

## Our India

**Dr. Bala Krishna BVV**

Course Coordinator, Dept. of Political Science, Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh, India

### Abstract

India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, spanning a period of more than 4000 years, and witnessing the fusion of several customs and traditions, which are reflective of the rich culture and heritage of the Country.

The history of the nation gives a glimpse into the magnanimity of its evolution - from a Country reeling under colonialism, to one of the leading economies in the global scenario within a span of fifty years. More than anything, the nationalistic fervour of the people is the contributing force behind the culmination of such a development. This transformation of the nation instills a sense of national pride in the heart of every Indian within the Country and abroad, and this section is a modest attempt at keeping its flame alive.

**Keywords:** Solemn promises, Democracy, CBI, Software, Livelihood, Poverty

### Introduction

Whenever governments want to impose more or higher taxes they tell us that the country is going through difficult times and the cooperation of the public is required to tide over the difficulties. Whenever a party wants to get elected they spread before the people multicolor dreams and poetical promises like food and accommodation, health and electricity etc. We always have crises; elections are always imminent or they seem so! Ultimately the surcharges never go away and the people are never better off in terms of quality of life. Life goes on, and the people cynically carry on believing no one and cursing their own lot. Come elections the poor voter gets a few rupees or a sachet of liquor or a piece of cloth.

Does he vote for the givers of these "goodies"? We do not know because he collects from both-or more sides and makes to each the same solemn promises. He knows that like the party to win, he too has no need to keep his word. Like the next rulers, he can't be called to account, either!

Thus, life goes on in the largest democracy of the world. We have so many parties, so many manifestos and so many promises and so many voices that things rarely get done. Fierce speeches denouncing communalism (not casteism) are delivered. Ministers become voluble on all subjects and wax eloquent everywhere, especially before the media. People on the run from law become legislators and even ministers. They freely denounce crime and threaten punishment. No problem. Their cronies listen to him respectfully, media has sound bytes and papers have space for them. What is required is publicity. Its color does not matter. Not getting caught by the 'long hand' of law is greatness and nothing to be ashamed about. That is heroism.

Our people have become cynical. They know the price of everything and the value of none. In the past fifty years we have destroyed our forests mercilessly. As a result, our rivers are sick and are nearing death. We are multiplying rapidly. Our leaders are fond of comparing our prosperity and progress with those of China whose population is compared to ours. They never talk about the geographic size of China. The leaders are proud of our democratic establishment. They don't

tell you that voters are routinely purchased or coerced with the help of rowdies and kiVers. They will not refer to what recently happened in the neighboring country; China hanged half a dozen government officials misappropriated state property. The entire procedure took only a few weeks. Here, a man who raped brutally and murdered a 14 year old girl was sentenced to death six years ago, in a relatively quick process, could survive for six years before being hanged ! Mercy was shown by our benign country to people who burnt innocent passengers of a bus and they will any day come out of jail and become voters again and move among the people without any compunction; may be they will be proud of being alive after also gruesomely killing unarmed and blameless innocents! Maybe they will become legislators or ministers, too!

Over the decades since independence, our institutions have been made ineffective for the public cause. They are there to be used as tools by individuals in power, for their own purposes. The notable exception is judiciary which by and large enjoys some respect. But even there, the arrears of work are so heavy that a case or a suit is likely to take decades or more before a decision can be expected. By the time it comes, it is generally too late for all concerned.

Ours is a peculiar problem. We are fond of saying and even believing that ours is a great country. We fall all over ourselves when any foreigner, especially white, praises any aspect of our country be it in a guarded and qualified way. Yet, in our heart of hearts we acknowledge that ours is a country abounding in poverty, corruption and inefficiency. In the index of corruption our country is towards the bottom of 130 or so countries. Some! I back, the CBI arrested two senior most officers of -the Customs and Excise and come Tax Boards. A very senior Policeman was also arrested in Telgi Scam. Nothing ore has happened so far; nothing will till a time comes when all the witnesses turn hostile or die; or till the records are lost or ruined because of old age.

Cynical? Yes.

Do you know that our Mumbai airport (and others) is one of the worst in the world? We need not and cannot compare these with Singapore or other airports. Even by absolute standards,

they are very poorly constructed and maintained. Yet when there is a move to modernize them with private investment, there is a hue and cry! We bear the indignity of falling low in world's esteem but vested interests want to perpetuate the discomfort, inefficiency and lack of hygiene. Forget prestige; the airports are at least two decades out of date. Everyone knows that we have a dangerously unsafe railway system. Time and again we can hear the ministers and others telling us how they are going to change the entire system to perhaps the best in the world. Words, words and words! They don't bring new permanent way or rolling stocks. Our trains will chug along at average speed of fifty kilometers if they are super-fast trains. Accidents will take place and people will die. Journeys will be full of dirt, discomfort and delay. No matter. Ask. The minister the next time and go home satisfied.

We go on reading about railway and other bridges cracking or collapsing soon after they are built. Bridges built before independence live on but the longevity of new bridges is proverbially short in many cases. Or, look at the roads. Shiny with color of tar today; one rain and the shine, the tar and the road disappear! No one goes to jail in spite of the strict standards written in print. No money is recovered. To feel still sadder, think of public buildings and other works in your neighborhood.

The country spends thousands or crores on medical services. Do you, if you are sick, dare enter a government hospital? The doctors there are as good as any other and even better in some cases but there will be no medicines or equipment. The hygiene there will give shudders.

The less said about education the better. School without teachers, without benches and boards are no more seriously commented on. The local communities expect the state to step in and do the spending, though it is their precious children who study in these schools. They do not want to take interest in the betterment of these schools. No money should go out of their pocket.

Take sports. We live and die by the game or cricket which has ruined the other games like football, hockey and many others. The role models for our youth are not achievers in patriotism, literature or arts; it is the cricket players who for every few good performances bring in many failures. The result of this obsession was starkly evident in the last two Olympics. For a nation of one billion, we got one bronze in the last games and one silver medal in the latest! And both times we went euphoric about these small mercies comforting ourselves by forgetting that countries not as big as three districts of our country won more medals including gold. And that China took a big heap and will probably taking the maximum in the next games. That country can, because if there is a scheme, they simply practise it. No left opposition, no right opposition, no intellectual opposition.

Take the last seventy years. What we achieved in science, literature or arts and other fields hall-marking a nation is not worth being proud of. How many have won international fame in these fields? The few that did succeed are too few.

The reasons for this backwardness are many. Our political system has degenerated so that it is about parties and governments but not the nation, its people and its pride. We have politicians aplenty, but not statesman. It is well said that a politician thinks of the next election whereas the statesman thinks of the next generation. As long as we have governments who think only of elections, which nurture vote banks at the

cost of the national interest and encourage backwardness in their own interests, our nation will not be able to get the status and dignity it deserves. Systems of elections and governments are there to make the people do better, feel better and live better. If that is not achieved, the system should be changed. Unfortunately even a faint suggestion of altering the present system of voting brings on violent reactions. This does not encourage constructive thinking. Not even when the opposition, unable to reconcile with the loss in elections, is using the most physical methods to stall functioning of the system. This obstruction is, as we may recall, a stronger repetition of earlier oppositions. So, what does this all bring to the common man? Poverty, ignorance and misery. That suits the politician for whom the ignorant millions are valuable as vote banks which can be purchased cheap.

This does not mean that everyone in our beloved country is poor and helpless. In the past ten years we have seen industry growing so well that after the protection was re-moved and they had to stand on their own legs, they reinvented themselves and are competing with the world. Interference of the government which practiced license and inspector raj is coming down and the results are visible. We have an excellent software sector which is attracting outsourcing from all over the world. Their services are so efficient and so cheap that U.S., the champion of free enterprise, is thinking of enacting laws to ban outsourcing! There are other sectors which give us satisfaction and economic welfare. Yes, these good things cover but a small percentage of the population; a fact bitterly realized by the last government. Now there are promises and plans for the agri-culturist and the poor. How much will be actually done, only time can tell. But, where bureaucrats rule and the state does not want, to help, encourage and nudge the small man to stand up and face competition, it is very doubtful if with the limited funds, much can be done. The policy should be not to spoon feed alms to the needy but to nurture them into believing in themselves and into enabling them to fully realize their own power and ability. As the ancient philosopher said, give a man a fish and he will have a meal; teach him how to fish and he has a livelihood. This should be our state policy; then country will not have the huge numbers of the people but it will have self-respecting, able and prosperous people who will win all the fields including sports; or, at -least do so well even when losing that they get respect and preserve their pride. Such people make a nation. A proud one; a forward one. That will be the golden dawn of India. This is a distant dream. It will be so till a Yugapurusha arrives when will that be? Let us pray me!

#### References

1. My India, Rao Akshara IJ, 2005.
2. The Hindu
3. Times of India
4. <http://knowindia.gov.in>