

**Special on Atalji's Birthday**

L.K. Advani.....	7
Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.....	8
M. Venkaiah Naidu.....	9

**Special Interviews**

Shri Nitin Gadkari.....	13
Dr. M.M. Joshi.....	16

**Articles**

Under UPA poverty...	
By Naresh Minocha.....	20
Why are smaller states good...	
By Vikash Anand .....	24
Be a player, not a potato	
By By C. Raja Mohan.....	26

**State Reports**

Madhya Pradesh.....	29
Himachal Pradesh.....	29
Jharkhand.....	30
Uttar Pradesh.....	30

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सर्वधर्मन्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रजा

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥

Resigning all your duties to Me, the all-powerful and all supporting Lord, take refuge in Me alone; I shall absolve you of all sins, worry not.

**Bhagavadgita, Chapter 18, Text 66**

**Editorial**

**Rangnath Mishra Commission Report  
A threat to nation's unity & integrity**

*The report of the Rangnath Mishra Commission virtually recommends division of the country on religious lines. It wants that all public appointments under the Central and the State governments in the country to be divided between Hindus and Muslims. It recommends that of the jobs reserved for minorities 73 percent should be earmarked for Muslims and 15 percent for Christians. His intention is clearly to determine the selection in government jobs on the basis of religion alone. The Commission, surprisingly, has made the recommendation knowing fully well, as do we all, that our Constitution does not permit any such thing on the basis of religion. The Commission has gone to the extent of saying that if necessary, the Constitution should be amended for the purpose.*

*Rangnath Mishra Commission does not stop at government jobs; it wants its recommendations to cover every aspect of the government*

*functioning. In the matter of education, the Commission wants that the minorities should be extended greater autonomy in the matter of running of educational institutions. In addition, 15 percent seats should be reserved for minorities in other government educational institutions. Further, if the number of Muslim students falls less than 10 percent, the rest of the seats should be given to other sections of the minority communities. It goes a step further. If still the required number of students is not available from amongst the minority community, the seats should remain vacant and not given to majority community under any circumstances at all.*

*The matter does not end here. It further recommends that the Central government should make it a mandatory obligation on the Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Milia to assume the responsibility of educating the Muslim community. It further recommends that government*

**"Do not throw the arrow which will return against you."**

**- Kurdish Proverb**

should open such a university in every State to take over the responsibility of educating the Muslims. This virtually amounts of segregation of various communities on religious lines.

Further, the Commission recommends that the Maulana Education Foundation established by Government should provide funds to Muslims to open their separate schools for Muslim students. It further recommends that the loans and other assistance provided by the banking institutions should also be governed and divided on religious considerations. It also wants that a list of castes under Muslim community should be framed as has been done in the case of Hindus and

these should be classified as scheduled. In the same way, scheduled castes within the Muslim community should be extended reservation as has been done in the case of Hindus.

There are many more recommendations of the Rangnath Mishra Commission which, if implemented, will only endanger the unity and integrity of the country.

No discussion has as yet taken place; its report has just been placed on the floor of Parliament. No commission in the past has come out with such disastrous recommendations. The interesting part is that these recommendations have come from a person who, at one time, was the chief justice of the

Supreme Court of India which interprets the law of the land and the Constitution. It is difficult to gauge the intentions of the Congress-led UPA government.

The whole country is worried at these recommendations. How can any political party or a government be given the license to indulge in anything just for swelling its vote bank in utter disregard of the interests of the nation. Every right thinking citizen of the country has to rise against these recommendations of the Commission. Its report is putting the very unity and integrity of the country in jeopardy. If the people do not assert themselves, the country is sure to be the worst sufferer in the long run. ■

## BJP seeks PM's response on killing of Indian student

Accusing the government of not taking effective action over killing of an Indian student in Australia, the Bharatiya Janata Party on January 4 sought a statement from Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh.

"The prime minister should tell the nation how many more Indians will be killed or injured before the government is really stirred into effective action," BJP spokesman Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad said here.

Describing External Affairs Minister Shri S.M. Krishna's response to the development as "pro forma", he said the prime minister should tell the nation about the government's stand.

Shri Prasad said the government had several options including use of "coercive diplomacy" and it should act suitably.

"It is the duty of the government to protect the life of every citizen," he said.

An Indian youth was on January 3 stabbed to death in Australia in the first fatal case in a series of racial attacks on the community in the country. (IANS) ■



**Kamal Sandesh  
Parivar  
extends greetings  
to its esteemed  
readers  
on the occasion of  
"Republic Day"  
on January 26**

# Need to work for last man in the queue : Gadkari

*Press Statement issued by BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari  
at his first press conference in New Delhi on December 24, 2009*

It gives me great pleasure to meet friends from the national media in my first press conference as President of the BJP. I extend a warm welcome to all of you. I wish you - and, through you, all my countrymen - Merry Christmas and also a Happy and Prosperous 2010. I also wish our source of inspiration Respected Atal Behari Vajpayee Ji a long and healthy life on the eve of his birthday.

I am truly overwhelmed by the trust and confidence that my party has reposed in me by entrusting this new responsibility to me. I am acutely aware that I am carrying a heavy responsibility on my shoulders. However, no task is arduous for any committed Karyakarta of my party if he resolves to remain truthful to its basic ideology and idealism, as embodied by Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay; if he continues to be guided by the inspiring legacy of our two tallest leaders, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee and Shri Lal Krishna Advani; if he displays an earnest eagerness to learn from seniors and juniors alike in an atmosphere of team work and discipline, which have always been the hallmark of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh and the BJP; and if he derives his strength from, and in turn strengthens, the vast army of fellow Karyakartas, including those in the lowest and the farthest units of party.

I am first and foremost a

Karyakarta. I know, and wish to re-affirm today, that my fellow-Karyakarta' spirit of sacrifice, struggle and tireless service to the party and the nation is the greatest guarantor of the strength of my party. In so far as party organisation is concerned, discipline,



determination and mutual trust and respect will be the cornerstones of our functioning.

Nationalism, our ideological foundation: BJP is an India – First party. We look at BJP as an instrument of Nation Building. Nationalism was, is and will always remain the foundation of my party's ideology and also the fountainhead of inspiration for every party worker. Indian nationalism is rooted in our ancient culture, which is inclusive, integrative and a source of inspiration for every patriotic Indian. The BJP remains committed to genuine secularism (Sarva Dharma Sama bhav), not vote-bank secularism. It brooks no distinction or discrimination between citizens of India on the lines of caste, religion,

language, region or ethnicity. India belongs to all, and all belong to India. All have equal rights. At the same time, all also have equal responsibility to make India stronger and united.

Therefore, the BJP will continue to oppose tooth and nail any policy and any attempt that has the potential to endanger national unity and security. Our opposition to separatism in Jammu & Kashmir, and to massive infiltration of Bangladeshis into Assam and other parts of the country, which the Congress party has been encouraging purely for myopic vote-bank considerations, stems from this supreme concern for India's unity and security.

Zero-tolerance towards terrorism and Naxalism: The same concern prompts me to reiterate today my party's unwavering stand that India must adopt a "zero tolerance" approach to fighting terrorism and Naxalism. Recent disclosures about the frequent reconnaissance visits to India by international jihadi conspirators like David Coleman Headley involved in the 26/11 terrorist attack on Mumbai, and the worrisome findings contained in the Pradhan Committee report, indicate that our security system has loopholes that could again be exploited by the enemies of the nation. Like terrorism, Naxalism, which is inspired by the anti-national foreign ideology of Maoism, also continues to claim

many innocent lives, including the lives of our security personnel. I urge the UPA government to be firm in combating these twin threats, and pledge my party's support to every right step it might take in this direction.

Politics as an instrument for socio-economic reform and nation building: Since it is my commitment to nationalism that drew me into politics, prosperity of India and welfare of its entire people are at the very core of my ideological belief. My subsequent experience in public life, and my stint as a legislator and minister, has further steeled my conviction that politics cannot be a battlefield for power; rather, it should be an instrument for socio-economic reform and nation building. I believe that the time has come for India to have a single-minded focus on development. The BJP believes in egalitarian development. In order to achieve this, we will also try and evolve an internal Performance Audit Mechanism to ensure Good Governance at every level where BJP is in power.

Sadly, the Congress has followed the path of "Development for some and Deprivation for the rest", which is both unsustainable and dangerously destabilizing. The recent revelation by the committee headed by Prime Minister's Economic Advisor, Dr. Suresh Tendulkar that the population of the poor in India has increased by 10 per cent is a warning signal. What is more worrisome is that poverty in rural India stands at 42 per cent, and not 28 per cent as was estimated earlier. The plight of the poor, and also of the middle-classes, is made worse by skyrocketing price rise, which the UPA government has completely failed to check.

Transforming this reality has to be seen as the first duty of the political establishment. I therefore

would like to tell my party men to derive inspiration from the desire to bring a smile on the faces of underprivileged brethren, to end the distress of farmers that has forced thousands of them to commit suicide, to eliminate malnutrition that is killing tens of thousands of tribal children, to create employment opportunities for our talented youth.

Commitment to Antyodaya: Development is high on my agenda. The BJP-led NDA government, under the visionary premiership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, used the people's mandate to accelerate and broad base development. Today I would like to encapsulate my party's development philosophy in the following slogan: "Nationalism is our Inspiration. Development through Good Governance is our Tool, and Antyodaya (which means giving priority to the last person in the queue, i.e. the most deprived sections including the SCs, STs, OBCs and other weaker sections) is our Objective." As a concrete expression of our commitment to this slogan, I would like every BJP member to be actively associated with at least one Vikas (development) and Seva (service) project in his or her area of work.

BJP will emerge stronger in the next three years: Let me underscore the fact that BJP is a natural party of

governance wedded to good governance, faster and inclusive development and national security, both internal and external and hence the only alternative to Congress. The BJP is proud of having transformed India's polity from a Congress-dominated single-pole system into a bi-polar system. The BJP is also proud of giving leadership to the National Democratic Alliance, a platform on which all non-Congress and non-Communist parties are welcome. My goal is to see that the BJP emerges stronger in the next three years, both in states where it is traditionally well established and also in those states where it so far has a marginal presence. Simultaneously, the BJP will also strive to expand and consolidate the NDA as a robust platform for opposition unity.

To achieve this goal, the first requirement is galvanization of the BJP's party organization at all levels. Striving for further geographical expansion of the party and making it further strong and unified will be my first priority.

Lastly, I request all my well wishers to not to offer me flowers or garlands and instead offer the money that you may be spending to Kisan Sahayata Kosh for the benefit of families of those farmers who have committed suicide. ■

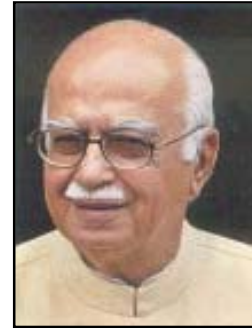
## I agree with Gandhiji on maximum production with maximum involvement of people: Gadkari

*Talking to press reporters he said "Jawaharlal Nehru's thrust was on maximum production, but Mahatma Gandhi's thrust was on maximum production with maximum involvement of people. I agree with the latter view. Handicrafts, handlooms, etc, need to be encouraged. Public-private partnerships too need to be encouraged. We should make optimal use of technology and make products that are world class."*

*He added that besides Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Shri L K Advani, Shri George Fernandes' "commitment to fight for the poor" had influenced him a great deal, and that he would like a "seva prakalp" in every Assembly constituency of the country.*

# I felt he was a man of destiny : Advani

*As Bharatiya Janata Party goes in for a leadership change and debates its future, there is no missing the legacy of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the country's first non-Congress Prime Minister to last a full term. As he turns 85 today, some of the most influential voices within the BJP and outside write on the 'Vajpayee Vision'*



The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) was formed in 1951. Atalji's first formal responsibility in the party was to accompany BJS founder president Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee as his aide. I was a pracharak of the RSS in those days — one of the few pracharaks to have been asked to work in the political field.

I was looking after the organisation's work in the districts of Kota, Bundi, and Jhalawar in Rajasthan.

Although I knew about Atalji through his powerful editorials and poems that he used to write in *Panchjanya*, a nationalist weekly (he had founded the journal in 1948), my first meeting with him was only in 1952, at the Kota railway station — he was then accompanying Dr Mookerjee on a train journey to popularise the newly-formed party.

I recall, most vividly, the image of a young, intense-looking political activist, nearly as lean as myself. He must have been 27 or 28 then; but I could easily tell that he was imbued with youthful idealism and carried around him the aura of a poet who had drifted into politics. At the end of this first tour, I said to myself that here was an extraordinary young man, and I must get to know him.

I came in close contact with Atalji when he came alone to the

state on a political tour of Rajasthan some time later and I accompanied him throughout his journey. His remarkable personality, his outstanding oratory, his inimitable command over Hindi, and his ability to effectively articulate even serious political issues with wit and humour — all these traits made a deep impact on me. I felt that he was a man of destiny; a leader who deserved to lead India some day.

Atalji, in fact, developed within me a complex which stuck on for many years — that I cannot deliver a public speech, although I may be able to draft resolutions, and write articles — a complex that made me resist the offer to become the party president in 1972.

Deendayal Upadhyaya, meanwhile, felt that the second Lok Sabha needed an able party spokesperson in Parliament, so "it must be ensured that Vajpayee is elected". In the 1957 elections, Atalji was asked to contest from three seats in Uttar Pradesh — Lucknow, Balrampur and Mathura. He won only from Balrampur. The party won four seats in the country. At this point, the party asked me to shift from Rajasthan to Delhi and look after the Parliamentary Party office and assist Atalji. I shifted to Delhi and even shared his 30, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road (then known as Queen

Victoria Road) bungalow. It was here that we came to know each other well.

With only four representatives in the Lok Sabha, the time allotted for our party in various debates was just a few minutes — Atalji would often not get a chance. It was in the course of a debate on foreign policy that Atalji finally got a chance to speak. Pandit Nehru, who was then present in the House, was greatly impressed by him. There were many Parliamentary initiatives that enabled him to make history. He was the first member, for instance, to force the Government to come out with its first White Paper — on Chinese intrusions in the country.

After Indira Gandhi imposed Emergency, Atalji and I fought together, went to prison together and, after Emergency was lifted, worked together towards the formation of the Janata Party. With other colleagues, I worked with Atalji in founding the BJP in 1980.

The BJP's meteoric growth, leading to a bipolar polity in the country, was due to the Ayodhya movement. After I launched the Ram Rath Yatra in 1990 to mobilise support for the Ayodhya movement, a peculiar asymmetry arose in the media's projection of Atalji and me. Atalji was seen as a

liberal; I was labelled as a Hindu hardliner. Some party colleagues then told me that “it, in fact, helps the BJP to have one leader who is projected as a ‘liberal’ and another leader who is projected as a ‘hardliner’.”

Later, in the wake of being falsely charged in the hawala case, I announced that I would not re-enter Lok Sabha until I was exonerated by the judiciary. I refused to contest the 1996 election. It was Atalji who contested from Gandhinagar, in addition to contesting from his traditional seat of Lucknow. He won, with a huge margin, both the seats, and resigned from Gandhinagar — his gesture was an unmistakable message about unity at the top in the BJP. It was the same message that had gone out from the party’s *maha adhiveshan* in Mumbai in 1995, when I, as party president, announced his name as the BJP’s Prime Ministerial candidate in the Parliamentary elections the following year.

There was much idle speculation on this point — some people in the party and the Sangh insisted that “I had made a big sacrifice by this announcement”. I was steadfast and I argued — “What I have done is not an act of sacrifice. It is the outcome of a rational assessment of what is right and what is in the best interest of the party and of the party and the nation”.

Along with others, the two of us worked together to bring the BJP to power in 1998. I served as his deputy in the government, and I was appointed Deputy Prime Minister on June 29, 2002. He used to consult me even earlier on all policy issues, and he would never go ahead with an idea if he knew that I had a different view on the same. Such was the understanding between the two of us.

It doesn’t mean that there were no differences amongst us, though. He had reservations about the BJP getting directly associated with the

Ayodhya movement. But he accepted the collective decision of the party — showing that he was a thorough democrat by conviction and temperament. The second instance pertains to the time when communal violence broke out in Gujarat after the mass killings of kar sevaks in Godhra in 2002. Atalji was among those in the party who thought that Modi should be asked to quit. I was convinced, after talking to a large number of people in Gujarat, that Modi was being unfairly targeted. He was, in my opinion, more sinned against than sinning.

If I have to single out one person who has been an integral part of my political life since its inception till now, it’s Atal Bihari Vajpayee — it is unparalleled in Independent India’s history for two personalities to have worked together in the same organisation for so long and with such a strong spirit of partnership. ■

(Courtesy: The Indian Express)

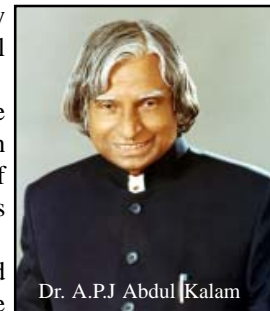
## He used to ask me, “*aapka Pokhran kaisa hai ?*”: Dr. Kalam

On the 85th birthday of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji, I extend my heartfelt birthday greetings with prayers for a great life. On this occasion, I would like to recall certain events that left an everlasting memory in my mind.

In the year 1980, we at ISRO, had successfully launched SLV3, which put the Rohini satellite into orbit. To celebrate the success and to honour Prof Satish Dhawan and his team, the then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhiji, organised a meeting of the Parliament Science Forum. In that meeting, the Prime Minister and many members spoke about how India was proud of the space community and its achievements.

In the same meeting, Vajpayeeji, then the leader of the Opposition, congratulated and embraced me for putting India into the prestigious Space Club. That was the beginning of our association and friendship. The connectivity continued when I was in the Defence R&D during the 1990s. As the Chairman of Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Vajpayeeji always used to provide great support for science, technology and defence programmes. Later, during my tenure as the Scientific Adviser to the Raksha Mantri, he always used to ask me, “*Aapka Pokhran kaisa hai.*” I used to say “*Pokhran bahut khubsoorat hai.*”

Today, when he has completed 85 orbits around the sun, I am reminded of a great event, when Lord Krishna reveals to the Universe the Vishwaroopa Darshan. When Arjuna sees the Vishwaroopa, he says, “Oh! Kesava, I see in you the light of thousands of suns.” Yes, on that day in 1998, the earth inside itself, had witnessed a ►►



Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

## Atalji, a true democrat : Naidu

I first met Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1967, when he had come to Nellore, my hometown, to address a public meeting. I was 18 then and had been a member of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). We sometimes called the ABVP “Atal Bihari Vajpayee Party” and, hence it was quite an experience to be involved with exercise of making arrangements for his public meeting there. My admiration for Atalji only grew stronger with time. I was a big fan of his oratorical skills, as also his poetry. I once saved money to travel to Chennai to hear him. My own style of public speaking was inspired by Atalji and also Jagannath Rao Joshi, a Bharatiya Jana Sangh veteran who, like Atalji, was known for speaking extempore.

I fought my first election in 1978 and second in 1983, when the Congress decided to call Indira Gandhi for campaigning. We wanted to invite Atalji to campaign but there was a hitch. We didn't have enough resources then, and his travel to my constituency would have entailed travelling by road for 350 km. Atalji,



*We called ABVP Atal Bihari Vajpayee Party*  
-M . Venkaiah Naidu

however, readily agreed to campaign and the turnout at his rally was far greater than the turnout at Indiraji's rally. He even called me to know about the results, and was extremely happy when told that I had won by 23,000 votes.

I often translated his speeches into Telugu whenever he was in Andhra Pradesh. I had the good fortune of working under him in the NDA cabinet and while highways and the Golden Quadrilateral was one of his pet projects, he once readily accepted my proposal to extend the project to rural India.

He was a true democrat, too. I was the party president when he said, “Narendra Modi (the then Gujarat chief minister) should step down following the anti-Godhra riots”. A BJP Parliamentary Board meeting, however, took a decision to the contrary and when I, as the party president, conveyed the decision to him, he said, “*Jo panchon ka faisla* (whatever the larger jury decides)”.

Atalji will remain an inspiration to the country for the times to come. ■ (Courtesy: *The Indian Express*)

► galaxy of suns. We saw then onwards, the decisions and actions of Vajpayeeji bringing light to so many missions, particularly the dimensions he gave to developmental politics and the way he put the nation on the resplendent path of progress.

I have seen and cherished the beauty of thoughts portrayed in Vajpayeeji's poems. I would like to recall one of the poems, *Oonchai*, which touched my heart. He says in the poem that man's achievements take him to heights. But the more he achieves, the more lonely he gets. Is loneliness a blessing or a curse, he asks. Of course, he has given a beautiful answer in his poem. He says man is a mighty creation of God. His mind makes happiness. Happiness should be a thick friend through various events all around us. He concludes in his poem: ‘My Lord, Never let me climb so high that I can't bend down to embrace another human. Deliver me ever from such arrogance.’ Today, let us rejoice the life of a great human being and leader who has created an indelible impression in the minds of every Indian—inspiring their hearts to dedicate themselves for the service of the nation. ■

### Cartoon Corner



## Scrap minority quota report, redefine minorities : Rajnath

Former Bharatiya Janata Party President Shri Rajnath Singh has demanded scrapping of the Ranganath Mishra Commission report on reservation for minorities and said there was an 'urgent need to redefine' minorities.

'The Ranganath Mishra Commission report is unconstitutional. It should be scrapped. BJP demands the government to redefine minorities with respect to district level, regional level and national level,' he told reporters in Lucknow on January 4.

'In the north-east, Christians constitute a sizeable population. Considering this fact, is the minority status for the Christians there justified,' he asked.

Terming the Commission report as 'anti-national', Shri Singh said the report poses a threat to nation's unity. 'It will promote religious conversions and affect the status of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes as enshrined in the Constitution.'

He said that Muslim Leagues' Peerpur Resolution in 1937 favoured division of the country into India and Pakistan on religious lines and the Mishra Commission report was also a fresh attempt in this direction.

Blaming the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government for its failure to contain inflation, he said it was all due to their 'wrong economic policies and economic mismanagement'.

'The ever rising inflation may also lead to law and order problems and may even result in food riots at places where the producers (farmers) are not getting adequate price for their produce which is

being sold at much higher price in the markets,' he claimed.

Shri Rajnath Singh also accused the UPA government of being not serious towards the country's national and internal security. 'Despite being aware of Pakistan's nefarious practices, the government has withdrawn over 30,000 troops from Kashmir. I have learnt that even military officers were against the withdrawal of the troops,' he added.

He opposed any move to grant more autonomy to Jammu & Kashmir and said: 'When there is a government functioning in a democratic manner, there is no justification to make the state more autonomous.'

On the Copenhagen Summit, he accused the government of opening



India's domestic initiatives for green house gas (GHG) emission cuts to scrutiny by international monitoring agencies and letting the developed world dilute its commitment to reducing GHG emissions. 'It appears the government is acting under some international pressure,' he alleged.

He described the new BJP president Shri Nitin Gadkari as a 'dynamic fellow'. 'Those who know him are well aware of his potential. Even today he is being appreciated for the work he did while he was the public works department (PWD) minister in Maharashtra. I had consulted him on several occasions,' he said. (IANS) ■

### Muraleedharan is new Kerala BJP President

Shri V. Muraleedharan has been formally elected unopposed as State president of the Bharatiya Janata Party at the State council meeting of the party in Kozhikode on January 6. His election was announced by BJP Minority Morcha president Shri Syed Shanawas Hussain, who was in charge of organisational polls in the State, at the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Hussain said that the party had a more youthful image when compared to the Congress party at the national level. The BJP also had a mature line of leadership to attract more youths into its fold, he said.



In his address, Shri Muraleedharan, who was hitherto State vice-president of the party, indicated the change of guard did not mean that the party would undergo a change in its basic character, he said.

#### New National Council members

The State council meeting also unanimously elected 20 national council members from the State. They are: O. Rajagopal, C.K. Padmanabhan, P.S. Sreedharan Pillai, P.K. Krishnadas, K.V. Sreedharan, Chettoor Balakrishnan, P.C. Mohanan, Madikai Kammaran, C. Vasudevan, P.P. Karunakaran, V. Ramankutty, Udayabhaskar, K.K. Radhakrishnan, E. Reghunandan, P.R. Balakrishnan, K.R. Rajagopal, K.S. Sreedharan Nair, P.P. Vava, Radhamma Thankachi and M.S. Kumar. ■ (Agencies)

# State has tremendous potential to inspire others : Advani

From Our Correspondent

**B**JP parliamentary party Chairman and MP from Gandhi Nagar Shri L K Advani said on January 1, 2010 that Gujarat has tremendous potential to inspire other parts of our country. Shri Advani was speaking on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of formation of Gujarat State.

He expressed happiness that he was associated with Gujarat and felt proud of his connection with the State, getting elected to the Lok Sabha five times from here. He said the State had developed not only because of the efforts of the State government only but equally with the contribution made by the people of the State. He congratulated the *Swarnim Gujarat Sanklap Parishad* and lauded its vision. Gujarat is the only State, where the number of people travelling in Indian Railways without-ticket is much less in comparison to other States he said. He lauded the integrity, tenacity and high cultural and moral values upheld by Gujarati people. "It is a proud privilege for me that I am representing Gujarat in the Parliament. 20th Century belonged to Western countries, 21st Century belongs to India, and Gujarat has made visionary planning to achieve the laudable goal. I am sure, this would usher in progress and prosperity of Gujarat," added Shri Advani.

Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi availed the occasion to invoke the "Narmada spirit" to appeal to leaders to "rise above

party politics" for the State's development.

He said "In the 21st century, Gujarat has to become home and destination for the entire world. I appeal present and past people's representatives to offer their valuable guidance and share their insights for realizing the ambitions goal."

"It is an appropriate occasion to recall landmark achievements; whatever progress is visible today is because of the collective endeavors and the hard work of all in last 50 years. No single person or a Government can change the world, he added. He made an appeal to all for extending their valuable guidance, and to contribute to the greater glory of Gujarat. Let us all take a golden pledge," he appealed.

"It is gratifying to note that everyone's contribution for the prosperity and progress counts, be it a labourer who has toiled for Narmada Project, or a farm-labourer. It is the collective strength of *Janta-Janardan*. " The Chief Minister spoke with rare passion.

He highlighted the entrepreneurial dynamism of Gujarati People. Gujarati community has spread across the entire world. But time has changed. In 19th and 20th century people migrated from

Gujarat across the world. "But in 21st Century, entire world would make Gujarat their home, Gujarat is the destination for them," emphasised the Chief Minister.

Every Gujarati would take a pledge, the 5.5 crores pledges would take Gujarat forward by 5.5 crore steps. Gujarat had led the freedom movement, Gujarat made golden contributions in independent struggle, now Gujarat would also take a lead for Good Governance too, added Shri Modi.

On this historic occasion, Shri



Narendra Modi paid rich tributes to the martyrs of 'Maha Gujarat movement'.

He expressed his earnest desire that all the people's representatives would give their valuable contributions for making Gujarat's tomorrow brighter through their inspirations.

"We can take the state on the march towards development only by following the Narmada spirit," Shri Modi said after moving a resolution at the *Swarnim Gujarat Sansadiya Parishad* in the Assembly. He was

recalling the united stand of the people on the construction of the Narmada dam decades ago.

Welcoming all the Speaker of the assembly, Shri Ashok Bhatt said, “Gujarat has made outstanding contribution in the parliamentary history. Glory of Gujarat is eternal; Gujarat’s contribution in the Independence Movement is inscribed in gold. In the land of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel, Gujarat has created post-Independence history; the ‘Swarnim Gujarat Sanklap Parishad’ adds a golden chapter. Shri Vithalbhaji Patel and Dadasaheb Mavalankar belong to Gujarat.

Reminiscent of the pledge administered by Pujay Ravishankar Maharaj, at the time of swearing-in ceremony of the first Government under the leadership of Dr. Jivaraj Mehta, “My government would never indulge in to exploitation of anybody. It would make relentless endeavors to flourish all.”

Shri Ashokbhai Bhatt said further, “We all have gathered on a historic occasion. Gujarat is poised to reach golden landmark on 1st May 2010. When people’s representatives take golden pledge, it yields sublime results. The Parishad is honoured and privileged to mark presence of former Chief Ministers, former Speakers, Central Ministers, renowned National Leaders like Advanijee and Jaitleyjee.

Shri Ashokbhai Bhatt also read out the messages of good wishes sent by former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Central Minister Shri Pranav Mukharjee, Shri Ahmedabad Patel.

The *Swarnim Gujarat Sansadiya Smrutika* -2010 which depicts glorious contributions of dignitaries in the last fifty years, was released by Governor of Gujarat Dr. (Smt.) Kamlajee. It has been prepared by Gujarat Assembly.

The Special Session paid floral tributes to Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi, Iron man of India and the Inspirer Shri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pujya Ravishankar Maharaj, Shri Indulal Yagnik.

Leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha Shri Arun Jaitley, Central Ministers Shri Dinsha Patel, Shri Bharatsinh Solanki, and Dr. Tushar Chaudhari, BJP Pradesh President Shri Purushottam Rupala and Congress Pradesh President Shri Sidhdharthbhai Patel were present. ■

## A BJP-JMM-AJSU government takes over in Jharkhand

BJP-JMM-AJSU have formed a coalition Government in Jharkhand. JMM president Shri Shibu Soren took oath on December 30, as the seventh Chief Minister of Jharkhand. BJP State President Shri Raghuvar Das and All Jharkhand Students’ Union’s Shri Sudesh Mahato took oath as Deputy Chief Ministers. The swearing-in ceremony, held in Ranchi at Morahabadi Maidan, was attended by several BJP leaders, including Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Dr. Raman Singh, Uttarakhand CM Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal, Bihar’s Deputy CM Shri Sushil Modi and former Union minister Shri Yashwant Sinha.

After the ceremony, Shri Soren, Shri Das and Shri Mahato held their first Cabinet meeting. Shri Soren said the new government’s top priority will be all round development of the state and to provide jobs to the youth. “The government machinery will be geared up to ensure proper implementation of welfare, agriculture, irrigation and industrial projects,” he said. Asked about the 70 investment proposals worth Rs 3.5 lakh crore that are pending due to the failure of the state government to provide them with land, he said: “The government will make efforts to resolve the problem.” On Naxal violence he said: “We have to initiate dialogue to bring them back to mainstream. Gun against gun may not make any sense”, he said.

Total Number of Assembly seats in Jharkhand: 81  
 BJP won: 18, JMM: 18, AJSU:05, JD (U):02,  
 Independents supporting the govt.: 2  
**Total: 45**

The tribal state has 81 member assembly, JMM has 18 seats, whereas All Jharkhand Students Union got five seats. On the other hand BJP bagged 18 seats and its ally JDU won 02 seats. Thus JMM, BJP, JDU and AJSU combine’s total tally crossed the magic figure of 41, which was necessary for government formation. Two independent legislators also supported the Soren led government. ■

***Reacting to the government formation with JMM, BJP president Shri Nitin Gadkari said in Mumbai that BJP had no option but to support Soren to provide a stable government in the interests of the people of the state. The alliance would give a “development oriented” government to the state, he added. He said that “there’s a difference between conviction and strategy,” suggesting that even if his party didn’t agree with the politics of the JMM, the government in the tribal state would be run on the basis of a common minimum programme “for full term”. ■***

## Video conferencing facilities will be in all state capitals to link them to party hqrs : Gadkari

*Shri Nitin Gadkari's first interview with TOI after taking over as BJP chief in Delhi. Excerpts:*

► **There is a widely held view that BJP has lost direction. How can you set things right?**

We are a strong alternative to Congress. The question is which organizational issues should we take up, what sort of leadership should be groomed. There are several issues, like security. Terrorism is killing innocents. After 9/11 nothing has happened in US. But in our country, the incidents never stop. Then there is price rise. Sharad Pawar said states should cooperate. But prices are rising due to wrong economic policies. It is the responsibility of government to act. I have two sugar factories. I sold at whatever rate I got. My working capital is low, I have to pay farmers. Neither the farmer nor factories benefitted. It benefitted Brazil; raw sugar is imported at much higher rates. This minimum price business must be done away. The price of fertilizers and power has gone up. If price is not correctly remunerative, farmers will kill themselves.

► **But how will you specifically focus on these?**

The 10% increase in poverty that the Tendulkar report talks of is in rural areas. Growth rate of agriculture in Gujarat is 40% but only 4-4.5% in Maharashtra. Vidarbha cotton is languishing while Gujarat cotton is going to China. In Maharashtra, it was found that shoes and chappals were inserted to increase weight! The Gujarat, the system is transparent and driven by demand and quality.

I would like to point to my suggestion that led to the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, objections were raised that these roads were state subject. But even today, after 62 years of independence, we are still discussing no roads, no water, no power, no food. I am not talking of capitalism or socialism. We cannot go by ideas written in books on ideology. I am not talking of ideology, don't stamp me



anywhere. I am telling our people, in the 21st century, we should think of the poor and think of generating employment and raising GDP. Try and reduce disparities between urban and rural areas. Otherwise there will be more slums and more crime.

► **You say BJP is a strong alternative. But your supporters are disappointed, confidence is low. Are you able to connect with the aspirations of the nation?**

When we lose an election, it means we need to further strengthen ourselves. If you look at us, we had two seats. We are much better now. Congress once got 114, did it vanish? Winning and losing is important, but it is not the final thing. This does look like an existential crisis.

There is a gap between BJP and Congress of 10%. Richard Nixon had said, "A man is not finished when he is defeated, but when he quits." You are defeated when you leave the battlefield. We are weak in Tamil Nadu, in Kerala, need to do more in AP, weak in West Bengal, more has to be done in Assam. By organization and political planning, I have to close this gap.

► **You have spoken of price rise and security, but the perception is that BJP as opposition is failing to connect.**

I am not hiding... politics is affected by cash, muscle power. Were these issues given priority by the people? I am not blaming voters; we will go to the people. If there is a weakness, we will set it right. We will find issues and work on them. We will work for scheduled castes and tribes. We will try and reassure minorities, bring them with us. I am a positive person; I will not criticize... if there is something good in Congress governments we will follow.

.....continue on page 18

## Jaitley brands Working Group Report a farce

Writes in protest to PM

*Text of the Letter written by Shri Arun Jaitley, Leader of the Opposition (Rajya Sabha) to the Prime Minister on the report of the Working Group constituted by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir on "Strengthening Relations between State and the Centre" on December 24, 2009*

Dear Prime Minister,

You had made an announcement after the Round Table Conference held on 25th May, 2006 at Srinagar that five Working Groups would be constituted to consider various issues pending in relation to the State of Jammu & Kashmir. Consequent to your announcement, the State Government constituted five Working Groups headed by different chairpersons. The fifth Group was on the important subject of "Strengthening Relations between State and the Centre". This Group was headed by Justice (Retd) Saghir Ahmad, a retired judge of the Supreme Court. This Group had twenty one members representing various political parties and organizations. I had an opportunity to be a member of this Group on behalf of the Bharatiya Janata Party. This Group met on five days between 12th December, 2006 and 3rd September, 2007. In these meetings, each of the different members orally stated their stand on various issues for discussion. Shri N.N. Vohra, prior to his appointment as Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, used to be present in the meetings. In one of the meetings, Shri Wajahat Habibullah, Chief Information Commissioner made a detailed presentation on de-centralisation and Panchayati Raj in the State of Jammu & Kashmir.



The record available with me indicates that the 4th and 5th meeting of the Working Group was held on 2nd and 3rd September, 2007 at New Delhi. Various members gave their opinion on the agenda items. I also had an opportunity to give my Party stand on the terms of reference. *The record of proceedings circulated on 30th October, 2007 states –*

"The Chairman appreciated the contributions made by the Members and thanked them for taking a keen interest in the deliberations and giving useful suggestions. He indicated that the next meeting of the Working Group would be held after about a month's time for taking further steps to finalise recommendations of the Working Group."

However, no meeting was held after 3rd September, 2007 and for all practical purposes the Working Group stood abandoned.

I had, as a matter of abundant caution, besides making oral submissions of my Party's stand, submitted a written Note to the Working Group.

I have not received any communication with regard to any meeting for even discussing the report of this Group. I have not seen any draft report of this Group nor has the same ever been circulated. As per the record available with me, no meeting of this Group has been held since 3rd September, 2007. It is, therefore, surprising that this Group has come out with the report on various important and sensitive issues. Obviously, in a Group comprising of 21 members representing Indian National Congress, the Bharatiya Janata Party, the National Conference, the PDP, the Panthers Party, Groups of various Kashmiri Pandits etc, no consensus could ever be possible. Whose report is it that has now been presented to the State Government? Is it an opinion of a retired Judge of the Supreme Court? A Judge by training is not competent to comment on sensitive political issues. He can only adjudicate issues that are judicially determinable. It is an improper practice to drag judges into the political thicket. The practice of providing assignments to retired Judges and using them to rubber-stamp a Government's agenda has to be deprecated. It is improper for a retired judge to have drafted a report on sensitive political subjects impinging on national sovereignty, that too two years after the last meeting of the Group without bothering to

discuss it with any member of the Group. This report at best is the personal opinion of Justice (Retd) Saghir Ahmad or of those who helped him to draft it. It is certainly not a consensus document of the Working Group. The report is a farce in so far it claims to be the recommendations of a Working Group. It deserves to be fully ignored.

The crucial question, however, would still be as to why over two years after the virtual abandonment of the Working Group, this report was unilaterally authored? What was the compulsion to by-pass the Working Group and produce the report? I have an uneasy feeling that the Government wants to show to some sections of the international community that it is willing to dilute the Indian position on Jammu & Kashmir. Is this report showcased for that purpose?

This Report is improperly prepared. I am writing to you to request you that the Central Government should not act on the basis of this report.

Even though this Working Group was appointed by the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir, it was appointed pursuant to your announcement and decision at the Round Table Conference meeting in Sri Nagar. It is for this reason that I have chosen to write to you. I will be separately sending a copy of this letter to the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir.

Sincerely yours,  
(ARUN JAITLEY)

Dr. Manmohan Singh,  
Hon'ble Prime Minister,  
Government of India,  
New Delhi.

## Gadkari favours bringing leaders alienated from BJP back to fold

From Our Correspondent

BJP national president Shri Nitin Gadkari on December 29 at Nagpur expressed himself in favour of making voting compulsory across the country on the lines of Gujarat but wanted the Congress to introduce a Bill to this effect in Parliament.

"I don't want to politicise the issue by presenting it as the BJP's agenda. Let all parties discuss and decide. I will appeal to the Prime Minister to introduce the Bill," he said at a "Meet the Press" programme organised by Nagpur Union of Working Journalists.

He stressed that any decision on electoral reforms should be taken on the basis of an all-party consensus. "If we do these things in our states alone, it will look like our agenda. I wish these things should be dealt with at planes which are above politics," he said when asked if he would like voting to be made compulsory in all the BJP-ruled states.

On Telangana, he said the Congress had added fuel to the fire for which the country would have to pay a heavy price, and so would the Congress.

Asked if Vidarbha statehood was acceptable to the BJP, Shri Gadkari said, "We already have a resolution in favour of Vidarbha. If the Congress brings a resolution in Parliament, we will support it."

On having new States Re-organisation Commission, he said any state formation should not be on the basis of emotions, but it should be from the development point of view. "And there should be an all-party consensus on it," he added.

Reiterating that his effort would be to win confidence of the minorities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and expand the base in States where the party was weak, the BJP president said he favoured bringing those alienated from the BJP back to the party fold. ■



# The chance India lost in Copenhagen

*Former Union Minister and veteran BJP leader Dr Murli Manohar Joshi attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference organised at Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, from December 7 to 18. He was member of a five-member delegation of Parliament. Organiser correspondent Pramod Kumar spoke to him in New Delhi to know the outcome of the Copenhagen conference and its impact on India. Excerpts:*



» **What is the outcome of Copenhagen Climate Change Conference?**

The Prime Minister may get appreciation from Obama in Copenhagen, but he failed to get any praise from the people of India. The Indian interest has not been fully safeguarded there. Rather to a great extent we accepted a draft or a note, though not a binding document, which will put a moral responsibility on us not to go back to it. The interpretation of it from the western countries now is that they can interfere in our internal programmes. That is not acceptable. We have demanded from the government that it must clarify and seek a clarification from America about their interpretation of the note.

» **The government still claims that it has not shifted its stand on Kyoto Protocol. What is your view?**

The Kyoto Protocol is almost jettisoned now. It has been buried deep. They will now consider something in Mexico which is not based on Kyoto Protocol. It will be based on this note. This note forms the basis for further dialogues. Where is the mention of Kyoto Protocol? I don't believe that the government interpretation in this regard is correct. The general apprehension is that the people have been let down.

» **What will be the impact of climate change for us and what are the indicators that India is getting affected by climate change and how it can damage India's developmental projects?**

The capping of two per cent of carbon emission may be good for the western countries, but it may prove disastrous for us. If the temperature rises

even by 1o centigrade, millions of tonnes of wheat, paddy and vegetable will perish. One degree rise of sea temperature will have a serious consequence on our marine life. The availability of fish would be reduced. What to talk about 2o, just rise in 1o will prove highly disastrous for us.

If the temperature goes on rising, I am not talking about the rest of the world, what will happen to our Sunderbans, Lakshadweep and the entire western coast from Kutch to Kanyakumari? We know that one Mahabalipuram and Dwarika have already

gone down under the ocean. So, there may be another holocaust on our coastal region. What will happen to Mumbai and Goa? The entire environment will be disturbed. If Sunderbans completely goes down in the sea, a large number of species will migrate from that place. People from that area and the other coastal areas will migrate. Serious problems of rehabilitation will arise. I ask why should we accept this cap. Just imagine what will happen to the monsoon which will be disturbed, causing double loss to the crops and India will be one of the worst victims. Our water system will also have very serious consequences.

» **What should India do in such situation?**

Our approach is and we also said it in the Parliament that this warming of atmosphere is the result of the 200 years of industrialisation in the west. Whatever happened in the past is present in the atmosphere even today. Scientists have now proved that the CO2 emissions produced by the first steam engine are still in the atmosphere. The carbon debt created

***India's food security is under serious threat. The government has bowed to US pressure***

***-Dr Murli Manohar Joshi***

by the first thermal power plant based on coal, is still here. So, what we are doing today will remain for more than 200 years. Two hundred years ago the atmosphere was cleaner and it had the absorbing capacity, but now it has become highly polluted. Why should we suffer for the crimes committed by the western countries? But despite that they are again saying that they would not reduce their emissions. It is highly inequitous, wrong and unethical.

▶▶ **Do you think the developed countries are not worried on it?**

They have committed an offence, which I call civilisational offence. Why should we pay for it? They say that they would give us carbon credit. What does it mean? It means they will continue to produce carbon debts, and we should continue to absorb it. They say take money from us, grow more trees. If we continue to grow more and more of trees what will happen to our food. They say they would grow food for us. Suppose if they refused exporting to us, what will happen then? The government must understand this foul game behind it.

▶▶ **They also say that they will give us technology. Comment.**

Yes, but my question is the technology is a patented thing and they will not give us free. They will give us carbon credit by one hand and take away the royalty for technology by another hand. They will make a fool of us. Their objective is, let us develop and let you perish. For the benefit of a few, many are suffering and many will continue to suffer. This is the biggest objection from my side to all what is happening now and what was ignored in Copenhagen.

There is another factor. The global warming comes from the pumping of energy. What is our condition in energy? We are the poorest in consuming energy. America is emitting 20 times more than us. In the five lakh villages in our country, there are large numbers of hamlets which do not have even a single point of electricity or any other energy service. The human resource development gets a setback if we are not able to provide the basic minimum requirements of life to millions of our people. When the temperature rises, the new diseases and viruses are likely to crop up. The old diseases will die and the new will strike. Then a lot of multinational companies will come with fully patented medicines. It will be the third attack on us.

We should put strong efforts and tell the west to change its model of development.

▶▶ **Is it possible to change the model of development at this stage of globalisation?**

Basically it is the consequence of wrong model of development. I will explain it in a nutshell. When India was getting Independence, somebody asked Mahatma Gandhi that since India will now be free, how will you remove poverty? Since England has shown you the way and become prosperous, it is expected that you should also follow the same path. Gandhiji said England became prosperous by plundering half of the planet, as it was ruling over half of the planet, how many planets would I have to plunder if India has to become rich on the same line? The present system of development is consumption and demand driven. The answer that he gave about 64 years ago is valid even today.

Secondly, I say the western consumerism is the main culprit. It is because of this consumerism that their economy collapsed. They have consumed more resources than they should have consumed. By doing it they created a carbon debt for the future. The tragedy is that you cannot replenish what you have spent here in natural resources and environment. That is gone. The recycling time may take billions of years. Then what to do? The basic principle is that one should not consume more than what the environmental conditions allow. And the planetary conditions say it is impossible to have infinite growth on finite planet. Again it leads to the growth model, which is flawed. Another objection is this model eats away the ethical and cultural values of the society. We have to strike a balance between the economic prices and the cultural values.

▶▶ **Can we propose an alternative model of balanced growth to replace the exploitative international techno-economic order?**

Yes, we have the model. Gandhiji and Deendayalji explained it very clearly. Atharva Veda too says very clearly. Integral Humanism is the alternate model. Even the westerners are saying that it is impossible to have an infinite growth. They say there should be a balanced growth and there must be equity. It should not be a lopsided growth. Too few grow and too many suffer, too few become rich and too many become poor. The average may be growing but the growth at the particular level is very high and the poverty at the other level is much higher. The poorer are becoming destitute and rich

are becoming richer.

The metrological department or the scientists specialising in studying nature, are not able to predict correctly even on drought, flood, rainfall, earthquake or cyclone. How is it possible for these experts to predict nature, say 50 or 100 years from now?

After having the data of the last 100 years or more, we know the trends. What was not observed earlier is being observed now thoroughly. We know what is happening. Now there are computers and super computers which can produce models of the future. Say, what will happen if 1o degree temperature rises? What will happen if 2o, 3o or 4o degree temperature rises? So, all these are extrapolations depending upon the present trend. Based on it, there is an average consensus by different scientists in different parts of the world.

- **Do you agree with the widely held view that all UN projections on climate change are nothing but an intelligent guesswork?**

No, I don't say it as an intelligent guesswork only. No doubt there is an element of guess. There are estimates, no doubt, but it is not done by a group of bureaucrats. This is studied by scientists all over

the world. It may be like this. Scientists are saying that it may be 5o, some group may come to the conclusion that it is not 5o, it is 4o or it is 5.5 or 6o. My understanding of the whole thing is that whatever the scientists say is little of the lower side. When they say it is 5o, it may be 6o.

Recently Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh told the west to stop eating beef to stop carbon emissions. What do you say?

Not only he, but many western scientists too say it. The reason is when you keep the animals for meat, they also produce greenhouse gasses. If the animal stock for producing meat rises, then of course the carbon emissions will increase. There are many scientists who say to go back to vegetarianism. Although vegetarianism also produces greenhouses gasses to some extent, but far less than produced by the animals.

Finally I feel the concept of sustainable development, the present paradigm, should be replaced with the concept of sustainable consumption. A reasonable level of nutrition should be provided not only to humanity but also to the animal world. ■ (Courtesy: Organiser)

*Continued from page 13*

- **You have become president at a time when the party is hit by factionalism and divisions. Secondly, you are an outsider in Delhi.**

On the question of outsider, that is the truth. I can't hide that. I weigh a little more than I should — I can't hide it and you can see this. I have no agenda. *Main apni leadership chamkane ke liye nahin aya hoon.* I am straightforward and obedient but that does not mean I don't understand politics. I am tolerant and quiet but I am aggressive too. Being aggressive is my strength. I am not biased, I am a *kora kagaz*. Advani and Atal are my role models. Everyone is senior than me. Respect should not be demanded, it should be commanded.

- **There is a perception that you are a nominee of the Sangh.**

I am tired of these reports. I am a member of the Sangh and worked with ABVP and then BJP. It is not as if Sangh put me here. Two months ago, L K Advani and Rajnath Singh told me that you become the president. I will not tell you what I said. But it was from BJP. There were four names, I was chosen.

It was Advaniji's thinking too. This was also the Sangh's view. The coordination between Sangh and BJP will be very good. I am here to sort out any issues.

- **Any organisational innovation that you are considering?**

I will get video conferencing facilities in all state capitals and link them to Delhi. I will use all modern technology as I can. I will distribute work and decentralize power. It is politically beneficial to work for the poor. By serving the poor your public support increases.

- **There is the question of how much you will emphasise on Hindutva? Will you go along with the Supreme Court's definition of Hindutva?**

Hindutva is a way of life. It is cultural and inspirational. It should not to be interpreted as going by religion. Whether it be the party or nation, if we can fix small things, the bigger issues will be resolved. Planning in advance and planning in detail, we will prepare a vision 2020-2025 for India. ■

# BJP & NDA ruled States are growing fastest in Country : BJP

*Press statement issued on January 6, 2010 by BJP National President Shri Nitin Gadkari on felicitating the finance ministers for high growth rate in BJP ruled states*

The recent Central Statistics Organization survey on the GDP growth rates has shown that BJP & NDA ruled States are the fastest growing and best performing states in the country. In fact among top five states, four are BJP & NDA ruled and the absence of any Congress ruled states in the list speaks for itself.

The fastest growing state is Gujarat, which has been governed by BJP since year 2002 under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi. Gujarat logging an average GDP growth rate of 11.05% from FY 2004-05 to 2008-09.

The miraculous turnaround of Bihar under NDA rule has registered GDP growth rate of 11.03% and emerged as the second fastest growing state in the Country. This is coming at the back of a negative growth rate of 5.15% of Lalu Raj. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Deputy CM and Finance Minister Sushil Kumar Modi certainly deserve congratulations.

The BJP ruled state of Uttarakhand has emerged as the third fastest growing state, achieving a GDP growth rate of 9.31%. The state of Uttarakhand has left its parent state of U.P. way behind which has a growth rate of only 6.29%. This is despite several constraints being an environmentally sensitive state, having two third as forest reserve land offering limited opportunities for development. Thus, it is remarkable that the state has still achieved such fast & inclusive

growth. Chief Minister Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank deserves congratulations. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee during his tenure as Prime Minister established benchmark of development, which has been aggressively pursued by the BJP ruled states.

The BJP has consistently proved that it has delivered better

governance than Congress and UPA both in the states as well as at the centre. The CSO survey ratifies the success story. It's a pity that the Congress party which claims to be the largest and the oldest political party ruling in several states, does not have even one state among the top five fastest growing states of the Country to its credit. ■

## BJP seeks protection of States' interests before bringing in GST

Bharatiya Janata Party has reiterated its commitment to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on January 6, but at the same time stressed that it would be impractical to introduce it from April 1, 2010, as the "interests of states had to be protected" and suggested it be implemented from the next financial year. "The issue of implementation of GST is bristling with problems and difficulties. Very surprisingly, the Government of India has not yet laid its cards on the table. We feel it is a progressive tax which leads to less inspector raj, less tax evasion and greater benefit to the consumer," said former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha, adding that the grievances of the states must also be addressed. The BJP has included a commitment to the GST in its manifesto.

A meeting of finance ministers of BJP-ruled states saw Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand put on record their concerns saying the "powers of states being compromised in the proposed regime".

The party said the GST structure should be such that common man is not "adversely affected either by additional incidence of tax or any consequent price rise".

It listed decision on revenue neutral rate (RNR) and revenue buoyancy, VAT on imports, pending issues of CST compensation, and effective mechanism of levy of tax on textiles among the measures which are of crucial importance in the transition to a GST regime.

The meeting was called by the BJP national President Shri Nitin Gadkari. Besides the finance ministers of BJP-ruled states, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Shri Arun Jaitley, former Union Finance Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha, former Union Minister Dr. M M Joshi, Deputy Leader of Parliamentary Party in Lok Sabha Shri Gopinath Munde, Shri Piyush Goel, and Shri Vinay Sahasrabudhe attended the meeting. ■

# Under UPA poverty is on the rise Reforms widen the rich-poor gap

By Naresh Minocha

**T**his revision of poverty line is too modest. It does not reflect the gravity of poverty grinding more than half the population. They say that UPA should straightaway accept the World Bank's revised definition of poverty line of \$ 1.25 per day per capita (Rs 58.13 at current exchange rate) for global comparison.

The Government-constituted expert group's report on methodology for estimating India's teeming poor has implicitly sullied UPA's claims on inclusive growth, poverty eradication and food security.

Even as the government is dragging its feet over the report as well as over the proposed Right to Food Law, bone-chilling news about hunger and poverty continues to come from the countryside. The Times of India reported on December 19 that malnutrition and the resulting complications led to the death of five members of a Vanvasi family in Orissa.

The other day Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh stated: "More recently some economists have argued that the poverty line itself should be raised. If this is done, the percentage of population in poverty is obviously higher. But this does not mean that the percentage below the poverty line is not declining. If we apply the new poverty line to past data it will show the same decline in poverty."

He made this observation at the annual conference of Indian

Economic Association on December 27, without referring to the expert group's report.

Dr. Singh said: "At this stage, I should emphasise that all the discussion on trends in poverty is based on the NSS survey data and the latest large sample estimate of the NSS is available only for 2004-05. We do not as yet have the next large sample estimate for 2009-10, which should be available a year

***The Prime Minister obviously wants inflation and natural calamities-raved poor to wait for next Lok Sabha elections before UPA does something concrete to protect the right of the poor to live with dignity.***

from now. Since the period of rapid growth of the economy was largely after 2004-05, we will have to wait for a year or two to know its impact on poverty."

The Prime Minister obviously wants inflation and natural calamities-raved poor to wait for next Lok Sabha elections before UPA does something concrete to protect the right of the poor to live with dignity.

UPA had set up the expert group on poverty in December 2005 under the chairmanship of renowned economist Professor Suresh D Tendulkar following stringent criticism from various

quarters that the official definition of poverty line was outdated and grossly under-estimated the number of poor people. It does not take into account the nutritional requirements, leave aside other basic needs.

The poverty line as defined is measured in monetary terms for the minimum food intake required by a person. The intake norms are 2400 calories per capita per day for rural areas and 2100 calories for urban areas. The Government assigns monetary value to these survival diets. Thus, the monthly expenditure for this food intake is Rs 356.3/month in rural areas and Rs 538.6/month in urban areas at 2004-05 prices.

A person who cannot afford to spend this monthly expenditure is considered below the poverty line (BPL).

In its report submitted on December 10, 2009, the expert group has revised the rural poverty line at Rs 446.68 and urban poverty line at Rs 578.8 at 2004-05 prices.

Using the revised norms, which are modest by any standard of living with dignity, the report has estimated the persons living below poverty line at 37.2 per cent of the total population for 2004-05, as compared to 28 per cent for the same year mentioned in the XIth Five Year Plan (2007-12) document.

This revision of poverty line is too modest. It does not reflect the gravity of poverty grinding more than half the population. They say that UPA should straightaway

accept the World Bank's revised definition of poverty line of \$ 1.25/day/per capita (Rs 58.13 at current exchange rate) for global comparison.

For 30 days or a month, this daily sustenance income aggregates to Rs 1743.9, which is more than three times the revised urban poverty line reckoned by the expert group.

Globalisation is not about subjecting domestic economy to rigors of import competition and hot money inflows. It is also about all aspects of economy.

According to the World Bank, "To assess global poverty on comparable terms, we use an average of the national poverty lines of the world's 15 poorest countries to determine the international poverty line at \$ 1.25 per day at 2005 PPP (purchasing power parity) prices.

India, on the other hand, measures its poverty according to its own national poverty line which, in 2005 PPP, translates to \$ 1.02 per day. As the two poverty lines are pegged at different levels, the number of people living below them is also different."

The Bank's website says: "The number of poor below \$ 1.25 a day has increased from 421 million in 1981 to 456 million in 2005. This is the biggest challenge facing India today."

Another World Bank document put the percentage of Indian population living on less than \$1.25/day at 41.6 per cent in 2005.

The expert group said it took "a conscious decision to move away from anchoring the poverty lines to a calorie intake norm in view of the fact that calorie consumption calculated by converting the consumed quantities in the last 30 days as collected by NSS (National

Sample Survey) has not been found to be well correlated with the nutritional outcomes observed from other specialized surveys".

The group noted that the rural and urban poverty lines were originally formulated at 1973-74 market prices and later adjusted over the years. The basket of goods consumed by the public was kept unchanged. They do not reflect the changing consumption pattern, changing human requirements and socio-economic dynamics.

They were prepared on the

***The Bank's website says: "The number of poor below \$ 1.25 a day has increased from 421 million in 1981 to 456 million in 2005. This is the biggest challenge facing India today."***

assumption that the cost of basic social services of health and education would be borne by the governments.

The group has made four departures from the existing concept of poverty line. First, it has moved away from calorie anchor. The revised concept, however, tests for the adequacy of actual food expenditure near the poverty line to ensure certain aggregate nutritional outcomes.

Second, it has dispensed with the differentiation between the rural and the urban population and recommended a uniform poverty line basket (PLB) based on the latest available observed household consumption data.

Third, the group has proposed a price adjustment procedure that is predominantly based in the same data set that underlies the poverty estimation. It thus corrects for the problems associated with externally

generated and population-segment-specific price indices with out-dated price and weight base used so far in the official poverty estimation.

Fourth, it has incorporated an explicit provision in price indices for private expenditure on health and education which has been rising over time and test for their adequacy to ensure certain desirable educational and health outcomes.

Prior to the submission of report by the expert group, the Law Commission lambasted the Government for its failure to ensure the Constitution-enshrined human right to lead a dignified life.

It succinctly drove home this right in its report titled Need for ameliorating the lot of the have-nots—Supreme Court's Judgments.

The report, which was issued in April 2009, described the concept of Indian citizen's fundamental right to live in dignity, free from want. The right includes right to be free from hunger, right to safe drinking water, right to live in adequate housing, right to work and receive wages that contribute to an adequate standard of living, right to education, etc.

It said: "In spite of the constitutional safeguards and State legislative intervention in favour of the poor and the needy, their socio-economic condition is deteriorating. Social and economic equality still remains a mirage for them."

There is nothing in public domain to suggest that the Government is showing the political will to define poverty on the basis of Law Commission report. The Government has also not worked out the cost implications of the expert group's recommended definition of poverty line for various anti-poverty programmes.

A World Bank study on poverty released in June 2009 also found fault with the Government's concept of poverty line.

According to the study, "Local people's definitions of what it means to be poor differ substantially from the definitions used by government officials. The income levels underlying official poverty lines tend to underestimate poverty as it is perceived at the community level."

The field study is based on intensive interaction by researchers at 30,000 villages in 300 cities across four states.

As put by the study, "Poor people said, quite clearly and repeatedly, that the income deemed sufficient according to official lines is inadequate to meet their basic needs or preserve their dignity. By contrast, community poverty lines usually tend to represent a dividing line between those who have adequate income, land, and housing to live with dignity—although they may still be vulnerable—and those who do not."

The official data on poverty does not capture poverty dynamics characterised by number of people who again fall below the poverty line due to inflation, natural calamities, family health problems, etc. A study issued by Asian Development Bank in May 2008 showed that 10 per cent increase in food prices creates an additional 2.3 million poor people in the Philippines. It proposed an alternative price index for the poor that takes into account the consumption pattern of the poor.

UPA Government has no such idea even as wholesale price index-derived annual rate of food inflation is running close to 20 per cent, which is the highest during the last 10 years.

It must shed this static approach

towards measuring poverty.

As put by an ADB Policy Brief titled Conceptualizing and Measuring Poverty as Vulnerability: Does It Make a Difference?: "One needs to focus not just on statics but also on dynamics, i.e., on movements in and out of poverty. In this dynamic view, poverty is not just seen as a form of deprivation but also as a form of vulnerability, where vulnerability refers to the risk of future poverty. The poor are not simply those with lower income and consumption but, more often than not, also face a more constrained and difficult environment within which choices are made."

UPA must shed its political and

bureaucratic inertia over estimating poverty and launching multi-faced initiatives including population control to eradicate poverty.

It should ring in 2010 with this World Bank observation: "Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. Poverty has many faces..." ■

(Courtesy: *Organiser*)

## BJP charges UPA with dereliction on Pak terrorists' escape

From Our Correspondent

The BJP on January 4 launched a scathing attack on the Congress-led UPA Government on "its silence over the escape of three Pakistani terrorists involved in a bomb blast case". The party also charged Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh with 'misrepresenting facts' on the Copenhagen climate change meet.

"The Congress is wailing like a widow on the Kandahar hijack episode, but why is it conspicuous by its silence on the escape of three Pakistani terrorists involved in the blasts near Red Fort?" asked BJP spokesperson Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

The BJP held the Union Home Ministry "directly responsible" for the lapse as law and order in the capital which is under its jurisdiction. "Why is the Home Minister silent on the issue? He is

said to be good at his work and the terrorists escaped right under the nose of the government," Shri Prasad charged.

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad also condemned the Government on the climate change issue, holding Union Environment Minister Shri Jairam Ramesh responsible for "misrepresenting facts before Parliament". "The Prime Minister has wittingly or unwittingly admitted that the Copenhagen Summit was not satisfactory. Does this mean that Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh had misrepresented facts before Parliament that India's interests were safe? The Prime Minister should direct him to present the correct picture before the nation," Shri Prasad said. He added that India should "take the lead in bringing the Kyoto Protocol back on track with the help of other developing nations". ■

## BJP will watch Govt. on Price rise, creation of Telangana, Ranganath Mishra report, plight of farmers: Javadekar

Addressing a Press Conference in New Delhi on January 1 BJP Spokes person Shri Prakash Javadekar said “Bharatiya Janata Party will carefully watch and monitor the government moves on 10 issues in 2010—Rising prices of food grains, terrorism and Naxalism, designs of Pakistan and other foreign issues, creation of Telangana, Ranganath Mishra report, plight of farmers, autonomy issue raised in Kashmir, punishment to the guilty of 1984 genocide, women reservation and conduct of the government.”

Government has miserably failed to tackle the price rise of food items in 2009 and its policies are responsible for such a hike in prices, he added. Lambasting the UPA he said “Government seems to have lost any political will to bring down the prices and give relief to the common masses. In fact, govt. policies are helping speculators and vested interests resulting unabated price rise.”

On security front targeting the UPAs abysmal policy, he said “The threat of terrorism is real and government has as yet to assure the country that it can tackle a 26/11 like situation. Naxalites have waged a war against the state and believe in the concept of *Power through Gun*. They must be isolated and defeated by ensuring speedier development and taking concerted police action. The state of Pakistan is a matter of grave concern and must be watched carefully as it has direct relation to terror activities in our country.”

In the backdrop of successful creation of three states by NDA the present UPA government has failed

in addressing the issue of creation of separate state of Telangana, he said. He added, “This is a case, where two states can live peacefully and grow faster. Government must act decisively on this issue in a time bound frame.” Reacting on Ranganath Mishra report he told the media persons, BJP will never allow dilution of SC/ST/OBC reservation under the garb of accepting Ranganath Mishra report, which effectively proposed to this effect. BJP will also oppose any divisive policy and effort to

strengthen separatists by giving any kind of autonomy in the valley.

He said, in 2010 BJP will also raise the issue of the plight of farmers and will fight for their right to remunerative prices calculated as per Swaminathan formula, which is cost of production +50%. “BJP will also closely monitor the development on the issue of women reservation. It will always be vigilant on the conduct of the UPA govt. and will expose its misdeeds and scams at an appropriate time,” he added. ■

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### Andhra Governor N.D. Tiwari quits over 'sex scandal'

Andhra Pradesh Governor Shri N.D. Tiwari resigned on December 26 citing “health grounds” after allegations of his involvement in a sex scandal.

“N.D. Tiwari submitted his resignation to President Pratibha Patil on health grounds,” said a brief statement from Raj Bhavan, the official residence of the Governor.

ABN channel, owned by Telugu daily Andhra Jyothi, on December 25 showed explicit clippings of the pictures taken in the Raj Bhavan.

The scandal rocked the state at a time when it was already embroiled in violent agitation over separate statehood to Telangana. Shri Tiwari’s resignation is a victory of moral values, says channel. (IANS)

### Prabhat Jha questions Congress silence

Writes to President

In a letter to President Smt. Pratibha Patil, BJP Rajya Sabha MP and national secretary Shri Prabhat Jha has questioned the manner in which the Tiwari episode was dealt with by the government.

“Raj Bhawan is a residence associated with the Constitution. The governor’s post is a constitutional post which enjoys respect. Did N D Tiwari keep that respect intact?” Shri Jha asked in the letter.

“The matter should be investigated ... and a case should be filed,” he said. Insisting that the whole nation was shocked by the episode, Shri Jha questioned the silence of the Congress on the issue.

# Why are smaller states good for development?

By Vikash Anand

Union of India came into being along with the merger of different princely States into it. The architects of our constitution empowered the Parliament to reorganize the states and change the status quo by a simple procedure. The essence of this is that the affected state or states may express their views but cannot resist the will of Centre. It is quite depressing to see Center dithering over the issue and delaying the presentation of the resolution in parliament to fulfill the needs and demands of the people of Telangana.

Geographically, Andhra Pradesh is the fourth largest State of India. It comprises three regions: Rayalaseema, Coastal Andhra and Telangana. Telangana remains the most under-developed among these regions. It is a land of poor people with rich and vast natural resources.

The core area of Centre-Periphery relation dominates, exploits and makes dependent socially and economically peripheral area. These under-developed and undeveloped areas operate primarily as the producers of raw materials which are exploited by the core area of States which are powerful and have all the access to authorities and power. Sometimes, the political centre (dominated by a particular class) seeks to control, manage or avoid dealing with the rest of the territory (i.e. periphery).

The people of Telangana have been complaining, for a long time, against the inappropriate or disproportionate distribution of resources and facilities, which has rendered the region under-developed. "Under the rule of a dominant class from a dominant region, some regions fail to achieve development. Sometimes these



***Geographically, Andhra Pradesh is the fourth largest State of India. It comprises three regions: Rayalaseema, Coastal Andhra and Telangana. Telangana remains the most under-developed among these regions. It is a land of poor people with rich and vast natural resources.***

regions are exploited for the benefit of the dominant one," says Amit Ranjan, a scholar at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University. The feeling of discrimination and the reality of under-development makes such regions demand a separate state for them.

The smaller States, as they think correctly, do fulfill their political as well as economic needs. Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand are much more developed than their parent States as per all the available socio-economic indicators. The political

as well as the administrative constituencies of smaller states are micro-sized and more manageable in comparison to what they are in their bigger counterparts. Hence, the units do not face the crisis of governability. People too find the fruits of administrative justice reaching closer to their home. Thus they feel very much satisfied.

Recently, Gorkhaland movement has also gathered substantial pace. West Bengal's deteriorating governance is responsible for the dismal state of affairs in the areas where the State is being demanded. The State government's lackadaisical attitude has left people of Gorkhaland much backward.

The government of smaller states is more accountable to the people. Their services are easily accessible. There is

a minimum possibility of negligence of a particular region in the smaller states. Political participation matters more in a democratic set up. Smaller States encourage political participation. They feel self-governed and become aware of their democratic rights. Such States are better for an easy administration and the gross development of their regions. Creating a separate State does not mean that the area is seceding away from the mainland. Rather, it helps in maintaining better trade and economic ties among them. ■

## Police takes BJP/TRS workers into custody

**O**n December 30 Barring sporadic incidents, the Telangana bandh today called by the all-party Joint Action Committee (JAC) in support of the separate statehood demand was peaceful.

There were no incidents of violence and the bandh was totally peaceful till noon, DGP R R Girish Kumar told reporters here.

However, normal life was paralysed across the Telangana region as the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) and the Railways suspended services.

The pro-Telangana agitators organised road blockades and dharnas in the districts of Telangana region. The JAC leaders also held a rally at Baghlingampalli locality here but they were taken into custody by the police.

“All parties have come under one umbrella and formed the JAC. We demand that the Centre table a bill in Parliament for formation of separate Telangana state immediately. Otherwise, we will intensify the agitation,” JAC convener Prof Kodandaram told reporters.

The rally was also attended by leaders of TRS, Congress and other JAC constituents.

The Osmania University, the nerve-centre of the statehood movement by the students, remained peaceful. Slogan-shouting students continued to hold relay hunger strikes in the university campus amid tight security arrangements.

Meanwhile, the APSRTC suspended over 9,000 buses plying in the Telangana region. Thousands of city buses in Hyderabad were

cancelled due to which passengers had a tough time in reaching their destinations. Many of them were stranded at various places.

Schools, colleges, shops and other commercial establishments remained closed in Hyderabad and other places in the Telangana region.

BJP leaders, including state party president Bandaru Dattatreya, and activists held a sit-in outside the office of the DGP demanding

that alleged false cases against students and other Telangana agitators be withdrawn.

Heavy police force was deployed across the region to avoid any untoward incidents and prohibitory orders were clamped in Hyderabad and other places.

At some places, local Police took TRS/BJP workers into custody. Activists of TRS, BJP and other parties organised rallies and other forms of protest in the district. **PTI**■

### NDA-ruled Bihar touches 11.3% growth rate

**C**entral Statistical Organisation (CSO) has put NDA-ruled Bihar's growth rate at 11.03 per cent as against the national average of 8.49 per cent. The most flattering aspect of CSO data is that Bihar has almost caught up with “developed” Gujarat that recorded an average of 11.05 per cent during last five years.

The growth rate assumes all the more significance as it comes after a negative 5.15 % growth of 2003-04. Bihar, that otherwise bears the tag of BIMARU state, is also way ahead of its “poor cousin” states as per CSO data.

Facts & Figures Growth rates of various states as per the CSO data

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| National average: | 8.49 %,      |
| Gujarat           | : 11.05 %,   |
| Bihar             | : 11.03%,    |
| Uttarakhand       | : 9.31%,     |
| Orissa            | : 8.74%,     |
| Jharkhand         | : 8.45%,     |
| Chhattisgarh      | : 7.35%, and |
| UP                | : 6.29 %.    |

Even Planning Commission deputy chairman, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, who recently visited

Bihar, admitted that Bihar has recorded a “desired growth” in the past three years.

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Shri Sushil Kumar Modi told news reporters “The CSO data shows that Bihar is actually progressing faster. We have closed in on Gujarat growth that has become the ideal benchmark of Indian progress.”

Shri Modi explained that 11.03 per cent growth could be achieved only because the state had spent Rs 35,368 crore in the last four years of NDA rule as against only Rs 25,000 crore spent during 15-year long RJD-Congress rule. He said the UPA government must now lend credence to Bihar government's serious efforts and help it achieve better results.

Last July, the World Bank had ranked Bihar 14th — ahead of Chennai, Kochi and Kolkata — for being the “easiest place to start business” in India in its report “Doing Business in India 2009”. The report presents indicators on business regulations, compared across 181 economies. **(Agencies)**■

# Be a player, not a potato

By C. Raja Mohan

One thing that won't change in India's foreign policy for the next decade is the absolute centrality of our ties with Islamabad, Beijing and Washington. What is new at the turn of the decade, however, is the prospect of instability in all the three relationships.

India's ability to manage them will depend entirely on the UPA government's ability to learn from the diplomatic opportunities lost and the mistakes made in its first term. Although India's own relative position in the world had steadily improved during the last decade, the Congress party led by Sonia Gandhi and the UPA government led by Manmohan Singh had come up short on strategic self confidence and organisational competence. When the UPA came to power in May 2004, it inherited an exceptionally positive foreign policy legacy from the NDA led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

In the short span of six years, Vajpayee had boldly altered the direction of India's foreign policy, especially towards the US, Pakistan and China.

Vajpayee's decision to conduct five nuclear tests in May 1998 and declare India a nuclear weapon power undid the damage from the half-cocked 'peaceful nuclear explosion' of 1974. If he defied the world on the nuclear question, Vajpayee was smart enough to seek a quick reconciliation with the United States. Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2000, the first by an American

president in 22 years, did not resolve the bilateral nuclear dispute but took out the poison that had accumulated in the Indo-US relationship over the years.

Vajpayee initiated a bold peace process with Pakistan by travelling to Lahore in February 1999 and offering to find a final solution to the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir. Despite Pakistan's Kargil betrayal that came to light soon after,

*By nature congress on foreign policy is risk averse, weak on coherence and strong on inertia. Has it learnt anything from the first term?*

Vajpayee persisted with his effort to rewrite the relationship with Islamabad by insisting that India can 'choose her friends but not neighbors'.

Vajpayee also broke the mould on China in 2003 when he unveiled a new framework for the resolution of the boundary dispute with Beijing that emphasized a political negotiation. In the middle of the outgoing decade, then, India found itself improving ties with Pakistan, China and the United States at the same time. In the past, India may have had a good moment with one of these three nations, but never with all of them simultaneously. While Prime Minister Manmohan

Singh and a few of his advisers understood the historic opportunities at hand, the Congress party and the government machinery were not intellectually prepared to take full advantage of the rare moment in India's foreign policy.

After all, the Congress was at the leading edge of Indian railing and ranting against the United States, China and Pakistan through the previous decades.

Within a few weeks during early 2005, Delhi stared at possible historic breakthroughs with all three. In mid-March 2005, George W. Bush, who was re-elected as President of the United States, sent his new Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice to offer a nuclear deal that Delhi could not refuse.

In early April 2005, Chinese premier Wen Jiabao was in Delhi signing off on a declaration of guiding principles for the resolution of the boundary dispute. In the same month, President Pervez Musharraf, who was in full command of Pakistan, invited himself to Delhi and offered a new framework for negotiations on resolving the Kashmir dispute and the normalisation of bilateral relations.

In retrospect, it is quite clear that the UPA government made heavy weather of the rare opportunity to rewrite India's three biggest foreign policy accounts. Self doubt in the Congress party and the Prime Minister's reluctance to affirm his political will over a conservative establishment prevented Delhi from breaking out of a security condition that had it

tied down for decades.

Bush on his part delivered on the nuclear deal in July 2005; the tragedy that followed in Delhi is too depressing to be recounted in full. Put simply, India converted Bush's 'gift horse' into 'Trojan Horse'. An open and shut case on implementing the nuclear deal took more than three years of a frenzied 'national debate', the threat of the PM's resignation, and the first ever confidence motion in Lok Sabha on a foreign policy issue that the UPA government won by the skin of its teeth.

That ending three decades of India's nuclear isolation depended on the political wiles of the Samajwadi Party's Amar Singh points to the opportunism of the BJP and the infantilism of the CPM.

The real problem, however, lay elsewhere; in the imagined fears of the Congress party and a free-for-all in the government, where the leadership of the Department of Atomic Energy, sections of the Ministry of External Affairs and the PM's own office created all manner of obstacles to the nuclear initiative.

It would be difficult to imagine Vajpayee, who sacked a chief of naval staff, or Rajiv Gandhi, who dismissed a foreign secretary, tolerating such insubordination among the civil servants. Although Dr Singh had his way eventually, the costs of the delay and extended internal wrangling were too great. And none more consequential than for the relations with Pakistan and China.

The bureaucratic conservatism, elevation of 'departmentalism' above the national interest, and fear of bold thinking in the Congress that prevented a quick implementation of the nuclear deal

with the United States, also blocked progress with Pakistan and China.

On Pakistan, the good moments when cross-border terrorism was down were squandered by the skepticism of the intelligence establishment on whether Musharraf was a reliable interlocutor, the cussedness of the Army leadership that undermined Siachen talks with Pakistan, and the obduracy of senior Congress ministers in the Cabinet who opposed Dr Singh's visit to Pakistan during 2005 and 2006. Musharraf, who was eager for quick results from his outreach to India, had little to show at home for his efforts; major

***Bush on his part delivered on the nuclear deal in July 2005; the tragedy that followed in Delhi is too depressing to be recounted in full.***

terrorist incidents soon began to cloud the peace process— starting with the blasts in Delhi's Sarojini Nagar market in October 2005 and followed by many major urban attacks.

By the time the PM was ready to travel to Pakistan in March 2007, Musharraf was on the slippery slope of the judicial crisis and was ousted by the end of 2008; and the outrageous terror aggression on Mumbai in November 2008 put paid to the peace process. If the failure to reach out to Musharraf during 2005 squandered a fleeting opportunity with Pakistan, there is nothing in the public domain to suggest Delhi had the courage to imagine, let alone pursue the logic of a boundary settlement with Beijing.

In the case of Pakistan, the persistent back channel at least negotiated a broad framework for

the resolution of the Kashmir question. In the case of China, the open channel for negotiation of the boundary dispute soon slipped into bureaucratic routine.

As Delhi dithered over the nuclear deal and its political classes squabbled on the virtues of partnering with the US, Beijing had little incentive to move forward on the boundary dispute and was emboldened to undermine the nuclear deal.

Has the Congress leadership learnt anything from the mis-steps of its first term?

There is no evidence in the public domain that the Congress is even aware of the lost opportunities. Although it has come back with a stronger majority, the Congress continues to behave like a weak government that is afraid of its own shadow.

By nature the Congress model of governance is a sack of potatoes — strong on inertia and weak on coherence. It is risk averse; prefers doing nothing to even minor foreign policy experimentation.

The party's unwillingness to back the PM's effort to revive the peace process with Pakistan at Sharm el Sheikh last July, its lack of enthusiasm for deepening the engagement with the United States, and its attempt to hide the many problems with China with vacuous rhetoric of friendship point to an unbelievable strategic lassitude. Meanwhile, no one in Delhi or other capitals has accused the current PMO as inspiring either awe of its capabilities or the fear of consequences when crossing its path. No government in Delhi, with the probable exception of those led by Deve Gowda and VP Singh, has had such a weak inner core as the present dispensation.

While the Congress and the government led by its how no signs of getting their act together on foreign policy, the rest of the world is not waiting for India. Infact, all of its three major foreign policy accounts — the US, China and Pakistan — have become messier. Despite its commitment to elevate the bilateral relationship with India, the Obama Administration badly needs Chinese cooperation in overcoming its economic woes and Pakistan's help in salvaging its eight-year-old occupation of Afghanistan. Add to it, the Democrats' obsession with multilateralism and dislike of balance of power politics in Asia.

No wonder, then, the basis on which the Indo-US engagement had been constructed during the last decade has become shakier under Obama.

In our obsession with the United States during the last decade, we have underestimated the meaning and consequences of China's rise. This in turn has produced a triple blow for India. China's improved infrastructure in Tibet has made it more assertive on the long border with India. In the neighbourhood, the deepening Chinese influence has begun to contest India's primacy.

And Delhi's ability to balance Beijing is constrained by the compulsions on the great powers to accommodate arising China. India's anger after the Mumbai attacks last November has prevented Delhi from adopting a cold and calculating approach to the fast evolving internal dynamic in Pakistan. By thinking of Pakistan as a black box and refusing to talk to Islamabad until it brings the plotters of the Mumbai aggression to book, India has deprived itself of the ability to influence the internal dynamic

across the border.

Having failed to take chances when Pakistan was under a strong military ruler, India now finds there is no one to negotiate with. In the coming years the situation in Pakistan is likely to get a lot worse, as the United States steps up its military offensive in Afghanistan. Whether America wins or loses, India's north-western frontiers are going to get a lot more turbulent.

Dealing with the new challenges in the New Year and beyond demands a broad consensus within the Congress party and between the party and its government on the following three propositions:

The first is that India must continue relentless and purposeful engagement, unencumbered by emotion and ideology, with the United States, China and Pakistan, irrespective of the many possible set backs; the emphasis must be on seizing opportunities when they present themselves and limiting and isolating the negative developments. The second is the recognition that India can no longer treat the policies towards the US, China and Pakistan in separate boxes. Instead of insisting that each of these relationships would be

pursued in a purely bilateral framework, Delhi must learn to leverage the movement on one front in the other two. Finally, in large governments like ours, personnel are policy.

Delhi's objective gains over the last decade, thanks to its growing economic weight, are being neutralized by a weak subjective capacity to exploit them.

As in the last decade, so in the next, the international system is likely evolve in a manner favourable to India. The weak agency of a national security system we are burdened with, however, could leave India deeply frustrated. If the UPA prefers to remain a sack of potatoes—unable to build roads to defend its borders and incapable of even shopping for weapons—Delhi is bound to get a few hard knocks on its head quite soon in the new decade.

Former national security adviser, Brajesh Mishra, says this could come in the form of a combined onslaught by China and Pakistan. If and when it happens, the UPA will find there is no place to hide. ■

*The writer is Henry A Kissinger chair in Foreign Policy and International relations at the Library of Congress, Washington DC (Courtesy: Indian Express)*

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## BJP launches 'Jai Andhra' movement

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched 'Jai Andhra' movement with "like-minded" leaders from Vijayawada on December 28, 2009. Andhra Pradesh BJP President Shri Bandaru Dattatreya said the party would also undertake a campaign on the issue in Kukatpally area where a large number people from the Andhra and Rayalaseema regions reside. He said the BJP had been consistent on bifurcation of the State.

Referring to the ongoing agitation in Telangana for a separate State, he accused the government of trying to suppress it through "police raj."■ (FOC)

## MADHYA PRADESH

## CM for speedy implementation of development schemes

Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan has called upon the Government departments to dedicate the year 2010 to the concept of Golden Madhya Pradesh. He has them to implement developmental programmes at a rapid pace, complete the targetted works within the deadline and follow the recommendations of Manthan committee during this period. He also instructed them to set a target for the full year and chalk out a programme to achieve this target on priority basis.

Shri Chouhan was addressing a meeting of Cabinet colleagues and Principal Secretaries of all the departments in Bhopal on January 03.

Extending New Year greetings to all the people of Madhya Pradesh, he said during the last one year, the Government work has been affected due to code of conduct imposed due to various elections. Now, all the departments have to ensure utilisation of available budget during the remaining three months of the financial year.

Shri Chouhan said that he will undertake a Statewide tour for *Aao Madhya Pradesh Banayen* campaign with spot assessment of distribution of Forest Rights documents. He has asked all the departments to send Action Taken Reports in connection with implementation on the instructions and announcements made earlier. The Chief Minister said that he will hold separate discussions with officers of various departments and apprise himself of departmental activities and difficulties.

Shri Chouhan said that appropriate action would be ensured against those found guilty of corruption and irregularities. He instructed the Government departments to take self initiative for ensuring maximum benefit of Central schemes, promoting information technology and using the same for the benefit of the common man.

He further said that proper implementation of social security and other beneficiary-oriented schemes should be ensured. Expressing his displeasure over instances of indifference in some schemes and programmes, the Chief Minister said that persons found involved in such cases will not be spared. He instructed the officers to maintain a constant dialogue with departmental Ministers and seek their guidance. He instructed the concerned departments to ensure revenue recovery against the set target so that the tempo of development

can be accelerated.

The Chief Minister said that 14 departments have taken decision on Manthan recommendations while the rest of the departments will take their decisions this month. He said that the budget for 2010-11 will offset our priorities and works of all the departments for next year will be determined accordingly.

## HIMACHAL PRADESH

## Dhumal launches e-samadhan

Moving a step further to ensure prompt redressal of grievances of the people, Himachal Chief Minister Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal on January 02 launched 'e-samadhan' (Online grievance monitoring redressal system) for the people meeting him with their problems at his official residence 'Oakover'.

It was a New Year gift to the people as the Chief Minister operationalised the system by click of mouse and registration of visitors started online. Under the system, the people meeting the Chief Minister with their problems would be registered and the instructions or orders passed by him would be entered into the computer the same day and immediately communicated to the concerned department.

The system would reduce the delay in passing on the instructions through manual system and the Chief Minister would be able to instantly monitor the follow-up action taken by the concerned officials and intervene and pass fresh instructions if needed.

Prof. Dhumal said that e-Samadhan was a bi-lingual citizen centric web enabled and work-flow based software designed for quick disposal of public grievances and a time frame had been fixed for each type of grievance or demand and concerned authority made accountable to deliver relief to the aggrieved within the stipulated period.

He said that additionally, commands were available in the system not only for updating and monitoring the grievances redressal process but also for analysis and making policy decisions. He said that the system not only addressed the interests and values of citizens but also of all stakeholders. Further, online advice from seniors was available to subordinates, action taken on file would be recorded, maintained online automatically and communicated to concerned persons. He said that all stake holders including citizens, Government departments, MLAs, MPs, Ministers and Chief Minister, Media and NGOs had been integrated in such a way that everybody was kept posted of the status of

application.

The Chief Minister said that e-Samadhan would be a paperless, transparent, accountable, responsive and environment friendly exercise for redressing public grievances in a more effective and time-bound manner. He said that computerisation of all the Government departments was nearing completion which would add to efficiency in delivering prompt services to the public.

He said that redressal of public grievances would be accorded top priority by every department while the Cabinet ministers would also extensive tour different assembly constituencies and organize 'Prashashan Janta Ke Dwar Par' (Administration at the Doorsteps of Public) programmes to listen to public grievances and ensure their prompt disposal.

The e-samadhan would also be extended to district and lower levels and the people would not be required to rush to state capital Shimla for redressal of the petty problems making the dream of paperless administration a reality.

## JHARKHAND

### ISC will deal with Naxal problem in the state : Raghuwar Das

Jharkhand Deputy Chief Minister Shri Raghuwar Das has hinted at the formation of Internal Security Committee (ISC) to deal with the Naxal problem in Jharkhand. However, he has refused to disclose the details and key responsibilities of the committee after he said the details will be available after the meeting of full Cabinet over this matter.

Sources, however, said that Shri Das wanted the committee some kind of replica of the National Security Agency (NSA) comprising of senior cops, security experts and others. "I need to discuss this issue with my cabinet colleagues. Details to this will be known in the later," Shri Das said noting that the Chief Minister is yet to expand his cabinet from three to twelve that is expected to take place after the government wins confidence motion on the floor of the assembly and a clear picture is yet to emerge. But it will be a big story in the coming days if the state cabinet nods to this. It will be for the first time in Jharkhand when any Government has given a broad hint to institute a high nodal agency to deal naxal issue with twin objectives: negotiation and strategic offensive.

The government on the other hand is keen to focus more upon developmental issues and public welfare projects as a means to neutralise red rebel.

January 16-31, 2010 ○ 30

### Maya Govt acting like a private ltd. Company : BJP

In a 'chargesheet' issued against the Mayawati government, the UP State BJP has charged that the Mayawati government was functioning like a private limited company in the year gone by which will go down in the annals of political history as a dark year full of 'atrocities, victimisation and administrative terrorism'.

BJP state vice-president, Shri Hriday Narayan Dixit told media persons that present government is one which does not even care about court verdicts and does not mind indulging in destroying establish norms of democracy. The government looted the state exchequer for the full 365 days of the year and focussed on making money and corrupting the system.

He said that the Mayawati government glorified mafia elements by fielding them in the polls. "The truth remains that criminals were given subsidy," he alleged.

Responding to the performance of the BJP, the vice-president said that party has acted as a responsible Opposition and opposed the faulty policies of the Centre and State governments at all appropriate forums. ■

### Terrorist strike at Lal Chowk an onslaught on sovereignty : BJP

A meeting of the all-India Office Bearers of Bharatiya Janata Party with Shri Nitin Gadkari, National President in the chair, was held at New Delhi on January 7. The following resolution was unanimously adopted at the meeting:

"Terror has returned to Srinagar in a big way. The terrorist attack at Lal Chowk in the heart of Srinagar is an onslaught on India's sovereignty. It is a reminder to the nation that those who are inimical to India have not given up their evil designs. While the terrorists are regrouping, the Government of India is lowering its guard. The state Government is not co-operating with the Army in its requirement for land. Both the centre and the state Governments are romancing with the ill-conceived ideas like autonomy and dilution of national sovereignty.

"The BJP strongly condemns the terrorist attack at Lal Chowk in Srinagar. It is a wake up call to the Indian nation that the terrorist's evil designs are still active. Let this attack be a challenge to the spirit of Indian Nationhood and let us all resolve to frustrate the design of terrorist with full determination." ■