

Dialogue and Democracy

Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies
(4th in the series)

Shri Soli J. Sorabjee

Judicial Activism : Boon or Bane

Shri P.S.Rama Mohan Rao, I.P.S.(Retd.)

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Prof. Manoj Das

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Edited and compiled by A. Prasanna Kumar

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Dialogue and Democracy-I Reflections on Ideas, Issue and Policies was released by Vice Admiral Anup Singh, Flag Officer C-in-C of the Eastern Naval Command at the 15th anniversary function of Centre for Policy Studies on October 6, 2010. From right : Shri D.V. Subba Rao Chairman CPS, Satguru K. Sivananda Murty, Vice Admiral Anup Singh and Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar International President of World Teacher Trust.

Dialogue and Democracy-II Reflections on Ideas, Issue and Policies 2nd in the series was released by Dr. M.M. Pallam Raju Union Minister, on June 29, 2012. From right Shri D. Srinivas MLA and Chief Whip, Vice Admiral Anil Chopra C-in-C ENC Chief Guest Shri Pallam Raju, Shri D.V. Subba Rao Chairman CPS, and Director A. Prasanna Kumar.



Dialogue and Democracy-III Reflections on Ideas, Issue and Policies 3rd in the series was released by Shri P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Minister for Civil Aviation on May 15, 2015. A.U. Vice Chancellor Prof. G.S.N. Raju, Vice Admiral Satish Soni, C-in-C, ENC, Collector Dr. N. Yuvaraj, Chairman CPS A.S.N. Prasad, and Secretary Prof. P. Somaraju are also seen in the picture.

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A word about this volume....

Seven years ago, on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of Centre for Policy Studies, *Dialogue and Democracy*, a compilation of articles published in the bimonthly Bulletin of the Centre along with messages of eminent persons was published. Encouraged by the response it received, a second volume was published in June 2012 and three years later, the third in the series was brought out in May 2015.

The present issue, the fourth in the series, is now being released on the occasion of the 22nd anniversary of Centre for Policy Studies and completion of 21 years of publication of the bimonthly Bulletin. Following a suggestion made by some regular readers of the Bulletin and requests from students, all the editorials of CPS Bulletin, from its first issue dated October 2, 1996 to the April 2, 2015 issue, were brought out in a book form commemorating the 20th anniversary of Centre for Policy Studies on October 2, 2015. The editorials published since then are carried at the end of this issue.

We are happy to inform that Centre for Policy Studies has become autonomous last year and was registered as a Society in September, 2016. The completion of 22 eventful years, with the inevitable ups and downs, strengthens the resolve of Centre for Policy Studies to broaden the scope of its activities in tune with the demands of the changing times. The need for greater public participation, especially by the younger generation, in debates and discussions cannot be overstated. The 21st century will be shaped by bright young minds whose participation in public fora could bridge the gap between public policy formulation and public expectations. Study of public policy process has remained 'a neglected dimension of Indian scholarship' and the late Rajni Kothari called upon political scientists and think tanks to study the reasons for and consequences of 'growing disenchantment with the state and the manner in which power is exercised.' Public apathy accentuated by intellectual indifference, would cause incalculable damage to the political system. The need of hour is to strengthen civil society at all levels so that public discourse characterized by discussion, dialogue and dissent, has its rightful place in policy formulation and decision making. Mahatma Gandhi wanted government to exercise power with restraint and accountability. As it was rightly said good governance is possible when conventions and values are given greater importance than rules, regulations and procedures---- 'maximum of values and minimum of rules.'

In our own humble way we, at the Centre for Policy Studies, rededicate ourselves to the goals and objectives that inspired us to launch this modest venture and keep it active, despite many odds, for over twenty years. It is our duty to convey our gratitude to all those who have been a source of support to us during these two decades and two years.

I express my gratitude to Shri V.Seetaramaiah, the respected educationist and retired Chartered Accountant, for his support and guidance. I am indebted to the members of the Governing Body for their unstinted support. To Dr.Ramesh Ramanadham and Mr.Dileep, my thanks are due for proof correction and to Mr.M.K.Kumar, CEO of Sathyam Offset Imprints for completing the publication works in time with care and efficiency.

Visakhapatnam
October 2, 2017

A.Prasanna Kumar
Editor

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Judicial Activism : Boon or Bane

Shri Soli J. Sorabjee

Former Attorney General for India

(Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Platinum Jubilee lecture)



Justice Lahoti, former Chief Justice of Supreme Court, Shri Ashok Pradhan, Director, Chairperson & Vice Chairpersons of BVB on the dais, ladies & gentlemen.

Judicial activism and activist judges have become buzz words. In every sphere relating to judiciary this topic comes up. There is no definition of judicial activism as such. I think it will be good if we refer to a dictionary to know what we mean by activism. Collins dictionary defines Activism as a policy of taking direct & often militant action to achieve an end, especially a political or social one. Webster defines Activism as a doctrine or policy of being active, of doing things with decision. So I think judicial activism within the judicial system is that which discharges its functions in vigorous and decisive manner to achieve an end. What is that end? Dispensing justice with a view to righting wrongs or providing remedies where none specifically exist.

The thinking in the past was that the role of judiciary was merely to decide cases by interpreting a statute behind the laws to a given set of facts reported. This was the traditional role according to which the judiciary merely declares a law. It does not make a law. As one jurist said no one now accepts this childish fixation. The common law is not made by judges but is miraculously something made from eternity and merely declared from time to time by judges. So the role of judiciary has undergone a change. Now let us see whether judicial activism is boon or bane. That we will come to later.

Let me give one example. Because of judicial activism a provision has been read in a statute which did not require a prior hearing when an adverse decision was taken against a person. Statutes didn't say the person should be heard. But judicial activism read the principles of 'audi alteram partem' which means prior hearing be given to a person against whom an adverse decision is taken. Thanks to that, the fairness in administration and also if I may say the omission of statute was made a law by good lawyers and judges. You don't condemn a man unheard. This thanks to judicial activism has been read to a statute and that to my mind is a boon.

Take another example, where a statute requires that reasons have to be given in support of a decision. Suppose a statute doesn't say about giving reasons. What happens? Again Activist judges took the view that giving reasons is necessary because it ensures application of mind by the decision making authority, minimizes arbitrariness and incorporation of extraneous factors and above all satisfies basic human requirement of fairness and natural justice because a person must know on what basis his license or permit has been cancelled.

There was a rule in Mumbai Police for hotel licensing, which said a license may not be given to a person if he is not a suitable person. But not suitable for what? Is it on account of his not getting marks, going to church, having an occasional drink with friends or something else? It is beneficial and effective to give reasons. Thanks to this development and the activist judges in this case it has certainly been a boon.

Take another technique. Thanks to activist judges certain rights which are not specifically mentioned in the bill of rights has been enforced from other rights explicitly mentioned. The Supreme Court of United States of America where they deduced right to privacy, though not specifically mentioned in the Bill of Rights. Take our own case of the Supreme Court, we all talk of freedom of press. Where is it mentioned in a chapter of fundamental rights?

An activist Supreme Court deduced freedom of press from the guarantee of free speech and expression. You talk of freedom of press being absolutely important for democracy. It is, but it

was given a constitutional status by the Activist judges by interpretation of Free Speech guarantee in Article 19(1). No one can say that's not a boon as far as the right is concerned. "The making of policies is the prerogative of executive and not courts." "Courts cannot make orders that affect the evaluation of policy and that require an executive to pursue a particular policy." This is all misconstrued. This is all gone into indepth in the judgement in a Supreme Court case (in the BALCO case). Supreme Court held that it is not within the domain of the courts nor the scope of judicial review to embark upon an enquiry as to whether a particular public policy is wise or a better public policy can be evolved or whether a different policy is available that is fairer or wiser or more scientific. But if a policy is in contravention of constitutional provisions, suppose a policy favours only a certain community or class of people or is in breach of some manadatory law or monopoly, judicial activism should be available. If that constitutes an intrusion into the domain of the executive then it is an intrusion mandated by the Constitution itself. Please remember friends the occasion for judicial intervention in majority of the cases is in violation of human rights which takes place on account of non-implementation of laws by the executive.

Now let us talk of the complaint that is running the country? I'll come to that in some cases. Normally what the law says to the executive is - you pass laws for protection of children working in factories or laws to prevent employing them from working in hazardous occupations. Implement the laws. Take a case of children working in hazardous occupation or work in factory, the parents consent to it because of economic necessity. The factory implementation is not strict. The factory owner will never complain about it. Whether these factories are brought to court is a different matter. Because of failure of implementation of laws there is violation of human rights of the children who are affected. Then the Court has to act. It cannot procrastinate or prevaricate. The Court must prevent continued violation of human rights. One significant achievement that Supreme Court has done is they have expanded the rule of locus standi. The Court realises that in some cases because of disability or because of economic reasons people cannot afford the court. So then any person, mind you acting bona fide, can approach Court and point out the violation of human rights of that section of society.

Therefore the field of PIL has been expanded. See what has happened on account of this. Under- trial prisoners got to go to court. Children working in hazardous occupation, all of them were brought to the notice of court. Thanks to expansion of the doctrine of locus standi and there the court gave such directions as were necessary. Here I quote what a great judge from England, Stephen Sedley said, "Judiciaries have moved to fill lacunae of legitimacy in the functioning of democratic politics."

Let me take another example. Vishaka's case. Just a little while back there was persistent and malignant evil of sexual harassment at work place which was going on for a long time. In Vishaka judgment the Supreme Court devised a complete mechanism to deal with and prevent sexual harassment. The court said these directions to withhold the field till Parliament enacts requisite legislation. Since the 1996 judgment, only a bill has been introduced to prevent this problem. This is the Vishaka case and I think it has been highly beneficial.

Thanks to PIL and judicial activism the role of law has been upheld and constitutional values have been preserved. Numerous undertrial prisoners languishing in jail were released, persons who were treated as bonded labourers or serfs got rehabilitated and have secured their freedom, young children working in hazardous occupation have undergone a humanising change and inmates of care homes and mental asylums have been restored to humanity. Thanks to judicial activism in the area of ecological issues accountability in use of hazardous technology has been made possible and that undoubtedly has been a boon.

The nagging question is, is it permissible for the judiciary to indulge in area of ad-hoc legislation and in this way promote judicial activism. Now frankly speaking there is no universal prototype of judicial activities. It all depends on a particular situation or the laws, absence of laws, positive administration, whether implementation is there or not. It is a quest for social justice to

relieve any human suffering which is a paramount motivation to a judicial activist. Sometimes, especially in some PIL's judicial activism has gone haywire. You see, judicial activism must not be confused with judicial showmanship or judicial adventurism. Judicial activism does not warrant a volatile trigger-happy approach.

Judicial activism does not warrant issuing directions that are beyond the judicial sphere and do more credit to the heart than to the head. It is arbitrary. Judiciary cannot direct the administration to construct roads, erect buildings, secure lands in a particular locality, appoint managers, to give ad hoc direction of huge monetary payments or compensations. Such orders have serious system and budgetary implications and are more in the realm of the executive and in this case you may say judicial activism is a bane. Judges should not entertain the belief that judiciary can solve all the problems of our nation.

Every matter of public interest cannot be the basis of a PIL, eg. increase in the price of onions, trains not running on time, deteriorating conditions of railway stations. It must be remembered that PIL is not a pill for every ill. Judges also have to act within the parameters of the Constitution-within certain constituent limits. If you ask me the three Peril's of PIL are Private Interest Litigation, Political Interest Litigation and Publicity Interest Litigation.

In Publicity Interest Litigation, I'm sorry to say judges are also humans and are affected by the publicity given to their order. I know a judge who made sure that the order passed by him was reported fully in the press. These are human institutions and these things happen. Let us not forget that because of this on the whole an advantage has been secured. The great benefit we have got is a result of this. So I end by saying judicial activism in some cases has been controversial. On a balance it has been a boon, that's my view and remember that Fundamental Rights in your constitution will remain ornamental decorations and teasing illusions if we do not have judges who translate them into living realities and make them meaningful in the hands of activists and sensitive and sensible judges.

Thank you.

(CPS offers its grateful thanks to Shri Soli Sorabjee for according permission to use the article published in *Bhavan Today & After, A Compilation of Platinum Jubilee Lectures.*)

(CPS Bulletin, October 2, 2016)

Promoting Equal Opportunity in an Unequal Society : What an Equal Opportunity Commission can Do and How?

Prof. (Dr.) N.R. Madhava Menon

(Founder Director (Vice Chancellor), National Law School of India University, Bangalore; Founder Vice-Chancellor, West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata; Founder Director, National Judicial Academy Bhopal; and Presently IBA-CLE Chair Professor, NLSIU, Bangalore; Former Chairman of the Committee appointed by Government of India, Ministry of Minority Affairs, to draft the Charter of an Equal Opportunity Commission.)



Progressive societies everywhere have been moving from inequality and exclusion towards equality and inclusion with varying degrees of success. If in the beginning the practice was slavery and segregation, in later times, it assumed discrimination and assimilation. With equality becoming the norm, democratic societies under rule of law became defensive by adopting “reasonable classification” to justify unequal treatment or discrimination considered fair and reasonable. “Formal equality” prevails instead of “substantive equality” in many jurisdictions which subscribe to human rights and social justice.

The Indian Constitution adopted a four-fold approach in dealing with Inequality and Exclusion. Firstly, it abolished certain abominable practices like untouchability and bonded labour and made them punishable as crimes. Secondly, it sanctioned reservation or quota system in education, employment and political participation for exploited groups by way of compensatory discrimination. Thirdly, it prohibited discriminatory practices and allowed individual citizens to move the Constitutional Courts for writ remedies to restore equality. Finally, the Constitution mandated the State to take positive action for achieving substantive equality amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations with a view to minimize inequalities in income, status, facilities and opportunities.

Both the Parliament and State Legislatures have enacted a series of laws in the last six decades in favour of discriminated sections and allocated resources to make a difference in their lives towards equality. However, recent findings of expert committees have shown that what is done is too little in a society long divided and exploited on the basis of caste, gender, religion and language. It is in this context, a recommendation for setting up an Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) was made on behalf of “minorities” and a Draft Legislation was proposed by an expert committee. What can an EOC do in the given circumstances to improve the lot of the excluded and discriminated sections of people in Indian society and how can it contribute to the social transformation envisaged by the Constitution.

While the judiciary can give remedy to individuals unfairly discriminated and the legislature can compensate past discrimination through affirmative action measures, there are not enough mechanisms to address denial of equal opportunities to groups and communities as proposed by Article 38(2) of the Directive Principles. What is expected here is positive action by the State to provide a level playing field or parity of conditions to groups unequally situated because of no fault of theirs with a view to achieve substantive equality or equality in outcomes. Ordinarily, the political processes in a democracy should be able to move in this direction; but a variety of historical and socio-economic factors limit the scope of the political process to advance this goal. The minority rights and the Directives of Part IV of the Constitution are, in fact, an acknowledgement of the imbalance in society and are intended to make up for this deficit. However, if the Government does not give due importance to the Directives in its legislative agenda (as it happened to the right to free and compulsory elementary education), the level playing field will remain an illusion and inequalities and exclusion will follow which may not necessarily fall under the description of unfair discrimination under Articles 15 and 16. The data assembled by the Sachar Committee vis-à-vis Muslims do illustrate the point. This is the situation which an Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) can well address in the given circumstances.

The EOC can potentially be a powerful body to intervene against group discrimination in policy planning, resources allocation and programme implementation not only in the public sector

but also in the private sector involved in the delivery of public services. Commanding empirical evidence on group discrimination or data on differential impact of governance perpetuating inequalities, the EOC can seek administrative correction from Government and, in appropriate cases, legislation to create a level playing field. Because equal opportunity is part of the right to equality and Article 38(2) involves positive action by the State to ensure equal opportunities for all sections, EOC can legitimately act as a watchdog outside the executive branch to advise, monitor, evaluate and intervene in the entire range of governance at the local, State and Central levels. As EOC acts on the basis of hard evidence on denial of equal opportunity (to identified groups) in different sectors (like education, employment, housing, sanitation, nutrition, health etc.) it can serve the cause of all “deprived groups” belonging to majority or minority communities. When EOC becomes an effective watchdog on behalf of “deprived groups”, affirmative action including reservation will become less and less relevant to seek equality.

Evidence-based advocacy on deprivation or denial of opportunities is the real strength of EOC for which it has to have a competent data gathering and data processing agency. It is in this regard EOC is different from other Commissions including the Women’s Commission, the Minorities Commission and the Human Rights Commission. Because its actions are evidence-based, EOC can seek even judicial remedies through public interest litigation on behalf of deprived groups. If one Commission at the national level is inadequate for the purpose, it is possible to set up four or more regional level Commissions with concurrent jurisdiction. The Census, the NSS and other official as well as non-official data gathering systems can be invoked by the Commission apart from its own investigating systems. Action can be triggered by individual complaints so long as it concerns group discrimination.

On the basis of its findings, EOC would have the power to undertake any of the following actions :

Direct the departments and organizations to modify their employment or management practices in reasonable time with a view to correct discriminatory treatment including denial of opportunities to identified groups. Whenever required EOC can intervene and mediate the change to the advantage of the deprived groups.

Advise Governments to take fresh legislative initiatives or policy changes to remedy the distortions and unequal impact of policies.

Make public the data-based status of equality of deprived sections in respect of different sectors of the economy and society as was done by the Sachar Committee and demand appropriate action from all concerned.

Evolve Code of Best Practices to advance equality in different sectors and recommend its progressive adoption both in public and private sector.

Departments and organizations not responding adequately can be black-listed or denied privileges. Further, wherever warranted civil and criminal proceedings may be initiated against them.

In short, EOC need not function as a toothless tiger as some other Commissions are alleged to be, the real strength being its capacity to command credible evidence on denial of equal opportunities in given sectors of governance or public services.

A question often asked is how the Commission, which is not a court, would enforce its orders to provide relief to the aggrieved groups. Firstly, it may recommend to the appropriate Government executive action appropriate in the circumstances, which ordinarily no Government that is committed to equality and equity will resent. Secondly, it may publish the inquiry report together with the EOC’s comments to the Government concerned and the action taken or not taken by the Government, thereby putting democratic pressure for compliance by both the parties so directed. In the case of corporate establishments, it can be suicidal not to obey the orders of such a Commission monitoring equal opportunity practices.

Ordinarily, the orders and directives of the EOC to a party will be such that the party can implement and claim to conform to Constitutional obligations without much difficulty. To be an Equal Opportunity Employer is a good public relations exercise. The EOC would propose a phased plan of action and assist the party to implement it within a stipulated period.

The EOC would also be authorized to order compensation to the aggrieved party. Again, the Commission can employ incentives and disincentives to make parties comply its orders. For this purpose, an Equal Opportunity Practices Code can be evolved and announced for each sector persuading parties to adopt it in public interest and in fulfillment of their corporate social responsibility. It would be recommended that private enterprises still failing to comply with this Code be blacklisted or denied privileges by the Government. In selected cases, the EOC could play the role of a mediator or conciliator and work out a settlement for compliance. In extreme cases, the EOC could approach the Courts or tribunals with a petition seeking remedy on behalf of the aggrieved party.

Yes, the concept of “deprived groups” is not coinciding with caste and religious identities and is more descriptive of social and economic factors. This is because the emphasis is on equality of status and of opportunity (the Preamble promise) for all sections whatever be the source of such deprivation. All the criteria to determine deprivation cannot be pre-determined as they vary from place to place, sector to sector and time to time. It is therefore left to the EOC to decide taking advantage of the criteria already declared as constitutionally permissible and judicially acceptable. The report of the Expert Group on EOC have defined the “deprived group” as follows:

“Deprived Group means a group of persons who because of social, economic, educational or other disadvantages or other impediments as may be prescribed by the EOC are unable to access existing opportunities, entitlements or rights available under law, schemes or programmes of the State or private sector establishments”.

One can argue that the equality situation in the country would have been different had there been an EOC functioning right from the beginning of the Republic. Dr. Ambedkar warned the Constituent Assembly in the following terms: “We are entering a life of contradictions on the adoption of the Constitution. While in politics we have achieved equality by giving one man one vote and one vote one value, in social and economic life, we continue to have inequality”. He asked, “How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions?” and warned that by allowing such inequality, we would be putting our political democracy in peril. Is not the rise and spread of Maoist and Naxalite violence related to the denial of equal opportunities to our tribal brothers and sisters? Should not the fruits of freedom and development be equally available to the backward areas and backward sections of people as promised by the Constitution? What is the mechanism now available for monitoring the efficient and timely implementation of the Directive Principles on the welfare of weaker sections by the appropriate levels of Government? Is the judicial oversight adequate to redress grievances of groups denied of equal opportunities? It is imperative to address these questions, which explain the need and urgency for establishing an Equal Opportunity Commission, and for comparing it with that exists now in this regard.

Country after country, afflicted with the problems of inequality and discrimination based on race, caste, religion and gender, have set up EOCs in preference to all other Commissions including the Human Rights Commission. In fact, in the UK, the Human Rights Commission has been merged with the EOC. The experience in those countries suggests that the very presence of an EOC has acted as a deterrent to discriminatory practices in both society and government, and has helped in the development of a level playing field for all groups, specially the deprived sections, thereby enabling them to compete with dignity, and avail of all opportunities for development according to one’s aptitudes, abilities and potential.

(Centre for Policy Studies conveys its grateful thanks to Prof. Madhava Menon.)

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IS HIGHER JUDICIARY IN A CUL-de-SAC?

Shri P.S.Rama Mohan Rao, I.P.S.(Retd.)
Former Governor of Tamil Nadu
Ex-DGP, Government of Andhra Pradesh



The judgment of the Supreme Court striking down the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act is severely flawed for reasons of both Jurisprudence and equity which will be explained later in this Article.

After, all the controversy that has dogged this issue, one would have expected that the Supreme Court, after having wrested back the control over appointments to higher judiciary, would have overhauled the collegium procedure to make it more transparent, objective and credible . The explosive revelations of one of the Judges who became a member of the collegium pointed to the contrary and only strengthened the popular misgivings over the collegium procedure. However, the Govt. of India , without seeking a further confrontation have negotiated with the Supreme Court a memorandum of procedure for appointments, which is said to be in the final stages of mutual agreement.

But, why is the S.C. Judgment flawed?

The judgment restores the collegium procedure laid down, by the Supreme Court in the Third Judge's case, by way of interpreting the meaning and import of Art.124(2) of the Constitution. In doing so, the Court, by a tortuous "sleight of the pen", morphed Article 124(2) to resemble Article 74. In effect, it laid down that the words "after consultation" would mean "concurrence" of the President with the Court's recommendations for appointment of Supreme Court Judges. The President will have only a limited option of returning the recommendations for reconsideration. If they are reiterated, he will have no further choice but to accept them. Article 74(2) imposes an identical obligation on the President in regard to advice tendered to him by the Council of Ministers (Cabinet) in regard to legislation and governance.

Was this the intention of the Constitution makers? If so, why did they employ different language and construction for the two Articles? The debates of the Constituent Assembly provide the answer. Several members moved various amendments ranging from appointment of Judges with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of India to the election of Judges by Parliament. In settling the debate, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar advanced the following arguments.

(a) "There should be consultations with persons who are 'ex-hypothese' well qualified to give proper advice"

(b) Eminent as he is, "the Chief Justice is a man with all the failings, all the sentiments and all the prejudices" attributable to common people --- and "to allow the Chief Justice practically a veto upon the appointment of Judges is to really transfer to the Chief Justice, the authority which we are not prepared to vest in the President or the Government of the day".

The collegium procedure is thus a virtual repudiation of the intent of the constitution makers.

Article 124(2) provides for consultation by the President, with not only the judges of the Supreme Court but also with such High Court judges in States, as he may deem necessary. This clearly implies, that in choosing the Supreme Court Judges, the President (Executive) need not be guided only and entirely by the views of the Supreme Court and could take into account where and when necessary the independent opinions of High Court judges also. Further, the careful usage of the words "after consultation" and not "in consultation" strengthens this view and suggests that the consultation process is sequential and not concurrent. The Constitution, while locating the power of appointment with the President (Executive) accorded sufficient role for Judiciary in making the choices. But the collegium procedure, now being insisted upon by the SC,

extinguishes this option. In effect, without an amendment by Parliament, the SC has completely changed the content and character of Article 124(2), by overreaching its powers of interpretation, wide and extensive as they are.

The Constitution, no doubt, circumscribes the sovereignty of Parliament with its various canons. The same would also apply to the powers of interpretation of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court can elaborate and enlarge the amplitude of a constitutional provision as it had done in respect of Right to life and Right to Education. But it cannot interpret a statutory provision to mean the opposite of what the clear and unambiguous language of that provision conveys.

Superior Judges, by their oaths, bear allegiance to the Constitution. On the other hand, the President of India, by his oath has to protect, preserve and defend the Constitution, In the event of a sharp difference of opinion between the Supreme Court and the Executive, in regard to the appointment of a particular person as Supreme Court Judge, whose opinion should the President accept? If, as the collegium procedure enjoins, he accepts the advice of the Supreme Court, he would have violated Article 74(2) and thereby failed to fulfill his oath. Even more, he would expose himself to the risk of impeachment, particularly, if a single political party were to dominate the Parliament. Certainly, it could not have been the intention of the Constitution makers to provide scope for such an eventuality.

Cabinet form of Government and the mandatory nature of its advice to the constitutional head are among the core features of the Indian constitution. If it was the intention of the constitution makers to take the council of Ministers completely out of the process of appointment of superior judges as the Supreme Court has done, they would have framed Art.124(2) on the lines of Art 103 under which the President has to go completely by the advice of the Election Commission, without any role for the Cabinet, in the matter of disqualification of Members of Parliament.

Another basic feature of the Constitution relates to the finely tuned checks and balances among the three branches of Governance. Here, it is pertinent to underline the point that the initial selection of High Court Judges from among whom, a majority of the Supreme Court Judges will be chosen, is crucial to the quality and credibility of superior judiciary. The collegium procedure impairs this arrangement. The only check against the Supreme Court is the process of appointment of Judges which is now taken away, leading to the wide-spread belief about cronyism and nepotism which Late V.R.Krishna Iyer, one of the most eminent jurists to sit on the Supreme Court, pithily and wittingly summarized with his comment that replacement of the patronage of the political boss with patronage of the judicial boss has not improved the quality of judiciary.

Let us now look at the arguments of equity.

The reluctance of the Supreme Court to expose judiciary to the “sunlight” of Right to Information Act and its insistence on a closed and exclusive process of selection of superior judges, are totally inconsistent with the trust and confidence that civil society reposes in the Judiciary. Justice is a cloistered virtue but a cloistered process of appointment of judges is not. There is no other instance in the world where judges chose their own successors. Selection of superior judges should not only be objective and impartial but also must be seen to be such. The collegium procedure does not meet this test.

It is contended that the 14th Law Commission endorsed the collegium procedure forgetting the fact that other Law Commissions held a different view in favour of a Judicial Appointments Commission. So did the Administrative Reforms Commission and the National Human Rights Commission. In fact, the most severe indictment of collegium procedure came from its own architect, Chief Justice of India Late J.S.Varma. Similarly, another Retd. Chief Justice of India, MN Venkatachaliah, known for his jurisprudential erudition and judicial balance, shifted his position from “primacy to Judiciary” to “equal weight to judiciary and executive”. It is necessary to recall that these two judges along with Justice Krishna Iyer framed a Joint recommendation to Parliament in favour of an Appointments Commission.

Looking back, the excesses perpetrated on the Judiciary by an insecure Executive, during the emergency days, generated an understandable concern in the Judiciary about its independence. Equating such independence with “primacy in the appointment of Superior Judges”, the Supreme Court devised the collegium procedure when an opportunity for doing so came its way. This could have led to a confrontation with the Executive, but for the constraints of coalition politics at that time.

But in the face of growing evidence that the collegium procedure was proving as deficient and inadequate as the earlier process and the resultant public debate, the Executive, after prolonged and wide ranging consultations with all interest groups came up with the National Judicial Appointments Commission bill which was approved almost unanimously by Parliament. By striking down the Act on the flawed reasoning as described above, the Supreme Court has revived scope for a future confrontation. There cannot be much doubt, that when the political environment turns favorable, the Executive would like to strike back. In the meantime, the memorandum of procedure is unlikely to prevent frictions between the two branches of Governance.

There can be no room for turf wars and ego trips in a matter as vital as harmony among the three branches of the Constitutional Tripod. Sagacity and wisdom should prevail over past injuries and imagined fears. A few tweaks in the over turned NJAC Act to allay any apprehensions of the Judiciary regarding its loss of independence should have been the right answers.

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AN AIDE MEMOIRE FOR THE NEW RAKSHA MANTRI

Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd)
Former Chief of Naval Staff
Ex-Chairman, National Maritime Foundation



It is a reflection of our misogynist thinking that almost the first comment about Ms. Nirmala Seetharaman's appointment as Raksha Mantri (RM) – a political double-promotion by any standards - relates to gender; and is followed by the anxious query whether a woman will be able to handle the defence portfolio. As one who participated in Indira Gandhi's victorious 1971 Bangladesh War and observed, from a Royal Air Force base in the UK, Margaret Thatcher's 1982 Falklands triumph, I dismiss such commentators as neanderthals.

There is no doubt, that by assigning the defence portfolio to Ms. Seetharaman, PM Modi has reposed profound confidence in her political, intellectual and administrative abilities. But he has also placed a 'crown of thorns' on her head; given the precarious national security scenario and the six-month hiatus during which the *'locum tenens'* RM hardly had time to spare for the MoD.

Even as the new RM tackles pending and current problems, she has to find the time and capacity to address long-term national security issues and formulate an agenda, and 'action plan' for her relatively short tenure in office. National defence has suffered neglect for decades, because it is a 24x7 job that brooks no pause for constituency, electioneering or politics. Advice will not be in short supply for the RM, but if she tries to do everything, she may end up doing little or nothing. A quick 'reconnaissance of the terrain' may help her in orientation as well as deciding her priorities.

One has to start by facing the unpalatable truth is that our current national security dilemmas are almost entirely of our own making; a consequence of political indifference and bureaucratic lethargy, resulting in egregious neglect of national security. Procrastination on defence reforms, delay in border-road construction, foot-dragging on purchase of arms and ammunition and leaving the MoD headless for months; have all been perceived as signs of weakness and lack of resolve by adversaries.

It needs to be clearly understood that, apart from army, naval and air operations, the MoD controls every single aspect of defence that is the responsibility of the three Service Chiefs. Military operations, too, are dependent on financial, material, personnel and infrastructure support - all of which require approvals of MoD bureaucracy. The fate of our military (and survival of the nation), thus, depend on a MoD, which is run exclusively by civilian officers of the IAS and Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS).

IAS officers are the elite cadre of civil servants who take pride in being versatile 'generalists', and who can flit effortlessly from job to job, in assignments as diverse as management of rural development to running PSUs to manning UN posts. Service in the MoD, however, demands domain-knowledge, which comes with years of experience, in arcane areas of force-planning, capability acquisition and weapon procurement. Itinerant IAS officers rarely stay long enough to gather significant expertise on such matters. IDAS officers, designated 'Integrated Financial Advisers', were, presumably, positioned at various levels of MoD to assist in budgetary planning and help expedite financial decision-making. Having long abandoned the 'advise' function; they prefer to lie in ambush as 'auditors' and wait for someone to make a mistake before pouncing.

An acute lack of military expertise in MoD and absence of collegiate consultation between civilians and Service HQ have ensured that all discussions take place – languidly – through file notings. This Kafkaesque *modus operandi* has served to jam the wheels of the MoD, and examples abound (jet trainers, artillery guns, submarines, fighters) where vital military hardware has taken

10-15 years to acquire. Unconscionable delays in financial sanctions have led to ships running aground in silted harbours and life-expired batteries self-igniting on board submarines.

In the irreverent words of Field Marshal Manekshaw, anyone connected with defence must be able to tell “*A mortar from a motor, a gun from a howitzer and a guerrilla from a gorilla.*” Urgent consideration needs to be given to creation of a sub-cadre, within the IAS, formally trained in management of national security issues and earmarked for service in MoD, PMO, MEA, MHA and elsewhere. While considering long-overdue defence reforms, the gradual induction of uniformed staff into MoD, starting with the RM’s own office, would enhance expertise and reduce friction.

It seems incredible that 30 previous RMs, over 70 years, lacked the vision and initiative to sow the seeds of self-reliance in military hardware. This, inspite of a vast defence-industrial complex comprising of sophisticated DRDO laboratories, and huge production facilities of the defence public sector undertakings (DPSU). The latter have delivered thousands of fighters, tanks, aero-engines, and missiles, falsely claiming ‘transfer of technology’ and ‘indigenization’ while actually, assembling imported kits. Heads should have rolled for this huge failure, but MoD’s Department of Defence Production resolutely shields its wards.

PM Modi’s ‘Make in India’ project has the potential to lift the nation out of its dangerous dependence on arms imports and bestow genuine ‘strategic autonomy’ on it, while providing a huge boost to industrialization, skill development and job creation. The holy grail of defence indigenization will take years to attain, but a start must be made at the earliest; with disaggregation of the DRDO and DPSUs and their re-constitution in strategic partnership with private sector centres of excellence. The task of re-structuring our defence-industrial complex must not be left to government bureaucracy or scientists, bent on protecting turf and *status quo*. It must be assigned to a reputed professional from business or industry.

Ms. Seetharaman need have no doubts that she will receive the unambiguous obedience and deference owed to a Minister, as well as the regard and courtesy due to a lady from the Service Chiefs (all older than her). On her part, the RM needs to have the “1961 GoI Rules of Business” urgently amended to ensure that the three Service Chiefs find mention as designated functionaries of the Government of India, responsible to the PM and RM for the defence of India’s land, maritime and aerospace domains.

The Forbidden Cave: The Nursery Of The Great Epic

Prof. Manoj Das



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

It was an October dawn at Badarikashram and quite cold. But I was already on my stroll - a resumption of my nocturnal stroll interrupted for a few hours of sleep when I continued to wander in my dreams.

At least for half an hour I was the solitary soul to meander along the dusky streets experiencing the gradual occupation of the valley by a gentle sunlight, at first manifesting like supernatural hues coming from the eyes of some invisible gods, then growing into a tenderly warm caress.

The twin mountains, Nara and Narayana, dominated the backdrop of the shrine of Badri Vishnu. (According to another account the mountain Nara was one on the eastern bank of the river on which the greater part of the bazaar had come up.) The sky between the two mountains, viewed from a certain spot, resembled a map of India.

Mythology says that the two earliest known Rishis, Nara and Narayana, performed their askesis on these two mountains, imparting to the place a certain vibration of consciousness which can still be felt. Anyone who could silence his or her mind for a brief moment could feel or at least sense it - a vibrant tranquility.

The temple was to close down in a few days for the winter. Snow would take over the entire region. The sun, the moon, the stars and the twilight would brush the infinite white canvas with their personal tones and create wonders to amuse only themselves, not human beings.

I was already at the Taptakund, the hot-water spring. Unbearable at the first touch, it grows quite hospitable to one's body in a minute and as one emerges from it, one feels a thrilling rejuvenation - an unforgettable sensation that could continue for a quarter of an hour. What a marvellous coexistence of cold and heat devised by Nature! The Taptakund must have been a cocoon of comfort for the ancient sages who lived here in defiance of the freezing winter.

'Do you know that there is a cave on the outskirts of Badarikashram bearing the memory of Vyasa?' I asked the officer who had received us at Joshimuth.

'Of course I know. Vyas Gumpha.'

'Can you kindly arrange for me to pass a night inside the cave?'

The officer laughed and in a voice tinged with empathy, said, 'To be frank, it may be difficult for you even to pay a visit there. The region containing the cave is forbidden to all, barring the army, since the Chinese intrusion.'

My face probably mirrored my deep disappointment, though I did not murmur. I sat looking at a chunk of dazzling cloud inching near a silver peak as though to surprise it with a kiss. The officer was talking to someone over the phone. My attention went over to him only when I heard him utter my name. The person at the other end was a colleague of his or may be someone senior to him. 'This guest of ours is not just a curious tourist or a traditional pilgrim. He loves Vyasa. I've read some issues of The Heritage he edits. Well, I don't mind confessing that to some extent I'm influenced by him; I'll feel very awkward if we let him go back disappointed.' I was moved. His gesture was unexpected. As he listened to his colleague's response, his face grew brighter and I knew that he had got me my passport to Vyasa, I shook his hand gratefully.

He explained to me why passing a night in the cave was an unrealistic proposition. There were no human beings around. Well, the presence of a few hermits in unknown caves could

not be ruled out - for once in a while the patrolling army men spoke of sighting a lone bearded stranger at ordinarily inaccessible spots - but that was no factor in my favour. 'Well, Sir, to let you pass the night there would amount to our leaving you at the mercy of the abominable snowman, if not surrendering you to the enemy as hostage. Oh no, agreeing to that part of your proposal is beyond us!' the officer said laughing. 'You propose to be there for some time. Right? You propose to meditate. Right? For how long? I will instruct your escorts to be patient with you - unless you pass into a trance and refuse to come out of it!' he said.

We drove to Vyasa Gumpha in the forenoon. Our jeep drove by the only village in the area, Mana. But the doors of all the houses were shut. The entire village had migrated to the plains, as was their practice for generations, at the approach of November. They would quietly return after the winter to their deserted village and resume their transactions, through the intricate snow-covered passes, with their associates in Tibet.

The people of Mana, in days gone by, were probably a great support for the Rishis - from the mythical ones like Vyasa, Bhrigu, Sanaka and Sukra to Badarayana, Gaudapada, and Shankara who can be historically identified. It is also likely that the Badarikashram of ancient days was green, the woods abounding in highly beneficent medicinal plants.

We stopped at the gateway into the prohibited zone. Despite the sanction already obtained by my kind host at Joshimuth, we had to wait there for half an hour for further clearance. I had to leave my camera behind. 'Please don't take it amiss. We often feel guilty at applying any rule mechanically on all, but we have no option. My only hope is, such an uneasy situation will not prevail for long,' explained the suave officer in charge of the camp.

He provided us with four or five escorts. We walked a couple of kilometres and then stood before the cave - the birthplace of ancient India's most profound creative work.

Vyasa had lived a life linked with epoch-making events particularly during the great Kurukshetra War. Even after the war he had acted like a guardian of the victorious Pandavas. He made Yudhishtira the emperor and pacified Dhritarashtra, the humiliated and self-exiled king. He then retired to this cave and devoted himself to editing the Vedas with the help of his illustrious disciples like Vaisampayana and Jaimini.

And then began the most intense creative phase of the process.

Inspired to compose the great epic, the Mahabharata, Vyasa required a savant to take down his dictation, a divinely gifted scholar who would not make a single error while doing so. Probably he also wished that no human mind would intervene in the process of his inspiration's transformation into poetry. He invoked the loving god, Ganesha.

'O remover of every obstacle! Be kind to me. Once I am inspired, I will like to go on reciting the verses nonstop. If my attention goes over to writing, the flow may be interrupted. Hence may I pray you to act as my scribe! My words, thereby, would assume a great sanctity. The hearts and minds of those who would read them would be ennobled,' said Vyasa.

Responded the compassionate Ganesha, probably in a lighter vein, 'Well, my dear Rishi, I will be happy to do your bidding, but on condition that you must not pause once I begin taking down your words. If you do, my flow would be checked!'

'Very good, O kindness incarnate, but may I too put forth a humble condition : You must not take down a couplet without fully comprehending its significance,' said Vyasa.

'Let it be so, O poet sublime,' said Ganesha - as generous and vast as the Himalayas. And thus began a unique experiment at the dawn of Indian literature - creation and appreciation proceeding simultaneously. The Mahabharata came into being, courtesy the world's first stenographer, Lord Ganesha.

'This is the slab of stone believed to have worked as the seat for both Vyasa and Ganesha as they sat cross-legged facing each other,' informed the army guide who had accompanied us from the last camp.

I felt like bowing to the stone. But, 'Can I, too, sit on it?' asked another guest and she sat down on the slab without waiting for a reply.

The murmuring rivulet flowing by the cave is known as Saraswati - not to be confused with the other Saraswati sung in the Vedas which had disappeared. This is the way which the Pandava brothers as well as Draupadi had taken for their last journey, Mahaprasthan. A giant stone bridges the rivulet and it is believed that Bhima had thrown it there to facilitate Draupadi's crossing the rivulet, while he and his brothers were able to jump across it.

But, for Draupadi, crossing the river was also crossing into a life beyond. She was the first to fall. The spot, at a higher altitude, is still identified. Too tired to climb, I sat looking at it - a milestone between the earth and the heavens.

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Cultural Diplomacy : Leveraging India's Soft Power

Eighth Pupul Jayakar Memorial Lecture

Shri Shyam Saran

Former Chairman,
RIS & Former Foreign Secretary



I wish to thank the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, INTACH, for inviting me to deliver the 8th Pupul Jayakar Memorial Lecture. INTACH is one of the most important centres of excellence in our country, dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Indian cultural and historical legacy. And, it is no surprise that like several other sister institutions, it owes its existence to Pupul Jayakar's initiative. She was passionate about India's art and culture, its craft traditions, its intangible cultural assets such as folk songs and story-telling. She was, in every sense, an embodiment of the finest sensibilities bequeathed to us by India's rich cultural and spiritual heritage. She was as much at home with the country's vivid and colourful tribal culture as she was with the complex aesthetics and layered symbolism of its most classical and elevated art forms. In fact, it would be fair to say that the entire spectrum of art, from the tribal to the formal, from crafts to classical forms, was to her, a seamless continuity.

Pupul Jayakar was influenced deeply by theosophy and became a follower of one of its best known spiritual masters, J. Krishnamurti.

One of my treasured possessions is an autographed copy of her celebrated biography of the spiritual guide and teacher. This was her gift to me in the midst of the Festival of India in Japan in 1987/88, which I regard as one of our most successful forays in cultural diplomacy, showcasing the breathtaking range of cultural experiences that India has to offer. The Festival in Japan, just like the earlier Festivals in the US and France, was meticulously choreographed by Pupul Jayakar. As coordinator of the Festival in the Indian Embassy in Japan, I had the rare privilege of working closely with her, putting in place nearly 30 events – performing arts, theatre, exhibitions, fashion shows and film festivals, which eventually covered as many locations throughout Japan. Japanese TV channels carried Festival related programming of over 100 hours, all without cost, bringing Indian culture as a living phenomenon into the homes of millions of Japanese. And over this veritable cultural feast presided Pupul Jayakar, not inappropriately known as the Czarina of Indian culture. I am honoured to have been invited to deliver this address in her memory.

The Festivals of India, which have now been institutionalized, were conceived by her, and embody in practical form, what cultural diplomacy is all about, demonstrating its capacity to deliver impacts that often elude traditional diplomacy, to which it still plays second or even third fiddle. I believe that the role of culture in international affairs is consistently under-estimated and therefore, under invested in.

What is cultural diplomacy? In a study carried out in the U.K. a couple of years ago, the following definition was offered:

“Cultural diplomacy may be best described as a course of actions, which are based on and utilize the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation, promote national interests and beyond. Cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either public sector, private sector or civil society.”

This is an operational definition of cultural diplomacy and useful as a frame of reference. But in fact cultural diplomacy has a much deeper significance than is captured in the associated semantics. We may not always be aware of this but culture provides the operating context for politics. It is the prism through which people perceive each other, nations interpret each other and mediate their

differences and celebrate their affinities. The state has a key role to play but not an exclusive role because culture relates to people, their deep seated attitudes and ways of living. Cultural diplomacy pursued by the state is most effective when it plays an enabling role, providing opportunities, platforms and resources for people themselves to get into the business of engaging, debating and sharing their cultural lives with counterparts in other countries. This may be in the form of art, language, literature, history, performing arts, theatre, or just workshops and seminars. The range of cultural exchanges really has few limits. The mutual familiarity, awareness and understanding created through such encounters generates cultural literacy. And cultural literacy is indispensable to acquiring a capacity to interpret actions by other states and navigate the inherent diversity that characterizes inter-state relations. What may positively influence one state may mar relations with another. There is no standard formula or generic template. Each country and its people are unique and their cultural particularities need to be understood even while making the effort to help them understand our own. In some cases, as with the Chinese or the Japanese, knowledge of their languages and the complex nuances that underlie the use of words is indispensable. In other cases, language may not be a barrier such as with Pakistan, but there may be cultural or psychological chasms of a different kind.

Most misunderstandings and even conflicts between states, as between people, arise from misperceptions and faulty interpretations of behavior. And cultural illiteracy is usually the culprit. But much of this is intangible, difficult to measure and even to articulate but it is critical to diplomacy, not a mere supplement to it.

Diplomacy is anchored in cross-cultural engagement which engenders a cultivated sensitivity to the cultural idiom of a country one is dealing with. It is this sensitivity which confers the ability in a diplomat to sense the shifts in moods and expressions of his interlocutor and read the clues to a reality that often lies hidden behind formal articulations. I would go further and add that it is not only familiarity with other cultures that is necessary for a diplomat to discharge his duties effectively. There is need for cultural empathy . One needs to have a compelling curiosity about the culture of a country one is exposed to, its history, customs and traditions and, yes, the dreams and aspirations of its people. This applies to friend and adversary alike. The ability to locate current interaction in a broader cultural context, may help enhance the positive and limit the negative impact on inter-state relations. This enables genuine dialogue and not merely conversations.

Thus I see cross cultural engagement as an essential and enabling component of successful diplomacy and this goes beyond promoting cultural exchanges.

While serving as a diplomat in several countries, I had the opportunity to explore and appreciate the cultures that I came in touch with. But in doing so I also felt the urge to know about my own culture in all its bewildering variety. This in itself was an exciting journey but it was a journey that ran parallel to the mission of exposing others to our own cultural heritage, delighting in discovering both unexpected affinities and often novel perspectives on the human experience. The diplomat becomes both an interlocutor and an interpreter, the medium through which cultures speak to each other and hopefully break down the persistent national stereotypes and prejudices which undermine mutual understanding and peace.

Let me take you back to the Festival of India in Japan to demonstrate the power of culture to project in a most powerful manner, the inclusive, accommodative and secular fabric of India. At the inauguration of the Festival, the Dagar brothers, Nasir Moinuddin and Nasir Aminuddin, sang an exquisite Shiva Stuti, which held the large Japanese audience spell bound. After the Inaugural ceremony there was a reception in the foyer where Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his Japanese counterpart, Takeshita were mingling informally with guests. Takeshita wanted to meet the Dagar brothers whose singing had deeply impressed him. When he was introduced to the brothers, Takeshita asked Aminuddin about the composition that he had been singing . Aminuddin replied that it was an ancient invocation to Lord Shiva, seeking his mercy and benediction. Takeshita expressed surprise, exclaiming, “But are you not a Muslim ?”

And Aminuddin replied, Yes I am a Muslim but also a devotee of Shiva. I pay homage to Allah through my song in praise of Shiva. Another instance of the power of culture in diplomacy is my own experience with a Festival of India I organized in Indonesia in 2002 . There were several music and dance performances, exhibitions and jointly choreographed programmes with Indonesian artistes. The island of Bali was one of the most important venues for us given its cultural connections with India. The then governor of Bali was a most enthusiastic sponsor and several events were slated to be held there in the last phase of the Festival. In a meeting I had with him on October 10, we had fixed the inauguration for October 18 with a flute recital by Hari Prasad Chaurasia. A day after I returned to Jakarta came the horrifying news about a terrorist bomb attack in the tourist district of Kuta in Bali with over two hundred people dead. I called the Governor and offered my condolences but also conveyed that I was cancelling the Festival in Bali in the wake of the tragedy. I was surprised when the Governor literally begged me not to cancel the Festival saying that Bali needed the Festival more precisely because the tragedy had taken place. I demurred pointing to inevitable concerns about security of the artistes and the possible negative reaction amongst Indonesian people that we were celebrating a cultural festival- a happy occasion- just a few days after the unprecedented and tragic loss of life in the terrorist attack on the island. The Governor's response was to again reiterate that his people needed the balm of culture to cope with this tragedy and India could provide the solace they needed. He said that many foreigners were leaving Bali in fear; would India, too, abandon Bali?

That settled the argument as far as I was concerned. We went ahead with the Festival. At the inauguration, in a hall designed to accommodate 750 people, there were hundreds more, several outside in the courtyard watching the event on giant screens. The Governor and his entire Cabinet were in attendance. Pandit Hari Prasad ji dedicated his outstanding recital to the people who had lost their lives in the bombing incident . It was truly an emotional moment.

Next morning while I was walking in the main street of the capital, ordinary Balinese came up to me, grasped my hand and said Thank you. The Festival in Bali coming as it did just after the trauma of the terrorist outrage, got far greater response and coverage than it would have in normal circumstances. It created a wave of goodwill for India and sense of cultural and spiritual affinity which still pervades the island.

We have several programmes of cultural and academic exchanges with South East Asian countries but we often lack modesty in speaking about our cultural affinities. Some Indian scholars alienate their South East Asian counterparts by suggesting that South East Asia got its culture and art from India.

True that throughout South East and East Asia as well, one encounters the colours and sounds of India every where. But whatever cultural assets they may have borrowed from India, our neighbours to the East transformed these into exquisite examples of local genius and creativity. What has been at work here is not cultural imposition but a creative exchange that enriched both. To watch a performance of the Javanese Ramayana at the ancient Prambanan Temple at Jogjakarta is exciting precisely because its Indian origins have been lovingly reworked with local flavours to create an uniquely Indonesian product. We see what is Indian in it but mostly neglect the beauty of the layers of colour and meaning that Indonesians have added to it through the ages. We need to be humble in claiming cultural parentage. Pride if any should be in rejoicing that our ancestors provided a cultural spark which led to such a powerful surge of creativity and artistic expression in our extended neighbourhood.

Cultural diplomacy should enable a joint journey of exploration of this historical process because this was a cultural encounter unparalleled elsewhere in the world.

Even in the Indian sub-continent which is a shared cultural space, there is need for sensitivity towards the inherent anxiety which our neighbours have about their own cultural identity being overwhelmed by the power of Indian culture. Cultural affinity needs to be pursued with humility and a readiness to acknowledge the many contributions made by neighbouring countries in enriching our shared culture of the sub-continent.

The success of Bollywood as a facet of Indian popular culture is legendary though treated with some disdain by votaries of high culture. The final event of the Festival in Indonesia was a Bollywood extravaganza of song and dance with Shah Rukh Khan as the main performer. Though the show was held in a large stadium, there was almost a stampede. Shah Rukh is probably better known in Indonesia than some of its own leaders and all his films are instant hits in the country. Amitabh Bacchan is an instantly recognisable face from the shores of Africa, across the Gulf and on to South East Asia.

Raj Kapoor's Awaara Hoon and Nargis's Mother India are still remembered in Russia and China. And no matter what barriers are erected by the Pakistani state, Bollywood and its stars still rule the Pakistani imagination.

The Indian state has had little to do with this most powerful instrument of cultural impact, but it could certainly leverage it to the country's advantage. I attach value to cultural diplomacy for another reason, which has to do with the excitement of discovering the many treasures of India's own cultural heritage, lost to us because of loot and plunder or the ravages of time and weather, which lie embedded in the cultures of the many countries which constituted India's extended neighbourhood through the centuries. This extended neighbourhood was defined by the monsoon winds which linked peninsular India with the countries of South East Asia and the Far East on its eastern flank and the Gulf, Arabian peninsula and the east coast of Africa on its western flank. But there was also the many centuries of interaction with Central Asia along the caravan routes threading across the high mountains and deserts to the north. The Mughal empire created a unique Indo-Persian cultural space whose fascinating story has been detailed in Audrey Truschke's recent book, "Culture of Encounters- Sanskrit at the Mughal Court." India is a cross-roads culture, its cosmopolitan temper, its embrace of plurality, being the precious legacy of its lying astride both the maritime and caravan routes of the past. It had much to give to its neighbourhood and the colours and echoes of India are to be found throughout this extended neighbourhood. Equally, one must acknowledge, our own culture carries the imprint of what we learnt from our neighbours, both far and near. The exploration of the history, philosophical traditions, language and scripts, sacred literature, architectural forms and art idioms of countries in this extended neighbourhood is one of the most important missions of cultural diplomacy. This exploration has to be a shared enterprise with our partner states. This will reveal as much of our own history and culture as it would theirs and through this will be born a stronger sense of affinity, a shared frame of reference which more traditional diplomacy can draw upon.

During my assignments in China, Japan, Indonesia, Nepal and Myanmar and visits to Tibet and Xinjiang, I was struck by how much of India's sacred literature, both Hindu and Buddhist, were preserved in temples and monasteries and even in modern libraries.

There were original texts in Sanskrit or Pali; there were also translations in local languages. Let me share with you an example from Japan. While serving in Japan, I had the opportunity to visit the ancient monastery town of Koyasan, not far from the ancient capital of Kyoto. Koyasan is associated with the name of Kobo Daishi, a Buddhist monk, who lived from 774-835 AD. Like many other Japanese Buddhist monks, Kobo Daishi also travelled to China to study under Chinese masters. Kobo Daishi spent several years in Xian, the then Chinese capital, where he learnt Sanskrit and studied Buddhist scriptures under an Indian scholar, Pandit Prajna, who had come all the way from Nalanda, which in those days was truly the knowledge capital of Asia. On his return to Japan, Kobo Daishi introduced the Sanskrit syllabary in the Siddham script, to the Japanese language and this forms the basis of katakana, the supplemental phonetic alphabet which is used together with Chinese characters or the Kanji. But Kobo Daishi also brought with him a very large stock of Buddhist scriptures, Sanskrit texts on secular subjects such as astronomy and medicine and scholarly commentaries, which are still stored in an ancient library at Koyasan and treated as a national treasure. Kobo Daishi's "Catalogue of Imported Items" gives us an idea of the wealth of invaluable Indian historical, sacred and secular texts which he had accumulated over his many years in Xian and which are not only

the cultural legacy of Japan but also of our own country. A very old and distinguished Japanese monk at Koyasan, in whose company I visited the library, told me that several of the texts no longer existed anywhere else in the world, the originals and even translations having been destroyed in wars, revolutions, civic strife, fires and disasters over the centuries. Should not cultural diplomacy enable a joint Indo-Japanese project, which may have to be spread over several years, to research this invaluable source of our own forgotten history?

The period between the 8th to the 12th centuries was one of intense cultural, indeed knowledge exchange between India and the Arab world, with Central Asia playing the role of intermediary. This has been meticulously chronicled in Frederick Starr's "Lost Enlightenment". During this 500 year period, Central Asia was invaded by the Arabs and Arabic soon became the lingua franca of the entire Islamic world stretching from the margins of Europe to the edges of the Indian subcontinent. Classic Sanskrit texts on Indian medicine, mathematics and philosophy, travelled to Central Asia where they were translated into Arabic and transmitted to the Arab peninsula. The medical treatises of Charaka and Susruta, the mathematical and astronomical theories of Aryabhata and Brahmgupta were translated into Arabic by well-known Central Asian scholars like Khwarazmi, Ibn Sina and Alberuni. Several of these treatises were already available in Persian from earlier exchanges between Iran and India. These include 6th century Persian translations of Pancatantra and the Hitopadesa. These, in turn, found their way to Europe, becoming part of the European renaissance from the 12th century onwards.

The Indian numeral system, the concept of shunya or zero and the decimal, the calculation of pi and the notion of negative numbers and integers, are part of India's intellectual legacy which spread far beyond its borders including to Europe and China.

The world today presents new challenges to the practice of cultural diplomacy. At one end of the spectrum, the communications and information revolutions, have brought humanity much closer than at any time in history. There are vastly expanded opportunities to directly experience other cultures through travel or to learn about them through virtual media. There is a continual exposure to different ways of life, cultural norms and traditions and cuisine. An international Yoga Day has made this quintessentially Indian heritage a global phenomenon and reinforced India's soft power. This increasing interaction among different countries, peoples and cultures is leading to cultural enrichment, a growing appreciation of what is best in every culture and, hopefully, a heightened cultural sensitivity to the particularities of individual cultures. The intensity of cultural interaction globally is leading to a burst of creativity and intellectual ferment across the world and this is welcome. The U.K. study on Cultural Diplomacy which I referred to before says:

"As opportunities for global contact and exchange are proliferating as never before, and because of these contacts, culture itself is changing. Cultures are meeting, mingling and morphing."

But there is also a dark side that has been unleashed by the same proximity, for example, the fear of a loss of identity, a sense of being culturally adrift in a world being transformed with unprecedented rapidity.

Indian culture has been constantly evolving, changing and adding new layers of experience, but always retaining the eternal strands that define its identity. But there are times when we tend to reject the present and the promise of the future in favour of a remembered past and ancient glory. But as Nehru observed in a comment about culture:

"A nation cannot prosper if it merely imitates its ancestors. What builds a nation is creative, inventive and vital activity."

Mechanical imitation inhibits the process of engagement and dialogue not only between cultures but between generations born into the same culture. Instead of celebrating diversity and sharing cultural experiences, we begin to raise walls around us and seek to stifle the very impulses which keep our culture alive and vibrant. A culture that does not share will soon stagnate and die. Cultural diplomacy is all about sharing not showing.

I truly believe that open and liberal societies, in particular plural democracies like our own, are far better equipped to successfully navigate the increasingly congested world which is emerging. The hall mark of a great and successful power of the future will be the ability of its people to handle diversity and adapt to different cultures. In seeking our place in the world, India should be careful not to devalue the very strengths we possess as a confident and accommodative, indeed assimilative culture. We must not encourage a political culture which feeds on division, exploiting fears of the loss of imagined identities and creating a sense of siege. Our democracy is a citizen based democracy. Individual eccentricity has always found place in our culture and we must retain space for every individual to give full play to his genius, free from narrowly defined cultural categories or uninformed prejudices. If we are to engage other cultures in a productive dialogue we must reaffirm confidence in our own and learn to accept and celebrate the diversity that lies at the heart of the idea of India.

Let me conclude by going back to Nehru, whom I consider as a rare example of a modern Indian, steeped in his country's innate cultural values and yet conscious of India's myriad connections and even indebtedness to other cultures of the world. Nehru considered nationalism as a limiting concept because from his point of view nationalism considered civilizations as unitary creations. But civilisations had emerged from interconnections with each other and India more so than the others. Therefore he said, the history of one society necessarily required knowing the history of other societies. It is this exciting adventure of mutual discovery that cultural diplomacy is all about. This is the message that Pupul Jayakar sought to convey through the Festivals of India and which is more than relevant today.

I thank you for your attention.

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THE ROLE OF THE CIVIL SERVANT IN INDIA

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A former Comptroller & Auditor General of India, while addressing the trainees at the National Police Academy some years ago, expressed his anguish at the deteriorating credibility of governance and the declining morale of the All India Services (AISs). In his words, “too much is at stake for too many in such a situation”.

As AISs form the core of the Indian bureaucracy, these observations apply as well to the role of the bureaucracy in general in delivering good governance to the people and planning the future of the economy on sustainable lines.

The civil services in the country owe their existence to Articles 308-323 of the Constitution. The Constitution has provided a unique status for the civil services as they are considered to be the prime instrumentality for delivering governance to the people in line with the objectives enshrined in it. The civil services are bound by the norms laid down by the Constitution and its laws; not by the whims and fancies of the political executive. The civil servants, who enjoy a longer tenure compared to the political leadership, provide the much needed flow of continuity in governance. While translating the policies enunciated by the political executive into tangible action, it is the civil servants who play the crucial role. It is for the civil servants to point out whether the policies mooted by the political executive are in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The AISs, in view of the very nature of their structure, are expected to act as the crucial administrative link between the Centre and the States. The federal structure envisaged in the Constitution places a special responsibility on the AISs to maintain a relationship between the Centre and the States that is in harmony with the Constitution.

At the time of Independence, when the AISs came into existence, their role was predominantly regulatory in nature. Over the years, as the government undertook a wide range of development programmes in the fields of education, public healthcare, community welfare, agriculture and a host of other activities, the role of the AISs, especially, the officers belonging to the IAS has gradually shifted to that of regulation-cum-development. The role of a regulator need not necessarily be in total congruence with that of a development administrator. Keeping this in view, the government has created independent regulatory authorities in the fields of electricity, telecommunications, water, environment and so on to separate regulation from development administration. Despite this, there remain many areas of economic activity in which the civil servants often find themselves caught in conflict situations, trying to harmonise regulation with development. Since the political executive is usually in a hurry to push through the development projects, the regulatory authority of the civil servant stands compromised, whenever there is no clear institutional division between the two roles. Dilution in regulation, as in the case of protecting the environment, often leads to long-term adverse implications, the cost of remedying which turns out to be far more than what it would have cost, had the environmental impact been contained at an earlier stage. Since the political executive’s tenure is hardly five years, its response to such adverse implications will necessarily be myopic, unless the leader of the political executive has statesman-like qualities. Many political leaders are responsive to such situations, provided the civil servants have the necessary clarity of thought to be able to explain the adverse implications of inadequate regulation with facts and figures. Such situations test the mettle of the civil servants and bring out the glaring distinction between a prudent civil servant and not-so-prudent one!

Against this background, it is necessary for the civil services to introspect on the role they are to play in the coming years, at a time when the political executive is under pressure to deliver good governance along with development. Are there some basic concepts that need to be kept in

view by the civil servants in meeting the expectations of the political leadership? What are the keys to “good governance”? How does one define “development”?

Before one examines these aspects, it is important to remember that the civil servants are often faced with the challenge of managing the physical resources of the country. Some of these are scarce, depleting resources which, if exploited imprudently, will not last long. There are other resources which, when prudently used, can benefit not only the individuals but also the community at large. The role of the civil services in managing these resources is crucial not only for the present generation but for the future generations as well.

As far as the depletable physical resources are concerned, the Doctrine of Public Trust requires both the political executive and the civil services to treat the same as being held in trust on behalf of the public. For example, Article 39 of the Constitution enjoins upon the State to ensure that “the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good”. By implication, the “community” here refers not only the present generation but also the future generations. In the case of high-valued minerals, for example, Kautilya’s Arthashastra (3rd Century BC) prescribed that they should be exploited with utmost care subject to a minimum threshold. When a short-sighted political executive directs the civil servants to over-exploit a precious mineral like bauxite, it is incumbent on the latter to invoke the Doctrine of Public Trust on behalf of the public and safeguard the mineral.

There are individuals in the society who try to claim more than what they need. The Greeks described this as “pleonexia” which denotes “greed”. In Gandhiji’s famous words, “the world has enough for everyone’s need, but not enough for everyone’s greed.”

In the distribution of physical resources, the civil services are often confronted with the decisions taken by the political executive to favour a few individuals or firms. The Indian Constitution is clearly based on the Doctrine of Equality as enshrined in Article 14 and in the other provisions relating to the Fundamental Rights. When a limited and a valuable resource such as the public land is sought to be doled out by the political executive to a few chosen individuals or firms, as it has been the case with the successive governments in Andhra Pradesh, the civil servants ought to have invoked this doctrine to prevent those individuals and firms to profiteer at the cost of the public.

Let us come back to the role that the civil servants should play in improving the tone of governance.

The term “good governance” is often used as a cliché by many and its meaning depends on whose point of view it is looked at. “What the caterpillar calls the end, the rest of the world calls a butterfly” said Lao-tzu, the great mystic philosopher of ancient China. Since the target of governance is the people at large, it will be most appropriate to consider its meaning from their point of view. For the public, good governance should imply greater efficiency in the services delivered by the government, greater public accountability, greater freedom in their day-to-day lives, a predictable state of living and a participative role in decision making.

The requirements for this can be readily summarised as (i) greater transparency in the functioning of all public authorities, (ii) a wider choice for the people in terms of public services, (iii) greater competition in involving private enterprise to improve the efficiency of services, (iv) greater public accountability of the executive, especially the political executive, (v) compliance with the rule of law and (vi) strengthening the democratic processes in decision making at every level.

Since we are predominantly a country of the poor, there is an overarching seventh requirement in our case. Gandhiji’s talisman to those that govern is, “recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]”. Governance in our country cannot be described as “good” if it is not directed towards the needs of the poor.

Whenever any of these requirements remained unfulfilled, the concerned government had to face severe public criticism.

For example, the debilitating scams associated with the infamous Enron power project in Maharashtra, the more recent coalgate and 2-G spectrum scams owe their origin to the failure on the part of the government to comply with the two primary requirements of ensuring “transparency” and “competition” in governance. The recent measure of demonetisation of the higher denomination currency notes, however wise it may be, has restricted the citizen’s choices by forcing him/ her to shift to a plastic-card system that is fraught with risks. It is still fresh in our memory how 3.2 million debit cards of well known banks in India were hacked by cyber thieves a few months ago. Whenever the government has chosen to belittle the democratic processes which lie at the core of the Parliamentary democracy we have adopted, there have been conflict situations arising, as for example, in the case of the numerous ongoing land conflicts that have tainted our political system in many parts of the country.

Inadequate attention to addressing the needs of the poor in India has placed India at a pathetically low rank of 130 in terms of UNDP’s Human Development Index (HDI), below Vietnam (HDI: 116), Indonesia (HDI: 110) and Sri Lanka (HDI: 73). According to a World Bank study, India accounts for one in three of the poor population worldwide. For a country which proclaims from the rooftop that its economy is “shining”, this is certainly not a comfortable situation.

We will now turn our attention to the term “development” that has become a cliché in the day-to-day discourse of the political executive and the civil servants in our country.

In his outstanding work, “Development is Freedom”, Prof Amartya Sen has described the essence of any “development” activity as the one that enlarges the freedoms of the individual, not the one that restricts their choices. In addition, just as in the case of the concept of governance, any activity that is chosen by the people through a democratic process can alone qualify to be described as a “development” activity.

Contrary to these ideas, most so-called “development” projects in India are those imposed from above, not those sought by the people who are expected to be the ultimate beneficiaries.

In a lighter tone, unmindful of the havoc it would wreak on the local agricultural activity, when the Andhra Pradesh government tried to force a sprawling international airport project near Bhogapuram village in Vizianagaram district, the local community resisted it, saying that what they always wanted was a modern bus-stand, not an airport! If one were to carry out an objective, professional social-cost social-benefit analysis of this airport project, it can be readily shown how the cost of the agricultural activity that is lost and the cost of the livelihoods deprived far outweigh the perceived benefits of that project.

In other words, “development” is a concept that corresponds to participative decision making that characterises any genuine democratic political system. Whenever this idea is lost sight of, the governments are blamed, rightly so, of encouraging crony capitalism that allows a few corporate houses to circumvent the law of the land and profiteer.

In this connection, it is interesting to recall an incident that took place more than two millennia ago in ancient Greece.

The market place in ancient Athens, known as the Agora, provided a meeting place for the great men of the day. Once, the great Greek philosopher, Diogenes the Cynic, was basking there in the sun during a cold winter day, when Alexander the Great, riding his majestic horse, appeared there. In a munificent mood, Alexander asked Diogenes to ask for a boon which he will readily grant. Unmoved by Alexander’s offer, Diogenes casually looked at him and waved him off saying, “if you stop blocking the sunlight which I am enjoying, that will be more than your boon”. Most development projects deprive the people of their natural rights, much more than the benefits they give.

In conclusion, the civil services in our country should remember that they should stand committed to the law of the land and remain accountable to the people, while discharging their responsibilities within the democratic political system in which they function. They should realise that they are merely public trustees of the physical resources they are expected to manage and the bias in governance should lie in favour of the poor.

The successive Pay Commissions have granted sumptuous salaries and allowances to the civil services in India and they should realise that they belong to the coveted higher income groups of the population. Unlike the managers in the private sector, they enjoy Constitutional safeguards in their service. If they fail the country in taking it forward, it will be unpardonable. The responsibility of translating the people-oriented norms of good governance into action rests squarely on them. They are expected not only to change the governance systems in the country for the better but also be the prime movers of the change process themselves. They should remember Gandhiji's words, "be the change that you wish to see in the world."

Failing to take note of what has been stated above and seeking political favours for short-term gains will be akin to a person trying to chop off the tree branch on which he is sitting. For the long-term survival of the institution of the civil services, this is an important lesson.

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Globalisation and India

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(Foundation Day Lecture by Y.V. Reddy at Centre for Policy Studies, Visakhapatnam on Feb. 14, 2017. This is based on several lectures and articles that Dr. Reddy had delivered in the past.)

Mr. Anjaneya Reddy, Professor Prasanna Kumar, Professor K.C. Reddy, distinguished academics and friends,

I am thankful to the organisers for giving me this opportunity to be with friends here. My association with Visakhapatnam goes back to 1965 when I was Assistant Collector here. I had the benefit of long friendship with Professor Sarveswara Rao, Parthasarathy, Ramana, Gopalakrishna Reddy, Chandrasekhar, K.V. Ramana of Economics Department, in addition to Professor N.S. Reddy garu of Anthropology and Professor Ramana of Social Work. I have many pleasant memories of Vizag, in particular being trained by redoubtable Abid Hussain as my Collector.

At that time, Vizag was a small University cum Port town with Hindustan Shipyard and Bharath Heavy Vessels as major industrial units. At that time, Indian Airlines had to be subsidised to run one flight a day connecting Hyderabad. Today, it is part of Indian network of cities, on the way to becoming part of global network of metropolis. Globalisation is very powerful, and if not well managed by governments and people, the bad may be more than good. In this lecture, I want to share with you my experience in dealing with globalisation in different capacities. Before doing so, let me clarify what globalisation is for our purpose today, and also give a review of India's approach to globalisation since independence.

Globalisation may be defined as the process by which greater connectivity is achieved in regard to ideas, goods, services, finance, and people, across the borders of nation states. The restrictions on movement of people is a phenomenon of early 20th century while globalisation as a concept came into prominence in later part of 20th century. 21st century so far has seen explosion of global finance, then a crisis, followed by uneven recovery and more recently a dampening of the process of globalisation especially in growth of trade and capital flows.

Cross-border integration can have several inter-related dimensions: cultural, social, political and economic. For the purpose of this presentation, however, only economic integration is considered. Broadly speaking, economic integration occurs through three channels, viz., movement of people, of goods and, of finance or capital.

Firstly, on the aspect of movement of people, the most notable achievement of globalisation is the freedom granted to many, if not all, from the tyranny of being restricted to a place and being denied the opportunity to move and connect freely.

Secondly, in regard to trade in or movement of goods across the national boundaries, two types of barriers are observed, viz., natural barriers and artificial barriers. Of late, while the multilateral trade agreements are encouraging reduction in such artificial barriers, the developments in technology are also making it difficult for national authorities to enforce artificial barriers. The spread and depth of global supply chain networks has resulted in making it very difficult to identify country of origin of a product.

The third dimension relates to capital movements for which also, the interplay between technology and the public policy becomes relevant. There have been, however, some special characteristics of capital flows in recent years mainly led by revolutionary changes in telecom and computing capabilities. These have highlighted the phenomenon of what is described as "contagion", which implies the risk of a country being affected by the developments totally outside of its policy ambit: though domestic policy may, to some extent, influence the degree of its vulnerability to the contagion.

Indian Approach: Review of Past (1950-80)

During the first three decades of planned development, successive plans emphasized the need for financing development largely from resources mobilized domestically. Firstly, Indian planners shared the export pessimism then pervading the developing world. Secondly, the existence of a large domestic market provided scope for internalising forward and backward linkages. Thirdly, development strategy hinged upon a programme of industrialization to break through the vicious circle of backwardness. Fourthly, the availability of foreign exchange was a major constraint, especially after the running down of the Sterling balances during the 1950s. Export pessimism dominated the policy stance throughout the early decades of our planning. Accordingly, exports were regarded as a residual, a vent-for-surplus on those occasions when such surpluses were available. Import substitution was the principal instrument of trade policy and was regarded in the early years as not only the correct strategy but also inevitable in a continental economy like India.

The objective of self-reliance did not find an explicit commitment in the second and third five-year plans (1956 to 1966) which were mainly concerned with generating the foreign exchange resources required for the plans. The third plan reflected the first signs of rethinking in the policy strategy by dedicating itself to 'self-sustaining growth' which required 'domestic savings to progressively meet the demand of investment and for the balance of payments gap to be bridged over'. The fourth plan (1969-74) contained an articulated approach to achieving self-reliance. It was in the fifth plan (1974-78) that self-reliance was recognised as an explicit objective. After a brief period of Rolling Plan (1978-80), the sixth plan (1980-85) emphasized the strengthening of the impulses of modernization for the achievement of both economic and technological self-reliance.

My first serious encounter started with World Bank and IMF when I joined Ministry of Finance in 1997. In one year I got familiar with India's relations with them. But, it was my move to World Bank that gave me a good perspective.

World Bank (1978-83)

I was Technical Assistant / Adviser to the Executive Director in World Bank. I was performing dual functions, viz., attend every Board Meeting (twice a week) to assist the Executive Director on all affairs relating to the World Bank. This gave me a global perspective. Further, as a leading country among the developing countries, I was involved in the meeting of G-9 (Group of 9). In parallel, I was representing Indian interest and advising Indian authorities in regard to the relationship between India and World Bank.

This was a period of great transition in global thinking and globalisation, but we missed the bus.

Why do I say this?

Firstly, China joined the World Bank. Russia also joined the World Bank signifying beginnings of changed world economic order. We did not renew our relationship with global economy.

Secondly, many of the developing countries were adopting outward oriented policies particularly in regard to trade. We continued the illogical self-reliance policies.

Thirdly, Reagenomics and Thatcherism were bringing about fundamental rethinking about the relationship between the State and the market, and public enterprises and privatisation. We were not even willing to discuss these issues in our policy circles.

Fourthly, some Committees were appointed, which made suggestions for marginal changes, viz., nature of control, fiscal or financial. Control mentality itself was not questioned.

Finally, we applied for a big loan from IMF under Extended Fund Facility (EFF). In Indian Parliament, there was a criticism about India going to IMF for a loan, but nobody questioned why we came to a situation that forced us to go to IMF. In fact, the Finance Minister was happy with IMF being blamed by the Parliament and not the Government.

Perhaps, we lost a valuable opportunity to learn, reorient and review our own policies.

Ministry of Finance (1990-93)

After a few years in government and academics, I went back to the Ministry of Finance as Joint Secretary in 1990. By then, we were under severe balance of payments stress. This turned into a crisis in 1991. We had to initiate reforms immediately. I was involved in both crisis and reform from the point of view of balance of payments and external sector management.

There are several lessons that can be drawn from this experience.

Firstly, being a closed economy does not guarantee that we will not be affected by external sector problems. In fact, we were a closed economy but we have been continuously facing shortage of foreign exchange, and in this case, a crisis.

Secondly, the crisis was triggered by war in Iraq and jump in global oil prices on top of disruption of trade with Russia. However, it was the domestic vulnerabilities that got us into the problems. We had been living on borrowed time and borrowed money. We liberalised imports and entry conditions for industry, but did not make corresponding adjustments in other aspects, namely, exports and exit from sick units.

Thirdly, the endorsement of International Monetary Fund was critical to our managing the crisis, even after using our gold.

Fourthly, a number of studies conducted by IMF and World Bank on Indian economy, in a way, helped us prepare our own version of managing the crisis and managing the reform. In particular, we had differences with IMF on raising NRI deposits to meet the crisis and on capital account management. Yet, it did not hurt our relationship.

Finally, from the reform point of view, we believed in relatively open trade regime, in gradual development of foreign exchange markets and carefully calibrated capital account liberalisation. The foreign exchange budget was dispensed with.

In a way, thanks to the crisis and response from IMF, globalisation was thrust upon us for our own good, in early 1990s; but we were sensible enough to manage globalisation in our own way.

Ministry of Commerce (1993-95)

In Ministry of Commerce, I had three important subjects which related to the global integration.

Firstly, I was designated as the first Anti-Dumping Authority. I had to work on establishing procedures and processes for its work. The Authority was empowered to levy duties in case of imports which are considered to be “dumped”; that is sold at less than its cost to capture market. This is a safeguard that accompanies when we reduce tariffs and move towards global integration in trade. China and Japan used to be the main suspects in dumping, needing actions by the Authority.

Secondly, I had to deal with overseas investments of Indian corporates. Our experience in the past during control regime was miserable. Yet, I was pleading for liberalisation of rules for our corporates to acquire companies in other countries on the ground that global integration cannot be one way street. We succeeded in liberalising, to some extent, though it happened after I left the Ministry.

In those days, prevailing view which I opposed was that our corporates will take away valuable exchanges; and in any case, what is the point in exporting capital when we were importing capital to bridge our current account deficit.

Thirdly, we had to deal with licensing of export oriented units. While it might have been advisable for China which was a sea of socialist economy, for us it did not make sense. We were a sea of inefficient market economy. We don't require islands of market economy. In the modern system, it is difficult to differentiate the domestic sector and the external sector since the production processes are parts of huge supply chains.

IMF / World Bank (1993-95)

I was a consultant for a few weeks during this period on fiscal affairs in China, Tanzania, Bahrain and Ethiopia. What impressed me most, in my five weeks in China, was their keenness to learn from others. They stated that their goal was to beat U.S.A. in every aspect of economic strength by 2020.

In India, my friends in China told me, we tend to think that we know a lot.

Deputy Governor, RBI (1996-2002)

As Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India, for six years I was in charge of the external sector. Hence, I was closely associated with the most rapid phase of globalisation of our finance.

We started feeling the effects of global developments on us and vice versa. Even though our level of integration was still at the initial stage, we had to manage the contagion due to the Asian crisis, global reactions to nuclear tests, particularly, U.S. sanctions, developments in Russia and Brazil and Y2K uncertainties. Fundamental and structural changes were brought about in the foreign exchange regime in anticipation of changes in the law.

The new law, viz., Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) only formalised this policy.

Self-reliance Redefined

Our view of self reliance changed dramatically. I articulated in detail. Let me give an extract from a speech delivered in Chennai on July 13, 2000.

“An exploratory redefinition of self reliance could be as follows: First, the reality of global trends in trade in goods and services warrants international competitiveness as a key to a sustainable trade regime. In other words, a differential approach to export sector and import of goods or services is becoming increasingly difficult to operationalise. Consequently, barriers to efficiency, especially physical and institutional infrastructure would operate against economic strength and thus against self reliance. It must be recognised that large scale poverty and illiteracy and malnutrition undermine a nation’s capacity to achieve and maintain competitiveness.

Second, as Governor Bimal Jalan has been emphasising, adequacy of level of reserves is a key component for managing our external sector. Furthermore, an appropriate exchange rate policy, coupled with price stability as a component of macroeconomic policies is also critical to maintain competitiveness of economy both to facilitate exports and fine-tune imports.

Third, the remotely possible vulnerability on trade account is mainly on import front and it relates to food (for which there is a more than adequate buffer stock); fuel (POL on which imports are still large); and fertilisers (which are essential). Policy initiatives to ensure economies in managing such potential shocks, taking advantage of emerging instruments of hedging would add to a sense of comfort and thus to self reliance.

Fourth, on capital account, there are several developments in regard to international trade in goods and services, international business, technology, cross border flows of capital, etc. that would necessitate a more active management of capital account, with a view to continuously assessing the costs and benefits of liberalisation vis-à-vis control or regulation.

In this context, management of the capital account involves management of control, regulation and liberalisation. Gradualism in liberalisation implies that the mix between controlled, regulated and liberalised capital transactions keeps changing gradually in favour of the latter. In fact, if the option of re-imposing controls to meet an emergency is contemplated, the management of capital account should always contain control, regulatory and liberalisation options.

Fifth, as an economy becomes more sophisticated, we need to recognise that as other countries find it profitable to invest in India, we too can benefit from selective investments abroad. It is in this context that we have to view Indian investments abroad. It is erroneous to equate all capital

outflows with capital flight. In fact, selective investments abroad which are being progressively liberalised could ultimately make a significant contribution to the resilience of Indian industry.

Sixth, there is a need to recognise the resource and other limitations on multilateral and other official bodies to extend adequate support if a large economy like India were to face a highly vulnerable situation. The resource and other constraints on international financial institutions and systems have been demonstrated in the recent Asian crises and hence India has to take extra precautions to minimise vulnerability and continue to be risk averse in this area.

Finally, it is clear that while several initiatives are proposed at the global level, the task of preventing a crisis is essentially a national responsibility though an enabling international environment is sought to be put in place to facilitate action by individual countries. No doubt, in today's globalised world, prevention of crises as well as mitigating the effects require multilateral efforts, but the social consequences of such crisis are to be met by the national governments concerned. In this sense, the ultimate responsibility in regard to crisis prevention and management rests primarily on the policy makers of the countries concerned."

Thus, the concept of self reliance can no longer be defined in terms of degree of openness but in terms of competitive strength in trade in goods and services on the one hand, and managing balance of payments (supply shocks on trade account and capital flows) to avoid vulnerability on the other.

Briefly stated, currently, self reliance of a country lies in its economic strength and resilience to potential vulnerabilities.

IMF (2002 – 2003)

I moved out of RBI to become an Executive Director in IMF. I was now on the Board of IMF as an important member in managing the IMF. This is a cooperative institution. However, it was a cooperative with unequal membership. We could command respect because we became a lender in 2002-03, in ten years, from being a borrower after pledging gold.

On close quarters, I understood the Fund's programme in Turkey, Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. The most important lesson was very clear. All systemic risks that arise out of globalisation will have to be borne by the government of the country concerned. The only exception may be USA because U.S. Dollar is virtually the world currency. Major sources of risk for a country are government's borrowing in foreign currencies from non-residents and banking system.

Governor (2003-2008)

On the basis of the lessons learnt from the IMF, we from the RBI took a highly nuanced position in regard to external sector.

We differentiated the balance sheets of households, corporates, government and financial intermediaries. We were fairly liberal in regard to households and corporates, but tight with regard to foreign currency exposure in regard to government and finance. Further, we were not willing to take any chances with global imbalances. In spite of all the precautions taken, our economy was affected to some extent, that is because the channels of contagion are several, viz., trade channel, finance channel and sentiment channel.

We increased global integration in a dramatic manner while building a war chest of reserves.

Global Perspective of Globalisation (2008-2012)

There are several areas of global economy and national policies that would be subjected to rebalancing as a result of the global financial crisis. Such a rebalancing will have to be based on three factors, viz., the lessons of experience from the events leading to the crisis; the after affects of policies undertaken to manage the crisis; and, the evolving socio-political and economic factors in different parts of the world, including in particular demographic profiles. Rebalancing has to

include capital, trade, employment, monetary system, financial architecture, and above all, global power balances. I will summarise views, as expressed in various fora by me at that time (2008-2012).

First, it was assumed that globalization of finance will result in the capital flowing from advanced economies to developing economies, thus helping the developing economies to accelerate the growth potential. However, the global capital has moved uphill, viz., from poor countries to advanced economies, on a net basis. This phenomenon may persist and even intensify in future.

Second, the global trade continues to be a source of hope for growth for many developing countries. However, the enthusiasm for globalised trade is getting moderated in advanced economies due to the crisis and high levels of unemployment. The extent of current unemployment in advanced economies may be partly cyclical and significantly structural. The technical solution to solve this problem is improving the productive capacity of the labour force in advanced economies to match their current standards of living, but their age profiles make it difficult to improve the skills among them. The economic activity in developing countries and in the global economy are likely to increase significantly, and hence trade among developing countries is likely to grow faster than trade between advanced and developing economies. Some of the developing economies may shift their demand to consumption from investment, while in some others, investment may gain priority. The labour costs are likely to increase in some of the developing economies. Overall, replacement of advanced economies as the locomotives of growth in global economy by the emerging market economies may be inevitable, but may occur over a longer term than widely believed.

Third, the employment trends in global economy have been particularly disturbing after the global financial crisis. The globalization of capital has enabled capital to move to areas where labour is least expensive. This also brought about unionization of global capital along with deunionisation of labour at the national level. The bargaining power of labour has been considerably eroded both by technological progress and breakdown of its union power (capital is mobile across countries, but labour is not), though this phenomenon is more prevalent in advanced economies than developing economies. The interplay of employment, demography, migration, and globalization may be more challenging for public policy in future. In addressing these issues, inequalities and social cohesion within each country may dominate the discourses.

Fourth, the international monetary system is described as non system because the dominant global reserve currency, viz., U.S. Dollar is not subjected to market discipline, and is not bound by any globally agreed set of rules. The weaknesses have been recognised, but no feasible new system is on the horizon. Replacement of one national currency with another will not solve the fundamental problems of such a non-system. Replacement of one currency with multiple currencies may diversify the risks, but the externalities will push the system towards dominance of one currency. SDR is essentially an accounting unit and not a currency. A global currency is not feasible without a global monetary authority endowed with powers to expand money supply, contract money supply and act as a lender of last resort, when essential. In fact, the problems arising out of current monetary non-system may be more complex in future than those before the crisis because of the threat to U.S. Dollar position over the medium to long terms, without a viable alternative.

The limitations of the present global financial architecture comprising IMF, World Bank, WTO, and possibly G20, are well-known. Improvements in their resources as well as governance have been made, but by all accounts they are marginal. There are signs of diminishing returns from G20, though there is promise of greater role in future. These considerations give rise to a strong possibility of lack of substantial improvement in global monetary and financial systems, and possibly greater uncertainties and tensions in the global monetary system and financial architecture.

Fifth, there are efforts to improve the financial regulation in the global economy, and in particular designing minimum standards of regulation in different countries. Regulation of cross-

border activities and financial conglomerates, has gained attention, particularly after the recent developments. There is considerable skepticism about effective regulatory regimes in the major international financial centres simply because they can continue to be global financial centres mainly through soft regulation. Further, globalization of finance without globalization of fiscal management may pose problem as illustrated by the experience in Euro Zone. Experience has shown that financial sector problem spillover into fiscal, and fiscal problem can impact financial sector in a variety of ways.

Finally, there is an increasing recognition that global power balances would shift from West to the East, and in particular, to Asia. There is considerable consensus that incremental economic activity in the global economy and incremental trade will shift considerably to the developing economies, in particular, Asia. It is not very clear whether financial intermediation will undergo a corresponding shift. More important, in terms of institutional capital and human capital, the advanced economies are way ahead of the developing economies. The shift of global power balances is also influenced by the social and cultural factors.

India will inevitably be an important part of the shift in power balances.

Conclusion

I want to place on record my appreciation for the work done by Centre for Policy Studies since its launch on 2nd October 1995. I am expecting that it will have an influential future not only because of the growing importance of Visakhapatnam as a Metropolitan city, but also because of the interaction between intellectuals, academics, experts and practitioners that the Centre is trying to promote.

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India in a changing Asia : Towards a Forward Policy

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(Lecture delivered on April 13, 2016 organized by Society for Policy Studies in collaboration with India Habitat Centre)

Introduction

Mr. Kacker, Cmde Bhaskar, and friends, I am delighted to be a part of this prestigious Changing Asia Lecture Series at the India Habitat Center, New Delhi.

We face today an extraordinary period of change at home and abroad. The changes in Asia and its waters have never been as consequential as they are today, and are likely to shape India's own evolution in the coming decades and the 21st century. Although the rise of Asia has been upon us for nearly a quarter of a century, our own debate on it has not generated enough clarity of thought.

Our strategic and economic policy communities continue to be buffeted by competing ideas. Self doubt and fear of entering uncharted waters compel us to cling to familiar but long outdated ideas. As a result, our policy direction seems to oscillate considerably between engagement and isolation. Before I examine some of these problems, let me say a few words about the title, especially the reference to Forward Policy.

The idea of Forward Policy is often associated with Jawaharlal Nehru's foreign policy towards China and has drawn much criticism for its lack of realism: of ambition unmatched by resources. But, the notion of Forward Policy was not invented by Nehru. It is very much part of our strategic legacy from the (British) Raj. It is very much rooted in the modern origins of India's territorial structure. It was about defining the nature of the relationship between the sovereign India and the adjoining territories; it was about addressing threats before they materialized on India's borders; it was about sanitizing the space around 'fortress India'. Sustaining this policy was never easy or cheap, even at the peak of the British Raj. But the inability to sustain it had severe consequences for the territorial integrity and security of India.

Having dealt with the notion of Forward Policy, let me explain the structure of this presentation. I will begin with a brief discussion of India's ideas of Asia and examine the centripetal and centrifugal forces shaping Asia. In the second part, I will briefly review the cycles of engagement and isolation in India's history and suggest that we are in the phase of expansive engagement. In the third part, I will look at India's potential role in a changing Asia and conclude with reviewing the case for a Forward Policy that will contribute to peace and prosperity in Asia.

India and the Ideas of Asia

As one of the world's oldest continuing civilisations, India has always been enriched by its interaction with other cultures and civilisations around it. As India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru told the delegates at the 1947 Asian Relations Conference in Delhi, India is "so situated to be the meeting point of western and northern and eastern and southeast Asia. Streams of culture have come to India from the west and the east and been absorbed in India, producing the rich and variegated culture which is India today."

"At the same time," Nehru added, "streams of culture have flowed from India to distant parts of Asia... If you would like to know about India, you have to go to Afghanistan and Western Asia; to Central Asia, to China and Japan, and to the countries of Southeast Asia. There you will find magnificent evidence of the vitality of India's culture which spread out and influenced vast numbers of people".

The idea of Asia's unique identity endures and takes many forms. There is the notion of a 'cultural Asia' that has been propounded by the Japanese art historian Okakura Kakuzo way back at the turn of the 20th century, as the region began to discover shared civilisational roots. "Asia is one" was the simple but profound first sentence of Kakuzo's highly influential work, 'The ideals of the East', published in 1903. As they gained national consciousness and became more aware of the world around them and intensified the effort to free themselves from colonial yoke, many in the region defined Asia as the 'spiritual other' in the East to the 'materialistic West'.

Some in Asia were deeply wary of the idea of an Asia that defines itself in anti-Western terms. Instead, they sought to imagine the Asian identity in more universal terms. Contemporary Asia's first great power, Japan, instrumentalised the idea of pan-Asianism to promote its own imperial interests in the first half of the 20th century. As it occupied vast swathes of Asia, Japan talked of an 'Asia for the Asians' and presented its own conquest of the region as a 'liberation' from European colonialism. In contrast to the notions of Asia's imperial unity, the anti-colonial struggles generated a very different version of Asian unity. This sense of solidarity expressed itself at the Asian Relations Conference in Delhi and the Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung (1955). It eventually morphed into the Non-Aligned Movement. Asia's sense of unity, however, was shattered quickly as inter-state and intrastate conflicts, exacerbated by narrow nationalism and Cold War geopolitics, enveloped the region.

As the West prepared for a triage of new nations, the so-called 'Asian Tigers' surprised the world by demonstrating the prospects for rapid economic growth through globalisation in the 1960s. Their example was emulated by others, including China and India, in the subsequent decades. Their separate efforts turned Asia into the world's economic powerhouse and laid the foundation for the great reverse in the balance of power between the East and the West. Complementing the rise of an 'economic Asia' was the new 'institutional Asia.'

If Asian regionalism and internationalism in Asia rapidly dissipated in the 1950s, the end of the Cold War saw the dramatic expansion of trans-regional institution building in Asia under the leadership of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). What seemed an impossible dream in the middle of the 20th century turned into a reality by the beginning of the 21st century amidst the proliferation of regional institutions, including those focusing on political cooperation such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, the East Asia Summit and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia.

Asian nations are now more economically connected than ever before. They are striving to deepen regional integration through trade liberalisation agreements at the sub-regional, trans-regional and international levels. In the middle of the 20th century, regionalism ran into opposition in Asia from those emphasising 'economic sovereignty.' Today, Asian nations have the luxury of dealing with competing trade pacts. As it seeks to build an economic community among its ten members, the ASEAN is also promoting the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership with six other partners— China, Japan, Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand. The United States has led the effort to draft a more ambitious trade pact among 12 nations, including some members of the ASEAN, called the Trans-Pacific Partnership. China has proposed a much wider arrangement called the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific. Meanwhile, market forces are pushing different parts of Asia and its immediate neighbourhood together. The rise of China and India has made them the largest and preferred customers for the oil resources of the Gulf and mineral resources of Africa. Trade, investment and aid volumes from China and India with the Middle East and Africa have surged. Beijing has also led the creation of new Asian and international financial institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank under the non-geographic forum BRICS involving Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Its ambitious One Belt and One Road initiative to build physical connectivity across borders promises to recast Asia's economic geography. Its project for overland industrial belts extends all across Eurasia. Beijing's Maritime Silk Road project connects the Indian and Pacific Oceans, long viewed as separate maritime domains. Japan, which had led the efforts in the second half of the 20th century to build

Asian infrastructure, is now taking fresh initiatives. As a result of these initiatives, Asia is going to be more intricately tied to itself through new roads, high-speed railway systems, energy pipelines and optical fibre networks.

The moment to celebrate the extraordinary triumph of the idea of Asian unity, however, seems to be marred by the re-emergence of conflict and power rivalry in the region. Regaining control of national destinies was one of the main objectives of the post-colonial states in Asia. The region today is no longer a mere theatre for European colonial powers. It is the motor of global growth and an agency in shaping the world's financial and political order. If the reviled Vasco da Gama moment has ended in Asia, the region is also facing sharp internal divisions. While the focus of the last two decades has been on the shifting balance between Asia and the West in favour of the former, the region is now coming to terms with structural changes in the evolution of Asia's 'internal' balance of power. The rapid rise of China relative to the other powers in Asia has raised big questions about the future strategic order in Asia. China has overtaken Japan to become the second largest economy in the world and is poised to surpass the US in the near future. The widespread hopes for Beijing's peaceful rise have evaporated amidst the sharpening maritime territorial conflicts between China and its neighbours.

To make matters worse, the great power harmony in Asia that has existed since the normalisation of Sino-American relations in the 1970s and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 has been replaced by mounting tension between China and Japan on the one hand, and between Beijing and Washington on the other. There is renewed emphasis on alliances, defence partnerships and military modernisation across the continent. At the same time, the project to build a 'comprehensive cooperative security architecture' for the region is in disarray. There are deep disagreements on the nature, scope and terms of any such arrangement, some of which have turned the idea of Asia into a contested one.

One view articulated with great vigour in Beijing reaffirms the slogan of 'Asia for Asians' and demands that outside powers quit the region. Others wary of Chinese power eagerly seek American military presence in the region. As they develop strategic partnerships with America, they also strengthen military cooperation among themselves as an insurance against a potential US-China duopoly in the region. A century after the ideas of unity and shared identity gained regional traction, Asia enjoys levels of integration and cooperation that few could have imagined. Yet, the political fault lines in the region have never been so deep.

India's Engagement and Isolation

As Asia enters a period of great churning, the question of India's role in the region has become an important one. The great potential and persistent challenges to India's role in Asia can be seen in terms of a paradox: Through the ages, India was both a self-contained (sub) continent in itself as well as the geographic pivot between different parts of Asia. India's history has seen periods of expansive engagement with the neighboring regions interrupted by extended periods of self-imposed isolation. This pattern has repeatedly played out over the centuries. The dynamic interaction with the Aryans from inner Asia, its maritime linkages with Greece and Rome, the spread of Buddhism from India by land and sea and its links to the Silk Road all marked a significant interaction with the world in the pre-Christian and immediate post-Christian era.

This engagement took place despite the physical barriers—the seas to the south, the deserts to the west and the great Himalayas to the north and east. When the Indian society turned inward around the 10th century, its engagement with the world was confined to the margins of the subcontinent. In this era too, the impact of Muslim rulers from Arabia, Turkey and Central Asia saw the enrichment of Indian society. But it was the rise of capitalism in Europe and the colonial era that dramatically reconnected India to the world. While it subjected India to alien rule, colonial rule began the process of globalising Indian economy. The region was no longer producing for itself and trading with the limited agrarian surpluses.

The new era saw local production for global markets and the emergence of India itself as a market for goods produced elsewhere in the world. The colonial era also saw the movement of Indian capital and labour across the world and formed the foundation for India's global footprint and human connectivity. Through the colonial era, India became the economic connector of different regions in Asia and in the Indian Ocean littoral. The colonial era saw the construction of three major ports—Bombay, Madras and Calcutta—that became critical nodes in the new global maritime trading network. The British Raj continuously opened new markets and new trading routes between India and its abutting regions in inner Asia, from Xinjiang to Yunnan. It built road and rail networks, much in the manner that China is doing with its Silk Road initiative today. At the political level, the colonial Raj saw the territorial consolidation of India. Although the Raj never fully approximated to the coherence of modern European states, it did become the largest empire that the subcontinent had ever seen.

The need to concentrate the means of violence under colonial rule saw the creation of a massive armed force that built on the many indigenous formations before. This force inevitably emerged as the centre of British imperial defence system. India's armed forces became the main security provider in the Indian Ocean and its abutting regions—from the South China Sea to the Mediterranean and from Southern Africa to Siam. Independent India, wittingly or unwittingly, abandoned this legacy of a massive external economic and military engagement with Asia and the Indian Ocean.

By making a conscious choice in favour of economic self-reliance and import substitution, India disconnected itself from the regional markets. The great Partition of 1947 made matters worse by breaking up the political and economic unity of the subcontinent. The creation of new borders and the tensions between India and Pakistan meant that the region's military energies, directed outward during the Raj, were now turned inwards. The unification of China, its control of Tibet, and the boundary dispute between Delhi and Beijing resulted in shutting down the long frontier between India and China. If an insular approach to development diminished India's relative economic weight in Asia and the Indian Ocean, Delhi's foreign policy rooted in non-alignment reduced India's weight in the security politics of Asia. That India became increasingly isolated in a region that was its natural space for leadership underlined the tragic paradox of India's foreign policy in the early decades after independence. It took the end of the Cold War and an internal economic reorientation to put Asia back at the Centre of India's foreign and economic policies.

Changing Asian Order

India's dilemmas in coping with the strategic consequences of China's rise and America's response to it are similar to those confronted its fellow Asian states. Until recently, East Asia believed that the rise of China is most likely to be peaceful and bet that Beijing can be 'socialized' through a network of regional arrangements. That confidence, however, has been shaken during the last few years amidst mounting tensions between China and the U.S. and between Beijing and some of its neighbours. Meanwhile, the United States which encouraged its Asian allies to accept Communist China as a legitimate power after the rapprochement with Beijing in the early 1970s and facilitated its economic growth, now confronts a challenger to its longstanding primacy in Asia.

India, which was deeply uncomfortable with the Western and Asian embrace of China in the past, now finds itself in a very different quandary as relations between China and America begin to enter a complex and uncertain phase. India, on the one hand, stares at a rare opportunity to shape the Asian balance of power and confronts on the other the real danger of being drawn into the conflict between the world's foremost power and the rising challenger. There are nine potential ways in which the regional order could evolve.

- The first is the prospect of a Sino-centric Asian Order. Many scholars including some in the United States have argued that if there is something natural about Asia being reorganized around Chinese primacy. After a couple of bad centuries, it is argued, China is reclaiming

its place at the heart of Asia. China's new role as Asia's largest economy and the engine of its economic growth would provide the foundation for this Sino-centric order in Asia. While this logic has much merit, it is not clear if many of the large countries of Asia, like India, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Japan are politically prepared to accept such an order.

- A second possibility is the reinforcement of American primacy, which has been the source of order and stability in the region for decades. A slowdown in Chinese economic growth, renewed economic vigour in America, restoration of American political will and the strengthening of its traditional alliances and new partnerships would certainly make that outcome possible. While India might be happy to live with the restoration of the old order, Delhi can't afford to devise its policies on that possibility. For the scale and scope of power shift in China's favour is undeniable. While the pace of that change might be uncertain, there is no escaping its essentially irreversible direction.
- The third and fourth and fifth possibilities are about different forms of accommodation between the United States and China. Before announcing the pivot, the Obama Administration signaled its willingness to accommodate the rising China if it was willing to play by (American) rules in the first year of its tenure. Many in Asia characterized the American attempt to offer strategic reassurance to China as the construction of a G-2. Beijing, however, appeared to utterly unenthusiastic about the concept of G-2. Many leading lights in the U.S. strategic community like Henry Kissinger have warned that a confrontation with China will be disastrous for America and insisted that there is no alternative to their 'cooperation and co-evolution'. Faced with the U.S. pivot to Asia announced during 2011-12, the Chinese leaders have called for a "new type of great power relationship" between Beijing and Washington that is different from the past pattern of conflict between rising and declining powers. Contrary to the widespread perception, Chinese opposition to an accommodation, in the form of a G-2 or Sino-American condominium is not about the principle, but the terms. Besides condominium there are other forms of accommodation between China and the United States.
- The fourth scenario in our list is the prospect of an arrangement for separate spheres of influence. Much like Spain and Portugal who agreed not to compete with each other, it is possible to imagine America and China demarcating their primary areas of interest and agreeing on the principle of no-contest in agreed spheres of influence. India is deeply concerned about the prospects for any form of joint management of the regional order in Asia by America and China. In the past, India reacted strongly against statements on U.S.-China cooperation for example in promoting non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Subcontinent. U.S.-China accommodation aimed at defining the rules for others in the region is bound to be resisted by India.
- Fifth, another variant of this is the prospect for 'offshore balancing' by America. Much like British policy towards continental Europe, America could step back from its current role as a hands-on manager of the regional order, promote 'in-situ' balance of power in Asia and intervene only to restore when the shift in the balance threatens its interest. Many American scholars dismiss the possibility of the U.S. ever adopting such a role by arguing that off-shore balancing does not come naturally to Washington.
- The sixth possibility involves the construction of a regional balance of power from a multipolar perspective. The idea of a concert of Asian powers, including America, China and India, has gained some traction in recent years but faces many practical obstacles. On its part, India has welcomed the proposal by the Obama Administration for a sustained triangular dialogue with China on Asian security issues. Beijing, however, has shown little interest in such a dialogue with Washington and Delhi. Besides China a number of other middle powers are not likely to respond positively to a self-selected Asian concert. In post-Napoleonic era, the Concert of Europe was formed by a set of roughly equal sized powers

all of them located within the old continent. In Asia, the varying sizes of the powers, the problems of limiting geographic scope and the pitfalls of excluding key players could complicate the challenge of constructing a concert of powers.

- A seventh possible scenario is the idea of middle power coalition in Asia that can cope with the challenges from a bilateral strategic dynamic between Washington and Beijing. Asia has a large number of middle powers with an inherited tradition of non-alignment. Even treaty allies of the United States might see such a middle power coalition as a small insurance against the twists and turns in U.S.-China relations. The last few years have seen an expanding network of bilateral defence cooperation agreements and trilateral security consultations between different middle powers in Asia. The U.S. treaty allies such as Japan, Korea and Australia have been part of this process. As one of the founding members of the movements for Asian solidarity and the non-aligned movement, India might not have the option of constructing such a coalition attractive. But it will require the devotion of considerable institutional resources, the lack of which is evident in India's current security engagement with the East Asian countries. The U.S. on its part might see the emergence of a web of regional security cooperation among the middle powers as a useful complement to its own traditional alliances and special relationships. China, however, is likely to prevent the emergence of such a coalition.
- The eighth possibility is that the regional security institutions, led by the ASEAN, will emerge strong and help mitigate the great power tensions in Asia and set the stage for a cooperative regional security. The reality, however, is that the very construction of these regional institutions, defining their membership and mandate has been subject to contradictions among the great powers. The evolution of the East Asia Summit initiated by the Association of South East Asian Nations underlines this. ASEAN has sought to draw in most other powers, including India, Russia and America, into the EAS fold to broaden the playing field. But Beijing's emphasis has been on limiting the scope of the EAS and refusing to let it interfere with China's pursuit of its own national interests. If the EAS has not done too well, neither the older institutions like the ASEAN Regional Forum or the newer ones like ADMM Plus (which brings together the defence ministers of the EAS member states) are likely to be effective in coping with the historic redistribution of power in Asia. Their current focus on soft security issues in EAS only underlines its inability to address the larger challenges coming to the fore. Beijing has also shown the ability to break ASEAN unity on issues relating to China. Meanwhile the attempts at regional economic integration are being pulled in different directions with the ASEAN calling for a new Asia-wide free trade agreement that excludes the U.S. and the American initiative on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. India, as the weakest of the major powers and strongest of the middle powers, has been happy with supporting the "centrality of ASEAN" in shaping the Asian security architecture. That is good diplomacy, but not necessarily a solid basis for structuring the future Asian security order.
- Finally, the most likely scenario for the near future is the slow but certain buildup of the Sino-U.S. rivalry in the region. China's assertiveness in the region and the U.S. response to it, in the form of military and diplomatic rebalancing to Asia, might have set the stage for a prolonged geopolitical contest in the region. It is a rivalry few in the region have wished for or can manage. The tension between Chinese search for greater freedom of action in its Asian periphery on the one hand and the American forward military presence and its long standing alliances on the other is real and will have great bearing on Asia's international relations for a long time to come.

Towards a Forward Policy

The search for regional balance of power will be different from the Cold War experience in Asia. Unlike the Soviet Union, which was isolated from the economic flows in the region, China

is at the very heart of Asia's economic dynamism and is by no means amenable to a strategy of containment by other powers. On the other hand, China's power naturally complicates the credibility of traditional U.S. alliances in the region. In Japan and the Philippines there is a fear that the United States might not stand by them when their territorial conflicts with Beijing turn into shooting matches. In Australia there is a debate on the importance of adapting to China's new role in Asian security. Meanwhile the ASEAN, which has seen itself as the driver of regional institution building is finding it hard to stay united amidst the assertion of Chinese power. The new divisions across the region are further reinforced by the deepening schisms in within the political elites of all major countries on how best to deal with China's assertiveness and how far their nations must go in working with Washington to limit Beijing's power.

These new dilemmas are clearly visible in India's own policy response to the changing balance between China and the United States. In Delhi they acquire greater complexity given India's own aspirations to play a larger role in Asia and its celebrated tradition of non-alignment. India's strategy in the near term is likely to evolve along four axes. One is to strengthen its own comprehensive national power, especially in the military domain, in order to slowly reduce the emerging strategic gap with China. The second is to deepen economic and security cooperation with the United States without becoming a formal ally of Washington. The third is to reassure Beijing that it will not become a party to any U.S. plans to contain China. Managing the relationship with China and avoiding a confrontation with Beijing on its borders will remain a major priority for India. Finally, India will try and step up its bilateral and trilateral security cooperation with key Asian states like Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and Australia to retain a measure of autonomy from the unfolding U.S.-China strategic dynamic.

This approach is not free of contradictions and is likely to face many tests in the coming years. Let me conclude then by briefly mentioning how others view us in Asia. That India's 'Look East' policy came in the wake of its economic reforms initiated at the turn of the 1990s was not surprising. Reconnecting to Asia, Delhi recognised, was critical for the modernisation of the Indian economy that had fallen behind the rest of the region and to rejuvenate its foreign policy in the new era. Since then, India has made considerable advances in connecting with Asia. It is now part of the major regional institutions, has growing economic and trade links and has stepped up its security cooperation with most Asian nations. Yet, there is a widespread sense of disappointment in Asia with India's recent record in the East. Asia's regional dynamic— in economic, political and strategic domains—has moved much faster than Delhi's readiness to adapt. Asia today hopes that the 'Act East' policy unveiled by the government of Narendra Modi will bridge the gap between India's promise and performance.

To meet the regional expectations for leadership, India will need to accelerate its internal economic reforms, deepen its integration with its South Asian neighbours, seize the opportunities for strengthening physical connectivity with different parts of Asia, play a more active role in the regional institutions and intensify its defence diplomacy. Delhi cannot afford to miss the unprecedented opportunity to accelerate Asia's march towards prosperity or disavow the historic responsibility to shape its future political order.

(CPS offers its grateful thanks to Shri C. Raja Mohan and Cmde. C. Uday Bhaskar)

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India's Changing Geopolitical Environment

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(IHC-SPS Lecture delivered at India Habitat Centre, Delhi under Changing Asia Series of Lectures on January 20, 2016)

Commodore Uday Bhaskar, Shri Rakesh Kakkar, Director IHC, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Why did we choose this topic? Because things are changing in a fundamental way around us. And they affect our chance to transform India into a modern developed country in which each Indian could achieve their full potential. So I thought I should speak about those changes and how we might respond to them, using them to promote our national interests.

Let us first consider the changes that we see around us in our immediate neighbourhood, the Indian sub-continent, then at our extended neighbourhood, east and west, and finally at the world order as a whole.

I. The Indian sub-continent

The first decade and a bit of this century were probably the best decade in the subcontinent's history in terms of economic growth, democratisation, connectivity and intra-regional cooperation — with one major exception, Pakistan, and, possibly, the Maldives whose future is unclear at present. For all the other countries in the sub-continent from Afghanistan to Myanmar this has been a period of unprecedented and sustained economic growth, of growing connectivity with each other, of settling internal conflicts and democratisation, and of cooperative relations with India. This is true of Sri Lanka (with the end of the civil war, restoration of democratic norms), Nepal, (where the 12 year insurgency ended, Maoists mainstreamed and democracy brought in), Bangladesh (which is coming to a reckoning with its past, fighting extremism, growing faster than ever, and working closely with India), Bhutan (which was ahead of the curve in driving change herself), Afghanistan (compared to an abysmal earlier condition), and Myanmar (where predictions of doom have been belied). This is not to say that all their problems have been solved. Each of us, India included, has major internal political issues and is in need of structural adjustment of their economies to cope with the new global and regional economic situation. But overall, the base has been laid, if we choose to build upon it, to continue progress towards integrating the subcontinent, building connectivity and habits of cooperation and making the institutions we established in this period, like SAFTA, the South Asia University, and others, work much better.

The exception, as I said, is Pakistan, not just because she is on the cusp between West and South Asia, and suffers the ailments of both, but as a matter of conscious choice by the Pakistani establishment of the kind of state and society they are building, of their instruments, such as political Islam and jihadi tanzeems and terrorists, and of the calculated use of tension in their relationship with their immediate neighbours, India, Afghanistan and Iran. Pakistan today exhibits many of the same features as are causing turmoil in West Asia — weak state structures, religion in politics and over politics, building nationalism on ancient or manufactured animosities, sectarian violence, an outsized military (in terms of its political role, its claim on national resources, and relative to the real security threats the country faces), a lack of popular participation and belief in the political system, weak economic prospects, and so on. At the same time Pakistan is trying to tap into the economic vitality and consolidation of East Asia, led by China. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, from Gwadar port through the Karakoram mountains to Xinjiang is one such an attempt. But it needs the promise of a specially raised division of the Pakistan Army to defend it and those who try to build it.

Over the last two years, Pakistan has benefited from the changing situation in Asia to make herself relevant to other states. A China stepping out into a regional and global role seeks partners,

and Pakistan is a willing though needy one, as the US\$ 36 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project announced by President Xi represents. The US desire to withdraw peacefully from Afghanistan requires an accommodation with the Taliban that Pakistan offers to broker. And differences in the Middle East between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Shia and Sunni, and the fight against Daesh offer Pakistan space and leverage. Even though choosing sides is never easy, Pakistan seeks to be all things to all sides, making herself useful and offering herself as an ally — joining the 34-member coalition led by Saudi Arabia while reassuring Iran that Pakistani troops will not serve abroad, and offering herself as an honest broker between them.

But none of these address the fundamental dilemmas of Pakistan: the role of the Army; religion in politics; religious extremism and the spread of Wahhabi ideologies; the declining writ of the state and the army; and the fragmentation of society — all of which cause or are directly linked to India's difficulties with Pakistan. As a result, Pakistan's capacity to sustain a normal relationship with her neighbours, whether India, Afghanistan or Iran, has steadily declined

India has consistently sought to find a modus vivendi or to normalise relations with Pakistan in our own interest. Today, we are in another phase of renewed hope, as a result of PM Modi's reaching out to PM Nawaz Sharif most dramatically with a Christmas Day "drop-in" on Lahore. This, however, was followed within five days by the Jaish-e-Mohammad cross-border attack on the air base at Pathankot on Jan 1-2 night, repeating a pattern that we have got used to. The more serious the India-Pakistan dialogue, the more likely and severe cross-border terrorism is. Despite this, the prospect is that the dialogue process will continue with several engagements foreseen in the coming months. It is still an open question whether the optics of India-Pak dialogue can be converted to substantive results: restoring the ceasefire, controlling and eliminating cross-border terrorism, enabling normal MFN trading, and implementing past agreements such as bringing the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack to book. But the risks of the relationship deteriorating into open conflict are slight, to my mind. That would be in neither side's interest. Indeed, both should have other more important things to do, developing their own economies and societies.

II. West of India

There is a clear dichotomy between what we see to our east, and what we see to the west in our extended neighbourhood. While the Asia-Pacific is building on its economic success in the last three decades, strengthening connectivity and its role in the world, the extended Gulf and the Levant are descending into turmoil.

Consider what we see in West Asia:

- A collapse of state structures and elimination of sovereign borders: This is as true of Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia as it is of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and is exemplified by ISIS and its territorial domain.
- The breakdown of the geopolitical balance, first upset when Iraq was taken out of the equation by the Gulf Wars, then by Turkey's attempt to work through the Muslim Brotherhood in other major states, and more recently by the assertive Saudi use of Salafi/Wahabi groups in Syria and force in Yemen. The major beneficiary has been Iran, whose influence and presence has grown from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf coasts.
- The rise of sectarian violence and ancient animosities which strengthen the first two trends.
- Economic stagnation or recession, particularly in single product oil exporting countries hit by low oil prices, which gives extreme, radical and terrorist organisations fertile conditions for recruitment among the youth.

Is there a way forward in West Asia that is not catastrophic? Judging by what we have seen we cannot look to the traditional Western dominated world order, established powers like the US, or the UN, for solutions. What we have seen in the last decade is a disastrous record of Western

interventions and UN ineffectiveness in country after country — Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and so on. To my mind the geopolitical problem could theoretically be fixed if the four major regional states, (Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Israel), understand their mutual vulnerabilities and agree a regional order. They could do so in theory as they have the capabilities required, but try getting to sit around the same table. They have yet to display the wisdom that such an outcome would require. Instead, Egypt is internally preoccupied; Israel works in (unacknowledged) concert with Sunni Arab regimes against what it sees as an Iran-Iraq-Syria-Hezbollah Shia axis; and, Turkey ploughs its lonely furrow with Daesh and against the Kurds. The net result is a geopolitically polarised region. To add complexity, even an agreement among the Big Four to forego interference in other states' affairs would not guarantee a solution to the problems of internal political order that plague the region, namely, weak state structures and the role of religion, (both of which are linked). The prospect is therefore for more turmoil. The best one can hope for is some degree of managed turmoil.

Turmoil to our west affects India directly, through our diaspora and energy security, and indirectly, through Pakistan and Afghanistan. You know the figures. Over seven million Indians live and work in the Gulf and Levant, they send over US\$ 35 billion home in remittances every year, and we get over 70% of our oil and gas supplies from the region. India's stakes in the region are very high, for if these are disrupted our quest to transform India will be disrupted. The turmoil has, however, also created opportunities for us — we are receiving counter-terrorism cooperation from regimes in the region that was not possible some years ago; the demand from regional partners for defence cooperation, particularly maritime security is growing; and we are better placed to deal with the possible radicalisation of individuals in our diaspora in these countries. I have no doubt that sooner rather than later India will have to make real political and military contributions to stability and security in this region that is so critical to our economy and security. What has inhibited us since the seventies have been limited capabilities and the fact that other states were providers of security in the area. Now that both those limiting factors are changing, our approach and behaviour should change in defence of our interests.

We have been fortunate that the appeal of radical West Asian ideologies and groups has been limited in our plural society. Most of the Indians whom we know were attracted to Daesh were brought to our attention by their own family or community. What should worry us is the fact that ten years ago we could say proudly that there was no Indian in Al Qaeda. Today we can no longer say so. But compared to other societies in South and South East Asia, we have not done badly in dealing with such radicalisation, even though in our case much of it has outside state sponsorship and a base in Pakistan where the military and others in the establishment still see terrorism as an equaliser in their attempt to seek parity with India. State sponsorship of cross-border terrorism is alive and well in South Asia.

The explanation for the limited radicalisation of Muslims in India probably lies in the history of Islam in India. Islam came to India in many forms at many places and at different times, — as trading communities along the coast which assimilated local customs and beliefs, as groups and tribes of migrants, some as invaders in the north and west, and in multiple other ways over several centuries. This meant that separate Muslim communities had very little in common in their social customs and practices and were relatively well assimilated into the broader society. The pluralism within the community is its strength, which enables it to resist radicalisation. This is also why Salafi and Wahabi attempts to homogenise the beliefs and practices of Muslims are so dangerous and have not succeeded in India and Bangladesh to the extent that they have in Pakistan.

Europe

Looking further west, there are fundamental changes in Europe which are obscured by Cold War rhetoric and frameworks that are still used to explain events there. The Eurocrisis and the flood of migrants have had profound geopolitical consequences for Europe. We may be watching the end, and certainly a fundamental change, in the European integration project, a closing of

borders within and around Europe, and a distinct turn to chauvinism and parochialism as a result of present and prospective economic stagnation. The effects are clear in the marked changes in Europe's relations with Russia, the world and among the European powers.

We may even be seeing the end of trans-Atlantic unity, of the Western unity that we have got used to since WWII in 1945. This in itself was a historical aberration, forced by the Cold War bipolarity and expressed in NATO. The attempt to negotiate a TTIP is an attempt to continue the old ways in the economy. Ten years ago it would have been inconceivable that the TPP in Asia would be negotiated before the TIPP across the Atlantic. But changing relative weights in the global economy, and the effects of domestic recession or stagnation are making the TIPP a harder negotiation. Politically, before 1945, Europe's internecine and trans-Atlantic wars and conflicts were called World Wars. Now that is no longer possible or necessary. My point is that Europe is reverting to type, with the return of geopolitics in the classical sense of a struggle for mastery between great powers, with the difference that this is now one more regional hot spot, but at a time when there is no settled world order within which it can be managed or find resolution.

III. Looking East

The geopolitical changes of the greatest significance for India are those taking place to our east.

The overwhelming phenomenon when we look east is the rise of China, which has masked the simultaneous, if less spectacular, rise of India, Indonesia, Korea, Vietnam and others.

The major geopolitical challenge for India in today's situation is dealing with the consequences of the rise of China and of Asia more generally. China has risen in a crowded geopolitical space, where her other neighbours, like Korea, Indonesia and India are also rising. The balance of power in Asia is shifting so rapidly that the Asian order must and is changing before our eyes. China's rise has occasioned internal and external balancing throughout the Asia-Pacific. Asia-Pacific has seen history's greatest arms buildup ever in the last few decades and informal coalitions have formed to balance the rapid accumulation of power by China. A Chinese leader said recently, "the US world order is a suit that no longer fits".

This moment of fundamental change opens up both opportunities, (especially for those like India who would like to improve the status quo), and risks, (particularly for those who built and managed the existing order to their own benefit like the US). India's answer, in the last few years is to both cooperate and compete with China in the periphery that is common to us both and on broader global issues. As for the bilateral issues that divide us like the boundary, trans-border rivers and China's activities in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, we have found ways to manage differences in the last thirty years while growing the relationship. China is now India's largest trading partner in goods and over 11,000 Indians study in China. We have little to gain and much to lose if we treat our relationship with China as a zero-sum game. Since both countries have major internal reform and structural adjustment to undertake, the present pattern of cooperation with competition should continue for the foreseeable future, but there are new factors which suggest that India and China need to find a new equilibrium.

The geopolitical challenge that we now face is two-fold: One is the emergence of a new order in the Asia-Pacific; and the other is structural adjustment in the Chinese and, therefore, the world economy. Both have major implications for India-China relations and India's prospects.

Since the 2008 world economic crisis, which is still with us, we have seen the emergence of a new continental order in the Asia-Pacific, where China seeks primacy and will certainly be one of the dominant powers. Russia now works politically with China to make this possible. We see the signs in their coordination in Central Asia, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Eurasian consolidation, expressed in the One-Belt-One-Road concept, is already a reality through a network of pipelines, roads, railways, fibre-optic cables, and so on, all of which lead back to China, and which are largely financed by China. It is consolidated through institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment

Bank and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and through financial arrangements and the increasing use of the RMB or Yuan in the settlement of China's trade. (By one account 30% of China's trade is now conducted in RMB.)

The maritime order, on the other hand, is contested, as is the global commons in outer, cyber space and the high seas. This in itself is a marked change from sixty years of unchallenged US dominance. The contest expresses itself in different forms. The rise of Chinese maritime capability has provoked responses by other powers in the region. Increased cooperation in defence, intelligence and maritime security among China's neighbours — India, Japan, Vietnam, Australia — is one. The other is an unprecedented arms buildup in the Asia-Pacific in the last twenty years, the greatest ever in history, primarily in their navies and air forces.

India now faces a very different situation from what we have got used to and benefited from over the last twenty years to grow at an average of over 6.5%. We can no longer assume that others will guarantee the safety of the sea lanes that carry our foreign trade and our energy supplies. Nor can we assume that a benign international order will keep the peace. We will have to decide how far we wish to assume new responsibilities, and how far we are willing to compromise on strategic autonomy and work with others on these security issues. At the same time, many more powers, facing the same uncertainty, are and will be willing to work with India in this effort, as we already see in maritime security and counter-terrorism.

India has so far sat on the fence on the emerging continental order and on contestation in the maritime domain and the global commons around us. We have not taken a position on the One-Belt-One-Road initiative. We cannot do so for much longer. We must now choose. My personal preference is clear. We should use the infrastructure and institutions that are being created to further India's transformation. Infrastructure is value free, it is its use that makes it a threat or an opportunity. We can convert the challenges into opportunities for India if we act now.

The World & the Chinese Economy

The other defining issue is structural adjustment in the Chinese and world economy. We have already seen the short term effects of what happens in Chinese stock exchanges on our markets, the effects of the global crisis and China's slowdown on world oil and commodity prices, currencies and stock markets. Each of the major economies and groupings needs, recognises and says that it must make basic structural adjustments. But what we see instead are individual attempts to maintain privilege, to change the rules to suit one or other group of countries, and rising protectionism, chauvinism, and intolerance in both developed and emerging countries. In the last five years, this has produced "beggar-my-neighbour" policies which will only worsen the disorder that we see around us.

While all the major economic powers recognise that they must structurally adjust their economies, the Chinese are the only ones with an announced plan to do so. They intend to move from an investment led, export driven economy to domestic demand, market led and consumption driven model. But that transition is likely to be bumpy. The transition has to be managed on top of real estate and asset inflation, and a US\$ 28 trillion debt burden caused by the Chinese government pumping in investment to avoid the consequences of the 2008 crisis. George Soros thinks that it cannot be managed smoothly and that China's problems have never been more intractable. He argues that China can carry on with her present policies for three years or so, exhausting her reserves of foreign currency and her people's trust. In that time, China will exert a negative influence on the rest of the world, reinforcing deflationary tendencies that are already present. Others think that the oversized role and power of the state and the accumulated wealth of thirty years of double digit growth make it possible for China to manage a soft landing. China is increasingly displaying some of the symptoms of a developed economy, with an ageing population, rising wage rates, plateaued productivity, and possibly the "Japanese disease", of a long period of stagnation. A Chinese friend described it as senility in youth! Whichever way the Chinese economy develops, we are likely to see the Chinese RMB further devalued, making Chinese exports even

cheaper, which will challenge our economy even further and make the success of “Make in India” less likely. Though China might settle to 3-5% growth in the future, that would still add India’s annual GDP to China’s every few years, and would diminish our prospects in the Chinese market, which is one of our largest today.

Besides, prolonged stress in the Chinese economy is likely to make it harder for the Chinese leadership to make the compromises that the rest of the world will demand in the increasingly assertive policies China has followed since 2008, whether in the South China Sea or, in our case, her rhetoric on settling the India-China boundary. As the legitimacy brought by high and historically unprecedented growth fades, the Chinese Communist Party is likely to turn increasingly to nationalism. This is both an opportunity and a challenge for India. While it makes settling our differences with China more difficult, it also means that the China alternative is less attractive to foreign investors and manufacturers, and that other powers will seek partners in balancing China’s rise and behaviour.

The rest of the world is hardly sitting still in the face of these changes. Their reactions, ranging from higher standards and implicit protectionism in the TPP and TIPP, to the closing of Europe, to the raising of interest rates in the West, will also make our task that much more difficult to access markets, technology and capital for India’s transformation. In the last three years or so we are watching “on-shoring” by both the US and China. A larger and larger proportion of the global manufacturing and value chains that pass through China is moving to China from South-East Asia. The same is beginning to be true of some high-technology and high-value manufacturing which is moving back to the US.

Looking further ahead, cheap energy and digital manufacturing are likely to further revolutionise the economics of manufacturing in favour of the established industrialised countries. A robot, unlike human labour, will cost much the same wherever in the world it is operated, thus eliminating a major source of competitive advantage that emerging economies have used so far. And new sources of fossil fuels, and the technologies for renewable fuels clearly belong to the same established powers. It therefore seems to me that we have a window of about ten years at most to industrialise India before the economics change drastically. At the same time, as in any disruptive technological changes, early adopters and the quick can benefit considerably. Mastering the coming high technologies for renewable energy and digital manufacturing could play to India’s strengths in highly skilled and educated manpower, if we turn our minds to it now.

IV. World Order

I have tried to describe what I see as fundamental changes in the regions and domains that directly affect our economic well being and security. But are there corresponding changes in the world order itself and in how it is run?

Not yet, because there is always a lag in changing reality on the one hand, and our habits and institutions on the other. The latter are still controlled or shaped by previous power holders jealous of their privilege, and often in denial about change. What we, therefore, see, instead, is not so much a changing world order as a fragmenting of the order as it existed before 2008. International governance at the global level is extremely fragile. Survival, or the absence of failure, as at the COP in Paris last December, is today hailed as a great victory!

Today’s situation is probably best described as generalised fragmented disorder. This is a world that will reward the agile and the nimble who adjust rapidly to change, not those who try to replicate the past and carry on on the basis of habit and old experience. To my mind this world is as much of a challenge as an opportunity for a country like India that wants to change the reality that we have inherited. I only hope that we once again show the wisdom to seize the day.

(CPS thanks Shri Shivshankar Menon and Cmde. Uday Bhaskar)

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Back to the Drawing Board

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The spectacular victory of BJP in the recent elections to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly following its victory in the 2014 elections had led political analysts to posit that Indian polity had entered a new phase in which, like the Congress Party during the first four decades of Independence, the BJP has come to be the natural party of governance. It has also been contended that the old tenets of secularism had become irrelevant, that the new hegemony of the BJP might be ‘used to dismantle the fundamentals of our republic’, and that consequently opposition should ‘reboot itself’ by recovering the legacy of Indian nationalism, and connecting ‘secular politics’ to ‘our traditions, cultures and languages’; the challenge to the new hegemony must ‘begin by developing a cultural toolkit to take on the ideological and moral legitimacy of the regime’.

The million-dollar question facing the nation is whether the purported paradigm shift in politics would also lead to the victory of the BJP and its affiliates in the culture and history wars, the country has been witnessing ever since the rise of BJP as a major political force in the late 1980s. At the heart of the wars are competing conceptions of India, Indian nationalism, Indian culture and secularism. Cultural nationalism is central to the Hindutva ideology while liberals and leftists espouse civic-territorial nationalism, and revile the cultural nationalism of RSS and BJP for being exclusivist and jingoist, for discriminating against minorities particularly Muslims, for intolerance towards critics and reckless antipathy against Pakistan. Leftists and liberals as well as ‘secular’ parties assail the Hindutva forces for undermining secularism, a precious heritage of the Freedom Movement, while those who subscribe to Hindutva ideology condemn the practice of secularism in post-Independent India as ‘pseudo-secularism’ which treats and appeases Muslims as *voteki mandi ka maal* (vote banks), and props up backward-looking Muslim religious elements with a more obscurantist view of the *shariah* (Islamic jurisprudence) than practiced in many Muslim countries.

This article seeks to outline a historical narrative which would help understand better the contest of ideas and ideologies; it also offers a brief explanation of expressions like cultural nationalism, multiculturalism and secularism are banded about as catchwords without being aware of their multilayered meanings.

I. Nationalism: A Little Bit of Theory

Talking of nationalism, in literature one can discern two *normative* concepts of a nation, and by extension of nationalism: civic nations and ethno-cultural nations. To put it simplistically, a ‘nation’ is a community of people with some shared attributes inhabiting a particular territory. According to the first concept of a nation, the shared attributes of a nation consist of civic laws such as the Constitution, and in the case of a liberal democracy of shared values enshrined in the Constitution such as freedom of association and expression, equality and secularism. The nationalism which follows from this concept of nation is civic-territorial nationalism which comprises attachment to one’s country (territory) and with the values enshrined in the Constitution and other civic laws. This conception of nation, nationalism and national identity requires everyone belonging to the nation to feel first and foremost that he is the citizen of the nation. To illustrate, every Indian should feel primarily that he is an Indian citizen, and not a Hindu or Muslim, or a Tamilian or Punjabi, or a Brahmin or Dalit. Ideally, citizens should give up non-civic identities; at the very least they should subordinate such identities to civic identity, and further such identities should not influence electoral politics lest Governments and political parties should foster such identities for electoral advantage to the detriment of civic identity. The overarching policy question a civic-territorial nation faces is, what should the Government do to rein non-civic identities? Should the State wage a war against divisive cultural markers like religion and caste, and create a la the Soviet Union a New Indian? Or should religion, ethnicity and other cultural markers be strictly relegated

to the private realm of the citizens by erecting a strong wall which separates the State and politics from religion and other cultural markers? Is such a strict separation possible at all?

In contrast to the civic-territorial conception of a nation, the second concept, called ethno-cultural nationalism, does not view the nation as a mere legal construct; people (*volk*) with a common history, common language and culture (in the sense of both way of life as well as literary and artistic expressions), and same ethnic composition constitute a nationality and that such a nationality is entitled to be constituted as a sovereign Nation-State. Ethno-cultural nationalism was the driving force of the unification of Germany and Italy as well as the demand for self-determination of the various 'nationalities' in the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires which culminated in the redrawing the map of Europe and the formation of many Nation-States in Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th and the first two decades of the 20th century. Crafting a historical narrative to bring out the antiquity of the Nation and creating a national language are crucial activities in nation-formation as well as nation-building after the Nation-State is formed. Ethno-cultural nationalism holds that cultural and national identities are synonymous, if not identical, and that preserving and upholding the primacy of the nation and its culture is as important a function of the State as securing for its citizens external and internal security, and the conditions for a settled life and prosperity. As an idea, ethno-cultural nationalism was more dominant than civic-territorial nationalism, and gave rise to the belief that the territorial boundaries of a state must coincide with the perceived cultural boundaries of a nation.

While in theory cultures and cultural identities of citizens do not matter with civic-territorial nationalism in actuality countries like France, the United Kingdom and the United States which are the 'historic paradigms of civic nationalism', attempted not only 'to inculcate constitutional principles' but had also insisted that 'their citizenries ...should also share further complex cultural contours, such as language, tradition, and a sense of common history and destiny' so that their citizens share a feeling of togetherness, the emotional core of nation was at peace with itself and able to face the future with confidence. This is because Man does not live by reason alone and requires emotional moorings; constitutional principles appeal to the head while cultural contours appeal to the heart. This point cannot be stressed enough as it is missed out by well-meaning leftists and liberals who espouse civic-territorial nationalism in our country.

II. Competing Conceptions of Nationalism During Freedom Struggle

The spread of the idea that a Government without the consent of the people was illegitimate was an offshoot of English education which initially spread more among the Hindus than Muslims. Nationalism was fostered by the discovery of rich cultural heritage of India by colonial administrators like William Jones, James Prinsep, Muller as well as Indian scholars such as R.G.Bhandarkar and Rajendralal Mittal. Their studies 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. Early nationalists like Dadabhai Naoroji offered a detailed economic critique of colonialism; their intense intellectual activity destroyed the imperialist argument that colonialism was beneficial to India. However, for quite a long time nationalists who believed in gradual progression to self-rule within the British Empire and adoption of constitutional means to attain that goal were dominant.

What put an end to their hegemony was the agitation against the bifurcation of Bengal, a historic landmark in that it radicalised nationalist politics, and spectacularly altered nationalist perception about many aspects of British rule including the education introduced by the British. 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 if political mobilisation was to go beyond the English educated minority, it was necessary to invoke symbols with which the politically uninitiated could readily empathise, and the masses were at a stage of history where religion had an all-pervasive influence. According to the noted Marxist historian Eric Hosbawm, during the period 1789-1848, even after the spread among the educated of the rationalist

ideas of the Enlightenment *philosophes* and the French Revolution which sought to emancipate individuals from the authority of the Church and the autocratic State 'the test of nationality for the masses in general was still religion; the Spaniard was defined by being Catholic, the Russian by being Orthodox'. Strange but true, even in April-May 2016, 8 percent of the population in Sweden and Netherlands, nearly 11 percent in Spain, nearly 20 percent in Britain, nearly 30 percent in the United States and nearly 55 percent in Greece believe that being a Christian is important to be a national of the country.

Whatever, in the medium term deifying India as Mother, treating nationalism as religion and celebrating Ganapati and Shivaji festivals were 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, a Marxist historian and doyen of the critics of Hindu nationalism conceded that far from being anti-Muslim or even wholly communal most militant nationalists including Tilak favoured Hindu-Muslim unity were modern in their political thinking and not backward looking. Economic boycott, their chief political weapon, was indeed very modern as also their political organisation. It should also be said that along with Annie Beasant and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Tilak was one of the leaders of the All India Home Rule League which played a lead role in the Freedom Movement during 1916-18. Suffice to say, to characterize Tilak as a Hindu nationalist as many Left-liberals do is to indulge in caricature.

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. 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 Mahmud of Ghazni, Muhammad Ghorī, 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 and a historical narrative which is acceptable to both.

It was the Mahatma Gandhi's genius which put in place, a strategy which united 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 *Iswar Allah Tere Nam* (Iswar and Allah are your names) was rendered. All in all, he was an 'essentialist' invoking the Hindu eclectic tradition of *Sarva Dharma Sama bhava* (viewing all religions alike) to foster Hindu Muslim unity. 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 in spite of differences between Hindus and Muslims 'at every step' (eg., Muslims looking down on Hindus as idolaters, killing the cow which is worshipped by the Hindus) they do not cease to be one 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 point, 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 recognised 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 he resorted to 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? His arguments in regard to cow slaughter and non-violence are ingenious and vividly bring out that he was not a moral perfectionist who would force his beliefs on others but a pragmatist who was willing to achieve a reasoned compromise. The Mahatma respected the cow with deep reverence but at the same time he respected all his fellow men, and that being so if he fought with or killed a Muslim in order to save a cow he would be the enemy of the cow as well as the Muslim. The only method he knew was to persuade his Muslim brother to protect the cow for the sake of the country, and if he did not succeed in persuading his brother he would 'let the cow go for the simple reason that the matter is beyond my ability'. If he were overfull of pity for the cow he would, in conformity with the law of his religion, give up his life for the cow instead of killing his Muslim brother. It is human nature to oppose imposition, and therefore the more the Hindus were insistent on stopping cow slaughter the more the killing of cows. Consequently, cow protection societies were in fact cow killing societies.

The Mahatma's conception of the Indian nation was one of the four competing conceptions. The first alternative could be described as a 'secularised' version of the Mahatma's conceptualization of which Nehru was the foremost exponent. Nehru was one with the Mahatma in holding that religion cannot be the basis for nationhood and that India should not be organised as a Hindu nation; however, the fountainhead of his approach was the 'secular' tradition dating back to the Enlightenment. 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. Whatever, the Mahatma's conception as well as its secularised version fall in the category of civic-territorial nationalism as they hold the whole of India in spite of enormous diversity is one nation and every inhabitant of that nation is a citizen with equal rights and obligations.

The other alternatives to the Mahatma's conceptualization are variants of cultural nationalism. The second alternative of the Two Nation theory is straightforward and simple: because of deep cultural differences – religion, customs, literature, and way of life Muslims and Hindus- are separate nations. The third alternative of Hindu nationalism conceives India as the land of Hindus in which Hindus are entitled to a privileged position. Even though there are subtle differences in the conception of Savarakar and that of the RSS in a broad sense, the term Hindus include all who profess religions originating in India such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism; all of them share a common *sanskriti* (culture). Muslims and Christians may consider India to be their *pitrubhoomi* (homeland); however, by virtue of their religion they do not consider India as their *punyabhoomi* (holy land), and cannot have as much attachment to India as Hindus. The texts of Hindutva do not propose their exclusion but call upon them to 'assimilate' themselves in the Hindu mainstream by acknowledging that India is the land of the Hindus, accept the centrality of Hinduism to Indian civilisation, and demand no special rights by virtue of being minorities.. The fourth conception holds that there are not two nations in India but several. In the 1940s, applying Stalin's theory about nationalities Indian communists contended that like the Tsarist Empire, India was not one nation but a multinational entity and that the different nationalities were entitled to self-determination. This theory had no practical application except the support extended by communists for the demand of Pakistan; however, it provides a rationale to the demand of the Akalis on the eve of Partition for a Sikh homeland and the subsequent Khalistan movement, the demand for a Dravidastan and the demand for an independent Nagaland.

The mainstream nationalism comprising Mahatma's conception and its secularised version was without doubt espouse civic-territorial nationalism; however, it had strong cultural moorings, a fact missed out by many Left-liberals. Identifying unity in diversity in various aspects of Indian life, society and culture was a major nationalist project, and Nehru's *Discovery of India* is itself a search for that unity in diversity. That project was necessitated to rebut the claim of many colonial administrators that India is a mere mosaic of races, religions and languages having nothing in common with one another, and that 'there is not, and never was, according to European ideas (of nationalism), an Indian nation or "people of India"'. It was also necessitated by the imperative of mobilising the diverse people constituting India to support, if not participate in, the Freedom Struggle. Nationalists considered that harping too much on diversity was an anti-Indian activity; an anecdote narrated by the noted sociologist M.N.Srinivas brings out vividly this feeling. Srinivas went to the Andhra Gymkhana Club in 'Bezwada' to meet a lawyer and inquire about caste sub-groups in Andhra. No sooner than he broached the lawyer about caste subgroups when the lawyer chased Srinivas out of the Club shouting 'Are you trying to do for Andhra what Katherine Mayo had done for India?', Katherine Mayo' being the author of the book *Mother India which* created outrage across India for its intemperate criticism of everything Indian, its society, culture and religion.

To give an example of the unity in diversity project, few countries in the world have the multiplicity and variety of languages as India; the landmark linguistic survey conducted under the direction of George A. Grierson identified 179 languages and 544 dialects spoken in India. Notwithstanding this bewildering diversity, India is not a Tower of Babel. Eminent linguists like Suniti Kumar Chatterjee highlighted the fact that what is surprising for a continental nation like India with diverse ethnic elements and socio-cultural forces of historic and pre-historic past was not the multiplicity and variety of speech forms but the extent to which common elements and strong affinities existed amongst the various Indian languages. Over the 3000 odd years of contact a number of common characteristics 'which may be specially called Indian' are to be found in the languages belonging to the three major language families, Austric, Dravidian and the Aryan; these common characteristics overlies the genetic diversity of the languages. The multiplicity of languages masks the fact that according to the 2001 Census 96.56 percent of the population has one of the 22 Scheduled languages as their mother tongue. Not without reason did Nehru said with a trace of irritation that 'the oft-repeated story of India having five hundred or more languages is a fiction of the mind of the philologist and the census commissioner who notes down every variation in dialect --- although spoken only by a few hundred persons'. As to literature, all 'the literary languages of India have habitually drafted to meet every new situation of requirement for expression of a new idea, or shade of meaning upon that vast, that inexhaustible treasure house of vocabulary, phrase, idiom and concept, comprised by the Sanskrit language and literature'. In the words of S.Radhakrishnan, Indian literature has 'a unity of outlook as the writers in different language derive their inspiration from a common source and face more or less the same kind of experience emotional and intellectual'. All in all, Indian literature was one corpus but expressed in different languages.

To give another example of the unity diversity project, nationalist narratives of history depicted Indian history as a saga of continuous cultural assimilation and synthesis. It is significant that unlike now during the Freedom Struggle few doubted the Aryan invasion. The nationalist narrative held that Aryan incursion took place over a long period during which synthesis between the culture of the pastoral Aryans and of the indigenous people many of whom had a high degree of material civilization took place; it was this synthesis which gave birth to neo-Aryanism or Hindu religion and culture. The nationalist reconstruction of the history of the 'Muslim' period is an impressive intellectual feat, and was built around the central theme that while there were episodes of conflict and religious bigotry there were long periods of peaceful co-existence of Hindus and Muslims. Even while acknowledging. In contrast to the English, the Afghans and Turko-Mongols who invaded India 'became completely Indianised with their roots in India, looking upon India as their homeland'. Most of the time, most rulers conducted themselves as all rulers do, and not particularly as Islamic rulers. Ruling a country that was conquered required at the very least that the hostility of the populace should be reduced. While the policy of winning over the Hindu

princes and populace was consummated during the reign of Akbar, as a matter of deliberate policy even the earlier dynasties, 'toned down their early ruthless methods, became more tolerant ... and tried to function not as conquerors from outside but as Indians born and bred in the land'. The rulers had to rely on the Hindu lower bureaucracy to administer their realm; while the higher officials and judges were mostly Muslims it was not rare for Hindus to be appointed to high civil and military office. Therefore, the British era was the only period of foreign rule in the sense that the country was governed essentially by foreigners from a foreign country in foreign interest. Village life continued mostly as it was, and the Hindu peasants were not displaced. Muslims did not take to trade and therefore commerce and trade remained mostly in Hindu hands. Nationalist historical narratives also faulted colonial historians for narrating gruesome stories of Muslim rule without noticing 'the harmony which evolved in social and economic life between the two communities'.

Co-existence for centuries led to inter-mingling of Hindu and Muslim cultures, culture in the sense of way of life as well as of artistic expressions to intermingling of cultures and the emergence of a shared *composite culture*. Due to reciprocal influences, a *composite culture* came into being among the courts, nobles and landed gentry in many parts of the country of which the composite Hyderabadi culture is a good example. In North India, Hindus and Muslims, particularly the upper strata and their associates, began to wear the same kind of clothes, eat similar type of food, and have similar artistic pursuits, and pastimes such as hunting and games. To elaborate a little bit, the Hindu practice of chewing betel-leaf became very popular among Muslims. A new cuisine emerged from the fusion of Indian and Iranian culinary practices; thus, *pilau* and *qawarma*, imports from Iran, acquired a distinctly Indian flavour and taste because of their seasoning with rich spices and chillies, a practice almost unknown in Iran. Due to Indian influence, rings, necklaces, and other ornaments began to be worn by Muslims even though strictly forbidden to the Faithful by Islamic law. The reciprocal influence is discernible even regarding social structures and practices. Most Muslims in India are converts, and many retained some aspects of the Hindu way of life. Thus, many Muslim communities retained the caste system even though a cardinal tenet of Islam is that all the Faithful are equal; consequently, what differentiated a Muslim craftsman from his Hindu counterpart was mainly religion. The intermingling of cultures led to cross-fertilisation of ideas, religion and morality also. The Bhakti movements and the Sufi sect of Islam have strikingly common features such as the approach to God through love and devotion, and intellect and intellectual life being regarded as a positive hindrance to a spiritual life and salvation; further, both are tolerant of other religions. There were many fakirs and saints who were venerated by Hindus and Muslim masses, and they preached the need to recognise the essential unity of faiths; pre-eminent among them was Kabir. His verse *Bhajaman Ramarabim, Bhajman Krishnakareem* captures the ecumenicalism of Bhakthi and Sufi movements. Suffice to say, Muslims did not cease to be Muslims or conversely Hindus; yet both communities had come to share some aspects of culture, and this sharing facilitated peaceful co-existence. To dabble in a bit of theory, a culturally diverse society like India or the United States cannot have a shared culture which covers all aspects of culture; if it does it ceases to be a diverse society. Shared composite culture is partial; yet being an offshoot of the cultural intermingling of communities it is something in which each of the communities can see of themselves and can take pride of. It is a valuable base to forge national identity and foster a sense of togetherness. Yet composite culture is usually a thin layer over deep strata of distinctive cultures, and that layer might be frayed because of exogenous (eg., Islamic radicalisation) or endogenous (eg., a narrowly defined nationalism) factors which might cause one or more cultural communities to ignore the shared composite culture, and to behave as if cultural differences matter more than the shared culture. Once such a behavior sets in it creates a vicious cycle of suspicion and hatred and communal disharmony, thereby weakening national cohesion.

Whatever, Mahatma might have failed to win over the majority of Muslims to his point of view. However, his 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 age-old evil practices like untouchability. The conception of the Mahatma and its 'secularised version' and the Hindu nationalist conception perceived the whole of undivided India to be one nation.

III. Cultural Diversity & the Constitution

How a Nation-State deals with cultural diversity is a seminal political question having a bearing on social cohesion and national survival; an ineluctable challenge a culturally diverse nation faces is to provide adequate space for cultural variety and cultural differences and at the same time ensure that variety and differences do not degenerate into fragmentation, social and cultural isolation and social conflict, or in other words, ensure that the nation does not degenerate into a federation of communities instead of being a collective of equal citizens. That difficult challenge is often missed out by the credo one often hears that diversity should be celebrated.

Policies to address cultural diversity have three inter-related aspects: (i) legal rights, (ii) organization of polity, and (iii) cultural aspects. The first aspect deals with the question whether every citizen, irrespective of belonging to the majority population or the minorities, has the same civic rights, and whether minorities are subjected to discrimination by the State and the majority population. second aspect deals with the question whether the polity is so organised that every citizen, irrespective of belonging to the majority population or the minorities, has an equal right and equal opportunity to participate in the conduct of the collective affairs of the Nation-State. The third aspect relates to the right of minorities to preserve their cultures in conditions of equality, human dignity and non-discrimination. Non-discrimination is the cornerstone of our Constitution with regard to legal rights, the constitution guarantees to *all* citizens equal civil rights such as the right to equality, freedom of association and expression, and the freedom to profess, practice and propagate religion. A few exceptions were made in the interest of public order as well as to the State to undertake affirmative policies for women, SCs, STs, and economically and socially backward classes; however, the Constitution-makers did not envisage that such policies would be needed permanently. The Constitution also provides cultural and educational rights to minorities. Article 29(1) which is not limited only to minorities confers on any section of Indian citizens having a distinct language, script or culture of its own the right to conserve the same, and Article 30 (1) grants educational and linguistic minorities the right to establish and manage educational institutions.

Secularism is another cornerstone of our Constitution. Given that secularism is at the heart of the contemporaneous ideational and political contest, and further that the term secularism is bandied about without much understanding of its multilayered meaning a bit of elaboration is called for. Like the words 'nation' and 'culture' 'secularism' has been conceptualised in different ways and is value-laden. From the policy perspective it is useful to differentiate between secularism as a doctrine and secularism as a policy response to religious diversity in a society. Secularism as a doctrine is anchored in the West European experience of the conflict between the State and the Church as well as the philosophical point of view that Man should be guided by reason alone and not by irrational belief and superstition. It follows that religion and religious organisations should not enter into the affairs of the State as well as politics, and further that even personal lives should be free of religion which is an embodiment of superstition, bigotry and irrationality. The French policy of *laïcisme* (anti-clericalism) which was in force from 1905 to 1959 is a classic example of the enforcement of secularism as a doctrine. That policy divested religion of any power to intervene in the affairs of the State, and banned public manifestation of cultural and religious identity such as the wearing of *hijab* (head scarf) and *burqa*. It is inconceivable for a French President or for that matter any public official being sworn-in over the Bible. Census in France does not collect data on population by religions. All in all, the French policy of *intégration républicaine* requires full *civic* assimilation of all the minority cultural communities and their giving up. This policy has come in for criticism as being insensitive to the cultural differences of the Muslim immigrants and inadequate for addressing Muslim alienation and Islamic terror. Associated with secularism as a doctrine is the hypothesis that secularisation, the process by which secularism advances, is an inevitable, irreversible and universal process which would engender a 'modern' society. Governance would be increasingly free of the domination of religious institutions and symbols, and personal religious belief and practice and their influence on personal lives decline culminating in the disappearance of religious faith and practices. The hypothesis has proved to be

partially right and partially wrong. Right in that the role of religion in the affairs of the State had declined all over the world, and progressively, legal systems and laws all over the world, including Islamic countries where according to tradition religion cannot be separated from the State, are being disassociated from religion. However, religion is not totally excluded from affairs of the State even in Western democracies; a survey of 25 countries brings out that all of them fund religious education in some way, 76 percent of them have religious education in State schools, 52 percent collect taxes for religious organizations, and 36 percent have established religions (these include all the Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom have established religions). Even the French Government financially supports Catholic schools provided they follow the national curriculum and admit students of all faiths. The French Government and local Governments also finance most Catholic Churches, half the Protestant Churches and about a tenth of synagogues. Contrary to the hypothesis that religious belief would decline over time there is a remarkable resurgence of religion in many parts of the world including India, Islamic countries and Africa, so much so that theorists of politics and religion feel that the secular doctrine is in crisis, and inappropriate for many parts of the world, and had come up with alternate theories of secularism. Some theorists like Charles Taylor who wrote extensively on multiculturalism, cultural pluralism and secularism had argued that the difficulties secularism is facing arises from the fact that a wrong model is being used, and that secularism is not about the relationship of the State to religion but about the correct response of the democratic State to religious diversity.

The American system of erecting a wall between the Church and the State is a longstanding example of a policy response to religious diversity. That policy is a response to the fact that many of the initial immigrants including Mayflower Pilgrims emigrated to escape religious persecution, and given their personal experience they strongly believed that 'one of the greatest dangers to the freedom of the individual to worship in his own way lay in the Government's placing its official stamp' on one particular kind of worship. In short, while the French policy is designed to protect the State from religion the American policy aims to protect religious liberties from the State, and not to marginalise religion. The American policy had been characterised as 'mutual exclusion', a policy wherein 'neither the State nor religion to interfere in the domain of the other'. Thus, unlike in France, banning ostentatious display of religious symbols like hijab in public places would be an intrusion of the State in religious matters, and as such not permissible. The Congress has no power to legislate on any matter pertaining to religion even when some of the values such as equality are violated within the religious domain. An example was the helplessness of President Obama in the face of a threat to publicly burn the Holy Quran.

The Indian policy of secularism is similar to the American policy, but not the same. The deliberations of the Constituent Assembly would bring out clearly that almost all members had in mind a conception of secularism which rejected 'the reality of an unseen spirit or the relevance of religion to life'; for them secularism meant that 'the Indian State would not identify itself with or be controlled by any particular religion', that 'no one religion should be given preferential status, or unique distinction'. In essence the secularism the Constitution-makers had in mind was *sarva dharma samabhava*. There is one significant difference between American and Indian secularism in that the freedom of religion is not absolute, and that the State could steer social reform even though connected with religious practice. That takes this narrative to personal laws such as laws relating to marriage, divorce, and inheritance of property.

The British introduced uniform criminal laws which applied to all subjects irrespective of religion, custom or usage; this was not so in respect of personal laws. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians had their own laws; however, it is not correct to believe that scriptures, customs and usage alone shaped personal laws. What eventually came to be known as 'Hindu and Mahomedan laws; were indeed 'creations of the colonial state ... rather than a simple codification of religious commands'. Acts like the Hindu Gains of Learning Act, 1930 and the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, 1937 did not have 'clear precedent in the scriptures or in regional Hindu practices, and entailed using civil authority to expand the scope of individual property rights within the family, thereby completely reconstituting the form of the Hindu family'. Muslim Personal Law

(Shariat) Application Act, 1937 provided that the *shariat* and not customary law or Anglo-Muslim law should be applicable to the Muslim community; it was backed by the Muslim elite's desire to project Indian Muslims as a unified religious and politically autonomous community. There were heated debates in the Constituent Assembly about a uniform civil code; those in favour of uniformity argued that laws should not discriminate between citizens, and those against arguing that personal laws are an integral part of religion and the foundational sources of the Muslim laws are Koran and other scriptural texts. In deference to the strong objections of the Muslim members a compromise was struck. The competence of the Indian State to modify personal laws was asserted in two ways. First, Entry 5 of the Concurrent List vested in the Union and the States the power to make laws in respect of 'all matters in respect of which parties in judicial proceedings were immediately before the commencement of this Constitution subject to their personal law'. Secondly, subjecting the freedom of religion in Article 25 to two provisos; the first authorised the State to regulate or restrict any secular practice which may be associated with religious practice, and the second authorised the State to make any law providing for social welfare and reform. At the same time while enumerating the reform needed the Constitution specifically mentioned only Hindu practices like untouchability which was abolished by Article 17, and barring entry to temples to some classes and sections of Hindus. And further, the enactment of a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India was included only in the Directive Principles. By virtue of its power to regulate or restrict any secular practice which may be associated with religious practice, and to make any law providing for social welfare and reform the Indian State had been characterised as an *interventionist secular State*. However, the objective of interventions is 'emancipatory', that is to say reform religious and social practices, and not to restrict religion as in say Ataturk's Turkey.

One hears in the contemporaneous discourse on cultural diversity that India should practice multiculturalism which can loosely be defined as accommodating diversity of all types- diversity of individual lifestyles and diversity of the ways of life of different cultural communities. The praxis of multiculturalism often faces the dilemma of some culture-specific customs and practices being obsolete, and even transgressing civic rights eg., social taboo against education of girls after puberty, honour killings, entry of women to religious places like the Shani Shingapore Temple in Maharashtra, Sabarimala Temple in Kerala and the Haji Ali Dargah in Mumbai, and triple talaq (a Muslim practice for husbands summarily divorcing wives). The question also arises whether the personal laws should be governed by religious canon or uniform civic laws. While one side frames the issue as one of upholding the primacy of Constitutional rights like freedom of expression, right to equality and right to life with dignity the other side frames the issues as one of trampling the religious beliefs and traditions. The policy response to such issues could be one of the two alternatives: first, leave it to the good sense of the cultural community to adapt its practices and customs to changing times, and secondly one or more of the three organs of the State to take the initiative and bring about change. Given that the Indian State was designed to be an interventionist secular State and had abolished some obnoxious practices like untouchability the Constitution did not envisage the practice of unqualified multiculturalism. Whatever, once the State initiates and steers cultural change it goes against the basic tenet of multiculturalism that the distinctiveness of cultural communities and their customs and values should be respected. Suffice to say, unqualified multiculturalism is an impossibility; for that reason a multicultural society is sometimes so defined as a society which allows all cultures/sub-cultures to keep their peculiarities intact subject to their respecting in the public domain the broader contours of an overarching (composite) culture and a single set of individual rights.

IV. Developments After Independence

The Constitution envisioned a society of citizens based on equal consideration of individuals without regard for caste, creed or gender. The greatest challenge Independent India faced -and still faces - was transforming a society of castes into one of citizens based on equal consideration of individuals without regard for caste, creed or gender. The Constitution provided the necessary legal framework but 'by itself could not conjure into existence the attitudes without which the transformation could hardly be effective'. With the wisdom of hindsight it can be said that the

present political and intellectual conflict about the society and polity we should have stems from the failure to foster the necessary attitudinal change.

Turning to secularism, there were two alternatives: either vigorously pushing through the version of secularism which Nehru favoured or the Mahatma's conception of *sarva dharma samabhava*. Neither of these are natural sentiments but have to be assiduously cultivated and continually reinforced. With the wisdom of hindsight it can be said no such attempt was made. Nehruvian secularism necessitates putting in place a policy akin to those in France and Ataturk's Turkey of banning religious rituals and symbols in Governmental places and functions, and using the schools to craft an overarching national identity. Nehru was too much of a democrat and disciple of the Mahatma to impose such policies, a case in point being the controversy over the reconstruction of Somnath Temple. In October 1949, a Trust was formed to reconstruct the Somnath temple which was raided first by Mahmud of Ghazni, was built again and again every time it was razed till it was totally destroyed by Aurangzeb. Whatever historians like Romila Thapar might say in Hindu popular imagination Somnath embodied the spirit of defiance against religious oppression, and in public affairs perceptions matter more than 'facts' and cold logic. Patel and K.M.Munshi were in the forefront of the effort to reconstruct the temple. Nehru opposed the reconstruction on the ground that it would promote Hindu revivalism. 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. And further, why should he not participate in the function when the Constitution did not bar State functionaries like the President from participating in religious functions? Nehru did again and again use his position as pre-eminent leader to lash at Hindu communalism but he did not walk the talk by putting in place appropriate policies or crafting the education system. To be honest he did not 'face up ideologically to the causes and consequences of a persisting Muslim (& Hindu) cultural identity for India's national identity and public philosophy'. Consequently, his conception of secularism had little impact either on his Party-men or the Central and State Governments, *pujas* came to be commonplace in State functions, and secularism became a mere catch word in politics.

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

the secular and the spiritual are breaking down and that what is secular is seen to have spiritual roots. India should strive to bring science and the values of spirit together and in harmony. The Commission suggested that a syllabus giving well-chosen information about each of the major religions should be included as a part of the course in citizenship or as part of the general education to be introduced in schools and colleges up to the first degree. Unfortunately, from the mid-1960s educationists and historians of a 'secular' bent of mind dominated the preparation of curriculum and history textbooks at the national level, and religion became a taboo subject. No wonder the religion which the young imbibe is religiosity touted by not-so-profound *babas* and *mullahs*, and TV serials of epics.

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

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

Strange but true, unlike with natural sciences subjectivity cannot be wholly eliminated in historical reconstruction. As the eminent historiographer E.H.Carr put it 'the belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the historian is a preposterous fallacy, but one which it is very hard to eradicate'. The Past is past in the sense that it could only be reconstructed and never totally captured or comprehended, every historical narrative is dependent on explanation, interpretation, and appreciation, and the way a historian interprets 'facts' is very much linked to the way he would like to contemplate the Present and shape the Future. Suffice to say, the worldview of the textbook writers necessarily influenced the content of the textbooks. Broadly speaking, a few common strands can be discerned in the treatment of

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

Educators exaggerate the transformative power of education ignoring the historic experience of Jesuit educational institutions turning out in large numbers atheistic French philosophes, and later of students from developing countries who studied in Paris returning home as Marxists while those who studied in Moscow returning home as anti-communist liberals. Likewise Indian history warriors seem to have an exaggerated opinion of the impact of their historical narrative on the worldview of students oblivious of the fact that there are other sources of influence on the student such as home, cinema and the electronic media. Nivedita Menon, a teacher at JNU and a liberal herself, is right on the dot when she observed that the textbooks were in use for many decades and 'generations of school-students have read them and learnt history the secular way', and yet every college teacher knows that 'the majority of students who come into her class in the first year of the undergraduate course invariably tell the story of India the way "they" tell it'. The majority of students believe that there was a Golden Age of Hinduism when women were respected and educated, that the Muslim invasions destroyed an egalitarian society, that "India" has existed since the "Vedic Age". And further, tourist guides at historical monuments all over the country 'retell this story in various ways, alleging the previous existence of temples at almost every monument built by "Muslim" rulers'. All in all, "our" history had dominated the academy and intellectual circles, "theirs", the streets and common sense'. Even Amar Chitra Katha the comic series designed to acquaint children with Indian history and cultural heritage seems to be more influential than history textbooks for children. All in all, 'their' history was increasingly shaped by the Hindutva elements as Left liberals vacated the nationalist space by ignoring the natural human instinct to be proud of one's ancestry.

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

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Tenzin Gyatso, the XIV Dalailama

Shri C.Anjaneya Reddy, IPS (Retd.)
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Dalai lama's great friend and another Nobel Peace Prize winner, Bishop Tutu recently said of him:

"I admire him enormously....I always say to people, after being in exile over 50 years, how many would show the same serenity, the same joy, and the eagerness to spread goodness and compassion in the world. "I would be very sulky, and there'd be a part of me that is sad it would show in my face. It doesn't in his. I mean I'm just saying, he is there for us as a beacon to tell us that you can, in fact, overcome some of the most horrendous circumstances, and, and emerge on the other side, not broken. So, he is a very great gift to the world. And maybe the Chinese, without intending it, have given the world a wonderful gift"

Dalai lama deserves all that and much more! One should read his autobiography Freedom in Exile to understand his attitude to life and its tribulations. The fact that he was forced to flee his country and the misery that the Tibet and its people have gone thru without any prospect of a final settlement, in the last 6 decades have not made him bitter! On the other hand, his passion for inter-religious harmony, universal peace and happiness and the hope of resolving the Tibetan problem through non-violent means, have remained matters of great conviction.

Looking back one feels, Indian leaders in the 50's in their new-found fascination both for 'socialism' and the Chinese –those were the days of Hindi-Chineebhai-bhai –let him down by recognizing Tibet as part of China, which it was not historically. Our anxiety to please China got the better of our sense of history. We paid for it by suffering a national humiliation in the 1961 cross-border conflict with China!

The Dalailama considers India his spiritual homeland; he claims he is a son of India both spiritually and physically: spiritually because he lives by the Nalanda tradition of Mahayana Buddhism and physically because he lives on Indian 'dal and roti'! He often says what he has been preaching all-over the world is India's ancient wisdom. In his autobiography, he recalls the comment of Morarji Desai that Indian and Tibetan cultures are two branches of the same tree.

He holds Acharya Nagarjuna's teachings in the highest veneration and visited Nagarjuni Konda as a young man immediately after he came to India. Tibetans hold that, of the six great Mahayana masters or six jewels as they call them, four – Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Dignath and Dharmakeerthi - are from the Telugu country and the other two, Asanga and Vasubandhu are from North-west India, now in Pakistan. Tibetans also believe though Buddhism started in North-India, some of its greatest masters came from the South. For this reason, South India has a special place in Dalai lama's esteem.

The Dalailama has won the admiration of the world for the way he has been handling the Tibetan tragedy – its occupation by China, continuing suppression of its language and culture (often described as cultural genocide), the long-drawn non-violent struggle of Tibet and the great effort that has gone into preserving and spreading Tibetan culture outside Tibet particularly in India, and the US. By his spiritual authority, he marginalized the extremist elements who wanted to take to violence to resolve the issue and proposed to the Chinese government in the true Buddhist spirit, a middle-way solution of political and cultural autonomy for Tibet as part of China. He wants Tibet to be demilitarized and turned into a zone of peace and its ecology which is so vital for the Asia's rivers to be protected and conserved! In a sage advice to the Tibetans, he counselled the extremists to understand the reality of the situation and the imminent disaster that would

follow any violent uprising! He made it known that he would withdraw his support to the struggle, should Tibetans use violence. In this, he was much influenced by Gandhi who he believes proved the efficacy of the Buddhist doctrine of non-violence in political struggles.

There can be no better or more acceptable solution to the Tibetan problem which has subjected deeply religious and mild Tibetans to untold misery for six decades now. The Chinese Communist government is yet to respond favourably; they seem to wait for his exit from this world and brand someone of their choice as the new Dalailama, a trick they employed when the Panchen Lama passed away a few years ago. This is not going to work as the traditional process of selecting a Dalailama is strongly rooted in the consciousness of Tibetans and any interference with it by the Chinese government would be counterproductive. Shrewd as he is, the Dalai lama has already forestalled the Chinese move by asserting that when the Dalai lama has gone away from Tibet in this life, there is no question of his successor being born in Tibet or China! The Chinese 'stratagem' to have a Dalai lama of their choice is most likely to be still-born!

The Dalai lama has already shed his political authority and entrusted it to an elected Prime Minister, a clear departure from the centuries-old tradition of the Dalai lama wielding both temporal and spiritual authority. Following his example, the Buddhist ruler of Bhutan also gave up his absolute power and compelled his unwilling people to opt for democracy and have an elected government to run their country.

Braving the vast propaganda machinery of the Chinese Communist government, the Dalai lama succeeded by the sheer force of his personality to turn the world attention to the Tibetan problem and find safe homes in different countries for the Tibetan diaspora through sheer goodwill. Single-handed, he is responsible to bring about a well-educated generation of Tibetan's in exile who will be the face in future of Tibetan struggle for freedom. He travelled the world – the first Dalailama to do it – and achieved world-recognition for Tibetan Buddhism and culture.

Over the years, where ever he goes, he has become a 'star' attraction and young people in the west come in thousands to pay and listen to him! His friend Bishop Tutu 'envies' the magic in him to gather thousands of people at his meetings even though he has difficulty in speaking English fluently! The Bishop of course knows that it is all due to his cheerful and compassionate presence! The great Buddhist practitioner that the Dalai lama is, the two virtues of Wisdom and Compassion come naturally to him; his unpretentious cheerfulness is infectious and affects people who come to listen to him! He jokes about his inadequate English and blames it on his playfulness as a young man in not taking seriously the lessons of Mr Menon, his English teacher on arrival in India!

The Dalai lama has clearly defined for himself a role in the wide world – propagating human values that would ultimately make people happier, inter-religious harmony recognising and accepting the common good in all religions and the cause of the Tibetan people who are the victims of a cultural genocide. Notwithstanding his advanced years, he hopes to return to Tibet some day; for this he counts on the changing Chinese society which, in his opinion, would ultimately secure its prosperity with political rights! Interestingly many Chinese Buddhists support the Tibetan cause and the solution proposed by the Dalailama. The Chinese govt. recently discovered, to their great surprise, that many of their officials have been secretly contributing funds to the Tibetan cause clearly demonstrating that the Chinese people have a more humane perception of the issue than their government!

Recognizing his non-violent struggle, twenty-seven countries in the world, have honoured the Dalailama with their country's highest civilian honours; these include the US Congressional Medal and the Nobel Peace prize. Yet the Government of India is still to honour him with Gandhi Peace prize or Bharataratna! This indifference to a great Buddhist monk who has been living in our country for fifty years now claiming to be a son of India, proclaiming that what he has been preaching is India's ancient wisdom and hailing our father of the nation as his inspiration for

his non-violent struggle for Tibet! How do we explain this? Appeasement of China, who amply demonstrated its near-contempt for India by claiming parts of Arunachal Pradesh and taking a part of Gilgit from Pakistan for its Belt Road project, knowing full well that it is part of Pak-occupied Kashmir. It is time we abandon defensive foreign policy, adopt a pro-active stand that would secure our country's interests better.

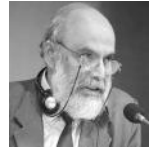
Tibetan culture is ancient Indian culture; Tibetan script is derived from the Brahmi ancestor like all Indian scripts. Tibetans are our Himalayan neighbours as much as Nepalese or Bhutanese. We have a historic responsibility to stand by them and further our common interests. India's borders are safe with Tibet as our neighbour, not China who is brazenly expansionist! Isn't it time then, we apologize to the Tibetans and the world and declare that we made a mistake in recognizing Tibet as part of China when it was not! China may not part with Tibet easily but might start rethinking about its case for its autonomy within China. Now they have what they call 'one country and two systems' (autonomous Hong Kong as part of China). They might find it help to fit Tibet into this model and resolve this human problem which tells on the image of China.

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DISCOURSE AND THE DEMOCRATIC DYNAMIC

Shri D.Ch. Tirupathi Raju Memorial Lecture delivered on October 2, 2015

Cmdr. (Retd) C. Uday Bhaskar
Director of the Society for Policy Studies
(Former Director IDSA & NMF)



Discourse and debate itself is as old as mankind and many civilizations have their own experience. We in India endowed with a rich tradition and the Upanishads are replete with the rigor and refinement of informed debate and discourse. The story of Yajnavalka, Maitreyi and Gargi reflect this deep philosophical tradition. And this is the tip of the ice-berg. But in relation to the democratic dynamic in which I locate the element of discourse – one has to fast-forward to the modern period. While the deliberations about demos or democracy as a concept can be traced back to the Greek philosophers of the ancient period – the linkage with the democratic dynamic is of more recent origin. Hegel comes to mind, as also the distillate of the thesis/anti-thesis/synthesis formulation. Perhaps this could be linked to the Indian tradition of '*vaad-vivaad-samvaad*'and here the centrality of the thought process – the seminal IDEA that is transmuted into word merits special attention.

If accept that the IDEA or thought is central to the human experience of aspiration and its attainment ; and the collective effort that later transforms into the democratic dynamic - then it would be fair to ask where is this endeavor to be nurtured?

Each society has evolved its own model and in the Indian case, one can point to Mahatma Gandhi who saw the essential linkage between discourse, debate and democracy. Along with Gandhi Jayanti, this week also marks the birthday of Annie Beasant, who as the editor of NEW INDIA provided an important platform for the dissemination of seemingly radical ideas in colonial India – such as self rule.

The relevance of informed debate and dissent and the need to arrive at an equitable consensus to accommodate all interests was most evident in the drafting of the Indian Constitution. The stellar role played by Dr. Ambedkar and his colleagues at the time provided the robust foundation on which rests the Indian Republic.

The question that I am posing today is whether it is enough to have such deliberations and debate within the legislature alone to hone the democratic dynamic – or if is there a need to nurture and enable other fora such as civil society and the mass-media.

To me the answer is an emphatic yes. While the media plays a critical role in both disseminating news and playing the role of an impartial observer and watch-dog if need be - of the legislature, executive and judiciary - civil society must create its own space and competence to provide a constructive critique of the entire spectrum – that of state, the media and itself – as the case may be.

RECENT TRENDS – APROPOS DEMOCRACY AND GLOBALIZATION

Some recent trends merit our attention in relation to democracy. Globalization and the emergence of very powerful non-state entities broadly classified as multi-national forces have introduced the reality of market forces which in turn have led to a distortion of the democratic experience. The normative ideals enshrined in the Indian Constitution remain elusive and 'We the people' have never been more despondent and weary – weary of a system of governance that promises but does not deliver and an increasing cynicism of the political culture that now prevails in India.

Institutional integrity has been tainted across the board – and no institution including the media has exuded the ‘sva-dharma’ that is expected of them. One refrain that is often heard these days is that in the 21st century, democracy is blighted – and that an alternative model needs to be identified or conceived. Clearly the answer is not to throw the proverbial democratic baby out with the bath-water – but to review and redress the many inadequacies that plague the system as we know it today.

In as much as the benchmark of institutional integrity has been lowered – personal integrity has taken an even bigger blow. India today is afflicted by the cancer of corruption across the board – from the petty corruption that the average citizen confronts on a daily basis; to the macro venality that is now associated with the world’s largest democracy – that ostensibly venerates Mahatma Gandhi and his values.

In India, all the pillars of democracy are now perceived with increasing dismay for their multiple transgressions. The pursuit of power and pelf has become par for the course; and the guardian has turned predator. Barring the honorable exceptions, in the main the elected representative – the politician has lost esteem in the public eye and the executive as represented by the ‘civil servant’ is deemed neither civil – nor do they serve the citizen in the manner that was expected of them. Post the Radia tape scandal – greater part of the media in India lost its credibility and the overall scenario is bleak.

To compound matters, the higher judiciary, till recently seen as the last bastion of institutional integrity now joins the legislature, executive and media as being tainted. The deviant has become the norm in India. The reason for this cynicism is the revelation made a few years ago by Justice Ruma Pal, a former judge of the Supreme Court. Delivering the fifth V M Tarkunde Memorial Lecture in November 2011 in Delhi, Justice Pal slammed the higher judiciary for what she called the seven sins.

Highlighting the many inadequacies that blight the higher judiciary in the country, she listed the sins as: turning a blind eye to the injudicious conduct of a colleague; hypocrisy -- the complete distortion of the norm of judicial independence; secrecy -- the fact that no aspect of judicial conduct including the appointment of judges to the high and Supreme Court is transparent; plagiarism and prolixity -- meaning that very often SC judges lift whole passages from earlier decisions by their predecessors and do not acknowledge this -- and use long-winded, verbose language; arrogance of the personal nature -- wherein the higher judiciary has claimed crass superiority and independence to mask their own indiscipline and transgression of norms and procedures; professional arrogance -- whereby judges do not do their homework and arrive at decisions of grave import ignoring precedent or judicial principle; and finally nepotism -- wherein favours are sought and dispensed by some judges for gratification of varying manner.

The reason I am spending some time on this candid critique of the Indian judiciary by Justice Ruma Pal is because of the centrality and sanctity of law in the democratic framework. The citizen looks up to the courts as the last resort when the legislature and executive are guilty of grave misdemeanor and the spirit of the Constitution is being trampled with disdain. The judicial corrective applied by the late Justice Khanna in 1976 in relation to the excesses of Mrs. Indira Gandhi is illustrative of the rigorous benchmark that the ‘brooding spirit of the law’ is capable of in the Indian context. But there is a silver lining to this dark and ominous cloud that now envelops India and optimism however slender must prevail. Civil society activists in India seemed to provide a glimmer of hope and it may be recalled that the Lok Pal bill and the Anna Hazare movement would become the catalyst that would cleanse the system. Alas, those hopes were belied and as a resident of Delhi who voted for the Aam Aadmi Party - twice – one can only share the frustration and anguish of a concerned yet helpless citizen.

What then is the answer to this conundrum – of the Indian democratic experience that is increasingly dominated by muscle power and money power on one hand; and where the populace does not cast its vote – but votes its caste!

But I would still make the plea that the ray of hope lies embedded in civil society – among those members who have the ability and the inclination to become active stakeholders in burnishing the democratic dynamic. And this is where I would like to dwell on the opportunities that beckon Vizag and its diverse civil society.

The bifurcation of the composite state of Andhra Pradesh is a reality and the two states have to now look ahead. Vizag by its pedigree and geographical location is ideally placed to provide that enabling location to review and refine the democratic experience in a holistic manner.

City of destiny is a phrase that has been often used to describe Vizag and many in the audience would have heard this expression. The lighter vein quip used to be that it is like the horizon – tantalizing but ever receding! However I would submit for your consideration and for the policy makers of the new state – that the current phase of the larger national endeavor is very propitious for Vizag.

India's 'Look East' policy that was unveiled by the astute but often neglected PM Narasimha Rao in the early 1990's has now become 'Act East' policy and the eastern seaboard is the site for realizing this policy. Among the coastal states that abut the Bay of Bengal – Vizag has the right combination of tangible resources and proven potential and this should be harnessed in the most effective and equitable manner.

India's tenacious sea-blindness is slowly but steadily being redressed and PM Modi's reference to the imperative of a Blue Revolution – akin to the Green and White revolutions that transformed India decades ago is case in point. The maritime domain offers 21st century India a wide range of opportunities that straddle the geo-political; the geo-economic; and the geo-physical strands of national aspiration and objectives.

How does this grand vision relate to Vizag and the theme of my lecture – discourse and the democratic dynamic? For a start – Vizag and its more committed citizens who are the stakeholders of the future have to forge a consensus about what kind of a city they envisage for themselves and their children.

I have often heard the suggestion that India needs to invest in smart cities and that Singapore is the preferred model for cities like Vizag. I beg to differ – with all the earnestness that I can bring to bear to this issue. The objective must be an equitable city – not merely a smart one ; and that Vizag must evolve its own identity that has the appropriate mix for its myriad citizens wherein the socio-political environment is equitable ; empathetic; ethical ; and economically viable. Furthermore, as a resident of Delhi allow me to add – where the air is clean and potable water is not a luxury!

To create such a city, the citizens must be able to deliberate over such issues in an objective and informed manner and hence the need for many fora; multiple venues and all the demographic streams that constitute the city.

I can list a few tangible goals that would be on my wish list for Vizag. These would incorporate the development goals that relate to human security with emphasis on gender equity across the socio-economic spectrum. Add to this the need to raise the educational and employment opportunities that this city is famed for – but in an equitable manner – in a manner that Gandhiji would have approved of ; maximize the industrial and technological opportunities that the 21st century and a young population represent ; provide affordable health-care to the citizens.....improve basic infrastructure from power generation to sanitation to better roads and public transport.....the list is familiar and each of you can add to this wish-list.

But how is this to be realized in the current democratic dispensation? Through the combination of objective and focused discourse at venues such as the CPS and the subsequent transmutation into the political process. This can be enabled by judicious civic action in areas where the state is unable to provide the resources and here the focus on Clean India is an example of an aspirational challenge that Vizag must collectively rise to.

Can a clean Vizag that evolves its own norms about plastic and urban waste become a reality over the next year? Can improved governance of the city and its suburbs become a reality whereby Vizag becomes the model for an equitable Indian city?

My sense is yes – BUT – meaning that this vision of an equitable city is not a pipe-dream but needs a restoration of certain values that have been lost or distorted over the decades.

RELATE STORY OF CHANAKYA AND THE LAMP.....

Contemporary discourses in India are dominated by the 3 C-s; cinema / cricket and celebrity crime. The advent of new communication and cyber technologies has transformed the contour of the dominant discourse – particularly between 8 PM to 10 PM . To paraphrase Pliny – Rome becomes the mob and the mob – Rome!

Paradoxically despite the high-handedness and fecklessness of the state, the ability of civil society to ‘push-back’ as it were, when motivated to give vent to its angst and anger in a collective manner cannot be ignored. Hence, my plea for nurturing and shaping public discourse in such a manner that the collective interest is prioritized - and no Faustian bargains are legitimized.

Ladies and gentlemen, on Gandhi Jayanti allow me to recall the vision of the Mahatma who wanted to wipe every tear from every eye. It was his cherished dream – to improve the welfare of the impoverished multitudes and a little before his assassination, Gandhiji poignantly noted: “ If that dream could be realized even now when I am an old man on the verge of death, my heart would dance. Children would then frolic in joy.”

This could be the Holy Grail for Vizag – to create an equitable and empathetic city where there are no tears to wipe.

And allow me to add that this quote has been borrowed from the editorial of the BULLETIN of an institution called the CPS – the Centre for Policy Studies – in October 2005 – on the occasion of their 10th anniversary.

Professor Kumar and esteemed members of the audience - I thank you once again for allowing me to share this auspicious occasion of the 20th anniversary of the CPS.

(CPS Bulletin, October 2, 2015)

Education: Addressing the Key Challenges

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A.P. State Council of Higher Education



1. The Context

A decade ago, the World Bank in its 2007 World Development Report, analysing the development process from a human resource perspective of emerging economies like China and India said that “the situation of young people today presents the world with an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate growth and reduce poverty. Because labour is the main asset of the poor, making it more productive is the best way to reduce poverty. This requires enhancing the opportunity to earn money and developing the human capital to take advantage of those opportunities “ (World Development Report, 2007, page, 2).

Available evidence shows that India is having the largest young population in the world with immense potential to contribute to wealth creation and national development. This is happening at the time of advanced globalisation opening new opportunities along with new rules and regulations like commitment to intellectual property rights that drive the idea of knowledge and information being considered as commercial products with pricing defined in appropriate markets. India has to adapt quickly to the changing global guidelines, and more importantly attempt to modify them to suit to the indigenous requirements taking advantage of her strengths in key areas like information technology apart from having huge young population. It is appropriate to recapitulate in this connection India’s inclusive approach to development which aims at distributing the fruits of economic growth to a wider population designing appropriate strategies. A key element of the inclusive approach is “to provide the mass of our people access to such basic facilities as health, education, clean drinking water etc. that they need by governments at different levels to ensure the provision of these services” (Approach Paper to the 11th Five Year Plan).

The impact of education on poverty, income distribution, health, demographic changes etc is found to be significant and important. In many developing countries earnings of workers with education have increased significantly compared to low literacy levels. This “rising premium “ for education, more specifically higher education reflects the growing demand for skills, driven on large part by the spread of new technologies. Recent research suggests that the increase in the number of skilled workers may have, in fact, boosted the value of further education and made it more important for growth thus unveiling the virtuous cycle of skills, growth, and demand for more skills. Building a work force with higher order skills is therefore becoming an increasingly important component to improve the climate for investment, acquiring competitive edge, in maintaining speedy growth. Higher education is regarded as the engine of development in the new world economy. It is in this backdrop that the conventional wisdom on the role of education in economic development is being revised and reviewed with reference to certain critical parameters.

Today tertiary education is considered more critical from the standpoint of development policy. The National Knowledge Commission, for instance noted that our ability to use and create knowledge determines our capacity to empower and enable citizens. Further, investing in tertiary education and its quality is vital for sustaining high rates of economic growth through not only human capital but also technological advancement. This shift in policy and approach has naturally resulted in several structural issues and challenges in the field of education, particularly in higher and tertiary education.

2. The Indian Education System

India’s education has evolved over the years in terms of its policy in stages through concerted action by the federal government through various committees and commissions beginning with

Radhakrishnan Commission to the National Knowledge Commission including the most recent T.S. Subramanian committee. These commissions made different recommendations to make education accessible to the needy, relevant, and quality conscious people. However, the National policy on Education adopted by the Parliament in May 1986 and its modified version of 1992 basing on the Ramamurthi committee recommendations is an important milestone in the evolution of Indian education policy and system. It is both revealing and refreshing.

The National policy states that education is essential for all and fundamental to our all round development, material and spiritual. The key cardinal principle of the National policy is that education is an investment in the present and the future. Further, the Policy stresses that education refines the sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit-thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution. The policy also states that education develops manpower for different levels of economy. It is also the substance on which research and development flourish, being the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance. The National policy concluded that the main task was to strengthen the base of the pyramid, which would come close to a billion people at the turn of the century. Equally, it was important to ensure that those at the top of the pyramid were among the best in the world. The National Knowledge Commission also expressed similar views to transform India into a leading knowledge centre by building an excellent education system to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Thus, it is evident that in independent India education has been given due importance by the federal, state and local governments. Although the major policies of education are laid down by the central government all the three layers of government have a role to play, though in different degrees, in the implementation of various schemes since education is in the concurrent list. Article 45 of the Indian constitution provides for free education to all and to move towards this goal efforts have been made at different levels by the governments and civil society during the last seven decades and the results are obvious and significant. In the initial years government was the major player while the civil society in the form of philanthropy was supplementing although in a small way. However, private sector made an entry into education initially in the form of running aided institutions at all levels on behalf of the government receiving aid from governments and this system has worked well in both school and collegiate education in most of the states. In fact, many good institutions were built under this stream across the country producing eminent people from different disciplines.

The need for universal primary education and demand for large number of colleges to accommodate the aspiring young girls and boys has necessitated an important shift in policy as the government alone couldn't meet the increased demand. This paradigm shift in policy did contribute to far reaching changes of varying impact on education including equity and quality besides expansion in the subsequent years. These implications are particularly disturbing in the professional education where private players have come in a big way affecting socio-economic inequalities. A brief note on the expansion of education is provided before attempting a discussion on the emerging challenges. Data for this purpose are drawn from two sources, the UNDP Human Development Report, 2016 and MHRD, Government of India.

India's literacy was less than 20 percent (18.3 percent) in 1951 and it has more than doubled to 43.6 percent in three decades (1981) and improved further to 73 percent by 2011. Throughout the six decades, literacy among men has always been higher than women although the gap has been significantly reduced between 1951 and 2011 because of the focus given to women's education through different programs. Similarly, the literacy among schedule castes and tribes has always been lower than others although significant improvement was noticed during the period under review because of concerted efforts by governments. The inequalities in both social and economic opportunities continue to be a matter of serious concern for policy. It is for this reason Government of India has been extending reservations for the weaker sections both in admissions and employment. Unfortunately literacy among ST community continues to be the lowest.

This significant improvement in literacy levels is largely because of the increase in the number of institutions since 1951. There were 2097 thousand primary schools in 1950-51 and they have more than doubled to 4945 thousand by 1980-81 and in 2014-15 the recognised primary schools in the country are 8471 thousand. In addition, there are 1353 thousand secondary schools in the country in 2014-15. In the case of higher education, there were 27 universities and 578 colleges in 1951 and increased significantly to 6963 colleges and 110 universities by 1980-81 and today India has over 39071 colleges and 799 universities. One important feature of this rapid growth of these institutions is that private players have become important stakeholders in the system over the years.

This increase in the number of institutions has also contributed to a significant improvement in the enrolment rates across the sector. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) in primary was 42.6 percent in 1950-51 and in the first decade of planning GER has improved by 20 percentage points to 62.4 percent. It is 100 percent today. Enrolment rates were expectedly lower in secondary education and declined further in higher education. In 2000-01, GER in secondary education was 33.3 percent while in higher education it was only 8.1 percent. In 2014-15, the latest year for which data is available, GER in secondary education is 78.9 percent and 24.3 in respect of higher education. These enrolment rates, particularly in respect of secondary and higher education were significantly lower compared to most of the BRICS countries leave alone the South East Asian tigers. This steep decline in enrolment in secondary education compared to primary and lower enrolment in higher education is partly due to high dropout rates apart from other social and economic factors. In the early part of the planned development period it was also because of lack of access to institutions and in the later part it could be partly due to issues of opportunity cost and the relevance and usefulness of the courses from the standpoint of livelihood.

Drilling down further into the details of enrolment will unfold a number of critical issues relevant for the policy. A comparison of enrolment rates into undergraduate programs with the enrolment in Ph. D programs will provide interesting insights. Bulk of the students are joining arts and commerce streams at the undergraduate stage and over 15 percent each are taking either science or engineering and technology. When Ph. D enrolments are considered more than 25 percent are joining science programmes and another 23 percent into engineering and technology. Commerce which has an enrolment of about 14 percent at undergraduate level has just over 3 percent enrolment into Ph.D. In contrast agriculture which had a paltry enrolment of 0.61 percent at the undergraduate level is attracting about 4 percent into Ph.D programs. Social science enrolment into Ph.D at over 12 percent though not comparable to an unhealthy high enrolment of over 40 percent into undergraduate courses is desirable in terms of balanced human resource supply. In sum, while the enrolment at lower levels were quite disturbing in terms both size and composition enrolment at Ph.D level show a sign of a mature society and economy which it is an important pointer to policy making.

Few points on HDI and related issues before getting into the challenges. India's HDI rank continues to be poor at 131 among 188 countries and the key HDI parameters including expected years of schooling and mean years of schooling at 11.7 years and 6.3 years respectively are also very low not only in relation to its own objectives but also compared to other emerging economies. For example China with a HDI rank of 90 has 13.5 years of expected schooling and 7.6 years mean years of schooling while Sri Lanka has 73 HDI rank with 14 years of expected schooling and 10.9 years of mean years of schooling. The other emerging economies including Russia, Brazil, South Africa apart from East Asian countries are all having better HDI ranks, expected years of schooling, and mean years of schooling. These variations are largely due to inadequate public funding of education which itself will contribute to poor pupil to teacher ratio and to some extent alarmingly high dropout rates at all levels resulting wastage of scarce public resources. There are other socio-economic and motivational issues which are simultaneously pulling down both quantum and quality and they will be discussed in the following section.

3. Emerging Challenges

Education in India should not be looked at in isolation. It has to consider the changing aspirations of the people in an economy which is getting increasingly integrated with the global economy. India is a young country with a median age of 26.6 years compared to 31.3 in Brazil, 37 in China, 38 in USA, 40 in Russia, Singapore, and UK, and 46.5 years in Japan. The average Indian today is looking at education as an instrument of livelihood and government is considering education not only to propel development but also to reduce inequalities of both social and economic opportunities. Therefore education, in particular higher education is expected to play a catalytic role in an equitable development of the economy in the 21st century. Having realised its importance, the federal government in particular has taken the task of building education system appropriate to the changing times. Several commissions, over the years, have made important recommendations including the very recent National Knowledge Commission. The present NDA government has also constituted the Subramanian Committee and to follow it up constituted another committee to work on a new education policy in the backdrop of an evolving society where economic activities will be driven largely by both knowledge and technology as key players. It is therefore necessary to look at the main challenges of Indian education considering its evolution and the future expectations from it.

There has been extensive discussion on the Indian education system and its varied and complex problems. Many scholars, educationists, and corporate professionals have been expressing concern, particularly in the recent past, on the low quality of education, specifically primary and secondary, and lack of industry specific skills in tertiary education thus affecting the employability of the graduates and their inability to participate in wealth creation and nation building. Recent studies are also focusing on the inability of Indian institutions to cope with international standards in higher education resulting in very poor record in global ranking of institutions. Besides, the more fundamental concerns relating to curriculum and institutional aspects and the problems of privatisation and globalisation of education have been at the centre of the debate on higher education. The objective of this humble note is to look at few critical issues impacting Indian education and to suggest pointers for policy.

First, the curricular dimension. Education is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary and multidimensional. In contrast, Indian education is continuing with an isolated uni disciplinary and compartmentalisation approach although there are quite a few exceptions of IIT's and few universities where interdisciplinary programs have been either initiated or in the pipeline. The focus is on professional education at the cost of both basic sciences and social and behavioural sciences both of which are vital for innovative initiatives and balanced development respectively. Also, there is watertight compartmentalisation between primary, secondary and higher education. Another important issue is not having any formal institutional linkages between universities and research institutions leave alone institution-industry interface. These are affecting not only the quality but more importantly the elements of basic values which are vital in terms of the objectives of education but also hampering the development of a complete citizen who will ultimately consider the interests of the nation paramount compared to his personal and family requirements. It is the inadequacy of both these elements in our education that is largely considered responsible for the existence of insensitive and unaccountable current institutional set up. Also, the curriculum is outdated, teaching learning methods are routine, lacking innovation practically not facilitating participation by the taught and the teachers are largely either uninspiring or disinterested in what they are doing. Emphasis on employable skills is justified given the fact that the society and the youth in particular consider education as a source of livelihood. However, the overemphasis has reached a point where some over enthusiastic institutions are designing curriculum only for industry specific skills at the cost of core elements of a program. It is a known fact that manpower demand is a dynamic concept and designing a programme to suit one specific sector or industrial or commercial enterprise will create more frustration besides unemployment as the nature of employment might change by the time the youth enrolled complete their degree or diploma.

The next issues relate to contextual and there are two equally important challenges, one on privatisation and globalisation of education and the other linking education with jobs. Both are being considered in the context of the overall development policy framework where education will provide social opportunity and facilitates economic participation thus promoting socio-economic equality. Opening of education to private and corporate agencies will not help to achieve this objective as they work with profit motive which is considered incompatible with the development strategy. Conventional wisdom used to consider only primary and secondary education as public good while tertiary education was defined as private good as the private benefits of higher education are higher compared to public benefits. However, recent studies are attempting to prove that even higher education is a public good as an individual's wellbeing through education will also help to improve the societal wealth. The question then is about access to these institutions which are run with high unit costs and they are all job oriented high cost programs of study. They are prohibitive to the poorer sections of the society because of their inability to pay. This problem is getting complicated further with globalisation of education where international players are entering into Indian education.

The challenge here is whether opening up of education to private sector and to global players will help Indian education at different levels with quality and relevant education and training or will end up creating few centres of excellence to cater to the requirements of selected few who can afford thus promoting inequalities. One has to take a conscious decision in terms of policy as degrees and diplomas must be internationally marketable as the nature and pattern of employment is fast changing and education policy that cannot incorporate these emerging elements will end up creating pool of frustrated educated unemployed with very serious socio-economic consequences. There is certainly no case for either reducing the importance of public education or replacing it with private or corporate education, either domestic or foreign. What is desired is a new look towards public funded institutions of global standards of teaching-learning and infrastructure and appropriate initiatives to provide access to poorer and vulnerable sections to these quality institutions. These issues must be looked in conjunction with the emerging knowledge and technology driven education and development.

A related aspect is institutional. Given the huge size of young population (the growth of working age population is put at 12 million per year, while the population has been increasing steadily by 18 million per year during the last two decades) there is need for more universities and colleges apart from schools given India's vision to provide universal primary and secondary education and increase the enrolment into higher at least to 30 percent in the next few years from the present 24 percent. India needs more teachers at different levels apart from huge investment in infrastructure. Is it possible to do all this with additional investment only from the governments or only with the not for profit private indigenous players? Also, India has to create every year one million jobs of different skill requirements to meet the demand from the new entrants into the job market. The current strategy is to train them all in industry relevant skill sets. Again, is it possible to accomplish this task by the governments alone or in partnership with indigenous training providers? In this connection, one has to reflect on skill development either as an exclusive strategy or a part of the curriculum given the huge numbers and the consequent investment and training resource requirements. Which is a sustainable model?

The final challenge is evolving a system of accountability among all the stakeholders in education to improve the quality of outcomes. Autonomy without accountability has driven Indian education into a situation of inefficient systems and unconcerned stakeholders. This in turn has contributed to inefficient operating mechanism ultimately affecting the quality of the outcomes from the system. Pumping more money into the system alone is not the answer to this complex problem. While technology and infrastructure are important to provide congenial environment Indian education system badly needs a vibrant academic environment where innovative teaching-programs are organised by competent and committed teachers. Opening education through international research collaborations and faculty and student exchanges with reputed universities

abroad and also with domestic research institutions will certainly help to improve the situation. Leadership vacuum is visible in the academic institutions and universities. International experiences as also domestic practices in the pre-independence period could be looked into to build quality, vibrant, and accountable institutional set up.

It is time to prioritise and judiciously use scarce resources through proper collaborations among the institutions working in and around a metropolis. Perhaps, common facilities including laboratories, libraries, play grounds etc. will certainly help not only to reduce pressure on the institutions but will also help develop comradeship among the students through continuous interaction.

4. Way Forward

The slogan of maximum governance with minimum government is quite appropriate and relevant to Indian education at the present juncture. There is no alternative but to open up it to private players and global partnerships given the current challenges. Governments must become more proactive as facilitators shedding their throat choking regulatory powers which did not contribute to growth of education in India in the way its founding fathers desired; nor it is addressing the concerns of the current generation.

Unfortunately, there is more government where it is not needed and nonexistent where it is needed. Governments may lay down the broad contours of policy and leave the implementation to institutions giving them academic and administrative autonomy along with accountability in respect of delivery and outcomes. The country cannot travel in the opposite direction when the rest of the world is moving towards global collaborations opening education to private and international players. However, in view of peculiar socio-economic inequalities India must safeguard the interests of those who cannot pay for private education. Therefore, strengthening public institutions, particularly primary and secondary schools may be considered the first priority and promoting science and social science streams would in the long run help to build sustainable institutions which will take care of the societal needs without referring to region, colour, caste and creed.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT - CHALLENGE & OPPORTUNITY

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I am approaching the subject as a person with many years in public life, having seen the evolving conditions in rural and urban areas, trying to empathise with the fears and the aspirations of the average citizen living in our villages and towns, and factoring the impact of the rapid changes taking place worldwide and experiencing the growing role and impact of Technology.

We have to accept first the reality of India, its diversity in so many aspects, the digital divide (India vs Bharat), the disparity in economic conditions, the living conditions, the contrast in the quality of education and exposure of our children in the rural areas and the urban, the access to connectivity and related technologies, the quality of the teaching and the relative exposure to the local economy, tradition and culture. India as a nation is a very heterogenous entity and that is the reality, with both good and adverse implications. We are proud of our diversity and the ability to live together as a nation with the common threads of religion, heritage and culture that bind us yet there are impediments to change that arise out of our humongous population and the disparity in our education and exposure levels depending on our geography and circumstances. Despite the disparities one of the strengths of the nation has been its innate ability to adapt to changes, especially from the younger generations.

Speaking of current reality, two factors seem to have had a large impact on society.... technology and consumerism have exposed everyone in similar ways and have created aspirations, both good and bad. Parents and Teachers are no longer the ideal role models that they once were. Duplicity in talk and actions have become largely pervasive and negative behaviour sometimes has become a norm as we read of the sad and gory events happening all over the country and the world. The impact of some of the characters in television serials has only subconsciously justified and reinforced negative and unethical behaviour. Sadly ethical behaviour and virtues do not enjoy the halo that Indian society once revered!

In a rapidly changing world, the threat of climate change looms large, its impact being felt all over the globe, a threat that is overshadowing all other positive and progressive developments taking place in the world, such as clean energy alternatives and positive applications of technology in all spheres of life. While the role of technological progress certainly has a largely positive impact in making the the world a closer society, deteriorating conditions of humanity in the less developed world and the disparity in income levels in developing and developed economies do lead to strife and crime. The fall in the oil prices has had a cascading effect on oil economies and the employment opportunities these economies had offered globally, including for a large population of migrants from India, are shrinking. Conflict and tensions between nations also are contributing to the rise of terrorism and war, which have global ramifications. Recent migrations of Syrian refugees to Europe has created feelings of insecurity and unrest and are forcing nations to become insular. Brexit is a direct fallout of the insecurities of losing opportunities to migrants. Even the USA, where qualified migrants have contributed to its economic rise, is getting increasingly protectionist. While the advances in science such as Robots and Artificial Intelligence gives rise to several possibilities and points to a progressive World, it also heralds an era of shrinking opportunities as intelligent and networked devices point to replacing human interfaces and jobs. All these are pointers towards rising uncertainties in a world which was full of opportunities once.

While the quest for a livelihood and contented community living are the primary drivers for mankind, lifestyle changes and aspirations too have been the dominant forces in shaping economies. India unleashed its true entrepreneurial and economic potential subsequent to the

liberalisation and globalisation of India's economy in the early nineties and we have seen how the GDP and the per capita income has grown and how this has given rise to a substantial middle class and a sizeable consumerist market that has fed the aspirations of millions. It has also led to new societal norms and disparities and changing value systems and perceptions. Aspiring to be "rich" or "doing business" is no longer a bad word. This has also led to competition to succeed in order to achieve security and to meet one's individual aspirations.

Now we shall look at what has changed as far as education is concerned and how it has brought about changes in our educational system. If you look at the younger professionals, faced with large changes in the economic opportunity mix, where educated and qualified professionals are moving from a preference for the competitive private sector as against the stability of a Government job, a move away from manufacturing to the services and the knowledge sectors, a move from agrarian occupations to skill based opportunities, the imperative is for a new look and a new dynamic to the shaping of our education system. These changes have therefore led to an academic environment with the majority focus on rote learning and competition on grades rather than on the gaining of knowledge and its positive applications. Aspirations of parents wanting to realise their dreams through their children has put a premium on education and the incapability of the state to provide enough resources towards creating capacity has also thereby made education an economic opportunity. As the premium demand in higher education has always been skewed towards Engineering and Medicine the capacity building in the private institutions has been dominantly in those fields while it has been non-existent as far as the supporting skilling disciplines are concerned, in our ITIs and our Polytechnics, Pharmaceutical studies and allied disciplines, which are equally important in the overall economy. Institutions relevant to supporting local economies do not get the priority as they should. Are we paying adequate attention to Humanities and creativity?

While the nation's population has grown, the capacity building in terms of Teachers and the teaching space has not kept pace due to inadequate resource allocation by Governments, both the Centre and the States, thereby leading to a significant fall in the quality factor in education. The annual (ASER) surveys being done to assess learning outcomes are pointing to a dismal learning curve all over the country. It has been the same story whether it is school education, college education or Universities funded by the state. These gaps provide an opportunity for those in the private sector education space, thereby leading to additional capacity creation, qualitatively better but costlier. The last Government has brought in the Right to Education Act (RTE Act 2010) which has allocated unprecedented resources towards making universal education until 8th grade mandatory for all children across the country. This has led to an accelerated creation of capacity of schools and teachers and has also put an emphasis on a wholesome environment in schools across the country. Capacity creation in the higher education institutions funded by Government has also been very significant.

While capacity creation and universalization of primary education is an ongoing objective the real debate is on the "quality" factor in education, its relevance and its impact on the individual and the society and is the debatable and ponderable topic of the day. The other relevant questions are whether our education system is shaping us to be more responsible individuals and a more caring society, whether our education system is creating the necessary industry ready capacity and therefore the competitive ability, and whether it is helping us develop an informed and empathetic attitude and orientation towards finding solutions towards resolving real issues affecting humanity, our neighbourhoods, the nation and the world. Is the system merely preparing us for accessing economic opportunity in the world or is it preparing us to gain knowledge for shaping a better world! Are we teaching our children to be more competitive to meet their individual aspirations rather than prepare them for being responsible players in a collaborative and cooperative effort for a better society and world. Is the pursuit of knowledge leading to wisdom and better sustainability of the ecosystems and the planet or leading to faster self destruction. Does India which once was the spiritual and cultural reservoir of the world have it in her to be the harbinger for positive change and cooperative and collaborative growth with the rest of the world?

Above all this is the greatest challenge that we face as a nation, in realising the true demographic dividend of an expanding population of young and working age citizens. There are 120 million young men and women entering the working age population every year and there is a national necessity towards creating enough opportunity to this workforce. The dangerous downside is the negative force that this aspirational population can be in society, if opportunities cannot be created fast enough and if disillusioned with the system or if skepticism takes over these young minds.

Having summarised the challenges and having raised the above questions and taking a utopian view, I would like to propose the following expectations of our Education system in order to create the optimum opportunity:

Morals - Values - Responsibility - Society - Education - Skills - Knowledge

School Education

A wholesome environment in every school, with emphasis on moral behaviour and manners, civic sense and sanitation, Ecology and environment, an equal weightage approach to sports and academics, fostering a team spirited orientation that puts the collective before the self, an environment that ingrains a lasting sense of responsibility towards society.

This requires the optimum capacity of teachers with the right knowledge and attitude towards instilling the necessary values. District level institutes which were established towards Teachers Training (DIET) in every district need to be strengthened for teachers to update themselves academically and to reinforce themselves with the necessary knowledge and tools that would motivate them in their academic duties and the larger purpose of nation building. An ongoing effort to review and revise the curriculum.

Nation building activities like the National Cadet Corps (NCC) have to be made mandatory for students.

Encourage involvement by parents, teachers and the society members in shaping the above environment in schools.

A healthy student teacher ratio in classrooms with the teachers having a suitable orientation to the background of the students and their community.

Optimum mix of academic learning and greater awareness to real world knowledge, derived from their local economy and environment.

A school environment that exposes the children constantly to local skills and the economy to give practical relevance to their academic knowledge instead of rote learning. An environment that emphasises on reading, thinking, questioning, writing and expression.

Higher Education

An environment that is a logical extension of the schools wherein the students enter with a clarity of purpose towards their own goals and consciousness to responsibility towards society at large.

An environment that exposes them to various sports and extracurricular activities including social work to the community and skills development of their interest. Labs and workshops to be integral to academics.

An enabling environment that encourages the utilisation of technology and their various applications, towards meeting their academic objectives and to gain knowledge. (Prerequisite: High speed data and reliable connectivity). Online courses for knowledge enhancement and application to be encouraged in parallel.

An academic environment that puts a premium on the application of knowledge and the ability to think solutions to real issues. An environment that fosters team activity for preparing them for a collaborative and cooperative approach to learning and the application of knowledge.

Several groups that are put in constant interaction with industry to prepare for real world preparedness and also with local Government to build awareness of real issues and the ability to formulate solutions both short term and long term. In short the institution becomes a repository of local issues and also an ongoing venue for academia-industry and academia-government interaction and sustainable solution finding.

Higher education campuses should also be able to nurture industry related technical skillsets and consciously make visible space for encouraging these activities which are relevant for industry support and an outlet for students or faculty with such aptitude.

Proactive facilitation by statutory and accreditation bodies to make rules that facilitate seamless movement between academics and industry and vice versa and to give an appropriate credits and weightage to the experience.

Career advisory centres, for both students and faculty to be strengthened with information on opportunities, both domestic and abroad, and the necessary inputs to facilitate the opportunity. These centres should also be able to prepare students to be entrepreneurs and play a hand holding role.

Our Colleges and Universities to be linked through the National Knowledge Network (NKN) which facilitates sharing of knowledge on Research and the latest updates on various subjects.

Higher Education institutions have to be highly conscious of the factors that go into the establishing the International rankings of institutions, the faculty and the student mix, the quality of the Research papers by its faculty, the academic environment and all such prominent factors that contribute towards the making of a truly reputable institution. Prominent alumni have to be roped in towards guiding and strengthening the institution in all ways.

Open University Education

Apart from the above, I would advocate strengthening our Open University Education systems augmenting them with online educational material. This would be the optimum and a less inhibiting environment for those who seek to further their knowledge but couldn't because of circumstances. The informal sector, those who had to join the unorganised sector and those whose professions are skills oriented could be the primary beneficiaries.

Industry standard Skills and capacity building

In the Nation's quest for a formal education, preferably in Engineering or Medicine, the greatest disservice has been done to our skilling institutions, especially our ITIs and our Polytechnics, especially as there is a predisposition towards obtaining a degree rather than acquiring a skill for a livelihood. In the bargain a subconscious bias has been built against skilling and its institutions as something secondary in the education hierarchy. This unfortunate bias has led to our skilling institutions across the board being relegated to the bottom of the priority list as far as our Educational priorities and funding are concerned.

The National Skilling Mission and the National Skills Development Corporation were established with the imperative to create the industry relevant capacity in order to create the necessary industry standard workforce for our various sectors. Thirty two sectors were identified and Sector Skill Councils formed for them to shape the industry relevant curriculum for creating the standards and the manpower.

Needless to say that this mission ought to be strengthened and greater thrust to be given towards the training programs and opportunity creation. The ‘trainers’ capacity could be created thru the thousands of disciplined and patriotic armed forces veterans who retire from the armed forces every year and are looking to a respectable second innings in their private lives. This highly disciplined force could be leveraged for the nation’s advantage in imparting the skillsets to our young minds.

Linkages with local industry and the business associations have to be established and strengthened as it exists in the community colleges in the UK and the USA and other developed nations. This helps in the handholding by Industry towards keeping the curriculum and the training equipment relevant and updated in mutual interest. Government should focus its resources on providing the infrastructure while encouraging the local Industry to play a more direct and proactive role in establishing the faculty and the curriculum.

Concluding my speech, I would say that the main challenge for the Nation’s education and creation of the optimum Human Resources potential is the traditional routes that we have been taking in a monotonous manner. It is time to get realistic, in tune with changing times and Technological progress. The opportunity lies in coming up with an approach that is more pragmatic, education that is more in touch with current reality and that which puts greater emphasis on assimilating the knowledge and on its active application for the enhancement of the quality of life on the planet. The institutional environment should be such that it helps you discover one’s true aptitude. The world certainly needs a more cooperative and collaborative approach to make this a more habitable planet for every life form and we should have the collective conscience that time is running out!

Jawaharlal Nehru

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The first half of the twentieth century was crowded with game changers in history – Lenin, Nehru, Mao and lest we forget, Sukarno - all creators of the most massive and complex countries in history. In this crowd Nehru was an awkward fit – compared to the rest, a democrat and alone amongst them as Gandhi’s follower and most trusted lieutenant, a practitioner of non-violence as a revolutionary strategy and the founder of a mega-state which has no parallel in history, and one which has survived better than all the rest.

For all that he achieved, Nehru’s stock has been on the decline for some time now, undeservedly so. In an article that appeared ten years ago in the EPW, the historian, Ramachandra Guha noted with some surprise and considerable asperity how Nehru so admired in his lifetime was ‘so comprehensively vilified since his death.’

The 125th birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru in 2014 was the saddest in living memory. Downplayed by the Government without even the issue of the usual children’s day postage stamp, and trivialized by the Congress Party, Nehru has seemingly fallen off the shelf for the first time since Independence. No one is sure who is being set up to upstage him. It is widely perceived to be Sardar Patel and through him Modi himself. Less obvious is the churning within the Congress, cynically positioning one of its more recent heroes as the best one to project for political mileage in elections that seem to be coming thick and fast. While Nehru has been a safe bet for the Congress, is it possible that a younger and more recent face like Indira Gandhi or even more, Rajeev could trump him yet? Regardless, Nehru cannot be easily wished away and his eclipse – as all eclipses are – is only temporary.

In death as in life Nehru remains a larger than life figure – the man who made the India we call ours today. As its longest serving Prime Minister, Nehru was responsible for laying the foundations of our country, creating a durable republic and ensuring a functioning democracy widely recognized as secular. India’s Communists who were often critical of him ended adopting him as their unofficial icon, a position that has hardly changed since PC Joshi’s gushing tribute appeared in 1965- an extract: ‘There is a fairly wide consensus that the future of our country lies in making the Nehru legacy our living national legacy, more actively and consistently than it was during Nehru’s life-time. The national get-together involved inevitably implies a forthright self-critical attitude on the part of various patriotic elements. This is the attempt as an Indian Communist. Nehru helped to make India independent and progressive more than any other son of India, alive or dead, and the Indian people gave him their love and devotion in a measure we all know. It kept him responsive to their demands and pressure, even against his own judgement and the decisions of his party.’

It is no more possible to talk of modern China without any reference to Mao than it is to speak of India without mentioning Nehru. Both leaders lived long enough to put their stamp on the countries they led, Nehru more than Mao if one is to go by the longer-term impact on a nation’s psyche. China could jettison Mao yet continue to venerate him; India paradoxically is nowhere close to discarding Nehru’s policies while being critical of him.

India’s emergence as a secular state was Nehru’s most spectacular and most difficult triumph. It was achieved in the backdrop of a half century mistrust and acrimony between Hindus and Muslims ending in a violent Partition. There was no wishing away the animus that had developed between Hindus and Muslims through British rule in India especially after 1857. Nehru for one

realized that unless the majority Hindu community was confident and comfortable with India becoming a secular state it never would become one.

Nehru was a frequent visitor to Europe, and acute observer of developments there. He witnessed the demise of Germany's well meaning Weimer republic and the resurfacing of European anti-Semitism manifest in Hitler's pogroms. It is highly unlikely that the scapegoating of a minuscule minority like the Jews by a highly insecure majority in Germany would have escaped his notice and obviously he would have drawn comparisons with Hindu- Muslim relations in India and contributed to the strategy that he had adopted to ensure secularism prevailed.

What historians gloss over is the fact that Nehru had to make serious and visible efforts to ensure Hindus bought into his secular vision. He could never have done it without Gandhi. While he anguished over some of Gandhi's strategies and initiatives- one being the Poona Pact of 1934 between Gandhi and Ambedkar which ensured the scheduled castes stayed within the Hindu fold. Nehru had the good sense and perspicacity not to challenge his mentor but to go along with him.

Until recently it was widely held that Nehru prevented India from giving in to the dark forces of Hindu fundamentalism in the aftermath of Partition. The narrative is only starting to change now and more for ideological reasons than any other. Those on the right blame Nehru for India's vivisection while charging him with minority appeasement, others are critical of his socialist ways. Nehru is accused of strangling India economically through misguided economic policies which allegedly unplugged India from the rest of world and condemned it to decades of shortages and quotas.

Two leaders from the Right – LK Advani and Jaswant Singh lay the blame of Partition at Nehru's door. It depends on how one sees that cataclysm. In Nehru's time Pakistan was viewed as a necessary excision by most Indians. India lost a lot through this process, not the least a greater geopolitical relevance that a united India would have retained from the British Raj. Partition also continues to condition the Hindu attitude to Muslims in much of India. But we need to see the results on the ground. Hindus have done well and today India has more Muslims than any other country except Indonesia rising to nearly 14 % today from a low of less than 10 % at independence. Barring a few riots Hindus and Muslims have lived in peace for much of the post –independence period- nothing comparable can be said of minority communities in any Muslim country in the world barring possibly Indonesia. Nearly seventy years on since freedom India has not given up on secularism or democracy; for sure, Nehru can rest his case.

Nehru died over half a century back. Long as he had lasted as Prime Minister, his time covered only the first seventeen of the sixty-eight years India has been a free country. Unfortunately, Nehru is being bundled with his daughter Indira , Prime Minister for over 14 years, her son Rajiv who was PM for five years and UPA 1 & 2 which governed India between 2004 and 2014, the *de facto* authority behind both widely believed to be Indira Gandhi's daughter-in-law and the late Rajiv Gandhi's wife, Sonia Gandhi. Nehru it seems has lost his individuality and is seen as a part of a dynasty he never founded; he is being pilloried and bad-mouthed for that and he badly needs to be extricated from an absurd position and a false charge. If Shastri hadn't died who knows where Indira Gandhi would have been? She certainly did not succeed Nehru as Prime Minister!

There is so much obfuscation of Nehru's contribution to nation-building that there is an urgent need to re-introduce him to generations born after his time. It is not easy to grasp the enormity of the challenges that the country faced at independence in 1947. Distanced by time, those of us who lived through sections of his life have perhaps gained the necessary perspective to assess a leader most of us idolize and even revere. This paper is an attempt at a rethink on Nehru without glossing over the less savoury bits with a special focus on the emergence of India as a secular state and the factors that contributed to it. Nehru needs to be seen as Cromwell demanded of his artist– to portray him warts and all.

A GROWING IGNORANCE OF NEHRU AND HIS TIMES

To appreciate the true extent of Nehru's achievements one needs only to recall India at

freedom and even after that. As the historian Perry Anderson otherwise critical of Nehru, conceded: At independence, only 12 per cent of the population could read or write. Comparable figures for Jamaica were 72 per cent, Sri Lanka 63 per cent, Malaya 40 per cent. As for poverty, per capita income in India today is still only about a sixth of that of Malaysia, a third of that of Jamaica, and not much more than half that of Sri Lanka. It is these magnitudes that make Indian democracy so remarkable a phenomenon and the pride of its citizens in it legitimate.

India was also perhaps the only country in history that was tasked with the job of assembling itself after its independence. In less than three years after 1947, the country had against all odds aggregated itself to the India we recognize today. The historian, Ian Copland captures the enormity of the outcome of the assimilation project: 'By any standards' Copland notes, 'integration' (as this process was rather euphemistically dubbed by its architects) represented a major watershed. It swelled the area of the new Indian state by over half a million square miles and its population by nearly 90 million; redrew the political map of the sub-continent; and overthrew an entire governing order with roots going back to the Mahabharata and beyond.' In an astonishing instance of parallel processing in politics Nehru also oversaw the emergence of India as a sovereign secular republic based on a constitution that mixed aspiration with fiat in equal measure. That this constitution still holds as a living document by which the country is governed is undoubtedly Nehru's achievement.

Notwithstanding the short disastrous war with China, Nehru ensured a modicum of peace in much of the country and presided over a gradual return of trust between India's Hindus and Muslims following Partition. Amongst several other things, Nehru conjured the country's first and the world's largest peaceful general elections, aspirationally based on universal adult franchise. We today take General Elections in our stride but back then the first one was a leap of faith, with no idea how an electorate so large and so illiterate would respond. These achievements are often trivialized by the best of foreign historians and never satisfactorily or objectively explained by our own – neither why the Indian Constitution borrows so heavily from the Government of India Act of 1935 nor the fact that India was governed for over five years after independence by Nehru on authority emanating from a pre-independence mandate given by an unrepresentative electorate. Then there was the deep reform of Hindu laws that Nehru saw through and which freed a majority of Indians from the shackles of a discriminatory past that went back in time. It was also under Nehru's watch that India's internal boundaries were re-drawn following the reorganization of states on linguistic lines.

In the midst of meeting the challenges of a newly independent state Nehru also found the time to set up what have become the country's educational icons, the IITs and the IIMs, the National Film Institute; he had a sharp eye for useful talent and engaging them e.g. Ray and Charles Eames instrumental in conceptualizing the National Institute of Design – still the best India has. There also were the big projects – the dams, shipyards, steel plants and aircraft factories he saw through. Nehru was also behind India's nuclear and space programmes that came up in his time and the creation of a brand new planned city- Chandigarh- with Le Corbusier. Anyone of these would have assured Nehru of his premier place in India's history but together they add up to a formidable and unmatched record. No single Indian attempted so much in so short a time and succeeded to the extent Nehru did -not Asoka, not Akbar and not the British.

Over time, a relatively strong centralized state of Nehru's conception saw off challenges to India's existence. This included a couple of wars, serious internal ethnic, linguistic and regional conflicts and frequent ambush by warring religions and castes. As India becomes increasingly federal in character, the political structures Nehru put in place are only now beginning to need some overhaul.

Under Nehru's watch, India has turned out to be a more durable state than most in his time had dared to expect. Then why is Nehru's reputation under stress and why is defending him and reasserting his place in contemporary history turn out to be a rearguard action than the confident assertion it ought to be? To some extent it has to do with Nehru as a person. So who was he?

GETTING TO KNOW NEHRU

Nehru's own writings, unlike those from the heart of his mentor Gandhi's, can be only partially relied upon for us to get the measure of the man. Uncharitable as it may seem, reading Nehru one cannot help conclude that he wrote for posterity to a time when he would not be around. There is much that he never committed to paper perhaps necessarily so for what is not said but which works is what matters. His seemingly premature autobiography appeared when he had become the most recognized face –along with and not after Gandhi - of India's freedom struggle; so did his other well known books, *The Discovery of India* and *Glimpses of World History*. Those were useful in establishing him in the intellectual sphere, bringing him the kind of respectability that comes with scholarship; together they constituted a clear differentiator from his chief rival Jinnah who by comparison came across as a disputatious and nitpicking quibbler.

Then we have a plethora of biographies on Nehru; but as we all know, objective ones of contemporary leaders or books on their times are notoriously difficult to write. Finding source material beyond what so many others have already trawled through is a near impossibility. The struggle to come up with a definitive biography of Deng Xiaoping met with only marginal success – one bordering on a hagiography by Ezra Vogel has only recently been incrementally improved by Alexander Pantsov and Steven Levine's *Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life*. Often only a dramatic collapse of a system rather than a mere change of guard as in India- or for that matter China - makes previously inaccessible material available for a classic like Stalin's *Curse: Battling for Communism in War and Cold War* by Robert Gellately, to emerge.

Biographies of Nehru – and there are several in the market- are largely sympathetic and adulatory. Unsurprisingly so, since the sources are much the same; we have yet to see a defining one emerge; for that we may need to wait a while longer- such is the control Nehru's heirs and his acolytes have over all personal material pertaining to India's first Prime Minister. Till then anyone attempting a life of Nehru need only expect to knead already thoroughly kneaded dough. Having said that, a few published biographies do stand out e.g. *Nehru A Political Life* by Judith Brown which comes with a masterly introduction by her and another and more recent one by MJ Akbar's *Nehru and the Making of India* - rich in detail but unfortunately a little too opinionated to be relied upon. A much earlier one by Michael Brecher, completed in the mid nineteen-fifties is interesting and has a sense of immediacy; there were no gatekeepers then. Stanley Worlpret's *A Tryst with Destiny* is a refreshingly different and sometimes speculative biography which bucks the adulatory trend and definitely worth a read. Several declassified records help us get a more complete picture of Nehru but so much – all the critical bits- remains stashed away. So we have to make our deductions from what happened on the ground and what was said by many including Nehru himself.

Nehru owed a lot of his success as a mass leader and a statesman to his education, the family he belonged to, the near full decade he spent in prison fighting for India's freedom and above all to Gandhi. He was strongly supported – not the least financially- by his wealthy father Motilal Nehru a leading Congressman who nearly brokered a deal with Jinnah and the Muslim community and later in a committee he chaired went back on it all. Motilal later emerged as an admirer and follower of Gandhi who gave up his western ways and lavish lifestyle largely influenced by his son Jawaharlal Nehru, who had taken to the Mahatma and virtually adopted him as a second father.

While many have admired Gandhi for transforming himself into the pre-eminent pan India figure of his time few today credit Nehru with a high level of political astuteness or appreciate his capacity for manoeuvring that enabled him to move past all his potential challengers – Bose and Patel included - and then his mentor Gandhi himself. Nehru typically won most of his battles without firing a shot himself.

Gandhi saw that beneath Nehru's leftist veneer, there was a centrist and an establishment man at heart with a useful stubborn streak necessary to push things along- as Gandhi put it 'he has indomitable faith in his mission'; never a prisoner of his words Nehru was ready to go back

on anything he said— in fact the right mix to evolve rather than force a freedom, keeping much of British India together. Indians early on recognized Nehru as a visionary with a much grander idea of India than any of his other contemporaries; Nehru spelt hope and this is the kind of positive message that the people of India bought into.

In a country then obsessed with aristocracy and caste-hierarchies, Nehru had the good fortune to have been born into wealth and born a Brahmin. Both these coupled with the best in English education, Gandhi shrewdly recognized, made Nehru his ideal lieutenant and successor with the kind of understated arrogance and confidence and a broadness of mind his other contemporaries lacked .

Westerners were well aware of this as the historian and author of a controversial biography of Nehru, Stanley Wolpert noted: 'Nehru was reared in the most aristocratic tradition and so he did have a certain snobbish concept of himself; but that gave him the courage to stand up to anybody, the Britishers and others. He had no false modesty and he was like Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill of patrician birth and training. The brotherhood/old school tie of Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge gave Nehru tremendous self assurance. He never felt inferior to any world leader, and he wasn't. This helped India's image, and gave it a boost on the world stage'.

In his personal life Nehru comes through as a sensitive and caring person, something that cannot be said of his mentor Gandhi. His uncomfortable relationship with his wife Kamala who predeceased him was not lacking in affection but Nehru was troubled by her religiosity and her sickness as well as the hostility and contempt his more snobbish sisters had for her. Nehru cared for Kamala and looked after her till her death in 1936 and that too in a period of great political and personal stress. Unfortunately many still dwell on salacious gossip. A lot of unnecessary and intrusive speculation is there about Nehru's relations with other women —especially Edwina Mountbatten then Padmaja Naidu. All one needs to ask is 'so what?'

Nehru was a dutiful son, a sincere father and supportive brother to his sisters. Through long years in prison, his wife's sickness and full time participation in India's freedom struggle Nehru never lost sight of his daughter Indira; Nehru doted on her and she in turn was very close to him all his life. He ensured that Indira met and interacted with the greats of her time like Gandhi and Tagore. Then there was the combination of educational experiences Nehru ensured in Shantiniketan, Switzerland and Oxford all complemented by the letters he wrote her which introduced India and the world to an impressionable young mind. Few fathers could have prepared their wards for public life better. Is it any surprise therefore that along with Nehru she has turned out to be India's most charismatic leader yet?

How much of a Hindu of his time was Nehru? Going by the evidence one would conclude 'more than we have been led to believe'. For a person who did not seem to care about religion it was surprising that following his return from England he not only went through a thoroughly Hindu-Brahmin 'wedding ceremony himself ; when it came to his daughter marrying Feroze Gandhi – a Parsee- the latter had to undergo a conversion rite to Hinduism. His views on Muslims -and by subtle extension Islam - were decidedly condescending. He also had an understated admiration for Hinduism and the qualities that made it endure. 'There is' Nehru wrote, 'a certain philosophical tradition among the intelligent Hindus which, though it does not affect practice, does make a difference to the ideological approach to a religious question'. He goes on to assert his Hindu and within that his Brahmin credentials with pride - Nehru again: 'It has, indeed, often been remarked that Hinduism is hardly a religion in the usual sense of the word. And yet what amazing tenacity it has got what tremendous power of survival! One may even be a professing atheist – as the old Hindu philosopher, Charvaka was- yet no one dare say he has ceased to be a Hindu. Hinduism clings on to its children, almost despite them. A Brahman I was born and a Brahman I seem to remain whatever I might say or do in regard to religion or social custom'.

Nehru's impressionable years in the heart of the Empire in England gave him the kind of international outlook that few of his contemporaries in the freedom movement had. He was an unabashed admirer of England and never bothered to hide that love: 'Personally' Nehru noted, 'I

owe too much to England in my mental make-up ever to feel wholly alien to her. And do what I will, I cannot get rid of the habits of mind, and the standards and ways of judging other countries as well as life generally which I acquired at school and college in England. All my predilections (apart from the political plane) are in favour of England and the English people.'

England and the grandeur of its empire made a deep impression on him and in spite of himself Nehru imbibed something of its imperial ways and that showed up at the most inconvenient moments e.g. when he met Zhou Enlai and Kennedy, neither of whom approved of his patronizing ways. His leftist leanings were no more than those of some of his other Cambridge contemporaries but were far more nuanced. While he appreciated many things Soviet, Nehru remained an ambivalent supporter of the totalitarian state admiring only the strong leadership that went with it and along with that, centralized planning. 'Much in Soviet Russia' Nehru observed – 'I dislike the ruthless suppression of contrary opinion, the wholesale regimentation, and the unnecessary violence (as I thought) in carrying out various policies' British Intelligence need not have got so exercised over Nehru- he was not a Soviet stooge after all.

There was a kind of thorough resourcefulness and dedication he brought to what he did. Galbraith noted that 'Age notwithstanding, Nehru retained a prodigious capacity for work.' Nehru was careful with his health and exercised regularly. His biographer, Judith Brown credits all that to his English schooling. For much of his life Nehru was indefatigable- he was the star campaigner for the Congress criss-crossing the country in the Provincial elections of 1937 and later he set a record of sorts in the distances he covered and the meetings he addressed during the first General election campaign.

For all his achievements, Nehru remains forgotten by the rest of the world. Compared to Mao he hardly finds a mention in any popular work on politics or international relations. Books on him are mostly by India specific writers and academics whose works are targeted at an Indian rather than a global audience.

In the West the post-independence Nehru -contrary to what we have been told - never became a figure of much consequence; not an enemy nor a friend but one who, when push came to shove, could be trusted to fall the right way. This was quickly brought out by the food crisis India faced in his time compelling a humiliating dependence on the United States for grain or developments following the 1962 war with China punching a huge hole in his policy of non-alignment. This of course was in sharp contrast to the excessive attention Nehru received from the world's media and a clutch of British intelligence agencies in the lead up to 1947 which followed his every move closely in and out of India for years.

Some of Nehru's most trenchant critics – apart from the Hindu right wing at home- expectedly come from the West. To the well-known historian Perry Anderson of UCLA Nehru - along with Gandhi - was a mediocre, duplicitous individual with a strong authoritarian streak, asserting itself throughout his life. But that is a view most of us aware of Nehru's stupendous achievements cannot concur. Long before England and France woke up to the evil challenge posed by the fascists and the Nazis. In an age when many Indians including Bose collaborated with Hitler and Mussolini, Nehru along with Gandhi shunned both emphatically and with contempt. He was also on the right side of history, making common cause with the Republicans of Spain and showing solidarity with China, then a victim of Japanese imperialism.

Throughout his career in public service Nehru displayed an eagerness to do the right thing but was flexible enough to settle for the expedient and the convenient when required. His stirring call for Purna Swaraj in 1930 or complete independence was followed a few years later by the Congress participating in an election Nehru had earlier denounced and then forming the government in most of the provinces of British India. His refusal to settle for anything less than full independence ended in an anti-climax, with India not only becoming a Dominion first but also having the last Viceroy – and an Englishman to boot- as its first Governor General.

Nehru loved to hold forth and hector his Chief Ministers through his monthly letters on

matters they knew enough about or were of no relevance to them. There was an element of the bully in him too. His takeover of Goa was a classic example against a Portugal which could be quickly overwhelmed. He could not try this with the French who exited Pondicherry on their terms, carrying their archives with them.

Nehru who fancied himself an ace in geopolitics was like Churchill a sometimes lucky amateur. He took personal charge of India's Foreign Service; this came in the way of the development of an institutionalized approach to India's external relations and what is worse, the country is stuck with a Foreign Service which remains stolid and unimaginative as ever, waiting for someone to think for it. Nehru's biggest failure, one that continues to cost India dear, was not to have kept the Chinese on India's side and, as common victims of imperialism, negotiated a fair border settlement with that country or at least kept the door open for a settlement instead of peremptorily asking an ill-equipped and poorly led army to throw the Chinese out. Notwithstanding the Late K.Subramanyam's contrived defence of Nehru and India's stand on China, there is hardly any doubt that making China an enemy was Nehru's most serious error of judgement, a second was not being strategically generous with miserable shell-shocked Pakistan at creation; thanks to Nehru we now have two formidable enemies on our borders when none should have been there.

Michael Brecher observed that for Nehru 'loyalty often outweighs sound judgment'. This repeatedly led him to practice a not-so-subtle nepotism by seeing non-existent virtues in rather mediocre people and promoting them to positions far beyond their capacity to manage. Two who immediately come to mind are Krishna Menon who later quit ignominiously as India's Defence Minister - rewarded for no better reason than for long being his pointsman and publisher-interface and sometimes secretary in London, or his own sister Vijayalakshmi Pandit on whom offices were continuously thrust only for her to disappoint. She was a disaster as a Minister in the Provincial Government and the wrong person to have placed at the UN where sharp and incisive minds were called for to counter the suave and sharp ones Pakistan deployed. In all her time as India's Ambassador to the USSR she failed to meet anyone of consequence in the Soviet hierarchy and never got to see Stalin. Her successor, Professor S. Radhakrishnan, later India's President, was much more successful – not only did he meet Stalin more than once but got close enough to banter with him and even ruffle his hair.

Often when he had to take a stand, Nehru displayed puzzling reticence e.g. his refusal to unambiguously condemn the former USSR's unwarranted and bloody intervention in Hungary in 1956. Michael Brecher was dismayed at Nehru's tendency not to follow up on his indignation at the many unsavoury features of Indian public life such as corruption. Brecher attributed this to Nehru's tendency to 'shrink from radical deeds', we who know better will sigh and say 'ah politicians'

The then US Ambassador to India John Galbraith became a good friend of Nehru and studied him closely. He saw through Nehru's loneliness and the extent to which 'many of his parliamentary and cabinet colleagues bored him'. Nehru's love for intellectual companionship did not escape Galbraith: 'In the nostalgia of age,' he wrote Nehru's mind turned not to Gandhi and the struggle for independence; it reverted to his yet earlier experiences when, in England he had been with or near men and women of compelling interest – the world as I have been told, of RH Tawney, the Webbs and of Trinity College and Cambridge'.

Nehru was sensitive and thin-skinned. An aside in a British intelligence report recorded that Nehru 'gave the impression that he would not stand up well to anything in the nature of serious heckling. While Nehru could encourage Shankar to good humouredly lampoon him through his cartoons, he could take serious offence when a Minister in his cabinet went on record stating that 'The Prime Minister is like a great banyan tree. Thousands shelter beneath it, but nothing grows'.

There is a long enduring myth that he was a woolly-headed dreamer, an amiable, rather impractical blunderer who was lucky to have had strong associates and none many claimed came stronger than Nehru's political rival and Deputy Prime Minister in his Cabinet, Sardar Patel. It is

widely accepted that India in its infancy was saved from imploding solely by this cold Bismarckian figure—widely but erroneously credited for having singlehandedly and painstakingly assembled the India we have today. The truth as extant records indicate is that nothing happened under Nehru's watch without his implicit or explicit consent.

Nehru's role therefore in keeping a distance from the process of assembling India, a task mostly seen through by Sardar Patel and his redoubtable assistant VP Menon is puzzling. The integration process was dirty work involving a lot of cajoling, some blackmail and considerable arm-twisting - all of which Nehru overtly left to Patel and VP Menon but kept close tabs on. Only when confronted by a huge massacre of Muslims following the takeover of Hyderabad did Nehru intervene by ordering an enquiry, the shocking results of which was immediately suppressed.

Nehru was no softie; even a cursory look at his actions would have convinced anyone that like his Chinese counterpart Mao, Nehru was no less focused and equally ruthless in pursuing his grand vision; for Nehru this led to his conjuring a viable country out of a Raj in which he had lived for much of his life. Central to this was not only the retention of the civil services the British had left behind and which he had despised, but further loading it with privileges and responsibilities way beyond what British had allowed. Eventually the civil service Nehru depended upon morphed into the self serving, mutually supporting system we recognize today.

Nation building is hard and unpleasant work. Nehru found it essential therefore to retain all the repressive laws the British had made, fine-tuned some of them and introduced a few of his own. As he stated, 'We have not yet rid ourselves of that atmosphere of violence and disorder that came with partition. Any activity therefore that tends to violence is more dangerous now than it might have been in a more peaceful state of affairs.....to us who preach civil liberty at a thousand occasions any suppression is painful. When the vital needs of the state demand such suppression, it has to be undertaken.' For Nehru leading the charge this meant taking big unpleasant decisions that had an even chance of failing; he never flinched whether it was relentlessly pursuing the Naga leader Angami Phizo, locking up a close friend like Sheikh Abdullah for years or getting rid of a democratically elected Communist government in Kerala. All these, as subsequent developments have shown, enabled Nehru to prevent what many in his time feared most – the Balkanization of the country.

Nehru also had an exaggerated notion of India as a continuum and flatly refused to concede that the Chinese had any grounds for the territorial adjustments they sought but never could get from Nehru. He also improbably claimed that 'India's northern frontiers are not the result of any British imperialistic expansion, achieved in violation of China's rights or interest, but have their sanction in the facts of geography and history, and the generally accepted principles of international law'. The observations of a British intelligence officer on him 'that he shares with `De Vallera a habit of drawing upon the centuries for his arguments' was spot on.

JUST SO MUCH HINDU, JUST THAT MUCH SECULAR

Unlike Gandhi who never downplayed his Hindu credentials, Nehru muddied it but just enough for the incipient Hindu to seep through without being branded a Hindu fanatic. All through the freedom struggle Nehru refused to see or acknowledge Muslim insecurities that gave rise to the Muslim League, Jinnah and the Partition. He even faulted the community for its backwardness. To his biographer, Judith Brown, Nehru failed to understand communalism as a force by itself and not the by-product of vested interests and was reluctant to believe that 'ordinary Indians could behave in such a way as a result of communal identification'.

Rather than failing to understand communalism as a force, Nehru one surmises was well aware of its power and contrived to set them neutrally in economic and scientific terms. He only knew too well how fragile and fractured the relationship between the Hindus and Muslims was and how devastating conflicts between the two always were. This is what he had to say of a Hindu-Muslim riot that broke in Allahabad ironically following the Unity Conference in Delhi in 1924: 'It was not a big riot, as such riots go' Nehru observed 'in so far as causalities were concerned, but

it was painful to have these troubles in one's home town. I rushed back with others from Delhi to find the actual rioting over; but the aftermath, in the shape of bad blood and court cases lasted a long time. I forget why the riot had begun. That year or perhaps later, there was also some trouble over the Ram Lila celebrations in Allahabad. Probably because of restrictions about music before mosques.... these celebrations were abandoned. For about eight years now' Nehru wryly observed, 'the Ram Lila has not been held in Allahabad.'

MUSLIM CONCERNS AND NEHRU

Contrary to what Nehru believed, the Muslims had good reasons to worry about their future. Coming from a family with strong links to the erstwhile Moghul court and prominent Indian Muslims, Nehru was fully aware of the community's concerns. So why Nehru was unimpressed and cold to Muslim worries?

As long as Muslims were the dominant political power in the Indian sub continent, accommodation with Hindus was not difficult to arrive at or sustain. However, the equations changed during British rule when they lost out politically and imploded economically, leaving the field open to the Hindus who made the most of the educational and employment opportunities that came their way.

Crushed by the British and weighed down by the fundamentalist elements in their religion, Muslims failed to kick start the kind of social and educational reforms that Hindus instituted. In fact the 19th Century continuing into the 20th India witnessed a Hindu renaissance that was also high on Hindu triumphalism built into it with inevitably strong anti-Islamic overtones further exacerbating the tenuous and sometimes hostile relations between the two communities. The founding in 1884 of the Congress Party, ironically by a Britisher, Allan Octavian Hume, and soon dominated by Hindus created a quasi-political forum to canalize political demands.

The Muslims were also from the start not excessively enthusiastic about a Hindu renaissance from the mid 1800s that eventually metamorphosed into a freedom movement. In the words of the historian, John Keay: Muslims took exception to this as to much else about the predominantly Hindu character of many of these movements. In the North they responded with a burst of fundamentalist activity which appealed to poorer Muslims and with a drive towards a more flexible and outward-looking orthodoxy which could accommodate a degree of Westernization. The latter trend was represented by Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan who in 1875 founded the Anglo Muhammedan Oriental College, later University of Aligarh'.

By the end of the 19th Century, Hindus occupied most of the middle and lower levels of Indian administration 45% to the Muslim's 7% nowhere near the 25% proportion of Muslims in India's population. Economically the Hindus began to do a lot better too through better deployment of capital in the long term and the consolidation of wealth within joint families over generations. After having lost their status, as rulers of India to the British the lot of Muslims worsened. They were also less well off than the Hindus and also more conservative and much less educated than them. The educational and literacy levels amongst Muslims were abysmally low. In the 1880s, only four percent of students in Indian colleges were Muslims At the start of the new century, the literacy rate among Muslim males was half that of the Hindus. Among Muslim women, it was virtually nonexistent.

For enlightened Muslims, the reduction of a once proud Islamic community to such backwardness was humiliating. Jinnah anguished, 'There never had been any systematic effort for their social and economic uplift. Whereas our sister communities have gone far ahead with their organizations and systematic programmes supported by a large bulk of people, especially the Hindus, who are not only in a majority but better trained, more disciplined and far better equipped educationally, economically and financially. The British move to involve Indians in administration seriously got underway with the Indian Councils Act in 1892. Seen as a triumph for the recently set up Congress Party under which India's struggle for freedom was waged, Muslim concerns began to be articulated. John Keay again: Anticipating the arguments which would eventually lead

to the genesis of Pakistan, Khan insisted that representative government might work in societies 'united by ties of race, religion, manners, customs, culture and historical traditions but in their absence would injure the well being and tranquillity of the land'. Subsequent increases in Indian representation in elected bodies such as the Legislative Councils had an interesting effect on Indian Muslims. It led to a gradual distancing of the community from the freedom struggle while seeking an autonomous existence within the British Empire. Anything it appeared was preferable to come under Hindu domination something that had never happened in over a thousand years in India.

Muslim support for the freedom movement led by Gandhi was not easy or sustained and when extended, extremely conditional, coalescing around a 'Jinnahian' vision of strong states and a weak centre with bullet proof safeguards against the possibility of being overwhelmed by the numerically superior Hindus. The Congress Party's claim to represent all Indians was rejected by the Muslims. As Judith Brown observed, the Party's Muslim base also began to shrivel - from 11% in 1921 to fewer than 4% in 1923.

Muslim disappointment with Nehru especially contributed to their sense of being cornered. He was instrumental in undoing an understanding between the Muslim League and the Congress to have communal electorates in 1916 which lasted for a while until Nehru joined Gandhi in the early twenties. By 1928 the Congress repudiated it on the grounds that it was not necessary and, in fact, contrary to its democratic and secular ideals. The agreement was finally buried with the Nehru-inspired Purna Swaraj or '*Complete Freedom Resolution*' of the Congress Party in January 1930.

This Congress position was reiterated unambiguously by Gandhi at the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1932 - one of three organized by the British Government to carry India further on the road to self government and the only one the Congress attended. This rejection of the one lifeline, the Muslims had been insisting on to save themselves from what they feared would lead to their being trampled over by a Hindu majority, marked the virtual exit of the Muslims from the freedom movement.

Nehru was a perfect foil for Gandhi. All the reaching out to Jinnah and the Muslims as well as Ambedkar and the Depressed Classes (as the Scheduled Caste Communities were known then) was in Gandhi's domain while projecting a strident secular vision was Nehru's. Between them they ensured there was no cause for Hindus to complain of being sold or for the Muslims to fear them. Gandhi was a recognizable and venerated Hindu personality and could risk supporting something like the Khilafat but never Nehru. Neither of course addressed the core concern of the Muslims - their relative backwardness compared to Hindus and their consequent marginalization.

Historians like Perry Anderson and Ayesha Jalal see this obduracy on the part of the Congress Party and its refusal to meet Jinnah and the Muslim League half way on the issue of communal representation contributing to the Partition of India. Even VP Menon the Indian civil servant who was instrumental in achieving the integration of the Princely States into the Indian Union felt that way. However, there is another and more plausible explanation. The founding of the Hindu Mahasabha, a radical anti Muslim organization, in 1910 was a wakeup call to the Congress that its mass Hindu base was seriously threatened. The Congress's non-accommodative stance vis a vis the Muslim League has to be seen in this light. By standing up for secular values and rejecting Communal electorates, Gandhi, Nehru and the Congress were none too subtly projecting a strong majoritarian image without appearing to be least bit communal thereby keeping the door open for 'nationalist Muslims to walk in if they felt like it. Here again Nehru and the Congress Party's need to keep Hindus on their side overrode every other consideration. Added to that was the thought in some Hindu minds- including many in the Congress Party too- that the end of British rule would not only represent a conclusion of the colonial era but also a final end to a millennium of Muslim dominance in the sub continent. Any compromise with the Muslim League would have almost certainly weakened the mass Hindu base of the Congress and the sustaining force of the Freedom struggle.

Gandhi and Nehru had the advantage that the Hindu community across India trusted them and their leadership. That of course was also the basis for the confidence that both Gandhi and Nehru exuded; after all Hindus constituted over 75% of undivided India's population and formed the big support base on which Congress stood. The same also compelled Nehru –increasingly the face of the freedom movement- to demonstrate unwavering opposition to the likes of Jinnah even if that meant the loss of mass Muslim support as long as he ensured the Hindus were with him and the Congress Party.

Nehru had little choice but to allow the Congress Party to evolve as a party extremely sensitive to Hindu concerns and in pursuing a majoritarian agenda. Many of its top leaders like Rajendra Prasad (later India's first President), KM Munshi and Purshotam Das Tandon were deeply Hindu and some bordered on being anti Muslim. One of Nehru's biographers, Sankar Ghose observed 'Nehru, like all Congressmen, spoke of democracy; but not all Congressmen were as secular as he. Some Hindu Congress leaders swore by democracy because the Hindus, being the majority community, had no apprehensions from democracy. Sankar Ghose was being kind; most Hindu Congressmen were Hindu at heart and majority of Hindus in the country never doubted that the Congress Party represented them first.

Though never openly acknowledged this increased the pressure on the Congress to strengthen its Hindu base especially when challenged by an entity like the Hind Mahasabha that openly flaunted its Hindu credentials. Nehru even gave up a successful campaign led by him which brought in a hundred thousand Muslims as primary members of the Congress Party in UP, Bengal and the NWFP' leaving the field open to Jinnah to build up the Muslim League. When the Quit India movement was launched there is little doubt that both Gandhi and Nehru were aware that Jinnah will not only rise but thrive in the absence of a Congress challenge and they appear to have been blasé about it. One suspects that in their minds the inevitability of Partition began to grow soon after war ended and freedom negotiations began. It may well be true as Ayesha Jalal claims that Jinnah was only posturing to get a better deal for the Muslims and never wanted Partition. It was left to Nehru to call his bluff.

The results of 1946 election before the British gave up India convinced Nehru that the Muslims under Jinnah - strengthened by the very strong showing of the Muslim League in the election - would never agree to be part of a free India, which lacked specific safeguards for the Muslims. These included the continuation of the Communal electorate, which they had enjoyed under British rule since 1909, as well as the kind of federalism, which left the central authority at the mercy of its constituents.

All through the freedom struggle Nehru was witness to the frequent riots between Hindus and Muslims, sparked off for the most trivial of reasons. In the lead up to independence, Nehru and the Congress ignored the many opportunities to reach out to Muslims outside of Jinnah and failed to follow-up on promising leads, including the aborted Mass Contact programme that Nehru had initiated. Nehru stridently projected a trust in scientific values over faith. At the end of the day this was a necessary feint. He used the argument to smother discussion on religion while seemingly agreeing with Marx that it indeed was the opiate of the people, one which should have no place in national discourse. It was an impregnable defence and Jinnah struggled to fashion a response.

Nehru never missed an opportunity to push Jinnah to the corner and a half-promised accommodation with the Muslim League failed to materialize following the 1937 provincial elections - the Congress gratuitously asked the Muslim League to disband itself since it (the Congress), was an inclusive party represented all Indians including its Muslims. Under Nehru the Muslims in the Congress Party too were marginalized to stop anyone from charging it with minority appeasement. Thus, apart from some symbolic gestures the Muslim members of the Congress Party were gradually but surely eased out of all positions of decision making and as Mushirul Hassan noted 'their viewpoint was treated with undeserved contempt'..... The self-perception of

Congress Muslims was that they were, at best bargaining counters; when not so they were stored in the deep freeze.

The fact is all things considered Nehru realized that the Congress could survive and continue the fight for Independence even with reduced Muslim support but never without the backing of the majority Hindu community. Finally when Partition became a possibility it was the Congress and Nehru who made it inevitable. They clearly recognized that a vastly reduced Muslim minority in a somewhat reduced but even more overwhelmingly Hindu India would much more readily accept a secular state of the kind Nehru envisaged, than a composite one where the community constituted a quarter of the country's population with perpetual veto rights on every aspect of governance.

As a Muslim and a Congressman, Abdul Kalam Azad recognized the potential harm Partition could inflict on the Muslims left behind in India with the added danger of becoming an inconsequential minority with no bargaining rights- as he observed , 'more than 30 million Muslims will be left behind in India. What promise Pakistan holds for them? The situation that will arise after the expulsion of Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan will be still more dangerous for them.' However as we all know his efforts to prevent Partition was given short shrift by Nehru and the Congress, something that left Azad bitter about to the end of his days.

The Congress efforts to marginalize Jinnah and the Muslim League from the time Nehru and Gandhi melded as a team needs to be seen in the context of its efforts to bring Hindus together one willingly accommodating Muslims as equal citizens secure and confident enough to allow a secular state to emerge -. Without such consolidation it is doubtful if a struggle for India's freedom could have been sustained.

Part of the price India has to pay for being secular is the need for any government to reach out to its Hindu majority often with gestures that would allay its fears of selling out to the Muslims of India. Gandhi, through the 1932 Poona Pact with Ambedkar which he arrived at but did not sign, ensured that the Scheduled Castes stayed in the Hindu fold. Post-independence, Nehru with his radical reform of Hindu Laws completed the job of making one community of all Hindus while allowing the minority communities especially the Muslims to retain their personal laws. To Omar Khalidi the Hindu-centric aspects of India's constitution stood out.

Nehru made no effort to purge the Congress Party of its rabid Hindu elements who would have been equally at home in the Hindu Mahasabha or the RSS. One of them, Purushottam Das Tandon was even awarded the India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna in 1961. Astonishingly the Babri Masjid issue began to fester in Nehru's time as Prime Minister. Mushirul Hassan while not doubting Nehru's secular intentions ruefully observed that after the District Officer KKK Nayar had been allowed to get away with the surreptitious installation of the Ram idol in Babri Masjid Nehru 'refrained from taking definite action. Yet he made no effort to mobilize his enormous political resources to resolve a long-standing controversy which threatened to shatter his own secular dream'.

In a sense along with Gandhi, or rather in partnership with him, Nehru recovered both Hinduism as well as secularism from their more extremist adherents. By repudiating the pact of 1916 the Congress demonstrated that it stood for majoritism allaying the fears of its Hindu members. By asserting its secular credentials and refusing to agree with Jinnah that it was essentially a Hindu party, the Congress kept the door open to Muslims agreeing with it to walk in without alarming its Hindu base or giving the Hindu Mahasabha any quarter to exploit. By following this course the Congress evolved a secularism that responded to local realities without the doctrinaire qualities of French laicite.

The manner in which Partition was allowed to happen was one of Nehru's two great failures the other being his inability to settle the border dispute with China peacefully. Partition itself was the logical culmination of decades of mistrust between the Hindus and Muslims of the sub-continent and in all probability it was inevitable even without Jinnah. It also brought a millennium-

long Hindu Muslim coexistence to an abrupt and bloody end. Nehru's failure was not in allowing Partition to occur but rather in settling for a British plan to abruptly ensure it did the way it did.

In the final negotiations leading up to India's freedom Nehru and the Congress held nearly all the aces. A Britain bled and impoverished by the Second World War no longer wished to hold on to its fabled Indian Empire – the so called Jewel in its crown. Freedom no longer had to be wrested for it was now available for the asking. Instead of leveraging the British desperation to cut and run from the sub continent Nehru acquiesced to a harebrained scheme to split the country into two- within a matter of months and weeks – a Muslim dominated Pakistan and Hindu majority India. Here Nehru showed undue haste and was un-strategic to quickly settle with Mountbatten. He would have done well to hasten slowly and ensure the kind of 'velvet- divorce' that in all probability would not have required the movement or death of so many millions , generating the kind of long-lasting inter-communal hatreds that Partition as it happened ensured. An added bonus to a peaceful parting of ways could well have been the retention of India's links to West and Central Asia.

It is inconceivable that Nehru did not know that Partition the way it happened would be so violent especially in the light of kind of mayhem that overtook Calcutta following Jinnah's call for direct action in 1946 and the many other Hindu-Muslim riots that often occurred before that. Even in his time it was clear there was another and more peaceful way of dividing a country.

PLACING NEHRU

Nehru's many weaknesses fall short of being fatal flaws and his success far outstrip his failures. There is little doubt that the mega-state and a secular democracy we Indians are proud of, is largely Nehruvian creations. Despite the Partition and the fiasco of 1962, India was fortunate to have had him at creation.

Nehru to the last remained an inscrutable personality with much of what we know about him traceable back to what he allowed us to know of him. The cloak of mysterious anonymity he wrapped himself in set a clear distance between Nehru and the rest enabling him to be loved without being understood. In a country always delighted with anyone who has earned his spurs in the West, Nehru for a long time remained much admired for what he said, did, wrote and published overseas. He got control of a country which was down on its knees at creation and set it on the course to greatness.

For him to come in for so much criticism is sad and the on-going efforts to erase his memory tragic. Since the last General Election anti-Nehru voices have only got shriller, to a point where every one of India's shortcomings is directly attributed to him. That unfortunately is the only expected outcome of a Congress culture that sought to deify him by presenting him as a larger-than-life personality to which they – the Congressmen, their party and a clique of fawning academics –insist everyone genuflect. India's historians are guilty of putting him on a pedestal by dishing out the kind of beatific accounts of Nehru which lack credibility.

We do need to see Nehru warts and all, rendering him much more human and much less divine. That will in no way diminish Nehru, for his many achievements by far out strip his few shortcomings. We can only marvel at his accomplishments as Prime Minister. Gnashing their teeth, India's Hindu Right is unable to stomach what undoubtedly was Nehru's greatest achievement - the creation of a secular yet quintessentially Hindu state that actually works for all.

The Indian Republic is clearly a Nehruvian accomplishment – grand and imperial in its scale, huge in its aspirations and limitless in its ambition. We Indians, whether we like to acknowledge it or not, are essentially his children and cast in his mould with all his ambiguities and contradictions as well as his strengths- all unmistakably Indian. In getting to know Nehru better and with greater objectivity we will understand ourselves even more.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Sustainability: Indian Context

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Introduction

No corporation exists in isolation. Every company is interdependent on the society. While society supports the company, the latter also supports the society in many ways. In the era of capitalism, the company was seen as a profit churning machine. From the very conception of a "company" by the British Crown in 1600 A.D., this innovative creature was used as a method of collective investment overseas and later at the domestic level. This also guided the development in the application of the concept of separate legal personality over a period of time on an international level.

India has a long tradition of corporate philanthropy and industrial welfare that has been put to practice since ancient times dating back to philosophers like Kautilya who had emphasized on moral practices and values while doing business in India. CSR has been informally practiced in ancient times in the form of charity to the poor and underprivileged sections of society. There are ample examples in Indian scriptures which highlight the importance of sharing one's earning with the underprivileged section of society. The tradition continues in the modern times with firms like Tatas, Birlas, Godrej, Bajajs, Singhanias and Modis practising CSR by setting up charitable foundations, educational and healthcare institutions consistent with the strong community ethos. The corporate philanthropy involved funding projects for building schools, pilgrim rest houses, places of worship like temples, distributing relief items during disasters, helping the poor and empowering employees. In fact the Tata Group is credited for introducing 'social responsibility' among corporate houses in the country.

'Sustainability' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility' ('CSR') are terms that are sometimes interchanged. However, CSR is a subset of sustainability and is the means by which we attempt to measure sustainable practices. The impacts of sustainable practices are expressed in terms of the 'three legs of sustainability': environmental, economic, and social effects. CSR is the method by which those effects are quantified and reported.

The differences between sustainability and CSR might best be explained through an example. Say a land mine manufacturer stops using toxic chemicals in its manufacturing process and final product. The company writes and distributes the appropriate reports about that improvement. The company might 'score' well from a CSR perspective: both the new manufacturing process and use of the final product will have a smaller effect on the environment. However, the production of land mines, toxic-free or not, is not a sustainable process because it has significant negative social and economic effects. This is why we view CSR and sustainability as two sides of the same coin: related but not identical. A business can adopt sustainable practices but fail to quantify the effects of those practices through the appropriate CSR tools. A business can also fulfil all its CSR reporting obligations while still being involved in unsustainable practices. To date, our focus at Ecology has been on sustainability first and CSR second. While both are important, we believe changing behaviour by encouraging sustainability is the most essential activity.

Brundtland Commission's Report in 1987 defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This is considered to be a standard definition, judged by its widespread use and frequent citation. However, this definition seems to resolve the apparent conflict between economic development and environment protection only, without highlighting the social dimension of sustainable development. It was in the Johannesburg Declaration at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 that social development as the third pillar of sustainable development was clearly acknowledged.

The emergence of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development as important concerns of business activity is the result of realization that any business conducted with the sole motive of profit maximisation for the shareholders, in disregard of societal and environmental concerns is bound to fail in the long run. The traditional concept of Business has come a long way since the famous economist and Nobel laureate, Milton Friedman famously proclaimed in 1970,

"The business of business is to maximise profits, to earn a good return on capital invested and to be a good corporate citizen obeying the law – no more and no less".

In 1984, Edward Freeman introduced the stakeholder theory and argued that socially responsible activities helped business in building strong relationships with stakeholders, and that management must pursue actions that are optimal for a broad class of stakeholders rather than those that serve only to maximize shareholder interests. In 1989 another prominent economist, Kenneth Andrews exhorted corporates "to focus corporate power on objectives that are possible but sometimes less economically attractive than socially desirable". In 1997, John Elkington first introduced the concept of "Triple Bottom line" to emphasise that a company's performance is best measured by the economic, social and environmental impact of its activities. These developments at the turn of the previous century are only indicative of several parallel movements, private initiatives and scholarly debates focussed on introduction of reforms in business, corporate governance and management practices. They arose out of a common concern for economic growth, environmental issues, social imperatives and enhanced ethical standards in business. Cumulatively, they brought about an integration of environmental, social and economic aspects of business and espoused societal expectations from business to behave responsibly and deliver better governance.

Based on the various literatures developed as on date, there are four aspects of sustainability which need to be recognised in any CSR activity, namely:

Societal influence, which we define as a measure of the impact that society makes upon the corporation in terms of the social contract and stakeholder influence.

Environmental impact, which we define as the effect of the actions of the corporation upon its geophysical environment.

Organisational culture, which we define as the relationship between the corporation and its internal stakeholders, particularly employees, and all aspects of that relationship.

Finance, which we define in terms of an adequate return for the level of risk undertaken. These four must be considered as the key dimensions of sustainability, all of which are equally important.

The UN Global Compact was the first major initiative by the International organisation to lay down a charter of ten principles for all companies globally to respect and follow in their business operations. By asking companies to embrace, support and enact a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-corruption, it sets the agenda for corporate social responsibility for all corporate enterprises and provides a framework for initiation and practice of sustainability policies. The overwhelming endorsement which it received from the corporate world testifies that the UN Global Compact is the largest voluntary corporate responsibility initiative in the world that forges close linkage between business, society and

environment in all development endeavours. Many other international bodies and associations like the OECD countries were quick in coming out with their set of guidelines for multinational corporations, largely in conformity with the principles of the UN Global Compact.

If in spite of such widespread awareness about corporate social responsibility and sustainable development, both these concepts have for long been in search of definitions which could separately capture their all-encompassing essence and philosophy, it is because these concepts are dynamic and evolving. Corporate Social Responsibility is the responsibility which the corporate enterprises accept for the social, economic and environmental impact their activities have on the stakeholders. The stakeholders include employees, consumers, investors, shareholders, civil society groups, Government, non-government organisations, communities and the society at large. It is the responsibility of the companies to not only shield the diverse stakeholders from any possible adverse impact that their business operations and activities may have, but also entails affirmative action by the companies in the social, economic and environmental spheres as expected of them by the stakeholders, to the extent of their organisational resource capabilities. This is besides corporate legal obligation to comply with statutory rules and regulations regarding the conduct of business operations, and the duty to compensate the stakeholders in the event of any harm or collateral damage.

It is now universally accepted that corporate social responsibility is not a stand-alone, one time, ad hoc philanthropic activity. Rather, it is closely integrated and aligned with the business goals, strategies and operations of the companies. There is a close integration of social and business goals of companies.

MODELS OF CSR IMPLEMENTATION

Although there has been a little documentation of social responsibility initiatives in India, particularly during the initial years, there has been a growing degree of companies that pay genuine attention to the principles of socially responsible behaviour, which are favoured by the customers and also preferred for their goods and services. Broadly the development of Indian Model of CSR can be divided into following timeline. This section presents the five distinct phases of CSR development in the Indian economy as –

- 1800 – 1914 - Ethical Model
- 1914 – 1960 - Trusteeship Model
- 1960 – 1980 - Statist Model
- 1980 – 1990 - Liberal Model
- 1990 – till date – Stakeholder Model

I. Ethical Model (1800–1914): CSR as Charity and Philanthropy:

Although there is no formal concept of CSR in this period, India not only witnessed a rich hub of merchandise trading in the world, but also the social engagement of wealthy merchants. The oldest form of CSR in India was predominately in the form of donations, charity and philanthropy. Hence, the first phase was mainly based on self-regulation of doing business characterized by culture, religion, family values and tradition but also influenced by caste groups and political objectives. The tradition of wealth sharing of the big businesspersons for social causes like setting up of temples, helping the society in getting over phases of famine, and epidemics by providing food and money to the poor and thus securing an integral position in the society was followed as a tradition. The approach towards CSR changed since 1850s when the large industrial families were inclined towards economic as well as social considerations.

II. Trusteeship Model (1914–1960)

During India's struggle for independence in 1914 Gandhi introduced the notion of "trusteeship", wherein the industrial houses establish trusts for the welfare of the common man.

Trusts for schools, colleges and scientific institutions were established to undertake activities in line with Gandhi's attempt to abolish untouchability, encourage empowerment of women and rural development. The concept of "trusteeship" views businesses as stewards of society's resources and assets that the right of a capitalist is to accumulate and maintain her wealth for the welfare of the society.

Theory of trusteeship resonates strongly with those founded in England and the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that later evolved into the concept of CSR. Further, some scholars present Gandhi's theory of trusteeship as an "ethical model" of CSR where companies commit voluntarily for public welfare. Similar to philanthropy in the early industrialization phase, this phase was also characterized by the support for physical and social institutional infrastructure. However in this period, such ideas were led by a nationalistic fervour and a vision of a free, progressive and modern India and not necessarily as social responsibility.

III. Statist Approach (1960–1980)

In 1960s there was a paradigm shift in the economy when India adopted the socialist and mixed economy framework with the emergence of Public Sector undertakings (PSUs), state-owned companies. This framework was propagated by then Prime Minister JawaharLal Nehru and is recognized as statist model. This period is also described as an "era of command and control" due to stringent legal rules and regulations to govern the activities of the private sector. High taxes and license system imposed restrictions on the private sector which indirectly triggered corporate malpractices at the same time. Labour and environmental standards became face of the political agenda and the subject of legislation. Despite the progressive nature of economy where businesses were to play their part as respectable corporate citizens, and engage into regular stakeholder dialogues, social accountability and transparency, the Statist approach did not materialize at that time and corporate philanthropy was still practiced.

IV. Liberal Approach (1980–1990)

During 1980s traditional engagement of CSR as corporate philanthropy was being abandoned by Indian companies and CSR was integrated into as a sustainable business strategy. During 1990s, the Indian economy was liberalized and deregulated to overcome the shortcomings of the mixed economy and to integrate India into the global market. During liberalisation, reforms, controls and license systems were partly abolished, and rapid growth was pronounced in the economy. The trend towards liberalization and privatization led to deregulation making companies solely responsible to owners, and this characterizes third model of corporate social responsibility viz liberal model. Along with this rapid growth, there was a further increase in the philanthropic donations commensurate with the increased profitability and enhanced expectations from business from public in general and government. The liberal model is consistent with doctrine by Milton Friedman (1970), who challenged the very notion of corporate responsibility for anything other than part of profit maximisation decision.

V. Stakeholder Approach (After 1991)

Since 1990s, globally, the trend of CSR has emerged which is beyond charity and philanthropy. Under the doctrine of Stakeholder Theory, CSR has evolved as corporate strategy which is closely related to core business. The stakeholder approach is further propagated by management scientists such as Peter Drucker and many other authors as a part of corporate strategy emphasizing that survival of the corporation depends on not only the responsibility towards shareholders but also towards employees, governments, customers and community in general. As a result of globalization and liberalization that integrated Indian economy into world economy there has been a fundamental transformation from charitable donations at individual levels to integrating community in organisation's reputation and success. The aforementioned transformation occurred as the outsourcing of production and manufacturing units flourished in India and Indian

corporates started following labour and environmental standards imposed on them by their western counterparts. Market competition among Indian exporters influenced more and more compliance with the International standards related to CSR and corporate governance.

Intertwined CSR and Sustainability :

Sustainable development poses a multi-dimensional challenge – in terms of economic, social and environmental dimensions – with each having competing claims for primacy. Corporate enterprises are expected to adopt sustainability policies that balance the trade-offs between these competing claims for the promotion and growth of business. An enduring and balanced approach to economic activity, social progress and environment protection is what is called for. But, for some reason, the concern for environmental protection continues to be emphasised and the social dimension of sustainable development is often overlooked.

Sustainable development policies touch upon social issues such as welfare of employees, empowerment of the weaker sections, holistic development of backward regions, improvement of the working conditions of labour, etc. Activities undertaken by companies to address basic issues pertaining to health, nutrition, sanitation and education needs of the impoverished communities, for the promotion of skill development, capacity building and inclusive growth of society, are all sustainability activities.

CSR policies are closely linked with the practice of sustainable development. Sustainability practiced through CSR involves conduct of business operations in a way that minimizes harm to the environment and local communities located in the vicinity of a company's commercial / production units, while benefitting consumers and employees, and thus contributing to sustainable development. Through sustainability initiatives, which include development of new range of goods and services, and innovative production methods that are environmental and consumer friendly and cost effective, companies can enhance consumer satisfaction, and simultaneously boost business growth and profitability. The R&D department in companies helps in sustainability efforts through innovation that often changes consumer preference for new products and services that are beneficial for environment and society. In fact, CSR activities are generally so full with content of, and focused on sustainable development that often CSR initiatives cannot be easily separated from sustainability policies. Hence, to judge the performance of a company separately for its CSR activities and sustainability initiatives, is at times difficult and impractical, and for that reason it makes business sense to deal with them together.

Since corporate social responsibility and sustainability are so closely entwined, it can be said that Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability is a company's commitment to its stakeholders to conduct business in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner that is transparent and ethical. Stakeholders include employees, investors, shareholders, customers, business partners, clients, civil society groups, Government and nongovernment organisations, local communities, environment and society at large. Recent trends indicate that a company's corporate social responsibility and sustainability is not limited to its own operations and activities, but extends to its supply chain network, which includes service providers, vendors, contractors and other outsourced agencies. Therefore, companies, especially multinational companies, are nowadays careful in their selection of partners, agents, vendors and contractors abroad and prefer to do a thorough check of their credentials in corporate social responsibility and sustainability.

Growing awareness about corporate social responsibility and sustainability issues have led to attempts at devising some common matrices for measuring the performance of companies in these areas. Such attempts, though nowhere near perfection, at least underline the need for consistency, transparency and impartial measurement. A number of international private initiatives in this regard have led to the development of standards and benchmarks for voluntary disclosure, reporting and audit of corporate social responsibility and sustainability programmes. Most notable of these initiatives are the Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Guidelines; Account

Ability's AA1000 standard based on John Elkington's triple bottom line (3BL) reporting; Social Accountability International's SA8000 standard; and, the ISO 14001 environmental management standard.

Due to increased customer interest, growing investor pressure, competitive labour markets, greater oversight over suppliers in the supply chain network, and increasing globalisation of business, there is demand for greater disclosure and audit of corporate social responsibility and sustainability reporting to establish good business citizenship credentials. Sustainability reporting is on the increase and a large number of organisations and companies worldwide have voluntarily adopted internationally accepted standards and frameworks like GRI for disclosure and reporting, and have offered their performance for measurement and audit against international benchmarks.

Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainability, if discharged sincerely, is perceived to bring with it several benefits for the companies. The spin offs can be by way of improving the brand image, preparing it for risk management through public goodwill in the event of a crisis, retaining and attracting talent for the organisation, winning the confidence of the investors and shareholders, improving its relations with important stakeholders, and positioning the company for competitive business advantage and financial gains in the long run.

The benefits that a company expects to reap from its CSR and Sustainability policies, or the motivation behind these policies is of great significance in determining the kind of CSR and Sustainability activities that it undertakes, or the implementation strategy that it chooses to adopt in pursuit of these policies. CSR activities prompted by 'genuine concern' for social and environmental issues produce implementation models different from those motivated by 'enlightened self-interest' of a company. CSR and Sustainability activities taken up as a part of 'public relations' campaign for enhancing the 'brand image', or for earning 'public goodwill' are different from CSR and Sustainability activities undertaken by a company to obtain 'license to operate' in certain areas.

From amongst the various perspectives of CSR and the different prevalent practices of CSR, the one that finds favour with the private multi-national companies of the developed economies is the 'strategic CSR', or CSR based on 'enlightened self-interest' of companies. This approach is supported and endorsed by the doctrine of "shared value" propounded by eminent Harvard economists Michael Porter and Mark Kramer. This approach seeks financial gains for companies from the activities they undertake in discharging their corporate social responsibility. According to Porter and Kramer "The essential test that should guide CSR is not whether a cause is worthy but whether it presents an opportunity to create shared value – that is, a meaningful benefit for society that is also valuable to the business". Creating "Shared Value" involves creating new business opportunities and developing new products that are profitable for companies while simultaneously contributing to social development. Through 'strategic CSR' companies seek to exploit "opportunities to achieve social and economic benefits simultaneously". Putting it succinctly, companies look for business opportunities in socio-economic problems besetting societies.

Creating "shared value" approach offers a good model for corporate enterprises to conduct their normal business operations, but it may not be the best suited for activities undertaken under CSR and Sustainability by the public sector enterprises in India because there appears to be an unstated but underlying direction for spending the mandatory budgetary allocation for CSR for public good, social value creation, and social causes.

Engaging the stakeholders in a dialogue to know their expectations is an important aspect of corporate social responsibility and sustainability. It is observed that corporate enterprises operating in different socio-economic conditions differ in their understanding of the range of stakeholders to be covered through their CSR activities, their assessment of the expectations of the stakeholders, and the mechanism of engagement of the stakeholders.

In the developed economies where the basic needs of the society are adequately taken care of, either through economic advancement, or by strong state welfare system like social security schemes for citizens, the corporate enterprises in such developed countries in their selection of CSR and Sustainability activities, are mainly concerned about the stakeholders, directly impacted by their business operations, like employees, consumers, shareholders, vendors, contractors, service providers and environment. And from the CSR and Sustainability activities they pursue, they seek and expect financial gains for business also.

However, in developing economies like India, where socio-economic disparities are glaring and state social security network is also not available to all, the responsibility of public sector enterprises gets enlarged to cover a wider spectrum of stakeholders, at times even those that are not directly impacted, like interest groups, government and non-government organisations, communities and the society at large. In such situations, stakeholders expect public corporations to assume social responsibility for inclusive socio-economic growth and lend support to efforts aimed at development of backward regions, empowerment of the weaker sections, and upliftment of the deprived and marginalised communities. Social and environmental concerns tend to assume primacy over immediate business gains.

Thus, there can be variations in the perception of corporate social responsibility and sustainability, and its implementation strategies, because different stakeholders in different socio-economic situations have different expectations from business and the way it should be conducted.

Business organizations are considered to be social institutions in India. They are expected to contribute to nation-building as much as an individual is expected to, but the onus is larger given that artificial entities have larger access to combined resources in comparison to the living entities. In the larger context, CSR encapsulates the idea of giving back to the society since all business organizations (esp. companies) derive resources from the society, whether it is labour, raw materials or profits. In other words, business should deal with the social issues that are impacted by the normal operating activities of the company. This is also backed by the stakeholder theory which has been the focus of the world since last two decades.

World Business Council has defined 'corporate social responsibility' as "the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and society at large." Several studies have observed a proportional relationship between the healthy CSR practices and financial performance of the companies. Some writers advocated CSR by arguing that, as entities existing at the behest of society, corporations and their managers were morally and civically obligated to engage in activities that benefited society but may produce fewer returns to shareholders, others argued that companies are built for chasing profits only and should not be expected to do charity. Some scholars view CSR as blood money to atone for past sins, or as an image projection which masks bare self-interest of the companies. For the more optimist, CSR provides an opportunity for companies to reconnect with their advocated values and gives them a chance to reflect a concern for social issues.

In Indian context, the sharp contrast between growth of GDP of the company and the simultaneous increase in poverty is the reason pointed out by the government to make CSR mandatory. In specificity, India's contribution to the global GDP increased from 1.5% in the year 2000 to 2.6 % in 2014 while it still remained at a rank of 135 out of 186 countries in UNDP's Human Development Index as calculated in 2014 and ranked lower than other developing countries in terms of social indicators. It is a clear reflection of the inequality present in India which must be minimized to bring about a sustainable growth in the country.

Regime under the Companies Act, 2013 and Companies Act, 1956

In Indian context, Chairman of the CSR Committee mentioned the Guiding Principle as follows: "CSR is the process by which an organization thinks about and evolves its relationships with

stakeholders for the common good, and demonstrates its commitment in this regard by adoption of appropriate business processes and strategies. Thus CSR is not charity or mere donations. CSR is a way of conducting business, by which corporate entities visibly contribute to the social good. Socially responsible companies do not limit themselves to using resources to engage in activities that increase only their profits. They use CSR to integrate economic, environmental and social objectives with the company's operations and growth."

The Companies Act, 1956 did not have any provision related to corporate social responsibility. It was absolutely voluntary and a number of companies performed activities even then. Tata would be a good example here which already had a comprehensive policy and programme in place. Its consumers associate Tata with a country conscious brand and it has been basking in consumer loyalty for years altogether.

With the advent of Companies Act, 2013, the CSR is mandatory for certain companies. These companies are those which have a high turnover amounting to 1,000 crores or net worth of rupees five hundred crores or more, or a net profit of rupees five crores or more during any financial year. These companies are required to establish a CSR Committee in order to formulate CSR policy and to supervise the CSR activities. However, the CSR policy is approved by the board and must be published in the Board's Report which is placed before the members of the company at the general meeting. The statute also points out to the activities which can be undertaken for CSR. Schedule VII to the Act enumerates such areas but is only illustrative in nature as was clarified by a circular which provided that CSR policy must be relatable to Schedule VII and the entries in the Schedule must be interpreted liberally so as to capture the essence of the subjects laid therein. A notable check placed by the government in this regard is that the companies must run these CSR exercises in a program/ project mode themselves or through implementing agencies which will be monitored & evaluated continuously by the company's committee. CSR expenditure is also under surveillance and must meet the format provided by the Ministry.

Transparency and accountability for the entire process is maintained by making mandatory various disclosures on an annual basis including inability to spend the mandatory 2% of the net profits. Interference in this regard by the government has been discouraged by the business community which has been readily conceded to by the Ministry. However, the inability to spend or allocate the amount has been allowed only when the company explains the same to the shareholders and puts all related information on its website, i.e. in public domain. Unspent amount out of this 2% is carried forward to the subsequent year wherein it must be spent over and above the calculated amount for that year.

Public sector undertakings have been placed with higher responsibilities in this regard and the government has been handed a whip to monitor the CSR activities in this regard. Additional check is also put because of the presence of Auditor and Comptroller General who audits these companies.

Challenges to CSR Initiatives in India

CSR initiatives face many challenges in India and are often seen as deterrent to even the best-intentioned plans. The most important ones are described here.

Lack of Community Participation in CSR Activities:

Often, the communities who are the intended beneficiaries of a CSR program show less interest which will affect their participation and contribution. Also, very little efforts are being made to spread CSR within the local communities and instil confidence in the people. The situation is further aggravated by inadequate communication between the organization and the community at the grassroots level.

Need to Build Local Capacities:

There is a need to build the capacities of the local non-governmental organizations. Many

NGOs are not adequately trained and equipped to operate efficiently and effectively as there is serious dearth of trained and efficient organizations that can effectively contribute to the ongoing CSR activities initiated by companies. This seriously compromises efforts to scale CSR initiatives and consequently limits the scope and outcome of a company's CSR initiatives.

Issues of Transparency:

Lack of transparency is one of the key issues. There is a perception that partner NGOs or local implementation agencies do not share adequate information and make efforts to disclose information on their programs, address concerns, assess impacts and utilize funds. This perceived lack of transparency has a negative impact on the process of trust building between companies and local communities, which is key to the success of any CSR initiative.

Lack of Consensus:

There is a lack of consensus amongst local agencies regarding CSR project needs and priorities. This lack of consensus often results in duplication of activities by corporate houses in their areas of their intervention. The consequent result in unhealthy competitiveness spirit among local implementing agencies goes against the necessity to have rather than building collaborative approaches on important issues. This factor limits organization's abilities to undertake impact assessment of their initiatives from time to time.

Conclusion

According to the emergent literature, there is a growing awareness that business needs to manage its relationship with the wider society. Corporate leaders are responsible for their corporations' impact on society and the natural environment beyond legal compliance and the liability of individuals. Wayne Visser has mentioned about the transformation of CSR 1.0 to CSR 2.0. According to him "Corporate Social Responsibility" is the classic notion, which he calls CSR 1.0 and CSR 2.0, which can be more accurately labelled "Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility". While the CSR 1.0 presents a vehicle for companies to establish relationships with communities, channel philanthropic contributions and manage their image; CSR 2.0 includes a diverse stakeholder panels, real-time transparent reporting and new-wave social entrepreneurship defined by "global commons", "innovative partnerships" and stakeholders involvement.

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Mahatma Gandhi Martin Luther King Center for Peace and Justice in Tamil Nadu

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Gandhigram in Dindigul Dist of Tamil Nadu is a big complex consisting of three separate but integrated entities. Those three are

- a) The Gandhigram Trust (which is the mother institution)
- b) The Gandhigram Rural University (of which I was the Vice Chancellor 1990-1993)
- c) Gandhigram Institute for Rural Health.

These three came into existence in the mid 40s. They were founded by a husband and wife team – Dr. G. Ramachandran who was an Educationist and Dr. Smt. Soundaram Ramachandran who was a medical doctor. Dr. Ramachandran had spent many years of his life (from about 1920) at Shanthineketan and in the early thirties he joined Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha. Dr. Smt. Soundaram came from an aristocratic Brahmin family (called TVS) and joined the Gandhi Ashram around the same time as Dr. Ramachandran. They met there and she, a child widow, took the bold step to remarry. Gandhi acted as the Priest at their wedding in the early 40s and asked them to start work in a village “which should be at least ten miles away from a main road”. This command of Gandhi they implicitly obeyed, and came to a village called Chinnalapatty which was, and is, famous for its handloom sarees. It is located about 250 miles south west of Chennai, or 50 miles north of Madurai. In those days (mid 40s) there was no road at all and Dr. Soundaram started her medical work by engaging a bullock cart, going round the surrounding villages. Dr. G. Ramachandran was both a Scholar and Educationist hailing from Kerala. He started the Gandhigram Rural Institute to train village boys and girls for self employment in rural areas. The focus was on Agriculture, animal husbandry, spinning and weaving, rural agro industries, etc.. For almost 30 years – up to 1975, they carried on this way, but Gandhigram Rural Institute became a University in that year, retaining the old name “Institute” Over time, a The University started teaching more and more subjects – Languages, Pure Sciences, applied Sciences, Cooperation, Rural Industries, Rural Sociology, etc. In short, it is now a modern University leading right up to Doctoral Program in several disciplines. One important faculty in the University is Gandhian Thought and Peace Studies for which it has an excellent, well deserved, reputation. It is largely a Residential University with a total strength of about 4000 students. It gets students from the north eastern states of India (Assam, etc) and some years ago we had students from several African countries.

The Gandhigram Institute for Rural Health runs a very well equipped rural hospital. As I said above, Gandhigram Trust is the Mother Institution, although the University has turned to be a much larger Institution since it is a Federal University with a large budget. Basically the Trust has stuck to large Rural Development Programs which include Water Supply and Sanitation, Khadi and Village Industries, Training of Panchayat Presidents, and training of the rural youth for self employment. The Trust also runs a very big rural school based on Mahatma Gandhi’s model of Basic Education. They also have special programmes for women.

Now I will explain to you the background and purpose of my visit to Atlanta (Georgia) in the US, in April 2015.

At the Gandhigram University Prof Ragupathy teaches Political Science. In May 2014, he organized a Seminar on “Lincoln, Gandhi, Martin Luther King”. Some well known scholars from South India participated. By special invitation, Sri. Subash Razdan, Chairman of the Gandhi Foundation USA also came for a day. Before Sri. Razdan left, we formed a small group, and discussed

with him the possibility of creating some permanent program in the name of Martin Luther King who had visited Gandhigram in February 1959. Sri. Razdan agreed and encouraged us. I then took the responsibility of establishing the “Mahatma Gandhi -Martin Luther King Center for Peace and Justice” as an integral part of the Gandhigram Trust. Sri. Shivakumar who heads the Trust agreed to give us the basic infrastructure for our work. The Center, which we call Gandhi King Center was formally inaugurated in July 2014. Sri Razdan during his second visit to GRI in January had invited me and Prof Ragupathy to come to Atlanta to form a Network with the big King Center there. That is what brought us both to Atlanta.

As soon as I returned to India in early May 2015, I have drafted the following Plan of Action for the GK Center.

Since Gandhigram Trust does not have any large fund, we have to make some low cost programs.

We must include in our Plan things like running an e-journal, also asking for space in the GRI Bulletin, creation of a proper website, etc.

Our PoA should have two sections, namely, the first 12 months and the first 36 months.

We must maintain continuous contacts with Gandhi Foundation, USA through Mr. Razdan.

The GRI Department of Political Science should be able to give us two or three volunteers who can give three hours a week to the GK Center.

I think we must name the Center as originally agreed, namely, Mahatma Gandhi Martin Luther King Center for Peace and Justice. The letter papers could be printed simply “Gandhi King Center” and the full name can be given just below. It is not necessary to bring in the word “DEVELOPMENT”. The website should be carefully constructed. The Department of Computer Science of GRI can help us. I have also recommended the name of one Sri. Suresh who has designed the website for Anasuya Foundation for Women and Children.

We must first prepare a list of Gandhian Institutions in Tamil Nadu, thereafter in South India and thereafter in India. This will help us to form a NETWORK. We must write articles in English and other Indian languages announcing our PoA.

One or two Seminars at Gandhigram will be useful to get new views. This is important.

A modest amount of fund raising must start immediately.

This list is purely illustrative and we can think of more.

So far we have held several meetings with students, with academics and with rural women on issues of Peace and Justice. We are now planning three Training Camps for Peace and Justice as indicated below:

1. 15th and 16th of August, 2015 – training camp at Chennai for NGOs
2. 2nd, 3rd and 4th of October, 2015 – training camp at Gandhigram Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu (for a mixed group of NGOs and senior students)
3. 15th – 19th of January, 2016 – training camp at Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu for mixed group of students, panchayats leaders and rural women. (Rev Martin Luther King came to Gandhigram on 19th January, 1959)

The GK Center hopes to become one of the important “Peace and Justice NGOs in India”. I suggest you can give me your opinion about what the GK Center can do. More important, what we should do over the next twelve months and how we can work together.

(CPS Bulletin, June 2, 2015)

THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN THE NEW CENTURY

Dr. Mrs. Prema Nandakumar



India has posited a tremendous achievement in accumulating, sustaining and guarding a vast amount of knowledge and has raised an unparalleled culture without the help of Mass Media. The Vedas have been transmitted down millennia without the loss of even inflexions. This has been possible because of a personal-contact view of knowledge; that knowledge is best gained by learning from a teacher in person. Hence the high position given to the Guru in Indian tradition. Even today this clinging to the fellow human being either as a teacher or as a student continues and we speak proudly of our generational transmission method.

The setting up of printing presses in India was our first introduction to the mass media. The eminent scholar, B.S. Kesavan, sees the history of printing and publishing in India as “a story of cultural re-awakening, consequent on the introduction to India of the art and technique of printing”. The newsheet followed not long after and India had entered the age of the mass media. The first Hindi weekly paper was Oodunt Mortund that was begun in 1826 with a panegyric on the Governor General, Lord Amherst as ‘Sriman Governor General Bahadur ka Subha Varnan’. However, within a year it had to close down due to lack of government patronage, but a little less than two centuries later, the Hindi newspaper industry commands a top slot in India’s socio-political scenario.

The success has come after long years of struggle, of course. For, a newspaper is for mass consumption and this leads to mass reactions as well. It could be for the good of the society or for its detriment, but the spread of news is fast. The rise of the newspaper industry in India in the first half of the 20th century was almost entirely due to the independence struggle. Later it became a formidable instrument to disseminate political news. In its golden moments it has been exposing corruptions in our society but in its worst moments, it has been a weapon of political and social black mail as well. News found in the papers can raise passions with great intensities, as in the Madurai Dinakaran case a few years ago.

The Radio, films and the Television joined the mass media in a big way after the coming of independence in 1947. The achievements of the radio are many, and happily, the track-record of India’s broadcasting history is very, very satisfying. Because of the inevitable control from the government, its political wings may remain clipped but thanks to its ability to reach out to the remotest village, it has spread the best of Indian culture and traditional knowledge (in agriculture, for instance) to the countryside as well. Governmental control is stressed for films and the television too but, these visual media have been a deep disappointment in many ways for the watcher of the society. I have myself had the internet at home since twenty years and I am terrified by its capacity to disseminate significant information, as also misinformation and unwholesome information.

But of course, increasingly “information is necessary at every step and access to information critical” (AIRC Newsletter, Chennai, January-March, 2000) in the twenty-first century. Political, scientific and technological developments cry out for such immediate conveyance of information to intercept tragedies and educate the masses. And the challenges posed by the twenty first century for man are many. As Duane Elgin says:

“Never before has the human family been on the verge of devastating the Earth’s biosphere and crippling the ecological foundations for countless generations to come. Never before has the entire human family been required to work together to imagine and consciously build a sustainable future. This is not a concern for the remote future. Current trends in population growth, resource depletion and pollution suggest we will reach a critical turning point or ‘evolutionary inflection’ within twenty or thirty years -- roughly the decade of the 2020s. If this is a valid assessment, then

never before in human history will so many people be called upon to make such sweeping changes in so short a time.”

One of the major triumphs of the mass media in the twentieth century was in the sphere of atomic war and atomic tests. It is true that Sri Aurobindo perceived the future course man might take if he used the splitting of the atom as a means to wage wars. If man preferred the course of war, mankind was doomed. He wrote a sonnet on 25th September, 1939, the year when it was found that by bombarding an atom of Uranium (the heaviest element), with a neutron, the latter could be split to release two or three neutrons which would split further, setting up a seemingly endless chain-reaction:

“One dreamed and saw a gland write Hamlet, drink
At the Mermaid, capture immortality;
A committee of hormones on the Aegean’s brink
Composed the Iliad and the Odyssey.
A thyroid, meditating almost nude
Under the Bo-tree, saw the eternal Light
And, rising from its mighty solitude,
Spoke of the Wheel and eightfold Path all right.
A brain by a disordered stomach driven
Thundered through Europe, conquered, ruled and fell,
From St. Helena went, perhaps, to Heaven.
Thus wagged on the surreal world, until
A scientist played with atoms and blew out
The universe before God had time to shout.”

Man almost did it when the atom bomb was developed by the United States under the direction of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer. The first test explosion was at Alamogordo on July 16, 1945. What Sri Aurobindo had hinted at six years earlier now found a curtain-raiser in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. After this, the Satanic World War II was over. But the Cold War had begun. The U.S. - U.S.S.R. race for making nuclear tests and stockpiling atomic weaponry could not go unnoticed thanks to the mass media: the newspapers and the radio. There was Franklin C. Stark, National Vice-Chairman of the Campaign for United Nations Reform speaking in 1982:

“The two super powers have warheads which equate with nearly 4 tons of TNT (Trinitrotoluene) for ever man, woman and child now living on this planet. Between these two nations there is the present capacity to destroy the entire globe twenty-seven times over.”

This was not poetry but hard facts and figures. The nuclear doomsday clock has been perilously close to the midnight hour and yet, if we have survived and seen the dawn of the twenty-first century, and are already fifteen years into it, one can say that much of the credit goes to the mass media. The printed word and the broadcasting voice helped in mobilising people’s opinion by leaders like Bertrand Russel and C. Rajagopalachariar. In India, a relentless pressure was set up through the press by eminent scientists, professors, philosophers and journalists (Dhirendra Sharma, K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Shivaji Rao and Subba Rao among them) that the world has worked together and has been able to roll back the onward ticking of the doomsday clock. Truly this has been a victory without swords or blood, as Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai happened to describe the Gandhian movement. There is a great deal yet to be done to make the world safe from the assaults of nuclear power. But with sanity prevailing and with the help of the mass media, success can be achieved.

While the nuclear danger promises a total annihilation, there are other dangers of slow poisoning that also threaten the globe. Here too the mass media has been of immense help to the common man. The Narmada Andolan has had a healthy discourse because of the mass media taking the message all over India, helping people to think about the pros and cons of building dams. The role of the mass media in the twentyfirst century would have to be purposeful in this regard. Already, it was mass media that made the Chipko movement catch on and made everyone realise the dangers of deforestation. But for the mass media's exposure of the heinous killing of a protected species of deer by a film personality, we would not have become alert of such goings-on elsewhere. The present century would have to turn the focus on environmental degradation in a big way. Else, our earth would become warmer gradually and cease to be productive leading to a state of constant famine and riots. As researchers and activists pile up the statistics, the mass media brings it all to a wide spectrum of readership that helps the planning of campaigns to clean the environment and keep the discourse online.

This is how we learn that the ozone layer is weakening at an alarming rate and might play havoc with the food chain in the oceans as well as on land; that toxic pollution is leaping like a tiger on land, water and air and is spreading over them like an incubus; that man is squandering away his precious resources gifted by Nature without giving room for its replenishment by the same Nature. This asuric consumerism which is denying the future generations a decent life on this planet can be highlighted best by the mass media to knock some sense down on the minds of the common people and the people in power.

But, how far has the mass media helped us in this regard? Percentage-wise, not much: this is the sad tale. In fact, I find myself often weighing the plus and minus of the mass media. There is a lot of good it is able to do but then it is also capable of immense harm. When the good of the community is brushed aside to favour the commercial success of a programme, how can one stop the slide down? Consumerism has caught on so fast that it is holding the middle and poorer classes in a vice-like grip, for they wish to imitate the richer people in the community who are engaged in conspicuous consumption. It is not only asking someone to buy or eat something; the way the advertisements are projected, woman gets a raw deal. She is seen always as the drudge doing nothing but cleaning the floors, washing dirty clothes and cooking with this or that oil; or she is the molly doll of sexist dream-fantasies. The aim of all these advertisements is selling. What does the seller care if the moral fibre of the society gets destroyed completely? I have never had a television at home but I am told the average person sees at least 25,000 commercials a year on the television. It may be remembered that these commercials do not merely sell the particular soap or eatable or bed or biscuit. They also sell certain behavioural patterns that do not help civilized ways of living and certainly inspire violence in thought and deed by attacking the growing minds without seeming to do so. Also, these commercials which posit a uniform richness -- plush cars that zoom through ever so smoothly, soft drinks that fizz over while the girls and boys are sailing in a boat or riding a bike, milk and cream and sugar dance together in vast pans to be gobbled as desirable chocolates by well-fed children -- affect the psyche of the poor with a terrible despair leading to an increase in juvenile crime and teenage murders. Somehow, one cannot refrain from using strong words and say that the history of the television in India has also been the history of a definite cultural and moral degradation in the society.

It is not the commercials alone that are being inimical to the society's health. Even in the manner of presentation of news, the visual media are playing havoc on the psyche of people. Watching an actual destruction being done -- the destruction of a temple or a mosque or a church -- could lead to communal flare ups. Even mere reporting can assault one's sensitivities. A few years back, this was brought to me in its acute form when conversing on the subject of a gruesome tragedy with some neighbours. We were giving voice to our outrage and sorrow that three promising lives had been snuffed out by an arsonist in Dharmapuri. One of my neighbours assured me that since I did not have a television, I did not see the actual bus in flames. They had all seen it, and how the bus was burning, and the students were screaming, and the people were rushing, how the police

came ... But the manner of dramatic description that accompanied the retelling to me made me feel that watching the episode on the screen had de-sensitised the ladies. For, another launched upon the parallel tragedy of how a person was cudgelled and drowned in a Tiruvananthapuram tank in the full view of so many bystanders ... Such daily dose of violent tragedy cannot keep the emotions of a person sensitive. Mechanical reactions, the ayyayyos and appappas and turn immediately to the noodles being served on a plate in a perfect dining room, the newly weds being seen off in the latest luxury car. Ah, the television is working and all is right with the world!

Mercifully, of all the mass media, including the printed newspapers and books, the broadcasting voice has been able to do the least harm, thanks to its limited range and lack of visual power.

But, because the mass media is thus going off the track, we cannot deny its existence. After all, never before was its help needed so much. The way things are going, the egoistic power-pressures make the governments a non-functioning toy and what is the point in crying hoarse that the government offices, the police, and the judiciary do not work? Especially with regard to a vast sub-continent like India, we cannot depend upon the Sircar to do everything for us. Already we see that people are slowly turning to voluntary agencies for redressal of their problems, and are themselves coming forward to be part of such voluntary agencies. The Mass Media is the answer to band together these non-governmental organisations, and one hopes 21st century's mass media will also follow what was best in its actions in the earlier century. Newspapers, broadcasting and television could help us communicate with one another effectively.

As I meditate upon what the communications revolution is going to offer in this century, I contend with available information that speaks of an integration of television, computers, satellites, fibre optics and such information technology appurtenances. That might lead to a spread of information which would be faster than light, perhaps! As it is, here is Duane Elgin's assessment of the television oriented present and the immense good it can do to awaken man's conscience:

"Roughly 60% of the world now has access to television and this percentage is growing rapidly. With the speed of light, television extends our involvement to the entire planet. Because we are a visually-oriented species -- "one picture is worth a thousand words', 'seeing is believing' -- television embodies a common, visual language that makes it the primary source of information and understanding for the human family. Through the eyes of television, we can touch the reality of a starving villager in Africa, we can see the effects of acid rain in Germany, we can feel the despair of ghetto residents in New York City, and we can touch the reality of fighting in the streets of Northern Ireland. Television makes every viewer an active witness -- a knowing and feeling participant in what is being shown. By any measure, television has become the 'social brain' or 'central nervous system' for the human family."

But none of our socially relevant projections can make a mark on the viewer's psyche if they are immediately countered by advertisement glitz. The present century has to come up with its own answers for the mass media in becoming a socially responsible instrument. The criticism has to come from within, and the immense power in its hands must needs be handled with responsibility. In this the mass media must act together with the aim of global good in its agenda, instead of racing against one another. Rachel Carson's one single book, *The Silent Spring* started the entire movement for environmental protection at a global level. It was a demonstration of the power of the published word. Hence we should hope for such purposeful wielding of the powerful instruments in our hands. It can be done, provided we, the public are alert, and the representatives of mass media, are prepared to respond. Let us remember how the 1028 Sukthas spread over the ten Mandalas of the Rig Veda conclude with the stirring call of Samvanana Angiras to humanity:

"Meet together, speak together,
let your minds be of one accord,

as the Devas of old, being of one mind,
accepted their share of sacrifice.
May your counsel be common, your assembly common,
common the mind, and the thoughts of these united.
A common purpose do I lay before you,
and worship with your common oblation.
Let your aims be common,
and your hearts of one accord,
and all of you be of one mind,
so you may live well together.”

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THE CRISIS IN THE CLASSROOM

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We often hear of the crisis in education and identify the usual suspects: uncaring parents, a mercenary, and indifferent state, commercial-minded private institutions, powerful industrial empire that try to save their souls by the creation of educational wings proudly sporting their names and lineages, teacher- politicians and their patrons, grant giving bodies that do not discharge their responsibility adequately; and when they do, do not ask of the recipients enough accountability.

We seldom hear of the real crisis, the crisis at the heart of all education, namely the crisis in teaching and the battle in the classroom.

Many of us think that the crisis in education will go away if we were to take timely measures. After all, we celebrate the Teacher's Day; colleges and universities boast the UGC scales; we do have Academic staff colleges; the number of national institutions devoted to research, policy planning and accreditation in higher education are increasing day by day. And yet, we keep hearing of the crisis in education every now and then.

The crisis in teaching in contemporary India is compounded by various factors; such factors however are not integral to the crisis I have in mind. The researcher who disdains classroom teaching as an avoidable distraction and merrily flies around the national and international seminar circuit, the pedagogue who refuses to read or study anything new in the field and follows the slogan: 'old is gold,' the teacher who thinks that educational innovation and syllabi reforms, indeed lesson planning and course completions, are plainly unnecessary to his/her creative genius are equally part of the problem, but they are not endemic to the problem.

We must fathom greater depths in order to find the real causes when we think of the many ways we can be a good teacher in the next millennia. Certainly, mastery of the newer approaches, ICT driven educational technologies, the use of digital media and so on can help. They are necessary but not sufficient conditions for effective dissemination of knowledge in the classroom context.

The real crisis of teaching is the crisis in the classroom. The crisis may be dramatized by the choice between two models essentially; the Socratic model [Socrates taught: 'know thy self'] and the model of Macaulay. [Macaulay, the English educationist had famously decried native languages and education in colonial India and advocated English education instead; sadly we are, for the most part following his footsteps]. Whatever else we may have done, none of the educational planning from the 'Wood's Despatch', to Macaulay's Minutes, the major educational commissions chaired by luminaries like Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Dr. D.S.Kothari have done enough regarding the ongoing debate. Socrates remains a symbol, a lip service and a dream and a mantra. Ivan Illich's goal of deschooling society, only an ideal. Sri Aurobindo's important proposition in the essay 'A system of National Education' in the first decade of the 20th century that the first principle of all true learning is that nothing can be taught, the teacher is not an instructor; he is a friend and a guide remains an elusive and utopian aim, the Mother's radical view of 'No school' in the Auroville experiment as far too idealistic, disconnected from the real world.

Best teaching, it seems, to me cannot take place in the absence of a radical revision of pedagogy and the art of teaching in the classroom.

The time haloed lecture method, sanctified by Thomas Gradgrind of Charles Dicken's Hard

Times must give way to the teacher as a fellow enquirer and not a repository of knowledge and wisdom. Verbal narcissism of the teacher before a captive audience, the learning with a notebook or an I Pad and the teacher at the podium must be replaced by real dialogues in the class room where problems and issues are articulated, discussed and debated in a respectful but egalitarian manner with the teacher as a facilitator. Thanks to the decline in reading habits and the ever present google and Wikipedia, even the lecture method has lost much of its sheen.

The Socratic Method must begin early, right from the elementary level with the curiosity of the child kindled. Knowledge must not be regimented by disciplinary boundaries. The teacher must discover himself or herself as a Renaissance personality who treats all provinces of learning as his or her own ethically endowed and intellectually empowered, such a teacher is an example both in words and deeds. Collegiality is a creed and a necessity both to the colleagues in the field and to the learners that are under his/ her charge. When examples are set, evil like plagiarism will be a thing of the past.

The real crisis is indeed the crisis in the classroom. The next decades will witness the crisis in sharper focus. We must change our pedagogy quickly. By restoring Socrates to the class room, we can aspire to be an effective teacher. We need to look within and put the house in order even as we ask for institutional changes and meaningful interventions from outside. Unless we can come up with this new teaching protocol in the classroom, all reforms will remain a chimera.

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Higher Education in the United States

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Higher education in the United States has rightly been heralded around the world for its excellence. In this brief article, I will attempt to highlight the key factors that differentiate the educational experience here. For context, I serve as the Provost (the Chief Academic Officer) and Executive Vice Chancellor (the Chief Operating Officer with budgetary responsibilities) at the University of Kansas (KU). Established in 1865, KU serves 27,565 students, of whom 19,262 are undergraduates and 8,303 are graduate students. These students come from over 100 countries and all fifty states. We are a public university, supported by the citizens of Kansas. We are also one of only 34 public universities to be members of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU). The AAU designation is reserved for universities with high levels of comprehensive research.

One aspect that is readily apparent when you set foot on a University campus here is the presence of undergraduate students. Unlike in India, where universities are for post-baccalaureate studies, US universities admit students right after their high school studies. We are a residential university and that means for most of the students, going to KU marks the first time they have been away from family. The acculturation begins right away in terms of planned activities to introduce students to the breadth of offerings at a comprehensive public research university. This also contributes to the emphasis on athletics, the arts, and a whole host of other co-curricular activities. Our mascot, the Jayhawk, is known worldwide. As I write this, our basketball team is in the hunt for the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) tournament title. This 'March Madness' is an annual rite of passage for students and alumni to rekindle bonds of friendship and re-live memories. Basketball is inextricably tied to the story of KU. James Naismith, the inventor of basketball, coached at KU and we are the home of the original rules of basketball. It is also a point of pride at KU that our debate team has also won first place numerous times as national champions. We are #1 among all public universities, having won five National Debate Tournament championships, and qualifying for the last 49 consecutive years to participate in the tournament. Even when I came to KU as a student, this emphasis on excellence, teamwork, and competition, whether in the sphere of the cerebral or the corporeal was an impressive differentiator.

Another hallmark of US higher education is the flexibility it affords students. Every student has to master some common domains of knowledge and demonstrate mastery of specific skills; we term these the common core. At KU, these include Critical Thinking and Quantitative Literacy; Communication; Breadth of Knowledge; Culture and Diversity; Social Responsibility and Ethics; and Integration and Creativity. Beyond this, students can mix and match the courses they wish to take and the paths they choose to blaze. It is not unheard of for students to change their majors, as they explore and examine different disciplines. More than any other aspect, this flexibility is the greatest strength of the US higher education system. As is the case with many of our peers, we are also examining how to showcase on a transcript not just a student's grade point average (GPA) but also involvement in leadership activities, community service, internships, and study abroad experiences. KU in particular has a rich tradition of global connections and exchanges. 27% of our students participate in a study abroad experience prior to graduation.

There are of course several challenges that face KU as an institution of higher learning. These are the proverbial 'what keeps you up at night' scenarios that leaders must consider. Many of these overlap with the challenges faced by universities worldwide; some are context-specific.

Access and affordability : Public research universities have the moral and fiduciary duty to educate the citizenry of the state while also making discoveries that change the world. Part of the

compact is funding from the state government to enable these aspirations. However, the decline in revenues from the state, combined with rising tuition costs, make it a challenge to ensure access and affordability. This means that the leader of a university today must be adept at friend-raising and fundraising.

Healthy dialogue across differences : We live in a 24-hour news cycle and events across the street or across the world achieve an immediacy of impact. As young people navigate turbulent political, economic, and social issues, universities must provide venues and avenues for them to debate and discuss different points of view. After all, universities must be places where students learn to grapple with the pressing issues of the day. This dedication to free speech must also be balanced with creating spaces where diverse viewpoints and life experiences are respected and nurtured.

Productivity and performance : Faculty members at top universities are expected to perform on three arenas: research, teaching, and service. The old model was that each faculty member would and should excel on each dimension. The ‘publish or perish’ imperative extends beyond securing tenure to promotions and raises. At the same time, the expectations of faculty to be active members of their communities, to encourage and engage in service learning, and student mentoring, continue to grow. Does one size fit all? Or do universities need to adopt the mentality of an orchestra or an athletic team, bringing together faculty who individually excel in specific roles, and collectively advance the mission of the university?

Modes of learning : Leaders of higher education today must ensure we stay relevant and impactful to students across modalities (online, on-ground, hybrid), and outcomes (degrees, certificates, non-degree and extension education). We owe it to our students that they matriculate with capabilities in the “Know, Be, Do” triad. The education experience must also be prepared for a lifetime relationship. How will we gear up for a world where students come back not for degrees, but for refresher courses and updates?

Despite the superficial differences, at the core, the promise of higher education is the same, in India and in the US. My father the late Professor T. Ramesh Dutta, and my mother, Professor T. Padma, worked at Andhra University for decades, and in their every interaction with students, in and out of the classroom, they demonstrated to me and to my sisters what a difference teachers can make, and how endless their influence can be, as it ripples across lives. The bottom line for me is this. Higher education has the power to transform lives and I am honored to be on the frontlines of this noble pursuit. That I get to lead an institution where I have such deep connections is icing on the cake. A photo from early 1969 shows my father, serious in his suit and tie, my mother at his side, my youngest sister in her arms. I am in front, a serious five-year old, clutching my two-year-old sister’s hand. With the help of the entire extended family, my father left India to go to KU for higher education. For close to four years, we did not see him. With no phone at home, conversations were rare and brief. My earliest memories are of my father’s letters telling us of these magical places, Kansas, and KU. It was a dream-come-true for my husband, Venkat, and me to also study at KU. After academic careers at Texas A&M University and The Ohio State University, now, we are back full-circle, at KU and in Lawrence. Rock Chalk, Jayhawk!

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FROM 'BRIDGES OF FRIENDSHIP' TO 'UNITED THROUGH OCEANS' - INDIAN NAVY'S IFR JOURNEY

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and was among the group of personnel

actively involved in the conduct of the International Fleet Review.



The culmination of the International Fleet Review (IFR) 2016 on 08 Feb with a spectacular multi-nation band concert brought the curtains down on a week of high voltage activity that characterized what was, arguably, India's biggest maritime event. The numbers by themselves are staggering – almost 50 countries including 22 Chiefs of Navies, 26 delegations and 100 warships including 24 foreign men of war took part in this multi-hued extravaganza at Visakhapatnam, on India's east coast that also saw more than a million spectators or footfalls. While marked by the pomp, pageantry, ceremony, precision and colour that invariably accompany such occasions, the IFR also had several takeaways in the political, diplomatic, military and civil society spheres. While analyzing all of them would constitute separate essays, a brief overview of the event may provide us some broad brush picture of the large canvas that was the IFR.

Historical Overview and Event Highlights

Historically, a Fleet Review is an assembly of ships at a pre-designated place for the purpose of paying respects to the sovereign of a nation and to display their commitment to him. In turn, the sovereign by reviewing the ships reaffirms his faith in the fleet and its ability to defend the nation's maritime interests. In our country, the President of India, as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, reviews the Fleet. Over a period of time Fleet Reviews in India have seen participation by ships, submarines and aircraft to emphasize the three-dimensional nature of the Indian Navy. Ships of the other government agencies such as the Coast Guard, government research vessels and Indian owned (flagged) merchant ships have also joined in paying respects to the President.

It is possible that our early maritime kingdoms such as the Cholas or Kalingas may have had their own versions of the Fleet Review given their oceanic excursions and endeavours. However, the earliest recorded Indian Fleet Review was in the 18th Century by the powerful Maratha Fleet consisting of 'Ghurabs' and 'Gallivats' under the renowned Sarkhel (Grand Admiral) Kanhoji Angre at the coastal fortress of Ratnagiri. In Britain, a Fleet Review was a precursor to setting sail for war or was conducted on special occasions like the coronation of a new monarch. In the USA, the 'Great White Fleet' meant to project American power overseas was reviewed by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907, prior to departure, and once again in 1909, on its return to the United States.

Independent India had witnessed ten Fleet Reviews prior to this year's edition, with the last one held on 20 December 2011 in Mumbai. This included the first ever International Fleet Review in 2001, which saw large participation from foreign and Indian ships. The eleventh review in Visakhapatnam, thus, was the second International Fleet Review hosted by India. During the review, the President is received by a Guard of Honour prior to embarking the Presidential Yacht. This is followed by a 21-gun salute, after which the President, onboard the Presidential Yacht, steams past an armada of anchored ships from the various theatre Commands of the Indian Navy along with ships of the Indian Coast Guard and Merchant Navy. In addition to the anchored ships, a mobile column of warships steams past the Presidential column, offering similar salutations. IFR-16 also witnessed warships, sail ships and delegations from friendly foreign nations joining the ceremony and the accompanying festivities.

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of India, Shri Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister, Shri ESL Narsimhan, the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Manohar Parikkar, the RakshaMantri, Shri Chandrababu Naidu, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and other high Indian dignitaries, along

with the naval heads of the participating nations attended the Fleet Review on 06 Feb, with collateral activities conducted from 04 to 08 February 2016. Apart from the Review itself, the mega event had a variety of programmes like the Maritime Exhibition that displayed our maritime heritage and technological achievements, an IFR Village that showcased India's cultural heritage along with entertainment performances and food stalls with multi-cultural cuisine, the International City Parade that witnessed men and women from many nations marching past in colourful attire, joint international band concerts, an International Conference that saw cogitation on matters academic and above all a high tempo operational demonstration on RK Beach – in all an extravagant show that guaranteed something for everyone.

Indian Navy, our Maritime Roots and the Genesis of IFR

It is often said that India is a young nation but an ancient civilization. Quite the same analogy can be drawn for the Indian Navy. It is a young service but imbued with a long and a glorious maritime heritage. Thousands of years before other parts of the world witnessed maritime activity, the Indian Ocean was a busy thoroughfare with India as its hub. An enduring relationship with the oceans had been established from as far back as the 3rd millennium BCE. Our hoary maritime past not only witnessed great feats in seafaring and ship building eons ago but also was informed by a vision that saw the world as one entity (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam) strengthened by bonds of friendship, nurtured by trade and nourished by cultural exchanges. Closer home to the East Coast, the Bay of Bengal was a highway for many kingdoms in southern and eastern India such as Pandyas, Cholas, Kalingas, etc. to embark on cultural and commercial missions to lands all the way to Pacific Ocean. While the second half of the last millennium saw a decline in this maritime spirit, we picked up the threads in right earnest soon after independence with the Indian Navy as the main embodiment not only of our maritime prowess but also of maritime thought. Thus, India's rich maritime past was characterized by an amazing range and depth of civilisational exchanges in an informal rule-based system that encouraged both commercial and cultural endeavours. The same impulses now mark our maritime outlook and our commitment to global peace today while adapting to the imperatives of current international landscape.

Post-Independence, in 1947, the Indian Navy, in acknowledgement of its maritime moorings, began to build up from a small entity it then was. Today, it is a truly global Navy – with a balanced force that includes modern ships including aircraft carriers, submarines and high performance aircraft - and is widely acknowledged as a professional three dimensional maritime force capable of undertaking several roles and discharging multifarious responsibilities. Over the last 25 years, the progress of the Indian Navy has been concomitant with the rise of India in the political, economic, diplomatic and technological spheres. This rise has been premised on the principles of peace, harmony, mutual co-existence and respect for universal values that have been at the core of India's beliefs. The Indian Navy has not only inculcated these values but has also been in the forefront of strengthening them through the common medium of the seas.

In an increasingly globalized and inter-connected world, India's national policies have emphasized cooperative international relationships for greater prosperity and well-being of not only of our citizens but humanity at large. The world of today is equally one of unprecedented opportunities and grave challenges. India's approach to increasing regional and global issues has been to build bridges of friendship with all the nations, with the Indian Navy as the principal instrument, to support our foreign policy efforts, in the maritime and security domains. Our approach to the global commons has always been one of seeking shared prosperity and security. In this endeavour, all the maritime nations of the world are our most indispensable partners in meeting many common challenges.

Against this background, the International Fleet Review (IFR) 2016 could not have come at a more opportune moment. IFR-16 was thus aimed at further broadening maritime engagement between India and the other foreign navies while providing renewed impetus and momentum to our global maritime partnerships. In the run up to the event, the objectives were aptly enunciated

by Admiral RK Dhowan, the Chief of Naval Staff, who said, “The hosting of the International Fleet Review (IFR) by the Indian Navy in February 2016 can be seen as a significant event in the nation’s maritime history. While showcasing our navy to the nation and to the Honourable President of India we also celebrate the time-honoured principles of friendship across the oceans, which are intrinsic to the seafaring community. The IFR serves to provide a platform for participating navies to interact with each other, strengthen bridges of friendship, towards developing a common appreciation of maritime challenges and the potential for addressing them through a united approach. This is in line with India’s overall policy of strengthening cooperation amongst nations to meet common maritime security challenges and to render the ‘global commons’ safe and secure’. The coming together of many navies will be accompanied by several events and functions in a week of action and interaction. These are aimed at maximising the time spent together by the members of the seafaring community, to fulfill the aims and goals of the IFR. Thus, we seek to move ahead on the concept of the global maritime family with our theme ‘United through Oceans’.

United Through Oceans

With the oceans serving as the highways of a globalised world, they are witness to both the convergence and divergence of national interests. Acting as a conduit for international commerce, they are vital lifelines of global economy. This has led to a vigorous and sometimes exploitative exploration for hydrocarbons, rare earths, precious metals etc. In addition, multiple challenges obtain in the vast oceans in the form of piracy, radioactive dumping, oil spills, overfishing, climate change etc. Issues of political instability, economic crisis, sectarian strife, civil wars and refugee crisis and global pandemics have also pervaded contemporary times. On the other hand, it has also been observed that when territories are fraught with peril, the oceans come to rescue. As the new level playing field, presenting opportunities and posing challenges alike, the vast and valuable oceans are emerging as a theatre of competitive coexistence.

A collective and cooperative outlook is at the core of the current maritime narrative which can help the world to harness and utilize the true potential of oceans. With oceans being the theatre of global trade, climate and marine research, the discourse on international relations today is incomplete without the mention of navies. Navies have become indispensable for a ‘world on tenterhooks’. The navies of today have witnessed substantial changes in their nature, scope and stature. Maritime transport today is the backbone of international trade and the global economy. Around 80 percent of global trade by volume and over 70 percent of global trade by value are carried by sea and are handled by ports worldwide. Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) and International Shipping Lanes (ISLs) that drive such a rapid economic integration have themselves become sensitive targets for non-state actors. The navies have an added responsibility of safeguarding SLOCs and ISLs while countering threats like piracy, encroachment and maritime disputes. The support of navies in rescuing refugees, providing medicines and supplies during epidemics and disaster management further fortifies their crucial role in global affairs.

As brought out hitherto, the Indian Navy has transformed from a small entity to a strong multi-dimensional, multi-spectrum and networked maritime force. With many successful regional and global operations under its belt, the Indian Navy in a very short span of time has created a formidable reputation for itself. The Indian Navy has pursued maritime engagements in multiple ways such as port visits, personnel exchanges, staff talks and interactions, exercises with foreign navies, maritime assistance, operational interactions and high level maritime strategic interactions. These serve to enhance mutual understanding, cooperation and interoperability between the maritime forces. Indian Navy is deeply committed to strengthen ties with maritime states and promote geopolitical and strategic cooperation with nations. Thus, the mandate of Indian Navy has gradually come to include a gamut of roles in addition to building and sustaining long lasting economic, commercial and security ties across the oceans. The broad spectrum of functions carried out by the Indian Navy ranging from constabulary, benign, humanitarian and military make it a constant presence in the high seas where several other navies operate.

India’s maritime neighbours are not only those sharing common boundaries of our maritime zones – but also nations with whom we share the common maritime space of high seas. Maritime

relations are an important facet of India's broader politico-economic relations, in which the Indian Navy plays a pivotal role. Indian Navy is a key instrument in India's 'Act East' policy to expand engagement and relations to its East, across the Indo-Pacific, with emphasis on economic and security cooperation. Project 'Mausam' in 2014 and SAGAR – 'Security And Growth for All in the Region' in 2015 are part of India's endeavours to strengthen cultural links and economic relations and development in a mutually supportive and cooperative manner. Moreover, with blue economy as the current geo-economic buzzword, security on the seas is a sine qua non for sustainable development of the world by harnessing the oceans. The national interests of India viz. enhancing relations and engagement with friendly countries and strengthening the international legal regime for all-round benefit act as the prime drivers for the Indian Navy's role and efforts.

In such a scenario, events like the IFR act as confidence building platforms where the navies of different nations 'unite' and cooperate to celebrate each other's maritime traditions and work towards mutual benefit. Today, it is in our common interest to regard the oceans as a zone of peace and goodwill than as a theatre of war and conflict.

The IFR and Visakhapatnam

Visakhapatnam, at the midpoint of the East Coast and blessed with a great natural harbour adequately protected from the sea by the hill features around it, is an ideal location for the headquarters of the Eastern Naval Command (ENC). Vizag hosted the Presidential Fleet Review (PFR) in 2006, the first time it was ever conducted outside Mumbai. The hosting of the second edition of the IFR at Vizag is recognition of both the ENC and the city. The IFR, in some ways, is the jewel in the crown of the Eastern Naval Command. As our sentinel to the East, the Command has rendered yeoman service for close to 50 years. It has come to be associated with Vizag in multiple ways, from the ships one sees frequently at anchorage off RK beach to the Kursura museum - a marker of the city's connection with the Indian Navy's submarine branch. This symbolic association got further enhanced with the IFR where both the Navy and City played hosts just 15 months after being battered by the cyclone Hudhud. The IFR is a tribute to the resolve and the resilience of both the Navyman and the Vizagite.

Vizag is known by many appellations - one of the fastest growing ports, an educational hub, city of destiny, the city of the submarine, a future smart city, and so forth. In future, she could well be known as the IFR city. Large-scale preparations, both by the ENC and the local civil administration have transformed Visakhapatnam in recent months. The greenery, the neat and clean beaches, the buzz in restaurants, hotels and malls, the picturesque tourist spots and above all the warm heartedness of the Vizagites have contributed in no small measure to the accolades that the event earned and the memories that the visitors have taken back.

Conclusion

Fleet Reviews are age old traditions that help harness our maritime heritage and history into more practical ways to cater to the complexities of a new era. Shaping a benign and conducive maritime environment, to counter global and regional threats and challenges, requires inclusive and cooperative efforts, between the nations concerned and their maritime forces. These efforts are facilitated by maritime events like IFR as a means of conducting maritime diplomacy. IFR was an endeavour by the Indian government and the Indian Navy towards promoting peaceful engagement, information exchange and maritime domain awareness. Exhibiting a benign and harmonious character, the IFR was a social, fraternal and inclusive form of naval diplomacy. In addition, the general public was also given the chance to get acquainted with our maritime history and heritage. The navies of the world shared and bonded at the IFR 2016 and displayed great esprit-de corps in what was truly 'the mother of all events'. It is hoped the friendly and sociable ambience of the IFR would lead, at some stage in future, towards cooperative maritime frameworks that would secure our seas and safeguard our oceans.

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Sir Arthur Cotton and Sri Kandukuri Veeresalingam Architects of Economic and Social Development of Andhra Pradesh

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(Summary of Lecture delivered at Centre for Policy Studies on April 22, 2017)

Modern Andhra owes a great deal for its modernity and the process of modernization to two important luminaries Sir Arthur Cotton and Sri Kandukuri Veeresalingam. While Arthur Cotton converted water into wealth and laid the material base for economic development, Kandukuri sowed the seeds of social revolution in Andhra.

Sir Arthur Cotton, “The Father of Irrigation” in Southern India:

Born on May 15, 1803 the tenth son of Henry Cotton, who was himself the tenth son of Sir Lynch Cotton, Arthur Cotton came to India as an Engineer and returned to England as one of mankind’s great benefactors. An Engineer by profession and a devout Christian, Arthur Cotton loved India but pitied her plight. As his daughter Lady Hope wrote, “India had taken hold of him. Not the India of Romance, but the India in need”. As an Engineer in the service of the Madras Government Cotton successfully constructed two anicuts across the Coleroon in 1835. They brought prosperity to the districts of Tanjore and Trichinopoly.

On the basis of that experience, Cotton submitted an elaborate report on the delta of Godavari and strongly pleaded for the construction of an anicut across Godavari. The prospects of irrigation through the Godavari anicut, as described by Arthur Cotton, were highly tempting even to the East India Company. The estimated cost of the whole project was not more than Rs.12,00,000/- and within a few years it was expected to yield Rs.2.5 Lakhs revenue per year. It was anticipated that the outlay would be counter balanced by several times. With amazing perseverance, he convinced the British Rulers that the money spent on irrigation works could be recovered as water could be converted into money. Upon Cotton’s persistent and repeated appeals the project received the official sanction of the Court of Directors on December 23, 1846.

Work on the “Gigantic Project” began in April 1847. It took five long and hard years to finish the anicut. Ten thousand labourers, five hundred carpenters and as many smiths were employed. It was a hard job for Cotton who used to say, “The more I worked, the stronger I became”. On 31st March 1852 the anicut was completed at a total cost of over fifteen lakhs of rupees. The same year Cotton and G.T. Haig built the Gunnavaram aqueduct of 49 arches across an area of the river. He was also instrumental in constructing the Krishna river irrigation project (1855) along with General Charles Alexander Orr. The impact of these anicuts on the life of the people of Andhra and especially the coastal districts was spectacular and varied.

Impact of the Godavari Anicut

The construction of the anicut at Dowleiswaram and other irrigation works by Sir Arthur Cotton brought about significant changes in the economic, social and political life of the Andhra area. Conditions prior to the construction of the anicut were characterised by “neglected irrigation, inadequate and costly transport, oppressive land tenures, decay of handloom industry, emigration of population, unfavourable seasons and deficits in food supplies”. Famines and droughts slowed down the growth of population “necessitating forced cultivation and use of torture in the collection of land revenue”. Transport facilities were woefully poor and a collector once lamented that a gentleman took four hours to travel seven miles on the horseback.

Cotton's genius resulted in the construction of the Godavari anicut and thanks to his creative energy the region was transformed into a prosperous and flourishing agricultural area of the Madras presidency. His irrigation works increased the presidency revenue by twenty - five percent. The Godavari district which ranked a poor thirteenth place among the twenty-two districts of the Madras presidency jumped to the second place from the revenue point of view, second only to Tanjore, Cotton's first success. The construction of the anicut by Sir Arthur Cotton, who converted water into wealth, transformed the famine-stricken area into the granary of rice in South India. Cotton who was admirably called "the founder of the cheapest school of engineering in the world" and "a benefactor of his species" brought an 'agrarian revolution' resulting in the economic prosperity of the people in this area. During the period 1850-1890 the agricultural progress was so phenomenal that wages of the agricultural labour had been doubled and a large number of landless labour became pattadars. As Foster, District Collector, put it some of the landless labour had moved up the social ladder and Godavari district witnessed social mobility for the first time in Andhra area. Social order in the deltaic area became very fragile. A qualitative change took place in the attitude of the lower classes towards their masters. As Baker rightly observes, in 1922 village service groups in large parts of the Godavari district refused to bear their masters around on palanquins. The rise of the middle peasantry greatly influenced the economic structure of the region. The irrigation facilities ensued with the construction of the anicut, developed the marketing facilities in the region.... Within a short time the region became a 'centre of intensive rice cultivation selling its produce in international markets. The value of the land had risen from Rs 40/- to Rs 1000-1500/-. The income of the inhabitants had been more than doubled.

The sudden spurt in economic prosperity promoted urbanisation and an inclination among the people towards western education and culture. Five important towns of Andhra – Rajahmundry, Kakinada, Machilipatnam, Vijayawada and Guntur – came up during this period. The introduction of railways in this area also increased the trade prospects of those places covered by railways and created new trading centres along the railway track. As means of transport, the railways played an important role on economic and social fronts. They not only brought about a revolution in the traffic and transport of people with minimum expenditure, but also enabled people to meet at a place frequently and exchange ideas.

The towns like Kakinada and Rajahmundry and Machilipatnam played a decisive role in the socio-political awakening of the people of the area by offering many educational facilities and thus contributing to the enlightenment of the people. It was mainly due to the economic prosperity and the initiatives taken by the Christian missionaries and the philanthropists like Rajah of Pithapuram and Pydah Ramakrishnayya that great progress in the field of education was witnessed during the second half of the 19th century in many parts of Andhra and especially in the Godavari district. By 1880 Godavari district had become the fourth most important district in the Madras presidency in the number of its schools. By the year 1900 when many of the districts were not having even a single college, the Godavari district could boast of having two full-fledged colleges - Government Arts college (1877) in Rajahmundry and PR College (1884) in Kakinada- offering courses in Arts and Science. These colleges gave an educational advantage to Godavari district over other districts in the Telugu speaking area.

The western system of education brought about a qualitative change in the outlook of the people. Its secular nature induced the students to develop a rational outlook. They began to change the traditional customs and practices which could not stand the scrutiny of reason and also the validity of the existing religious and social practices in the light of scientific enquiry, rationalism, liberalism and humanitarianism and thus helped in the socio-religious reformation of Andhra society. Further, western education broke the intellectual monopoly of the Brahmins by opening the doors to education to all classes. Though, the Brahmins took lead, all the other people who could afford to pay for education enrolled their children in schools and got them trained for employment under the government. Thus western education contributed to an unprecedented degree of occupational mobility which helped in the increase of social mobility.

Equality of educational opportunity provided the artisan a chance to acquire knowledge freely while the Brahmin was given freedom to choose his vocation.

The economic prosperity of the people of this region also led to the rise of new social classes-collectively called as 'Middle class'-in the society. This new class, whose size was by no means meagre, represented a new standard of values and exhibited great entrepreneurship resulting in progressive social mobility. Those belonging to the professional classes like lawyers and teachers, landed gentry, students, business people and the government employees constituted the bulk of the middle class who played a significant role in transforming the society. Nyapathi Subba Rao, Bulusu Samba Murthy, Konda Venkatappayya, Unnava Lakshminarayana and Tanguturi Prakasam were among the eminent lawyers who strove for the socio-political awakening of Andhra area. The teachers constituted yet another important section which contributed to the growth of socio-political awareness of the times. A number of prominent personalities like K. Veeresalingam , R.Venkataratnam Nayudu, Ch. Lakshminarasimham, Basavaraju Gavarraju and Desiraju Pedabapaiah who were in the centre of the social reform movement opted for this profession, as it provided ample time and opportunity to work for social progress.

The professional classes, who constituted the bulk of the Indian middle class, were the first to break caste rules and regional barriers and developed a sense of unity and solidarity which made possible the development of national spirit in India. Since the middle classes were much influenced by the English education and western liberal thought, they passed on this enlightenment to the masses through newspapers, both in vernacular and in English, and helped the masses not only to get acquainted with the western thought but also to get rid of many age-old customs and irrational superstitions. They also encouraged the masses to cultivate a rational outlook towards social beliefs and practices. Though the middle class, in reality constituted a negligible fraction of the total population, it rose as a strong and powerful social force mainly in the urban areas. This class imbued with creative ideas and progressive outlook inspired the masses as well as the upper classes in joining and forming a united front.

Another important feature of this period was the remarkable growth of journalism both in English and the vernacular i.e. Telugu. Godavari district was a major centre of journalistic activity in Andhra. Rajahmundry was the head quarters for a number of journals published from the Godavari area. K.Veeresalingam, the great social reformer was considered "the father of Telugu Journalism" with the publication of his periodical titled 'Viveka Vardhani' in 1874. Veeresalingam also started a separate journal for women called the 'Satihita Bodhini' (1883) and the 'Hasya Sanjeevani' (1876) and 'Satya Samvardhani' (1891) to propagate his ideas. His effort was a pioneering attempt in modern Telugu Journalism.

The lead provided by Veeresalingam was followed by several prominent people- Nyapathi Subba Rao, Chilakamarti Lakshminarasimham, Raja KRV Krishna Rao et al. who contributed to the journalistic activity in this area. After completing his law course at Madras, Nyapathi Subba Rao came to Rajahmundry in 1880 to practice law. While he was still a student of law in Madras, he became one of the six founder members of the famous national daily in English, 'The Hindu', which was established in 1878. Later on, when he came to Rajahmundry he continued his interest in journalism and started two journals one in Telugu 'Chintamani' (1890) and the other in English 'Indian Progress' (1903). He was a veteran politician, publicist and social reformer. Dr S.Radhakrishnan called him one of the two lights of Rajahmundry, the other being Veeresalingam. For the services rendered, he was rightly acclaimed as the 'Andhra Bhishma' -the Grand Old Man of Andhra.

Women were not lagging behind in journalistic activity in this area. 'Hindu Sundari' was started at Kakinada, another important centre for social and religious reform in Andhra, under the editorship of Mrs. Mosalakanti Ramabayamma. It was the first periodical in Telugu founded and edited by a woman for women. The credit for starting the first Telugu daily also goes to this area. 'Gautami' (1911) is the first daily started by Sri Pada Krishnamurthy Sastry which ran for one year.

Under the intellectual leadership of Veeresalingam, the Godavari region occupied a unique place in Andhra in the field of journalism. By the year 1908, Godavari district was the leading centre of journalism in Andhra, with 17 out of 50 journals in Telugu coming out from that district. In those days 'Rajahmundry was to Andhra what Calcutta was to Bengal, Poona to Maharashtra, Patna to Bihar, Allahabad to Uttar Pradesh, indeed what Athens was to Greece'. It was the main centre for literary, social and cultural activities in Andhra and was called the cultural capital of the Andhra.

While the educational system helped in the growth of literacy, journalism facilitated the exchange of new ideas and thoughts on a large scale in a short time. It helped in spreading not only knowledge and information but also in promoting the critical assessment of the current affairs through the media of newspapers and periodicals. The newspapers and the journals generally acted as the moulders as well as mirrors of public opinion. They also contributed to create favourable atmosphere for social reform.

Kandukuri Veeresalingam and Social Reform Movement

Another great emancipator who was primarily responsible for the transformation of the Godavari district in particular and Andhra region in general before the birth of the Indian National Congress was Kandukuri Veeresalingam. He was the pioneer in the field of Social Reform Movement in Andhra. A 'doughty champion of Social Reform', Veeresalingam gave to Andhras their first lessons in social reform. Veeresalingam's pioneering work in the field of social reform would probably not have been possible but for the benevolent work of Sir Arthur Cotton. Hailed as 'the greatest Andhra of modern times', he put forth 'extraordinary effort' towards the emancipation of the down trodden. There was no equal to him not only in Andhra but in the Tamil districts of Madras Presidency. Because of him, the Andhra area took an early lead in social reform.

A Brahmin by birth, Veeresalingam was a typical representative of early Indian nationalism. He was the first man who wrote in straight forward prose. He rejected totally the cumbersome, erudite Sanskrit language which hindered and shackled the new concepts. He wrote the first novel and first modern play and founded periodicals. He became the first journalist, essayist and wrote autobiography and was a polemist. He opposed child marriages and urged for the rights of widows. He took up the dowry problem and prostitution. He pleaded for a fairer deal for untouchables. He was physically sick and infirm; yet he was harder than steel even where the least of his beliefs were involved. The consciousness of such a prominent personality was shaped by Rajahmundry located in Godavari district. As Ramakrishna observes, Rajahmundry had elements of enlightenment. This he traces to the changing economic conditions after the construction of Godavari anicut.

The greatest achievement of Veeresalingam as a social reformer was the encouragement and performance of many widow marriages. His crusade for widow remarriage constitutes a stirring saga in the history of modern Andhra. Even if he had done nothing else in the field of social reform, this single social reform act of courage and benevolence is enough to earn immortal fame for him. The problem of widows remarriage was, as stated by R. Venkataratnam Nayudu, 'a colossal social problem'. In Andhra, it was estimated that there were as many as 22,962 widows below the age of 14 years and 2,577 widowers of the same age in the year 1881. There was hardly any home which did not have a widow. Lack of education, the general attitude of women against remarriages, superstitious and religious customs led to the continuance and increase of the number of widows. Undeterred by the relentless opposition from the orthodoxy, Veeresalingam undertook a vigorous agitation in support of widow marriages. With great courage and commitment, he even started the Widow Marriage Association of Rajahmundry in 1879 and performed the first widow marriage in Rajahmundry on 11th December 1881. Within 3 years i.e. by 1884, he was able to perform as many as 10 widow marriages, including those of two vaisya couples. Undaunted by severe opposition from many quarters and vituperative personal attacks in the press, Veeresalingam strove till his last to liberate young girls and widows from the shackles of social oppression and exploitation. Through his social reform activities, by the end of the 19th century, Veeresalingam gave to the people of Andhra an altogether modern, progressive and humanistic turn to their life and thought. As Rajaji

rightly observes, "Andhra Desh and Andhra people could not be what they are if Veeresalingam had not arrived to vitalise them".

Raghupati Venkataratnam Nayudu and the Purity and Anti-Nautch Movement

The social reform work of Veeresalingam especially the anti-nautch movement was carried further by Raghupati Venkataratnam Nayudu, a man of impeccable honesty and a fine product of western education. Venkataratnam Nayudu abhorred the Hindu practice of devadasi and carried a virulent campaign against nautch system. Chilakamarti Lakshminarasimham, K. Venkatappaiah, Darsi Chenchiah, Pattabhi Seetaramayya, Mutnuri Krishna Rao, A. Kaleswara Rao and others also took up this cause. The efforts of these social reformers contributed in creating social consciousness among a large section of people in Andhra that nautch were an institution which deserved to be annihilated.

Venkataratnam Nayudu carried on a ceaseless campaign against untouchability. Long before Mahatma Gandhi took up the cause of the untouchables, Venkataratnam Nayudu not only gave shelter to the untouchable children in his house, but also adopted them as his own children, educated them and settled them in honourable positions in life. With the financial assistance rendered by the Rajah of Pithapuram, he also started hostels for harijan girls and helped them on the lines of Veeresalingam. In the sacred movement of harijan upliftment, he made caste and untouchable pupils sit side by side in Andhra Jateeya Kalasala, Machilipatnam. Further, as principal of P.R.College, Kakinada from 1905 to 1919, he managed to admit into the institution, girls and boys of depressed classes.

The social reform activities initiated by Veeresalingam and Venkataratnam Nayudu provided an excellent milieu for the growth of political and social consciousness in the region. The birth of vernacular press and the emergence of Telugu Journals and literary works were other important factors that contributed to the renaissance in Andhra which became a trendsetter in social reconstruction. Gandhiji was moved to tears on his first visit when he saw in Andhradesa programmes and institutions for dalit and women emancipation.

As education spread more rapidly in the fertile circar districts of Andhra, the reform movements became stronger and more successful there than in the ceded districts, where literacy was less. These educated people initially worked for social reform and then entered the political arena since a healthy socio-religious system created the ground for political consciousness. They were responsible for the emergence of nationalism and development of anti-colonial feeling in later times. Renowned leaders of the freedom movement Nyapathi Subba Rao, Konda Venkatappaiah, Tanguturi Prakasam, Bulusu Samba Murthy, Bhogaraju Pattabhi Seetaramayya, Mutnuri Krishna Rao, Ayyadevara Kaleswara Rao, Kopalli Hanumanta Rao. Gadicherla Harisarvothama Rao and Unnava Lakshminarayana drew much of their inspiration from the social reform activities initiated by Veeresalingam and Venkataratnam Nayudu.

Kakinada Congress, 1923

In view of this background that seventy years after Cotton built the anicut and fifty years after Veeresalingam launched his social reform movement that Kakinada got the unique distinction of holding the annual session of the Indian National Congress (INC). It was for the first time in its 38 years history that an annual session of the INC was held in Andhra in 1923. The Kakinada Congress session (December 28, 1923) clearly exhibited the social awakening that has been taken place in this area. A number of women came forward to attend the session. Duvvuri Subbamma, Vadantam Kamaladevi, Gandham Adilakshamma, Maganti Annapurnadevi, Goparaju Hanumayamma, Yamini Poorna Tilakamma and a host of women delegates attended the Session. Some of them took an active part in the deliberations of the Congress. Duvvuri Subbamma was one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Reception Committee. It was in this Session that she was conferred the title 'Desabandhavi'. Vedantam Kamaladevi, Balantrapu Seshamma and Vemuganti Papayamma acted as lady volunteers in this Congress.

It was in this session that young Durgabai became the centre of attraction as a young volunteer among thousands of Congress workers who attended the session. Gummadidala Durgabai, who later became Durgabai Deshmukh following her marriage to Dr. Chintamani Deshmukh, was a girl of 12 years when she plunged into the freedom struggle. She rose to become a doughty champion of women's rights and built orphanages and homes for destitute women and widows and is rightly and gratefully remembered as one of the great emancipators of women in India.

Further, in this session, a rousing reception was accorded to Maulana Mohammed Ali, the president of the 38th session of the INC, when arrived at Kakinada. Over a lakh of Andhras, especially the ryots of the villages participated in the welcome procession. The secular nature of the procession was such that Mohammed Ali had 'Arati' before every temple on the way and had his 'Namaz' in an orthodox pandit's house. Another important feature of the Kakinada Congress Session was that Kommireddy Suryanarayana Murthy Naidu, the then Municipal chairperson of the Kakinada town and an active member of the Justice party, though politically opposed to the Congress, came forward to cooperate with the Congress leaders and extended his whole hearted support in organising the Session. Above all, Bulusu Samba Murthy, the Secretary of the Reception Committee, though lost his only son, aged about 20 years, a few days before the commencement of the Session, with firm determination and exemplary courage organised the Congress Session in a grand manner. Sarojini Naidu paid a high tribute to Samba Murthy when she said, "In the service of his country, Mr. Samba Murthy forgot his personal sorrow and transformed the tears of his agony into pearls of welcome for his fellow-countrymen and the anguish of his heart was turned into dedicated service". Mohammed Ali, the president of the Kakinada Session, used to say that up to 1929 the Kakinada Congress had been the best organised Congress Session. The construction of the anicut by Cotton thus brought about lasting changes in the economic conditions of the people leading to social change and political ferment in one of the most important areas of South India.

Unique Pattern of Change and Development

An interesting point relating to Andhra Pradesh district is that it provided a pattern of change and development different from the general pattern noticed in the modern history. In countries like Britain, France and America first occurred the political revolution and declaration of independence did not immediately result equality and social Justice. It took more than a hundred years for achieving social equality and Justice in those countries. Economic change came much later. Same is the case with many other great nations. In other words the sequence of change was from political to social and then to economic in most cases. But surprisingly Andhra Pradesh provides an opposite picture of such a process. In Andhra Area first came tremendous economic change caused by Arthur Cotton's construction of anicut and dams and that was followed by social reform, thanks to Veeresalingam. Political ferment and change arrived much later. Thus economic change, followed by social awakening leading to political development is a sequence of considerable significance. This was possible by Sir Arthur Cotton through the construction of an engineering marvel, the Godavari anicut.

MARITIME LANDSCAPE OF ANDHRA PRADESH: Perspectives and Prospects

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Introduction

The erstwhile 23 district State of Andhra Pradesh was reorganized into 10 districts of Telangana State and residuary state of Andhra Pradesh (AP) with the remaining 13 districts by AP Reorganization Act No 6 of 2014. Nine out of 13 districts has coastline of Bay of Bengal which stretch for about 974 kms long between Itchhapuram in the north and Tada in the south (12° 45' to 19° 50' Northern Latitude and 76° 45' to 84°45' Eastern Longitude). Several geomorphic features of marine, riverine and hill tracts together with sub-tropical climatic regime characterize the eastern part of Andhra Pradesh as maritime landscape. Coastal landforms like rock cut caves, benches, sand ridges, sand dunes and such allied marine induced geomorphic structures together with their typical marine flora and fauna on one hand and the estuaries, wetlands and deltas of the Godavari, the Krishna and the Pennar rivers, besides mouths of several ephemeral streams (about 32) form the coastal landscape of Andhra Pradesh. In addition to these natural endowments the backwater streams, ponds, lagoons and lakes present a mosaic of maritime resource system, which has been supporting cultural and economic developments over the millennia.

Natural Perspective

A cursory look into the landsat imagery or the Google-earth map of the coastal landscape of Andhra Pradesh presents diversified and vivid picture of its geo-physical resources in the form of bays, lagoons, lakes, backwater streams, badlands, wetlands, estuaries, deltas, islands and sand dunes. The ground truth realization is marvelous in viewing bays with surfing tides, brownish sand ridges, muddy wetlands with greenish mangroves, several stream mouths; birds foot deltas, rock-cut caves and benches, besides anthropogenic structures.

i. **The Badlands:** The badlands are huge deposits of sands and sandy-silts, red in colour located at Bhimunipatnam and Bhavanapadu rises to a height of about 900 meters stretch over a few thousand acres are presenting a dissected landscape with several channels. The landscape of these badlands overlooking the sea, the rays of the rising sun on these red-sands is a feast to the visitor, and they appear like ruins of great civilization, but they are natural denoting the past drainage system and palaeo-climatic episodes.

ii. **The Deltas:** The deltas are huge sedimentary deposits found at the confluence of the Godavari (4173 sq km), the Krishna (200 sq km) and the Pennar Rivers are the rice bowls of Andhra Pradesh. These deltas are evergreen with varied types of vegetation and crops. The aquaculture farms all along the coastal margins of delta are extending economic opportunities and at the same time a threat for the aqua-ecosystem.

iii. **The Lakes:** The landlocked water bodies on the coast at Kondakarla near Visakhapatnam and Kolleru (2.2 lakh acers) in between Godavari and Krishna deltas, and Pulicat near Nellore are the resource base for native and migratory avifauna. These water bodies are again put to aquaculture leading to groundwater pollution and threat to migratory birds.

iv. **The Coastal Wetlands and Mangroves:** The wetlands are located at several places (565) measuring 1.5 lakh hectares along the coast, particularly at the mouths of several ephemeral rivers (35), have typical maritime ecosystem. The wetlands at Coringa, Kolleru, Machalipatnam, Diviseema are a few examples of mangroves of the State. These resource systems are rich in biodiversity and natural barriers in protecting the coastal landscape.

v. **The Islands:** The coastal dynamics have resulted in the formation of small islands adjacent

to the coast at Kakinada and Sriharikota, and these present a different ecosystem transitional between marine and inland systems. The mangroves and sand dunes around the islands are of great significance in protecting mainland and at the same time picturesque.

These marine induced natural landscapes are of great significance in understanding the maritime dynamics of the past and the present to project the future as well as making use of these systems for economic ends and recreational purposes.

Cultural Perspective

The people living along the five-kilometer swath of the coastal landscape have been organized into different endogamous social units/caste groups whose economy is marine fishing. They are called Agnikulakshatriya, Palle, Vadabalija, Besta, Gangaputra, Jalari, Gundla, Vannekula Kshatriya, Vannereddy, Vannekapu, Pallekapu, Pallereddy, Neyyala and Pattapu fishing communities. The population of these communities account for about 35 lakhs, distributed in 508 villages and a few wards in urban agglomerations. Though their habitations are on land the economic dependency is the biotic wealth of the Bay of Bengal. These fishers harvest sea-food from open-sea, available in the form of crabs, squids, prawn and different schools of fish on indigenous modes. Over the ages these fishing communities acquired knowledge and skills and transcending them to the successive generations on sea navigation and harvest of resources of maritime ecosystem. They are well versed with marine climatic dynamics, sea weather conditions, fauna and flora. A distinct division of labour is characteristic of marine fishers where men harvest at sea while women vend the catch on land among neighbourhood populations. Fishermen habitations are mostly of traditional thatched houses of conical and rectangular shape followed by simple concrete buildings. Other structures noticed in the habitations are simple buildings for schools, revenue offices, shrines of Mother Goddesses and cyclone relief centers. These habitations are inhabited exclusively by fishermen communities, with an exception to a few families of petty traders, toddy tapers and shepherds. The location of houses, their structure and direction, streets, shrines, boat and net yards are suitable to the sandy beach, coastal winds and surfing coast is a typical culturesscape of the fishers. A few villages have a space for boat building and repair.

Traditional catamarans and low-technology crafts are still in use to take up short and long distance voyages for fishing without the help of modern scientific gadgets. Though mechanization and ocean navigation brought sea changes in fishing, the traditional fishing communities are able to combat risks such as weather, cyclones, tsunamis, high-tides as they possess commendable knowledge on maritime resources. Recruitment of illiterate traditional fishermen by the mechanized/corporate operators (trawlers, merchant navy, ports, harbours etc) would stand as testimony for their capability of maritime knowledge and endurance. Traditional maritime knowledge (TMK) is now endangered due to advances in fishing economy. The levels of education are low, but now showing a marginal trend towards modern education. The educated youth are showing seasonal migration to access better opportunities particularly in urban agglomerations and port areas. There is an increase in occupational mobility among the fishers from traditional to modern menial works in the nearby peasant villages or urban agglomerations such as construction workers, plumbers, masons, electricians, drivers, mechanics etc. The females are opting to work as maidservants, industrial workers and helpers in business establishments. The reasons of occupational mobility are attributed to mechanized corporate fishing, depletion of marine resources due to pollution, and uprooting and rehabilitation of fishers due to industrialization. In spite of governmental programmes in sustaining artisanal fishing in protein extraction from common property resource and local vending is slowly drifting into the corporate market forces leaving traditional fishers to their fate resulted in seasonal migration and occupational change.

Spiritual Perspective

The coastal landscape has also preserved some sacred structures of spiritual importance. These structures signify the development of varied spiritual pathways connecting mortal with the immortal. The remnants of these structures remain as heritage. They belong to Ancient, Medieval and Modern Periods of Indian History. The ancient are further grouped into Buddhist and Hindu structures. The monasteries located at places like Adurru, Bavikonda, Bhattiprolu, Bojjannakonda, Dantapura, Ganjam (Chinna and Pedda), Ghantasala, Goplapatnam, Kanuparthi, Pavuralakonda,

Salihindam, Thotlakonda etc are either on the hilltops abetting the sea or at the mouths of the rivers. The temples of Appeswara, Chelleswara and Someswara at Appikonda, Nageswara at Dimili, Natarameswara at Rameswaram, Narasimhaswamy at Antharvedi, Jaladeswara at Ghantasala are located right on the beach sands of the coastal landscape. The Vallabhaswamy at Bangarampalem and Madhavaswamy at Revupolavaram are a few temples located on the hillocks contiguous to the coast belong to the medieval period. The lighthouses, revenue offices, churches, traveler bungalows and similar structures of British architecture are seen on coastal landscape. All these structures of religious order or otherwise go a long way in reconstructing the local history of Andhra Pradesh besides maritime merchandise activities over the ages.

Economic Perspective

The coastal landscape of Andhra Pradesh is dotted with 3 major (Visakhapatnam, Gangavaram and Kakinada) and 11 minor seaports (Bhavanapadu, Bheemunipatnam, Kalingapatnam, Krishnapatnam, Machilipatnam, Meghavaram, Nakkapalli, Narsapur, Nizampatnam, Vadarevu, and Yanam). These are catering to the needs of bulk exports and imports of food grains, fertilizers, crude, industrial and electronic items. In addition to these, 32 jetties and fishing harbours are in operation both for cargo handling and fishing. The lighthouses located at Antharvedi, Bhavanapadu, Bhimunipatnam, Chintapalli, Durgarajapatnam, Kalingapatnam, Krishnapatnam, Machilipatnam, Nagayalanka, Nizampatnam, Pentakota, Pudimadaka, Ramayapatnam and Visakhapatnam cater to the navigational needs of the voyagers. The other noteworthy features of the coastal landscape are buildings of government offices, traveler bungalows and Churches of British architecture.

The backwater streamlets at different localities at the coastal landscape of Andhra Pradesh are converted into salt pans for production of salt, an important ingredient for human survival. Noteworthy salt pans are located at Chinnaganjam, Iskapalli, Krishnapatnam, Kakinada and Naupada, where several families are depending on salt production. The climatic oscillations, sea-level transgressions and maritime calamities are causing frequent threats to production of salt, which is on traditional mode.

Prospects

1. The oral traditions and maritime knowledge the fishermen possess is of great significance in understanding coastal weather dynamics, calamities and resilience, resources of the sea and ocean, and such related hidden untapped knowledge would strengthen maritime science and knowledge. Further, such human resource spread along the coast is a great asset in making use of their endurance and experience in coastal security and combating the sea calamities.
2. The wastelands or badlands of the coastal landscape, which are otherwise unproductive, could be made use of to establish pharmaceutical, chemical and petrochemical factories with a precaution to prioritize recycling effluent processes on scientific principles.
3. The bays and estuaries of Andhra Pradesh coast could be developed into shipbuilding yards, ports and jetties facilitating sea transport and cargo handling. These would become the hub of special economic zones and industrial cities besides defense establishments.
4. The context of natural sands, sea and surf, the archaic relics of heritage, and the present ethnic communities could be molded into one of the tourism destinations.
5. Maritime museums, aquariums, fairs and festivals, short-distance voyages, water sports, can be planned as part of tourism to promote service sector.

Keeping in view the natural and culturescape of the Sunrise State of Andhra Pradesh these development prospects are suggested. However, the development shall be in an eco-friendly manner notwithstanding the rules and regulations of the coastal regulatory zone (CRZ) authority. The Itchchapuram-Tada coastal landscape is a boon to the newly formed residuary state of Andhra Pradesh and it shall not be a curse in the process of coastal development. The landscape could be a corridor of development embracing the facets of nature, culture, industry and tourism including defence parks as manmade marvels of AP to attract national and international investors and tourists to convert the state into a global role player.

Kantian Ethics

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Kant Says' Happiness is not an ideal of reason, but of imagination "Kant mentions that We need to distinguish between the public and private aspects of human life. These Cannot be viewed in isolation. Kant was convinced that personal morality can become a reality Only in the Context of a Society. The unprecedented growth in economic, Cultural, political, Scientific and technological areas as observed, makes one to realize the necessity and Significance of ethics. The endeavour is to avoid Suffering and to make these benefits available to the Cross Sections of Community. The requirement is to respect the freedom and ability of each person enabling him to make his own decisions. The dawn of the 21" century is undergoing turmoil mainly because of denial of human rights and inequality. The Spread of terrorism is creating havoc in most of the pockets of the globe. Uncertainty prevails. This paper focuses On the moral and ethical values with Specific reference to Immanuel Kant, German Philosopher of the 18th Century.

Kantian Ethics :

As a prerequisite, it is necessary to recapitulate and get an insight of the ethical views that existed in the earlier periods of time. This is for a preliminary understanding and for this purpose We draw upon the thoughts from Indian philosophy and Western philosophy. Vedic religion projects Rita as the principle of natural order which regulates and COOrdinates the Operation of the universe and everything within it. Natural, moral, Sacrificial Order', are Collectively referred as dharma and the action of the individual in relation to these Ordinances as karma. The Upanishadic thought was very inspiring and incontrovertible in the power of its philosophy. They have dominated Indian Philosophy, religion and life for Over 3000 years and Constitute the highest Wisdom. They emphasize on ceaseless quest for truth. Verses in Manusmriti (200 BCE-100 BCE) recommend non-violence, temperance, abstaining from falsehood, to develop virtues of Compassion, forbearance, truthfulness, Self control and not desiring. Ethics of Ramayana talk about the three goals Kama, Artha and the moral Strength Dharma. Mahatma Gandhi dreamed that Rama's royal dharma would become the ideal for

India. Bhagavad gita teaches renunciation of rajasic and tamasic gunas in individuals and focus On a Ction.

Turning our attention to the ethical concepts of various periods of time pertinent to the Western philosophy; Pythagoras (580-500 BCE) believed in rebirths and says that it is man's duty to put an end to the wheel of rebirths, laid emphasis on purity of Conduct, founded an Order in Which men and Women were regarded as equal Considering achievements as Collective. In the Greek System, the Sophist theory of morality in the period of second half of 5th Century BCE, says that man is a law unto himself in matters of Conduct, and "feeling "was taken to be the Seat of morality; Sophists held the view that morality consists in pleasure, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle (470-399, 437-347, 384-322 BCE) -Plato was Socratic in his belief that knowledge is virtue in and of itself. To know the good is to do the good. Virtue could be taught by teaching Some One right from Wrong, good from evil. Aristotle Stated that knowing what was right was not enough, that One had to choose to act in the proper manner, in essence to Create the habit of doing good. Epicureans (341-270 BCE) considered ethical problem to be of paramount importance in many thoughtful minds. Rational approach and Wisdom play an important role in determining the joys of intellectual life. St. Augustine (353 AD) Says that love is the Supreme Virtue and that the highest values in the

universe cannot be found in the material gains but in the Spirit with emphasis that the highest part of man is not his body, nor his impulsive nature. Peter Abelard's (AD-1079) views are : Sin Consists in Our Consent to evil, morality is a matter of ConScience and a good Will is prompted by the love of god and acts in obedience to divine Command, these aspects are note Worthy. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 AD) says that knowledge of god is the highest good, reason is important and that the immoral character of external act depends On the Will. Francis Bacon (1561–1626) expressed that ethics describes the nature of good, and the human being with firmness should avoid being Selfish. John Locke (1632-1704) reiterated that the Conscience of an individual differentiates the principles and actions which finally paSS a judgment. Leibniz (1646-1716) Stated that ethics is a rational Science, moral principleS Operate unconsciously as instincts, and the fact is that moral characteristics of the Soul are belonging to the human nature itself. "Will" is conscious impulse.

Regarded as the greatest of the modern philosophers, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) experienced Wars and revolutions of Europe and in particular Germany. Kant's moral philosophy is built in with Shrewd analysis of the ethical parameters mainly dealt with the actions and characters of individuals. Kant's approach to moral theory is via political philosophy and the vision that the legal structure for any civil Society must have a moral basis is akin to the Overall logic. Moral choices generally adhere to Subjectivity and it is to be remembered what Aristotle projected in his moral theory, that the first and foremost concern is the individual and private relationship S. Kant insists that our moral criteria must override our personal Concern and the laws have to be impersonal. The Concepts that flow out of Kant's moral theory are as follow S. Firstly moral laws Cannot be based on experience since this takes away the opportunity of building a moral point of view. Herein the soundness of morality versus the Corruptibility of human nature Comes into play. Secret impulse of Self love under the cloak of false appearance of duty can tilt the actual determining cause of the will. Human nature is attracted to flattery and by this the inward principles of the person get Sacrificed. The strict Command of duty is missing, in the Sense the dear Self which is very prominent is accommodated and not denied. Kant thus stresses on the need for a pure moral philosophy, away from empirical phenomena. Secondly, Kant positions morality firmly within the public forum where justice prevails with Standards and rational thinking. Thirdly, the moral Standards cannot be violated by eXCuSeS because of their universal applicability. Referring to the renaissance and reformation period in Europe, the opposition to the Catholic idea grew stronger and the foundations were laid for the political theories which have played Such an important role in modern history. The Opposition from the Secular powers and the radical attack by the Italian diplomat by Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), absolute despotism to realize the ideal of a strong and independent State Civic freedom got Sacrificed and these means will lead to the nationalistic goal; force, deceit Severity, breach of the So called moral laws are all justified by the great end. Anything is preferable to the existing anarchy and corruption, because Machiavelli was not Willing to adopt halfway mea Sures and Wanted to meet force With force. Kant uSed the formula Of univ'er Sal la W to test the policies Machiavelli had proposed, even though he criticized any ruler using the Machiavellian excuse of necessity to justify using whatever indirect practices might promote his Own personal gain. Kant identified Such an individual as Supposedly politically practical man.

Rousseau's (1712-1778) book *Emile : Political theory and Education* Says that a child's education should begin only after the desire for knowledge arises. Rousseau exercised deep influence in Germany on Kant and few others, and this can be seen in Kant's Words "I am myself an investigator by inclination, I feel the intense Craving for knowledge" Rousseau's mission is to Save religion from reason. There is worth in every human being. Man by nature is innocent and good; the impulse preserves him to his capacities With Sympathy to Others. Morality and religion are not matters of reasoned thinking, but of natural feeling. Moral nature determines man's Worth and intelligence has no role. Kant adds that a will is good when it is determined by respect to the moral law or the Consciousness to duty.

The Categorical Imperative, the vital component of Kant's moral law, Consists of three formulae. These demonstrate adequately the moral theories. We have desires to Satisfy, and We

may not Want to obey the moral law. The moral life is Subjected to two problems, (i) deciding what are the right moral dictates and (ii) whether we have the moral Courage to observe. The Sole motive of genuine morality is pure respect for the law. Formula one is the formula of Autonomy or of universal law: Always act So that you can will the maxim Or determining principle of your action to become universal law; act So that you can Will that everybody Shall follow the principle of you action. This law is the Supreme test of what is right and Wrong. This formula Commands us to act autonomously on maxims fit to Serve as the formal Structure of a moral World. Formula Two States, "Act so as to treat humanity whether in your own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end in itself and never as merely as a means". This Commands us to recognize that all perSons have objective value and SO is obligatory matter. Everyone has a dignity and no one has the moral right to interfere with this. The Third formula is "Therefore every rational being Ought to act as if he were by his maxims his universal principles, a legislating member of a universal kingdom of ends".

Kant continues to emphasize that we have both an objectively obligatory

interest in Our moral Well-being or virtuous character and a Subjectively unavoidable interest in Our natural Well-being or happiness. Kant continues to chart the influence of Our ConScience, and expresses the role and power of it. We have a duty to Cultivate and Sharpen Our COncScience Since this basic tool is the one that does the moral questioning regarding actions. A character that is perfectly in accord with the moral law, a perfectly moral man, has infinite Worth and deserves all possible happiness. Doing right is not for happineSS alone but for right'S OWn Sake. Motivations are, doing our duty, having a moral character and Self respect. Moral law limitS Our purSuit Of happineSS.

Summary and conclusion leads one to understand that Self-interest drives individuals to act in a manner not Conducive to the needs. Kant held the view that the human nature tends to meet the demands of morality with leSS of enthusiasm, and his explicit appeal is that a truly virtuous life should be more promising than holding on to this morose attitude. AS humans We have a responsibility to develop rational thinking, inculcate, and adhere to Stipulated moral norms in order to Spread love and Compassion to the Community, to Our Nation and the global citizens at large, assimilating diverse rhythms in a unique harmony. The Categorical Imperative is the Sole fact of pure reason. Cultivation of ethical Conduct will restrict the emotional behavior and will pave the way for better living Conditions. The fact is that all the talent S. We possess within ourselves are only for reaching out to everyone else; and it is With this basic Commitment that many philosophers from East and West of previous generations, With their thoughtful and Creative minds, put forth vehemently, major ethical theories Such as hedonism, altruism, utilitarianism and categorical Imperative. It can be Said that Kant changed the frame work within which philosophical inquiry has been carried out. Kant provided Substantial motivation to the Subsequent generations. To end with a quote of Kant'. In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing SO"

Adding life to years

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(Summary of Lecture delivered at Centre for Policy Studies on July 15, 2017)

Stroke, commonly called paralytic attack, is a devastating illness of the elderly leaving many disabled in the later years of their life imposing enormous burden on the families and their finances. A large majority of strokes can be prevented by attending to risk factors like high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, smoking and abusing alcohol etc. All these risk factors should be recognised before they cause damage to body organs and treated adequately. Early signs of impending stroke should be recognised like deviation of mouth, slurring of speech and weakness of hand. They should be transported to a facility where appropriate treatment can be instituted early to limit the damage to brain and facilitate early and good recovery. People with residual deficits should receive training at rehabilitation centres to restore their full potential to work as independently as possible. This needs public education on a war footing and also setting up emergency services to reach the needy at the earliest so that benefits of advances in treatment are made available to them.

The World Health Organisation estimates that every year 15 million people worldwide are afflicted with stroke of which 30% die and another 30% are left with serious disabilities impairing the quality of life and imposing enormous burden on their families and country's health budget.

India like other developing countries faces the dual challenge of both communicable and non communicable diseases. It is being increasingly recognised that stroke is the leading cause of premature death and disability in India. This is largely due to the change in demographics exposing them to risk factors predisposing to stroke. Unfortunately majority of them are from lower socio-economic strata who have limited access to modern health care which they cannot afford. The result is that survivors who are bread winners are left with serious disabilities leading to major impact on their standard of living.

Brain attack or stroke, as it is more popularly called is often because of blockage of a blood vessel supplying the brain depriving the brain of the blood supply. This is due to thickening of the vessel wall caused by deposition of cholesterol. Aging, high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, smoking and obesity are other risk factors which promote stroke. Once the blood supply is cut off, the affected brain dies and result is paralysis. There is another kind of stroke which results from rupture of a blood vessel, called cerebral hemorrhage. This is often due to uncontrolled hypertension and causes higher mortality. It is important to distinguish between these two types as treatment is entirely different for both. CT scan of the brain very precisely distinguishes between both.

Effective treatments are available to lessen the damage to the brain in the event of occurrence of stroke, but there is always a window period during which they should be administered for optimum benefit. Even in developed countries only a small fraction receive this treatment. The reasons are many. Ignorance, inability to recognise the warning symptoms, lack of transport facilities to treatment centres are among many. In countries like India where very few have health insurance and health care costs are met by out of pocket expenditure, affordability is also an important factor. To avail these facilities, large scale public education is necessary apart from subsidizing these treatment modalities.

The symptoms of stroke are multiple. But the common ones should be recognisable, like slurring of speech, deviation of mouth and weakness of hand grip. Unfortunately pain is not a prominent symptoms like in heart attack which may cause delay in seeking medical advice.

In view of the dismal outlook of the stroke, it is obvious that the most important measure should be primary prevention which means tackling the risk factors before they cause stroke.. Every individual after the age of 30, in particular those with a positive family history where one of the parents or siblings is affected should have their blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol checked up even if they have no symptoms. It is not uncommon for patient with stroke to have his/her high blood pressure recorded for first time after admission to hospital. It is equally common for those who apparently are being treated for high blood pressure to find their blood pressure readings unacceptably high at the time of their stroke. It is a well known fact that even in affluent countries only one third with high blood pressure are detected and adequately treated. No wonder it is branded as a silent killer. Both blood pressure and diabetes are dynamic conditions. Detecting and getting a prescription from a doctor does not ensure risk free life. Strict compliance with medication, dietary control as advised are very important. Periodic measurements of blood pressure and blood glucose are necessary to ensure that the medication is optimum as their requirement keeps changing.

Smoking is strong risk factor for both stroke and heart attack. It multiplies the risk when high blood pressure and diabetes coexist. Smoker should be strongly encouraged to quit smoking. Smokers also endanger others as passive smoking is also hazardous.

Obesity should be treated with exercise and dietary regulation. Regular exercise such as brisk walking for 30 minutes a day for at least 5 days in a week also lessens the risk of stroke. Yoga and meditation are also likely to confer additional benefit. Alcohol consumption should be moderate. Aspirin is very effective in preventing strokes and heart attacks. If prescribed by physician, it should be taken life long like antihypertensive and antidiabetic medication unless side effects like heart burn compel discontinuation.

Majority of survivors are left with varying disabilities which impairs their quality of life and also increases the burden on their care givers. Aggressive physiotherapy and rehabilitation should be given to see that they will be able to manage their activities of daily living independently. This not only reduces the care giver burden, but also enhances their self esteem.

In conclusion, the only effective way to reduce burden of stroke on the society and the individual is to recognise the potential and modifiable risk factors and attend to them early and regularly. This needs public education on a war footing and providing treatment which is easily accessible and affordable.

Education at Cross Roads : The shifting goals and means

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(Summary of Lecture delivered at Centre for Policy Studies on August 31, 2017)

The idea of the purpose of education in general public is to get some degree useful for gainful employment, preferably in government departments or big companies. Within a limited context of organized human society, it is safe to assume that the goal of education is the well being of society and individual, and the means is by a deliberate design of the system. At the minimum, society is responsible, first to make every individual to learn the art of interaction, fit into the society and accept its authority, second to make him learn some skill to make a living and finally contribute to society's smooth running. It is a bonus if he learns good behavior, rises to his innate potential, understands the cause and effect relationships of nature, discovers the secret of the universe, and realizes God. Education is a peculiar human affair and is not a natural phenomenon. It is a designed process for achieving certain goals in human society. It has this limited purpose and has no cosmic significance.

India is an economic force in the world, with a large and growing number of people with disposable incomes. Much of the economic activity is knowledge-based, making education a critical component of this transformation. Governments have been too eager to reduce their financial commitment but preferred to retain control to influence electoral politics and to ensure social justice needs. Bureaucrats have formulated quick fix methods to meet emerging needs and a comprehensive policy framework for regulation and delivery of services is not in place. The prevailing system of education is a wide landscape involving government and its agencies, public and private institutions operating in a hurriedly organized framework of regulations with wide anomalies and contradictions. At times it feels like 'a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma', to borrow the immortal words of Sir Winston Churchill. There is many a slip between the cup and the lip, as the proverb goes, between the contrasting narratives of the theory and practice, the means and ends, the reality and political correctness. In this dynamic mixture of light and darkness, it's difficult to condemn or accept the different, sometimes opposite, approaches to the policy and administration. Depending on purpose and context, contradictory systems seem to be justified or needed.

Aspirations of Indian parents and students have undergone a sea change in line with the current era of growth oriented capitalist economy driven by consumerism and ambitions of personal wealth combined with globalization of trade, capital and human resources. Indian parents started looking for the best formula in education for a better, richer and more prestigious tomorrow for their children and chose institutions promising results. There is a race for getting into lucrative professional courses offered at the best educational institutions such as the IITs and IIMs etc. Parents and students, willing to spend, want shortcuts to get into careers with lucrative potential and migrate to western countries. To cater to this trend, private entrepreneurs have come up to exploit the emerging opportunity. A for-profit industry has mushroomed catering to the coaching needs of students for entrance tests to elite public institutions and also for the +2 level course.

It seems that India as a society has not been too fond of rule of law or a system of tradition; instead has ended up in an era of convenient, ad hoc methods both in public and private domains. These factors started shaping the emerging players in education. They made a successful business model for profit bringing in branding and marketing to attract people to their new intense methods designed for success in a particular process such as entrance examinations, specific skills for employment, going abroad and other allied paths for a lucrative career. Entrepreneurs who could quickly change commercial complexes, homes, even suburban poultry sheds into schools and colleges have succeeded in establishing institutions, attracting a huge number of students and making their enterprises profitable.

It is noteworthy that the elite institutions are government funded but big money is channeled to ordinary private institutions either by way of direct payments from students or by way of government scholarships for socially or economically backward categories. Thousands of colleges and private universities have come up in the space vacated by governments, catering to higher education; but there is no perceptible change in delivery of value to students by many private institutions. If the argument is that there is no accountability in government-funded institutions, the elite institutions prove otherwise. If private managements are expected to deliver results, they may have delivered profitability but have not become the first choice of top aspirants. Is it the elitism built through assembling a student body of top performers and providing a good atmosphere on the campus and largely autonomous management that brought about good results in the publicly funded elite institutions? What ails the performance of the many publicly funded central and state universities and colleges, is it the external interference in management, selection of poor quality teachers and the presence of a large body of uneducable students? What is the problem with private institutions, which start courses catering to high current demand with profitability but unable to achieve better quality within the limited offerings? Who carries the burden of preserving courses, which are not currently in demand? The real physical skills sector is also in a crisis, as many do not choose these courses due to the social stigma attached to these professions, instead join college education, mostly in low quality institutions even if they have no aptitude leaving them unfit for any employment. These facts must force us to reexamine the processes on how to model funding, governance and burden of preserving, distributing and expanding the horizons of knowledge and skills while enabling people to choose a path based on aptitude and suitability for a satisfactory career.

Private colleges and universities are incorporated as non-profit societies, trusts or non-profit companies as there is no other corporate entity possible by law. This has led to a situation where returns on investments cannot be legitimately enjoyed by investors. If private investments are to be encouraged, should not a corporate entity be enacted which enables a return and also taxable if dividends are distributed, non-taxable if specific exemption granted? While Income tax act provides for this, the basic law governing societies and trusts does not allow dividends and no other structure is allowed under education act. Companies are allowed to start medical colleges as per recent amendments but not in other fields. While the larger debate must settle whether private players are appropriate for education, a proper honest legal system does not exist for private investments currently. Fee structure controls exist, while law is not fully settled, for the sake of paper-compliance and private players resort to cash transactions to ensure viability and returns.

Regulation of the sector is formulated with no understanding of what aspects should be regulated and what should be left free for the institutions to decide. Government agencies such as the UGC, AICTE, NCTE, and MCI etc. are engaged in routine tasks of overseeing rules for permissions to start institutions or specifying service rules etc.; their contribution to standards, quality, content and delivery mechanisms is not fully visible yet. Some of the agencies have also travelled through allegations of unfair practices. An unregulated institutional structure has emerged from UGC's conferring of a very strange category called deemed-to-be-university and this authority of UGC may be incompatible with constitution which requires a state or central legislature to enact a charter for institutions to have degree granting status. Courts have to fully resolve these issues along with issues of the rights of unaided institutions, government and management quotas, fees structures and an uneasy status-quo atmosphere prevails. Governments have tried to influence universities through agencies to adopt certain syllabus content and course structures to suit ideological slants or whimsical formulations. Even in the technical education field, central agencies have stipulated adopting online courses as compulsory and a six-month project in industry. Both steps appear progressive in nature but have left boards of studies struggling to implement them. Students are unable to succeed by self-study in the online courses and faculty unable to help as they lack expertise in the chosen course. Industries are not willing to host students at all, let alone six months; even when they do in rare cases, students get exposure to routine tasks than technical issues relevant to them. Despite an outward appearance of push for research, the overall output

of useful world-class contributions remain dismal including the elite institutions successful in the instruction area.

Course design and delivery has come under tremendous stress as the student is thought to be not-industry-ready, lacking in personality skills and specific domain skills for employment. It has become the norm to talk about industry- academia interaction. The institutions are no longer sure whether they have to prepare students with skills of analysis and fundamental knowledge in a given area or prepare someone to present for employment even before graduation. Demands of employers' particular needs, added to the woes of unresolved challenge of good general education. It is believed that no more than 20% of graduates are employable. Forced to cater to the label of 'best placement record', institutes have adopted an assortment of methods ranging from dressing styles, body language, and English language to mock interviews. Industry, especially IT sector, started taking advantage by specifying training in narrow areas of interest to them perhaps with a view to reducing training costs for themselves. This resulted in an imbalanced approach for institutions to design and deliver domain and general skills within the time available. The much-hyped industry- academia interaction did not yield much fruit, as the industry specialist mostly turned out to be a routine tasks manager and not a practitioner of relevant skills failing to articulate and share. Interactions tended to be public relations exercises with photo-op and media publicity.

The biggest crisis facing education sector is non-availability of talented teachers. While the entry of the private player was expected to attract talent via higher pay, it is alleged that there is an exploitative situation. Poor working conditions coupled with superior global opportunities, right talent is not inclined towards teaching, and recruitment in government sector has been more employment generation than placing right person for the right job. Many teachers are ill prepared for the job, as there is no formal method of training for the purpose. Lucky if they find the right track after some trial and error, else several generations of students are exposed to poor methods. The specification of a Ph. D. degree for a professorship can not ensure teaching performance, probably not even future research potential in the Indian context. Administrative burden often takes away time from teachers to focus on their core area; strangely many Indian teachers prefer to be administrators. Higher education of the future may be travelling towards replacing ineffective teachers with standardized remote on-line content and presentations or using artificial intelligence technologies.

Students' aptitude, factors of class size, non-homogeneous background of students, medium of instruction being different from mother tongue, poor linguistic skills, institutional infrastructure and ambience, have all become roadblocks for the student. There is no time or opportunity for learning life skills, sports, fitness, bonding with others, appreciation for art, culture, scientific thinking. Student apathy is clearly in evidence and they are retreating to their own space of social media and smart phones. The education system is unable to compete for the students' time and mind. Narrow focus study methods employed for entrance tests and +2 course have developed a tunnel vision for students and even after succeeding to get into elite institutions such as IIT, they are unable to cope up and dropping out. A considerable number of students have come under extreme pressure in this reality of parental expectations and their inability to cope up either because of lack of aptitude or improper delivery from deficient colleges. Some have taken the extreme step of suicides but a good number have taken refuse in substance or social media abuse. Student suicide like farmer suicide represents the demise of innocent resulting from a struggle with an indifferent society.

Some who have succeeded through the process mostly migrate to US and other western countries, in a way filtered talent of India prepared with public funding is serving the west. This development was termed as 'brain drain'. Dr. Abid Hussain humorously dismissed it, as 'brain drain is better than brain in the drain'. Successful children who fulfilled the aspirations of parents have become non-resident away from home often leading to dissatisfaction among parents.

It is evident that there is a clear shift in goals as perceived by governments and society at large and the means have shifted in line with these goals. The goals and means of life have also moved from a full scope of realizing one's potential, life-long learning and quest for knowledge to tactics and strategies to reach the ends of immediate success, money, power, importance etc. Can the goals and means of education, which is a sub set of society's life process, be any different from the values and aspirations generally present in society?

Kahlil Gibran, the poet, gently reminded us that, "Your children are not your children, they are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself...you may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts", and David Bates "He who checks a child with terror, stops its play, and stills its song, Not alone commits an error, but a great and moral wrong." Many are wise enough to grasp that "The will to live marches on for survival, Life is to live first then to live well; There isn't anything better than balancing a day with some work some play and some rest." Yet, Indian parents have kept up the high-pressure expectations on children in the hope of a better tomorrow for them. For them education is the only route to material success in the competitive world, despite Walt Whitman's lament on the choices of educated people, "I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained, ...They do not sweat and whine about their condition, ... Not one is demented with the mania of owning things, Not one kneels to another, ...Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth", or what Einstein had said "It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education...it sometimes seems that education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school."

If we believe that we are evolving positively we must design and implement an ethical education system, which caters to the individual to rise to his creative potential as well as to make a dignified living. Perhaps, people can balance their life expectations first and a calm consideration of the following aspects may result in a better approach.

- Good general education of adapting to society and ability to think and conceptualize, specific skills to make a living with a dignity of pursuing any trade or profession,
- Clearly separating out areas, which are the responsibility and right of public space, building up a commonly accessible knowledge pool supported by society funding through government taxation or alumni contributions,
- Areas better served by private-for-profit participation in a transparent manner,
- Autonomous self-governing institutes with enabling ecosystems, decide on content which serves individual's development and stays relevant to employment needs,
- A teaching community, respected and well paid, dedicated with commitment to their profession of gathering, preserving and transferring knowledge and skills,
- Students not going through a dream world under the influence of drugs, social media, fads or fake heroes but bonded to the community and institutions with self-motivated free choices under their own shades of self-discovery.

Are these a tall order? Is it beyond the collective wisdom of our society? This crisis presents an opportunity to be resolved satisfactorily to help us face the next challenge, the most complicated, human society will ever face. It is already here but not recognized fully. The reality of the end of growth oriented economy model with demand and supply driving it with no restraints, employment and common good automatically flowing from its streams. The reality of depleting resources, unsustainable practices, degradation of environment, a world where employment even for suitable people is not possible and equitable distribution of resources and meaningful life style choices will be under threat. A situation of declining supplies and requirement of deliberate planning to keep growth low, perhaps negative to sustain life on earth itself could be the new game. Only a motivated, balanced human race with the right education in a cooperative culture can hope to survive and possibly remain happy.

Dr. C.R.Reddy – ‘A Statesman of Education’

A. Prasanna Kumar

President, Centre for Policy Studies
(Former Rector, Andhra University)

(Andhra University celebrates Foundation Vice-Chancellor Dr.C.R.Reddy’s 137th birth anniversary on December 10, 2017)

Andhra University was a gift of modern Andhra Renaissance. The demand for a separate university was articulated along with the demand for a separate state for Andhras in the first two decades of the last century. The Andhra University Act came into force on April 26, 1926. The first to be named after the language of the people of a state in south India and the first to be conceived as a residential, teaching-cum- affiliating university, devoted to post graduate teaching and research, Andhra University was formally inaugurated on August 30, 1926 at Bezwada by Lord Goschen, the first Chancellor. Stating that the word Andhra appealed to all people Dr C.R.Reddy said that “the word Andhra is used to denote the people whose language is Telugu” and that ‘high educational ambitions were at the root of our years’ long agitation for a separate university.’ Dr C.R.Reddy was the first Vice Chancellor of the university. Dr Reddy, setting aside the claims of other towns, chose Visakhapatnam for locating the university and shifted it accordingly. On September 5, - an interesting coincidence as it was Radhakrishnan’s birthday which later became Teacher’s Day—in 1930 the university started functioning in Waltair uplands.

The choice of Vizag for locating the University was impeccable. Ramanand Chatterjee, founder-editor of Modern Review, said that “freedom seems to rejoice here between the roar of the sea and the echo of the valley.” A great moment it was for the university when India’s first Nobel Laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore came in 1933 and again in 1934 to give lectures. What an occasion it was to have on the campus India’s first two Nobel Laureates Rabindranath Tagore and C.V.Raman on the occasion with Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in the presidential chair. In his lecture on MAN Tagore said that “Man’s discovery and utilisation of the hidden forces of nature contribute to his well-being.” Having first visited Waltair in the winter of 1933 Tagore came again in the spring of 1934 and directed a dance drama on the campus.

Prof N.K.Siddhanta, the renowned scholar and educationist, lavished praise on the place thus: “ We have dreamt of Utopian plans of a University in the land of perpetual spring— a season, this, that we had heard about but never actually enjoyed. Here at Waltair is this Utopia, where Nature is willing to help man with the utmost cordiality and sustain his efforts for the training of the intellect and the dissemination of knowledge...”

Dr P.V.Rajamannar, the Chief Justice of Madras High Court put it lyrically in his 1961 Convocation Address. He said:” The university is fortunate in having an ideal site. It is rarely that a university can secure such a beautiful campus as this, with all the loveliness of Nature, in all its varied aspects. You have the Hills and you have the Sea—primeval symbols of the static and dynamic aspects of human nature. The hills “ emblems and coruscations of invisible unoriginate perfection” represent tradition and the sea “restless living element” embodies the spirit of adventure and change. What an environment for a seat of learning.”

Dr.Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan succeeded Dr.C.R. Reddy as the Vice Chancellor and he assumed office on May 1, 1931. On July 1, 1931 the University College of Arts was inaugurated with two honours courses in Telugu and History. The College of Science and Technology with honours courses in physics and chemistry, was inaugurated on July 4, 1932. The teaching staff of the University was increased from six in 1931 to seventeen in 1933. During 1933-34 the buildings for the colleges were constructed and a clock tower costing Rs. 30,000 adorned the college of science and technology. In July 1933 technology courses were started. The University Library which initially had 7000 volumes till 1928 had 23000 volumes by 1934 and a qualified librarian was appointed on July 1, 1934. The first Convocation was held in 1927 with Radhakrishnan as the chief

guest. "I firmly believe," said Radhakrishnan on the occasion, "that if any part of India is capable of developing an effective sense of unity it is the Andhra. Our generosity of spirit and openness of mind are well known. Our social instinct and suggestibility are still active." Sir C.V.Raman delivered the oration at the second convocation in 1928 at which Radhakrishnan was conferred an honorary doctorate degree.

It was university's good fortune that it had in its early years two great visionaries, Dr C.R.Reddy and Dr Radhakrishnan as Vice Chancellors. "The university is lucky" said Prof N.K.Siddhanta, "in having a Vice Chancellor like Dr Reddy as its administrative head and none of us failed to admire his buoyant enthusiasm for the work of the institution and his pride in its success... a good part of the success was due to the communication of the Head's enthusiasm to all his colleagues who appeared to have unbounded confidence in him. Here we felt was the nearest approach to a happy family that all Universities should endeavour to be." Sir C.V.Raman hailed Dr.C.R.Reddy's leadership and said that "by his personality and his example Reddy has been able as perhaps no Indian with the exception of Sir Asutosh Mukherjee to instill into a body of scholars that idealism for which he himself stands. And so long as that idealism that love of truth, impels the University, no one need fear for its future." Rajaji described Dr.C.R.Reddy as an extraordinary Vice-Chancellor. Journalist N.Raghunathan called Reddy a 'statesman of education'.

As Dr. C.V.Raman wrote "The work of these two leaders of Andhra will never perish. These two Andhras have not only succeeded in infusing into the minds of Andhradesa a love and regard for the University with which their names are connected but have succeeded in drawing to it the support of those influentially connected with Andhra."

Three Bharat Ratnas – Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Dr.C.V.Raman and Dr.M.Visvesvaraya, had worked in the Andhra University in the 30s of the last century and nurtured it into a famous centre of higher learning. Dr. C.R.Reddy returned to the university after Radhakrishnan's departure in 1934 and was its Vice Chancellor till he left for Mysore in 1949.

Andhra University, with such a rise to eminence in the field of higher education, was waiting for K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar to come and enrich it with another dimension to its destiny. CR Reddy made the right decision at the most appropriate time. In inviting Srinivasa Iyengar to Waltair the Vice-Chancellor had a larger vision, a goal he set not only for the Andhra University but also for the field of education and beyond. "The light of Pondicherry to spread all over the world," declared CR Reddy. " I hail Sri Aurobindo as the sole sufficing genius of the age," and in 1948, a year after Iyengar joined the university, CR Reddy presented, in absentia the Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy National Prize to Sri Aurobindo at the convocation in 1948. The renowned orator-scholar was at his brilliant best when he presented the citation in which he called Prof Iyengar's work on Sri Aurobindo "a splendid biography a book written in a style of superlative charm and power and one which could without exaggeration be regarded as masterpiece in English literature."

Accepting the honour Sri Aurobindo in his message said "Andhra University has been created by a patriotic Andhra initiative, situated not in a Presidency capital but in an Andhra town and serving consciously the life of a regional people. The home of a robust and virile and energetic race, great by the part it had played in the past in the political life of India, great by its achievements in art, architecture, sculpture, music, Andhra looks back upon imperial memories, a place in the succession of empires and imperial dynasties which reigned over a large part of the country; it looks back on the more recent memory of the glories of the last Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, a magnificent record for any people. Your University can take its high position as a center of light and learning, knowledge and culture which can train the youth of Andhra to be worthy of their forefathers; the great past should lead to a future as great or even greater. Not only Science but Art, not only book-knowledge and information but growth in culture and character are parts of a true education; to help the individual to develop his capacities, to help in the forming of thinkers and creators and men of vision and action of the future, this is a part of its work."

Teacher *to* and *for* humanity

A. Prasanna Kumar

President, Centre for Policy Studies
(Former Rector, Andhra University)

We cannot always control events, but we can always control our attitude towards events,” remarked ‘ Sarvepalle Radhakrishnan in 1963 when the then US President, John F. Kennedy, expressed disappointment at the rain that spoilt the warm reception the latter had arranged to India’s Head of State.

It was not the first time for Kennedy to make note of such words of wisdom. Ten years earlier, as Senator, he had made a note of a sentence from Radhakrishnan’s address to the US Congress as the Vice-President of India: “No society is static; no law is unchanging; and no constitution is permanent. Given time and patience, radical changes may happen both in human nature and in systems of society which reflect human nature.”

At the other end of the ideological spectrum, the Soviet dictator and the coldest of cold warriors, Joseph Stalin, was moved to tears when Radhakrishnan, the then Ambassador of India to the Soviet Union, patted Stalin on the cheek and advised him to take care of his health. “He is the only man,” the stone-hearted dictator confessed, “who treats me not as a monster but as a human being.”

The builder of the “rainbow bridge” between the age-old wisdom of India and the new knowledge of the West, as Radhakrishnan was hailed, became almost a ‘cult figure’ in Europe and America. His philosophy stemmed from a fusion of Indian and Western thought and his outlook presented a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.

In 1904, philosophy chose Radhakrishnan - born at Tiruttani (Tamil Nadu) on September 5, 1888 - to be its student when the lad passed the Intermediate examination in first class. That his cousin passed on his textbooks in psychology, logic and ethics was an accident that prompted the poor youngster to choose BA in philosophy. If he had money, he might have chosen, some other course. Poverty made his early life hard. But it could not corrode his spirit or dampen his zest for intellectual pursuits. Poverty had once saved him from the jaws of death when a highway robber searched on the boy’s person in vain for gold ornaments. Finding only peanuts in his pocket the robber changed his mind and let Radhakrishnan go. Otherwise he would have been pushed into a nearby well. The family, was so poor that there was no money to buy banana leaves on which food was usually served and the family members ate off the floor after cleaning it! He borrowed money and even auctioned his university medals to maintain the family. The ‘unseen hand’ as Radhakrishnan chose’ to describe God’s will always guided his life. Equally interesting was the fact that for want of a post he was first ‘appointed in a temporary vacancy as Malayalam Master in the Madras Presidency College. Years of hardship preceded’ the young lecturer’s upward career graph. His output was prolific and of a high quality. His article on the Gita secured for him the appreciation of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and writings on Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, the “grateful admiration” of India’s first Nobel laureate. Tagore’s, work was “a mystical torrent” that paved the way towards transcendence synthesised “the ideals of Indian philosophy, religion and art”. Radhakrishnan was convinced that Tagore was God’s gift to India. Another great influence on him was Mahatma Gandhi, the masterpiece volume on whom Radhakrishnan edited in 1939. He wanted to revise it and present it to Gandhiji on his 80th birthday on October 2, 1949, but as the editor wrote, “Fates decreed otherwise and it has now become a memorial volume.” Earlier, when he went to Gandhiji for permission to dedicate the volume. to him, the latter said:

“Who am I? What is my service? You are my Krishna, I am your Arjuna.” Professorship at Mysore and Calcutta and lectures at Oxford proclaimed his credentials as a philosopher and teacher of rare eminence. The farewell he received at Mysore in 1921 was one of the most memorable events in his life. Detaching the horses from the carriage in which he was to travel to the railway station,

the students pulled it themselves to the destination. The platform was flooded with flowers and people and the compartment' with roses as Mysore gave a tearful send-off to the young professor of 32 summers. Calcutta honoured him no less, and as King George V Professor, Radhakrishnan earned the admiration of such stalwarts like Asutosh Mukherjee and ,. Brajendranath Seal.

Radhakrishnan delivered the first convocation address of Andhra University in 1927 and received an honorary degree at its convocation the next year. Even now people recall with pride and nostalgia the outstanding work he did as Vice-Chancellor at Waltair shaping the infant Andhra University into a famous centre of learning. His son, S. Gopal, the eminent historian who passed away recently, records in his biography of his father that he brought to Andhra University eminent teachers and researchers from far and near. Sir C.V. Raman was co-opted as a member of the syndicate and made honorary professor of physics; Sir M. Visvesvaraya was put in charge of technology; S.C. Chawlawas brought from Lahore for mathematics and T.R. Seshadri for chemistry, besides Humayun Kabir, Hiren Mukherjee and V.K.R.V. Rao for humanities.

Interestingly, Radhakrishnan invited C.K. Nayudu, 'the Tendulkar' of those times, to coach cricketers at Waltair and the legendary Nayudu accepted the offer though the plan did not materialise as the VC had left Waltair in 1935. The greatest tribute to Radhakrishnan as VC came from Raman himself: "He waved a hand and a university has sprung up. In his frail body is enshrined a great spirit - a great spirit which we have learned to revere and admire, even to worship."

What an intellectual feast it was when in 1934 Tagore delivered the Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer Endowment Lecture at the university on 'Man', with Radhakrishnan in the presidential chair!

This teacher to and for humanity, who passed away on April 17, 1975, was indeed the 'pride of Andhra University, which celebrates with fervour his birthday as Teachers Day. Recalling the glory of those halcyon days is, of course, a matter of pride to the city of Visakhapatnam also. It is a different matter that such a great man has a small bust in an inconspicuous place on the Andhra University campus as a memorial for him!.

(The Hindu, Vizag Edition, October 14, 2002)

THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Some leaders of the ruling NDA government claimed that corruption has been checked, even eliminated at the top level, during the last eighteen months. Ironically enough, around that time was organized the annual 'Vigilance Week' with a directive from the union government to focus on 'fight against corruption', with the motto being 'prevention is better than cure'.

The last week of October witnessed Vigilance Week functions everywhere with prominent persons inflicting pompous messages on captive audience in public sector and government organizations. The call, loud and clear, was of course to 'eradicate' corruption, reminding one of the proverbial dilemma of the priest: 'Everyone wants to go to heaven, but nobody is willing to die.' Lectures and meetings were followed by pledge-taking by every employee similar to the oath taking done by elected representatives and appointed ministers at the time of assumption of office.

Kautilya in his 'Arthashastra' wrote that 'government servants could enrich themselves improperly in two ways, either by cheating the government or exploiting the public.' Corruption goes beyond pecuniary gratifications, he said. India is among the most corrupt countries ranking 85/175 on the scale prepared by Transparency International. According to a recent survey done by an international consultancy firm there is a high percentage of fraudulent practices such as money laundering and bribery in India which are considered risky for the foreign investor.

Former Central Vigilance Commissioner N.Vittal explained how the process of corrupting institutions degenerated into institutionalization of corruption with public response keeping step with it in three stages— criticizing corruption in the early years of democratic India followed by tolerating it in the years that followed climaxing in honouring the corrupt with high positions and even awards. Vittal was forthright in his indictment that those "who are known to be corrupt behave like angry porcupines the moment someone mentions it." In his incisive study he declared that people 'cannot go to any public organization or office today and get the services which they are supposed to get without either paying bribe or bringing influence by way of recommendations or references from VIPs.' From the cradle to the grave is certainly not a cliché in the case of corruption because getting a birth or death certificate without greasing the palm of the government employee is impossible.

Deinstitutionalization of the deeply entrenched system of corruption should be at the top of the agenda for the government. Reform must start with electoral politics in which alliances and seat adjustments pave the way for mobilization and misuse of money, muscle power and liquor. The wheels of government are lubricated by liquor which is a major source of revenue for the state and the main cause of misery for millions of families with women being the worst victims. A former Prime Minister described poverty as a form of violence against the poor. Another Prime Minister admitted in Parliament that "bureaucratic oppression, technocratic tyranny, crass inefficiency, bribery, jobbery, nepotism, corruption and the million other malfeasances afflict the poor of our villages, towns and cities."

There was no surprise that Anna Hazare's movement which had raised high hopes of reining in corruption fizzled out as the fight against corruption is a Sisyphean ordeal. It is time the Prime Minister initiated steps for a drastic overhaul of the administrative system. The image he has built up abroad for himself and his government has begun to fade and the NDA government that came into power eighteen months ago promising to usher in 'acche din' is now being described as 'a false dawn'. The failure of Indian state and society to check corruption and eradicate poverty is due to many factors the most conspicuous of which is the insincerity of the government and apathy and indifference of civil society. Higher GDP growth and FDI's may help India in becoming an economic giant. But unless the polity is cleansed of the evil of corruption India will remain a mere electoral democracy. The time to act is now.

(CPS Bulletin December 2, 2015)

CONSTITUTIONAL MORALITY AND CONSCIENCE KEEPERS

Sixty six years after the Constitution of India came into force the question whether ‘the Constitution has failed us or we failed the Constitution’ continues to be debated. To the world’s longest constitution one hundred amendments have been made, averaging more than one a year, and a number of such acts are on the anvil. In a polity driven by seekers of power and worshippers of Mammon terms like constitutional morality and conscience keepers are oxymorons in political lexicon, deserving no place in public discourse.

January 26 is a red letter day for India. On that day came into force the Constitution of India drafted by the Constituent Assembly which met from December 9, 1946 to November 26, 1949 to draft the historic document. Stalwart leaders and legal luminaries enlivened the Constituent Assembly’s debates and discussions with their wisdom and ‘there was hardly any shade of public opinion not represented in the Assembly’. The Preamble to the Constitution is a classic and concise proclamation of the goals and ideals of the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India. Granville Austin commended the Constitution for its ‘ideals of consensus, nonviolent, non-coercive self-rule,’ upholding the ‘rich, deep and undogmatic traditions of Indian culture’ and absorption of ‘the most advanced intellectual concepts’. During the first two decades praise was received from many an expert on India’s democratic experiment. Samuel Huntington described India as a ‘consolidated democracy’ while a Consociational Interpretation of ‘The Puzzle of Indian Democracy’ was provided by Arend Lijphart. Though it was criticized as ‘too long, detailed and rigid’ and ‘over centralized’ the Constitution was acclaimed for providing mechanisms and institutions for social and economic transformation in the world’s most heterogeneous and largest democracy and for ensuring the unity and integrity of India which was never a single nation before 1950.

But as B.R.Ambedkar cautioned “However good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it happen to be a bad lot. Who can say how the people of India and their parties will behave?” The rot did set in sooner than feared. The rapid decline of constitutional institutions and the spread of corruption at all levels reduced Indian democracy to ‘a land damned by a long litany of ills’. Rajni Kothari lamented the ‘wholesale criminalization of politics; increasing communal orientation and highly corrupt system of governance’. Nani Palkhivala aptly pointed out that ‘constitutional morality is no less essential than constitutional legality’ stressing that ‘we must get away from the legal solubility of all problems’. As Soli Sorabjee observed “Judicial activism must not be confused with judicial showmanship or judicial adventurism” adding that PIL is not a pill for every ill.

It was constitutional morality that enabled, to a considerable extent, Indian democracy to become a role model for newly liberated countries of Asia and Africa. Conventions and customs were adhered to and political leaders and civil servants displayed accountability and responsibility in the discharge of their duties. The words of former Chief Justice of India R.C.Lahoti that “We, the judges on the Bench hearing the matter, felt that we were answerable to the Constitution and to our conscience and we had no other option but to defend the Constitution against the attack on it” apply to all working in and for the government or holding public office. They are the conscience keepers of India’s Constitution and custodians of citizens’ rights and welfare. As Indians we are known for failing to use opportunities and for converting wealth into waste. Republic Day reminds us that ultimately we, the people of India, who gave the Constitution to ourselves six decades ago, are its conscience keepers entrusted with the responsibility of protecting and promoting the substance and spirit of the Constitution. It is our duty to reignite the torch of constitutional morality.

(CPS Bulletin February 2, 2016)

THE WORLD AT WAR WITH ITSELF new threats to global peace and security

In world politics the ambitious designs of great powers are, without doubt, the main cause for conflicts that take a heavy toll of life and property. Two years ago in the centenary year of the outbreak of the first world war scholars and historians recalled how it lasted for 1565 days claiming 17 million lives and rendering as many disabled and homeless. 'Never again' cried the traumatized people of Europe when the first global conflict ended in 1918. The victorious powers called it 'the war to end all wars'. No less ironical was the fact that the treaty that followed came to be known as 'the peace that ended all peace'. In less than two decades broke out the second world war in which 60 million people perished. The two world wars resulted in the collapse of empires, the loss of millions of precious lives, the destruction of property, private and public and drastic cartographic changes across the world. The two world wars bore testimony to the hubris and hypocrisy of the so called great powers.

Notwithstanding the two global conflicts the twentieth century witnessed the liberation of colonies, the rise of democracy, remarkable progress of science and technology and huge growth in population. It is now an overloaded and overheated planet facing such daunting challenges as poverty, backwardness, climate change and terrorism. From 1945, the year in which the United Nations was created 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war', till 2014 nearly 55 million people died in wars and conflicts in different parts of the world. Terrorism accounted for 170,000 lives in the first decade of the 21st century. The year 2014 witnessed a record 82% increase in deaths due to terrorist attacks numbering 32,727. In that year was born the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq which has risen with alarming speed as a dangerous terrorist outfit striking terror in different parts of the world, resulting in loss of innocent lives. Hard to imagine the intensity of destruction and damage across the globe if cyber attackers target the undersea cable infrastructure.

The cold war may have ended in the late eighties but not the rivalry between the super powers. Russia, in spite of the collapse of the Soviet Union, is still a formidable power. The manner in which Crimea has been grabbed and Ukraine kept under check by Russia from getting into western domain confirms our worst fears about return of cold war politics. China is flexing its muscles in western pacific and Indian ocean area causing concern to many countries, the United States in particular. China's territorial designs continue to expand and the 'dragon' shifts its strategic gears with dexterity. If it is 'string of pearls' strategy to strangulate India in this part of the world, it is 'the first island change' in the pacific encompassing the Philippines, Japan and Taiwan, all under the protective umbrella of the USA. How to deter China in the pacific and checkmate its rising influence in Asia is the biggest challenge for the United States. Let's not forget that forty five years ago when Henry Kissinger on his sensational secret visit to China, shook hands with Premier Zhou En Lai the latter said "This will shake the world." The USA, wrote Kissinger 'is an Asian power as many Asian powers demand it.' Today the US cannot hide its lurking fear that China may topple it from the pinnacle of global political hierarchy.

Wars and conflicts in the 20th century occurred mainly due to ideological and racial differences. The great powers indulged in persecution and exploitation of poor nations and peoples and asserted their superiority by controlling international organizations including the United Nations. As a scholar aptly quipped when two small countries fight and take the dispute to the UN, the dispute disappears; when a big power and a small nation refer their conflict to the world body the small nation disappears and when two super powers fight the UN itself disappears! Perpetual peace is a myth, history reminds us. If the human mind is the source of war and conflict, just a few of the nearly seven and a half billion homo sapiens are enough to blow up the planet to smithereens. Alas! not even one messiah of peace like Gandhi, or Mandela or Mother Teresa is around to give humanity hope and solace!

(CPS Bulletin April 2, 2016)

Narendra Modi completes two years as Prime Minister

Two years in office for a Prime Minister chosen for five years is, of course, not a period enough for evaluation. It is not even the half way mark. That too in a large democracy full of puzzling problems and glaring contradictions, assessments and evaluations of leaders' performance are hard to make. Only the small screen claims and demonstrates its capability to put any person in the dock and pass judgments, except perhaps death penalty. It's all instant analysis that is immediately forgotten or ignored.

It is exactly two years ago that Narendra Modi was catapulted to the highest office in the government in the historic 2014 election in which the world's largest electorate participated. The ten year lack-lustre Congress- led UPA rule, tainted by charges of corruption at the top, provided the BJP with an unprecedented opportunity to convert people's mood into vote and vote into power. In a democracy where elections are to a large extent decided by waves and charismatic leadership, Narendra Modi's emergence as a leader who could mobilize people's support through oratory and whirlwind tours helped the Bharatiya Janata Party to form the NDA government.

Narendra Modi began with a bang. He caused eyebrows to be raised by inviting Pakistan's Prime Minister and other important leaders of the region for his colourful swearing-in-ceremony. He embarked upon an elaborately designed programme of tours to countries, big and small, distant and neighbouring to promote India's image and economic interests through foreign investments. Abroad his popularity soared, especially among NRIs. Twenty four months of frequent foreign tours by the Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy have neither raised India's stature as a role player in global politics nor contributed substantially to India's economic development, according to expert analysts.

The roots of successful foreign policy, of any country, lie in domestic politics and stability. The charge that the Prime Minister has not visited different parts of the country to better understand the problems of the people, especially those living in agency areas and remote villages is not without substance. The Prime Minister has hardly spent time for promoting the relations between the Union and State governments. The first Prime Minister thoughtfully built up a regular channel of communication with state government through 'letters to the Chief Ministers.' The unitary bias of the Constitution was sought to be neutralized through some healthy conventions during the first fifteen years of our democracy.

Narendra Modi's strength lies in his energetic tours and inspiring speeches. He is hard working and fond of innovative programmes. TINA principle (there is no alternative) is his biggest advantage. At the same time the Prime Minister, called *primus inter pares* (first among equals) gives the impression that he doesn't treat his colleagues as at least near equals. The prestige of the three major branches of government has plummeted to the rock bottom. Parliamentary sessions bear testimony to it. The Chief Justice of the Apex Court publicly shedding tears shatters the little confidence people have in our judiciary. The executive meekly surrenders to the political masters for its survival.

Democratic decentralization is still a distant dream. What is happening in most of the states is no different from what has been taking place in national politics during the last fifty years. Dynasty and sycophancy, once the monopoly of the Congress durbar, have come to dominate governance at the state level and many chief ministers are authoritarian in their style of functioning. Our elected representatives are seen crawling, if not prostrating, in public before their leaders.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi cannot alone change overnight the plight of the beleaguered Indian democracy. Politics is too serious a matter to be left entirely to politicians. Narendra Modi can and should take the lead in harnessing the untapped India's youth power to stem the rot and give the nation a new direction. After two years of 'successful foreign tours' he must now begin to focus on national development and the process of rebuilding India. The next three years of Modi's Prime Ministership will be keenly watched.

(CPS Bulletin June 2, 2016)

MAKING DEMOCRACY SAFE FOR THE WORLD

Almost a hundred years ago, on April 2, 1917 to be precise American President Woodrow Wilson sought the approval of the American Congress for declaration of war against Germany so that the world “be made safe for democracy.” Wilson’s appeal was acclaimed and approved because Germany’s cruel submarine warfare killed ‘many peaceful and innocent lives in one of the darkest periods of modern history’. Since then ‘making the world safe for democracy’ has remained one of the famous quotes in public discourse. Ironically enough the happenings, during the last three decades and more, in the name of freedom and democracy seem to have necessitated an alteration of the Wilsonian maxim into that ‘democracy be made safe for the world.’ Not only because of the fact that during the past three decades 24% of the world’s democracies have broken down and the world is experiencing ‘a slow degradation of political rights and legal procedures through electoral fraud and the rise of authoritarian leaders’ but also due to the fact that democracy is providing space for demagogues and corrupt elements to exploit the vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the society. Authoritarianism, crony capitalism, dynastic rule and primordial loyalties have emaciated democracy to such an extent that rule of law and respect for basic human rights have been marginalized.

‘Freedom itself is not free’ - is no longer a cliché but a threat looming ominously on the political horizon. According to Freedom House that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom and human rights ‘the state of freedom is worsening significantly in every part of the world’. Only 89 countries out of 195 are designated Free and they represent 40 percent of global population, 51 countries are deemed ‘Not Free’ and 55 Partly Free. 125 countries are described as electoral democracies. Freedom of expression and civil society rights continue to decline. Added to this is the growing restriction on freedom of movement – all in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948.

Public concern over the future of democracy is growing as evidenced by the works of scholars and analysts expressing doubts and anxiety about the future of democracy. *Democracy in Decline?* edited by Larry Diamond and Marc Plattener states that ‘liberal democracy is in trouble’ and the democratic world is in ‘recession.’ In his review of the book in *Foreign Affairs* issue of May-June 2016 John Ikenberry writes about ‘the undertow of dashed expectations that seems to define the fate of modern democracy: political gridlock, economic stagnation, growing inequality fraying social contracts, reactionary nationalism and rising authoritarianism. They make ‘the stunning observation’ that the world is experiencing ‘a slow degradation of political rights and legal procedures through electoral fraud and the rise of authoritarian leaders.’ Marc Plattener in his article in the June issue of *Democracy & Society* identifies three reasons for doubts about democracy 1) the growing sense that advanced democracies are in trouble in terms of their economic and political performance at home 2) the new self-confidence and seeming vitality of some authoritarian countries and 3) the shifting geopolitical balance between democracies and their rivals. In the May 2-15 issue of *New York* Andrew Sullivan writing under the title “Our democracy has never been so ripe for tyranny” refers to the ‘dystopian election’ campaign that has unfolded in the United States. He begins with a quote from Plato’s *Republic* that “tyranny is probably established out of no other regime than democracy.” The vicious campaign in the run up to the US Presidential election has unleashed forces that threaten to deepen the fissures in American society.

Democracy has been hijacked in both advanced and developing countries by demagogues who thrive on evocation of hatred and spread of intolerance. India’s decline as a democracy has been alarmingly steep. Institutions have decayed and professional autonomy has collapsed. The state is now perceived as the main source of all chronic afflictions such as violence, corruption and poverty. Still India’s stability as a democracy is vital not only for Asia but for the entire world. It is a testing time for the nation as threats continue to emanate from across the border to India’s security while anti-national forces pose a serious challenge to the unity and integrity of India. Can India come out of the present morass? Why not? Civil society should help politics in making the impossible possible.

(CPS Bulletin August 2, 2016)

Nonviolence is a 'living force'

"The world is terminally ill with violence", writes Arun Gandhi in his foreword to 'The Search for a Nonviolent Future' by Michael N. Nagler, adding that "when the disease assumes a virulent form we plead for a remedy; but when we are cured we go back to our old destructive ways." Nagler, initiated early in his life into the study of Mahatma Gandhi's life and work, began to realise that "Gandhi was at once much greater and yet more relevant - even to my own little life - than I had imagined." Convinced that Satyagraha does not suppress reason but frees it from inertia, Nagler writes that Satyagraha does not 'enslave, it compels reason to be free.' His mission is to make more accessible 'the vast unexplored possibilities of that force which establishes its sovereignty over prejudice, hatred, and other baser passions'. To a world divided by hatred and conflicting ideologies and devastated by World Wars and mindless violence, Mahatma Gandhi's panacea was Nonviolence. Satyagraha launched by him generated intellectual excitement and debate among philosophers, thinkers, scholars and scientists across the world.

Amazed by Gandhiji's 'invincible' calm and imperturbability', Edward Thompson declared that 'not since Socrates has the world seen his equal for absolute self-control and composure'. Probing the philosophical foundations of Nonviolence C.E.M.Joad raised and answered the question 'what consists the most characteristic quality of our species? Some would say, in moral virtue; some, in godliness; some, in courage; some, in the power of self-sacrifice. Aristotle found it in reason'. But Aristotle's answer gives, according to Joad, part of the truth, but not the whole. 'The essence of reason lies in objectivity and detachment', said Joad who found in the 'virtue of detachment from self the source of Gandhi's authority'. Hailing Gandhi as a 'moral genius' Joad wished that Gandhi's method should grow 'more powerful than the forces of destruction, if civilization is to survive.'

In the words of Nagler, it is a science if there ever was one but it cannot make predictions as nearly as mechanics or electricity, for Satyagraha is what Gandhi called "a living force," not a physical one. He is a social scientist, explained Richard Gregg, because 'he follows social truth by the scientific method of observation, intuitional and intellectual hypothesis and experimental test. Unlike western social scientists he tested the hypothesis on himself. He is not a mere scientist; but a great social scientist because of his choice of problems, because of his methods of solution, because of his persistence and thoroughness of his search and because of the profundity of human heart.'

When asked about the experiences that influenced his life, the Mahatma replied "Such experiences are a multitude. I recalled particularly one experience that changed the course of my life that fell to my lot seven days after I had arrived in South Africa. At Maritzburg when the beds were issued, the guard came and turned me out and asked me to go into the van compartment. I would not go and the train steamed away leaving me shivering in cold. Now the creative experience comes there. I was afraid for my very life. I entered the dark waiting-room. There was a white man in the room. I was afraid of him. What was my duty, I asked myself. Should I go back to India, should I go forward, with God as my helper, and face whatever was in store for me? I decided to stay and suffer. My active Nonviolence began from that date." From that day in 1893 till that fateful Friday, 30th January 1948, Gandhiji was confronted with violence in its virulent and subhuman manifestations---abuse, ridicule, insult, physical assault, and eventually assassination. The Mahatma remained unperturbed throughout these fifty five years. Instead he prayed and pleaded with the authorities concerned not to punish them, whether it was the sentry who kicked him off the footpath or the white racists who thrashed him mercilessly or his own countrymen who conspired to eliminate him physically. Nonviolence is ultimately a way of life that men and women live by said Martin Luther King, because 'of the sheer morality of its claim.' If the world is to have peace, declared Gandhiji, nonviolence is the means to that end and there is no other. That living force which has inspired millions of people including Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela continues to glow as a beacon of hope and peace for humanity. *(CPS Bulletin October 2, 2016)*

CHANGING GLOBAL SCENARIO

testing times for India

“I identify the descent of the West as the most important development of the twentieth century,” wrote Harvard historian Niall Ferguson in his book *The War of the World*. Describing the Second World War as ‘the greatest man-made catastrophe of all time’, Ferguson cautioned a decade ago that “We shall avoid another century of conflict only if we understand the forces that caused the last one – the dark forces that conjure up ethnic conflict and imperial rivalry out of economic crisis, and in doing so negate our common humanity. They are forces that stir within us still.”

Are those dreaded ‘dark forces’ at work now turning the world upside down? Countries big and small seem to have been bitten by the bug of ethnic nationalism which *The Economist* of November 19-25, 2016 has described as ‘dangerous nationalism’ of which Donald Trump is the ‘latest recruit’. Trump’s astonishing victory in the American presidential election is a numbing disaster for a large number of people and the influential print and electronic media of the world’s most powerful nation. The U.S. will take quite some time to recover from the traumatic effects of the triumph of Trump. For the western world it was another stunning blow after Brexit had demonstrated how the anger and frustration of the ‘silent majority’ could topple a confident government led by a competent prime minister. Marine Le Pen, President of National Front (FN) of France warned “Today the United States, tomorrow France.” Greatly worried about ‘Islamification of France’ Le Pen predicts ‘Frexit’. Adding chill to the new cold war winds Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed the election of Trump and declared that “Russia is ready and wants to restore fully fledged relations with the U.S.” America’s woes seem to be growing with Russia and China challenging American interest in Europe and the Pacific. “The United States has not faced a more diverse and complex array of crises since the end of the Second World War,” wrote Henry Kissinger last year, as quoted in *Foreign Affairs* (Sept-Oct 2016).

Power, it is said, is a modifier of positions. Donald Trump has already toned down his rhetoric. He may come up with his own doctrine for the U.S. to outwit the expansionism of Putin. The White House can convert hawks into doves and make presidents forget pre-poll utterances and promises.

India also figures in the list of countries propagating the ‘dangerous nationalism’. This is in sharp contrast to India’s reputation of the past. From Jawaharlal Nehru who pioneered India’s role as a peace maker in world affairs through non-alignment to Narendra Modi, all prime ministers have made sincere efforts and significant contribution for the promotion of peace. Domestic political stability and pluralistic culture lent credibility to India’s foreign policy even in the most difficult times. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is India’s undisputed leader, enjoying advantages which none of his predecessors had during the last three decades. His frequent foreign tours confirm his commitment to India’s foreign policy goal of ‘good relations with all countries and close relations with neighbours’ enunciated decades ago. The prime minister must, however, ensure that India’s secular values and pluralistic culture are not corroded by domestic policies. India’s rank is low not only on the WDI but also in the survey presented annually by Freedom House. The tag of dangerous nationalism being attached to India is unfortunate. A nation that was respected for its adherence to ideals of peace and non-alignment during the dreadful decades of cold war politics knows well how to keep away from ‘the dangerous wave of ethnic nationalism’ spreading across the world. The prime minister should rise to the occasion and lead from the front in effecting the necessary course correction.

(CPS Bulletin December 2, 2016)

INDIA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION

finetuning maritime diplomacy

With Indian Ocean Region emerging as a complex hub of maritime activity and rivalry, India is finetuning its maritime diplomacy to meet the new challenges. If the 21st century belongs to the oceans, the Indian Ocean, the smallest but most crowded of the three, with busy sea lanes and several densely populated littoral states, has emerged as the hub of global trade and commerce and a theatre of great power rivalry. Experts on strategic affairs describe how it has become ‘an area of acute tension and a zone of peril in which not only navies of the littoral states but also the nuclear weapon carriers of seven states—USA, Russia, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel ply here.’ Robert Kaplan writes that the Greater Indian Ocean ‘may comprise a map as iconic to the new century as Europe was to the last.’ He quotes the late British historian C.R.Boxer who wrote that ‘Monsoon Asia, at the cross roads of the Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific, will demographically and strategically be a hub of the twenty-first century’.

The Indian Ocean came into prominence with the withdrawal of Great Britain from the zone and the entry of USA to fill ‘the vacuum’ created by the former’s exit. Two lady prime ministers, Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka and Indira Gandhi of India, asserted the autonomy of the littoral states of the IOR by enunciating the zone of peace theory. As strategic affairs analyst C.Raja Mohan observed ‘the zone of peace was a continuation of the anti-imperial struggle to rid the Indian Ocean of the ruinous great power intervention and rivalry that had gone on for centuries’. A shift in American policy towards India began resulting in steady growth of strategic relationship between India and the United States. The US desiring to make ‘an elegant’ retreat from IOR wants India to take its place in checkmating China’s designs and ambitions. China has made it abundantly clear that no stone would be left unturned and no pearl left unused in designing the string/chain in the IOR to strangle India politically, strategically and economically.

Only three weeks ago newspapers carried the statement of US Admiral Harry Harris that the relations between India and the US have been improving with the US acknowledging the surveillance capabilities of Indian Navy of Chinese submarines. “There is sharing of information by the US and India on the Chinese maritime movement in the Indian Ocean Region”, said the American Admiral. Indian Navy has stepped up the induction of submarines in response to China’s growing presence in the region, according to reliable sources. Against that backdrop Chinese President Xi Jinping’s recent statement that China does not believe in ‘zero sum game’ but thinks that the time has come for ‘win-win cooperation between nations,’ assumes significance. As analyst C.Uday Bhaskar observes “One fact is irrefutable. If this century is indeed to be an Asian century with China as the pre-eminent economic entity – then the texture of the Beijing-Delhi axis is critical to the realization of this exigency”.

The prime minister’s foreign policy initiatives have received the approbation of expert analysts for embarking on a new trajectory of connectivity with nations big and small, discarding some outdated concepts and theories. For instance, India now seeks ‘strategic influence’ in place of ‘strategic autonomy’ in the IOR. To create a favourable maritime environment India needs to involve the public in promoting maritime awareness. As suggested by the leading analyst, ‘the national security establishment and the political class, in particular, should shed inertia moving away from traditional approach in international affairs’. India’s quest for global role player status is intertwined with the Indian Ocean environment.

(CPS Bulletin February 2, 2017)

PRESIDENT OF INDIA - A MERE FIGUREHEAD OR CUSTODIAN OF NATIONAL VALUES?

Who will succeed Pranab Mukherjee as the fourteenth President of India in July 2017 is the question heard everywhere. With quiet dignity, the veteran leader and the first Bengali to hold the highest office of the Head of State, Pranab Mukherjee has completed four years and eight months of his five year tenure. Except the first President, Rajendra Prasad, no president was elected for two terms. Of the twelve presidents who succeeded him, two presidents, Zakir Hussain and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, died in office, the former holding office for less than two years and the latter less than three years.

With independent India opting for the Westminster type of parliamentary democracy, the Constituent Assembly became the theatre for lively debates and discussions in designing the architecture of Indian democracy, from December 9, 1946 to November 26, 1949. Jawaharlal Nehru and B.R. Ambedkar clinched the issue in favour of 'the more cohesive, more responsible and responsive' parliamentary type of government as against the presidential system. Several crucial and politically sensitive issues were sorted out with clarity and sagacity thanks to the wisdom of the Chairman of the Drafting Committee Dr B.R. Ambedkar, and the dedication and perseverance of such legal luminaries as B. N. Rau and Alladi Krishna Swami Ayyar. When Chairman Rajendra Prasad raised questions about the scope of presidential powers under the constitution, Alladi clarified unequivocally that the president of India would be like a British monarch and there "is no sphere of his functions in respect of which he can go without reference to the advice of his ministers." It was agreed that while the office of the President of India was one of 'great dignity and authority', the president would act only in consultation with his ministers, seldom like 'an umpire' between the states and the union government.

When Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar asserted that the position of Indian President would be 'analogous to the British monarch' it was implied that Walter Bagehot's famous words in his classic on the English constitution that the monarch had the right to warn, the right to encourage and the right to be consulted would be the guidelines for Indian democracy too. Despite a little turbulence in the early years in the relations between President Rajendra Prasad and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, it became abundantly clear that the Prime Minister is the ultimate authority in the parliamentary system which is also called the prime ministerial system.

It was a fascinating, though short and testing, period in the annals of Indian democracy when two men of luminous intellect and high moral integrity, adorned the two highest offices, Head of State and Head of Government. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan as President and Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister gave a new image to Indian democracy and new dimension to India's political culture. S.Gopal, biographer of both Nehru and Radhakrishnan summed it up in his inimitable style thus: 'Without violating the constitution and keeping well above party politics, he(Radhakrishnan) opened out a new horizon for the president ship. The Prime Minister was concerned with government; it was for the president to draw attention to values.' The President is the custodian of national values.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP led government, now riding a wave of success, will allay fears about growing majoritarianism and earn national goodwill by choosing Vice President Hamid Ansari, whose credentials are impeccable, for the high office of President of India. It will be a reaffirmation of our faith in the spirit of the constitution and in our pluralist culture.

(CPS Bulletin April 2, 2017)

PROTECTION OF CHERISHED VALUES AND CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS a national responsibility

The BJP government led by Narendra Modi has completed three years in office. Buoyed up by its recent electoral successes in four states, the BJP is now vigorously working out its strategy to capture power in the southern states also. With Narendra Modi's charisma undimmed even by the dramatic manner in which demonetization was done stunning the nation, adversely affecting small businesses and inconveniencing millions of people across the country, the BJP leadership is preparing the electoral roadmap for the next ten years, far beyond the 2019 general election. In Indian politics electoral 'waves' that catapult parties and leaders into power do not last long. But in the case of Narendra Modi two major advantages ensure the invulnerability of his own position and BJP's immediate political future. First is Modi's energetic leadership allied to communication skills. There is no political rival capable of matching his skills or posing a threat to his *numero uno* position. Secondly the emaciated opposition parties whose pronounced weaknesses will be Modi's added strength!

That apart there are quite a few chinks in Narendra Modi's armour which may grow into costly mistakes in the unpredictable world of politics. When Narendra Modi was sworn in, exactly three years ago, in the midst of hope and enthusiasm, the new Prime Minister aroused high expectations with a shower of promises. One of them was to alleviate the suffering of the farming community by declaring that "no one will be allowed to loot farmers." That was in 2014 when 5650 farmers committed suicide. The following year the number registered an increase of 42% with 8007 farmers ending their lives. The plight of the poor farmers continues to be pathetic. Modi's resolve to 'bring back black money', his tirade against corrupt people for their 'anti national activity' and determination to root out corruption prompted his admirers and party cadres to claim that 'the BJP rule is corruption free.' The Prime Minister touched a chord in many a heart when he proclaimed that his 'mind and body are totally devoted to making India corruption free.' The irrefutable fact, however, is that corruption has not come down though scams such as those that had rocked the previous UPA government have not surfaced. Corruption is so deeply entrenched in our body politic that nothing moves in government offices and official circles without the intervention of corrupt elements. Is it possible for a poor person to get a ration card, or a birth certificate or the family of a deceased person a death certificate without greasing the palm of the government employee/official concerned?

Many of our state governments have become dens of corruption. Sycophancy, casteism, nepotism and feudal practices lay the path to power. Dynastic rule and authoritarianism of those in power have eroded the legacy left behind by leaders of vision and integrity. Implementation of the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution can be a solution to the misrule at the state and local levels. Instead of converting non-issues into national controversies the BJP government must strive to generate national consensus on vital issues like gender justice, employment generation and national unity. As P.N. Haksar said 'it is essential to understand the concepts of pluralism and transcendence for achieving national integrity'. Granville Austin, the seer of Indian constitutional philosophy, warned against 'the exploitative nature of capitalism in India'. The Prime Minister must protect the nation against such divisive and disruptive forces aided by corporate culture in their bid to have a stranglehold on Indian politics. There is force in the charge that the government is intolerant of criticism. If criticism is the anti-septic of democracy, dissent is the essence of democratic maturity. Two years are a long time in politics, enough for Narendra Modi to put the system back on rails. Pluralism, democratic decentralization and diversity are the strengths of Indian democracy. It is the duty of the government and responsibility of every Indian citizen to protect the cherished values and constitutional norms against any threat from anywhere.

(CPS Bulletin June 2, 2017)

Platinum Jubilee of India's Independence

India had never been a nation state till August 15, 1947. It was on that day at the midnight hour that India's national flag was hoisted seventy years ago amidst jubilation by the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru with his historic 'tryst with destiny speech.' When the country was celebrating the dawn of freedom, the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was fasting and praying for communal harmony in a Muslim locality in Calcutta. The partition of India led to the eruption of terrible violence and communal riots resulting in massive loss of life and property. The new nation state emerged out of the holocaust as the world's largest democracy. What lay beneath that capacity and fortitude of the people in overcoming crises on several fronts?

The sixty two years prior to independence unveiled the fascinating story of the freedom struggle. An idea grew into a protest and small meetings led to a movement culminating in the greatest non-violent revolution in human history that liberated India from colonial rule. During that defining period, the values of cultural pluralism, secularism and tolerance and ideals of liberty, equality and justice strengthened the philosophical foundations of the future Indian state. "The basic value system of the national movement dates from that period," wrote B.R. Nanda. Those eventful six decades forced the British to leave India, with honour, of course, thanks to Mahatma Gandhi. That sixty year epic struggle began in 1885 under the leadership of A.O. Hume, an Englishman supported by some famous Parsi, Muslim and Hindu leaders. The early stalwart leaders like A.O. Hume, William Wedderburn, Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, D.E. Wacha, W.C. Bonnerjee, Annie Besant, Budruddin Tyabji, Surendranath Banerjea, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Bal Gangadhar Tilak "whose distant steps echo through the corridors of time" provided direction to the movement. The vision of Sri Aurobindo and the stirring wake-up call given by Swami Vivekananda inspired the torch bearers of freedom movement. Mahatma Gandhi arrived with a message that exemplified the value system nurtured during the first thirty years. His words delivered almost a hundred years ago are always relevant: "We must forget we are Hindus or Sikhs or Muslims or Parsis. We must be only Indians. It is of no consequence by what name we call God in our homes. In the work of the nation all Indians of all faiths are one." The strange paradox, observed Nanda, was that while Gandhiji was "deeply religious, his politics were completely secular." Rabindranath Tagore's gift of the national anthem and prayer for that heaven of freedom into which India should awake, ennobled the Indian spirit.

However the halo surrounding the role model Indian democracy lasted hardly ten years. Institutions began to decline, professional autonomy started collapsing and corruption became institutionalized at all levels. Experts called India 'a functioning anarchy' and 'a mere electoral democracy'. In the survey, annually released by Freedom House, India always ranked low, at 77 last year out of 100 while Transparency International placed India at 76 out of 168 countries on the corruption scale. India is no longer the role model democracy, 'the ancient Athens of modern Asia,' it once was. Andre Beteille cautioned against the rise of authoritarianism and anarchy in Indian politics. Experts point out that the rulers' intolerance of criticism and dissent stifles the progress of democracy.

Globally democracy has come under critical scrutiny during the last few years. Political scientist John Ikenberry of Princeton university has referred to new trends in democratic governance and how "critics often deride democracy as imperialism in new guise." India, with its bitter experience of dynastic authoritarianism and abuse of power by incorrigibly corrupt politicians and bureaucrats, must keep away from such growing anti-democratic forces. The pledge made seventy years ago 'to wipe every tear from every eye' remains unfulfilled like the ideals of liberty, equality and justice enshrined in the Constitution. In spite of many shortcomings, India is said to be on 'the pathway to greatness.' Is India moving closer to the beacon of light, though crawling at snail's pace, through the tunnel of darkness? India's bright new generation will answer that question.

(CPS Bulletin August 2, 2017)

Mahatma Gandhi and the power of Satyagraha

'Satyagraha is, perhaps the mightiest instrument on earth' said Mahatma Gandhi before leaving South Africa in June 1914. "From my childhood my life has been a struggle to extract good from evil. We should draw out gold and diamond even from mud," he once said. His stay and struggle in South Africa where he was insulted, abused and even physically assaulted have been movingly narrated by Ramachandra Guha in his monumental work *Gandhi Before India*. Gandhi was in his thirties when he was told that some of his own countrymen were conspiring to kill him. He replied with instant happiness that he would welcome it if his death would end Hindu - Muslim discord. The highest tribute given to Gandhiji was a line written to Guha by a South African friend. "You gave us a lawyer; we gave you back a Mahatma."

The Quit India Movement, the 75th anniversary of which is being celebrated all over the country this year, had severely jolted the colonial government. According to Rajmohan Gandhi, Viceroy Linlithgow reported to Winston Churchill that "Quit India was by far the most serious rebellion since that of 1857." The British Prime Minister replied with characteristic hubris that he had not become the Prime Minister of His Majesty's Government to preside over the liquidation of the British empire. Sir Winston, who went on to win the Nobel prize for literature for his writings and for 'upholding human values', asked Viceroy Wavell with unforgivable meanness why Gandhi had not died yet! The 'privilege of presiding' over the empire's end, and of conceding independence to India went to the unostentatious British prime minister Clement Attlee.

That Gandhiji could convert men/women of clay into heroes and inspire the meek and the weak to strive with dignity and self-respect for freedom was one of his lasting contributions. The world was passing through turbulent times when Gandhiji arrived on the global stage. The first world war ended with the traumatized innocent people crying 'never again.' The Russian revolution, inspired by Marx and led by Lenin, opened the door to a new philosophy while American President Woodrow Wilson went to Paris peace conference amidst pomp and hopes of peace with his famous Fourteen Points. Italy was rising as the champion of Fascism. India heralded the advent of Gandhi with Satyagraha as his weapon showing the way out of global gloom.

Gandhism was hailed as the answer to Wilson's capitalism and Lenin's communism. B.R. Nanda described Gandhi as a thinker as well as a man of action. 'He was Marx as well as Lenin of the Indian Revolution,' wrote Nanda praising Gandhi's genius for organization. In a memorable line he said that Gandhiji "converted the thirty five year old Indian National Congress from a Christmas week spectacle into a live political party." It reminds one of the famous words of Harold Laski that Marx found 'communism a chaos and left it a movement.' As William Shirer summed up Gandhiji 'left an indelible imprint through Satyagraha, his supreme achievement, and demonstrated that there was a greater power in life than force.' The Mahatma showed to humanity how the power of love and truth is beyond time and space.

(CPS Bulletin October 2, 2017)

CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

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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.

It was a part of Sankar Foundation from its inception to March 22, 2002 when it was merged with Gayatri Vidya Parishad under the chairmanship of Prof. B.Sarveswara Rao, eminent professor of Economics and former Vice Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University. On September 28, 2016 it was registered as a Society with the objective of expanding its research activities focusing in particular on public policy formulation at macro and micro levels and its impact on the people. A new Governing Body has accordingly been constituted to be guided by an Advisory Board of eminent persons.

The activities of the Centre for Policy Studies include publication of a bimonthly Bulletin, holding meetings and seminars and organizing lectures by renowned persons.

Publications of CPS :

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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, 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 submitted a report on Feedback on Subhram and Jana Chaitanya authored by Dr. Mrs. P.V.L.Ramana and Dr. Mrs. S.Rajani.
- ❖ Decennial Volume, a collection of CPS Bulletin articles was released on October 2, 2005 when CPS completed ten years along with Footprints of Divinity- A Gandhi Reader, edited by A.Prasanna Kumar and 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.
- ❖ Dialogue and Democracy- Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies (2nd in the series released by Dr M.M.Pallam Raju, Union Minister on June 29, 2012.
- ❖ The Hundredth Bulletin was released on April 16, 2013 by Cmde. C.Uday Bhaskar, former Director NMF and IDSA, Delhi.
- ❖ 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-Convener for Better Visakha as honoured guests.
- ❖ Dialogue and Democracy-Reflections on Ideas, Issues and Policies, 3rd in the series was released on May 15, 2015 by Shri Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Union Minister for Civil Aviation.
- ❖ On October 2, 2015 the twentieth anniversary of CPS was celebrated with Cmde.Uday Bhaskar as Chief Guest. A commemoration volume on the occasion of completion of 20 years by CPS and Unfashionable Thoughts by Dr.R.V.Vaidyanatha Ayyar, IAS (Retd), former Secretary HRD, Govt. of India were released.
- ❖ "Constitutional Morality: Is It a Dilemma For the State, Courts and Citizens?" D.V.Subba Rao Memorial Lecture by Shri Gopal Subramaniam was published in 2015.

- ❖ On February 18, 2016 Dr.(Mrs.) Prema Nandakumar's book 'Matter's Logic and Spirit's Dreams – A Sheaf of Essays' was released by Shri H.J.Dora, I.P.S.(Retd.), former Director General of Police, Andhra Pradesh.

Seminars/Lecture Meetings

Over 200 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 for India
- Shri Vavilala Gopalakrishnayya, freedom fighter
- Shri Khushwant Singh, author and journalist
- Shri B. Satyanarayana Reddy, Ex-Governor
- Shri N. Ram, former Editor-in-Chief, The Hindu
- Shri K. Jayachandra Reddy, former Chairman, Press Council of India
- Dr M.M. Pallam Raju, former Union Minister for HRD
- Shri Ashok Gajapathi Raju Union Minister for Civil Aviation
- Vice Admirals Raman Puri, R.P.Suthan, Anup Singh, Anil Chopra, Satish Soni, H.C.S.Bisht
- Cmde C. Uday Bhaskar former Director NMF and IDSA
- Dr.C.Raja Mohan Director Carnegie India
- Shri P.S.Rammohan Rao, I.P.S., former D.G.P. and Governor, Tamil Nadu.
- Shri T.R. Prasad, IAS, former Cabinet Secretary
- Dr. E.A.S. Sarma, I.A.S. (Retd.) former Secretary Govt. of India
- Shri T.S. Krishna Murthy, former Chief Election Commissioner
- Shri C.S.Rao, I.A.S. (Retd.) former Chairman IRDA
- Dr. Y.Venugopala Reddy former Governor, RBI
- Dr. Amrik Singh renowned educationist
- Shri H.J.Dora, I.P.S., former Director General of Police, A.P.
- Shri C.Anjaneya Reddy, I.P.S., Chairman A.P.Tourism Development Corpn.
- Shri Surendra Mohan, Ex-M.P.
- Shri K.P.Fabian, former Ambassador
- Shri Amit Dasgupta, former Ambassador
- Shri B.VR.Mohan Reddy, NASSCOM Chairman
- Prof. K.C.Reddy former Chairman A.P.S.C.H.E.
- The first Dr Abid Hussain Memorial Lecture was delivered under the auspices of Centre for Policy Studies by Cmde C.Uday Bhaskar, Director Society for Policy Studies Delhi on February 10 2014.
- Prof RVR Chandrasekhara Rao former Vice Chancellor Dr B.R. Ambedkar Open University delivered the D.Ch. Tirupathi Raju Memorial Lecture on August 13, 2015.
- The first K.S.Dutt Memorial Lecture was delivered by Dr BVR Mohan Reddy, Nasscom Chairman on November 15, 2015.
- Shri Gopal Subramamium, former Solicitor General of India and senior advocate Supreme Court delivered the first D.V. Subba Rao Memorial Lecture on April 24,2016 on "Constitutional Morality: Is It a Dilemma For the State, Courts and Citizens?"
- Shri P.V.R.K.Prasad, I.A.S., (Retd.), Former Chairman, Visakhapatnam Port Trust and Media Adviser to the Prime Minister delivered the D.Ch. Tirupathi Raju Memorial Lecture on November 10, 2016 on "Values in Public Life – P.V.Narasimha Rao's Role in Upholding Them".
- The second Dr Abid Hussain Memorial Lecture was delivered by Dr.C.Raja Mohan, Director, Carnegie Foundation India, on "India and the Geopolitics of the Bay of Bengal" on January 27, 2017.
- Dr Y. V. Reddy former Governor of Reserve Bank of India delivered a lecture on Globalisation and India on February 14,2017
- Dr.M.M.Pallam Raju, former Union Minister for Human Resource Development delivered a lecture on "Human Resource Development – Challenges and Opportunities" on February 27, 2017.

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