police Commission Report submitted sometime in the 70's is still languishing and crying for implementation notwithstanding that the matter of implementing their recommendations as to a large extent received judicial approval by the apex court.

(D) Taxation Reforms:

- (a) The present system of taxation of business enterprises as well as individuals needs to be completely revisited. For example, the system of flat final tax on Interest, Commission, and salary income could be considered to simplify the tax administration thereby reducing harassment to taxpayers. These items can be taxed at a flat rate on a gross basis with a two-tier schedule: The rate of tax can be at 10% upto Rs.10,000/ and 20% above Rs.10,000/ on the gross receipts. Only those having income other than these items need to file tax returns. Such a step will reduce the administrative cost and compliance cost apart from reducing manpower in tax administration.
- (b) The existing Service Tax can be rationalised. I see no reason why a separate Commissionerate is required to implement this tax. Actually, this is an additional Income Tax on people rendering various services. This is very much a Direct Tax. This tax originally started with a small rate has now crossed 12% which is an additional burden on all Income Tax payers providing services. If this is to be continued after CST is to be introduced, it can as well be collected along or integrated with the Income Tax with an additional column in the Tax Return along with necessary documents by making suitable legislative changes. Such a measure can result in substantial savings in manpower.
- (c) At present, taxes are collected by various specified banks through their branches. Perhaps there can be a centralized dedicated Tax branch in each District Headquarters to which remittances can be made by tax payers from any branch through NEFT. The advantage of this method is that reconciliation of tax payments can be made by the tax administration more easily. Should there be any difficulty in implementing this, it should at least be implemented in respect of Corporate Tax payers.
- (d) The system of assessment of Income Tax Returns has substantially improved in recent times but the Income Tax records of a tax payer for various years are not kept together. As a result, at no point of time it is possible to access the complete tax history of an individual or corporate. While it is true that information for various years may be kept electronically, a complete picture of a tax payer and associates need to be kept at least in respect of about 1000 individual top tax payers and all public limited companies which will be useful for investigation of suspected tax evasion. It is possible technologically to develop a programme so as to ensure that investigation mechanism in the department is well armed.
- (e) The present system of Advance Rulings in both direct and indirect tax administration is far from satisfactory. Firstly the appointments to the various posts are not made in time and secondly they

are not required to give the rulings within a time frame. Moreover, the scope of Advance Ruling Body also needs to be widened. Many tax litigations could be avoided if this institutional mechanism is properly organized.

(E) *Corporate Law Reforms:*

- (i) There are number of companies and banks under liquidation where the winding up proceedings are pending for long period with the High Court who do not have wherewithal to dispose of these proceedings. Some companies are under liquidation for 3 to 4 decades where the shareholders of the companies are still to get dividends from sale of large assets owned by such companies. In some cases the shareholders would have died by now with the result the legal heirs may not even know about their dues. Huge assets such as land, machinery, bank deposits etc., are locked up without any productive purpose. These idle assets need to be put into proper use. In Singapore, all liquidation proceedings are statutorily to be completed within one year whereas there are companies in India which are in liquidation for decades. Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) needs to be abolished as very often they do not allow smooth restructuring of companies in distress.
- (ii) In India, there is no Corporate Restructuring Authority to nurse back companies in distress. For example, in the case of Satyam Limited the government through Company Law Board replaced the Board in order to save large number of employees from losing their jobs. The same thing can be done in many cases. Company Law Board and the BIFR who have legal authority to do this do not have the necessary focus on nursing such companies. Government passed a legislation to create National Company Law Tribunal (which would have replaced the Company Law Board and BIFR) which has not been able to function because of the litigation in the courts. There are many countries where corporate restructuring is undertaken by a separate agency and the whole process is completed in one year. I see no reason why such institutional change cannot be brought about in our country.
- (iii) Similarly, the rules relating to Asset Reconstruction companies which are under the regulation of RBI need to be liberalized to enable the ARCs to take over the NPAs of the banks.
- (iv) At present Investor Protection Fund is maintained by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs as also by National Stock Exchange, Bombay Stock Exchange and SEBI. Moreover, there is a complaint that the fund is used for studies/conferences by some professional institutes such as ICAI, ICSI etc., without much of direct benefits to the investors. There is very little of significant activity to spread Investor education and undertake investor protection. Perhaps there is no need for multiplicity institutions having a same fund with different budget.
- (v) The Companies' Act 2013 contains number of provisions relating to Private Limited companies and wholly owned subsidiaries. For example, if the parent company and the wholly owned subsidiary companies are to merge there is a long procedural legal requirement which seems to be unwarranted. Such provisions need to be deleted as there is no impact on any outside shareholder/stakeholder.

(F) *Judicial Reforms*

- (i) A number of suggestions have been made by various bodies including the Law Commission for improving judicial administration. Although many foreign investors appreciate the rule of law prevailing in India unlike many other developing countries, they have strong reservations due to judicial delays. A commercial organization cannot carry on business with uncertainty in matters of litigation. It is therefore imperative that there is a time limit for completing litigation proceedings both in civil and criminal areas. The present system of granting adjournments without any limitation is casting a slur on our judicial system. This needs to be remedied without any delay if we want to attract investors both foreign and domestic.

INDIAN NAVY'S HERITAGE

Vice Admiral Satish Soni

Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command

If you were to visit the iconic Taj Mahal, the forts of Jaipur or the Jalianwala Baugh where hundreds of freedom fighters were mercilessly massacred, you would in all probability be taken back in time as these historical monuments are all related to significant events or periods of history. Ironically, the oceans that cover two thirds of this earth cannot stimulate historical memory, even though their mesmerising expanse has many a tale to tell; for it has been through these very oceans that many civilisations emerged, and merged by way of trade and religious crusades; and it has also been through these very oceans that a few civilisations were wiped out by war. Amongst all oceans of the world, if there is one that has much to tell of centuries gone by, it is the Indian Ocean.

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world occupying approximately 20 percent of the Earth's sea surface. It is very distinct from the other oceans as it is an "embayed" ocean - which means that it is bounded to the North by the Asian landmass and the inverted triangle of Peninsular India that forms the two great bays, the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The Indian Ocean is also home to the Monsoons with its peculiar phenomenon of wind patterns and ocean currents that reverse their flow during alternating seasons. For sail ships that traversed the seas prior to the advent of steam ships, it meant that they could travel from West to East during the South West monsoons, and go back a few months later during the North East monsoons.

Intrinsic to Roman, Egyptian, Persian and Syrian lifestyles was *frankincense*, a resin found in the bark of trees in the deserts of Dhofar in Oman. Frankincense killed disease, sweetened funerals, kept insects at bay, had medicinal virtues, embalmed corpses; and was to antiquity what oil is to modern age – the basis of economic existence. Until one hundred BC, the fulcrum of trade was in the deserts of Southern Arabia. The desert people, the Omanis, were the most proficient sea faring race and Frankincense was the main produce of trade.

The emergence of Islam in the seventh century encouraged sea faring trade. Unlike Hinduism, which is anchored to deities and local temples, Islam was 'portable' and was well suited to travelling merchants. Islam attracted converts - conversion was good for business and Islamic communities were established from Mogadishu to Malacca, from Somalia to Kerala and Malaysia. Muslims were such good sailors that closer home, the Zamorin of Calicut had decreed that one child of every fisherman family must be raised as a Muslim to be conscripted into his Navy.

The Muslims were literally everywhere until about the thirteenth century. However, control of the Indian Ocean remained predominantly with the Indian kingdoms. Indian supremacy in the East Coast commenced with small scale trading with Kingdoms in the Far East, to an era of extensive colonisation that started around the first century or perhaps earlier. It ceased only with the breakdown of Sri Vijayan and Chola empires in the 13th century. With the collapse of these empires, the Muslim merchants got the upper hand. Although they dominated trade, the Indian Ocean was not theirs alone. Traders from all over took advantage of the ocean's unique environment and several local powers learned to coexist. The ocean was neutral.

The demand for Pepper from India changed all that. Pepper was the most sought after produce of those times – craved by all from ancient Rome to China. Black pepper was as much known for its use as a flavouring agent as it was for its medicinal properties. The Arabs were firmly established in the trading process. However, to the Europeans, the Arab middlemen only increased costs and therefore, they sought to take over the trade completely. The first Europeans who controlled events in the Indian Ocean were

the Portuguese when Vasco-da-Gama landed at Calicut on 14 May 1498. Within two decades of their arrival, they started to exercise exclusive control over the Indian Ocean.

The achievements of Vasco-da-Gama and his contemporaries demonstrated the capabilities of a Navy, employed for political purposes. Sailors of those days navigated largely by following the coastline. Even the fighting fleets travelled in this manner, battling only within sight of land. Vasco-da-Gama changed all that. On his first voyage of exploration, with the help of very little gadgetry by modern standards, he remained at sea for an unprecedented 93 days before he reached the Southern coast of Africa. This event was a pivot of world history, for the seas now extended a nation's frontier to distant foreign shores.

Resistance from the Arab and Muslim traders caused the Portuguese to return to Lisbon in 1499. However, they came back in 1500 with a larger force and a decidedly military objective. Calicut was bombarded from the sea for the first time in 1501. This challenge to the Zamorin's naval power was not left unanswered. The ruler of Calicut fitted out a 80 ship strong fleet carrying 1500 men to meet the invaders off Kochi. The battle of Kochi in 1503 was a significant event. Although the battle swung in our favour, the enemy sailed away unharmed since Zamorin's relatively smaller ships were unable to pursue them.

Portuguese attempts at supremacy off the Malabar Coast remained fruitless because, for well over 90 years, Zamorin's sailors held their own in the home waters off Calicut. Leading the Zamorin Navy were the Admirals - Kunjali Marakkars. Between Kunjali Marrakar I to IV, their fleets constantly attacked the Portuguese and their aspirations to control the Malabar Coast never really materialised. This caused the Portuguese to venture Northwards and they quickly brought Goa under their control in February 1510. They would have expanded further inland but for the Mughal King Akbar. By conquering Gujarat in 1572, Akbar saved India from disintegration and falling further into the hands of the Portuguese.

By the late sixteenth century, the Portuguese faced increased competition in the Indian Ocean from other European powers. The Dutch had initially set up trading posts along the Eastern coast, and were waiting in the wings to take over control of the Indian Ocean from a failing Portuguese empire. In 1663, Cochin along with smaller settlements along the Malabar Coast fell to the Dutch. The Dutch maritime empire grew rapidly and, by the mid 17th century, they had a fleet larger than the English and French put together. By 1648, the Dutch were the greatest trading nation in the world.

With trade to-and-from the Indian Ocean Region still being lucrative, the Indian Ocean was once again at the heart of great power struggles, this time between the Dutch and the English. By 1670, the Dutch lost their primacy as a global maritime power. The British made gradual inroads into India as they established their authority in the factory towns of Surat, Madras and Calcutta.

Interestingly, in the period between the Portuguese collapse and the establishment of British supremacy, Indian naval interests received a remarkable revival. This was led by the Maratha king Shivaji and saw the rise of Kanhoji Angre, one of the greatest Indian Admirals of all times. His maritime campaigns regained much of the lost territory and the Maratha Empire for the first time was in control of the Konkan Coast. The heroics of the legendary Admiral were continued by his son Sambhaji who prevailed over the British comprehensively. However, his son Tulaji could not carry the mantle forward and this remarkable legacy soon came to an end.

After the Marathas, the French challenged British supremacy in the Indian Ocean. Although the French arrived at the Malabar Coast as early as 1527, regular trade started only in 1601. For almost all of the 16th and 17th centuries, Pondicherry was the lone significant gain for the French. The British, with no credible opposition from any other power, ruled the Indian Seas, and in effect the Indian subcontinent, well into the mid 20th Century. The enabler to such supremacy was of course, the Royal Navy which, after the annihilation of the French at Trafalgar in 1805, became the lone naval power in the World.

Considering the fact that all European powers came from the West around the Cape of Good Hope, it was inevitable that most epic sea battles in the Indian Ocean happened off the Western seaboard. So what of the East?

From time immemorial, the strategic location of the Bay of Bengal has made it a focal point for trade, maritime activity and international relations. Buddhist texts dating back to 600 BC, mention navigation in the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean by Indian mariners from the Coromandel Coast to Sri Lanka, Burma and South East Asia.

During the rule of Kalingas between 300 and 150 BC, numerous maritime expeditions were dispatched to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Myanmar, China and Japan, resulting in the spread of Buddhism. The Satavahanas ruled the Deccan and Central India from the second century BC to the third century AD. They maintained trade links with Malaysia, Indonesia, Rome and Mesopotamia.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Chola Dynasty encouraged sea trade by developing maritime infrastructure such as navigation facilities, lighthouses, wharfs and repair yards. They traded actively with Cambodia, Malaysia and China, even sending ambassadors to these countries. The resultant cultural influence of Hinduism and Buddhism is seen in present day South East Asia in the form of architecture, temples, fables and dialects of Sanskrit spoken in some of these countries. For example, the Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia epitomizes a blend of Indian and South East Asian cultures.

It is therefore evident that the Indian mariner has a parentage to be proud of in the Kalingas, Satvahanas, Cholas, Kunjalis and Angrias. However, it is difficult to pinpoint the origin of the Indian Navy. It would be fair to say that we as a Navy have evolved from the Royal Navy. Brief milestones of the Indian Navy are as follows:-

- 1612 - East India Company acquired a squadron of ships.
'Indian Marine' was established at Surat.
- 1686 - The British shifted base to Bombay.
Re-designated as the 'Bombay Marine'.
- 1827 - Ships flew the Union Jack. Now named the 'Indian Navy'.
- 1863 - The Indian Navy was abolished. Defence came under the Admiralty.
- Existing ships came to be known as 'Bombay Marine' and 'Bengal Marine'.
- 1877 - Reorganised as 'Her Majesty's India Marine'.
- 1892 - Named 'Royal Indian Marine'.
- 02 Oct 1934 - Inauguration of 'Royal Indian Navy'.
- 26 Jan 1950 - Came into being as the 'Indian Navy'

India has a long coastline of over 7600 Km and over 1100 island territories. These are home to 13 major and over 200 minor ports. India dominates the International Shipping Lanes connecting the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Aden in the West, to the Malacca and Sunda Straits in the East – possibly the most heavily trafficked and crucial sea lanes of the world. India, therefore, figures in strategic calculations of many nations and it is imperative for us to effectively participate in maritime security initiatives in the Indian Ocean.

Today, despite the jet and information age, 90% of international trade and two thirds of all petroleum products are carried over the oceans. It is much simpler, cheaper and safer to move a ton of anything by water than by any other means. The Indian Ocean Region is a major transport route for oil and gas from

the Middle East, and coal from Australia and South Africa. 70% of the world's petroleum traffic originates from the Indian Ocean and more than 80% of this oil passes through three chokepoints – the Straits of Hormuz, Malacca and Bab-el-Mandeb.

To give a more India specific perspective - over 97% of India's trade by volume and 75% by value is sea-borne. Nearly 80% of our petroleum products come by the sea route and we have substantial investments in offshore platforms, both in India and abroad. The security of our maritime trade, as also offshore and onshore maritime infrastructure, is an important factor in our strategic calculus.

So how do we secure our mandate? We have put in place a methodical plan for force accretions that aims to be in sync with our growing aspirations in the region. We are today a 142 ship strong Navy and 40 new warships are at various stages of construction. From now on, four to five big ships will be commissioned every year. Our fleet includes aircraft carriers like the Vikramaditya, the Vikrant which was launched at Kochi shipyard last year, destroyers like the Kolkata Class, and Kamorta class ASW corvettes. A variety of new aircraft and helicopters are at various stages of induction. The submarine arm has also received a fillip with the commissioning of the nuclear-propelled Chakra, and our indigenous submarine Arihant was put to sea for trials recently.

We also have plans for inducting four large Amphibious ships – Landing Platforms Dock - which will enhance our capability to undertake Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief missions. During the last few years, the Navy has contributed to such missions on numerous occasions, a few examples being the Tsunami relief operations in 2004, flood relief in India and neighbouring countries, and evacuation of Indian diaspora from conflict zones in Lebanon and Libya.

We have backed up our force accretions with a commensurate increase in infrastructure. For example, the Indian Naval Academy, established at Ezhimala in Kerala, is an iconic establishment that will cater to the ab-initio training requirements of our officers whose basic qualification has now become B.Tech. The second phase of Project Seabird naval base at Karwar has recently got the Government's go ahead, and will soon be transformed into the region's largest Naval Base. Similarly, infrastructure development on the East coast at Visakhapatnam, Paradip, Tuticorin, to name a few places, is at various stages of planning or implementation.

Let me now share with you a few of the challenges that the Navy currently faces and deploys its assets 24 by 7 to counter.

The heavily populated and high-value sea routes in the Indian Ocean have become attractive hunting grounds for pirates. Considering the fact that our trade is almost entirely dependent on the seas, it is important that the Indian Navy continues to have the wherewithal to combat terrorism and piracy on the high seas. Since 2008, 48 Indian naval ship deployments have escorted over 3000 merchant ships from 50 different countries. In doing so, they have prevented over 40 piracy attempts.

Tasking for anti-piracy duties has provided justifiable reasons for other navies to deploy warships in the Indian Ocean Region. There are three dedicated counter-piracy coalition forces - in the Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, and the Arabian Sea. A European Union Task Force and another from NATO are also operating in the area. The US also has strong presence of its own in Bahrain – where its Fifth Fleet is based – and at Diego Garcia down to the South. The British Royal Navy and the French Navy also have a fairly robust presence in the Indian Ocean Region. A relatively new entrant is China. From 2008 onwards, China has been deploying three warships continuously in the Indian Ocean Region for anti-piracy operations.

Coastal Security is a new challenge since 2008. The Navy has adopted various Coastal Security Initiatives such as coordination between stakeholders such as Coast Guard, Customs, marine police, port

authorities, fisheries department and intelligence agencies. Focus on force and infrastructure accretion has also been strong with the formation of Sagar Prahari Bal, setting up of coastal radar chains, and induction of Fast Interceptor Craft, to name just a few initiatives.

Shifting focus now to certain aspects of the Navy that I would like to share with you.

Many centuries ago, Kautilya pioneered an exposition on Comprehensive National Power in the Arthashastra, wherein he brings out that two of the seven elements of a nation's power are the Armed Forces and International Alliances. The Navy is a constituent of both. Our ships routinely visit foreign shores for Flag showing missions – these have a benign influence on policymaking while also providing a sense of security and belongingness to the Indian Diaspora.

Foreign Cooperation and engagement with other regional Navies is something we take rather seriously. The Navy has a healthy exchange with almost all our maritime neighbours. The nature of support includes training, supply of aircraft and ships, technical assistance, EEZ surveillance, hydrographic assistance, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

We also try and engage with maritime nations through initiatives that bring together like-minded countries. The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium – or IONS – was pioneered by the Indian Navy to enhance maritime cooperation amongst littoral states of the Indian Ocean. Activities include a conclave of Chiefs, and seminars under the overall guidance of a member country. Another initiative is MILAN - a biennial meet of regional Navies hosted by the Indian Navy in Port Blair since 2000. Coupled with IONS, it helps the Indian Navy cement its position as a key facilitator in the Indian Ocean Region.

To conclude, the Viceroy of India Lord Curzon called the 'seas' as the most 'uncompromising' and 'effective' of frontiers. However, a look at the history of the Indian Ocean, particularly with reference to India, suggests that far from being a frontier, it has been a highway - a highway of unlimited opportunities. If we really want to improve the lot of our people and give them the opportunity to enjoy a reasonable quality of life, we must have the wherewithal to exploit the sea. And for that, we must be able to control the sea. Sir Walter Raleigh's immutable wisdom remains as relevant today as it was then - "*Whosoever Commands the sea, Commands the trade; whosoever Commands the trade of the world, Commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself*".

* * *

"The Eastern Naval Command is headquartered at Visakhapatnam from where the Flag Officer-Commanding-in-Chief(East) exercises operational control of all land, air, surface, and sub-surface assets placed under the ENC. As the largest geographical command in the armed forces of India, the ENC's jurisdiction extends from the Sunderbans in the North to the Gulf of Mannar in the South. Eastwards, the ENC influences a sea area beyond the Malacca straits, into the West Pacific.

Today, the combined might of a powerful Eastern Fleet, a formidable flotilla, a potent submarine arm, a versatile air arm, a capable naval dockyard, and a number of units spread along the East Coast operate with synergy in furtherance of India's maritime interests. In anticipation of an exciting future, the ENC is poised to expand further in the next decades, with plans for infrastructure growth and capability enhancement firmly in place." (from The Eastern Shield - A pictorial essay on the Eastern Naval Command 2014)

THE LAND ACQUISITION IMBROGLIO

Prof. M.N. Sastri

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“India lives in several centuries at the same time. Somehow we manage to progress and regress simultaneously.” -Arundhati Roy

A natural habitat is defined as a pristine area where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives and grows. The evolution of the human species and the growth of civilization and technology impacted the natural habitats as result of land disturbance from human activities. Currently, nearly 90 million sq.km. of undisturbed land, or roughly 52% of the terrestrial area (including rock and other uninhabitable areas), remains on the planet.

The term *habitat index* which represents the undisturbed vegetation in an area under study (Ambio, 23, 246, 1994) is calculated by using the empirical relationship

$$\text{Habitat Index} = \frac{[\text{Undisturbed area} + 0.25 \text{ partially Disturbed Area}]}{\text{Total Area}} \times 100$$

(Area in billion hectares)

While the index value could be a subject of debate, it can give some good first approximations. A low index value indicates a relatively low remaining natural habitat with high human domination while a high value indicates a larger amount of natural habitat. This value for the total world is determined as 58 with 23.9% human dominated area. For different continents the values (% values human dominated area given in parentheses) are: Europe -20.5(64.9), Asia 50.3(29.5), Africa- 57.9(15.4), N. America-61(24.9), S. America-68.7(15.1), and Australia 68.8(12.0), and Antarctica-0(0). The values by biogeographic region are Indo-Malaysian-19.6(56.6), Afrotropical-47.1(18.9), Palearctic-57.6(25.0), Nearctic-62.9(23.0), Neotropical-65.5(17.9), Australian-69.1(10.1), Oceanian- 80.7(10.1) and Antarctic-98.4(1.5).

It is seen that the Indo-Malaysian region has the lowest habitat index with the highest human domination. The Indian sub-continent which forms part of this region has the world's lowest Habitat Index and the highest percentage of human dominated area with values: Bengal Forest-3.7(85.1), Coromandel-7.3(70.9), Deccan Thorn Forest-8.8(64.8), Malabar Rain Forest- 9.6(61.8), Indus-Ganges-10.9(56.8), and Mahandian-12.1(51.7). It is in this scenario that India is currently seized with the task of allocating the scarce land resources to meet the rising infrastructure demands (industries, roads, railways, river dams, power, mining etc., and building urban complexes and other economic activities) in environmentally sustainable manner causing minimum disruption to human settlements.

Post independence, the Government of India adopted the Land Acquisition Act 1894 enacted by the British Government, for land acquisition with amendments incorporated from time to time. Essentially this Act allows the government to acquire land by government agencies for public purposes or a company after paying a government-fixed compensation to the land owners. The term “public purpose” has come to refer to 1. Acquisition of land for defence purposes or any other work vital to the State, 2. Infrastructure projects, such as generation, transmission and supply of electricity, construction of roads, highways, bridges airports, rail systems or mining activities, and 3. Constructing educational institutions, schemes such as housing, health and water supply projects, irrigation projects, sanitation, sewerage systems. The Act empowers the Centre or the State Government (as the case may be) to fix the compensation to the owner on the basis of the value of the land. The amount of compensation is invariably meagre and not commensurate with the loss, suffered by the displaced owner of the land. In majority of the situations the technical competence of the displaced owners is low. Consequently they fail to find adequate alternate

employment. The process of land acquisition in India is a very complex issue taking an unconscionably long time leading to considerable delays in project implementation. Some problems faced in acquisition are -

- Litigation due to inheritance
- Multiple sales that have not been properly recorded
- Fragmented holdings
- Pledging of lands to local money lenders
- Tough resettlement and rehabilitation problems.

All these lead to corrupt practices in the acquisition process with touts and middlemen exploiting the situation to the detriment of the displaced owners.

With millions of acres of agricultural and forest land, acquired under the draconian Land Acquisition Act of 1894, the resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced families has turned out to be the most sensitive for several major development projects, especially with river dam projects. In the post independence period, these projects, described as “temples of progress” turned out to be the “graveyards” for millions of the Project Affected Families. According to one report, “during the last fifty years some 3,300 big dams (sic) have been constructed in India. Many of these have led to large scale forced eviction of vulnerable groups. The situation of tribal people is of special concern as they constitute 40 to 50 percent of displaced population.” The brutality of displacement as a consequence of dam construction has been dramatically highlighted during the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NGO), spearheaded by Medha Patkar. Official figures indicate that about 42,000 families were displaced. But the NGO put the figure at 85,000 families or 500,000 people. The construction of the Tehri Dam caused the displacement of 85,600 families. The construction of the Hirakud Dam in Odisha (started in 1948 and completed in 1953) displaced a total number of 22,144 families with a population of 1.1 lakh to 1.6 lakh spreading over 249 villages in Sambalpur district. In the original estimate an amount of Rs 12.0 crores was provided for payment of compensation to the displaced, but actually only Rs.3.32 crores was paid. A large number of families were evacuated without compensation from 1956 onwards. Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister, addressing the villages of the Hirakud Dam area in 1948, said,

“If you are to suffer, you should suffer in the interest of the country.”

Construction of the Bhakra Nangal dam started in 1948 and completed by the end of 1963. The fourth generation of a family whose lands were acquired for the dam is said to be still awaiting final compensation! (Pavan K. Varma, TOI, March 14, 2015).

Dams, mining industries, and other development activities have resulted in the displacement of an estimated 60 to 65 million people in India since independence, the highest number uprooted for development in the world. “This amounts to around one million displaced every year since independence”, says a report released in 2012 by the UN Working Group on Human Rights in India.” Of these, over 40 per cent are tribals and another 40 per cent consist of dalits and other rural poor. While land owners give up land in the process of acquisition by the State, the landless people are deprived twice, by not getting the opportunity to work on land as agricultural labourers and by not being the beneficiaries of compensation. Further, the majority of the displaced from the land acquired for industry or services cannot get absorbed in any of the industries or services because they lack the required skills. They are forced to eke out a living through casual work or by setting up small-scale trade. This category of people, coming under what is called the non-formal sector, is described by John Maynard Keynes as belonging to the *universe of disguised unemployment*.

Before liberalization, location of an industry in India was decided at the time of the grant of license to the proposed industry. The licensing authority took many factors into consideration. One important factor was maintaining regional balance in development. However, post liberalization, the process has been considerably diluted. Entrepreneurs got the freedom of choice to set enterprises free of location constraints, but subject to environmental clearances. Further there arose a competition among the States to devise lucrative schemes for attracting the entrepreneurs. Even the rules in the Land acquisition Act were bent for acquiring land they sought ostensibly for the proposed projects. In some cases, the States were even said to be in cahoots with the entrepreneurs for grabbing the land with ulterior motives. In several cases even prime land that should have been conserved for agriculture was diverted for the SEZ programmes. The SEZ policy is said to be the biggest land grab movement in the history of modern India. The Comptroller and Auditor General in his report in 2014 observed that out of 45,635ha of land notified in the country for SEZ purposes, operations commenced in only 28,488.49ha (62.42%) of land. Out of 39,245.56ha of land in six states (AP, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha and West Bengal), 5402.22ha (14%) of land was denotified and diverted for commercial purposes. Many tracts of these lands were acquired invoking the “public purposes” clause in the 1894 Act! In some states (AP, Maharashtra, Karnataka and West Bengal) some developer units raised Rs.6309.53 crores of loan, mortgaging the SEZ lands and utilized 35% of the amount (Rs.2, 211.48 crores) for purposes other than the development of the SEZ!

Tribals are the worst affected as a result of land acquisition for economic development, because their habitats are rich in natural resources. About 90% of all coal and 50% of all remaining minerals are in the regions they inhabit and eke their livelihoods depending on the forest, water and other resources that abound in their habitats. As per the Census of 2001, of the 86 million tribals, about 80% live in Central India belt of AP (now bifurcated), Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, M.P., North Maharashtra and South Gujarat. Most of these tribals come under the IV Schedule under Article 342 of the Constitution that accords protection to their land and culture. But according to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs nearly 85 lakhs of tribals were displaced till 1990 to make room for development projects like dams, mines, industries without proper rehabilitation. With the advent of liberalization post 1990, their displacement has assumed greater proportions. Under the Land Acquisition Act 1894, the Common Property Rights gives the legal right to manage the forest land for common good but not own the land. This approach makes it easy for the state to acquire land which is considered as the state property making it an easy prey for “grabbing”. The Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act of 2006 however gave some relief by recognizing the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources. However the law is said to have proved contentious and ambiguous in many respects. Some examples illustrate the risks faced by tribals.

The \$12 billion POSCO project in Odisha is the largest foreign investment project ever in India. Out of the 4,004 acres of land needed for mining, 10% belongs to the cultivators. The rest of the land belongs to the State of Odisha and has been recorded as “under forest” in official records (as CPR). Though the major part of the vast land has been enjoyed by the tribals living in the area for generations, hardly 1% of the land has been recorded in their favour. Now these tribal cultivators are termed as encroachers by the State and face eviction.

The agitation against the Tata Nano car project which the CPM ruled West Bengal Government facilitated through the acquisition of 997 acres of agricultural land in Singur, Hoogly District, under the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 attracted even international attention. The Tata Motors spent a sum of Rs 1,500 crores on the project and the first car was to come out of the factory in October 2008. At this stage the TMC Party instigated about 1,000 people to blockade the factory and demand the return of 400 acres (180 acres according to the Government figures). This demand was untenable to the Tata Motors. The Chairman of the Tatas announced in October that they were pulling out of Singur due to the political unrest and agitation. This success helped the TMC Party unseat the CPM from State Government. After

assuming power, the TMC Government announced that the land would be returned to the owners. To this end, the West Bengal Assembly also passed a resolution. The Tata Motors who paid full compensation to the Government went to the court disputing the decision. The matter is currently before the Supreme Court. The farmers who took part in the agitation have become the victims of populist politics, having neither received the compensation offered to them nor getting back their land even after several years. Many marginal farmers, who had given up their land hoping to secure employment in the factory, now face poverty. With soil fertility seriously disturbed as a result of the construction activity, doubts are also raised whether the 400 acres of land, even if returned, could be fit for cultivation.

Another controversial issue that attracted wide attention relates to the proposal of the West Bengal Government to acquire 4,000 hectares of land at Nandigram for a SEZ to be developed by the Indonesian-based Salim Group through locating a chemical hub. This led to resistance by the villagers who were supported by the TMC Party. In March 2007, the police and CPM cadres unleashed violence on the villagers killing 14 people and injuring many. This was followed by fresh violence forcing the Government to drop the proposal.

With a view to solve the hardships faced by the agriculturists/landless poor, the UPA Government came up with a new act, called the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013, in the place of the 1894 Act. The salient features of the Act which came into force on January 1, 2014 are:

Payment of compensation is four times the market value in rural areas and two times the market value in urban areas.

Multi-cropped, irrigated land cannot be acquired unless it is for defence or emergency caused by natural calamity.

No land can be acquired in the scheduled areas without the consent of the Gram Sabhas.

No one shall be dispossessed of the land until and unless all payments are made and alternative sites for the resettlement and rehabilitation (including schools, health centre and civic infrastructure) are provided.

Land should be returned to original owner if not used in five years, for the purpose for which it required.

In cases where the PPP (Public Private Partnership) projects are involved, the consent of not less than 70% of those whose land is sought to be acquired is required. In the case of acquisition for private companies, 80% consent is required.

Social Impact Assessment study is mandatory for the proposed acquisition of land over 100 acres for all projects. The Study Group consisting of officials, technical scientists, experts on rehabilitation and representatives of the Gram Panchayat shall prepare a report on the impact of the project on various components such as the livelihood of the affected families, properties assets, sources of drinking water for cattle, community ponds, grazing lands etc and presented in the local language at the Panchayat/ Municipality/ Municipal Corporation, as the case may be.

Many states, ministries and stakeholders began reporting many difficulties in implementing the Act. With little land acquisition, achieved under the new Act, major infrastructure projects were kept in limbo. Some were even abandoned. If the land acquisition took 4 to 5 years under the old act, it is feared that under the new Act, it will take twice as long, because more notices are to be given out, more studies commissioned with long periods for the committees to respond. The plans of the Vedanta Ventures to mine bauxite in Niyamgiri to feed its Rs.5, 000 crore alumina refinery project in Odisha has been stalled after all the 12 Gram Sabhas against mining round the hill, they consider sacred.

With the avowed objective of expeditiously meeting the strategic and developmental needs of the country through surmounting the barriers holding up projects worth about Rs. 2 lakh crores in sectors such as rail, steel, mining and roads, the BJP Government proposed amendments to the Act, keeping in view the objective of the welfare of the farmers. The following are the major changes proposed:

Five categories – industrial corridors, private-public partnership projects, Infrastructure, affordable housing and defence are exempted from the mandatory consent of 70 per cent of the farmers in the area where the land is to be acquired. Private educational institutions and hospitals which were earlier excluded from the list of infrastructure projects are now included in the category. The mandatory requirement of Social Impact Assessment is also waived for these categories.

The existing law stipulates that the land acquired is to be returned to the original owner if it is unused for five years. The proposed amendment scraps the five-year limit and says that the land will be returned if it is unused for the period specified in the project.

The provision to penalize bureaucrats for any violations is amended and stipulates that government sanction is required to prosecute them.

The Government tried to introduce the Act in the amended form in the winter Session, 2014 of the Rajya Sabha but the Opposition stalled it. The Government then issued an Ordinance which has to be cleared by both Houses during the 2015 Budget Session or it will lapse.

With an incremental spending of Rs.72, 000 crores in targeted infrastructure projects proposed in the 2015-16 Budget, the Government declared its seriousness to expand the productiveness of the country's economy. To this end, the Government pushed through the amended Act in the Lok Sabha on March 10, albeit with some changes. These include

Acquisition of land required for industrial corridors (highways and railways) is limited to 1 km on both sides. Land required for projects is kept to the barest minimum. These projects are exempted from Social Impact Assessment and consent clauses.

Provision of compulsory employment to one member of each family of farm Labourers, hit by acquisition.

Constitution of hassle-free district level authority for hearing and redressal of grievances.

No exemption from the 80% consent of land owners to “social Infrastructure” projects in public-private partnership mode. This will prevent individuals acquiring land to open colleges and hospitals as business ventures.

Social Impact Assessment for these projects will be the prerogative of the State Governments.

Multi-crop land will not be acquired.

Land acquired to be returned to the owner if the project is not completed in prescribed time. This will not however include the time, consumed by court cases.

Acquisition of land one kilometre on either side of industrial corridors, without consent appears to have serious implications. For example, the one hundred billion dollar Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor has a length of 1,483 km, running through UP, the Delhi NCR, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Under the proposed law, the area liable for acquisition works out 2,966 sq. km. or 2, 96,600 hectares/7, 32,914.5 acres. Other industrial/freight/economic corridors under proposal are: Amritsar-Kolkata (1,839 km), Chennai-Bengaluru, and Mumbai-Bengaluru (1,000 km), Kolkata-Mumbai (2,000 km), Delhi-Chennai (2,173 km), Kharagpur-Vijayawada (1,100 km), Chennai-Goa (890 km). The total area liable

for acquisition without consent, works out to a huge area (including agricultural land) of land and displacement of large population!

The amended bill, which has been promulgated as an Ordinance in December 2014, faces a roadblock in the Rajya Sabha where the Government has no majority. With the united opposition deciding to stall the bill branding it as anti-farmer, the Government has not introduced the bill in the Rajya Sabha to replace the Ordinance which lapses on April 5. As of this writing time, both the Houses have gone on a break. As per the Constitution, an Ordinance cannot be brought during a session break. To circumvent this, the Government has chosen the path of proroguing the Rajya Sabha session and re-promulgating the Ordinance. The bill replacing the Ordinance will be placed before the Parliament when it meets on April 20. If the Government fails to push the bill through the Rajya Sabha, it can re-promulgate the Ordinance after the Parliament session ends on May 8. Alternatively, it can convene a joint session of both Houses to get the bill passed because the Government claims to have a majority in the combined House. According to reports, various strategies including winning over some opposition parties are being explored. In short, a battle of wits is on in the corridors of power.

While the intention of the Government to make industrialization easy, while genuinely protecting the land owners and displaced persons is laudable, the manner in which the bill is being pushed through by making concessions, makes one apprehend that the poor displaced may get caught up in the domain of the capricious bureaucracy and litigious procedures, as well as predatory middlemen in the course of acquisition, resettlement and payment of compensation and other issues. If the government does not spell out foolproof safeguards to protect the displaced from these pitfalls, the displaced poor may end up an embittered lot and be forced to “suffer in the interest of the nation”.

* * *

Dr. M.N. Sastri, Retired Professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry, Andhra University, is a distinguished scientist and prolific writer on energy and environment.

Born on August 5, 1925, he studied at the Andhra University where he obtained the M.Sc degree in 1947 and D.Sc in 1951. He went to the United Kingdom on a Government of India scholarship for higher studies and took the Ph.D. degree from Durham University in 1958.

Joining the Andhra University's Chemistry Department in 1948 as a demonstrator, Dr Sastri became Reader in 1959 and Professor in 1966. He carried out extensive studies in the fields of Volumetric Methods Chromotography, Precipitations from Homogenous Solutions, Chemical Kinetics and Tracer Methods. He organized the first full- fledged M.Sc course in Nuclear Chemistry in the University and was the Founder-Vice President of Indian Association for Nuclear Chemists and Allied Scientists. Prof. Sastri was mainly responsible for establishing the Centre for Nuclear Techniques in Andhra University with financial support from the Atomic Energy Commission. He was Visiting Professor at La Trobe University Australia in 1976 and Adjunct Professor, San Jose State University, USA in 1986 and Fellow, National Academy of Sciences, Allahabad.

*Prof. Sastri received the P.C. Ray Gold Medal of the Calcutta University for contributions in analytical chemistry and the Dr. M.V. Ramanaiah Memorial Award from Indian Association for Nuclear Chemists and Allied Scientists for Life Time Achievements and contributions to Radio Chemistry. This is Prof. Sastri's third book published by Centre for Policy Studies. **The Profiligate Civilisation in 2007 and World Demographic Trends in 2011** were his previous works. **History of Planet Earth, Vistas in Analytical Chemistry, Water, Introduction to Environment and Weapons of Mass Destruction** are among the other books authored by him. He has served on several expert bodies at the state and national levels. His latest book, **The Nuclear Genie**, published by Centre for Policy Studies was released on his 90th birthday on August 5, 2014. Prof. M.N. Sastri and his wife Mrs. Sarala Sastri live in Mumbai.*

CIVIL SERVICES NEED TO REDISCOVER THEMSELVES

Shri C. Anjaneya Reddy I.P.S. (Retd.)

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With many civil servants frequently in and out of jails and some even holding offices while on bail, unflattering comments about the Civil Services are many these days. Historically, the Indian Civil Service was praised by some as the *steel frame of India* and was also famously reviled as neither Indian, nor civil nor service. But for Sardar Patel's insistence, the all-India Services, IAS and the IPS would not have been created and secured in that primal document, the Constitution of India! All this in the hope, there would be a disinterested hierarchy of professionals to keep the governance going in a plural polity that the new republic was seeking to be. With all this, civil services in this country continue to be subjected to unflattering comments. Apart from the well-known post-Emergency barb "*they started crawling when they were asked to bend*", here are some more: "*The British invented the bureaucracy and the Indians have perfected it*", "*Non-professionals in a world run by professionals*", "*Indian administrators are still trapped in the regulatory mindset when they should be facilitators in a developing economy*".

If the Civil Services are not functioning the way they are expected to, why is it so? What are the constraints? Why is a Civil Servant not professional enough? Is there any colonial hangover still? Are the recruitment procedures primed to select the right type of candidates? Is the right man in the right place? If not, why is it so? Why do they not assert themselves when they have all the security in the world? What is the Civil Services leadership, if at all there is one, doing about it? These are some of the many questions that are asked. The answer seems to lie in the fact that there has been no serious attempt to resolve these issues by the senior civil servants as career advancement and post-retirement sinecures occupy their minds by the time they come to the top of the hierarchy more than concern for the Services.

Also, as is the habit with the Indian mind, instead of locating the knots in the system and undoing them, it looks for short-term solutions outside the system that do not help healthy evolution of the Services. Adding to the confusion, Judiciary in its anxiety to be an 'activist' is stretching itself beyond its role and competence seeking to substitute for every other wing of the government. Activism is good, even welcome, but that has to be turned inward first to improve their own efficacy - reducing the staggering pendency at different levels and modernizing the legal procedures and systems and making justice affordable. Instead the judge overcome by self-righteousness seeks to reform everyone else!

Both the political executive and the civil services leadership are yet to give serious thought to transforming the Services to enable them to keep pace with fast-changing times and to making them an effective tool of modern-day governance. The old trick of the trade 'regulation' has been upset and is replaced by the new buzz word 'facilitation.' Many useful recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commissions have not impacted the Services, mostly because of their own indifference! In most States, particularly the smaller States, the administrator's role has been appropriated in good measure by the political executive reducing all governance to ordering transfers of officers and placing obliging civil servants in the more-important jobs with scant regard to their ability or suitability. Rampant corruption in the country is mostly collusive corruption, result of the politician and the civil servant coming together to feather their nests. Systemic Improvements in the Government have also not addressed the core issue of civil service neutrality and accountability. The glaring failure is there for all to see in the way the bureaucracy

was 'managed' post-Emergency leading to even well-meaning civil servants 'falling in line'. Isn't it time then we further insulate the civil services and secure their neutrality and lay down their accountability by more clearly identifying *their space in governance*. Over the years, many civil servants have reduced themselves to be executives at the disposal of the political boss. *That they are the custodians of public interest is almost lost on them!* This unfortunate trend has to be reversed and the correct perspective restored.

The civil servant is expected to guide and assist the political executive in the art and craft of governance while helping him to transform his agenda into acceptable and workable schemes. To secure and safeguard public interest without giving an impression of encroaching on the domain of the political executive who wants to drive the change he wants to bring about, is the crux of the problem. Civil Service leadership is yet to confront this critical issue and secure the civil servants' role further without leaving it to the resource of individual officers to assert. A comprehensive "*thus far and no further*" guide lines have to be evolved with an in-house mechanism to check deviance. The office of the Chief Secretary, which was originally charged with this responsibility, has been over the years reduced to ornamental redundancy by the Chief Minister's Office or CMO, a counter-part of the Prime Minister's Office or PMO invented in Delhi and strengthened during and post-emergency!

It is equally important that the assessment of professional competence of a civil servant which should be the preserve of his professional seniors is to be retrieved from the political executive who now has the last say in the matter. In the absence of the necessary time or skills to do that, he goes by hearsay and what he records is at best his impression rather than assessment. This means for a successful career, the need to impress the political executive and secure his favour is as much or more important than professional accomplishments.

Also, post-colonial civil service, the IAS has nearly lost the confidence of the sister services who look upon them as self-serving careerists, perpetrating generalist dominance in decision-making at the cost of professional advice. This has led to the present situation where non-professional Secretaries are advising the Ministers who need well-informed professional advice. The Nehruvian idea of inducting professional in and above the rank of Jt. Secretaries in the Union Government is largely unrealized. In the recent past it has reached ridiculous levels with generalists becoming financial advisors and vigilance officers in the Ministries. Pay scales and pensions, working conditions and privileges of Civil Services have improved a great deal over the years. With each pay revision - 7th Pay Commission is now constituted – there has been an impressive increases in emoluments and pensions and interestingly, with a corresponding decline in the standards of governance! *Return on investment* so to say, has been going down!

However, all is not lost yet. After several years, we have a government in Delhi which has largely checked political corruption and is laying emphasis on good governance. It has been making efforts to involve people in improving governance. The Civil Service leadership should seize the opportunity and redefine in more concrete terms the autonomy and accountability of the Services. One solution could be a statutory '*Civil Services Board*' outside the government both at the Center and in the States which would monitor the standards of professionalism in the Services without in any way affecting the primacy of the political executive. The Board would be compact and would comprise former Civil Servants of proven integrity for a one-time tenure of 3/4 years and would be presided over by a former Civil Servant of another State. To secure professionalism and neutrality of the Civil Service, the Board would be effectively involved in the selection of all the officers of the rank of Secretary in the State and Jt. Secretary in Govt. of India. The process of empanelment of senior officers for placements in Govt. of India and States would be taken over by the Board. They would shortlist for each senior position, a panel of three officers considered suitable based on experience and record of service obliging the political executive to choose one of them.

Likewise, the '*Appointments Committee*' of Government of India would be obliged to choose from among those identified as most suitable by the Civil Services Board. The Secretary of the Ministry, will record reasons if he wants the transfer of an officer of this rank and asks for a substitute.

Professional competence of the officers would be entirely assessed by the Board and not the political executive as is now done, giving no room for often well-founded apprehensions of extra-professional considerations! If a decision of the government is called into question in a Court, the Board should be able to take a stand on who is responsible for the mischief, the administrator or his senior who has reviewed the issue or the minister who finally takes the decision. As of now, the civil servant is hauled up, even humiliated in the Court for not only his sins but those of his seniors in the profession, officers in the CMO or the political executive himself! This often happens as he is the signatory to the final Government Orders which may have contravened his own recommendations!

Civil Servants these days are stuck between aggressive politicians, presumptive anti-corruption laws which expect the Civil Servant to prove his innocence and over-reaching Judiciary! His space in governance is shrinking by the day. The pompous colonial with the swagger of *maa-baap* is gone and gone for good. But his successor, an unassertive public servant is not good enough to be the custodian of public interest which is his *raison d'être*. If things are to improve, the civil service leadership should go beyond TV talk shows and self-promoting autobiographies and work for role-clarity and accountability of civil servants and self-correcting mechanism in-house!

QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE A PREREQUISITE FOR EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FROM INDIAN EXPERIENCE:

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India's development experience provides for academic analysis and also for policy formulation with rich insights to reflect on the challenges and opportunities of development and how the challenges can be converted effectively into opportunities. The basic purpose of this small note is to reflect on these issues with a view to build a consensual model of development, which was very dear to Shri. D.V. Subbarao to whose memory this volume is being dedicated.

Both governance and development are complex, multidimensional, and crucial in the evolution of societies and economies. Economic reforms facilitating an important role to the private sector even in critical areas impacting the living conditions of majority of the population has made governance critical. Governance and development are interdependent although the degree of interdependence will vary from country to country and for a country for different time periods. There is extensive discussion on their interdependence in the literature on both public policy and economic development. They are important independently and complement each other in more ways than one. The linkage between them depends on the very conceptualization of both.

Broadly, public governance encompasses policy legislation, administrative machinery, rules and procedures. The first two are considered macro aspects while the latter two are micro aspects of governance. Both are important in their own way as focusing only on micro aspects ignoring the macro issues will affect the outcomes of various government programmes. It is widely accepted and largely documented that good governance is relatively more important for developing and transition economies compared to their advanced counterparts in view of several social and economic inadequacies. More importantly, the poor in the developing countries are more concerned about governance quality because of their vulnerability. It is also argued that governance quality and accountability requires special focus in the early stages of development in view of institutional constraints and inadequacies. With economic growth institutions get stabilized and become more accountable and their role and focus get diversified to build equitable and sustainable models of social and economic development. However, the relevance of governance will continue to occupy center stage even in a market economy as an efficient market requires an effective and accountable government.

Development implies different things to different people and the revisit on the objective and purpose of development focusing on equitable social and economic opportunities among a wider section of population in contrast to the conventional growth paradigm has made development complex though desired. In *Development as Freedom*, economist and philosopher Amartya Sen has said that the state has not only to avoid limiting human freedom but also aim to expand human freedom by providing fulfillment of basic human needs. The development outcomes must include removal of major sources of unfreedom such as poverty, tyranny, fear, economic and social deprivation. It is impossible to summarize the vast literature on the conceptualization of economic development particularly after Sen. and others institutionalized it through UNDP's Human Development Index where the level and rate of growth of an economy is defined in relation to both economic and social factors. Societies and economists now largely agree with the view

that economic growth must be sustainable and equitable to provide meaningful impact on the living conditions of people at large and this calls for focus on social infrastructure like health and education apart from physical infrastructure. Development must ensure equal participation of every one in both social and economic institutions to become equitable and sustainable.

Governance is the process of decision making and the process in which decisions are implemented. Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance apart from national and local governance. According to the European Commission, governance concerns the State's ability to serve the citizens. It refers to the rules, processes, and behaviours by which interests are articulated, resources managed, and power is exercised in a society. The way public functions are carried out, public resources are managed and public regulatory powers are exercised is the major issue to be addressed in this connection. The ILO agrees that an effective and democratically accountable state can support high economic growth through appropriate macroeconomic policies, provide public goods and social protection, raise the capability of people and enterprises and deal with vulnerability. Contrary to the prevailing trend to downsize the State, it argues, there is great deal that the state can do to promote decent work and this is a widespread political demand in the democratic process. World Bank in a similar fashion defines governance "as the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised for the common good. This includes-(1) the process by which those in authority are selected, monitored, and replaced, (2) the capacity of the government to effectively manage its resources and implement sound policies, and (3) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them". UNDP analyzing the multidimensionality of governance defines democratic governance as a process of creating and sustaining an environment for inclusive and responsive political process and settlement. (Human Development Report, 2011). Good governance is both an important input to boost economic and social development, and more importantly it is an ingredient of development. The World Bank's World-wide Governance Indicators are composites made up of indicators of control of corruption, government effectiveness, political stability, absence of violence and terrorism, regulatory quality (including rule of law) and accountability. All the indicators are expected to have positive impact on domestic and foreign investment and thus on economic growth and per capita income. In other words good governance in the end is for people, to enable them to live and work without fear. It should also be development centric.

In the Indian context from the standpoint of the basic objective of economic development of governance need to focus to build institutional and human capacities to make public policies and strategies effective, particularly in terms of service delivery to expand peoples capabilities and choices that will enable them to lead healthy and creative lives and enable them to participate in decision making impacting their own lives. This is particularly important as India today presents glaring contrasts in certain key areas, such as sectoral productivity levels and quality of educational and health institutions notwithstanding the fact that the country made remarkable progress in terms of economic growth, particularly after the 1991 reforms. Productivity differentials are sharp between rural and urban areas both in formal and informal sectors, agriculture and industry, industry and services etc. Also, there is growing divide between those who attend private schools and government schools, the former qualifying to access top of the line tertiary institutions at home and abroad while the latter have fewer choices with many ending up in distance education or low quality tertiary institutions. Sectoral productivity differentials and quality differential in education and health indicate that the benefits of economic growth are not being shared in a fair way by different social and economic groups. Consequently, while India is shining in some regions and in few sectors a large proportion, about one third living in rural India is yet to benefit from the progress made in the country. It is rightly said that economic reforms have bypassed certain sectors and sections raising questions on the very approach and strategy of development process pursued in post 1991 reforms.

The current status of infrastructure, both physical and social evidently shows that India has to not only raise the public investments in them significantly but more importantly improve the efficiency with which they are spent in the years to come. The World Economic Forum estimating the Global Competitive Index for 2014-15 quantified quality of infrastructure for 144 countries. India has a rank of 90 while most of the other Asian countries like Singapore with 5th rank, Malaysia with 20th rank, Srilanka with 37 and China with 64th rank are all better placed. In terms of quantity also India's position is very poor. During 1992-2011 India spent only 4.7 per cent of GDP on infrastructure while China has spent over 8.5 percent during the same period. The situation is no better when the status of social infrastructure is analyzed. UNDP developed Human Development Index is the most appropriate indicator of the level of social development of a country. India's HDI for 2013 with 135 out of 185 countries is slightly better compared to Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan but certainly very poor compared to countries like Sri Lanka, China, Indonesia, Egypt, and Iraq. Allocations to both health and education are very low and meager. Further, the actual expenditures sometimes half of the allocations speak about the pathetic situation. This is undoubtedly the biggest challenge for young India. India's demographic dividend is well documented. An average Indian is 17 years younger than Japanese and 14 years than an average American. Over 300 million youth will join the work force in India during 2010-2040. India needs to create on an average every year during the next 25 years 10 million jobs to provide gainful employment to the youth. This requires increased investments in both physical and social infrastructure to work on both the supply side and demand side of employment. Two recent and extremely important works by Amartya Sen and Jean Dreze, *An Uncertain Glory*, and Jagadish Bhagavathi and Arvind Panagaria, *India's Tryst with Destiny* analyze how India is paying heavily because of inadequacies in education, health, and employment. And this is largely due to institutional inadequacies and lack of proper accountable systems and procedures.

It is necessary in this connection to underscore that generous budgetary allocations alone will not help the cause. Resources need to be wisely invested and expenditures effectively monitored to ensure reasonable returns and expected outcomes. In terms of conventional wisdom, improved incomes through accelerated economic growth are expected to improve the quality of institutions to facilitate their response to changing requirements of people and address the challenges of globalization. However, Indian institutions do not appear to have responded adequately to care for the people who have become vulnerable in the process of economic transformation and restructuring. It is quite appropriate to refer to the sentiment echoed in a lead article by *The Economist*, "...outlays and outcomes are not the only thing. Standing between the two is administrative machinery corroded by apathy and corruption. The government's subsidies fail to reach the poor, its schools fail to teach them and its rural clinics fail to treat them.' (*The Economist*, March 8, 2008). It is thus clear that apart from investments in physical infrastructure India must focus on soft infrastructure, including governance, probity in public life, quality education and health to ensure the desired outcomes. In short, we need to focus on governance-standards. The list of reforms is familiar and well known. It is not rocket science. What is needed is political will and willingness by the citizens to prepare for small short-run difficulties in the larger interest of their own children and grandchildren. Let us be optimistic on both.

Note: A substantial part of the material for this article is drawn from PROFESSOR BHAVARAJU SARVESWARA RAO Endowment Lecture the author delivered at ANDHA UNIVERSITY on November 22, 2013.

Governance through Participation

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Democratic governance, by definition, is based on the primacy of people. Elections, accordingly, reflect the will of the people and consequently, whom they decide to delegate governance to. In Israel, for instance, Netanahyu has been elected for a fourth term. In Sri Lanka, Rajapakse was defeated against all odds and speculation. In India, NarinderModi swept aside the Congress. And in Delhi, AAP created history.

People, in other words, gave their verdict, through the electoral process, on who their preferred option was and consequently, who had let them down. Governments and elected representatives were, in other words, replaceable if they did not deliver on promises and the aspirations of people. This is the core principle of democratic governance.

Over time, this has dramatically changed. Today, people matter only when elections are to be held. It is only then that they are wooed and feted. They are made to feel they are important and relevant. Their woes are heard and promises made. However, once elections are over, people cease to matter.

This was not how democracy was envisaged by the founding fathers. When Lincoln spoke of governments by, for and of the people, he emphasized the centrality of people. People were the *raison d'être* of democracy. Governments, in other words, were servants of the people and thus, accountable to them.

This is no longer the case. Increasingly, elected representatives have come to enjoy enormous prestige, power and influence, which they are known to regularly exercise over the very same people, who elected them. As a result, a deep disconnect characterizes the relationship between people and elected governments. This alienation goes counter to the very spirit behind democratic governance.

Bertolt Brecht had once proposed in jest that when people lose all faith in the government and governments realize that the situation is not likely to be reversed easily, governments might find it more convenient to simply dissolve the people and re-elect another. In other words, in democracies people have become dispensable and thus, replaceable.

So, how did this occur? We are all aware as to how elected representatives, especially in developing countries, enjoy considerable power and authority. Power, by definition, is alienating because power can only be exercised over the powerless. Power, in other words, does not operate in a vacuum. Power is also visible. It evokes fear. It subjugates. It divides the society into those who have power and those who are denied.

Consequently, power creates jealousies. It evokes strong interest among many others in joining this exclusive club of power elites. Unless the membership co-opts the like-minded, the power base would be challenged and even, dismantled. This would lead to conflict, crisis and disorder.

Consequently, power structures, especially in developing countries, are distributed between the polity, the bureaucracy and the corporate sector, who continually connive to reinforce each other's power and thus, ensure their own survival. This cozy club can be ruthless when challenged.

Often criminal elements are, accordingly, co-opted to ensure that the power system is not threatened. In several Latin American countries and even in the US, not very long ago, drug and gambling syndicates wielded significant influence over local administration and politicians. Indeed, the local administration, including the law enforcement agencies, and politicians were often in the pay roll of the syndicates. The situation is no different in the sub-continent. In Pakistan and several African countries, the government

and security forces make for strange bedfellows. This ensures survival, wealth sharing and corruption.

Over time, contemporary societies have seen the emergence of new spheres of influence that appear committed to challenging existing power structures. Recall the Watergate scandal and the fearless manner in which the journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein brought down a powerful US President or the courageous manner in which a newspaper in India carried a blank front page to protest curbs on the freedom of press during the infamous Emergency. The media, in other words, has emerged as a potent stakeholder.

The judiciary in India has, similarly, played a significant role in chastising the government on various issues ranging from the environment to the most recent one on freedom of expression or what has come to be known as the 66A verdict. Given the constitutional authority that the judiciary enjoys and the respect it commands, the judiciary is, most certainly, an important protector of democracy.

The third significant stakeholder is people. R.K. Laxman had powerfully brought out, through his brilliant cartoons, how the common man had been marginalized and reduced to a mere bystander by the power elite. AAPs recent victory in Delhi demonstrates that the common man or *aamaadmi* is no longer willing to be by-passed.

It is possible, therefore, to bring back democracy, as envisaged by the founding fathers, through an alternative partnership or, what I call, the *panchsevak* model. This is governance *through* participation. The five partners or *panchsevak* are government, bureaucracy, business & industry, the media, and civil society. The judiciary plays the over-arching role of ensuring that the partnership model operates within the boundaries of the constitution and the law. The need for the judiciary to be independent disallows it from being one of the *sevaks*.

The contours of the model envisage collective realization of aspirations and consequently, of collective responsibility for failures. Governance, in other words, is too important a job to be left to governments and bureaucracy alone. This is contrary to current practice where governance is seen solely as the responsibility of the elected governments and of the administration. Indeed, successful governance requires that governments realize the aspirations of the people. Governments, in other words, need to consult people and deliver on what the people desire. Today, this is simply not the case.

Visakhapatnam is a clear instance of the manner in which politicians and administrations have imposed their decisions on the people. Take the RK beach, for instance. Were the people consulted on how the beach was to be beautified through the installation of bizarre statues and the patchwork that is done on every occasion that the beach is eroded?

Indeed, projects are introduced and implemented without consultation because it reflects the power that the administration and the polity have to be able to do so. There is a strong rumour, for instance, that the Vizag zoo would be shifted, so as to make way for a government project. Have the people been consulted on this? Do people really matter?

The *panchsevak* model envisages that each of the five partners has a common objective: sustainable development and growth. This is contrary to the existing system, which assumes that only the government has the wisdom on what is best for the people. In other words, governments impose the will of the government rather than realize the will of the people. Shifting from this kind of thinking requires transforming mindsets. It will also lead to the erosion of power of the privileged few. I believe that it is not only possible but rather, that it is eminently desirable. The late D.V. SubbaRao, for instance, during his tenure as Mayor, demonstrated that it could be done.

Let me elaborate, through an example, as to how the *panchsevak* model of governance would work. Consider tourism in Vizag, which is the port city's potential USP. Indeed, handled well, Vizag could well emerge as one of the world's great tourism destinations rather than continue to be in the present woeful state it is in.

Vizag is blessed with an outstanding coastline, ancient Buddhist ruins that date back to 2nd century BC, old heritage buildings and structures, and a countryside of extraordinary beauty. This is rare. Yet, the port city has not been able to capitalize on these to emerge as a top tourism destination. This is largely because tourism is yet to be perceived and nurtured as a serious revenue and employment generating industry. Till this shift in mindset occurs, Vizag will continue to remain as a 'could-have-been-but-is-not' destination.

In the *panchsevak* model, the corporate sector or business & industry would see tourism as an investment and thus, would actively participate in value addition. The open fish market in the fishing village operates, for instance, under stressful conditions. No conscious attempts appear to be made to improve conditions and to attract visitors. Vendors sit on the floor, which is also where they ply their trade or gut the fish. It should come as no surprise that the conditions appalled the European Commission officials, who refused, thereafter, to receive marine products from Vizag. Unless these conditions are improved, the approach roads upgraded and facilities for visitors and buyers augmented, it will remain a tourist attraction for the wrong reasons. Vessels destroyed during cyclone Hudhud, at the harbor, still remain as a grim reminder of the devastation caused.

Business & industry, working in tandem with government and bureaucracy, can transform this. Recall the Sydney fish market, for instance, where fresh produce, not unlike the catch in Vizag, is displayed and sold under superb hygienic conditions alongside excellent restaurants. This is a business & industry led enterprise and its successful model is not difficult to replicate.

Restaurants in Vizag, similarly, operate under unhygienic conditions. Cockroaches and rodents are regularly visible. Nor indeed, is the food particularly extraordinary or appetizing. To emerge as a world-class tourism and business destination, Vizag needs to focus on its hospitality industry. This requires investments in training and infrastructure – all of which, business & industry can execute as a business model in consultation with government and bureaucracy.

Government and bureaucracy need to recognize the rampant and arbitrary manner in which the city has grown. This has put enormous pressure on limited resources and created a virtual urban jungle. There is a clear absence of city planning or waste management. Piles of garbage lie unattended attracting sewage rats that are carriers of deadly plague. A clear absence of any master plan or architectural design characterizes the city.

Ambitious plans of converting Vizag into a Smart City can be deceptively attractive. What Vizag needs is urgent correction of arbitrary and ad hoc decision making that has reduced it to the urban chaos that it is. Governance through participation recognizes that a lotus does not survive in sewage. It is the sewage that first needs to be treated before the lotus is planted.

The people and media, similarly, have responsibilities. PM Modi's Clean India campaign points to the manner in which people, through their callous attitude, have dirtied the city and rural countryside. The ancient Buddhist heritage sites, for instance, have become an attractive picnic spot and it is distressing to see the manner in which litter and paper plates are strewn all over the site. The beach, similarly, is full of garbage and an eyesore. Unless the consciousness of people is raised, the situation will simply deteriorate from bad to worse.

Governance, in my view, is too important a task to be left to governments. For governance to be sustainable, it must be participatory in nature. Without the collective realization of aspirations, we will continue to be a nation of *jugaad* and *chaltahai*, neither of which should make us proud.

Change, even transformational change, can occur but only if we aspire towards it. The 5-partner model seeks precisely this.

(Based on a lecture delivered by the author at CPS on February 28, 2015.)

Gandhian Smart City

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I had the privilege of knowing late Sri D.V. Subba Rao garu for over fifty years. He was a founding member of the Society for Human Science and Service I started at the beginning of the millennium. He attended and actively participated in the last general body meeting of the Society.

I recall fondly how we together received Mother Teresa at the airport when she visited Visakhapatnam. At that time, Sri Subba Rao was Mayor of Visakhapatnam and I was the Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University. In addition to being a judicial luminary with national stature and recognition (he was Chairman of the Bar Council of India), Sri Subba Rao garu was one of the most distinguished citizens of the city of Visakhapatnam and served it as few others did before or after him. His services to this city are on a par with the contributions of Sri Tenneti Viswanadham garu.

In my view, the basic foundation of Visakhapatnam as a *smart* city was laid by Sri Subba Rao garu when he was the Mayor of Visakhapatnam. It would have cheered him to see now that Visakhapatnam is selected by the Government of India headed by the party of which he is an important member to be one of the smart cities to be developed in cooperation with United States of America. Visakhapatnam in this process of transforming itself into a smart city surely would miss Sri Subba Rao garu.

The concept of smart city is western in its origin. It refers to the emerging notion of cities fully digitalized and e-governed. Now there is even the notion of *smarter city* being floated in South Korea and the Middle East where ultra-modern high rise-buildings with latest technology are being built all new. I believe that it would be unwise to attempt to replicate the western model in India. We do need smart cities, but they should be modeled to suit our conditions and native Indian ethos. I see here relevance of M.K. Gandhi to developing an Indian model of smart city.

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi's ideas have universal relevance. They were relevant during his time. They are relevant now. They will continue to be so in future as well, because they address core issues of concern to human functioning. What varies, however, is the level of awareness of their relevance on our part.

Gandhian philosophy is best described as pragmatic idealism. His idealism consists in the principles he held as absolute and sacrosanct. His pragmatism is seen in the various ideas and practices that evolved out of these principles when the latter are applied to problems in real life. Principles are ideals to reach and are seldom realized fully in practice. Unlike his principles, Gandhiji's theories and techniques were not cast in concrete. They have an evolutionary history changing with times and varying with context. They can be adapted and adopted to deal with a variety of issues. Here then is the room for experimentation and innovation.

Sri Narendra Modi, since he took office as Prime Minister of India, has repeatedly invoked the name of Mahatma Gandhi in his speeches in India and abroad. More importantly, he has attempted to translate some of them into action plans and operationalize them in a few of the programmes of his government. These include plans for rural development and campaign for clean India. Unlike Swatchh Bharat, the Smart City initiative may not appear at first glance as another attempt to operationalize Mahatma's ideas by Modi's government; but it is something that could be meaningfully linked to Gandhiji's thought.

Smart City Context

Development is the main mantra in Modi's political manifesto. Development as it is conceived and undertaken requires industrial growth. Expansion of industry inexorably results in increase of urbanization. Urbanization involves mass migration to cities. Concentration of population in cities creates a variety of problems we are familiar with, since the industrial revolution in Europe and America. In the present urban landscape of our own country, we find the simultaneous rise of skyscrapers and the spread of slums, coexistence of growth and backwardness. We note ecological degradation and emergence of dehumanizing socio-economic structures, and unending problems relating to education, employment, environment, health, sanitation, transport, communication, and culture, among others. It is for these reasons Gandhiji opposed unbridled industrialization during his time which tended to further impoverish the masses. It is a popular misconception that Gandhiji was opposed to industrialization. Gandhiji did not oppose industrialization *per se*. What he opposed were the aberrations of industrialization. He wrote: "No one is opposed to machinery; our opposition is to its misuse or its excessive use" (CWMG, 37:158). Again, "use of machinery is lawful which subserves the interests of all" (CWMG, 30:292). Gandhi used the term machinery to refer mostly to industrialization.

Gandhiji was opposed to industrialism and not industrialization, if we can make such a distinction. Industrialism is a creed "to exploit". Exploitation is ethically wrong; it is also self-defeating like violence which in the final analysis self-destructive. Again, Gandhi was forthright in denying that he was against the machine age. "To say so", he emphatically asserted, "is to caricature my views. I am not against machinery as such, but I am totally opposed to it when it masters us" (*Harijan*, 27-2-1937). What Gandhi objected to is "the *craze* for machinery and not machine as such" (*Young India*, 13-11-1924). He was objecting against machines as tools of exploitation, serving as instruments of greed. Gandhiji asserted that "I would favour the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided" (*Young India*, 3-11-1921). Gandhi made it clear that for him "the supreme consideration is man" and that the machine should not make him subservient to it. He opposed to machinery and industrialism when they accentuate economic inequalities, when they help to concentrate production and distributions in the hands of the few and thus promote monopoly and when they bring about conflict between labour and capital. The remedy for this is to localize production and consumption; and that is the reason why Gandhiji was in favour of reviving village industries (*Harijan*, 20-11-1934), where the human face is not replaced by mechanical associations. The Smart City initiative may be seen as a measure to ward off the evils of such urbanization by proper planning and adequate steps to ward of the adverse effects of urbanization mentioned above.

A well-known American philosopher, John Dewey (1927; 1930) wrote at length about the undesirable socio-political side effects of rapid industrialization prompted by scientific and technological innovations in the West. He spoke of the "eclipse of the public", how the local communities lost their self-control and were subjected to the control of large and remote organizations. The workings of these organizations were beyond the comprehension of the public, the common man. The face-to-face associations, which are so necessary for proper functioning of democracies, were destroyed and replaced by the relatively impersonal, mechanical, and adversarial modes of interaction.

When the individuality is lost, the person loses his identity. With the loss of one's identity comes the lack of accountability. In the absence of accountability there will be value erosion and moral degradation. Moral degradation is the main source of crime and violence and social instability.

Writing at about the same time, Gandhiji sounded similar warning and pointed out the impending disaster for India following industrialization of the kind that brings with it the above effects harmful to human well-being. Gandhiji's emphasis on the village is his solution to avoid the "eclipse of the public", by bestowing on the person individuality and identity so that he could function as a responsible and participating

member of his community, enjoying face-to-face interactions, and not as an amorphous member of a crowd. In rural India, Gandhi saw ample social space and scope for adequate human functioning, unlike the depersonalized and degraded conditions in crowded cities. Return to the village meant to him restoring the rural ethos to living, with sufficient socio-eco-economic and cultural space for the people to find themselves and express themselves. Mahatma's opposition is not to the city as such, but to its impersonal and mechanized character. What he pleaded for is "equality between villages and cities." This needs to be brought out by providing urban conveniences to villages and bringing rural ethos to cities.

Things have not changed since the time of Gandhi and Dewey. If anything they became worse with globalization and the accelerated pace of communication.

Smart City Concept

Sri Venkaiah Naidu, Union Minister for Urban Development, with his characteristic style, stated succinctly that the smart city involves (a) four Ss – (i) smart leadership, (ii) smart governance, (iii) smart technology, and (iv) smart people; and (b) four Ps – (i) public, (ii) private, (iii) people, and (iv) their participation. What needs some clarity in this context is the pertinent meaning of the word "smart". It is here the Mahatma becomes relevant.

Applied to smart leadership, Gandhi's person and philosophy portray characteristics of the desirable leader. They are, in Gandhi's terms, empathy, fearlessness, sacrifice and readiness to suffer, responsibility, accountability, spirit of service and practice of action without attachment. The smart leader, according to Gandhiji, is a karma yogi.

Smart governance is decentralized governance with least concentration of power. It is grassroots empowerment, and involves people's participation in decision making. It is more than majority rule. It is moral governance. It is more than self-governance; it is good governance. It is value driven and not guided by vote bank politics. People's participation presumes public's full awareness of their functions and actions and their consequences. This becomes possible only in a community where "face-to-face" associations exist and are promoted.

From Gandhian perspective smart technology is not measured in terms of its sophistication but in terms of its mastery and control by people. People should have control over technology and not the other way round. Technology should serve the needs of the people without being their master controlling their life. Economist Joseph Schumpeter (1942) eloquently stated that, capitalism in revolutionizing periodically the economic structures by new innovations is engaged in a continuous process of "creative destruction" – destroying the past with a promise for the future. When men lose control over their innovations, as Gandhiji saw it what we would have instead is "destructive creativity", which is perilous to mankind. This is what the Mahatma feared and was greatly worried about. Smart technology in Gandhian terms is more than mere instrumentation. It is smart *use* of technology.

Smart people are people with human face. They are people who are happy, kind and compassionate. They are less selfish and more altruistic. According to Gandhiji, man is a composite of beast and human. The beast in man drives him to indulge in sensory gratification and makes him selfish. Man gets mired in competition, exploitation and consequent violence. The human in man moves him away from self-serving to serving others, from being selfish to altruistic. As Gandhiji (1922) puts it, "man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men" (p. 58).

Smart City Development

The emphasis of the four-P model for smart city development from the Gandhian perspective is on *people* and not on *funds*. It would start with the preamble, "we the people". It is development *of* the people,

by the people and for the people. Public participation is participation of the people through their government. Smart city plans evolve out of their effort. Private participation is the participation by the people on their own, who wish to be involved in the city's developmental process with altruistic motivation. It is those who actually build the smart city. All the development is for the people living in the city, who are the main stake holders. Their inputs and involvement are indispensable as a primary concern. Thus, the three Ps represent people in their different roles, all geared to uphold public good. Finally, it is participation by people at all the three levels. Participation involves conscious involvement and not forced presence. There can be no conflict in the Gandhian model between public good and private pursuit and individual participation. There is a profound philosophical basis for their reflexivity in Gandhi's thought.

The goal of smart city is not material affluence, but wholesome happiness – physical, mental and spiritual well-being. It follows that the development of smart cities may not be measured by the skyscrapers and the roads built, and the amount of concrete used to build them, but by the ideas that help to build a community of citizens content and happy.

The smart city needs therefore to attend to the requirements of not only the body, but also the mind and the spirit of its citizens. What is obvious is that it calls for environmental friendly layouts, disease free, clean and aesthetic surroundings, health enhancing facilities and hospitals to treat the sick, and schools and related facilities for the development of the mind. What is less obvious, however, is that it is equally fundamental to have cultural and other associated activities to serve the spirit and give the person opportunities to participate as a member of the community with his individuality intact. This gives the human face to the community.

Self-sufficiency is a necessary ingredient and the hallmark of the smart city. Educational and cultural facilities are intended to develop the human side of the citizens. These would provide for the necessary personal and social needs of the smart city its citizens and the community. Clean surroundings and healthy physical environment provide the necessary conditions for healthy living, the breathing room, the lung space, for the community. In addition, city life needs human face and social space.

City community is different in essentials from urban crowd. The crowd is amorphous and unarticulated. The community is the place where individuals consciously and intelligently participate in conjoint activities and collectively reap and share the consequences for the benefit of all. Such a community is implied in Gandhian concept of *sarvodaya*. Gandhiji's vision of village republics is a move toward the *sarvodaya* state. In Gandhiji's view, *sarvodaya* state is possible only when the rural ethos pervades community life. Rural ethos fosters face-to-face associations and renders the individual with his own identity salient. Smart, in short, stands for *sarvodaya*.

Central to the concept of *sarvodaya* is the conviction that "the good of the individual is contained in the good of all." Gandhi's insistence of the purity of means is crucial in any developmental exercise. Gandhiji asserted that "means are after all everything" (*Young India*, 17.7.1924). In his *Hind Swaraj* he likens the means to a seed, the end to a tree and emphasizes that "there is some inviolable connection between the means and end as there is between the seed and the tree" (ch. xvi).

Providing urban resources and the attendant conveniences and comfort to rural areas and bringing rural ethos to urban living are the two necessary steps for bridging the rural-urban divide. Dr. Abdul Kalam's well-known concept, implied in "Provision of Urban facilities in Rural Areas (PURA), is an attempt to address the former. The smart city concept is a *smart* move in the direction of addressing the latter. *Smart city is the urban community place with authentic human face and ample lung and social space.*

In the context of development, if large scale urbanization is an inevitable and irreversible process, as it seems to be, the Gandhian slogan would be "make the city a village". There is no opposition between the concepts 'city' and 'village'. The essence of village, according to Gandhi, is not the sheer size of the

population, but its ethos. Once the city reflects in its community the rural ethos, it becomes the smart city. Smart city, as an epitome of *sarvodaya*, is a place where people with human face live as self-conscious individuals with dignity and self-respect and work for the welfare of all. In the concept of *sarvodaya* Gandhi has brought out a synthesis between “I” and the “other”, and shown how what is good for the community is also good for the individual.

The issues are simple and straight forward. How may we link cities and villages? How may we bridge the rural-urban divide? There is much we can learn from Gandhiji on these matters. We need in-depth studies, focused research including empirical investigations to bring clarity to Gandhian ideas and translate them into action plans in the current socio-economic environment.

Let us reflect a bit more on this, summarizing what was said above. Rapid urbanization results in problems beyond sanitation and health, education and employment, which can be remedied relatively easily by conventional means. There are other problems that call for more resolute and creative ways of resolution. Crowding in cities causes congestion of the mind. Congested minds not only cause abuse, cause conflict, and split violence, but also lead to alienation. In crowded cities the person gets lost; he finds himself dehumanized. Dehumanized, the society becomes stale, insipid and amoral. Stale and insipid, the society becomes pedestrian, unimaginative and a mechanical maze, where the individual loses his identity and becomes a wheel in the machine. Humans become robots. Worse they return to their beastly origins. The urge for altruism gives way to selfishness. Selfish, man becomes dangerous, ever hungry to exploit rather than help others.

Where does the remedy lie? In the Gandhian model, the cure consists in decongesting the mind. Decongestion of the mind occurs when appropriate cultural space is provided. Cultural space exists in communities where face-to-face associations are in place. How may we establish face-to-face associations and create caring communities in the place of an amorphous crowd? Here is the relevance of Gandhiji’s proposals for constructive work, his ideas on rural development, economic equality, avoidance of wastage of resources, the concept of Trusteeship, decentralized administration and people’s participation in it, and his advocacy of basic education which connects classrooms with community.

‘Economic equality’ is one of the selected eighteen items of Gandhiji’s Constructive Programme. He called it “the master-key to non-violent independence”. He explained it thus: “Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means leveling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation’s wealth on the one hand, and leveling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other” (CWMG, 75:158-9).

Gandhiji is equally emphatic about avoiding wastage. “There should be no wasteful expenditure. Money is not the only wealth for us. Every useful commodity is real wealth. We may not throw away even water. If one glass of water would do, why take two? – We may not overeat a delicious dish.” (CWMG, 71:240). “It is also theft if one receives anything which one does not really need. The fine truth at the bottom of this principle is that Nature provides just enough and no more for our daily need” (CWMG, 36:400).

The Concept of Trusteeship is very relevant at the present time. It is more than corporate social responsibility. It means in Gandhiji’s words, “Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for society” (CWMG, 75:259).

There are two other ingredients in Mahatma’s conception of development – self-sufficiency and ecological integrity. Smart city, or smart village for that matter, must aim at self-sufficiency. If it cannot achieve it on its own, the city may become a part of a cluster which together may achieve self-sufficiency with regard to basic needs that include food, shelter, water, and energy. Again, whatever development that

is aimed at must be ecologically sensitive. We hear a lot of discussion about developing communications, infrastructure, industry and so on; but there is little discussion in the way of maintaining ecological balance. A lot of ecological destruction has already damaged our cities and villages. We need special attention to rectify it. Again, a smart city is a city that will depend on renewable resources to generate energy rather than those that are used extensively with full awareness that they are limited and not renewable and that for most part, their use is polluting the atmosphere. Under these circumstances, in Gandhi's conception of a smart city, we would have a city that aims at energy self-sufficiency, energy that is not polluting, energy that we can generate locally.

Let me conclude by quoting what the Mahatma described as his "dream of free India." "I see free India self-governing and self-supporting, with peace abroad and trade and communications well established, *with great cities in which busy men and women dwell contended as bees in humming hives, and with a chain of linked villages happy in their home industries.* Women shall pay their part equally with men in this new, free India." He concludes: "Then to the clear, blue heavens, her banner wide unruffled, let the New India face the future and the world" (CWMG, 48:353-354). May the Smart City initiative be an attempt to realize Mahatma's vision of free India."

What is sketched above is a Gandhian conceptual frame for the smart city initiative. The logistics of developing smart cities need to be worked out within that framework. This calls for intensive study of Gandhi on the one hand and empirical studies of vibrant villages that truly reflect rural ethos on the other.

It is very appropriate that the task of developing smart cities is placed in the hands of Sri Venkaiah Naidu, who in his earlier stint was Union Minister for Rural Development. Sri Naidu has indeed strong village roots and his life style abundantly reflects rural ethos.

ELECTORAL REFORMS, POLITICAL PARTIES AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

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Reforms in the electoral system of the country are not going to be exercised in isolation. The Election Commission, Political parties and the Parliament have to accept changes in their functioning if reforms are to be of any meaning. Of course, there are numerous and oft repeated proposals of reform. Not all of them merit attention. Some of them are held out mostly because they have become fashionable. Like the Recall of the elected representative. A proposal of this kind is simply not implementable in our country – unlike in Switzerland where it is practised albeit rarely – the signatures of those who are a party to a petition of recall cannot be verified or authenticated at all. Likewise the idea of introducing the proportional representation in lieu of the present first-past-the-post method is fraught with possibility of cure being worse than the disease. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in an interview to Michael Brecher shot down the proposal saying “I can think of nothing more conducive to creating feeble ministry and a feeble government than this (proposal)”. He was right absolutely. If proportional representation was to be adopted here, the story of Pakistan’s instability would have repeated here as well. The Congress party which has been the main ruling party would not have managed Single- Party government at all even in the Nehruvian days. In fact this party has never received 50% or more number of popular votes in any general elections to the Lok Sabha.

What, then, we require to do is to impose certain conditions through law and the Constitution to check the misuse and abuse of the loosely structured provisions and institutions related to the elections. First of all, the election commission should be given the power to register and de – register political parties which wish to contest elections. No independent candidate should be permitted to contest the elections: if anybody wishes to do so he must be required to open a party to suit his convenience and get it registered properly. The parties which do seek registration with the Election Commission have to necessarily fulfill a number of simple conditions. They must have a well – publicised document governing their structure and functioning through democratic and open method. Their finances must be annually audited and thrown open for public scrutiny. Their nominees for electoral positions anywhere should be such that their credibility to represent the public is acceptable (No criminal charges, no outstanding public loan, no pendency or evasion of taxes, sufficiently educated and having a minimum of social/public services).

This above condition is not difficult to enforce by the Election Commission if small changes are made in the Representation of people’s Act. However to allow time to scrutinize the credentials of candidates the parties should be asked to file their nominations sufficiently in advance, along with possible alternatives. Rajaji had once advocated that parties should nominate their candidates five years in advance! One of the advantages of this novel suggestion was that one would work hard at least five years prior to the elections. Secondly, a mad rush for getting party tickets by aspirants must be avoided. If general elections are to be held at regular and specific time, the above suggestion may work out. However, if in an unseen circumstance a sudden election is ordered, suitable modifications could be made in the requirements. The Election Commission should be empowered to call for nominations in general anytime. The Constitution of India does not specify anywhere that we have to follow the British model of parliamentary democracy. Yet, we are doing it, without following the spirit of it. Party-loyalty is something conspicuous by its absence. Splits and marriages of convenience are often observed in the making of and functioning of ministries. The number of ministries is unlimited. Often political horse- trading as witnessed in Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Goa, Bihar, UP or Haryana has brought a bad name to democracy in our country. One or two dissident members of a ministry are enough to bring down the government of the day.

To check this prospect a suggestion may be made that as in Switzerland or in the US federal system, in our country, too, we can fix the number of ministries. In Switzerland this restriction is made through Constitutional provision while in the US this objective is achieved through Congressional Law. We have proliferated our ministries to 75 in a state like Uttar Pradesh, 70 in the central Government, and in Meghalaya almost all the MLAs of the ruling (or even the opposition) party had a chance of becoming a minister as if by a method of rotation through changes in the composition of the ruling alliance.

To overcome this problem, first of all the number and nature of ministries need to be mentioned in the constitution or by Law. There is no justification to have 75 ministries in one state and ten in another. Depending upon the size and specific requirements of a state, the ministers may be instituted without scope for manipulation. Secondly, the Central Government should necessarily have only those ministers who deal the subjects allocated to the centre by the Constitution. There should be no place for cabinet ministers at the centre for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development. Thirdly, there should be developed consciously among the leading political parties the practice of setting up a shadow- cabinet or an alternative government in the waiting. If an MP or MLA is put in charge of a subject of a ministry he may train himself in all respects to tackle the subject efficiently either as an opposition member or a ruling/treasury bench member. What we witness now –a days, however, if anybody can become any Minister and fail to make any impression Politically or even Constitutionally the government of the day is answerable to the Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha. There is no mention anywhere in the Constitution that the government should be made up of only one party. So, sometimes, a coalition or alliance of parties have formed the government. And some other times, even a ‘minority’ party (meaning not having a majority number of MPs on the floor of the House) has run the government. Smt. Indira Gandhi and Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao were adept at this practice. However, for want of an assured majority, many a Governor has dismissed ministries at the state level. Defections, re-arrangements of parties in alliance etc., have been witnessed at various levels. Though immoral these have been justified as being politically correct and Constitutionally tenable. To avoid this unseemly spectacle a suggestion can be made which looks unconventional but answers to political and constitutional needs. This is to allocate years/months of rule to the major parties which are represented in the Lok Sabha or Vidhana Sabha. If a party has won 55%, 60%,75% of the seats in the House, it can function as ruling party for 55%, 60%, 75% of the tenure of the House. This is even more relevant and meaningful when no party has secured 50% of the seats. The parties aspiring or dying to form government would make unethical compromises just to stay put in power because of uncertainty of number. Instead of this risky exercise, they can all form governments, one after another, for a reasonably fixed period without let or hindrance. After all one has witnessed in the case of Karnataka a combination of Congress and JD(S) ruling for some twenty months followed by a combined governments JD(S)and BJP for the next twenty months. If so why not allow JD(S), Congress and BJP twenty months each to rule the state without being thrown out by the “opposition”?

If one examines the electoral manifestos of all political parties, he finds that most of them say the same thing : clean(i.e. corruption- free) administration, roads, hospitals, education, water and electricity! If the Congress and BJP in words and their practices were to be examined with respect to economic policy, telecom policy, foreign policy, defence, Kashmir, Telangana, administrative and judicial reforms, one would find a ‘virtual identity ‘of views or standpoints!

If ‘coming to power’ is all that there is to election, democracy cannot survive for long in its true spirit. Corruption in the form of desire to occupy seats of power, would spoil the entire body politik. It has been truly well said that while power corrupts, lack of power corrupts absolutely. The aim of the elections should be a sportive competition to serve the public. And elections should not be the be-all and end –all of democracy. True democracy lies in the spirit of accommodation, discussion and healthy cooperation between the opposing parties. An alert public opinion, strong judiciary and independent media are indeed the touch- stone of democracy. Not electoral outcomes.

(Summary of a lecture delivered at CPS on November 19, 2012)

NATIONAL WATER POLICY

Prof. R. Vaidyanadhan

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India, as well as many countries in the world, is passing through a Water Crisis,” partly due to increasing demand from a burgeoning population, partly due to erratic distribution of rainfall in different parts of the world due to natural causes and partly due to misuse or indiscriminate over-exploitation of this natural resource. Government of India has a National Water Policy. But unfortunately there are not only lacunae in them in terms of regulations specified but also difficulties in implementing the policy. It does not include problems connected with some of the important variations in the quantum and quality of water resources from surface and ground water.

Sri. Rajendra Singh (a Magsaysay Awardee), General Secretary, Tarun Bharat Sanga, who had rejuvenated some of the extinct tanks in Rajasthan with people’s cooperation, has proposed a new NATIONAL RIVER POLICY. He is trying to create interest in persons in the know of the problem and possible solutions, in different parts of the country. In this connection he initiated a Group Discussion on “Rejuvenation of Rivers System in South India” and “National River Policy,” in Bengaluru on the 2nd and 3rd August, 2013. This was conducted by the Geological Society of India, Bengaluru, a premier Earth Science Society in the country, founded in 1958. About 60 participants drawn from different walks of life – political, administrative, scientific, NGOs and stakeholders attended the same.

The 4 sessions were presided over by eminent persons including former Chief Justice of India Sri. M.N. Venkatachalaiah, Capt. Raja Rao, Former Secretary, Water Resources, Government of Karnataka and Dr. Ashok Dalavi, IAS, Deputy Director General, UADAI, Bengaluru. Justice Santosh Hegde, Former Lokayukta was the Chief Guest.

There were a number of presentations from invited scientists, administrators, past and present, and activists in this field on the first day. This included problems related to depletion and pollution of water resources, both surface and ground water, the efforts of the Governments in the southern States to mitigate the deleterious effects of the dwindling resources and the rapacious onslaught on these resources by a nexus of politician-bureaucrat-industrialists in many cases. For example the pollution of streams and ground water by the effluents from the tanneries in Vellore district in Tamil Nadu, large quantities of sand mining from the river bed in Chalakudpuzha in Kerala lowering the river bed by an average of 6-8 metres within about a decade, the artificial drought created by diverting the waters for sugar cultivation to a large extent in Maharashtra driving poor farmers to migrate to urban areas, with facts and figures, were all shocking revelations. With many earthen small check dams across the tributaries of Godavari and Krishna, in the two drainage basins, the sediment supply to the rivers in the downstream considerably reduced with the result the progradation (advancing) of deltas of Krishna and Godavari rivers has caused a little shrinking in the delta front and causing receding of the coast line, causing imbalance in the ecosystem there. As a student in the early school days at Vijayawada for over a decade, off and on, I used to see families living in boats in the canals and transporting coconuts and plantain, besides others. Now a major part of these canals look like conduits for the sewage drains from the adjoining settlements.

A realistic picture was also presented of the conflicting, but genuine concern of different users of the water resource from a dam. For example, where multi-purpose dams are built for (i) irrigation through canals, (ii) hydroelectric power, (iii) flood control, (iv) navigation and (v) recreation, an increase or decrease in the height of the dam demanded by adjoining States, where the river with all its main tributaries is in one State and canals in the adjoining State, wherein the river joins the sea (in the case of Mullapayar dam – Kerala and Tamil Nadu; Alamatti dam – Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh) the following is the general scenery in a hypothetical case.

Farmers downstream would like increase in the height of the dam, so that they continue to get water in the lean years of rainfall as well. Where reduction is demanded, as the existing one is weak or in a tectonically hazardous region, causing damage to settlements in the upstream, power generation will be affected. Increasing the height of the dam also increases the bed load in the reservoir, reducing the total volume of water held over a long period. Unlike in the case of tanks it is not possible to de-silt the increasing accumulation of sediments in the reservoir. This will also disturb the profile of the river causing soil erosion in the upstream. In the years of unexpected copious rainfall in order to save the dam, when water is suddenly released, it affects the crops and settlements on the banks of the river in the downstream. Similar effects can be expected in navigation, particularly in the case of large perennial rivers, and recreation, where hotels have been established for tourists along the edges of the water spread in the reservoir part.

The panel discussion on the 2nd day dealt with the Draft Policy on rivers and decided to convene similar meetings in the southern States and come out with a working action plan taking into consideration special problems in each of the States caused either due to natural processes or anthropogenic agencies. It is hoped that before long a comprehensive policy on the rivers will be made so that action will be undertaken both by the Governments at the Centre as well as the States to rejuvenate the rivers and tanks, so that the future generation may have better resources at its command to sustain in the years to come.

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Rejuvenation of Surface Water Resources Of India: Potential, Problems and Prospects

Editor: Prof. R. Vaidyanadhan

(Special Publication-3, Geological Society of India, Bengaluru 2014)

The subject of rejuvenation of surface water resources is very much relevant and apt at present, considering the problems faced on account of water scarcity, resulting in droughts in many parts of India. The above publication edited by Prof. R.Vaidyanadhan, deals with rejuvenation of rivers, their potentials, problems, perspectives, and initiatives in the states like Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal, A.P., Tamil Nadu and also regions like North-Western India, Indus and Ganges river basins, North Eastern region and East Central India.

There is a lot of awareness in public about the vagaries of monsoon occurrence, every year in some parts of the country (western and southern parts mainly) and devastating effects of floods sometimes occurring almost simultaneously in other parts (particularly eastern & northern India). This complex subject has been dealt with relevant statistics with suggestions to conserve the most precious natural resource i.e. water and also dealt with geographical features of the region, types of soils, climate, rainfall which have a bearing on the run off coefficient and discharge of the rivers.

The present need is how best we can preserve our water bodies (reservoirs, lakes and tanks etc.) and augment the surface water to the optimum utilization and the conjunctive supply to fields and ultimate goal of transferring the river flows from surplus basins to deficit basins by linking the rivers, if not on a large scale, but by local linkages. This aspect has been dealt in a lucid manner. The contents of the articles enable in arriving at National River Policy which is the need of the hour to meet the ever increasing demands for water for power (electricity), industries and domestic needs apart from ensuring the requirement for irrigation which is major. Indiscriminate exploitation of ground water creates hazards.

The alarming situation that 40% area of Maharashtra State, and about 30% in combined A.P. (Rayalaseema & parts of Telangana) and parts of Gujarat & Odisha, reel under drought conditions almost every year resulting in suicides of farmers has been highlighted in various articles. Several methods (catchment area treatment etc.) are also suggested to obviate this problem. Thus, the publication contains valuable and useful information and statistics for policy makers, geologists, irrigation engineers and sociologists and all those interested in public welfare.

**- Shri U. Narayana Raju,
Irrigation Engineer (Retd.) Govt. of A.P.**

A Noble Award?

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How does the Nobel Committee so often come short choosing the right candidates for its Peace Prize? One of its past recipients, the former Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Anan was indicted in the oil for food scam by the Independent Inquiry Committee headed by Paul Volcker. More recently President Obama was astonished to receive the prize early in his first Presidency, for no real achievement at all.

In conferring the Nobel Peace Prize last year on Kailash Satyarthi the Nobel Peace Committee has once again rewarded easily contestable achievements overlooking or ignoring some very real ones from India that deserve such a Prize much more - the kind that should make the world sit up, notice and learn from. One that immediately comes to mind is the astonishingly robust response system that India has put in place after a super cyclone hit Odisha claiming thousands of lives in 1999. Since then the East Coast of India has survived two similar ones - the Hudhud being the latest- with so few loss of lives. The mission that freed India of polio in a porous neighbourhood still rife with the disease is another remarkable achievement that has gone unnoticed by the Nobel Peace Committee.

While the Prize has gone to the UNICEF, the European Union and Médecins Sans Frontières in the past, the Nobel Committee has either failed to recognize or deliberately ignored two institutions that zealously protect the human and democratic rights of over a billion people - India's Supreme Court and the Election Commission. By awarding prizes to the likes of Satyarthi the Nobel committee has once again chosen to ignore the many good things that are worthy of global recognition in this country while focusing on the sensational and the unverifiable.

The only other Indian recipient of the Prize, Mother Teresa richly deserved it for her selfless and verifiable work carried out quietly over decades. Yet her noble efforts were widely known and much admired within our country long before the Nobel came her way. Contrast this with Kailash Satyarthi. The sheer anonymity of his existence and his activities in India and the widespread ignorance of his now larger than life persona in the country contrast sharply with the image he has so assiduously cultivated over three decades, as a 'bold crusader' against child labour in places where it apparently mattered most and uncritically so - the West. His backers include a sprinkling of US law makers.

Such recognition got Satyarthi several awards in the West culminating in the biggest prize of them all, the Nobel, seemingly grand even when shared. The truth is that the Prize stands much diminished by the one to whom it has been given and even more so by the laughable and contrived assertion of the Norwegians who gave it - that this one in some way makes up, in fact adequately compensates, for what had not unfortunately been given to Gandhi in his time.

In a country starved of Nobel Prizes, even one so ill deserved puffs national pride while elevating someone claiming improbable and unverified success, to demigod status. All this and more with hardly any check of what Satyarthi had done to deserve such honour and without determining if indeed there is any truth behind his claim of having brought 80,000 children out of virtual slavery or that he now works in more than 140 countries.

In the eighties and nineties Kailash Satyarthi, along with many others like him, including several serving government officers - got on to the children-in-distress bandwagon with NGOs that sourced funds from many western charitable organizations, governments and bleeding heart individuals. Apart from

the generous funding they received, it also enabled them to plug into influential networks that had the ear of policy makers in Europe and the United States, benefiting them personally in diverse ways. Did their work improve the lot of the children whose cause they purported to espouse? Hardly!

In a landmark ILO study, the statistician and former student of Amartya Sen, the late Professor DP Chaudhri analyzed data across several census' in his work *Dynamic Profile of Child Labour in India* published by the ILO . It brought out that child labour however visible and ugly was by the nineties already in steady decline across much of India. As Professor Chaudhri asserted, so long as the State keeps plugging away at education this problem would cease to exist sooner than we expect it to. Even Satyarti acknowledges a decline in the incidence of child labour, smartly implying his stellar role in this fall.

In its response to the sad plight of the country's children, the Indian government despite all its shortcomings has also been reacting to one of its most trenchant critics, the late Professor Myron Weiner of MIT. His powerful well researched work *The State and the Child in India - Child Labour and Education Policy in Comparative Perspective* made child labour the problem to lick in the early 1990s. Since then India has instituted a slew of measures that have together improved retention rates in schools, not the least because of an attractive midday meal scheme. The ongoing drive to provide toilets in schools will further contribute to an improvement in school retention rates especially of the girl child. Couple these with heightened public awareness of what governments are expected to do thanks to the media, Information Technology and the power conferred on citizens through the widely used right to Information Act, the performance of public institutions is only getting better.

What one forgets is how bad things were in 1947 when India got its freedom—the country had a literacy figure of less than 12% then – and how much they have improved since. One can always throw harrowing statistics at India – the world's largest illiterate population, the most number of malnourished etc- but it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that India needs to be compared with continents rather than countries. The country has over a billion plus people, more than all of Africa in a fraction of its area. In all the years it has been free India has never had a famine and uniquely amongst developing countries never faced the danger of a coup or a revolution. Instead, it has sustained a democracy that much smaller countries have failed to do. Every institution India is known for - e.g. its IITs, its IIMs – is a product of government intervention and continuing support.

In a little over twenty years since India began its economic reforms hundreds of millions of Indians have been brought out of poverty and into the middle class and poverty still awful is down to a fraction of what it was and falling. All this indicate that systematic and sustained interventions by the State, however unsexy, are far better at achieving sustainable results in reducing child labour than headline grabbing ones of 'raid and rescue' such as Satyarti's.

While one cannot expect much from the Nobel Peace Committee we can only hope India does not get carried away by this rather undeserved award to Satyarti. Much rather, the world should join this country in applauding the efforts of the likes of Anand Kumar of Super 30 fame. At least he takes in the poorest and most disadvantaged children in the state of Bihar year after year without fanfare and prepares to get them into the best India has - the Indian Institutes of Technology. What a powerful message that is to motivate parents to give their children an education they can build their lives on. Now that is something to sit up and take notice!

(The views expressed are personal.)

About the author

Dr. Uday Balakrishnan was Director in charge of the national programme to eliminate child labour in the mid nineties. During his tenure much of the country were covered through a Government of India initiative which included bridge schools to enable children removed from work to get into mainstream education. These provided midday meals to all children placed in them, and also awarded stipends to their parents. This initiative precedes the all India spread of mid day meals as well as the the MGNREGS. Additionally, to bring about a convergence of different ministries - e.g. education, women and child, rural development – to eliminate child labour, Dr. Balakrishnan contributed to the setting up of the National Authority on the Elimination of Child Labour. At his behest the ILO commissioned the study of census data over several census' to evolve informed responses towards tackling the problem of child labour. As Chairman of the Sub Committee of the Ministry of Labour that made the ILO's global programme, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour by far the most successful one globally. Dr. Uday Balakrishnan retired, as Member Postal Services Board was contributed towards making Rural Postal Life Insurance the largest of its kind in the world covering millions of poor in India's rural areas. Dr. Balakrishnan is currently Visiting Faculty at the Centre for Contemporary Studies, Indian Institute of Science – Bangalore.

Emotional Secrets in Musical Constructs

Dr. T.V. Sairam I.R.S., (Retd)

President, Nada Centre for Music Therapy

Emotion plays an important role in our music appreciation. It is the emotion in music which makes it attractive and habit-forming for the listeners. The emotion in music is also known to heal its listeners from their various mental problems and deficiencies for centuries. Right from the days of Plato, music is known for its healing role, though only of late – from the world war aftermaths, music has turned into an exclusive discipline called ‘music therapy’.

When we talk of emotion, we all know that music may sound joyful, sad or angry depending on its contents and tempo. For the purpose of this article, we would analyse the sadness in a musical structure. Let us take the piano music to understand this aspect of music which emits sadness.

Secret of Sadness found in Music:

The Western world for very long time thought it is the intervals that decide the impact of music. We have three forms: major chords, minor chords and also diminished chords which affect our emotional experience. For instance sadness is reflected in minor chords of the piano. They are usually termed as the “melancholic cousins of the major chords”. The minor chords are long known for their tonal impact. They sound quite sad even as you practise these chords in your piano or guitar! They sound introvert and mellow as compared to the major chords. The great composers of the western world have therefore, made use of their emotional impact and produced innumerable masterpieces which are the sweetest songs that tell of saddest thoughts. Further, it is the minor third intervals in the minor chords that sound more introvert and mellow.

Theoretically, every major chord is built out of a major third and a small third. The minor chords are built the other way round. They are formed by a minor 3rd and a major 3rd on top of it. So, you basically switch the order of the major chords to create the required sobriety! For instance, C Major is constituted by C, E and G, whereas C Minor is formed by C, Eb and G so as to add a tinge of melancholy!

Apart from this, we also have in the western system, what we call as “diminished chord” which also enhances such a mood-changing impact. For instance, let us again take the example of C Major. When we intentionally diminish both the middle note of the chord (E in C major) and the upper note the chord (G in C Major) in half a tone, we form a diminished chord. The result of this effort by pianists is that they are able to create the unstable chord, containing lots of tension which can easily affect the listener’s mind. Thus C Diminished chord is formed by C-Eb and Gb, that is two small 3rds (Eb and Gb) close to each other, producing intense feelings.

Now what is the impact of sad songs? Firstly, they provoke intense feelings, triggering memory, making the listener nostalgic. It should be remembered that the sad songs do not create just sadness, but sadness with certain beauty that can be savoured or relished by its listeners! This helps listeners to a pleasant simulation of thought feelings, which remain inexpressible. Following the law called “similia”, which stands for the concept, like cures like, it is the sad tinge in music that works as a cure for those who are saddened by events and relationships. A feeling of consolation as someone is undergoing the same sense of isolation and tension is guaranteed by such musical forms. They also help in unburdening the unwanted emotional baggage in the listener’s personality. Though there are millions of songs which can be grouped as ‘sad songs’, one of the recent ones I admired was Rahat Fateh Ali’s ‘Saaiyaan mere’. Minor scales are also thus known for their impact in Indian music. However Indian classical music places less emphasis on the use of minor chords and instead it is the right combination of tones (or semi-tones) that can infuse

melancholy to a particular raga. Ragas like Asavari and Subhapanthavarali are the burning examples of ragas that express melancholy. Ragas like Charukesi, Hindolam (Malkauns), Jagan Mohini, Kapi, Kharaharapriya, Madhuvanti, Marga Hindolam, Mayamalavagowla, Nandanamakriya, Purvikalyani, Revati, Ritigowla, Shivrangani, Srirangani etc have been successfully tested by the volunteers of Nada Centre for Music Therapy, a pioneering organization devoted to popularizing music therapy in India on the survivors of major calamities in India such as tsunami and cloudbursts in recent years.

Joy in Music

We all know that the physical state of joy reflects thrill or faster heartbeats. Lot of exuberance and extrovert characteristics in the happy man's personality. All these are reflected in music which give joy to us. Fast paced, peppy music or those which mimic squeals or shouts with joyful lyrics and played or sung in higher volumes are the typical music that reflect joyful moods and create the same in its listeners. Among the contemporary artistes, one can find joyful beats and rhythms in Calvin Harris (Feat- Ne-Yo- Let's Go number for instance). In carnatic ragas, we have Bhupalam and Bowli which depict moods of the morning – fresh and joyful to enter into a new waking! Brindavana Saranga depicts the moods of midday-laced with joy, peace, devotion and majesty – a recipe for being happy and healthy! Chandrakauns, Desh, Gauri Manohari, Hamsa Nandi, Kanada, Kadanakudoohalam, Nagaswarali, are the other beautiful Indian ragas, which are capable of infusing joy and peace to its listeners.

Angry Tunes and Songs

Anger in music is reflected through the “diminished” chords which we had mentioned earlier. By diminishing the stable notes and making them unstable and tense, the musician is able to create certain sense of instability in the minds of the listeners as well. The same “similia” principle works here too. The people who are prone to anger are attracted to such tunes, which like joyful ones are also fast-paced. They are however more ‘growling’ than ‘singing’! They depict distorted voices and shrill screaming which produce fear or hatred in listeners. Percussion of this kind of music also produces a feeling of venting pent-up anger. The odd sounds of this music as in many a metal genre of music do produce such impact which help many of its listeners –especially the younger ones- overcome the lurking anger and frustrations, caused by high expectations in life and from people around. Modern lyrics such as “Break you” by Lamb of Gods in Heavy Metal format and verses such as “you taught me hate, I’ll teach you fear” etc feed the medicine of anger to those who are already angry. This helps them pleasantly overcome their anger and disgust. Coming to the Carnatic ragas, Abheri, Atana, Bhairav and a host of other ragas, which reflect anger or disgust or ridicule can be used for healing similar feelings in patients. While doing so, it is advisable to incorporate fast or irregular tempo which reflects the physical aspects of anger. Nada Centre for Music Therapy, a pioneering organization devoted to music therapy in India since 2004, has done intense research experiments on ragas such as *Chakravakam*, *Devagandhari*, *Panthuvarali*, *Punnagavarali* and *Shanmukhapriya* to study their beneficial impact on the anger-prone people.

TEACHING CULTURED DISCOURSE

Dr. Mrs. Prema Nandakumar

The recent elections have revealed the importance of cultured discourse. Cultural discourse is one thing and cultured discourse is another. The former deals with histories, traditions, rituals, art and all that. It can be taught in classes, learnt by sitting for hours in a library or wandering through a land interacting with the people. The latter is learnt by us in our childhood by watching ideal personalities in the family and outside world who inspire us by their example, by the way they work, talk and move around.

In earlier generations, cultured discourse was learnt by simply observation and an occasional corrective from the elder in the family. Seventy years ago, it was automatic for us to bend before elders in salutation if we met them for the first time, and whenever we met them after a little interval. My grandfather would say that if you do namaskaram to elders, even if he dislikes you, it will turn into a blessing, such is the power of humility. He would speak of Vedanta Desika's work, 'Anjali Vaibhavam', how 'Anjali' means "turns to water", and that the heart of the person receiving the honour would melt immediately with love. These days this has been sadly replaced by hand shakes and hugs which are a western import.

Recently the world saw how the PM-elect of India did namaskaram to the steps of the Parliament before going up. This is exactly what is done in temples even today. There is an interesting legend associated with the temple steps which are referred to as 'Kulasekaran Padi'. It was the desire of Kulasekara Alvar, the Chera king to lie as a step in a temple so that he could watch the Lord going across in procession.

"Lord Venkateswara who removes our misery
That keeps entangling us! I would love to be
The doorstep of your temple on which walk
Men and gods, and watch your coral-red lips."

Such briefings now and then from the elders in a Hindu household made for physical discipline in various ways. "Do not throw away food, the rice will go and complain to Mother Ganga" was a familiar admonition that taught me never to waste food. "Do not leave the plate unwashed after eating food", was a command that we dare not disobey as children. Naturally, even today not for me piled up dishes in the kitchen sink that is a familiar (and ugly) scene today in many households!

Just as the outer discipline was instituted without taking recourse to punishment except in extreme cases, the growing mind also was helped to blossom in a healthy manner. I belonged to a traditional household that had quite a few children. Come evening, we had to repeat certain Tamil verses that marked a daily time-table for us. While we had Tirukkural in the school, our uncle made us learn 'Aathi Soodi', 'Nanneri', 'Moothurai' and the rest. Seven decades have passed by but the village pial, the evening twilight, and the children reciting have not faded away. **Ulaganeethi** was a must and as it was rhythmical, we shouted ourselves hoarse reciting the poem. "Odhaamal orunaalum irukkavendaam"!

"Never allow a day to pass without studies.
Do not speak ill of others;
Never forget your mother.
Do not rub shoulders with the deceitful.
Do not go to forbidden areas;
Do not keep complaining thereafter.
Ever, forever hail Subramania,
The rider on the peacock."

It is a short poem of one hundred and four lines. One need not study tomes of books on self-control and attend special lectures on how to lead a moral life. All is contained in these lines and if they are allowed to sear into a person's heart, an ideal citizen would be born. Whenever a temptation to take the wrong path rises, a line from this work would scotch it immediately. Watching the recent Indian elections, I marveled at the manner in which unconditioned, indisciplined mind can commit mistakes and idiocies for a minute's appreciative snigger from an equally curmudgeonish audience.

For instance, we read that the mother of the then Chief Minister of Gujarat who lived in her small house, went to the polling booth in an autorickshaw and cast her vote. Since most of my mother-grandmother group had done the same thing, we were happy to know that the lady was so self-reliant, had no wish to ask for a car from her son nor had she cared for the trappings of officialdom. Unfortunately, within two days, we read an open letter from a Congressman who wished to speak of the lady's son (the Chief Minister) as a heartless son in a bid to tarnish his image. It was addressed to Narendra Modi: "Your mother is like my mother. I have immense respect for her. I may not be as resourceful as you are, but I would request you to allow me to provide her all the necessary comforts of life according to my capacity." If Rashid Alvi was trying to insult, the attack failed. He did not realize that living a simple life linked to high thinking has always been the Indian ideal. Giving up luxuries is automatically praised by the tradition.

This incident was one of those many that ultimately cost the Congress Party its defeat. Which is very unfortunate, for I have the highest regard for the institution which once upon a time, long, long ago, gave us Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, and of course, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Come to think of it, the speeches and incidents of this Election need scientific analysis to find out wherein our system of education has lost its moorings, settling down into the Serbonian Bog of unbridled thought, speech and action. Shall we begin again with Ulaganeethi and recite, "Do not speak of what you do not know!"

(Courtesy : The School (Bangalore))

THE 'PURITY SYNDROME'

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN A SECULAR AGE

Prof. Sachidananda Mohanty
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The quest for the 'Origin' in all aspects of life seems to be characteristic of the human condition. Archetypes across cultures speak eloquently of the 'Creation Myths' that attempt to explain the mysteries of existence. Systems of thought — East and West — give primacy to worldviews that claim to be 'unique' and exclusive. Our embattled social and political life, indeed, the entire domain of our contemporary identity politics, is defined by the notion of competitive supremacy. The journey of the explorers into the Sahara, the Kalahari and the Amazons in search of the 'Lost World', the Star Trek expeditions into the outer space, attempt to discover the denizens that are 'pristine' and 'pure'.

The search for the 'pure' has not lost its currency despite the passage in time, and despite Jacques Derrida. If only this search was not innocent in human terms! After all, much of the social and religious strife and upheavals have been caused by the 'purity syndrome'. The Nazi eugenics attempted the diabolical creation of the Super Race, destructive and atavistic in character. The Hindu Religion, in its organized aspects has relied on the questionable creed of 'purity' and 'pollution', just as the followers of Judea-Christian system continue to battle out their own conflicting destinies in terms of the notion of the 'chosen' people of God.

Why is that the children of God everywhere preach the gospel of war? Why must they constantly parade their claim to being the 'unique' and the 'pure'. The search for the 'pure' is not only elusive in practical terms; it seems to contradict the basic tenets of the Religions themselves. In a striking travel book, entitled *From the Blue Mountains: A Journey in the Shadow of the Byzantium*, celebrity author William Dalrymple, disproves the rival claims of the Semitic religions. He shows that their inter-religious conflict has been the source of much of the blood and mayhem of the contemporary world.

As we travel with Dalrymple in the ancient world, we encounter startling archeological and cultural facts. The oldest serving manuscript of *The Spiritual Meadow*, the Armenian Cathedrals of Turkey, 'The Mausoleum of Cirrus' in Syria, the Monastery of Koshaya in the Qadisha valley in Lebanon, the sculpture from the Temple of the Sun of Baalbek—all reveal, as Dalrymple shows, a rich and complex mosaic of cross-religious affinities that parallel the leit motifs of ancient monuments: the home monastery of Mar Saba in the wilderness of Judaea, the monastery of St. Anthony, Egypt and the Great Kharga Oasis.

As Dalrymple travels and savors the scent and sights of this ancient world, he sees inevitably the contact between the 'Mediterranean and Celtic fringe' and the 'Egyptian ancestry of the Celtic Church'. (Dalrymple: 418) Indeed, he realizes that the search for a 'break' between 'the pre- and post-Muslim Conquest' is a vain one.

(Dalrymple : 335.)

The lessons in ethnic and religious pluralism that Dalrymple's journey across the Biblical lands teaches us have parallels with the major religious and spiritual traditions of the world. While Indic religious traditions have taken pride in projecting themselves as open, liberal and eclectic; in practice, however, the followers and their worlds often do not meet in social, ceremonial, canonical and spiritual terms. And thus, the Jains, the Buddhists and the Hindus live apart. The manifest absence of conflicts among themselves does not disguise the fact that they live separate lives. It is true that Hinduism speaks of Swabhava and Swadharma, the characteristic law of one's being. Many households have Isha Devas of the local traditions.

In the ideal sense, here the folk, the mass and the canonical co-exist. The worship of the Mother Goddess is a good example of this. Durga, Kali, Chandi and Chamundi are the many variants in the Indian villages, all equally venerable. The Sufi and the Peer traditions abound.

And yet, Religion in practice at the societal level, across class and caste, often manifests a degree of strident separatism. A peaceful coexistence of the uneasy kind is an inevitable consequence. Underlying affinities in terms of faith are often suppressed by zealous followers. Images and iconography, that are eclectic and syncretic in character, often give way to polarized differences in sharp, polemical terms. Religious practices that are hybrid and pluralistic in nature are often derided as 'impure' lacking canonical or scriptural approval. The Buddhism practiced in Sri Lanka, for instance, combines iconography from the Jataka and Hindu myths. The idols and inscriptions in the temples of Kandy and Anuradhapura of Sri Lanka, speak eloquently of the syncretic character of the Ceylonese Buddhism and Hinduism, whereas their counterparts in Bodh Gaya and Sarnath in the Indian mainland, are more exclusive in religious terms. There is thus a disjunction between religious precepts and practice. The sectarian strife among sects and denominations of a single faith, be it Islam or Christianity, Buddhism or Hinduism, does not come for public criticism as much as inter-religious conflicts among the major Religions of the world.

How then can we recover the syncretic character of Religion and Spirituality? How may we banish the notions of the 'impure', the 'heathen' the 'infidel' from the lexicon of the Religions of the world? What could be pedagogy that will prepare the new generation of the young to deal with matters of Faith and Reason, accommodate the claims of faith with those of secular modernity? Can we teach followers to go beyond the fact of uneasy co-existence to the genuine acceptance of pluralism?

It would thus be seen that Religions must free themselves from what I call the 'purity syndrome'. Only a progressive approach, open minded and exploratory, marking a radical break from the past habits of thinking, can save Religions from the pitfalls of bigotry. An enlightened Reason can be the antidote to sectarianism. Our educational system must stress the virtue of a syncretic and comparative approach to the study of Religions. That is what Dalrymple's travel to the Levant essentially teaches us, just as the lives and teaching of modern Saints like Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo are living testimony to genuine pluralism.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa - *The summum bonum* of all faiths

Shri. C. Sivasankaram

He was no born saint. He was a saint evolved through life's several physical, psychical and spiritual vicissitudes, trials and experimentations. The way of evolution was distinctly his own. Gadadhar, an illiterate Vaishnava Brahmin boy with no spectacular background or ancestry, scaling greater heights than the other great contemporaries of his, grew up to be revered as Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa.

Gadadhar used to play the role of Krishna or Siva in village dramas. The youthful maidens of the same sect at Bengal's sequestered village, Kamarpukur, used to form into a ring around him in those plays, as Gopika's were known to gather around Krishna. With his charm and the inherent transparent divinity, the lad could acquit himself as Krishna the celebrate inviolate.

Gadadhar was born in Kamarpukur on February 18, 1836-just two years before the advent of Shiridi Sai Baba. By the time the lad came of age, circumstances had so shaped that the family perforce migrated to Calcutta, the then imperial capital of India. Destiny was awaiting him in suburban Dakshineswar, a few kilometers away, to shape him into Sri Ramakrishna, 'the son of God'. Following the expiry of his elder brother, Gadadhar was initiated into priesthood and installed as the archaka of Kali Temple there. As the priest. Ramakrishna's ways of worship were so odd and unconventional that they enraged the temple's founders, but they never toyed with the idea of removing him. The invisible hand of the Divine was working within and soon the elders and others, too, started enjoying the crazy manners of the priest.

The family elders thought it fit to get him married as a curative measure of his supposed madness. Gadadhar himself chose as his bride a five-year old girl who was to blossom into Mother Sarada Devi later, and he remained a celebrate inviolate.

The extraordinary souls that wrought change in the unusual life of Ramakrishna were a beautiful Brahmin woman and Totapuri. His intellectual brilliance was prodigious. He was able to become an adept in any kind of knowledge in an amazingly short time.

All was natural and spontaneous about him. In his philosophy man was the central figure. Around him the gamut of his thought was vigorously composed.

The century was the mother of many a pronounced reformative and rationalistic movement. The rugged wind of the well- disciplined movements clamouring for radical change had silently made inroads into the mind of the saint in the making. His intellect was ever alert and never slumbering. It was unbroken 'Kaali' Consciousness.

'He keenly observed the winds of change and the personalities under whom the movements were smarting. His religion was human and at the same time spiritual to the core and enlightened like that of the Buddha, like whom he was for founding of the kingdom of Earth or Kali, the supreme primordial principle of Prakriti within it the unmoved mover reposes. Prakriti reveals the face of Purusha in boundless and countless forms. That is Kaali the Mother," all beauty and all bliss". The mystic touch of Hers in all that is thrills and amazes and enhances the ageless urge of man to delve deep into Reality.

Ramakrishna's sayings possess flair and beauty of their own like that of the Buddhist Dammapada which the Chinese savant Lin Yutang believes is more impressive than the Bhagvad Gita.

Ramakrishna's abhorrence of woman and gold smacks of Christian asceticism. Mother Kaali saw him mellowed and strikingly reasonable in his attitude towards the woman as the virtual stumbling block on the road to Beatitude. He came to conclude in the dazzling dusk of his marvelous life that woman was the mother and honest women were the noblest gifts in the world. Though Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrism besides Hinduism, maintain more or less equal share in his outlook as epitomized in the eloquent form of his sayings it will be blasphemous if we call his philosophy eclectic. They are universal Divine Mother's spontaneous overflow of unvarnished feelings, the immanent spirit's superb outpourings.

His mission was to establish the worship of the Divine Mother quite contrary to the mystic adoration of the impersonal. To erase the stigma of the 'products of sin' from the face of woman he elevated the ideal of womanhood into Divine Motherhood. Ramakrishna possessed the yogic powers but seldom he exercised them. He vividly proved in his life and thought that he was a novel avatar who was the summum bonum of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and all other religions of the world. The catholicity of certain Christian men of wisdom tended to draw comparisons between Jesus the Christ and Ramakrishna the Paramhansa. Unless one is an ascetic, one is a sannyasin, one cannot convince oneself to sweep and clean the dingy tenements of the outcaste. That Ramakrishna did the job was logical conclusion of his sublime awareness that all is Chaitanya who is one. This world is the manifestation of Kaali the Divine Mother in whose lap the saint and the scoundrel, the savant and the sinner the vicious and the virtuous"took rest. The Divine Mother held olive branch to one and all to live in calm serenity of consummate reconciliation.

Hardly a decade after the absorption of the Paramhansa in the Brahman (August 16, 1886), there appeared an article in a British periodical, the Imperial and Quarterly Review of 1896. The title of the article was 'A modern Hindu Saint'. It was the able pen work of C.H. Tawney. The distinguished professor's dispassionate article aroused wildfire interest in the European learned circles, of whom the scholar-extraordinary and the legendary orientalist, Max Mueller, was one. He contributed a brilliant short sketch of Sri Ramakrishna entitled, 'A Real Mahatman'. The celebrated sketch aroused antagonistic criticism in the diehard Christian and Theosophical world.

Sri Ramakrishna transferred his life-long savings of esoteric and ethical attainments to the virile Vivekananda who, in turn, by his fiery enterprise roused the soul of the world. Thus Sri Ramakrishna turned the 'Trivikrama' of limitless expansion.

Tributes to late
Shri D.V. Subba Rao
Former President, Gayatri Vidya Parishad
&
Chairman, Centre for Policy Studies



D.V. Subba Rao, an alumnus of Andhra University was in his student days, president of the University law society and Captain of University Colleges Cricket team that won the Inter-Collegiate Championship for the Tirumurti Shield in 1955. After joining the bar in 1957 Subba Rao rose to eminence in public life through hard work and merit. As a legal luminary, the first mofussil lawyer to become the Chairman of Bar Council of India, as Governor Lions International, later as Chairman Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority, Mayor of Visakhapatnam and President of Andhra Cricket Association Subba Rao rendered outstanding service to the city of Visakhapatnam in particular and the larger society in general. His passing away on December 20, 2014 leaves a void hard to fill. D.V.Subba Rao is remembered with admiration and affection by all. CPS gratefully dedicates this volume to his memory.

Shri D.V. Subba Rao

A tribute

Dr. E.A.S. Sarma I.A.S. (Retd.)
Former Secretary Govt. of India
&

Founder-Convener Forum for Better Visakha

Shri D. V. Subba Rao's demise in the third week of December, 2014 left a void for Vizagites in many ways.

As a legal luminary, he not only provided a benign and constructive leadership for Vizag's legal profession but also elevated the city's presence to the national level by heading the Bar Council of India twice.

Rarely do persons of professional excellence dare to enter politics. Shri D V Subba Rao did venture into the political arena and became the city's Mayor. In addition to toning up urban governance during his stint as the Mayor, he raised the bar of probity and integrity for his successors.

In his younger days, he was an active cricketer. Later, as an ardent cricket enthusiast, he not only provided an excellent leadership to the Andhra Cricket Association but also played a pivotal role as a member of the BCCI for years. His love for the sport took him to West Indies in 1977 when he accompanied the Indian cricket team led by Sachin Tendulkar, as its Manager.

It was during his stint as the city's Mayor that the local municipal stadium hosted the city's first ODI. If Vizag has a modern cricket stadium today and the city has become a favourite venue for several ODIs, the credit for it should go to Shri Subba Rao. No wonder that Vizag has since started making its presence felt at the national level by contributing excellent players to the ODIs and Tests.

Shri Subba Rao was a gentle, courteous human being, always sensitive to the concerns of the others. Those were the qualities that made him unique.

THE YEOMAN'S SERVICE OF "DVS" TO LEGAL EDUCATION

Prof. R Venkata Rao

*Vice-Chancellor, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru
Former Principal, Andhra University College of Law*

Subroto Bagchi in his book "The Professional" observes: "Without basic honesty and fundamental ethics, nobody, however brilliant, can be called a professional. Professionalism is about building a legacy. A professional, at the end of the day, is a person who is remembered. A professional is one who adds integrity to what he does and leaves his footprints on the sands of time."

DVS, an epitome of display of modesty and absence of arrogance, and an example of that rare breed who work for systems rather than make money from systems, perfectly fits into the above definition of a professional.

Shashi Tharoor, in his inimitable style, states that in India in future, there will be more YOUTHQUAKES than Earthquakes. The amazingly talented Indian Youth representing the Aspirational India is not prepared to settle even for the second best and they want only the first best.

National Law School of India University, Bangalore(Bengaluru), is a place where one finds the amazingly talented Indian Youth. Few know that NLSIU has been sponsored by the Bar Council of India and it is the "Baby of the Bar Council of India". The contribution of Shri.DVS to the phenomenal growth of this "Jewel in the Crown of Legal Education" has been immense. As a member of the Statutory bodies of National Law School of India University and as the Chairman of the Bar Council of India for two terms (it may be recalled DVS was asked to continue as the Chairman for the third term also by all concerned but he politely declined. May be DVS, himself a cricket buff, remembered Sunil Gavaskar's classic remark: 'One should retire when people ask "Why" and not "Why Not")', his contribution in meandering this Institution in the formative years to safe shores has been laudable'. Today there may be seventeen National Law Schools but from 1988 to 1998, Bangalore Law School was the only School and people were watching this experiment with doubts and suspicion. The critics were shouting from the rooftops that it was only a question of time before the experiment of National Law School would wither away as the word "excellence" is alien to the scenario of Legal Education in India. But in less than ten years "doubts and suspicion" got transformed to "awe and admiration" and in 1998 the second Law School NALSAR was established in Hyderabad. The rest, as they say, is history. If today National Law School, Bangalore is attracting the best talent (many youngsters reject seats in IITs and AIIMS and seek admission into NLSIU, Bangalore) it is because it provides "intellectually stimulating, professionally competent and socially relevant legal education" and if NLSIU, Bangalore has become the preferred destination for quality legal education, it is mainly due to the fact that it was carefully nurtured and nourished during the formative years by the Bar Council of India when Shri.DVS was the Chairman.

DVS has carried the legacy of the Faculty of Law, Andhra University. If in the second half of his life he has contributed to the growth of National Law School movement, it is because of his tutelage he has received in the, if I am permitted to say, "International Law School (College of Law, Andhra University Campus). The silver tongued oratory of Prof. .S.Venkataraman, the intellectually stimulating discourses of Prof. B.S.Murthy on various aspects of International Law and insightful analysis of higher values of Rule of Law by Prof. Gupteswar have been legendary. These are only illustrative.

A.U. Faculty of Law was a harbinger of legal education and was the pioneer in introducing reforms in Legal Education. It was the first to have introduced the Semester System in 1970's, the experiment of open book examination system was introduced by the one and only Prof.D.Goplalakraishna Sastry in Constitutional Law, floating of optional in L.L.B course -subjects like Fundamental Rights, Law of the Sea, Banking, Maritime Law and Criminology, to name a few were taught as optionals - these were some of the unique contributions of the Faculty of Law, Andhra University to the cause of Legal Education. Shri DVS drawing from his rich experience by his close association with Faculty of Law, A.U, first as a student and then as a member of the Statutory Bodies and then as the President of the Alumni Association, has contributed to the growth of Legal Education in the country.

If today, the Law Student is treated with respect and dignity and if today excellence has become a by word in Legal education in National Law Schools and if today the Legal Education is making an immense contribution to the fostering of Rule of Law values, the contribution of "the proud son of Visakhapatnam" Shri.DVS has to be inscribed in letters of gold.

THE QUINTESSENTIAL VIZAGITE

A. Prasanna Kumar

It was in 1955, a year after I stepped into the Andhra University campus, that I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Durvasula Venkata Subba Rao and the greater pleasure of playing for our University colleges' cricket team under his captaincy. We were a bunch of talented cricketers, individually very good but collectively, like the cabinet in some parliamentary systems of government, weak and divided. Our venerable physical director, a champion athlete and fine sportsman in his youth, Shri K. Sudarsana Rao made gentleman-cricketer D.V.Subba Rao the captain of Andhra University Colleges cricket team. It was a master-stroke by our shrewd physical director. Subba Rao was known more as a gentleman than as a cricketer. It clicked as our team scored stunning victories in inter-collegiate tournament, over better-known sides like A.V.N. College, M.R.College, Vizianagaram, Govt. Arts College, Rajahmundry, Engineering College, Anantapur at Anantapur before triumphing over Agricultural College, Bapatla in the final, to win the Championship and bring the Tirumurti Trophy to the university campus. The entire campus headed by the Vice-Chancellor congratulated Captain D.V.Subba Rao and his team.

Subba Rao's leadership qualities and gentlemanliness, besides his skill as a public speaker, earned for him the support of the student community and the affection of the Vice-Chancellor Dr. V.S.Krishna, Registrar Dr. K.V.Gopala Swamy, Principal Prof. K.Rangadhama Rao and, of course, his own professors and teachers like S.Venkataraman, B.S.Murty, K. Gupteswar and others. He was elected President of the Law Society. Prof. Gupteswar was fond of comparing Subba Rao with his illustrious grandfather and legal luminary Durvasula Srirama Sastry. From his father Somayajulu and uncle Seetababu, Subba Rao drew inspiration and by dint of merit and hard work he rose to eminence in the legal profession and public life also.

The first mofussil lawyer to become the Chairman of Bar Council of India, Subba Rao was respected by both the bench and the bar for his intellect and integrity. As Justice Bhagawati said Subba Rao was "a man of high integrity and exceptional character, with large experience in public life and breadth of vision not confined to law but to a wide range of activities." Subba Rao was a member of two prestigious committees, Justice Malimath Committee on reforms of criminal justice and the Justice M. Jagannatha Rao Committee constituted by the apex court to suggest ways for effective implementation of Section 89(2) of Code of Civil Procedure. He was associated with National Judicial Academy which provides training for judges, lawyers and teachers of law. Though he rose high in his profession to national eminence, Subba Rao always held subordinate courts and mofussil lawyers in esteem saying that "they are the backbone of the judicial system." Subba Rao evoked the admiration of judges and lawyers at all levels, from the mofussil court up to the Supreme Court of India for 'the eloquence and diligence with which he argued his client's case' as a former CJI put it. What was extraordinary about Subba Rao was that he practised law not to make money but to walk in the footsteps of his illustrious forbears. He would have made crores of rupees had he ever made a compromise on his ideals. Though not in good health, Subba Rao used to go to his office till almost he breathed his last. When asked he replied with a soft smile "to earn my daily bread."

As Chairman of VUDA and later as Mayor of Visakhapatnam Subba Rao's services were unparalleled. He persuaded Chief Minister NTR to approve the plan to construct the huge Gurazada Kalakshetram. Later as Mayor he transformed the Municipal Stadium into a first class cricket stadium where Vizag hosted a World Cup Cricket match in 1996. As Mayor he received an award at UNICEF Conference at Dakar in Senegal in 1991. As cricket administrator he put Vizag on the international map by organizing many national and international matches. The quintessential Vizagite, an epitome of high ideals and values was

an embodiment of humility. He embodied the spirit of Vizag marked by cultural catholicity, vibrancy of outlook and enduring humility. He was gentle in disposition but firm in conviction, soft in expression but uncompromising in his adherence to values. An accomplished public speaker, he was also a delightful conversationalist with a penchant for anecdotes laced with humour. His broad and disarming smile put even strangers at ease. We used to greet each other on our birthdays, the gift being a good book. On one such book he inscribed “ my true friend.” I told him on my last birthday in September 2014 that we would celebrate the ‘diamond jubilee’ of our friendship in 2015. Now my grief is such that I am reminded of those poignant words that “friendship is more tragic than even love because it lasts longer.” The fragrance of the memory of our friendship will never fade. My gentleman-cricket captain always loved these words: “Well Played Skipper”!

* * *

A view of the City of Destiny, Visakhapatnam is the only place in the eastern ghats where the mountain and the sea meet. Late Mayor D.V. Subba Rao who was always proud of Vizag contributed immensely for its development.



Book Review :

Gandhi BEFORE INDIA

RAMACHANDRA GUHA

ALLEN LANE an imprint of PENGUIN BOOKS in 2013, PP673, Rs899/-

Seven years after publishing INDIA AFTER GANDHI which earned for him national and international acclaim Ramachandra Guha has brought out GANDHI BEFORE INDIA, the inspiration for which came in 1998 on the campus of University of California at Berkeley. “A decade ago,” explains the author, “after teaching that course in Berkeley, I decided I would write a many-sided portrait of Gandhi, which would explore his words and actions in the context of the words and actions of his family, friends, followers and adversaries.” That has culminated in this fascinating story of “Gandhi’s journey from Gujarat to London to Natal and the Transvaal and then back to Gujarat.” The focus is on those crucial years in South Africa between 1893 and 1914 where he went to practise law for his livelihood and became the saviour of countless number of oppressed and exploited people. As a South African friend wrote to the author : “You gave us a lawyer; we gave you back a Mahatma.” A month before his farewell to South Africa in 1914 Gandhi himself felt that satyagraha which was born in South Africa became “perhaps the mightiest instrument on earth.”

Ramachandra Guha unveils his massive work of meticulous research with a thought-provoking prologue in which he states his idea of portraying ‘Gandhi from all angles.’ Guha is more than a historian of repute. He is a social scientist and humanist as well, enormously gifted and trained in the art of unravelling the forces underlying human struggles against injustice and exploitation. In South Africa it was the struggle of the oppressed and migrant people during ‘the first phase of globalization’ and Gandhi’s heroic fight against the oppressive ruling classes holds out lessons which are relevant in today’s globalized world. An interesting parallel is drawn between Gandhi and his religious hero Lord Ram. The similarities between the two include ‘long journeys, long periods in exile’ and support received from their loyal, though not always well-treated, spouses and circumstances that forced them to take on powerful adversaries. Guha prefers not “to push the parallels too far”. Lord Ram and Gandhi, he points out, strove to uphold dharma in different times, one ‘in myth and the other in reality’, ‘both having enjoyed a vigorous and contentious after-life.’

The twenty two chapters that follow in this tome of 672 pages present a gripping account of Gandhi’s life from his home town Porbandar which according to an English visitor ‘had received from Nature an unimaginable splendor of sea and sky’. After taking the oath on his ‘mother’s knee’ that he would not ‘touch a strange woman, or drink wine or eat meat’ young Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi sailed for London on September 4, 1888. In London Gandhi wrote in support of vegetarianism as ‘the logic of vegetarianism is not chemical, but moral, social, hygienic’. Back home the London trained lawyer could not make a mark in his profession at Rajkot or in Bombay. Dada Abdullah, a Porbandar Muslim trader with successful branches in South Africa, invited Gandhi to take up his legal cases and “the invitation from South Africa allowed him an escape from the political intrigues at home and to earn a decent sum of money.” That was a turning point in the life of Gandhi and in the history of his country and of the century that followed.

No leader or public figure ever suffered such savage physical attacks and public assaults as Gandhi in South Africa. Guha narrates how ‘Gandhi was beaten, but not bowed. Blood was flowing down his neck, but eye-witnesses state that he bore himself stolidly and pluckily through the trying ordeal’. Gandhi was ‘the target of the collective anger of (virtually) all the whites in Natal, expressed continuously for several weeks at a stretch’. Death stared at him several times but he remained unwavering in his commitment to Hindu-Muslim unity. “I may have to meet death in South Africa at the hands of my country-men. If that

happens you should rejoice. It will unite the Hindus and Mussalamans... The enemies of the community are constantly making efforts against such a unity. In such a great endeavour, someone will have to sacrifice his life. If I make that sacrifice, I shall regard myself, as well as you, my colleagues, fortunate” he declared. The harder the blow was the firmer Gandhi became in his resolve to fight oppression and racial discrimination through satyagraha.

The same South Africa provided for Gandhi spiritually uplifting and ennobling experiences beginning with the 1893 Maritzburg incident when Gandhi was thrown out of the railway compartment described by Fischer as ‘the most creative experience.’ A decade later was born satyagraha.

As the aptly titled chapters describe 'A Tolstoyan in Johannesburg' and 'A son departs and a mentor arrives' it was here that he found his mentors and inspirational leaders notable among whom were Tolstoy, Gokhale, Pranjivan Mehta. The relationship between Gandhi and Pranjivan Mehta is described interestingly: “Pranjivan Mehta was to Mohandas Gandhi what Friedrich Engels was to Karl Marx, at once a disciple and a patron, who saw, very early that the friend of his youth had the makings of the heroic world-transforming figure he was to later become. Their friendship was consolidated by a shared language and culture – it mattered that Engels and Marx were both Germans, and that Mehta and Gandhi were both Gujaratis. There were differences: Engels believed Marx would redeem a class (the proletariat); Mehta believed Gandhi would save a nation, India. Both, however, had a deep, almost unquestioning faith in their compatriot’s genius. Both were prepared to reach deep into their pockets to activate and enable it.”

Gandhi believed that self-scrutiny and self-criticism should constantly guide his approach to issues. 'Praise is everyone's enemy' he said. As his mentor Gopal Krishna Gokhale summed up Gandhi's distinctive combination of personal saintliness and social meliorism was necessary to safeguard the position of Indians in South Africa.'

Guha narrates several poignant moments in his own lucid and simple style like for instance the relationship between Mohandas Gandhi, the demanding father and Harilal, the rebellious son . “You did not allow me to measure my capabilities; you measured them for me,” protests Harilal against his father’s decisions. A touching moment it was when the father pats the son on the cheek saying “Forgive your father, if you think he has done you wrong”.’

Ramachandra Guha’s indefatigable energy for original research brings to light several interesting things about support from all parts of India for the movement in South Africa. “ A Telugu weekly in Guntur reached for mythic parallels – Gandhi, the leader of the resistance, was like Arjuna, brave and fearless, while Gokhale was like Krishna, providing sage advice from behind the scenes,” records the historian who ends his treatise of epic proportions with the chapter titled *How the Mahatma Was Made*.

This is a magnificent work, the first of a trilogy, on Gandhi's early life and work in South Africa before his return to India in July 1914. It should be read to understand the genesis of satyagraha and non-violent protest movement against racial discrimination, social injustice and exploitation of the weak and downtrodden. The making of the Mahatma is no ordinary story and to have constructed it with such deep research and narrated it so brilliantly Ramachandra Guha deserves our grateful appreciation. At a time when the world after World War I was being dominated by such ideologies as capitalism, communism, Nazism and Fascism, Gandhi offered to humankind a refreshingly different approach based on satyagraha and non-violence which is still accepted at all levels as the only way out of darkness and violence. Therein lies the uniqueness of Ramachandra Guha's masterly work.

A.Prasanna Kumar

(CPS Bulletin April 2, 2014)

Book Review :

THE ACCIDENTAL PRIME MINISTER *THE MAKING AND UNMAKING OF MANMOHAN SINGH*

SANJAYA BARU

Penguin Group 2014 pp 301, Rs. 599/-

Manmohan Singh “remains not just a good man but in the final analysis a good Prime Minister,” writes Sanjaya Baru in his book released on the eve of the 16th general election. Interestingly and ironically too, the former media adviser to the prime minister who wrote this book to rebut the charges of incompetence and comments ridiculing the head of the UPA government in public and private, had to defend himself against adverse media reactions and ire of the Congress Party. No wonder that in the Durbar politics of Delhi, where the corridors of power are manned by sycophants, it is customary to portray authors of pinpricks as assassins and conspirators.

But, Sanjaya Baru, the seasoned journalist and experienced economic editor, stoutly and effectively replied to the furore against the publication and timing of the book release. He begins his work by dedicating it to his mentors ‘the legendary’ H. Y. Sharada Prasad and K. Subrahmanyam. “I have combined admittedly subjective accounts with hopefully objective analysis... I purge myself of pride and prejudice while telling a story that needs to be told,” states Sanjaya Baru. It is an objective study of Manmohan Singh’s role as Prime Minister and contribution to national stability and development and also of his avoidable acts of omission, long and inexplicable spells of silence and above all his unwillingness(inability?) to assert his authority.

The rise of the reclusive academic to the pinnacle of power was indeed accidental. Few expected the Oxbridge economist to stray into politics and occupy seats of power. When Manmohan Singh opted to quit UNCTAD to get into politics, Secretary-General Raul Prebisch said “Sometimes it is wise to be foolish,” a comment Manmohan Singh liked to recall later while taking critical decisions. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao inducted Manmohan Singh into his cabinet as finance minister and needed to use the persuasive skills of his media adviser P. V. R. K. Prasad to restrain the sensitive Manmohan Singh from quitting the cabinet every time there was an attack on the government and the finance minister. (According to Abid Hussain, P. C. Alexander also played a major role in coaxing Manmohan Singh to stay on.) That was a critical period in the history of the nation when economic reforms were launched to pull the economy out of grave crisis.

The reluctant finance minister of the 90s became the ‘accidental prime minister’ in 2004. Sonia Gandhi was, of course, the undisputed ‘monarch’ *of all that she surveyed*. As Sanjaya writes “In the UPA, however, Congress party spokespersons let it be known to all concerned that Sonia Gandhi would remain the boss even though she was not the PM, despite her ‘renunciation of power.’ More importantly Sanjaya adds, “...the arrangement also implied...” that “...the credit for all the good work done by the government would go to Sonia, and all the blame for any mistakes would go to Dr. Singh” who “...never shied away from this political reality.” Sonia Gandhi “never allowed any one person to assume he or she was the last word on any issue,” sums up Sanjaya. The prime minister had also to sort out internal differences between colleagues in his cabinet and officials in the PMO such as those between Natwar Singh and J. N. Dixit, and Shivraj Patil and M. K. Narayanan. Hard it always was for the soft spoken prime minister and his office to put up with the messages and ‘instructions’ that constantly flowed from No. 10 Janpath to 7 Race Course Road (RRR), a regular feast for the gossip hungry media! It is noteworthy to mention here that Sanjaya

recalls the words of advice he received from the venerable Sharada Prasad “Tell the prime minister that he should be politically active and do what he can and must as PM without necessarily challenging her authority as party president.”

Sanjaya showers high praise on Manmohan Singh’s first term as prime minister: “No congress leader- and I include here the party’s leader Sonia Gandhi and its ‘heir apparent’ Rahul Gandhi- can match his unique combination of personal integrity, administrative experience, international stature and political appeal across a wide swathe of public opinion. These qualities were strikingly evident during the first term of the Congress led UPA alliance from 2004 to 2009.” The author hails Manmohan’s return to power in 2009 for a second term as he became “the first prime minister after Jawaharlal Nehru to have returned to office after a full five year term and with an improved majority to boot. Nehru managed that only in 1957, not in 1962.”

However, the financial scandals that rocked the UPA government and the loss of control over governance by the ‘ineffective’ prime minister after his ‘handsome victory’ in the 2009 elections ‘dismayed’ Sanjaya Baru. The prime minister’s image ‘plummeted’ and was ‘irretrievably damaged’ because of ‘his long public silences, his reduced visibility, the corruption exposes, the policy paralysis, his willingness to be pushed around by his party and coalition partners and to have his decisions publicly challenged by Rahul Gandhi.’

On January 3rd 2014, less than six months before the end of his second term as prime minister of India, Manmohan Singh said at a press conference “I honestly believe that history will be kinder to me than the contemporary media, or for that matter, the Opposition parties in Parliament. I cannot divulge all things that take place in the Cabinet system of government. I think, taking into account the circumstances, and the compulsions of coalition polity, I have done as best as I could under the circumstances.” Sanjaya Baru adds that in UPA-1, “the economy logged the highest rates of growth for any plan period since Independence.” The author likens Manmohan Singh to Bheeshma of Mahabharata who was consumed by ‘impotent rage’ and whose failure was due to misplaced loyalty. “That was Dr. Singh’s fatal error of judgment,” sums up Sanjaya Baru. Obviously the Oxbridge scholar did not learn from G. K. Chesterton’s famous maxim that in politics loyalty and gratitude are the signs of weakness.

Any review of such an eminently readable work would be incomplete without reference to author’s gift for narrating anecdotes with a touch of humour. Manmohan Singh is not always all seriousness and silence. When Sanjaya reported to the prime minister the story from the Hindi media that “BJP leader L. K. Advani was offering prayers and conducting a *havan* to ensure the ouster of the Singh government,” Manmohan Singh “...burst out laughing, something he rarely did. ‘He will never succeed,’ he said emphatically, “if his priests are going by my official date of birth!” Mrs. Kaur, Sanjaya reveals, was a source of unfailing strength and support to Prime Minister Singh in his hectic daily work schedules.

Manmohan Singh has ceased to be the Prime Minister. He will, however, remain forever in the hearts of the people as the architect of economic reforms and as a gentleman-prime minister.

A. Prasanna Kumar

(CPS Bulletin June 2, 2014)

Book Review :

ONE LIFE IS NOT ENOUGH

an autobiography

K. NATWAR SINGH

Rupa 2014 pp 410 Rs 500.

Asked when he would write his autobiography, that seer and statesman with a razor sharp intellect, Rajaji, replied it seems, that he never entertained that idea as writing autobiography would generally entail writing paeans of self praise and unkind words about others. Writing autobiography is indeed a hazardous exercise. Amrita Sher Gil, the brilliant painter who died prematurely, wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru that his autobiography was different from others because Nehru would say “when I saw the sea” while others would write “when the sea saw me.” Autobiographies, at least most of them, trigger controversies. Some do not evoke any public interest. K. Natwar Singh’s *ONE LIFE IS NOT ENOUGH* created a stir even before its release. A year ago Natwar Singh’s book *WALKING WITH LIONS Tales from a Diplomatic Past* was hailed as ‘a literary stroll in the jungle of politics, diplomacy and public life.’ The book under review is different, It is the angry roar of a wounded tiger, the anguish of a seasoned diplomat-turned politician and distinguished writer in the evening of his life.

Such is Natwar Singh’s style of writing that a book of 410 pages does not fail to sustain the reader’s interest throughout. The preface begins with Plato’s words: ‘An unexamined life is not worth living’ and in his inimitable style Natwar Singh justifies his desire and decision to present the story of his own life, frankly and forthrightly. ‘Understatement, restraint, objectivity have a paralyzing effect on an autobiography. Mine is as subjective as it could be,’ he writes. The twenty two chapters that follow cover a wide range of subjects from Natwar Singh’s early life to the 2014 pre General Election events followed by Narendra Modi’s assumption of office as Prime minister of India.

Born on May 16,1931 in Bharatpur in a ‘feudal’ and ‘conservative’ family whose ‘ancestors served the founders of the Bharatpur dynasty for generations’ Natwar Singh was educated in his hometown and later at Scindia School, Gwalior. Joining St. Stephen’s College in July 1948 young Natwar Singh spent ‘the happiest and most rewarding’ early years of his life. He blossomed into an all rounder excelling in higher studies at Delhi and winning tennis titles too. His gift for friendship was among his many assets. The narrative laced with humour and anecdote describes his success in civil service examinations and entry into Indian Foreign Service while pursuing higher studies at Cambridge, the rise of the young career diplomat and his marriage to Hem the Princess of Patiala. Natwar quotes his dear and eminent friend E.M. Forster- ‘All those that marry do well. All those that refrain do better.’ That his is a happy married life does not need mention as the autobiography is dedicated in typical Natwar style : “ To Hem without whom not.”

Natwar Singh’s loyalty to the Nehru -Gandhi family was unfettered. On the influence of Jawaharlal Nehru he writes: “I have been a Nehruite all my life. For decades I was mesmerized by his courage, his penchant for living dangerously. His stellar role in the freedom movement was second only to that of Gandhiji, who gave it a spiritual dimension. Nehru provided the intellectual dimension. Within a fortnight of Nehru’s passing on 27 May 1964, I decided to edit a book of tributes to him.” The great man’s costly errors are also discussed in detail in the chapter titled *ONCE A NEHRUITE*. “ It was Pandit Nehru’s error to have invited Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India to become the first Governor General of India. His three cardinal errors were: his disastrous handling of the Kashmir issue, his misplaced trust of the

leaders of the people's republic of China and his turning down of the Soviet proposal to give India a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.”

His admiration for Indira Gandhi was such that he considered himself ‘truly fortunate’ to have worked under her for many years. Natwar, however, conceded that he, as a diplomat, found it hard to justify the unjustifiable imposition of national emergency by Indira Gandhi in 1975. “ In the process, I was disregarding my conscience. It is one period of my life which I do not look upon with pride,” admits the author. When Natwar Singh chose to enter politics Indira Gandhi said: ‘Now that you are coming into politics, a thicker skin would be more useful.’ Words of prophetic wisdom that must have come to his mind two decades later when he felt betrayed by Sonia Gandhi. The last three chapters of the book contain details of the developments leading to Natwar Singh’s exit from the UPA cabinet and the Congress party which have been widely discussed in print and electronic media. Natwar Singh’s stout rebuttal of charges against him and his son and criticism of the role of Prime Minister and his cabinet colleagues like P. Chidambaram show the leadership of the Congress party and the functioning of the UPA government in poor light. ‘Politics is a blood sport where there are no friends at the top’ rues the former External Affairs minister. The setbacks and frustrations he experienced in the slippery world of politics were in sharp contrast to his sureness of footing and outstanding success in the glossy field of diplomacy.

Natwar Singh allocates a chapter to Sonia Gandhi. Some have found it controversial and ‘biased.’ But there is force in his assessment of Sonia Gandhi. ‘What Sonia Gandhi has achieved is to reduce the Congress, one of the greatest political parties of the world, to a rump of forty-four members in the Lok Sabha,’ writes the author. Her dependence on sycophants and tale-bearers and her acts of omission and commission proved to be disastrous for the Congress party and the UPA government. One glaring example was the way the Congress party has been wiped out in Andhra Pradesh, a Congress stronghold for decades. Natwar writes: “Sonia’s behavior during my implication in the Volcker Report was vicious and venomous, and caused me great pain.” The author sums up: “Beneath all that posturing an ordinary and insecure person emerges.”

Natwar Singh’s speech in Rajya Sabha quoted in one of the appendices ends with these lines: “Sir, I am in the evening of my life and I shall meet the Cosmic Master with my head high. Clean I came into the world and clean I shall depart. Thank You.”

The epilogue has a touch of poignancy. One of india’s finest intellectuals Natwar Singh who feels proud of “the blood of his ancestors that flows in his veins”, of his achievements at home and abroad and of the accolades he received from statesmen and literary giants, concludes philosophically : “Someone wrote that man is condemned to death the moment he is born, with extended reprieve. My reprieve could end any day. Soon I shall drift out of the harbour on a silent tide beyond the beat of time.”

A. Prasanna Kumar

(CPS Bulletin October 2, 2014)

Book Review :

Essays on HINDUISM

KARAN SINGH

THIRD EDITION PRIMUS BOOKS Delhi 2014 pp 168 Rs 395/-

This is the third and updated edition of Dr Karan Singh's *ESSAYS ON HINDUISM*, a collection of articles written and lectures delivered at different periods of time in India and abroad. The well known philosopher and elder statesman who has lectured and written extensively on a variety of subjects has added in this edition an essay titled *Keep the Light Shining* which points out that "fundamentalist Hinduism would be a travesty of the great Vedantic tradition." The quintessence of that great tradition is lucidly explained in the first chapter *Hinduism : An Overview* studded with Sanskrit slokas explaining the significance of scriptures, the contribution of ancient seers for the enrichment of the tradition and modern renaissance ushered in by reformers and saints for the reinterpretation and rejuvenation of Hinduism. "We, who are children of the past and the future of earth and heaven, of light and darkness, of the human and the divine, at once, evanescent and eternal of the world and beyond it, within time and in eternity, yet have the capacity to comprehend our condition, to rise above our terrestrial limitations and, finally, to transcend the throbbing abyss of space and time itself. This, in essence, is the message of Hinduism," writes Karan Singh.

The seventeen chapters that follow deal with wide ranging subjects from *Vedanta in Nuclear Age* to *The Ethics of Conservation* and *The Way to Peace*. The chapter on *Restructuring Education* emphasizing the need to restructure our educational system which "suffers from lack of direction and purpose" is as timely and thought provoking as the one on *Secularism: A New Approach*. Karan Singh suggests that we should 'overcome the religious-phobia in our educational system.' Pointing out the flaws in the classical concept of secularism which India adopted the author says that "we have to move on to an entirely new concept of secularism if it is to have relevance in the years and decades to come." The 'problem' can be converted into a 'positive asset if our educational system gladly accepts the multiplicity of our religious tradition,' states Karan Singh. Religion plays an important part in the lives of the people and outmoded concepts and practices must be replaced by 'periodic reformulations' and creative reinterpretation of its philosophical roots according to the author. Explaining how the Upanisads represent 'the high watermark not only of Indian but of world philosophy' Karan Singh asserts that the real debate is not between secularism and Hinduism. Let's not forget, he states, that 'one of the great glories of Hindu thought has been its capacity to embrace the entire human race with its concept of *Brahman-Atman*'.

The Appendix of forty pages at the end, a page more than the *Overview* at the beginning of the book, is on *Mundaka Upanisad*. Paraphrasing Kalidasa who likened the Vedas to the mighty Himalayas, Karan Singh sees in the Upanisads the peaks of Himalayas, full of splendour and glory. He quotes from the writings of Sri Aurobindo who 'with his gigantic intellect and deep intuition developed one of the most comprehensive and original systems of thought in modern times.' It was on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy that Karan Singh worked and obtained his doctorate degree from Delhi University. Aurobindonians are known for their intellectual sharpness and breadth of vision and Dr Karan Singh is a renowned torch bearer of that culture.

Essays in Hinduism is a scholarly work that begins with an invocation to and portrait of Lord Siva and ends with an expression of gratitude in love and reverence to the 'realized seers, the saviours and torch bearers of mankind' for 'imparting the luminous truth'. The eminent scholar writes in the preface that 'the reader will inevitably come across a certain amount of repetition'. But as the great John Morley proclaimed if it is truth it should be repeated as often as possible.

A.Prasanna Kumar

(CPS Bulletin December 2, 2014)

Book Review :

INSIDE OUT INDIA AND CHINA LOCAL POLITICS GO GLOBAL

WILLIAM ANTHOLIS

(First Indian Edition 2015, Viva Books Private Ltd. pp 235 Rs.795/-)

It was gracious of Mr. William Antholis, Managing Director of the Brookings Institution, where he is also a senior fellow in Governance Studies, to have personally presented a copy of the book under review at the luncheon he hosted for me and Member of Parliament, Dr.K. Hari Babu during his two day visit to Visakhapatnam. Though that day happened to be 9/11 (September 11, 2014), there was absolutely no reference to the horrendous terror attack on America fifteen years ago. It was a pleasant and frank exchange of views for almost an hour. When the M.P and BJP State President Hari Babu spoke with optimism about his government's determination to transform India and his own plan to develop Visakhapatnam into a leading city on the national map, I ventured to express my own apprehensions about the numerous constraints and hurdles that come in the way of fulfilling election promises and making the dream a reality. I even made bold to tell the distinguished visitor, William Antholis, that "the U.S now needs India's cooperation more than ever before."

The sleek volume of 235 pages, containing a thought-provoking preface and six chapters along with maps and tables, is the result of an insightful study of the 'power paradox' in China and India, following the rise of two strong leaders, Xi Jinping in 2013 and Narendra Modi in 2014. "One third of humanity is governed from two capitals, Beijing and New Delhi," is the first line in the first chapter dealing with the *jigsaw puzzle*. Endowed with a sharp mind William Antholis writes with ease and lucidity on complex issues. Writing on China and India in one small book is no ordinary task. 'Five months, four people, three questions' is the subtitle that stands for the five months spent in China and India by the four – William Antholis, his wife Kristen and daughters Annika and Kyri, raising three questions – How do Chinese provinces and Indian states work? How do they blend local and national priorities and value systems? How do they view some major global issues? The author 'addressed these questions to government officials, political leaders, business people, journalists, academics, and nongovernmental groups' while the family put 'the same questions of tour guides, taxi drivers, school teachers and waiters.'

The difference between China and India, as far as development is concerned, is interestingly presented. China's provincial experimentation, writes Antholis, has transformed the world economy for the better. India's local leaders are making some of the world's most dramatic advances in human development. Yet India's paralyzed federal politics and China's authoritarian efforts to control its provinces are crucial for their national evolution.' Do democratic institutions impede effective governance? The author quotes Kishore Mahbubani's 'caricature of the Chinese view of the world'. Chinese model 'is not perfect' writes Mahbubani, "but it has lifted more people out of poverty, educated more people, increased their lifespans and generated the world's largest middle class. No other society in human history has improved human welfare as much as the Chinese government the west should value outcomes as highly as political process, if not more so."

Antholis writes how India has 'remained committed to democratic governance as well as maintaining a multiethnic, multilingual, multireligious, and multi caste society.' Multiculturalism, democracy and economic growth constitute India's main goals. He classifies India's states into three categories *most forward*—

Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, *Swing States* such as West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh and the others that come under the backward category. India's 'seven biggest states have the combined population of about 740 million people. That is the same as the combined population of the seven largest industrial democracies. Antholis highlights the pragmatism and entrepreneurial spirit found in the states and their leaders such as Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, with rapidly urbanizing and globalizing cores. Bihar, has over 300 million people, 80 percent of whom live in rural poverty. "The extraordinary results speak for themselves; by 2012 the average Bihari's Income more than doubled to about \$ 500 a year," observes Antholis.

The United States has been actively assisting Indian democracy in many ways right from the beginning despite its tilt towards India's hostile neighbours at different periods of time. Ambassadors Chester Bowles and J.K. Galbraith, among many other diplomatic personnel based in India, have played a prominent role in improving Indo- American relations during the last six decades. Antholis points out how the US Consulate in Chennai has helped Tamil Nadu in its industrial development. For instance Ford Motor company choosing Chennai to build its manufacturing facility was 'the single most important decision in turning Tamil Nadu into a manufacturing state in India. That would not have happened had it not been for an active and engaged U.S. consulate,' writes Antholis. Chennai "is by far the world's single greatest conduit to the united states for highly skilled workers. Half of all U.S.-issued visas for high-tech workers go to Indians –particularly the H-1B, Which allows a firm to transfer a foreign –based employee into the United states. Half of that half –that is, 25 percent of the global total –go to workers from five south Indian provinces that together make up less than one- seventh of India's population, " according to the author.

India's endemic problems such as corruption and bureaucratic hurdles come in for critical comment. The author hits the nail on its head when he points out that 'even in normal times 25 percent of power generated is lost in transmission, thanks to a combination of ageing infrastructure and outright theft alone.'

William Antholis writes with empathy and concern for India. His work reflects the goodwill of the world's oldest and mature American democracy towards its largest counterpart that has stood the test of time. At this critical juncture each needs to understand the other better and work together in fighting not only the neo-Malthusian trilemma of climate change, depletion of resources and the burden of growing population but also the alarming spread of violence and terrorism.

He concludes his work commending and cautioning Indian democracy in these words: "Democracy is deeply engrained in India as a practical matter; the political system both represents and contains India's enormous diversity. Rather, India's challenge is to live up to high liberal democratic expectations across a vast and diverse population – and to do so while representing the masses and also protecting minorities." He calls upon the western countries 'to think differently and act differently' and deploy bottom-up diplomats including their state and local leaders for a new approach towards China and India. The foundation for that approach is to give a new priority to inside-out and bottom-up diplomacy with China and India. Doing so means learning to respect and embrace the tension between the local, the national, and the global that is at the heart of federalism itself.'

- A. Prasanna Kumar

(CPS Bulletin February 2, 2015)

Book Review :

A Journalist Reflects On Eminent Governors, Editors and Politicians

S.K. Rau

Former Editor *The Searchlight*, Patna News Editor *The Pioneer*, Lucknow
(Nov 2014, Avichal Publishing Company, Delhi, pp 253 Rs.450/-)

“If the 19th century belonged to the novelist” wrote James Reston four decades ago, “the twentieth century belongs to the journalist.” It was around that time that two journalists, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, investigating the Watergate scandal, caused the downfall of American President Richard Nixon. Journalism in America, it was said, underwent a change from ‘access culture to aggression culture’. Such was the transformation that journalists yearning ‘to dine with leaders and celebrities began to dine on them.’

In India too the field of journalism has undergone a change with the newspaper market emerging as the world’s biggest. Over a hundred million copies of newspapers are sold every day. Ever since its debut in 1780, print media attracted public attention and later admiration for disseminating news and information and for promoting healthy debate on public issues. The print media came to be recognized as a ‘modernizing elite’ for its role in the freedom struggle. Newspapers and journals, both English and vernacular, were founded and edited by famous leaders and stalwart journalists. They combined in themselves the best of England’s Fleet Street culture and Indian values. Their service to society and contribution to freedom struggle through the print media earned for papers and editors wide public support and respect too.

The book under review is a birth centenary commemoration volume of the writings of late S.K. Rau, a veteran journalist and editor of the last century. His son Keshav Rau writes in the introduction how his father, working as a temporary clerk in the Collector’s office, lost his job for his ‘audacity’ in pointing out an error made by the Collector in a file noting. The Collector, however, had the generosity to concede that S.K.Rau was ‘destined for better and more interesting things in life than the monotony’ of a clerical job in the government! Not only gracious but prophetic was the Collector as Seshagiri Krishna Rau, a mere matriculate, rose to become a renowned editor and journalist.

President of Indian Federation of Working Journalists K.Vikram Rao, worthy son of another famous journalist late Kotamraju Rama Rao, writes in his foreword that journalists are like playback artistes, who “give voice to the other main actors, but fade away, not writing down their own scores and losses. S.K. Rau made heroes of men, but himself remained a pen pusher.” Lauding S.K. Rau’s ‘correct English, precise use of words and easily comprehensible style, Vikram Rao writes: ‘Now knowledge and use of English grammar has turned optional for Indian editors. S.K.Rau stands out as one who wrote English as an Englishman.’ Interestingly by working in the north, east, west, and south S.K. Rau combined in his person the four sides which make NEWS, says Vikram Rao. The foreword is followed by a lucid introduction by Keshav Rau about his father’s early struggle in life and rise to eminence through merit and hard work. Keshav Rau has neatly organized his father’s writings on four U.P. governors, seven editors and five politicians in a book that is both informative and interesting.

Madras Governor Sir Archibald Nye was the first governor to visit a Harijan home and eat the Madras dosa ‘the best Indian dish he ever tasted.’ Sarojini Naidu called herself ‘a wild bird in a cage’ when she was made governor. The irrepressible Sarojini Naidu once told Kailash Nath Katju, Governor of

Bengal, “My dear fellow Governor, you are a joker, I am a joker and governors are nothing but jokers in free India.” H.P.Modi, the Bombay industrialist and aristocrat who succeeded Sarojini Naidu as Governor of Uttar Pradesh “restored to the government’s house to its old regal splendour. Modi was a real ‘Lord sahib’. Another Governor of Uttar Pradesh K.M.Munshi, known for his learning and respect for tradition ‘nationalized’ the government’s house providing a ‘feast’ to art lovers, scholars and pandits. He also became a controversial figure for dabbling in politics. V.V.Giri ‘a chip off the old block’, was a famous labour leader who sacrificed his position and earnings for upholding high ideals.

The book abounds in interesting and at times amusing anecdotes. As Governor of U.P. Giri was addressing the legislature, Raj Narain asked Giri to speak in Hindi and persisted in interrupting the Governor’s address. Governor Giri silenced Raj Narain by warning, “If you think you are a goonda, you must know I am a bigger goonda. I will not wait for the Marshal to throw you out. I will myself jump into your seat and throw you out.” S.K.Rau’s articles on U.P. chief ministers Dr.Sampurnanand, Charan Singh and other political leaders also make interesting reading.

The section on editors who left a lasting imprint on Indian journalism, begins with a tribute to K.Iswara Dutt whose style, as Radhakrishnan said, “has clarity and sparkle and his writings often cease to be journalism and become literature.” S.K Rau also lavishes praise on the three Raos – K.Rama Rao, Khasa Subba Rao and M.Chalapati Rau. Khasa loved and demanded absolute freedom as editor and famously said “I never wrote a single word to anybody’s dictation”. Arthur Alfred Hayles, editor of *The Madras Mail* was an all rounder and perfectionist. Pothan Joseph, a physics graduate from Madras University, had a mastery over the Bible, Shakespeare and classical literature. He rose to become one of India’s outstanding editors. There are brief references to M.S.Kamath, Subramaniam Srinivasan who later became famous as S.S.Vasan, Kalki Krishnamurthy and M.S.M.Sarma.

The birth centenary commemoration volume is not only a fitting tribute to a self-made veteran journalist but also an eminently readable work on some famous political leaders and journalists of yesteryears. S.K.Rau’s style of writing was marked by forthrightness, generous in praise and fair in criticism of the persons he wrote on, in an admirably balanced manner. Late S.K.Rau’s life and work provide inspiration not only for the present generation of journalists but also remind us of the spirit of sacrifice and service that characterized India’s public life in those halcyon times.

- A. Prasanna Kumar

(CPS Bulletin April 2, 2015)

Congratualtions to Shri A.S.N. Prasad



Centre for Policy Studies conveys its hearty congratulations to Shri A.S.N. Prasad, the new President of Gayatri Vidya Parishad and Chairman Centre for Policy Studies and good wishes for a successful tenure.

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(GAYATRI VIDYA PARISHAD)

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CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES was launched on October 2, 1995, the 126th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, with the object of providing a forum for the intellectual, the academic and the expert to interact, focusing on issues and policies of contemporary relevance. The Centre regularly organises meetings and seminars on policies and issues relating to areas of politics, society and development and brings out a bimonthly bulletin carrying articles on different themes and subjects.

Publications of CPS :

A Study on *Street Children in Visakhapatnam*, brought out by the Centre was released by Dr. Abid Hussain, former Ambassador, in December 1996. *Emancipation Before Empowerment — A Study of Women's Problems in Visakhapatnam*, another publication of the Centre, was released by Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, former Prime Minister, in August, 1999. A booklet on *Values in Higher Education* by former Vice Chancellor Dr. B. Sarveswara Rao and *Education and Technology — Challenges of a Paradigm* by Dr. RVR Chandrasekhara Rao also a former Vice Chancellor was released by APSCHE Chairman Prof. K.C. Reddy in November, 2004. A Book on the *Impact of Electronic Media on Women, Visakhapatnam : A Case Study*, was released on May 10, 2005 by Shri C.S.Rao, IAS., Chairman, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India. At the request of Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation CPS has also submitted a report on *Feedback on Subbram and Jana Chaitanya* authored by Dr. Mrs. P.V.L.Ramana and Dr. Mrs. S.Rajani.

On October 2, 2005 when CPS completed ten years, the following volumes were released:

Decennial Volume, a collection of CPS Bulletin articles, Footprints of Divinity, A Gandhi Reader, Reflections on Religion and Philosophy by Shri Challa Sivasankaram. *The Profligate Civilisation - Essays on Energy and Environment* by Prof. M.N. Sastri was released in 2007. *Education, Development and Culture - Essays in honour of Sri Vavilala Seetaramaiah* was released on June 26, 2009.

At the fifteenth anniversary function of CPS on October 6, 2010, the following books were released:

Dialogue and Democracy - Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies (CPS Bulletin Editorials), Footprints of Divinity, A Gandhi Reader (2nd Edition), Heritage and Culture of India, by Shri Challa Sivasankaram

World Demographic Trends - by Prof. M.N. Sastri was released on August 4, 2011.

Dr M.M.Pallam Raju, Union Minister released on June 29,2012 *Dialogue and Democracy*- Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies (2nd in the series), an anthology of twenty two articles.

The Nuclear Genie by Prof. M.N. Sastri was released on his 90th birthday, August 5, 2014, at a function presided over by Shri D.V.Subbarao, Chairman Centre for Policy Studies/ President Gayatri Vidya Parishad, with Prof. G.S.N. Raju, Vice- Chancellor, Andhra University and Dr E.A.S. Sarma I.A.S. (Retd) Founder-Convenor for Better Visakha as honoured guests.

Over 225 meetings and seminars have been organised by CPS since its inception. Among the eminent persons who addressed CPS are: Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, former Prime Minister, Dr. Abid Hussain former Ambassador to USA, Shri Soli J. Sorabjee, former Attorney General of India, Shri T.R. Prasad, IAS, former Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Amrik Singh renowned educationist, Shri Khushwant Singh, author and journalist, Shri K. Jayachandra Reddy, former Chairman, Press Council of India, Shri Vavilala Gopalakrishnayya, Shri N. Ram, Editor-in-Chief, *The Hindu*, Cmde C. Uday Bhaskar, former Director NMF and IDSA Sri B. Satyanarayana Reddy, Ex-Governor, Shri Surendra Mohan, Ex-M.P., Dr. E.A.S. Sarma Shri T.S. Krishna Murthy, former Chief Election Commissioner Shri K.P.Fabian and Shri Amit Dasgupta former Ambassadors and Vice Admirals Raman Puri, R.P. Suthan and Anup Singh and Dr M.M. Pallam Raju, Union Minister for HRD.

The first issue of the bimonthly Bulletin of Centre for Policy studies was released on Gandhi Jayanti in 1996, on the occasion of the first anniversary of Centre for Policy Studies. *The Hundredth Bulletin* was released on April 16, 2013 by Cmde. C.Uday Bhaskar, former Director NMF and IDSA, Delhi.

Nuclear Genie authored by Prof M.N. Sastri was released on August 5,2014 by Dr E.A.S. Sarma I.A.S. (Retd) with Prof G.S. N. Raju Vice Chancellor Andhra University as Guest of Honour on the occasion.

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