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इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥

The senses are said to be greater than the body; but greater than the senses is the mind. Greater than the mind is the intellect; and what is greater than the intellect is He, the self.

Bhagavadgita, Ch.3, Text 42

Editorial

*Let's resolve to make our democracy
Real, Dynamic and Vibrant*

It is again the time for unfurling of the tricolour. Like each year, this year too the Prime Minister will perform this ritual and address the nation. This ceremony is being performed every year since when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru did it on the night intervening August 14 and 15, 1947. The whole country was then deluded into the ecstasy of the birth of freedom for the nation.

Today the situation has changed. The Prime Minister does perform this ritual each year but none goes wild with ecstasy now. We shall be celebrating the 63rd anniversary of our independence on August 15. As the country was waging a war of independence, its sole aim was concentrated at gaining independence. But what is our aim after achieving it, the country has so far failed to determine. Before independence the spirit of Indianness and nationalism ran in the heart of every Indian as a natural course as did the blood in their veins. But after independence, the spirit of nationalism is slowly and slowly on the wane. In spite of that we have been successful in protecting our freedom.

If the independence celebrations get turned into just a ritual, it is a sign of trouble for the democracy. People have started recognizing that the celebrations are getting weaned of the mirth and enthusiasm. This feeling and reaction is a matter of concern for all of us. We remember how, in the initial years, children and students started decorating their classes in celebration of independence. The tricolour flew high on every building, big or small, official or private and even on the roadsides. Competitions for singing of national songs were the order of the day everywhere. School children got up early for this celebration. Holding high the national flag in hand and wearing tricolour badges on the dresses was a matter of pride for everyone. The seeds of the nationalist spirit were sown from the childhood itself.

But the situation is changed today. The craze for hoisting tricolour

"I do not agree with a word that you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

— Voltaire

on private buildings is on the decline. Celebration of other national festivals too is losing its sheen. The times have drastically changed. There was a time when people were ready to make supreme sacrifices at the mere call of leaders. The present leaders today do not command the same faith and respect. Surprisingly, the present leadership doesn't care to ponder over the present situation and the reasons for this deterioration. Why? It remains a mystery. Once the *vishwaguru* today India is gripped with its own internal and external problems. Disparities are widening. It has become a nightmare for the *aam aadmi* to manage *roti, kapda* and *makāan* for the family. The hard reality of our freedom got exposed the day the Dasgupta committee appointed by UPA reported that 75 percent of India's population could not afford to spend more than ₹. 20 a day. What picture of our economic development does this reality indicate? We dream to be a super power in the 21st century but still continue to be dependent upon imports. We do not manufacture computers; we only assemble these in India.

Farmer's lands are getting dry and barren. Our borders are ripped with blood. Pakistan continues to be as belligerent as before during the last 60 years. We failed to scrap Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. It is only after 62 years of independence that we have been able to bestow the fundamental right to education to children upto the age of 14. Growth of population is getting beyond our control. The prime of youth is getting wasted in

a vain search for jobs. To be young is becoming a curse and a problem. The hands that should have ushered in development are getting involved in destruction. We have failed to reform our electoral process to make it truly representative of the will of the people. Politics and power is getting concentrated into the hands of a few. *Aam aadmi* cannot dream of fighting an election. Fighting an election is turning into a pastime to remove one's own poverty. Political parties fighting for the cause of the poor are getting obliterated. Country's parliament which should have been the forum to wage battle against poverty seems to be turning into a battleground of various industrial houses. Discussions and debates are getting digressed. Parliament is turning into a nursery for those claiming to have a political lineage. The people have no objection to a leader's son/daughter joining politics, but they do expect that he/she should have the wherewithals for the onerous job. People's resentment surfaces when he/she has only a claim to parentage but lack the quality of sympathy, honesty, integrity and morality. Who will welcome such a scenario in democracy?

The executive, legislature and judiciary are considered to be the three main pillars of democracy. Media is taken to be its fourth pillar. But these pillars of democracy have started getting weakened. There is a tussle for usurping and concentrating greater and greater between these institutions of the Constitution. At times, it appears, as if nobody is willing to listen to the other. The spirit of collective

thinking in the interests of the nation seems to have come to naught. Any discussion if it takes place is only in threads and pieces. People now seem to be concentrating on self and the country is getting overlooked. Therefore, it is time when a public awareness campaign be launched to ignite civic feeling among people. The spirit of Indianness and nationalism needs to be revived. Otherwise this festival of democracy will get relegated to the position of a mere ritual when tricolour will be unfurled from the ramparts of Red Fort in the morning and people will forget it in the evening. The problems facing the country have to be solved within the country. Therefore it is necessary that the gulf between India and Bharat should be bridged. Youth should care about the nation while caring for their own *roti*.

People at the helm of affairs need to understand that their own self is not greater than the country. Today the situation has drifted to a position where people seem to be more worried about their own individual prosperity than that of the nation. The true meaning of democracy will get reflected only when the man standing at the lowest ladder gets inspired to sing *Bharat Maata ki jai, vishwavijayee tiranga pyara* and *vande mataram*. It is the duty of every Indian to realize the dream of real independence. As long as every Indian does not offer *ahuti* in the *yagna* to perform his national duty, the reality of real spirit of independence will continue to remain a distant dream. ■

A big blow to national foreign policy : Rajnath Singh

During the ongoing Budget Session the Bharatiya Janata Party led Opposition has vociferously denounced the recent Indo-Pak joint statement issued at Sharm-al sheikh (Egypt), both inside and outside Parliament and effectively grilled the Government for committing an unprecedented diplomatic blunder.

The UPA Government has dealt a huge blow to the basic tenets of our national foreign policy by delinking talks from terror and allowing Pakistan to accuse India of interference in Balochistan.

The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's statement in Parliament was not only inadequate and vague but even failed to address the key concerns expressed by the BJP and other parties.

The Government is giving confusing signals to the country as on the one hand it says that it will not talk to Pakistan unless it stops terrorist activities on its soil and helps India in resolving Mumbai terror attack case. On the other hand it is showing the willingness to jeopardize India's diplomatic interest even if Pakistan does nothing to stop terrorist activities.

The UPA Government has also messed up by equating India and Pakistan as victims of terrorism. The Joint Statement says, "Both leaders agreed that terrorism is the main threat to both countries". It clearly implies that terrorism directed against India and Pakistan comes from the same sources and that both countries are being targeted in the same way. This is something far from reality.

If the UPA Government reposes faith on Pakistan then it should have asked Islamabad to strongly act

against Hafiz Mohammed Saeed the founder of Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and the current head of Jamat-ud-Dawa who are widely considered as the brains behind the Mumbai terror attacks.

Pakistan has arrested five of its citizens including Zrar Shah and Zaki-ur-Rahman Lakhvi in connection with Mumbai attacks and called them non state actors. The Prime Minister in his statement in Parliament said, "I was told (by P a k i s t a n ' s President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yusuf Raja Gilani) that Mumbai was the work of non-state actors."

It was shocking to see the UPA Government deviating from India's stated position which maintained from day one that Pakistan's official agencies aided the terrorists involved in Mumbai attack. The Prime Minister himself had said on earlier occasion that official agencies of Pakistan supported the Mumbai attack.

The Prime Minister should have strongly rejected Pakistan's theory of non state actors because the ISI and certain sections of the Pakistani Army do not fall in the category of non state actors.

The Sharm-al-Sheikh fiasco is an outcome of the UPA Government's desperation as if it is under some Constitutional obligation to make peace with Pakistan even if there is no reciprocating gesture from across

the border.

In June, Dr. Manmohan Singh had told President Zardari in a meeting that his mandate was limited to telling him that Pakistan must not allow its territory to be used for terrorism against India.

But within few weeks the UPA Government's mandate changed so



drastically that the Prime Minister delinked terrorism from the composite dialogue and issued an incongruous joint statement with Pakistan's Prime Minister? The prime minister still owes it to the nation to explain how this came about and under what pressures? While addressing the

House he said, "In between came the dossier which showed progress though not adequate progress."

The Prime Minister should explain to the people that when the Government itself is not satisfied with the progress then why is it in such a great hurry to make peace with Pakistan.

It is high time the UPA Government should admit that it has committed a himalayan blunder at Sharm-al-Sheikh and immediately rectify the mistakes by introducing diplomatic policies based on national consensus and national interest.

If Pakistan is serious in maintaining cordial bilateral relations with India then it should come down heavily on the perpetrators and masterminds of Mumbai terror attacks. Pakistani investigation agencies have

adequate proof that the banned Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) is directly involved in the 26/11 terror attack. A Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) report handed over to India says the material recovered from LeT camps in Karachi and Thatta indicates that the terrorists received training and weapons.

After signing the nuclear deal with India the United States was supposed to become a strategic partner. The UPA Government had highlighted this fact on many occasions. During the recent visit of the US Secretary of State Ms Hillary Clinton to New Delhi the Government should have raised the issue of US financial assistance to Pakistan. At least a warning could have been issued to Pakistan that unless it stops all terrorist activities on soil no financial aid would be given to Pakistan by the USA and other international communities.

The BJP believes that Pakistan is the cradle of terrorism and the infrastructure of terrorism has to be dismantled permanently. Pakistan must meet the minimum pre-condition of dismantling terrorist-training camps operating from its soil.

The joint Statement at Sharm-al-sheikh is an unfortunate and shameful document of the UPA Government's failure on issues pertaining to diplomacy, statesmanship and national interest. The UPA Government should immediately stop shifting goalposts and come up with a contingency plan to undo the damage done to India's diplomatic drive against the menace of terrorism. ■

Co-operative Movement an important tool for economic development : Rajnath Singh

National Executive Committee meeting of Central co-operative cell of our Party was held on 6th August 2009 at BJP Central Office, New Delhi.

Inaugurating the programme Shri Rajnath Singh, BJP National President highlighted the uniqueness of the country that being one of the six most economically prosperous nation with respect to purchase power parity (PPP) in coming years, India still process nearly 62% population who are directly involved to the rural agricultural with 18.4% share of GDP (2007-08).

No other country in the world including China has such significance of mutually progressive development in Agriculture, Manufacturing and service sector.

The role of cooperative movement is a very important tool for advancement of economic development since this ensures distribution of National wealth evenly and equally, share of rights and duties among our people irrespective of cast, class, creed and religion, sense of community development and self belongingness.

Shri Rajnath Singh ji, express concern about the UPA government's decision of levying Income Tax in the cooperative sectors. He raised this issue in the parliament also and opening that if such measures are implemented, by the UPA government, the health of the National economy will be jeopardized since

cooperative sector is the basics of the in-built structure of Indian Economy.

In his welcome speech Shri Dhananjay Kumar Singh, Co-convenor, Central Cooperative Cell highlighted the success of cooperative movement and economic prosperity of all the states in all the states where BJP has been governing and governed at any point of times. He focused for the importance of total integrated cooperative

No other country in the world including China has such significance of mutually progressive development in Agriculture, Manufacturing and service sector.

movements in all sectors of manufacturing housing, services and with particular emphasis on Agriculture. Dhananjay ji invited all the stake holders to work hand in hand for another green revolution and restructure the

economic and social development to our country to fulfill the noble mission of Late Deen Dayal Upadhyay. Newly elected M.P.'s in Lok Sabha who are cooperative leaders were also graced this occasion namely Sarvshri Shripad Yesso Naik(Goa), Sh. Shivarama Gouda Karnataka, Sh. Murarilal Singh (Chattisgarh), Smt. Kamla Devi Patle (Chattisgarh), Dr. Rajan Sushant (H.P.), Special presence of Shri Giriraj Singh, Cooperative Minister from Bihar and Shri Gouri Shankar ji, Cooperative Minister from Madhya Pradesh. In the end of programme Shri Banwar Singh Shekhawar Co-convenor Central Co-operative Cell BJP and Chairman, Madhya Pradesh State Co-operative Bank Ltd. delivered the vote of thanks. ■

India becoming subordinate ally to US : Jaitley

Brief highlights of the points made in the speech made by Shri Arun Jaitley, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, while intervening in the debate on the working of the Ministry of External Affairs.

The monumental lapse committed by the Prime Minister and his team of negotiators at Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt on 16.7.2009 has reversed the consistent foreign policy position pursued by the Government of India.

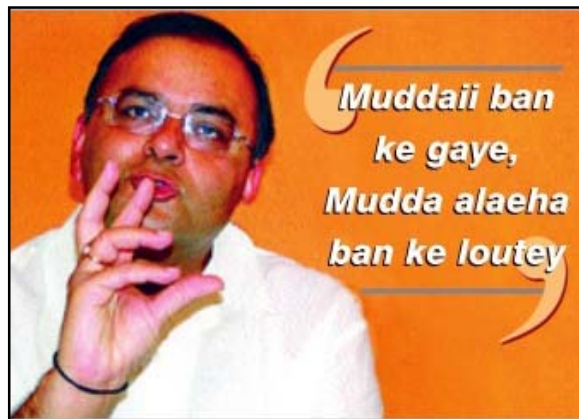
While we thank the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, for the words of appreciation that he had for peace process initiated by the former Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Dr. Manmohan Singh has effectively reversed the process set in motion by Shri Vajpayee. The 6th January, 2004 joint statement between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Musharraf stated –

“Prime Minister Vajpayee said that in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented. President Musharraf reassured Prime Minister Vajpayee that he will not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.” The purport of the 6th January, 2004 statement was—

(a) that to take forward the dialogue process, terrorism must be prevented and;

(b) Pakistan will not permit its territory to be used to support terrorism.

Thus, from a Nation which had to bend backwards to India and the world community that terrorism would not be permitted from Pakistan, the first dilution of the Vajpayee line came in 2006 at Havana, where the Prime Minister



brought parity between India and Pakistan. The prime Minister declared to the world that Pakistan was also a victim of terror. Thus, from a Nation which allowed its territory to be used to sponsor terrorism against India, a moral equivalence was sought to be brought between India and Pakistan by the Prime Minister of India by equating both as victims of terror.

The second major lapse by the Prime Minister which negated the Vajpayee philosophy completely took place at Sharm-el-Sheikh. Sharm-el-Sheikh was witness to two major lapses by India’s foreign policy negotiators.

Firstly, the reference to Baluchistan was conscious and deliberate. It was intended to point an invisible finger at India. Pakistani media and Prime Minister Gilani have maintained after Sharm-el-Sheikh that the guilt of sponsoring terrorism was being shifted to India and that is why after the Sharm-el-Sheikh joint statement, India, far from being a victim of terror, had overnight become a sponsor of terror. India went to Sharm-el-Sheikh as a complainant and returned as a guilty. “ Muddaii ban ke gaye, Mudda alaeha ban ke loutey”.

Secondly, The major lapse at Sharm-el-Sheikh was to delink action on terrorism from the Composite Dialogue process. The statement emphasizes the need for dialogue. It states that the dialogue is the only way forward and to over-emphasize the need to dialogue, it delinks dialogue from action against terror. This completely destroys the Vajpayee line on peace process. Thus, the Prime Minister paying lip sympathy to Vajpayee’s initiatives is of no avail. The statesman in Vajpayee and the praise for him cannot shield the prime Minister from the monumental lapses.

Thirdly, truth has only one version and that is why the Prime Minister on his return to India on 17.7.2009 has changed his statement of what happened at Sharm-el-Sheikh. His statement to both houses of Parliament reads –

“It has been and remains our

consistent position that the starting point of any meaningful dialogue with Pakistan is fulfillment on their commitment in letter and spirit not to allow their territory to be used in any manner for terrorist activities against India.”

This position has now been changed by the Prime Minister in his statement in Lok Sabha on 29.7.2009. The Prime Minister now says –

“I have said time and again and I repeat right now again. It is impossible for any Government in India to work towards normalisation of relations with Pakistan unless the Government of Pakistan fulfils in letter and spirit its commitment not to allow its territory to be used in any manner for terrorist activities against India.”

The condition precedent for a Composite Dialogue on 6.1.2004 was not to allow its territory to be used for terrorist activities against India. On 17.7.2009 the Prime Minister understood his Sharm-el-Sheikh commitment to mean that the condition precedent for the starting of a meaningful dialogue will be to stop the use of Pakistani territory for terrorism. The Prime Minister has now diluted his position on 29.7.2009. The condition not to allow its territory to be used for terrorist activities against India is now only for full normalization of relations and no longer for starting a Composite Dialogue with Pakistan. The truth has inconveniently slipped out. The joint declaration at Sharm-el-Sheikh means that irrespective of there being no action against terror, the dialogue can start.

Fourthly, the stand of the Congress Party on this issue is ambivalent. The Congress Party is only appreciative of Prime Minister’s reply in Lok Sabha. The Congress President in her address to the

Congress Parliamentary Party on 30.7.2009 has fully supported the Prime Minister for his firm and unequivocal statement in the Lok Sabha. Why is the Congress President reluctant to support the joint statement. There is a fundamental distinction between the joint statement and Prime Minister’s reply in Lok Sabha. The Congress supports the reply but is shy of making any comment on the joint statement.

Fifthly, international relations are governed by joint statements and the agreed texts. They are never governed by unilateral speeches of Heads of Governments in their own countries. Further engagement between India and Pakistan would commence only from an analysis of the joint statement text. Will India be bound by the clear and unambiguous meaning of the joint text in English language or will India be bound by the unilateral explanations of our Prime Minister which are at variance to the plain and simple meaning of English text.

Sixthly, the argument put up by the Prime Minister that the alternative to a dialogue is a war, is alarmist. The success of India’s diplomacy lies in compelling Pakistan to agree to a Composite Dialogue while not allowing its territory to be used for terrorism against India. India should encourage dialogue but not dialogue with terror. The Prime Minister’s foreign policy does not represent the continuity and the legacy of Vajpayee’s foreign policy. Vajpayee’s foreign policy was to negotiate from a position of strength- dialogue but without terror.

That was the core concern. Sharm-El-Sheikh declaration is a negotiation out of fear not strength. It is dialogue irrespective of terror. That is why the Prime Minister erroneously told the nation that there are only two options- Dialogue or War. This is an understanding of India’s foreign policy from a position of weakness, not strength. ■

Buta Singh should resign : BJP

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on July 31 demanded the resignation of Shri Buta Singh as chairperson of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes after the arrest of his son in a corruption case.

“This is a case of open corruption... Buta Singh must resign,” BJP General Secretary Shri Gopinath Munde said after the arrest of Sarobjit alias Sweety Singh by the anti-corruption wing of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The son of the veteran politician, who has held several important posts, including home minister, was arrested on July 31 after he was caught allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs.1 crore from a Nashik-based contractor in New Delhi.

The CBI is also trying to ascertain Sweety Singh’s involvement in some other financial transactions including hawala deals.

According to CBI sources the corruption case against Sweety Singh involves a complaint filed by Nashik-based civic works contractor Ramraj Patil.(IANS) ■

UPA altered fundamental foundation of foreign policy, alleges NDA

NDA Memorandum to the Hon'ble President of India

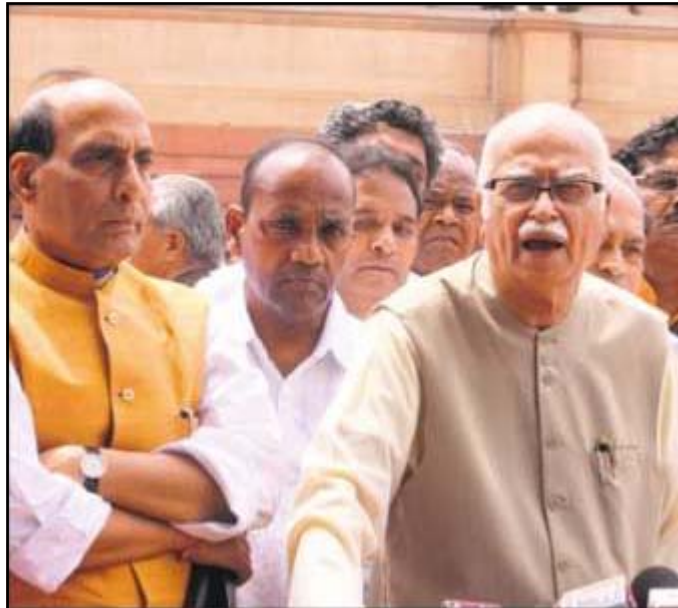
145 NDA MPs on July 28, 2009 marched to the Rashtrapati Bhavan from the far end of the South Block. Leading the group were NDA floor leaders, including Shri L K Advani, NDA acting convenor and JD(U) President Shri Sharad Yadav, Shri Anant Geete (Shiv Sena) and Shri Ajit Singh (RLD). Speaking to the media after submitting a memorandum to her Excellency the President Smt. Pratibha Patil, Shri Advani said, "Our demand to the President was that she should intervene and give correct advice to the Government." The NDA said the government had gone against the national consensus by agreeing to delink terror from the composite dialogue with Islamabad. The memorandum also termed the mention of Balochistan a "monumental blunder" and called the end-user pact with the US "a serious violation of India's sovereignty".

Text of memorandum

We, the Members of Parliament, belonging to the Parties, which are constituents of the National Democratic Alliance, are constrained to approach you on a matter of national concern. Little did the country expect that within weeks of returning to power, the UPA Government headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh will completely reverse India's strategic and foreign policy positions much to the detriment of the Nation.

The Indian Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart, Mr. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met at Sharm-El-Sheikh on 16th July, 2009 and a joint statement between the two Prime Ministers was released. The joint statement states that "Prime Minister Gilani mentioned that Pakistan has some information on

threats in Balochistan and other areas". This is the first time in the history of Indo-Pak relations that a joint statement contains a unilateral reference by Pakistan to "threats in Balochistan". Obviously, the invisible finger was pointed at India



allegedly fomenting trouble in Pakistan. Prime Minister Gilani's statement two days later in Pakistan

affirms this. The joint statement never carries a unilateral statement. It is only the agreed text, which is carried. If a unilateral statement mentions such allegations, it should also contain the stand of other party on such allegations. But that is missing in the joint statement. By this blatant and monumental blunder, Indian negotiators and the Prime Minister have brought Balochistan to the centre stage in Indo-Pak dialogue.

The joint statement further mentions that "both the Prime Ministers recognized that dialogue is the only way forward. Action on terrorism should not be linked to the Composite Dialogue Process and these should not be bracketed" The language of the joint statement in this regard is clear. The

tenor of the two sentences categorically is that dialogue is the only way forward and that action on terrorism should be de-linked from the Composite Dialogue Process. The purport of this as understood in plain English language is that even if terrorism is to continue from Pakistani soil against India, this will not deter the dialogue process. Needless to say that the world at large and specifically both India and Pakistani media have understood this aspect of the joint statement to mean clearly what it states. International relations are governed by joint texts. They cannot be explained away by unilateral statements made by any Nation state or its functionaries. The statement of the Foreign Secretary that it is badly

drafted text reduces India's diplomacy to a laughing stock. The truth is that it is a case of bad policy and not just of bad drafting. Never has national interest been bartered away through clumsy handling of a bilateral text as the present Government has done.

If this was an isolated incident, India could have wished it away as a mistake though a costly one. In the past fortnight there have been other developments too. During the visit of Mrs. Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States of America, the Government of India agreed "on the end use monitoring arrangements that will henceforth be referred to in Letters of Acceptance for Indian procurement of US defence technology and equipments." The purport of this will be that whenever defence technology or equipments is purchased by India from the US

or from other countries either directly or through third parties including private suppliers, it will be a condition precedent that end use monitoring by US government of India's defence installations and equipments will take place. This is not a simple contract between a supplier and a buyer relating to protection of the intellectual property rights. Even if a supplier is a private firm, the right of inspection goes to the US government. This is a serious violation of India's

All these events which took place in the period of a fortnight, raise a serious doubt in the minds of Indians that India's foreign policy is no longer an independent one.

sovereignty. This is unacceptable to Indian public opinion.

At a recent meeting of the Major Economies Forum (MEF) at Italy, there has been in the text of the Agreement between 17 countries, a dilution of India's position on climate change. India has conventionally held the view that it is the polluting nations, which must bear the brunt when it comes to countering global warming and bear the cost of alternative technology as also mitigation of environmental damages. However, at the MEF meeting the final draft to which India became signatory diluted the position which India has conventionally adopted. Even our negotiators have expressed unhappiness on this count. During the visit of the Secretary of State of the USA when India's Environment Minister tried to reiterate the conventional position, the US

negotiators confronted him with what India had agreed at the MEF.

At a time when the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Agreement was executed, a legitimate apprehension was voiced in India that steps would be taken to compel India to sign the NPT and CTBT in return for obligations, which the US and other fuel suppliers and technology suppliers to India would undertake. The Prime Minister had assured the nation in Parliament that there would

be full cooperation and no such condition would ever be enforced. However, at the recent meeting of the G-8 nations, the G-8 nations resolved to make signing of the NPT as a condition precedent before enrichment and re-processing technologies could be supplied to India. This completely

violates the understanding and the assurances which have been given to India and which in turn were held out by the Prime Minister to the whole nation.

All these events which took place in the period of a fortnight, raise a serious doubt in the minds of Indians that India's foreign policy is no longer an independent one. This chain of events have created an apprehension in the minds of all patriotic Indians as to why within weeks of returning to power, the Government has altered the fundamental foundations of India's foreign policy and strategic interests. The nation is worried and we as the principal parties in opposition to the present Government have been constrained to approach your Excellency to voice our concern against the negation of fundamental values this country has cherished for years and decades.

Caving in to Pakistan : Yashwant Sinha

What changed between June 16, when Manmohan Singh met Asif Ali Zardari in Yekaterinburg, and July 16, when he met Yousuf Raza Gilani in Sharm el-Sheikh? The answer to this question will explain why the Prime Minister gave in to Pakistani intransigence and shamelessly capitulated

Soon after the 26/11 outrage in Mumbai, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had told Parliament, “We have to galvanise the international community into dealing with sternly and effectively with the epicentre of terrorism which is located in Pakistan. The infrastructure of terrorism has to be dismantled permanently.”

The Prime Minister also informed that he had told several heads of state and Government who had called him up that India would not be satisfied with only assurances. He said the “use of terrorism as an instrument of state policy is no longer acceptable”.

On July 16, the Prime Minister met the President of Pakistan, Mr Asif Ali Zardari, in Yekaterinburg, and admonished him in the hearing of the whole world. He told him: “I am happy to meet you, but my mandate is limited to telling you that the territory of Pakistan must not be allowed to be used for terrorism against India.”

Strong words; we all felt very proud of our Prime Minister; here was our Prime Minister, fresh from

his victory at the polls, confident, assertive, ready to tell Pakistan and the rest of the world, ‘Do not mess around with us’.

That was the message that he had conveyed, and we felt proud that the Prime Minister had conveyed this message on behalf of the whole country.



In less than a month, at Sharm elSheikh, there was a complete turnaround from this stated position, and a joint statement was issued. In

the joint statement, there are many points, and I would like to comment on those which stand out. The joint statement says Mr Singh and Pakistan’s Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani considered the entire gamut of bilateral relations with a view to charting the way forward in India-Pakistan relations.” I emphasise the words entire gamut of bilateral relations. Second, “both leaders agreed that terrorism is the main threat to both countries”.

Third, Mr Singh reiterated the need to bring the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack to justice. Mr Gilani assured that Pakistan will do everything in this regard. Fourth, Mr Gilani mentioned that Pakistan has some information on threats in Baluchistan and other areas.

Fifth, both the Prime Ministers recognised that dialogue is the only way forward: “Action on terrorism should not be linked to the composite dialogue process and these should not be bracketed.”

The sixth point is, Mr Singh said that “India was ready to discuss all issues with Pakistan including all outstanding issues”. Seventh, Mr Singh reiterated India’s interest — please note that our Prime Minister reiterated India’s interest — in a stable, democratic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

And, finally, both leaders agreed that the two countries will share real timecredible, actionable information on any future threats. Both Foreign Secretaries will meet as often as necessary and report to the Foreign Ministers who will meet on the sidelines of the coming UN General Assembly. Now, let us take up these issues from the joint statement. The first is, the two Prime Ministers discussed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. It was not merely confined to cross-border terrorism. It was not merely confined to holding Pakistan guilty of the acts of terrorism that it has unleashed on our sacred soil. The Prime Minister discussed the whole gamut of bilateral relations. So, the whole thing was expanded.

Second, when we say that both leaders agreed that terrorism is the main threat to both countries, then they put India and Pakistan at par. The distinction between the aggressor and the victim is obliterated, completely obliterated, because we are both victims of terrorism. So, where is the question of being the perpetrator of terrorism and where is the question of being

the victim of terrorism?

Pakistan, according to the statement, gave the assurance that it would do all within its power to bring the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to justice. We know that the Home Minister of Pakistan has said that they have absolutely no evidence against Hafiz Saeed of Jammat-ud-Dawa'h. I heard our own Home Minister tell television channels on Wednesday that we have given enough evidence to Pakistan to prosecute Hafiz Saeed. Yet, Pakistan's Home Minister says that India has given no evidence; they have freed Hafiz Saeed; there is nothing pending against Hafiz Saeed. The mastermind of the Mumbai attack has been let loose by Pakistan. No action is being taken against him. And we say that we will take all the action which is necessary.

Now I come to Baluchistan. Why on earth was Baluchistan included? We have nothing to hide. Yes, of course, we have nothing to hide. We have nothing to hide on many other issues. So, shall we put all those issues where we have nothing to hide in a bilateral document?

Is this an argument, that if we have nothing to hide, we will put it in a bilateral document?

I was going through some of the newspaper reports on how the Pakistanis now, at the official level, at the level of their Home Minister and the Prime Minister, have started talking about Baluchistan. The Pakistani Home Minister has said that Pakistan will use the Baluchistan reference to the hilt. He said that evidence of Indian involvement in Baluchistan will be presented at international fora at the appropriate time.

Pakistan has seriously accused India of supplying arms to the

Baluchis.

Pakistan has accused us of using our Consulates in Afghanistan to train them and give money and arms. This is the allegation that Pakistan has been raising ever since those Consulates in Afghanistan were established.

I want to put some questions to the Prime Minister. First, has the trust deficit between India and Pakistan, after the joint statement and the Sharm el-Sheikh meeting, widened or narrowed? Second, what changed between June 16, when he met Mr Zardari, and July 16, when he met Mr Gilani? What has brought about this complete change of heart? What has happened? Third, Pakistan has already gone to town

on Baluchistan. But the Prime Minister has said that there was no dossier given. So, I am not asking that question.

Then, what are the achievements of the anti-terror mechanism set up in 2006 after Havana? The Prime Minister has said it in his joint statement of April 4, 2005. It was a ringing statement, saying that the peace process between India and Pakistan was now irreversible.

Does he stand by it now, that the peace process between India and Pakistan is irreversible, and that they will go on doing what they like? ■

(Extract from Shri Yashwant Sinha's speech in the Lok Sabha on July 29 during the debate on foreign policy.)

Omkar Bhave is no more

Bhaveji was VHP national vice-president



VHP national vice president Omkar Bhave passed away on July 23 in New Delhi following a brief illness. He was 85.

Bhave had been admitted to the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital on June 27 after he complained of breathlessness. Doctors after examining him found 70 per cent congestion in his right lungs and immediately put him on ventilator at ICU. As his condition was not improving, Bhave was brought to the VHP office here on July 23 where he

passed away, he said.

"Bhave, a bachelor, was a lifetime pracharak. He devoted his entire life in serving the nation," Bansal said.

Born on July 26, 1924 at Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh, Bhave joined RSS in 1938. He later completed his graduation from Prayag University in 1945 and became a lifetime pracharak of Sangh and served the organisation in various capacities.

Bhave actively participated in Ram Janma Bhumi movement and in the movement launched against emergency in 1975. He was made national vice president of VHP this year. ■

Government has miserably failed to contain prices : Naidu

Synopsis of the speech on spiralling price rise made by Shri Venkaiah Naidu in Rajya Sabha on August 4, 2009.

If you see for the last three years, the inflation rate is coming down, but, the market prices are going up and there is no explanation whatsoever. How are WPI and CPI functioning? Most of the things are also in the hands of the Finance Minister and some are in the hands of the Commerce Minister. The Agriculture Minister alone will not be able to help the problem. The Government is not able to do anything. I also understand that the States have a responsibility. But under whose control cement and steel comes? My point is that the Government has miserably failed to contain prices. The common man is left to suffer year after year.

The latest figure shows that the paddy cultivation would go down by 20 per cent because of deficit monsoon. 55%-60% of the budget of the common man accounts for food items. Today, the prices of

almost all the food items are increasing. The Government should plan beforehand if there is going to be a shortage of crops. If so, you have to plan for importing from outside.

I would also like to know what has been done with regard to increase the production of foodgrains and pulses. As far as hoarding is concerned, I do admit that the State Governments have a role to play. Today, the price of every item, particularly, food items, is going up and we, in the Government or in the Parliament, are not able to do anything. It has been said that the WPI is an unsatisfactory indicator of inflation. As regards WPI the



series are released in a transparent manner, but not as far as Consumer Price Index is concerned.

There is also a news item that stocks of pulses rot in major ports, as the prices have shot up. Nobody seems to be concerned about it. I would like the Government to immediately call an

inquiry into this. It is a very serious matter. Sugar is also an important item. I would like to know what is being done with regard to sugar. Have you any contingency plan, to see to it that proper production of, at least, the foodgrains, is made. There is no information available as to whether production in respect of foodgrains has gone up or come down. We must give more push to cold storage systems. It is the responsibility of the Central Government to rush required stocks to States. The Minister should give an assurance how he is going to solve this problem of the future. How the issues of the shortage, storage, black marketing and exploitation by the middlemen are going to be tackled? This responsibility should not be thrown on the States. Government is silent about how the price rise is going to be tackled. People are weeping and the Government is sleeping. ■

Exports decline by 27.7 pc, imports by 29.3 pc

On Aug 3, India's exports fell for the ninth month in a row in June, this time by 27.7 per cent, on account of the global downturn, while imports dropped by 29.3 per cent, reflecting slowdown in domestic consumption.

As the country's total imports, largely influenced by a whopping decline of 50.6 per cent in oil imports, showed a faster pace of contraction than exports, the trade deficit was USD 6.16 billion in June 2009-10 from USD 9.12 billion in the same month last fiscal. Exports dropped to USD 12.81 billion in June from USD 17.73 billion in the same month last year, according to the government data released today. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director-General Ajay Sahai said the declining trend is likely to continue for some more months.(PTI)

Since 1984 no permanent appointment in P&T : Prabhat Jha

In Rajya Sabha the discussion on working of the ministry of communications and information technology was initiated by Shri Prabhat Jha. He drew attention of government to pitiable condition of Post & Telegraph Ministry. Here is synopsis of his speech.

Post and Telegraph is a capable medium of cultural, social and economical development in India. Nearly 6 lakh people work in this department. Sometimes, whitewash and painting work is done in the Post Offices in the name of modernization. The number of letters has not reduced even today, but there has been no permanent appointment in the Department of Post and Telegraph since 1984. There are only 5 per cent appointments done on compassionate ground, but no attention is paid to the condition of the rest 95 per cent. The coach labeled 'Department of Post and Telegraph' in the trains is not being added these days. Now, sorting of the letters is also not done. No appointments are done in the place of the people who retire from the department. The work in one department of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology is still being done manually. The condition of Speed Post is also not good. The officials of Post and Telegraph Department are running private courier service posing as benamis. Gramin Sevak, who are functioning in Postal Department, have to work like regular employees, but they do not get pension and gratuity. The Budget has been reduced for the vans which take letters to the villages. The employees of post offices work in NREGA. According

to the report of CAG, the work of Cash Certificates is being done negligently and bungling and corruption in crores is prevalent there. Equal status is not being accorded to all the unions. ACP schemes should be applicable to all the categories of postal employees, outsourcing should be stopped and action should be taken in the matter of corrupt

Government employees. The website of Department of Information Technology has not been updated. There was no mention about information technology in President's Address. Apart from Internet and Broadband, nothing else has been mentioned in the Economic Survey also. Similarly, no other words like information technology can be seen in the Budget Paper. 5666 towers have been installed in rural areas whereas the number

of towers in urban areas is more than 4 lakh. The 5 per cent levy for telecommunication development in rural areas is collected under USO and not even 30 per cent of that has been spent by Government in rural areas.

This is creating digital divide in India. The Ministry should not behave in this

discriminatory manner with the villages. As far as Internet usage is concerned, we are behind even Pakistan. 60 thousand villages do

not have even electricity, then what will they do with the computer. The use of computer in our country is not increasing because we have not made any effort regarding languages. If we want to reach the small villages, we will have to take the help of the languages, but the budget allocated in this regard is the same as in the last year. It was announced in Bihar that each call will be charged at 10 paise per minute, but nothing has been done so far in this matter. No work has been done with regard to the announcement of Mobile Number Portability (M.N.P.). Similarly, Voice Over Internet Protocol has also not been implemented till date. The Ministry has given unnecessary exemption to private operators whereas MTNL and BSNL have to compete with them under the rules. All types of data regarding Government, non-government, trading and security related sensitive information is available on American Server. This is very dangerous from our security point of view. As far as the question of software is concerned, the country has made progress through private companies. We appreciate it. But India is not having its own brand in the field of System Software in the world. BSNL have an important role in the economic development of the country. Its performance has deteriorated. MTNL provides telephone services in Mumbai and Delhi. It is also in bad condition and the reason is poor management by the Government, not the global recession. I hope the Government would certainly take note of it. ■

No honest attempt at introspection by UPA : Ravi Shanker

Main points of the speech made by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, MP while initiating the debate in the Rajya Sabha on the Finance Bill

- The Finance Bill is the last step in the presentation of Budget process. This time the entire exercise was being keenly watched as to what kind of Budget and Finance Bill, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presents because he was doing so after gap of 25 years. During this long period the world has changed substantially. Yet, this entire exercise has not been able to inspire or, generate hope.
- This was the first budgetary exercise of the new Government after election and it was expected that it would unleash growth momentum by giving a whole range of incentives, encouragement and reforms so badly needed to give a push to the economy. There is a big let down on that front.
- It was expected that there would be an honest introspection about the real reasons of the economic slowdown. This was all the more important because earlier the Prime Minister or, the earlier Finance Minister repeatedly claimed that the fundamental of our economy is quite strong and the global meltdown would not impact us at all. Now, the Economic Survey suggests that the international crisis is the only reason for decline in growth mounting inflation, unemployment and fiscal deficit. Again the foreign hand was branded as the culprit. There is no honest attempt at introspection. The real reason was the abject failure to continue the reforms programme. Failure to promote investment at the desired rate, pumping in sufficient investment into infrastructure, taking proper care of industry's concern in the manufacturing sector, stalling the much needed long term changes in the agriculture sector has all contributed to the down turn in the economy. There is a palpable reluctance to acknowledge this.
- There is always a competition between growth and equity and genuine equity can come about only through growth. In this connection the entire budgetary exercise remains confused about its real objective. What is the prescription for the poor? We want to survive them only on doles or, we wish to create conducive atmosphere and infrastructure for the poor to prosper as well.
- The Finance Minister would have been well advised to come with concrete programmes to show the seriousness of his intent for growth like:
 - i) Identify ten major infrastructure projects with time lines for project clearance before the actual bidding process.
 - ii) He could have outlined a few concrete steps to monitor the impact of outlays to the rural sectors and to reduce leakages.
 - iii) Apart from concrete proposal for disinvestment he could have announced major bold steps to reduce the size of the Government and thereby its expenditure.

There is no such vision at all.
- Core sector ought to have been given substantial tax incentive and other encouragement. Housing is a very critical issue for "aam adami" and financial incentive encourages growth in this sector. The 1% interest benefit announced up to Rs. 10 lacs is too meagre. Provisions be made for lower interest rate on housing loan up to Rs. 30 lacs and there is need to reintroduce tax holiday under Section 81 B for housing.
- IT and Software – This industry has brought us great pride and now, when even USA is pushing for Buffalo over Bangaluru it was very important to give a roadmap of incentive on a long stable basis in the taxation proposal. It is not there.
- Today was the occasion to give substantial benefit in the Finance Bill to Labour intensive industries, hotel industry to

attract more tourists, textile sector in view of the decline in exports and massive fiscal incentive for investment in the agriculture sector. All this would have encouraged growth and employment both. The big picture of growth is completely missing.

Fiscal Deficit

- There is no concrete plan to control fiscal deficit which though is claimed at 6.8% but if the expenditure on oil pool and the deficit of various States is included then it will be in the region of 12-13%. The big issue is the huge borrowing of more than Rs. 4 lacs crores from the market. Bank deposits have risen by over 20% to over Rs. 6.5 lacs crores and the if the Government takes away all by borrowing then precious little would be left for others. If the Government manages otherwise through open market operation by the RBI then the very massive nature of the operation would bring the economy under severe strain and inflationary risk.
- The Government has put many things on autopilot and has presumed that they would shape-up as planned and if any thing goes wrong the economy would be heated up. The total spending by the Government has increased in the last two years from Rs. 7.1 lacs crores to 10.2 lacs crores and the entire increase has been funded by additional borrowings. Such a heavy deficit spending coupled with heavy expenditure on interest makes the situation rather disturbing and course correction very difficult.
- The roadmap is absolutely unclear from where will the

money come.

Income Tax Proposal

- It is time there is need to have a fresh thinking on the entire management of income tax. Not only the income tax return form has to be “saraal” but even the entire massive income tax laws with equally massive notifications, circulars etc. needs to be simplified so that the people are encouraged to comply more.
- The Customer interface needs to be improved and there has to be stability in the tax regime. Many amendments have been made retrospectively which would only create complications for ordinary tax payers.
- The rise in the exemption limit for income tax only by few thousands for sr. citizens, women and ordinary tax payers

is too meagre. It must be raised up to Rs. 2 lacs.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- While we appreciate the decision to migrate to the dual GST both Union and States the short time fixed for its implementation from April next year may need a rethink. A lot of steps are required to be taken including legal and Constitutional amendment. There must be wide consultation with the State Governments and their interest consistent with the principal of fiscal federalism must be protected.

Special package for Bihar

- Bihar under the present Government is on the march to recovery and it is very important that it be given special package so that the road to development becomes conducive. ■

Chhattisgarh State legal Cell Executive Committee in Raipur

Chhattisgarh State Legal Cell Executive Committee Conference was organized at BJP Headquarter, Raipur, on 05 July 2009. Around 250 to



300 lawyers attended the Conference from all over the State.

Almost all districts were represented by advocates in the conference. The gathering was very impressive and unprecedented in the history of Chhattisgarh State Legal Cell. Ms. Pinky Anand, National Convenor, BJP Legal Cell chaired the conference and Dr. Raman Singh, Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh addressed the gathering applauding the role of Legal Cell in Chhattisgarh in serving the people. Shri Ram Pratap Singh, Gen. Secy. (Org.), Chhattisgarh StateBJP, Shri Brijmohan Agrawal, Education Minister of Chhattisgarh, Shri Ramvihar Netam, Law Minister of Chhattisgarh, Shri Suresh Kharkharia, State Convenor, BJP Legal Cell and several other eminent and senior advocates addressed the conference. Various issues including right to food and good governance, effective food policy implemented by Dr. Raman Singh government and role of advocates in providing justice to people were discussed in the conference. ■

BSP and SP never wanted to give good government : Jaitley

“There is no need to be disappointed at the results of elections. Political calendar doesn’t have last day”, Leader of Opposition and Party in charge of Uttar Pradesh Shri Arun Jaitley said in Lucknow in the two days Working Committee

Meeting.

He added, the vacant space in politics of Uttar Pradesh and country should be filled by our hard labour, contact and communication. What is now more important that the party will have to bring in its favour the

anti-BSP wave which prevailed in the state. “Even though we failed to gain power in this election but we have firm belief that we will gain mandate of people again through our policy, programme and struggle”, he said.

Focus on villages, stick to Hindutva: Rajnath Singh

“Politics is impossible for any party or individual who forgets self –restriction and modesty and people tend to forget them forever in the times to come”, BJP President Shri Rajnath Singh said on July 26 at the closing session of the BJP’s two-day state committee meeting in Lucknow.

Shri Singh said creating a dialogue with the villagers would help them get closer to the masses and revive the party.

“I feel our leaders and workers should also spend nights in villages and get involved in direct dialogue with the public because we need to be closer to the people to know their problems and respond on them,” Shri Singh said. “We are determined to follow our agenda even if we have to wait to be in power for the next five or ten years, we will not let go of our commitment towards Hindutva.

We started from the ideology of Hindutva and continue to draw inspiration from it.

Hence, we will not compromise on it at any cost,” he said.

He said the party needs to analyze reasons, but there was no need to go public with it. “It is time to introspect. We are analyzing the factors behind the unsatisfactory performance of the party but that does not mean we start making those factors public,” Shri Singh said. He said the party has emerged as the biggest Opposition and should utilise the opportunity to win back the confidence of the masses.

“The election results have shown that the country’s politics has become bi-polar and the BJP and the Congress are the only two options. The results show that there has been a decline in the mandate of regional parties, including the Left, Samajwadi Party and even the BSP. The primary factor for this is that the parties have lost their original character,” said Shri Singh.



We can never compare BJP with BSP and SP, he claimed. He said further, “Because both parties BSP and SP are having same character. They never had any intention to give good governance. They have only worked to divide society by spreading message of castism and disharmony through government.” So, BSP and SP can’t be alternative of politics in largest and spiritual state like Uttar Pradesh.

“Now people have rejected criminal background politicians in recent elections in Bihar and UP”, he said. He added, due to this, vote

bank of BSP and SP has decreased. BSP vote bank decreased up to 3%, SP’s up to 2%. And on other side, BJP’s vote bank has increased. Anti-BSP sentiment was apparent in the Lok Sabha elections. BJP’s coalition got 21%, SP-23% and Congress 18% and BSP 24%.

On the basis of election results, it is not proper to raise question on ideology, he maintained.

No need to be disappointed: Om Prakash Singh

The BJP Legislative Party leader in Uttar Pradesh Assembly Shri Om Prakash Singh said in the meeting that Party leaders and workers should seriously analyze the reasons of the unexpected results in the Lok Sabha election. No need to be disappointed and we should start work by keeping in target the 2012 election.

Work to make BJP number One in UP: Vinay Katiyar

BJP National General Secretary and Rajya Sabha Member Shri Vinay Katiyar said on the occasion, "Now People are going to close their window for BSP. It is already closed for SP. Now we have only one resolution as to how to make BJP number one party in the State", he said. "Let us go ahead, victory is for BJP", he added.

BJP is natural alternative: Lalji Tandon

Lok Sabha Member Shri Lalji Tandon said "corruption prevailed in Uttar Pradesh Government. People want to get rid of the present government and BJP is natural alternative of people of the State". ■

Joint statement a shame : Yashwant Sinha

Initiating the discussion over the Indo-Pak joint statement and End User Monitoring Agreement (EUMA) on July 29, 2009 former External Affairs Minister and senior BJP leader Shri Yashwant Sinha accused Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of sidelining "national consensus" and compromising India's position on terror and Balochistan.

"All the waters of Neptune will not be able to wash the shame of Sharmel-Sheikh," Shri Sinha said and charged the PM with breaking promises he made before both Houses of Parliament after the November 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Declaring that the attack on Mumbai was an attack on India, Shri Sinha accused the government of staging a turnaround by agreeing to discuss the "entire gamut" of Indo-Pak relations even as Pakistan had freed Hafiz Saeed, the alleged mastermind of the attack.

"The issue of blaming Pakistan as the perpetrator of the 26/11 attacks is gone," Shri Sinha said. He wondered at the inclusion of Balochistan in the joint statement

and said Pakistan would now use it against India at international summits.

Shri Sinha said instead of walking half the mile, the PM had "walked all the way" into Pakistan.

Dissatisfied with the PM's reply to the debate on issues arising out of his recent foreign visit in general and the Indo-Pak joint statement in particular, Shri Yashwant Sinha warned the Government against putting too much faith on Pakistan.

"The faith which our PM is reposing on Pakistan is misplaced and not supported by what Pakistan history is," he told reporters in Parliament.

Shri Sinha said, "We don't have to move forward. We have to strengthen ourselves. We have to guard ourselves against terrorist attacks. Let Pakistan go wherever they want."

Shri Sinha said Pakistan did not deserve the 'magnanimity' Singh had shown towards it. The PM was silent on the fate of 26/11 accused JuD chief Hafiz Saeed.

On Balochistan, he said PM had taken the 'old beaten line'.

PM's statement unsatisfactory : Dr. Joshi

Party leader Shri Murli Manohar Joshi said Pakistan 'dared' to include Balochistan in the text of the joint statement "because we were not serious in our talks with Islamabad".

He also wondered what action the Government was contemplating on bureaucrats who committed the 'drafting mistakes'. Terming the PM's statement as 'unsatisfactory', Joshi said issues on end-use agreement and ENR technology needed more debate. ■

Death sentence for all three Gateway, Ghatkoper bombers

In a verdict, a Special POTA court on August 6, 2009 handed out capital punishment to the three convicted Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) operatives, including a couple, for conspiring and engineering the August 25, 2003 explosions at Gateway of India and Zaveri Bazar in south Mumbai, in which 54 people were killed and 244 others injured.

Ten days after he held them guilty of planting explosives in taxis near the Gateway of India and at Zaveri Bazar and also being a part of the conspiracy behind the twin bombings, Special Judge MR Puranik sentenced Mohammed Haneef Sayed (46), his wife Fahmeeda (43) and aide Ashrat Ansari (32) to death.

UPA begins to lose lustre

By Balbir K Punj

As in the Budget Session of Parliament, the first major business session after the Lok Sabha poll, draws to a close, the lustre of the UPA's election victory is already fading. The unbelievable India-Pakistan joint statement that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh inked in Egypt last month is only one of the several areas in which the Government has goofed up.

Mr Singh invoked the legacy of his predecessor, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to justify the Sharm el-Sheikh disaster. However, Mr Vajpayee's strategy vis-à-vis Pakistan was vastly different.

Within days of the NDA Government coming to power in 1998, Mr Vajpayee demonstrated great political acumen.

By carrying out the nuclear tests in Pokhran, he announced to the world that India had graduated from being a first generation to a second generation nuclear power.

It was only after demonstrating India's nuclear capability that Mr Vajpayee initiated his 'bus diplomacy' with Pakistan. Later, it was only after completely routing the Pakistani forces in Kargil sector that he invited Gen Pervez Musharraf for the Agra summit. Here too Mr Vajpayee did not yield an inch, which disappointed Gen Musharraf as his book *In the Line of Fire* very clearly mentions.

Similarly, after the ISI-sponsored attack on our Parliament House complex, for almost two years Mr Vajpayee refused to shake hands

with the Pakistani President, so much so that Gen Musharraf was forced to offer a handshake at the SAARC summit in Kathmandu. Also, for two years the NDA Government kept the Pakistani Army on the edge by launching Operation Parakram. Finally, Mr Vajpayee eased the pressure on Pakistan but only after the latter's national security chief agreed to relent on the terrorism issue.

Therefore, simply invoking Mr

The fundamental position of Pakistan has not changed despite the cosmetic measures that Islamabad has of late undertaken to please its American bosses.

Vajpayee's legacy of statesmanship will not help the UPA Government undo the damage it has already done in Sharm el-Sheikh. Soon after the joint statement, Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani milked the Balochistan issue that India had conceded, and told the Pakistani media that he had made New Delhi agree to delink the dialogue process from action on terrorism.

The fundamental position of Pakistan has not changed despite the cosmetic measures that Islamabad has of late undertaken to please its American bosses. There is no denying that terrorism continues to be used as an instrument of state policy by Pakistan vis-à-vis India. Pakistani terrorist organisations keep the entire Indian security establishment engaged at all times. What could be

a better proxy for the Pakistani Army?

Therefore, Islamabad will never dismantle the terrorist camps operating from its soil. The on-going Pakistani Army operation against the Taliban is different because these jihadis are a threat to Pakistan itself. Rest assured, terrorist organisations like the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba will remain insulated from any such crackdown.

Back home the Government is facing flak on various domestic issues.

Union Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal is already backpedalling on his proposal to have a single secondary school board for all States. Further, the dispute over natural gas pricing has invited the criticism that the Government is being partisan in its handling of this important issue. This criticism has been so effective that the Government has had to amend its stand on the matter in the Supreme Court.

The Government has also had to backtrack on several other issues. For instance, after welcoming the Delhi High Court verdict decriminalising homosexuality, it now says that it wants to reconsider its stand. Its ally, the Trinamool Congress, has also forced it to rethink the land acquisition Bill, while the DMK is refusing to go along with the Government on divestment, at least as far as PSUs in Tamil Nadu are concerned. Union Telecom Minister A Raja hasn't helped the Government's image either. He continues to embarrass

the Government with his shenanigans.

The severity of the power crisis nationwide, the shadow of drought looming large over many parts of the country, and the spurt in food grain, pulse and vegetable prices even though inflation is in negative, do not provide a rosy picture of the Government in charge. Even before recovery from the economic downturn has firmed up, there is talk of inflation raising its ugly head again.

The Government's chicanery on the issue of declaration of assets by our judges has been well and truly exposed. After introducing the relevant Bill in the Rajya Sabha, the Government quietly withdrew it when the Opposition saw through its gameplan to shield the judges.

And finally, to cap it all, the Maoist menace plaguing many States of the country flies in the face of all the brave talk by Union Home Minister P Chidambaram. Two months in office may be too short a time to judge a Government.

But the omens are worrying. This Government is virtually no different from the previous regime which was in power from 2004 to May 2009. That is a lot of time to show results, or obfuscate issues. (Courtesy: The pioneer) ■

Opp seeks JPC or CBI probe into rice export

The Government on July 30 admitted to PSUs infringing certain conditions of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) notification for export of non-Basmati rice, but claimed the 'scam figures' reported in the media could be exaggerated

The entire Opposition staged a walkout after the Government virtually rejected its demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) or a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe.

BJP Leader and Lok Sabha Member Shri Gopinath Munde accused that the Group of Ministers allowed export of rice through private firms despite the ban with an aim to raise election funds.

NDA leader Shri Sharad Yadav sought to know how private players came into the picture when it was supposed to be a deal between two Governments.

Opposition Shri Advani also objected to Kumar's direction to the Minister to lay his speech and said the practice had been that a Minister always read his speech during a Calling Attention Motion. ■

Urdu Version of *My Country My Life* Launched

Urdu Version, "Mera Watan, Meri Zindagi" of Shri L. K Advani's autobiography, "My Country My Life" was launched on August 6, 2009 in a function. Speaking on the occasion, he said "The joint statement in Sharm el-Sheikh is a curtainraiser to the UPA Government's surrender to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue under external pressure. The Government seems inclined to

'settle' the Kashmir issue in blatant violation of the unanimous resolution by both Houses of Parliament."

Shri Advani said while BJP followed the two-pronged policy of honestly pursuing friendship with Pakistan while not compromising on terrorism, the UPA Government was interested in friendship with Pakistan at "any cost". "This may prove costly", he warned.

The function was attended by BJP President Rajnath Singh, Smt. Kamala Advani, BJP's minority morcha Chief Shahnawaz Hussain, Rajya Sabha Member Najma Heptulla, eminent Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and senior journalist Shri M.J. Akbar. ■



Bill will increase divide between rich and poor : Azad

Synopsis of the speech on Right to Education Bill delivered in Lok Sabha by Shri Kirti Azad

Though I support the Right to Education Bill, I have certain reservations. If all the powers were to be provided to the State Governments, then what was the need of getting this Bill passed by the Centre? The entire burden has been put on the State Governments. No norms have been prescribed.

The State Governments will decide as to what will be the meaning of neighborhood schools and Gurukuls and they will also decide as to where the schools should be located. But, nothing has been said about financial structure. The funds will have to be provided by the State Governments, though the Central Government would also provide necessary grants.

There are so many States in the country which are not in a position to provide funds. I was going through your statement wherein it was mentioned that even the funds released for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan had been diverted.

The committee had suggested that both, the overall financial cost as well as the sharing formula between the Centre and the States must be settled. It has not been done. The committee also recommended that necessary steps be taken to ensure that the State Governments discharge their basic responsibilities of providing elementary education. You have not settled even this.

There are two things in finance. Firstly, how much cost is invoked and where from the funds should be

raised? You have not prepared this formula. You have to evolve this formula so that we may feel assured that the poor States, where you want to implement right to education have ample resources to implement it. You have asked the State Governments



to fix the criteria. But the people are not even aware of the concept of neighborhood school.

Our country does not consist the plains areas only. It has hilly areas, rivers and deserts too. People are living in small hamlets. How is the State Government going to decide where to set up a neighborhood school and how would it mobilize resources for this purpose. You have said that the State Government, Local Authorities, parents, mukhia, public representatives would ensure that the children are going to school. You have fixed this responsibility but what is the punishment if the children do not go to school.

The authorities would pass on the buck to each other and this way

the right to education Bill would not serve its purpose.

I would like the hon. Minister to reply to these points. As per the survey conducted by the Government more than 60 per cent of the people of the country earn only Rs.20 per day. Such people would want their children to work and earn a few rupees. So, you have to give some financial incentives to motivate these children to go to school and motivate their parents also. I would request you to appoint those academicians in the proposed advisory council who have not only imparted education but have experienced the problems in

the education sector in the backward areas.

You have said that a programme like mid-day-meal would be prepared in consultation with the State Governments. If it is going to take five years then how would this target be achieved? I would request you to pay attention towards sports also. Trained sports teachers should be appointed. All the teachers who are appointed should also be trained in sports. Whether the Government would be able to identify such 60 lakh teachers. I have a report as per which 44 per cent of the teachers were not even able to reply to the questions of the level of the fifth standard. Whether these teachers would be able to educate the children and make India move ahead

in the field of education. These are the points which need serious consideration. The government stated that 5067 Gram Nyayalayas would be set up. You earmarked Rs.18 lakh for setting up and for this 300 pilot projects would be launched a Gram Nyayalaya. It is a matter of regret that not even one pilot project has been completed while seven months have passed since the Act came into force.

The State Government said that they do not have funds. In this case you had decided to grant billions of rupees for five lakh villages. It is a point on which you should pay attention. Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Scheme has been discussed. The target was to complete it by 2012. But I would like to say that not even five per cent work has been done in my constituency.

That is why the Union Government should plan properly before implementing a scheme. I support the Bill in question but I am not sure as to what extent it is going to be successful. You talk about quality education but have not said anything about dropouts. It has been said that admission would be given to children in various classes according to their age. The Standing Committee has suggested that there should be a monitoring mechanism but no such provision has been included in this Bill. The Bill does not say anything about vocational education.

I would request you to include extra-curricular activities. There should be courses on public awareness and civic awareness also. Trained sports teachers should be appointed in neighbourhood schools who may identify such talented boys in sports who can bring pride to the nation in the arena of sports. Nowadays we are getting

cricket players of international level from villages and small towns. Please do not bring an incomplete legislation when you talk about complete quality education. It has been said that the State Governments would run pre-schools. How can the poor States which cannot construct roads and cannot supply electricity provide complete education. It is not possible. Hence, the Union Government should help the States in this regard.

Right to Education Bill will further increase the divide between the rich and poor. I have put one point before you i.e. if the Right to Education Bill is passed in its present form, there would be no immediate choice but to engage in a public interest litigation which may turn out to be the most important one ever fought in the history of this country. There are no specific penalties if the authorities fail to provide elementary education.

You have not mentioned about the dropouts. The main reason for maximum dropout rate among girls

is absence of toilets in schools. I would like to mention about the works being undertaken by the Government of Bihar. Girls in Bihar particularly in rural areas are getting incentives for education. The Government of Bihar is engaged in providing education in spite of financial constraints. You have not excluded minority schools. They are not exempted from the provisions of this Bill. Is it possible that it will conflict with article 30 of the Constitution which allows minorities to set up and administer educational institutions? This is something can create problem in future.

We have doubts if the Government would be able to implement Right to Education Bill in five lakh villages in the country. I do support this Bill but with certain amendments and hope that the Centre Government would also take responsibilities along with State Governments so that the Government would be able to provide right to education and value education to children of our country. ■



BJP Welcomes Dropping of McoCa Charges

On August 1st The BJP welcomed the dropping of charges under MCOCA against Malegaon blast accused and said this had “smashed” the “fictional myth” about Hindu terror.

“We welcome the dropping of charges under MCOCA against Malegaon blast accused by the Mumbai special court. With this the diversionary and fictional myth about Hindu terror has been smashed. It has been proven false,” BJP spokesperson Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy said.

He said the 11,000 page chargesheet against accused Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur and Colonel Srikant Purohit had failed to prove the MCOCA charges.

“The case will now be tried in an ordinary court. The MCOCA charges were dropped on two grounds. One, that the accused were not a part of any organised crime syndicate. Secondly, there was no prior chargesheet against them,” Shri Rudy said.

Playing politics with calamity is a sin : Naidu

Important issue raised on July 24 ,2009 through the Calling Attention in Rajya Sabha by Shri M Venkaiah Naidu on failure of Monsoon, drought situation and contingency plan

- Monsoon delayed is Monsoon denied
 - Indian cultivation depends mostly on Rains
 - We are in the beginning of the era of uncertain monsoon, untimely rains, Climatic Changes as a result of Global Warming.
 - The failure of monsoon will have multiple impact – Food Security, Human Livelihood Security – Food Shortage – Power Shortage – Raise in Price of essential Commodities.
 - Livestock and livelihood are connected.
 - The Meteorological Department (Met Dept) measures good monsoon or bad monsoon by the rainfall. Meteorologists will be happy to announce quota of rains are complete. For Ex. Rainfall in August may not be of any use for crops but will cause floods. A flood means more water, more problems.
- Suggestions by Shri MV Naidu to the Centre:**
- Call all party meeting and also convene the CM's meeting of concerned states.
 - Send central teams to affected states
 - Educate the farmers to go for alternative crops
 - Reschedule the repayment of loans for 4 years with out interest
 - Centre should give additional power to the states affected by the drought
 - Provide subsidized diesel to the farmers who draw water for their crops from deep bore wells
 - Make available the required seeds and other inputs for alternative crops
 - Take up river linking at least now as a long term solution
 - Wherever there are late rains take up de-silting of water tanks, ponds and reservoirs. Use NREGA as additional resource.
 - Provide confidence to people that the system can cope with any contingency.
 - The government must rush seed, fertilizers and other inputs to regions that badly need them.
 - A compensatory production programme in those regions with better soil moisture at this point.
 - Reintroduce Food for Work Programme.
 - Provide timely calamity relief from the CRF, without discrimination to the affected states.
 - Do not play politics with calamity. It is a SIN.
 - There are 4 different alternative intra spell durations – In July drought relief and in September flood relief.
 - We need clear-sighted and firm policy intervention.
 - Provide confidence to people that the system can cope with any contingency.
 - Ask the faculty and the students of Agriculture Universities to leave their class rooms and spend time with farmers for one month.■

Need to oversee proper utilization of Haj subsidy

Synopsis of the speech delivered by Rajya Sabha Member Shri Prabhat Jha on proper Utilization of Haj subsidy

Haj pilgrims have to wander in Mumbai and Delhi offices for their tickets and passports. They don't get enough time to do preparations. Passengers are sent separately in the buses and their luggage is thrown on the roads in heaps. Elders, children and ladies have to go through many difficulties on account of less number of buses. Four to six persons are kept in each room of the Guest House. People from rural areas have problems in using western style toilets. Only ten or twelve toilets are provided for thousands of pilgrims in Meena and Arafat. Women and old persons have to go for toilet in open area. When people complained having given toilet water for drinking purpose, nothing was done inspite of a fax sent to the officers by the AHO there. Sixty people have to stay in one tent in Meena. There is no screen for the women in them. Their bodies touch each-other, which is against their religion. Similarly, no screens have been put between men and women in the canopies in Arafat also. After all is over, Indians have to spend there another 45 days, which increases their expenditure without reason. Therefore, I demand that the subsidy being given by the Government should be properly utilized. One monitoring committee should be formed, so that Haj pilgrims don't have to suffer the hardships. ■

Govt. failed in providing social justice to the country : Shanta Kumar

Synopsis of the speech delivered on July 22 by Rajya Sabha Member Shri Shanta Kumar on the demands of Social Justice Ministry

Crores of people became dalit and neglected in the country due to some historical wrong deeds. This was the major reason for the slavery of our country. But the great persons, the saints in this country strived to bring about social justice and harmony. It has been incorporated in the preamble of the Constitution to provide social justice to achieve the objective of the Republic. A Scheme has been launched to earmark a sub-plan of annual plans in about 27 States. Why this Scheme hasnot been launched in all the States? There is no provision regarding proportion of population in that Scheme. Even after 60 years of independence, the tradition of scavenging in the country is very unfortunate.

The Ministry should formulate a special plan in this regard. The prevention of drugs abuse is one of the tasks of the Ministry which have been assigned to it. The use of drugs has been noticed in the schools in the State like Himachal. Provision of adequate funds has not been made to prevent it. I am happy that it has been decided to consider the problems of senior citizens under the auspices of the Ministry. Today,

the population of senior citizens in India is eight crores, which is likely to be increased to 18 crores during next five years. The Ministry have not any comprehensive plan in this regard. There is no provision of funds for it. In the Report of the Ministry, there is no mention about



prevention of beggary. One can see in films how the children are stolen from the houses of poor people and made lame. They beg at the crossings and in front of temples. This has become a big business.

This Ministry has failed in providing social justice to the country. Even Rs.50 crores have not been spent by April, 2007. No reason has been mentioned for this in the report. The scholarships are not provided to the children belonging to deprived classes according to their needs. A number of NGOs are fake. There is shortage of hostels and whatever are available, they have not been utilized fully. The task of the Ministry to provide social justice, is a comprehensive task. We have, so far, not been able to provide social justice in the country in totality.

Number of rich people is

increasing, but condition of poor people is deteriorating everyday and we are unsuccessful in giving justice. Freedom fighters dreamt of a Prosperous India but today we have a very rich India, a middle class India and a poor and hungry India. Resolution for Social Justice which was made long ago, today it is completely unfinished. On the one hand riches of few people is skyrocketing and on the other hand poverty is sobbing in huts. According to Forbes Magazine India has more billionaires than Japan. According to World Bank, India has joined 12 rich countries of the world. It is a matter of happiness that India is becoming very prosperous but condition of Social Justice is very bad. Another picture is that in unorganized sector, according to National Commission on enterprises in unorganized sector 77 percent people live on Rs. 20 daily. In rural areas, 80 percent people do not have latrines. 10 percent people of Scheduled Castes living in rural areas have no land and 65 percent people have even less than half acres of land. Over 27 percent people of world's under nourished population lives in India while 43 percent of children under 5 years of age in the country are under-weight. Maximum number of people are suffering from hunger in India. Whether we want to make such India which has billionaires on one hand and number of hungry person keeps on increasing up to crores? If

development takes place and if it is confined to some person and crore of some persons are starving than it is very alarming.

Terrorism and Maoism are increasing and about 150 districts are affected by this. Law and order situation is deteriorating. Poor youth is disappointed, he is not getting any work, he can be instigated. Biggest reason is economic disparity and when that youth feels that some persons are becoming rich overnight and when that frustrated, unemployed youth feels that some people have deposited their money in secret accounts in Banks of Switzerland than how he thing, it can be imagined. Situation is very alarming from social security point of view. Social Justice is very important subject and I want to say that very little work has been done in this direction.

Polices of the Government should be thoroughly revised and all plans should be made from new angle, concentration of wealth in few hand should be stopped. Decentralised economy should be considered than only indeed we can bring social justice in the country. About giving reservation to people who have adopted conversion, I think, it is absolutely wrong. Such people should not get the facility of reservation. By this it will be a raid on people, who are already getting this facility and there will be social tention. Hence it is not at all required.

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Due attention not given on *National Action Plan* on climate change : Koshiyari

Synopsis of the speech delivered on environmental and forestry issue by Rajya Sabha Member Shri Bhagat Singh Koshiyari on August 3, 2009.

The subject of environment and forests is very important subject but as a whole, not even one per cent of total budget has been provided for it. National Action Plan on climate change is there. It has very pointed mission plans. When we go through these plans, it seems that all the problems relating to environment and pollution would be solved. But it did not happen. This subject was not given due attention to the extent it required.

I would like to speak more on conceptual, cultural and spiritual aspects of this subject. We all know that the human being is directly related to nature and he has worshipped it. In a way, he has worshipped the forests, he has worshipped the earth. He called it Mother Earth. The people of this country had sacrificed their lives for Mother India, not only to achieve freedom, but, also to preserve our natural resources like sea, rivers, forests,

trees, mountains etc. But, we see, after that the trees were cut indiscriminately and the forests were vanished. Then, Chipko Movement was launched creating an awareness to save the environment.

Our ancestors had feeling that in what manner we conserve the environment including nature. But unfortunately, all the things were changed. After independence, we have committed too much mistakes. To avoid the recurrence of such mistakes in future, you have a National Mission, in which you have also included Himalayan Ecological Mission. I congratulate you for this. The Himalaya will be conserved thereby and ecology of Himalaya would be in order. Therefore, I request that all of us look at our those cultural values again. This country has 20 per cent forest cover, whereas it should be 33 percent. ■

Judges should declare assets in public : BJP

The BJP on August 1st made a strong demand that judges should make public their assets and liabilities and said there was no point in making such a declaration before their higher-ups.

“BJP welcomes probity in public life. But what purpose would be served if the assets and liabilities declared by judges are not made public?” BJP spokesperson Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy posed at a press briefing in New Delhi.

He said making such details public was essential to “maintain a degree of transparency”.

“There is no point (in submitting such information to higher-ups) if such details are not made public,” he said.

The demand comes ahead of the government’s proposal to introduce in the current session of Parliament the Judges (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Bill, 2009. The Bill proposes that judges of the Supreme Court will furnish details of the assets and liabilities to Chief Justice of India, while high court judges will submit the information to their respective chief justices. ■

Montreal Protocol used by developed countries for their advantage : Rudy

Synopsis of the speech in Rajya Sabha by Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy on August 3, 2009 on Global Warming

Only 1.24 per cent Forest area has increased during the last 30 years. The number of lions has come down to 1,400 from approximately 40,000 at the time of independence. We have great bio diversity. Many States are facing the condition of famine due to climate change. Deforestation is going on. As a result, possibility of floods are rising. Rise in temperature is one of the reason. In 2005, Carbon emission was around 7.5 billion tons which will rise to 14 billion tons in 2055. As a result, temperature of world will rise about 4 to 5 degrees more. What are the reasons of Carbon emission? The rising consumerism is the biggest reason for this. As a result, the level of sea is rising. This rise in sea will affect adversely many countries of South East Asia and Asia.

Corals are dying in Lakshadweep. Glaciers are melting. The whole ecology is being affected adversely. Montreal Protocol was signed in the decade of 1990 and initiative to control the CFCs emission was taken at that time. But the developed country used it to their advantage. USA is at first position as far as Carbon emission



is concerned. Per capita 1.4 ton carbon emission takes place in India. What action was taken by the Government of India in this regard? The Prime Minister told the whole world in La A q u i l l a International Conference that India accepts 2 d e g r e e centigrade. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Prime Minister whether he talked to the scientists and the Ministry of Environment and Forests and all other concerned before taking decision in this regard.

We have taken an onus of the world. It is a liability of the world being imposed on the developing nations.

We are using everything possible to protect the environment. We had passed the Conservation act and the Environment Protection Act much before. Now we are heading towards signing an agreement which can be retrospectively affect the welfare of the country. All the developed countries have come together. We would be squeezed out of that. In future for setting up any industry we will be required to take sanction not from our government by but from the governments of other countries such as USA, Japan, Europe etc. The people of India will not pardon this government for accepting this agreement.■

Inflation falls, but food prices rise further

Inflation remained in negative territory for the eighth consecutive week, falling marginally to (-)1.58 per cent for the week ended July 25, even though the prices of food articles continued to soar. Though inflation, based on the wholesale price index, declined by 0.04 percentage point against (-)1.54 per cent in the previous week, food rticles like sea fish, pulses, fruit and vegetables, groundnut oil and sugar became dearer. However, eggs, soyabean, oil cakes and imported edible oil became cheaper during the reporting week.

Prices of fuel, power, and light and lubricants remained unchanged over the last week. "WPI, which is in the negative zone, is an unnecessary distraction for policy making as prices of food and other commodities are going up," economic think-tank Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations director Rajiv Kumar said.(courtesy:IE)■

Agriculture : Secret of Modi's success

A recent study suggests the secret of Narendra Modi's electoral success lay in agriculture, an area completely neglected by political analysts. Leaders in other states should sit up and take notice, says Swaminathan S Anklesaria Aiyar.

WHEN Narendra Modi won the 2007 state election in Gujarat, the media focused on Hindu-Muslim issues. Some journalists highlighted rapid industrial development that had made Gujarat India's fastest-growing state. I mentioned Gujarat's successful port-led development.

However, an excellent new study suggests that the secret of Modi's success lay in agriculture, an area completely neglected by political analysts. Ashok Gulati, Tushaar Shah and Ganga Sreedhar have written an IFPRI paper, 'Agricultural Performance in Gujarat Since 2000', which highlights something few people know — that Gujarat's agricultural performance is by far the best in India. Between 2000-01 and 2007-08 agricultural value added grew at a phenomenal 9.6% per year (despite a major drought in 2002). This is more than double India's agricultural growth rate, and much faster than Punjab's farm growth in the green revolution heyday. Indeed, 9.6% agricultural growth is among the fastest rates recorded anywhere in the world. That drives home the magnitude of Gujarat's performance.

Since the bulk of Gujarat's population is still rural, this mega-boom in agriculture must have created millions of satisfied voters. Hence it must have played a major role in Modi's victory. Yet I did not

see a single media analyst mention it.

Gujarat is drought prone, with 70% of its area classified as semi-arid and arid. Although journalists focus on the Sardar Sarovar Project, its canal network is hopelessly incomplete, and currently irrigates only 0.1 million hectares. No less than 82% of irrigation in the state comes from tubewells, which have depleted groundwater. By the mid-1990s, groundwater extraction exceeded natural recharge in 31

The IFPRI study says that 10,700 check dams were built up to 2000, and helped drought-proof 32,000 hectares. That sounds a lot. But subsequently, under Modi, Gujarat has built ten times as many check dams! He could well say 'chak de, check dam'.

talukas, and 90% of the safe extraction yield in another 12 talukas.

In the 1990s, the state along with grassroots organisations embarked on decentralised water harvesting. This included the building of check dams, village tanks, and bori-bunds (built with gunny sacks stuffed with mud). During the 2007 election campaign, the Congress slogan was 'chak de, chak de Gujarat'. I heard Modi say at a rally that his reply was "check dam, check dam Gujarat." I did not realise at the time how significant this really was.

The IFPRI study says that 10,700 check dams were built up to 2000, and helped drought-proof 32,000 hectares. That sounds a lot.

But subsequently, under Modi, Gujarat has built ten times as many check dams! He could well say 'chak de, check dam'. These have played a big role in the agricultural growth of Saurashtra and Kutch (aided, it must be said, by bountiful monsoons in the last five years). Better water availability has also increased milk and livestock production.

Gujarat has promoted drip irrigation, badly needed to conserve water in semiarid districts. Like other states, Gujarat offers subsidies and loans, but it also fasttracks and simplifies procedures. Farmers contribute 5% initially. Then a state-owned company provides 50% as subsidy, and arranges a bank loan for the balance of 45%. One lakh acres have been covered by drip irrigation so far. Like the Sardar Sarovar Project, drip irrigation's total irrigation potential is far higher.

Research shows that rural roads are the most important investment for agriculture. Gujarat has one of the best rural road networks in India, and 98.7% of villages are connected by pukka roads.

MODI'S Jyotigram scheme for power has provided regular, high-quality electricity to villages, greatly helping farming. Jyotigram provides separate electric feeders for domestic use and pump-sets. This permits the state to supply round-

the clock domestic supply, while limiting agricultural supply to eight hours a day (which is continuous and of constant voltage). This has facilitated a switch to high-value crops like mango, banana and wheat, which need assured water. Constant voltage has protected farmers from damage to pumpsets earlier caused by fluctuating voltage. Continuous power for non-agricultural uses has spurred diversification into nonfarm activities, vital for rural growth.

The irrigated area has expanded at the rate of 4.4% per year. The fastest growth in crops has been in wheat, followed by cotton and fruits and vegetables.

Private seed companies have brought in new technology for several crops, ranging from bajra to castor, but above all in Bt cotton. More than 20 Bt cotton varieties are now produced by 30 seed companies. In his election campaign, Modi waxed eloquent about Gujarat's success in cotton. He declared that Gujarat was now famous in China as the producer and exporter of Bt cotton, and he said this was a source of Gujarati pride. (Let me add that this is a great improvement on his earlier notion of Hindu pride, exemplified in his 'gaurav yatra' after Godhra). Gujarat has only 26% of India's cotton area, but 35.5% of its production, thanks to high yields. Rising world prices have also helped, and been buttressed by a huge jump in the minimum, support price for cotton.

New institutional arrangements like contract farming have helped improve marketing. Gujarat's famous dairy co-operatives (everybody loves Amul) have provided a stable basis for milk and livestock development. But the private sector is emerging as an important player too. Corporates have entered agro-exports, agro-processing, organised

food retail, and rural infrastructure development. Vimal Dairy and Vadilal Industries have entered the dairy sector. Agrocel has taken up organic farming of cotton and sesame seeds. Atreyas Agro and Godrej Agrovel plan contract cultivation of jatropha and palm oil respectively. Food retail chains like Food Bazaar, Reliance Fresh and Spencer have sprung up in Gujarat's cities, sourcing produce from farmers directly.

The state has helped catalyse production, notably in water harvesting. It has worked with NGOs and companies to bring the best technology to farmers. Gujarat

Agricultural University has been split into four separate universities, helping strengthen R&D.

Can this be replicated in other states? Much of it can. Jyotigram looks least likely to be replicated because it abandons the free-but-unreliable rural power that politicians regard as vote-winners in most states. Many states also prefer large irrigation projects to small water-harvesting ones, since bigger projects translate into bigger kickbacks. Yet Modi's electoral success points to a new way of winning rural votes. Others should sit up and take notice. ■

(Courtesy: The Economic Times)

BJP demands probe in spectrum issue

BJP on July 28, 2009 walked out of the Rajya Sabha in protest against what they termed an unsatisfactory reply by Telecom Minister Shri A Raja on the controversy surrounding 2G Spectrum allocation. Leader of Opposition Shri Arun Jaitley called the Spectrum allocation process a "monumental scam". Opposition were demanding a probe by the Joint Parliamentary Committee, also staged a walkout as Raja refused to yield to the demand.

The BJP had been alleging that Spectrum allocation had been made at throwaway prices to companies leading to losses worth several thousand crore rupees to the exchequer.

Shri Jaitley accused him of "skirting core issue" whether the prescribed Rs 1,651 crore license fee was a fair value and described the episode as "huge monumental scam" before leading a walkout. Last

year, Unitech and Swan — after bagging the licences for Rs 1,651 crore each sold stakes to foreign partners at huge premium leading to an outcry over alleged undervaluation of Spectrum.

He said that cancellation of licences would be natural if flaws were found in the allotment process. "Cancellation (of licence) would be natural consequence if the JPC — as demanded by the Opposition in Rajya Sabha — finds flaws in the sale of Spectrum," said the BJP leader, adding that the entire exercise amounted to trading in licences, with original players who bid for Spectrum licences, offloading majority stakes to foreign players, making huge sums of money in the process. He added that "this was one case where the PM stepped in and handed over the 3G auction matter to a Group of Ministers headed by Finance Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee". ■

Delhi Pradesh BJP Mahila Morcha demonstration against price rise

New Delhi, 3rd August, more than three thousand women workers of the Delhi Pradesh BJP Mahila Morcha staged demonstration at Sansad Marg and courted arrest in protest against price rise.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Leader of the Opposition in Delhi Legislative Assembly Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, former Chief Minister of Delhi Madan Lal Khurana, Mahila Morcha President Sarita Chaudhary, General Secretary Rekha Gupta, former MP Anita Arya and Delhi Pradesh BJP President Prof. Om Prakash Kohli addressed the demonstrating women.

Addressing the women workers Smt. Sushma Swaraj told that the Manmohan Singh Government which made one promise after another within hundred days of its constitution has completely failed to curb price rise. She told that the women have to suffer the most due to price rise because she manages the kitchen and prepares budget of the family for the whole month. Smt. Sushma Swaraj told that there has been unlimited rise in the prices of all the essential commodities used by the common man, which has made a mockery of the claims of the UPA Government that inflation has come down to minus zero. She told that the BJP will strongly attack the Government on the front of price rise in Parliament also and expose the wrong policies of the Government.

The Pradesh BJP President Prof. Om Prakash Kohli told that

today sugar, milk, pulses, vegetables, petrol, diesel, edible oil are beyond the reach of common man. Arhar Dal is being sold at the rate of Rs. 90 to Rs. 95 per kg and Moong Dal at the rate of Rs. 72 per kg. Prof. Kohli told that the wrong economic policies and economic mismanagement of the Manmohan Singh Government at Centre and Sheila Dikshit Government of Delhi are responsible for the unbearable rise in the prices of essential commodities.

The Leader of the Opposition in Delhi Legislative Assembly Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra warned the Delhi Government that if it does not take effective steps to curb the price rise then the BJP will be compelled to stage more strong demonstration. Ridiculing the announcement of the Sheila Government to sell cheap pulses at 80 shops in Delhi he told that opening only 80 shops for one and half crore people of Delhi is a ugly joke with the people of Delhi. He told that the BJP will make price rise as the main issue in the bye-election to MCD to be held by the end of the month.

The former Chief Minister of Delhi Shri Madan Lal Khurana congratulated the Mahila Morcha for coming in the streets in the scorching sun in the noon and told



that he never saw such price spiral of essential commodities during his 50 years of political life.

The Mahila Morcha President Smt. Sarita Chaudhary criticized the Delhi Congress Government and said that the concern of the Congress Government for supplying wine to

the people of Delhi is not seen for providing water. She demanded that why cheap pulses are being sold only on 80 shops, it should have been supplied through all the ration shops of Delhi. She strongly condemned the lack of sensitivity of the Sheila Government towards the common man.

Besides Mahila Morcha General Secretary Rekha Gupta, Mahila Morcha Secretary Rekha Sinha, Councillors Rajesh Yadav, Neelam Buddhiraja, Poonam Bhati, Nisha Maan, Malti Verma, Vice President Usha Badola, District President Usha Singh, Pradesh BJP Vice President Vishakha Shailani, Pradesh BJP Secretary Kamal Sehrawat, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of MCD Rajni Abbi, Pradesh Mahila Morcha Vice President Laxmi Kanta Arya about three thousand women participated in the demonstration. They broke the barriers put by the Sansad Marg Police and courted arrest. ■

Filing of FIR against Shri Virbhadra Singh

Law to take its own course : Prof. Dhumal

Himachal Chief Minister Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal has said that it was not the BJP but a former Congress Minister in Shri Virbhadra Singh's Cabinet who had released the CD to the public on May 28, 2007.

Shri Dhumal said the Congress made a complaint to the Election Commission on May 30 and requested for a stay on playing the CD. Shri Singh, who was the Chief Minister then, went to the High Court for a stay and filed a criminal complaint against his former Cabinet colleague Major Vijay Singh Mankotia who had released the CD. A senior bureaucrat filed a public interest litigation petition on November 22, 2007 and Shri. Singh went to the Court claiming that it was neither his nor his wife's voice in the CD.

The State Advocate-General then marked the enquiry to the Vigilance Department. The statements of Shri Mahinder Lal, the deceased senior bureaucrat who was purportedly talking to Shri Singh about an alleged monetary transaction, were also recorded by the Vigilance Department in May 2008.

The CD was then sent to the Central Forensic Laboratory in Chandigarh on May 21, 2008, and the original cassette was also handed over to the Vigilance Department by Major Mankotia.

Shri Dhumal also challenged the Opposition members to file individual affidavits in the High Court if they feel the CD is doctored and does not contain Shri Singh's voice.

He said the law was taking its own course at its own pace and the forensic report was given by a laboratory and not the BJP

government. He requested the Opposition to let the truth come out and asserted that it was not a case of political revenge. (Agencies)

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## Sai, Kaptan & Dave elected to Rajya Sabha

Former State BJP General Secretary (Organizational) Shri Kaptan Singh Solanki and State BJP Vice President Shri Anil Dave have been elected to Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh. The seats fell vacant after the resignation of BJP leader Smt. Sushma Swaraj and State BJP president Shri Narendra Singh Tomar who were elected to the Lok Sabha from Vidisha and Morena respectively.

Shri Kaptan Singh Solanki was born in a farmer's family on July 1<sup>st</sup> 1939 at Gaadh Para Village in Bhind district. He was a Swayam Sevak since his childhood. After completing his M.A. B. Ed. he joined P.G. Science College as teacher of English literature. As a social activist he served various organizations in different capacities.

Born on the day of Vijaydashmi in 1956 at Baran Nagar in Ujjain Shri Anil Dave became Swayam Sevak of RSS in 1964. He did Management in rural economy and served RSS as pracharak between 1989 to 2004. He was also actively associated with several writing, publication and editing works. At present he is Vice President of Madhya Pradesh BJP.

Shri Nand Kumar Sai elected from Chhattisgarh to Rajya Sabha, had been a three time MP in Lok Sabha and Leader of opposition in the state assembly. He is a veteran tribal leader since the days of Jana Sangh. He had also been BJP President in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. ■



Kaptan Singh Solanki



Anil Dave



Nand Kumar Sai