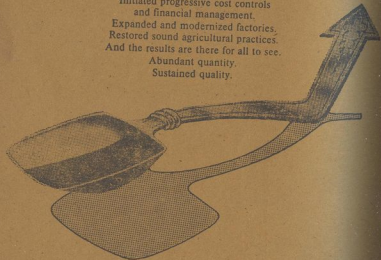


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Editor's Introduction

THE Nagpur Unit of the Deendayal Research Institute organised a seminar on Indian Political System in April last. Academicians of various persuasions and from many seats of higher education in Maharashtra and a number of social workers participated in the deliberations.

The Seminar's theme paper by Prof. S.G. Kashikar was published in the July, '88 issue of this journal. The salient points that were presented therein were as follows :

1. The Britishers had introduced, in pre-Independence India, a perverted version of parliamentary system under their overlordship. The kind of parliamentary system that we have in India after Independence is also not compatible with Indian ethos.
2. India's political system and its Constitution should be in keeping with its deeprooted traditions. Its ideal should be 'Dharma-Rajya'. This *dharma* is not to be confused with religion. It denotes the supreme code of human conduct that sustains society and the supremacy of moral authority over state power. It takes an integrated view of human needs, not merely economic or political. It recognises the interdependence of man and man, and man and his environment. It seeks to serve the genuine needs of the individual, the community, the nation and the humanity as a whole. Therefore, all religions are likely to feel affinity for it as close to their socio-ethical tenets. The preamble to the Constitution should clearly mention that the Dharma-Rajya encompasses the ethical-juridical principles common to all religions.
3. If the ideal was defined as above, it could equate the service of man with the service of God and set in the process of spiritualising politics. It could establish the supremacy of ethics over politics.
4. Mutual adjustment and cooperation is the basic law of existence. Class cooperation is the rule, class conflict is the exception.
5. Western culture is marked by extreme materialism and individualism. The parliamentary system in the West is, therefore, geared to the material interests of the individual or the party. When such a system is introduced on our soil, people tend to select their local representatives on the basis of their casteist or religio-communal considerations. As against this, India should opt for a form of government in which heads at all levels, from national to local, are designated as guardians. Which means, the national guardian (Rashtra-Palak), provincial guardian (Prant-palak), village guardian (Gram-Palak) should all be directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise. They would select their advisers or ministers. This would enable good people to operate at all

levels and transform the society. This may be called the presidential system of Indian variety.

6. Code of conduct for political authorities should be provided in the Directive Principles of the Constitution itself. Moreover, there should be provision of small cells of knowledgeable, experienced, selfless and respected persons, such as Acharya-Kul or Group of Elders, at every level of territorial organisation, with statutory powers to conduct investigations wherever there is a breach of these directive principles.

7. The system of political parties taking adversary positions is contrary to Indian genius. The Indian tradition has been to seek the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Political parties on the other hand, tend to take lopsided view of truth. Their interest militates against seeking the whole truth. Their partisanship works in their individual or group interest, against national interest. We must, therefore, have a partyless democracy.

8. The current political philosophies of democracy, communism and socialism are on the way out in the modern world. We have to eschew the class rule of the moneyed class or the class-rule of the proletariat. Our objective has to be all-sided welfare of all people.

9. Freedom of thought and expression, tolerance, decision by consensus (instead of by merely majority votes), changes by non-violent methods, decentralisation, autonomy in political and economic sphere (as distinct from party whips regarding expressions of opinion in legislatures and the state-bureaucracy-dominated economy) are the core of Indian democracy. The need is to build up suitable institutions around his core.

10. At territorial levels, there should be uni-cameral deliberative bodies based on professional representation. This will ensure representation of all genuine interest groups. By plugging the chances of casteism, it will usher in a profession-based social order. Only at the national level, there should be two Houses—one based on professional representation, the other on territorial representation.

1. Political and economic decentralisation has to be the backbone of the political system. Indian genius seeks unity in diversity. Hence centralisation would be no cause for worry about national integrity.

2. Financial dependence of the lower units must go.

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13. The system of people's courts at local levels is essential. Directive principles for judicial functionaries should be provided in the Constitution.

14. The dominance of English has prevented the burgeoning of people's culture. It should be replaced by the language which is understood by most people. Only Hindi can be the link language. In the provinces, administration should be conducted in their respective regional languages. Widest possible scope for translation into one another's language must be created.

15. The institution of family—which, under the impact of west-oriented modernism, is tending to break up—must be nurtured. The emphasis has to be on individual-in-society, not individual versus society.

16. Workers should be co-sharers in all economic enterprises. Naturally, these views, stirred a lot of debates.

In the following pages, we are publishing the other papers presented at the Seminar. In our forthcoming issue, we would publish the discussions that followed the presentation of these papers—and along with these, an Epilogue seeking to synthesise the views.

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By : Dr. M.G. Bokare,
Vice-Chancellor, Nagpur University.

(1) The alternative to parliamentary democracy is being discussed by many thinkers in India. Royist-intellectuals argue in favour of partyless democracy. The Sarvodaya thinkers also explore synonymous paradigm. The spirituality to suggest this is attributable to Acharya Vinoba Bhave, and Shri Jayaprakash Narayan. Deendayalji also expressed dissatisfaction with the current practices in parliamentary democracy which had their roots in the Constitution of India.

(2) Broadly similar and yet dissimilar in details are these three visions—Radical Humanism, Sarvodaya and Integral Humanism. They have similar views on the current phase of parliamentary democracy. I believe, the essay of Prof. Kashikar is an exercise to elaborate the views of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. Deendayalji's lectures on Integral Humanism underlined the *definition of Dharma as Laws of Nature*. The political form of civil society ought to evolve from the Laws of Nature i.e. Dharma. Its evolution has been conceived by Prof. Kashikar in his essay.

(3) Political form explains the relationship of citizens with their state. This relationship has been changing in history. The king as ruler has been replaced by elected citizens as rulers. The patterns differ but the essence is retained. The process of election is the essence. Cabinet form and the presidential form are patterns.

(4) Why do we discuss this subject ? Obviously, "we" are dissatisfied with the functioning of party system in parliamentary democracy. "We" in this expression connote the people who are exploring an alternative to parliamentary democracy. When M.N. Roy conceived of partyless democracy, he had the courage of dissolving his own party. This is consistency between theory and practice. Party is irrelevant to the flowering of democratic life of the society. Rather, it arrests the manifestation of value in democratic behaviour and expression. If this proposition is held true, the association with any party becomes schizophrenic. Any party may come into power, the parliamentary form of democracy emanating from this political victory will not accomplish harmony in democracy. This is the conclusion.

(5) If the limited experience of Congress Party's rule, or for that matter the rule of Janata Party for a very brief period, is the only reason why we are exploring the alternative, I submit that this is myopic. If we

consider the experiences of European states and their democratic forms of living, we learn that there is similar dissatisfaction. I know an essay of Prof. F.A. Hayek (Nobel Laureate) which expresses similar dissatisfaction. The frame of reference is democracies in Europe and America.

"Since there would be no parties, there would be, of course, no nonsense about proportional representation," says Prof. Hayek. This is to emphasise the exploration of the partyless democracy.

(6) Similar crisis has overtaken the practices and theory of State in communist-led countries. Some leaders are arguing in favour of many political parties with their programmes to accomplish communist society. This is spelled out in Hungary. The Soviet Union, however, argues in favour of many candidates under one-party system. This difference of visions among those who know "scientific socialism" is worth noting.

Content of democracy and its form have come into contradiction. The philosophic vision of communist parties in power does not discard the essence of democracy i.e. the process of election. However, they feel compelled to change the form. Hence, the movement of the form is being debated.

(7) Those who have eulogised democracy of their own cognition are becoming aware of the weaknesses of democracy. This is the problem and the thinkers have discovered that party-based parliamentary democracy works like unstable equilibrium. The democratic mechanism should be such that it should promote stable equilibrium. This is how we cognise Nature in her harmony. Prof. Kashikar suggests that the cognition of the definition of Dharma can help us in this exploration. If society is governed by Dharma, he believes that the harmony of State can be accomplished.

Prof. Kashikar qualifies his thesis by the truth connoted in the definition of Dharma. This is to say that those who agree with this definition of Dharma can conceive the change for an alternative to parliamentary democracy. One has to agree with the definition of Dharma. Therefore, the laws of Nature i.e. Dharma can be discussed in the law-bound changes in the political form. Prof. Kashikar's definition of Dharma is, I believe, of the nearest approximation to law of Nature.

(8) We have to know the answer to the following questions:

- (a) Is there a law-bound movement in Dharma explaining the evolution of a perfect State of the citizens?

(b) Is partyless democracy a law-bound change?

(c) Is partyless democracy an eternal political order?

The partyless democracy is being conceptualised. Its reasoning has been given. It connotes a universal message, which is like this. Democracy, as it is now, has revealed weaknesses. The party-based democracy, due to the weaknesses, is likely to be converted into dictatorship. Alternatively, it may promote disharmony and anarchy. The weaknesses of party-based democracy will be removed by partyless democracy. Can we make such deductions?

(9) In social science, we make statements. Some statements are positive statements as in physical sciences. Many expressions are normative statements. This distinction is extremely useful in endorsing views in social science.

(10) We feel frustrated with current trends and therefore suggest solutions. This is to say that I have my 'ethical'/moral view. And I desire that it should be accepted/introduced/endorsed by all to get rid of the present crisis. This kind of presentation partakes the form of normative statements. The phenomenon should be improved on the lines which "*I think*" are correct. The suggested improvements, of course, are the results of the studies.

Party-based democracy *should* be changed into partyless democracy.

This is a normative statement.

Party-based democracy *will* be changed into a partyless democracy.

This is a positive statement.

When the statement is positive it is like a statement in science. If this kind of statement is made, it fits into the lexicon—phenomenology—where 'logy' connotes science-like movement of history of human beings in all its manifestations.

(11) Democracy is a phenomenon. In history, the human beings are in movement. From the rule of kings we have moved to democracy. Our hopes of democracy also remain in doubt. We can not go back and accept values other than democratic life. The party-based democracy however has its weakness. The human beings, therefore, must move to remove their unhappiness emanating from party-based democracy. People

have moved from the rule of kings to democratic life. Its reasoning is studied in phenomenology. The movement is science-like in history. The same science-like movement will remove unhappiness emanating from party-based democracy.

(12) We make statements.

Partyless democracy is deterministic in the history of the formation of the state.

The appearance and development of democracy in the history is associated with party-based activities.

The party-based democracy reveals its own weakness. The society experiences its disadvantages.

Therefore this phase itself is not a harmony in the political life of the people.

The movement of the society is from disharmony to harmony.

This explains the disappearance of party-based democracy. Will it move towards partyless democracy? We can answer this question on the basis of logic and experience.

The movement from party-based democracy cannot be anything except partyless democracy. We should listen to alternative logic if somebody argues in any other way. Rigorous logic is necessary in this exercise. If this exercise along with its logic can be stated with cause and effect it becomes a theorem.

(13) The logic of human living has to have some evidence. There must be some experience in human living where we discover that they are moving away from party-basis of their political living. And further, the movement should be towards partyless form of democratic decision making. I have shown some such evidences in my letter to Prof. T.K. Bang. Wardha. I am expecting his criticism as regards the evidences.

(14) Phenomenology, therefore, should inform us of the partyless democracy. Whether one likes it or not, we cognise that democratic decision making is moving in favour of partyless democratic form of living. This is how historicity of partyless democracy is substantiated in social science.

Essential Requirements for a Truly Indian Political System

By : Prof. S.V. Bhalerao

The present political system has been operating in India for over 38 years, i.e. for two generations. But one has to be too bold to make a statement that it has got stabilised or accepted emotionally by the people.

The Constituent Assembly had a preponderance of Western-educated members. Yet it had many members who had studied ancient Indian literature and political thought deeply. But without any consideration for our glorious traditions, customs and people's psychology, they foisted a western political system on India. The result is, as was expected, giving rise to the need for change of the system.

The Constituent Assembly adopted parliamentary democracy as a federal system but with a strong centre. It was felt that a strong centre was needed to tackle problems of law and order, defence and economic development while the federal form was necessary to meet the requirements of diversity of language, religion, culture and socio-economic conditions. This was really a bookish view. It got exposed in 1967 as soon as different political parties came to power in different states, which led to centre-state conflict. Even earlier, to counter secessionist tendencies in Madras and Kerala, the centre had amended the constitution to put limitation on freedom of expression.

It may be mentioned here that the word 'federal' does not occur anywhere in the constitution which, instead, says, 'India that is Bharat shall be a Union of states.' This raises a question as to whether India is a federation or a quasi-federation. Further, in the Keshawananand Bharati case, the Supreme Court laid down that no amendment can be made in the 'basic structure' of the constitution. But it did not define what constitutes that basic structure.

The parliamentary system has failed to deliver the goods and meet the expectations of the people. This has given rise to the debate to replace it by the presidential system. In 1975, after the declaration of emergency, Mrs. Indira Gandhi encouraged such a debate in her characteristic way. Antaiya published a book and the Union Minister Shri Vasant Sathe wrote a few articles in advocacy of a presidential system.

Thus the search for an alternate system goes on intermittently. But the debate completely ignores that India had its own political system that functioned satisfactorily in the past before the advent of the British and the Mughals. Valuable contributions to Dandaneeti have been made since the times of the Vedas by Shantiparva, Arthashastra, Shukraneeti, Kamandaka and even Buddhist and Jain literature. The Indian constitution has not taken cognisance of this ancient wisdom except provision of Gram Swarajya under the influence of Gandhiji. There is hardly anything 'Indian' in the Indian constitution.

It is necessary that the debate should attempt to tackle the basics and draw upon our ancient wisdom, deep-rooted traditions and public ethos. This does not mean that everything old should be taken as gold. Nor does it mean that all old is to be treated as dead. We should adopt from the old what is good and beneficial in the modern times and evolve an alternate system which is 'old and yet always new.'

This subject can be considered in two parts :

(1) Attitudinal changes essential in the Indian society, i.e. the abstract side of change, and (2) Institutional change.

As Muhammad Iqbal has pointed out, there are certain enduring worthwhile elements in our being which account for indestructibility of our identity. It is these elements—benevolent, beneficial, progressive enlightened and eternal that constitute the essence of 'Bharatiyata' and should be incorporated in our constitution. One such element was absence of over-government. Government was never the centre of life in India.

Will it be possible to reintroduce such a system? The wholesocial life today is in the clutches of octopus-like politics. There is total dependence on government for everything, resulting in topsy-turvydom. Those who are proclaimed in a democracy as the real masters—namely, the people—have become subordinate, and their professed servants—namely the elected representatives have become the masters. This situation must change. The non-political field should increase. For that, social, religious, cultural and economic institutions should be made autonomous. People's dependence on government should decrease if they are really to be sovereign. The Gandhian concept of society free from government should be realised.

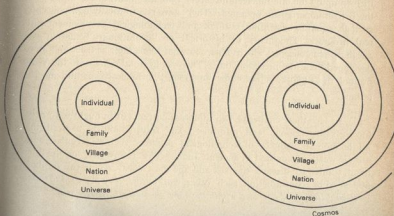
What is the 'basic structure' of the constitution? Why should leaders of society and representatives of parties not come together and settle it once for ever? With broad outlook, this should be possible.

We have accepted the principle of the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number' under Western influence. But our ancient principle has been 'happiness of all'. This should be possible if we follow the ancient ideal of decision by consensus, instead of by majority, at all levels from village to the federal.

Today democracy functions through the party system. But political parties use money power on a big scale and exploit the poor people. To prevent this, there should be definite rules regarding the funds, accounts, expenses, organisational elections etc. and they should be strictly enforced. There should be an independent body to deal with cases of breach of these rules and to cancel recognition of defaulting parties.

A new profession of 'social work' has come into being in the present times. Politics has become a profession like that of doctors, pleaders, industrialists etc. To put a check on this tendency no one should hold an elective office of profit or membership for more than two terms or a total of ten years.

In view of the distinctive Indian nature, some quantitative changes would also be necessary. In India, we do not feel any conflict between the genuine interests of the individual, family, society, nation and the universe. The conflict between nationalism and internationalism arises if they are looked at as two circles emanating from the same centre. In India, on the other hand, all aforesaid entities are considered to be parts of a continuity of spiral circles. In it the larger circle is a continuation of the smaller circle. The two perceptions are depicted in the following figures.



There should be decentralisation of power, every unit being vested with adequate resources. These units would be autonomous in their functions and yet integrally related to one another. Institutional changes are necessary to bring about such an integral—not unitary—structure.

Needed a Constitution Consistent with Lokneeti

By : Prof. S.B. Pandharipande.

As a concept the Indian Constitution can be considered from two points of view : historical and cultural. Here it is considered from the cultural point of view.

The term "culture" is used here in a comprehensive, universal, non-sectarian sense. At a certain level of human comprehension, culture loses its particularist elements and becomes part of what Walter Lippman calls 'Public Philosophy' or Vinoba Bhave calls 'Lokneeti'. For example, truth, non-violence, freedom, equality, brotherhood and co-existence are supreme human principles common to all cultures. All we have to do is to find out how they can be realised through our socio-political system.

The means we have to explore which outlook on life would enable us to meet the challenges of modern times.

The challenges we are considering here are, in fact, the challenges thrown up by the late-nineteenth-century Enlightenment, under whose guise the British imperialism operated. They gave rise to totally new concepts, such as equating scientific outlook and technological development with real progress. The theory of historical or "evolutionary" analysis was another such concept, which regarded what came later as truer and more developed than the preceding one. This was in total contrast to the Vedic outlook of ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुच्यते ॥, of microcosms and macrocosms.

To face these challenges, two different currents of thought were developed; resurrectionist and reformist. The resurrectionists averred that all the modern gadgets of technological progress, such as aeroplanes and atomic weapons, existed in ancient India. The reformists, on the other hand, wanted to discard the past and ape the West. These two outlooks appear to be contradicting each other. But, in fact, they accepted the same western criteria and operated within the same theoretical framework.

Gandhiji was the first to realise that the invasion of British imperialism was basically a cultural invasion and that it had to be met at that very level. His 'Hind Swaraj' is a path-indicator in this respect. 'Modern' culture (not western alone), according to him, is based on desire, lust, greed and consequent offensiveness, exploitation and violence; while true Indian culture values restraint, non-attachment and non-accumulation. These principles are not sectarian but ethical.

This is a new ideological weapon given by Gandhiji; and while discussing a way of living for India we will have to adopt a methodology that will conform to it.

What, then, should be our approach that tallies with the Indian ethos? I propose that the approach should be in pursuance of the three principles of organic unity, totality and harmony. These are the characteristics of Indian culture.

Organic unity implies an inter-related interdependent and self-contained approach or entity like that of a tree. Totality indicates inter-complementary relationship between human beings, other animals and the physical world. And harmony points to co-existence and co-prosperity or mutual enrichment at all levels of life. This trio provides a new paradigm which is badly needed by the world today. It constitutes the basic category for restructuring economic, social and political life in India.

In this connection, mention may be made of 'Economics in a Buddhist Society' by Schumacher and 'Economics of Permanence' by J. C. Kumarappa. They present a picture of new economic order based on the categories of restraint, enjoyment with sacrifice and limitations.

Regarding the new political order, Gandhiji's and Vinoba's concept of 'Gram Swaraj' may be accepted as a model. It denotes a self-contained, agro-industrial and urbo-rural social order. Jaya-prakash Narayan's concept of collectivistic society comes very close to it, as detailed in his 'Reconstruction of Indian Polity'. Decentralisation of power should ultimately lead to negation of power. Vinobhaji has given the following basic principles of new political order in his 'Swarajya-Shastra'. They are (1) Universal brotherhood (2) Voluntary and conscious cooperation among nations, (3) Identity of interests of the minorities and the majority, (4) All-sided and equal welfare of all, (5) Broadest possible division of state power, (6) Minimum government, (7) Easiest possible procedures, (8) Minimum expenditure, (9) Minimum protection and (10) Universal, unhindered and neutral or free dissemination of knowledge. These are the principles of ideal polity that have universal and ever-lasting application. It is not a revival of the ancient Indian village polity and yet it is naturally close to the Indian tradition.

The concept of "Swaraja" bears closer affinity to the Indian ethos than the concept of "Rajya". For, Rajya invariably implies coercive authority. That the authority is derived from popular consent does not make any difference. There is distinction between authority and power. We should aim at reducing the authority of the state and increasing the power of the citizen. This power is opposed to violence. We may call it spiritual or moral power.

Suggestions for an Alternative Political System

By : Prof. P.J. Jagirdar

Our country is today caught in a cobweb of innumerable problems and the Government finds itself increasingly incapable of solving them. This indicates a basic fault of the Constitution, which is not suitable for the Indian way of life. It is, therefore, necessary to have an indigenous constitution based on Indian thoughts and practices.

The question is : Should Indian thoughts and practices be taken to mean only 'Ancient Indian thoughts and practices'? Prof. Kashikar seems to think so. There is a flaw in it.

The ancient Indian thoughts, though originally propounded by pundits and thinkers, eventually percolated to the common masses through discourses, 'puranas' and various forms of folk-lore and so can be said to be of all Indian people. But we should not ignore the impacts of the medieval period, of the Islamic polity and the British rule in India and also of the modern western thinkers. It is, therefore, presumptuous to think that all ancient Indian thoughts and practices are equally relevant even to this day.

I, therefore, suggest that instead of digging into the past, let us straightway delve into the present Indian way of life and find out its living elements through an empirical questionnaire method. This will provide a solid foundation for the alternative political system.

The second significant point is that the difference between pre-industrial and post-industrial-revolution cultures is more basic than that between cultures of different countries, particularly in the political context. It was no mere coincidence that democratic system arose in post-industrial period in the West.

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At present, India is neither in the pre-industrial nor in the post-industrial stage. It is passing through the transitional period. Search for more worldly happiness prompts transition to industrialism. But the Indian philosophers reject the preponderance of worldly pleasures. That, however, does not mean that the desire for worldly pleasures would not exist.

The Present-day Indian Society :

Rejection of faith and adoption of empirical logic is a characteristic feature of the post-industrial-revolution culture. This is taking place in India, though its impact is even now small.

Rise of bureaucracy is another feature of the post-industrial revolution society. It means rules are more important than persons. Although the ancient Indian society, too was governed by rules—by Dharma—the rules then were too broad and too few. Mainly, the society was ruled by persons.

Joint family is yet another feature of the pre-industrial society. In India it is breaking up under the impact of industrialism. Yet some elements of it and respect for it still linger on.

Village panchayats played an important role in ancient India and are important even today. However, relationships among villagers are becoming more interest-oriented though the hold of old values still persists.

Different religions follow different rules and practices and hence the society gets divided according to religions.

Regarding moral values, India is somewhere between the old and the new ones. Fatalism is on the decrease. Loyalty to castes is decreasing; yet they are exploited to serve one's interest. Cooperation is giving place to competitiveness. Social stratification, however, still persists.

Such is the picture of the Indian society of today. However, it should be verified through the questionnaire method.

Characteristics of Indian Political life :

Religion still has hold on the Indian mind. What is deplorable in it is the rise of hostilities among different religious communities. Its solution lies in (a) separation of religion from politics completely, (b) re-interpretation of religious teachings to bring to the fore their pristine values and thereby to promote inter-religious harmony, and (c) giving up those traditions that rouse inter-religious hatred.

Joint family system breeds nepotism. Personality cult makes elected members into heroes. Loyalty to the family, caste and village has decreased, but loyalty to the nation has not increased sufficiently. This is a cause of corruption and rise of provincialism, casteism, communalism etc.

Most of the voters do not know the importance of vote. Politicians exploit them for self-interest and self-aggrandisement. Remedy to it lies in limiting the scope of undue exercise of influence by the elected members and prohibiting their interference in administration.

In India the defects of responsible government have assumed a glaring dimension. Political parties look upon one another as enemies. All are guided by abject party-interest. This is not only un-Indian but also irrational. This scenario must change. Decisions should be taken by consensus. Government should always be multi-party government. *Majority government is not suitable for India.*

Universal franchise is also not suitable for India. The poor and illiterate masses are not ready for it. It breeds corruption at all levels. This is the fact of Indian life. The provision of universal franchise, therefore, should be deleted from the Indian constitution. There should be no right to vote for those who are below the poverty line.

The present constitutional provisions regarding centre-state relations are unsuited to Indian conditions. In the past, loyalty to the village institutions was very strong in India. But today, with village loyalty declining and national loyalty not fully taking its place, regional loyalties are getting stronger. This development should be duly recognised by giving adequate administrative and financial powers to the states.

Conclusion : In pursuance of the foregoing considerations, the alternative political system for India should have the following features:

- (a) Legislators should be prohibited from interfering in day-to-day administration;
- (b) Responsible government should be replaced by collegiate executive;
- (c) Executive bodies at all levels should be elected by corresponding legislatures on the basis of proportional representation;
- (d) There should be no right to vote for those who are below the poverty line;

(e) Powers of the Centre should be reduced; and

(f) At all levels decisions should be taken by consensus (or by 80% vote where consensus is not possible).

India Needs an Indian Constitution

By : Prof. Vasant Muttepar,
Ambajogai

The Indian constitution is the most comprehensive constitution in the world. Its detailed provisions evince the efforts of the constitution-makers to make it complete in every respect. And yet it is far from being complete, as evidenced by 59 amendments in 38 years. Even with these amendments, it still cannot be called complete.

No constitution is good or bad in itself. Its success or failure depends on two conditions—namely, its ability to satisfy the needs of the society in a given period and the character of the people who operate it. To meet the first condition the constitution needs to be made more and more flawless; and to meet the second, appropriate social enlightenment must take place. The two should constitute a parallel process to make the constitution successful.

The consideration of the Indian constitution must begin with its preamble. It places an ideal before the Indian society. Yet the ideal is not fully Indian in nature as it is influenced by western thought. 'Ramarajya' is the Indian ideal. It is not different from "Dharma-rajya". So, a clear mention of "Rama-Rajya" as constitutional objective should have been there in the Indian constitution.

The 43rd amendment further spoiled the structure of the preamble by adding the words 'socialist' and 'secular'. There is confusion among scholars about the precise meaning of these words, which are used in India more or less to achieve cheap popularity.

As C.E.M. Joad has said, socialism is a cap that has lost its shape because everybody wears it. Socialism implies freedom from anxiety to satisfy man's basic material needs. But in doing so, there should not be any erosion of individual freedom. However, in the name of socialism, this very freedom of the individual is being curtailed.

Socialism is often presented as an economic concept. But basically it is an ethical concept, as its main opposition is to the injustice that results from economic inequality or exploitation. Socialism implies that man should not be required to take to an immoral path to earn his livelihood. In this sense inclusion of socialism in the preamble would not be objectionable. But in reality the distinction between means for a family's own labour and means for exploitation of other people's labour is overlooked. For example, the 25th amendment took away the right to proper compensation for nationalisation of property. If individual rights and freedoms are curtailed in this way, it would lead to despotism in the garb of socialism. The constitution should have, therefore, defined socialism in clear terms.

Like socialism, secularism also has lost its meaning. The dictionary meaning of 'secular' is 'worldly'. A Government may be secular in the sense that it deals with this-worldly or temporal matters only. But an individual has both material as well as spiritual needs. Science only answers 'how' but not 'why' and hence even a scientist can be a spiritualist. The deeper you go into science, the nearer you go to God. God is the need of the individual and, therefore, of the society. And hence even a secular state cannot remain totally aloof from religion. This is all the more true in a country like India where different religions exist.

The term 'secular' also means that the state would not be under the influence of any religion, nor would it interfere in any religion. Yet, the state has to prohibit harmful social practices like 'sati' which may be associated with some religious belief. There is nothing wrong in this ban. Such interference, however, should not be confined to the harmful social practices of one religion only. Unfortunately in India, the state controls the Hindu religion only. The evil and obsolete Muslim practices of polygamy and easy divorce at the expense of women are not touched. A common civil code for all citizens is not yet prepared. There is, on the other hand, appeasement of Muslims for votes. This is no secularism. As appeasement of Hitler for peace led to war. The appeasement would lead to the growth of creedal fanaticism instead of socialism in India. This harms the genuine interests of the Muslims too.

Therefore, in place of 'secularism', the term "religious tolerance," which is the hallmark of Indian society, should have found a place in the constitution. Tolerance implies peace and is against aggressiveness. It recognises co-existence of all religions. If the partition of India, which once resulted from the appeasement of Muslims, is not to be repeated, our secularism needs to be properly defined and followed.

Citizen's rights have been given a prominent place in the constitution. But there was no mention of the citizen's duties and obligations

in the original constitution. They were introduced by the 42nd amendment. But their mention is sketchy and there is no provision to ensure their observance. The term 'Dharma' also means duty and is quite influential to ensure observance. The constitution should, therefore, enumerate in detail the duties of the rulers—Rajdharmā—and of citizens.

Justice delayed is justice denied. There should, therefore, be mandatory obligation for expeditious disposal of court cases.

The objective of punishment should be the reformation of the offender. For that, good education is necessary. Punishment should also be deterrent. In India, life is so miserable that for many, prison is more comfortable than outside it. Hence there is no fear of punishment. There is no use giving equal punishment for equal offence. The quantum of punishment should be related to the accomplishments and position of the offender. In ancient India, if an offender were a Brahmin (i.e. a person of higher status) he received punishment four times that of a Kshatriya and sixty-four times that of a Shudra. Similar scale should be adopted to-day, though it should be based not on caste but on status.

Ministers are not necessarily experts in the subjects dealt with in their departments. Moreover, they are constantly on tour to establish public contact and hence get little time to apply their minds to their subjects. Therefore, we should have a presidential system that will, make it possible to appoint experts as ministers as in the U. S. A.

The British convention regarding the presiding authority of the legislature is that on being so elected he resigns from his party and is re-elected unopposed at the next elections. The same convention should be followed in India also.

There should be stricter rules about the conduct of members inside the legislature. At present their conduct is simply pitiable. Views of the opposition should be listened to with respect. Otherwise, tyranny of the majority which, according to J. S. Mill, is worse than despotism, arises. Names of members who never participate in discussion, should be periodically published so that the people come to know the mettle of their representatives.

Election is an inseparable part of democracy. Our election system, though simple, is very faulty. Statistics of the past elections show that the ruling party usually gets majority of seats with minority of total votes polled. Multi-party system is largely responsible for this phenomenon. We should, therefore, evolve a two-party or three-party system. Alterna-

tively, we may adopt the system of proportional representation to every major public viewpoint.

The constitution describes India as the union of states. But states, in the terminology of political science, are sovereign entities. Therefore, in order to discourage divisive tendency and to foster integration, we should designate the regional units as provinces and not states.

Although the states, i.e. provinces have been reorganised on linguistic basis for administrative convenience, Hindi, which is understood by the largest number of common men, should be the common medium of communication for the entire nation.

The aforesaid changes, if brought about both at the institutional and attitudinal levels, will put the imprint of Indianness on the Indian constitution.

Direction of Rural Political Transformation

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During the forty years of independence, the limitations of Parliamentary democracy have become quite clear, leading to a search for an alternative political system. The present article discusses what changes can be introduced in the village-level institutions. First, the nature of ancient Indian rural institutions has been outlined, followed by enumeration of limitations of the existing rural institutions in the present Panchyati Raj system. Finally, in this background, the changes that can be introduced in the present system and the points to be noted while doing so, have been discussed.

From ancient times, village has been the basic unit of Indian social organisation. The village institutions were self-reliant, self-contained and self-governed. Gramsabha, Gram-Pramukh and Gram-Panchayat and, along with them, Nyaya-Panchayat and Jati-Panchayat were the main institutions operating at the village level. There was no particular philosophy or ideology underlying them but they were the products of the circumstances prevailing in those times. Their main responsibilities were : To make social

living of the individual comfortable and to control social organisations. Social groups were accorded more importance than individuals. 'Individual-in-society' was the central point of their thought and activity. Their emphasis was on collective action, collective thinking and collective decision-making. Even today these institutions are regarded as models of decentralisation (of powers). Though self-contained and self-reliant, they were under the regulation of the central authority to a certain extent. Born out of need, they were realistic in their nature and existed uninterrupted for centuries on end.

After independence, efforts were made to revive this system through panchyati Raj organisations. This ancient system was discontinued by the British, who tried to introduce their pattern in its place. Gandhiji gave deep thought to the problem of village administration, which led to the adoption of the Panchayat Raj system after independence. However, as time passed, the weaknesses of this system as subsidiary to the parliamentary system became evident. These were dependence on the higher organ, limited powers and resources, and pervasion of 'politics' at all levels. The need to change it is therefore being strongly felt.

These changes should form part of the overall restructuring of the Indian polity and should represent proper blending of ancient tradition and modern circumstances. It is necessary to revive the ancient principles of decentralisation, accountability, solidarity, consensus etc. At the same time we must end for ever the remnants of ancient feudalism, hereditary status, high caste dominance etc. Their place should be taken by universal equality, individual freedom and dignity, collective welfare, and self-actualism.

In pursuance of the aforesaid goals, the following changes in the structure of local self-government at the village level are suggested:

1. Provisions regarding organisation, functions, duration and powers of the village authorities (Gramsabha and Grampanchayat) should be mentioned in the constitution itself.
2. Gramsabha, being a broad-based assembly, should have not merely deliberative but also decision-making powers.
3. Grampanchayat should be the executive organ and should be so constituted that it reflects properly the various sections of the village population.
4. Sources of income of the Gram-Panchayat should be increased and, where necessary, it should be aided by the Government.

5. The old Nyaya-Panchayat system should be revived and empowered to arbitrate in local feuds. For this purpose the scheme of Lok-Nyayalaya should be broadened.
6. Village-level planning should come from below and should be given due consideration.
7. Decisions in Grampanchyats should be taken by consensus.
8. Along with institutional changes, appropriate changes in people's attitudes, thoughts and outlooks should also be brought about.
9. There should be people's committees to bring about coordination of institutional functions.
10. Strong impetus should be given to informal process of transformation along with the formal ones.

Panchayati Republic

By : Principal Dr. Narayan Khale,
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The sovereign democratic republic of India is an amalgam of various models, such as British parliamentary system, Canadian federation and American fundamental rights. As many as 250 articles of its constitution, out of the total of 395, are virtually borrowed from the Indian Act of 1935. Yet, as K. Subbarao has pointed out in his 'Conflict in Indian Polity': "The constitution on paper and in action is so different that one might say that it has practically lost its sanctity." The basic cause of this is its incongruity with the Indian customs and traditions. This article intends to explore which healthy traditions of India should be incorporated into our constitution.

The first point is about the purpose of the state. Machiavelli has described it as maintenance of law and order. Other Western writers have described it variously from police functions to welfare functions. Ancient India, in this respect, had an integrated approach expressed by the concept of 'Dharma'. *Dharma here is not religion, not concerned with the way of worship. It synthesises a practical code of conduct for all humanity with*

universal ethico-juridical concepts. To some extent it corresponds to the Greek concept of 'life of virtue'.

According to Shantiparva, Smritis, Kautilya's Arthshastra etc. the purpose of the state is to uphold 'Dharma' that is to foster virtue and deter vice. This includes maintenance of law and order. As Dr. Ambedkar has pointed out, material happiness is not everything in life; Dharma gives man greater mental happiness. Gandhiji had the same view when he projected the ideal of "Rama-Rajya" based on imbuing politics with spirituality. Thus the upholding of Dharma should be the purpose of the state.

The second point is about electoral system. Faulty electoral system turns democracy into oligarchy. Sir Henry Maine, in his 'Tiny Republics in India', has said that the members of the executive body of the ancient republics were elected by drawing lots. This system effectively prevented the rise of oligarchy, autocracy or hereditary rule. It gave chance to every candidate. It also prevented concentration of economic and political power. I, therefore, think that serious thought should be given to introducing "election by lots" in the present circumstances.

A Critique of Prof. Kashikar's Theme Paper

By : N.R. Varhadpande

The following are my observations on the proposals made by Prof. S.G. Kashikar.

Secularism : It has been proposed that since the concept of secularism is controversial, we should opt for a constitution based on the ethico-juridical principles common to all religions. But these common principles have not been spelt out in the proposal. In fact it is impossible to find such common principles. If there are any, they would be of very minor nature, and a constitution incorporating them will not be acceptable to any religious group as having been based on its tenets. For example, faith in Christ as the Son of God and in New Testament as His words is a basic principle of Christianity. Those who do not have this faith go to hell. Similar is the case with Islam that believes in Muhammad as Prophet and the Quran as Allah's words through them. Those who do not believe in them and in them alone, are heathens and doomed to hell.

The principle of equal regard for all religions, according to Christians and Muslims, undermines their religions by equating the heathens with the faithful.

A constitution giving sanction to all religions will find it difficult to find a way out of the conflicting principles of different religions.

To obviate this difficulty, Prof. Kashikar has suggested that the constitution should incorporate not all but only the good common principles of all religions. But what is the criterion to determine goodness except that of scientific rationalism? And if good principles are to be selected, why limit our choice to religions only?

To base Indian constitution on scientific thinking, on rationalism is to adopt secularism itself. It is said that secularism is against the Indian tradition. But of all the traditions, European and semitic, the Indian tradition is most receptive to such secularism. For, India never believed in the doctrine of one Book and one faith.

If so, why is our secular constitution not delivering the goods? The answer is that our constitution is not truly secular. The word 'secularism' did not find place in the original constitution which recognised the unsecular right of religious conversion. And when the word 'Secularism' was incorporated in it, it was given the strange interpretation of "equal respect for all religions". In fact, not all subscribed even to this view. For them, secularism meant respect for all religions except Hinduism. That is why the state does not interfere with any religion except Hinduism. That is why the tendency to declare oneself as non-Hindu and demand special considerations from Government is on the increase in India. It is not the acceptance of true secularism but of its caricature, which is against the Indian tradition. This has been responsible for the rise of divisive forces in India.

Charismatic leadership: It is true that worship of charismatic leadership is prevalent in India. But it would be wrong to encourage it, as suggested by Prof. Kashikar. He has suggested that there should be a cell or 'Acharya-Kul' of knowledgeable, experienced, self-less and respected people. This is already observed in the form of nominated members of the Rajya Sabha.

Party System: Party system is not acceptable to Prof. Kashikar. But there is nothing in it that is against Indian tradition. In India associations based on different philosophies did exist. There should be no objection if they are based on political philosophies.

Wholesome Features of Constitution Later Ignored: The original constitution of India did possess some Indian features. Replacement of English by Hindi and other regional languages, after fifteen years from the commencement of the constitution was contemplated. Unfortunately, it has not been implemented resulting in the failure of the nation to develop its identity and self-respect. We feel that there is no element binding us together except the English language.

Prohibition of cow-slaughter was a directive principle in the constitution. It is necessary not only in view of the national sentiment about it, but, also for economic development in the prevailing conditions. This also has not been done.

Liquor prohibition was yet another directive principle. In fact it was one of the major planks of our national movement. This also has not been implemented.

The original draft of the constitution envisaged the status of complete independence for India. But we later decided to retain links with the British empire; the love of chains was so strong.

Thus the fault lies not in the non-provision of Indian features but in their non-implementation.

Conclusion: In view of the foregoing, the following changes in the constitution are suggested:

1. The constitution should not give recognition to any religion or classification of people into majority and minority according to religion.
2. Recognition as a religious group should not be a fundamental right though every individual should have the right to follow his or her mode of worship.
3. Religious conversion, except through philosophical understanding, should be completely prohibited.
4. No one should hold office for more than ten years.
5. English should be given up as the medium of administration and education.
6. Provinces should be reorganised solely on the basis of language.
7. There should be no link of the Indian republic with the British monarchy.

A Critique of the Theme Paper

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(1) The theme paper of Shri Kashikar is not clear about the 'Indian way of life'. In fact, in the olden days the prevalent concept was of the king and his kingdom. There was no thought of the people. What the king considered proper was taken to be good for the people. Today we live in the age of democracy. The people decide what is good for themselves. Hence it is wrong to consider only the old system to be truly Indian.

(2) The present Indian constitution has been framed by distinguished men. It is far from true to say that it lacks Indianness. If the content of Dharma changes according to times, then the present constitution has all the attributes of Dharma of today. To make change in the constitution according to experience is its merit and not demerit.

(3) Party system and majority rule are not the core of democracy. At village level, all men and women can decide what they want to do. But at higher levels, representative democracy becomes inevitable. How these representative institutions should be linked to the local institutions, from Zila Parishad downwards to Gram Panchayat needs consideration.

(4) We have adopted the parliamentary system of Government. This was considered better than the presidential system. Both have some inherent drawbacks. But it is not proper to blame the system that has served us well for the past 40 years without giving full thought as to why it is not suitable today.

(5) In the context of charismatic leadership, the party system seems to be inevitable. For leaders form parties according to their views. But if all parties pursue national interest, why should they not be able to agree on a common programme after elections? It is only through (a) an agreed programme and (b) an all-party government that the hold of party politics can be loosened. Party politics arises out of a thirst for power, which has no sanction in the constitution.

(6) The use of Hindi should not be made compulsory in view of bitter experience in the past. Professional representatives should be consulted, but it is a moot question whether their organisations should be given any constitutional form. Whatever changes are to be suggested in the constitution, should be informed by the adage that "Democracy is the worst system of Government but the best available."

(7) The term "secular" does not mean 'Nidharmit'. It should be taken to mean 'Adhibhautik' so that all religions and sects, while retaining their ideologies, can offer loyalty to the constitution.

(8) In the modern state, the principle is that sovereignty resides in the people. Hence the grant of equal franchise to all adults. Democracy aims at achieving economic and social equality through political equality. Accordingly, the basic framework of the present Indian Constitution includes (a) the Preamble, (b) Fundamental rights (c) Directive principles of state policy, (d) Allocation of powers to the Union and the states and (e) Independent judiciary. There seems to be no need to change this framework.

In Defence of Indian Constitution

By : Prof. Kishor Mahabadi,
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THE framers of the Indian constitution dreamt of a democratic political system based on freedom, equality and fraternity. However, the dream has not yet come true. The expected social, economic and political order has not yet emerged. On the other hand, the nation is fast moving towards disintegration. It is, therefore, necessary to study the total environment and suggest basic remedies.

One school of thought holds that our degeneration is due to the so-called conflict between the adopted new system and the traditional Indian way of life. The other school avers that the traditional Indian system had everything that the new system professes to offer. Dr. Jaiswal belongs to the latter school while Prof. Kashikar belongs to the former.

Ancient Indian writings on political thought give diverse and even conflicting views on various political topics. However, some of their core principles could be enumerated as follows :

1. The King should be 'Kshatriya' by birth (though there are instances of others becoming Kings) and his right to rule is divine.
2. The King should uphold the fourfold—Chaturvarna—division of society.

3. The King's thought and action should conform to 'Dharma'.
4. Social interest should be given precedence over individual interest.
5. Of the three *varnas*, it is the Brahmins and sages who should have the priority of right to exercise checks on the King's power.
6. Village areas should be controlled through Panchayats.

The system based on the aforesaid principles fostered inequality. It denied rights to women and Shudras. Dharma has been described variously by various writers. Myths were created to make kingship absolute. The ancient political system has become obsolete today.

The theme-paper proposes that India should be declared a 'Dharmarajya' by adopting ethical values of religion. This is purely a theoretical concept without any operational aspect about it. Religion can never be only theoretical. Certain patterns of operations always go with it. Again, the doctrines of different religions are often so conflicting that it is not possible to find common ground among them. And if so found, it will have to be based on rational criterion, which will not be acceptable to the orthodox or the traditionalists (who are in majority). The situation is under control today because the constitution is secular. That a state based on ethical principles common to religions of old will lead to progress is pure wishful thinking. History is witness to the fact that a state founded on any religion always leads to the protection of interests of a certain class.

There, however, need not be any objection to accepting the ethical principles of religions. But a lot of discretion will have to be used while doing so. Development of science is exposing the futility of religions' principles. It will also have to be decided which principles, spiritual or temporal, should be given more importance. Chanakya gives more importance to temporal than to spiritual principles, while other ancient political thinkers give more importance to spiritual principles. It will be more appropriate to accept both the viewpoints in their respective spheres. And the Indian constitution is the outcome of such thinking process.

The values enshrined in religious philosophy have been accepted by the Indian constitution. Freedom of worship, freedom of expression etc. have been guaranteed by the constitution. In fact, the Indian constitution has taken a revolutionary step in giving to all people these rights which were available only to a few people and classes in the past. The principles of justice, freedom, equality and fraternity as also that of secular, sovereign

republic, enshrined in the constitution, are not alien to India. In ancient times, the Indian philosophy had discussed these principles in detail. In this context, attention may be drawn to the statement of Tarkateerth Jaxmanshastri Joshi that the core principles of all modern ideologies have already found expression in the ancient Indian Philosophy. In other words, the principles of Indian constitution have been derived from the ancient philosophy.

It is not correct to say that after independence India has adopted a completely alien political system, which resulted in today's problems. The constitution has completely adopted the Panchayat System and the Parliament is a developed form of Panchayat system itself. Various changes have also been introduced in the constitution according to circumstances and needs. Hindu culture has been always open to new ideas and so this is in keeping with our tradition.

Our problems are due not to the adoption of an alien system but to factors like population explosion, excess of individual freedom, apathy of intellectuals, clinging to obsolete traditional values, prevalence of undemocratic elements, personality cult, and delay in cultivating democratic political culture. There were problems in the past also, but their number was small. To-day, because of increase in population and lack of adequate resources, they have assumed serious proportions and have increased the burden on the state system.

The parliamentary system is ideal for India. The fact is that the parliamentary system has not failed in India. It appears to have failed because it has not at all been given fair trial.

Answer to the present-day problems lies not in change of system but in change of attitudes. We need men of character to operate the system. Ancient Indian political treatises have laid great emphasis on the character of rulers. Their views on this topic can guide us even today. The people should also have the right to recall.

The individual and the society are interdependent as propounded by our ancient sages. But in the name of individualism, great harm is being done today to the interest and healthy growth of society. Parochial considerations of caste, sect, religion and individual interest are leading the country towards disintegration. In ancient political thought, emphasis was put on training of rulers for service of the people and the king was defined as one who kept the people happy. Similarly, today's political leadership should give importance to their duties towards the society.

Self-less, socially conscious intellectuals are required to exercise moral checks on the rulers. Our ancient political thought recognised the

need for such checks. Today this check is lacking. Intellectuals feel alienated from the society and develop apathy towards social and political problems. The present educational system is responsible for this. That is why the electoral process does not yield the desired results. We need citizens in all levels of society—bold, self-less, conscious of their duties—who dare to stand up against injustice.

Freedom of thought, earlier restricted to a few people in the field of philosophy, is now available to all. Even people belonging to neglected classes are now raising their voice. This is a good sign. It will bring about improvement.

To sum up, the problems that have arisen in various fields are not due to faults in the system. These are the results of obsolete attitudes. These attitudes need to be changed to bring about qualitative transformation of our democracy. The aforesaid principles of Indian political thought are helpful in this direction. However, they should not be given the form of narrow stereotypes. They should be understood in a new form and determined efforts should be made to make the parliamentary and secular system—which gives importance to, and appeals to, the intelligence of every individual—successful. That is the real need of today.

Rulers' Tricks Defeat the Constitution

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Even after 40 years of independence we find the unity and integrity of the country in danger. This makes it necessary to analyse the factors that led to this condition.

After independence our leaders gave us the best possible constitution, whose four founding pillars are: Independence, Democracy, Socialism and Secularism. However as Dr. Ambedkar had pointed out, it is not enough to make good constitution, its success depends on how it is actually implemented.

We adopted the parliamentary system because we had some experience of its operation during the British rule and because it appeared to meet our requirements better than any other system.

India took a quantum jump by providing universal adult franchise in the hope that it would avert mass inertia and usher in an era of mass enlightenment and mass welfare, that the numerical pressure of the poor

will impel the government to take measures to introduce social and economic democracy and thus bring about peaceful social transformation.

During the past 40 years, elections to the Lok Sabha were held eight times and to the state assemblies a number of times. The participation of the rural masses in elections has also been growing. Naturally, it exerts democratic pressure on government which has to adopt more and more progressive policies. It is not a mere coincidence that many important measures were adopted on the eve of elections; e.g. establishment of the Planning Commission and introduction of Five-Year Plans (1952), declaration of socialistic pattern of society as the goal (1957), abolition of privy purses and nationalisation of banks (1967), policy of 'Garibi Hatao' (1971), protection of human rights during emergency (1977), and the anti-defection law in the interest of stable government (1980).

Yet the total impact of the common people on the administration and the rulers is not commensurate with their strength. The rulers have invented numerous devices, strategies and slogan-mongering to trick the people into voting for them. This resulted in decreasing benefits to the people. The present system has become impotent to bring about an amelioration in the conditions of the poor. There is no guarantee that the promises made at the time of elections would ever be fulfilled. For the down-trodden the right to vote is just superficial. Casteism, communalism, linguism etc. are exploited freely during elections. Vast funds are spent in elections and vaster ones minted afterwards. Corruption has reached all levels. This has endangered the very existence of Indian democracy.

Parliamentary democracy requires two-party system for its success. But India, because of its diverse nature, gave rise to multiple parties. This results in either instability or one-party dominance. This is what has happened in India. A system of one-party dominance has come to stay. It does not allow a strong Opposition to emerge. There is an unholy alliance of rulers, bureaucracy and the rich vested interests. Unless this alliance is broken, benefits of democracy will not percolate to the poor and middleclass people.

Mahatma Gandhi had advocated the disbanding of the Congress after independence. Manabendra Nath Roy had proposed a partyless democracy. Jayaprakash Narayan wanted a participatory democracy shorn of political partisanship. They were all rejected. Without social and economic democracy, political democracy is hollow. So, though we have made spectacular advance in many areas, our basic problems have remained unsolved.

Economic conditions are pretty bad but social conditions are still worse. Electoral politics combined with decentralised panchayat system has given a boost to casteism and violence. Fundamentalism is on the increase. Religion is being exploited on a very large scale. The leadership has exploited all these factors to the detriment of the nation. Parochial sub-states are taking shape within the Indian state and threatening its very existence. Where is freedom? Where is equality and secular citizenship?

We have forgotten the ideals of our freedom-fighters and belied the expectations of our founding fathers. There is no awareness of duties. Everyone is after his abject self-interest. The whole system has been commercialised. These are not the signs of democracy coming of age. The future of Indian democracy is very bleak indeed.

Yet, we will have to make efforts to save it. For that basic changes will have to be brought about in our system. The earlier we do them the better. Good people will have to come forward to take up this task. We have made abundant investment in material resources. Now investment in human resources is necessary, so that men of character and principles alone operate the system.

Malafide Working of Bonafide Constitution

By : B.B. Shende, Advocate
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INDIA has witnessed many ups and downs during the period of 40 years of independence. There have been turmoils, social, political and economic in these years. However, in spite of progress in science and technology made during these years, the people in general are not happy. Life has become quite unhappy, complicated, miserable and dissatisfaction all over the country prevails. When India was under the foreign rule, one and all could point their finger to the British and blame them, but after independence no such blame can be thrown against them and people have to blame themselves.

The reasons for such a dissatisfaction are sought in the politico-legal pattern the country has adopted after independence. As is well known the people of India have 'adopted, enacted and given to themselves the Constitution on 26th Nov. 1949 which came into force from the Republic day i.e. the 26th January 1950. The Constitution declares

its aim to constitute India into a sovereign, democratic Republic, and give to all its citizens liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and opportunity, justice, social economic and political and to promote among them all fraternity and unity of the Nation.'

The words 'socialist and secular' have been added to qualify the aims of the Republic in between the words 'Sovereign and democratic and the word 'integrity' after the word unity in Preamble by the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act 1976. Thus India has been a democratic republic, socialist and secular. In spite of these high ideals laid down by the founding fathers of the Constitution, people or their leaders have failed to put them into actual life or practise them in individual and public life. There has been apparent divergence of ideals and practice in the life of the country. Failures on different fronts are being ascribed to socio-political or constitutional system adopted by us. How far this stands the test of truth is a matter which requires introspection and dispassionate examination.

One of the causes ascribed for the failure on these fronts is that the entire system has no Indian (Or Bharatiya) foundation. It is alleged that the Socio-economic or political pattern existing in ancient India has been ignored by the leaders of the country in evolving the system. The Indian culture and civilization has been thousands of years old. It would be a bold statement to say that any one common code of social and political conduct ruled for these ages. One cannot lose sight of the fact that art, literature, culture and civilization of our country has been the product of development of hundreds of years of experience and profound thought. No one system or code of conduct prescribed could be said to be operating through all these ages, and what Manu prescribed had undergone amendments by the great sages like Yagnawalkya. What is painful is that those who had the reins of social control had used their intellect and power not in the interest of the people as a whole but for their own limited ends and the principles like 'Let all men be happy' remained only an ideal in the religious texts.

In later stages, the country saw many rulers, particularly from the 12th century, prominent among them the Mongols, Sultans, Mughals and the British who did have loyalties to ancient Indian tradition but who nevertheless made impacts on Indian culture. It is difficult to deny the fact, that by third quarter of the 19th century, practically the whole of India, from Baluchistan to Burma and from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, came to be administered by strong, integrated central rule of the British. The British introduced their own system of laws which they had carefully developed for themselves in administering the country and applied some indigenous local laws and customs in the administration of justice.

Now it is well acknowledged that the founding fathers of the Constitution had examined the various constitutions of the world, that of England, U.S.A., Ireland, Japan, Australia, Canada, France & others. The experience of mankind in working out the institutions founded by them could not be overlooked. The Constitution makers satisfied themselves that they adopted some of the best principles and traditions evolved and worked out by the other nations such as England and the U.S.A. Copious use was made of the Govt. of India Act 1935 for creating institutions like the Supreme Court, the Governors, Parliament and President of India in place of the Governor General, with constitutional limitations, and Prime Minister with Council of Ministers commanding confidence in the House of the People, administering the country. The Bill of Rights under the Constitution of U.S.A. had been adopted as Fundamental Rights Chapter to confer certain basic rights on the people—citizens & non-citizens who were deprived of most of the rights being under the foreign rule for hundreds of years.

There were members in the Constituent Assembly who had expressed their desire that the constitution should represent the basic or cultural heritage of India. Question was : which elements of the cultural heritage could be represented in India's Constitution? Religion or Dharma is said to be the basic element having a very earnest appeal to the people in India. Dharma or 'Rule of Law' includes application of the rule to spiritual and temporal life. Could India proclaim to be a state following a particular religion as far as it applies to spiritual life? The answer is obviously in the negative.

The Constitution guarantees freedom to practise, to propagate and to profess one's own religion under Art. 25 but subject to public order, morality and health. Besides, it confers other rights under the head "fundamental rights." Clause 2(a) of Article 25 vests the State with power to regulate or restrict any financial, political and economic or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice. The Hindu religious and charitable institutions could be thrown open to various classes and sections of the Hindus under Art. 25(2)(b) and the term 'Hindu' has been defined under explanations to Art. 25 as including the Sikhs, Jains and Buddhist religions. Art. 26 guarantees a right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes and to manage its affairs in matters of religion and to own, acquire & administer the same according to law. The state is forbidden to collect any taxes the proceeds of which are to be appropriated for promotion or maintenance of any religion or religious denominations, under Art. 27. Art. 28 prohibits religious instructions in general in educational institutions maintained wholly out of state funds. However, the institutions which impart religious instructions cannot compel those students to participate in such instructions or religious worship against their wishes.

Now, if it is a principle of our ancient cultural heritage to have respect for different religions and treat them alike, it is difficult to deny that principles contained in the above articles do represent our ancient heritage and traditions of high moral philosophy of equality of religions or 'सर्वेषाम् समानम्'. If our ancient culture contemplates equality of men and women alike irrespective of caste, creed, community, sex, place of birth or descent. The principles of equality before law and equal protection of law guaranteed in Art. 14 and equal opportunity in Art. 15 & 16 are a definite manifestation of such principle. If our ancient religion and culture believes in treating all men alike and not making a distinction of high or low, then Art. 17 making a declaration of abolition of untouchability is no doubt an expression of such a belief. If our ancient jurisprudence propounds that no one should be punished without proving a guilt against him, then Art. 21 guaranteeing rights to life and liberty of a person and enjoining against its deprivation except according to the procedure established by law, does represent that jurisprudence.

The constitution makers have adopted Parliamentary democracy or a Cabinet system of Government on the British pattern. Democracy cannot be thought of without people's participation in the government. We have an indirect democracy under the Constitution in as much as people elect their representatives to the Parliament. The majority party in the Lok Sabha is entitled to form its own council of ministers with the leader of the party as a Prime Minister. Prime Minister with his council of ministers is responsible to the House of the People under Art. 75—that is to say, the House of the People, if dissatisfied with the administration, may remove the Prime Minister and his council of ministers by a vote of no-confidence. Such a system does contemplate a strong two-party system so that the party in opposition, if sufficiently strong can drive the government out of power by a vote of no-confidence. Unfortunately opposition to the ruling party has not so far been strong enough to vote out the ministry from power for various reasons, like dissensions and communal groups. Even at the end of five years of the tenure of Lok Sabha the opportunity for the people to vote another party into power is not utilised properly for want of political education, maturity. Political corruptions and crossing of the floor, use of financial magnetes are matters which are cutting at the roots of democracy and that is the reason why there is a consistent and pressing demand for electoral reforms by the various political parties and political thinkers.

Could the Constitution makers expect that such a state of affairs might be reached by the misuse of power and by the administrator's capacity to hoodwink and even corrupt large masses of the people? However good a framework the Constitution might have provided, it is

for the people and their leaders to implement and execute the scheme under the constitution. It is not possible to blame the constitution for the ills brought in by those who are entrusted to work out the Constitution. The people who are sovereign and supreme shall have to see the kind of government in power if they want to exercise their will politically. There might be some lacuna in the system in vogue, but it is not possible to find a system without a lacuna; and in spite of some pitfalls parliamentary democracy is indispensable for a country like India.

Will it be possible to replace the present parliamentary democracy by any ancient institutions? Can we trust that now or in future certain persons with competence forming the Council of an advisory nature to the Ruler will be so incandescently honest and wise as to safeguard the interest of the people at large? The answer is simply in the negative.

In democracy, freedom of expression is so fundamental that it cannot be overemphasized. The freedom of speech and expression has been guaranteed under Art. 19 (1) (a). But the freedom of expression becomes meaningless if it is not deep-rooted in the social or public life. The freedom embodies a right of dissent and hence a criticism. The developments for the last several years have shown that criticism of an individual or a party is *not* being tolerated. Critics are looked upon with contempt and efforts are being made to eradicate them. In our country whose essential character has been tolerance, critics are looked upon as enemy. This is a trend towards dictatorship. Is dictatorship an element of India's essential social life? If it is not, then, freedom of speech and expression as provided in Art. 19 can be held to be a continuation of India's broad cultural heritage.

In ancient India it is well known that the King's descendant became the ruler. He was aided by some ministers who were well versed in law or Dharma. The King was the ruler, administrator, lawmaker and judge. He combined in himself, the executive, the legislative, the judicial and military functions though he sought the advice of his ministers. The modern system under the Constitution has devised a three-tier system, in which the legislature makes the laws, the executive i.e. the cabinet executes them, and the judiciary administers justice according to law and examines whether the laws are being applied properly.

Under India's Constitution, the President has been placed at the apex of the constitutional machinery as a head of the state. He is indirectly elected by representatives of the people in Parliament and the State legislative assemblies. Institution of the head of the state was no doubt necessary. Most of the powers enjoyed by the Governor General under the Government of India Act 1935 are vested in the President with some modifications to suit the democratic structure. The oath of office to the

President enjoins that he has to protect, preserve and defend the Constitution and the Law. Constituent Assembly had been seized of the question as to whether the head of the state could be a President or a King; and the consensus was to have a President whose position would be somewhat like that of the King in England. The President was designated to be a protector of the Constitution with various powers, most of which could be exercised only with the aid and advice of the Prime Minister and his council of ministers.

A controversy has been raised during the past few years that the President should be the real executive head and not a titular head of the state suggesting thereby that Presidential form, as obtains in the USA, should be adopted in India. When the Office of the President was found exercising certain brakes on the unconstitutional working of the government functionaries, this theory was advanced by certain political groups to suit their own ends. Suffice to say that it is not possible to reconcile the parliamentary system, with its checks and balances and government's accountability to the people's representatives and the presidential form, which confers immense power on the President to be controlled only by the American Congress. Moreover, there is the question of a country's culture. It is difficult to find in India the equivalent of an American example, where a Chief Justice and the Senate directed the President to submit the tapes recorded in the White House in what is known as the "Watergate Scandal". The institution of President as Executive authority, by virtue of its inherent centralised and absolute character is incompatible with democracy. Prof. Patterson believes that 'the President (in the USA) is a dictator but thanks to the Supreme Court, he is a constitutional dictator'.

India's Constituent Assembly or the Drafting Committee was not in favour of introduction of the presidential system on the U.S. pattern, nor did they intend to make the President a mere 'figurehead'. Jawaharlal Nehru as a Chairman of the Union Constitution Committee emphasized upon the ministerial character of the Government and wanted to make the position of President as "one of great authority and dignity" (C.A.D. Vol. IV P. 734). Even Dr. K.M. Munshi, another important member of the Drafting Committee, advocated that the President under the Constitution is not a mere constitutional figurehead but a repository of wide powers. President V.V. Giri said, "I, as a President, was not a figurehead but a participant in the affairs of the country." (Foreword to the 'President of India' by Dr. B.C. Das).

How far the elements of ancient Indian religion and culture could be articulated in the form of governments in the constitutional framework, is thus a problem arising more out of love and affection in the

country's climate than out of experience on working out of a Constitution. Forms of governments may vary but if those who are entrusted with the working of the machinery do not faithfully work it out, then, no form of government can serve any people. In other words, if the various problems—social, economic, political and constitutional—now being faced have to be resolved, the people must be alert and vigilant. If the people are indifferent to these problems, no form of government can be a remedy for the ills. The people would get only the government they deserve. Organisation of strong political groups to control the government and the representatives in legislature, irrespective of affiliations, is therefore a must in a democracy.

Granville Austins' testimony in this context would be noteworthy. He said, "The Indians' sense of their rich cultural heritage, their record of *progression* achievement in the arts and sciences of the modern world, and their faith in their ability to govern themselves combined to give them a national maturity that allowed a reasoned approach to the creation and working of government equipped with the basic qualifications, attitudes and experience, for creating and working a democratic constitution, Indian did not default in their trust with destiny". (P 330) (Indian Constitution Cornerstone of a Nation).

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, while moving the Draft Constitution said, "Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realise that our people have yet to realise it. Democracy in India is only a topdressing on Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic," and further, "I feel that it is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace and in wartime. Indeed, if I may say so, if things go wrong under the new Constitution, the reason will not be that we had a bad Constitution. What we will have to say is that Man is vile." (P 436, Framing of India's Constitution).

Way to Revamp the Indian Political System

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INDIA is known as the world's largest democracy. Its population is now nearing 800 millions. The preamble to the Indian Constitution declares the objectives as establishing a sovereign, democratic, secular, socialist Republic by ensuring economic, social and political justice, liberty, equal-

ity, fraternity and assuring the dignity of the individual and unity of the nation.

I. Failure of the Political System :

Forty years of our experience has belied the hopes, ambitions and aspirations of the people. Poverty, illiteracy and hunger haunt a major segment of the populace. At the same time new scales of prosperity out of all desirable proportions has descended upon a small section of groups and individuals. Thirty per cent people share 70 per cent resources and 70 per cent people have to be content with 30 per cent of national income. The top ten per cent 40 per cent of resources and the bottom 40 per cent left with bare ten per cent of the slice of the national income. Political and administrative corruption has assumed alarming proportions.

What has happened to the Fundamental Rights of the people and the Directive Principles purporting to establish a Welfare State? Only on the count of political equality could it be said that the right to vote is given regardless of any restrictions or qualifications. But the same unfettered right has proved to be a bane rather than a boon. The principle of one man, one vote, one value has been distorted to such an extent of absurdity that the universal adult suffrage has come to mean that the poor choose to be poorer and willy nilly make the rich richer. Through distortions, manipulations, manoeuvrings, misleading propaganda, party politics and machinations the election system based on single-member-constituency and plurality of votes had disproved the well-known thesis of Maurice Duvverger that such an arrangement always invariably leads to emergence of a two-party system. Due to fragmentation of the Opposition, the ruling party in India has managed to get two-thirds majority in the Parliament barely with a support of 40 per cent of the popular votes polled. That with the help of a minority of votes a party can manage to have a steamroller majority and the others with a huge majority of support should be reduced to a hapless, hopeless and helpless minority is nothing but the most grotesque travesty of truth.

To illustrate the point, out of the total population of 800 millions, half of them are voters. Voting being around 66 per cent, with the help of 120 million voters the party can claim wholesale power throughout the length and breadth of the country over all the states and citizens unrestrained by law. The so-called 'parliamentary supremacy', which had emerged in England to curb the powers of the king, is further claimed as a justification to amend any part of the Constitution including the basic structure or even the Article 368 itself stipulating a special majority and ratification by States. If the Parliament so elected can assume absolute unlimited authority unfettered by any constitutional provisions, it only

means that life, liberty and rights of the people have been surrendered to a coterie of politicians and their sense of right and wrong. This is nothing short of State-terrorism. The result of the amendments made so far has been ever-centralization of powers of the Centre further aggravated by self-aggrandisement of extra-constitutional institutions and politicians.

With manipulations at party level and by destroying institutions like that of the Speaker or the Council of Ministers and the Parliamentary procedures, and by cowing down the feeble opposition in the House through lung power and dubbing it as "anti-national interested in only causing obstructions in the national development" and by misuse of men, money and muscles for excessive use of state power, the Parliamentary Government has been reduced to a para-military government. Much water has flown since Mahalanobis Commission pointed out that as a result of planning in India, the rich have become richer and poor still poorer. The degeneration of the Government, the efficiency and corruption actively encouraged and promoted by politicians causing the loot of the national resources have become the main concern of the political system. Justice Lentin Committee's report at the state level and the Bofors and Fairfax scandals at the Union level are just tips of the ice-berg.

II Curing the Malaise of the Body-Politic

1. The distortions in the election system can be cured by adopting proportional representation. Each party getting the seats in the Parliament in proportion to its popular votes polled in the election. It should be open for the parties to choose their representatives after the polls so that election-bickerings would be minimised. Character assassination, mud-slinging, factionalism and floor crossing would then be replaced by concern for party ideology, manifesto, programme and policies. All the parties will have to be active to keep constant and continuous liaison with the people. Parties will be organically linked with public opinion. It would be the primary concern of every party to build its image, gain confidence of the people in its leadership to deliver the goods. There should also be an obligation on all political parties to hold regular elections of party office-bearers, so that there would be inner-party democracy instead of domination through nomination and formation of party-cliques. This should be a pre-requisite for gaining the right of nominating representatives to the legislature.

2. The government itself should sponsor the election campaign by allowing party-wise canvassing, through public media like Radio, T.V. and newspaper columns. This will save the small parties from financial constraint and subject the powerful parties to constitutional restraint. Even at a modest estimate the big political parties are spending about Rs.

Ten Lakhs per parliamentary constituency. Even keeping touch with every voter through one single posted envelope would cost a candidate something Rs. 7.5 lakhs.

3. Minimum qualifications, training, experience, ability to understand socio-political-economic problems of the country and also international political system and the world order have to be prescribed for members of the legislature. A thorough exposure to parliamentary procedures must be a pre-requisite to be a member of Parliament. With the expanding horizons of knowledge, it should not be difficult to expect a high exacting standard of qualifications from our Parliamentarians numbering about 800 in a country of 800 millions. Once a person is elected to the august assembly, he must be expected to train every nerve for rendering faithful and loyal service to the people and do justice to the assigned job. His presence and participation in the House throughout the proceedings except for a pro-sanctioned leave should be made compulsory. The daily allowance is not to be given just for appending his signature on to the register and then remaining absent for the whole day. I am all in favour of ensuring them a good standard of life with decent amenities and facilities to enable them to be in touch with their constituency in particular and the national problems in general. The Parliamentary Sessions should be arranged in such a way as to have maximum duration. The committee work should be of more exacting nature. The entire term of assignment should be meant for working in a business-like manner. The Parliamentarians should deal with public issues, policies and general decision-making. They should not be allowed to take interest in personal gains or work for their relatives and friends. The rules should be made more stringent to disqualify the members and discredit the party indulging in undue favours.

4. Nepotism can be minimised and corruption can be restricted to 'a great extent if voters' councils are organised activated to keep a check on the representatives. There is a great need to organically link the voters with the representatives. Right to recall may not be worthwhile, but right to 'name' the representative can become a strong instrument in the hands of the Voters' Councils. If given recognition and status, Voters' Councils can keep an effective check on the activities of the representatives through close scrutiny and demanding accountability. For this purpose the representative has to be a local man. A man from Kashmir cannot be organically linked to the voters from Washim. The game of uprooting persons from their soil in giving them party tickets is a deep game which undermines the authority and respectability of the representative institutions.

5. A minister must be well-informed, if not an expert, in the portfolio he is leading. No doubt, it is the prerogative of the Prime Minister to assign the portfolio, but a high-powered institution like that of a Cabinet, the Council of Ministers should not be allowed to be reshuffled like a pack of cards with a joker donning any place. The Constitution itself should safeguard against such jokes. What national purpose is served by frequent reshufflings expect keeping the Ministers on tenter-hooks to satisfy the vainglorious egotism of the Prime Minister? Every exercise of reshuffling so far has brought in confusion and demoralization. A Minister should normally hold a portfolio during his 'good behaviour'. If there is a breach of faith or incompetence, there is no rationale in shifting such an inefficient Minister to another portfolio.

6. Judiciary should enjoy complete freedom : non-interference from the executive must be strictly ensured. At present the appointments of the judges are made by the executive. Vacancies are not filled in despite the mounting of heavy arrears. In the Supreme Court itself, there are 1,40,000 cases pending. The number of cases in arrears in State High Courts are around 14 lakhs. The entire organization, appointments, temporary appointments, etc. should be left to the Supreme Court with complete devolution of financial authority. The Executive has still the powers to withdraw prosecutions (especially criminal cases including murder trials) at any stage. This must be done away with.

7. To check the political corruption a high-powered institution on the models of Ombudsman should be created. It should have an elaborate machinery at its disposal. If the present Central Bureau of Investigation works directly under the President and is directed by the Ombudsman, politicians cannot escape from the clutches of law. However, a code of conduct will have to be prescribed for politicians.

8. The states must enjoy full financial autonomy. They should be partners in sharing the prosperity of their region with the Centre and not be beggars at the mercy of the Centre. It is inconceivable to have a strong Centre with weak States. But all along our polity is moving towards centralisation, rather over-centralisation. This trend must be reversed and decentralisation should be carried out to the grass root level with constitutional guarantees. Very few have realized that the problem of Punjab stems from 'operation deprivation'. The demand for restructuring Centre-State relations had begun as far back as 1967 when the non-Congress Governments came into power in majority of States. But even today the Union Government is thinking of abolition of Sales Tax and introduction of excise duty, increase in steel price and reduction of taxes thereon to deprive the States of their legitimate share. There is absolutely no reason to think that leadership at the union level is

often better than that at the state level. In a vast country like our even ten million people can form a coherent political sub-system. If by giving them sufficient scope for self-government the regional identities can flourish and strengthen national integration, it is worthwhile to increase the number of states. All of us know how the Union Government stood in the way of even naming a particular state according to the strong desire of the people and invited agitation and popular wrath. Such attitude is always counter-productive. Instead of having rickety states and a pot-bellied diseased federal government, let us have self-reliant autonomous states contributing their mite to make India a strong nation.

9. Last, but not the least, the wide gap between authority and responsibility, promises and performance, legitimacy and credibility must be bridged by constitutional guarantees. In the body politic there has to be some in-built mechanism where by the people can keep themselves informed of the going-on inside the legislatures and the administration. Today, their right to such information is merely theoretical and ineffectual. It has to be made real and effective.

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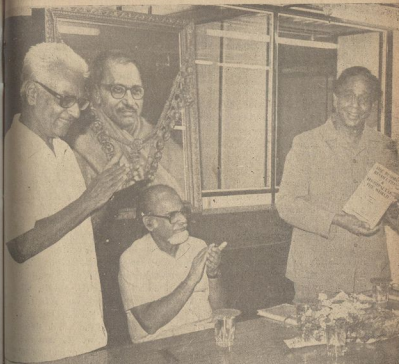


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*Shri A.P. Venkateswaran releasing the book to general applause.
(L to R) K.R. Malkani and Inder Gujral.*

Venkateswaran releases DRI book 'The October Revolution & Its Impact on the World: Gujral Presides

On September 27, the Deendayal Research Institute published the book "The Russian Revolution & Its Impact on the World".

The book was released by Shri A.P. Venkateswaran, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India. Shri Inder Gujral, our former Ambassador in Russia presided.

Earlier, Shri Malkani welcomed the guests. And Shrimati Neelam Deshpande presented them bouquets of flowers. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Shri Nana Deshmukh, Chairman, DRI thanked the guests.

Here is a report of the speeches :

MALKANI : It is a great pleasure to have you all here today. On behalf of the Institute, I welcome you all. You are all aware that a few months back we had an important seminar in this Institute. Russia had just completed seventy years of the Revolution and we thought that that was a good occasion to assess what the impact of the Revolution had been worldwide. We invited even the C.P.I. and C.P.I.(M). And I am glad to say that the response was very good. The CPI designated two senior leaders to present their views. Mr. Namboodiripad of the C.P.I.(M), though he could not attend, contributed a paper. And when we circulated a number of papers, he reacted to them, and sent us another paper.

All these papers were circulated and, subsequently, we had a two-day seminar. I have not attended another seminar as interesting and as illuminating as this one. We were not too many—I think less than 20. But what we learnt in those two days was something unusual for all of us. As my good friend, Prof. Bimal Prasad of the J.N.U. put it, we attend many seminars, but this one was different—and much better. Other seminars on Russia are either pro-Russia or anti-Russia, but this one was *on* Russia. Discussion was free and frank and the whole thing was done with sweet reasonableness. At the end of it, we felt that the papers and the discussions were so valuable that it was not enough to publish them in our monthly magazine, *Manthan*. We thought they should be brought out in book form. The seminar was held on the death anniversary of Pandit Deendayal. And the book is now ready on his birth anniversary.

Panditji's name brings to mind many memories. His dying was so mysterious. But I will not go into that. It was happy enough that a man like Deendayal, a gem like Deendayal, could be produced in this country even in this iron age. He would have been extremely happy to see that this Institute is engaged in serious discussion of major issues. More than politician, he was a thinker. A sage like him would have been delighted that we organise seminars like these here, and publish books like these.

It is very happy for us to have Mr. Gujral and Mr. Venkateswaran with us today. Mr. Gujral was able to attend the seminar. He led the discussion in the concluding session, a very illuminating session. He needs no introduction. Mr. Gujral's last appointment was as Ambassador to

Russia. But he is something more than Ambassador. He advocates all good causes. Both of them are men of light and learning and of very high experience. Mr. Venkateswaran retired as Foreign Secretary. After a distinguished diplomatic career, he resigned. And now we find that he is also taking up national issues. There has been some controversy about this. I am sure he thoroughly enjoys it; all healthy people do. It is such a pleasure to have two such distinguished men with us today. There are few men in India who know as much about Russia as Mr. Gujral and Mr. Venkateswaran. I would now request Shri Venkateswaran to give his assessment, his appreciation, of the Russian scene.

SHRI VENKATESWARAN : It gives me very great pleasure to be associated with the release of this book "The Impact of the Russian Revolution on the World", which contains seminar papers and the discussions held under the auspices of the Deendayal Research Institute in New Delhi sometime ago. I also had the privilege of being invited to this seminar. But, unfortunately, I had to be away from Delhi at that time. I had asked Mr. Malkani to be good enough to send me as many seminar papers as he could. I must say that unlike most organisation which acknowledge letters but do not follow up, he did send me the seminar papers. So I had an idea of what was in this book even before I came here.

The debate has always been on "Evolution" and "Revolution". Evolution, as you know, is a very slow process and I believe that this human race has evolved over three million years, and I am sure that most of us are not very happy with the end-product! As they say, "Man is the younger brother of the gods and elder brother of animals. Like the animals, he eats, excretes and procreates. And like the gods he aspires for truth, justice and beauty. So we have a long way to go before we attain godhood and we have to be very careful that we do not lapse into the animal kingdom. H.G. Wells once said that a revolutionary can be compared to a glass balloon, when it is being blown and it is red hot. But a time comes when the glass balloon cools and it becomes rigid. At that stage a revolutionary becomes a reactionary; at least he ceases to be a revolutionary. That means, the balloon has to be the blown after breaking the glass. Some theorists speak about revolution and the continuation of a revolution. Actually, a revolution by its very nature is just one revolution, like a revolution of a wheel. Or if you take it in the whole context, political organisations also have a cyclical life. But even in cycles it is not the same cycle which continues. Those of you who have sensitive electronic gadgets in Delhi know that electrical gadgets are often no longer of much use when they get blown up. So the Russian Revolution, I think, should be judged by what it achieved in 1917, the impetus it gave to the country, its people, the vision with which the

Revolution succeeded. After that you can judge where the revolution led; not that the revolution continued, but where did that initial push take the Soviet Union.

It has taken the Soviet Union a long, long way. If you have to choose two great revolutions which have affected the minds of men, apart from achieving something in their respective countries, I can only think of the French Revolution and the Great October Revolution in Russia. Because here they were not merely to change a system, there was a mission, there was a goal, namely, to change humanity. In the French Revolution the slogans were liberty, equality and fraternity. It ended there. And we know that for the effects of the French Revolution itself, we will have to search very carefully today if you go to France. They acquired colonies, oppressed the people, and felt happy in their exploitation. Besides, one of the phenomena which came out of the French Revolution was Napoleon who was no revolutionary. Revolutions are not meant to overpower others and rule over them. A Revolution means changing yourselves and your community, your society, your nation. So I would say that the Russian Revolution was something very unique, greater by far, because it involved the people all over the world and set a moral which many have tried to imitate.

The focus of the Revolution was to win a new Utopia. Visionaries can be categorised into two groups: those who dream of utopia and those who dream of doom. I certainly would like to be on the side of those who dream of utopia because even if you do not get those utopias, at least you can move one stage towards it, trying to improve over the past.

I have been very fortunate in my career in the Foreign Office to have been associated with the Soviet Union quite intimately. I served in the Soviet Union in the 60s for three years. Then, I dealt with the Soviet Union as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of the Soviet Desk in the 70's; later I dealt with the socialist countries, including the Soviet Union. When I served in Moscow, my wife took up a Russian language course and was also associated with the Soviet ballet. She became for me a tower of strength because in the 60's there was no glasnost, no freedom, and you could not easily meet Soviet people; you could meet officials and they were obliged to meet you. Those who were specially authorised, would meet you in their offices. And those who had been very, very specially authorised, could invite you to their homes. And that was that. But because she was a student in the State Institute of Theatrical Arts, families of ordinary people would invite her and because I was her husband, I would also get invited. So I had been to all kinds of homes—homes of senior bureaucrats, homes of tram drivers and

bus drivers of Moscow. We used to be there because all of them had been students of the Institute of Theatrical Arts.

This, again, brings to my mind what was unique in the Soviet Union. There were only two privileged categories there; children and students. Anything concerning a child was always sold at a fractional price. And anything which was needed by students was also available at subsidised price. Our daughter went to a Soviet school, not to the International School. The reason was that we felt that she should make friends among the people and not just mix with children of other diplomats. Within the first three months we got three notes from the teachers advising about her strengths and weaknesses and telling us what should be done. Unfortunately, despite all these efforts, these have had only limited results for their own people. Possibly, this was due to the psychic complex they acquired during the early years of the revolution, when there were 23 foreign armies trying to snuff out the revolution. There was a culture of suspicion. The culture of suspicion resulted in what was called the Okhrana, of the KGB with Luleyanka Prison right in the middle of Moscow.

It seems to me that what Gorbachev is trying to do is to carry forward the opening up which was done by Khrushchev in the '50s. Khrushchev denounced Stalin, which was a very courageous thing to do. You can understand how much courage was needed for this. So I would say that Gorbachev required a little less courage because of that pioneer, Khrushchev who had already done something very important. I believe that it is only by opening up the human spirit that the message of the Russian Revolution can really carry out what it was really intended by Karl Marx who, all said and done, was basically a humanist. He wanted that men and women should realise their fullest potential. And so through this theory of dialectical materialism, he was aiming at human beings realising their full potential. Then it means that their individual personality has to be allowed to blossom and not merely the collective spirit, certainly not the collective being of a State. Because when you look at it, what was the ultimate goal of Communism? It was that the state will wither away. So if the state is to wither away later, why do you give additional instrumentality to the State, to keep the people under guided control? Some minimal control is essential because all States rest on the use of force. When I was studying law, a Professor, who was also an interesting person, permitted questions. Nowadays, I find it is not permissible to do so, because it will get you bad marks! I asked him, what does the last rupee of uncollected land revenue rest on? He said that it depended upon the last bayonet of the last soldier in the realm. I asked, what happens if that bayonet is also successfully resisted. He said, then, the revolution would stick. And that is absolutely true.

Here I would like to give you a story which was told by Mr. Khrushchev at a dinner in our Embassy in 1964. Mr. T.N. Kaul was the Ambassador and the visit was a special gesture that Mr. Khrushchev had made. When his time came to reply to the toast—and of course, the toast given by our side was full of high-praise flattery—Mr. Khrushchev said he had just come back the previous day from the Caucasus where people's longevity could reach 120 or 130 years. He said he gave his presentation there. An old man was standing at the back of the hall. Khrushchev called him Jabia, and said: "You have seen how things were before the Revolution, you have seen the Revolution, and you have also seen the fruits of the Revolution. What do you think of our achievements?" And the old man replied: "I have only one shirt. It is getting frayed at the cuffs. My shoes are worn out and I do not know where I shall find the money to buy a new one". Mr. Khrushchev said he felt embarrassed and told Jabia that he must not complain because there are countries which are even poorer—China and India, for instance—where they cannot afford even to wear shoes. Thereupon the old man said: "Mr. Khrushchev, did the revolution come to China and India before it came to the Soviet Union? (Laughter). Here was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Russia. He had the capacity to laugh at himself and the system. That was the kind of openness with him.

When I went to Moscow for the 50th Anniversary of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic, they wanted to give higher precedence to Mr. Dange than to Mr. Pathak, our Vice-President, who was leading the Indian delegation. We told them that if they put a private citizen like Dange ahead of the Vice-President of India, we will have to walk out. They could not understand us. And I had to point out that I did not see that within two generations the Communist Party would come to power in India. They at last understood. So we have to be very cautious. In the speech of Mr. Pathak on that occasion I put in a quotation from Kamban, the famous poet of the South, who rendered the Ramayana in Tamil. Kamban described Ram Rajya thus:

*Illoorum illai udayaarum illai
Illoorum illai, udayaarum illai*

It means that in Rima's kingdom, there was nobody who did not have enough and there was also nobody who had more than enough. Because if you do not have enough, you can be exploited and if you have more than enough, then again, you can exploit. So basically it means: To each according to his needs; no more no less, which is what communism aspires for. That was the principle underlying Ram Rajya. So the Soviet Revolution has a message for us that we too have to emulate. But

we have also to keep in mind that sometimes there are certain things which can be taken only at a jump, and, cannot be taken at a walk.

I think it is important to study all these things—the Seminar papers and the discussions that were held. And those of you who have not had the opportunity of studying them, I would advise you to take the first opportunity to do so.

Before I end I would like to make one more point, namely that friendship between India and the Soviet Union is extremely important for us. Sometimes it is fashionable to say in India that the Soviets need us more than we need them. I do not think so at all and it will be increasingly evident when there is a growth in the interaction between the Soviets and the United States. Mind you, the United States is having a tremendous dilemma. On the one hand it shouts that the Soviet Union must liberalise and open up. On the other hand, they know that the Soviet Union will become stronger if it succeeds with its Glasnost and Perestroika. If one recalls what happened, I think in 1972, there was a ten-point agreement which was drawn up, ten principles guiding relations between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. I was then Joint Secretary dealing with the Soviet Union. So I had to interpret it, summarise the proceedings and send it to our leadership. One of the points was that neither side will take unilateral advantage of the other. And I pointed out that it could mean both sides can together, take advantage of any one else.

Geo-politically, the Soviet Union is more important for us than the U.S.A. and it will always be so. I think the Soviets being an Asian as well as a European power, have a slightly more oriental bent of mind and heart. That makes, I think, for a better relationship all around.

SHRI MALKANI: Mr. Venkateswaran, thank you very much, for your enlightening talk. I would now request Mr. Gujral to enlighten us on the subject.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: Nanaji, Mr. Malkaniji, Mr. Venkateswaran, ladies and gentlemen, I had participated in the seminar and, therefore, I have an intimate idea of its deliberations. When you buy the book or you have been given a copy free (Laughter) you will find some of the observations I had made at that time. I had said that there was need of understanding Russia in so many ways, not only because it is our neighbour—or presently it is a super-power,—but also because over the centuries, our vital interests have been involved in this region. There is a good old adage which says that when you are trying to analyse trends and historical ethos, it is very important to be objective and unemotional. Unfortuna-

tely, in India, we sometimes, rather frequently, tend to look at the foreign policy issues in an emotional manner. We liken friendships with love affairs. We, thus, juxtapose our prejudices into a situation, thus blurring our view.

Mr. Venkateswaran has been a highly rated diplomat all his life. Unlike him, I had only a brief span as ambassador in the U.S.S.R. But I have often found it to my dismay that some media-men and even enlightened public opinion leaders inhibit frank discussions by branding the speakers. This difficulty particularly pertains to the Soviet Union. A diplomat who has worked there is hastily branded as pro-or anti-Soviet. I was reading Galbraith's memoirs of ambassadorship in India. He makes a very succinct observation when he says that a time comes when you people at home start believing that while you are assigned to a foreign country, you are prejudiced in favour of that country. All the same an important part of a diplomat's job, he says, is that his assignment does not end with termination of his assignment. A nation invests in his stay, and it is very important that when he returns home, he must continue to interpret that country to his own people. In my own humble way I have been trying to do that though, sometimes, I have been branded as pro-Soviet.

I believe that the Soviet Union is an area of our vital interests. It is our neighbour and also a major world power. Therefore if we want to understand our short-term and long-term interest, we have to understand this country.

Unfortunately, as Mr. Venkateswaran said, we divide ourselves into anti-and pro-camps and the result is that when you are judging events and situations, you tend to falter. If you are pro-Soviet, then you ignore their shortcomings and you try to justify their faulty policies and thus overlook major mis-directions. If you are anti-Soviet, then you see nothing right in it and see everything in some shade of black. The Soviet nation has several aspects that are interesting, social transformation of its Asian part particularly. Those of you who have had the opportunity of travelling in these parts of the Soviet Union, would have seen that Samarkand, Tashkent, Bokhara etc. present the sight of backward societies transformed from the mediaeval areas to the present times in a matter of a few decades. Women have come out of purdah. It should make us think how a society that was far more backward than ours, has been transformed so quickly. Sometimes the means applied have not been very desirable, but the transformation is there to see.

The book has two major merits. One is that Mr. Malkani, thanks to his zeal, got together those whose prejudices either way were known.

He tried that they should interact with each other. And that helped them also, because it enabled every one to see another person's point of view. This was one of the unusual discussions when the participants tried to understand the Russian ethos. As Ambassador, I had one complaint: whenever an Indian delegation came to Moscow, the subject under discussion was always, and only, India and never Russia. The result was that the discussions did not add to our knowledge. I remember a delegation of the Planning Commission that discussed the Indian plan. I intervened on the third day to say that while we had been discussing the Indian plan, we wanted some data about the Soviet Plan too. The data was not forthcoming. That was in the pre-Gorbachev era. Now it seems some change is taking place. In the course of the last two years I find that discussions in Moscow and in Delhi pertain to the Soviet Union as well.

Whenever we talk of a Revolution, we often overlook the ethos and the history of the country. We think as if Russian history began in 1917 and as if the Russian mind was born in 1917. In the book you will notice that I had quoted a very interesting incident. In the last century in 1839, there was a French traveller by the name of De Crustine. His name is wrongly spelt in the book. He travelled in the Russian Empire and wrote a travelogue. The book then got lost. The average life of a book is never very long. And everybody forgot about it till a French Ambassador in Moscow found its copy in a second-hand bookshop and then got it reprinted. I also have a rare copy of this reprint. If you put your thumb on the 1839, you feel that much of what he was talking about represented the scene of pre-Gorbachev era. He talks of a sick society, of a suspicious society which only commands and obeys, a society which is neglected. That made me look for more books of the same type and then read an interesting but old biography of Chenghiz Khan. If we want to understand Russia, we should read this book. The Mongols ruled the Russian Empire, what is now the areas of Soviet Union, for more than four centuries. Russian liberation came only about 300 years ago. Therefore, the institutions, the thinking, the State structures, and even the world view, sometimes is Mongol. With the Revolution, several aspects changed, but some survived. The point that I am trying to make is that revolutions do change societies, but some elements survive the revolutions.

When do revolutions occur, generally speaking? I am not talking in terms of Marxian concepts. I feel that revolutions generally come when a society loses the capacity for inner cleansing, when a social system decays and when it does not know how to readjust itself to the new realities. The Russians for the moment are passing through such a process of inner cleansing. Every society, I think, sooner or later or rather periodically, faces such a reality. Like the individuals, if you do not know how to

cleanse the stomach either through Yoga or through medicines, then the results are generally difficult and painful.

USA faced such a situation in the Nixon era. But the democratic system manifested strength and the society met the challenge. In Russia, one such effort is being made by Gorbachev. Whenever a moment of truth comes, the beginning has to be made by re-examination of existing institutions. That should not be interpreted to mean as if somebody is trying to denigrate what has been achieved. The thinking people who have an incisive eye and a penetrating mind, try to look at the institutions, how far they have served and how much they have decayed. No institution is eternally right or wholly wrong. So when we are analysing the Soviet Revolution, it will be a mistake to think that Gorbachev is rejecting the socialist revolution. He is accepting it and rejecting it at the same time. Dialectics basically means that you both accept and reject at the same time, and thus establish continuity.

The Russian leaders of today are the insiders of the system, products of the system. They are trying to transform society without wrecking it. It will be a mistake to believe that capitalism is coming back in Russia. It is not. When socialism is modified, it does not mean that capitalism is coming. Whether socialism will be able to readjust to the new realities or not, is still to be seen. Gorbachev is showing remarkable courage. There are very few leaders—I am not talking only of the Russian leaders—in the world who have such courage to expose, to put aside their dogmatic garments and say these are the discarded dogmas. These faults were there all along, but now here is a leader who is leading this society and he says, "Yes, these are the bad points", and he, along with his colleagues, wants to change them.

Another quality of this man, which I admire most, is that, unlike many world leaders, and particularly our leaders, he does not only sit up and lecture on change. He pursues the change. He sees to it that the change filters down.

Another aspect that I think we must bear in mind is that he is not only changing internally, he is transforming the foreign policies in a very big way. If you read the theoreticians of foreign policy in the Soviet Union today, for the first time you realise that they say openly and categorically that the central point of the Soviet policy today is friendship with America. The postulates have changed. If we go by the old thinking that the inherent contradictions between the Soviet Union and America persist, then we will be mis-judging the situation. How much and how

far he is succeeding, is difficult to perceive. But definitely his postulates are very different. One of his firm beliefs is that his new foreign policy cannot succeed unless there is an assurance of peace.

The pursuit for peace has entered an interesting phase. Both USA and the Soviet Union have now reached a stage when their economies cannot afford the excessive defence expenditure. Weapons now are a very expensive proposition. For the first time, you find that the American economy is in a spin. I am referring to a recent article by Mr. Kissinger. He says that there is no hope of recovery of the American economic leadership; Japan has overtaken it. Europe also has begun to fear the burden of defence. Thus the question arises: can America sustain the dream of star wars, and continue to invest in nuclear weapons? The situation in the USSR is similar. The Soviet economy cannot afford to invest more money in nuclear arms. The reality stares both of them in the face.

Gorbachev has taken two courageous initiatives. First is Afghanistan. I was Ambassador in Moscow when the Soviet army went into Afghanistan. I stayed on for another year. And later I travelled to Afghanistan. It was very difficult to foresee that either voluntarily or involuntarily, the Soviet Union would ever withdraw. But Gorbachev has done it. He has taken a major risk. If Americans and Pakistanis together make it difficult, the enemies of Gorbachev in the Soviet Union—who are averse to change—will get hold of his throat. This can create a grave crisis. That is where, to a very large extent, it depends on the USA.

The latest initiative that has come only two days ago, is Gorbachev's speech in Siberia wherein he has propounded a new thesis of peace in Asian and Pacific region. Brezhnev in his time also used to talk of Asian security. When Mrs. Gandhi came to Moscow in 1976 I was there. Brezhnev exerted his best to persuade Mrs. Gandhi to back his conception of Asian security. Whatever your views about Mrs. Gandhi may or may not be, I must certify that she was a remarkable diplomat and she knew how to negotiate, not by long speeches but by pauses and silences. I do not know of any other leader, whose art of negotiation was or is, as skilful. She did not respond to Brezhnev. She just smiled and kept quiet. Brezhnev was uncomfortable, she was not. She did not accept the Brezhnev plea. The reason was simple. Brezhnev's thesis was aimed at ganging up to isolate China. She knew that this would be alignment, by another name. Our policy was changing in another direction; we were trying to revive our relationship with China. We did not want to fall in that trap.

But Gorbachev has advanced a new conception, that is all-inclusive. Like the European detente, China would also be at the table, so should be the USA and Japan. Step by step, he wants to eliminate tensions and build a new peace. It has its difficulties when Japan is now being armed and China is not willing to co-operate. Also India has its own dilemmas.

We all favour an Asian peace, but are averse in the context of a South Asian peace. This duality of values inhibits our style. We tell others to be peaceful with their neighbours, but we do not take any worthwhile initiative in our region. We lack the courage of Gorbachev. The main point before India, when Gorbachev comes here, would be: Are we, or are we not, in a position to take new initiatives in South Asia, in our neighbourhood? If our patriotism, or our concept of patriotism, negates peace in South Asia, then our future in Asia cannot be very comfortable. Do we have the courage to have another look at our foreign policy?

The Indian mind, the Indian media and Indian thinkers are very courageous when it comes to criticising super-powers; they are very courageous when it comes to South Africa, Latin America and what not, but we are all very tame when it comes to our neighbourhood. We do not want to criticise our foreign policy in Sri Lanka. We do not want to criticise our policy with Pakistan. We do not want to talk about Bhutan. We do not want to talk about Nepal. That, we think, negates patriotism.

Gorbachev has shown a new style and if we are wise and draw some moral from it, let us have the courage to review our neighbourhood relations.

Thank you very much. I am glad to be associated with the book.

MALKANI : Thank you very much. Mr. Gujral, for your insights into the Russian scene and your candid comments on the making of foreign policy. I would now request Nanaji, Chairman, Deendayal Research Institute, to say a few words of thanks.

(Pl. see next page also)

NANA DESHMUKH : The Deendayal Research Institute is fortunate to be able to invite the country's thinkers periodically to speak on subjects of interest to the nation and humanity at large. It has also been lucky to receive their gracious responses. Today you gave us your valued assessments of the October Revolution. No amount of thanks can be enough for these. Yet, both individually and on behalf of DRI, I express my grateful thanks for the insights you gave us.

Shri Venkateswaran came here today for the first time. I hope we will continue to receive fresh inputs of his thoughts. Shri Gujral came here on previous occasions. Hope he has come to feel that it is worthwhile to come here time and again and to enrich our people's vision by clear expositions of ideas.

Dr. Susheelaji is like an elder sister to us. She has affection for DRI. She often comes here and gives us the benefit of her experiences and thoughts. This gives us strength. Today, the book "October Revolution & Its Impact on the World" is being released. It is a part of our celebration of the 72nd birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. He was born on September 25. There is a reason why we are observing it here, at Delhi, two days after the date of his birth.

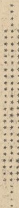
On September 25, Shri Mahesh Chandra Sharma, Secretary of the Institute, inaugurated a momentous programme for the youth at Nagpur. This is a programme for mobilising and unifying the youth for reconstructing the society and rebuilding the nation. DRI has launched yet another programme from Aurangabad. This is for the *Vanaprasthis*, i.e. for the people who have retired from the jobs they had been holding to earn their livelihood. It was inaugurated by Shri Yadav Rao Deshmukh, this Institute's organising secretary. How useful the *Vanaprasthis* can be to the country is clearly perceivable from the performance of the two *Vanaprasthis* who delivered their discourses here today.

The third programme of DRI related to educational research. An Educational Research Centre was inaugurated by myself at Jayaprabhagam in Gonda.

DRI keeps on organising such programmes. You will keep on receiving information regarding the progress of these programmes which are interlinked in the service of our people and for universally shared prosperity of mankind as a whole.

All of you have graced this occasion by your presence. I thank you all.

With best compliments of

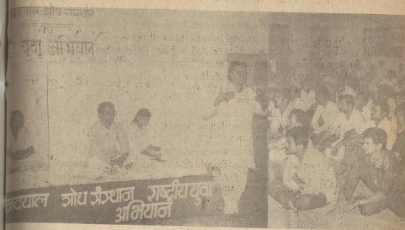


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Mahesh Chandra Sharma, Secretary Deendayal Research Institute called up the youth.

DRI, Nagpur opens

National Youth Movement

National Youth Movement was inaugurated in the auditorium of Bhagini Mandal, Sitabardi on the auspicious occasion of the birthday of Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya on 25th Sept., 1988. Large numbers of young men and women were present. Shri Mahesh Chandra Sharma, Secretary, DRI and Chief Guest, opened the programme by lighting a lamp. After Shri Vinod Bokare's solo song, Dr. Ramesh Gautam, in his introductory address, narrated the inspiring reminiscences of Pt. Deendayal ji and called up the youth to give practical shape to his ideas.

Shri Mahesh Chandra Sharma in his inaugural address explained that the whole country is aware of the "Integral Humanism" concept of Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya but our youth has not paid any attention toward the social-utility of this concept. The new generation represents the "present" of this country and it is only the young who are endowed with the capacity to face the crisis. Our society has become a helpless playground for hypocrisy and double standards. It is not enough to put 'Satyameva Jayate' (It is truth that triumphs) as an emblem and become carefree. It has become essential to hold fast on to the truth in one's personal and social life.

National Youth Movement will foster the programmes for eradication of evils of casteism and dowry systems by organising discussions, seminars and public movements and helping to solve the local problems by collective 'shramdan' movements. The forum of Deendayal Research Institute is always ready to undertake any constructive work by young men and women of the country.

Later, Shri Mahesh Chandra Sharma had informal talks with the young people on various subjects and replied to their queries.

Sow. Sumatibai Suflikar was present on the occasion. Ms. Vishakha Deshpande acted as the moderator of the programme. Arati Purohit thanked the audience for gracing the occasion. The programme ended after the "Vandemataram" song sung by Sow. Sarita.

Young people were present in great number in the function.

Speech Competition

Lachhu Bhaiya Khadkar Memorial Speech Competition was organised under the auspices of Deendayal Research Institute, Bal Jagat, Laxmi Nagar, Nagpur, on Monday, 26th Sept., 1988 at the Ranjan Sabhagriha, Matree Seva Sangh, Sitavardi, Nagpur in the evening.

The function was presided over by Sow. Madhuri Joshi (Teacher Pt. Bachhraj Vyas Vidyalaya, Hanuman Nagar) and moderated by Sow. Asha Dharpure.

28 students of 16 schools took part in the competition. First prize was captured by Ms. Sonali Pandhri Pande (Bhinde Kanyashala, Bardi) second by Ms. Archana Vankhade (Ravinagar) and third by Shubhangi Bhende (Pratapnagar, Prathamik Marathi Shala). Supporting prize was handed to Sukhdev Dudhalkar and Prakash Hivse (Viklang Bal Vikas Kendra).

Chief of the Institute's Nagpur unit Sow. Sumatibai Suflikar was present throughout. Sow. Madhuri Joshi acquainted the audience with the ideas of Pt. Deendayal Ji.

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