

**National Executive &
National Council meeting
at Nagpur
6-8 February 2009**

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Note

A resolution on Agriculture was also adopted unanimously. It will be carried in the next issue.

Cover : *Onward to victory now.*

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सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

Treating alike victory and defeat, gain and loss, pleasure and pain , get ready for the fight, then; fighting thus you will not incur sin.

Bhagavadgita, Ch.2, Text 38

Editorial

*Message from Nagpur
It's mandate to BJP*

BJP's one-day National Executive Committee meeting and two-day National Council meeting at Nagpur has sent out a very clear, loud message to the party karyakartas and the people: "It is now a mandate for BJP". During the in-depth discussion, a critical and comparative assessment of the NDA's rule and of Congress-led UPA's for a few months less than five years led one only to the unanimous conclusion: NDA was a glorious success; UPA is an ignominious failure. Where NDA succeeded, UPA failed.

In his address, BJP National President Shri Rajnath Singh said that during the next elections the people have to make a choice not only from amongst the different political parties but also between the two alliances - BJP-led NDA and Congress-led UPA. He was brimming with confidence that after the people make an honest and fair comparison between the two, they will certainly prefer NDA in their own interest and that of the nation. The NDA's proud milestones of developments and achievements had raised the

country's image high in the esteem of the world. India had become a force to reckon with in the comity of nations.

Under foreign pressure the powers that be had failed to undertake an atomic explosion for decades together. BJP-led NDA government did the trick in just two months of coming into power in 1998. This left the world shocked in amazement. The whole country was excited and charged with emotions. For the first time since independence, people of India felt proud to raise their head high in the world. The NDA had the guts and the vision to undertake many more ambitious projects and record numerous proud achievements which have become models and guiding stars of the country. People quote these instances to highlight the failures of UPA government. BJP President brought forth the innumerable failures of the present UPA government and recounted how the standing of the country had gone down during the present regime.

He highlighted the new model of development and so did he

Leadership ... the ability to see what no one else sees, to listen when others talk and the ability to be optimistic when others are pessimistic.

-- George W. Cummings

reiterate Party's undiminished determination to construct a magnificent temple of Lord Rama at Ram Janmabhoomi complex. The National Council adopted unanimously resolutions on agriculture, economy and political situation in the country. These three resolutions have brought to light in detail as to how because of the wrong policies, programmes and decisions of the UPA government, no section of society - be it the common citizen, farmer, mazdoor, youth, worker, government servant and the like - was free from its tyrannical adventures. A complete picture of the pitiable economic situation, further worsened by the recessionary trends was placed before the Council. The political resolution contained the reality of the present political condition in the country.

The bristling enthusiasm, overflowing high spirits, zeal and high morale of more than 7,000 participants presented a grand spectacle pleasing to every eye. That was the sign how well-prepared the common *karyakarta* was to face the challenge of the coming Lok Sabha elections. A galaxy of top leadership of BJP presented its views on various burning issues. The way Shri Lal Krishna Advani received a standing ovation not once, but numerous times when he spoke or reached the dais was a clear signal how enthusiastic the *karyakarta* was to see him as the next Prime Minister of the country. The collective slogan "Desh ka neta kaisa ho, Lal Krishna Advani jaisa ho" left nobody in doubt about the mood of the party and the worker. There was only one determination, one resolve and one target emanating from every corner, from the heart and mind of every worker in the pandal and the country: Lal Krishna Advani will be the next Prime Minister.

The meeting of the National Council just before the onset of Lok Sabha election has infused a new sense of unity, collectiveness and a resolve to bounce the BJP back to power in alliance with its partners. The meeting presented a unique picture of the leadership feeling proud of its *karyakartas* who, in turn, were priding themselves with the presence of their top leadership which only further ignited their spirits and resolves.

Every corner of Nagpur was tastefully decorated with hoardings, posters, banners and balloons to give the city a festive look. The unprecedented presence of the people from all walks of life in the massive Vijay Sankalp Rally at Yashwant Stadium in the city left no one in doubt that the people have already made up their mind to throw their lot with the BJP-led NDA this time. The meeting spread a message to the *karyakarta* that it is now up to him to cash in this mood of the people by penetrating into them, highlight UPA's failures and

NDA's great achievements during its rule. We will, then, certainly be able to make our resolve a reality: "Jeetegi BJP, Jeetega Bharat". Shri Lal Krishna Advani will then certainly unfurl the national flag at the next Independence Day.

The three-day meeting also, once again, revived the sentimental attachment of BJP *karyakartas* with Nagpur when practically every leader and *karyakarta* made a beeline to bow his head in reverence before the *samadhis* of *Parampujnya* Dr. Hedgewar and Shri Guruji. In the meeting there, the old memories got refreshed and there was discussion of the present situation and future programmes. The conglomeration of *karyakartas* from Kanyakumari to Kashmir was not just a reflection of the unity and integrity of the country but also of the fact that India will always remain united together and nobody could dare throw an evil eye on it.

As the leaders and the *karyakartas* were deliberating on the issues facing the party and the nation, they also felt the absence of their beloved veteran, Shri Atal Bihariji Vajpayee who could not make it to Nagpur because of his health. The leaders and *karyakartas* joined together in praying for his speedy recovery and long life so that he could continue to guide the destiny of the party as before. ■

Lakhiram Agarwal is no more

Former Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh BJP President Shri Lakhiram Agarwal, 76, passed away at Apollo Hospital in Bilaspur on January 24. He is survived by five sons and one daughter. The veteran leader's last rites were performed at his ancestral village



Kharchia in Raigarh district on January 25. A two-time former Rajya Sabha MP, he was ailing for the past few days. Senior BJP leaders including Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Shri Raman Singh were present at Shri Aggarwal's funeral.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed profound grief over the demise of Shri Agrawal and said in the united Madhya Pradesh and after formation of Chhattisgarh; his outstanding services in social and political fields would always remain memorable. "In his death, we lost an organizer and a devotee of nationalist values," Shri Chouhan said. ■

Jeetegi BJP, Jeetega Bharat

Rajnath's call to people

In his Presidential Address to the two-day meeting of the National Council of the Bharatiya Janata Party on February 7-8, 2009 in late Suryabhanji Patil Parisar Nagpur Shri Rajnath Singh was brimming with hope and confidence as the Party in the wake of magnificent victories in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh assembly elections held recently. He lost no opportunity to highlight the failures of the present Congress-led UPA government at every front. He infused a great sense of achievement and enthusiasm among karyakartas and set the tone for party's common goal of bringing BJP-led NDA government to power in the next Lok Sabha elections and in some State assemblies going to polls along with to make Shri Lal Krishna Advani the next Prime Minister of India. A day earlier, he also addressed the meeting of the National Executive also. Here is the full text of the speech delivered by him:

Friends, we had met in Delhi in January 2008 for the last National Council Meeting.

I can clearly recall when, with your approval on January 20th 2006, I took over responsibility as President. Three years have passed since then. And today's presidential address in Nagpur after three years, bears a special significance for me. The reason is that right from my childhood days as a *bal-swayamsevak* in a small village in Uttar Pradesh, I have in my heart always felt a deep reverence and faith for Nagpur even though I had not even seen the city. In this context I feel highly elated in addressing you today in Nagpur as the Party President.

Geographically, Nagpur is said to be located in the centre of the country. In my opinion, Nagpur is not only a geographical centre but has also been the centre of many social, cultural and other nationalist movements dedicated to the nation. 84 years ago in 1925, a light of nationalism was ignited from here which continues to illumine and influence the entire India till date. The sacred memorial of *Pujya* Dr. Hedgewar and *Pujya* Shri Guruji even today shines like a light house guiding nationalists. The Nagpur region has also been the *karmabhumi* of the immortal forbearer of social harmony and the author of the Indian constitution Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar. Let us begin our meeting with salutations to these tall symbols of India's national and social development.

Not just Nagpur and Vidarbha but for centuries the entire land of Maharashtra has been the flag bearer of

nationalism in India.

Whether it was the establishment of the Hindu *pad-padshahi* by Shivaji Maharaj during the darkest moments in the history of India; or Nana Saheb Peshwa



inspiring the first war of independence; or Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak launching the freedom struggle by declaring *Purna Swaraj*; Swatantrya Veer Sawarkar lighting the lamp of staunch nationalism; the land of Maharashtra has always contributed towards strengthening the struggle of nationalism.

In accordance with their glorious past and the possibility of a golden future, I am confident that the people of Maharashtra will choose development with nationalism and in the forthcoming Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections, will extend full support to the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance. A development oriented and nationalist government will come both in the centre and Maharashtra.

This is our last National Council meeting before

the Lok Sabha elections and neither will a National Executive Meeting be held prior to the polls. This is our last collective meeting before the elections. It is natural that this meeting should also symbolize a pledge for victory for the BJP led NDA alliance in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections. We all should leave this meeting with the resolve and confidence that when we meet again, it will be after establishing a BJP led NDA government.

I would like to remind you that prior to this, our National Council Meeting had taken place in Nagpur on 27th and 28th August 2000. At that point of time, we were in power at the centre and by the time of the next meeting, we will again be in power at the centre under the leadership of respected Shri Lal Krishna Advaniji. Results of the Assembly Elections

In November and December, assembly elections took place in six states - Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Mizoram and Jammu & Kashmir. For us the election results have been a mixed outcome. While we could not return to power by a small margin even after running a good government in Rajasthan, the results in Delhi were surprisingly contrary to our expectations and would have impacted the mood of our *karyakartas* across the country.

In Jammu & Kashmir our performance was magnificent and we increased our strength from one to eleven. The impressive victory of the BJP in Jammu has hoisted the flag of nationalism in this separatism inflicted northern state. This remarkable victory has also proved that even today people can support us on our ideological issues. We will play the role of an effective and strong opposition on all issues of public good including the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus.

These election results have also added some glorious chapters to the BJP's history. I remember that on January 28th 2008, when we had met at the National Council meeting in Delhi, we were filled with excitement after the splendid victories in Gujarat and Himachal. Similarly, the victories in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh enthuse us. The victory in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh has shattered the myth that the BJP does not come back to power. Prior to this, in Gujarat, which has remained our stronghold for the last 15 years, we have repeatedly been returning to power and as an exception, in Jharkhand in 2005 and Rajasthan in 2003 (with a brief interregnum of President rule) we have not returned to power in any other state. From this point of view, our victory in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh symbolizes the entry of the BJP into a new

era. For the first time in the history of the BJP and Jansangh, we have successfully returned to power in two states at the same time. For this, on behalf of the National Council, I congratulate the people, all BJP *karyakartas*, leaders, State Presidents Shri Vishnu Sai and Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, the incharges and election incharges Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Shri Anant Kumar and Shri Venkaiah Naidu. Also especially to the Chief Ministers, Dr. Raman Singh and Shivraj Singh Chauhan.

If we look at the election results of all the states in totality, then we are far ahead of the Congress. We have got more MLAs elected. But we should also learn from this experience that we need to establish stronger bonds with the people. Greater sensitivity and efforts are required to tackle the people's problems.

Today's Situation

Friends, today we cannot remain satisfied by saying that while some countries in the world are moving towards a negative growth rate, if our rate declines by 3-4 percent, it is not a matter of concern for us. I would like to convey to the policy makers of the government of India that given the great size of India and the basic developmental level of our economy, even a 1% decline in the growth rate affects the bread and butter of millions of people. According to an estimate, around one crore people will lose their jobs in the near future. In Tamil Nadu's Tirupur alone, due to the decline in exports, about ten lac workers are now facing problems of livelihood. A similar problem is also being faced by lacs of workers in the diamond cutting industry of Surat.

If such a crisis is visible across the entire world, why has the government not initiated effective and timely steps in India? I would like to repeat that even in 2001-02, a difficult situation had emerged when the NDA government was in power, but we did not allow its effect to be felt on India.

I would like to remind the UPA government, which is using the international economic crisis as a pretext today, that during the NDA rule, the international economic situation for India was far more critical than this. Immediately after forming the government, we faced economic sanctions in the wake of the Pokhran nuclear tests, and thereafter, we had to face the Kargil war under such circumstances. Despite all this, we neither allowed the growth rate to decline nor allowed inflation or the rate of unemployment to increase. During the time of the NDA, interest rates on home loans and agricultural loans were reduced and the share market marched ahead steadily. I would like to ask the government that today the country is neither facing

any sanctions nor any war. Yet the country is facing economic problems. Why unemployment is continuing to increase? The only reason is that this government completely lacks a longterm economic vision.

This government not only lacks a longterm vision for the economy, it is also incapable of keeping an eye over all the scandals that are happening literally under its nose. The nature of the recent financial scam that has been unearthed in Satyam, one of the country's reputed IT companies, proves that the government is also incapable of controlling problems that are arising out of the fast emerging and expanding corporate world.

The tenure of the UPA government, which came to power in the name of the *aam admi*, is now coming to an end. If we take the UN Development Report into account, then even today 80% of India's population earns one US Dollar or less than Rs 50 a day. 25% people have a spending power of less than Rs. 15 per day. About 38% people do not have a source of water close to their homes. Half of the population still lives in mud houses or such inappropriate housing conditions. Around 43% villages are still not connected with proper roads. Is this what we can call economic development?

The common man remained continuously burdened by price rise during the four half years of UPA rule. Today the government claims that prices are coming down. Are prices declining due to the efforts of the government? Prices are coming down due to the global recession and neither is it yielding any relief to the common man as unemployment is also continuously increasing simultaneously. According to a joint survey conducted by the reputed American think tank Heritage Foundation and the Wall Street Journal, in 2008 India ranked 115th in the Economic Freedom Index.

Despite all this, the UPA government, on coming to power, virtually put all the important infrastructure related projects started by the NDA government into cold storage. The National Highway Project launched during the tenure of the NDA government was regarded as a milestone in the development of the country. According to the original plan, this project would have been completed by now, but in reality it actually stands far from completion. The reason behind this is that while during the tenure of the NDA 11 KM of road was being constructed everyday, under the UPA government less than 1 KM of road is being constructed daily.

Not only have the pace of projects slowed down, one can also see a decline in the allocations of funds. According to an estimate, today hundreds of crores of

rupees for infrastructural projects is entangled merely on account of administrative procedures.

At a time of economic recession, can the country bear the burden of slowdown of infrastructural projects and hundreds of crores of rupees being stuck because of red tapism? The country is being compelled to suffer all this. The UPA government feels that since these were the projects of the NDA government, so even if the roads remain in poor condition or are incomplete, the NDA should not get credit for them. Is it not dishonesty with the nation?

I am not saying this merely for politics. Infact this is the opinion being expressed even by foreign economists as well as economic experts from communist China.

A few days ago, a senior Polit Bureau Member of the Communist Party of China who is also the head of the Shanghai unit of the party, met with me. While discussing the economic recession, I said that if India pushes infrastructure projects for which there is immense potential in the country, then many companies looking for new projects will be attracted to come here. India will in the process benefit from standard projects at lesser costs and this will also help the country emerge out of the recession. While agreeing with this, he added that they were also doing the same thing in China.

However, the UPA government wants to keep all these projects in cold storage merely because the NDA's name is associated with them.

Friends, the people of the country have now understood about this dishonest game being played against development. Now the NDA government will again come to power, then all these mega developmental projects will again be speedily implemented to help the country recover from the current recession.

Terrorism

I clearly recall that after the UPA government came to power and when Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh went to Mumbai, then he had said that he would ensure that Mumbai becomes like Shanghai. Friends, the manner in which terrorists created a war like situation between the 26th and 29th November at railway stations, hospitals, hotels, roads and everywhere else, made me wonder whether this was the face of the same Mumbai which the UPA was claiming to make like Shanghai.

Now, finally the government has passed an anti-terror law. It is worth remembering that among the first steps which the UPA government took after coming to power was to repeal POTA. Now in the last phase of its tenure, it had to finally pass an anti-terror law again. This proves that during its entire tenure, the

government, which was blinded by vote bank politics, has now accepted the same point that we have been demanding for the last five years.

However, over the last four and a half years, the country has had to pay a heavy price for this. Over the past four and a half years of UPA rule, more than 40 terrorist attacks have taken place. This means that on an average, not even one and half month could elapse without a terrorist incident taking place. Hundreds of people have been killed in these terrorist attacks and every nook and corner of the country has been affected. I would once again like to remind you that even the US State Department had in its report for the year 2007 ranked India as the most terrorism affected country after Iraq. The manner in which the incidents took place on the streets of Mumbai between 26th and 29th November, it appeared as if they were taking place in Iraq's Baghdad and not in Mumbai.

The government has now also accepted the need for a central investigating agency. The realization for having a new anti-terror law and an agency dawned upon them only after the entire country was literally burning in the flames of terrorism. The government's policy of tackling terrorism reminds me about the famous "*Niti Shatak*" by the great scholar Bharthari who had said – "*Proddipte Bhavane, Cha Kupa Khananam*" – meaning the person whose vision is akin to digging a well only after the building is on fire, leads the entire society towards destruction. The policy of the UPA government is like this.

False Resolve to Fight Terrorism

Over the past few years all the main cities of the country have faced terrorist attacks. In addition to the terrorist attack a few months ago in Mumbai, serial bomb blasts took place in Delhi in September 2008 in which 25 persons were killed and more than 100 were injured. On 19th September the brave inspector Mohan Chandra Sharma was martyred in the Batla House encounter and on 30th October 2008 serial bomb blasts shook four districts of Assam in which 83 persons died and more than 400 were injured. This was the biggest terrorist incident in Assam till date.

Even as all these incidents were taking place across the country, the people need to recall what kind of statements the ministers of the UPA government were making:

- ◆ One central minister was speaking about granting citizenship to Bangladeshi infiltrators.
- ◆ Another central minister was declaring SIMI as a cultural organization.
- ◆ The leaders of the Congress and its allies rushed

to the village of a terrorism accused and made statements about the so called injustice being meted out to him.

- ◆ While one leader of the government's alliance partner was demanding an inquiry into the Batla house encounter, another important Congress leader in Parliament raised a question mark on the martyrdom of the STF officers.
- ◆ A Communist Party Chief Minister used derogatory language for the family of the Major martyred in Mumbai terror attack.
- ◆ And the sleep of the Honourable Prime Minister was disturbed on account of the investigations that were carried out against a terror suspect in Australia.
- ◆ The Prime Minister advocated the first claim of the Muslim community on the country's resources. The first claim should go to the poor irrespective of their religion or caste.
- ◆ The Prime Minister on his tour to Cuba declared Pakistan as a victim of terrorism.
- ◆ And all these activities should be seen in context of how nothing has moved over the past three years in executing the sentence announced by the Supreme Court against the Parliament attack accused. While on the other hand, by creating the hoax of "Hindu Terror" to serve its political interests, the investigation was carried out at such a fast pace that literally every day a new revelation was being made.
- ◆ These two examples of the government's delaying and fast paced tactics expose the two aspects of its approach towards terrorism and also proves its questionable intentions.

When a government having such policies and intentions speaks about dealing with terrorism then it not only comes across as ludicrous but also anguishes one.

Neighbouring Countries

Many important developments are taking place in the countries neighbouring India. Today our internal security and our foreign policy towards our neighbouring countries have become two aspects of the same coin. That is why in the last National Council Meeting, I had demanded that the government should formulate a separate foreign policy for our neighbouring countries. The current situation with Pakistan proves the necessity of this.

The facts which have come to light after the terror attack in Mumbai clearly point towards the active involvement of many organisations in Pakistan and

also some parts of the government machinery in perpetrating the ongoing terror attacks in India. I would like to ask the Government of India as to whether this is the same Pakistan which the Prime Minister said was a victim of terrorism?

After the terror attack in Mumbai, some statement or the other emanates from the government on a daily basis as if war is about to take place. Then the statement is contradicted only for another statement to appear again after two or three days. The government wants to divert the attention of the people by making such statements. We have already said that in this situation Pakistan will have to take some concrete measures and for this the Government of India should take the international community into confidence and create diplomatic pressure on Pakistan and if there is no outcome even after this, then the alternative of direct action should be resorted to.

I want to ask this government another question – it's two and half months since the Mumbai attack and the government is continuously raising questions about the terror-network in Pakistan. However, the UPA government should also inform as to how many terror-modules has the central government destroyed within the country over the past two and half months? The government should update the people of the country about the status of investigation of every terrorist attack that has taken place over the last four and a half years, the situation as of now on each case and the details of the success achieved in punishing the perpetrators of these terror acts.

The Bharatiya Janata Party is completely with the government in its attempt to fight terrorism. The leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and the future Prime Minister of the country, respected Shri Advaniji has clearly said that we are united with the government in its fight against terrorism. I have also publicly declared the BJP's support to the government. But the central government has till date not been able to take a single effective step within the country what to speak about outside. It would not be inappropriate to say that the government's so called fight against terror is like an empty vessel only making noise.

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, the influence of the Taliban is continuously increasing. The activities taking place in the frontier regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan are definitely a matter of concern. The influence of the Taliban is now not only limited to the North West Frontier and FATA Provinces but has expanded deep into other parts of Pakistan. In this manner it is also

coming closer to the Indian border. The Taliban has already made a declaration that in time of war, it will support the Pakistani army against India. The Government of India should take effective measures to deal with this situation.

Sri Lanka

The LTTE in Sri Lanka is on the verge of a decisive defeat. In this changing scenario, the Sri Lankan government, in a sensitive manner and through dialogue, should work out a political solution to the ethnic conflict keeping in mind the problems and sentiments of the Tamil people. The Government of India should extend full cooperation in this effort to ensure that permanent peace is established in Sri Lanka.

We respect the sovereignty and integrity of Sri Lanka. However, permanent peace and stability in Sri Lanka is can be achieved if the Sri Lankan government devolves power to the Tamil areas according to a federal structure as envisaged in the 1987 peace accord. Moreover, according to the 1987 peace accord, the Tamil people should also be provided power according to the 13th Constitutional Amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution.

Bangladesh

The Bharatiya Janata Party welcomes the return of democracy in Bangladesh. After a gap of seven years including two years of military rule, a new Awami League government led by its president and former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajid has come to power in these parliamentary elections. I extend my congratulations to Sheikh Hasina and her new government. We hope that the new government will ensure an end to the terrorist centres operating from Bangladeshi soil against India and pave the way for better bilateral relations. Sheikh Hasina has expressed a commitment for fighting terrorism in South Asia. If Bangladesh honestly and effectively cooperates in this direction, then we can free the entire region from terrorism and herald a new age of peace and prosperity.

Nepal

The Maoist government in Nepal after assuming power through democratic means, in our opinion has tried to harm the country's social and cultural set up in an inappropriate manner. Recently, despite court instructions, the manner in which the centuries old system was attempted to be forcibly changed in the world famous temple of Bhagwan Pashupatinath, a major centre of faith for the Hindus across the world, raises doubts about the commitment of the government towards Nepal's democracy and culture.

The issue is not just about Indian priests but refers

to the common cultural heritage between India and Nepal spanning thousands of years and such attempts can inflict damage to these relations. Understanding the gravity of the issue, I immediately spoke with the Prime Minister of Nepal Shri Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and the President Shri Rambaran Yadav over the phone. Having made them aware of my sentiments, I requested them to intervene and immediately restore the status quo.

India never links cultural and religious issues with politics. If Sister Alphonsa or Mother Teresa are declared as saints by the Vatican, we would never oppose this on the ground that such processes should be undertaken only by Indians. The government of Nepal is seeking to lay down an indigenous Nepali procedure for appointment of priests in Pashupatinath Temple, so that their appointment and the recognition of priests can be decided within Nepal. I would like to ask the Government of Nepal, whether they will oppose the appointment of the Archbishop and Cardinals of Nepal by the Vatican, and will they lay down an indigenous Nepali procedure for appointment and recognition of Archbishops and Cardinals as they are trying to do so in the context of Pashupatinath Temple? China

The manner in which China has been constantly raising the question of Arunachal Pradesh, has now become a matter of concern for us. The central government which claimed good relations with China throughout its tenure, has not even once been able to adequately respond diplomatically everytime China has summarily rejected India's claim.

The NDA government under the leadership of Atal ji:

- ◆ Established India in the league of global superpowers.
- ◆ Resolved the issue of Sikkim.
- ◆ Isolated Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir.
- ◆ Rendered ineffective Pakistan's anti-India propaganda in the western countries.
- ◆ Did not allow a single opportunity to any third country to interfere in our internal affairs be it the Kargil war or the attack on Parliament.

Foreign Policy

Friends, between the last National Council Meeting and this one, the Indo-US Nuclear Deal has been approved. The central government has claimed that India has become a strategic partner of the US. We are in favour of good relations with all countries including the US. I had demanded that if the US is indeed a strategic partner of India, then it should stop all financial

aid to Pakistan until Pakistan effectively acts to control all the terrorist outfits operating from its territory.

The President of the United States Mr Barack Obama immediately after taking his oath, in a foreign policy directive said that it would not be possible for the US to continue providing aid to Pakistan if it failed to stop terror activities from its soil. However, the US has increased non-military aid to Pakistan. In my opinion any kind of aid to Pakistan strengthens the terrorist elements there because the line dividing state and non-state players vis-à-vis terror activities is becoming increasingly unclear.

The Defence Secretary of the United States has also recently said that there is a possibility of a big al Qaeda network in Pakistan and if this is proved to be correct, then the US army can even consider a direct attack on Pakistan. Is this situation appropriate for giving additional aid to Pakistan? In my opinion certainly not. Even though, the US administration has slightly reduced the amount of the additional foreign aid to Pakistan, in my opinion the government of India should persuade America that it should not give any additional financial aid to Pakistan.

The new President of the United States has assumed office. On behalf of the Bharatiya Janata Party, I extend my best wishes to President Barak Obama for his tenure and hope that Indo-US relations will get stronger and play an effective role in establishing peace in the world.

Another incident during the oath ceremony of the US President filled every Indian with a sense of pride. From the time of the first US President George Washington, it has been a convention in the US that various religious leaders pray for the President. This time, a lady priest of Indian origin and a respected doctor in America, Dr. Uma Mysorker officially participated in the prayer ceremony. This is yet another indication of the continuously increasing respect for India's culture in the US and other parts of the world.

The respect and reputation which India enjoyed at the international level during the tenure of the Vajpayee government, has been completely lost under the UPA rule.

The manner in which the Union Home Minister says that he will visit the US to once again show the evidence against Pakistan, illustrates as if India has become helpless under the UPA government.

At the meeting of the Chief Ministers, the Prime Minister said that the government machinery of Pakistan was involved in the Mumbai attack. However, the British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said that Pakistan's government machinery was not involved. He also said

that proceedings against the accused should be undertaken in Pakistan whereas the Indian government wants the action to be undertaken in India. And if this was not enough, the British Foreign Secretary went to the extent of saying that the Kashmir issue was the root cause of the problem and with its resolution, terrorism would get completely controlled.

Despite this statement being fundamentally in contravention to India's foreign policy, even then the Government of India has failed to register any effective protest.

The situation in Jharkhand

Friends, in the Jharkhand elections of 2005, the BJP emerged as the single largest party and other parties could not even win half the number of seats won by us. We formed the government, but the manner in which the central government misused the constitutional machinery and abducted the people's mandate, initiated a tragic political drama that even today has not yet ended. The defeat of Shibu Soren clearly demonstrates the people's anger against the policies of the Congress and its allies in Jharkhand. I am fully confident that the people of the state, fed up with this kind of ugly political drama, will give a thumping majority to the BJP in the forthcoming assembly elections.

Northeastern States

The northeastern region of India is one such area that has not been given due importance by the mainstream political parties. The 26 Lok Sabha seats in the entire region are more than any medium sized state. The area has distinct circumstances and therefore unique problems. The BJP has always been committed towards developing the northeast. Recently, the Asom Gana Parishad, the main opposition party in Assam, the largest state in the region, has declared its alliance with the BJP. I am confident that in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, the BJP-AGP alliance will record an impressive victory. In addition to this, in other states like Arunachal, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Sikkim and Meghalaya, many political parties may come forward to cooperate with us.

Bangladeshi infiltration is a huge problem in the northeast which has led to demographic changes in many districts of the region. The governments in Assam and the centre have completely failed in resolving this problem.

Today the Home Minister is speaking about scrutinizing the visas granted to Bangladeshis and tightening legal measures. For the last five years, infact not just five years but for the last 30 years, ever since this problem started, the approach of the Congress

governments at the centre and in the state has not only been soft but one that actually encouraged infiltration.

The Supreme Court even passed strictures against the government in its decision on the IMDT Act. The Assam Governor's report has described in detail the unhindered infiltration that is taking place from across the border. Yet the government instead of checking infiltration has helped it by adding provisions of the IMDT Act in the Foreigners' Act.

Not only this, a minister in the government has spoken about granting citizenship to Bangladeshi infiltrators.

Given this background, the talk by the Congress about taking strong measures against Bangladeshi infiltration is nothing more than a charade.

Farmers

Friends, today India has emerged as one of the important, largest and fastest growing economies of the world. Yet around 60% of the population is still dependent on agriculture for their livelihood in one way or the other. Therefore, in the absence of proper development of agriculture and the farmers, it would be futile to contemplate about a bright future for India. The land in India is among the most fertile lands of the world and is full of natural resources. In such a situation, any development model that only focuses on the industrial and service sectors while neglecting the agricultural sector, cannot do justice to the real potential of India. That's why I believe that the actual future of India is embodied within the future of the farmers.

Today, when the salary of top officials of multinational companies has touched lacs of rupees, the average income of the farmer in India is Rs. 503 for his monthly expenses, which is close to the poverty line and of which more than half is spent on food.

According to a report of the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, 83.6 crore people in the country are not capable of earning even Rs. 20 a day. According to the official figures in a report of the National Sample Survey, the loan on an average farmer family has doubled in the last few years.

For this very Vidarbha region, the Prime Minister had announced a relief package with lots of hype but according to a report by the Government of India's Comptroller & Auditor General of India (CAG), even after the announcement of the relief package, the suicides by the farmers in the Vidarbha region have increased. It is clear that farmers have not benefitted from this relief package and loan waiver.

As a result of the UPA's policies, a situation has emerged over the last few years whereby undertaking

agricultural activity is increasingly becoming more expensive. For example, in the Telangana region, the farmers having 5-7 acres of land are also living below the poverty line. Even in a prosperous state like Punjab, 60% of the farmers are burdened with loans. In the Vidarbha region, where the per acre cost of cultivating cotton 15 years ago was Rs 2500, today it has become Rs. 13,000. It is as a result of this that farmers are committing suicide in large numbers or are being compelled to abandon agriculture despite the absence of any alternative employment opportunity.

The tenure of the UPA government has come to an end. It saddens me to note that my demand for a special session of Parliament to discuss the condition of the farmers and the entire agriculture sector which is passing through its worst phase in independent India, was finally not accepted by this government.

We should not think that the problems which are emerging in the agriculture sector will remain confined only to the farmers. If these kinds of policies are allowed to continue, then we may have to face a situation of food crisis in the coming days. Last year we had witnessed a glimpse of shortage of food products. The shortsighted policies of the government are endangering our food security.

Youth

Friends, there are three main national parties in India –Congress, Communists and BJP. Among the three, the BJP is the youngest party. The BJP was founded after independence. Our ideology and vision are based on the vision of a new young India which was dreamt by young ascetics like Swami Vivekanand and Sri Aurobindo and for which many youth like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Bagha Jatin and Vasudev Balwant Phadke had laid down their lives.

Today 70% of the country's population is less than 35 years of age. Who will address this section, who will take care of the youth?

During the tenure of the NDA, we created impressive employment opportunities and development. According to many reputed international institutions, during the last phase of the NDA government, in the year 2003-04, the highest amount of employment opportunities got created. This provided the youth an opportunity to display their ability and talent in totality.

When former Prime Minister respected Atal ji envisioned making India a developed country by 2020, it was a resolve for young India. Because the youth of today will become the policy makers of India in 2020 and thereafter.

Be it the issue of using new technology or launching

a website or connecting the entire party through Information Technology, among all political parties, the BJP has always been in the forefront in relating to the technologically savvy youth.

However, even today, 3/4th of the country's youth is either living in the rural areas or in urban slums earning livelihood through petty means. While speaking about the youth, we often tend to forget this huge section of youth. We need to pay more attention to this section of the youth.

Today one can see two conflicting expressions of young energy in the country. While young software engineers and scientists in Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad are earning laurels for India in the international arena, in Jammu and Kashmir and many parts of the country, they are creating problems by indulging in terrorist activities.

The creative energy of the youth helped establish India as an IT superpower at the international level in the closing years of the 1990s and in the early years of 2000. This path was further paved during the tenure of the NDA government.

On the other hand, the seeds of terrorism were sown in the decade of the 1980's when the Congress of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi ruled the country with 2/3rd and 3/4th majority.

This clearly exemplifies that only the BJP has the ability to enlighten the youth of the country in the right direction.

Today's Congress and Gandhi

Yesterday in the National Executive Meeting, I had mentioned that the developmental model for making India's future glorious should be based on that power of the youth which was envisaged by great thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and inclusive of economic, social, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual development of the youth.

I had also yesterday said that 100 years ago in his famous book *Hind Swaraj*, what kind of development model that Mahatma Gandhi had spoken about for the future of India.

Gandhi in his philosophy has categorically said that for the future of India, the principle of "*Karma-vaad*" is of utmost importance. Only this alone can take the youth of the country in the right direction. The Gandhian concept of *karma-vaad* is totally based on the principle of the Gita's *nishkaam karma*. Tilak, who pioneered the entire political journey of India's freedom struggle by giving the call for total independence (*purna swaraj*), has also given the concept of *Karmayog Shastra* in his famous book *Gita Rahasya*. In politics,

Mahatma Gandhi carried forward the legacy of Tilak. For the fear of being called communal, probably the Congress of today will shy away from even taking the name of the Gita what to speak about the *Karmayog Shastra* of Tilak and *karma vaad* of Gandhi.

Today's Congress does not reflect any of Gandhi's values and thoughts. I would like to ask my Congress friends, to what extent they have implemented the Gandhian thoughts in their policies while ruling this country for around 50 years? The policies of Congress reflected more the elements of British Raj while the element of Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* was missing. Is there any Gandhian thought left in the conduct of the today's Congress? In today's Congress' thinking neither is there any *Hind Swaraj* nor *Gram Swaraj*; no place for villages and no respect for the farmers; no *swadeshi* cottage industries; no section living a simple life of sacrifice is connected to them; neither is there a *swadeshi style* nor *swadeshi* language. And if this not enough, then the very symbol of Gandhian *karma vaad*, the *Srimad Bhagwat Gita* is communal and the very basis of Gandhi's vision of *Ram Rajya Bhagwan Ram* is also communal. Gandhi's favourite prayers be it *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram* or *Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye* are totally communal by today's parameters. If one is to seek any of these aspects of Gandhian ethos in India today, then it can only be found in the ideology of the BJP and in the simple and dedicated lifestyle of several organizations of our *parivar*.

I would like to ask what does today's Congress have that was Gandhi's? Today probably no leader even wears the *khadi* of Gandhi. Today's Congress has nothing related to Gandhi except a family name. All the works associated with Gandhian ethos, if at all are visible, will not be found in that *parivar* of the Congress but in our *parivar*. They are only a name while we are the ones who are carrying forward his actual work.

Women

The BJP is serious about providing adequate representation to half of the country's population. Instead of "*Nari-Mukti*" (women's liberation), the party believes in "*Nari Shakti*" (women's empowerment). Even today women have to face numerous problems. Over the last six decades, even though literacy of women has increased, it cannot be considered satisfactory. The participation of women in politics today is not to the extent as it should be. We are committed towards providing 33% reservation for women in the legislature. During the tenure of the NDA, we presented this Bill on two occasions, but due to opposition by some political parties, it could not be passed. The participation of

women in politics is not just an intellectual exercise. We have expressed our commitment by ensuring 33% participation by women within our organizational structure. The BJP has displayed its credibility of having no difference between what it speaks and practices. In BJP ruled states, we have also implemented 50% reservation for women at the panchayat and municipal levels.

Scheduled Castes

The Bharatiya Janata Party and BJP Scheduled Caste Morcha have always made efforts for the development of the scheduled castes. Our governments have implemented many welfare plans for the benefit of the scheduled castes.

In addition to development, self respect is the other feeling that constantly remains in the minds of the people belonging to the scheduled castes. The Bharatiya Janata Party has always accorded top priority to the self respect of the scheduled castes. On every important post, be it ministers, chief ministers, governors or central ministers and even the Lok Sabha Speaker, we have ensured adequate representation to the scheduled castes.

Shri Ram Janambhoomi and Ram Setu

Five years of the UPA government's tenure have elapsed, and I feel pained in saying that during these last five years, the government has failed to spare even five minutes for initiating dialogue to resolve the Shri Ram Janambhoomi dispute. No effort, direct or indirect, has been undertaken by the government. On the contrary, in the affidavit filed by the government on the issue of Sri Ram Setu, the government denied the very existence of Maryada Purushottam Bhagwan Ram, something not even the foreign rulers had dared to do.

During the tenure of this government, the kind of contempt that has been displayed towards our cultural symbols, has perhaps never taken place throughout our history.

If you will recall, on January 20th 2006 in my Presidential Address at the first National Council Meeting in Delhi, I had cited the example of the Wailing Wall in Israel. Today I will cite another example. If you will visit Bangkok, the new airport there is called Swarnabhoomi Airport, and on entering the airport, one can see a beautiful mural depicting the scene of the "*Sagar Manthan*" as enumerated in the Vishnu Purana and Devi Bhagawata. Just imagine if such a proposal comes for any airport in India, then all the so called secularists would see communalism in it. Prior to this, the government of Sri Lanka authenticated places associated with Bhagwan Rama and the Ramayana.

It is painful to note that our cultural symbols are respected outside India but to seek respect for them within our country is considered communal. After 60 years of independence, at least now we should come out of the colonial mindset that sought to instill an inferiority complex within us.

Successful launch of Chandrayaan

Friends, over the last few days, with their expertise and perseverance, our space scientists made history when India successfully launched its first unmanned space craft to the moon. With this, India has become the sixth nation of the world to send its mission to the moon. For this historical achievement, I extend my felicitations and greetings to the Chairman of ISRO, G Madhavan Nair and his entire team of scientists and engineers. For the BJP, it a matter of even more pride since the project was initiated under the leadership of Atalji during the tenure of the NDA.

NDA versus UPA

Friends, today in the country one witnesses a political polarization between two broad alliances. One is the Congress led UPA and the other is the BJP led NDA alliance.

The UPA alliance is an opportunistic, self-centered and full of internal contradictions alliance which has severely harmed the interests of the country during its tenure.

On the other hand, the NDA over the last 10 years has been working as a stable and positive alliance. Our allies have a long history of cooperation with the BJP. Our alliance with the Shiv Sena is more than 20 years old. Our alliance with the JD(U) has been for the last 14 years. The Shiromani Akali Dal has been our ally for twelve years and we have been working with the Biju Janata Dal for the last 10 years. Has the Congress been able to keep its allies together for such a long period of time?

Recently some more allies have joined the BJP. In Haryana, the Indian National Lok Dal led by Shri Om Prakash Chautala has announced their joining the NDA. In Assam, the Asom Gana Parishad has declared that it will be contesting the forthcoming Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections in alliance with the BJP. In the coming days, you will see a further expansion of the NDA.

The examples of the better condition of the country during the tenure of the NDA and the deteriorating condition of the country under the UPA are given below:

ECONOMIC

- ◆ The NDA continuously kept price rise under

check for six years. Price rise continuously increased under the UPA in the last four and half years.

- ◆ The NDA reduced the rates of interest on agriculture and housing loans. The UPA increased it.
- ◆ Under the NDA, food stocks were overflowing. Under the UPA, there has been a problem of foodgrains.
- ◆ Employment increased under the NDA. Unemployment has increased under the UPA.
- ◆ No economic scam took place during the time of the NDA. During the tenure of the UPA, many scandals like the food scam, spectrum scam and Satyam scam have taken place.
- ◆ We provided a development oriented economy of plenty. The UPA has given an economy of recession and deficit.

SECURITY

- ◆ The NDA on forming the government implemented the anti-terror law POTA. The UPA repealed it.
- ◆ The NDA established India as a military power through the Pokhran tests. The UPA surrendered this position by signing the nuclear deal.

POLITICAL

- ◆ The NDA gave justice to all. The UPA has displayed the height of appeasement politics.
- ◆ NDA preserved the dignity of constitutional values. UPA destroyed it (as in the case of Bihar, Jharkhand Goa etc.).
- ◆ The Parliament functioned only for 322 days during the entire tenure of the UPA government. In the history of Indian Parliament, this is a government which throughout its tenure has faced Parliament for the least number of days.
- ◆ NDA enhanced the international status of India. The UPA diluted it.
- ◆ The NDA never gave political support to the corrupt. Under the UPA even Quattrochi was given an opportunity to run away with the country's money.
- ◆ NDA allowed its government to fall by a single vote. The UPA purchased votes by distributing notes to win the trust vote.

DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ NDA started huge infrastructural projects. The UPA either slowed down these projects or dumped them in cold storage.
- ◆ NDA established India as superpower in the field of atomic energy, space science,

communication and information technology. UPA could not initiate any such measure.

CULTURAL

- ♦ NDA deleted the derogatory remarks against great religious personalities from the text books. UPA added such references.
- ♦ NDA respected the cultural values. The UPA has shown disrespect towards the key cultural symbols (for example Vande Mataram, Ramsetu and Amarnath controversies etc.)

If we study the UPA government's entire tenure, one finds that development has fallen, employment opportunities have reduced, international stature has declined, security got destroyed, the entire economy is in shambles, and above all, the government has even denied the existence Lord Ram. In a single sentence it can be said that "*UPA sarkar ne kiya kaam tamam; aam admi ko na maya (economy) mili na Ram*".

After comparing the two, the people of the country can themselves decide as to under which alliance the future of the nation will be secure. I challenge the UPA government to name even a single task undertaken by it which will have a significant positive impact on the future of the country.

The people's anger against the UPA has been witnessed clearly over the last few years. In the last two years, out of the 17 state assembly elections held, UPA lost 11 and Congress on its own managed to win only 4.

The NDA has unanimously declared senior BJP leader respected Lal Krishna Advani as its prime ministerial candidate. Respected Advani is not only one of the most experienced and senior leaders of the country, but the kind of commitment and dedication that he has displayed by retaining a clean image in over 50 years of his political life, is a lesson for us to emulate and follow. Without doubt no other alliance or party has a leader of such maturity and vision as the NDA has in respected Shri Advani.

Karyakarta

Over the last few years, we have jointly steered the BJP through various situations, and marching ahead we have effectively strengthened our position throughout the country.

We have not only geographically and politically expanded but also added a new chapter in terms of organizational expansion. For the first time in history, booth committees have been constituted. Today, throughout the country, we have constituted our units on more than 65% of the booths. In many states like Gujarat and Himachal, more than 90 to 95% booth committees have been formed.

Today the electoral process for the Lok Sabha elections have commenced. In the BJP's history, the forthcoming Lok Sabha will be the most significant and extraordinary. After our formation, we did not have any significant role to play in national politics in the elections that we fought in the decade of the 1980s. Between 1989 and 1999, we contested elections either on ideological issues or on the plea that Vajpayee ji should get a chance to be the Prime Minister of the country. In 2004, we contested the elections on the issue of development. The 2009 elections are important for us from all the three perspectives. This means that we will have to formulate an integrated strategy for the forthcoming elections. By integrating our ideological base, capacity to offer good governance (*sushashan*) and the strength of alliance and organization, we will definitely be able to get the people's mandate.

Today India is facing challenges from within, challenges from across the border, the economy is in difficulty, capital is in shortage, and in addition to all this, there is a crisis of credibility among the political parties. As a result of globalization, there is also a cultural crisis in the country in terms of social and family values. This year, on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on 23rd January, I read in a newspaper that today there is a large section of such children who are not aware about Netaji. One child said he was a cabinet minister while another said that he was a police officer.

I am trying to say that in the post independence era, today we are passing through a really critical phase. At the time of elections, such a situation can be both a challenge as well as opportunity for us. The entire nation is looking at us to find answers to these challenges. If the BJP fails to respond to these challenges, then rest assured, no other political party will have a solution for them.

If by galvanizing our organizational powers we are successful in this election, respond to all these challenges and take the country out of these crises, then we will be considered as architects of history in the years to come.

I am fully confident that all of us as BJP *karyakartas* will eventually do well in our efforts and be successful in this election, and on the coming 15th August, respected Advani will address the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort.

"Senani karo prayan abhay, bhavi itihās tumhara hai. Sab nakhat ama ke bujhte hain, sara akash tumhara hai."

Vande Mataram!

Nation in deep crisis under UPA : Arun Jaitley

BJP National General Secretary Shri Arun Jaitley presented the Political Resolution on February 08, 2009 and Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi, National General Secretary Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot and National Spokesperson Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad seconded it. After deliberations the resolution was adopted unanimously. The following is the text of the resolution:

The Five year term of the UPA Government at the Centre is now coming to a close and shortly general election of Lok Sabha would be held. The only legacy of the UPA Government is that the nation today faces crisis on nearly all the fronts. This is directly attributable to the manner in which the Union Government has handled the affairs of the country. Determined leadership, decisive governance and coherent policy was never demonstrated by Dr. Manmohan Singh Government. India Becomes a Soft State

Thanks to the soft approach of the UPA Government India today has emerged as a very soft State. It has become vulnerable and a strong epicentre of terror in the last more than four and half years. Terrorist strikes at will and with impunity. They have, amongst others, attacked New Delhi, the political capital of India, Mumbai, the commercial capital of India, Bengaluru, the scientific capital of India, and Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India. Be it North, South, East or, West, no part of the country is secure from the killing spree of the terrorist.

The terrorist attack in Mumbai on 26th November was the worst in the series. It was a well planned attack by terrorist from Pakistan, who were given sophisticated training under guidance of important segment of the Pakistani establishment including the ISI and executed with military precision. It was indeed an attack on India itself and exposed our sheer vulnerability. The terrorist took the sea route from Karachi, landed at Mumbai attacked well-known hotels which are the landmarks of the country including the CST Railway Station killing hundreds of people with impunity and yet the entire intelligence apparatus of the country seemed completely paralysed with no credible information or, preventive



action to stop the attack. The country witnessed a virtual civil war and blame game between various intelligence agencies. It is self evident that greater coordination and timely initiative by a decisive political leadership would suddenly have prevented attack and the cruel loss of so many innocent lives.

Ten terrorists from Pakistan demonstrated so shockingly as to how vulnerable and weak India was against a determined group of jihadi terrorist. Pakistan true to its character is in a constant state of denial including even about the Pakistani origin of the terrorists. It is time not only for firm measures but also for a strong action. The BJP would be supportive of the measures, which the Government may be required to take but under no circumstances whatsoever the terrorist, their handlers and their patrons in the Pakistani establishment should be spared at all. The BJP demands that all those responsible for this attack as also those who conspired and abated must be deported to India to face trial and the Government must not spare any strong measure in this regard. If Pakistan is not willing to respond, then what action needs to be taken is still not clear. Senior Ministers frequently keep on repeating that all options are open and at times contradict themselves. Even, the National Security Advisor contradicts many times the comments of Ministers. Diplomatic efforts have been exhausted with no real advantage. Now, what next? The BJP demands that the Government should seriously consider that all trade, transport, tourism and cultural ties with Pakistan be snapped and our High Commissioner in Islamabad be recalled if Pakistan does not take proper action including handing over all the terrorists involved in Mumbai and other terrorists attack including Dawood Ibrahim.

However, the larger question remains that the

policies of the Congress led UPA Government has directly caused the vulnerability of India against repeated terrorist attacks. Repeated signals has been given to the terrorists and their patrons inside the country as also across the border that strong action against them is tradable for vote. The UPA after coming to power allowed a culture to develop wherein every terror threat was sought to be minimised. Their constant refrain was that the NDA magnified terror for partisan agenda. The repeal of POTA, though constitutionally declared valid by the Supreme Court was hailed as a triumph of secularism. Terrorists were described as misguided youth. The security agencies in such atmosphere had no incentive left to continue to fight terror with courage and conviction, lest they be branded as communal. The UPA Government for full four years firmly rejected the need for strong anti-terror law in spite of repeated suggestions from the security agencies. Finally, after Mumbai attack some Amendments were made in The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Though the BJP supported it yet, the hard fact remains that it has still many shortcomings, which shall continue to create problems for the security and investigative agencies in the fight against terror.

The lust for legacy led Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to ignore certain basic and elementary facts in his dealing with Pakistan. Describing Pakistan as a victim of terror and proposing a joint terror mechanism was a case of colossal diplomatic blunder. Pakistan has used terror as a tool as a part of its well-designed policy of causing hundreds cuts to bleed and weaken India. Pakistan hugely benefited from this strategy. If some of it is recoiling on Pakistan today, it cannot be called a victim because the ISI and important segments of the establishment in the Armed Forces; still vigorously pursue this policy. The attack in Mumbai was a part of this conspiracy. Needs of the security of the country has been trivialised under the UPA. The response of the government on serious diplomatic questions concerning the prestige of the country is equally weak. Recently the Foreign Secretary of United Kingdom Mr. David Miliband came to India and aggressively declared that terrorism and resolution of Kashmir issue is interlinked. In spite of BJP protesting, the government could not even lodge a proper protest with Great Britain.

Vote Bank Politics

It is without doubt that the UPA's commitment to vote bank politics is seriously coming in the way of fight against terror. The most glaring instance is the encounter in the Batala House at Jamia Milia in New

Delhi. While the Government awards Ashok Chakra to the Police officer who was killed there, fighting the terrorist; senior Ministers of the Government keep on demanding probe into the incident with alarming regularity. The Government at the highest level is unwilling to offer a categorical denial. Even the reassuring declaration, by some eminent religious leaders of the minority community that terrorism is inhuman, is not able to dissuade the competitive claim for vote bank politics. From Ram Sethu in the South in the course of which Lord Ram was described as a fictional character; to the withdrawal of land for the pilgrims of Shri Amarnath Yatra in Jammu & Kashmir in the North, describing SIMI as a cultural organisation by senior Ministers; to encouraging religion based reservation which is constitutionally impermissible; we notice the worst interplay of vote bank politics at great cost to national integrity. Naturally, this curse of competitive vote bank politics has only emboldened terrorist and their patrons within the country and outside; to continue to bleed India with contempt. The failure of leadership and the dereliction in duty to act in time has left an unfortunate legacy of unsafe India.

North - East today is in turmoil. Extremism and continued illegal infiltration from Bangladesh has created a very dangerous situation. The UPA has failed miserably to control the influx of Pakistan trained militants into Kashmir, ISI backed HUJI operatives from Bangladesh and Maoist Guerrillas from Nepal. Faced with arc of terrorism that encompasses Islamic Jihadis, secessionists of many hues and ultra left desperadoes, the UPA Government appears to have abandoned the people of India to their fate instead of effectively combating the challenge. Naxalism is indeed a serious threat in many States. Chhattisgarh is one of the worst affected by naxal violence. We salute the people of that State who braved open threats of naxalites for poll boycott in the recent Vidhan Sabha election; voted in large numbers and gave unprecedented and overwhelming success to BJP candidates in nearly all the constituencies afflicted by naxal violence. The State Government has set up Salva-Judum camps to give security to innocent tribals who face death at the hands of naxalites in their villages. A vicious and interested campaign has been undertaken against these camps including by the leaders of the Congress Party in the State. The UPA Government never took a clear stand against this campaign. Those who talk of human rights need to be asked one question – whether the victims of terrorist and naxal violence have any human right or

not, or; this is a luxury available only to those who attack and kill with impunity?

The new Home Minister appears now to vaguely recognise the threat of infiltration from Bangladesh. It is now too late. It was his own Government which repeatedly ignored and did every thing to undo the directive of Supreme Court wherein it described large scale illegal migration from Bangladesh in the North-East as amounting to external aggression and internal disturbance and required the Government to take all action as enjoined in the Constitution. No effective action was taken against illegal immigration in spite of repeated information of their involvement in facilitation of terrorist attack; obviously, for vote bank politics. The BJP demands that illegal Bangladeshi immigrants must be identified and deported in a time bound programme. A proper time frame must be fixed for border fencing on the Eastern Sector as has been done in the the Western Sector.

The country today looks up to the BJP to secure it against the repeated and vicious attack from the terrorists, extremist, Islamic Jehadis like SIMI and others, Naxalites and other secessionist elements. The Party under the time tested effective leadership of Shri Lal Krishna Advani is determined to ensure a safe and secure India.

The BJP demands an early resolution of the crisis in Sri Lanka. The government of India must take effective steps on the basis of various bilateral accords to safeguard the security of innocent Tamilians who are suffering in the cross fire. The BJP supports a peaceful and democratic resolution of the crisis.

Incoherent Alliance

India is suffering because it is being ruled by an incoherent alliance where opposition to BJP is the only compulsion, which binds. The Communists left mid-way and the Congress has openly declared that it has no national alliance with any political party. Even otherwise, running a coalition has never been the virtues of the Congress. A coalition of opportunism can never ensure good governance and development. If the leadership is weak then it just gets reduced to clinging to power without good performance. Such a coalition of desperation has got no moral and political right to seek legitimacy because of its track record. Now there is a very fierce competition among leaders of the UPA constituents themselves to become the Prime Minister. The country entitled to know as to who is the future Prime Minister of the UPA. Further, a hostile war is now going on between various constituents and supporters of the UPA themselves. DMK vs PMK, SP vs. Congress,

Laloo Prasad vs. Ram Vilas Paswan (RJD vs. LJP) and the increasing ambition of the NCP to expand and overtake Congress; are glaring symptoms of a coalition which is unstable and unworthy.

The Communist Parties are again entertaining an illusion of third front little realising that its time and relevance is over long ago. Now, we hear reports of SP and RJD again making efforts to bring them closer to Congress. The Country is entitled to know what is their status – official opposition or, unofficial supporter of the Congress. The people of the country are disgusted with these kinds of manipulations and political opportunism.

Decline of Institutions

Institutional credibility has suffered serious erosion by the UPA because of repeated abuse. The cash for vote during the test of majority of the Manmohan Singh Government on the floor of the Lok Sabha represents a new low of political corruption in the democratic history of the country. Every attempt was made to save the main players who sponsored and organised this shocking decline of Parliamentary procedure and institutional integrity. Even the reputation of Parliamentary Panel constituted to investigate this scandal came under cloud. Now, those who exposed this as whistle blower are being prosecuted. C.B.I. has been subjected to the worst abuse by the Government. The C.B.I. vigorously prosecutes the case against a political leader who is opposed to the UPA Government and in the event he becomes supportive of the Government then the C.B.I. takes a complete about turn. This is evident in the twist and turn before the Court in the proceedings relating to the disproportionate assets of Ms. Mayawati and Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav. The C.B.I. was the main prosecutor in the infamous fodder scam in which Railway Minister Shri Laloo Prasad is an accused. When he was acquitted in a questionable judgement relating to his disproportionate assets prosecution, the C.B.I. instead of challenging it, sought to oppose the very filing of the appeal against the said judgement. There are numerous such instances of patent abuse. The response of the Government in the recent issue relating to the biased conduct of an Election Commissioner further reinforces the lack of concern for institutional integrity even in case of as high body as Election Commission so vital for our democracy. All standards of political propriety has been crossed by many Governors under pressure from the UPA government. The rank abuse in Goa & Jharkhand is evident. The State of Jharkhand must have fresh elections as no government presently is possible. The

UPA government openly discriminates against BJP and NDA ruled State Governments in violation of federal principles.

Development almost derailed

When the UPA years in power are coming to a close, increasing evidence is emerging that the pace of development has been nearly derailed. The common man (Aam Adami) has been the worst victim whose interest, the UPA falsely claimed to champion. The Government did not demonstrate any vision or, long term planning to contain prices, which rose to an all time high in the last nearly two years. Now, even when the rate of inflation has declined as claimed, still it is not being reflected on the actual price of commodities on the ground. The very survival of a common man is becoming increasingly difficult. The global recession is now going to hit India very hard. The spectre of massive unemployment is looming large. An indecisive UPA Government, which refused initially to even recognise the existence of the problem, has only worsened the situation. The Indian Industry has recorded a negative growth of 0.4% in October last year due to Indian exports coming down by almost 12%. The manufacturing sector too recorded a negative 1.2% growth in October last year from 13% an year before. The agriculture sector too is not in a happy state. The suicide of farmers continues unabated. As we are assembled in Nagpur, the Vidarbha area continues to register the highest number of farmers' suicide in spite of the package

announced by the Prime Minister.

The biggest area of negative growth is the derailment of the crucial infrastructure sector. The National Highway Development Programme (NHDP) today suffers from chronic delays, ad-hocism, lack of monitoring and also play of extraneous forces in decision making. The ambitious NHDP has failed miserably on all counts presenting a copy book case of non-performance by the UPA in stark contrast to the exceedingly good work done by the earlier NDA Government headed by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee wherein growth in NHDP phase-I was 81%. Now, rank non-performance stares in all the phases. Other sectors of infrastructure also present a very sorry spectacle. The spectrum Scam haunts the communication department while scandalous trade of land in the name of SEZ has become the order of the day in the Ministry of Commerce.

The Country Looks Towards The BJP

A suffering and insecure India is the legacy being left by the Congress led UPA Government. Naturally, the country looks towards the BJP and nostalgically recall the good government of the BJP led NDA, which brought cheers and smile to Indians. The BJP appeals to all Indians to free the country from the misrule of the UPA Government and ensure the return of the BJP led NDA Government under the leadership of Shri Lal Krishna Advani for the security, development and prosperity of India. ■

Lok Sabha Election Incharge

According to a Party Press release, the following will be incharge for the next Lok Sabha elections:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▶ Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu
Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands & Lakshdweep | Uttarakhand & Haryana |
| ▶ Smt. Sushma Swaraj
Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh & Jharkhand | ▶ Shri Narendra Modi
Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Daman Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli |
| ▶ Shri Arun Jaitley
Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Punjab & Chandigarh | ▶ Shri V. Satish
Orissa |
| ▶ Shri Ananth Kumar
Madhya Pradesh & Karnataka | ▶ Shri Soudan Singh
Rajasthan |
| ▶ Shri Shanta Kumar and Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Jammu Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, | ▶ Shri S.S. Ahluwalia, Shri Harendra Pratap and Shri Chandrasekhar
Assam, North East & Sikkim |
| | In addition to above Shri S.S. Ahluwalia will be incharge of West Bengal. |

■ (FOC)

Congress ruined a perfectly healthy economy : Yashwant Sinha

Former Union Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha moved the Economic Resolution on February 07, 2009. It was seconded by former Union Minister Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Shri BC Khanduri, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Shri Sushil Modi and Shri Kirit Somaiya Ex-MP. A number of members took part in the discussion after which it was adopted unanimously. Text of the Economic Resolution is as following:

Once every few generations is born a wayward son, who through his irresponsible and profligate ways, dissipates the hard earned assets of the family and ruins its future. The National Council of the BJP strongly feels that the UPA government has behaved exactly like that wayward son during the last five years and nearly ruined a perfectly healthy economy. When the UPA government headed by Dr Manmohan Singh assumed office in May 2004, many people in the country thought that the golden age was about to dawn on India under his intelligent leadership. Five years later that dream lies shattered.

The UPA government inherited a robust economy when it assumed office in May, 2004. According to its own Economic Survey presented to Parliament before the first budget of this government in July, 2004 it said "The economy appears to be in a resilient mode in terms of growth, inflation, and balance of payments, a combination that offers large scope of consolidation of the growth momentum with continued macroeconomic stability". It went on to add "Apart from agriculture, the industry and services sectors also maintained the momentum, with GDP growth from these two sectors accelerating from 6.4 percent and 7.1 percent respectively, in 2002-03, to 6.5 percent and 8.4 percent respectively in 2003-04. A broad-based acceleration in growth from the second to the third quarter of 2003-04 was also observed in mining and quarrying; electricity, gas and water supply; trade, hotels, transportation and communication, and financing, insurance, real estate and business services". In his budget speech which followed the Economic Survey, the Finance Minister said, "The economic fundamentals appear strong and the balance of payments is robust". For over four years, the UPA government has coasted along on the strength



of the legacy left behind by the NDA government without making any efforts of its own. It did nothing to build upon and consolidate this legacy as the Economic Survey had suggested. The elixir of an 8 percent plus growth since 2003-04, the last year of the NDA rule, intoxicated this government with a false sense of complacency and success to which its own contribution was zero. Far from making efforts to further propel this growth and take India to double digit growth, the UPA government not only stopped economic reforms, it went into the reverse gear and abandoned many of the useful initiatives of the NDA government like highways development, inter-linking of rivers and pension reforms. The mismanagement of the economy has led to several major imbalances such as high fiscal deficit, high current account deficit, elevated inflation levels and a collapsing economy. None of these is the creation of the recent global financial crisis. All of them are directly the result of the complacency and the cavalier attitude of the UPA government while the crisis was brewing. It did not build the needed hurricane shelters when the sun was shining. Even the Reserve Bank of India in its latest monetary policy statement for the third quarter of the current financial year has observed "The Indian economy experienced a cyclical moderation in growth accompanied by high inflation in the first half of 2008-09". With due respect to the judgment of the RBI, the National Council of the Bharatiya Janata Party would like to assert that the so-called moderation is actually a recession and it is not cyclical, it is the direct result of the mismanagement of the economy by the UPA government.

In fact, the NDA left the economy with sufficient growth momentum and efficiency gains so that the economy could grow at a sustainable 8-9% level for the

next many years. The global credit bubble and the irresponsible fiscal spending by the UPA government predictably led to high inflation in 2008, which led the RBI to slam the monetary brakes. Industrial production, credit expansion, and infrastructure spending then immediately started to decline as interest rates spiked. Thus, when the global economy began to collapse in late 2008, the Indian economy was already slowing down dramatically. Returning the Indian economy to its sustainable growth rate of 8-9% will now be doubly hard because it will require reversing and remedying the UPA's failed policies while simultaneously dealing with the global economic meltdown.

Why did the UPA's so called economic dream team pursue such misguided policies? The National Council of the BJP believes that the UPA government's economic policies have been solely guided by political and often unethical considerations rather than economic principles. The first of these is the principle to stick to power at any cost. The great reformers of this government had no hesitation in jettisoning economic reforms in order to placate the Left parties and continue in office. Pension reforms, which would have ensured higher returns for the organised sector and brought the benefit of pension to the door step of the unorganised sector, are a case in point. After coming to power, the UPA government was so concerned about these reforms that it actually brought an ordinance to give effect to them. Then under the pressure of the Left parties, it sat over the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Parliament for the next four years. It is now trying to do stealthily what it could not do through legislation.

Similarly, despite the gross mismanagement of the National Highway Development Programme by the concerned Minister, the Prime Minister has failed to discipline him and put a stop to his unprincipled and corrupt ways. On the other hand, he has become a willing party to the shenanigans of the Minister in order to continue to get the support of his party. For the same reason, the Prime Minister has remained a silent spectator to the assaults made on the autonomy and excellence of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi by the Health Minister. The setting up of six new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences announced by the NDA Government have failed to make any progress during the last five years, yet the Government does not hesitate to announce the setting up of new Institutes for political reasons.

The second principle which the UPA government has followed during the last five years is of vote bank politics even in the economic field. Nowhere is it more

evident than in its approach to the farmers of the country and their problems. The National Council of the BJP is of the view that the seeds of the present agrarian distress were sown by the present Prime Minister when he was Finance Minister in the government of the late Shri P V Narasimha Rao. Capital investment in agriculture declined sharply during this period. Rural infrastructure was completely neglected. The public distribution system received the short shrift. Agricultural extension services came to a halt. The farmers of India were left to their own devices and to their own fate.

During the NDA regime we tried to reverse that trend through schemes like the Kisan Credit Card, the Watershed Development Programme, the Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojana, construction of cold storages and godowns, the Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana, the improved Form income insurance scheme ultimately leading to the income insurance scheme for the farmers and the reduction in the rate of interest on farm loans.

The UPA government has merely changed the names of many of these schemes and claimed them as their own. Bharat Nirman is nothing more than the bunching together of already existing schemes. The UPA government tried to add a new dimension to it by making it 'a four year business plan' ending in 2008-09 but its targets are far from being met. The famous National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme is another name for our Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojna. These examples can be multiplied.

Farmer suicides have been rampant during this regime. Yet, the UPA government's heart did not bleed for the farmers until elections approached. Then, without giving proper thought to it, it hurriedly came out with a loan waiver scheme. Quite naturally, the loan waiver scheme, despite its size, has failed to meet the challenge of agrarian distress and farmers continue to commit suicides. It has done nothing to follow up on the excellent initiative of the NDA government to provide income insurance to the farmers. The Kisan Credit Card scheme has not yet covered the entire farming community, irrigation for every field still remains a far away dream, agricultural inputs, specially fertilisers, kerosene oil for field pumps and pesticides remain expensive and outside the reach of the small and marginal farmers. Nowhere is the UPA government's failure more glaring than on the farmers' front.

Communalisation of the budget of the Government of India is another misdeed of this government guided solely by vote bank politics. Instead of backwardness, poverty and deprivation being the sole considerations

for allocation of resources, this government has made religion as the sole consideration. The Prime Minister's assertion that Muslims had the first right over the resources of this country is a direct assault on secularism.

Its third principle is to make money wherever possible. Economic policies and large projects have been sold to the highest bidder under the UPA government. This is the most troubling ethical breach. The NDA put in place the SEZ policy to encourage a few, world class SEZs that could match China's SEZs. Instead, the UPA converted the SEZ policy into a naked land grab for real estate firms and corrupt politicians. Coal mines for ultra-mega power plants were diverted to other power plants. Telecom licenses were procured through a rigged bidding process. And, finally, the Satyam fiasco has shown the world the unholy nexus between corrupt Congress politicians and sleazy business families. The National Council of the BJP promises the people of India to put in place an empowered regulatory framework for Banks, Auditors, FIIs and other players in the capital markets to prevent scams like Satyam. It also promises to reopen the entire gamut of telecom spectrum allotments.

The fourth unethical principle that the UPA government has followed is the principle of "After me the deluge". Both the RBI and the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister in their latest reports have clearly indicated that the fiscal deficit of the government this year will be in excess of 8 percent of the GDP. Our own estimate is that the Government of India's deficit will cross 10 percent of the GDP this year. What is more shocking, however, is the fact that the then Finance Minister was less than honest about this issue while presenting his budget last year. Today, the budget presented on February 28, 2008 is in tatters like the account books of SATYAM. Huge liabilities by way of bonds have been passed on to future years by this government. Even the liabilities on account of arrears of the Sixth Pay Commission and the farmers' loan waiver scheme have been spread over the next two to three years. This sleight of hand in budget making is unprecedented in modern Indian economic history. It will take many years for a future government to set things right on the fiscal front.

The fifth principle that this government has followed is either to ignore the challenges on the economic front or to mess around with them, be it rural distress, price rise or the global financial meltdown. The fact of the matter is that the present recession is directly the result of the misguided policies of this government, specially the manner in which it sought to tackle the

problem of inflation. Along with the Reserve Bank of India it took a number of steps to tighten liquidity, force financial institutions to raise interest rates and not only make credit unavailable but also unaffordable. In view of the fact that the Government of India was already running a huge fiscal deficit and liquidity was already under pressure, these further steps made the situation even worse. This naturally had an impact on demand, both consumer and investment. The slowing down of the economy was the natural consequence of these policies. If inflation has moderated now, it is not because of the policies of the government but because of the global recession and the crash in commodity prices. But prices of essential items continue to remain in double digit. Even the Reserve Bank of India in its third quarter review of monetary policy 2008-09, has admitted that though headline inflation, as measured by the wholesale price index, has fallen by more than half from its intra-year peak of 12.91 percent on August 2, 2008, the prices of primary articles have actually increased. In December 2008 consumer price index for all types of workers remained in double digit due to the firm trend in prices of food articles. Critical products, like fertilisers, LPG cylinders and kerosene are also in short supply causing undue hardship to the people both in the urban as well as in the rural areas.

The UPA government has done great injustice to the working class by reducing the rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund deposits to 8.5% as against 9.5% during the NDA regime, despite high inflation.

Similarly, the UPA government has failed completely to meet the challenge posed by the global financial crisis. Firstly, it failed to anticipate the crisis. Secondly, it went on chanting the lullaby "our fundamentals are strong". Thirdly, it failed to adjust its policies in a fast changing situation. Fourthly, it always acted in a too little too late fashion, doing a bit today and a bit tomorrow. The result has been a crisis of confidence, resulting in the collapse of the stock markets. The small investor has once again been the worst sufferer. The National Council notes with satisfaction the fact that the Party came out with its assessment of the situation and its suggestions on tackling the crisis as early as October 14, 2008. This was followed up by another document issued on October 30, 2008 in which the Party suggested various steps to tackle the crisis in the different sectors of the economy. The Leader of Opposition Shri L K Advani met with some of India's top business leaders on November 20, 2008 to discuss with them the steps needed to tackle the crisis. The Council notes with regret the fact that the valuable

suggestions made by the Party have not been followed by the government causing avoidable hardship to the people. The National Council of the BJP promises the fight the rigours of this crisis by laying the greatest emphasis on the proper implementation of the important schemes of the Vajpayee Government like the National Highway Development programme, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the Interlinking of rivers and creation of a proper safety net for those who are losing their livelihood as a result of this crisis.

The sixth principle of this government has been a “could not care less” attitude. As a result of the downturn in the economy, compounded further by the global recession, lakhs of people have lost their livelihood. Large lay-offs have taken place both in the organised and the unorganised sectors. And there is no safety net for these hapless workers. Textiles, handicrafts including carpets, gems and jewellery, real estate, automobiles and light engineering goods, the entire sector of small and medium industries, mining, steel, cement, travel and tourism, information technology have all suffered crippling blows already. Industrial growth is less than half of last year. Government revenues are well below target. Services sector growth has declined to single digit. Agricultural growth continues to remain weather bound and stagnant. The Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council has described 2008 as a year of crisis. It is a matter of shame that when the country is faced with a crisis of these unprecedented dimensions the UPA government cannot find a finance minister to look after this important ministry. First the Prime Minister took charge of the ministry and now after his heart surgery it has been passed on to the External Affairs Minister, already loaded with multifarious responsibilities. The UPA government had to sack its former External Affairs Minister for unethical conduct, it had to sack its Home Minister for non-performance and now it cannot find a finance minister. Should such a government be voted back to power? The National Council of the BJP regrets to note that 2009 will be a year of bigger crisis if the UPA is voted back to power and many lakh more workers will lose their livelihood if the UPA continues in power.

In March 1998 we had inherited an economy which was going down hill. During the six years of Vajpayee rule, despite challenges, we brought inflation under complete control, took balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves to a safe zone, rid the country of perpetual food shortages and made dramatic improvements in infrastructure. An economy of shortages was converted during this period into an

economy of surpluses. The greatest contribution of the Vajpayee government, however, was that it made India economically secure. That security is once again in jeopardy. The UPA government has once again made India weak and vulnerable on the economic front.

The National Council of the BJP resolves to frame its economic agenda for governance, inter-alia, around the following priorities:

1. Establishing an equitable growth model for all Indian citizens that will guarantee economic security employment and the provision of basic needs. Every Indian should have adequate nutrition, health care, sanitation, the fundamental right to water, access to education and credit. Furthermore, we will utilise modern technology and innovative implementation approaches to ensure efficient delivery of all development and welfare schemes to the beneficiaries with minimal leakages.
2. Rapid employment generation has to be the overriding performance metric for the economy given that we have over 150 million young people joining the workforce in the next five years. To that end, we will focus on large-scale employment generation by promoting labour-intensive industries such as construction, textiles, manufacturing and infrastructure. The National Council of BJP takes note the fact that when the NDA was in power it created sixty million employment opportunities during five years.
3. Strengthening agriculture across India and improving farmers’ economic livelihoods through remunerative prices, right decisions on crop management, the best agricultural technology, adequate water supplies, clear property rights, the necessary rural infrastructure that will allow them to operate as efficiently as possible and a comprehensive income insurance scheme.
4. Strengthening rural infrastructure by providing electricity to each village and connecting it with all weather road.
5. Ensuring quality education and health care for all Indians. Both these sectors can benefit from public-private partnerships which can help in improving quality, providing specialised services, and developing new technologies. Moreover, access to higher education needs to be vastly expanded for all students. Expanded access is crucial for training more teachers, professors, and health care professionals. With the right policies, India can create a highly educated workforce at

- home and be an educator to the world.
6. Developing infrastructure on a war footing. Highways, power plants, transportation systems, irrigation projects (including medium and small projects), railway tracks, ports, all these are absolutely essential for rapid growth. The right regulatory frameworks, fair and honest bidding, single window clearance, and adequate investment returns in each of these sectors are necessary to accelerate infrastructure development.
 7. Securing India's energy independence by taking full advantage of our hydrocarbon and renewable resources. India's energy requirements will also require accelerated development of our gas and electricity grids. Green technologies are likely to be a major growth area, and India has the technological resources to be a global leader in this industry.
 8. Revitalizing cities and putting them on a sustainable economic footing. Within the next 20 years, 45% of India will live in urban areas, which will require major new urban infrastructure. Local accountability needs to be strengthened and sensible public-private partnerships have to be developed to deliver urban services. Along with fixing our existing cities, many new cities will have to be developed, as is being done in Chattisgarh and Gujarat.
 9. Further reforming the financial sector but in a manner which will not expose it to undue domestic or global risks. There is a need to dramatically improve financial inclusion, meet the targets of priority sector lending (particularly infrastructure), mobilise private capital and to have world-class regulation. Additionally, the entire financial system might need to be recapitalized aggressively to support growth.
 10. Ensuring access to the best private sector R&D and skills is critical for defense production. Therefore, government requirements and plans need to be as transparent as possible. Contracts should then be awarded with long-term orientation so that the private sector can make the necessary investments.
 11. Reform the taxation system, abolish completely the central sales tax and provide easy loans to the small traders so that they can earn their livelihood
- The Bharatiya Janata Party remains committed to its idea of making India strong, secure and prosperous. It remains committed to improving the quality of life of our people both in the urban as well as in the rural areas. It is committed to rid the country of the evils of poverty, deprivation and denigration. We are committed to making India a developed country by 2020. ■

NDA Rally at Faridabad (Haryana)

UPA to blame for farmers' plight : Rajnath

BJP National President Shri Rajnath Singh addressing a huge NDA rally in Faridabad (Haryana) on February 01 said that the Congress led government at the Centre is responsible for the pitiable plight of the farmers in the country and said if the NDA came to power at the Centre, it would usher in policies for their welfare. He asserted it would reduce the interest rate on loans for farmers to 4 per cent. Shri Singh said that the Atal Bihari Vajpayee led NDA government had for the first time reduced the interest rates on loans to farmers from about 18 per cent to 8 per cent and the NDA government had also decided to provide electricity to all villages in the country by 2012. However, this mission could not be completed as the UPA assumed office in 2004.

Speaking on the occasion BJP National General Secretary, Smt Sushma Swaraj said that the coming parliamentary elections in the country were an opportunity to unseat the Congress-led UPA government. She said the Congress was only trying to perpetuate "dynasty rule". Only sons and daughters of established leaders of the Congress were being promoted in politics, she added. She further said that middlemen and other vested interests pocketed the subsidies meant for the farmers during the rule of UPA and the Congress led government has been encouraging this act. INLD Chief and former Chief Minister Shri Om Prakash Chautala said farmers were reeling under hardships during the present Congress rule in the state. He alleged that land of farmers in Haryana was being acquired and given away to business houses. He said that the Congress government had failed on all fronts. He was critical of the way the below poverty line (BPL) lists were prepared in Haryana. Shri Chautala further said while names of deserving persons had not been included in the lists, those who were well off had been included. This was done with an ulterior motive with the collusion of Congress leaders and officers. Apart from them senior leaders of Haryana State Unit of BJP and INLD were present on that occasion. ■ (FOC)

His call : Onward to victory now

BJP-led NDA's Prime Ministerial candidate and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Shri L. K. Advani in his margdarshan on February 08,2009 at the conclusion of the National Executive and National Council meeting at Nagpur, Maharashtra infused a great sense of purpose and dedication among the workers and the leaders calling them to gear up for the coming electoral battle. He emphasised once again that BJP was a party with a difference and we have to prove ourselves so by our words and deeds. Text of his margdarshan:

Shri Rajnath Singhji, President of the BJP, and my esteemed colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to be with you at this crucial meeting of the National Council of the Party.

At the outset, I join all of you in paying homage to two of the great sons of Bharat Mata - Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. Nagpur

Development? The BJP is firmly committed to these three ideals, which also find an echo in Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism.

Nagpur is Dr. Ambedkar's Deeksha Bhoomi, the place where he embraced Buddhism. Mumbai is his Chaitya Bhoomi, where he ended his worldly life. Both places have fairly impressive memorials. However, his



Janma Bhoomi, Mhow in Madhya Pradesh, had remained without a suitable memorial during the decades-long rule of the Congress in the state. I was, therefore, happy and privileged when Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, our young and dynamic Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, invited me last year to unveil a magnificent memorial for

was the Karma Bhoomi for both of them.

Dr. Ambedkar was a scholar of the highest order. A proud patriot in whom the spirit of nationalism always burnt with incandescent brightness, his advocacy of equality, human dignity and social justice serves as a beacon even today. The best example of this is his address to the Constituent Assembly on 25 November 1949, a day before the Assembly formally adopted the Constitution. On that day he had warned:

"On the 26th of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril."

What can be a better enunciation of an Inclusive Society, Inclusive Democracy and Inclusive

Dr. Ambedkar at his place of birth.

Dr. Hedgewar is the founder of our ideological movement. The BJP was founded in 1980. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh was founded in 1951. However, the ideological movement of which the BJP is an integral part started its journey in 1925, when Dr. Hedgewar founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. In the nearly 80 years of its existence, the RSS and all the entities inspired by it have grown into what can be called, without the slightest fear of contradiction, the largest family of mass organizations dedicated to the service of the nation. This ideology can be summed up in just two words: *Rashtra Sarvopari* or Nation First.

It is precisely because of the massive, and steadily growing, collective strength of our ideological family that our adversaries have mounted the most vicious attack on us. To those who oppose us out of malice, we say, "Your motivated attacks will not deter us." However, to those who are aloof from us out of ignorance or due to the propaganda of our adversaries, we extend a hand of mutual understanding and say, "Come, let us work together despite our differences for the greater good of

the nation.” This is how the BJP has grown, remaining true to its core beliefs and winning allies in the democratic space.

Why Congress must be voted out

Friends, the circumstance that invests this meeting of the National Council with crucial importance is well known to you. In less than ten weeks, India will go to the polls to elect the 15th Lok Sabha. In slightly over 15 or 16 weeks, the election process will have been over and a new government installed in New Delhi.

It is our resolve to make that new government, a BJP-led government of the National Democratic Alliance. We shall make it happen by seeking, and securing, a decisive mandate from the people of India.

Hence, the Call of Nagpur is: Onward to Victory.

In democracy, victory comes to those who can win the trust and confidence of the people. It comes to those who can convince the people that they are best suited to govern the nation at a time when it is facing multiple and mammoth challenges.

I have the good fortune of having participated in all the 14 general elections held so far, from 1952 to 2004. There is a simple and self-evident formula that determines the outcome of an election. If the people are happy with an incumbent government, they give it a renewed mandate. But change is not guaranteed if they are unhappy. For the desired change to come about, the people must see a clear and credible alternative.

What can be said about the national situation as we prepare ourselves for the electoral battle? Do the people want change? Most certainly, Yes. The UPA Government’s performance is so full of failures and betrayals that its continuation in office would constitute a vastly increased threat to the vital interests of the country and its people.

The Government’s soft and compromising approach to cross-border terrorism, further weakened by the virus of votebank considerations, has endangered India’s internal security like never before. Secure in the knowledge that the Government in New Delhi has neither the political will nor the clarity of policy to fight terrorism, the enemies of India have felt so emboldened that they mounted one barbaric attack after another, making the last five years witness the highest number of terrorist incidents and casualties since the onset of terrorism in India in the early 1980s.

On 26 November, they staged the most audacious assault till date in Mumbai. The revelations about how this attack took place can only lead to one conclusion: the Congress-led governments at the Centre and in Maharashtra were sleeping in spite of having full

information that the terrorists could use the sea route. This was not so much a case of intelligence failure as of governance failure.

Six questions for Dr. Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi

I have six questions for the Prime Minister and the Congress president on internal security. The people of India deserve answers to these questions because accountability is the cornerstone of democratic governance.

- ◆ Although the Union Home Minister and Maharashtra’s Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister were sacrificed after 26/11, why has no commission of inquiry been set up to probe all aspects of the Mumbai terror attacks? The BJP demands a high-level judicial inquiry that will not only unearth what went wrong but also recommend ways of preventing recurrence of such attacks.
- ◆ If the Union Home Minister was removed for incompetence, at whose behest was he retained in that crucial post for four and a half years?
- ◆ In the aftermath of 26/11, senior members of the UPA Governments made statements to the effect that “all options are open” in dealing with Pakistan. Why has the Government not used even the mildest of diplomatic options in the past two months to make Islamabad feel the heat for sponsoring terrorism? And why are senior representatives of the Government speaking in multiple voices on Pakistan?
- ◆ The UPA Government enacted two anti-terror laws in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks. The BJP readily supported their passage in Parliament, even though the Congress had stoutly opposed the enactment of POTA in 2002. Will the Prime Minister show the honesty to admit to the nation that it was wrong on the part of his Government to have doggedly maintained for the first four and a half years that no special anti-terror laws were needed and that existing laws were adequate to deal with the menace? And will the Congress president have the honesty to accept that opposition to POTA in 2002 was wrong?
- ◆ Now that the term of the UPA Government is coming to an end, will the Prime Minister tell the nation why his Government chose not to implement the Supreme Court’s decision upholding the death sentence on Afzal Guru, the mastermind of the terrorist attack on Parliament? In this context, let me assure the people that a future NDA Government, if elected to power, will recommend

Afzal Guru's execution to the President within the first 100 days. Here is our warning to the merchants of death and their sponsors: "We shall follow a zero-tolerance and zero-compromise approach to dealing with terrorism."

- ◆ Why did the UPA Government deliberately and contemptuously disregard the Supreme Court's directive with regard to enacting an effective law to curb the influx of Bangladeshis into Assam and other states, which the apex court described as "external aggression"? A future NDA Government will lose no time to implement the apex court's directive and thereby safeguard the unity and security of India on the eastern front.

Aam aadmi's livelihood security endangered

Endangering India's internal security and the citizen's physical security is not the only reason why the UPA Government qualifies to be voted out. The Government has compounded its failure by also endangering the people's livelihood security. Unprecedented rise in prices of all the essential commodities and services during the past five years has been a source of daily torment for the *aam aadmi*. Now all sections of society are reeling under the effect of a graver economic crisis. Lakhs of people have lost jobs – in construction, textiles, manufacturing, automobiles, tourism and hospitality, IT and IT-enabled services, etc – and the sword of job-loss is hanging over the heads of many more.

The Federation of Indian Export Organizations has forecast that there would be one crore job losses by March. This comes on top of an already unacceptable level of unemployment. No government in the past has been as unfriendly to the youth, for whom opportunities in education have stagnated, openings in employment are shrinking, and the future is looking bleak.

The five years of the UPA Government have been the worse for the Indian kisan. During no comparable period in the past have so many farmers committed suicide, unable to bear the burden of debt and distress – and their number runs into tens of thousands. The corruption-ridden implementation of the SEZ policy has resulted in farmers getting dispossessed of huge tracts of land. Migration of the rural poor to urban centres has accelerated.

The plight of the urban middle class has worsened. They have been badly hit not only by the price rise, economic recession and growing job losses, but also by the other manifestations of the mismanagement of the economy under the UPA rule. Housing loans, for

example, have become costlier to service due to sharply risen interest rates.

Development programmes derailed

How the UPA Government has betrayed the nation can be seen from the following startling facts:

- ◆ The Planning Commission itself has given very poor marks to implementation of the National Highway Development Project, the dream project launched by the Vajpayee Government. Targets have been missed by a wide margin on all phases of the project, and on some stretches the implementation is as low as 5%.
- ◆ Similar is the fate of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. The Vajpayee Government, which launched it, had pledged to complete it by 2007. Under the UPA rule, it is nowhere near completion.
- ◆ When the Indo-US nuclear deal was signed last year, it was tom-tommed as the UPA Government's greatest achievement. Its proponents promised 'nuclear *bijlee* for all'. While that promise remains a chimera, unlikely to be fulfilled for several decades, it is useful to know that last year India added only 7,000 MW to the generating capacity. China added 100,000 MW in 2007.
- ◆ The UPA Government seems more interested in advertising 'Bharat Nirman' than in implementing it. As against modest targets set for rural electrification, achievement is only 34%. For officially determined BPL families, the achievement is an abysmal 6%.
- ◆ Universal provision of safe drinking water and clean sanitation is one of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. A quarter of India's population lacks access to safe drinking water and 70% of it has no access to proper sanitation. About 21% of communicable diseases in India are related to unsafe water. Diarrhea alone accounts for more than 1,600 deaths daily — it is equivalent to eight 200-person jumbo-jets crashing to the ground each day!

How can we accept this reality? The BJP will not. What we accept is the challenge to change this sordid reality. I recently said – and I would like to repeat it here so that it becomes the commitment of the Party as a whole – that, whereas India today is ranked at 128 in the United Nations Human Development Index, it should be our goal and resolve to elevate it to the Top Ten nations in the world in the next two decades. Congress proves again it's the fountainhead of corruption

If the UPA Government has any "achievement" to

its credit, it is in scaling new heights in corruption. The stench of corruption can be felt in almost single ministry. The highway project has stalled because of corruption. The ministry of communications is mired in a scandal over credible allegations that the exchequer has lost nearly Rs. 50,000 crore in the fraudulent manner in which new telecom licenses have been given. The entire government machinery was misused for letting Ottavio Quattrocchi, the principal accused in the Bofors scam, off the hook. The Government has suppressed the truth about the Food for Oil scandal in Iraq and the Scorpion submarine scandal.

The year 2008 saw two more unprecedented scandals. In a desperate attempt to save itself in office, the UPA Government enacted the "Cash for Votes" scandal, a hideous case of political corruption in the history of Indian Parliament. More recently, the Rs. 7,000-crore scam in Satyam/Maytas has come to light. Revelations about this have exposed a massive fraud not only in corporate governance but also in Congress governance in Hyderabad and New Delhi. The BJP demands a judicial inquiry to unearth, among other things, the political dimensions of the Satyam/Maytas scandal.

The five years of the UPA misrule will be remembered for the devaluation of the institutions of democracy on a scale never seen before, except during the Emergency. Even the Election Commission has been sought to be brought under the control of the Congress party by appointing a pliable and undeserving officer as an Election Commissioner.

I sometimes hear people say that corruption is no longer an election issue. The very fact that such comments are being made shows how rampant corruption has become. But we must not deduce from this that the people are no longer concerned about corruption. Experience has amply shown that the culture of corruption has stunted India's development, disfigured our democracy and infected the moral life of our society. The BJP cannot and will not abandon the ideal of *bharashtachar-mukt shaasan* (corruption-free governance) because probity in public life is the very cornerstone of *sushaasan* (Good Governance), to which we are firmly committed.

I have always believed that the fight against corruption must start from the top. The Ganga will certainly get polluted if Gangotri itself is polluted. Last week, the Prime Minister's Office announced, in response to an RTI application, that the Prime Minister, his ministerial colleagues and their relatives are exempt from disclosing their assets. This decision is retrograde

and goes against the grain of transparency in governance. A future NDA Government, if elected to office, will reverse this decision. The Prime Minister, his ministerial colleagues and their relatives will voluntarily declare their assets on an annual basis.

Further, I wish to assure that we shall put in place an effective mechanism for fast-track disposal of cases involving major economic offences and major corruption cases against politicians and civil servants. This is necessary to strengthen people's faith in the political and judicial system.

Why BJP is the only alternative

Friends, I said earlier that people's displeasure with the incumbent government alone cannot guarantee the desired change. What is required is the emergence of a clear alternative that can win the trust and confidence of the people. In today's situation, who can that alternative be? The answer is one, and only one: a BJP-led alliance.

Look at the opponents who are ranged against the BJP/NDA. The UPA is in disarray. The Congress Working Committee has recently announced that the Congress will not have any national alliance in the parliamentary elections. It will only forge state-specific alliances. This decision is nothing but a declaration of the impending burial of the UPA. The Congress is also unable to decide who to project as its leader in the coming elections. For the past five years, the real authority in the ruling dispensation has resided in 10 Janpath, which is not accountable to Parliament. The devaluation of the office of Prime Minister that this has brought about is an insult to the system of parliamentary democracy.

As a matter of fact, one wonders if, right now, there is anyone in command of the government. For the past over two months, we have no full-fledged finance minister. This, at a time when India has been facing one of the worst economic crises. Thus, here is a party that is without a track record of anything resembling good governance, without an alliance, and without a leader. Such a party and its government deserve to be shown the exit door.

The 1996 farce of unstable govts must not be repeated

The disarray in the non-NDA and non-UPA ranks is far more marked. The so-called Third Front is nowhere to be seen.

What is disconcerting, however, is the thinking in many quarters to work for a repeat of the 1996 experiment, when the BJP, in spite of having emerged as the largest single party in the 11th Lok Sabha, was effectively

isolated from forming a stable government. They are hoping for a badly fragmented outcome of the forthcoming elections. Those in the Congress and some other parties that are dreaming of this misadventure should know that 2009 is different from 1996. Both in 1998 and 1999, the isolators themselves were isolated. Further, in 1999, the destabilisers got a drubbing. Unlike in 1996, the BJP has many stable allies today and we are confident of attracting more. Both our present and past allies are well aware that the BJP is sincere in its adherence to Coalition Dharma.

The Indian voter is mature and enlightened enough to know that the two highly unstable, indeed farcical, Congress-supported United Front governments between 1996 and 1998 proved to be detrimental in every respect. It took an enormous effort on the part of the Vajpayee-led NDA government to put the nation back on track and take it forward along the path of all-round progress.

The BJP has already demonstrated its ability not only to run a stable coalition government, but also to run it well. Be it in the area of national security, development or good governance, the performance of the BJP-led NDA Government between 1998-2004 stands head and shoulder above that of the UPA Government.

When I say that the farce of 1996 must not be repeated, it casts a responsibility on all of us to ensure that the NDA wins a decisive mandate, with the BJP's tally constituting a robust and stabilizing core of that mandate.

My appeal to the National Council, therefore, is: Let us make 2009 the highest watermark ever in the BJP's electoral performance. We can certainly do it. And WE SHALL DO IT!

Our priority: Remove despair, restore hope

What is the source of my optimism? It is simply this: people's memory is not so short as to forget that when the NDA Government demitted office in May 2004, it left behind a mood of hope, self-confidence and national pride. We also left behind a buoyant exchequer and an upbeat economy. When the UPA Government leaves office, which it surely will, it will have left behind a mood of despair, all-round insecurity, uncertainty about the future, and a badly mismanaged economy.

In recent months, I have often been asked how I would summarise the priorities of a future NDA Government. My answer is worth repeating here since repetition conveys the power of our conviction. Our priority would be to restore and further enhance the mood of optimism and self-confidence in every section

of our society.

How will we do it? We will do it by vigorously implementing a positive agenda of Good Governance, Development and Security. Our commitment to these ideals has been demonstrated not only by the track record of the previous NDA Government at the Centre, but also by our governments in all the BJP-ruled states. The specific elements of the NDA's common agenda of governance are being worked out by our colleagues. We are also formulating a set of bold and important decisions our government will take within the first 100 days.

Suffice it to say that five major commitments will underpin our agenda.

- 1) We shall promote employment-oriented economic growth by promoting massive investments in agriculture, rural development, infrastructure development, and revival of the river-linking project. We shall provide unprecedented focus on education, healthcare, drinking water, sanitation and other areas of social infrastructure development. As was demonstrated by the National Highway Development Project launched by the Vajpayee Government, our ambition and resolve will match the magnitude of challenge. We shall complete the incomplete tasks in the road sector. In *bijlee, paani, swasthya* and *shiksha*, we shall launch – and implement – programmes as grand as the Golden Quadrilateral.
- 2) We shall take such bold steps for the revival of agriculture that not a single farmer will be pushed to commit suicide due to indebtedness.
- 3) We shall undertake far-reaching reforms to promote Good Governance, with focus on administrative, police, legal and electoral reforms, including State funding of elections.
- 4) As I said earlier, we shall pursue a no-compromise approach to dealing with threats to India's internal security.
- 5) We shall vigorously promote social-economic justice and political empowerment for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and poorer sections of all other communities. Our commitment to gender justice and political empowerment of women will be unwavering. And although we shall be uncompromising in opposing minorityism, we shall protect their legitimate rights and promote their aspirations without discrimination.

I am happy to inform members of the National Council that the process of preparing this agenda has

been far more participative and broad-based this time than ever before. Shri Rajnath Singhji and I, joined by several senior colleagues, have held a series of round-table meetings with experts on various issues – ranging from national security, agriculture, economy and business, drinking water, etc. We have also used the Internet as a tool not only to communicate our vision and views to the rest of the world, but also as a platform to receive ideas and suggestions on diverse topics of development and governance.

Five tasks before the Party

The situation today is such that the people want us to win. The BJP commands a lot of goodwill among the people, because they know that ours is the only party that can overcome the serious challenges before the nation. However, because of the unacceptable conduct of some of our colleagues, an image has been created of a party divided within. Some have left the Party. Moreover, we scored self-goals in the recent Assembly elections in Rajasthan and Delhi, both of which we could have won.

These developments in the past few months have pained Party workers and our supporters everywhere. We often take pride in proclaiming that the guiding principle for every BJP worker is: Nation First, Party Next, Self Last. A majority of our colleagues and workers indeed follow this principle with conviction and discipline. However, those who flout it not only harm the Party but also harm themselves. There is no place for them in the difficult battle ahead of us. Let me put it bluntly that the wrong conduct on by some of our own colleagues is the only thing that is acting against us.

Therefore, in the weeks ahead, the first and foremost task before the Party is to work with robust unity and unflinching resolve. The process of candidate selection has already begun and will be completed soon. Once the Party chooses a candidate, his or her victory becomes the responsibility of one and all within the organization. Therefore, our election management at the central, state and constituency levels should be such that the full force of the entire Party and the ideological Parivar is deployed for the success of the BJP and NDA candidates.

Secondly, there is absolutely no room for complacency and over-confidence of the kind that proved very costly to us in 2004. Indeed, it is the Congress which seems to be exhibiting overconfidence after its victory in Delhi and Rajasthan assembly elections. Let us exploit its weakness by working harder. It is of vital importance that we mobilize each and every

potential voter to cast his/her vote on polling day. I want to congratulate Shri Ramlalji and all other colleagues down the line who have painstakingly to form booth-level committees of Party karyakartas. They are our frontline soldiers in this battle and they must receive every support they need.

Thirdly, let us conduct an aggressive, creative and self-confident mass-based campaign that focuses as much on our own positive agenda for the future as on the failures and betrayals of the UPA Government. This is an election in which issues will matter a lot. We indeed have an opportunity to turn this into one of the most educative election campaigns, in which the voter makes a rational and well-informed choice.

Fourthly, let us especially unleash the energy of the youth in our campaign. There will be as many ten crore first-time voters newly eligible to cast their votes in Elections 2009. For us, they are not only potential voters but also potential campaigners, who will bring vitality and vibrancy to the campaign. In this context, I want to congratulate the Yuva Morcha for reaching out to first-time voters on a big scale through its nationwide Pratham Matadata Samman Abhiyan.

Fifthly, let us ensure harmonious and mutually cooperative functioning between BJP workers and workers of our alliance partners.

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My valued Party Colleagues, this meeting of the National Council is an occasion for all of us to remind ourselves that history has placed an onerous responsibility on us. We are not fighting this battle because we are fascinated by power, not because we have been out of office for five years, and want to get it again by any means. Power for the sake of power has never been the credo of the BJP. Our founder Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, and our ideological guru Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, have placed lofty ideals before us. These ideals have inspired us throughout our long and arduous political journey, giving us strength and showing us the path at the most trying times. We must not give up these ideals for any temptation of power and pelf. Political power for us is an instrument to serve the nation and build an India of our dreams. And right now, it is an imperative need to halt India's downward slide which, if not reversed, can have cataclysmic consequences.

Therefore, as I said earlier, call of Nagpur is: **ONWARD TO VICTORY.**

Thank you.

Vande Mataram!