

Indo-Pak Summit

The Issue Is Clear: Either Build A Bright Future Together Or Perish By Fighting Each Other

I. Its Context

1. Contention in nuclear explosions in May (1998) and Wagha handshake in February (1999)—these two extremes represent the contrasting postures of India and Pakistan within 9 months. Both were dramatic events.

2. The first occurrence was a hawkish move—the culmination of the 52 year long confrontationist line pursued by the two countries. The genesis of this confrontation lay in the pre-1947 contention between two misconceived brands of nationalism—i.e., Liberal, Hinduism-oriented Gandhism and the Muslim League sponsored Pan-Islamism.

3. The second occasion took everyone by surprise. Because its conciliatory nature and style represented a negation of the post-1947 line of confrontation adopted by the two countries and the fundamentalist ideology of the existing two respective Prime Ministers. As is commonly known, the two Prime Ministers—Atal Behari Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharief—symbolised two extreme ideological poles of the two nations. The former has been a life member of the RSS which upholds a Hindu fundamentalist approach, swears by *Akhand Bharat*, denies the reality of Pakistan, stands for undoing of 1947 partition through force, considers Pakistan as enemy number one and casts a doubt on the Indian Muslim minority's loyalty to the country. The latter has arisen from the fundamentalist Pakistani national brand which considers India as the root of all evils in the world.

4. However, there was nothing extraordinary in the two extreme positions. New things always happen through a

process characterised sometimes by confrontation and sometimes conciliation.

II. Its Various Interpretations

5. The Indo-Pak Summit has been interpreted from various angles in the world. While the liberals have characterised it as a unique event, the hawks have dismissed it as an 'exercise in futility'. While cynics have described it as a zero-sum game, the moderates have called it a step towards peace and amity. The common people all over the world, including India and Pakistan, have heartily welcomed it. On the whole, the positive view has predominated over the negative one. This shows the spirit of our times in which the old way of confrontation and conflict is being replaced by dialogue, friendship and cooperation.

III. Its Real Significance

6. The real significance of this Summit, however, can be seen from its documents—i.e., the Lahore Declaration, the Memorandum of Understanding and the Joint Statement—which emphasise peace and harmony.

7. The main points in the Declaration were that the two sides would intensify their discussions and efforts to address to the Jammu-Kashmir problem, combat terrorism and respect human rights, take steps for strategic restraints on their nuclear and missile capacities to avoid accidental nuclear confrontation, hold meaningful discussions for additional confidence building measures to ensure stability and mutual security.

The memorandum of understanding included the following main elements: agreement to consult on security concepts and nuclear doctrines, putting in place measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, the decision to give advance notice of missile tests and sign an agreement on the subject, taking steps to reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons, abiding by the moratorium on further tests, with the rider that they retain the option of testing if vital national security interests are involved.

8. True, the summit documents have not provided the solution of any contentious problem. But they have laid the basis for negotiations to resolve all Indo-Pak disputes, including Jammu-Kashmir. They have provided a direction and approach to the Indo-Pak official level talks. Despite their being halting and inadequate, they have put peace and friendship on top of

other matters. If properly worked, they are likely to contribute towards the normalisation of situation in the sub-continent over a period of time. The follow-up measures can further crystallise the matters.

9. Both countries have tried to explain the documents in their own light. Pakistan considers that the Indian side has, for the first time, shown the willingness to discuss the issue of Jammu-Kashmir seriously by conceding that, without addressing to it, Indo-Pak friendship and cooperation is not possible. The Indian side claims that Pakistan has, for the first time, opted for bilateralism in place of 3rd party intervention. Each side is trying to project that it has 'scored' over the other.

10. From whatever angle one may look at, the documents point out a right direction which pulls out the two countries from the shackles of their contentious past. India and Pakistan have both gone beyond their stated positions to start a meaningful dialogue. India has given up the old *mantra* of Jammu-Kashmir being an inalienable part of India and hence non-negotiable. Pakistan has not insisted on the UN-directed plebiscite and accepted bilateralism as a method of solution to the Jammu-Kashmir problem. Both have opted for detente instead of confrontation. There is a basic shift in the position of each country.

11. To read the Documents as signs that things would henceforth move forward smoothly between the two countries would be a gross distortion of the ground reality. The highly complex political realities in both countries rule out all easy-going assumptions. The passion for Jammu-Kashmir exists equally among people and governments on both sides. There is a huge backlog of mistrust and suspicion between the two countries. Basic issues still remain unresolved between them. The process of problem resolution is likely to be a lengthy two-sided process with the right hand seizing all favourable moments, while the left clinging to the old rusted wares. The transition from enemy to friend cannot be achieved overnight. It requires several realistic, balanced and measured steps. The bus ride is a first step, the first confidence building measure, in a lengthy process. The real hard work is yet to come.

IV. Reasons Behind The Summit

12. What factor did drive the two Prime Ministers—Atal Behari Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharief—to undertake the bus diplomacy? What made them realise the urgency of promoting mutual

relations of friendship and cooperation?

13. Various arguments have been put forth in this connection.

(A) Some Partial Arguments

14. The principal one, as propagated by the hawkish lobby including the US, is the theory of nuclear deterrence which holds that nuclear weapon states cannot afford to go to war for fear of mutual destruction and hence are forced to settle their conflicts by non-military ways. But this point is not supported by facts. For example, the two nuclear powers, i.e., the former USSR and China—remained engaged in continuous border clashes in 1960s and 1970s. Nuclear China on its side and nuclear US on the island of Taiwan stood in confrontation for years together. The nuclear states of the former USSR and the US reached the brink of nuclear war several times—in Cuba in 1962, in the European theatre in 1970s and 1980s. Obviously, the nuclear deterrence theory is merely a trick to cover up the harmful consequences of the nuclear weapons for mankind by presenting them as war preventing factors.

15. Another argument is that the US pressure has forced India and Pakistan to adopt a conciliatory course. But the experience shows that the US pressure has hardly worked in case of 52-year old Indo-Pak confrontation. Also, it has failed to work in Cuba, Iran, Libya, Iraq, etc., in recent times.

(B) Actual Reasons

16. The actual reasons for the new conciliatory mood in India and Pakistan are as follows:

First of all, more and more people in India and Pakistan are awakening to the social need of the normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan. There is an increasing realisation among the masses that they have lost a great deal from the 52 year of unremitting hostility between their two countries. Now they want a change for the better in the quality of their life. And this can only happen if relations between India and Pakistan become tension-free and normal. This harmonious mood among the people of India and Pakistan has mainly come from the globalisation process—i.e., the process of economic integration of various national economies to the global market, of political reconciliation of various bilateral conflicts between different countries, and of the rise of a common global culture—which has been transforming the peoples attitude in various countries from

national animosity to national harmony towards their adversarial country.

Second, the globalisation process has made it imperative for India and Pakistan to resolve their disputes, including Jammu-Kashmir, through dialogue and negotiations. Because this process demands of every country to follow a 2-sided path. That is, to link its national economy with the global market, on the one hand, and to set up a regional market in association with the neighbouring countries, on the other. The economic necessity of forming a regional market stresses that India and Pakistan follow a path of friendship and cooperation between them and with all neighbouring countries. If India and Pakistan continue to defy this social requirement even now, they are, with their below average economic and political performance, likely to suffer serious social troubles and even destabilisation. The issue is clear: either they build a bright future together or perish by fighting each other. The SAARC is providing them a way out.

Third, there is a general pressure of the world people and the governments that India and Pakistan reduce the high level of mutual hostility and help establishing peace and stability in South Asia by resolving the Jammu-Kashmir problem bilaterally with the involvement of the Jammu-Kashmir people. The general trend of globalisation demands a peaceful resolution of all disputes, whether between countries or within one country. Today, military solutions, whether state-led or a group-sponsored, have lost much of their meaning. A peaceful solution can only be a fair and mutually beneficial solution. And no one-sided solution of any problem can be acceptable to the world. That is why none of the countries (even powerful ones) supports New Delhi's theory of Jammu-Kashmir as an inalienable part of India or Islamabad's version of Jammu-Kashmir having been an Islamic issue or certain groups demand of self-determination or plebiscite for Jammu-Kashmir. The idea of an independent Jammu-Kashmir has already been opposed by all countries contiguous to Jammu-Kashmir in view of their assumption of its becoming a power play of big powers.

Fourth, there has emerged a dominant opinion among the top leaders and the military experts in both New Delhi and Islamabad that neither of the two countries can win the war and get the Jammu-Kashmir problem or any other issue settled on its own terms. Both the Indian and the Pakistani military chiefs have recently publicly stated that there is very little possibility of any

war between India and Pakistan. This perception has necessarily led to the seeking of alternative, non-military means for the solution of contentious issues by these two countries, including even their respective liberal fundamentalist leaders, like the present two Prime Ministers.

Fifth, the lesson which the 52 year old sub-continental history has provided to the rulers and the people of India and Pakistan is that the politics of confrontation had produced very damaging results for them. The record is so disgusting that it cannot be justified by any standard. Even the operators of this system now accept this fact. It has only brought misery, suffering and pain to the Indo-Pak people, especially the Kashmiri community, which has been the main victim. Unless the all-sided deadlock between India and Pakistan is broken, neither the Jammu-Kashmir problem be resolved and nor the way to the progress and prosperity of these two countries be opened.

17. All the above reasons are the social needs or compulsions of the new global reality.

V. Will The Bus Diplomacy Work

18. The bus diplomacy can, of course, work, provided the two countries take positive steps to implement the mutually agreed decisions in the summit. There have been many instances in the recent world where farsighted leaders have taken bold initiatives to break the deadlock in bilateral disputes. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's 1977-initiative in normalising relations with Israel resulted in not only Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai area but also the start of a peace process between Arabs and Israelis which later culminated into Palestinian-Israeli peace accord. In 1980s, Brazil and Argentina settled their controversial issues and successfully normalised their bilateral ties. The 1987-joint Reagan-Gorbachov declaration that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought, followed by concrete actions of reducing the nuclear arsenals of the two countries, resulted in the end of cold war. Earlier, in 1960s, the conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia over certain islands was resolved after the formation of the ASEAN and that between France and Germany over Alsace Lorraine after the development of the European Community.

VI. Needed Some Imaginative Initiatives

19. Having broken the ice, it is now highly essential that the two Prime Ministers adopt some concrete measures to carry

forward the Indo-Pak normalisation process.

20. At the outset, it is necessary that, before proceeding further, each side keeps in mind the historical rule of give and take in arriving at a mutually acceptable compromise.

21. The next question facing the two sides is 'where to begin'. Official level talks will be a mere stale exercise. A concrete breakthrough is needed somewhere. Better, if after the bus diplomacy, it happens to be in relation to Jammu-Kashmir. Here, two issues—Siachen and Wular Barrage are quite ripe for clinching. They have been discussed threadbare by the two countries for over a decade. Agreements were also reached on them sometime ago. But, later, India went back on Siachen Accord and Pakistan on the Wular Barrage.

22. Beyond the already discussed accords, these issues can be addressed anew by imaginative ways. For example, Siachen Glacier can be converted into a scientific research centre jointly run by both India and Pakistan instead of the 1989-Siachen Accord of mutual troops withdrawal. The other issue, involving technical complexities, should be tackled through a political deal. Next month, officials of the two countries are going to meet in Islamabad to deal with three issues—Siachen, Wular Barrage and Sir Creek. The two governments should do everything possible to finally conclude the already approved three accords. This could become the second step towards peace and amity in South Asia after the bus ride.

23. Some other areas for agreement may comprise: disengagement of forces on the Jammu-Kashmir border by withdrawing them one kilometer behind the Line of Actual Control by each side; joint patrolling of the disengaged area by the forces of the two countries; creation of joint Indo-Pak Friendship Parks at selected places inside the disengaged zones; opening of Indo-Pak Friendship trade centres at specific places in the disengaged area on the Jammu-Kashmir border, such as Suchetgarh in Jammu, Uri in Kashmir, etc., and at strategic points on the Indo-Pak border, like Wagha (Punjab), Munavao (Rajasthan); opening of Khokharabad (Sind)-Munavao (Rajasthan) rail link and Muzaffarabad bus route; people to people exchanges in the fields of culture, sports, tourism, academics; etc.

24. However, the atmospherics of talks between India and Pakistan is totally new. The new conciliatory moves (generated by the new reality) have a weak political base in the two countries. The enemy notion of the two countries about each

other still goes on. As long as that notion continues, the process of normalisation can be reversed at any moment. There is no national consensus on the new 'friendly approach' in the two countries. The building of such a consensus should now be the priority task of the two governments.

VII. On Jammu-Kashmir

25. As regards Jammu-Kashmir (including 'Azad-Kashmir'), it is a life and death question both for India and Pakistan. For India, it is an issue to prove the validity of its 'secularism' and refute the rationality of Pakistan's two nation theory. For Pakistan, it is its jugular vein, an unfinished agenda of the 1947-partition and a means to demonstrate the truth of its two nation theory. No Indian or Pakistani government can survive by making one-sided concessions over this question.

26. Thus, Jammu-Kashmir is the core issue of the Indo-Pak conflict. It is the principal factor of tension in South Asia. It is a threat to peace and security not only in South Asia but also the world. A durable peace and security in South Asia can only be established on the basis of its solution. The problem cannot be wished away by sleeping over it. The passage of time had not made it obsolete.

27. So far, both India and Pakistan have sought to sort out this problem on their own respective terms. Each has offered nothing but surrender terms to the other. Pakistan's well-known proposal of self-determination or plebiscite is an anathema for India. Similarly India's oft-projected offer of status quo constitutes a humiliation or indignity for Pakistan. No compromise or conciliation is possible on the basis of these outmoded propositions.

28. Likewise, the proposal of an independent Jammu-Kashmir or a Jammu-Kashmir under the UN trusteeship for 10 or 15 years is totally unacceptable to India which considers it as a disintegrating threat to its national unity. Neither it is acceptable to the majority of the people in Jammu and Ladakh regions. It has also been disapproved by Russia, China and Iran, all of which fear of its turning into a US base. Pakistan has not ever said anything about this proposal during the past 52 years. However, it had often rejected the 3rd option for the Jammu-Kashmir people, while supporting their right to self-determination and plebiscite.

29. Another proposal envisaging the division of Jammu-Kashmir on communal basis is neither acceptable to India nor to

the world community in view of its damaging consequences in 1947-India and the present day Bosnia, Kosovo, etc.

30. Realism demands that both India and Pakistan should, if they are sincere to their summit decisions, prepare themselves for a dilution in their respective standpoints on Jammu-Kashmir. Both countries will have to give up something and step a little back. And so will have the Jammu-Kashmir people. India should get ready to accept something less than its present position in Jammu-Kashmir. In the same way, Pakistan should get prepared to agree to something other than a plebiscite or self-determination. Both should be willing to involve the Jammu-Kashmir people in the process of resolution of Jammu-Kashmir problem and to adjust their aspirations and concerns to their respective national interests. Both countries need a review of their respective Jammu-Kashmir policy. Only the moulding of a realistic mindset can lead to the conclusion of a just, rational and viable solution. Such a mindset and a realistic solution emerge only when we, while learning from the past, start from the present and proceed towards the future. We must bear in mind that the basic nature of human is cooperationist and not confrontationist.

VIII. For A Just, Rational and Viable Solution

31. The sorting out of a just, rational and viable solution to Jammu-Kashmir problem demands the observance of following principles:

(a) To proceed from the global understanding that the future of India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir People lies together.

(b) To treat Jammu-Kashmir as a trilateral question concerned with India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people.

(c) To fully safeguard the respective national honour of both India and Pakistan and reconcile their national interests.

(d) To harmonise the concerns of the Jammu-Kashmir people, especially the Kashmiris (including the migrants) with those of the Indian and the Pakistani people.

(e) To give due consideration to the desires and the interests of ethno-regional identities in Jammu-Kashmir.

(f) To strive for bringing Indian, Pakistani and Jammu-Kashmir people closer.

(g) To keep in view the strengthening of the unity of the SAARC and the state of peace and stability in South Asia, while tackling the Jammu-Kashmir problem.

32. The respective national honour of both India and Pakistan

should, and can, be safeguarded and their national interests reconciled by establishing over Jammu-Kashmir state an Indo-Pak (or a SAARC) Condominium (which would handle only Jammu-Kashmir's defence, foreign affairs and currency), while the interests of Jammu-Kashmir people should, and can, be harmonised with those of the Indian and the Pakistani people by giving semi-independence to the state, with the maximum possible autonomy to each of the ethno-regional identities in the state.

33. With regard to the protecting of the desires and the interests of Jammu-Kashmir's ethno-regional identities, these should, and can, be reconciled by adopting a federal constitution of the state which should, on the one hand, give maximum possible autonomy to each ethnic region, with a provision for further devolution of powers to the district, block and village councils, and, on the other, stand for a single Jammu-Kashmir state, having a common Head of the State to be elected by the ethno-regional councils, and a common High Court, a common Election Commission, a common Public Service Commission, a common Environmental Commission and a common Human Resources Development Commission, all to be appointed by the ethno-regional councils with one representative from each.

34. The Indo-Pak Condominium represents a social model that ensures a common future for India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people; treats Jammu-Kashmir as a trilateral question; safeguards the respective national honour of both India and Pakistan and reconciles their national interests; harmonises the concerns of the Jammu-Kashmir people with those of the Indian and the Pakistani people; gives due consideration to the desires and the interests of ethno-regional identities in Jammu-Kashmir; strives for bringing India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people closer; and strengthens the unity of SAARC and the state of peace and stability in South Asia. It will be a new experiment of a global-oriented development model, showing how the divergent national interests of various nations be reconciled and the different aspirations and concerns of various ethnicities be harmonised.

IX. Historic Responsibility Of Jammu-Kashmir People

35. The most appropriate starting point of the trilateral option (or Indo-Pak Condominium) concerning Jammu-Kashmir is that it should be initiated jointly by the two Prime Ministers. But this can become practicable only if they are able to evolve a national

consensus in its favour, get it approved in their respective parliaments and mobilise the people in its favour. At the present moment, it may not become feasible but it has all the ingredients of feasibility if proper steps are taken in this matter.

36. A major responsibility of starting and carrying forward this process falls on the shoulders of Jammu-Kashmir people who can now do a lot in bringing India and Pakistan closer and getting the Jammu-Kashmir problem resolved on a just, rational and viable basis. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to fulfil the following tasks.

The first step in starting this process should be the carrying out a series of meaningful talks on the nature of the Jammu-Kashmir problem and its different dimensions between the representatives of various ethno-regional groups on the Indian side of Jammu-Kashmir and the thrashing out of a general agreement.

The second step should be the formation of a united front in order to mobilise and organise the people on this side of the State on the agreed points, on the one hand, and the starting of a dialogue and the arriving at an agreement with the representatives of the ethno-regional groups on the other side of Jammu-Kashmir by sending various delegations and vice-versa, on the other.

The third step should be the convening of a joint representative conference of all ethno-regional groups of the two parts of Jammu-Kashmir so as to sort out a consensus-based agenda concerning Jammu-Kashmir problem and constitute a united front to carry out that agenda. This agenda and front should, on the one hand, represent the aspirations and concerns of the Jammu-Kashmir people and each of its ethno-regional groups within the single Jammu-Kashmir state, and, on the other, uphold the national esteem, national interests and public impulses of both India and Pakistan. If a joint representative conference of the two parts of Jammu-Kashmir could not become possible due to official restrictions, then each side should hold its own conference and the two sides should try to evolve a consensus through communication.

The fourth step should be the mobilisation of support from all just and fair-minded people in India, Pakistan and the world.

The fifth step should be to present Jammu-Kashmir peoples standpoint before the governments of India and Pakistan and appeal to them for its acceptance.

37. By performing these tasks, Jammu-Kashmir people play a historic role in the history of South Asia.

X. Some Dispute Management Models In The World

38. The world also provides some experience of conflict resolution between countries. And there exist a number of dispute-management models in the present world. Some of these are: (1) Aaland Islands model established under an agreement (1921) between Finland and Sweden by which Finland possesses the right of sovereignty, while the ethnic Swedish population enjoys the autonomy to manage its own affairs. (2) South Tyrol model established under an agreement (1946, 1969) between Austria and Italy by which Italy possesses the right of sovereignty, while the ethnic German population manages its own affairs. (3) Triest model established under an agreement (1954) between Yugoslavia and Italy by which the Italian part of Triest freely interacts in trade and travel with the part under Yugoslavia. (4) Northern Ireland model—an agreement (1998) between England and Ireland by which Northern Ireland will, after a specific period, express its opinion whether it is to join the Irish Republic or continue the status quo.

39. Under the first three old models, the state in possession of the given territory remains the legal sovereign, while concluding a bilateral agreement with the disputant neighbouring state to grant a quantum of autonomy to the ethnic people in the concerned territory. Following this sample, both India and Pakistan can, under a UN-guarantee, conclude an agreement which recognises their individual sovereignty over that part of Jammu-Kashmir that has been, and is, under their respective control, ensures full autonomy to the people (minus defence and foreign affairs) in each part and acknowledges the LOAC as international border.

40. However, compared to this old pattern of countrywide national sovereignty, the new Indo-Pak Condominium model of collective sovereignty well serves the Jammu-Kashmir and other South Asian people as well as the emerging global order by keeping Jammu-Kashmir as a single democratic unit and by bringing India and Pakistan closer together.

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Indian Budget 1999-2000 On The Fiscal Brink

I. What Is A Budget?

A budget is a 2-sided process which deals with finance in particular and economy in general. On the one hand, it denotes a financial statement of estimated income from various sources and expenditure on different heads, and, on the other, it expresses an economic policy pertaining to the management of inter-relationship between production, distribution, exchange and consumption of wealth (money or goods) of a given person, community or government for a certain period of time.

It is said to have originated from the French word *Bougette* which means a small leather bag employed to contain the currency available for a household's expenditure or to carry to the legislature the documents concerning a given government's proposed annual expenditure.

The age-old underlying principle of a budget (whether individual or government) has always and everywhere been that one should cut one's coat according to one's cloth. That is, one should not spend more than what is in one's kitty and what one can realistically expect or collect in the kitty in the near future.

The ancient proverb of harmonising 'coat and cloth' is quite similar to the general rule of matching 'demand and supply' for maintaining the health of every financial and economic process and the law of balancing 'attraction and repulsion' for preserving equilibrium in every natural phenomenon. The breaking of anyone of these three basic principles related to three different categories of objects always results in distortions in the concerned thing, causing negative effects.

It is the perpetual violation of the common-sensical fundamental of 'coat and cloth' by the Indian budget that has involved the Indian state into a serious financial economic crisis. Every ruling party, whether at the centre or in any state during the

past 52 years, has, by violating this imperative, contributed more or less in the making of this crisis.

II. How Does The 1999-2000 Budget Appraise The Challenges Confronting India's Financial-Economic Process Today?

This can be better seen from the pre-budget Economic Survey (1998-99) presented to Parliament on February 24, 1999. Giving a vivid account of the Indian financial-economic realities, it shows a highly dismal picture.

It admits that most of the 1998-99 Budget objectives have remained unfulfilled. These included: restoring the health of the Indian economy and the momentum of industrial growth, ensuring macro-economic stability, raising investment, particularly in infrastructure and calibrate the pace and character of integration with the world economy. The situation with regard to the objective of fiscal consolidation and the immediate issues of the elimination of low priority expenditures and non-targeted subsidies as well as downsizing the government has further deteriorated.

It says that, in the year 1998-99, the financial situation in the country had become worse than the year 1997-98. The finances of the central government continued to be under stress, with fiscal deficit (i.e., budget deficit + borrowings) blowing out of proportions. On the monetary front, the year-on-year monetary (M-3) growth at 19.8 as on January 15, 1995, exceeded the corresponding growth in 1997-98 by 2.9%. The rate of expansion of reserve money during the same period in 1998 was 10.7% against a 4.8% increase in the corresponding period previous year. The net increase in RBI credit to the government increased sharply from 2.5% in 1997-98 to 13.4% in 1998-99. While money increase factor pushed inflation up, the presence of excess capacity in the economy as well as competitive pressure from outside constrained inflation to rise much.

The situation on the fiscal front was also not good. The 26% growth in total expenditure during April-December 1998 as compared to a 4.7% increase only in revenue receipts exacerbated the fiscal deficit. Thus preliminary estimates indicated that the fiscal deficit was higher by 77.1 % in April-December 1998 over that in the same period of 1997 and accounted for about 80.7% of the budgeted fiscal deficit for 1998-99. With continuing shortfalls in indirect tax collections it

was unlikely to contain the fiscal deficit within the budgeted amount by the year end.

Dealing with the economic aspect, the survey observes that the economy has, by any reckoning, been performing poorly since two years. For the past several months, it is in the grip of recession. Industrial production had slipped to 3.5% (April-December 1998) from 6.7% in the corresponding period last year. Infrastructure sector has performed abysmally. Exports have fallen. FDI has slowed down. There has been a net withdrawal of the foreign institutional investment (FII). According to the Survey, FDI declined by 38% over the previous year (1997-98) and FII outflow was \$700 million.

On the positive side, the Survey refers to 4 areas. That is, (a) the expected growth of 5.8% in the GDP, up from 5% in 1997-98, (b) a fall in the current account deficit from 1.6% of the GDP last year to 1.4% in 1998-99, (c) the 9.8% growth in the capital goods sector for April- December 1998 compared to 6.7% in the corresponding period last year, and (d) the modest trend in the wholesale prices.

However, all these positive trends are of transitory nature, resulting from casual factors and not from some strategic reason.

A major manifestation of the serious financial-economic crisis is the government's burgeoning public debt which has almost become unsustainable. When the reforms were initiated in 1991-92, the public debt in that year was only Rs 8,000 crore. In 1998-99, it is expected to rise upto Rs 90,000 crore. Now, it is reaching a stage (i.e., internal debt=over rupees 7 lakh crore and external debt=nearly rupees one and a half lakh crore) where the country's entire borrowings will go to meet interest payments.

This means that India is virtually on the edge of a debt trap. All this has resulted from the government's suicidal policy of meeting its expenditure either through borrowings or printing more notes.

III. What Is, According To The Economic Survey, The Main Cause Of The Present Financial-Economic Malaise In India?

The pre-budget survey (1998-99) identifies the government's profligate spending disproportionate to its resources as the main reason behind the present grave situation. Another reason, which has, according to the survey, supplemented this crisis, has been the ongoing financial upheaval in the East Asian economies.

IV. What Course Of Action The Economic Survey Suggests To Overcome India's Present Financial-Economic Trouble?

The pre-budget survey (1998-99) observes that "fiscal consolidation is absolutely necessary for containing inflation, reducing interest rates, promoting investment and growth and fostering reasonable stability in the financial system and the foreign exchange markets." It also demands the elimination of low-priority expenditure and non-targeted subsidies and for freeing up funds to complete the unfinished tasks of universal primary education, effective public health systems and modern water and sewage systems. It further adds that the impact of the 5th pay commission and its aftermath on revenue deficits of the centre, states and local bodies lent urgency to the need to downsize the government.

According to the survey, "the time has perhaps come to reconsider the issue of constitutional limits on the deficit as well as to take up the challenge of re-engineering the government." Another initiative suggested by the survey is to de-bureaucratise the system. It notes that "the extent and depth of the economic distortions such controls have created are perhaps not fully appreciated by all, even though the negative effect on public is known to all who inter-act with the government. Also, the remaining price and distribution controls must be eliminated."

The survey also calls for a more flexible and liberal policy for export promotion to reverse the declining trend in exports. It proposes that the government should withdraw from these areas where private initiatives could achieve the goals more efficiently and that the government should instead refocus its priorities on responsibilities like providing basic facilities, primary education and health services, improve the norms of civil society and eliminate violence and corruption from the system.

V. How Does The 1999-2000 Budget Propose To Meet The Challenges As Contained In The Economic Survey?

In contrast to the realisation of the pre-budget economic survey (1998-99) about the gravity of challenges facing the Indian economy (born out of survey's assessment of government's poor performance last year), the finance minister's budget speech seems to suggest with its 1998-99 performance and its results and not much disturbed about the economic problems ahead and their

implications. This is obvious from the finance minister's remark that "we have brought the boat safely out of storm". The same impression is implied in his articulation of a "vision of India as a genuine economic super power by 2020". A similar feeling is reflected by his style of presentation of the budget speech in which he straightaway rattles, without identifying any challenge, out a 6-fold strategy which neither clarifies its aim, direction and priorities and nor its attendant tasks. But it asserts to spur investment and growth next year and take India into the next millennium.

The main points of the budget strategy are as follows:

- * Begin a medium-term process of revenue and fiscal deficit reduction, along the lines indicated in the Ninth plan, which will free more resources for productive investment and growth and contain inflation.

- * Undertake a major reform of indirect taxes to promote productivity and employment.

- * Deepen and widen economic reforms in all major sectors and accelerate internal liberalisation to release the productive energies and creativity of our farmers, manufacturers, traders and service providers.

- * Safeguard the economy from external shocks, revive exports and stimulate the domestic engines for growth revival.

- * Strengthen the knowledge-based industries and thus prepare ourselves for the challenges of the new millennium.

- * Last but not the least, revitalise and redirect public programmes for human development, encompassing food security, health care education, employment and smelter. Their focus should be on empowering the poor and the weaker sections, especially those belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes.

(A) How serious the budget is about its 6-fold strategy? Do its strategic principles are backed by matching initiatives? Is there a harmony between its prior and the budgetary actions? There are a large number of instances which show that there is no coherence between the strategy's saying and the budgetary doing.

For example, the 6th principle of the budgetary strategy commits itself to "revitalise and redirect public programmes for human development". But the budgetary initiatives are not in tune with this commitment. The budget speech makes much of the fact that the plan outlay for agriculture and the allied activities has been hiked by 34.5% and the outlay for social services by nearly 22% from the revised estimates for 1998-99. What it does

not specify is that when compared to the budget estimates of the last year, there is a decline in the outlay for agriculture and the allied activities and a mere 8% increase in the outlay for social services. This shows how indifferent the budget is in following its own strategy. The Minister of State for Agriculture has publicly protested against Finance Minister's discriminatory attitude towards agriculture.

Another human development issue which the budget speech projects as a proof of its concern for education and senior citizens is related to two new schemes—the 'education guarantee programme' and the 'Annapurna'. But the budget contains no mention of either scheme. The budget documents demonstrate that neither scheme has been allocated any funds.

The 'education guarantee programme' was meant to provide an elementary school within one Km of every village. Under this scheme, the centre and the states were to share the cost of teaching materials and at least 1.8 lakh new schools were to be set up during the next 3 years. The *Annapurna* scheme was designed to provide 10 Kg cereals a month for every indigent senior citizen who is entitled to but does not receive the old age pension.

Further, the budget speech, while making loud declarations about poverty elimination and unemployment alleviation as government's first priority, glorifies its human development initiative as a model for developing the capabilities and the capacities of the Indian people and thus building the knowledge potential of India. But the budget's shabby treatment of some sectors connected with these matters shows the government's non-chalant attitude towards its public commitments.

For example, the department of Rural Employment and Poverty alleviation has been allotted Rs 6,902 crore in place of Rs 5,933 crore last year. The provision for mid-day meal, essential for the spread of elementary education, particularly in rural areas, has been reduced by Rs 400 crore this year. In case of rural health-care, the central government will only provide funds to those gram panchayats which are able to put up community health-care facilities with their own contributions.

(B) Another inconsistency of the budget is its style of resorting to generalities and avoiding to get into specifics regarding its targets.

For example, the first principle of the budgetary strategy marks a pledge to completely eliminate the revenue deficit and bring down the fiscal deficit to 2% in 4 years. But nowhere the

budget specifies how it proposes to do that.

The budget claims to garner revenue and curtail expenditure to meet the runaway fiscal deficit. But the revenue is largely dependent on the growth of industry. The faster industry expands, the larger the revenue that the government pockets. Broadly, a 1% rise in industrial production increases government revenues by Rs 1,600 crore. But unless the recession lifts, the taxation might not get the government the targeted revenue and the shortfall of 1998-99 be repeated. Things could also go wrong in the area of government expenditure. This is because the budget has allocated much lower increase in expenditure than warranted by the current economic trends.

Moreover, it is impossible to achieve the target of eliminating revenue and reducing fiscal deficit without a national consensus. Funds raised through public sector disinvestment can only be a temporary measure. This solves the problem of stock, not flow. So long as the deficit continues to flow due to unchecked expenditure, the fiscal deficit would continue to be a worrisome issue, affecting the country's rating and the cost of raising funds. The budget does not clarify any of these searching questions.

Further, the 3rd principle of the budgetary strategy promises to 'deepen and widen economic reforms in all major sectors and accelerate internal liberalisation', yet the budget hints at nothing in this regard.

True, the reforms must be deepened and widened and carried forward. But why, how and with what objective. Without clarifying anything, the finance minister seems to hustle the people towards some other stereotype. It will be in the interests of all if the government, before proceeding further, provides to the people some factual information on three issues.

First, what does the 8-year experience of India's economic reforms show? How much it was positive and to what degree negative? What should be done next?

Second, what experience the global economic process has provided in the post-cold war period?

Third, what does economic liberalism denote? What type of liberalism are we following? Is it individual-based or state-controlled or a combination of both? Would it not be proper if we adopt the realistic concept of individual-cum-social which harmonises the both—the individual as well as the collective or a human and his society. It differs with the above-said three one-sided concepts. One should always differentiate between society

and state. Because the latter is only a part of the former.

(C) Another hollowness of the budget is the cleavage between its declarations and actual implementation. For example, fourth principle of the budgetary strategy declares to 'revive exports and stimulate the domestic engines for growth revival' as one of the six major areas of its focus. But the budget does not reflect this objective. It does not address even a single reason underlying the exports decline. Nor the budget proposals suggest any specific action-plan for exports revival. And such a casual approach is improper when stiff competition is likely to come from the recovering ASEAN economies in the days to come. The budget's only practical solution is to set up a high power committee to affect a reduction in the transaction cost of exports. The intention to reduce the interest rates is the one specific step in the right direction. Rationalisation of indirect taxes is a positive move but loaded with a rise in all customs duties.

The budget has practically neglected the export sector probably because of its perception that a significant turnaround is not possible without a global economic recovery and that a depreciation of the rupee will be enough.

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) has expressed its disappointment at the 1999-2000 budget.

Further, the 5th principle of the budgetary strategy announces to 'strengthen the knowledge-based industries and thus prepare ourselves for the challenges of the new millennium'. But the immediate issue facing the industrial sector is of recovery.

The budget has, while admitting that economic depression is the single biggest problem facing Indian industry, done practically nothing to address it. If this trend continues, the industrial production will fall further, impacting our GDP growth. The budget contains no special package for combating demand recession. Nor it has anything effective for promoting investment in general and the infrastructure in particular. As far measures to generate demand at home, the budget falls short of industry's expectations.

To stimulate economic recovery, the budget could have taken 5 routes—stimulate infrastructure, step up public investment, agricultural-cum-agrarian reforms, revive the capital markets and help exports.

More, the 2nd principle of the budgetary strategy 'undertakes a major reform of indirect taxes to promote productivity and investment.'

Indirect taxation is a retrograde social phenomenon. Because

such a taxation hits the common masses. The relative importance of indirect taxes as compared to direct taxes should be reduced. Their reform should aim at gradually doing away with them. Instead of reforming them, the entire tax structure demands rationalisation.

Still more, the 6-fold budget strategy totally ignores infrastructure, although in the 1998-99 budget the present finance minister had said that his top priority was infrastructural development. Last Year, he announced the State Bank of India's 'India Development Bonds' to attract NRI funds for financing infrastructural projects. But practically Infrastructure remained neglected last year. The coal output growth declined to an annual rate of 0.9% (less than 1%), crude oil growth rate was down to minus 3.6%, cement to a mere 2.8%, rail freight moved down to minus 2.2% and cargo handled at ports were down to 0.1%.

The all-round importance of infrastructure in the developmental process is a universally accepted fact. But, in our case, it is today one of the most prime sectors where we need to immediately focus on and that too on a war-footing.

(D) These facts demonstrate that the budget is full of empty jargon. For instance, its vision of 'India as a genuine economic superpower by 2020' is counter to the world general reality of economic inter-dependence of nations. How can a relation of inter-dependence become a relationship between an economic superpower and its satellites?

Similarly, its claim to transparency is refuted by its manipulation of facts concerning the budget deficit, 1998-99 disinvestment figure, fiscal and revenue deficit estimates, etc.

VI. General Characteristics Of The Budget

In terms of approach, priorities, path and organisation, the budget takes more or less the same position as the earlier ones had taken. This is evident from the sources of revenue and the pattern of expenditure where one finds no qualitative change except minor tinkering.

Most of the non-plan spending continues on 3 items—interest payments, defence, subsidies constituting about 75% of the budgetary expenditure. The rest of the non-plan spending is mainly on the administrative structure. The plan funds mostly go to the public sector.

All talk about reducing the fiscal deficit is mere humbug. On the basis of old calculation method, the deficit is higher than last

year's budget and revised estimates. How can there be a basic shift with the same traditional parameters?

Capital expenditure has been drastically reduced whereas revenue expenditure continues to rise. The expenditure financed from borrowings is only a little less than the tax-revenue. The reduction in capital expenditure—most of which goes to building sound infrastructure—will seriously affect all the measures, including growth and development. This is going to have highly negative implications in the long run.

The basic requirement for any viable strategy pertaining to revenue and fiscal deficit reduction is the imperative of lowering the revenue expenditure. If this imperative remains unfulfilled, an increase in investment coupled with widening fiscal deficit will plunge the economy into high inflation, increase imports and widen the external payments gap (with its attendant effect of foreign investors losing their confidence in the Indian economy and withdrawing their capital).

The budget commits the government to allowing revenue expenditure to rise by only Rs 7,200 crore in the next year. This is less than 1/4th of the Rs 36,800 crore increase that has been taking place in 1998-99. If the revenue expenditure (less the interest) rises by a similar amount this year, all of budget calculations go haywire, and the budgetary strategy for containing the fiscal deficit will fail.

India will then be on the fiscal brink.

VII. Why Has The Indian Financial-Economic Process Gone Astray

Two main causes—(A) the underlying or long-term, and (B) the immediate or short-term—seem to be plausible.

(A) The underlying cause rests with our traditional development theory as represented by two traditional economic models, i.e., (a) free market economics and (b) state-controlled market economics. The former is represented by various branches of Adam Smithian economic school of thought which considers self-interest as the main human motivating force. The latter comprises various sects of Marxian economic school of thought which regards party represented collective interest as the chief motive force. Obviously, both these concepts ignore the role of nature (i.e., environment or natural resources) and of people in social and economic development.

As regards nature, they consider it as an unlimited storehouse

of useful materials meant for free human exploitation and consumption and consequently do not take into account the crucial contribution of environmental factor in their economic computation. Disregarding the bio-social nature of man, the free market economics fails to see the aspect of his social nature, while the Marxist economics neglects his individual biological character.

Both these schools of thought did work for long in the period when mankind had neither attained a higher understanding of environment for human existence nor grasped the importance of the concept of fundamental human rights (political, economic as well as cultural) as a crucial factor in social development. Then, there existed neither environmental degradation nor population explosion. The basis of new human understanding lies in the newly-emerged scientific-technological-sociological knowledge which has been bringing changes in our concepts, work-patterns and organisational structures.

Today when the role of people and environment has become highly important in social progress, the two traditional development theories have become irrelevant and a new pro-nature and pro-people global development economics is step by step taking shape.

(B) The immediate cause, according to traditional economics, has been the fiscal deficit. No doubt, fiscal deficit apparently seems to be a valid reason. But behind this reasoning stands the unsustainable, unproductive spending on certain items constituting the government priorities. No economist or expert has any right or authority to get these priorities amended in the name of sound economics. Thus, the fiscal deficit is, in fact, an effect caused by the unrealistic government priorities.

Tracing its history, one can find that it is the outcome of our ruling parties' 2-sided political objective. That is, to build India as a great country on the basis of military power, on the one hand, and to perpetuate the respective ruling party's rule through populist economism and political corruption, on the other. This has resulted in the squandering of India's economic resources on defence and internal policing (including all defence and policing-related institutions and factories), on the one hand, and on populist, unproductive schemes (like untargeted subsidies, wasteful expenditure on unproductive projects, 5-star lifestyle of Indian rulers, loan melas, etc.), on the other.

Of the 5 chief revenue-consuming budgetary heads—interest

payments, defence and policing, subsidies, administration and loss-bearing public sector enterprises—it is the defence and policing which constitute the villain of piece (expenditure on defence has risen from Rs 168 crore in 1951 to over Rs 55,000 crore in 1999, including expenditure on para-military forces and state police). It was the galloping expenditure on this 'holy' national 'lifeline' (i.e., defence) in the 1960's and 1970's that forced the Indian economy to negotiate more and more debts from abroad and resort to ever-widening deficit financing and public borrowings at home. Today, this debt (both internal and external) has assumed threatening dimensions, consuming over 50% of our total annual expenditure. Nearly 30% is eaten up by defence and policing, subsidies, PSEs, etc. Can such a dire strait of Indian finances sustain any longer?

VIII. What Does The Indian Financial-Economic Process Demand Today?

(A) Talking into account the above-mentioned facts, our future vision should be the establishment of a global-oriented (or inter-nation dependent) development model, based on democracy, equity, human values, environmental safety and productivity. All these 5 characteristics of this model are inter-related, inter-acting and of equal importance.

By the global-oriented development model is meant a social system which considers different issues in terms of globalism (or inter-dependence of nations), representing a global approach or the outlook of the entire human community. In other words, it denotes the adoption of rational humanism as a determining factor between right and wrong. In economic terms, its economics stands for a judicious mix of foreign and domestic capital.

Under such a model, democracy will involve empowerment of the people in all social spheres—political, economic and cultural. It also includes the ending of all traditional privileges enjoyed by the chosen few in every field of activity, including MNCs, companies and firms where special rights vested in promoters and directors will be terminated and share-holders will have the final say in deciding matters concerning a given company.

Equity will imply ending of all major inequalities, such as between rich and poor, urban and rural, literate and illiterate, male and female, etc.

Human values will mean the fostering of a democratic style in all walks of life and rooting out of corruption, crime, mafiaism,

drug-trafficking, violence and similar anti-social traits.

Environmental safety will be ensured through the judicious use and the protection of all natural resources.

Productivity will be developed by increasing peoples knowledge, skills, creativity, social sense, human compassion, modesty, etc.

In its march towards globalism, this model will, in the first instance, strive to build an Economic Community of South Asian States.

(B) To overcome the immediate challenge of fiscal deficit, the keynote should be the adoption of right fiscal-economic priorities in place of wrong ones. All matters related to human resources development—like reducing inequalities, eliminating poverty, ending unemployment, providing education, health-care, social service, culture, science, technology, infrastructure, etc.—should be given preference over militarisation, policing, rich and urban-oriented development, issues related to bureaucratisation, high style living, etc. The task should be to reduce the fiscal and the revenue deficits to a tolerable level by cutting all inessential and low-priority expenditure, putting all state resources into maximum productive use, including the generation of new resources, and stimulating demand in order to revive the economy.

For cutting inessential and low-priority expenditure: So far, the government has done very little to cut its unnecessary expenditure. Since the main pressure on India's non-plan revenues comes from 5 main heads—interest payments, defence, subsidies, public sector undertakings and administration, it is necessary to see if there is any possibility of reducing some of the burden in any area.

(1) In the case of interest payments: Here, either India reduces this burden or the latter will, in a short time, destabilise the former. It is possible to reduce a portion of this burden by liquidating a part of domestic debt. The following initiatives need to be taken.

... To sell a part of government's vacant lands, estimated to be lakhs of hectares, with railways alone owning over one lakh hectares of land.

... To sell all confiscated gold.

... To sell 50% of public sector shares in a phased manner at market prices.

(2) In the case of defence spending: Here, the aim should be to achieve peace and stability in South Asia in particular and the

world in general by taking the following steps. To restructure India's foreign and defence policy by ending hostility with Pakistan and China. To negotiate a friendly agreement with Pakistan on the basis of establishing an Indo-Pak Condominium over Jammu-Kashmir with semi-independence to the state and autonomy to each of its ethnic region within one unit. To conclude a border agreement with China by recognising the line of actual control as the border between the two countries. To reduce, after the resolution of conflicts with Pakistan and China 20% defence expenditure in the first instance, followed by 30% reduction in the next 3 years.

(3) In the case of subsidies: Here, the aim should be to provide relief to the poor. Hence, all non-targeted subsidies benefitting well-to-do classes should be stopped.

(4) In the case of public sector undertakings: Here, the aim should be to end all wastage of capital, on the one hand, and to protect the workers interests, on the other. Hence, the task should be to sell all loss-bearing factories to the concerned workers' cooperatives through negotiations in the first instance. Failing this, they should be sold in the market to the highest bidder.

(5) In the case of administration: Here, the aim should be to democratise the administrative structure and empower the people by taking the following steps: To reduce the role of government by transferring all the functions of governance that do not involve formulation of policy to the peoples organisations dealing with issues relating to public in general, different classes, regional groups, etc. To transfer to the states and panchayats the functions in their spheres.

To carry out a reduction in overstaffed departments. To set up a Restructuring Commission in consultation with all parties to democratise the government functioning in which the ministry concerns itself with the formulation of policies with their respective priorities, leaving the work, of execution to the administration and the peoples organisations.

For putting all state resources into maximum productive use: It is necessary to (a) carry out structural reforms to integrate the Indian economy into the world economy, (b) reduce fiscal and revenue deficits by cutting unproductive expenditure and not at the cost of revenue capital (as the central government is at present doing), (c) tone up the productivity of capital, (d) stop distributing subsidies on populist lines, (e) cease to cut investment to curb inflation, (f) match budgetary intentions with

performance, (g) introduce more democracy, transparency and openness in the mode of functioning, (h) motivate the staff on the basis of rational humanism, supplemented by other incentives, (i) develop new work culture, harmonising the interests of both the collective and the individual, (j) end all corruption, wastage, inefficiency, etc., in the work process, and above all (k) regulate all markers through a proper law.

For generating new resources: It is necessary to (a) rationalise the entire tax structure, (b) reduce the relative importance of indirect taxes as compared to direct ones, (c) introduce the value added tax (VAT) system in order to eliminate the cascading effect of the central excises, states' sales taxes and local bodies' octrois (this will help creating a single all India market which, in turn, will increase the competitive ability of industry and agriculture), (d) expand the tax-net to all better off sections of the population, and (e) improve methods of tax-realisation so as to raise the yield of direct taxes, and so on.

IX. Sum Up

Today, when the Indian economy is more and more getting into the syndrome of low production and inequitable and unsustainable growth, the national economics is dominated by BJP's *Swadeshi*, Congress' self-reliance (and sometimes foreign reliance) and Left's confused economism. What the country now-a-days requires is the economics of a model of the interdependence of nations.

10-03-1999

India's 1999-General Elections Change For The Better Or Face Gradual Destabilisation

I. Disturbed Public Mindset

1. Hardly 13 months after the 12th General Elections, people are again called upon to vote for the 13th Lok Sabha. During the past 10 years (1989-99), they have seen 8 PMs and their governments and gone through 5 general elections (9th to 13th).

2. This shows that India's political process (i.e., the process of its power structure) has become sick and unviable. Or, in other words, it means that the Indian people have, after decades of single party rules, lost faith in every existing mainstream party and thus started to give a fractured mandate.

3. The matter gets more serious, when viewed in the context of present times. It is occurring at a moment when the nations of the world are entering the 3rd millennium with a hope in their future whereas our people are pre-occupied by a sense of uncertainty and insecurity about their coming period. Gone are the days when the Indian people felt that our development model, though inadequate and wanting, would one day lift us out of misery and squalor. Today, no one knows where we are heading. Even the one-year long Golden Jubilee gala of India's independence played by India's top 'Nationalist' politicians and their mainstream parties had failed to rekindle any spirit of regeneration among the common people.

4. What has disturbed the mindset of our people? This is a question that needs to be tackled by us before expressing our opinion in the coming polls. In our view, this can be seen by looking at some basic Indian facts.

II. Disgusting State Of Our Human Resources

5. The first basic fact is that the peoples disturbed mindset is closely related to the existence of a highly trouble-some and

disgusting state of our human resources.

6. Briefly stated, 62% of our people come under the category of poor, 40% live in absolute poverty with no job, no home, no proper food, no electricity and safe-drinking water, 40% have no access to basic help facilities, 75% have no proper latrines, 10% live in urban slums, 48% are totally illiterate, 5% are unemployed and 33% under-employed, 33% have no house of their own, 10% are invalids who remain a neglected lot. About 12% are landless, constituting the poorest strata of our society. Over 53% children are denied the right to basic and quality education. Nearly 75% of women in the country suffer some form of oppression. The less said the better for the condition of dalits, tribals and other deprived sections.

7. According to a TOI survey, 80% of common Indians want to go abroad and work there. Among the specialists and experts, about 6,000 highly trained Indians, comprising 40% engineers, 10% to 12% doctors and 15% to 20% scientists move to other countries for securing lucrative jobs every year.

8. As per the 1998-UNDP Report (which ranks countries in the matter of human development on the basis of such indices as average life-expectancy, literacy and overall well-being and not on the criterion of income alone), India has slipped from 138 to 139 position among 174 countries since 1997.

9. The 1998-UNDP Report further warns that the country may be paying a heavy price for its development process which is bungling in its wake ecological devastation and numerous health problems. A conservative estimate of environmental damage puts the figure at more than \$10 billion a year or 4.5% of GDP in 1992. If higher estimates are used, the Indian developmental model is causing a loss of \$13.8 billion or 6% of our GDP to the India's people.

10. The 1998-UNDP report further adds that the urban air pollution costs India \$1.3 billion a year, while water degradation leads to health costs amounting to \$5.7 billion every year, nearly three-fifths of the country's total environmental damage.

III. Worsening State Of Our Environmental Resources

11. The second basic fact is that the poor state of our human resources is further compounded by the worsening state of our environmental resources.

12. Out of a total of 143 million hectares of cultivable land, nearly 60% suffers from soil erosion, water-logging and salinity.

Another 16 million hectares is afflicted with ravines and rivulets.

13. The forests have been the worst sufferers. In 1864, 60% of the country's landmass had a tree cover. By 1952, it is said to have come down to 22% and today is only 11 %.

14. The problem of water is getting more and more serious. Water availability is constantly decreasing due to the wastage of rainwater and the overpressure and misuse of ground water. Already, the water shortage in the towns and villages has become alarming. The quality of water (whether running, stagnant or underground) has been constantly decreasing.

15. The use of toxic chemicals, automobile, transport and the coal-based thermal plants and some other industries are creating pollution. According to the Centre for Science and Environment, the pollution from vehicles in India has gone up 8 times.

16. Deforestation, land and water degradation and air pollution have created threats to India's genetic resources (comprising 45,000 plant varieties and 75,000 animal species).

17. The unprecedented increase in population from 342 million in 1947 to 1,000 million today has been resulting in serious social distortions.

IV. New Records In Double-Dealing And Trickery

18. The 3rd basic fact is that unscrupulous politics and corrupt lifestyle of many of our top politicians have made the people disenchanted with the political process and destroyed their impression of these politicians credibility.

Just see the behaviour pattern of 2 top political role models—Vajpayee and Sonia. The former made a commitment on the floor of the House in the first session of the 12th Lok Sabha that, he will from now on not contest the Lok Sabha elections and aspire to become the Prime Minister again. But now he stands at the top of the list of BJP candidates for the 13th Lok Sabha. Similarly, the latter told the President after the fall of the Vajpayee government in April 1999 that she commanded the support of 272 Lok Sabha members. But after 2 days, produced a list of only 233 supporters. Laloo, Mulayam, Kanshi, Jai Lalitha and their ilk have no match in chameleon politics the world over. In fact, the whole lot of our colourful politicians have broken the set records in manipulation, double-dealing and trickery. Now, the people have realised that there is no basic difference in the agendas, priorities, styles and records of these political brands

and that they are chips of the same block. Naturally, this has also shattered the fake image of all mainstream parties.

19. At the public level, the ruling culture of corruption and manipulation has created an immoral atmosphere, all around. Cheating, bribery, black-market, adulteration, drug-trafficking, smuggling, favouritism, casteism, communalism, etc., flourish all over the country—making peoples living next to impossible.

V. Main Feature Of Indian Society

20. The above said three basic facts denote that the main feature of the Indian society today is its inequalitarian, unsustainable, inefficient, violent and corrupt nature.

VI. Source Of Our Troubles

21. The 4th basic fact is that the main source of our human and environmental troubles and degenerative politics lies inside (in Delhi), rather than outside the country.

22. The main fault lies in our social system (i.e., India's Constitution) whose centralised nature has violated the plural (or varied) reality of our country. It has worked for a centralised polity, economy and culture, thus creating tensions among different categories of the Indian people (ethnic, cultural, religious, casteist, etc.). That is why fifty years after independence, there is lack of emotional integration among various social groups and why the question of national integration remains a perpetual issue before the country.

23. Secondly, the fault rests with our centralised polity which has, in accordance with its nature, created the lust for power and money and made them as the most powerful factors for people's motivation. The personalisation of power-cum-money (delinked from the social aspect) factor has led to the detachment of politics from morality (a social necessity) and consequently the use of all means, mostly the foul ones, for its attainment. This unscrupulous politics has necessarily resulted in the perpetuation of criminalisation, corruption, communalism, casteism and violence in our political process—bringing in its wake the abuse and the misuse of the rule of law by the top politicians and other state institutions.

24. Thirdly, the fault resides in our national economy which, having been characterised by corporate and landed-interest economics, had failed to build itself on an equitable, sustainable and productive basis—thus worsening the quality of our human

and environmental resources.

25. Fourthly, the fault is located in our foreign-cum-defence policy which has, by ignoring the imperative need of the Indian people for peace and stability, taken the course of becoming a great military power in the South Asian region. It has landed us into four wars with two of our neighbours (Pakistan and China) and kept us on a confrontationist path against Pakistan. By eating up our meagre financial resources, it has degraded our human and environmental position.

26. Fifthly, the fault is also shared by our standards of behaviour where conformism, docility, lust for power and money, etc., have come to be the normal way of public life.

27. The various excuses of our country's failures put forth by different unscrupulous and manipulated political approaches—i.e., pro-minority secularism, upper caste oppression, foreign created troubles, India's huge size and population, etc.—indicate misperceptions about this country's multi-sided social reality.

VII. Setting Matters Right

28. Taking into account the above facts, the problem of setting matters right in India demands the sorting out of three questions: (a) A realistic agenda that restructures India in accordance with the existing social realities; (b) A Peoples' Federal/Confederal front to carry forward the above agenda; and (c) A proper response to the 13th Lok Sabha elections.

(a) India's Restructuring Agenda

29. Any restructuring agenda demands a thorough consideration of three principles: (a) Learning from the past experience (which shows that the post-1947 India's National Model had not worked well and needs restructuring); (b) Taking into account the present reality of emerging regional communities the world over (which demands that India's restructuring be made in the light of the developing SAARC community); and (c) Adopting a correct future vision (which accords with the most dominant social trend, i.e., the globalisation of the inter-dependence of the countries).

30. The main features of this model may be as under:

(i) **Vision:** To establish a rational, just and fair global human society in the long run and the South Asian (SAARC) community, in the years ahead, both of which will be nature-friendly, on the one hand, and people-friendly, on the other.

(ii) **Aim:** To establish a rational, just and fair social order in India immediately, serving the interests of both man and nature.

(iii) **General Approach:** Scientific Realism which studies a process through observation, experimentation and systematisation.

(iv) **Social Perspective:** Rational Humanism.

(v) **Genuine World Peace:** To strive for ensuring a genuine peace in the world by discarding the politics of superpowerism and its confrontationist mode, reconciling the interests of various nations, defusing regional tension points, proceeding towards complete disarmament, vesting the control of atomic weapons in the UN, etc.

(vi) **SAARC Security And Development:** To resolve all bilateral disputes through the SAARC mechanism and seek a tripartite solution to Jammu-Kashmir problem by establishing a joint Indo-Pak or SAARC Condominium over the state which will be responsible for that state's defence, foreign affairs and currency, while ensuring semi-independence to the state and the maximum possible autonomy to each ethnic region in the state. This will open the way for the development of SAARC which, in due course, is likely to grow into a Free Trade Common Market Area with a regional security system and a Confederal political union. Also to pledge together with Pakistan not to manufacture the nuclear weapons and its related delivery system.

(vii) **Democratic Order and Peoples Empowerment:** To resolve all internal conflicts through dialogue. To organise India on a federal-confederal basis giving the states' semi-independent status and a special status to Punjab. This will help in resolving India's ethnic, communal and casteist conflicts. Full democratisation of all institutions, upholding of the rule of law to be exercised through the empowerment of people (i.e., their involvement in decision making, supervision of all developmental works, right to information, ending of all social and economic disparities, right to call for a plebiscite on any national issue, etc.) at all levels and interpreted through the judiciary (without any power of contempt). To decide the controversy between judiciary and legislature on any law through a plebiscite. To carry out state funded elections at every level, free from money and muscle power.

(viii) **Economy:** To protect the system of nature, on the one hand, and to promote the interests of the people (i.e., empowering people, removing social inequalities and disparities, like rich-poor, rural-urban, gender inequality, etc.), on the other. To involve the people especially the women in the work of

environmental conservation and population control. To strive for a balanced economic growth, having a closer integration with the global economy, operating through the 2-sided mechanism of market-generated growth and state-organised social justice and directed by the principles of sustainability, productivity, equity, democracy and transparency.

(ix) **Value System:** To promote rational humanist thinking and democratic behaviour.

(x) **Foreign-cum-Defence Matters:** To follow cooperation and friendship with every country of the world and reduce defence expenditure by 50% after the proper resolution of Jammu-Kashmir problem.

31. The afore-mentioned restructuring agenda necessarily comprises several components. These are so integrated that no single component can work if detached from others. For instance, the question of the empowerment of the people can work only if combined with a policy of peace. Under conditions of cold war against Pakistan, the issue of sustained development will work only on paper.

32. Undoubtedly, India can today become a crisis-free country if it opts for the above restructured model which properly responds to all the national and the global issues, arising out of the New Historical Era of Globalisation. Most of the post-1947 Indian failures are due to its irrelevant national model. Definitely, India's traditional recipes—like Gandhian *Ram Rajya*, Nehruvian Socialism, JP's Total Revolution, Golwalkar's *Hindutva*, Lohia's Mandalism, Anti-BJPism, Anti-Congressism, American Presidential System, etc.—are unable to meet the social requirements of the New Globalised Era. Sure enough, the world recognised old national theories—the market-oriented western liberalism and the public sector-gearred communism—are in an all-sided decline and unable to face the new world challenges, i.e., environmental degradation, population explosion, ethnic assertion, etc., created by themselves. No doubt, in the absence of a newly-required appropriate paradigm, the countries are swinging back and forth between different traditional samples. But, finding no way-out, everyone is on the look-out for something new.

(b) Needed A Peoples' Federal/Confederal Front

33. A crucial problem concerning the afore-mentioned agenda is the question as to who will put it into practice. Obviously, it

demands the formation of a broadest-possible federal-confederal front that carries out this agenda to the people. Even those who agree with its points v, vi and vii may also be admitted into it.

34. This front is quite in accord with the plural character of India, marked by different ethnic and regional communities and their aspirations. It is also relevant in a prolonged era of United Fronts and coalitions, especially at a time when there is widespread cynicism about the mainstream centralised parties.

35. It may be formed at any level. According to given conditions, some other democratic issues may also be included in the agenda at any place.

(c) Vote On Principled Basis

36. A proper response to the 13th Lok Sabha elections is, and can be, the one that aims at freeing our political process from the methodology of political corruption and criminalisation and the politics of money-making and power-grabbing, communalism and casteism. But this aim becomes realisable only if there is a real democratic alternative before our people.

37. This election is, however, taking place at a time when there is no real choice before the people. And, in the absence of any viable alternative, the mainstream parties are able to lure the people into voting in favour of their candidates.

38. Such a situation demands the taking of following steps with the specific objective of transforming the prevailing money-cum-power based electoral approach into a principled and democratic one:

(i) To popularise the fundamentals of India's restructuring agenda.

(ii) To bring forth the negative effects of the mainstream parties' agendas and their unscrupulous style.

(iii) To appeal to the people to participate in the elections on the basis of principles and not expediency, reject criminal and corrupt politicians and cast their votes on the criteria of honesty, truthfulness, principled stand and service to the people in favour of rational humanists, social workers (belonging to various voluntary movements, i.e., environment, peace, human rights, *sarvodaya*, etc.), women, deprived, minorities and experts in various fields.

39. Wherever desirable and possible, the democratic forces may put up a candidate and conduct a principled electoral campaign to mobilise the people.

VIII. Possible Post-Poll Scenario

40. A look at the peoples mood and the state of electoral parties shows that the post-poll social scenario is not going to be fundamentally different from the present one. Obviously, the peoples mood does not reflect any basic transformation since the 12th Lok Sabha elections. And similarly the condition of electoral parties and their poll pacts do not express any basic shift.

41. Given this probability, there is hardly any possibility of a single party taking up the reins of power. May be, the BJP and the Congress change their respective places.

42. The pointers of our social scene do not signal the possibility of any decrease in the basic or ordinary mass troubles, except a little tinkering here or there. Thus, there is no possibility of any substantial change in the quality of peoples life.

43. The coming period is full of new possibilities. It is unfolding in the context of the failure of military adventurism in various areas of the world (i.e., Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Israel, East Timor, Jammu-Kashmir, etc.), on the one hand, and the outgrowth of movements for equality and social justice, human rights, environmental conservation, etc., on the other. There is every likelihood of the further spread of such movements.

44. It is the call of our times that all genuine peace-loving and democratic forces get ready to effectively act in and react to the rapidly changing situation, give top priority to the mobilising of the people on their immediate concerns as well as on the agenda for the restructuring of India.

10-6-1999

Kargil Conflict And Festering Jammu-Kashmir Problem Product Of Jingoist Indo-Pak Nationalisms Way Out In Inter-Dependent National Vision

I. Facts Highlighted By Kargil Conflict

1. If Kargil conflict goes to prove anything by 100%, it is the total bankruptcy of the N-weapon fed security policy of the Indian Government. After the Pokhran test, the Vajpayee Government had with great fanfare announced that the N-capability would strengthen Indian security system beyond any challenge and raise country's standing in the international affairs. But all this has proved a hoax.

2. N-bomb failed to frighten the intruders from occupying the strategic positions in the Kargil-Dras areas and deter Pakistan from openly supporting them. Now, this weapon is ineffective to push the intruders back. Only the pressure of the world public opinion can force Pakistan to ask the intruders to leave the hills or the onset of 'kind' coming winter alone can compel the intruders to vacate the high altitudes and go back. At this moment, it is humanly impossible for the Indian army to get the occupied places vacated, the chief constraint being the terrain and its topography.

3. In case the world public pressure does not work in sending the intruders back, it may lead to the fourth Indo-Pak war, with its N-dimensions. Such a war is likely to spell a great disaster for the people of India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir and a heavy loss to the world people. If, somehow, common-sense withholds India and Pakistan from going to an all out war, the ongoing low intensity conflict would continue to bleed India white both in human and financial terms. At a daily rate of 10 deaths and Rs 20 crore expenditure, this would cost the country over 2,000

precious lives and nearly Rs 4,200 crore upto December 99-end.

4. The less said, the better for the Indian government's post-Pokhran international image. Its 50-year old anti N-bomb and peace upholding personality has been replaced by a hawkish and power hungry figure. Now, neither the NAM nor the G-8 or the G-5 consider it as a responsible member of the world community. Its self-recommendatory claim to the Security Council membership has hardly evoked a positive response from any quarter.

5. The most amazing post N-blast happening had been the climb down of the Indian government from its 5 decade long stand on Jammu-Kashmir as an integral part of the Indian Union. In the Lahore declaration (February 1999), it did accept the reality of the disputed nature of the Jammu-Kashmir question, thus contradicting and violating the December 15, 1994 unanimous pledge of the two houses of the Indian parliament declaring Jammu-Kashmir as an inalienable constituent of India and a non-negotiable matter. The Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee himself made a 180 degree about-turn from his life long political commitment for ending Article 370 of the Indian Constitution and thus 'make' Jammu-Kashmir fully Indian.

Reality always makes a flop of all unrealistic pledges and political trickeries. And the same thing happened to our parliamentary resolution and Vajpayee's stand-point.

6. The second point emphasised by Kargil conflict is the failure of our N-security system's 'intelligence' mechanism. The varying Indian intelligence agencies—RAW, IB, Army Intelligence, BSF Intelligence, State CID, etc.—all were quite ignorant of any intrusions when it had become a known fact to the shepherds and the common people of that area. Now, this security lapse is charging a very high price in human and material terms from the country. The Vajpayee government is fully responsible for this suffering and deprivation. A similar thing had happened in the 1962 Sino-Indian border war under the Congress regime. This shows the hollowness of all N-zealots who always talk high but are at all times low in performance.

7. The third point brought forth by the Kargil conflict is the leading role played by Pakistan in organising the intruders of diverse identities and sending them across the LOAC. This shows the duplicity of all the fundamentalist forces who, while talking peace, continue to foment trouble by underhand means.

8. If Pakistan denies the authenticity of this fact, then why did the Pakistan foreign minister raised doubts about the validity of

the line of actual control (existing since 1972) and the ceasefire line (operating since 1948).

9. If somebody (like the Indian Prime Minister and the Defence Minister) tries to put the entire blame on the Pakistan Army for the Kargil incursions, then why did Pakistan Prime Minister and Defence Minister threatened the use of N-weapons if India seemed to pose a threat to Pakistan.

10. The fourth point stressed by the Kargil conflict is the most welcome fact of the lack of any war hysteria among the common people in both India and Pakistan, despite the chauvinistic slogans raised by the jingoist forces in these two countries. Throughout the period of hostilities, a general feeling of restraint and toleration has marked the mass mood.

11. The fifth but a highly important point highlighted by the Kargil conflict is the positive and the crucial role played by the world community (including G-8, China, Commonwealth and other developing countries) in dealing with this unfortunate happening. The community has exerted its full pressure to prevent the escalation of the Kargil conflict into a full-scale Indo-Pak war.

12. In the beginning, some bellicose and threatening statements from responsible quarters on both sides did appear, adding further fuel to the fire. But, following the hostile global reaction to their surcharged ways of expression and action, the political temperature seems to have somewhat declined, while the military situation on the ground remains deadlocked. India has declared that it is not going to cross the line of actual control except under extremely compelling circumstances. Pakistan has said that it does not want any war with India and will only fight if forced to do so. This means that neither India nor Pakistan is hankering after war or escalation of Kargil conflict. The only sticking point is the issue of intrusions on which the perceptions of the two countries remain fundamentally apart.

13. Today, the national interests (political, economic, cultural, etc.) of both India and Pakistan do not need any war, but the confrontationist national mindsets at certain occasions may generate very serious military contentions. This urgently demands the bridging up of the gap between the objective and the subjective on both sides.

II. Lessons Provided By Kargil Facts

14. Five main lessons follow from the preceding facts.

(A) One is that the politics of gun (whether nuclear or non-

nuclear) has ceased to be an effective and lasting answer to any problem (as already manifested by three Indo-Pak wars, 10-year armed conflict in Jammu-Kashmir, various insurgent and counter-insurgent movements in North-East India as well as Arab-Israeli conflict, South African apartheid and many other struggles in various countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America).

(B) The other is that so long as Jammu-Kashmir problem continues to fester between Indo-Pak confrontation, it would continue to create trouble-spots in our sub continent—charging a very high price.

(C) The third lesson is that the policy of Indo-Pak confrontation as pursued by the two countries for the last 50 years has proved suicidal to the national interests of the two countries. By pushing its objective of militarisation as a national priority, this policy has turned both India and Pakistan into two pauper states in the community of nations.

(D) The fourth lesson is that both India and Pakistan should have fulfilled their joint commitment of resolving all their disputed matters as made in the three Lahore Documents (February 1999) through practical deeds. The first thing after this historic occasion demanded the signing of some pending bilateral agreements on three outstanding irritants (Siachen, Wullar Barrage and Sir Creek) as prepared by the two sides sometimes ago. Instead the two respective governments used the Lahore Summit as a cover to perpetuate their own petty interests. Vajpayee's first statement after his return from Lahore Summit pledged to never concede even an inch of Jammu-Kashmir territory in any deal with Pakistan. And Nawaz Sharief as usual engaged himself to perfect his Kargil project.

(E) The fifth but the most important lesson is that the objective of global peace has today become the principal human need. This need, in turn, demands a peaceful resolution of all social disputes, whether between countries or within one country. That is why the world community immediately stands up to prevent the escalation of any conflict in this area and why it is so much interested in getting the Jammu-Kashmir problem sorted out at its earliest.

15. The objective of global peace as the principal human concern is not an abstract catchy slogan. It comes from the newly-emerged global reality of national inter-dependence. The process of this inter-dependence can only develop through cooperation and integration of varying human activities (political,

economic and cultural) among all the countries of the world in general and of given region in particular. Conflict and strife hinders this process. Hence, the politics of peace has today become a pre-condition for global development, while the politics of gun has come to be a social obstacle.

16. The global reality of national inter-dependence is the outcome of a new social division of labour and a new way of life brought up by 5 main technologies and their scientific theories (i.e., space, energy, materials, biology and information) of our era.

III. Search For A Realistic Way Out

17. Given the above-mentioned account, it follows that only an inter-dependent national vision can today provide us a way out. And as stated earlier, the first task of this vision embodies the achievement of a genuine peace everywhere.

18. Obviously, a genuine peace in our present national state of affairs demands proper response to four sensitive areas, i.e., (a) Kargil Conflict, (b) Jammu-Kashmir Problem, (c) Sino-Indian Border question and (d) Indian Social System.

19. Taking up the Kargil conflict, realism demands that this issue be considered as a part of the Jammu-Kashmir problem. Thus, its peaceful resolution be sought in the context of the Lahore Indo-Pak Summit by both India and Pakistan through a 2-ended process. That is, the restoring of a status-quo-ante in the Kargil-Dras areas by ending all intrusions within two months, on the one hand, and the starting of an unconditional dialogue process between India and Pakistan for (i) resolving the basic issue of Jammu-Kashmir within a given time-frame, and (ii) involving the Jammu-Kashmir people in the resolving process of this basic issue, on the other.

The above proposal is based on three reasons: (i) after the Lahore understanding, no change should be sought in the Jammu-Kashmir ground situation by any side through military or underhand means, (ii) the process of dialogue should remain open under all circumstances and never qualified by any preconditions, and (iii) Jammu-Kashmir problem should be accorded the first position in the list of all the outstanding Indo-Pak problems.

20. Coming to Jammu-Kashmir problem, a just, rational and viable solution to Jammu-Kashmir problem demands the observance of the following principles:

(a) To proceed from the global understanding that the future of

India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people lies together.

(b) To treat Jammu-Kashmir as a trilateral question concerned with India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people.

(c) To fully safeguard the respective national honour of both India and Pakistan and reconcile their national interests.

(d) To harmonise the concerns of the Jammu-Kashmir people, especially the Kashmiris (including the migrants) with those of the Indian and the Pakistani people.

(e) To give due consideration to the desires and the interests of ethno-regional identities in Jammu-Kashmir.

(f) To strive for bringing Indian, Pakistani and Jammu-Kashmir people together.

(g) To keep in view the strengthening of the unity of the SAARC and the peace and stability in South Asia, while tackling the Jammu-Kashmir problem.

21. The respective national honour of both India and Pakistan should, and can, be safeguarded and their national interests reconciled by establishing over Jammu-Kashmir state an Indo-Pak (or SAARC) Condominium (which would handle only Jammu-Kashmir's defence, foreign affairs and currency), while the interests of Jammu-Kashmir people should, and can, be harmonised with those of the Indian and the Pakistani people by giving semi-independence to the state with the maximum possible autonomy to each of the ethno-regional identities in the state.

22. With regard to the protecting of the desires and the interests of the Jammu-Kashmir's ethno-regional identities, these should, and can, be reconciled by adopting a federal constitution of the state which should, on the one hand, give maximum possible autonomy to each ethnic region, with a provision for further devolution of powers to the district, block and village councils, and, on the other, stand for a single Jammu-Kashmir state, having a common Head of the State to be elected by the ethno-regional councils, and a common high court, a common election commission, a common public service commission, a common environmental commission, a common human resources development commission, all to be appointed by the ethno-regional councils with one representative from each.

23. Turning to the Sino-Indian border question, a practicable solution may be the one which recognises the line of actual control as the permanent border between the two countries and requires China to recognise Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh as parts of India.

24. As regards the Indian social system, the inter-dependence national vision demands its restructuring all along the line.

(A) In general, it calls for the ending of all types of inequalities and the ensuring of a fair and just equality in all spheres.

(B) In the political process, it asks for the introduction of a fully federal system, maximum possible direct empowerment of the people, transparency, peoples right to information and the administration's total accountability to the people.

(C) In the development process, it requires the adoption of the principles of sustainability, productivity, equity, democracy and transparency as the basic norms of thinking and acting.

(D) In the cultural process, it needs the development of democratic behaviour-pattern and norms at all levels.

(E) In the foreign-cum-defence process, it desires the ensuring of a genuine peace by doing away with all sorts of internal and external irritants.

25. While concluding, two points need particular mentioning. One is that the principal challenge to our country is coming from its own internal weaknesses and the external threats are only secondary. The other is that the classical variety of our nationalism—based on exclusive sovereignty, over-centralism, total self-reliance, secrecy and inequality (as represented by the Congress' dynastic rule or one-person directed democracy, BJP's Hindutva, Left's proletariat-led democracy and the casteist parties' Mandalwad)—does not accord with the nature of today's world of inter-dependent nations. Only a vision based on the existing reality can enable us to go forward. 26-06-1999

Quality Of Human Rights Reflects The Nature Of A Social System, Peoples Awakening Main Guarantee For Ensuring Human Rights

I. Concept

1. Conceptually, the human rights, in simple terms, be defined as a set of just claims to which every human being is entitled to as a member of the human community and which must not be taken away by any authority under any situation. These rights mainly comprise:

(a) Right to equality in all walks of life—political, economic and cultural (including gender). Here, equality denotes full equality in politics and culture and a just and fair equality in economics.

(b) Right to life and security.

(c) Right to be free from hunger, clothing, shelter and unemployment.

(d) Right to education, health-care and social security.

(e) Right to personal liberty and freedom.

(f) Right against exploitation.

(g) Right to information.

(h) Right to freedom of conscience and belief.

From the foregoing concept, it follows that human rights are a very important part of a given social system. Their quality reflects the nature of a given social system's rule of law, social justice and behaviour pattern.

II. Historical Perspective

2. Historically, the issue of human rights is as old as human species. But it has varied in different historical stages, each characterised by its given level of social development and given form of human rights. Thus, while the food-gathering clan

community (ensuring equal rights to all its members) denied every right to a non-clan member and put him to death, in our times, even prisoners enjoy the right to life and security. Only a few centuries ago, the hands of a thief were amputated in order to teach him a lesson in physical torture, but now all types of physical torturing is legally prohibited with a view to transform all criminals into useful citizens.

3. The human rights process got a great stimulation from various democratic happenings in Europe after the 15th century, namely, the European reformation (16th century), emergence of parliamentary system in Britain (17th-18th centuries), French and American revolutions (late 18 century), emergence of Communist and Socialist ideas in Europe (19th century), etc.

4. The modern historical phase of human rights began after the end of the 2nd world war, when the mass revolutions against the pre-war savagery and war-time horrors of Nazism, Fascism, Militarism and Totalitarianism demanded the creation of a world forum to ensure peace and humane relations. The result was the formation of UN in 1945. Three years later, the UN adopted the 1948-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including both the socio-political and socio-economic rights. In 1966, the UN approved two covenants on human rights—one concerning the norms of equity and social justice and the other relating to the civil and political rights. So far, the UN has endorsed nearly 25 covenants in relation to human rights. The UN declaration and many of the UN covenants have now been ratified by nearly all countries, with only a few exceptions.

III. Present State Of Human Rights Process

5. With the termination of the cold war, the issue of human rights has become one of the principal concerns of the world community. And the human rights movement has gained a new momentum all over the world.

6. However, the actual situation of human rights at the state and the government level in each country is not very satisfactory, though better than in the past. Some countries (primarily the developed ones) lay stress only on civil and political rights, while some (mainly developing ones) emphasise the economic and cultural rights alone. A number of countries are oblivious to both, caring neither for political nor economic rights.

7. At the mass level, the human rights movement is playing a positive role in the world. Transnational human rights

organisations—like the Amnesty International and the Human Rights Watch—are the major performers in this movement with the national level human rights organisations contributing their due share.

8. But, despite its positive performance, the human rights movement at present is also characterised by one-sidedness. It mainly attends to the matters concerning the political and civil rights and totally ignores the issues of equity and social justice.

9. The human rights organisations hardly question the sub-human inequalities existing in our human world. They hardly care that about 20% of the world population (i.e., 1.4 billion, according to World Bank) continues to be absolutely poor and about 50% subsists on the poverty line.

10. According to 1998-UNDP Human Development Report, “global consumption at \$24 trillion this year is 6 times the figure for 1975. But 3/5th of the 4.4 billion people in the developing countries are living in communities without basic sanitation. Almost 1/3rd are without safe-drinking water, 1/4th lack adequate housing, 1/5th live beyond the reach of modern health services, 1/5th of the children do not get as far as grade five school.”

11. Contrary to the above miserable living conditions of the world's common people, “86% of expenditure for personal consumption,” according to 1998-UNDP Report, “is made by just 20% of the world's people. The world's 225 richest people have a combined wealth of over \$1 trillion, which is also the total income of 47% of the poor, who number 2.5 billion. The wealth of 32 of the world's richest persons exceeds the GDP of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives) plus Iran and Afghanistan. In 1956, average per-capita income in the world's 7 richest nations was 20 times that of the poorest seven. By 1995, it had soared to 39 times as much. In Africa average per-capita income was now only 7% of the level of developed countries. In Latin America, it had fallen from 1/3rd that of industrialised countries in the late 1970 to 1/4th today.”

12. The report further reveals that “\$11 billion worth of ice-cream is consumed in Europe while the spending on pet foods in Europe and the USA is in the region of \$17 billion. Another \$12 billion is spent on perfumes in the US and Europe, while Japan spends \$35 billion on business entertainment. The report further disclosed that just 3 of the world's 225 richest people have a combined GDP of the 48 least developed countries.”

13. Also, the human rights organisations do not challenge the existing unequal global and national political structures, but work within their framework. For example, none of the human rights organisations has ever raised its voice against the veto-based unequal structure of the biggest organisations of the world, i.e., the UN, or the financial weightage-based voting pattern in the IMF and the World Bank.

14. By concentrating only on political and civil rights, the human rights organisations obscure the actual problems faced by the various groups of people, especially the poor and the deprived. When a person has nothing to eat, live or work, how can he enjoy political and civil rights.

15. Thus, the human rights movements cannot be an alternative to other democratic and socio-economic movements. They can only play a supportive role to the democratic movements standing for changing the system.

IV. India's Human Rights Record

16. In India, the record of the human rights at the state and the government level has been quite dismal since independence. Despite having signed the UN Human Rights Declaration and many covenants, the Indian government has consistently followed a policy of human rights violations all through this period.

17. The continuous operation of detention laws in India since 1947 speaks volumes for the state of civil liberties in India. From 1947 to 1950, the British-enforced detention laws continued to throttle civil liberties in the country. In 1950, the Preventive Detention Act (PDA) was enacted. Under this draconian law, any citizen could be arrested by any ordinary police official on mere suspicion of committing a crime or detained to prevent that he or she might do something against the law. It was re-enacted 7 times, each time the duration of the Act having been three years. The PDA was replaced by the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) which lasted from 1971 to 1977.

18. With the lifting of the emergency, the country was mercifully free from any detention law for three years. Then, in 1980, the National Security Act (NSA) was imposed on the country which continues to this day. The NSA is much more harsh than the previous detention laws, containing the provision which lays the onus on the accused to prove his innocence.

19. Besides the NSA, two more cruel laws were enacted in the

following year, that is, (a) The Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1984, and (b) The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1985, known as TADA. The TADA (repealed some three years earlier) was used to terrorise the opponents of the ruling party.

20. The most ferocious of all laws, i.e., the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (amended in 1972), still remains in the Statute Book under which no warrant is required for arrest or search and any soldier has the power to fire in order to kill.

21. The fact that such savage laws should have occupied a prominent place in the legal guide of our democracy for almost its entire life reflects the real quality of our Rule of Law. It also shows the actual nature of our mainstream parties and politicians. Barring some notable exceptions, the judiciary's overall record leaves much to be desired—e.g., upholding of emergency, procrastination in dealing with the detention laws, declining to take strong action against the offenders in Bhopal tragedy as well as those big-wigs who abused and misused the law. The role of the investigating agencies, especially the police, had been the most deplorable. Operating under the 1861-British enacted Police Law, it has been behaving as a law unto itself.

22. Today, the human rights scene in the country is highly distressing.

23. For example, despite the constitutional guarantee of the Right to Life, millions of our people die every year due to hunger and under-nourishment and millions pass away because of lack of timely medical care. Despite the constitutional guarantee of the Right to Free Expression and Assembly, restrictions continue to be imposed on the exercise of this right under various pretexts. Despite the constitutional guarantee of the Right to Equal Treatment, the law enforcement agencies play a partisan role in favour of the rich as against the poor and in favour of the majority community as against the minorities, especially in the communal and the caste conflicts. Despite the non-justiciable constitutional commitment to provide universal education within 10 years, millions of our children have no opportunity to go to school and nearly 45% of our people remain illiterate even five decades after independence.

24. Despite the constitutional guarantee against self-incrimination, thousands of under-trials are subjected to third degree methods and inhuman treatment, including blinding (Bhagalpur case), during interrogations. Numerous cases of

death in police custody on account of physical torture occur every year. Prisoners inside jails are often beaten and tortured. Police encounters are only a euphemism for killing those considered to be dangerous by the police. Outrages against minorities and weaker sections are treated as routine affairs.

25. The level of our social criminalisation can be seen from the fact that no VIP in our country can today move without commando protection.

26. The prevailing impression of the law-enforcing agencies on the people is not that of law-abiding bodies but of law-breaking forces.

27. All this shows that the mere insertion of the human rights in the constitution and law is not enough guarantee of their actual realisation. Equally important is the question of their implementation.

28. Every year, the Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the human rights organisations in India publish reports about the worsening state of human rights in our country, with alarming human rights situation in Jammu-Kashmir and the North-Eastern states. Their latest reports constitute a severe indictment of the Indian government concerning human rights abuses. This clearly indicates that, in addition to the positive work performed by the human rights organisations, something more needs to be done.

29. As regards the condition of human rights in other countries, the position does not seem to be very encouraging. Perhaps, the US and Russia have the highest crime-rate in the world. The countries dominated by the religious fundamentalism (e.g., Afghanistan, Pakistan, etc.), ethnic strife, social and economic inequalities and authoritarian politics, parties and politicians are generally prone to human rights violations.

V. Reasons For Human Rights Violations

30. The following reasons, in the main, may be responsible for the bad condition of human rights:

(a) In general, the old nation-state order, based on state superpowerism both in internal management and external dealings, is the underlying cause today. Because it really empowers the parties, politicians and bureaucrats and provides only one-minute democracy to the people (at the voting time) and that too under the money and power-conditioned social environment. It obstructs the empowerment of the people in

particular and the individual in general and distorts even the constitutional guaranteed rights to the people or the individual in practice.

(b) The other reason is the prevalence of unscrupulous political norms, dominated by money and muscle power, and non-issues (like Babri Masjid; *Sonia Lao, Desh Bachao*; able Prime-Minister; *Swadeshi*; Secularism serving all religions; etc.).

(c) The 3rd factor is the existence of undemocratic laws (new and old) which accord with the absolutely authoritarian nature of the nation-state and its semi-authoritarian governmental powers. In our country, these include all the detention laws and other laws, bye-laws and regulations arming the executive, the judiciary and particularly the law-enforcing agencies (police and the security forces) with extraordinary powers, search, interrogate and even detain without warrant; laws discriminating between the high and the low; laws prejudicial to women, minorities and other weaker sections; etc.

(d) The 4th element is the rot in the law-interpreting and the law-enforcing institutions, particularly in the developing countries. In our country this can be seen from the judicial process marked by delayed and high-cost justice, judiciary's persistent use of the power of contempt, and almost non-existent rate of top politicians and the moneyed-people's conviction, increasing volume of the violations of the Rule of Law, all-round violence and corruption and also from the law-enforcing process distinguished by the culture of violence and bribery adhered to by our police.

(e) The 5th but a highly important point is the lack of human rights consciousness among the people. In our country, this is reflected by the large-scale illiteracy and the wide-spread ignorance about the constitutional-guaranteed fundamental and non-fundamental rights, the lack of economic means by a big chunk of our people to seek redress, the continuation of the traditional ethos emphasising subservience to authority, the toleration of an unscrupulous politics, the hesitation in combating injustice, the communal and the casteist tensions, etc.

VI. Needed Initiatives

31. The cause of human rights calls for an integrated response which includes initiatives in several areas.

Firstly, it needs a rational attitudinal and behavioural change among the masses through a 2-sided initiative, i.e., mobilising

the different sections of the people on their respective welfare agendas (concerning their immediate problems), on the one hand, and motivating them for a systemic change, based on the empowerment of the people at all levels, on the other. Essentially, human rights movement is a movement for systemic change.

Secondly, it requires the informing of the people about their present constitutional and legal rights and preparing them for their realisation.

Thirdly, it lays stress on the sensitisation of politicians, administrative and judicial machinery and above all the law-enforcing agencies (police and the armed forces) on the most fundamental democratic principle, i.e., to uphold the human dignity and human rights under all conditions, on the one hand, and to preserve the Rule of Law and fulfil their constitutional and legal responsibilities at all times, on the other.

Fourthly, it asks for improving the existing laws (especially the detention laws and the penal code) in accordance with the international human rights standards and ensure: (a) making of judicial enquiries mandatory into all allegations of torture, including rape and deaths, in custody within a reasonable time and the immediate publication of these enquiries, (b) conducting of medical examination of detainees before their admission to the place of custody and regularly there-after, (c) producing of all detainees before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest, with prompt information to the former about their grounds of detention, (d) informing of the relations of a detainee immediately and granting of access to a detainee's relatives and lawyers to meet the former, (e) termination of the practice of keeping detainees in prolonged police or para-military custody, (f) Trial of the perpetrators of torture in custody, (g) compensations to the victims and their rehabilitation and also to the families of the victims of disappearances, and (h) releasing of all those political prisoners against whom there are no charges of violence, etc.

Fifthly, it emphasises the abstention from the politics of confrontation and intoleration and the resolving of all external and internal conflicts through dialogue and negotiations.

Sixthly, it stresses the adoption of a sustainable, productive, equitable, transparent and peoples-controlled developmental model which stands for the conservation of nature, on the one hand, and the human dignity and welfare, on the other.

Seventhly, it demands increasing cooperation between different international and national human rights organisations

and their free access to any trouble-spot in the world, including Jammu-Kashmir.

Lastly, but importantly, it necessitates the human rights organisations to adopt a concrete human rights agenda, including both its political-civil and socio-economic sides. One-sided explanation does not fully awaken and motivate the masses. A concrete agenda suggests that the human rights organisations, in order to broaden this movement, should while creating a united platform of all such bodies in each country, try to forge closer ties with those democratic organisations which stand for changing the existing people and environment—neglecting set-up into a pro-people and pro-nature system.

VII. Issue For Serious Reflection

32. The situation of human rights in our country rather in South Asia as a whole calls for serious reflection. During the past five decades, while crores of our people have subsisted under poverty, disease, suffering and humiliation, a tiny minority has rolled in 5-star luxury and opulence, of which even the old emperors would be envious. It is a state of peoples total deprivation—political, economic and cultural.

33. This unjust order, based on money, crime and violence, needs to be replaced by a people and environment-oriented order.

28-06-1999

Challenges Facing India At The Threshold Of 3rd Millennium Heading Towards An Uncertain Future, Needed A New Vision of Inter-Dependence Of Nations

I. How Do Matters Stand

1. As the world proceeds towards the year 2000, the public belief and the mood in India is marked by doubt and uncertainty in the country's future. This feeling is the outcome of India's 52 year long inefficient and below-average performance where nothing works in a normal way and everything goes topsy-turvy. For the past over a decade, the country has been caught in the grip of serious political instability, characterised by a succession of eight Prime Ministers and five General Elections (9th to 13th). Today, no one knows where it is heading next. Here, the facts tell their own tale.

(A) Day-To-Day Mass Problems

2. Looking at the day-to-day basic problems (infrastructural facilities) of the people, pure drinking water (the 2nd imperative for human survival next to oxygen) has become a scarce commodity. In big cities, the water taps run hardly an hour a day in common man's localities, while in towns they often work thrice a week. Over half of all villages in India still have no protected sources of drinking water. Nearly one-fourth are totally devoid of any dependable source of drinking water. It is just possible that if the wastage of ground water and the non-harvesting of rainwater continues, the per capita availability of water in India may slump from the current level of 2,000 cubic meters to 1,100 cubic meters (a level below normal need) in the near future.

3. The state of sanitation, particularly in urban areas, presents

a horrible picture where filth depots continue to emit foul smell in the air, drains are choked and streets remain unswept for days together. Public toilets all over the country (including those in the hospitals, bus stands, railways, airports, etc.) stay as a source of stinking odour to all visitors. Still 3/4th of our people have no proper lavatory facilities and are forced to use open spaces to facilitate themselves.

4. The power position in the country is getting highly irritating day by day. The constant power cuts in the urban localities and the totally irregular supply in the rural areas surpasses all bounds of human patience.

5. The roads all over the country, particularly those in the rural areas, continue to be in a dilapidated condition. Only those roads are repaired on which VIPs or some other influential persons are to pass. New roads are constructed only according to the political needs of the ruling group and not in the public interest. Traffic jams and transport bottlenecks have become a regular feature of all cities and towns. Passenger transport is generally a victim of reckless driving and overloading. Traffic accidents have broken the world record.

6. Trains generally run late and do not reach in time. Rail transport is quite known for its inefficient management, poor working and an unparalleled accident record.

7. Public education, occupying a highly prominent position in the global councils, has always remained a neglected area in this country. Despite the Indian Constitutional Directive (Article 45) of attaining universal literacy by the year 1960, only 60% of this target had been attained so far. Consequently, the education has suffered both in quality and quantity.

Qualitatively, the primary motivation which the Indian education system provides to the student as well as the teacher is to hanker after money-making or power-grabbing business or at least to get a lucrative job.

Quantitatively, all enquiry committees and surveys show a black picture of the educational infrastructure. There is lack of appropriate teachers, labs, libraries, furniture, play grounds, etc., particularly in the rural areas. Some of the rural schools have no teachers, in some the incumbents do not attend, some are without buildings, some have no blackboards, in some, there are blackboards but no chalks. The drop-out rate is phenomenal (about 53%), especially among females. The standard of teaching is no better. Very little attention has been paid to the

vocational education. Private schools cater only the upper and the middle classes.

8. The less said about the public health the better. It is getting costlier day by day, thus beyond the reach of common people. Whatever medicines are available in the hospitals, dispensaries or health centres, they either go to serve the VIPs and other privileged individuals or enter into the black market. They hardly reach the poor people. Rural health service lacks both doctors as well as medicines. Pollution, insanitation, food adulteration, sub-standard drugs, illicit liquor and drug-taking have all become means of spoiling peoples health.

9. The poor working of tele-communications and postal services is too well-known and hardly requires any comment.

(B) Illegal Impositions On Public Living

10. Illegal economic activities have further choked the public living. It has become difficult for ordinary people to avail any facility or meet any need through normal means. Obtaining a ration card or a gas facility, getting water, electricity or telephone connection, admission to hospitals, schools, colleges and professional institutions, hiring a shop or a house, reservation in railways, purchasing a ticket for any significant debate, exhibition, test match, picture, music, or dancing show, etc., can only become possible by paying an illegal (or black) price. Sub-standard goods, short-weight and overpricing go on unchecked. Bogus employment exchanges, false universities, forged currency dealers, hawala firms and fake passport and visa agencies, chit fund companies, etc., continue unhindered. Tax-evasion, money laundering, smuggling, drug-trafficking, manipulation of foreign trade, transfer of black money to foreign banks, bank frauds, securities scams, stock market racketeering, arms, heroine and gold smuggling and infiltration on the border and at the airports with the connivance of security personnel, etc., thrive quite at ease. Corruption has become the general way of India's governance. Nothing moves in the country without illegal gratification.

(C) Black Income Generation

11. Closely related to all round corruption, black income generation has become a very powerful sector in the Indian economy. The black income generation saps the purchasing power of the people and imposes very heavy burden on them. It

amounts to 40% of the GDP and comprises about Rs 7,00,000 crores, according to a just published study (*The Black Economy in India* By Dr. Arun Kumar of Jawahar Lal Nehru University). This includes a contribution of 32% from the legal sectors and 8% from the illegal activities like smuggling, drugs and flight of capital. The black income generation of this magnitude is concentrated in the hands of at the most 3% of the population, thus reflecting extreme inequalities in income and wealth.

12. According to the above study, the black economy in 1990-91 constituted about 35% of the Indian economy which was larger than either its primary or secondary sectors. Since then, black income generation has increased not only through 'legal' activities like real estate transactions and the share market but also illegal ones which include inflated election expenses, capitation fees and bribes. It mentions high taxation and excessive controls in fuelling tax-evasion as the causes of black income generation. It says that black income generation results in inefficiency, waste and sub-optimality in the economy and society. It holds that the technical remedies like the VDIS achieved a limited success and that structural remedial measures can curb speculation in real estate and electoral reform. It pleads for recognising the role of criminalisation and the nexus of the businessmen, politicians and bureaucrats in perpetuating black economy.

13. The study includes factor incomes and excludes transfer incomes in its estimation of 40% of GDP as black economy. Factor incomes are wages, profits, interest and rent. Transfer incomes are those which only change hands without there being an associated production. For instance, if an individual purchases property and pays a part in black, the money only exchanges hands from the buyer to the seller, without involving any production. Thus, it does not take into account transfer incomes like generation in real estate transactions or bribes. It distinguishes black income generation in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors and the organised and the unorganised sectors in each one of them.

14. The study finds that the highest black income generation is in the organised tertiary areas like hotels, restaurants, trade and other services. It estimates that the black income generation in 1990-91 was 5% of the output in the primary sector, whereas the corresponding figures in the secondary and the tertiary sectors were 25% and 70%.

(D) India's Human Development Index

15. Turning to the indicators of India's human development, one finds a massive level of deprivation, a level of sub-human living.

16. According to an August, 1999 released *India Human Development Report*, prepared by the National Council For Applied Economic Research (NCAER), over 58% of the Indian rural households have an annual income of under Rs 20,000. They get to spend Rs 6 a day on their minimum needs—an amount which can keep them only at the subsistence level. Merely 4% of the rural population has an annual income of over Rs 86,000. That makes their lot 13 times better than that of the poorest of the rural population, the Report said,

17. As per the 1999-UN Human Development Report (which measures human development on the basis of 3 indices, i.e., average life expectancy, literacy and over all well being), the human poverty index (HPI) in India is high at 35.9% of the population. It varies sharply across regions. It is the highest in Bihar where the HPI is 54% and low at 23% of the population in Kerala. The other two components of the human development index (HDI) also reveal a pitiable position. The population not expected to survive till 40 years of age is 16% as against the average of 12% in the medium HDI category. The adult illiteracy rate is a whopping 46.5% as against 26% for the group as a whole. The population without access to safe drinking water is 19%. About 71 % of the population has no access to sanitation in contrast to 57% for the medium HDI countries. The number of underweight children is also excessive.

18. The UNDP (1999) also ranks countries on two significant gender sensitive indices—the gender related development index (GDI) and the gender-empowerment measure (GEM). In GDI, measuring achievements in basic human development from a gender perspective, India ranks 112 out of a total of 143 countries for which data was available. It ranked 95 out of a total of 102 Countries in GEM, which measure's gender inequality in economic and political opportunities.

19. Compiled on the basis of Indian official and non-official data, the state of human development emerges as below. 62% of the people come under the category of poor. Nearly 40% live in absolute poverty. 40% have no access to basic health facilities. 75% have no proper lavatory arrangements. 10% live in urban slums. 48% are totally illiterate. 5% are unemployed and

33% under-employed. 33% have no houses of their own. 10% are invalids. About 12% are landless, constituting the poorest strata. Over 53% children are denied the right to basic and quality education. Nearly 75% women suffer some form of oppression.

(E) India's Environmental Resources

20. As per the UNDP (1999), India may be paying a heavy price for its development process which is bringing in its wake ecological devastation and numerous health problems. A conservative estimate of environmental damage puts the figure at more than \$10 billion a year or 4.5 % of the GDP in 1992. If higher estimates are used, the Indian development model is causing a loss of \$13.8 billion or 6% of the GDP.

21. The above report further adds that the urban air pollution costs India \$1.3 billion a year, while water degradation leads to health costs amounting to \$5.7 billion every year, nearly three-fifths of the country's total environmental damage.

22. According to Indian official figures, out of a total of 143 million hectares of cultivable land, nearly 60% suffers from soil erosion, water-logging and salinity. Another 16 million hectares is afflicted with ravines and rivulets.

23. The forests have been the worst sufferers. In 1864, 60% of the country's land mass had a tree cover. By 1952, it is said to have come down to 22% and today is only 11%.

24. The problem of water is getting more and more serious. The availability and the quality of water is constantly declining.

25. The use of toxic chemicals, automobile transport, thermal plants and some other industries are creating pollution. According to the Centre For Science and Environment, the pollution from vehicles in India has gone up 8 times.

26. Deforestation, land degradation and water and air pollution have created a threat to India's genetic resources (comprising 45,000 plant varieties and 75,000 animal species).

(F) State Of India's Population

27. The 1999-UN Report on the State of the World Population released a few days ago said that the Indian population is reaching one billion in the current year. It urges Indian planners to take note of this 'huge challenge' and strike a 'sustainable, equitable and vital balance between human members and available resources.' It cautions that the eventual lack of water

for irrigation could cut India's grain production by 25%. It warns that in Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of the Indian sub-continent, which together contain about a third of the world's population, aquifers are getting depleted and so is the per capita crop land.

28. Fifty-two years ago, when India threw off colonialism, it had 342 million people. Since then, its population has tripled. India, with its population growing by 1.6% a year, is expected to overtake China as the most populous nation in the next 4 decades. China, with more than 3 times the area of India, reached the one billion mark in 1980 and now has 1.27 billion people with a growth rate of only 0.9 percent.

29. By 2016, India, slightly more than a third the size of the USA, is likely to have more people than all of Europe and the rest of the industrial world, excluding Russia.

30. The World Bank experts say that some other big numbers about India also tell not a very happy story. That is, India has a large majority of the world illiterates, nearly 500 million. It has more than 320 million abjectly poor people unable to muster an income equivalent to \$1 a day needed to buy basic foods. As many as 50 million children do not go to school. Development experts and demographers say India is in danger of being overwhelmed by numbers as gains made in fields like education, health and agriculture fail to stay ahead of the surging population. Poverty imposes an oppressive weight on India, especially in the rural areas, where almost 3 out of 4 Indians and 77% of the poor live, the World Bank said in its 1997-Report.

31. The Washington-based Worldwatch Institute said that having a billion people is no cause to be celebrated by India where more than half of the children are undernourished and one-third of the people live below the poverty line. The Indian population was already 'outrunning its natural resources' well before the billion mark. It can be seen by its shrinking forests, deteriorating rangelands and falling water tables.

32. The Worldwatch noted India now has more than 338 million children under 15, presenting a major problem on the educational front. The country cannot provide jobs for the annual 10 million job-seekers. Farmlands per farmer have shrunk from 2.7 hectares to 1.6 hectares, while the number of farmers rose from 48 million to 105 million in the past 30 years.

It remarked: "in some ways, India today is paying the price for its earlier indiscretion when, despite its impoverished state, it invested in a costly effort to design and produce

nuclear weapons and succeeded in becoming a member of the nuclear club. As a result, it now has a nuclear arsenal capable of protecting the largest concentration of impoverished citizens on earth."

33. The Worldwatch criticised India for spending 2.5% of its GDP on defence, while allocating only 0.7% for health, including family planning.

It concluded: "It may be time for India to redefine security. The principal threat now may not be military aggression from without but population growth from within."

(G) India's Economic Indices

34. India's economic development model has been shaped on the basis of two well-known industrial capital theories—i.e., the liberal and the communist. In the first post-independence phase (1947 to mid-1980s), it adopted a mixed model, coordinating the Western and the Soviet experiences of the above-said two economic theories. Later on (in the late 1980s), it began to lay more emphasis on the Western economic pattern. After the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991), it completely shifted to the market-led Western economic sample and has been pursuing the same. But its total record covering the two phases has been so poor that, despite having been the 1/6th of the world population, it is, on the basis of its inadequate performance, considered as one of the least developed countries by all the international bodies and the developed countries. The leading *Weekly Economist* of London has recently characterised it as the "biggest underachiever of the world." And the distinction is quite realistic.

35. For instance, the first and the foremost shortcoming of the Indian economy has been its low level of human development and the degradation of all environmental resources—air, water, bio-diversity, forests and land. It has done nothing to transfer incomes and opportunities to the deprived and conserve the natural resources. Instead, it has made the rich richer and the poor poorer, while overexploiting the natural resources. All this is as obvious as daylight.

36. The second serious shortcoming of the Indian economy has been its failure to develop infrastructure and promote relevant science and technology. This is evident from its production process which is characterised by high cost of production (i.e., capital/output ratio), low rate of labour productivity and shoddy products. That is why it lags behind in

production and trade as compared with both global and developing countries averages. For example, while it contains 16% of the world population, its present share in global trade is only 0.7%, while the latter had been 2.5% around 1950. In the global total output, its share is only 2%, while the latter had been the same even in 1947. Its share in global industry and agriculture has also remained more or less stationary, i.e., 1.5% and 9% respectively.

37. The third serious shortcoming of the Indian economy has been its fiscal deficit, caused by the government's profligate spending disproportionate to its resources.

Tracing the history of the government's overspending, one can find that it is the outcome of different ruling parties' 2-sided political objective. That is, to build India as a great military power, on the one hand, and to perpetuate the respective ruling party's rule through populous economism and political corruption, on the other. This has resulted in the squandering of India's economic resources on defence and internal policing (including all of the defence and police-related institutions and factories), on the one hand, and on populist, unproductive schemes (like the untargeted subsidies, wasteful expenditure on unproductive projects, 5-star lifestyle of the rulers, loan melas, etc.), on the other. Of the 5 chief revenue-consuming budgetary heads—i.e., the interest payments, defence and policing, subsidies, administration and the loss-bearing public sector enterprises—it is the defence which constitutes every Indian government's main priority, with everything else subservient to it.

38. The fourth serious shortcoming of the Indian economy has been the over-stretching of its borrowing-spree to an unsustainable level. Both the public debt (which now stands at Rs 8,00,000 crore) and the external borrowings (amounting to nearly \$100 billion) have risen phenomenally. This has been mainly due to the galloping expenditure on the various ruling parties so-called 'lifeline' or 'holy' sector of national defence that had been forcing the Indian economy from the 1950 to negotiate more and more debts from abroad and resort to ever-widening deficit financing and public borrowings at home. Today, this debt (both external and internal) has assumed threatening dimensions, consuming about 50% of our total annual expenditure. Out of the remaining 50% budget revenue, nearly 30% is eaten up by defence and internal policing (paramilitary forces), subsidies, public sector losses, etc. The remainder goes to meet the

expenditure on civil administration—leaving development to cringe on the crutches of government borrowings. Can such a dire strait of Indian finances sustain any longer?

39. The fifth serious shortcoming of the Indian economy has been the predominance of the parallel or black money in which funds are siphoned off to undesirable economic activities, mafiaism, terrorism, manipulation of elections, speculation, smuggling, foul activities, etc. Most of the money that the rich flaunt is ill-gotten through kickbacks, bribes or other illegal sources.

40. The sixth serious shortcoming of the Indian economy has been its bureaucratic managing of the development process without any peoples involvement and control; keeping the corporate sector under the dictates of its promoters who, with the help of the present law, succeed in holding the company directorship for ever instead of making the company management fully democratic, with share-holders having the final say; and allowing the stock and the currency markets to be run by the brokers and the speculators instead of improving their functioning through a democratic and transparent law.

41. The seventh serious shortcoming of the Indian economy has been its focus on serving the interests of the rich and the privileged groups by determining all economic priorities in their favour.

42. Throughout human history, the importance of the economic factor in the social stability of any group of people—may be a tribe or a nation—has always remained a crucial input. While formerly the social standard of 'might being always right' used to determine the social status (with political, economic and cultural resources in the secondary place), in the post-second world war phase (or the cold war period, 1946-1987), the norm of social status determining had undergone a change. That is, in those days the social position came to be decided by a mixture of both the economic and the military counts. For example, the Soviet Union, despite having the world's largest nuclear stockpile, disintegrated in 1991 because of its poor economic performance, or, in other words, due to its inability in combining the military force with the economic strength. However, in the ongoing post cold war phase of national interdependence, the economic power is step by step gaining edge over the military muscle in settling the social standing. And today, the economic might can only be built by firmly adhering to a policy of durable peace and cooperation and friendship with other

countries and by relegating the importance of defence to a secondary position. If India and Pakistan will not draw proper lessons from the Soviet experience, ignore the nature and the demand of the new epoch, remain on the old path of mutual confrontation and cold war, continue to give top priority to N-weapons and militarisation, neglect to take the economy in the first position, they are bound to suffer the inevitable consequences which may be fatal even for their national survival.

(H) Main Features Of India's Political Process

43. The principal feature of the Indian political process has been that it holds money-making and the power seizing as the only goal of human life. This goal is to be attained and retained at all costs, whether by hook or by crook. All Indian political entities—i.e., political parties, executive and legislature—faithfully adhere to this goal in their respective decision-making processes and action plans

44. The other main feature of the Indian political process is its domination by double-dealing politicians, big business plus black money holders, shady bureaucrats and mafia gangs, etc.

45. Its third feature is that its adherents have, by using all social evils—i.e., communalism, casteism, corruption, violence, crime, etc.—polluted the entire social life and wrought havoc with moral values in all social sectors.

46. The fourth feature is that it has boosted the rise of mafiaism and the springing up of mafia gangs in every such venture—i.e., political parties, legislature, trade unions, cultural centres, stock and money markets, import and export business, industry, trade, finance, public sector, administration, education, health, railways, automobile transport, forests, telecom, etc.—which can be utilised for grabbing money and power.

47. The last but an important feature is that the rise of mafiaism has led to the perversion of the rule of law and the deprivation of the people of even the meagre rights available to them in the existing set up. However, the intensity of this negative trend gets blunted by two positive factors. One is the inter and the intra sharp conflict between different political parties and politicians, big business plus black money holders, shady bureaucrats and mafia gangs—a conflict which prevents every side to change the social law in its interests or to violate it with impunity. The other is the role of the judiciary and the media plus the fear of the adverse public opinion.

(I) Indian Systemic Norms Of Behaviour

48. The social infrastructure of the Indian system has developed a hyper consumerist culture which emphasises money and power as the basic inputs of decision-making and promotes manipulatory ways to achieve these inputs. Its general functional norm is the style of double-dealing which says one thing but does the other. It has created an immoral atmosphere where there is premium on all types of immorality.

(J) India's Diplomacy And Defence

49. While waving the flag of Gandhian non-violence, India has always followed the politics of gun in its external matters, whether diplomatic or relating to defence. The gun approach has logically adopted militarisation and domination as its main themes. This is obvious from the fact of defence having been the country's top priority during the last 5 decades.

50. The politics of gun had involved India into 4 wars with its two neighbours—3 with Pakistan, and one with China—in the post-1947 period. In the remaining time, both India and Pakistan had been on the confrontationist course. Even after the end of the cold war, militarisation has stayed on as the country's top most priority. Today, India has the distinction of being the biggest importer of weapons among the developing countries. And now it has gone ahead by cracking the nuclear bomb.

51. Not only in external disputes, but even in internal conflicts, the country has made use of the gun to suppress all protest, with the result that all dissenting problems remain unresolved even today.

52. Thus, both externally and internally, the gun politics has, by wasting India's financial and human resources in wars and internal conflicts, harmed the development of India—keeping the latter as one of the least developed countries in the world.

53. However, the politics of gun, having been devoid of any rational principle, has always taken a conciliatory and concessionist line towards big powers, e.g., the US, Russia, China, etc.

54. Had India pursued the politics of peace in the post-independence phase, it would today have become a medium developed country—with more prosperous and contented people.

(K) India's Administration Of Justice

55. The first condition for a proper administration of justice is that it should be guided by socially just and relevant laws. But,

the Indian legislation lacks this quality, having been riddled with loopholes. This has provided favourable occasions to those unworthy elements who had been able to sneak into the ranks of judiciary and police for bending the law according to their convenience. It has also enabled the offenders and their counsellors for exploiting the loopholes in their favour—thus tinkering with the process of justice.

56. Secondly, besides defective legislation, thousands of obsolete and archaic laws have created a jungle of rules, regulations and procedures. As many as 1,300 outdated laws out of a total of 2,500 central laws and nearly 15,000 useless laws out of a total of 25,000 state laws have been the source of corruption in the central and the state government offices—thus causing trouble in the disposal of public business.

57. Thirdly, the tardy judicial process of imparting justice with a backlog of 3 crore cases pending before the courts is another form of the denial of justice to the people.

58. Fourthly, the citizens access to law remains restricted due to the enormous costs involved in the lengthy process of justice in which the endless series of appeals tire out the contenders, particularly the victims.

59. The problem of defective legislation, delayed justice, high costs involved in the process of seeking justice is as old as independent India. Various commissions and committees have made a number of recommendations as remedial measures. But, the problem has only aggravated.

II. Causes Of Getting Matters Wrong

(A) A Misconceived Vision Of Indian Nationalism

60. The basic cause of India's poor record rests with its misconceived vision of Indian nationalism (which denotes a nation's way of thinking and behaving). It is characterised by two main features—(i) Historical Chauvinism and (ii) Majoritarian Secularism.

(i) Historical Chauvinism

61. Historical chauvinism denotes the traditional Hindu belief which considers India (i.e., *Bharat*) as a unique land (or a special creation of god) and traces the origin of Indian nationalism (or *Bharatiyata*) in remote antiquity—thus ignoring the reality of its recent evolution. It believes that, in ancient times, India

represented the peak of human civilisation—with its *rishis* (Saints) imbued with the universal knowledge (like cosmos, atom, electron, quark, computer, robot, cloning, and so on)—that human beings could or would ever attain again. According to it, India entered its dark period during the middle ages and began to resurge in the latter part of the British rule—leading to the country's independence in 1947. And now India is, as per the BJP finance minister's 1999-2000 budget speech, rapidly marching towards becoming the world superpower in the early 21st century. This chauvinistic expression is also obvious from India's pet phrases, like the world's biggest democracy, the biggest Asian market, the biggest country in South Asia, a N-power, the most ancient civilisation, etc.

(ii) Majoritarian Secularism

62. Majoritarian secularism expresses the social picture of the Indian people in which the majority community forms the basis or the mainstream of the nation. It demands of all religious, ethnic, cultural, linguistic or regional communities or groups to adjust their beliefs, customs and traditions to the majority ones. Thus, it considers Hinduism as the sole guarantor of Indian secularism instead of ensuring such a guarantee by reconciling the interests of every Indian social group, whether in minority or majority.

63. Thus Indian nationalism—as conceived by Gandhi, a Hindu saint—gives a vision of a Hindu India. That is why it failed to establish Hindu-Muslim harmony in the pre-1947 India and ultimately led to partition. Even 50 years after independence, it has not succeeded to emotionally integrate the various Indian social groups. India continues to be the most incohesive society in the world. And even today the question of its national integration remains a perpetual issue before the country.

64. Today, this national approach forms the central theme of all types of Indian nationalism, whether Gandhism, *Hindutva* or *Mandalwad*. Of these three, the Gandhian variety has been the sole national mode from its beginning (around 1920) to this day, because each of the other two national theories contends to be the true heir of Gandhism—now distorted, according to them, by the Congress. Further, the Gandhian national concept is quite similar to *Hindutva* which defines India in terms of Hinduism. Even the Congress has recently emphasised the view that Hinduism was secular both as a philosophy and a way of life and based on pluralism.

(B) A Centralised And Unaccountable Social System

65. The other important cause of India's poor record lies in the Indian constitution which, following the foregoing national vision, conceives a centralised and unaccountable social system. The constitutional centralised vision is incompatible with India's plural character which calls for a fully federal and decentralised state. This system centralises the whole power at the top and makes everything else dependent on it.

66. It considers armed power as the only force to counter every national challenge, internal or external. That is why it makes defence as its foremost priority. It does not consider the Indian people as the motive force of the Indian society. Hence, it does not recognise human development or the strengthening of social sector as its reference point and places the latter under the charge of the states. It accords a very low priority to the worsening state of environmental factors which constitute the bed-rock of human existence.

67. It builds a highly unjust and unfair social order by giving specific privileges to the prosperous groups of people, like legislators (provision for a lot of free services and immunity from law in the legislative domain), judges (special rights under the contempt of courts law), bureaucrats (officials secrets act, service rules, etc.), army officers (court-martial powers), industrialists (special rights to company promoters and directors), black money holders (voluntary disclosure income schemes), mafia gangs (loopholes in criminal laws), exporters and land-owners (subsidies), VIPs (special protection through commando force), etc. The rule of granting privileges to top social layers contravenes the basic principle of equality before law and violates the fundamental norms of social justice and human rights. It considers the common people as nobodies. That is why, 52 years after independence, 2/5th of the Indian people live below the poverty-line, one-half are illiterate, 1/3rd houseless, and so on. On the contrary, it imposes unbearable financial burdens on the people through indirect taxation and deficit financing. This is why India today symbolises the most unequal unjust, unsustainable, inefficient, violent and corrupt society in the world.

68. The Indian social system does not make its government or any official, accountable to the people. It grants only one single democratic right to the people, i.e., the right to vote that is exercisable after every 5 years.

(C) Money And Power-Oriented Motivation Of National Parties

69. The top politicians of all the traditional national parties, subscribing to the vision of Indian nationalism, follow an unscrupulous style, oriented to money-making and power grabbing and marked by manipulation and trickery. Starting their legislative careers by filling false returns of the expenses in their respective elections, they have no qualms in getting black money from the dubious sources, entering shady deals with the underworld dons, appealing to the religious and caste sentiments of the masses, making false promises with the people, creating or breaking parties, following the politics of *Aya Ram Gaya Ram* and the double-dealing style of saying one thing and doing another.

This tricky style has, since 1947, remained the principal methodology of every traditional national party for its mass mobilisation. But, as things now stand, this deceptive style itself has come under a cloud, with the daily eroding credibility of all these parties and their top politicians.

(D) Judiciary And Media

70. Both the judiciary and the media play a mixed role. As regards the judiciary, the honest and the law-committed judges continue to serve the cause of public and the rule of law, while the dishonest and the opportunist lot go on playing havoc with the law as well as the democratic order. As regards the media, its official variety, having been directed by the ruling elite, continues presenting an exaggerated picture of government reality. The unofficial variety remains preoccupied with its traditional issues concerning governance, money and power, scandals and day-to-day happenings. The matters concerning human community (environment, population control, peace, etc.), Indian society (equality, social justice, human rights, etc.), deprived sections (poverty, unemployment, availability of safe drinking water, health-care, minimum wages, etc.) and general public issues (like water, sanitation, power, transport, telecom, housing, corruption, price-rise, shortages, etc.) get second preference. In general, both the judiciary and the media are oriented by the chauvinistic-majoritarian vision of Indian nationalism which often gets reflection in their assessments of right and wrong concerning fundamental questions, like defence, religious and caste affairs, priorities of the privileged groups, etc. Besides, media is swayed by market stereotypes.

(E) Traditional Public Mindset

71. The traditional public mindset, conditioned by age-old beliefs and customs (handed down from generation to generation, like the force of money and power, personality-cult, belief in fate, fear of the mighty, toleration of injustice, etc.), does not exert a significant check on the multi-sided systemic defects.

III. Managing Matters Realistically

72. Taking into account the foregoing facts, the problem of managing matters realistically involves the sorting out of a 2-sided question. That is, the basic question of restructuring India's social system on a realistic basis, on the one hand, and the awakening and the involvement of the people in carrying out this agenda to its logical conclusion, on the other.

(A) Basic Question Of Restructuring India

73. The importance of this question lies in the fact that its realistic understanding provides us a social perspective (a way of thinking and acting) to view every Indian problem realistically.

(i) A New Vision Of Indian Nationalism

74. The first point concerning the restructuring of India is that the country should have a new national vision by replacing the classical ones (i.e., Gandhism, *Hindutva* or *Mandalwad*)—all oriented to ancient realities, like Hinduism or Casteism. This need is based on a 2-fold reason. One is that the classical nationalism has already proved disastrous to the Indian nation by generating two tragedies, i.e., the 1947-partition of India and the existing political instability in the country which, if not mended in time, can lead to the destabilisation of the country for good. The other reason is that the fundamental reality of India (a reality that determines its direction, movement and structure) has undergone a change. That is, it has today become inter-dependent with other nations in place of having been an independent and sovereign country from 1947 to 1987. This change itself has been caused by the newly emerged process of globalisation (a process which itself has emerged out of the new scientific-technological and social knowledge that has given rise to a new way of thinking, working and organising).

Thus, the new vision which India should, corresponding to its own new fundamental reality as well as the reality of the other nations of the world (i.e., the reality of the inter-dependence of

nations), adopt is the vision of the inter-dependence of nations. This vision today stands for a 3-fold objective, i.e., (a) the long-term objective of establishing a rational, just and fair global human society, (b) the medium-term objective of building the South Asian community (SAARC) on the basis of fairness, equality and fraternity, and (c) the immediate objective of transforming India's ultra-nationalistic and majoritarian democratic order into a fully democratic order, based on human brotherhood, equality, social justice, human rights, etc.

(ii) Fundamental Principle Of New Vision

75. The fundamental principle of the new vision should be to put the people and the environment at the centre of national activity. In other words, our national aim should be to serve the peoples interests, on the one hand, and to take care of environmental conservation needs, on the other—with one occupying the first priority at one time, while the other in the secondary position and vice-versa.

(iii) Approach Towards People

76. The approach towards people (i.e. the human or the social relations) should be based on rational humanism which studies human phenomenon on a rational and realistic basis. People should have all those rights which are needed for a healthy and contented living as members of the human community and which should not be taken away by any authority under any situation. These rights mainly comprise:

(a) Right to equality in all walks of life—political, economic and cultural (including gender). Here, equality denotes full equality in politics and culture and a just and fair equality in economics.

(b) Right to life and security.

(c) Right to be free from hunger, clothing, shelter and unemployment.

(d) Right to education, health-care and social security.

(e) Right to personal liberty and freedom.

(f) Right against exploitation.

(g) Right to information.

(h) Right to freedom of conscience and belief.

Since the ensuring of the above rights will take a long time, it is necessary that, in order to proceed in that direction fastly, three steps be taken in the first instance. i.e., (a) arranging for the minimum needs of the poor and the deprived, (b) ending of all

privileges and special rights, and (c) removing of all types of gap (like rich-poor) between the high and the lowly.

(iv) Approach Towards Nature

77. Approach towards nature should be based on scientific realism which studies a natural process through a 3-stage integrated methodology—i.e., observation, experimentation and conceptualisation. Scientific-technological research should be given special attention. Environmental (concerning pollution of air and water, degradation of land and forests, threat to bio-diversity) conservation should, along with human development, be given top priority by involving the whole people in this process. All efforts should be made to develop harmony between the demands of environment and the needs of human development.

(v) Global Peace

78. The human and environmental priorities can only be fulfilled by ensuring a genuine peace in the world, by discarding the politics of superpowerism and its confrontationist mode, reconciling the interests of various nations, defusing regional tension-points, proceeding towards complete disarmament, vesting the control of N-weapons in the UN, ending the special rights of a few countries in the international bodies, establishing relations of equality among different countries and step by step ending the wide developmental gap between the developed and the developing countries.

(vi) Resolving Jammu-Kashmir Problem And Other Tension-Points In South Asia

79. To seek a tripartite solution to Jammu-Kashmir problem by establishing an Indo-Pak (or SAARC) Condominium over the state which will be responsible for that state's defence, foreign affairs and currency, while ensuring semi-independence to the state and the maximum possible autonomy to each ethnic region in the state. Similarly, other tension-points among the SAARC countries be resolved either bilaterally or through the SAARC mechanism.

(vii) People-Based Political System

80. To establish a people-based political system in India by taking the following steps. To organise India on a federal-confederal basis—giving a semi-independent status to the states and a special status to Punjab. This will help in

resolving ethnic, communal, casteist and lingual tensions in India. All the existing conflicts—whether peaceful or non-peaceful—to be resolved through dialogue. All institutions to be fully democratised. The rule of law to be upheld and exercised through the empowerment of the people which will, step by step, be developed from the village to the central level. People to have the right to information and also the right to call for a plebiscite on any national or state issue. The interpretation of the law to be vested in the judiciary. Any controversy between the judiciary and the legislature on any law to be decided through a plebiscite. All laws giving special rights or privileges to any group of people or individual (whatever his status), except those meant for weaker and deprived sections, to be abrogated. All social and economic disparities to be ended. Elections at all levels to be state-funded, free from black money and muscle power.

(viii) Peoples-Friendly And Environment-Friendly Development

81. The aim of development to be peoples-friendly and environment-friendly. That is, to promote the peoples interests, on the one hand, and to protect environmental system, on the other. To involve the people, especially the women, in the work of population control and environmental conservation. To strive for a balanced economic growth, having a closer integration with the global economy, operating through a 2-sided mechanism of market-generated growth and state organised social justice and directed by the principles of sustainability, productivity, equity, democracy and transparency.

(ix) Value System

82. To promote rational humanist thinking and democratic behaviour.

(x) Foreign And Security Matters

83. To follow a policy of cooperation and friendship with every country in the world. To organise the regional defence in South Asia and reduce the defence expenditure by 50% after the resolution of Jammu-Kashmir problem.

(xi) Traditional Concepts' Irrelevancy To Meet New Realities

84. The above restructured model is fundamentally different from all traditional recipes. This is because the former represents

a response to the new realities of the emerging era of globalisation, while the latter had been confined to the old realities of the previous era of nation-states.

85. Whereas the constituents of the traditional model present an incoherent picture—e.g., BJP's acceptance of parliamentary democracy as a form of government and its adherence to *Hindutva* value system (or culture) or Congress' devotion to both Nehruvian socialism (a recent Western theory) and Gandhian *Ram Rajya* (a three thousand year old model)—the components of the new model are so integrated that not a single one of them can work if detached from others. For instance, the question of the empowerment of the people can work only if combined with a policy of peace. Under the conditions of cold war against Pakistan, the issue of sustained development will work only on paper.

86. Most of the post-1947 India's failures are due to its adoption of an irrelevant national agenda. Definitely, India's traditional formulae—like the Gandhian *Ram Rajya*, Nehruvian socialism, JP's total revolution, Golwalkar's *Hindutva*, Lohia's caste-based politics, Left's anti-BJP-ism, Lohia Socialists' anti-Congressism, the demand for having an American-type Presidential system, etc.—are not quite fit to meet the social requirements of the new globalised era. Similarly, the world recognised two old national theories—the market-oriented Western liberalism and the public sector-based socialism-communism—are in an all-sided decline and unable to face the new world challenges (i.e., environmental degradation, population explosion, ethnic assertion, problems of unemployment, poverty, inequality, social injustice, etc.) which also are their creation.

No doubt, in the absence of a newly-required appropriate paradigm, the countries are swinging back and forth between different traditional samples. But, finding no way out, everyone is on the lookout for something new.

(B) Mass Awakening And Involvement To Carry Forward The Basic Agenda

87. Both history and sociology emphasise that no social change can take place anywhere if the concerned people remain unaware of the need for such a change. In fact, every social change is the result of a given peoples mindset. The only route to solve any social problem lies in the awakening, involvement

and the organised strength of the masses, Thus, the only guarantee of transforming the aforementioned basic agenda into reality rests with the changing of the public mindset in its favour.

88. The first point in the process of mass awakening and involvement is how the people are to be motivated. Experience shows that there are two ways to accomplish this task. One is to change the peoples ideology. And the other is to rouse the peoples interest in favour of that task by linking it with the matters of immediate mass concern. Of these two modes, the second one is easier and early fruit-yielding, because the people are instinctively interested in their problems and thus get immediately involved in any activity that facilitates the solution of their problems.

Stressing merely the ideology without linking it to the mass issues turns the former into a barren and dry topic, while integrating it with the mass concerns generates public interest in that ideology.

89. The next point is where should one begin one's work. In general, one can start work anywhere by knowing its concrete conditions. In particular, there are three types of broad target groups, viz., the area specific, the problem-specific and the class or trade union-specific. The criterion of selection should be the concrete conditions.

90. The third point is to get oneself acquainted with the target group in general and its conscious and informed persons in particular, together with having a thorough understanding of the former's problems.

91. The fourth point is to prepare the problem-agenda of the target group with the help of its conscious and informed persons and then get it thoroughly discussed among the concerned people. The agenda may comprise a set of problems or only a single burning mass issue or any incidence of injustice to the target group or its any section.

92. The fifth point is to use this agenda as a starting point for further strengthening the motivation of the concerned group. The agenda-problem (or problems) along with its cause, its method of resolution and solution are constantly reflected upon by the given group, with the facilitation of the social activists. This constitutes the start of the process of the target group's awakening and its integration with the social activists.

93. The sixth point is to enrich the group's awakening process by linking its problems to the similar problems of the region,

state, country and the world.

94. The seventh point is to get a core team, consisting of its conscious members, elected by the target group.

95. The eighth point is to organise the concerned people into various units on the area or the professional basis by its core team. Such committees should be set up at all levels. It is necessary to develop a close-knit coordination among the unit members and to ensure their participation in the decision-making process.

96. The ninth point is that the concerned people themselves are to carry out their decisions in consultation and cooperation with the social activists. Through repeated actions, they gain self-confidence. Alliances with other mass movements and joint actions with them on different issues, whether group-specific or concerning the region, country or the world, give them a sense of solidarity and prepares them for bigger actions.

97. The tenth, but a very important, point is that, in every group discussion or activity, it is necessary to emphasise that whatever is today happening in the country or to any group of people has not fallen from above or come from outside. It has been the outcome of the country's wrong vision, agenda and priorities and the corrupt and the unscrupulous style of the principal political parties and their top politicians. And that if we want to set things right, we must stand up on our own feet and wage a consistent mass struggle against these negative forces.

98. In brief, every effort should be made to transform the traditional public mindset, driven by money, power, personality, caste or communalism into a rational, fair and confident minds

99. To conclude, the only way to set things in order at all levels resides in the awakening, involving and organising of the people.

Humanity Entering A New Millennium

I. A Time To Look Backwards And Forwards

1. The new millennium is opening up. It is just 75 days away. A millennium is a vast amount of time, humanly impossible to comprehend. In any case, it is a moment to look back at what the 20th century has brought to humanity. How much it has been positive and to what degree negative? What has become obsolete and what new is there?

2. It is also time to reflect at what challenges the outgoing century is bequeathing to the succeeding century. And how the new century is expected to respond to them—a glimpse of the shape of things to come.

3. The uniqueness of the occasion lies in the extraordinary developments of the 20th century.

(A) Significance Of The Outgoing Century

4. The last century has been special in its own way. Casting a glance at its whole process, a wide range of events come to mind. Unbelievable advances in science and technology, on the one hand and unprecedented degradation of the environment, on the other; amazing increases in production, trade and wealth in coordination with scarcity, poverty and unemployment; co-existence of prosperity and deprivation; the climax and the breakup of the world colonialism; political liberations marred by immense economic-cultural problems; emergence of the developed and the developing world; rise of the communist world and its fall; cold war yielding place to global peace; nation-state losing ground to the united nations and other international organisations; inter-dependence and economic integration of nations alongside ethnic assertions for national statehood—have been the main paradoxes of this century.

5. Above all, it was a century of the development of five

fundamental sciences and their technologies (i.e., space, energy, biology, materials and information). The emergence of these 5 sciences and technologies has made it possible for human beings to communicate from far off places at the speed of light and to personally meet and exchange commodities at the ultrasonic speed. They gave rise to a new way of thinking, functioning and organising at the global level, now called globalisation. It is this highly positive development (i.e., globalisation) whose multi-dimensional problems humankind has to address to in the newly-emerging century.

6. It is not all that rosy, however. The passing century is also leaving behind many unresolved serious issues, with two of them as challenging as to pose a threat to human survival itself. The problems of environmental degradation and the population growth have assumed unmanageable proportions. So far humankind has not been able to make a proper response to these life and death problems.

(B) Passing Century's Performance And Challenges Ahead

7. The Washington-based 1999-World Watch Institute Report provides an interesting picture of the last century and the challenges ahead. The world population of 1.6 billion in 1900 escalated to some 6 billion by the turn of this century. The global economy expanded from an annual output of \$2,300 billion in 1900 to \$39,000 billion in 1998, a 17-fold increase. The growth in the year 1997 alone exceeded that of during the 17th century as a whole. The average grain yield per hectare increased from 1.06 tonnes, in 1950 to 2.7 tonnes in 1998. From a few thousand barrels of fossil fuels a day in 1900, oil use exploded to 72 million barrels a day in 1997. And the phenomenal growth in computers—from 3,76,000 in 1990 to over 30 million in 1998. Life expectancy, perhaps the sentinel indicator of human well being, registered a healthy growth from 35 years in 1900 to 66 today. The century witnessed great strides in medicine and bio-technology, with man trying to 'play god' by successful cloning exercises.

8. However, the picture is also dotted with black spots. There is growing disparity in income among countries and within countries. An estimated 841 million people are under-nourished and under-weight, 1.2 billion do not have access to safe water, 1.6 billion are unlettered and two billion do not have access to electricity. The lure of neon lights has triggered massive migrations to the cities of

the world, resulting in urban congestion and blight.

9. The profligate use of fuel oils and other material resources and the pressures of the throwaway economy are fouling the environment and converting increasing areas of the earth into waste dumps. The increasing pressures on the eco-systems usher in a new period of climate instability with indeterminate adverse consequences. The weapon technologies have taken quantum leaps with unimaginable lethal potential.

(C) Global Warming

10. Another natural calamity now raising its head is the global warming. There is increasing scientific evidence that the earth's mean surface temperature has been rising at a much faster rate in recent years. According to the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climatic Change jointly established by World Meteorological Organisation and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1998, the climate models project an increase in global mean surface temperature of about 1.35 degree celsius by 2100 and an increase in mean sea level of about 15.95 cm. The average rate of warming would probably be greater than any seen in the last 10,000 years. Unless preventive action is taken now, it may be too late and immense damage may be caused to human society.

11. The major cause of global warming is the emission of green house gases (like chlorofluoro-carbons or CFCs, chlorine and bromine which erode ozone content in the environment and also increase the content of carbon in the air. Ozone layer (located between 10 to 50 kilometers above the surface of the earth) protects us from the harmful effects of ultra-violet radiation (about 95%) from the sun. Any decrease in this layer would mean prolonged exposure to UV radiation, resulting in several human ailments (like skin cancer, weakening of the immune system, eye disorders, such as cataract, etc.), on the one hand, and an increase in global warming, on the other.

12. The cruel irony of the global warming is that while it could produce climatic changes by drying up monsoon rains, it could also raise sea levels with disastrous consequences for islands and low-level coastal areas. Climatic changes could also raise sea levels with disastrous consequences for islands and low level coastal areas. Climatic changes could also disrupt our food production system, damage our health and make human living impossible.

(D) World Heading For A Major Water Crisis

13. World is heading for a major water crisis. People numbering 1.2 billion in the developing countries lack access to safe drinking water. 2.9 billion do not have adequate sanitation and water related diseases kill 4 million children a year.

14. According to the Director of the global Water Policy Project in Amherst (Massachusetts), water scarcity is now the single biggest threat to global food production. Each year, the world's farmers take out about 160 billion cubic meter of water more than is replaced into aquifers. That amounts roughly equal to the water needed to produce nearly 10% of the world grains. As ground water runs out, wells will run dry. Where ground water still exists, it may become too expensive to pump from greater depths.

15. Surface water in rivers and streams is also vanishing. Many major rivers now run dry for large portions of the year—including the yellow river in China, the Indus in Pakistan, the Ganges in South Asia and Colorado in the American South-West. cities and farms now compete for scarce water, as do neighbouring countries that depend on the same river. Unless the farmers begin to use new water conservation technologies, irrigated lands will turn into deserts as the water runs out.

16. Compounding the problems, population growth is the fastest in some of the world's most water short regions. The number of people living in water-stressed countries is projected to climb from 470 million to 3 billion by 2025. If these countries lack the water to produce sufficient food for their populations, competition for grain imports will increase.

17. Water as a resource was under tremendous pressure from population growth, rapid urbanisation, industrialisation and environmental degradation. Water scarcity was the single most critical limiting factor for development. The way we use or misuse water affects the quality and the availability of this most precious resource—not only for every country and community but also for the coming generation the world over.

(E) Global Population Explosion

18. Another sensational news showing the state of things to come has appeared in the UN Report on the state of population, released in September, 1999. It shows that this century, which began with 1.6 billion, marked a jump from 5 billion to 6 billion in just 12 years.

19. The world population grew 4.4 billion in the 20th century,

by far the greatest increase of any century. A three-fold increase of population from 1900 to 1999 can be said to be one of the defining features of this century. In the 19th century, the growth was only 600 million in all.

20. Today, about 98% of the world population increase takes place in the less developed countries.

21. Never before have so many people lived so long. Life expectancy is now 64 years in less developed countries and 75 years in more developed ones.

22. The report paints a grim scenario of the depleting resources, especially in the developing countries, where most of the population increase is taking place. This means greater pressure on the meagre resources of food, cultivable land and provisions for health and nutrition. In short, it will get more difficult to provide a decent life to everyone.

23. The impact of the rising population will also be visible in the form of collapsing fisheries, shrinking forests, rising temperatures and the loss of plant and animal species in these regions. Global warming is linked to population related issues such as fuel consumption and food, land and water supplies.

24. The less developed regions of the world are already unable to provide access to education for all and quality reproductive health-care or meet the demand for contraceptives.

25. Another challenge before the developing countries is that nearly 2 billion people in these countries are today below the age of 20. This poses a great challenge to these countries and the world. This large group of young people needs education, health-care, nutrition and jobs—a task of staggering proportions which both the developed and the developing countries had not been able to tackle even during the last two decades. The other challenge emerging from this fact is that this vast number of young men and women would be reaching child-bearing age soon enough, bringing about a new population boom. How is the world going to tackle this situation?

26. Another problem that developing countries will face is that of migration of populations in ever greater numbers from rural to urban areas because of the paucity of resources and jobs in the countryside. It is estimated that, by the year 2006, half of the world population will be living in urban areas, causing tremendous pressures on the resources of these areas, thereby resulting in economic upheavals and social disruption. Things will be pretty difficult, even explosive, in the first few decades of

the 21st century if remedial measures are not planned right now.

27. The challenge of inequality now facing the world will become more acute. The developed countries have a population growth-rate of only 0.1% and a per capita GNP as high as \$20,350. On the other hand, the annual increase in the population of the developing countries is 1.7% and their per capita GNP a paltry \$1,330. The gap will become still wider.

28. The scenario before the world is that over 300 million women do not have access to contraceptives. Almost 6,00,000 die as a result of pregnancy and 70,000 lives are lost each year due to unsafe abortions. Women and girls constitute 3/5th of the world's poor.

29. The message of the population report is clear: freedom of choice has to be left to individuals. That means paying close attention to individual needs, reproductive health, education and equality between women and men.

(F) Old And New Threats To Human Health

30. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the nation-states the world over are committed to achieving the goal of providing health for all by 2000. But it remains still illusive when the third millennium is just round the corner. The state of human health today is that the human community will inherit not only diseases of the past century but also fall victim to new ailments—such as AIDS, cancer and so many others.

31. Leprosy and polio still remain a health problem in many countries. Cholera and gastroenteritis continue to appear in various parts of the world. The outbreak of dengue fever too has become frequent in some countries

32. Some diseases—like malaria and tuberculosis—earlier thought to be waning, have re-emerged with more vigour, mostly in the developing countries. The WHO has now put malaria on its top priority list. It affects nearly 300-500 million people and kills 2 million of them every year. The tuberculosis kills more than 3 million every year, accounting for more than 25% of all preventable adult deaths in the developing countries. The sudden spurt of TB is attributed to its link with HIV which weakens the immune system and renders an HIV positive person 30 times more susceptible to TB than an HIV negative person. In the next 20 years, TB will infect one billion people and kill 70 million if control mechanisms are not strengthened.

33. AIDS has caused an estimated 12 million deaths since its

origin in 1981. HIV is one of some 20 new diseases causing organisms that have emerged in the last 2 decades.

34. Some of the new emerging diseases include: Legionnaires disease—a form of pneumonia caused by bacteria which contaminate water and air conditioning systems; ebola haemorrhagic fever, which is confined to tropical Africa; Rift valley fever, caused by a virus first isolated in Kenya and later found in Egypt; Monkey-pox, a disease clinically similar to small-pox; creutzfeldt-jakob, a degenerative brain condition associated with consumption of infected beef.

35. WHO says a new influenza pandemic can be expected in the next century. A new strain of cholera, vibrio cholerae, can spread rapidly even in populations protected by antibodies generated in response to other strains of the same organism.

36. WHO predicts that cancer will remain the leading cause of death worldwide. Despite research and new drug regimes, only 1/3rd of all cancers can be cured by early detection combined with effective treatment. Diabetes cases will more than double globally from 143 million in 1997 to 300 million by 2025, mainly due to dietary and other lifestyle factors.

(G) NATO's New Gun-Boat Doctrine

37. An extremely dangerous recent development has been the US-led NATO's new gun-boat doctrine according to which the NATO arrogates to itself the right to militarily intervene in any country on the pretext of human rights violations without referring the matter to the UN and getting its permission. The doctrine hints at even the use of nukes in certain situations and asserts the security of North America as permanently tied to the security of Europe. Already, the US has been acting as the self-appointed policeman of the world. Its recent firing of cruise missiles on Afghanistan and Sudan, adopting of an imposing attitude in every global forum, threatening every country that differs with its policy, etc., are clear manifestations of a power-driven chauvinist mindset.

38. US-led NATO's gun-boat doctrine constitutes a threat to the peace-loving people of the world. In an inter-dependent world, it only signifies a nihilist concept, filled with destructive intent. It shows that its propounder has learnt nothing from history. That is, all war-mongering enemies of the people had finally perished in their self-generated worst debacles.

(H) Ever-Increasing Inequality

39. A highly disturbing feature of the human development today has been the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots.

40. The 1999-UN Development Report shows the ever increasing inequality between the rich and the poor. It says that, in the past 9 years (1991-99), the income ratio between the top fifth and the bottom fifth has gone from 6:1 to 74:1, and 80 countries have less revenue than they did a decade ago. The assets of the 200 richest people exceed the combined income of 41% of the world's total population. Condemning a dangerous polarisation between those able to take advantage of the system and those who are forced to suffer its effects, the report stressed the need to rewrite the rules of globalisation.

41. The 1998-UN Development Report said 86% of expenditure for personal consumption is made by just 20% of the world's people.

42. It added global consumption at \$24 trillion this year (1997-98) is 6 times the figure for 1975. But 3/5th of the 4.4 billion people in developing countries are living in communities without basic sanitation. Almost 1/3rd are without safe drinking water, 1/4th lack adequate housing, 1/5th live beyond the reach of modern health services. 1/5th of the children do not get as far as grade five school. It revealed that \$11 billion worth of ice cream is consumed in Europe, while the spending on pet foods in Europe and the USA is in the region of \$17 billion. Another \$12 billion is spent on perfumes in the US and Europe, while Japan spends \$35 billion on business entertainment. Just 3 of the world's richest people have the combined GDP of the 48 least developed countries.

43. The report disclosed that the world's 225 richest people have a combined wealth of over \$1 trillion, which is also the total income of 47% of the poor who number 2.5 billion. The wealth of 32 of the world's richest persons exceeds the GDP of South Asia (7 countries, including India) plus Iran and Afghanistan. In 1965, average per capita income in the world's 7 richest nations was 20 times that of the poorest seven. By 1995, it had soared to 39 times as much. In Africa, average per capita income was now only 7% of the level of developed countries. In Latin America, it had fallen from 1/3rd that of industrialised countries in the late 1970 to 1/4th today.

44. The 1999-World Development Report by World Bank

paints a bleak picture of the developing world. It says the 'trickle-down economics'—the practice of cutting taxes for the rich hoping it would benefit the poor in society—does not work. But, whatever policies were used over the past 50 years one thing is certain: poverty continues to rise. Today, 1.5 billion people live on an income of less than one dollar a day, up from 1.2 billion people in 1987. It forecasts the numbers living at that lowest of incomes would reach 1.9 billion by 2015.

45. It reveals the gap between the rich and the poor has also widened. Between 1970 and 1985, the average per capita income for the world's poorest countries dropped from 3.1% of incomes in rich countries to just 1.9 percent.

46. The facts provided by some other UN agencies give us the following picture.

47. About 1.4 billion people continue to be absolutely poor the world over (World Bank). Hunger or hunger-related diseases take an annual toll of 18 million people. Malnutrition kills about 13 million children under the age of 5 every year. About 6,00,000 women die each year in pregnancy and child birth, and 30 times that number suffer injuries which are usually untreated and unspoken of (according to the UNICEF). About 1.7 billion people go without pure water supply and 3 billion have no access to sanitary facilities. In cities alone, about 600 million people are either homeless or living in 'life and health threatening environment' (UN Centre for Human Settlements). Out of the current global work force of 2.6 billion, 120 million are totally unemployed and 680 million are under-employed, unable to make both ends meet, while more and more people are entering adulthood and seeking productive employment. Crime has increased manifold. In the US alone, about 15 million criminal cases are, on an average, reported to the police annually. About, 3 million children are abused every year and about 7,000 children suffer gunshot wounds. The annual expenditure on narcotics alone exceeded the combined GDP of 80 developing countries.

48. The 1999-UNDP Report also provides an account of the sharp disparities between the various nations of the world in terms of access to the network society. It says: in Cambodia, there was less than one telephone for every 100 people in 1996. In Monaco, by contrast, there were 99 telephones for every 100 people. A widely-accepted measure of basic access to telecommunications is having one telephone for every 100 people—a tele-density of one. Yet as we enter the next century,

a quarter of countries still have not achieved even this basic level. Many of those countries are in Sub-Saharan Africa and among the least developed countries. At the present average speed of telecommunications spread, Bhutan and some other countries in the world would take until 2050 to achieve the tele-density that Germany and Singapore have today.

49. Beyond basic landline connections, the disparities are even more stark. In mid-1998, industrial countries—home to less than 15% of world people—had 88% of internet users. North America alone—with 5% of global population—had more than 50% of internet users. By contrast, South Asia is home to over 20% of the whole people but has less than one percent of the world's internet users.

(I) Still An Unfair World Order

50. The world is still living under an unfair and unjust social order where the powerful dominates the weak and the haves ride over the have-nots—with money, might and privilege constituting the accepted norms of justice and truth, both on the global as well as the national levels.

51. This fact is, firstly, obvious from the theory and the functioning of all the world bodies. For instance, the UN and its agencies are regulated by the 1945-Charter which gives veto powers and permanent membership of the elective security council to the militarily most powerful 5 states of the world—i.e., the US, China, Britain, France and Russia. Obviously, such a privilege-based rule is totally discriminatory and unjust because it reduces the role of the remaining 180 UN members to nullity. Morally and legally, it negates the world accepted principle of political equality, the one entity-one vote norm of the universal suffrage and the human right of every nation-state. When the UN has been interfering in the affairs of different states on the basis of human rights violations, why should not it restructure itself on a rational basis in order to make itself relevant to the new era?

52. Secondly, the same irrational and undemocratic style prevails in the two international financial institutions—the IMF and the World Bank—in which the economic weightage determines the voting strength of each member. Thus, these institutions are definitely governed by the financially developed countries, especially the US having 17% of the total voting strength.

53. Thirdly, the newly created unjust CTBT regime gives a virtual N-weapons monopoly to the 5 big nuclear powers—thus

making them the invincible overlords of the world.

54. Fourthly, a handful of the developed countries, with hardly 15% of the world population, today control over 80% of the world's material and financial resources, leaving less than 20% for 85% of the world people, living in over 130 developing countries.

55. Fifthly, one-half of the world population, constituting the female part of the human community, continues to be the victim of ill-treatment and misbehaviour the world over.

56. Sixthly, the national situation in every country is not much different from the prevailing global order. Despite variations among the 186 countries due to their different physical settings, historical backgrounds and socio-economic conditions, there is a great deal of similarity in the quality of social life, especially among the developing countries. For instance, the political process in almost every country (whether developed or developing) remains dominated by money power which, in case of the developing countries, is also compounded by muscle power and primordial norms. The economic process in general operates through cut-throat competition, speculation and black money. The unscrupulous norms constitute the common behavioural forms everywhere.

57. In almost every country, the legislators enjoy certain immunity from common laws under the law providing special parliamentary privileges. In the developing countries, the ruling groups often abuse the law with impunity. Nowhere the judiciary is accountable to the people. Instead, the universally prevailing contempt of courts law empowers it to silence every critic. The official secrets law, existing in nearly all countries, authorises the bureaucracy to cover up all deals and thus ride roughshod over the people. The law-enforcement agencies enjoy wide ranging powers the world over. In the 3rd world, they behave as law unto themselves. Everywhere the law favours the rich and the law-breakers and is biased against the poor and the deprived.

58. It is a world where unscrupulous politics, black money and yes-sir conduct have been the most profitable professions. In fact, they signify the parameters of the prevailing unfair order.

59. All the afore-mentioned serious challenges and dangerous threats reflect disharmonies within human society and between the latter and the nature. Essentially, they indicate the imbalanced state of the human society.

60. This state of affairs demands that the human community,

both as a collectively as well as nationally, makes a determined effort to set things right. But nothing of this sort has ever attained a priority in any global action plan (whether of UN or some other international body) nor become the passionate concern for any country.

II. Reasons Underlying Human Challenges

61. The underlying reasons why human society is not so concerned about its confronting threats are varied and many. The main ones are as follows.

(A) Unrealistic Human Approach Towards Nature

62. The principal reason underlying human challenges has been the human approach towards nature. The central point of this approach has been the human assumption about the infiniteness of nature, on the one hand, and human being's centric position in that infinite existence, on the other. All types of ancient theories, including the ones claiming supernatural origin, speak of a divinely created limitless existence with humankind as its supreme product. The 19th century born Marxism too holds nature as inexhaustible (having neither any beginning nor end) and the people as the maker of their own history by 'opposing themselves to nature.' The various Western liberal schools of thought of the 19th and the 20th centuries are also one in stressing human being as a unique phenomenon in the system of nature.

63. According to the latest scientific facts, the human approach emphasising the boundless character of reality and the primary human position in the system of creation, had been merely an unrealistic view of nature. Nature is limited in matter, space and time. It is characterised by the inter-dependence and inter-action among and inside the different natural processes (including the human process) through a 2-sided method of unity and struggle.

64. Such an unrealistic human approach was bound to lead to distortions in human thinking, behaviour and organisation. The entire process of human society—i.e., the various human social stages of the clan, tribe, religious community and nation—shows that humankind has always tried to advance the human cause at the cost of natural resources. Upto the 19th century, the unrealistic human approach towards nature could not cause any major harm to the natural system because then humankind knew too little to exploit the different elements of nature. But as soon

as the human knowledge of nature began to advance, the humankind, particularly in the developed world, started to apply its knowledge to the overuse and the abuse of nature. This coupled with the pressure of increasing population and poverty on the natural resources, particularly in the developing countries, resulted in the environmental degradation, now posing a survival threat to humanity.

(B) One-Sided Approach Towards Human Development

65. The second reason underlying human challenges has been the human approach towards the human development (or society or human history) which emphasises the role of the genius as primary at all times in the human development (or in the building of human society or the making of human history), while relegating the peoples role to the secondary place for ever. All types of traditional theories have projected this idea. The various Western liberal versions too advocate it. The Marxist school of thought, while promoting the thesis of the people as history makers, simultaneously negates it by putting forth the counter thesis of the vanguard role of the communist party led by an omnipotent leader (who alone ultimately emerges as the peoples ultimate liberator). Such one-sided approach towards people has inevitably led to distortions in human thinking, behaviour and organisation towards the human resources and their development.

(C) Traditional Public Mindset

66. The third reason underlying human challenges rests with the traditional public mindset which, having been conditioned by age-old beliefs handed down from generation to generation—like the force of money and power, personality-cult, belief in fate, fear of the mighty, toleration of injustice, etc.—exercise a very small influence in the working out of any agenda and in the determining of its priorities, both at the national and the global levels.

(D) Weakness Of Existing Global Mechanism

The fourth reason underlying human challenges lies in the weakness of the existing global mechanism. This mechanism—i.e., (i) the UN and its various agencies and (ii) the two global financial institutions, the IMF and the World Bank—had been created in 1945 to deal with the situation after the second world war. Hence the institutions of this mechanism reflect the social

realities (or power equations) of those times and have ceased to be relevant to the problems of a new era.

(E) Inadequacy Of Nation-State

68. The fifth reason underlying human challenges is concerned with the inadequacy of the nation state (i.e., the top unit of the 19th-20th centuries) which has been becoming less and less effective day by day to deal with the present problems, i.e., environment, population, market mechanism, technology, poverty, unemployment and so on. This is because the national perspective (which looks at things from the angle of a nation) and the national priorities conflict with the global nature of these concerns. And further, no single nation-state—howsoever powerful—today has the resources and the capacity to properly respond to a global issue on its own. Thus, it is not in a position to act as a global actor. Hence, closer cooperation among the different countries is needed to address to a global question satisfactorily. When every country goes on pursuing its own national interests, without any heed to its effects on others, the global community is inevitably put to trouble.

III. A Rational Option

69. Identification of the problem and its whys and hows inevitably lead one to the question what should be done. A logical answer is that, taking into account the problems and the reasons underlying them, it is necessary to restructure the existing global order whose foundations were laid down some 53 years ago.

(A) A Stage Of Quasi-Nationalism And Quasi-Internationalism

70. The present reality is characterised by the fact that, while the increasing inter-action between the nation-states demands a common regulatory centre to manage this process, the traditional public mindset and vested interests (which generally hold important positions in the developing countries) call for enhancing the national prestige and the national concerns. Secondly, there is a continuous emergence of new regional economic groupings which are oriented towards a global order. And thirdly a keen competition proceeds between the UN and the nation-states in which the former strives to acquire more and more authority to cope with the problems of the new epoch while the latter resist to surrender any authority. Thus, it constitutes a

stage in which the UN and the nation-states contend at an equal footing—with the UN step by step increasing its strength. These facts point out that the present reality represents a stage of quasi-nationalism and quasi-internationalism (or inter-dependent nationalism).

(B) Vision Of One World

71. The first need of a world of inter-dependent nations should be its vision. The 1945-UN Charter gives us the vision of sovereign and independent nations, a vision contrary to the existing reality. The present reality of the inter-dependence of nations (or quasi-national and quasi-international states) provides us the vision of one world. Such a vision, on the one hand, serves the interests of the human community, and, on the other, meets the concerns of every nation.

(C) Fundamental Principle Of 'One World' Vision

72. The fundamental principle of the above-mentioned vision should, firstly, be to put the people and the environment at the centre of global activity (i.e., to serve the peoples interests, on the one hand, and to take care of the environmental conservation, on the other)—with one occupying the first priority at one time, while the other in the secondary position and vice-versa.

(D) Approach Towards People

73. The approach towards people (i.e., the human or the social relations) should be based on rational humanism which studies human affairs on a rational and realistic basis. People should have all those rights (as mentioned in the two 1966-UN Covenants, one concerning the political-civil rights and the other economic-cultural rights) which are needed for a healthy and contented living as members of the human community and which should not be taken away by any authority under any situation.

(E) Approach Towards Nature

74. The approach towards nature should be based on scientific realism which studies a natural process through a 3-stage integrated methodology—i.e., observation, experimentation and conceptualisation. Scientific-technological research should be given special attention. Environmental (concerning the pollution of air and water, degradation of land and forests and threat to bio-diversity) conservation should, along with human

development be given top priority by involving the whole people in this process. All efforts should be made to develop harmony between the demands of the environment and the needs of human development.

(F) A Democratic Global Order

75. A global order should be founded on the principle of democratic structure and functioning. But the UN lacks this quality. The UN general assembly's structure and functioning is quite democratic. But its top decision-making body, i.e., the security council, is characterised by highly unfair and totally undemocratic norms—i.e., the permanent membership for the militarily most strong five nations and their special veto rights.

76. Obviously, any attempt to fully democratise this body would, at this moment, encounter stiff resistance from the 5-member privileged club. So, taking into account the existing global power structure, it seems that the full democratisation of the security council will take some more time. For the time being, the rule of special veto powers should be done away with, while retaining the norm of permanent membership till the change in the ongoing balance of power. All other seats in the security council should be filled through election by the general assembly.

(G) A Durable Global Peace And Security

77. The founders of the UN had envisioned a durable global peace and security as its main objective. But it remained illusive during the whole course of cold war. Now, the ending of the cold war has made this task viable, with the world people longing for it.

78. Obviously, the human and the environmental priorities can only be fulfilled by ensuring a durable peace in the world, by discarding the politics of superpowerism and its confrontationist mode, defusing regional tension-points, reconciling the interests of various nations, proceeding towards complete disarmament, vesting the control of N-weapons in the UN, ending all political and economic inequalities in the world and step by step ending the developmental gap between the developed and the developing countries.

(H) A Pro-People And Pro-Environment Global Development

79. The aim of development should be peoples-friendly and environment-friendly. That is, to promote the peoples interests,

on the one hand, and to protect environment, on the other. To involve the people, especially the women in the work of population control and environmental conservation. To strive for a balanced economic growth, having a closer integration with the global economy, operating through a 2-sided mechanism of market-generated growth and state organised social justice and directed by the principles of sustainability, productivity, equity, democracy and transparency.

80. It is necessary that the UN sets up a highly capable and qualified Global Development Council to act as a guiding and advisory centre for the development of natural and human resources in different countries.

(I) A Global Value System

81. The aim of the global value system should be to promote rational humanist thinking and democratic behaviour among the world people.

82. It is necessary that the UNESCO, after a proper discussion with various international and national cultural organisations, defines a global value system and circulates it for consideration of the people the world over. After a proper debate, it should, with the necessary changes if any, be placed for discussion and adoption as a model paper, in a global conference attended by culturally knowledgeable persons.

IV. To Sum Up

83. Today, the main direction of the human movement is towards peace, democracy, cooperation, equality and fraternity. But the continuously weakening old forces of hegemonism (i.e., super-powerism, national chauvinism or jingoism, etc.), fundamentalism (i.e., market-based, state-controlled, religion-directed, etc.), and one-sidedism (individualism, extremism, formalism and all types of one-sided views) are step by step hindering this advance. Such out-dated forces cannot, however, halt the march of historically-emerging new.

N-weapons—A Threat To All Living Organisms A Product of Hawkish Nationalism, Demand Time-bound Destruction And Interim UN Control

1. The issue of N-weapons is highly crucial, both from the viewpoint of bio-survival as well as the question of human living. If these weapons are used, they will pose a serious threat to the survival of all living organisms. And if they are, as per the scheming of CTBT on which a near-consensus exists among all the countries, accepted by the world community as a monopoly of 5 militarily strong global powers (who also enjoy the privilege of having been the permanent members, with a veto right, of the world's highest decision-making body, i.e., the security council, then the human world will be further doomed to an unjust and inequalitarian global order (as it exists today). In such a world order the billions of world's deprived, hungry, half-naked and shelterless will, as usual, have no future and continue subsisting on the verge of a miserable living. In all cases, these weapons will have to be destroyed once for all if bio-life is to be preserved on this earth and if human global order is to be established on a just and equalitarian basis, while, in the intervening period required for their destruction, they should be placed under the custody and the command of the UN general assembly.

2. Casting a glance at the present scenario of the global order of power, one can easily visualise that such an order does, and will, not permit the banishing of N-weapons to materialise. Yet, the historical experience shows that once the people are awakened to any cause, no obstacle can deter them from securing their objective. This is because human rationality and ingenuity enables them to tackle any problem by trying out new techniques on the basis of trial and error.

3. The process of mass awakening on any issue mainly consists of providing them a correct information about the given issue so that they may themselves decide the rights and the wrongs of that topic. And a correct information about any matter involves the sorting out of its 3 features—i.e., (a) Its nature—showing whether it is a human necessity or a counter human matter, (b) Its cause—indicating how much social necessity it is, and (c) Its solution—proposing how it should be tackled.

(A) Nature Of N-Weapons

4. Today, it has become a common knowledge that N-weapons are essentially anti-organic and hence counter-human in character. This is because, according to the N-experts, a N-explosion, while causing a fission or split in the heavy atomic nucleus into two or more parts, releases a large amount of radiation (containing radioactive poisons) which instantly kills all bio-matter. The first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 had a capacity equivalent to 20,000 tonnes of TNT (a powerful explosive). Now hundreds of times more powerful N-weapons exist in the arsenals of big N-powers. Even the non-combat nuclear uses (based on fission technology)—like nuclear tests, nuclear plants for generating power and laboratory experiments—generate radioactivity, i.e., dust emitting radiation, that is fatal for living matter.

5. The N-weapon was needed neither in the past nor now. That is why the scientists who contributed in the inventing of this weapon were against its use in the war. Albert Einstein, who was one of the scientists responsible for ushering in the nuclear age, told to a fellow scientist, Max Born in late 1952: "I made one great mistake in my life when I signed the letter to President Roosevelt recommending that atom bomb be made, but there was some justification—the danger that the Germans would make them." In April 1955, Einstein and Bertrand Russell issued a joint declaration demanding nuclear disarmament. It was signed by eminent scientists such as Joliet Curie, Neils Bohr and Oppenheimer. It invited the attention of the statesmen all over the world to the dangers of the use of the hydrogen bomb and pointed out that war and science can no longer co-exist. This led to the setting up of the Pugwash Conference with the objective to encourage dialogue between the world political leaders and the scientific community to prevent things from getting out of hand.

6. There is no rationale in the theory which emphasises N-

weapon as an instrument of lasting peace, an ultimate tool or a device to deter the enemy from resorting to any adventurist action. This is because no anti-bio factor which does not distinguish between the victor and the vanquished can become even an acceptable thing in human society, what to say of its strategic utility.

7. The international experience shows that the N-weapons have never enabled anyone to win a war. Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Falklands, Balkans—all show their non-strategic nature. They are not even effective instruments of intimidation. The US has so often been defied by Cuba, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya, Sudan, Yugoslavia, etc., but the former could not translate its destructive atomic capacity into actual strength. The possession of a great number of N-weapons by the former superpower, the Soviet Union, and its socialist bloc, could not save them from disintegration. N-China had failed to cow down a small island, like Taiwan. The Pokhran balance sheet also reveals a similar story. Immediately after the blast, the pro-bomb lobby claimed that it would raise India's global stature, enhance country's security, expand the room for the country's independent foreign policy-making, contain the armed militancy in Jammu-Kashmir, raise India's bargaining power vis-à-vis the US and strengthen India's claim to a permanent seat in the security council. But instead of achieving even a single gain, India stands morally and politically discredited in the eyes of the world. Firstly, it appears to be a double-dealing state that for 50 years criticised the N-club for its hypocrisy and later itself joined it. Secondly, it seems to be an insensitive nation that is incapable of adequately feeding 2/5th of its population but nurtures global hegemonic ambitions. Thirdly, the neighbouring countries look at it as a belligerent country that used the argument of insecure environment to join the N-combine. Fourthly, India has, as vividly shown by the Kargil crisis, become vulnerable to a Pakistani N-attack so long as the Jammu-Kashmir problem is not properly resolved. Fifthly, N-weapons are a highly costly affair. According to an expert estimate, the country will have to spend Rs 50,000 crore every year for maintaining a tiny N-arsenal less than a fifth of China's size. This will inflate India's already bloated military budget. Even in the pre-nuclear period India used to spend twice as much on the military sector as on its human development aspect which includes health, education and all its social security schemes. Sixthly, India's new N-weaponry programme has fuelled

the arms race in the sub-continent, created the possibility of a N-war in our region, induced other countries to undertake the N-weapon path and created confrontationist psychosis all around—thus making the country more insecure. Seventhly, the BJP-led officially-sponsored N-patriotism is subtly trying to promote jingoism, militarism, cultural conformism, muzzling of dissent, militarisation of science and technology, legitimising of violence.

8. The particular note-worthy 'contribution' of N-weapons in human society has been their black-mailing role to maintain the present unfair and inequalitarian global-cum-national order (i.e. the privilege of veto powers for 5 N-weapon states in the UN; financial weightage-based voting rights in the IMF and the World Bank ensuring the domination of few countries in these two institutions; strengthening the existing order in which 15% of the world population controls 86% of the world resources and 85% of the world population has to subsist on 15% of resources.

9. The most worth-considering fact, however, is the erosion of the theory of N-weapon owners that these weapons are needed to safe-guard their respective national interests, But even this self-justification theory loses its rationale in the newly-emerged world of inter-dependent nations in which the main human problems (like environment, population growth, sustainable development, social justice, human rights, poverty and inequality, gender equality, empowerment of the people, etc.) have become global. Naturally, they demand a global response which, in turn, needs friendship and cooperation among all the nation-states. The change from a world of sovereign nation-states to a world of inter-dependent nation-states has deteriorated the relevance of all the traditional concepts of war and military 'solution' and consequently of their ultimate tool, the N-weapon, in defending the national interests of the given N-weapon states and their cherished existing unjust global order.

(B) Reasons Behind N-Weapons Creation

10. The N-weapons did not arise out of any human need in general. It was the product of the mutual rivalry of the colonial powers whose 2 combinations—one led by the US and the other by Germany—wanted to crush each other in the 2nd world war. The US succeeded in inventing it first. However, the victory of the US-led combine came through the traditional weapons. When the victory was quite at hand, the US arbitrarily dropped two N-bombs on two Japanese cities, i.e., Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It

was just a signal to the world, including its allies, that the US has become all-supreme—a reflection of its jingoist urge.

11. The US monopoly was broken by the former Soviet Union in the early 1950s. Later, in the 1960s, Britain, France and China entered the N-weapons arena. The Soviet Union manufactured it to compete with the US for global hegemony, while Britain and France aimed at maintaining their global great power status. Chinese intention was to counter the challenge from the two superpowers. India exploded its first nuclear device in 1970s after the signing of the 1971 Non-Proliferation Treaty—declaring that it did not intend to make any A-bomb. Thereafter, in May 1998, first India and then Pakistan carried out their respective N-weapon tests to force their entry into the N-club.

12. Despite fully knowing their anti-biological nature, the monopolists of N-weapons have made desperate efforts to inculcate among the masses the rationale that the N-weapons are meant to defend the collective-cum-personal security of a nation and to defeat the national enemy. Countering the top scientists' and other academics' anti N-weapons campaign, they further substantiated that N-bomb was simply a deterrent device (without actual use) against any threat. This logic was understandable during the cold war when people used to fear the opposite camp. But the irony is that even after the end of the cold war, the N-weaponry protagonists go on parroting the same theme. For Indian and Pakistani hawks, it has, however, been quite simple to incite their respective people against one another, given the past animosity between the two nations.

13. The primary reason behind the given public support for N-weapons has been the lack of mass information about the monstrosity of N-weapons, the world over. Secondly, the main national concepts—i.e., the Western liberal, Marxist and theocratic/ethnic—continue to mould national consciousness and motivation among the people which facilitates the spread of national N-defence. Thirdly, the US has been projecting a new idea of the global-cum-national enemy in the form of a rogue state, like Iraq, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Afghanistan, etc., which can, by clandestinely manufacturing N-weapons, pose a threat to the world order. Fourthly, pro-N-weapons lobby identifies Islamic fundamentalism as a new global challenge.

(C) Goal And Tasks

14. Taking into account the nature and the role of the N-

weapons and keeping in view the reasons behind their manufacturing, the basic social goal in this matter should be the complete destruction of all N-weapons. Since the process of complete N-weapons' destruction involves a certain amount of time, there should also be an immediate aim, requiring all the N-weapon states to hand over the full control of such weapons to the UN general assembly.

15. To achieve the afore-mentioned 2-sided goal, our main task should be the awakening and the involving of the people in the anti N-weapons movement. This requires the carrying out of three initiatives.

Reality Of CTBT

16. The 1st initiative is to clarify the reality of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which has been projected by the N-weapon states as a just global solution to the N-weapons problem, on the one hand, and the actual position of New Delhi's draft N-doctrine, portrayed by its propounder as a rational approach on N-weapons, on the other.

As regards the CTBT, this treaty, firstly, legitimises the full control of 5 N-weapon states over their N-weapon stockpiles for an un-limited period. Secondly, it authorises these states to continue developing and refining their N-weapons through lab-devices, without resorting to explosive tests. Thirdly, it was unverifiable and can lead to contention among N-weapon states for excelling in quality production from each other. By implication, it enables the US to outdo the rest which are far behind the former in lab-technology. Obviously, it is a dangerous theory.

Nature Of India's N-Doctrine

With regard to New Delhi's draft N-doctrine, it is as dangerous as the CTBT. Firstly, it talks about its purpose of ending the N-weapons and N-war, on the one hand, and advocates the spread of N-weapons (i.e., horizontal proliferation of these weapons) by itself becoming a N-weapons state, on the other, thus inducing some others to follow suit. To justify the horizontal N-weapons proliferation is a highly irresponsible act which creates a threat to world peace and encourages destabilisation all-over. The more the number of people who possess N-weapons, the more the chances of matters getting worse, The smaller the number of N-weapon states, the more the chances of holding meaningful

talks. The question of ending the N-weapons within a time-frame does not in any case justify the spread of N-weapons all over the world.

Secondly, it lays down the building of a minimal credible nuclear deterrence with a 'triad' mechanism (of aircraft, mobile land-based missiles and sea-based assets). The doctrine does not define the concept of 'minimal credible N-deterrence', having the potential to grow into a big N-weapons power.

Thirdly, its promise of 'no first use' is merely a ruse to project itself as a value-based concept. Besides, it is a totally unviable proposition. Whatever it says now, with pressure building up during the time of actual fighting and the strategic need of the armed forces at that time, the armed conflict can escalate and acquire a bigger momentum going to a N-level. Next, it is really very difficult to monitor it in times of crisis. Further, some N-weapon states contend that their N-weapons are a deterrent not only against rival's N-stockpile but also his biological and chemical weapons stock and in certain cases even conventional uses.

N-Weapon States Perpetuate An Unjust Order

17. The 2nd initiative is to explain the fact of the anti-people role of the N-weapon states in the perpetuation of an unjust global-cum-national order.

The main features of such a global order are the privileges of permanent membership and veto rights for the 5 N-weapon states in the top decision-making body of the UN, i.e., the security council; the special rights of financial weightage voting for the few most developed countries in the international financial institutions, i.e., the IMF and the World Bank; the monopoly of having and developing the N-weapons by the 5 veto-holding members of the security council; the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots (such as the assets of the 200 richest people exceeding the combined income of 41% of the world's total population (1999-UNDP Report), 86% of expenditure for personal consumption made by just 20% of the world people and the world's richest people having a combined wealth exceeding the GDP of 7 South Asian countries (including India) plus Iran and Afghanistan (1998-UNDP Report); and 15% of the world population living in the developed countries controlling 86% of the world's material and financial resources, leaving 14% for 85% of the world people.

On the national scale, money and power constitute the two

biggest motivational factors in the whole social life; the political process remains dominated by corruption, black money, charisma and in some cases muscle power and primordial norms; the economic process by unemployment, inequality, poverty and deprivation, unsustainability, environmental pollution, speculation and black economy; and the cultural process by unscrupulous norms and yes-sir conduct. Overall, a few privileged groups and in many cases even mafia gangs go on dominating the social life.

Anti N-Weapons Movement— A Process Towards A Fair Order

18. The 3rd initiative is to specify the fact that the movement for the total elimination of N-weapons in human society is a peoples movement for establishing a genuine global peace in order to build a fair equalitarian and sustainable global-cum-national order.

It upholds the vision of one world which, on the one hand, serves the interests of the human community and on the other, meets the concerns of every nation. The fundamental principle of this vision is to put the people and the environment at the centre of human thinking, action and organisation.

It stands for achieving a lasting peace by discarding the politics of superpowerism and hegemonism and their attendant confrontationist mode, reconciling the interests of various nations through friendship and cooperation and the resolving of all conflicts (whether between countries or within them) through talks and negotiations between the contending parties.

It advocates the restructuring of the UN and other international institutions on a democratic, equal and transparent basis by ending all special rights and discriminatory rules.

It pleads for a peoples and environmental friendly development process—which ends all inequalities and sets up a fair economic equality. It emphasises the promotion of rational humanist thinking and democratic behaviour in all walks of life.

On the national basis, the reordering of the political process on the basis of the rule of law, the maximum possible direct empowerment of the people, transparency, peoples right to information and the administration's total accountability to the people at all levels. In the development process, it stresses the adoption of the principles of sustainability, productivity, equity, democracy and transparency as the basic norms. In the cultural

sphere, it emphasises the development of a value-based behavioural style. In foreign-cum-defence matters, it asks for doing away with all sorts of external irritants through dialogue and thus ensuring the process of a stable peace all around. Lastly, but with the foremost priority, it calls for the adoption of a vision of an inter-dependent nationalism (or the notion of the inter-dependence of nations in place of the outgoing concept of a sovereign, independent and exclusive nationalism which is often prone to chauvinism and jingoism.

19. The anti N-weapons movement in the world has many things to its credit. It had prevented things from getting out of hand. It had played an important part in bringing about significant reductions in the N-arsenals of the US and Russia through various treaties and agreements. And there has not been any big and drastic increase in the number of N-weapons, recently. Given the global power balance, it had gone much ahead. In the new global era, there is a great possibility of its attaining at least the immediate goal. 01-11-1999