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Subscription

Annual Rs. 100/- || 3 years Rs. 250/-

Publisher and Printer : Printed by Dr Nandkishore Garg
for Dr. Mookerjee Smruti Nyas, at Excelprints, C-36,
F.F. Complex, Jhandewalan, New Delhi-55 and Published
by Dr. Mookerjee Smruti Nyas, PP-66, Subramanya
Bharati Marg, New Delhi-03. Editor : Prabhat Jha.

यः सर्वत्रानभिप्रेहस्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

He who is unattached to everything, and meeting with good and evil,
neither rejoices nor recoils, his mind is stable.

Bhagavadgita, Chapter 2, Text 57

Editorial

The rising terror of rising prices

The dragon of rising prices is the greatest threat facing the people of the country. And it is here the Congress-led UPA government which otherwise swears by the aam aadmi has failed miserably. If the Prime Minister, his Finance Minister and the Congress supremo Mrs. Sonia Gandhi were to read back their own public statements and declarations made in and outside Parliament since the first session of Parliament in 2004, they will know how honest and true have they been to their masters who elected them and put them in the seat of power. It is nothing short of cheating.

Shri Sharad Pawar, who is more a cricket minister than a food minister has rightly been called the Mehangai Mantri by BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari. Only a fortnight back when the media asked him when the prices of essential commodities will be under check, in anger he retorted, "I'm not an astrologer". But only two-three days back he turned an astrologer to predict that the prices of sugar

will come down.

We feel inclined to agree with Shri Pawar that he is no soothsayer. On the contrary, he is the great man who predicts, with a reasonable measure of accuracy, the doomsday. For the past over six months he has only been threatening the aam aadmi to get prepared to face the ordeal of still higher prices of food grains, daals and sugar during the next 12 months. He seems to be suffering from insomnia even. He forgets today what he said yesterday. The other day he declared that now the prices of milk will rise because there has been a shortage of milk production in the north. But the next day under political pressure, he denied it and put the blame on media. His predictions of good times may not come true, but those of doom do. His announcements, in advance, of rise in prices of food grains, daals, sugar, and milk, have only helped the hoarders, profiteers and manipulators to make quick illegal money. The moment Shri Pawar announces that prices are going to

You'll begin to succeed...

"You will begin to succeed with your life when the hurt and problems of others begin to matter to you."

-Mike Murdock

rise, these anti-social elements jump in to hoard and create a sense of imaginary scarcity that further spurts the prices of essential commodities.

No section of society has remained untouched by tyranny of the rise in prices of essential commodities. The worst sufferers are those living below the poverty line and the labour in unorganized sector that live by the wages they earn every day. But even those living above the poverty line are feeling the heat of it. Earlier, the aam aadmi could make do with either daal or subzi. But now under UPA these two items have become luxuries they cannot afford.

During BJP-led NDA regime the prices of essential commodities remained under check. Atalji government ensured that there were not shortages and black-marketing or profiteering. Cooking gas was available in plenty and on demand. The moment UPA government took office about six years back, the profiteers, black-marketeers and shortages are back in control of our economy. In fact Congress and rise in prices have become synonymous with each other.

The reality is that Congress has no policy on prices. It is directionless, groping in the dark. When prices rise and there is a great hue and cry, it only acts in a knee-jerk reaction without a long-term policy with any tangible result and relief to the poor.

The tragedy is that all government efforts are concentrated on assessing the extent of price rise based on a fallacious data which has no

relevance to the prices at which the essential commodities reach the common man. Government goes by the whole-sale prices while the common man suffers from the prices prevailing in the retail market. Take the data of prices these days. In mandis (wholesale market) the potato is selling at Rs. 7 (retail Rs. 20), onion Rs. 10 (35), tomato Rs. 14 (40), beans Rs. 15 (65), cabbage Rs. 3 (20) and cauliflower at Rs. 5 (30). By basing its claims on wholesale prices, the government is not only trying to befool the common man but itself also. And that is why all its efforts in containing prices have never borne fruit. The intriguing part of the whole phenomenon is that the Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi and the heir apparent Shri Rahul Gandhi are maintaining a stoic silence on the issue that is hurting one and all. Shri Gandhi does speak of empowering youth, but he is not worried about the spectrum of rising prices that is snatching food from the mouth of the children and the youth.

As a responsible opposition party, BJP could not be a silent and passive spectator to the ever increasing prices of essential

commodities that have played havoc with the life of the aam aadmi. That is why the Chairman of BHP Parliamentary Party Shri Lal Krishna Advani and BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari led a deputation of senior BJP leaders to the Prime Minister to shake the slumber of UPA government on the issue. The Prime Minister did promise the BJP leaders that his government would take effective steps in the direction of reining in the price rise. But going by the track record of Manmohan Singh government, people have little hope from this government.

BJP has throughout been raising this matter at all levels. But it cannot afford to keep idle any longer. The aam aadmi is face to face with a different type of terror - the terror of rising prices. BJP has already announced week-long protests all over the country against the rise in prices and failure of UPA government to control these. In the days to come BJP will have to gird up its loins for waging a longer and decisive battle against prices from the national level down to the village level so that the government is forced to act and the aam aadmi gets relief in real terms. ■



Six decades of Indian Republic

Time to have a reality check of our Republic

By Prabhat Jha

Republic Day comes every year in the life of the nation. Every Indian wishes that our Republic should be immortal, amar.

At the same time, it is also an occasion to review the successes and failures of our republic every now and then. We should not evade it nor should it be perfunctory lacking the element of honesty in its evaluation. If the exercise is done on the plain of reality, we can measure the extent of our progress in the real sense.

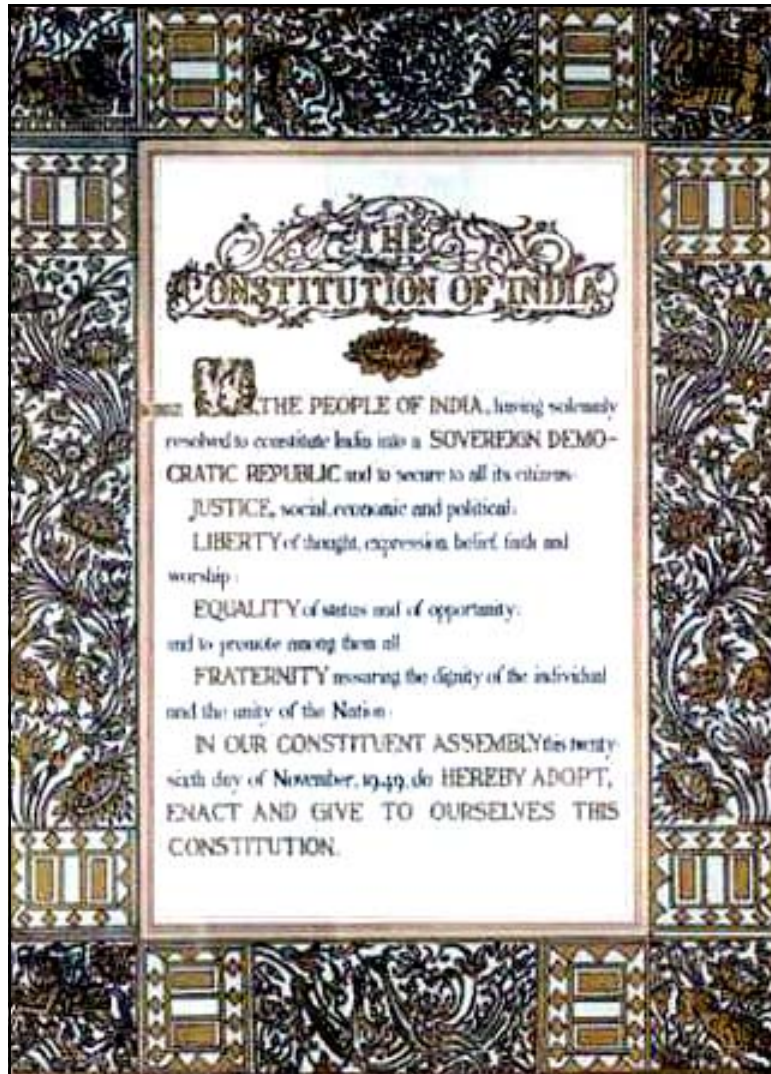
Where do we stand today, where have we to go to reach our goal and how have we to strain our nerves to attain it? We should all know it too well. Every Indian has the inalienable right to know his country. The country does not belong only to those who are members of parliament or of State assemblies. It is also not the sole property of those in politics. The country belongs to all those who consider themselves Indians by all counts. We only have a superficial and not an in-depth view of the republic. The fault

lies in the fact that we considered that the country belongs to those who run it. We speak very loudly about our rights but we are always evasive of our duties. If we have to usher in change for the better, we have to ponder over the present conditions in the country. We have to be face to face with the stark reality

To which direction is agriculture moving?

After we won our independence, we have throughout been saying that Indian economy is predominantly agricultural. The foundation of our economic edifice stands on agriculture. Yet, where do we stand as far as agriculture is concerned? In 1951 our per capita cultivable land holding was 0.46 hectare which went down to 0.19 in 1992-93. Today it stands at just 0.16 hectare.

70 percent of our population in 1952-53 was dependant upon 102.09 million hectare of agricultural land. At that time 18.1 percent of the land was irrigated. Agricultural production was 59.2 million tonnes and average production was 580 kilogram per hectare. At present with 45 percent of 122.4 million hectare of agricultural land as irrigated, the total agricultural productions stands at 230.3



million tonnes with per hectare production at 1854 kilograms. The percentage of population subsisting on agro-based industries stands at 56.

Fighting hunger and malnutrition

Addressing a joint session of the two houses of Parliament in June 2009 Her Excellency the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Patil declared that Government will come out with a new law called National Food Security Bill. But this law has as yet to see light of the day. 53 percent of our population, out of which 20 percent belongs to backward classes, is suffering from hunger and malnutrition. According to a latest survey, 1.5 crore children in rural India are at the verge of malnutrition. 27 percent of the world's population afflicted with malnutrition belongs to India. 20 lakh infants (2.8 percent) die every year because they cannot get potable water vital to sustain life.

How alarming is the situation and how complacent are the people can be seen from the fact that in India food grains worth Rs. 58,000 crores get rotten, unfit for human consumption just because we lack the modern technique for storage. Could we not have taken adequate and effective steps all these years to prevent this loss while crores of people are suffering from hunger? What a paradox that among 119 countries in the world India stands at No. 94 in the matter of hunger and malnutrition. What was our aim and where have we gone?

Rising poverty graph

We may claim that poverty in the country is on the decline. But facts speak otherwise. Increase in poverty is keeping pace with the increase in economic development in the country. According to a report released by the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Committee's

Chairman, Shri Suresh Tendulkar, 37.2 percent of India's population is very poor. This figure, according to the Report, is 10 percent more than the assessment made in 2004-05 which stood at 25.5 percent. In other words, in the last 11 years 11 crore more people have joined the population living below the poverty line.

41.8 percent of the population, that is 45 crore people, according to Tendulkar Committee report, are subsisting on a monthly per capita expenditure of Rs. 447. In other words, these people are unable to meet their daily basic essential requirements of life. This situation only makes us to think as to how many republic days need we to wait to usher in a life of plenty and prosperity for each and every citizen in the country.

Widening disparity between rural and urban population

Villages are not progressing the way and on the lines they should. This is what the official figures indicate. In urban areas 77.70 percent people live in pucca houses and in rural areas, only 29.20 percent. 81.38 percent of urban population enjoys the facility of drinking water, while in villages only 55.34 percent population is lucky to have this privilege. 75 percent of urban population has the benefit of power supply while only 30 percent of rural population has their houses illuminated. In 6 lakh villages in the country the literacy percentage is 59 while in 5,161 cities it is 80 percent. We have to work very hard to narrow this gap between the urban and rural population. We know that even today 72.2 percent population of the country lives in villages. Therefore, villages hold the key to India's progress. Without the villages moving forward, country cannot march towards progress. India as a

whole cannot be strong without rural areas being made strong and prosperous.

Increasing foreign debt

Our boasting cannot hide the reality. The country continues to be heads and tails under debt. Till December 2008 India's debt liability had gone up to \$230.80 arab which was not far from our foreign reserves of \$254.6 arab during the period under review. According to official estimates, the external commercial borrowing (ESB) has jumped to \$66.16 arab from \$4.6 arab and till September 2008 the share of ESB in the total national debt has gone up to 28.7 percent from 27.4. Why are we not worried about these mounting debts? Why are we not serious to bring back the illegal money stacked by Indians in Swiss banks? Why have no concrete steps been taken to get the country out of the debt trap? These questions are crying for answer from the government.

Population to touch 150 crore

According to a UN estimate, by 2025 India's population will grow to 150 crores, half of which will be living in cities. Speaking in a seminar on disaster management, experts have opined that the urban population will be the worst hit if our cities were exposed to any disaster. But we seem to be the least concerned about this threat. Government seems little interested in saving the country from the threat of population explosion. How long shall we wait? How long can we wait?

Asia's fourth most corrupt country

In the list of the most corrupt countries of the world we stand at 85 and in Asia at 4. Our last year commenced with the explosion of a scam worth Rs. 7,000 crores in the country's largest IT Company, Satyam Computers. Then followed

a series of scandals, like the spectrum scam in the Communications Ministry, scandals involving the former Jharkhand Governor Shri Sibte Rizvi and by Jharkhand former chief minister Shri Madhu Koda, former union minister's son Sweety and recently Parliament echoed with the scam involving Justice Dinakaran and senior Army officers involved in land scam. All these have only lowered the esteem of the country in the comity of nations.

Education system that inspires no hope

Government claims that the percentage of admissions in primary schools is touching 90.95. Presence of children in schools is increasing. At the same time the number of children and youth is also witnessing a marked spurt. Based on this assumption, India is in the forefront of the youthful nations in the world. But that is not the reality. On the contrary, the fact is that one-third of the youth in the country continue to be illiterate or they have not been able to complete their primary education. Irony is that the picture of a young India that is being projected is only limited to the youth living in cities having received education in information technology, computer, software, management etc. 70-80 percent of the youth living in villages and slums in urban areas still stand deprived of such elite education. Of which Bharat nirman are we speaking of without the emancipation of the really young India?

For various social and economic reasons, about 40 percent of our children are forced to leave the schools without completing their primary education. Most of these get engaged in child labour. In other words, only 60 percent of the

children are able to reach the middle standard of education. Even among these, 50 percent of children leave their middle school education in the way. This leaves only 30 percent of the children who are able to reach the secondary school education. Further, among these students 30 percent students who complete their secondary school education, only 15 percent are able to get admission in colleges. In sum, out of 100 students who get admission in primary classes only 10-12 are able to reach for college education.

Pitiable position of higher education According to an ASSOCHAM report, more than 4.50 lakh students go to foreign countries, like USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Germany, Singapore etc. and spend about Rs. 48,000 crores.

The reason for this outflow of students is the lack of facilities for high quality professional education within the country. Government will have to chart out a roadmap to meet this shortcoming. Otherwise, Indian students will continue to be the target of racial discrimination, as in Australia, and Indian money will continue to strengthen the economies of other countries.

Poor health facilities

A perusal of the 2008-09 economic review, according to the 2001 census standards India is short of 20,856 health sub-centres, 4,833 primary health centres and 2,525 community health centres. The 34 percent of the existing health institutions are also functioning from rented accommodation. Even the health institutions at present functioning are handicapped by an enormous shortage of doctors, nurses and other para-medical staff. Hundreds of country's hospitals are functioning without doctors, specialists and nurses.

It is unfortunate that in a

country where about one thousand people die every day, the government is spending only one percent of the country's GDP on health facilities as compared to our neighbour China which spends 6 percent of its GDP.

Acute housing shortage

According to a figure released by the national housing organization, about 2.5 crore urbanites (about 37 percent of urban population) have no house of their own. According to data released by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) 32 percent of India's urban population has less space to live in than the space available to people in jails in USA.

In villages 39 percent houses provide 65 square feet of space per person. But during the last fifty years the space available in a house per person has got further squeezed both in villages and towns. Today 55 percent of people in urban areas and 56 percent in rural have to make do within a space of just 10x10 feet per person. According to UN Habitat report, 17 crore people live in slums in India. The life in the slums, we all know, is worse than that in US jails.

Republic Day is a national festival. We gave to ourselves this Constitution on that day. We had vowed that administration will ensure a better life for the people and will be answerable for it. We have tried to bring to the notice of government the problem of roti, kapda, makan, education and health facing the aam aadmi. Despite all that is available in the country, still people are faced with the problem of hunger and want. We have to ponder over why this situation still persists. If we are able to overcome all the hurdles and difficulties that lie in the way, we will certainly be able to chant loudly: Mera Bharat Mahan!

(The writer is a BJP National Secretary & Rajya Sabha MP) ■

Politics should be an instrument of national reconstruction : Gadkari

In an Idea Exchange Programme with the Indian Express BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari made very important points. While denying that the RSS had any role in his appointment as President, Shri Gadkari declared that BJP will fight the coming Vidhan Sabha elections in Bihar in alliance with JD (U) and that the NDA continues to hold together as before. He asserted that the change of party president "doesn't mean that its policies have changed" and reiterated that he wants to "make India a super economic power". He said, "I feel that in the 21st century, politics is the politics of performance...and that an audit performance is more important. I will make performance audits for everybody".

Excerpts of his interview on January 10:



NITIN GADKARI: I am not experienced in national politics. I began my career as a worker of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad and that motivated me to serve the poor, the country and society. I feel politics is an instrument of social and economic reform. As a BJP worker, I feel we have to change the present political scenario. It must be an instrument of national reconstruction. The ideology of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya is the inspiration and motivation for us.

Politics is not my profession. I have never considered it my career. I am a very small worker and started my political career by sticking posters and painting slogans on the walls. The party has given me many opportunities. I always say there are some people who

convert opportunities into problems and then, there are people who convert problems into opportunities. So here I am in Delhi. I am aware of the difficult task that lies ahead but the one thing I have is that my past record shows 100 per cent success. When I accept a challenge, I always complete it.

► **UNNI RAJEN SHANKER: Do you think your present project is more difficult than the ones you handled earlier?**

It is a difficult task, it is very challenging. But the good thing in my party is that all the senior leaders are supporting me.

► **MANEESH CHHIBBER: How much of a role did the RSS play in your ascent to the BJP president's post?**

I am related to the RSS but my appointment is not by the RSS. This is the media impression.

We are inspired and motivated by the RSS, we have coordination and connections with the RSS. Sometimes we take their guidance but they do not interfere in the day-to-day activities of the party.

► **MANEESH CHHIBBER: How much control will the RSS exercise on you now?**

If you check my track record, you will know that no one can remote-control me. I will take only those decisions that are permitted by my conscience.

► **SUMAN K. JHA: There's an apprehension that the (Sangathan Mantris) (organising secretaries, usually appointed by the RSS) will become more prominent in the party now. Is this how the RSS intends to control the BJP?**

The impression is totally

wrong. Our party has an organising secretary system. There are many such secretaries who have dedicated their lives to the party. They have not contested elections and many of them do not even belong to the RSS. I have no plan to change anything. My only problem is the media. I have decided not to attend press conferences. This issue of the RSS is one of image versus reality. RSS ideology is a part of my life's convictions but never has the RSS dictated terms related to ticket distribution or the formation of the ministry. They expect you to follow good, clean conduct. Nothing besides that.

- ▶ **J.P. YADAV: Last week you held a meeting of BJP-ruled state finance ministers. Could you explain the idea behind the meeting?**

The perception till now is that BJP calls meetings of cultural ministers and not finance ministers.

It is not like you have to talk Hindutva because you are the BJP president. I have been talking about (economic) growth for the last 4-5 years. I am a good BJP karyakarta. I feel that the country needs politics for development.

- ▶ **COOMI KAPOOR: You had said you were more interested in social development than politics. But one of your first acts as president was to support the formation of the Jharkhand government with a CM whose removal the BJP has asked for several times on corruption charges.**

The Jharkhand situation was

- ▶ **DHIRAJ NAYYAR: Do you think party agenda matters less in politics now and development matters more?**

After 62 years of Independence, we still do not have roads. After all these years, we are still talking about a 55,000 megawatt power shortage. We have no plan, no coal, how will we run our thermal power plants? I have sugar factories but power and fertilisers are unavailable. Even after 62 years, we are still talking about water, power and roads. Is this progress? The Tendulkar Committee report says the poor have increased by 12 per cent. Why?

Farmer suicide, poverty and unemployment are not related to caste, religion or language. These problems are the result of the wrong economic policies of the government. We can increase budgetary provisions three times by using public-private investment. We can give priority to the poor and diversify the budget provisions for the rural sector. Wrong economic policies have led to price rise. I am a sugar manufacturer. I sell my sugar at Rs 14 a kg and now Brazilian sugar is being sold for Rs 28 a kg. So what do they mean when they talk about development? Our idea is entirely different.

very different because of the hung assembly. We had limited choices. The Congress party has hatched a conspiracy to divide small parties and form a government. We understood this plan and decided to form the government. It will be a stable government for the development of Jharkhand. We went with whatever option we had in that specific situation. When the CPM and Congress fight each other in West Bengal and Kerala and come to Delhi and support each other, what then? This happens because politics is a game of political compulsions and compromise.

- ▶ **SWARAJ THAPA: Elections in Bihar are due in 2010. What will the BJP strategy be-will you go it alone or be a coalition partner of the JD(U)?**

In Bihar, we are very clear that we have a good alliance with Nitish Kumar. I am satisfied with the performance of the government. The GDP was minus 5 per cent and now it is 11.5 per cent. It is a miracle the way it has changed. The performance in Bihar is an example of good governance. We have good coordination with Nitish Kumar and have decided to fight the elections as an alliance.

- ▶ **SWARAJ THAPA: In the last election, one of your oldest allies, the BJD, parted ways with you. Will the BJP be able to retain its allies?**

Look at our track record. The BJP-Shiv Sena alliance is the longest-running alliance. The alliance with the Akalis is also good. The most successful leader in alliance politics is A.B. Vajpayee.

The NDA alliance is a very good one. We need good relations with allies but we have to study the strengths and weaknesses of all cases. As BJP president, I feel we must concentrate more on SC/STs and minorities and labourers in the unorganised sector where we plan to increase our vote balance by ten per cent.

▶ **DHIRAJ NAYYAR: In terms of development and social welfare, how do you differentiate yourself from the Congress?**

I don't want to compare my policy, philosophy and projects with anybody. I have this positive programme. The Congress has a right to propagate its policies and I will propagate mine.

▶ **DHIRAJ NAYYAR: In Maharashtra, you failed to dislodge a government that visibly failed on many fronts. Did the BJP fail to highlight its agenda or was it an arithmetic problem?**

The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) divided our vote bank and we lost at least 50 seats. The dispute within the Shiva Sena family was creating problems for us.

▶ **SUBHOMOY BHATTCHARJEE: You talked about development but over the last two years, the BJP seems to have ignored these issues. What are the issues you will focus on this year?**

Good governance in BJP-ruled states is my priority. I have started researching good programmes even in Congress-ruled states. My idea is to collect all good schemes that are active in different states and then make a power point presentation of these schemes

to my ministers. As far as economic issues are concerned, I feel that in the 21st century, politics is the politics of performance. Financial audit is essential but as a student of management, I feel that an audit for performance is more important. I will make performance audits for everybody. If you want a party post, I want performance. If you are not ready, then do not accept national leadership. The politics of performance and audit for performance is essential.

▶ **SHEKHAR GUPTA: Will you be able to do this given that your party has turned hierarchical. Acts like touching feet, offering paan, doing pujas have now made an entry in your party. And, it is much tougher in your party to be respected as a young leader.**

Honestly, in all my life, I have bought garlands on only two occasions: once for Mr. A B Vajpayee and the other for Lata Mangeshkar. I never get into things like these. My cut-outs, etc. are never installed.

▶ **SWARAJ THAPA: We also heard news reports about you going to Ramlalji, general secretary (organisation), rather than him coming to you.**

I do not believe in such protocols. Respect should not be demanded, it should be commanded.

When I was a minister, this is how I was and now that I am the party president, this is how I will be. My parents or grandparents were not prime ministers. I was born to middle-class farmer parents. I began as a simple party worker who would whitewash walls. I had

such a terrible handwriting that I could not even paint slogans. So I would whitewash and Prakash Javedkar would paint the slogans. Being chosen as the party president came as a surprise to me. But now that I have been chosen, I will give it my best.

▶ **M.K. VENU: Sudheendra Kulkarni had written an article for The Indian Express before quitting the BJP in which he had said the party needed to move towards Integral Humanism as opposed to ideologues like Veer Savarkar. Can you explain the two different strains within the party?**

India's problem is that there is a lot of difference between promises and implementation. If you say something, you must implement it. This culture of rising within political hierarchies will not do anything for democracy. I could also visit poor households, share their meals, but what then? It is important that you come back and do something that will actually help them. I can tell you stories that I have provided employment to 5 lakh people, 1 lakh people are associated with my projects. But I don't do this for publicity. There are many such politicians who work for the needy. You must highlight this even if they are members of other parties.

▶ **COOMI KAPOOR: The last few elections have shown that BJP has lost the youth and urban centres, the reason being that your message is no longer in sync with them.**

The Congress has a rich heritage since 1947 while we were maligned after 1952,

saying we are anti-Muslims, non-secular, casteist etc. Now we have to revive ourselves and regain public confidence. I think we must increase our basic vote strength by 10 per cent at least.

► **SHEKHAR GUPTA: Why is the BJP losing in cities like Delhi and Mumbai?**

Delhi has changed. It has witnessed migration from UP, Bihar etc. Now we need to change our focus in Delhi. We also need some sort of a self-examination and rectify our weaknesses.

► **S U B H O M O Y BHATTACHARJEE: So is the BJP putting aside issues like Ram Mandir and looking at development?**

Just because the party president has changed doesn't mean that its policies have changed. I am not talking about changing the policy; instead I am telling you what my focus will be. I want to use IT and make India a super economic power.

► **SHEKHAR GUPTA: There are many bills that have been passed by parliamentary committees. Sushma Swaraj had earlier promised support but maybe the two parties are not talking anymore.**

I have a suggestion. The PM must call an all party meeting to discuss issues of national importance like election reforms, EVMs, water, power, etc. He should explain and discuss these policies and if they are good, we will support them in the interest of democracy. ■

BJP feels Kashmir exodus has roots in Delhi

BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari said that the exile of the Hindus from Kashmir was one of the most painful exoduses of a community. He added the problem did not originate in Kashmir but was rooted in Delhi.



Shri. Gadkari was speaking in a seminar on the '20 years of exile of Kashmiri Hindus' in New Delhi on January 19.

"Though the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus began twenty years ago, the crisis relates to the time of partition," said Shri Gadkari. He held Congress for responsible for the plight of the migrants, "The problem arose due to the appeasement policies of the Congress. It led human rights to be determined by religion and language" he said.

If the fundamentalists in the valley demand for autonomy, the BJP National President asked, why do they need money from the Center. "The youths in Jammu & Kashmir have been deprived of their history and cultural past," Shri Gadkari said and alleged that if any attempt is made in this regard, it is labeled as communal. Education of masses was essential in order to facilitate the return of the Hindus to the valley, he added.

Expressing similar opinion, former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and former Union Minister Shri Jagmohan said that if autonomy was granted to J&K, similar crisis will occur in North-eastern states as well. "The people of the State must understand that they are going to gain nothing from Article 370 of the Constitution. What is there in Indian

Constitution that poses a threat to their cultural identity", he asked.

Shri Jagmohan said that the common men in Kashmir wanted to live peacefully but they were misled by the politicians. "The environment in the country has been polluted by the corrupt practices of the political class. No serious issue, be it Kashmir, Naxalism or the insurgency in North East can be solved without changing the environment", he opined.

BJP National Vice President Shri Bal Apte, also speaking on the occasion, said that the wounds inflicted on the lakhs of Hindus, who were forced to live in exile, are still fresh. "The Kashmiri Hindus are not alone in their battle for justice. It is, however, the prejudiced people in government and judiciary who have prevented them from getting justice", he alleged. The defect was in the system and justice should be provided to all with appeasement of none. Among those present on the occasion included Uttarakhand Chief Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhariyal Nishank and former Delhi BJP President Dr. Harshvardhan, Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Prof. VK Malhotra, BJP National Spokesperson Shri Prakash Javdekar, BJP National Secretary Shri Balbir Punj and a large number of migrants from Kashmir. ■ (FOC)

UPA responsible for unprecedented price rise

Since UPA formed a coalition government in 2004, its greatest failure has been on the price rise front. In his first address to Parliament as Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had declared that his priority is to contain prices which were pinching the aam aadmi hard. Yet, year after year the prices continue to make high jumps and all claims to contain the prices have proved untrue.

To bring home the fact of Congress failure on this front and the need for the UPA government to take immediate steps in the matter, a deputation of BJP leaders and MPs waited upon the Prime Minister on January 20 and presented a memorandum. Here is the text of the Memorandum:

Hon'ble Prime Minister,

We, on behalf of the Bharatiya Janata Party, have been constrained to approach you in view of the unabated price rise being witnessed in the country. During the past few months prices of essential commodities have sky-rocketed scaling unprecedented levels, apparently,

in absence of any effective steps from Government to arrest the same. The authorities of Government responsible for managing and monitoring the price situations of food articles and essential commodities have

themselves been airing opinions contradicting each other e.g., while the hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Food, Consumer Affairs & Public Distribution in your Cabinet expressed worry over spiraling food prices albeit attributing it to demand supply gap, the Dy Chairman of Planning Commission found the soaring food inflation to be not a matter of concern. These were reported by the Times of India, New Delhi on November 5, 2009.

During the period of economic slow down when the wholesale price index (WPI) stood at negative, the prices of all essential commodities in the market rose consistently to levels which remained beyond the reach of vast majority of our households. The economic slow down has left consumers with lesser purchasing capacity, lower level of income, besides a very large

section jobless. Still the prices of food articles in our country have been continuously rising to exceptionally high levels in spite of the fact that globally the prices of food articles have remained under control for many months now.

The worst affected have been the economically weaker sections and families of large number of workers in unorganised sectors in our society who are most adversely affected due to the increase in the food prices as their wages have not commensurated with the price rise



being witnessed over such a long period.

The prices of wheat, rice, cereals, pulses and vegetables have soared exceptionally high. The food prices as per the governmental estimates increased by nearly 20 per cent though the actual impact of the price rise in the market was much higher. Prices of sugar, pulses, potatoes & onions have increased in the market by 50 to 100 percent in the last one year. Prices of other food items especially dairy, poultry products and even seasonal vegetables have also increased as never before. The annual rate of inflation, based on wholesale prices, rose sharply to 7.31 per cent in December, 2009 from 4.78 per cent in the previous month indicating nearly 90% increase on month-on-month basis (as per the data released by Government on 14th Jan, 2010). Such a

situation should have woken up any Government worth the salt to take prompt measures in order to ensure easing of prices of essential commodities and rescue the common man from the hardship.

Notwithstanding the considerable divergence between the wholesale price index (WPI) and the consumer price index (CPI), even the price data released by Government is in consistence with the ground realities prevailing in the market. The consumer price index which measures inflation corresponding to the market situation has shown a much higher increase for all categories including the industrial workers and urban laborers. There is a need to reconcile the price index in consonance with actual prices in the market.

The mismanagement of the food prices is apparent also from the fact that prices have risen despite bumper stocks of various agriculture commodities.

It is an alarming situation that the increase in the prices of food articles will also eventually impact the prices of manufactured items of common consumptions. The Departments of the

Government which deal with the management of the economy have failed to intervene effectively in order to address this burning issue. It appears that the Government lacks seriousness and has run out of ideas on how to deal with the situation.

The need of the hour is for the government to have a comprehensive food pricing and management policy in order to provide relief to the common man. In fact, the success of such a policy should be measured by a more realistic index which may be termed as "the food price index" which should be regularly released by the Government to make the country and those in power aware of the ground realities. The Department of Consumer Affairs which is the nodal Department to deal with the consumer prices has miserably failed to discharge its responsibility.

It is disheartening that the approach of the Government has been insensitive. The recent statements of the Food and Agriculture Minister, Shri Sharad Pawar suggesting that he is not an astrologer capable of predicting as to when the food prices would come down and his continuous flip flop in predicting the fall in the

retail price of sugar have not at all been reassuring to the Nation. He has indicated that in foreseeable future effective relief from the unlegislated tax called inflation may not be available to the common man. The management of the supply side in relation to the food economy has been a clear failure. The government has failed to foresee the areas of shortage. While it theoretically refers to the need to expand domestic production in those areas, the effectiveness of these measures is inconsistent with the ground realities. The need to manage the supply side both by expanding domestic capacities as also through imports has to be emphasized. The expectation of inflationary trends in the economy needs to be curtailed rather than encouraged through insensitive statements of your

ministerial colleagues. There is also a lack of administrative will and earnestness at various levels in enforcing the anti-hoarding and anti-profiteering measures. This is evident from the fact that there is a disparity between wholesale and retail prices in several commodities such as rice, potatoes, onions resulting through artificial shortages. The Government



has not demonstrated so far any determination to deal with these issues.

The Government is resorting to a "do nothing approach" in the hope that the problems will resolve on their own. The essential coordination required between different departments of the Government appears to be lacking. This is not the time for apportioning the blame game between various ministries of the Government. This is a time for action since the inflationary trends have caused enormous misery to the common man.

We have been constrained to approach you in view of the apathy of the Government in dealing with this issue. We hope that as a responsible Government, it will take proactive steps to ensure that the misery of the common man arising from unprecedented rise in food prices is mitigated at the earliest.

Sincerely yours,

L. K. Advani
Sushma Swaraj
M.M. Joshi
Gopinath Munde
Ananth Kumar

Nitin Gadkari
Arun Jaitley
Rajnath Singh
S.S. Ahluwalia

Congress failed to check price rise

Addressing a huge public meeting in Amritsar on January 18, BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari has severely criticized the Congress-led UPA government at the centre for price rise of essential commodities. The burst of anger of Shri Gadkari came after sugar prices touched Rs. 50 per kg.

Shri Gadkari said, "I think that Shri Manmohan Singh led UPA government is setting new records in inflation. The prices are rising by 200 and 300 percent. Sugar has made a half-century (Rupees 50 per kilogram) whereas the pulses scored the century (Rupees 100 per kilogram)".

He further added, "We have sold sugar at the rate of Rs 13 and 14 (per kilogram), we emptied godowns to make cash payment to sugar farmers. When sugar prices were Rs. 13 and 14 (per kilogram) then the federal government gave import and transport subsidy and exported 4.8 million tonnes of sugar". The prices of basic commodities mainly sugar, pulses and potato has touched a new high. The wholesale price inflation surged to more than a year's high of 7.31 per cent in December on higher food prices.

Tomar hits out at Centre for failure to control inflation

Bharatiya Janata Party MP State president Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, MP has stated that the Central Government has proved weak on the front of inflation. The Congress is searching for a scapegoat to save itself from the responsibility and renouncing the spirit of group responsibility in democracy, he said.

He said, "Things are running out one by one from the plates of the poor and different ministries of the Central Government are playing different tunes due to the lack of co-ordination.

The Congress is blaming NCP leader Sharad Pawar for the inflation. While the NCP is having the Agriculture and Food Ministry, the Chemical and Food Ministry is with the DMK and there is no co-ordination among these two Ministries. So inflation is at the peak and consumers malaise for foodgrain and farmers malaise for fertilizers" are common, said Shri Tomar.

Shri Tomar further said that the Congress promised to tame inflation within 100 days after coming in power, but instead of controlling price, the Government has

failed even in rationalization of minimum supportive price. Public supported the Congress and now the Congress is punishing and products of farmers will go in bags of multi-nationals, he alleged.

He said that deficiency of oilseeds and pulses was not the problem of today but the Government had failed to make proper plan to remove it. Instead of making up for this deficiency at national level, the Government has become dependent on import. He said that the Government could motivate farmers after making proper plan for heavy production instead of importing foodgrain, oilseeds and pulses at high cost.

BJP to launch an aggressive campaign against price rise

In its bid to corner the central and state government on the issue of price hike the UP state BJP will launch an aggressive campaign with agitating at all district headquarters on January 31 and holding a massive meeting on February 25 in the state capital.

This was decided in the meeting of the state BJP office bearers, which was chaired by state party President Dr Ramapati Ram Tripathi and also attended by the national vice president of the party Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi.

Later addressing a press conference Shri Naqvi said that the reason behind the shooting up of the prices of the various commodities was not natural. "Infact this is price hike scam for which primarily Congress led UPA Government was responsible." he said.

He said that people were facing the problem of price hike due to the faulty policies of the Congress led central government. He said that as the poor people were finding it extremely hard to get the bread and butter the BJP leader and workers will keep fast on January 31 in mark of their protest over the price hike. He said that various leaders of the party will hold a meeting on January 23 and 24 to finalise their preparation for the January 31 agitation.

Shri Naqvi said that party leaders and workers will form the human chain on highways and other places demanding the price control. Replying a question he said that all the central and state leaders including former national president Shri Rajnath Singh, Dr Murali Manohar Joshi, national general secretary Shri Vinay Katiyar and other leaders will lead the protest march at different places. He said that karyakartyas will also Gherou the Parliament in March. ■

UPA-II : Mehengai Badhao Sarkar

Rising prices leading to reverse-development

By Shiv Shakti Bakshi

It is highly unfortunate to note that even in the face of repeated protests and criticisms the UPA-II government callously remains oblivious of the hardship the people are facing in the wake of unabated and unprecedented price rise. In its tenure so far UPA-II can now better be described as *Mehengai Badhao Sarkar* catering to the whims and fancies of the cartels of profiteers, hoarders and black marketers by swelling their coffers at the cost of the poorest of the poor. Its ministers are fast earning the epithet *Dam Badhao Mantri* failing to control the rising prices, yet shamefully confessing their inability to do so in public. While the first news in the media every day is the news of continuously spiraling prices, the ministers endlessly keep indulging themselves in teaching bizarre economic explanations to millions reeling under poverty and squalor. While pulses have already crossed beyond the means of the people, Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar has indicated that the price of milk would increase not mentioning the fact that prices have already been raised several times in a single year.

Symptomatic of rot

The price rise is symptomatic of the rot that has set in the work culture of the UPA-II. The irony is that it appears no one is


answerable to anyone, not responsible even to the people who voted them to power. The ministers seem not accountable to the Prime Minister. Senior ministers are not ready to let junior ministers share their powers and hold over their respective ministries. There is no

coordination and the result is that blame game between the allies is taking place in full public view. While Congress is trying to find a scapegoat in Sharad Pawar blaming him for price rise and the entire mess, its Finance Minister has failed to display any keenness to control the

prices. Though India's annual inflation rate based on wholesale prices is under 5 percent, food inflation has spiralled to reach close to 20 percent, notably on account of prices of essential items of daily consumption. Food inflation stood at 17.28% a week ago. Despite the decline in food inflation, the rate is still higher, compared with last year's level of 11.59% during the same period. In Pakistan and Sri Lanka, annual food inflation exceeded ours in 2007 but now it has fallen to 11% and 4% respectively. But UPA has completely failed to even emulate Pakistan and Sri Lanka in this regard. It is very unfortunate to see that the government has chosen to adopt a "wait and watch" policy and let the economy to drift to correct itself and find its own solution without UPA moving its finger.

It is very important to see which section is worst affected by the price rise - it is the poor in the country whose numbers are on rise even in the face of contrary

Veggies On Fire



Vegetables	Dec 2		Dec 16		Jan 21	
	Mandi	Retail	Mandi	Retail	Mandi	Retail
Potato	7	20	7	20	6-7	15-18
Onion	10	35	12	35	13-14	30-35
Tomato	14	40	5	35	8-9	30
Capsicum	14	50	15	50	11-12	40
Beans	15	65	18	60	16-17	65
Cabbage	3	20	2	18	3	22
Cauliflower	5	30	4	25	10	28

(All prices per/kg)

Pulses	Oct	Dec	Jan
	Arhar	80	84
Lal masoor	60	62	65
Moong dhuli	70	100	100
Chana black	30	32	32-34
Sugar	30	38	47
Rice (basmati)	30	32	35
Wheat flour	160	180	195

The Losers - Kissan-Consumer

The gainers - Hoarders-Blackmarketeers

claims by the government. While everyone is generally affected, the condition of those below the poverty line is unspeakable. Poverty in India is widespread with the nation estimated to have a third of the world's poor. According to the 2005 World Bank estimate, 42% of India's population still falls below the international poverty line of \$1.25 a day. According to a report submitted by SD Tendulkar, the former chairman of Prime Minister's economic advisory council India has 38 per cent population below poverty line (BPL). An NC Saxena committee formed by government in June 2009 reported that 50 per cent people are under BPL. In 2007, Arjun Sengupta, associated with National commission for enterprises in unorganised sector, said that 77 per cent of Indians are in BPL. A couple of years ago, NSSO, the national sampling government organisation, has thrown a figure in the public domain that about 70 per cent of populations in India don't even spend Rs. 20/- a day on them. It is almost unequivocally accepted that the incidence of poverty is very high in India.

Affecting quality of life

The poverty has direct connection with quality of life. The rising prices are further worsening this quality of life in India. The Indian population acutely suffers from malnourishment and undernourishment causing health hazards to a very huge population. India's 2005 National Family Health Survey found 46% of children below three to be underweight and 38% stunted. In a critical comment on India, World Bank states the level of malnutrition in India is nearly double that reported in Sub-Saharan Africa and it is unlikely that the United Nations' MDG (millennium development goals) target of

halving the incidence of underweight by 2015 will be met. Malnourishment rates are highest among scheduled tribes and scheduled castes, with 54% of them being stunted. Child malnutrition in rural areas is also much higher (51% stunted and 46% underweight). A recent survey found that levels of anaemia in children and women had worsened compared to seven years ago -- around 56 percent of women and 79 percent of children below three years old were anaemic. UNICEF officials said in a report two years back that there had been negligible progress in improving the immunisation of children with the survey finding nearly 44 percent of children being inoculated against illnesses such as measles and polio compared to 42 percent seven years ago.

In such circumstances, rising prices are causing great havoc to the people in general and those living below poverty line in particular. Can India move ahead with the phenomenon like price rise which is reversing all the efforts made to improve the quality of life in India? In fact, the manner in which the issue has been so far treated only indicates the myopic vision and stunted understanding of UPA-II government which has failed to calculate the damage the rising prices are causing continuously. It has become a factor in Indian economy setting in motion trends of "reverse-development" offsetting any step taken on the path to strengthen developmental measures. Not acting on the issue of price rise which the UPA-II might describe as something akin to the policy of "masterly-inactivity" will not work as it is proving to be "criminal-inaction" on its part robbing people of their food, health and quality life.

UPA-II is failing to control

rising prices mainly because it lacks a vision that inspires its leaders to ameliorate the condition of the masses. It now banks on somehow befooling people at the time of elections through tokenism and hollow promises while acting contrary to people's expectations while coming to the power. The only mantra that guides it is the mantra of power. Somehow coming to the power and then using it to serve vested interests of different cartels, profiteers, hoarders and black marketers is the guiding principle of the Congress party. That is why its promise to rein in prices within 100 days of coming to power has come a cropper. It could not uphold its promises to the masses because promises made to its patrons constituted of various cartels, profiteers, hoarders and black marketers outweighed its commitments to the people.

NDA promoted Antyodaya

The NDA government led by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had taken wide ranging initiatives under Antyodaya programmes to ameliorate the distress of the poor. The entire tenure of NDA government witnessed stable prices owing to prudent and farsighted economic politics and fiscal management. Special provision for BPL families under PDS was the result of such initiatives. The first step that UPA took on coming to power was to cut short the food grains quota for BPL families under PDS. Now its criminal complicity in allowing the hoarders, profiteers and black maketeers cartels stops it from arresting the trends of unprecedented price rise. Congress led UPA is bereft of the concept of Antyodaya which is inspired by nationalism and development. It lacks the philosophy for national cohesiveness and inclusive growth.

It can only intensify social divisions for its political ends. That is why Congress led UPA is unable to control the rising prices.

While India's growth indicators may point towards emergence of a strong economy, are we really making progress which can bring prosperity to the masses - we cannot say yes. While more than 70 millions of the India's population is reeling under acute poverty there are ministers who roll in wealth and choose to stay in five star hotels on the tax payer's money. The UPA-II ministers are insensitive to the rising prices just because they are not hurt by these themselves. They can revel on flying in economy class forgetting that there are still a large number of people in India who have neither seen train nor witnessed electricity. Even talk of flying is beyond their imagination. But Congress has a culture to catering to the interests of its patrons. Rising sugar prices are an example. It is not the first time that Shri Sharad Pawar is indulging in it. Earlier, Shri Kalpanath Rai, a Congress minister, too had effected heavy rise in sugar prices acting under the pressure of Sugar lobby. Whenever Congress has been in power, price rise has been witnessed by the masses. Currently, emboldened by their victories in the recent elections, the UPA has started taking the people for granted. If the people can overwhelmingly vote for it despite the sky-rocketing prices, it thinks, there is hardly any need to do anything to contain prices. But that would be disastrous both for the government and the people. The people of India has enormous reservoir of patience. But if it bursts, the government may not be able to stand its fury and get uprooted in the fury of flood of peoples' anger. Masses can befooled for some time, but not for all the times to come. ■

BJP denounces UPA efforts to shift blame on states

In a statement issued on January 15 BJP denounces Central Govt. efforts to put the blame on states for the price rise. Argument by Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar that states are not lifting the wheat and rice made available to them is ridiculous. The Central Govt. is not offering the states any subsidy. It wants to charge the states at the rate of procurement cost in addition to transportation cost from Ludhiana. This is impractical and unviable option. This suggestion is politically motivated with the intent to shift the blame on the state for the situation for which they are not responsible.

This was stated by BJP National Spokesperson and MP Shri Prakash Javadekar on January 15 that the best way to tame the inflation is to release enough quantities of food grains in the open market, through transparent tendering system from buffer stocks. This measure alone can impact the prices immediately. The second step which is needed at this hour is to change rules and regulations for stocks of food grains. Central Govt. has failed to address this issue of amending these rules despite various suggestions. Central Govt. has also failed to take timely decisions regarding import export of food grains, which is causing lot of pressure on prices.

Govt. has permitted import of raw sugar at zero duty up to end 2010. This won't ease the prices in near future as Indian demand pushes the International prices further. BJP wants to ask the Govt. why it allowed export of 48 lakh tons of sugar @ of Rs. 12, knowing fully well that the sugarcane area has shrunk? Central Govt. is fully responsible for this disastrous decision. Sharad Pawar must take responsibility for that. Instead of accepting the fault, Agriculture Ministry is offering a lame excuse of not getting correct data from the states.

On 11th Jan, Sharad Pawar said that he is not astrologer to predict as to when prices will come down. We want to ask how come on 13th Jan, he becomes astrologer to predict that the prices will come down within 10 days? This is nothing but UPA's attempt to fool the people. ■

UPA cheated *aam aadmi*

BJP on January 12 lashed the Congress led UPA government on the rising prices of essential commodities and said that the Congress-led government has deceived and cheated the *aam aadmi*. BJP national spokesman Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters, "BJP is unable to understand why the UPA government was unable to contain prices with an Economist Prime Minister". Strongly criticizing the Union Agriculture Minister for his comments that he is not an astrologer, Shri Prasad said, he should refrain from making such irresponsible statements, and the Prime Minister, UPA chairperson Smt Sonia Gandhi and Shri Pawar should address the issue and answer the nation how it has failed on price rise of essential commodities. He said barring the rise of onion prices during the NDA regime, the prices of essential commodities were stable for six years. ■

Keep beef out of games menu : Rajnath Singh

Text of letter written on January 13

I would like to draw your attention towards a resolution adopted unanimously by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to keep beef out of the menu for the Commonwealth Games scheduled later in October this year. These Games would be held in the area which comes under the jurisdiction of the MCD. Therefore the MCD resolution becomes significant as it reflects the cultural and religious sentiments of the majority of people living in Delhi. This resolution not only shares the sentiment and concern of the people in Delhi but also reverberates the voice of the entire nation. Cow in India is considered sacred and this thought has been integral to our ancient cultural ethos for ages. No wonder even the founding fathers of our Constitution also advocated a ban on cow slaughter (article-48 Indian Constitution). The Commonwealth Games have become an important event where we should use every possible opportunity to highlight our cultural values and age old traditions. By removing beef from the menu card the organizing committee would not only empathize with the popular sentiment but also save the Games from agitations and other possible controversies. We in the BJP believe that the guests and participants coming to Delhi for Commonwealth Games should be given the best of facilities and welcomed with warm hospitality but it does not mean we should ignore the sentiments of our own people. Keeping these facts in mind the organizing committee should remove beef from the Commonwealth Games' menu card and attenuate any

possibility of outrage or anger over this sensitive issue. (Rajnath Singh) To, Shri Suresh Kalmadi, The Chairman, Organizing Committee, Commonwealth Games, New Delhi.

Shri Rajnath Singh Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) Date-13 January, 2010 I would like

to draw your attention towards a resolution adopted unanimously by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to keep beef out of the menu for the Commonwealth Games scheduled later in October this year. These Games would be held in the area



which comes under the jurisdiction of the MCD. Therefore the MCD resolution becomes significant as it reflects the cultural and religious sentiments of the majority of people



BJP to gheraos hotels serving beef

The BJP-led Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has declared to carry out demonstrations across the city if beef is served to foreign guests and sportspersons during the Commonwealth Games.

"If the players, officers and foreign guests are served beef, the party councillors and workers will picket and gherao the hotel as well as the offices of the Commonwealth Games Organising committees. The city will witness unprecedented unrest," said Subhash Arya, leader of the MCD House.

The BJP councillors said they would lodge FIRs against the officials and the hotel management for serving beef. The legislative wing of the civic agency has written to Lieutenant Governor Shri Tejendra Khanna to intervene in the matter.

The civic body has unanimously adopted the resolution that beef should be removed from the Commonwealth Games menu. It has also recommended prohibition of import for the purpose.

"We worship cows, how can we allow them to be slaughtered and served to be eaten? During 1994, the then Delhi Chief Minister Madan Lal Khurana had imposed a ban on cow slaughter, processing and sale of its meat. How can they serve beef during the CWG?" asked Shri Ram Kishan Singhal, chairman of MCD's standing committee.

The councillor said the Games Village comes under the MCD area and they will not allow beef to be served to guests or sportspersons. ■ (FOC)

Come clean on granting deemed university status to fake institutions : Ravi Shanker Prasad

Arjun Singh is mainly responsible

The BJP on January 19 demanded that the government should come clean on the issue of granting of deemed university status to some fake institutes. Expressing its resentment over granting of deemed university status in large numbers during UPA-I, the party said government "played havoc" with higher education in the country.

BJP's national spokesperson Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad said, "Why was Arjun Singh (former HRD minister) distributing deemed university status like a big largesse?"

Describing it as a "cruel joke", Shri Prasad said that an institution has to meet set criteria for

infrastructure and status before it could become a deemed university.

"During the NDA rule, HRD minister Shri Murli Manohar Joshi gave deemed university status to institutions like the IITs and IIMs," Shri Prasad said. He further alleged that Shri Singh had flouted the UGC regulations which apply in such cases. The BJP leader described former HRD minister Shri Arjun Singh's tenure as "full of populism and opportunism".

Hacking of PMO computers

Shri Prasad also expressed concern over hacking of computers in the PMO allegedly by Chinese hackers. He further said this has reinforced the Opposition's



contention on the "aggressive designs of the neighbouring country". "If the National Security Advisor's computer is being hacked, how will this country remain secure, he asked. This is an alarming situation. It reinforces our allegation of aggressive Chinese designs," added Shri Prasad. (FOC) ■



living in Delhi. This resolution not only shares the sentiment and concern of people in Delhi but also reverberates the voice of the entire nation. Cow in India is considered sacred and this thought has been integral to our ancient cultural ethos for ages. No wonder even the founding fathers of our Constitution also advocated a ban on cow slaughter (article-48 Indian Constitution). The Commonwealth Games have become an important event where we should use every possible opportunity to highlight our cultural values and age old traditions. By removing beef from the menu card the organizing committee would not only empathize with the popular sentiment but also save the Games from agitations and other possible controversies. We in the BJP believe that the guests and participants coming to Delhi for Commonwealth Games should be given the best of facilities and welcomed with warm hospitality but it does not mean we should ignore the sentiments of our own people. Keeping these facts in mind the organizing committee should remove beef from the Commonwealth Games' menu card and attenuate any possibility of outrage or anger over this sensitive issue. ■

C.P. Singh is the new Jharkhand Speaker

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Shri C.P. Singh was elected as the new speaker of the newly elected Jharkhand assembly. He became the fifth speaker of the Jharkhand assembly.

Shri C.P. Singh had been the legislator for four times. Six sets of nomination papers were filed in favour of Shri C.P. Singh. The ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), BJP and Janata Dal-United (JD-U), the main opposition parties Jharkhand Vikas Morcha-Prajatantrik (JVM-P) and Congress proposed his name for the post.

Shri C.P. Singh becomes the first BJP speaker of the Jharkhand assembly. He was first elected in 1995 from the Ranchi assembly seat and since then he had been representing the same constituency. ■

India unwisely provided China cover

By Brahma Chellaney

By making common cause with China, India has presented itself, inadvertently, as a major global polluter by making common cause with China, says the writer. India needs to embark on a correction course. Otherwise, it risks making the same mistake it did during the Jawaharlal Nehru era on Security Council permanent membership

China is a schizophrenic power, a developing country on select international issues but a rising superpower that sees itself in the same league as the US in other matters, with its new muscular confidence on display. At the Copenhagen summit, China was the former: it loudly emphasised its membership in the developing world and quietly used poor countries, especially from Africa, to raise procedural obstacles in the negotiations.

China, the world's largest net polluter whose carbon emissions are growing at the fastest rate, was the principal target at Copenhagen. But China cleverly deflected pressure by hiding behind small, poor countries and forging a negotiating alliance with India and two other major developing countries, Brazil and South Africa, known as the BASIC bloc.

China escaped without making a binding commitment on carbon-emissions cuts, at least for now. But the big loser was carbonlight India, which undercut its interest by getting bracketed with the world's largest polluter and being compelled to agree to national mitigations actions under undefined international monitoring. In the process, it has helped formulate,

even if unintentionally, the broad terms for revising what admirably suits its interests in the existing climate-change regime.

As for China, although it hid behind India and the other BASIC-bloc countries at Copenhagen, western leaders did blow its cover after the summit, with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown taking the lead to call it the principal wrecker at

India, thus, not only aligned itself with the wrong group but it also presented itself inadvertently as a major global polluter by making common cause with China, whose carbon profile is more akin to America's. China now is responsible for 24% of global carbon emissions with 19.8% of the world population.

Copenhagen.

The post-Copenhagen western attacks on China could suggest that Beijing would increasingly find it hard in the future to blunt criticism of its policies and practices by jumping on the developing world's bandwagon whenever it suits its interests. As the world's largest and longest-surviving autocracy that still flouts international norms on trade, human rights and currency, China is likely to gradually get exposed as a self-serving power without comparing whose interests

are at odds with the rest of the world, developed and developing.

With climate talks likely to resume this year, India has to learn the lesson from its folly in providing diplomatic cover to China.

First, China has little in common with India. With its carbon-intensive, manufacturing-based economy, China's per-capita carbon emissions are four times higher than

India's. India has the lowest per-capita emissions among all important developing countries. India's per-capita emissions are just 26% of the world average.

Second, in the run up to Copenhagen, India gratuitously signed a five-year understanding with China to present a united front in international climate-change

negotiations, with the minister of state for environment going to the extent of saying that there is no difference between the Indian and Chinese negotiating positions. What is common between the two countries when China openly rejects India's approach that per-capita emission levels and historic contributions to the build-up of greenhouse gases should form the objective criteria for carbon mitigation? China, as the world's back factory, wants a different formula that marks down carbon

intensity linked to export industries.

Third, the price for providing cover to China is that India got roped in to commit itself to mitigation. Instead of a deal being struck between the world's two largest polluters, the US and China, the US was forced to cut a deal with the BASIC bloc. India, however, has little in common even with South Africa and Brazil in carbon or industrial-development level.

India, thus, not only aligned itself with the wrong group but it also presented itself inadvertently as a major global polluter by making common cause with China, whose carbon profile is more akin to Americas.

China now is responsible for 24% of global carbon emissions with 19.8% of the world population, but India's current contribution does not match even half its population size. Yet, instead of dehyphenating itself

from China, India went into the negotiations as if it were joined at the hip with that adversarial neighbour.

How much it suits China to be

- ◆ ***Instead of gaining anything by aligning itself with China at Copenhagen, India undercut its interest by getting bracketed with the world's largest polluter***
- ◆ ***Despite India's emissions at just 25% of China's, it had to commit mitigation***
- ◆ ***India must learn a lesson from its mistake of providing diplomatic cover to China***

seen in the same class as India on carbon issues than with its real polluting peer, the US, was made clear by the hurried post-Copenhagen phone call the Chinese foreign minister made to his Indian counterpart to emphasise continuing Sino-Indian collaboration. But when it comes to global or Asian geopolitics, China

insists India (like Japan) is in a junior league.

New Delhi can be sure that when criteria for mitigation action is defined in future negotiations, China will work to unduly burden India by insisting that weight be given to elements other than per-capita emission levels and historic contributions.

Having unwittingly aided the Chinese gameplan in Copenhagen, India needs to embark on a correction course. Otherwise, it risks making the same mistake it did during the Jawaharlal

Nehru era on UN Security Council permanent membership.

When the US and the Soviet Union offered India a permanent seat in 1955, Nehru demurred, saying the seat rightfully belonged to China. Now, China is the main obstacle to India's Security Council aspirations.

Courtesy: The Economic Times

Rajnath tells cadre, don't shun ideology

Former BJP National president Shri Rajnath Singh on January 21 said the commitment among workers was the biggest challenge before the party. The senior leader felt the party workers should shun the habit of turning rebel or quitting the party in case of being denied ticket to contest election.

"Workers are getting interested only in contesting elections. If a worker is denied ticket, he quits the party. This is not commitment to ideology. Steps should be taken to arrest this tendency. Our future programmes should keep this in mind," Shri Singh told media persons.

He drew a parallel between the BJP and the CPI(M) saying both were cadre-based parties and the latter started losing its grip on the ground when the ideological commitment of its workers got diluted. "The BJP has to see that this does not happen to it. We still enjoy the goodwill of the people and the cadre is our strength," he said.(FOC) ■



Telangana: inevitable and desirable

By G. Kishan Reddy

The Congress-led UPA government has mishandled the highly sensitive issue of the carving out a new State of Telangana out of the present Andhra Pradesh. BJP has already declared its unstinted support for the new State. In the article the writer has highlighted how the new States of Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand have recorded tremendous progress, although Jharkhand could not come up to that mark, only because of other political considerations and instability.



In the winter of 1953, the Fazal Ali Commission was set up to reorganise the States of the Indian Republic. Its recommendation to go about creating States on linguistic lines, indirectly paved the way for the creation of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra was formed from the northern districts of the erstwhile Madras state and the southern districts of the erstwhile Hyderabad state -- though the committee itself did not advocate such a merger and was against it.

Fifty-six winters later, the very concept of the creation of States based on linguistic lines has become passé. We need to look for fresh parameters for the creation of States, and that has to be based on holistic development on economic and social lines for better administration and management. This fact has been proven with the creation of Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand from Bihar and Uttaranchal from Uttar Pradesh.

Two issues that seem to be at the centre of the contention between the two regions of Andhra Pradesh is the future of Hyderabad and the repercussions in terms of the sharing of river waters from the completed and planned irrigation

projects after the division of the State. Any entity, political or otherwise, that is able to find pragmatic solutions to this conundrum would not only earn the respect of the people of the State but also help set a precedent in the matter of contentious State divisions in the future.

Economics of small States

The case for small States can be argued with two parameters of macroeconomic statistics from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. The first parameter is the percentage increase in Gross Domestic Product for States between 1999-2000, when the smaller States were created, and 2007-2008. India's overall GDP increased by 75 per cent during this time period. During the same period, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal recorded more than 100 per cent, 150 per cent and 180 per cent increase respectively. These rates were much above the rate at which national GDP increased. This clearly indicates that the recent creation of smaller States was a step in the right direction.

Experts have often argued that the creation of smaller States has been at the expense of the States they were created from. For all its

lack of governance, Uttar Pradesh grew by more than 21 per cent of the national average during this time period.

The second parameter, the percentage contribution of States to national GDP, helps negate the myth of smaller States growing at the expense of the States they are created from. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh each contributed the same amount to national GDP. While the contributions of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh increased by 0.01 per cent and 0.06 per cent respectively, Uttar Pradesh's contribution to national GDP increased by 1.2 per cent during the same time period. This is more than Chhattisgarh's percentage increase in the contribution of 0.64 per cent to national GDP, the highest increase among the three newly created smaller States.

Capital politics

Hyderabad is an integral part of Telangana and a Telangana State without Hyderabad as the capital is inconceivable. However, the militant rhetoric of some political parties has made people of other areas feel unwelcome, creating an air of mistrust among the Telugu-speaking people of various regions. This is not only constitutionally illegal but

also extremely foolish as it affects the image of Brand Hyderabad. Everybody who has come to Hyderabad in search of a better quality of life must be protected. Rhetorical slogans such as Telangana waalon jaago, Andhra waalon bhago gives the impression of an exclusionist movement that forces people of the non-Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh out of Hyderabad rather than a movement where the people of Telangana want greater autonomy for their region. Significantly, when Maharashtra and Gujarat were created from the then Bombay state on the recommendation of the States Reorganisation Commission, there was fear about Mumbai losing its importance as a financial nerve-centre as a lot of investment in Mumbai had been made by Gujarati business people. The creation of two separate States did not halt Mumbai's rapid development. In fact, it additionally paved the way for the development of Ahmedabad and Surat as alternative financial centres. Hyderabad can emulate the same model. As in the past 400 years, the city can continue to welcome people with open arms rather than close its gates to fresh talent and creative ideas.

The people of the Andhra and Rayalaseema regions feel that the benefits reaped from Hyderabad must be accessible to all those who have been equal stakeholders in the city's development. The solution to this is not alternative models such as according Hyderabad the status of a Union Territory or making Hyderabad a joint capital for the States carved out of present-day February 01-15, 2010 ○ 23

Andhra Pradesh. These solutions are just not practical.

A better approach would be to plan a special financial package for the development of a new State capital for the non-Telangana region. Pragmatism would dictate that the special package be funded through some form of cess on the city of Hyderabad for a limited period rather than running to large financial institutions for loans, as has been proposed by some political entities.

India's overall GDP increased by 75 per cent during this time period. During the same period, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal recorded more than 100 per cent, 150 per cent and 180 per cent increase respectively. These rates were much above the rate at which national GDP increased. This clearly indicates that the recent creation of smaller States was a step in the right direction.

Social dynamics of water

About 70 per cent of the catchment area of the Krishna and close to 80 per cent of the catchment area of the Godavari is located in the Telangana region. Across the world, water distribution and sharing schemes between two areas is calculated on the basis of the percentage of the catchment area that lies in the region.

Other factors that influence water-sharing accords is the population of a given region, the

projected usage of water for industry and the domestic population, and the physical contours of the region through which the river flows.

The finale

The Telangana agitation is the only such movement in India that involves a capital city located in the region that is fighting for separation from the main State. This clearly reflects on the lack of governance and civic administration in this area as the benefits of having a State capital in the hinterland have not trickled down to other areas in that region. Smaller States still need a good and vibrant administration to be recipes for success. Chhattisgarh is a fine example of how an effective administration could turn around a State in all aspects of development. The

development that has happened in the Chhattisgarh region from Independence till 2000 has in fact been less than the development that has taken place from the time a new State was created in 2000 till now. The first Telangana Chief Minister would have done a great service to the infant State should he take a prescription from Chhattisgarh's most famous Ayurvedic doctor.

(Shri G. Kishan Reddy is the floor leader of the BJP in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly. ■



Entrepreneurs & professionals can correct problems in governance: Shourie

From Our Correspondent

"Entrepreneurs and professionals, the two classes making a new India," have the ability to correct problems in governance. It can only be done by (these) the two classes. He added that public discourse was one of the key instruments to put pressure on the political class and, thereby, "improve public policy and those who are in public policy."

This was stated by former Union Minister and BJP leader Shri Arun Shourie at the time of launch of his 25th book titled *"We Must Have No Price and Everyone Must Know That We Have No Price"*. The book is based on his first-hand experience in government, politics, media, as well as his singularly wide-ranging research.

Speaking on China he said, that for over a decade, he had been writing on how Beijing viewed India as a potential nuisance in South Asia which must be kept in place and so was helping build Pakistan with nuclear weapons and militarizing Tibet. And although India had a friendly government in place in Bangladesh, Dhaka, too, has a military pact with Beijing. The shortsightedness and pressures of internal coalition politics of India's government led

to Sri Lanka turning to China for help and arms. "We must learn to face the facts...Our society does not want to face the facts because then we have to change our conduct," said Shourie. "In South East Asia all over, these things are



being watched," he said, underlining that even the highest policymakers in these countries did not speak in public against China. "Our image should not be of our national bird peacock. We should be porcupines," he added.

He noted that of the 81 members of the Assembly in Jharkhand, 59 had criminal records. "Do you think China is not watching that?" he asked. He said one could not engage the government in matters of policy unless one examined them in detail. "We have to ensure that our persons in public life are honest, competent, dedicated to the country," he said, in response to a question. Shri Shourie, who was

the Disinvestment Minister in the NDA government, said in India, reforms had taken place in two spurts, from 1991 to 1993 and from 1996 to 2004 beginning. "(This) stop, go, approach doesn't give people confidence," said Shri

Shourie, who was responding to questions about the moves by the Congress-led UPA government to sell government stake in PSUs, adding that BALCO, which was disinvested during the NDA regime, was now one of the largest aluminum producers in the world and had

increased production by 250 per cent.

He added that IPOs were being planned now by the Centre was because the deficit unmanageable which was the worst reason to sell, and would not change the character of the enterprise.

He also highly praised former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and said he was one person about whom it could be said he had no price and would not budge from what he had decided.

Shri Shourie said Shri Vajpayee insisted on doing things regardless of the cost - and did not do some things despite the advantages offered. ■

Malaysia strips Hindus of rights

By Sandhya Jain

A fourth generation descendant of Tamil indentured labour, P Uthayakumar, HINDRAF legal adviser and secretary-general, Human Rights Party of Malaysia, has returned from New Delhi's Pravasi Bharatiya Divas jamboree to face trial for 'sedition', a charge made by the ruling United Malay National Organisation regime.

Advocates Uthayakumar and M Manoharan spent 514 days in Kamunting Jail under the draconian Internal Security Act for leading the spectacular one-lakh-strong HINDRAF rally of 2008, which demanded equal citizenship rights for Malaysian Hindus and opposed the ethnic cleansing of Tamil Hindus in that Islamic country. If convicted, the duo could face a three-year prison term, a real possibility given the nature of the Malaysian judiciary and the studied indifference of the token creamy layer of establishment Hindus.

The Hindu organisation has been banned since, though it poses no threat to Malaysian social or political stability. As India's human rights 'industry' only serves Western geo-political interests, it cannot be expected to speak up for suffering Malay Hindus. Hence New Delhi should take up the matter with Kuala Lumpur and urge it to permit HINDRAF to work as a non-governmental minorities and human rights organisation.

Sadly, the HINDRAF leaders who came here to present the Malaysian Indian Minority & Human Rights Violations Annual Report 2009, Malaysia Truly Racist, received only a perfunctory hearing

by official New Delhi.

The HINDRAF & HRP leaders urged Foreign Minister SM Krishna to diplomatically espouse the cause of the Indian minority which the Malaysian Government is subjecting to systemic racist, religious extremist, and supremacist policies that keep 70 per cent of Indians desperately poor and outside the national mainstream development. As Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak is coming to India with a trade mission on January 19, a firm word from New Delhi could have a timely impact.

Mr Uthayakumar laments that Indians are denied equality and equal opportunities in direct contravention of Articles 8 and 12 of the Malaysian Federal Constitution, created by the founding fathers. Today, the state has denied birth certificates and citizenship documents to nearly 300,000 minority Indians; hence they cannot secure admission to kindergarten and primary schools, deserving students are denied places in elite schools and institutions of higher learning, loans and scholarships, and licences to do trades and related occupations.

He informed the Foreign Minister that Hindu temples, schools, burial grounds, or settlements are regularly demolished or relocated arbitrarily; poor and landless Indians excluded from agricultural land schemes; Indians denied top jobs in Government, corporate and business sectors.

So horrendous is the discrimination that Indians are arrested without cause and released only when no charges can be framed

against them; over 90 per cent deaths in police custody are of Hindus. Every week, 1.3 persons on average are shot by the police; 95 per cent are Hindus. A staggering 70 per cent of Indian Malaysians have been reduced to hardcore poor, poor or working class, with 90 per cent being in the daily or monthly wage-earning category. As the racism and religious persecution is all state-sponsored - ordinary Hindus have no problems with ordinary Malay Muslims - there is a strong case for the Government of India to take up the human rights violations and religious freedoms of these besieged Hindus.

One of the worst problems is forced conversions to Islam, which has become particularly acute since 2001, despite the provision for freedom of religion entrenched in Article 11 in the Malaysian Constitution. A recent case that has shaken the country involves a 27-year-old Tamil Hindu, Bangaramma, who was converted as a minor in a Government orphanage and registered as a Muslim without her knowledge. She continued to regard herself as a Hindu, worshipping and marrying a Hindu in a temple, according to Vedic rites.

Bangaramma is now fighting for her religious freedom in order to live as a Hindu with her Hindu husband and two children, as the Government is refusing to register her marriage and to acknowledge her husband as father of her children. Worse, she is being threatened with the charge of apostasy, which in Islamic Malaysia means she can be forcibly separated from her husband and children (aged two and seven). It is obvious

that the whole controversy is aimed at forcing the entire family to accept Islam.

Another acute problem is the deliberate attempt to reduce the number of Hindu professionals in the country. At independence, innumerable top Government jobs were held by educated Hindus, but gradually Hindus are being frustrated in their quest for higher education. Some of the reputed, and relatively cheaper, medical institutions in Russia, China and East Asia have been de-recognised by the Government so that Hindus cannot practice medicine when they return to the country. The number of medical seats for Hindus was reduced from 16 to one in 2004 (out of 2,000).

Students also need a Government no-objection certificate to study overseas, and this is another obstacle.

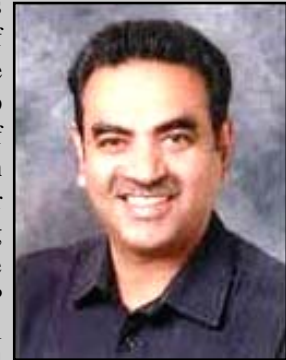
Leaders of HINDRAF have urged the Government of India to stop offering medical seats to Malaysia on a Government-to-Government basis, and to grant the seats directly to Malaysian Indian students alone. This is a legitimate request, and the task can be easily executed via the Indian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur. India could also consider scholarships for Malaysian Indian students wishing to pursue other professional courses such as pharmacy, IT, and such. More direct pressure can be exerted by sourcing India's imports of palm oil from Indonesia instead of Malaysia; curbing further Indian investments and discouraging Indian IT professionals from working in Malaysia; and, choosing to work with Malaysian corporations with a decent Indian Malaysian equity participation or employment of Indian Malaysians, especially at the top level.

The Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi assured HINDRAF he was aware of the plight of poor and working class Malaysian Indians and would champion their cause in India and with Kuala Lumpur, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Ms Sushma Swaraj, expressed concern at their plight. ■

Courtesy: The Pioneer

Sanjay Tandon elected Chandigarh BJP President

Shri Sanjay Tandon, on January 18, has been unanimously elected President of Bharatiya Janata Party Chandigarh unit. He was declared elected by Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Central Observer for the election of State President in the presence of Smt. Kiran Ghai, Incharge for party affairs for Chandigarh and Purshotam Mahajan Acting President, Shri Raghubir Lal Arora State Election Incharge Shri Satya Pal Jain, Ex-M.P were present. Earlier to this Shri Yash Pal Mahajan was elected as Member for National Council of BJP.



Shri Sanjay Tandon started as a Member State Executive of BJP Chandigarh in 1995. He became Convener of CA Cell, Chandigarh in 2002. After this he was appointed General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party, Chandigarh in 2007. Now he has been elected as President of State Unit. (FOC) ■

UPA Govt. falters on progress reports

The UPA government's promised to bring out quarterly progress reports of pro-poor schemes has fallen flat. According to *the Hindustan Times* report, the ministries involved in implementation of Bharat Nirman programmes have so far failed to bring out the second quarterly reports. The reports were to be made public by the first week of January.

The UPA-II had promised to bring out "suitably institutionalised quarterly progress reports on flagship programmes" in the Presidential address on June 4 last year.

The first quarter also saw reluctance on the part of ministries to come out with such reports until Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh intervened in the matter following criticism from various quarters.

The reports on flagship schemes such as National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and four other schemes were also kept in public domain. ■

Veteran CPM leader Jyoti Basu passes away



Former West Bengal Chief Minister Shri Jyoti Basu passed away at a Kolkata hospital on January 16. He was 95.

Shri Basu suffered multi-organ failure and was on a temporary pacemaker .

He is survived by his son Chandan Basu and several grandchildren.

BJP leaders have expressed their condolences on the demise of Shri Jyoti Basu

His stature and credibility led to his long innings in political life: Gadkari

The BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari said , "He was one of the tallest leaders of contemporary India. He was a leader committed to the weaker sections of the society.

He remained firm and committed to his ideology and his sense of idealism. His stature and credibility led to his long innings in political life." (FOC) ■

His demise has ended a chapter in politics: Vajpayee

Former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, expressing his condolence message, said "He was an able administrator and a hard working political leader." "He not only created a record for being Chief minister of West Bengal for the longest duration but took several visionary steps," Shri Vajpayee added .He said Basu lived by his conviction and had reached the post of chief minister through his hard work.

"His demise has ended a chapter in politics," Vajpayee said in the message.

He was a stalwart... a great leader: Advani

Reacting on demise of Shri Jyoti Basu BJP Parliamentary Committee Chairman Shri L K Advani said "He was a stalwart... a great leader. He held the CPM fort in West Bengal for a long time. The Communist movement has been affected. Basu was in the line of great leaders like E M S Namboodiripad, Bhupesh Gupta and Indrajit Gupta. Our ideologies were different. Still, going by his greatness, I respect him and pay my tributes."

His demise has left a big void in Indian politics: Rajnath

Former BJP National President and MP Shri Rajnath Singh said that he was deeply saddened to know that Shri Jyoti Basu, the doyen of Left wing politics in India, had passed away today after prolonged illness. He added Shri Basu rendered his services for the upliftment of the working class and other weaker sections of the society. "He was highly regarded by the people of India in general and West Bengal in particular as an honest and able administrator" Shri Singh said.

"His demise has left a big void in Indian politics" he added. He told "I offer my heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family". ■

Indian Bar Council impressed by Gujarat's initiatives and achievements

Indian Bar-Council and eminent Lawyers from various States called on Chief Minister Shri Narendrabhai Modi on 10th January 2010. They were impressed by Gujarat's innovative initiatives to bring about quality changes in justice delivery system. Judiciary plays a decisive role in democratic set-up. They welcomed the reform-initiatives taken in Gujarat. Credit goes to the initiatives taken by the C.M.

A delegation of Indian Bar-Council, under the leadership of Shri Suraj Narayan Prasad Sinha-Chairman of Indian Bar-Council-made a courtesy call to Chief Minister Shri Narendrabhai Modi. Office bearers of Indian Bar Council, members of various States' Bar Council, Minister of State Shri Amitbhai Shah were present on the occasion.

All the members of Bar-Council unanimously welcomed the State's pioneering legislative move of making voting mandatory in local Body's -Stahnik Swarajni Sanstha- elections. They sought details from Chief Minister about 'Mandatory Voting, Provision of Negative Voting' Shri Narendrabhai Modi said, 'It would help in many ways. Political parties would have to select good-candidates. The ethical provisions would further strengthen the rights of the voter. It would further consolidate the ideals of democracy. Now, voters would actively participate in the decisive process. Common citizen

can better prove his eminence.'

The eminent lawyers and members of National Bar Council appreciated the initiatives taken by Gujarat to implement qualitative changes for expediting justice delivery system especially the Evening-Courts. It has remarkably reduced the numbers of pending-cases before the Court. They lauded the visionary leadership of Gujarat. They also appreciated the constructive cooperation from the justice-delivery mechanism in such initiatives.

Consultations included various aspects of bringing about qualitative changes in Justice Delivery framework.

CM Gujarat briefed them about the Digital-Law-Library and Bar-Law-Library. Education imparted at Gujarat Law University, in drafting Government

Laws. Training facilities for the Judges. Educational facilities offered to the Judges at Forensic Science University."

Chief Minister expressed his resolve for achieving the goal of zero pendency. Because of the constructive and positive response from the Justice Delivery System, burden of pending cases has been reduced. Evening courts have remained successful in reducing the burden of pending cases.

Chairman Bar Council of India, Shri S.N.P.Sinha admired the initiatives of Evening Courts. Gujarat has really created better legal infrastructural facilities for Justice Delivery System.

Vice-Chairman Shri J.R.Benival, Managing Trustee Shri Ashok Deb and others office bearers felicitated the Chief Minister. ■



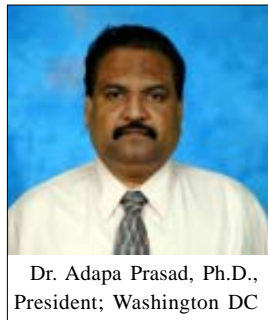
Jharkhand Chief Minister Shri Shibu Soren called on former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at his residence in New Delhi.

OFBJP-USA Elects National Council and Executive Committee

OFBJP in USA has completed its organizational elections for the term 2010 - 11. Dr. Mahesh Mehta, the Chairman of the Election Committee conducted the election and declared the result on Nov 24, 2009. Twenty eight National Council (NC) members representing six zones in USA were elected consensually. These 28 NC members unanimously elected Shri Jayesh Patel as the President - Elect for the term 2010-11. The current President-Elect, Dr. Adapa Prasad took charge as the President for the term 2010 - 11 on Jan 01, 2010 from the past President Shri Suresh Jani.

OFBJP National Executive Committee 2010-11

Dr. Adapa Prasad has been serving OFBJP for the last 10 years in various capacities. He has been an active Indian American community leader in Washington DC area serving several ethnic and national organizations in various capacities. A former ABVP activist, he has been associated with American think-tanks and US Congress on several issues pertaining to Indian Community, Bharat, and Global Terrorism. A graduate from Banaras Hindu University has been living in USA for the last 20 years. Professionally, he has been a scientist, academician, and IT professional.



Dr. Adapa Prasad, Ph.D.,
President; Washington DC

Shri Jayesh Patel has been serving OFBJP for the last 7 years in various capacities. Active Indian American community leader in New Jersey/New York area, he has been serving several ethnic and national organizations including Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), and temple trusts in various capacities. His family lives in Gujarat and he was active in VHP and Sangh activities in India. Professionally he is a Civil Engineer and his wife Shefali is a microbiology-scientist.



Shri Jayesh Patel
President- Elect;
New Jersey

Organizing Secretary:

Shri Chandrakant Patel, Florida

Treasurer:

Shri Krishna Reddy A., New Jersey

Vice Presidents:

Shri Rajendra P. Singh, New York
Shri Raj Dave, Illinois
Shri Ramesh Shah, Texas

General Secretaries:

Shri Ram V. Kamath, New Jersey
Prof. Rao Mulpuri, Washington DC
Shri Amar Upadhyay, Illinois

Jt. General Secretaries:

Dr. Kurmanath Chadalawada, Missouri
Shri V.K.Sabhpathy, New York
Dr. Satish Misra, Washington DC

Past President:

Shri Suresh Jani, New Jersey

OFBJP Area Coordinators 2010 - 11

Shri Raju Patel, New Jersey
Shri Raghu Varma, Washington, DC
Shri Srinivas Vishwanath, Missouri
Shri Gaurav Khatri, California
Shri Kiran Senapati, Florida
Shri Hitendra Modi, Texas

Committee Chairs and Committees will be constituted by the end of January 2010.

Contacts:

Dr. Mahesh Mehta: National Coordinator
Dr. Adapa Prasad: President
Shri Jayesh Patel: President -Elect
Shri Chandrakant Patel: Organizing General Secretary

(Released By: Public Relations and Media Committee, OFBJP-USA)

(FOC) ■

BJP demands CBI probe into Koda scam

Senior Jharkhand BJP leader Shri Saryu Roy on January 19 demanded CBI probe into multi-crore-corruption case involving the former Jharkhand Chief Minister Madhu Koda, and five former Ministers - Enos Ekka, Harinarayan Rai, Kamlesh, Bandhu Turkey and Bhanu Pratap Sahi.

Citing quotes from the Jharkhand High Court in an order (January 10, 2010), he went on to add that the Court has asked the State Government, "As to what is the stand of the State regarding the question raised by the petitioner and whether the investigation in regard to the accused respondents is fit to be handed over to the CBI or not". "I think it is high time that the case should be handed to CBI since it is the apex investigating agency and can we even probe the links related to the case overseas. It would be better if the probe is done by CBI rather than the Vigilance department," he said.

Addressing the media, he said that the State Government should be serious in nailing the former Ministers involved in the cases of corruption and accumulating illegal assets. "I am of the opinion that the State Government should clear its stand on corruption and make order for CBI probe," he said.

He further said that investigation carried by Vigilance department so far is not satisfactory and moreover the department also lacks capable workforce. Since the network of the corruption case is wider it would be better. "We can take the examples of Delhi Government that gave orders for CBI probe in a similar kind of corruption case," he noted.

UTTARAKHAND

Nishank meets Ramesh over mining ban

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank met Union Environment Minister Shri Jairam Ramesh in New Delhi on January 20 and requested to allow mining in Gola River, which is closed for long, because thousands of daily wages workers have become unemployed.

The workers have been consistently protesting and creating problem for the State in maintain law and order so the CM requested the Ministry to do something

concrete to sort out this problem. Again the Chief Minister would meet him on January 21.

There is a need for mining in Gola, Dabka, Koshi and Sharda river, otherwise these rivers would invite floods in the nearby area so the Ministry should allow the State to do mining for six months immediately.

Meanwhile the State Government would study its effect on environment so that the Union Government can reach final conclusion. He also apprised him of a request that has been sent to the Union Environment Ministry regarding construction of 25-km long bypass road in between Jolly grant to Dehradun. Listening to the Chief Minister's request Shri Jairam assured that the Union Government would support the State as per the law. In this regard the Union Environment and Forest Ministry officials would sit with Uttarakhand Government officials to discuss pending issues in detail.

Madhya Pradesh

CM to embark on year-long 'Madhya Pradesh Banao' yatra

Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan would embark on a year-long 'Madhya Pradesh Banao' yatra on January 26. Shri Chouhan would travel throughout the State to inculcate the feeling of 'My MP' among the residents. As per the programme so far, Shri Chouhan would travel to different parts of the State for two to three days in a week. On January 26, he would start the yatra. During the yatra, he would also maintain direct dialogue with common people, as he did in the past.

Sources said that during the visit, Shri Chouhan would review development works in far-flung areas and receive feedback. Barring the days when he is busy in the Assembly or other important programmes, he would continue the yatra.

During his travel, Shri Chouhan is also likely to raise the issue of simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha and Assembly. The Chief Minister is of the opinion that frequent polls and prior period of code of conduct were hampering developmental work in the State.

In the past one year, there were Assembly polls followed by Lok Sabha and civic polls and now panchayat polls are in progress. Shri Chouhan's proposal also found favour with Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abudllah. After writing to Members of Parliament across the party, he has now decided to write to Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and Chief Ministers of different States regarding simultaneous polls to Parliament and Assembly. ■