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LETTER 2

BOOK SCAN 30



NEWS

NATIONAL 32

INTERNATIONAL 34

WTO 36



CONTENTS

COVER ARTICLE 4

*A resounding No to
Bt Brinjal across
the country*
Devinder Sharma

10 INSIGHT

Relevance of Vedic thoughts in today's Global Economic Crises
..... **D.G. Bokare**

14 REPORT

Ambitious China – The latest Civilisational Threat
..... **Swadeshi Samvad**

17 ACCOUNTABILITY

Impending need for CAG audit of PPP Projects
..... **Ashwani Mahajan**

19 PETITION

Parliamentary Committee Vs Technical Expert Group on Patent Law Issues
..... **B.K. Keayla**

21 AGENDA

Reduce consumption to save the planet
..... **Bharat Jhunjunwala**

23 OUTRAGE

UN body misled world, scientific community on global warming

27 NEWS-DISSECT

Moving Pen
..... **Kashmiri Lal**

Hockey on National Game

Hockey continues to be officially the national game of India. But the reason for which hockey in India was in news recently is a matter a shame for any patriot. Hockey in India has not only been popular, but has produced wizards of the game. The past record of winning Olympic medal for hockey is incredible. In fact it was thought to be a sure medal for the country. Hockey in India has not been able to keep pace with changing times. And no single individual can be held responsible for the deterioration.

It needs better understanding on the part of hockey India to market the game in such a way that attracts best talent which in turn will attract crowds to the stadium. Once crowds are there to cheer, money will pour in. market forces are inventing events to reach people for promotion of their products. Hockey in India is still very popular and there will be no dearth of sponsors who will like to benefit from the popularity of the game.

– **Mukesh Rajput** (Uttam Nagar, New Delhi)

Hunger Free world

Ending world hunger is not impossible. A long term fund needs to be created and invested in sustainable agriculture and focus on the small holder and women farmers who make up more than 60% of the world's hungry people. We need to have these plans monitored by the UN and civil society to ensure transparency. The G8 took a step in July 2009 and pledged \$22 billion in new funding to combat hunger. But they still haven't followed through on that commitment. They must be forced to make good on their existing funding commitments. We've seen politicians back down on their promises before. But we've also seen the power of grassroots mobilization to change the course of history. And with more than 1 billion already going hungry, there's no time to waste.

In India, there are about 38% people who are below the poverty line and suffer from hunger. Govt. of India should also act to end hunger in India. If we remove corruption from the Public Distribution System, I think that the hunger would end. Govt. of India may kindly ensure that there is no corruption in Public Distribution System. If we could check corruption in all our welfare schemes as well as other financial activities, then our whole fiscal deficit can be wiped out and we could be really a nation of rich people.

– **Satbir Singh Bedi**, BH(Poorvi) 682, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088

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Quote-Unquote



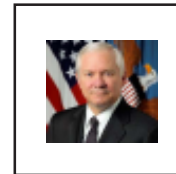
India is reworking its war doctrine to meet the possible challenge of a two-front war.

Gen Deepak Kapoor
Army Chief



The CPI (M) has no hesitation in joining hands with believers and religious leaders... The party does not bar those with religious beliefs.

Prakash Karat
General Secretary of CPI (M)



It will be unreasonable to assume that India will have unlimited patience in case it faces a 26/11 type terror attack.

Robert Gates
US Defence Secretary



If we save Pakistan, it will amount to saving the rights of poor people.

Asif Ali Zardari
President of Pakistan

India Turns Sixty

Republic of India turned sixty this month. We became politically independent on August 15, 1947. But it was on January 26, 1950 that India became a republic with a written constitution. 60th year is an occasion to be celebrated in our society. Shashtipurti is a festival in families. It is considered to be auspicious by almost all Indians. A person on turning 60 is expected to enter a different phase of life. Even though life of person can in no way be compared to the life of any nation, more so with an ancient civilization called India. Yet sixty years of existence as an entity in modern idiom is a stage to have a look at the performance and over all experience as a modern people's democratic and secular nation. India that is Bharat is the only place in the world to have an uninterrupted continuity of existence for millennia of years. It has a recorded history of more than 5000 years. Experiences which humanity had in this part of the world and the vast ocean of knowledge that resulted from these experiences are unique and a prized possession of human race. No where else has human mind been able to dive deep to take out jewels and pearls of wisdom from the laps of Mother Nature. Resultant "way of life" that became possible after centuries of hard work by generations of people is as relevant today as it was at the time of its conception. This way of life being nature friendly is sustainable and hence enduring. It is based on "minimum needs for sustenance" and not on the principle of maximum consumption for enjoyment". Having understood the non-permanent nature of this universe, Indian mind has evolved an outlook that is predominantly spiritual in content with out undermining the importance of this life. Indian nation, due to several factors including the cyclic up and downs had to under go a bitter period of subjugation by the barbaric and imperialistic forces. Freedom loving people of this land forced these powers out of India to resume the march forward.

During this period of subjugation life standard of vast majority of Indians was disrupted. Colonial powers drained our resources and we as a nation that regained its freedom in 1947 were left stripped. Our wealth was stolen, natural resources exploited and our social cultural and economical foundations devastated. Our minds were forced to focus just on one thing, attainment of freedom, freedom and freedom. We resumed activity as a proud nation after that goal was attained, though in tragic and truncated form of our motherland. The world was a different place by then. World War II had changed the power game and a new global order was already in place. Poor and developing nations by the standards prescribed by Victorian forces were forced to take sides in a cold war between super powers with communist and capitalist models of running their countries. In a conscious effort to remain independent we at the dawn of freedom were forced work with several handicaps and hidden costs attached to our decision. With this background when we look at the progress we have made so far we have reason to be satisfied. Comparative figures tell the story translucently. After six successful decades of existence we have reached a stage where we need to have a fresh look on our priorities and possibilities. World has again changed a lot during this period. Power balance has changed both at global level and also at the societal level within the country. The ongoing century belongs to us Indians. Asia is new centre of global trade. India is the only country in Asia that has system in place to take people of different backgrounds along. The generations that took over the reins from colonial powers has been replaced by a proud generations with out any inferiority complex. The generation that is out there to take India to a different pedestal has both confidence as well as the experience. The GENEXT is not ashamed of being called Indians. This tag in fact has become their prized possession. Enormous amount of energy has been unleashed. A silent revolution is taking place. Distinctions of caste, colour, creed, religion and sex are no more able to divide us. But we know there is no room for complacency. Laurels, glory and achievements so far are lovely and charming. But we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep.

A resounding No to Bt Brinjal across the country

Bt is a hazardous technology and will poison successive generations. People have rejected the technology and one should respect the sentiments of the people, says Dr. Denvinder Sharma

It was a busy and trying day today. A strong and loud verdict against Bt brinjal came from three cities across the country. First, at the 2nd National Consultation held at Bhubaneswar in Orissa, Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh, announced that with the State saying a loud and clear No to Bt brinjal, more than 60 per cent of the brinjal growing areas of the country — Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa — have formally rejected genetically modified brinjal.

But first let me share with you two more Bt brinjal events that happened in Hyderabad (in Andhra Pradesh) and in Baroda (Gujarat). My colleague Dr Ramanjaneyulu of the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture was at a meeting organised by the AP University for Agriculture. He tells me that the AP Agricultural University has formally opposed the introduction of Bt brinjal, and also called for a moratorium on Bt brinjal. This is encouraging indeed, and it is probably for the first time that agricultural scientists have asked for more tests.

I however would like to draw your attention to the report that Dr Ramanjaneyulu has sent me. I am pasting it below, and you will be amused to read about the role played by IARI scientists in promoting Bt brinjal. In fact, IARI is



becoming a centre of national shame the way it unabashedly is promoting the commercial interests of the biotechnology companies. I hope Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar is reading this. But I do not expect Sharad Pawar to take any cognisance of what his scientists are doing, because he too is pushing for an unwanted technology at the cost of farmers.

Meanwhile, I was in Baroda today, and had a long day. Starting with a preparatory meeting, followed by a press conference, I joined a silent march taken by concerned citizens in the city today culminating in submission of a memorandum addressed to the President and Prime Minister. The memorandum was presented to

the Collector of the district, and he promised to forward it to the top functionaries. This peaceful march, organised by the Baroda-based voluntary organisation Jatan — A Mission for Organic Farming along with several volunteers, attracted a lot of attention from shopkeepers and onlookers.

I was particularly very happy to see the involvement of the people. A lot of women, men and young students joined this rally, and this gives me strength and hope. When people take control over what they should eat, I am sure the industry and the agricultural scientists will behave.

And now, take a look at the report from Hyderabad:

Finally AP Government says

Experts Question Approval of Bt Brinjal

Violates Cartagena Protocol & Precautionary Principle

THE claimed benefits and the apparent risks emerging from inadequate regulatory and monitoring systems of the proposed introduction of Bt Brinjal, a transgenic variety of brinjal were rigorously examined at a Colloquium organised by the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health (CSMCH), School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, in collaboration with Hazards Centre, New Delhi on the 27th of January.

Taking cognisance of the valid questions raised about the conflict of interest ridden Genetic Engineering Approval Committee, the experts recommended adoption of precautionary principles and adherence to Cartagena protocol of which India is a party. The experts at the Colloquium felt that Bt Brinjal requires to be further studied by a trans-disciplinary, independent and impartial team of scientists keeping in mind the short-term and long-term consequences of genetic pollution linked acute and chronic toxicity of food chain. The Colloquium adopted the following Resolution.

Resolution

The Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, in collaboration with Hazards Centre, New Delhi, organised a Colloquium on Bt Brinjals on the 27th of January 2010. Attended by students and faculty, the house resolved as follows.

Various issues are unresolved about the problematic nature of transgenic technologies in general and Bt in particular. One core issue was the competence, the transparency and the conflict of interest in the regulatory process prior to the grant of licence to market Bt brinjal.

Safety issues have not been adequately dealt with both in terms of food safety and environmental safety. Long-term studies on allergenicity and toxicity have not been carried out prior to approval.

We are also concerned about the implications for food security for the country. It is not desirable to hand over the control of seeds to transnational monopolies. To ensure that access to seed is ensured, the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime must retain farmer's rights and must not reduce flexi-

bilities in Indian law.

As per the Cartagena protocol, to which India is a signatory, transgenic versions of crops for which we are the country of origin should not be permitted. Mexico, China and Peru follow this protocol. Thus transgenic varieties of Bt brinjal cannot be permitted in India.

A system of post-release monitoring must be put in place before commercial release is allowed into the environment to assess the performance and impact. Exhaustive socio-economic studies are necessary to assess the impact of transgenic crops on traditional agricultural systems and indigenous crops.

A proper system of labelling of GM crops must be put in place with public awareness to enable informed choices.

A system of public participation in decision-making and in regulatory bodies must be put in place. All regulatory data and bio-safety data should be available to the public.

A law of liability must also be in place before commercial release is permitted so that companies are liable to health and environmental damage that might ensue. Till such systems are in place, this house calls for a moratorium on all transgenic crops.

The herbicide tolerant trait should not be permitted in India as this will displace agricultural labour and destroy valuable plants used as food, fodder and medicines.

There is indeed an acute agrarian crisis in the country. The solution to this does not lie in GM technologies. There are cheaper, safer, healthier options that must be explored and supported.

The participants included eminent experts like Dr Pushpa Bhargava, Founder Director, Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Prof. Mohan Rao, Professor, CSMCH, JNU, Prof. Deepak Pental, Vice Chancellor, University of Delhi, Dr. Suman Sahai, Convener, Gene Campaign, Dr. Rama Baru, Professor, CSMCH, JNU, Dr N. Raghuram, School of Biotech, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Dr K.C. Bansal, Professor, National Research Centre on Plant Biotech, IARI, Prof. K.J. Mukherjee, School of Biotechnology, JNU and Dunu Roy, Director, Hazards Centre. □

no to Bt Brinjal. Today a meeting was organised by Acharya NG Ranga University and AP Horticulture University with farmers unions, farmers, NGOs and other concerned people on the decision on bt brinjal. Earlier, Govt had appointed a three member expert committee with two vice chancellors Dr. Raghava Reddy of Agri. University and Dr. Shikamani of Horticulture University and Sri. Pankaj Diwedi, IAS, Agri Production Commissioner.

The committee has unanimously recommended to State govt that Bt brinjal is not needed as there are several good varieties already under cultivation and the safety issues are still under question and all the studies need to be done again against best varieties and technologies.

In today's meeting Dr. Anandkumar (of IARI New Delhi) made a "wonderful" presentation obviously expressing his intent to sell bt brinjal and made my job easier to say these men are the regulator (Several people including a scientist from agri university said he looked more like a salesman than a scientist or a regulator).

More than 60% of the brinjal growing areas of the country - Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa - have formally rejected genetically modified brinjal.

All the leaders from farmers unions dismissed the claims by Dr. Anandkumar and said they have seen several problems with bt cotton. The farmers from several districts also raised the issues very well.

Prof Purushottam Reddy opened the discussion saying environment concerns are more important than yield or any thing else. AP Rytusangam, AP Shepherds union, Telugu Rytu, AP kisan cell said completely NO. CIFA representative, who earlier on many oc-



cassions opposed bt cotton/bt brinjal, said technology should not be opposed just because it is developed by MNCs if it has problems we need to do proper testing.

I could get some 15 min times after lunch for my presentation. Surprise came with Vice Chancellor of Horticulture university who said there is no need for such technologies in brinjal. He said we should have a clear Environment Risk Assessment system in place and test against and do proper risk assessment if a relevance is established in any case. Both vice chancellors requested farmers unions to give in writing to Jairam Ramesh which will strengthen their report.

To Bt or not to Bt

For quite sometime Biocon chief Kiran Mazumdar Shaw has been commenting on the need to have GM crops. While we appreciate what she has done in her biotech business, but I think it is always advisable to keep yourself confined to your areas of specialisation. Treading into areas (read agriculture) about which you know little can be dangerous, and this is what she often does.

I was asked to respond to some of her remarks. Here is a brief news report that incorporates my response. Titled To be or not to Bt, the report appeared in the Bangalore edition of the New Indian Express.

There is a false propaganda against Bt Brinjal, said Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, CMD, Biocon. However, she was quick to be countered by food policy expert Devinder Sharma, who said Mazumdar was only interested in 'making money' and therefore does not mind 'lying'. Speaking for Bt brinjal and the use of biotechnology in agriculture at a curtain raiser event for Bangalore Bio 2010, Shaw said, "There is a danger of false propaganda against Bt, especially at a time when it is going commercial".

She said, "We need to tackle this on a scientific basis. Bt is a very safe science and we are all very responsible stakeholders. Agri-biotech can prove very helpful for the country." The scientists and policy analysts, though, are divided on the issue.

In an online conversation with the Express, Sharma said, “Bt is a hazardous technology, and will poison successive generations. People have rejected the technology and one should respect the sentiments of the people.” He termed the environmental clearance accorded by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) to Bt Brinjal as biggest “scientific fraud” in the country. The report, he alleged, “blatantly ignored dangerous impact of Bt brinjal on the organs of rats and other animals”.

He said, “There is a strong conflict of interest with several members of the committee being responsible for or associated with the development of Bt brinjal.” “It has been established that compared to Bt bio-pesticide sprays, the concentration of Bt

toxin in Bt brinjal is thousand times more,” he added.

“There have been animal deaths after they grazed on Bt cotton leaves in Andhra Pradesh and Haryana. Bt is supposed to kill sucking pests like pink bollworm in cotton and thereby reduce pesticides consumption.

This, however, does not hold true for long.” Citing the case of China, Sharma said farmers growing Bt cotton are now reported to be spraying eight per cent more pesticides and incurring losses. This report is based on a study conducted by the Cornell University, he added.

Responding to the pro-GM argument that Bt in agriculture will ensure food security, Sharma said: “There is no shortage of food in the world. We have 6.5 billion people on Earth and we produce food

for 11.5 billion people.

If more than one billion people are going to bed hungry, it is because of the faulty distribution process rather than the unavailability of food.”

State horticulture dept says no Bt brinjal

A senior official of the horticulture department said, “The department has submitted a report in this regard to the state government. But overall, our position is ‘No to Bt brinjal.’” President of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, Kodihalli Chandrashekar, said, “For the past 15 years, we have been fighting against genetic engineering technology. When Bt cotton was introduced, we even burnt the trial fields of Cargill and Monsanto. Bt brinjal is harmful not only to the environment but also for human beings. □□

Let us educate ourselves

A Scientific FAQ on GMO (compiled from various sources)

What is Gene?

A gene is a discrete sequence of DNA nucleotides. DNA Stands for Deoxyribo Nucleic Acid. DNA is located inside our cells nucleus and packed into 46 chromosomes (we get 23 chromosomes from father and 23 from mother). The information in the DNA is divided into different regions called genes they determine the characteristics of the life-form - all these are inside the Cell's nucleus

What is GMO and what is BT?

A GMO is short for Genet-



ically Modified organism (GM), also known as Genetically Engineered organism (GE), or transgenic organism. A portion of gene

code from DNA of an unrelated species is inserted into a particular (target) food crop /Organism to achieve the characteristics of an unrelated species into the target food crop or organism. BT Stands for ‘Bacillus thuringiensis’ a bacterium found in the soil - a poisonous microbe (which produces pesticide) for human as well as other life forms. Thus BT-Brinjal means a Bacteria Brinjal (child from a forceful marriage of bacteria father and brinjal mother)

With biotechnology /Genetic Engineering (GE), Brinjals are

no longer crossed with other varieties of Brinjal. They are forcefully inserted with the Genes of a bacterium called 'Bacillus thuringiensis'-similarly many other vegetable and grains with poisonous genetic substance from unrelated species.

Why GMO (as per the Seed cos)?

Insects and Pests eat food crops and thus a lower yield is achieved by farmer. To increase the yield the crop is made into a poisonous one so that Pests and insects don't eat them. (Can we eat them?).

The fact is that even after the pests /insects reducing yield, we are producing plenty of food. More food is destroyed (over 30%) due to improper storing methods in Godowns and warehouses and ineffective distribution mechanisms than by pests /insects

GMO how it is done?

First the source organisms DNA is sequenced using PCR (polymerase chain reaction) is a molecular genetic technique for

making multiple copies of a gene, and is also part of the gene sequencing process. Then Through Recombination technology (Recombination of DNA structure) - also called as Gene Splicing. Genes are randomly taken from the source (bacteria, etc.) and thrown into the target. The technology of preparing recombinant DNA in vitro by cutting up DNA molecules of target (brinjal) and splicing together Gene fragments of the source (bacteria) at Cell level.

How GM Crop is made?

To make a GM crop, the new combination of genetic material must first be constructed by using enzymes (proteins that catalyze reactions in organisms) to cut and join DNA from different sources into one stretch. To make a GM plant, say, that has a built-in insecticide to kill insect pests, for example, a gene coding for a protein that kills the insect is included. Then gene cloning methods in which a non-native gene is introduced to the target organism and expressed in a new organism

and the same is multiplied

How it is inserted into the cells of target (food crop /organism)?

The technology that makes this all possible is called biolistics - a gunshot-like violence that pierces the nuclear membrane of cells. This essentially violates not just the core chambers of life (physically crossing nuclear membranes) but the conscious-choice principle that is part of living nature's essence. Where a cluster of modified DNA is fired, penetrated using force, piercing through the cell walls into the target cell - thus born a mutated cell with strange qualities and not produced by nature.

So what this GMO does at cell level?

It produces Pesticide proteins even inside our stomach - we become a pesticide factory

How much it costs to develop one GMO?

Huge sums are involved in this research. Depending on the crop and organisms the costs ranges anywhere upwards of US \$ 450,000 per GMO (in Indian rupee equivalent of over 2 crore rupees or more)

So the companies doing this is spending this money for removing poverty or world hunger?

Ha... Ha... good joke. The GMO Seed companies have recorded 100% increase in profits and their share values have increased to over 300% in the last few years. If they are into removing poverty /hunger then they must be in debt.

How they make money?

By selling patented seeds at higher costs than the traditional seeds.



Why would people buy seeds from them?

In few years of introduction all other varieties of Brinjals will be extinct and only BT-Brinjal seeds will be in the market and at the price fixed by the company. Also once the native seeds are contaminated with BT then the seed company can legally sue the farmer for illegally using their seeds.

Will this BT-Brinjal contaminate other Brinjal varieties?

Yes. Due to cross pollinisation by wind /insects and other Genetic pathways - all brinjals varieties will eventually become GMO. Most of the cotton in India is contaminated and become BT (GMO) within 5 years. Almost the entire Corn, Canola, Cotton and Soy in USA has become GMO - health experts are advising to avoid them. So even if we want to stop GMO in the future we can't

GMO or BT-Brinjal crops don't need pesticides right?

Instead of pesticides they need equally dangerous chemicals called Herbicides to grow. Herbicides are also patented and that also you have to buy from the same company which sell the seeds. Herbicides are proven neurotoxins and are carcinogenic in nature (Carcinogen: Cancer causing chemical)

What are the safety tests for the GMO?

SAFOTEST, a very essential experimental test to study safety of genetically modified food on experimental animals is done to establish Lowest-Observed-Adverse-Effect-Level (LOAEL) from rodents to larger animals over a minimum of 90



day toxicity study-3 year study is considered ideal with blood, faeces and milk studied for toxicology. Unfortunately no lab in India working on genetically modified crop testing is doing this very essential test before releasing to human consumption. Even SAFOTEST can't guarantee safety for animals or human beings.

Are they enough testing centers in India?

No. The fact is WEDON'T EVEN HAVE a SINGLE Agricultural University with a SAFOTEST CENTER in the country. WE RELIED ON MONSANTO SUPPLIED (FRAUDULENT) SAFETY MATERIAL

Seed companies have recorded 100% increase in profits and their share values have increased to over 300% in the last few years.

TO APPROVE BT CROPS. EVEN AFTER 8 YEARS AFTER THE APPROVAL OF BT-COTTON, even after the death of number of cattle due to consumption of BT-Cotton in Andhra, SAFOTEST Infrastructure and process is not established by Agri universities

What about GMO testing with Rats?

Rats have low lifespan and thus the onset and development of Cancer can't tested with Rats - GMO testing need to be done on animals with longer lifespan - or with human beings - NOW THIS IS GOING TO BE TESTED ON INDIANS.

How can one find out whether a seed is GMO or not?

The easiest way is to perform ELISA test to find out. The same ELISA test, that is done with blood samples to find out whether people are infected with HIV (AIDS Virus). So in some sense a BT crop (GMO) is comparable to a human infected with AIDS virus. □□

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Relevance of Vedic thoughts in today's Global Economic Crises

Vedic thoughts on economics are competent to lead the world's humankind for a peaceful future. But, very few of us have taken pains to understand their messages and guidance of Veda's. It is time to look back to Vedic thoughts, pleads D G Bokare

The mankind is presently facing very difficult kind of crises, which are threatening the very existence of the mankind and also the planet. The experts, technocrats, economists, social leaders and other eminent persons across the world are finding no solutions to these crises. This is because the world has been experiencing only two types of economic and social systems during the past three centuries. First is the capitalist economic system, and the other is the Marxian model of socialistic society. Capitalist economic development model is older than the Marxian economic model. Marxian model was evolved purely in early 20th century out of frustration and exploitation of workers by landlords and other capitalist class forming part of the capitalist economic model. However, the Marxian model of economic development miserably failed in 1989/90 due to lack of sound economic theories in the systems. The claim about eternal economic order is proved utopian. On the other hand, the surviving model of capitalist economic development has been based on greed and materialistic satisfaction of a selected few in the society. It too has no sound base of economic theories. Sound economic theories are normally based on nature's laws. Any thing going against the nature's laws are not sustainable.

Hence the present crises are in the form of exploitation of poor by rich, poverty, unemployment, unequal distribution of national wealth among all human beings, uncontrolled growth of urbanization of economies, heavy taxation by state, avoidance of taxes by elite people, inflation, depressions, corruption in all the four pillars of any democratic systems, increasing criminal activities, uncontrolled pollutions and illness, warfare, terrorism of all kinds, disconnect between religions and economies, influence of rich class on the functioning of states, ineffective state machineries, etc. etc. This list could be further lengthened by including many other weaknesses the mankind is presently facing and finding it extremely difficult to survive in this exploitative world. He is also being used as a commodity like other consumables. Latest in the list of important threats for human survival is 'global warming', which could be the greatest threat for the survival of the mankind as well as the planet itself. The present economic systems are pushing all the human societies on the irreversible road of anarchy and thereafter to the road of permanent destruction. These modern economic systems have proved to be incompetent to offer peaceful existence of humankind in this beautiful planet.

Broad reasons for such a state of affairs can be listed as follows:

1. Though the democracy is the best form of human development, the same is being manipulated by the privileged people of the society to their own advantage. Economic equity is what is missing from the present democratic systems. Man-made laws have divided the society into exploiters and exploitees.

2. Religious teaching has been given the back seat in the whole human development. Rather the rich have discarded religions altogether.

3. The role of omnipotent state is totally missing in doing right justice for all in the human society. Lawmakers are themselves got trapped in the acts of law breaking.

4. Nature's bountiful resources have been manipulated by the privileged people and have been turned them into scarcity of supplies for selfish benefits. Abundance of goods verses scarcity of goods has become an order of the present day society.

5. Ridiculing the ancient seers' thoughts and the blessings has become a symbol of prestige and status for highly educated class of people.

6. Monetary values have been preferred over ethical and moral values while handling the programmes of social progress.

Many experts from capitalist world have now come to the conclusion that the capitalist economy

is on the last stage of its existence. Let us look at what a few leaders say in this regard:

1. Hong Kong economist Mare Faber says, “the average life span of the world’s greatest civilization has been 200 years. Once a society becomes successful, it becomes arrogant, righteous, overconfident, corrupt, and decadent... over spends... costly wars... wealth inequality and social tensions increase; society enters a secular decline.”

2. Former chief economist of IMF Simon Johnson says, “The financial industry has effectively captured our government and is blocking essential reforms, and unless we break Wall Street’s ‘stranglehold’, we will be unable to prevent the Great Depression No.2.”

3. Financial historian Niall Ferguson says, “Another bubble (and crash) is virtually certain, thanks to Washington’s \$ 23.7 trillion explosion in debt, the Fed’s support for the \$ 670 trillion shadow banking system and Wall Street lobbyists getting super-rich, thanks to Wall Street’s insatiable greed.”

4. Billionaire investor George Soros says, “America’s 25 year ‘superboom’ led to massive deregulation... blindly chasing free markets (sic)..unleashed excessive greed .. created the dot.com and credit meltdowns and a shadow banking system of derivatives”.

5. Former Morgan Stanley research guru Barton Biggs warns us to prepare for “a civilization.. your safe haven must be self-sufficient and capable of growing some kind of food...it should be well-stocked with seeds, fertilizers, canned food, wine, medicines, clothes, etc... A few rounds over the approaching brigands’ heads would probably be

a compelling persuader that there are easier farms to pillage.” (from Best seller book of 2008 “Wealth, Wars and Wisdom”)

Let us look back to Vedic thoughts

Hindus must be very proud of our ancient past for the guidance available from the literature, both verbal and written, in respect of all the facets of our human development. They are more relevant in today’s context of degrading conditions of human society. However, very few of us have taken pains to understand their messages and guidance for overcoming any crises the human society

Hindus must be very proud of our ancient past for the guidance available from the literature, both verbal and written, in respect of all the facets of our human development.

faces not only in India but also across the world. This is hardly known today to the people not only from the West but also within our own society. Very few economists from India could trace the roots of economic and political systems in the ancient literature and develop an alternative economic model for well-being of human race. Most of the Indian economists still take pride and pleasure in teaching Western economics to our children. This may be due to their ignorance in this regard or due to developing a feeling of inferiority complex.

The contents of teaching materials and books in Europe and

America prepared by the economists have been described by Noble Laureate P.A.Samuelson in a crisp phrase, “kept men”. Economists in communist countries have proved themselves sophists after the collapse of erstwhile Soviet Union. Books in Eastern European countries have been thrown on streets and burnt. Famous economist Joan Robinson has a piece of advice for scholars in this respect. In her essay on “Teaching Economics”, she had confessed her share in teaching economics in English universities with harmful thoughts and ‘a stamp of English teaching.’ Demonstration-effect of Marxist and bourgeois economics pervades teaching in Indian universities. Dr. M G Bokare (former vice-chancellor of Nagpur University) says, “I now feel guilty for passing falsehood to the students.”

“Malthusian iron law of wages and Marx’s industrial reserve army, for example, is the evidence of WHOLE deciding the market price and other economic parameters of the PART. The WHOLE decides the economic categories of the PART. Yet, the WHOLE is not studied. It cannot be studied in the schemata of modern economics. Vedic economics, on the other hand, studies the WHOLE of the economy”, says Dr. Bokare.

Modern economics is facing a dilemma. Is the dilemma soluble in Vedic economics? This enquiry is exciting. The answer to this is in affirmative. Vedas have disclosed all the economic concepts, which are comprised in modern economics. Resources, population, production, market, prices, wages, interest, profit & loss, tax etc are indicated, though they have not been theorized as done today in modern economics.

The tool box of macro-economics emanates in value-added. In micro-economics, it is in distribution theory for interest, rent, wages, and profit. If value-added is used in Vedic economics, it endows a paradigm of new civilization. Vedic economic system is the paradigm of the theory. It is fully consistent with Rig Veda and the guidance of Mahatma Vidura of Mahabharat era. It is in the theory of self-employment. All have income in their family enterprises. It can be consummated in theory. This is employment for all work forces. The prices move downward as a trend in a competitive market economy. Thus, stagflation is removed. Poverty and class wars get totally wiped out in this process. A civilization emanating in Vedic economics will be bliss in philosophy of economics.

Some facts for world's knowledge

1. The word 'economics' was for the first time in the world invented and defined in the Vedic literature. Teacher of economics was called '*Arthachintkah*'. As against this, the West has been claiming that economics was first invented by Aristotle (384-323 BC). There is no mention of Kautilya's Arthashastra in the history books on economics written by many economists from the West. Well-known economist of the world J. K. Galbraith has, however, kindly accepted this error, when pointed out. He says, "There was, indeed, in ancient times a very sophisticated discussion of economics. Your comments on the matter are well taken. Were I writing the book again, I certainly have them in mind. I am very grateful to you for writing." (Hindu-economics 2nd edition 2009, page 80)

2. All the four Vedas, some

Upanishads, Vidur-niti in Udyog-Parva, Shanti-Parva, Manu-smruti, Yajnavalkya-smruti, Shukra-niti, and Kautilya's Arthashastra have very detailed thoughts, definition, explanations, guidance in respect of all the economic activities of human society. This information can easily be translated into the modern economic lexicon. These are not the only books about economic thoughts. There are many other such books, which can also be listed if warranted. If the western economists now study these thoughts, they would experience illumination. Their own books would be richer if they incorporate

"All those identical sense organs, the same actions, the same undamaged intellect, the same speech; yet without the warmth of wealth, the same man becomes quite different in an instant".

some of the propositions of these books in India.

What is the message from Vedic books?

1. Nature has provided bountiful of material for human satisfaction and growth.

2. Demons obstructing these supplies will be killed or destroyed.

3. God warns that those who misuse the given resources shall be punished. This is punitive jurisprudence in Holy Vedas.

4. Dr. S. Radhkrishnan says, "The Hindu does not elevate asceticism or exalt the sterile renunciation of the joy of life. Physical

well-being is an essential part of human well-being. Pleasure as such is not to be condemned."

5. Maharshi Vyasa says, "May all being be happy. May all attain bliss. May all see happy days. May no one be subject to suffering."

6. Bhartrihari says, "All those identical sense organs, the same actions, the same undamaged intellect, the same speech; yet without the warmth of wealth, the same man becomes quite different in an instant".

7. Rig Veda has blessed mankind with abundance of wealth. Isha Upanishad gives guidance by saying: All kinds of resources are given to all people on this earth. Give your earning to others. Consume your earnings. Do not appropriate others' wealth. Whose wealth? What is wealth? Any modern economist would agree that these are some of the fundamentals of the modern economics.

8. Mahatma Vidura has philosophized self-employment and says, "Self-employment is the best status to earn income for living". He further says, Taxes should become like bees collecting honey from the flowers". He adds for the protection of human society by saying that persons should save to avoid bad effects of natural and man-made calamities.

Man is the center of study in social sciences. His living in society is the subject of his work to earn income for consumption. He has two hands and a mouth for work and consumption respectively. All men have same organs of the body-physiology. Therefore, all can develop their faculties and personalities equally, if all have equal access to national wealth. Those who do not have wealth to work and earn income constitute the greatest loss of

labour-power. We have become conscious of biodegradation of human beings living on doles, beggary and crimes. Then we have Vyasa's message in "Sarve Santu Niramaya". It means: 'Let us be free from the sufferings'. States are conscious of unemployed in declaring the right to work. It is human right. Thus, we have no solutions in the modern economics from the West.

Sri Aurobindo rightly points out that the aim of economics would be not to create a huge engine of production, whether of the competitive or the cooperative kind but to give to men, not only to some but to all men, each in his highest possible measure, the joy of work according to their own nature and free leisure to grow inwardly, as well as a simple, rich and beautiful life for all.

Holy Vedas have ordained that people shall not live in the kingdom of corrupt rulers whose whole duplicity and bad demeanor are tolerated by the king (now the state). Vedic economic system is a political economy in the sense of an ideal political system in democracy, which shall remove all obstacles in the path of economic development accomplishing abundance in economic life. The problem of poverty, criminal tendencies against law and order, agitation against taxes, etc. are removed. This is the most peaceful metamorphosis of the engineering of the Vedic civilization, which subsumes all the conflicting ideologies like capitalism and Marxian socialism. It also subsumes emerging ideologies like Gandhism and interest-free Islamic economics.

Vedic economics engenders political economy, which is exactly opposite of the political economy

in Western economics. The state in Vedas has the role of omnipotent power in economic development. It is unlike laissez faire in Europe. It is also unlike command economy of socialist state.

Holy Vedas is the beginning of economics in the history of economics in the world. The blessings of abundance in Holy Vedas is also the end of modern economics in the Western corpus of the studies.

Vedas is the first book of knowledge of the world history of mankind. They have ordained mankind with abundance of goods. Vedic economics, the economics of abundance, is consistent

Hindu-economics is based on Vedic economic thoughts derived from various Vedic literature as mentioned above and presented the same to the world in the language and lexicon understood especially by the economists of the West.

with theories of modern economics. Vedic economics is for mankind on similar lines argued by classical economics, Keynesian economics, Marxian economics, etc.

Economic thesis based on Vedic literature is called Hindu-economics since it represents those who live in brotherhood in the geographical area and promote their own lifestyles, values of life, culture, customs, etc. Also most of the books from Europe and America use 'Hindu' for description of Indian affairs. We Indians should not, therefore, feel awkward to call this thesis as Hindu-economics. There are other books prefixing the reli-

gious names, such as Islamic Economics, Christian Economics, Buddhist Economics, etc. Hindu-economics starts where Western economics has stopped to analyze economics theory for more light. This will be useful now for all after the distrust of Western economics. Indian scholars have now the opportunity to trace the ideas of economics in ancient India. The blessing of abundance in Holy Vedas is also the end of modern economics in Western corpus of the studies.

Hindu-economics is based on Vedic economic thoughts derived from various Vedic literature as mentioned above and presented the same to the world in the language and lexicon understood especially by the economists of the West. The above essay is based on this great work whose importance cannot be set-aside in the present context of unprecedented crises the world is facing in the areas of economics, social sciences and political science. This theoretical proposition is the only option for the world to overcome the threat of destruction of the mankind and the planet due to the faults in the present economic systems. Vedic thoughts on economics are competent to lead the world's mankind for a peaceful future. Reading Hindu-economics is illumination for any student to searching for solutions to the present day uncertainty about the future of the mankind. These Vedic thought-based economics can overcome the threats to the human society arising out of the present issues of global warming, poverty, unemployment, criminal activities, etc. □□

(Based on Hindu-economics of Dr. M G Bokare, former vice-chancellor of Nagpur University, second edition 2009).

Ambitious China – The latest Civilisational Threat

Swadeshi Samvad

Chinese dragon seems to be emerging as a new monster threatening not only India but entire humanity. China in the name of fierce nationalism is following a policy that has potential of becoming a menace not only to its immediate neighbours but far and wide. It is not in one aspect that China has acquired aggressiveness; its stance in every aspect of human activity is increasingly belligerent. Be that Trade and Commerce, military and strategic affairs or socio-cultural activity. China is progressively more interfering in affairs of other countries in every part of world.

To secure its energy requirements China is acquiring assets wherever it is possible for that country. To protect these assets Chinese are developing China-towns in different parts of world particularly Africa and settling Chinese population there. Chinese products are flooding world markets and almost destroying local manufacturing sectors. It has already become 2nd largest economy and is set not only to over take US economy in size but will in fact be double the size of US economy in not that distant future. Geographically China has doubled its area in last 100 years. Its military might has increased manifold. In the field

of sports China is a force second to none. Normally there can be no objections to progress and development of any country, including China. If a nation works hard to give its people a decent life and improves the lot of its people no one shall have any problem. But same is not the case with China.

China is not what it projects itself to be. It neither follows a path of legally recognized progress nor does it respect human dignity. In shortsighted pursuit of an 'ideal

subjugation. China is aggressive on cultural front also and is reinterpreting religious and cultures in its own way to de-culturise people under its illegal and dishonest subjugation. Budha, hence gets Chinese makeover. China is fast emerging a very serious threat for India in many ways. It has ambushed India from all sides and on all fronts. Chinese investments have increased manifold in all countries neighbouring India. Be that Nepal, Bangladesh or Myanmar and Sri Lanka or Maldives. China is spending large amount of money in all these countries. Known anti India elements are being encouraged in big way. Anti-India feelings are strengthened and these elements are armed with latest weapons.

Chinese challenge and India

As an effort to make people aware of the threats India is facing from China, SJM organized an impressive function in New Delhi. Endeavor was part of the 4th Dattopant Thengadi Memorial Lecture put in by Swadeshi Vichar Kendra. Topic of the lecture this year was "Chinese Challenges and India" and the speakers were Sh. Tarun Vijay and Dr. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma.

Introducing the subject and



objective' China undermines rights and respect of 'other' people. It has no respect for unity, integrity and sovereignty of other countries. Like an imperialist power, China is using corrupt practices to influence governments' world over. It bribes dishonest politicians and dictatorial regimes to attain its determined point. China is assuming menacing postures to force unwilling regimes into

need to focus attention of the countrymen on this sensitive issue, Sh. Pardeep sharma “Deepak” said that USA is a capitalist country and China a communist nations. Rev. Dattopant Thengadi had deep understanding of both these systems and thus spoke about the commonality in both these system. Exploitation of poor and natural resources was common to both, he said. The difference if any was in the exploitation only. While rich and powerful corporate were in the role of exploitor, the role is played by the state in a communist system, he added. He said China has flooded Indian markets and is posing a serious threat to over all trade and commerce of this country.

Tarun Vijay, the leading journalist and director Shyamaprasad Mukherjee research foundation was the main speaker. Tarun Vijay it may be noted is an experienced China watcher and has been visiting that country very regularly as a member of Indo China Eminent Persons Group.

He began his speech with reflecting the diagonally opposite views of the two countries on almost all major issues. In spite of being neighbours both these coun-

Never did these two countries, except for 1962, fight a war during these millennia of years old associations. Indians were most respected people in China ...

tries have different world view and are taking divergent stands on major issues, he said. Even in India the perception of China varies from one extreme to another. While one set of people look at China as an enemy there is a sizeable section of the population that pleads for increasing efforts to a lasting friendship. Taking a look on historic background of relations between the two neighbouring countries, Tarun Vijay said that these relations are 9000-10,000 years old and are civilizational and cultural in substance. Never did these two countries, except for 1962, fight a war during these millennia of years old associations. Indians were most respected people in China and Buddhist monks were not only received well but were cherished and honoured. Kumar Jiva, a Buddhist monk whose mother was from Kashmir and father from Kashgar Xinxiang was officially the 1st Rajguru of China. Communist Party literature on Buddhism still maintains him as Teacher of China.

Four Rishi's from India, Kashyap, Matang, Samant Bhadra and Kumar Jiva, are the most respected names in Chinese even today. Kumar jiva in fact overwhelmed Chinese to the extent that they offered him the highest seat of honour. His invention of 17 step methodology for proper translation of Indian traditional knowledge into Chinese is still being followed.

Most Chinese people are opposed to Christianity China has not recognized Vatican. They are now claiming that Buddha belongs to China. A 250 ton Buddha Statue has been installed on Mount Emishan and has been dedicated

to Samant Bhadra. Common Chinese people have a lot of respect for India there is a common saying that reflects the sentiment for India it goes like “Next Birth in India”.

But all this changed after communism came to China. They destroyed original thought and culture of China. A BBC documentary on China reports killing of 4 crore people in the process. This was one of the worst kinds of barbarism. Traditional villages were destroyed. People's liberation Army grabbed whole of China. They followed literally the dictum ‘Complete elimination of enemy’. Any one who opposes is annihilated. Dissent is curbed with force. This expansionist policy is followed not only within China but internationally as well. The result is that China in terms of geographical area has doubled in last 100 years where India is just half of what it was a century back. Chinese ambitions have grown. It is now challenging USA. Chinese products are flooding global markets. In the automobile sector China has challenged Japanese supremacy in US markets. In Tibet China has changed almost everything. Names of places have been changed from Tibetan to Chinese. Potala palace has been rendered lifeless. Tibet is being flooded with materialist outlook. Tibetans are being de-cultured. New generation is being weaned away from its past. Chinese are being settled in Tibet. Most of the trade in Tibet is in Chinese hands. Entire demography of Tibet stands changed. Same policy is being applied to Xinxiang province. 48% of that province is now Chinese. Communist party has taken a firm central over ev-

ery aspect of live. Process starts in primary school itself. There is local unit of communist party in every school and teachers are the members of party.. Quran is taught in Chinese language. Kashgar (Kashi for them) has been connected with mainland China by five parallel railway tracks. China has a policy of giving lesson to its neighbours. This means a continuous pinpricking policy. Under this policy China is staking claim over 90000 sq. Km territory of India.

But let me tell you, continued Tarun Ji, India is not a priority for China right now. China wants to avoid a war for next 20 years. They are not afraid us. Their only anxiety is our democratic establishment. They are not able understand our inherent strength. They want to learn more about us, to know how it is possible for India to not only survive but march ahead and progress that too in spite of such a huge difference on every level India. A book is being written on RSS as a part of this process. Under these circumstances we have to decide, Tarun Vijay told the audience what we want? I will like to highlight another aspect of Chinese life. Within next 20 years China will face a revolt from within. There is no communism left in China. It is China first and China last. exploitation of labour and farmer is going on at a large scale. Hinterland China is very poor. Communist party is most corrupt. Scandals and corruption dominates media content. There are no media channels Chinese rulers are scared. That is why they are introducing slow motion democracy. So on internal front China is going to face serious trouble. Regarding

During NDA regime bilateral trade with China was projected to reach \$32 bn by 2008. It already is \$42 bn according to India government while as Chinese official's claim it to be more than \$50 bn. trade deficit is huge, to the tune of \$30 bn.

India China is not going to abandon claim on our territory China does not want to see India moving forward. But the problem is that we are not aware of Chinese reality. It is important to make people aware. Unfortunately no political party in India has a China-policy. Tarun Vijay concluded his speech by appealing for more interaction on people to people level. He asked country men to learn Chinese and visit that country more often to understand that in a better way.

Prof. Bhagwat Prakash Sharma agreed and said that historically India influenced large area extending up to Tajikistan and Sinkiang. China was never an influence on India. Changiz Khan moved away from India because of this influence. China is now more aggressive towards India. Chinese incursions are reported regularly by our newspapers, he said. Pyngong lake is half in India half in China. China patrols that regularly. It has pointed red a large area in Ladakh and has written China on rocks there. It even dared to stop construction of roads in our area. China has established client-patron relationship with all our immediate neighbours. Be that Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal or

Srilanka. It is keeping a strict vigil on our army and is missing no opportunity to hurt us. It has let loose 10,000 cyber warriors and has already stolen sensitive information from our embassy in USA. It even hacked several other important emails. China has captured almost entire trade of Pulses in Myanmar. We import large quantity of Arhar Dal from Myanmar. Prices of Dal are directly benefiting China. Beside our food security stands compromised. A cursory look at bilateral trade reveals further Chinese ambitious game plan.

During NDA regime bilateral trade with China was projected to reach \$32 bn by 2008. It already is \$42 bn according to India government while as Chinese official's claim it to be more than \$50 bn. trade deficit is huge, to the tune of \$30 bn. According to a survey done by FICCI 75% of market has eroded due to Chinese imports and if the trend continues closure of 70% units is possible.

Take tyre trade as an example. Chinese Tyres are being sold at a cost of Rs. 2000-3000 less than Indian Tyres. This hurts not only new Tyre business but also retreading of Tyres as client feels better to have a new Chinese Tyre than a retreated Tyre. We continue to subsidise raw natural rubber export to China. We are, hence empowering China economically. China uses this money on arms and ammunition to be used against us in the long run.

A large number of people including professionals and sections of opinion making intelligentsia heard the learned speakers with rapt attention. □□

Impending need for CAG audit of PPP Projects



Despite heavy public investments, there is no provision of compulsory audit of Special Purpose Vehicle companies by Comptroller and Auditor General of India. Need of the hour is that all Private - Public Partnership projects be subjected to audit by Comptroller and Auditor General and in all future contracts, this be included as an essential condition, recommends Dr Ashwani Mahajan.



In the era of liberalization Public Private Partnership has been growing at a very fast speed. Consistent with the requirements of development in the country and lack of public funds, private sector participation requirement in infrastructure development can not be denied. Roads, bridges, airports, sea ports or power projects, today many Public Private Partnership projects have been completed and construction is going on in many others. Since handsome fee is charged for the service provided and private partners get a sizable share in the same; these private partners are more than willing to participate in the projects.

According to rough estimate,

government's contribution in the projects run on PPP basis is substantial. But there is no constitutional mechanism to inspect or audit the accounts of these projects. We know that according to the Constitution all government departments and social welfare projects fall within the purview of the Comptroller and Auditor Gen-

Private sector companies involved in these projects, whose interests are rooted, are against any such move.

eral of India In this way government departments and programs are accountable to the people of the country through Parliament.

For the purpose of a particular project with government and private parties as partners, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Company is created. All activities starting from construction to administration after the completion of the project are carried out by this SPV.

Passenger tariff and other types of income in Delhi Metro go to this company's account, collections from Airport Passengers Fee, go to the airport company's account and toll imposed on roads and bridges go the concerned SPV company. After that this revenue is divided between private partners and government. We must accept that the government has also invested heavily in these projects and without the support of the government these projects wouldn't have completed and become economically viable. In fact these projects get different types of approvals without any hassle, as they are considered government projects. After the completion of the projects private partners get their share in revenue very easily. Because of these facilities, private partners are desperate for investment in such projects.

But it is unfortunate that de-

Accountability

spite the revenue sharing and heavy public investment, there is no provision of compulsory audit of these SPV companies by Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). Recently Department of Telecommunications ordered for enquiry of some such companies after complaints of bungling in their accounts. Many years ago due to large-scale rigging by Enron Company, agreement



with the company was cancelled. After global bankruptcies of the company its accounting fraud was more firmly established. After the exposure of fraud by the CEO of Satyam Computers of more than rupees 7000 crores, all his companies who were involved in public private partnership infrastructure projects, have become doubtful and no wonder that we may be getting into a much bigger fraud in these projects also.

Under the circumstances the office of Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has asked the Government that it should be allowed to institute audit in all such ongoing projects in Public Private Partnership companies (SPVs). This is important to note that 'CAG' is only allowed to investigate this matter that these

These projects get different types of approvals without any hassle, as they are considered government projects.

projects have been approved on the basis of competitive bidding or not. Since there is an involvement of public funds in these projects and SPVs are involved in revenue sharing, CAG should legitimately be allowed to investigate and audit accounts of these SPVs.

In addition to this, doubts have been raised from time to time that these companies try to escalate costs to fetch greater share from the government and demonstrate lower returns from these projects. This gives another argument for CAG's audit of these projects.

In this context, private sector companies involved in these projects, whose interests are rooted, are against any such move. They say that government's audit would cause a delay in such projects and thus cost may increase. They also argue that since the availability of finance is a major issue, government auditors may not appreciate that problem appropriately.

But on the basis of these ob-

jections, one can't ignore the issue of accountability and parliamentary control of the projects where there is huge involvement of public funds and where private parties are sharing revenues. Public funds can't be left on the whims of private companies. We know that in all those sectors, where ever the new private sector investment is allowed regulators have been created, to regulate their functioning.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Insurance Regulatory Authority, Electricity Regulatory Commission, etc. are some examples. In addition to them securities market is regulated by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and banks are regulated by Reserve Bank of India. But the irony of the situation is that despite billions of rupees of public investment and with much bigger revenue potentials these Public Private Partnership projects don't have any provision for constitutional audit and inspection. If one says that officials from respective ministries can take care of inspection, it would lack prudence, as the very justification of the institution of CAG would be lost.

Thus need of the hour is that all Private-Public Partnership projects be subjected to audit by Comptroller and Auditor General of India and in all future contracts, this be included as an essential condition. □□

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Parliamentary Committee Vs Technical Expert Group on Patent Law Issues

Accept the recommendations of the Department related Parliamentary Committee on Commerce and not that of the Technical Expert Group that has made a mess of the issue relating to the scope of patentability; B.K.Keayla, Convenor, NWGPL, writes to government



Government must accept the recommendations of the Department related Parliamentary Committee on Commerce and not that of the discredited Technical experts Group on patent Laws. The proposals made by Department related Parliamentary Committee are 'TRIPs compliant and would have proper co-relation with our Health Policy'. This appeal has been made by Shri B.K. Keayla, Convenor, NWGPL. He adds further that it is for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to take a final decision on the issues raised by the Members of Parliament during the debate in the Lok Sabha on Patents (Amendment) Bill, 2005. The Report of the TEG is only one of the inputs available

to it, he opines. Keayla Ji has also questioned the credibility of TEG's that has been questioned firstly because of the plagiarism indulged in by it and now because of its misquoting an eminent international expert like Dr. Carlos Correa. Moreover, its views are at variance with the opinions given and recommendations made by high level commissions, committees and experts who have examined the issue of patentability. These opinions and recommendations which have come out clearly in favour of limiting the scope of patentability and developing countries exercising flexibility in this regard, no doubt constitute an important guide in taking a decision on the subject.

Taking all these factors into account, BK Keayla suggests, the only logical conclusion, for the Government is to accept the recommendations of the Department related Parliamentary Committee on Commerce.

This appeal was made by Shri B.K.Keayla in a letter which he wrote in December 2009 to important secretaries of government of India. Extracts from the letter are given below:

The Scope of Patentability is an important component of the patent system. The issue was rightly raised by the Members of Parliament in the Lok Sabha during debate on Patents (Amendment) Bill 2005. The Government also rightly set up a Technical Expert Group (TEG) to examine the issues raised by the Members of Parliament. The terms of reference for the TEG were set by the government as follows:

- a) whether it would be TRIPS compatible to limit the grant of patent for pharmaceutical substance to new chemical entity or to new medical entity involving one or more inventive steps; and
- b) whether it would be TRIPS compatible to exclude micro-organisms from patenting.

The TEG examined the issues in their Report of December, 2006. However this Report

was found plagiarised and the TEG was asked to revise the Report. The revised Report was submitted by TEG in March 2009.

Conclusions of the TEG

The TEG concluded in Para 5.38 of their revised Report that “it would not be TRIPS compliant to limit the granting of patents for pharmaceutical substance to New Chemical Entities only, since it prima facie amounts to a “statutory exclusion of a field of technology”. However, every effort must be made to provide drugs at affordable prices to the people of India. Further, every effort should be made to prevent the grant of frivolous patents and ‘ever-greening’. Detailed Guidelines should be formulated and rigorously used by the Indian Patent Office for examining the patent applications in the pharmaceutical sector so that the remotest possibility of granting frivolous patents is eliminated”.

The TEG has further concluded in Para 5.50 of their Report “that excluding micro-organisms per se from patent protection would be violative of TRIPS Agreement”.

Comments on TEG Report

The terms of reference for the TEG required examination as to whether “limiting the grant of patent for pharmaceutical substance to New Chemical Entity or to New Medical Entity would be TRIPS compatible”. The TEG instead of examining the issue of limiting granting of patent has based their findings on ‘statutory exclusion of a field of technology’. The analysis by the TEG leading to conclusion of exclusion but not limiting, is based upon Para

5.29 of Dr. Carlos Correa Report published by the South Centre entitled ‘Integrating Public Health concerns into Patent Legislation in Developing Countries’. Dr. Carlos Correa is an eminent international expert on Intellectual Property Rights issues. He has commented (Annexure I) on the TEG Report. The relevant extract is as follows:

“The TEG had, in my view, the opportunity to explore the various means available to India (and other developing countries) to limit the grant of patents that only cover minor, often trivial developments or uses of existing pharmaceutical products, and to provide the government concrete guidance to avoid the proliferation of patent that may restrict legitimate competition and erode the role of India as a world supplier of active ingredients and medicines”.

Surely, misquoting of an international expert to reach a conclusion is worse than plagiarism for which reason the Report of TEG (2006) was required to be revised. The TEG Report which has not only purposely twisted the views of Dr. Carlos Correa, but has also ignored the views/recommendations of a large number of International Studies by important Commissions and by other experts who have dealt with the scope of patentability in an unambiguous manner. Extracts from the Reports of these Commissions are attached.

Serious Concern

Our cause of concern writes Keayla ji, is the volume of patents being filed in India. On an average, about 35,000 or so claims are being filed annually. Media

report comments that almost 82 per cent patent claims are by foreign companies.

This flood of patent claims over a period may rise to an alarming number, as is evident from the number of patents in force at present in some of the developed countries during 2007. The data is: over 18 lakhs patents in USA, 5.67 lakhs in Republic of Korea, 4.92 lakhs in Germany and 3.90 lakhs in France. Even if patents granted in India in due course of time go upto to a level of about 50 per cent of patents granted in the developed countries, the prices of patented monopoly products will go up several times and the middle class and poor will not be able to afford patent protected medicines. It will not be possible to prevent the grant of frivolous patents and evergreening through a detailed guidelines as suggested in the conclusion of TEG. Only statutory provisions can control this menace.

The scope of patentability has to be specifically specified in a separate Section as: basic invention for sectors other than chemicals and pharmaceuticals, and for pharmaceuticals new drug molecule, addition to patents as stipulated in chapter IX of the Act for 3 (d) items and process patents for activities of genetically modified micro-organisms. Process patents would also be available to technologies which satisfy the prescribed criteria.

From time to time data about minor or frivolous patents granted in India are being compiled.

The phenomena of frivolous and questionable patents have been commented upon in some important international studies. □□

Reduce consumption to save the planet



The agenda of Mexico, where the leaders will assemble to follow up on Copenhagen, should be to limit consumption. The control of carbon emissions alone will not deliver, humankind will have to reduce its consumption to levels that are supported by the earth, suggests **Dr Bharat Jhunjhunwala**

Results of Copenhagen can be said to be mixed at best. 26 prominent leaders agreed that the developed- and developing countries have to work together to control carbon emissions. But this is difficult because the leaders fail to recognize the inherent conflict between unending growth and environment. The source of carbon emissions is ever increasing production and consumption of goods and services. Traveling in air-conditioned car and shopping in air-conditioned mall adds to consumption of energy and to carbon emissions. The leaders have resolved to reduce carbon emissions while increasing the rates of growth. This is like pouring oil in fire and simultaneously trying to quench the smoke.

Belief is that this difficult task can be accomplished by the use of clean technologies just as an improved oven uses less fuel and emits less smoke. But the total carbon dioxide emitted will increase if four dishes are cooked on the improved oven instead of two dishes on the conventional oven. The use of clean technologies may not lead to a reduc-

tion in emissions. California provided special incentives to people to use fuel-efficient hybrid cars. The energy dissipated during application of brake is captured and stored in a battery in these cars. That gives better fuel average. But this did not lead to a reduction in fuel consumption. Instead, people undertook more- and longer journeys. We can see this happening before our eyes every day. Rich



families use copper coated fuel-efficient cooking vessels. They also consume more energy per person. Generally, a person who is capable of using expensive clean technologies also has higher consumption.

Our leaders have resolved at Copenhagen to reduce carbon emissions by the use of clean technologies. Such is unlikely to take

place. Instead the clean technologies are likely to add to consumption and put more strain on the already stretched earth.

The larger problem of sustainable development is not solved even if carbon emissions were somehow to be controlled. Other environmental problems will continue to be generated if we persist in seeking unending increases in consumption. AIDS, for example,

has been created due to uncontrolled sex. Ground water level is depleting across the country because of excessive withdrawal for the cultivation of water-hungry crops like grapes and chilies. Excessive consumption of meat by the rich is depriving the poor of even staple food grains, causing malnutrition and leading to spread of TB.

Wars are being launched to capture the natural resources in faraway lands and this is fuelling the growth of terrorism. Use of genetically modified crops is suspected to increase the incidence of diseases such as blight. These myriad problems will continue to increase even if our leaders manage to control carbon emissions. Ultimately hu-

mankind will have to reduce its consumption to levels that are supported by the earth.

Modern economics is the main impediment to such reduction of consumption. A primary principle of economics is that increased consumption leads to higher welfare or 'utility'. Any introductory book of economics will teach this: If 5 units of utility are obtained by consumption of one banana, 3 or 4 units will be obtained by the second banana. The consumption of bananas should be increased till the additional increase in utility is more than the cost of buying the additional banana. This becomes a prescription for ever increasing levels of consumption since cost of production is often reduced by the use of modern technologies. We find this to be true in our daily life. An ice-cream with three flavours seems to provide more pleasure. But there is a problem. This approach indicates that those consuming more should be happier persons. But we see the opposite. The rich are seen to suffer more with psycho-somatic diseases such as blood pressure, asthma and insomnia. More consumption is leading to more unhappiness.

The root of this problem lies in ignoring psychology. Psychologists define happiness in terms of unification of the conscious and the subconscious. A person will truly be happier upon eating two bananas if his subconscious desire is that of eating bananas. But he will be unhappy if he eats bananas while his subconscious desire is that of eating cake. He may be led to consume bananas through advertisements. But such consumption may be contrary to his subconscious desires. This explains

Restrictions will have to be placed on advertisements that implant new desires in the minds of innocent people.

why rich people are unhappy. They are consuming myriads of things but do not know what they truly want. Unfortunately modern economic theory has no concept of the subconscious. It assumes that fulfillment of conscious desires will provide happiness. And ever new conscious desires are implanted in his mind through advertisements and other stratagems. Mankind is trying to increase consumption under the impression that this is the route to happiness. This is the real source of problems like carbon emissions, terrorism and depletion of groundwater. These problems will not be solved even if our leaders somehow manage to control carbon emissions.

Many civilizations have become extinct in human history. Ancient Egypt, Indus Valley, Iraq, Greece and Rome have all died. Empires of Mongols, Portugal, Spain and Britain have imploded in the last six hundred years. This has happened because these people could not present a definition of sustainable growth. For example, Rome indulged in large scale loot of other countries. Rome became internally weak from such over-consumption and could not protect itself from the attacks by Berbers. The challenge before man is to secure happiness with-

out unending increase in consumption. The agenda of Mexico, where the leaders will assemble to follow up on Copenhagen, should be to limit consumption. The control of carbon emissions alone will not deliver.

The beginning has to be made by a combined effort of economists and psychologists. 'Happiness' will have to be connected with subconscious desires instead of consumption. Every person must be encouraged to discover his subconscious desires. If the subconscious desire is of eating ice-cream then he should not be encouraged to consume more bananas. A cultural policy of controlling consumption will have to be made. School children will have to be taught that happiness comes from discovering one's inner self rather than from mindless increase of consumption. Restrictions will have to be placed on advertisements that implant new desires in the minds of innocent people. King Yayati sought the youth of his son so that he could fulfill his sexual desires. But he found no happiness even then. He then realized that happiness comes from within rather than without. This is the message that needs to be spread. Then consumption will reduce and all the associated problems along with.

The positive aspect of Copenhagen is that the danger of extinction looming before humanity has been recognized. But it is unfortunate that instead of quenching the desire of unending consumption, the talk is only of controlling carbon emissions-that too with increase in consumption. This will not do. □□

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UN body misled world, scientific community on global warming

Scandal rocks climate panel on glaciers

A scandal of Himalayan proportions has hit the UN Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change with reports that the body misled the world and the scientific community on conclusions regarding melting of Himalayan glaciers.

In its fourth assessment report released in 2007, IPCC claimed most of the Himalayan glaciers would vanish by 2035 because of global warming. The claim was hugely contested in academic circles both in India and abroad in the last three months.

Critics argue that the IPCC report was based on three documents – a 2005 report on glacier by the World Wide Fund for Nature, a 1996 UNESCO document and a New Scientist news report. None are peer reviewed.

The WWF report cited the New Scientist news in which a British journalist interviewed Indian glaci-

ologist Syed Hasnain who made this claim. When the same journalist re-interviewed Hasnain in 2009, he admitted that it was only a speculation without any evidence.

IPCC claimed, “Glaciers in the Himalayas are receding faster than in any other part of the world and, if the present rate continues, the likelihood of them disappearing by the year 2035 and perhaps sooner is very high if the Earth keeps warming at the current rate.”

Scientists at the Ontario Trent University, Canada who helped unearth the misleading claims on Himalayan glaciers also charge the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with another major blunder.

A team led by J Graham Cogley quoted an earlier report by a Russian hydrographer that predicted substantial melting of the Himalayan glaciers by 2350. IPCC Cogley claimed, made a blunder

and may have published 2035 in place of 2350.

A section of Indian geologists headed by V K Raina, a former deputy director of the Geological Survey of India, too suggested Himalayan glaciers, had not in any way exhibited, especially in recent years, an abnormal annual retreat, of the order that some glaciers in Alaska and Greenland reported.

Had global warming been a real threat, such retreat in recent years was inevitable because the last decade was the warmest known to science? True that Himalayan glaciers shrunk in volume & constantly showed a retreating front. But there may be other explanations.

Also most of the claims are based on data from 20 Himalayan glaciers whereas there are 9500 glaciers in the Himalayas – the data simply is too inadequate. □

Glaciologist demands apology from Pachauri for ‘voodoo’ remark

India’s senior-most glaciologist V K Raina says the chief of the UN climate body should apologise to the scientist fraternity for dubbing their work on melting of Himalayan glaciers as “voodoo science”.

“The IPCC had dumped our report that the glaciers have not retreated abnormally. Now, with the truth out in open, the IPCC

should dump its own report which was based on mere speculation,” said Raina. IPCC must be answerable to all the scientists and experts associated who stand vindicated that glaciers melting is not being happening at the abnormal pace as declared by it, he noted.

“It only shows that IPCC has

based its arguments on speculations and did not verify it before making it public,” the former deputy director general of the Geological Survey of India said. Raina, in his report, had maintained that glaciers have “not shown any remarkable retreat in the last 50 years and the reports of the glaciers demise are a bit premature.”□

No More Lies, Please

*It is high time to dissect authors of any report that adversely affects our lives and recognize the vested interests of those who funded it, the integrity of those who compiled it and the accountability of those public institutions that authenticated its credibility and reassure ourselves of not only the consequences but also of the motives its recommendations and their implied impact on public policies, opines **Nikunj Jain***

The recent admission of the error in IPCC report, regarding the rate and time of disappearance of the Himalayan glaciers, by the IPCC chairman Dr. R. K Pachauri has again raised grave doubts about not only mankind's understanding of the science of climate change and the present state of earth's environment but also about the credibility of such reports and studies. The panel's claim that the glaciers in the Himalayas would disappear by 2035 has been found to have not been based upon any substantiated or established scientific process of experiments but on a mere interpolation of a journalistic assumption by an interviewer who interviewed an ex-Jawaharlal Nehru University researcher back in 1999.

The so termed "unfortunate error" when viewed in perspective of the enormity of the report's subject in concern, its alarming findings and hence its grand impact on various governments and their policies throughout the globe and thereby on the daily lives of average people at large does make the average person feel unfortunate to the point of foolishness.

The various recommendations and the notes of caution of the IPCC report such as the alarming levels of rate of growth of developing world's Green house gas emissions and the

imminent need and responsibility of mankind (and especially that of developing world's Poor's) to curtail these emissions, are also being questioned by a large portion of the scientific and journalistic community.

The whole incident can well be seen in the fresh light of the recent World Health Organization's (WHO's) swine flu vaccine scam. Whereby, WHO falsely escalated the evils of a flu as mild and less fatal as the common flu. The fear and panic thus created lead to a widespread sale of monopolistic testing methods and the only available treatment medicine "tamiflu", throughout the world both to governments and private entities, manufactured almost solely by a Swiss pharmaceutical manufacturer Roche Ltd. and its overseas subsidiaries.

Though, the authenticity of the recently awarded "pandemic" status to the H1N1, (triggering even more demand for the antiviral drug), has been put to question by the unearthing of the major financial gains a few high level WHO officials benefited off due to their direct contacts and links with the concerned antiviral manufacturing companies.

Yet again when all the ruckus is viewed from the perspective, that it has been proven worldwide that H1N1 is even less dangerous and fatal than the common flu, that it

has so far and shall be responsible for less hospitalizations and casualties than the common flu and that the recent British health journal found that of every 5 people given the flu treatment only 1 actually had the flu, it gives the common man no solace but only succeeds in impregnating in him a feeling of sheer helplessness fueling perpetual skepticism.

Something similar happened in the case of the 2003 Coca Cola controversy, whereby, pesticides were found in alarming levels in 11 Coca Cola brands and Pepsi by a Delhi based NGO. The entire controversy was quickly followed by a massive consumer reassurance campaign by Coca Cola and Pepsi involving big stars like Aamir Khan and Shahukh Khan confidently proclaiming (with big confident grins) on the screen about the products now being safe. Yet another report followed in 2006 by the same NGO, which unveiled the ongoing flagrant violations of toxicity standards by same companies whereby the products still had 24 times more pesticides in them than those allowed by the Bureau of Indian standards.

Another major research that was and probably is still extensively doubted for its findings and their motives was the study behind the Montreal protocol. The study stated the harmful effects of a partic-

ular class of freons on the ozone layer precisely at the time when the patent for its production, which belonged to a US firm, named Dupont, was about to expire. Also, as it happened to be, the patent for an alternative refrigerant which, supposedly, did not harm the ozone also rested with the same firm. Even though the credibility of the study behind the Montreal protocol is still openly debated, as an

obvious consequence of the protocol, the refrigeration industries of other countries, especially Europe and Russia took a major hit and so did the other complying countries continued to experience high costs of refrigeration equipments, while Dupont merely made billions of dollars.

It is probably high time that before any such report hit the market and adversely affected our lives,

we questioned its authors about the vested interests of those who funded it, the integrity of those who compiled it and the accountability of those public institutions that authenticated its credibility and reassured ourselves of not only the consequences but also of the motives its recommendations and their implied impact public policies. □

Nikunj Jain (IIT-Delhi)

Glaciating the climate debate

The recent controversy on the IPCC report regarding Himalayan glaciers has been all over the media. Before dwelling on this matter further, it is important to recognize that it was a silly mistake on the part of the authors of the IPCC report (those who wrote and reviewed Chapter 10 of the Working Group II: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerabilities), to pick up a non-peer reviewed paper and quote it as a definitive finding. Silly still, they quoted a definitive year – 2035 – for the vanishing of the entire Himalayan glaciers. Considering that the science of climate change is still evolving (that is why IPCC publishes its reports every six years), giving a definitive year was a blunder.

Having said that, it is important to recognize that this fauxpas of IPCC doesn't in any way take away the fact that Himalayan glaciers are indeed receding. In fact, most scientific papers available on this subject do agree on the following:

- Most glaciers under observation are retreating – some at faster pace than others. Smaller glaciers are degrading at a faster pace than the bigger

ones. Some have not shown any retreat (reportedly, Siachen). But most importantly, there is hardly any report of a glacier that is advancing.

- All glaciers under observation have shown cumulative negative mass balance. Essentially, glaciers are melting faster than the amount of ice accumulating on them.
- Early melting of seasonal snow cover has been reported by some studies; and,
- Few studies done on the river basins fed by glaciers indicate increase in winter time stream runoff.

These findings are incontrovertible. What is disputed is the rate of glacier retreat/ degradation and how much of it is because of rising temperature and climate change.

It is common knowledge that glaciers will respond to variations in natural cycle, local and regional changes (deforestation, urbanization, industrialization etc.) as well as to global changes (increase in global temperature). What is the contribution of each factor is impossible to quantify. But to say that increasing global temperature

doesn't have any impact on Himalayan glaciers is irresponsible, to say the least.

One of the fundamental reasons behind the controversy over the Himalayan glaciers is because they are least studied. In fact, the Department of Science and Technology, the major funding agency for research on this subject, has a budget of only a few crores (in 1990s it was reportedly about Rs 1 crore). I do not have data on how much is currently being spent for researching glaciers (it would be interesting to know the numbers), but I am sure it will not be in hundreds of crores. When you do not know enough on a subject, squabbling is natural.

The fact of the matter is Nepal has a better inventory of its glaciers than India. While China and Nepal participate readily in international glacial study programmes or seek help from other countries, India, for strange reasons, has always kept away from regional or international cooperation.

We need to know more about Himalayan glaciers. We need to build capacity of institutions to do this research and provide ad-

Outrage

equate funds. But this should not stop us from preparing ourselves for the eventuality when glacier degradation will start impacting the water regime of our glacier-fed rivers. Also, this should not lead us to deny climate change.

This controversy around the IPCC report, if given more importance, will strengthen the hands of the big global pollut-

ers. At Copenhagen, it became quite clear that they do not want to take any action. They would in fact be very happy to deny climate change and continue with business as usual. We in India should not allow this to happen. In our enthusiasm to rubbish the IPCC report (IPCC should accept the mistake and rectify it), we are falling in their trap. After

all, the principal climate change deniers are in the US and Australia – two countries that have reneged on Kyoto targets and are least interested in reducing their emissions. If today, we fall in their trap and give them the license to pollute (if we sign Copenhagen Accord, we will do exactly this), we will pay dearly in the future. □□

(Curtsey: www.cseindia.org)

IPCC did not consult me: Hasnain

The controversy over the IPCC observations on melting of Himalayan glaciers by 2035 took a new turn with glaciologist Syed Hasnain contending that he has never mentioned the time in his research papers which the UN body had included in its climate change report.

He also said that he was not

even consulted by the IPCC for including his research papers in the report. The Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, headed by Rajendra K Pachauri, has triggered a controversy with claims that the Himalayan glaciers would disappear by 2035 due to global warming.

The Indian government had

questioned the finding last year and come out with its own report doubting the glacier melt at the pace the IPCC had predicted. The IPCC findings were based on Hasnain's interview to "New Scientist" magazine in 1999 which were used by Murari Lal who had edited the chapter on glaciers for the IPCC report. □

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Nobel Laureate of Economics: Ostrom

You might have heard about Elinor Ostrom who has been awarded 2009's year Nobel Prize for Economics. The issue of his research is of immense importance. Whenever there is a common property or eco-system we resort to the tendency of providing its management to two factors: Either the Government as in China or to the private companies as in America and other capitalist country. There is one third traditional way which has been totally forgotten these day viz the Management by the common people who are using these resources. The traditional wisdom is considered out of date these days. What Elinor has proved in her work for which she was given this Nobel Prize is, that this third way is the most appropriate way. Is it surprising or not? This factor is not diluted by her sharing the prize with Williamson but the subject is the same. Let us read the citation by the Prize committee which reads as follows:

“Ostrom is considered one of the leading scholars in the study of common pool resources. In particular, Ostrom's work emphasizes how humans interact with ecosystems to maintain long-term sustainable resource yields. Common pool resources include many forests, fisheries, oil fields, grazing lands, and irrigation systems. She conducted her field studies on the management of pasture by locals in Africa and irrigation systems management in villages of western Nepal. Ostrom's work has considered how societies have developed diverse institutional arrangements for managing natural resources and

avoiding ecosystem collapse in many cases, even though some arrangements have failed to prevent resource exhaustion. Her current work emphasizes the multifaceted nature of human-ecosystem interaction and argues against any singular “panacea” for individual social-ecological system problems.”

What impressed me most was that she is deeply concerned with this subject and that finds its echoes in the Indian context also. Our



The Moving

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tanks, water resources, forests were always maintained for centuries together in this way. The general estimate is that about 14000 sacred groves in our country are still very well maintained by public and the important book of Gandhian thinker Anupam Mishra: “Still the tanks are Relevant” shows how every village of Rajasthan is still upholding the tradition of water bodies maintained by villagers. So her study should be given proper attention in this period of globalisation, say privatisation and the impending menace of Dictatorship of China. Anyhow the name of her book is explicit in itself : Managing by the commons.

Management Fundas in Indian Myths & Folklore

Usually the present day management gurus are ardent admirers of Western experts. They use the same alien idioms, proverbs and mythology like humpty-dumpty and Alice in the Wonderland or Blunder land. They look disdainfully towards Indian idioms and myths. But Dr. Devdutt Pattanaik

is a delightful example to the contrary. He has done a yeoman's service by searching the eye-opening wisdom hidden in these myths. A simple example from this precious niche will satisfy you, nay enhance your cravings to read more of him. Let us see...

We have usually heard about four indigenous characters: Shaikhchilli, Mitti ka Madho or say Gobar Ganesh, Gangu Teli and Raja Bhoj. He explains that Shaikhchilli is a dreamer whereas Gangu Teli is a hardcore implementer and Mitti ka Madho is of Use-me-as-I-am genre. But Raja Bhoj is a leader and knows how to use all of them maintaining the right balance. Now how he illustrates it in the modern day terminology, read on.

Mr. Pyne is a copper pipe manufacturer and is running well his business. Demand being greater than the supply in the market, his business is flourishing. He told his HR department, “No dreamers for me. I want people who implement. Why to spend money on new ideas just copy other competitors and excel them by hard work.” He had had his traumatic experience with the dreamers, Shaikhchillis, giving presentations to him and sitting whole day in easy chairs and imagining the market without stepping outside their air-conditioned office rooms. “All this strategy non-sense may be good for other companies, but I want practical men to implement my plans,” he would say forcefully. His business went well for a long time & then came a recession! And then his businesses showed de-growth suddenly and nobody wanted copper pipes & payments were not coming. No hope anywhere. To his utter sur-

prise, he observed that one small unit in the same profession was still doing well. One day the owner of this small profit making unit, Mr. Rout was kind enough to share the secret of his success on repeated requests made by Mr. Pyne. What was it?

“I imagined that all booms are followed by busts and so created a small team to imagine a situation where there is no demand for copper pipes. How would we survive then? Those dreamers came up with many ideas and I invested a small portion of my profits to experiment with them. Most of their ideas failed except two. You know these two ideas are proving viable in this trying time,” he explained humbly. Here Mr. Pyne realized that Mr. Rout was Raja Bhoj, making proper use of Shaikhchillis! Oh! This is but one topic. He has similarly written on Vikram Betal, stories of Ramayana and other epics and has compared them with that of the West also.

I think several other authors might be doing the same job in other ways & fashions. If you know about any of these, please convey to us also. I know one Sandeep Singh who has written on forgotten acumen of our national heroes in the matter of management skills in his book: *The Business of Freedom*.

Anyhow, coming back, you might have heard about Mr. Kishor Biyani and his marvelous success story in Indian retail sector and his Future Group. Mr. Devdutt is Chief Belief Officer in this Future Group & has written a number of good books on this subject and can be contacted for management queries on devdutt@devdutt.com. Certainly I like his talent in telling stories but I know little whether he is a

Engine of Indian Economy – Entrepreneurship

Some useful facts

- India has the highest rate of entrepreneurs 17.1% of population
- 99.0% of the economy controlled and driven by families
- 4.2 Crore enterprises
- 370 clusters in India, 2600 rural and artisan clusters
- 93% of employment opportunities developed by the un-organised sector
- Nearly 40 crore jobs generated, 52% of Total employment in un-organised sector is self-employment; And in rural areas, it is 57%
- 95% of the Industrial units are in SSI sector
- 5% of capital only from organised sources. 95% from family and community sources
- 45% belong to SC/ST and MBC group
- Contribute 70% of Industrial out-put and 66% of direct exports

A UNIDO study (1997) shows that out of the 370 small scale industrial clusters and 2600 artisan-based clusters, which generated 70 per cent of India’s industrial output, 66 per cent of exports, and 40 per cent of employment, only 13 were government-sponsored.

A study of unregistered small and tiny enterprises by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) in 2005 showed that there were over 42 million such units, out of which 45 per cent were owned by backward castes, scheduled castes, and scheduled tribes. These 42 million units provided the largest employment outside agriculture, engaging 90 million hands, and growing at an annual rate 2.6 per cent during 1990-98

- Panipat – 75% of blankets produced in the country
- Tirupur – 80% of cotton knitwear
- Agra – 75% of leather exports
- Ludhiana – 95% of woollen knitwear, 85% of sewing machines, 60% of Bi-cycles and spares
- Surat – 85% of diamond polishing and 60% of synthetic textiles

Why Want to Become an Employee? Become an Employer!

Raja Bhoj or a Shaikhchilli himself!

Swadeshi Melas

Recently I visited three Swadeshi Melas’ in the last month and I was overjoyed to see the participation of common masses in these Melas. First of all I went to the Jamshedpur Mela held in Mazdoor Grounds. Vandeshanker ji with his team of workers was full of enthusiasm to see the rush of people participating, purchasing, and giving the positive reactions re-

garding it. About 150 kiosks were spread over in the ground and on the final day several dignitaries were on the dais to discuss the significance of Swadeshi movement and its necessity in the period of globalization. Some seven to eight kiosks belonged to garments and say khadi garments. Two or three big shops were there which I have never seen anywhere in Swadeshi Melas and these belonged to furniture prepared of marble. After the popularization of herbal products

by Baba Ramdev and other preachers, there was a mushroom growth of stalls having such indigenous medicinal stuffs. Oh, I shouldn't forget to mention the stall where plants of Ayurvedic herbs were sold in earthen pots along with supporting literature, in order to popularize the indigenous medicines. About 5000 persons visited the mela on that particular day. Anyhow, in all this din and cry of kiosks, the organizers were not forgetting the distribution of Swadeshi/Videshi products' list to all the visitors.

Second Mela I visited also belongs to Jharkhand and it was held at Bokaro Steel City. This Mela though comparatively slender in kiosks and visitors compared to the above mentioned Mela, has several strong points to its credit. The number of volunteers or activists of SJM who were conducting all the activities surpasses any other Mela, to the best of knowledge and belief. The stalls of eatables have a specialty of its own and there is always seen good rush at the kiosk of litti-chokha there.

The public programme where Deputy Commissioner, local MP, Pashupatinath Singh and one of the highest official of the Steel plant, all sat on the Dias and spoke well about the Swadeshi Mela and appreciated this effort of popularizing local products and Swadeshi thinking. The young DC Satyendra Singh was much lauded when he lambasted the Chinese policy of flooding and dumping our market with their products and appealed people to boycott such products. It amused everybody when Prant Sanghchalak Jagannath Shahi while giving his presidential remarks said that he had neither visited any fair in his childhood nor in youth, and

SJM in brief

- History of the world is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves – Swami Vivekananda.
- India shall be built by Indians
- When the policies followed by the Communist Russia failed, Capitalist America failed, it is necessary to stick on to our own Indian model of Dharma-based policy i.e. Swadeshi.
- Swadeshi is not simply economics but encompasses life-style, culture, societal methodologies
- Need-based life not Greed-based life
- Not materialistic or consumerist but spiritualistic and dharmic
- Entrepreneurship is an important trait of Indian economy building.

it is at this fag end of life that I have visited this Swadeshi Fair and the credit for it goes to SJM. Anyhow I appreciated the efforts of organizers, especially Sachindra Badiar and Deepak shuklaji, in the sense that such public dignitaries are called at one stage to ponder over the ill effects of globalization and how to inculcate the indigenous spirit among the masses. I was especially attracted towards one kiosk where locally prepared swords and knives were sold.

And the third Mela I visited on 10th Jan was Raipur Mela of Chhatisgarh. It topped all in number of participants and visitors and kiosks. On Sunday we could not muster the courage to visit it along with Rajendra Dube because of messages coming to him that all roads leading to Mela were blocked by people's rush. Everyday they invite some particular community to organize the cultural stage show and happily that day belonged to punjabi Sabha. I got a flavour of Punjab in their exhibition of swords, lathi demonstration and other activities and a jubilant crowd was giving a big hand in clapping over every event presented. Really a mega event it was to bring different sections of people at one vantage point of

Mela. I was particularly impressed to see two big canopies where one Slam bhai's stalls exhibited & it was really a big attraction in the Mela.

One stall of eatables run by local Jail inmates was also attracting people. One surprising factor was that wherever we went in the Mela, but one of the enthusiastic organizer Parveen Jain was found there, he was really, omnipresent. What created jubilation in me was one other incident. One organizer was announcing on the mike that owner of one particular stall has been caught selling some Chinese products and so all his paraphernalia has been confiscated. The spirit of Swadeshi was at its height among the audience.

Arvind Singh, senior office bearer of CBMD proudly said that with this Raipur Mela, the charming number of 150 melas in the country had been achieved, and this number is excluding a dozen or more Swadeshi Mela which have been directly arranged by independent local SJM activists and Bokaro's Mela you know is one of them. The spirit with which Lokmanya Balgangdhar Tilak started this concept of Ganesh Chaturthi procession is reverberating clearly in these Swadeshi Melas. □□

The Peepal Tree and the Market

the only market system which will be sustainable is that which shows deference to non-formal norms and harmonizes with the society that incubates and sustains those norms.

It is not that the concept of market is alien to India. But here the market is very different in scope and character. It is confined to trade and is not extended to all areas of human life. What is the market India is familiar with? It is not the market in the western sense of the term. It approximates to the symbolic “Sandhai” as known in the Southern India or the “Haat” in Northern India. It is a periodical gathering of buyers and sellers for trade in a common place. These markets function on certain socially accepted norms. An example from the East India Company’s experience reveals what something about the functional norms of these markets, as it used to be. In Murshidabad in Bengal where the “Sandhai” was being regularly held under the trees, the shadow of the trees was inadequate as with the arrival of the East India Company the trade had expanded. So, the East India Company authorities planted trees to expand the market space and some of the trees planted were the Peepal trees. The traders, who used to assemble in the original place where the “Sandhai” used to be held, began assembling in another place. When asked why were assembling at a distance and not under the trees as originally they used to do, they replied that they could not but tell lies in conducting their trade, but, they could not tell lies in front of the Peepal trees, which they worshipped as God! What is

the meaning of this statement? It meant that trade is confined to market where traders strategise their selling and buying, which would involve an element of lying, and so they cannot trade in front of the peepal tree. The message is that norms of trading to make profits should be confined to the market. Market should not extend to or invade the other areas of life which is sacred. It should not invade places such as those where the peepal trees stand, which are sacred places. That is to say, the market should not pollute the general society. In particular it is not based on unbridled individualism that tears apart all organic social mechanism. It is based on integral approach to life where economics is part of the life and does not exhaust the entirety of life.

No other civilization may understand this as easily and clearly as an Indian mind. In the course of the study of the community and relation-based businesses in different places, the Tamil Nadu unit of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch [SJM] had come across the following case in Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu where two leading communities, the Kongu Gounders and Kamma Naidus had over the last few decades set up prosperous businesses. In the course of their study, the workers of the SJM found to their surprise how the community norm, or what approximates to the idea of Dharma, was actually function-

al and had greater legitimacy than law and contracts, in shaping the behaviour and attitudes of even highly successful businessmen. A corporate promoter belonging to one of the two leading communities had large cash reserves in his balance sheet. When he was asked why he did not buy out some of the companies through hostile takeover under the company takeover code, he said that that would create bad name for him in his community!

When we asked him why he could not think of taking over companies belonging to other community owners, he replied that that would create bad blood between the two communities! When similar questions were to put to the industrialist belonging to the other community, his answers too were identical. This is the influence of the society on the market. The laws and the market forces are subordinated to the norms of the society and the community. This non-formal self-regulation, is what provides against greed which has brought down the edifice of modern financial capitalism today, and is supervised by social capital. This brings about larger social harmony. If any businessmen breaches this norm by following merely the law and acquires the companies of his fellow community businessman or of the other community businessman, that immediately leads to the destruction of social norms.



The community restraint is disciplining the market forces.

This social vigilance makes India a self-governing and self-managing society. That is why for seven lakh villages in India, there are only about 12,400 police stations in India. Yet according to the UNDP Human Development Report, India which is the least policed state, is also the least crime prone nation in the world! This testifies to the depth of the social discipline in this country enforced and supervised by non-formal institutions. Modernists steeped in Western notions would decry this as social policing. For them the corrupt legal policing is in tune with human values, but not the non-formal social supervision.

The message of the discourse is clear. The sustainable market model is the one which is based on the organic (in the Western idiom non-formal) family, community and social relations, and not that which just works on contract-based individualism. The market that disregards all human relations and looks at human beings as just subjects of contracts is barbaric. And yet that is the ruling market model today in the West. This market model contains seeds of its own destruction. The crisis in the Western market model, which is real, is because of the notion of contract emerging as the supreme and destroying all organic human relations and values. It is undermining thinkers like Emile Durkheim which has cost the West dearly. The fall of the market model of the West, particularly the Anglo-Saxon West, is now being dismissed as just recession or depression. But the problem

runs much deeper. It is the un-sustainability of the purely contract-based life model on which the free market economy and (its cousin) liberal democracy are founded that is getting exposed today. It is only a matter of time before the free market mechanism and the concept of liberal democracy are reviewed by the West itself. It needs an unbiased introspection also in India where the Western influences are still dominant.

The 'Peepal Tree Market' – the market that shows deference to social norms, not just state regulations, only that is sustainable

The human society cannot exist without market. So Karl Marx was wrong in conceiving a society without market. But, the human society cannot live only with the market. So Adam Smith and his fellow travellers too were wrong. That the free market based on unbridled individualism, and legitimises greed as a vehicle for growth, is not a sustainable mechanism, needs no proof today. Every one blames greed as the evil. But the very mechanism of the individualism based free market is founded on greed. The only safeguard that the free market relies on to contain greed is the state and law. It is also evident that human greed cannot be contained or limited by law or state. Non-formal social restraint and therefore social policing is needed to keep greed under control. Over the last couple of centuries besides undermining all non-formal institutional mechanisms and promoting unbridled individualism, the West has powerfully advocated this as the universal norm for the rest of the world. This is despite knowing and experiencing that individualism of

the unbridled variety undermines and disables the informal institutions of the society. A critical function of the state is to protect the society's capacity and not disable it. But, today's constitutional state structured on the Western experience is designed to undermine and de-legitimise all intermediary institutions between the state and the individual, and increasingly allow the market as an exclusive intermediary amongst individual citizens subject only to nominal regulation by the State. In such a system it is increasingly clear that even the most basic unit of human civilization, the family, has no legitimate space.

Given the experience of the last century and particularly the last couple of decades, and more critically the last couple of years, what the world needs is an integral mechanism which allows the non-formal institutions – the family, the community and other informal mechanism of the society – their legitimate role. It means that there should be adequate space for non-formal social order within and along with the formal state, its rules and instrumentalities. So we need a market which will function along with, and not undermine or destroy, non-formal institutions and conventions. So, the only market system which will be sustainable is that which shows deference to non-formal norms and harmonizes with the society that incubates and sustains those norms.

QED: Symbolically, it is a market that respects the Peepal tree and fears to tell lies in its presence that is sustainable. The challenge is for the world to institute and protect such a market in the years, perhaps decades to come. □

Not in favour of disintegration of Supreme Court: CJI

Rejecting Law Commission's recommendation for setting up of four Supreme Court regional benches, Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan has said that he did not favour the "disintegration" of the apex court.

"I am not in favour of the disintegration of the Supreme Court. Personally I feel the Supreme Court cannot be in any other part of India. This is the highest court of the land. It is in the capital city of the land," he said. The CJI said, "It is a final court and we should maintain the integrity of the Supreme Court." The Law Commission had last year suggested division of the Supreme Court into a Constitution bench at Delhi and regional

benches in Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai. The CJI said that there is nothing wrong in restructuring of the Supreme Court but it cannot be disintegrated.

Speaking at the R K Jain memorial foundation lecture here, he said that the filing of cases in the apex court is increasing at a phenomenal rate. There are at present over 50,000 cases pending in the apex court. At present there are 26 judges in the Supreme Court against the sanctioned strength of 31. The Law Ministry had sought opinion of Attorney General G E Vahanvati who also was not in favor of regional benches of the apex court. □

More incentives for small scale sector

The Government has increased the incentives for the cluster development programme (CDP) to encourage micro and small enterprises (MSE), hit hard by the global downturn. The guidelines, approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) headed by Prime Minister, seek to enhance the maximum cost for the common facility centre from Rs 10 crore to Rs 15 crore, with a Government contribution of 70 percent.

"Enhancement of the maximum project cost for infrastructure development from Rs 5 crore to Rs 10 crore, with government contribution of 60 per cent," an official statement said in New Delhi. As per the modifications, the CCEA also approved the enhancement of the maximum project cost for soft interventions (capacity building, design inputs) from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 25 lakh, with government contribution of 75%.

The Government also increased the cost ceiling for preparation of detailed project report to Rs 5 lakh, it said. "The implementation of modified MSE-CDP will facilitate in enhancing the sustainability, productivity and competitiveness of micro and small enterprises," it said, adding the outcomes of these initiatives would be in the form of coverage of more number of enterprises, increased production and turnover and increased employment and exports. There are about 26 million MSEs in the country.

Govt raises subsidy cap for jute mills on machinery

The government has raised the subsidy cap for jute mills on purchase of machinery and equipment to encourage modernisation of the sector. Under the

modified scheme, the cap on subsidy has been enhanced to Rs 3.5 crore per mill for existing mills and Rs 4 crore for new units or those in the north-east, said a release issued after the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

This is expected to provide the much needed thrust and incentive to the jute industry to invest in modernisation on a significant scale, it said. Under the previous scheme, the ceiling on subsidy was Rs 75 lakh per unit for existing unit and Rs 1 crore for new mills and for units in the north east, the statement said. The government has also approved a scheme for financial assistance to khadi and polyvastra at an estimated cost of Rs 345.05 crore, which will be spent over the next two fiscal.

Under the Market Development Assistance (MDA) scheme, financial assistance of 20 percent of the production value of khadi and khadi products, and polyvastra would be provided from 1st April 2010.

The incentive would be shared among spinners/weavers, producing institutions and selling institutions at 25 percent, 30 percent and 45 percent respectively. The MDA would replace the existing rebate plan under which a discount is extended at a flat 10 percent of the sale value throughout the year.

Besides, special rebate is extended to coincide with local festivals at a rate of 10 percent for 108 days in a year in addition to normal rebate. As a result, sales were getting concentrated only during the period of special rebate. MDA proposes to distribute sale throughout the year. The earlier rebate was meant for price subsidisation with little emphasis on quality improvement. The MDA, however, proposes to improve the quality of the product, marketing standards and techniques, the statement said.

Task Force Report on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

The Report of the Task Force on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises was presented to the Prime Minister by its Chairman, Shri T.K.A.Nair. The Prime Minister had announced setting up of the Task Force in August, 2009 when representatives of prominent MSME associations had met him to highlight their issues and concerns. Accordingly, the Task Force under Shri T.K.A. Nair, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister was constituted on 2nd September, 2009 to reflect on the issues raised by the associations and formulate an agenda for action after discussions with all stakeholders. Its members included Member, Planning Commission, Secretaries of concerned Government Departments, Deputy Governor, RBI, Chairman and Managing Director, SIDBI and representatives of MSME associations.

The report provides a roadmap for the development and promotion of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). It recommends an agenda for immediate action to provide relief and incentives to the

MSMEs, especially in the aftermath of the recent economic slowdown, accompanied by institutional changes and detailing of programmes, to be achieved in a time bound manner. In addition, it suggests setting up of appropriate legal and regulatory structures to create a conducive environment for entrepreneurship and growth of micro, small and medium enterprises in the country.

The Prime Minister remarked on the occasion that India needs thriving, vibrant and strong enterprises in the micro, small & medium segment for all round economic development. He commended the Task Force for the detailed & painstaking analysis done & the pragmatic recommendations put forth in their report. The Prime Minister said that implementation of the recommendations should be taken up earnestly & in a time bound manner to give a sustained impetus to this sector. He requested the Minister for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises to take the lead & spearhead policy reform for this sector. □

India to give Bangladesh \$1bn line of credit

PM Manmohan Singh announced a \$1 billion line of credit for Bangladesh. Bangladesh in return promised not to allow its territory to be used for terror against India. The significant Line of Credit offered by Prime Minister during talks with his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina marked the highest one-time grant by India to any country.

India also has decided to give 250MW of power to Bangladesh from the central grid. New Delhi also sought to address Dhaka's concerns with regard to non-tariff barriers by agreeing to remove these on more items and assured that India will not take any step on Meghalaya-based Tapaimukh dam which would hurt Bangladesh's interests. At the wide-ranging talks here between Singh & Hasina, the two sides reached a number of decisions to revive the traditional links of connectivity, which included Akhaura-Agartala railway line.

The discussions covered the entire gamut of bilateral ties, with particular focus on terrorism, security, connectivity, trade and investment, border-related issues and sharing of water and power resources.

During the discussions, Hasina told Dr Singh that her government will not allow Bangladesh to be used for terrorism directed at India, an assurance aimed at addressing a major concern here about North East insurgents taking shelter there.

The two leaders discussed ways in which the countries could cooperate in checking the menace of terrorism. The credit will aid infrastructural development in that country, including building railway bridges, supply of locomotives and assistance in dredging.

3G spectrum auction put off to next fiscal

In a surprise move, the government has postponed to the next fiscal auction of spectrum for 3G telephony which was expected to bring in Rs 35,000 crore to the exchequer. According to senior officials in the Department of Telecom, Law Minister Veerappa Moily, who is member of the EGoM, has opined that the auction should be held when the spectrum is available.

Officials however, said that the auction is expected to take place in August-September this year. It is pertinent to mention that the Ministry of Defence had agreed to vacate the spectrum only during middle of this year.

The Empowered Group of Ministers, headed by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, had decided to allow four private telecom firms for the next generation mobile telephone services (3G) and had made a provision for garnering up to Rs 35,000 crore from the sale of airwaves in the current fiscal.

The postponement of 3G spectrum auction to 2010-11 is likely to have some adverse impact on the government's finances and the fiscal deficit which is pegged at 6.8 per cent of the GDP. □□

India a global success story: British PM

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown says India is a 'modern global success story' that is marching toward prosperity. 'The astonishing pace of change, the dynamism and excitement that it is generating and the potential to do great things is a tribute to all Indians,' Brown said in an article marking the 60th anniversary of India becoming a republic.

'The long march to liberty is now being matched by the rapid march towards prosperity,' Brown said in his article, published in Asian Lite magazine. Brown said modern Britain 'simply wouldn't be the same without our strong bond with India and the enormous part played by the Indian community.'

'The relationship of one of the world's oldest democracies with one of the largest owes its

foundations to our proud historic ties. 'But it thrives now - as a partnership of equals - on our shared values and our faith in free institutions, free markets and free societies.'

The British leader said his meetings with prominent Indian-origin people at a Diwali reception at 10 Downing Street in October 'reminded me again of the deep respect and enduring friendship of our two nations.'

'For many years now our public services, professions, businesses and cultural and creative industries have been enriched by the Indian community,' he added. 'The Britain-India link is central to our shared prosperity & people of Indian origin here are part of the very fabric of modern British society.' □

US sanctions on Iran may hit Indian companies

The United States has moved one step closer to imposing tough new sanctions on Iran for its alleged nuclear transgressions, with the US Senate unanimously voting to punish non-Iranian firms that do business in Iran's energy sector or help Teheran produce or import refined petroleum products like gasoline by blocking them from doing business in the US market.

Indian companies with business links to Iran include Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), owner of the world's single largest petroleum refinery complex. The sweeping Senate measure, which passed by voice vote, must now be merged with a similar bill in the House of Representatives to forge a compromise measure for both sides to approve and send to President Barack Obama, who took a tough line on Teheran in his recent State of the Union address.

Iran is the world's fourth largest oil exporter, and refining its crude was part of the calculation in the massive expansion of capacity in Gujarat. Together with the first phase of the complex, which has a capacity to refine 660,000 bpd, Reliance is said to have the world's single largest petrochemical complex capable of refining 1.24 million barrels of crude every day. The complex was earlier owned by Reliance Petroleum, which was merged into RIL.

In a letter to the head of the US Export-Import Bank last year, US lawmakers urged it to suspend financial aid to Reliance unless the Indian firm agreed to stop selling gasoline to Iran. The US bank had approved two loan guarantees to Reliance worth \$900 million that included a \$400 million facility issued in August to help finance the Jamnagar refinery.

While US lawmakers are moving full steam ahead to impose sanctions on Iran, American businesses are not fully on board. A day before the Senate vote, the US Chamber of Commerce, Business Roundtable, National Association of Manufacturers and the National Foreign Trade Council wrote to National Security Advisor Jim Jones opposing the Congress-proposed sanctions.

The groups say the sanctions legislation will damage US alliances and international trade, by mandating US penalties on foreign firms that violate US unilateral Iran sanctions the Reliance-Chevron alliance being but one example.

Meanwhile, Iran itself has dismissed the idea of sanctions, saying it won't work. "These kinds of unilateral sanctions are not new to us. For the past 30 years such sanctions have been imposed by the US and everyone knows they could not be workable," an Iranian official was quoted as saying, suggesting that Teheran knows ways of getting around the ban.

US push Pak allow Afghan goods' passage to India

The US is pushing Pakistan to allow Afghan agricultural products to pass through its territory into India as part of efforts to revive the once prosperous and export-oriented farm industry of the country.

This is considered a major challenge for the US given Pakistan's reluctance in this regard.

"One challenge is making sure that we can continue to promote exports for Afghanistan, particularly to India. That is their main custom-

er," US Agricultural Secretary Tom Vilsack told reporters in a teleconference from Kabul.

This is the first trip of a US Agriculture Secretary to Afghanistan in the recent past and his main effort is to give a fresh impetus to Afghanistan's agricultural economy. Vilsack said export of Afghan agricultural products to India needs a transit agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan it must be mentioned here is opposing Indian presence in Afghanistan at every step. □

Obama unveils US\$ 33 bn jobs package

US President Barack Obama has unveiled a 33-billion-dollar package of tax cuts to encourage small businesses to hire new workers, as he takes aim at 10 pc unemployment. Obama, who has made job creation the top priority of his administration, spoke as the White House got a rare economic boost when GDP data showed growth for the fourth quarter at a higher than expected 5.7 percent.

The proposal, which must be passed by Congress, would allow small businesses to claim a 5,000-dollar tax credit for every new employee they hire and to be reimbursed for Social Security retirement taxes on increased payrolls.

The firms will be allowed to claim the credit every quarter, so they do not have to wait until the end of the tax year to benefit from the plan. The total cost of the proposal is 33 billion dollars, according to the White House.

'Pak intelligence behind fake Indian currency racket'

Pakistani intelligence is involved in marketing counterfeit currency in India and Bangladesh to patronise militant groups like LeT for their cross-border operations, according to Bangladeshi media reports.

Quoting Bangladeshi police and intelligence agencies, the mass circulation Prothom Alo newspaper said several detained suspected members involved in such activities said a Pakistani intelligence agency patronised them and their operations were being regulated from Karachi.

"The (Bangladeshi) intelligence officials identified one 'Majumdar' as the coordinator of their operations in Bangladesh (and) a manhunt is underway to arrest him," the report said.

Dhaka Police Commissioner AKM Shahidul Haque said he suspected that a large part of the counterfeit currency was being used to patronise militant groups like Lashar-e-Toiba.

Deputy Commissioner of the detective branch of police Monirul Islam also said that through extensive interrogation of the detained members they now suspected the involvement of Pakistani intelligence.

First State-funded Hindu School formally opens in UK

The first State-funded Hindu school in UK has started its operation in a new building here where meditation and yoga will form part of the lessons. Founded in 2008, The Krishna Avanti Primary School had spent its first year in borrowed classrooms in a neighbouring school and moved to its new premises in September 2009 in Harrow, which has the highest percentage of Hindus than any council in UK.

The school, which has a temple at the centre of its premises, is the first voluntary aided Hindu faith school in the country and is recognised as the most eco-friendly. It is also Britain's first vegetarian state school. Children here study the national curriculum, but also tend the garden and learn concepts such as equality of all living things.

The School has a state-of-the-art building design with the highest aspirations for sustainability and conservation. □□

WTO shares India's concerns on protectionism

Sharing concerns of India and other developing countries, WTO agrees that protectionism was a major concern and expressed confidence that a deal on opening world trade further was possible this year. "We need to remain vigilant. With unemployment remaining high, protectionist pressures are a worry," WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy said. His comments, incidentally, coincide with US President Barack Obama heightening the pitch to protect American jobs in the wake of employment losses due to outsourcing to developing countries like India. Obama said it was time to end tax breaks to American companies that outsourced jobs overseas, while helping those that created employment within the US.

Lamy said the international trade body would continue to keep a close watch on protectionist measures that impeded international free trade. "We at WTO secretariat will continue monitoring these developments through 2010," he said. India and several emerging economies like Brazil have raised concern over protectionist measures in the West, especially after the global financial crisis. The stance against protectionism got support from South Korea, with its President Lee Myung-bak saying: "The G-20 Summit had played a pivotal role in resisting protectionist pressures and we need to reaffirm the importance of continuing our stance against protectionism".

Arabs push for Arabic to be official WTO language

Arab members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are pushing for Arabic to be made a fourth official language of the global trade body, diplomats and officials said. But the heavy cost of translation, interpreting and extra printing involved in adding Arabic to the three current official languages- English, French & Spanish - means the proposal is running up against resistance.

"There has been a formal request made by Kuwait and members are engaged in consultations now," WTO spokesman Keith Rockwell said. Any move to add Arabic as an official language would probably prompt a request for Chinese, and maybe even Russian — aligning WTO language policy with the United Nations. Adding three languages would cost about 45 million Swiss francs (\$43 million) a year, the ambassador said — no small amount given a total WTO

budget in 2009 of 189 million francs.

As a result the Arab group will need to lobby hard to convince other members of the virtues of the proposal. The WTO's 153 members include a dozen Arab countries, and another six are applying to join, including Iraq, Algeria and Libya.

The Arab group is also pushing for the Palestine Liberation Organization to get observer status as a prelude to membership when the occupied Palestinian territories gain statehood.

India to join WTO panel on Govt purchases

India will join a WTO panel as an 'observer' that would give the country an insight into how governments of developed countries place multi-billion procurement orders with the industry. The Cabinet Committee on WTO has cleared the proposal for the country to join the "exclusive" club comprising 14 full-fledged members and about 20 observers.

"We will go through the process and become the observer (of the Government Procurement Agreement)," Commerce Secretary Rahul Khullar told media.

While the 'observer' status does not mean that India is under an obligation to subject its about \$ 125 billion government purchases to the WTO rules, it could be taken as an initial signal that the country would eventually play the ball as desired by rich countries like the US and EU. The government procurements constitute about 10-15 per cent of the global economy, according to the estimates of the World Trade Organisation.

Brazil suggests summit to push for WTO Doha deal

Brazil has suggested that world leaders meet to give a final push to long-stalled negotiations for a global trade pact, according to WTO chief Pascal Lamy, "During the course of the discussion, (Brazilian Foreign Minister) Celso Amorim put this option on the table," he said.

"Nobody said no, but we all said during the course of the discussion that if that was to happen, what remains to be done - which is a list of 12-13 fairly technical questions - will need to be simplified," he added.

Some 17 ministers representing countries including Australia, China and India, as well as the European Union attended the mini-ministerial meeting on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos. □□